

FRONT LINES



www.usaid.gov

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

MAY 2006

Afghan PRTs a Success, Says U.S. Military

Twenty-two civilian-military Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) carrying out development work in Afghanistan have been "a huge success," and they "have a potential for Iraq reconstruction as well," said retired Lt. Gen. David Barno, commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan in 2003-05.

In an interview while the first USAID PRT orientation course took place at National Defense University (NDU) April 13, Barno said at the school that the civilian-military teams brought health, power, roads, food, and

▼ SEE AFGHAN PRTs ON PAGE 14

New Global Epidemic Threatens World Harvests

A virulent virus known as stem rust is attacking wheat in Africa and threatens to spread to Asia's breadbasket in India as well as to America's wheat fields, warned Norman Borlaug, the scientist who developed the high-yielding Green Revolution wheat in the 1960s.

"We face a crisis in cereal production" said Borlaug in a symposium at USAID headquarters April 7. "The new global rust epidemic is a wakeup call against hunger."

▼ SEE NEW GLOBAL EPIDEMIC ON PAGE 15

PRSR STD
Postage and Fees
Paid USAID
Permit No. G-107

U.S. Agency for International Development
Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20523-6100

Penalty for Private Use \$300
Official Business

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Sudan Mission Reopens

FOOD RUSHED TO HORN OF AFRICA



Ethiopians and their camels escape a serious drought. As of April 11, USAID is providing 34,000 more tons of grain, peas, and vegetable oil to some 3.5 million farmers and herders in the drought-stricken Horn of Africa region. This comes on the heels of the U.S. announcement of an additional \$92 million to the nations in the Horn to fight famine and address some of the underlying causes of food insecurity.

Katherine Almquist was sworn in April 20 as Sudan mission director, assigned to reopen the USAID mission in Khartoum—the Agency's largest program in sub-Saharan Africa—14 years after U.S. sanctions suspended development aid to the African country.

Humanitarian aid continued under sanctions and a small development program began in 1998, after U.S. policy changed to allow USAID to provide such assistance in certain areas.

With a budget of \$855 million in 2005, USAID in Sudan is providing food and other humanitarian aid to southern and eastern Sudan and Darfur. Extensive reconstruction is also supported in the war-damaged South and in Abyei, Blue Nile, and Southern Kordofan regions.

USAID/Sudan mission staff will be located in the capital Khartoum and the southern city of Juba. The Agency also will maintain a field presence in the western region of Darfur, where more than 2 million people have been driven from their homes and 200,000 have died in what the U.S.

▼ SEE SUDAN ON PAGE 11

U.S. Hiked Aid 39 Percent in 2005

The United States increased development assistance 39 percent last year over 2004, helping boost the overall flow of aid from rich to poor countries to \$106.5 billion, a record high.

U.S. overseas development assistance (ODA) has nearly tripled from the 2000

level, marking the largest American aid increase since the Marshall Plan, preliminary figures show.

Total U.S. foreign assistance was at \$27.5 billion in 2005, a \$7.8 billion increase from the year before. USAID carried out 42 percent of the assistance, which aims to

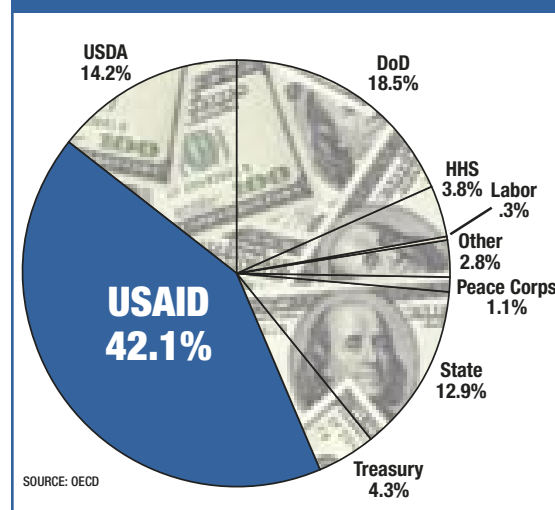
- improve the ability of governments to serve their people
- improve healthcare and education
- boost economic growth
- provide humanitarian relief and reconstruction after conflicts and natural disasters

The Agency also gives out development aid in conjunction with other government agencies such as the departments of State, Defense, Treasury, and Agriculture.

U.S. aid to Asia last year more than doubled to \$14.4 billion, led by grants for reconstruction

▼ SEE U.S. HIKED AID ON PAGE 15

U.S. FOREIGN AID 2005



AMAZONIAN CHOCOLATE



In Ecuador, a woman harvests cacao beans that will be processed into chocolate. A three-year USAID project is helping farmers in the Ecuadorian Amazon harvest and process cocoa beans, and sell the resulting chocolate worldwide. See story on pg. 6.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS PAGE 2

USAID Tackles TB in Asia 4
Cambodia Builds Documentation Center . . . 7
Indonesia NGO Visits Agency 12
Rwandan Coffee Partnership Succeeds . . . 13
Tsunami-Hit Area Gets New Road 14

USAID/MALAWI WINS VIDEO AWARDS PAGE 13

Satiré Comunicaciones

Mexico Methane Gas Project to Begin

WASHINGTON—The U.S. and Mexican governments agreed to develop clean energy projects in Mexico using methane, a greenhouse gas.

“USAID is committed to working with EPA and the government of Mexico to promote and find productive uses for renewable energy,” said USAID Acting Administrator Frederick W. Schieck on March 24.

Under the terms of the agreement, EPA, USAID, and the Mexican Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources will work with local governments and the private sector to share and expand the use of technologies to recover and use methane gas released from natural gas and oil systems, landfills, underground coal mines, and agricultural operations.

The United States and Mexico are two of the 17 countries currently participating in the partnership, an international initiative launched in November 2004 to advance cost-effective methane recovery and use it as a source of clean energy. Methane is a clean-burning fuel that is the main component of natural gas. The United States is committing up to \$53 million over the next five years to support the effort.

USAID, Equatorial Guinea to Form Fund

WASHINGTON—Officials from USAID and the Republic of Equatorial Guinea said on April 11 that they are working to establish a Social Development Fund in the country, implementing projects in the areas of health, education, women’s affairs, and the environment.

Equatorial Guinea is contributing \$15 million to USAID to provide technical assistance to support implementation of the fund so USAID can foster transparency and accountability in the design, implementation, and

evaluation of social needs projects.

“Equatorial Guinea’s decision to use government revenues for social development needs demonstrates visionary leadership and the potential of true transformation. This kind of agreement can serve as a model for future partnerships around the world, and USAID graciously accepts these resources,” said USAID Administrator Randall L. Tobias.

USAID’s technical support of the fund will be managed through USAID’s West Africa Regional Program in Accra, Ghana.

EIU Resources Available Agency-Wide

WASHINGTON—Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) country reports and profiles, which are published by the parent company of *The Economist* magazine, are now available to USAID headquarters and missions, as are Columbia International Affairs Online (CIAO) reports.

EIU country reports contain in-depth analysis of political and economic trends in nearly 200 countries. EIU profiles are more lengthy documents focusing on background and historical context of current economic and political events.

CIAO is a major source for working papers, proceedings, and policy briefs focusing on theory and research in international affairs. Both databases can be accessed by Agency employees from the USAID library intranet site at <http://ppc.usaid.gov/library>.

Democracy Projects Effective, Study Says

WASHINGTON—USAID democracy and governance programs have had a measurable impact on democratic progress around the world, according to a Vanderbilt University and University of Pittsburgh study.

“We found that when the United States spends money to promote democracy in foreign countries, it works,” said Mitchell

BURUNDI PEACE RADIO



Disk jockeys at USAID-funded Studio Ijambo produce radio programs promoting dialogue, peace, and reconciliation in Burundi, which is recovering from 10 years of civil conflict. Members of different ethnic groups work together at the radio station. One of the programs exposes real-life stories of people who, during the crisis, risked their own lives to save the life of someone from another ethnic group. A popular radio soap opera, *Umubanyi niwe Muryango*, based on the daily challenges of two neighboring families inspires listeners to identify with problems faced by others and understand positive, nonviolent ways of resolving conflicts.

Seligson, professor of political science and a fellow of the Center for the Americas at Vanderbilt. “Unlike all prior published research, our data set is based upon an exhaustive survey of the entire democracy portfolio of USAID since the end of the Cold War.”

The study, *Effects of U.S. Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building: Results of a Cross-National Quantitative Study*, uses a statistical model to draw its conclusions, measuring the specific impact of USAID spending on democracy assistance rather than the impact of all types of U.S. foreign assistance on increasing democracy, and controlling for many other possible influences

on the growth of democracy. Its findings will help inform subsequent research, including in-depth country case studies.

High-Nutrient Food Fights Malnutrition

LILONGWE, Malawi—The Office of Global Development Alliances (GDA) is teaming up with Nutriset, a French for-profit company, and Project Peanut Butter, a Malawian NGO, to locally produce a high-nutrient food that is similar to peanut butter and has the nutritional content of therapeutic milk.

Such ready-to-use therapeutic foods are a simple and effective way of supplying vital nutrients that can sustain life, while requiring no cooking or additives such as clean water or milk. GDA supports training of local staff and the purchase of machinery to improve local production of the food, called Plumpy’Nut-Chiponde.

The Malawi production facility, operated by Project Peanut Butter, uses raw materials from local farmers. USAID is also funding the use of Plumpy’Nut in food emergencies elsewhere in Africa, namely Niger and Sudan.

USAID Launches Private Equity Fund

BOGOTA, Colombia—At a ceremony attended by President Alvaro Uribe and senior U.S. diplomats, USAID on March 7 launched the first private equity fund for local small and medium enterprises.

With an initial capitalization of about \$17 million, the fund aims to create jobs and raise incomes.

USAID/Colombia and the Trans-Andean Fund contributed \$7 million in seed capital to stimulate and legitimize the fund. A matching commitment of \$10 million was arranged with Colombian private pension and insurance funds.

