



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

FRONTLINES

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A Brazilian fishing community is using digital technology to increase profits and safety.



Indigenous fishermen are using computers to conduct business in Bahia, Brazil. See page 13.

Photo by Alex Araujo, USAID

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President Barack Obama, left, walks with Administrator Rajiv Shah through the Agriculture and Food Security Expo in Mumbai, India. Confederation of Indian Industries President Hari Bhartia, U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, and U.S. Ambassador Timothy Roemer were also in attendance.

Photo by Hope Bryer, USAID

U.S., India Partner for Evergreen Revolution

By Hope Bryer

MUMBAI, India—After nearly 60 years of U.S. assistance to India, the two nations are taking development cooperation to new levels. This was one of the core messages President Barack Obama took to his first official state visit to India earlier this month, where he was accompanied by USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah.

Over the course of three days, Obama sought to bring the benefits of expanded collaboration—in areas from education to clean energy—to Indians, as well as to convince constituents back home that India's evolution as a middle-income country would translate into new opportunities for American goods, and hence, jobs.

Recognizing India's unique position as an emerging global power, the two nations have been committed to working in partnership to reach India's development goal of halving poverty by 2015. Dialogue is also moving beyond existing, albeit important, efforts

see **INDIA** on page 11 ▶

Agency Helps Haiti Fight Cholera-Hurricane-Earthquake Triple Punch

By Janice M. Laurent

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti—Nine months after a magnitude 7 earthquake devastated their country, Haitians were moving into temporary shelters, clearing rubble, and returning to school. Despite persisting challenges, the Caribbean nation was moving forward along the long and bumpy road to recovery.

Then, at the 10-month mark, cholera, a disease not seen for over 60 years, suddenly appeared in the center of the country, and a mere two weeks later, Hurricane Tomas lashed the western coast. Tomas caused comparatively little damage.

In contrast, Haitian officials report that, as of Nov. 23, the cholera outbreak has sickened more than 60,000 and killed more than 1,400 since it was confirmed in mid October.

Many more may be sickened in the coming months as the

disease, which is spreading north and south from its point of origin and into the capital city Port-au-Prince, makes its way through the country's temporary encampments that more than 1 million people still call home. Makeshift sanitation facilities and close quarters in many of the tent communities make them an ideal breeding ground for cholera. Equally at risk are the dense neighboring slums that have less access to the water, sanitation, and health facilities that donor countries and NGOs have made available in the larger camps.

The Haitian government, with support from the United States and the international community, is leading the response to all three disasters, and months spent preparing for storms and disease outbreaks in the aftermath of the

see **CHOLERA** on page 6 ▶

Aid Follows Ash in Indonesia

By Ikene Sere Edwina

SLEMAN, Indonesia—Eight-year-old Janu, who lives in Wonokerto village, Yogyakarta province, looks cheerful playing with his friends at the Caturharjo community center on a Saturday morning. (Like many Indonesians, Janu and his family use only one name.)

It's hard to imagine that the second grader just barely escaped the rage of Mt. Merapi early on the previous morning, Nov. 5, fleeing the mountain's worst volcanic explosion in the last 140 years. The volcano's blast forced his family to abandon their house to find a safer place. The continuous chain of Merapi eruptions that began in late October had claimed over 250 lives at press time.

see **VOLCANO** on page 15 ▶



This year, Vietnam turned 1,000 years old and marked its 15th anniversary of normalized diplomatic relations with the United States. On pages 7 to 10, see how the country is helping its ethnic minorities, drug addicts, and high-tech workers—and making “unprecedented progress” to improve the lives of its poorest citizens. Pictured: Pham Thi Bich Ngoc rides a modified wheelchair her father designed to take advantage of her leg power and get her out into the community.

Photo by Richard Nyberg, USAID

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INSIDE DEVELOPMENT

Interview with Ian Solomon

Ian Solomon, the U.S. executive director of the World Bank Group, recently discussed the Bank's development activities with FrontLines Managing Editor Kelly Ramundo.

Q: You've held the position of U.S. executive director to the World Bank Group for less than a year. Tell me a little bit about your job.

SOLOMON: The World Bank is a fascinating institution and it is a privilege to represent the United States as the largest shareholder. This institution is dealing with some of the most important challenges of our time—from restoring global economic growth to addressing climate change; from ending poverty to improving global food security; from improving governance and fighting corruption to helping to stabilize and rebuild fragile states.

It is extraordinary to be here while the U.S. is developing and rolling out its new global development policy. Development is an economic, moral, and strategic imperative for the United States. I believe this office and the World Bank will play an important role in helping to implement this policy.

Q: The World Bank's mission statement—to promote sustainable growth and fight poverty, is essentially very similar to USAID's. Can you describe the nature of your office's coordination and relationship both with USAID and other government agencies?

SOLOMON: I think that there is quite happily some overlap and complementarity, but also major differences in what both institutions do. The Bank is first and foremost a multilateral organization where 187 countries are represented through 25 voting board members. I represent the U.S. shareholding on that board, and I aim to present a whole-of-government perspective, including views from Treasury, State, USAID, MCC [Millennium Challenge Corporation], and other USG offices and agencies. As a multilateral organization, the World Bank helps the U.S. to leverage its resources and enhance the

impact of our policy engagement with countries around the world. My office works to facilitate effective coordination and collaboration of U.S. agencies with the World Bank, and vice versa.

Unlike USAID, which often implements programs through NGOs and the private sector in recipient countries, the World Bank mostly works through host governments, though it also undertakes private sector lending through the IFC [International Finance Corporation] and private sector credit guarantees through MIGA [Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency]. A central part of the World Bank's mission is to build the capacity of client country governments to meet their own development challenges. That means that the Bank often works most closely with the finance ministry or other ministries of client countries to implement programs.

The World Bank also has an important role to play, bringing its global technical and research expertise on development issues to the table, as well as using its comparative advantages for helping convene a broad range of donors, priorities, and expertise within a given country setting. The better the Bank can work with USAID, the more effective both institutions can be.

Q: What are the nuts and bolts of the USG inter-agency process? What agencies are weighing in on the projects that the U.S. government decides to support?

SOLOMON: A team of World Bank employees will work closely with host government officials—and usually other development partners, including USAID on the ground—to come up with a multi-year strategy for that country. These strategies determine what sorts of projects should be implemented, what are the priority sectors, which investments governments are going to make on their own, where the



Ian Solomon

World Bank will play a part, and, when the strategies are done well, where different bilateral partners will take key roles.

Before that country assistance strategy—or any particular investments that come out of it—is discussed at the Board, my office distributes the strategy to the U.S. interagency through a process that involves the Treasury Department, USAID, the State Department, and the folks in-country. The U.S. Trade Representative, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and the Commerce Department may also get involved. Different agencies get the strategy and we invite them to weigh in.

One good example of where USAID is playing a key role with the World Bank is agriculture and food security. Not only are USAID missions helping shape Bank agriculture project design and aligning them with the work of Feed the Future in countries like Ethiopia, but USAID participates on the steering committee of the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program, a fund hosted at the Bank. USAID and Bank staff are collaborating on a strategic agriculture and food security dialogue to be started in the coming weeks.

Q: Are there areas that USAID and the World Bank can improve their collaboration?

SOLOMON: Certainly. What I'd really like to do is to better integrate the work of both institutions. We want to make the work of client countries who are tackling development challenges easier by looking at ways we can share planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes, for example.

It means having a sense of shared missions, shared accountability for results tracked in very similar ways, shared commitment to transparency and a shared sense that we're trying to build the capacity of countries so they will create the conditions where both institutions don't have much left to do. And if we can achieve that, then I feel we'll have advanced President Obama's policy for global development and made a difference in the lives of the poorest of the poor.

Q: Speaking of the PPD [Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development], how will this returned focus on sustainable

economic growth in select areas influence the Bank's policies?

SOLOMON: At its core, the Bank's mission is around sustainable economic growth, so the key theme for U.S. development policy coming out of the PPD is very consistent with the Bank's overall mission.

The PPD also is quite clear about certain expectations of the countries where the U.S. is investing significant resources to address development challenges and on how to better achieve results. We want to make sure that the Bank is best allocating its resources to achieve development results while helping countries build effective governance and democratic institutions, something that is central to U.S. development policy.

This emphasis on good governance is something that is also shared by the World Bank. For example, in the allocation of resources to IDA [International Development Association] countries—IDA is the World Bank's fund of grants and concessional loans for the poorest 79 countries of the world—the Bank already uses a process that provides additional resources to those countries that are better-governed and are getting the best development results. This is, I think, one of IDA's real innovations and where it has been somewhat ahead of its time in the field of development.

Now, of course, we all have more work to do to make sure that we are getting the best results—measuring them better and learning from them—so we have the capacity and the flexibility to improve how we do business for the lives of the poor.

Q: The World Bank, like USAID, is undergoing a reform process. Is there any interconnection between the two?

SOLOMON: It is an exciting and also challenging time to be at either USAID or at the World Bank. We all face a number of financial challenges, given the fiscal constraints that the U.S. and most other donor nations are facing right now. But it's also a very exciting time because there is a real emphasis on innovation. As you know, innovation is a theme that features prominently in the PPD and USAID Forward agenda. It's also a priority that the United

States is pushing to include as part of the reform agenda at the Bank. We know that to achieve the kind of breakthrough results we need to make progress on the MDGs [Millennium Development Goals] or to achieve our respective missions of a world free of poverty, we need to see the game-changing innovations.

There's also increasing agreement on the need for country-owned development policies. We see this as a key theme of the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative, for example, and country ownership is what drives the Bank's model. We need to strengthen civil society and accountability mechanisms so that "country-owned" doesn't just mean that a few folks in the client government and donor governments think it's a good idea. Country ownership means being willing to be held accountable by your citizens for achieving better results.

Related to this, another area of reforms for both institutions is the need for increased transparency on how we do business—how we design, deliver, implement, and monitor development programs. Are we supporting priority issues that have been identified by recipients? Are programs or projects building better systems and stronger institutions? This is an area where I think the Bank and USAID can work together so we have better information about where aid dollars are being spent and what results are being achieved with those aid dollars.

Q: Can you tell me a little bit about how the financial crisis is reshaping the Bank's agenda?

SOLOMON: In early 2009, President Obama and other world leaders called on the Bank to dramatically increase its financial commitments and disbursements in response to the drop in global private capital flows to the developing world. The World Bank tripled its lending in response to that call, and the Bank was quite good at responding quickly. In the process, the Bank developed some new instruments to

see **SOLOMON** on page 14 ►

MISSION OF THE MONTH

USAID's office in Kyrgyzstan is part of the Agency's Central Asian Republics mission.



Handover ceremony of medical supplies at Naryn Oblast Hospital

Wounded Protesters on the Mend with Quick Infusion of Medical Supplies

By Leanne MacDougall and Fatima Kasmahunova

Challenge

In April 2010, thousands of Kyrgyz citizens took to the streets in anti-government protests. Ensuing clashes between the protesters and security forces left many injured and 87 dead. Approximately 1,600 people sought care in Bishkek's seven hospitals.

More than 1,000 individuals were treated as outpatients and 581 had to be hospitalized. Each hospital called in all its available physicians and nurses to respond.

Gunshot injuries were severe, with many suffering massive trauma to internal organs and bones. The large number of patients with these injuries devastated the hospitals' limited drug and medical supplies stocks.

Dr. Sabyrbek Jumabekov, the director of the Bishkek Trauma and Orthopedics Scientific Research Center, a specialized hospital for emergency health care, said that his team performed 180 surgeries in the first two days of the violence. "We typically perform 25 to 40 surgeries per day, so this was an enormous demand

on our resources," he said.

When hospitals became overwhelmed with patients after the unrest started, the Kyrgyz Ministry of Health put out a request for assistance.

Innovative Response

USAID staff asked CitiHope International (CHI) to come up with a proposal to provide emergency assistance to hospitals caring for the wounded and injured. CHI was well-positioned to take on this role as it has a strong local presence and experience working with USAID in Kyrgyzstan.

CHI staff conducted a rapid assessment of the number of hospitalized patients, their conditions, and the hospitals' needs. CHI learned that the hospitals were in urgent need of bandages, syringes, and intravenous injection systems. USAID health specialists and authorities with the Kyrgyz Ministry of Health developed the list of necessary medical supplies.

Between April 15 and 20, starting just one week after violence erupted, USAID donated medical supplies to 10 hospitals in Bishkek, Chui, Naryn, and

KYRGYZSTAN



Talas Oblasts. The basic supplies and equipment, valued at \$150,000, included bandages, syringes, surgery supplies, and surgical sets necessary for treating patients.

"USAID through CitiHope was able to respond to the need quickly and provide the surgical equipment needed to rehabilitate victims of the violence," said Dr. Jumabekov.

Results

All told, the Bishkek center received medical supplies, instruments, and equipment necessary for reconstructive surgery for more than 150 patients. The center admitted 168 people injured from the violence, including 119 with gunshot wounds.

USAID's donation made it possible for more than 100 patients with severe injuries to receive free treatment for orthopedic operations, including implants for damaged bones. Having the appropriate, quality supplies meant that patients experienced a more rapid recovery and rehabilitation.

"On behalf of the patients and workers of the Bishkek Trauma and Orthopedics Center, I would like to express gratitude and acknowledgment to American citizens and USAID for the timely provision of humanitarian aid, which enabled us to help the victims of April's events," Dr. Jumabekov said.

Dr. Kasymbek Mambetov, the deputy minister of health, added: "USAID's assistance to Kyrgyz citizens was appreciated, particularly because it came at a difficult time for the Republic.

"The Kyrgyz Ministry of Health has a long history of cooperation with USAID through a variety of activities....Our long-term partnership demonstrates successful results and has grown into new forms of cooperation." ★

INSIGHTS

FROM ADMINISTRATOR DR. RAJIV SHAH



At our last town hall, I had a rare opportunity.

In front of a packed auditorium, I got to introduce our new deputy administrator, Donald Steinberg, to the Agency. It was a rare opportunity, not just because this agency has gone too long without a deputy, but because Don is a candidate of such rare talents.

Don's extensive experience in places like Haiti, Central African Republic, and Angola, and his role as an advisor to the U.N. secretary-general on women, peace, and security have lent him a unique expertise of our agency's priorities. And as a former ambassador and deputy White House press secretary, he has an exceptional understanding of the political and diplomatic realities our work faces.

I'm thrilled to have the wisdom of Don's guidance and leadership as we embark on this agency's most dramatic program of reforms since its inception: USAID Forward.

The reforms that comprise USAID Forward are designed to allow everyone in this agency to become development entrepreneurs; to free us from the bureaucracy that hinders our work; to shorten the time between forming ideas and generating results; and to form a culture that supports and nurtures learning, risk-taking, and leadership.

The reforms we are proposing didn't start with me. They didn't come from a politically appointed team. They came from you. They're based on innovations and ideas from the field. And they were directly shaped by the feedback you provided.

When I visited Kenya, I met with our Foreign Service Nationals who told me they wanted their growth and development to reflect their professionalism. That's why we're altering our HR processes to ensure we have more higher-graded Foreign Service National slots, and creating a special Senior FSN Advisory Corps.

When I visited Bangladesh, I was told that we must streamline processes that encumber our staff, and work more closely with a diverse group of local change agents and partners. That's why we're reforming our procurement process, moving away from a model dominated by large contracts administered by large consulting firms and NGOs, to one that's more inclusive of those who can create lasting change on the ground.

When I visited Senegal, I heard you say how crucial it was that USAID engage in long-term development planning, forming comprehensive strategies that were aligned to country priorities and our resource framework. That's why we reestablished our policy bureau, and regained a primary role in managing our budget.

And because I heard from people around this agency that we must recapture our tradition of smart, transformative program design and implementation, we're investing in science and technology, embracing a spirit of innovation in everything we do, and improving our monitoring and evaluation capabilities to make certain we deliver the changes we seek, and learn from our failures when we do not.

In short, these reforms are about building an agency that frees us to do the work we all joined this agency to do: eliminating global hunger, helping a mother safely give birth, and giving someone the opportunity to vote for the first time in their life.

That is the agency you have been asking for: streamlined, efficient, and modern. And with your help, that is the agency USAID Forward will help create. ★

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS

BRIEFS

Floods Spark Emergency in Benin

COTONOU, Benin—The United Nations says weeks of flooding in the West African nation of Benin have affected 360,000 people, killing at least 60, and causing at least 800 cases of cholera. The Associated Press reported in late October. Around 120,000 people were forced to flee their homes, with at least 55,000 homes destroyed by the floods, authorities said. The U.N. says the country, one of the world's poorest, was in need of emergency shelter, food, and clean water. The government of Benin has declared a national emergency and called for international aid in response to the rapidly emerging crisis.