The Agency provided technical and financial support to launch the fund, and helped identify the initial group of potential investments. It also recommended modifications to a wide range of regulations to make it easier for Colombian capital-management institutions to participate. ★

DARFUR CLINIC REOPENS WITH ASSISTANCE FROM USAID



A health clinic in Deleig, a town located in the Wadi Saleh locality of West Darfur, reopened on March 3 thanks to USAID assistance. International Medical Corps (IMC) rehabilitated the clinic, which now serves about 20,000 people from the Deleig area. At the clinic, IMC conducts nutritional screening and offers the community comprehensive primary health care services, including outpatient consultations, antenatal care, growth monitoring, immunizations, minor wound care, and health education.



Jamaica



MISSION OF THE MONTH

Challenge

Situated in the heart of the hurricane zone in the Caribbean, Jamaica is vulnerable to natural disasters. Just two years ago Hurricane Ivan pounded the south coast of Jamaica with heavy rains and strong winds, leaving behind \$580 million in damages.

Out of Jamaica's 1.2 million labor force, 20 percent are in the agriculture sector. Many farmers, especially those in the southern part of the island, lost all their crops and equipment during the hurricane. Significant losses were recorded in domestic production of fruits and vegetables.

Saddled with much external and domestic debt as well as high unemployment, Jamaica was unable to cope with the additional challenges of hurricane recovery, including providing support to its farmers.

Innovative Response

USAID quickly responded to the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan with a one-year, \$18 million recovery program that emphasized "building back better." Working with the Jamaican government, houses, schools, community centers, and businesses were rebuilt using construction techniques that make buildings more resistant to storms.

One effort under the program provided technical assistance, training, grants, and new technology to restore businesses affected by the storm to pre-hurricane production levels or better. It also erected 11 greenhouses—the first ever of their type constructed in Jamaica—at demonstration farms across the island to jumpstart fruit and vegetable production and provide better crop protection. Up to 1,500 better quality plants can be grown in a greenhouse of 600 square meters, averaging gross sales of \$13,000 for a single crop.

The field demonstration farms are also serving as training sites to illustrate to other nearby farmers the advantages of greenhouse technology in producing high-value crops. The growers are required to contribute to the cost of land preparation, as well as labor for building the greenhouses and for plant support systems.

While greenhouse production costs more in the beginning, it has minimal costs for controlling weeds and pests and provides higher yields per acre than crops planted in an open field.

The \$7,500 greenhouses are made of lumber, with plastic roofing and antiviral netting on the sides. The plastic roof

reflects ultraviolet rays, increasing the metabolic efficiency of the plants, and channels infrared rays out of the greenhouse. The antiviral netting reduces problems with pests, viruses, and diseases.

The greenhouses also use drip-irrigation systems, which reduce water use by 40 percent or more and provide improved, more-efficient fertilization of crops and easier pest and disease management.

Results

Jervis Rowe from Manchester, Jamaica, one of the farmers benefiting from the greenhouse technology, is harvesting an increased crop of tomatoes, healthier than ever before.

"Growing in the greenhouse produces healthier products, and the use of chemicals is almost negligible. I can now provide vine-ripe tomatoes to the consumer that have a better flavor and appearance. The fruit is reaped fully mature, so it goes from farm directly to the consumer," Rowe said.

His first greenhouse crop is expected to be 15,000 pounds. He anticipates getting about 10 pounds of fruit from each plant—a yield significantly higher than tomatoes grown in the open field, where the average yield is 3 or 4 pounds per plant.

"The greenhouses are giving some growers production yields nearly four times greater than open field production," said Vicki Johnson, director of the Office of Economic Growth for USAID/Jamaica.

Other farmers involved in the project are following Rowe's example, reaping and marketing crops of tomatoes, sweet peppers, and lettuce of superior size, color, and shape, and taking advantage of high-end marketing opportunities in special markets, such as supermarkets, hotels, and catering companies.

Many new farmers are now requesting help in starting greenhouse operations, while some of the current farmers in the program have already begun investing in their second greenhouse. The greenhouse growers have also formed a marketing alliance.

Private partnerships that formed as part of the program are expected to continue. For example, an entire new market opened for the local company, Jamaica Drip, and farmers are continuing to use and promote the drip irrigation system technology.

USAID anticipates continuing similar work in future economic growth and environmental projects to reach more farmers across the island as funding is available. ★



Jervis Rowe is one of the Jamaican farmers benefiting from the island's first 11 greenhouses built with U.S. assistance.

Notes from Tobias

★★★★★★★★★



Greetings to the employees, partners, and friends of USAID. As I began my work in 2003 as the first coordinator for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, I observed first-hand the commitment of USAID's men and women in the fight against HIV and AIDS in some of the most difficult environments in the world.

Today, as I transition into a dual role as 1) Director of foreign assistance at the U.S. State Department and 2) Administrator of USAID, I am honored by the opportunity and excited about the challenges we will face together on this and other critical issues facing the worldwide community.

USAID has a long and proud history and an extensive track record for extending a helping hand to countries recovering from disasters, trying to escape poverty, and building democratic institutions. Now more than ever that expertise will be necessary to meet the unprecedented development challenges of this century—a time where the world is both ripe with democratic promise and menaced by global terrorism.

We, as an agency and a nation, must recognize that our future is inextricably linked to those we seek to assist. Our nation today is threatened less by conquering states than by failing and ungoverned ones. Threats to U.S. national security have shifted to the developing world where poverty, oppression, injustice, and state indifference are exploited and provide havens for people intent on plotting criminal acts against us.

To counter these new threats, development assistance is now a foundational pillar of our new national security architecture. Development must engender fundamental changes in governance and institutions, human capacity, and economic growth, so countries can sustain economic, political, and social progress toward democracy and increased freedom. "Results" and "sustainability" must be our guiding principals.

The reorganization that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has announced is going to transform the implementation of American foreign assistance over the long term, well into the 21st century. Strategies to promote good governance, strengthen human capacity, and increase access to economic opportunity have long been principles of development assistance. Our foreign policy objectives are also now aligned with these principles, and

▼ SEE NOTES FROM TOBIAS PAGE 10

ECONOMIC GROWTH, AGRICULTURE, AND TRADE

Moldovan Farmers Learn to Raise, Market Calves

Rural Moldova has excellent agricultural land, but its wheat and corn markets collapsed with the Soviet Union. After that, poverty began to rise and the region's young people fled to urban areas.

And that's when Norval Dvorak, an 84-year-old retired farmer from Wisconsin, showed up.

As a volunteer under the Farmer-to-Farmer (FtF) Program, part of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade, he first arrived in a northwestern village of Moldova in March 2005 to help the Tersimeda Cooperative. The cooperative had been formed with British assistance after Moldova passed a law governing cooperatives. But the group didn't know what its members could produce and market profitably.

From Dvorak's experience with U.S. cooperatives, he came up with an idea: raise calves that could be fed the surplus grain. He also shared the concepts of private-sector business management and farming practices and talked about ways to respond to the needs of the market. And, he introduced "heifer-hutches," plywood structures for each animal that minimize the spread of diseases and foster growth.

Dvorak's ideas won an enthusiastic response from cooperative members, who were willing to put in sweat and some cash equity. What the plan lacked, however, was capital. A World Bank line of credit with a local bank helped purchase tractors, but would not fund live animals.

So Dvorak returned to Wisconsin and talked up the idea to civic and church groups. He met with community leaders statewide, composed letters calling on the support of his senators, and published articles in the local press. He even convinced another dairy farmer to serve as an FtF volunteer and help with the feed rations and disease control.

The effort paid off.

On his second journey to Moldova in September, Dvorak carried \$10,000 in donations, and was joined by 28 U.S. donors,

who paid their own way to Moldova to see how the money would be spent.

"I'm very enthusiastic about the progress that's been made," Dvorak said. "The villagers working with the cooperative are taking a hand in the project. They're seeing the vision we created together, and they're becoming really engaged with the calves. Now that they feel a sense of ownership, they realize they can mold the calf project, that they can shape its future."

To date, the Tersimeda Cooperative has spent \$6,000 to buy 39 calves, built 10 hutches, and fixed up an old barn. The remaining funds will go for 50 to 60 more calves this year. Tersimeda members provided 15 tons of feed worth \$1,200. The oldest calves are now six months old and will be ready for sale in the fall.

Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs, one of eight organizations that implement FtF programs in more than 40 countries, arranged for the owner of a new French steak house in Moldova's capital to visit the Tersimeda Cooperative in December. The owner of "La Boucherie," which is part of a worldwide chain of upscale restaurants, will be the first buyer, providing gross sales of \$27,000 and net profits of \$10,000 to 30 of the coop's 56 members. Plans are already underway for the export of Tersimeda beef to the Romania branch of "La Boucherie."

"It's been great to work with the people from the cooperative," Dvorak said. "In fact, people from other villages, and even the technological university in Chisinau, came to see the seminars and the demonstration farm. They wanted to give their input and discuss the different possibilities."

"Across Moldova, people are 'thinking outside the box' and embracing this fervor."

Moldova Agriculture Minister Anatolie Gorodenco, who hopes to replicate the cooperative's model, said: "The assistance and encouragement provided by Norval Dvorak has been inspirational. As I travel to other parts of Moldova, I talk about what the Tersimeda Cooperative is achieving." ★



Farmer-to-Farmer Volunteer Norval Dvorak inspects calves during the winter in Dusmani, Moldova.

GLOBAL HEALTH

Agency Fights Rising TB Rates



A woman covers her mouth in a tuberculosis ward of a hospital in Cambodia, where USAID supports TB and HIV/AIDS programs.

China, India, Indonesia, and the Philippines have made remarkable progress in the battle against the tuberculosis (TB) epidemic, and other countries such as Bangladesh, Brazil, and Pakistan are showing steady improvement, according to the 2006 Global Report on Tuberculosis released March 24 to coincide with World Tuberculosis Day.

Worldwide the incidence rate of TB was still growing at .6 percent during 2004, largely because of TB-HIV/AIDS, inadequate investments in public health systems, and, in some areas, emerging TB drug resistance, the report said.

In sub-Saharan Africa, TB rates are being driven up by the HIV epidemic; and in former Soviet states, drug-resistant strains of TB are spreading.