US, Afghanistan Reach Deal on Security

KABUL, Afghanistan—Several news sources reported this month that Afghan officials and foreign diplomats have agreed that a shutdown of private security companies in Afghanistan will have to be carried out in several stages. The development indicates a possible compromise over the controversial issue, which has occupied top international diplomats and Afghan officials since President Hamid Karzai in August ordered the closure of private companies that provide security guards in the country. He later backed away from a Dec. 17 deadline for the shutdown, after diplomats said the move threatened billions of dollars worth of reconstruction projects, including many being carried out by companies on contracts with USAID.

US Eases Sudan Embargo

KHARTOUM, Sudan—The Obama administration has eased sanctions on Sudan ahead of the January referendum where voters in the south of the country will decide if

they want their region to become a separate country. The specific change focuses on an exemption to the embargo on farm equipment. According to the Reuters news service, Abdel Latif Ijaimi, an official at Sudan's Agriculture Ministry, said: "We welcome this and it is part of a move to open more cooperation and will allow us to enter [global] markets and improve in terms of quality and prices."

Seoul Sends Food Aid to North Korea

SEOUL, South Korea—South Korea is sending food shipments of rice and instant noodles to its neighbor to the north, the first food aid the Seoul government has sent to North Korea since its President Lee Myung-bak was elected in 2008, *The New York Times* reported last month. The aid is part of an \$8.5 million package, and according to the Ministry of Unification, included 5,000 tons of rice and 3 million cups of instant noodles. North Korea faces perennial food shortages and next year promises to be no different. The U.N., in a report released in November, said that most North Koreans "will face food shortages in the coming year unless [the country] receives international assistance." In addition to food, South Korea said it has scheduled deliveries of cement and medicines for December. North Korea was hit with torrential rains that caused severe flooding in July.

Researchers: Resistance Grows to Malaria Drugs

TORONTO, Canada—Nicolas White, a scientist who helped to develop artemisinin-based treatments for malaria, is warning that "growing parasite resistance to the treatment, spurred in large part by the massive marketing of counterfeit versions, could have major consequences down the road—perhaps even making the drug ineffective," according to Canada's *Globe and Mail*. White is the director of Mahidol Oxford Tropical Medicine Research at Mahidol University in Bangkok and one of the

world's leading malaria experts, according to the paper, and was honored in Toronto as winner of the 2010 Canada Gairdner Global Health Award. The award goes to people who have made major scientific advances in the developing world.

Pakistani Flood Aid "Drying Up"

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan—Echoing warnings from other organizations responding to the humanitarian crisis in Pakistan, Oxfam is warning that aid money is "drying up," various news organizations reported. Oxfam said that without additional funding, both current humanitarian operations and long-term reconstruction are at risk. Reuters reported that the Pakistani government has cut spending for development projects and that donors are unlikely to contribute to the nation's flood reconstruction unless Pakistani officials can convince donors that the money will be spent transparently. More than 20 million people have been affected by flooding, which deluged parts of the country this summer. Flood waters have yet to fully recede.

Peace Corps Volunteers Increase

The Washington Post reported that more people are volunteering with the Peace Corps than at any point since 1970, citing statistics provided by the agency. The Peace Corps said that it had 8,655 volunteers working in 77 host countries at the end of September, a 13 percent increase in headcount from the same time a year earlier. The Peace Corps attributed its success to new host countries, extended volunteer stays, and a \$400 million operating budget, which it says is its largest ever.

From news reports and other sources.★

FRONTLINES: NOVEMBERS PAST

1970: With a death toll expected to reach 300,000 and the number of homeless to exceed 1 million following a Nov. 12-13 cyclone in East Pakistan, USAID and the Department of State relief efforts. After the Agency rushes 10,000 cotton blankets and 1,000 tents as part of emergency assistance, the United States allocates \$10 million for relief, reports the Nov. 19 *FrontLines*. USAID had been providing financial and technical assistance to the country for flood control and coastal embankment for the past 10 years. In 1876, a cyclone that hit the same area of Pakistan also claimed about 300,000 lives.

1980: Inexpensively removing the salt from sea water could have a significant impact on communities where fresh water is in short supply, reports the Nov. 6 *FrontLines*, and a new invention may offer the way. A desalination pump called the Delbuoy produces impurity-free water by using the force of waves to send sea water through a filter, resulting in 1,500 gallons of fresh water a day from each machine. Developed at the University of Delaware, the Delbuoy is predicted to save expenses for those who must have fresh water shipped in. Because the system is powered by waves, only construction and maintenance costs would be involved in the new desalination process.

1990: Leaders from more than 70 countries convened at the United Nations in New York City in September for the first World Summit for Children, reports the November *FrontLines*. "...we should acknowledge that for many children, the only blessing they will ever know is their innocence," said President George H.W. Bush in his keynote address to the summit. The president added that more than 14 million children would die in the next year and that 1,000 babies would die in the next hour. The countries in attendance pledged to work together to decrease child and maternal mortality, improve child nutrition, and provide better access to clean water and primary education.

2000: Because corruption and lack of accountability hamper economic growth and good governance, USAID, through its Office of Inspector General, works to strengthen the national audit organizations of various countries around the world, reports the October/November *FrontLines*. In the United States, the General Accounting Office serves as the national audit institution, seeking to ensure that public funds are spent in the manner intended. USAID Administrator Brady Anderson opened the Anti-Corruption Summit 2000 in Arlington, Va., Sept. 21-23, with over 300 participants from 54 countries. ★

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GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS

USAID Reform Effort Makes Formal Debut

By Angela Rucker

Administrator Rajiv Shah says that USAID Forward, the package of reform measures he is proposing to repair Agency shortcomings and restore its luster on the international stage, is the most crucial set of new policies since USAID was founded in 1961.

At an Oct. 20 town hall meeting at Agency headquarters in Washington, Shah was joined on stage by a panel of USAID field and headquarters staffers from the bureaus for Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, and Africa to formally introduce Forward and talk about the ways it will improve the way the Agency operates in seven broad categories: implementation and procurement reform, talent management, rebuilding policy capacity, monitoring and evaluation, budget management, innovation, and science and technology.

"They're designed to free us from the bureaucracy that gets in the way of getting our work done," Shah said.

At its core, the plan addresses failings that many in and outside the Agency acknowledge have held USAID back in its mission. Among them: too few experts in science and other disciplines; long-term planning discarded for short-term aims; policies that strangle creativity and hobble swift action; and too much bureaucratic red tape.

USAID Forward has been in the planning stages for nearly a year, coinciding with the early days of Shah's tenure as administrator.

It is an early outcome of the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, a State Department-led planning effort to ensure U.S. development and diplomacy are ready to meet the global challenges of the next four years.

And the reforms also provide the foundation for the new approach to foreign aid proposed by President Barack Obama, who has called for USAID to retake a position as global leader in international development. In an address in September during the United Nations General



Photo by USAID

USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah and Dr. Sheila Macharia from the Agency's Kenyan Office of Population and Health during an Oct. 20 town hall meeting in Washington

Assembly, Obama committed the United States—by virtue of USAID—to help the world meet the U.N. Millennium Development Goals; encourage and invest in country-led development initiatives; create a new generation of technologies and scientific breakthroughs that improves lives in poor countries; and better use U.S. expertise in humanitarian disasters and conflict settings.

For Shah, it was the Jan. 12 Haiti earthquake that helped mold his vision for what reforms the Agency needed.

USAID FORWARD'S SEVEN REFORMS

- ▶ Implementation and Procurement Reform
- ▶ Talent Management
- ▶ Rebuilding Policy Capacity
- ▶ Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation
- ▶ Rebuilding Budget Management
- ▶ Science and Technology
- ▶ Innovation

"People moved quickly, they took on incredible personal responsibility," he said, of the response to the monster disaster that would go on to kill 230,000 and leave more than 1 million homeless. "They changed and adapted the rules in order to make sure we could get things done."

Shah says he wants to see that kind of reaction—he is calling them the actions of "development entrepreneurs"—in other parts of the Agency.

"I think the spirit of USAID Forward is good," says Dr. Sheila Macharia, a senior health manager and team leader in the Office of Population and Health

at USAID/Kenya who participated in the town hall meeting.

She said when Shah visited the Kenya office earlier this year he got an earful from staffers about their daily challenges—from onerous reporting requirements and too little time in the field to beneficiaries who mistook aid from the United States as coming from the NGOs who are most visible on the ground.

For her, Forward provided a "wow" moment. "For the first time," she said, "someone has crystallized what was said. If nothing else, people listened."

"I'm not naïve," she added. "This is a government. It's going to take a bit of time. The consultation process is just beginning."

She said Agency leaders should acknowledge that Forward is a long-term vision and invite staffers to participate.

The latter is happening already. Yet questions still remain in what could be a dramatic shift in the way USAID does business, especially coming after several other reform initiatives have sputtered or been discarded as administrations change. Some Agency employees say they are eager for more details. "I know that reform efforts in the past have promised much and not always delivered," Shah said in pushing forward an information campaign he hopes will relay information to employees about USAID Forward's progress.

He also pointed to the Agency's new budget office and Bureau of Policy, Planning and Learning as examples of how USAID is moving forward. "Ultimately, these reforms are yours," the administrator added. "Our success in implementing them will depend on our ability to move them forward together, and with the participation of the entire Agency." ★

Reversing Vitamin and Mineral Deficiencies by Fortifying Crops

Grace is 4½ years old and lives in Nanyuki, a small town north of Nairobi. She is one of millions of poor children in Africa seriously affected by vitamin A deficiency.

Because her diet lacks diversity, Grace consumes very few sources of vitamin A—commonly found in foods such as carrots, sweet potatoes, butter, and broccoli—and is deficient in other key micronutrients. She eats mostly maize, twice a day. Grace gets sick easily, and if she does not get the nutrients her body needs, she may lose her sight.

Estimates show 127 million preschool children worldwide do not get enough vitamin A. And children with vitamin A deficiency are also likely to be deficient in other nutrients. Globally, micronutrient malnutrition affects more than 2 billion people—mostly women and children—increasing their susceptibility to diarrhea and other deadly illnesses and infection. When deficiencies exist in many nutrients, brain function is affected, reducing economic well-being for families and countries.

"Hunger and under-nutrition is such an enormous global challenge that it demands innovative technical, operational, and institutional solutions," says Dr. Bruce Cogill, chief of nutrition at USAID.

That is one reason that in 2011, HarvestPlus, an alliance of over 200 agriculture and nutrition scientists and development program implementers, is on tap to receive \$1.3 million from USAID to biofortify seven staple crops that represent the source of food for the vast majority of people on the planet.

The Agency has teamed up with the international agricultural and food research community to place better quality food—not just more food—on the agenda and on dinner plates where it is most needed. In this instance, through biofortification, researchers will use plant breeding to add iron, zinc, and vitamin A directly into staple foods. At its core, the effort is using an agricultural tool to improve global health.

"Nutrition is a major objective of both the Global Health and

Feed the Future initiatives and is integral to USAID's development programs across sectors," Dr. Cogill said. "USAID health programs deliver a package of holistic nutrition interventions—and maximize benefits to women and young children by coupling these efforts with water-, sanitation-, and health system-strengthening programs."

Feed the Future, the U.S. government's global hunger and food security initiative, is designed specifically to increase sustainable market-led growth, particularly for small and rural farmers, thereby contributing to an increase in rural incomes and a reduction in the prevalence of poverty.

Breeding nutrients into staple foods holds great potential because the strategy reaches people who currently have limited access to viable health-care systems or commercially processed fortified foods.

There are already signs of improvements in the field. Orange sweet potato packed with vitamin A is now being planted alongside traditional white sweet potato throughout East Africa. Vitamin A-rich cassava in Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo, high-iron beans in Rwanda, and maize high in vitamin A in Zambia are currently being adapted by agricultural research programs in those countries. In India, high-iron pearl millet is being evaluated by research organizations and seed companies in Maharashtra and Gujarat. Studies have shown that consumers of the improved varieties of sweet potato have elevated vitamin A levels; more studies are under way.

"It [crop fortification] is an idea whose time has come," added EGAT Assistant Administrator Josette Lewis. "We can help channel the powers of modern agricultural technology to reduce the single largest public health problem in the world, malnutrition. The reach of biofortification could be monumental."

For little Grace and children like her, biofortification of common food crops represents another tool to reverse nutrition deficiencies and provide a head start to a healthy childhood.

For more information see: www.harvestplus.org ★

Agency employees can learn more about USAID Forward, keep track of its developments, and offer suggestions and comments at <http://inside.usaid.gov/USAIDforward>.

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS

Grantees Lap Up Innovation Awards

By Angela Rucker

It wasn't so long ago that mobile telephones served the same purpose as their corded cousins. Flash forward just a couple of decades and today's mobile phones are the equivalent of one-stop shopping at the biggest shopping mall.

Get directions, listen to music, call up dinner menus, read news feeds, monitor home security systems. In the developing world, the mobile telephone is equally useful. Mobile devices put banking in the hands of people who live in areas without brick-and-mortar financial institutions and supply rural farmers with pricing information they need to get top prices for their crops.

It's that kind of innovation that USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah hopes to harness for the developing world. In early October, Shah unveiled USAID's first Development Innovation Ventures (DIV) awards to eight companies and institutions working on devices and technologies they believe will move the needle on innovation in the developing world. The grants range from just under \$100,000 to just over \$230,000—\$1 million total.

"We need to try new approaches and take more risks, and commit to rigorous measurement and evaluation at every turn, so that we can discover what is truly effective and replicate it," Shah said in announcing the grants in New York.

USAID is partnering with institutions that have creative ideas to aid international development, but need capital to see out their plans.

More than 100 proposals from would-be innovators were submitted in the first round of the USAID competition. The eight winners range from the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), to Dimagi Inc., a technology company in Massachusetts.

The plan is modeled in some ways on the Development Credit Authority and Global Development Alliance—USAID's more traditional ways of leveraging government funding with money from corporations and foundations. But the new arrangement is aimed at high-risk ventures.

"We know that great ideas and development breakthroughs

come from all different places," said Maura O'Neill, USAID's chief innovation officer. "Often, it is a combination of different people and organizations working together in new ways to create a way to identify and grow innovative ideas. Our focus is on faster breakthroughs that scale to have global impact."

UCSD, for example, is using its grant to research whether mobile phones in Afghanistan can lead to more transparent elections and reduce fraud. In the study, Afghans in certain polling locations will use cell phones to snap a photo of the election vote tallies and transmit the image to a central collection center.

CHOLERA from page 1

earthquake have made that job more manageable.

In the face of the cholera epidemic, USAID, along with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is working closely with the Haitian Ministry of Health and Population, the Pan American Health Organization, and other international partners.

"Our current focus is on supporting the Haitian government and the international community's efforts to ensure access to medical treatment and to take measures to limit the spread of the disease," said USAID/Haiti Mission Director Carleene Dei.

Cholera can hit victims quickly with severe diarrhea, leaving them dangerously dehydrated and at risk of death in a matter of hours. People contract the illness by consuming food or water that has been contaminated by the bacteria that causes cholera.

One of the most effective treatments is oral rehydration therapy, which is essentially replacing lost water and salts in the body. If caught in time, the medications can almost always restore health.

USAID partners have pre-positioned oral rehydration salt treatment kits and intravenous fluids at hospitals and clinics. And they also are distributing water purification products in affected communities to treat household water supplies.

As of Nov. 23, the U.S. government, in a response coordinated by USAID, has provided nearly \$15 million in cholera response assistance, which includes overseeing the distribution of oral rehydration solution. USAID is also providing needed supplies, including disinfectant,

Dimagi is also picking up the phone to help rural Indian residents improve access to health care. The company created an app, or application, called CommCare that is aimed at providing maternal health education regardless of literacy level.

Another venture is looking at developing an E-bike powered by a fuel cell. The bike will be able to travel up to 100 miles by battery power—the fuel cell can be removed to power other devices—and will emit only water vapor and air exhaust.

In a statement, Michael Lefenfeld, founder and CEO of SiGNa Chemistry Inc., developer of the E-bike, said the "fuel-cell power source is the

type of transformative clean energy solution that will have an enormous impact on developing, third-world countries throughout the world, from making it possible to deliver life-saving medicines to the rural poor to providing a safe, efficient way to power emergency power systems during disasters."

DIV is also looking to build scientific expertise at the Agency. Harvard University economist Michael Kremer, who first came up with the idea for DIV, will lead that part of the initiative. He will also help recruit USAID innovation fellows to develop projects alongside Agency staffers.

"For too long, USAID has taken on the bad habits of a large government bureaucracy," Shah said in his New York speech.