On the day the report was released, USAID announced it was providing a \$1 million grant to the Green Light Committee (GLC), part of the global Stop TB Partnership, to help accelerate treatment of multi-drug resistant TB in 29 countries. The grant will enable the GLC to provide technical assistance to Global Fund grants, which include second-line TB drugs.

"Even though a cure has existed for more than half a century, tuberculosis remains one of humankind's greatest scourges," said Dr. Kent Hill, USAID assistant administrator for the Bureau for Global Health.

Tuberculosis devastates families and hinders economic growth. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that almost 9 million people become ill with TB annually, and almost 2 million die. TB kills

5,000 people every day worldwide. Because TB is an airborne disease, no community is immune from its threat.

Virtually all TB deaths are in the developing world, where the victims are mainly adults in their most productive years. Twenty-nine percent of all TB cases are in Africa. Some 250,000 TB deaths, most of them in Africa, are related to HIV.

However, unlike many health threats, TB's spread can be halted through research into new drugs, vaccines, and diagnostics; and with assistance efforts to expand the new Stop TB strategy.

Dr. Hill said Stop TB, the GLC, and the Global Fund are "making a real difference in the lives of thousands of people with drug-resistant TB who, until recently, had little hope of being cured."

The GLC, which is housed at WHO, works with technical experts from various Stop TB partners and other organizations. The \$1 million grant from USAID will allow it to provide technical assistance and monitoring to Global Fund grant recipients who are expanding directly observed treatment, short-course strategy using second-line TB drugs—called DOTS Plus—for multi-drug resistant TB patients.

USAID and other U.S. agencies currently assist TB programs in 40 countries. USAID is the largest bilateral donor for TB treatment; since 1998, it has provided \$408 million to developing countries to fight the disease. In 2006, USAID will provide \$90 million for global TB control. ★

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

Private Sector Fellow Shares Expertise

Karen Li of Intel Corp. came to USAID headquarters in January for three months to identify ways to broaden the way Intel and the Agency use information and communications technology for economic, educational, and workforce development.

Li is the first participant in the USAID Private Sector Knowledge Exchange Program. She is Intel's worldwide K-12 education program manager, based in Santa Clara, Calif.

"The exchange program is an excellent opportunity for corporations and others to gain a greater understanding of how USAID works," said John Davies, Intel's senior vice president, Customer Solutions Group. "It has provided Ms. Li access and insight to key decisionmakers in Washington and the field. These opportunities are already beginning to achieve goals and objectives for both sides that might have taken years to accomplish."

While at USAID, Li consulted with representatives responsible for the information and technology sectors in the Bureau for Asia and the Near East and traveled to missions in India, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia.

"Although innovative technologies and sound development strategies are important, it's really the people that make a public-private partnership work," Li said. "The beauty of this exchange program is that we're building relationships with people to bring our mutually desired outcomes to fruition."

In Sri Lanka, Li consulted with the mission on the Last Mile Initiative, established to connect underserved areas of Sri Lanka to the internet and to computerized

programs to teach English as a second language.

She identified several areas where Intel could bring private-sector resources to bear on difficult problems while potentially increasing the Sri Lanka mission's impact. Li identified low-cost alternatives to current technologies used to connect the "last mile" to the internet, and she suggested aligning Intel and USAID programs to scale up the distribution of several of the mission's products to reach thousands of underserved areas.

"Ms. Li's insight and knowledge into the private sector's capabilities were value added and will certainly help ramp up the reach and distribution of several of the mission's tools and products," said USAID/Sri Lanka Mission Director Carol Becker. "I believe this private sector exchange program holds promise for many other USAID missions."

Under the new exchange program, private sector experts donate their time to assist USAID with major initiatives while also learning about U.S. development programs. The program also hopes U.S. and overseas private trade and professional organizations, other for-profit companies, and foundations will host civil service employees and foreign service officers.

This program presents the Agency with an opportunity to equip USAID's current and new employees with private sector knowledge and expertise, said Manpreet Anand, who is with the Office of Global Development Alliances. The aim is to create more effective officers in Washington and the field who are better able to interact with private sector organizations. ★



A computer dealer in Ratnapura, Sri Lanka, speaks with Karen Li about the Last Mile Initiative.

DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Agency, DoD Collaborate in Africa



U.S. Navy Cmdr. Paul Vandenberg, right, an engineer with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Seven, greets Abdi Reshid Mohamed Omer, center, the head of Ethiopia's Mines and Energy Department, and Alemayehu Mekonin, a water engineer, at a waste water treatment facility in Gode, Ethiopia, March 31. Vandenberg is doing preliminary research on behalf of Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa, which is interested in aiding a construction project to add capacity to the area's water treatment capabilities.

CAMP LEMONIER, Djibouti—Over 90,000 metric tons of U.S. food aid will be shipped to local ports in coming months, even as incidents of piracy in the Horn of Africa have risen in the past year.

To cope with piracy threats to relief shipments, Tom Baltazar, who leads the new Office of Military Affairs (OMA) within the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, met recently with senior leaders of the Combined Joint Taskforce Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), an arm of the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) that deals with counterterrorism and humanitarian work.

Officials with CJTF-HOA, which is based out of a former French Foreign Legion post here, made no firm commitments on providing security for the vessels. Any final decision would come from the White House after consultation with military leaders.

This relationship in the region goes beyond piracy talks. CJTF-HOA already includes some civil-military operations in its mission, such as drilling wells, providing medical care, and renovating schools and clinics throughout the Horn. The USAID and DoD staffs have been meeting to find ways their combined efforts can address development issues in the Horn.

"Where it makes sense, the CJTF-HOA command is keen on supporting our activities throughout the region," Baltazar said. "The

military has the equipment and resources—hardware—and USAID has the knowledge and experience—software. When they are combined and coordinated, U.S. national security is enhanced."

Among the military office's first tasks has been reaching out to the Defense Department's combatant commands, which carry out military operations around the world. USAID is placing representatives in each command to work closely with the military and help coordinate efforts in specific regions.

"For the first time, the four-star commander will not only have a State political advisor on his staff but also a USAID senior development advisor," Baltazar said. "This is an important effort to ensure that our country's strategic plans are integrated and synchronized with State MPPs [mission performance plans] and DoD theater security cooperation plans, resulting in a plan that addresses the President's National Security Strategy."

His recent trip to the region included meeting some of the key players in and outside of USAID from Djibouti, Kenya, Yemen, Ethiopia, and Sudan. There were also talks with staff in the Regional Economic Development Services Office for East and Southern Africa and regional representatives from the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance. ★

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Ecuador Jungle Chocolate Begins to Flow From Amazon Region Cacao Beans

Ecuador had been a leading exporter for 40 years of cacao beans used to produce chocolate, but it only began to export processed high-value chocolate from its Amazonian region three years ago.

Small farms in the provinces of Napo and Sucumbíos have been able to increase incomes by working with a project that turns the raw beans into tasty products ready for world markets.

Yachana Gourmet, seller of high-end chocolate products, is the result of a partnership between USAID/Ecuador, the Ecuadorian-Canadian Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the community.

"This initiative shows the richness and success of building public-private alliances, mobilizing new ideas, and merging efforts and resources," said Adolfo Franco, assistant administrator for the Bureau of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The process begins early in the morning when families in a minga, or collective, harvest the cacao fruits, open them, scoop out the cacao beans still covered in sweet and fruity pulp, and transport them to the banks of the Napo River where Yachana Gourmet buyers are waiting.

The day's harvest is transported to Yachana's cacao collection center in the rainforest community of Agua Santa where

its transformation into Jungle Chocolate begins.

The beans are placed in wooden boxes, covered with banana leaves to maintain temperature, and fermented to develop the cacao's rich, chocolate flavor.

Next, the Yachana team spreads the beans out on wooden platforms to slowly sun dry. The best beans are toasted until they acquire a rich, nutty flavor characteristic of dark chocolate. The beans are then transported to Yachana Gourmet's production facility in Quito, where they are ground and the beans separated from their husks to create chocolate "nibs"—little bits of cacao.

Nibs are mixed with macadamia nuts and pineapple and then packaged and shipped to markets worldwide as nibs, nibs-and-fruit mixes, and chocolate paste.

Cacao processing is changing the lives of the 14,000 people involved in the Yachana Gourmet chain of production. Farmers who sold raw beans for \$15 per 100 pounds now get \$70 per 100 pounds from Yachana for processed beans. In addition, average harvests are rising from 300 to 800 pounds per hectare.

Many farmers have doubled their net income, said Mike Magán, deputy assistant administrator for the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean. And parents

say they are now able to send the kids to better schools because of their increased incomes.

Magán, who recently visited the project, said that in five years chocolate exports in cacao producing countries in this region could expand from the niche markets they are now.

In addition to Ecuador, Colombia is close to being capable of exporting chocolate and Peru and Bolivia are good candidates. Right now the South American output is dwarfed by the cacao-producing countries in West Africa like Côte d'Ivoire, which produces nearly 40 percent of the world's cacao beans.

"It's a question of putting the necessary resources and private sector backing into this," said Magán, who saw Yachana Gourmet in action along with officials from Kraft Foods Inc. and Mars Inc.

"It's very exciting ... when you can see a light at the end of the tunnel," Magán said of his recent trip. "In the out years, this will not just change people's lives, but it has the potential to become a big part of economies." ★



A farmer admires the size of a cacao bean. Before a USAID partnership began three years ago, small farmers in this region of Ecuador exported very little processed chocolate. Now the cacao beans are processed in the country and shipped to markets worldwide.

AFRICA

Mali Communities Study Fiscal Management

CIRCLE OF SAN, Mali—When regional prefect Sékou Coulibaly recently visited all 25 local communes, he found that just one was in full compliance with the laws and regulations on fiscal management that he is responsible for monitoring.

Members of that compliant commune, Niamana, it turns out, had been trained by the USAID/Mali-funded Programme de Gouvernance Partagé (PGP). The project works with local governments to boost their workers' skills and give them the knowledge

to manage local resources effectively and transparently.

The training—designed for commune-level accountants, mayors, subprefects, and secretaries general—included financial management, accounting, budget planning, and fiscal tracking. Participants also learned how to fill out forms for receipts and expenditures, calculate totals, and set up appropriate bookkeeping based on actual figures from their communes.

Convinced the other communes could get up to speed, Coulibaly secured a commitment from World Vision to cover part of the cost of providing training to some of the other communes.

Most of the communes had procedural manuals from a 2003 training program, but in 20 communes surveyed, none were being used. Some of the community leaders said the new training gave them a fresh start.

"There were many aspects of financial management that we did not understand. Because of this training, we now know how to manage expenses and receipts, and we can now put our finances in order," said Bougouziné Dembélé, the secretary general of the Prefect of San.

Boubacar Bibi Koté, the mayor of the Commune of Sy, added: "We were confronted by misunderstanding of financial procedures. The training has given us a better comprehension of financial manage-

ment, and as mayor, I will see to it that we strictly apply proper financial and budgetary procedures in my commune."

Other circles are now seeking funds for similar training. The Circle of Ansongo, for example, was successful in obtaining funding from a Dutch NGO. The PGP project will furnish the trainer for all seven communes in the circle, with the Dutch covering all other costs.

The PGP's annual report found that the result of these training sessions includes significantly improved tax collection procedures and the commitment of the population to pay taxes because they have confidence that their scarce resources will be well spent.

"There is greater transparency in the use of public funds, a system of checks and balances, a better utilization of public resources, and improved budget planning for public services, like schools and health centers—all essential and fundamental elements of successful decentralization," the report concluded.

Coulibaly is convinced that the training will have a lasting impact on the fiscal health of the region he monitors. "The collection agents and I will be better able to monitor tax revenues and to provide better technical assistance in financial matters to the communes," he said. ★



Sékou Coulibaly, prefect of San, explains the importance of financial management training for Mali communes.

ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST

Documentation Center Gives Voice to Victims of Genocide



A group of Buddhist nuns looks at bones and clothing at a memorial at Choeung Ek Killing Site, Phnom Penh, Feb. 26, 2006.

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia—A USAID-funded documentation center is providing critical materials to help Cambodia's new Khmer Rouge tribunal bring the perpetrators of almost 13 years of civil war to justice. Information is also provided to survivors and their families, scholars, and the public.

The Center, only one of two such efforts in the world, archives documents, photographs, and other information pertaining to the history of Democratic Kampuchea and the Khmer Rouge. It is the world's largest repository of primary materials on the Khmer Rouge.

At least 1.5 million Cambodians died from execution, forced labor, disease, or starvation during the Khmer Rouge regime from 1975 to 1979. The 1991 Paris Peace Accords mandated democratic elections and a ceasefire, but it was not until 1993 that UN-sponsored elections helped restore some semblance of normalcy under a coalition government. The remaining elements of the Khmer

Rouge surrendered in early 1999, ending almost 30 years of civil war. Today, some of the remaining leaders are awaiting trial by a United Nations and Cambodian government-sponsored tribunal for genocide and crimes against humanity. They are slated to be brought to trial in early 2007.

The Documentation Center of Cambodia, which has a \$2 million endowment from USAID, holds documents that will likely provide the bulk of the evidentiary materials used at the Khmer Rouge tribunal. The Center will receive annual earnings from the principal invested to fund its core activities and programs.

Despite the 27 years that have passed since Pol Pot, the leader of the Khmer Rouge, was ousted from power, many Cambodians do not know what happened to those who went missing. For the past decade, the Center has used cadre biographies, confessions, and other information to help several hundred Cambodians learn the fates of the disappeared.

One such missing person was Huot Sambath, who served as a parliamentarian and Cambodia's minister of foreign affairs between 1962 and 1964, and ambassador to Yugoslavia from 1970 to 1976. The Center was able to give his son 12 confessions he made before his execution at the Tuol Sleng

prison. A family friend wrote, "Thank you for providing Rami the photos, records, and translation for his father.... Rami last saw his father at age 6. It has been 30 years that Rami has been seeking answers about his father's death at Tuol Sleng."

The Center maintains four databases containing over 53,000 documents, including cadre biographies, Khmer Rouge notebooks, prisoner confessions, execution logs, and telegrams. It also contains over 3,000 interviews and 6,000 photographs of prisoners at Tuol Sleng, the main prison and torture site during the genocide, as well as digital information on almost 20,000 mass grave sites. All material is on microfilm and being digitized.

With its funding from USAID, the Center will boost its ability to collect living history through interviews. Radio programs and films will also be made, educating the public about the tribunal.

Jonathan Addleton, former USAID/Cambodia mission director, said "of all the civil society organizations supported by USAID, this organization is one that we envision will remain serving forthcoming generations 20, 50, or 100 years into the future. We sincerely hope that this endowment will help the Documentation Center obtain their vision of a permanent center." ★

EUROPE AND EURASIA

Serbia Uses Baltimore System to Reform Service

INDJIJA, Serbia and Montenegro—This small city is some 5,000 miles away from Baltimore, Md., yet both—and another Serbian town, Paraćin—use the same municipal management system.

In May 2004, a group of Serbian local government officials from the two cities visited Baltimore to learn about CitiStat, a system developed in Baltimore to identify and fix problems in local government. The system relies on the active participation of citizens, who can report concerns through various channels, and on proactive management by municipal officials, who use a comprehensive data tracking system and then develop and implement timely and effective solutions to identified problems.

The visit was sponsored by the USAID-funded Serbian Local Government Reform Project (SLGRP), which promotes effective, accountable, and transparent local government in more than 70 Serbian municipalities, including Belgrade and 12 constituent municipalities.

Serbian officials met with Baltimore Mayor Martin O'Malley, attended CitiStat public meetings, and visited local administration departments. Then they returned home to build their own systems.

In the 18 months since System 48's launch in Indjija, resident concerns reported to the Citizen Assistance call center—established in August 2004—have averaged 450 per month.

This call center uses automated routing to make it available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and generates work orders for the appropriate public enterprise or department.

Through System 48, Indjija's public officials have removed illegal waste dumps, improved electricity fee collection, reorganized city lighting, and instituted an automated public parking system. Parking collection rates have doubled, and collections have already exceeded the \$34,000 investment cost—reaching \$73,000 in the first year alone.

Indjija's mayor, Goran Jesić, said System 48 is improving local governance by enhancing services and cutting operating costs, and it has yet to reach its full potential. He said the city plans to expand the system to cover additional public enterprises and departments.

At a recent municipal Best Practices Fair, Serbian mayors voted System 48 the most innovative practice of 25 municipal presentations.

In Paraćin, an InfoStat office was set up and a fiber-optic wide-area network was installed, linking all municipal departments and public utilities to facilitate data sharing and performance monitoring. This enables the office to review and analyze department and utility performance data and report to the mayor on progress. Through InfoStat, performance standards were established for municipal departments and utilities. Each

A billboard in Serbian language prompting citizens to call their municipality for any concerns.

month, these departments are required to publicly present their progress on meeting those standards.

SLGRP is a five-year, \$30 million project that began in October 2001. Implemented by Development Alternatives Inc., the project aims to improve municipal management in

the areas of citizen participation, information technology, financial management, communal enterprise management, and public procurement. ★

DAI staff contributed this article.

Agency Funds Diverse Range of Ag Research to Boost World Harvests

To meet expanding needs for food in developing countries—where most fertile land is already under cultivation—farmers need to increase production per acre through research in centralized laboratories as well as field practices.

Much of the funding for agricultural research, especially in poor nations and in Africa, has been provided by USAID and other donors.

Global agricultural research has been effective, especially in the area of genetic resources and plant variety improvement. It also provides scientific leadership and encouragement to national programs through numerous grants and projects.

For instance, for the past 30 years, USAID has funded the most important organizational vehicle for conducting research, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), a cluster of 15 research centers around the world (see page 16 for a profile of one of the CGIAR centers).



Bean/Cowpea CRSP

Senegalese market women selling cowpeas, which are short season crops and provide fresh shell beans at a time of year before other foods are available. These cowpea varieties, developed through Bean/Cowpea CRSP research, have been widely adopted and have contributed to yield increases 2.4 times above the 20-year baseline because of their earliness; resistance to drought, insects and disease, and high yields.

Since 1978, USAID has also supported the Collaborative Research Support Programs (CRSPs), which helps U.S. universities contribute knowledge, train personnel, and provide technology to improve agriculture worldwide. CRSPs focus research on crops such as beans, cowpeas, sorghum, millet, and peanuts; livestock; pest management; aquaculture; and soil management.

The Agency also funds technical cooperation among Middle Eastern countries and the utilization of U.S. and Israeli expertise by developing countries. The Middle East Regional Cooperation also supports development in the Middle East via projects that involve direct Arab-Israeli cooperation.

The following photo essay illustrates some of the research work that USAID supports around the world. ★



Ben Barber, USAID

A researcher at a seed bank checks plant materials at CIMMYT, the international center for maize and wheat research outside Mexico City, where the Green Revolution high-yield wheat was created in the 1960s.



CGIAR

A lab technician testing soil samples. CGIAR scientists play major roles in collecting, characterizing, and conserving plant genetic resources. Eleven centers together maintain over 600,000 samples of crop, forage, and agroforestry genetic resources in the public domain.



A pig farmer in China shows off his healthy livestock. The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines has worked with China's farmers to grow more rice on less land so they could diversify into other agricultural products such as livestock.



A farmer in Zimbabwe inspects his groundnut crop. Researchers and field technicians from the Global Crop Diversity Trust visit farmer fields to observe and record the varieties that farmers are growing and to offer their technical support on ecological and socio-economic issues.

For the past 30 years, USAID has funded the most important organizational vehicle for conducting research, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), a cluster of 15 research centers around the world.



The black bean seeds shown are of a drought-tolerant line undergoing evaluation at the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), headquartered in Colombia. This particular line is of interest in Central America, where drought is a severe problem and many consumers prefer black-seeded beans.



Scientists at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) have been improving the resistance of rice to insects and diseases. Their work helps farmers raise productivity, keeping rice affordable for growing populations.



A researcher checks a cassava field for mosaic virus disease. USAID has helped to rebuild Uganda's cassava production by joining with NGOs to introduce resistant varieties.