But he also said DIV can exploit the advantages of a large agency like USAID, including global presence and impact, massive buying power, and scaling up efforts at lower cost.

"We can move development into a new realm," Shah added, "with the discipline and focus of the private and entrepreneurial sectors, and the scale and reach of the public sector."

USAID is in the process of soliciting proposals for the next round of DIV awards. For more information, go to www.usaid.gov/div. ★



Dr. Berlius Philogène with USAID partner International Medical Corps reads a patient's chart at a cholera treatment center Oct. 28 in Verrettes, Haiti.

Photo by Kendra Helmer/USAID

radio, word of mouth, loudspeakers, and sirens. These messages saved lives by permitting people to find shelter in more durable structures before the arrival of the hurricane.

Historically, the northern city of Gonaïves is extremely vulnerable to tropical storms or hurricanes. Thousands died in 2004 when Hurricane Jeanne hit. Four years later, Hurricanes Hanna and Ike affected countless families, burying houses in mud, destroying crops, and damaging key infrastructure including roads and bridges.

This year, thanks to mitigation efforts, people like Camélita Cadet did not have to evacuate or return home to find belongings buried under mud. "The water just flowed in the canals without causing any damage to the area," said Cadet, 40.

Dei added: "With the help of the international community and various NGOs working on earthquake relief, the country is better equipped to respond to hurricanes than before the earthquake and to address challenges such as the cholera epidemic."

It is not a small undertaking. Helping Haiti build back better is at the heart of USAID programming in the disaster-prone country. Since January's earthquake, U.S. assistance to Haiti has totaled over \$1.14 billion, of which almost \$663 million is from USAID. The Agency will program close to another \$1 billion to support Haiti's reconstruction over the next two years, much of it intended to help the Haitian government continue to improve how it responds to the needs of its people. ★

pails, and cholera beds to expand treatment in the country's hospitals.

The Agency is also coordinating with international partners—including those in the health and WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene) clusters—to limit the outbreak's spread in Port-au-Prince by increasing the chlorine levels at public water distribution points, which are used by the vast majority of the population, and by ramping up surveillance of the water distribution system.

In partnership with the Haitian Ministry of Health, local health departments, and international agencies, USAID is conducting a public health information campaign on hygiene and proper water sanitation management to mitigate further outbreak. This includes disseminating information about prevention, treatment, and hygiene through text messaging, pamphlets, radio spots, and mobile loud speakers. Public health agents are also educating community members about cholera, one household at a time.

The close collaboration among USAID partners in disaster prevention and mitigation extended to hurricane preparation efforts as well.

"We assisted the Haitian government in its efforts to communicate with the Haitian people about what to do in the event of a storm," Dei said. "We stockpiled shelter supplies, repaired houses, built transitional shelters, helped clear canals, and stabilized slopes to prevent mudslides."

A key component was the rehabilitation of Haiti's meteorological facilities that were destroyed by the earthquake. A partnership consisting of USAID, the U.N. World Meteorological Organization, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Hydrologic Research Center developed an effective flood warning system to provide real-time alerts to the Haitian National Meteorological Center. Tropical storm and hurricane alerts were then disseminated through text messaging, local



SPECIAL REPORT: VIETNAM

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NOVEMBER 2010

USAID Accompanies Hanoi into New Millennium of Development

By Richard Nyberg*

This Oct. 10—10/10/10—Hanoi turned 1,000 years old. For most residents, the run-up to the city's millennial celebration, ablaze with culture and pageantry, brought the most color, congestion, and construction to Vietnam's capital in living memory.

For the U.S. government, it was also time to celebrate.

In July, the United States and Vietnam formally marked the 15th anniversary of normalized diplomatic relations. And 10 years ago, on Nov. 19, 2000, U.S. President Bill Clinton and USAID Assistant Administrator for Asia and the Near East Robert C. Randolph opened a representational Agency office in Hanoi following a decade of USAID programs managed out of Washington.

"It's a fascinating time to be in Hanoi," said Frank Donovan, USAID's current mission director, looking back over the years of U.S. development assistance to Vietnam. "Through excellent collaboration with our Vietnamese counterparts, we are carrying out a unique blend of programs that are helping the government and the Vietnamese people."

While Hanoi celebrates its first millennium, experts are lauding Vietnam as a star performer in

meeting the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

As world leaders converged on U.N. headquarters to assess the status of the MDGs in September, the Overseas Development Institute issued a report highlighting Vietnam's "unprecedented progress" in improving the lives of the poor.

The country is in the top 10 for several indicators: it reduced the proportion of the population living on less than \$1.25 per day from nearly two-thirds to one-fifth in 14 years; it more than halved the proportion of underweight children; and it cut under-5 mortality rates from 56 per 1,000 live births to 15 between 1990 and 2007. Vietnam also scored high on access to improved drinking water sources.

After the end of the Vietnam War, USAID restarted its support programs to Vietnam in 1989, six years prior to diplomatic

normalization. The first 10 years of USAID assistance focused on Vietnamese with disabilities with \$13 million through the Patrick Leahy War Victims Fund and \$12 million from the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund. People with disabilities received rehabilitative services, prosthetics, and orthopedic support devices in addition to improved care through training of doctors and other health workers. USAID has provided training, equipment, and support devices for patients at the rehabilitation department of the National Pediatrics Hospital and at a rehabilitation center in Hanoi.

The opening of the Hanoi office in 2000 saw an expansion in the scope and size of programs. From 2000 to 2009, USAID contributed over \$330 million in assistance to Vietnam, including more than \$84 million in fiscal year 2010. Currently, USAID manages programs in HIV/AIDS, animal and pandemic



Hanoi comes to life during its millennial celebrations in October 2010.

influenza, economic growth, governance, higher education, environmental remediation and health, support to people with disabilities and other vulnerable populations, anti-trafficking in persons, and disaster assistance.

In 2009, working in close partnership with the Vietnamese government on environmental remediation of the Agent Orange contaminant dioxin, USAID initiated an environmental assessment at the Danang Airport. This assessment is guiding the U.S. and Vietnamese governments' joint remediation efforts at that site. USAID is also addressing health and social conditions around Danang Airport, where Agent Orange was stored during the Vietnam War.

Despite the progress made over the past two decades, MDG challenges remain, particularly in meeting HIV/AIDS targets and advanced development indicators such as higher education.

Vietnam maintains a low prevalence of HIV in the adult population at around 0.44

percent. An estimated 254,000 people in Vietnam are infected with HIV, and more than half of those needing anti-retroviral treatment are currently receiving it. HIV prevalence among injecting drug users is just over 20 percent, and in some provinces, up to 60 percent, and continues to drive the spread of the virus to other populations.

USAID began supporting HIV/AIDS programs in Vietnam in the mid-1990s. In June 2004, HIV/AIDS funding to Vietnam was increased substantially under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). In 2009, USAID assistance was \$43.5 million of the total \$89 million PEPFAR Vietnam budget, which also covers activities of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, as well as the U.S. Department of Defense.



Nguyen Thi Chien interviews a client at a USAID-supported HIV testing and counselling center near Hanoi.

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FOCUS ON VIETNAM



Y Lam stands among the cocoa trees in her village of Dar Ju in Vietnam's central Dak Lak province. With USAID support to the Success Alliance cocoa project, farmers like Y Lam expect a big return on their investment from 200 seedlings planted in 2007. Hundreds of farmers await harvest of the first pods in 2010. In the meantime, they plant corn, rice, cashews, and other cash crops alongside the cacao to maintain their income.

A Cocoa-lined Path Out of Poverty for Ethnic Minorities

DAK LAK, Vietnam—

Vietnam's Central Highlands is home to some of the country's poorest people, many of them ethnic minorities living in remote, mountainous areas.

According to the Vietnam government and the United Nations, more than half of ethnic minority groups were still living below the poverty line in 2008. This contrasts sharply with the country's overall 75 percent reduction in poverty since 1990.

USAID support is part of Vietnam's ongoing efforts to improve conditions for the poor and ethnic minorities here, including increasing access to agricultural services—in particular, cocoa production—and to quality education.

With its rich soil and moist, temperate climate, the Central Highlands offers some of the best

conditions for cocoa cultivation.

In an effort to raise the standard of living for poor farmers in this area, USAID joined in the SUCCESS Alliance—a public-private partnership with the development NGO ACDI/VOCA, candy giant Mars Inc., the World Cocoa Foundation, and the Vietnamese government—which offers training in crop cultivation, harvesting, and fermentation as well as support in connecting farmers with cocoa buyers.

Since the program's inception in 2007, over 5,000 smallholder farmers in Dak Lak and Lam Dong provinces (of which 60 percent are ethnic minorities) have received more than 900,000 cocoa seedlings and training that has helped expand cocoa cultivation in the Central Highlands by over 1,500 hectares. Cocoa planted in

2007 has started to produce fruit, and the first harvests in 2010 are expected to bring in \$60,000 in revenues, and much more in subsequent years.

H'Bim, a 42-year-old M'Nong ethnic minority farmer in Krong, a village in the Lak district of Dak Lak province, has profited from the new cash crop. As one of the leading farmers in her district, she manages a thriving cocoa farm as well as her own fermentation unit, and trains other farmers.

"We are very happy with cocoa's good price. Many members of cocoa clubs intend to buy more cocoa seedlings to grow, while others want to grow cocoa for the first time," said H'Bim, who uses just one name. "We may need to organize one more cocoa club in our village."

see **AGRICULTURE** on page 10 ▶

USAID REACHES VIETNAMESE WITH DISABILITIES

DANANG, Vietnam—

Little Nguyen Quang Trung is without question the life of the party, making more noise than most kids his age. "Hello," he bellows in English, repeatedly, to the amazement and satisfaction of friends and adults gathered around a table. Most people know children who like to be seen and heard, but most wouldn't know that Trung didn't want to be either for the first five years of his life.

It all changed when his mother brought him to a district rehabilitation clinic in Danang supported by USAID. Trung has a learning and development disability. Before he came to the center, to call him shy was an understatement. He had never spoken and found it hard to be around other people. Now he can follow directions, communicate with staff, and charm visitors with a robust salute.

Across town, 4-year-old Kha Han loves to roll around for hours on a blue cylindrical cushion at one of 63 community-rehabilitation units in Danang networked and supported by USAID. While the activity is fun, it also



Le Van Nho exercises regularly at the USAID-supported community rehabilitation unit not far from his home.

strengthens muscles in her legs and hands. Healthy until six months of age, Han rapidly became weaker and was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. Han's mother takes her lively daughter for exercise regularly to the unit,

which is housed in a government community center.

"It's more convenient to take her here than to the hospital—which is just too far," said Le

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Four-year-old Kha Han enjoys coming to a rehabilitation unit in Danang where she can exercise and interact with other children.



A client at a methadone clinic in Hai Phong receives his daily dose of medicine, friendship, and support.

METHADONE HELPS ADDICTS KICK HEROIN, PREVENT HIV

HAI PHONG, Vietnam—

One by one, they make their way into the clinics. Greeting the staff, they sign in and move to the next room where they pick up their daily dose of a colorful fluid in a small disposable cup, washing it down with a sip of water. No longer dependent on heroin, they are trying to kick the habit and get their lives back on track.

The pink juice contains methadone, a medication that is used to treat heroin addiction. Without methadone or heroin, the torture of withdrawal takes hold. With the treatment, there is no need to engage in criminal acts to support an expensive habit and no needles to spread diseases like HIV and hepatitis. Patients are more likely to find jobs, heal ties with family, and become stable, productive members of society.

USAID, through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), has played a leading role in Vietnam's successful pilot phase with methadone.

In May 2008, after two years of planning, the Vietnamese government, with PEPFAR support, launched six methadone clinics in Hai Phong, Hanoi, and Ho Chi Minh City—three of which are supported by

USAID—to treat heroin addicts. Of the more than 30 PEPFAR countries, Vietnam was the first country to use the program's funds to support medication-assisted therapy.

Methadone treatment, used for more than three decades in many western countries, is now part of a comprehensive set of health-care services supported by USAID.

"Methadone helps drug addicts reduce the frequency of drug use, reducing risk behavior for HIV; stabilize their lives; and reintegrate with families and communities. Also, it can help reduce crime and overdose deaths," said To Minh Gioi, vice chairman of Can Tho People's Committee, the province's governing authority, at a clinic opening this year.

According to Chu Quoc An, vice director of the Vietnam Administration of HIV/AIDS Control, Vietnam's experience has been positive.

"After nine months of treatment, there was no new HIV carrier, hepatitis B, [or hepatitis] C patient among these [former heroin addicts]," he said in an interview with Vietnam's *Tuoi Tre* newspaper. "The percentage of patients facing health

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Growing Highly Skilled Engineers for a High-Tech Workforce

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam—Just as Vietnam eyes prospects for high-tech economic growth, USAID has launched a partnership between U.S. academia and industry and Vietnam's technical schools to enhance the quality of engineering education at the latter.

For the three-year, public-private Higher Engineering Education Alliance Program, Arizona State University (ASU), Portland State University, and U.S. IT giant Intel will serve as trainers and mentors for Vietnam's top technical universities and its education ministry in the areas of electrical and mechanical engineering curricula and instruction.

Playing a key coordination role, USAID is also providing \$850,000 to leverage \$1.5 million from Intel and \$175,000 from ASU.

"This program will result in a more highly educated and motivated faculty using cutting edge curricula," said U.S. Ambassador Michael W. Michalak. "They will train bright and successful engineers who will help Vietnam reach its rightful place in the global economy."

According to Rick Howarth, general manager of Intel Products Vietnam, countries that lead in innovation have excellent higher education systems and strong alliances between academia and industry. He said the program seeks to "develop a new generation of graduates who are intellectually curious enough to ask questions that no one else has thought to ask, creative enough to attempt new ways of doing existing work, and who are bold enough to challenge the status quo."

Electronics manufacturing represents about 5 percent of Vietnamese exports, which have traditionally been dominated by rice, coffee, fish, clothing, and petroleum. The Ministry of Education and Training, however, has placed a higher priority on technical education, seeking to boost enrollment of engineering students from 21 percent to 35 percent by 2020.

Responding to these plans for better science and technology graduates, university partners,

guided by USAID and Intel, recruit and train engineering professors from Vietnamese universities, develop curricula, and increase collaboration between universities and industry.

The first group of 25 Vietnamese faculty members, coming from an array of technical schools, returned in August after a six-week training program at ASU's Ira A.

Fulton School of Engineering. One recently returned professor is Pham Bach Duong, deputy dean of the faculty of mechanical engineering at the Ho Chi Minh City University of Technical Education.

"I observed the ways of organizing, using, and maintaining lab equipment effectively. I also learned about the methods to promote innovative, creative, and critical thinking as well as intellectual abilities such as business communication skills and leadership," he said. "We really want such kind of programs for our next generation in Vietnam to help the universities to grow and to contribute to the development of the country."

At ASU, the faculty focused on skills ranging from designing hands-on experiments for engineering labs, problem solving, and data analysis to English, communications, and teamwork.

At the Aug. 24 ceremony to formalize the agreement between USAID, ASU and Intel, Vu Dinh Thanh, rector of Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology, said it was "truly the honor of our university to be a partner in the project." He said his institution places "top priority on expanding



Pham Bach Duong, deputy dean of the faculty of mechanical engineering at the Ho Chi Minh University of Technical Education, explains how his training at Arizona State University is helping him be a better teacher.

its relationship with industry and community."

Since returning to Vietnam, faculty participants began working on proposals to implement internationally accredited engineering curriculum at each of their universities—the second phase of the program.

Intel is providing innovation grants to develop and expand instructional improvement projects and funding to enhance engineering laboratories in Vietnam. In addition, the company will lead a private sector coalition to help Vietnamese universities better engage with the private sector.

Vietnamese faculty will be mentored by faculty from ASU and Portland State University as they develop their projects. In each of the three years after completing the technical training and mentoring, they will launch instructional projects that will be monitored and evaluated for faculty and student performance.

ASU will also work to expand the current alliance to include more private sector partners and deeper government participation; and if the alliance proves successful, more Vietnamese universities will become partners. ★



Vessels of all sizes ply the waters near Can Tho in Vietnam's Mekong Delta, an important rice producing region where USAID is active helping authorities combat avian and pandemic influenza and HIV/AIDS, and informing young people about the risks of human trafficking.

AGRICULTURE from page 8

In addition to contributing \$2.5 million for the cocoa project, the Agency's support for education in neighboring Kon Tum province helps strengthen pre-school, primary, and lower secondary levels. The Kon Ray Lower Secondary Boarding School, built in 2008 with USAID funding for 250 ethnic minority and disadvantaged students, also serves as a center for teacher training, community involvement programs, and promotion of early childhood care

by parent teacher associations.