Dr. Henry Wamwayi vaccinates cattle in Ethiopia with a recombinant rinderpest vaccine that was developed at the University of California, Davis, with USAID funding.

March 5, 2006—April 1, 2006

PROMOTED

Stephanie N. Budzina
IDI (Program/Project Development Officer)

Edna D. Bullock
Supervisory Contract Specialist

Barry Collins
IDI (Executive Officer)

Markus D. Dausses
IDI (Executive Officer)

Victor De Leon Diaz
IDI (Executive Officer)

Eduardo G. Elia
Procurement Analyst

William C. Hansen
IDI (Executive Officer)

Joseph Hirsch
IDI (Program/Project Development Officer)

Sean Huff
IDI (Program/Project Development Officer)

Velma Lee Jones
Management Analyst

Nora Lewis
Management & Program Analyst

Ian S. MacNairn
International Cooperation Specialist

Darren A. Manning
IDI (Executive Officer)

Sarah K. McKim
Contract Specialist

O V Morgan
Secretary OA

Katherine Valdez Osborne
IDI (Program Officer)

Michelle B. Sadler
Secretary Stenography

Marquita A. Wise Williams
Administrative Operations Specialist

REASSIGNED

Sabinus F. Anaele
COMP/NE/OJT to Senegal/D

Kenneth L. Barberi
COMP/FS to Dominican Republic/DIR

Jeanne M. Briggs
E&E/PO to DCHA/OTI

Arthur W. Brown
COMP/FS to DCHA/PPM

Alisa M. Cameron
COMP/NE/OJT to Malawi/JOPA

Courtney L. Chubb
Mexico to COMP/FSLT

Thomas Crubaugh
Guinea/PPD to Tanzania/D

Robert F. Cunnane
Uganda/GD to Indonesia/OD

Paul G. Ehmer
GH/SPBO/SPBD to GH/HIDN/ID

Alia El Mohandes
COMP/NE/OJT to WB/Gaza

Karla Fossand
COMP/NE/OJT to Nigeria

Kay J. Freeman
ANE/EAA to ANE/SAA

John P. Groarke
Iraq/OMD to Egypt/DIR

Aler Grubbs
COMP/NE/OJT to Egypt/DIR

Gloria Halm
AA/E&E to AA/GH

Edith I. Houston
Africa/SA to Ecuador/GD

Jed D. Meline
ANE/TS to COMP/DETAIL/SUP

Sean J. Osner
COMP/NE/OJT to Iraq/PSO

Randall G. Peterson
Honduras/ANRO to Honduras/D

Suzanne M. Poland
COMP/NE/OJT to Mozambique/AFR

Suraj Prasannakumar
M/OAA/DCHA to M/OAA/EGAT

Vann D. Rolfson
M/OAA/GH to M/OAA/EGAT

Michael A. Ronning
COMP/NE/OJT to WB/Gaza

Donna Rosa
OIG to OIG/AIG/MCC

Lawrence Rubey
Malawi/AFS to El Salvador/SO1

Daniel Sanchez
COMP/NE/OJT to El Salvador/SO3

Joel B. Sandefur
COMP/NE/OJT to Ghana/OD

Stephan Solat
COMP/NE/OJT to Ukraine/OHST

Francisco R. Somarriba
COMP/NE/OJT to Egypt/FM

Kevin J. Sturr
COMP/NE/OJT to Senegal/D

Jene Clark Thomas
USAID Mexico to Afghanistan/PFNP

John R. Thomas
EGAT/AG/ARPG to EGAT/AG

Sara R. Walter
USAID Mexico to USAID RDM/Asia

Pamela Wyville Staples
COMP/LWOP to EGAT/WID

Jessica H. Zaman
COMP/NE/OJT to Mozambique/DI

RETIRED

Justine B. Baylor

Matthew Bradley

Patrick L. Brown

Mary E. Buchanan

Richard M. Cornelius

Patrick Chilion Fine

Judith W. Gilmore

David W. Hess

Thomas J. Marchione

Mary Ann Riegelman

Frederick Rudolph Vigil

Ellen Ruth Wills

MOVED ON

Paul L. Booze

Zina M. Fatemi

Philip M. Gary

Mary E. Lew

Todd K. Lofgren

Timothy Reuter

Correction to April *FrontLines*:

In the April *FrontLines*, the photo accompanying Indonesian "Children to Get Sesame Street in 2007" pictured the following individuals in addition to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice: left to right, Ambassador B. Lynn Pascoe, translator Jerry Fisher, and USAID/Indonesia Mission Director William M. Frej.

Retiring Food Expert Receives Bolivian Award

LA PAZ, Bolivia—Frederick Rudolph "Rudy" Vigil, who retired after 23 years with USAID, received an award from the Bolivian government for his efforts to provide food to vulnerable Bolivians.

Vigil retired as team leader from the Office of Food for Peace (FFP). He was presented a medal by the Secretary of the Department of La Paz, Bolivia during a Jan. 20 ceremony at the office of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, one of four USAID partners working in Bolivia.

"Rudy is a very dedicated and well-respected employee among his peers and the beneficiaries of La Paz," said USAID/Bolivia foreign service officer Alan Hurdus. He "is recognized for his leadership and service to the communities of La Paz."

Vigil worked at missions in Africa and Asia as well as the Bureau for Asia and the Near East. He then joined the FFP office and spent more than 10 years working in Latin America.

In Peru, he was presented with another award by the local community in

recognition of the valuable contribution the Title II programs made to poor communities.

"Rudy is a true professional with a heart of gold that keeps on giving. The fact that many Latin Americans have graduated from FFP programs is a testament to his tireless efforts" said P.E. Balakrishnan, FFP development program director. ★



Frederick Rudolph "Rudy" Vigil, after accepting a service medal from the Secretary of the Department of La Paz recognizing his contribution to Title II communities in Bolivia.

Richard Charles McClure, 68, died March 23 in Altamonte Springs, Fla. Born in Rockford, Ill., McClure served in the U.S. Navy during Vietnam. He then joined USAID, and over 24 years held positions as controller in Thailand, Pakistan, Liberia, Indonesia, and Ecuador. He retired in 1994 and moved to Central Florida.

Mary Ann Micka, 65, died on April 8 in Arlington, Va. Micka came to USAID from the Peace Corps and served as a health officer in Senegal,

Sudan, and Romania. She also held positions in Washington with the bureaus for Africa and Europe and Eurasia. Her accomplishments included pioneering programs in Romania to provide orphaned children and vulnerable families with community-based services, and getting children out of oppressive institutions and into supportive families. Micka retired in 2003; she is remembered for her dedication and encyclopedic mind. ★

Comments, corrections, submissions, and suggestions for *FrontLines* are welcomed and should be sent by email to frontlines@usaid.gov; by mail to USAID, Ronald Reagan Building, Suite 6.10-020, Washington, D.C. 20523-6100; or by fax to 202-216-3035.

Notes from Tobias

▲ FROM PAGE 3

this reorganization will ensure that our foreign assistance budget reflects that alignment.

In the end, as Americans, we cannot turn our backs on the millions of children who succumb to starvation and disease each day. We cannot turn our backs on citizens who toil under oppressive poverty, seeking to feed their families in a daily struggle for survival. We must better engage developing nations in order to get at the root causes of terrorism.

This is already happening. In Afghanistan, for example, where USAID's programs are making steady—and in some cases dramatic—improvements in healthcare, civil society, education, and the building of democratic institutions. I am looking forward to drawing on some of USAID's

best practices as we work together to replicate these kinds of successes in other countries.

To be sure, USAID will always stand committed to feeding the world's hungry and relieving suffering in regions of the world that face disaster. As the reactions to the 2004 tsunami in South Asia and last year's earthquake in Pakistan demonstrate, this agency can be an efficient, compassionate, and effective responder to humanitarian emergencies. USAID must continue to play a leading role in such efforts.

The men and women of USAID have been empowered to play a vital role on behalf of the people of the United States, not only to alleviate poverty and suffering, but to assist citizens of the global community to realize a hopeful, prosperous, and peaceful future. I am proud to serve alongside you. ★

Sudan Mission Reopens

▲ FROM PAGE 1

government has called “genocide.”

In January 2005, the Sudanese government and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement signed a peace agreement officially ending Africa’s longest civil war, which over more than two decades killed 2 million people and displaced 4 million. An interim constitution authorized a new, semi-autonomous government of Southern Sudan to hold a referendum in 2011 on whether

the South should remain a part of Sudan or become an independent country.

Today, displaced Southern Sudanese are beginning to return to their homes and rebuild their communities, and USAID is supporting various programs to ease that process. Here the Agency provides humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to war-affected communities—helping displaced people, providing basic services and food, and improving food security through

agriculture and economic development.

In Darfur, the Agency has provided extensive food and other humanitarian aid and worked to ensure humanitarian access in unstable areas, spending \$476 million last year. It has also supported political negotiations aimed at ending violence, and is preparing for eventual reconstruction.

In eastern Sudan, where malnutrition and maternal mortality rates are among the highest in the country, USAID provides food directly and as payment on work projects. It also provides food to 80,000 women, children, and the elderly in camps around Khartoum.

The reopening of the Sudan mission takes place 14 years after U.S. sanctions halted development aid to the country. Since then, USAID has aided largely through emergency response to conflicts, droughts, and floods by providing food, medicine, water,

seeds, tools, and logistical support. The program was managed from Washington and Kenya. A small humanitarian staff worked in Khartoum.

To head the Sudan mission, Almquist leaves behind the job of deputy assistant administrator for the Africa bureau, where she was responsible for the offices of East African Affairs, Sudan Programs, and Development Planning.

Almquist will continue to be the U.S. representative to Sudan’s Assessment and Evaluation Commission, the international commission mandated to oversee implementation of last

year’s peace agreement.

Before Almquist joined USAID in 2001, she was chief of staff for both the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority and the Executive Office for Administration and Finance of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. From 1992 to 1999, she worked for World Vision. ★

The reopening of the Sudan mission takes place 14 years after U.S. sanctions halted development aid to the country. Since then, USAID has aided largely through emergency response to conflicts, droughts, and floods by providing food, medicine, water, seeds, tools, and logistical support.

U.S. Drug Chief Sees Progress Against Poppy in Afghanistan

BY PHILLIP KURATA
Washington File Staff Writer

Afghan authorities are succeeding in reducing opium poppy cultivation, according to the director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, John Walters.

Briefing reporters in Washington April 10 after a visit to Afghanistan the previous week, Walters said that he saw “enormous progress” in Afghanistan’s effort to eradicate opium poppy production since 2004 when he made his first visit to the country.

The most impressive progress occurred in the eastern province of Nangahar, traditionally one of the prime poppy growing areas of the country, he said. In 2005, the area under poppy cultivation dropped by nearly 50 percent nationwide, but the figure for Nangahar province was a decline of 90 percent, he said.

The United States estimates that 207,600 hectares were under opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan in 2004, and the figure dropped to 107,000 hectares in 2005, according to one of Walters’ aides. The amount of opium produced did not show a corresponding steep drop, however: 4,950 metric tons in 2004 and 4,475 metric tons in 2005, according to the Walters’ aide.

The United Nations reports that 2.3 million people, 10 percent of the Afghan population, were involved in opium cultivation in 2004; in the following year, the number of opium cultivators fell to 2 million, or 8.7 percent of the population.

To mitigate the hardships caused by eradication of poppy plants, USAID has been working with farmers in the region through alternative livelihood projects. Cash-for-work programs provide immediate income for families who suddenly find themselves deprived of income from poppy cultivation.

One major project is the Marja irrigation drain cleaning in central Helmand, which is aimed at improving agricultural productivity. This project has resulted in 47,000 hectares of farmland receiving increased access to water.

Walters said that the Afghan government, supported by its allies, has no

illusions that it can substitute opium poppy with an equally valuable crop.

“That’s not what we’re doing as a combined effort in Afghanistan. We’re really doing rural development. We’re bringing roads, electricity, micro-credit. We’re trying to give people who have been chained to the land in a variety of ways, including by poppy cultivation, a future,” he said.

Walters said that the opium trade remains the last large threat to Afghanistan, after the Taliban and al-Qaida have been driven from power and the warlords largely have been disarmed.

The Afghan government in March launched an aggressive campaign in southern Helmand province, which was the heart of the Taliban power in the 1990s, to eradicate poppy cultivation after an unsuccessful attempt at eradication in 2005.

A new governor of Helmand, appointed by Afghan President Hamid Karzai, has taken the lead in dispatching local and provincial teams of eradicators, armed with tractors, to destroy poppy fields while Afghan army units protect the eradicators from the Taliban.

Walters said the entrenched interests in the poppy trade are higher up, and the Karzai government has established a national court to investigate, prosecute, and try people suspected of involvement in the drug trade, which, according to United Nations estimates, accounted for more than 50 percent of Afghanistan’s gross domestic product in 2005.

This court has special accommodations to assure the security of investigators, prosecutors, and judges as they pursue traffickers, Walters said. The personnel involved in this operation are being trained by experts from Norway, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy, he said. ★

Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.

USAID staff contributed to this report.

Please see related article on page 1 of the April FrontLines.

Public Must Understand Aid, Tobias Tells InterAction

Administrator Randall Tobias recently addressed the annual meeting of InterAction, where he called on leaders of hundreds of nonprofit organizations that carry out much of USAID’s development and relief projects to help tell the American people about the foreign aid program’s benefits to people around the world.

“I’m not sure people know about foreign aid—we need to tell the story of why it is in their best interest,” Tobias said. “We need more broadly based public understanding.”



Administrator Randall Tobias

Asked about the consequences of closer State-USAID ties since he was appointed both head of USAID and director of foreign assistance at State, Tobias said he had learned while head of the U.S. AIDS program that “good people leave their uniform at the door” and pitch together regardless of which agency they work under.

However, he noted to the chiefs of major nongovernmental groups such as CARE, Save the Children, and Catholic Relief Services that “USAID is the crown jewel of our efforts in addressing these issues” of international development and relief.

He also said that with his dual-hatted position as Director of U.S. foreign assistance and Administrator of USAID, “I have a seat at the table.”

Foreign aid is now “at the absolute center of what the U.S. government is trying to do,” he said.

He cautioned that there is a need for a clear strategy so that “what we spend” matches “what we think it ought to be.”

“I’ll ask what it is we want to get done in each country where we give foreign assistance,” he said.

“Foreign assistance is now an issue of common concern across the U.S. government, the goal of which is to help create a world of democratic, well-governed states that can meet the needs of their citizens and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system,” he told the InterAction meeting at the L’Enfant Plaza Hotel April 10. ★

Leaders of Indonesia's Largest Muslim NGO Visit USAID

The leaders of Indonesia's Muhammadiyah—the world's largest moderate Muslim social group with 28 million members—came to Washington in April to celebrate more than three decades of working together with USAID on projects that range from health-care to tsunami relief.

The group runs more than 500 health facilities and 17,000 schools and universities.

When the tsunami hit Aceh Province in Western Sumatra, it was Muhammadiyah that quickly organized young men and women into cleanup teams who hauled away tons of mud and other debris from schools and public buildings.

Team members wore blue T-shirts bearing the name Muhammadiyah and the logo of USAID, which paid for the work.

Leaders of Muhammadiyah and its autonomous sister organization Asiyiyah met with officials of USAID and the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University, groups with which Muhammadiyah and Asiyiyah (M/A) have worked in the past.

USAID's work with M/A started 30 years ago with healthcare. Agency staffers credit Muhammadiyah with laying a strong foundation on which to build family planning in Indonesia, and the efforts are now considered among the most successful in the developing



Muhammadiyah staff help clean up a school in Banda Aceh following the December 2004 tsunami.

world. USAID is graduating family planning assistance to Indonesia in September 2006, and the mission there credits in large Muhammadiyah's grassroots efforts for the success of the program. M/A continues to work closely with USAID in other health programs, including maternal and child health services, infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, and general quality-of-care issues.

USAID and Muhammadiyah started democracy and governance work together about 20 years ago, and the group is now promoting democratic reform in Indonesia, including organizing election and voter education campaigns that led to the country's first democratically elected president in 2004. Current projects with USAID include education and economic development.

"These are only stepping stones," said Dr. Sudibyo Markus, the chairman of Muhammadiyah. "Our objective is a civil society."

Mark Ward, deputy administrator in the Bureau for Asia and the Near East, added that "Muhammadiyah is the best evidence I have seen in a long time of the extraordinary value of using indigenous organizations to carry out our work."

"A grant to Muhammadiyah makes our more-and-more constrained program dollars go so much further because they know what works and doesn't work at the local level in Indonesia, and they know how to mobilize the most effective change agents of all—the Imams," he said.

The group's most recent high-profile work was in the aftermath of the tsunami. M/A was in Aceh within 24 hours of the natural disaster with 10 medical teams and 2,000 volunteers. The group received USAID funding to provide immediate health services to survivors and to follow up with recovering projects, such as cash-for-work programs, building reconstruction, and assistance to small businesses.



Muhammadiyah midwife provides quality reproductive health counseling to a client using a USAID/World Health Organization flipchart.

The tsunami also gave M/A an opening to bring conflict resolution to Aceh, where fighting between the Free Aceh Movement and the Indonesian government had been going on since 1976. The two sides called a cease fire after the tsunami.

In the tsunami, 235,000 died or were declared missing in Aceh, making it the hardest hit area of the natural disaster.

M/A's work in Aceh raised the group profile, said Dr. Markus, but also gave them an opportunity to spread their civil society message into the contentious region. Muhammadiyah is also doing this formally, instituting civic education in its universities and high schools. The M/A delegation said they'd like to spread those lessons to elementary schools as well.

Building a civil society and instituting democratic reforms requires building "social cohesiveness" from the bottom up, Dr. Markus said. "If we set up the building, we must set up a strong foundation, strong pillars," he added.

He said he is cautious but optimistic about the prospects for democracy to take hold in his country, home to the world's largest Muslim population. One spark, he said, could set off tense situations in some regions.

M/A are also facing internal challenges as their missions expand. "In so many ways, the issues are developing more quickly than we can cope [with]," he said.

He said he'd like to bring M/A's organization development up to speed with its humanitarian and development activities by, for example, boosting branding and improving their use of technology. USAID is likely to assist with this. In certain operational aspects of their work, he joked, "we're still living in the stone age."

The visiting group also included Dr. Atikah M. Zaki, who heads the Central Board of Asiyiyah; Dr. Daricha Yasin, a health advisor to Asiyiyah's board; and Dr. Moetmainnah Prihadi, vice president of health and community welfare for Muhammadiyah. ★

Agency-Sponsored Volunteers Assist Response to Avian Flu Threat

USAID's Farmer-to-Farmer (FtF) program has dispatched the first American agricultural professional to help fight avian influenza (AI) in developing countries.

Elizabeth Krushinskie, an adjunct assistant professor at Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine and vice president for Food Safety and Production Programs at the U.S. Poultry and Egg Association, went to Armenia last November 2005 to perform a threat assessment.

As a volunteer, she joined highly skilled and paid scientists, doctors, government leaders, and humanitarian workers who have for months been working on containing AI as it rushes across Asia, Africa, and now Europe.



Elizabeth Krushinskie is the Farmer-to-Farmer program's first volunteer to use her expertise against avian influenza.

"Dr. Krushinskie's experience as the first USAID-funded AI expert to work in the field has really helped us define what we need to do in response to avian influenza," said Jim Yazman, a livestock specialist and member of USAID's Avian Influenza Working Group. "She has been instrumental in pointing out that avian vaccination programs might do more

harm than good since they would hide the symptoms, not eliminate the disease."

Krushinskie helped conduct a rapid assessment of Armenia's agricultural procedures and the country's preparedness for detecting, diagnosing, and containing AI. She also helped train staff at the Ministry of Agriculture in laboratory diagnosis and testing protocols.

In addition, she helped procure sample collection equipment and supplies and personal protective equipment. She helped develop training and educational materials, and she delivered educational presentations to the agriculture ministry's staff.