In mid-August, the Kon Tum province's governing People's Committee joined USAID to break ground for new construction of Xa Hieu Kindergarten in Kon Tum's Konplong District. The kindergarten will serve about 1,500 students per year, and is one of 26 early childhood care centers to be refurbished with USAID funding in the province by 2012.

On Sept. 28, the state-owned *Vietnam News* newspaper reported that Deputy Prime

Minister Nguyen Thien Nhan had called on cities and provinces to finish land planning for the construction of kindergartens by mid-October. He said the government plans to spend more than \$736 million to provide school for all 5-year-olds in the country to prepare them for primary school. Under the program, six mountainous provinces bordering the impoverished Central Highlands will be home to 24 new kindergartens—a crucial step along Vietnam's path out of poverty. ★

METHADONE from page 9

problems reduced from 9.7 to 4.9 percent after three months of taking methadone. The ratio of patients who were in high risk of depression fell from 80 percent to 5 percent after nine months." Following the successful pilot, the Vietnamese government says that over the next five years it will roll out methadone treatment to reach 80,000 of the country's officially estimated 150,000 heroin addicts, who account for the majority of people living with HIV in Vietnam.

Deputy Prime Minister Trương Vĩnh Trọng, chairman of the National Committee for HIV/AIDS, Drugs and Prostitution Prevention and Control, asked the Ministry of Health to conduct pilot projects in 10 more cities and provinces between 2010 and 2012—a tacit acknowledgement

of the initial project's success. After examining results, officials will then map out plans to conduct the second stage covering 30 provinces and cities from 2013 to 2015.

Over the next several months, USAID will provide support, including methadone and related services, to 10 new clinics in Can Tho, Dien Bien, Hai Phong, Hanoi, and Ho Chi Minh City. USAID also supplies most anti-retroviral drugs to HIV clinics in Vietnam.

As of late September, more than 2,150 drug users were voluntarily taking advantage of methadone to help shake off heroin dependency. In clinics, where the synthetic drug is kept under lock and key, clients receive their daily dose, and much more. They are provided

health examinations, free basic lab testing, and, when necessary, are referred to other health facilities for care. They also benefit from drug-addiction and family counseling and have the opportunity to take part in peer-group support sessions.

One beneficiary is Manh, who had battled a 10-year addiction and asked that his surname not be used in an article. He now drives a taxi in Hai Phong, has married his girlfriend, enjoys the acceptance and support of his family, and volunteers at the clinic.

"Methadone treatment has made a positive change in my life," he said. "My health is improving, I feel better about myself, and my life is stable. I am very happy now and waiting for a baby." ★

DISABILITIES from page 8

Phuoc My Nhung. "We can get here in just 10 minutes by motorbike."

There are countless other stories of how USAID has cooperated with NGOs and the private sector to provide services for those both directly and indirectly affected by disabilities. Over the past two years in Danang, these services have reached more than 8,000 people and include more than 5,200 health examinations, medical rehabilitation for nearly 800 local residents, 300 corrective surgeries, and over 550 wheelchairs, hearing aids, and other assistive devices.

USAID also supports a new network of more than 240 community-based rehabilitation workers who provide daily assistance to people with disabilities, referring them to hospitals when necessary. USAID also provides support for students to stay in school, vocational skills training, and employment assistance to more than 1,000 Vietnamese with disabilities.

According to community leader Pham Trung Kham, the rehabilitation units in Danang are drawing increased social interest. "People are less isolated since they started coming here," he said. "They are more confident. As they see people in the same situation, they are motivated to exercise, and their families become more aware of how they can help and are more supportive in care giving."

At one of those centers, Ho Thi Thanh, a 41-year-old merchant, uses her hands to work her way down two parallel bars as she practices walking and strengthens her muscles. Diagnosed with polio when she was 4, today she uses a wheelchair to get around. She comes here three times a week instead of trying to exercise at home. She says she is grateful to have a facility in her own community.

VIETNAM from page 7

Since 2005, PEPFAR has supported life-saving antiretroviral treatment for about 30,000 people, and provided care to more than 8,000 orphans and vulnerable children. PEPFAR programs reached more than 59,000 people living with HIV in 2009 alone.

The next generation of USAID's programs will expand into higher education—the weakest link in Vietnam's surge towards middle-income status.

Le Van Nho, 51, agrees. A stroke survivor who also suffers from high blood pressure, he had to stay home for six months because his muscles couldn't support him. "Two months ago, he couldn't move his leg at all," said his wife, Ngo Thi Tien. "Now he can move it," she said, as her husband pedaled an exercise machine with the help of local Red Cross workers.

Of the \$46 million the Agency has provided for a wide range of health and social services for people with disabilities since 1989, \$8 million went to developing Vietnam's policies related to the disabled, which have advanced their rights and interests.

This assistance helped Vietnam to set up the inter-agency National Coordinating Council on Disability (NCCD) in 2001; enact a barrier-free access code and standards for public construction in 2002; enact access standards for public transport in 2005; add disability inclusion provisions in labor laws and education plans throughout the past decade; and pass the broad-scope Vietnam Disability Law in June 2010.

Activities in late September included workshops to help shape an executive decree to implement the disability law and a new National Action Plan for 2011-2015.

The law and policy achievements circle back to help people like Le Hoang Thi Truc Nhi, 11, a girl with muscular atrophy. With USAID support, she received corrective surgery, physical therapy, orthopedic shoes, and support to cover school-related fees.

"Without this program, I think no one would help," said Nhi's mother, Chuyen Nguyen Thi Chung. As trains roar past, Nhi says she dreams of being a pop star one day, breaking into a song of appreciation: "One rose for my mother, one rose for my teacher." ★

Your Voice

By Susan K. Brems

Your Voice, a continuing **FRONTLINES** feature, offers personal observations from USAID employees. Susan Brems is the senior deputy assistant administrator in the Bureau for Global Health.

Scientific Breakthrough Tips the Gender Scales in Women's Favor

We have much to look back on with pride and look forward to with hope as we commemorate World AIDS Day 2010 on Dec. 1, but one particularly noteworthy event stands out.

At the International AIDS Conference in Vienna in July, the Center for the AIDS Program of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA) presented breakthrough findings that energized the overflowing crowd in the main conference auditorium: Women who used a vaginal microbicide gel containing an antiretroviral drug known as tenofovir before and after sex were 39 percent less likely to become infected with HIV compared to the placebo gel users (see August *FrontLines*, page 1).

What's more, risk fell by 54 percent for women who reported



they used the gel more consistently. Third—and unexpectedly—gel use cut in half infection by herpes simplex virus, a very common sexually transmitted disease that results in increased morbidity, and also increases the risk of acquiring HIV.

These heartening findings from what is commonly referred

to as the CAPRISA 004 study—largely funded by USAID under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief—are a breakthrough in several ways.

This is the first ever “proof of concept” (meaning that it works) that a vaginal microbicide can reduce the risk of sexually transmitted HIV. We all know that science consists of trial and error, and previous studies of microbicide candidates had not proved promising. While further testing is necessary, we now have renewed hope for a microbicide as we move forward.

The public health community is well aware that we must make further dramatic inroads in prevention if we are going to get on top of this dreadful disease. Microbicides will be an excellent

addition to the prevention toolkit, along with male and female condoms, male circumcision, and other biomedical, behavioral, and structural measures.

But what is particularly noteworthy about CAPRISA 004 is that use of microbicides is controlled by women. Women, particularly young women, are arguably more vulnerable to HIV, because of both biology and imbalanced gender relations between males and females that are embedded in society and culture.

The CAPRISA success comes at an auspicious moment. President Barack Obama's Global Health Initiative is in full swing, and has as one of its central organizing principles an approach centered on women, girls, and gender equality. That women in the near future may be able to protect themselves from HIV without their decision requiring a partner's approval or participation is a revolutionary step forward in redressing gender imbalances.

The public health community is well aware that we must make further dramatic inroads in prevention if we are going to get on top of this dreadful disease.

When men have power over women and girls, females are often not able to negotiate how, when, or even with whom they have sex. We see this in Africa, where the practices of multiple concurrent sex partners and intergenerational sex, just to name a few examples, fuel the epidemic. In sub-Saharan Africa, 60 percent of the people infected with HIV are women and girls. And we see this in Latin America, where men who have sex with men have been the principal route for infecting their female partners.