"My experiences working in several former Soviet Union countries with the Farmer-to-Farmer program has been

both rewarding and heartbreaking," said Krushinskie, who also worked in Ukraine. "I had no idea what terrible economic conditions the people in these countries have been facing since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, especially as it relates to agriculture and food production."

"Helping people improve the safety and availability of poultry meat has been some of the most satisfying and compelling work I have ever done," she added.

FtF is one of several programs USAID manages worldwide to stem the spread of avian flu. ★

For updates about these efforts, go to www.usaid.gov.

Malawi Aid Team Awarded for Video Teaching Cotton Production

LILONGWE, Malawi—The USAID mission here was recognized with two awards last year for creating “distinctive and ingenious work” using digital video to promote development.

As the Oscars honor motion pictures, the Telly Awards honor excellence in local, regional, and cable television commercials in more than 200 categories. USAID/Malawi was awarded two Tellys for its training DVDs, *Jacto Blue* and *Introduction to Agricultural Chemical Safety*. The first, produced in the national language of Chichewa, shows farmers how to assemble, use, and maintain a commonly used

backpack sprayer. The second, produced in both Chichewa and English, shows a day in the life of a man who surmounts the real-life challenges Malawi farmers face with the safe use and distribution of agricultural chemicals.

The USAID project “is using modern technology to bring agriculture messages to rural farming communities throughout Malawi in innovative ways,” said Richard

Kimball, a private sector growth advisor with the Malawi mission. “They use local languages and the local tradition of storytelling to educate and empower communities at the grassroots level.”

More than 20,000 people have seen the two films, which have been screened at cotton companies during farmer training sessions. The films are presented in rural areas using a rural projection kit powered by a car battery that drives a small DVD player, digital light projector, and set of speakers.

One viewer the films helped was Wema Sikisi, a 10th-grade student who last year also became a cotton farmer. The first born in a family of six, Sikisi began farming last year because her mother could no longer cover her school fees—roughly \$45 per year.

“I learned that it is extremely important to wear protective clothing while spraying,” she said, after seeing the *Introduction to Agricultural Chemical Safety* film in November. She immediately applied to her field what she learned from the film. Her

two three-quarter acre plots are now a contrast between traditional and more modern cultivation methods, just as she saw depicted in the film.

Sikisi’s willingness to innovate caught the eye of one of the ginning company’s extension agents, who selected her fields as demonstration plots. Over 30 farmers have visited her plots to see the differences between planting the new and old way. Sikisi is now one of the characters in *In High Cotton*, a new video that USAID/Malawi is hoping will win a Telly in the next round of awards.

Over 10,000 entries were received for last year’s award from all around the world. Entries are judged against standards established by top professional advertising and production professionals. ★

The USAID project is using modern technology to bring agriculture messages to rural farming communities throughout Malawi in innovative ways.



USAID/Malawi was recognized with two high achievement awards in the television commercial industry for DVDs it produced teaching cotton farmers how to improve production.

Starbucks Brings Top-Priced Rwandan Coffee to Eager U.S. Customers

BY JIM FISHER-THOMPSON
Washington File Staff Writer

Millions of coffee drinkers worldwide and thousands of farmers in Rwanda have been

made happy, thanks to a partnership with USAID that led giant U.S. coffee retailer Starbucks to market the brand “Rwandan Blue Bourbon” in 5,000 of its shops.

Executives from the Starbucks

Company—whose 100,000 employees host 40 million customers a week in 10,800 outlets worldwide—joined USAID officials at the Rwandan Embassy in Washington on April 11 for a celebratory tasting of the latest Starbucks “Black Apron Exclusive” specialty coffee from Rwanda.

The coffee arrangement with Starbucks, for which sales began in March, is a result of USAID working with Rwandan coffee farmers to upgrade their planting and processing infrastructure.

Jacqueline Schafer, USAID assistant administrator for the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade, told the gathering, “We have spent \$10 million in the past five years to promote and develop the Rwandan coffee industry.”

“I am particularly pleased because this market-oriented partnership has improved the livelihoods of 40,000 [Rwandan] farmers by enabling them to sell a high-value crop,” she added.

As part of its five-year project, USAID helped Rwandan farmers build and renovate coffee-washing stations, trained them in “cupping and tasting” techniques, organized cooperatives, furnished financing opportunities, and introduced them to U.S. coffee retailers like Starbucks. (See related article in April 2006 FrontLines.)

Alfredo Nuno, a green-coffee trader [purchaser] for Starbucks, told the embassy

gathering that Rwandan Blue Bourbon is a “superior” product that naturally belongs with nine others in the company’s Black Apron Exclusive category of premium coffees.

Referring to the ethnic strife that led to the deaths of 800,000 Rwandans 12 years ago, Nuno said: “We look at the future of Rwanda and see that it is bright. We are committed to working with Rwandan producers ... to establish a long-term relationship” and expand their production into the international market.

Rwandan Ambassador Zac Nsenga also touched on the 1994 tragedy in his country, saying: “This morning’s celebration is timely. It is happening at a time when we are in our 12th genocide commemoration. Therefore, we are not only celebrating a success story of a meaningful cooperation ... but also the dividends of reconciliation and stability in Rwanda.”

The government of Rwanda is “determined to create a conducive business environment for this relationship to flourish” and to continue a development strategy emphasizing public-private sector partnerships, he added. ★



Jacqueline Schafer, USAID assistant administrator for the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade; Rwandan Ambassador Zac Nsenga; and Alfredo Nuno, a purchaser for Starbucks, toast the success of Rwandan specialty coffee at a ceremony April 11.

Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.

FrontLines is published by the U.S. Agency for International Development, through the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs.

J. Edward Fox, Assistant Administrator for Legislative and Public Affairs

Jeffrey Grieco, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Public Affairs

Steve Tupper, Chief of Publications

FRONTLINES EDITORIAL BOARD

Ben Barber Editorial Director

Kristina Stefanova Acting Deputy Managing Editor

Angela Rucker Writer-Editor

Claire McIntyre Production Editor

Rebecca Gustafson Online Editor

Pat Adams Photo Librarian

Mary Jane Cotter Human Resources Coordinator and Employee Liaison

Contributing writers, editors, and staff include

Rick Marshall, John Waggoner

FrontLines correspondents and reporters include

AFGE—Lawrence Williams; **AFR**—Christine Chumbler, Ranta Russell; **AFSA**—William Carter; **ANE**—Lori Severens; **DCHA**—Jenny Marion; **EGAT**—Dana West; **E&E**—Sarah Berry, Brock Bierman; **EOP**—Gloria Blackwell; **GC**—Stephen Kaplitt; **GDA**—Daniel Harter; **GH**—Chris Thomas; **IG**—Donna Rosa; **LAC**—Keenan Howell; **LPA**—Barbara Bennett; **PPC**—Joseph Duggan; **SEC**—Randy Streufert, Valrie Gallion.

Readers are encouraged to send in stories, feature articles, photos, nominations for “First Person” or “Mission of the Month” columns, and other ideas.

Letters to the editor, opinion pieces, obituaries, and requests to be added to the mailing list should be submitted by email to frontlines@usaid.gov; by fax to 202-216-3035, and by mail to Editor, *FrontLines*, USAID, Ronald Reagan Building, Suite 6.10, Washington, D.C. 20523-6100; tel. 202-712-4330.

Production assistance for *FrontLines* is provided by IBI—International Business Initiatives, Arlington, Va.

Afghan PRTs a Success, Says U.S. Military

▲ FROM PAGE 1

other assistance despite threats from hostile groups.

“The PRTs are one of the most innovative techniques and help us be effective in countering insurgency and providing development—the two roles fit hand in hand,” said Barno, now director of the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies at NDU.

PRTs generally consist of about 100 well-armed troops supported by helicopters from nearby bases. The civilian side typically includes one official from USAID and one each from the State and Agriculture departments. There is also an Afghan Interior Ministry officer.

Up until now, civilian and military officials sent to staff the PRTs have gone there without formal training in the new system. But on April 10–14, USAID and other officials who have served in the PRTs conducted a training session for about 20 new appointees heading out to staff the Afghan teams.

Among the topics taught were Afghan politics and culture, carrying out programs in Afghanistan, dealing with NGOs, principles of counter-insurgency, conflict and stability, and local Afghan structures and systems.

John Schweiger, deputy field program manager for PRT logistics and personnel, helped arrange the training course and taught several sessions, as did Philip Gary, chief of staff for the Kabul USAID mission.

Barno commanded over 20,000 U.S. and other troops in Combined Forces Command Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom and oversaw the PRTs during that time.

PRTs helped the fight against Osama bin Laden, Mullah Omar, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and their terrorist networks,

Barno told a meeting at USAID headquarters in December.

The PRTs also helped fight “against those internal forces that were always struggling to pull Afghanistan apart—that went back thousands of years—narcotics, corruption, crime, poverty, lack of education, lack of medical care,” Barno said.

“All those internal things, capped off by warlords and their militias, were constantly pulling at the fabric of the country to make it not be an effective whole.

“We saw extending the reach of the central government as being a critical node there. And the PRTs played perhaps the most central component of that part of our strategy.”

He called it part of “a war for the minds of the people of Afghanistan.”

The Afghan people were tired of more than 20 years of constant war and “broadly were very supportive of that international aid that was coming in there,” he said.

His goal was to use the presence of 20,000 troops for more than carrying guns: “it’s a lot of movement capacity, it’s a lot of ability to get around and talk to people,” he said.

“We could impact a lot of things across the country. And the PRTs are a key way we did that.”

When he arrived in Afghanistan in 2003, three of the four PRTs in the country at the time were in the north. But most of the insecurity from Taliban and Al Qaida supporters was in the south.

“So we made a major effort over the winter of ‘03–04 to push out, and get ready to push out, lots of PRTs into that zone of conflict to help seed that area with these islands or these pools of growing security and influence,” he said.

“That was a big success. So by the summer

of ‘04, we had upwards of 15 PRTs almost all across the southern half of the country going into the elections in the fall. It had a dramatic impact on our ability to reach out and touch different areas of the country to help extend the reach of the central government and to help establish those pools of security that rippled out around them in many different directions.”

Today there are 23 PRTs with about two thirds of them American and the rest run by German, Canadian, Czech, British, New Zealand, Spanish, Italian, Baltic and other troops.

The PRT mission is to extend the reach of the democratically elected central government of Afghanistan, Barno said. In fact, the PRTs were important in enabling elections to take place.

The teams provided support to local governments, driving out to meet with local officials and provide them with new or refurbished local government buildings, schools, clinics, paved roads, generators, fans, medicine, irrigation canals, women’s centers, and other aid.

Barno said that the PRT “encouraged other people to have confidence in the growth of the international community operating in their province.”

“The USAID reps had a tremendous role in different parts of the country,” Barno added.

“Wherever we had USAID reps, we were very much nested into what was going on, centrally directed from Kabul for the overall development plan on the country. It gave us the windows and the eyes into the broad national priority programs, which was the Afghan program to develop aid and to develop reconstruction of their own country.” ★

New Road Bypasses Dangerous Ferry in Indonesia

LAMNO, Aceh—The line to board the Lambeso River ferry is crowded, and the four-car limit makes a long wait under the Acehnese sun almost a certainty. Adul Puteh, a merchant transporting goods from a traditional market in the north to his store in Calang, stands in the shade. Patiently,

he passes time talking with other drivers and smoking kretek, the pungent Indonesian clove cigarette.

“We have no choice,” says Pak Adul. “The ferry is dangerous, but without transporting my goods, I cannot feed my family.”

Pak Adul’s problem is about to be solved. In mid-April, a temporary bypass for the national road will be officially opened and the Lambeso River ferry rendered obsolete.

The bypass is part of USAID’s \$245 million plan to rebuild roads and bridges in the Western Sumatra province of Aceh, where more than 200,000 died in the December 2004 tsunami.

The usual wait of one to four hours will be shortened to a 20-minute journey; most important, the simple journey across the Lambeso will again be safe.

The tsunami that hit Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, India, the Maldives, and Somalia ripped through Aceh and destroyed much of the region’s infrastructure. Many bridges were swept away along the 240 kilometer road from the provincial capital Banda Aceh to the trading hub of Meulaboh.

The loss of the Lambeso River Bridge interrupted commerce up and down the coast. To close this gap, a makeshift ferry to cross the Lambeso was established.

The small, floating wooden barge is made of planks, many rotting from exposure, that were tied, nailed, and wedged together to form an improvised deck. The structure creaks under the weight of trucks, cars, and people.

Men dangle from the side, and women carrying babies hang on for their lives, as the barge makes its journey from bank to bank. Fear of capsizing is on everyone’s mind. A truck has already fallen off.

Teuku Umar, a local vendor, contemplates the crossing while adjusting his intricately woven green, black, and gold topi, the traditional head cover worn by men in Aceh. He said: “Inshallah [God willing], the ferry will safely arrive. Catastrophe is not in our hands, but finding a better way to cross is.”

USAID/Indonesia Mission Director William M. Frej said, “Reconstruction of the Banda Aceh to Meulaboh Road is progressing. This is a small, but important step forward. The road to Meulaboh is long, and the challenges are many, but the U.S. project will be completed in the anticipated three-year reconstruction period.” ★



Indonesians anxiously cross the river on an old ferry. Ferries were not used often, as people took a nearby road. But for the past year, the road was closed because of damage it suffered during the tsunami. USAID has now helped repair and reopen it.

Jeff Borda with USAID/Indonesia contributed to this story.

New Global Epidemic Threatens World Harvests

▲ FROM PAGE 1

The highly virulent new race of stem rust known as Ug99 first appeared in Uganda in 1999, and it is “a serious and imminent threat to world wheat and barley production,” according to a research study by the North American Millers Association and U.S. wheat and barley producers. “It is only a matter of time before it reaches the U.S.”

Long-lived spores of the rust are spread by winds and carried on the clothing of people traveling between countries. Kenya and Ethiopia are already infected with the disease, which should take about a decade to spread from the Horn of Africa to Yemen, Egypt, Turkey, Pakistan, and India.

“It’s almost inevitable it will follow this track,” said Dr. John Dobbs, director of research at CIMMYT, the USAID-supported international wheat and maize research center outside Mexico City, where Borlaug launched the Green Revolution. “Almost 100 percent [of the wheat seeds in Asia] are susceptible to rust,” said Dobbs.

Chemical treatments can contain or destroy

The highly virulent new race of stem rust is “a serious and imminent threat to world wheat and barley production.”



Researchers at CIMMYT, the international wheat and maize research center outside Mexico City, sort through plant seeds.



A highly virulent new race of stem rust known as Ug99 first appeared in Africa in 1999 and has become “a serious and imminent threat to world wheat and barley production,” according to a research study by the North American Millers Association and U.S. wheat and barley producers.

some wheat rust outbreaks in developed countries, or among commercial farmers in developing countries, but are prohibitively expensive for poor farmers, experts at the symposium said.

The main strategy to fight the disease is to breed rust resistance into new varieties of seed. However, it can take years to develop these new varieties, and farmers in developing countries may be unwilling to switch from their current seeds.

Wheat breeding and testing centers have been set up in Ethiopia and Kenya, which

Kenya and Ethiopia are already infected with the disease, which should take about a decade to spread from the Horn of Africa to Yemen, Egypt, Turkey, Pakistan, and India.

are already infected. U.S. and other wheat farmers and researchers are sending seeds there to be tested in hope of finding resistance to the new virus.

A Global Rust Initiative, which USAID supports, has been started to combat stem rust (see www.globalrust.org).

“There is no time to lose—the virus has not moved out of East Africa yet,” said Matt MacMahon of the World Bank.

He recalled a barley rust epidemic in the 1970s that spread around Bogota, starting near the airport, likely carried in by travelers.

It eradicated all the barley in the Andes as far as Bolivia, driving thousands of families into urban slums.

Borlaug recalled an earlier attack by a rust virus in the 1950s in the American great plains that killed up to 100 percent of crops, especially those receiving abundant irrigation and fertilizer.

Now more than 90 years old, the U.S. scientist and Nobel laureate still works on plant breeding.

CIMMYT, which is working with the research centers in Ethiopia and Kenya to

breed rust resistance into wheat seeds, is one of 15 research centers belonging to

Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). CGIAR operates with about \$450 million donated by 63 members, including the United States, other countries, international organizations, the private sector, and foundations such as the Rockefeller Foundation.

USAID gave about \$50 million to CGIAR in the past year. ★

A Global Rust Initiative, which USAID supports, has been started to combat stem rust (see www.globalrust.org)

U.S. Hiked Aid 39 Percent in 2005

▲ FROM PAGE 1

in Iraq and Afghanistan, and disaster assistance to Pakistan, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and other countries. For sub-Saharan Africa, U.S. aid rose by 17 percent to \$4.1 billion.

The largest foreign aid donor last year was the United States, followed by Japan, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. Japan’s net development aid rose to \$13 billion.

The ODA report was released at the High Level Meeting of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Development

Assistance Committee, held in Paris in early April, attended by USAID Acting Administrator Frederick Schieck and Millennium Challenge Corporation CEO John Danilovich.

Topics discussed at the meeting included scaling up of aid and greater aid effectiveness based on developing country performance; the political imperatives and risks of engaging effectively with fragile states; and promoting growth, private sector, agriculture, and infrastructure as part of effective strategies to reduce poverty. ★

USAID Funds Agriculture Think Tank to Fight Hunger

When farmers in Africa or aid groups in the West look for ways to meet the food requirements of growing populations, they often turn to a small research group based in Washington called IFPRI—the International Food Policy Research Institute.

The center is one of the 15 branches of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)—most of which are primarily biological research stations with fields and laboratories for breeding improved crop varieties, developing better production practices, and conserving soil, water, and biodiversity resources.

Washington-based IFPRI is partly funded by USAID through the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade, the Africa bureau, and other offices.

The center's strength is its focus on policy and strategy, said Peter Hazell, former director of IFPRI's Development Strategy and Governance Division, who is now a professor at Imperial College London.

"We're the guys who go to African leaders and show them the options—we do a lot of workshops and training," he said. "We're the food policy guys."

In Ethiopia, for instance, IFPRI works with the government to strengthen market reform processes, Hazell added.

Unfortunately, when Ethiopia ended its experiment with socialism a few years ago, it got rid of government agricultural organizations that distributed seed and fertilizer and purchased crops—but it did not initially replace them with anything, Hazell said. This led to "disaster," he said.

The World Bank and International Monetary Fund pushed for reliance on markets rather than government agencies running agriculture programs. But IFPRI is doing research on what a "managed transition" from central planning to a market economy would look like, he said.

"In most African countries, the small farmer now has less access to fertilizer and

The center is one of the 15 branches of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)—most of which are primarily biological research stations with fields and laboratories for breeding improved crop varieties, developing better production practices, and conserving soil, water, and biodiversity resources.



Philippe Berry, IFPRI

For three decades, IFPRI has studied ways to meet the world's food needs in a sustainable manner.

improved seed, less credit, and less market access because the parastatals [government agencies] were dissolved," Hazell said.

In its rush to push production of exportable crops, Africa should not neglect staples such as grains and cassava, he added.

"We need a road map" for proper agricultural development, which would include "traders, banking, storage, and suppliers of

seed and fertilizer," he said.

In many countries, "no one is doing" this kind of agricultural reform, Hazell said. As a result, when there's a bumper crop of corn one year, prices crash. The next year, farmers don't plant corn.

"That's what happened in Ethiopia," he said.

IFPRI also identified the need for roads

to allow farmers to obtain cheap fertilizer and seed and to market their crops. It is also working on separate strategies to assist farmers living along roads and those away from roads.

IFPRI's budget rose from \$26 million on 2003 to \$34 million in 2004. Funding comes from many countries and international organizations. ★



Ruth Meinzen-Dick, IFPRI



Richard Adams, IFPRI

The majority of the world's hungry people depend heavily on agriculture for their food and livelihoods.

IFPRI works closely with developing countries to support the sound management of natural resources.