Development practitioners eager to address gender often ask how they can operationalize that somewhat elusive concept in their everyday work. CAPRISA 004 is a stellar example of gender-sensitive science. We at USAID should be proud of our role in bringing it about and hopeful about its scientific and socio-cultural impact. We are likewise committed to collaborating with partners to see this promising product through to, we hope, its successful culmination as a woman-centered product available to those who need it most. ★

INDIA from page 1

to promote agricultural productivity and food security in the Asian nation, home to over 1 billion people, of which some two-thirds depend on rural employment for a living. Unveiling the “Evergreen Revolution,” the countries highlighted the capacity of American and Indian innovation and partnership—public and private—to advance global food security and prosperity.

On Nov. 7, a demonstration of this strategic partnership convened in a momentous occasion for USAID—an Agriculture and Food Security Exposition in Mumbai. Shah escorted Obama, along with U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, through an array of innovative agricultural exhibits on display at St. Xavier's College. The event, co-hosted by USAID, USDA, and the Confederation of Indian Industries, provided an opportunity for the president to visit with Indian farmers who are increasing their productivity and

linking more effectively to markets.

As the delegation travelled through the exhibit-lined courtyard in the sweltering late morning heat, one farmer demonstrated how he receives crop information on his cell phone, while another showed how he obtains information on market rates at village Internet kiosks, enabling him to better negotiate the sale of his produce. A woman farmer handed the president a simple machine she uses to strip corn cobs in a small metal tube. Jokingly, the president compared the tool to a TV infomercial product, and then remarked on how the device reduced the time it takes to strip corn by as much as 30 percent.

Obama has been committed to addressing food security around the world. Through his USAID-led Feed the Future initiative, the United States is redoubling its commitment to solving global hunger. The

innovations showcased at the expo offer important insights on new tools and technologies that, when brought to scale, can transform the agricultural landscape in India and abroad.

The event also highlighted the ways U.S. universities and corporations are partnering with their Indian counterparts to transform Indian farming—the same kind of collaboration that helped produce the first Green Revolution in the 1960s, which led to major advances in agriculture and saved millions of people around the world from starvation.

Now, as farmers and rural areas face the effects of climate change, drought, population pressure, and stagnating agricultural productivity growth, the United States and India are engaged in a new partnership that has the potential to create a second, more sustainable, and greener revolution—one that will benefit farmers and consumers in India, the United States, and around the globe.

Even though India has seen accelerated growth over the past decade (its economy grew at 6.1 percent in the last quarter of 2009) and has emerged as a global player with the world's fourth largest economy in purchasing power parity terms, the nation is still home to around one-third of the world's poor. Over 800 million people still live on less than \$2 a day.

As a result of USAID's collaboration with the Indian government, it is expected that the Indian food processing industry will be enhanced and food safety improved; approximately 1.5 million Indian farm households will decrease water use by a quarter and increase production, yield, and net profit by 30 percent; new agricultural and food security-related technologies will be deployed; and real-time information on crops, weather, and market prices will be available to 10 million farmers.

“The partnership that we are restarting and expanding on here in India is really emblematic of a partnership where two peer nations work side by side to develop the kinds of innovations and solutions that can help improve the lives for hundreds of millions of people here in India,” Shah stressed, “but also improve the lives for hundreds of millions of people in Africa and even in the United States.”

As part of this new Evergreen Revolution, the United States and India will also seek collaborative, breakthrough innovations in agricultural research, technology, and natural resource management to improve food security in Africa. India will share its expertise with African farmers, and it is anticipated that at least 10 India-sourced agriculture technologies will be customized for deployment in specific areas in Africa with the hope of expanding throughout the continent in the coming years. ★

THE REGIONS

ASIA



Sinhalese and Muslim community members attend a dialogue forum with Buddhist clergy in Dighavapi.

Buddhist Clergy Encourage Interethnic Dialogue

DIGHAVAPI, Sri Lanka

A longstanding conflict over land that is sacred to both Sinhalese Buddhists and Muslims in this region has been exacerbated by a war lasting more than two decades between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Sri Lankan government, and by limited access to resources such as water.

To help ease tensions in this community in Sri Lanka's Eastern Province, USAID sponsored a forum led by Buddhist clergy to address the concerns and fears of both Sinhalese and Muslims.

"There is a strong connection between the Sinhala, Muslim, and the predominantly Hindu Tamil communities, but we have not understood this fully," said the Venerable Poddiewela Chandananda, a monk who participated in the Dighavapi forum.

In Dighavapi, a lowland agricultural region in the east of the island nation, which sits off the southern coast of India, the inability to access water and fears of encroachment by members of the rival community are among the gravest concerns. Prior to the conference, members of both groups felt their grievances were not being addressed by their political or civil representatives.

"When we elect a politician to represent our interests in Dighavapi, he is expected to represent all of us, regardless of which ethnicity we belong to. This is why I believe it is not fair for one ethnic community to benefit from a water distribution

system and for the others to be left out," said an anonymous Muslim community member.

Nearly 74 percent of Sri Lankans are Buddhists, while about 7 percent are Muslims and about 18 percent are Tamils. However, in Dighavapi, Buddhists make up about 37 percent of the population, while 44 percent are Muslim; the Tamils remain constant at 18 percent.

At the end of the meeting, participants decided the issues should be taken up by the Buddhist clergy hosting the forum. The monks would advocate on behalf of both the Sinhalese and Muslims before the region's civil administration and local political representatives. The monks would also work to increase communication and interaction and to build stronger linkages among Muslims and Sinhalese.

The meeting represented an important first step toward lasting reconciliation in Dighavapi. "Our aim should not be to live as different ethnic and religious groups, but to co-exist and live together as one group," said Chandananda.

The forum was part of the larger Supporting Regional Governance (SuRG) program, sponsored by USAID, that works with 100 Buddhist monks and nuns in three districts in Sri Lanka on issues of democracy, governance, and reconciliation, and supports their work to promote interethnic harmony and social development. By conducting dialogues among

see **SRI LANKA** on page 14 ▶

EUROPE & EURASIA

Macedonia Helps Schools and Civil Servants Improve Performance

By Sharon Kellman Yett

SKOPJE, Macedonia

Over the past several years, Macedonia has been working to enact and amend its laws to conform to European Union requirements. While most legislation is now in line with EU standards, adequately implementing these laws remains a challenge.

In many cases, the laws imposed new responsibilities and requirements on government workers such as educators and procurement specialists—without an understanding of how to perform these duties successfully.

USAID has been working with a number of public institutions and non-profit associations in Macedonia to improve their performance in implementing key laws using a methodology called Human and Institutional Capacity Development (HICD).

The HICD process identifies gaps in performance, and then intervenes with a package of solutions that addresses the root causes of those gaps.

The assessment first examines the organization's external environment—surveying stakeholders that work with the organization (such as other educational institutions or donors that work in the same field) as well as customers—and then the internal environment—including the workplace's mission, structure, processes, and the workers themselves. USAID reviews the assessment findings and works with the organization to implement necessary changes.

Macedonia's State Education Inspectorate (SEI) is one example. SEI previously focused only on legal compliance, but now is mandated to assess the quality of education in primary and secondary schools nationwide through integrated evaluations. But, the agency lacked standardized procedures and tools for carrying out evaluations. Compounding its troubles, the Inspectorate did not have a sufficient number of staff to conduct evaluations throughout the country.

Through the HICD, the Inspectorate changed its entire institutional structure to help it establish new processes,

including regional deployment of inspectors. SEI developed a set of indicators to objectively measure educational quality in the schools. It also developed the Manual for Integrated Evaluation, a detailed breakdown of the process.

In addition, SEI established a corps of in-house trainers who developed a program and supporting materials for current and new inspectors. New employees that joined SEI in February 2010 were the first to participate in the newly developed training within one week after starting their new careers as inspectors.

"Given the sad history of inspection in this country, teachers and directors are scared when the inspectors come. But our goal is not to frighten or punish them. We really want to improve educational quality and give recommendations on how to achieve

in the previous school year. The quality of both the findings and the recommendations has significantly improved, which is especially important as these reports are included in both national and municipal government education action plans.

In the economic growth sector, USAID used HICD to help the Public Procurement Bureau (PPB) meet requirements of the Public Procurement Law, which went into effect in January 2009. The law governs public spending, including tendering and how money is spent through public procurement, or how the government of Macedonia purchases goods and services from the private sector. The Agency's work included helping the PPB establish a training center, which produced the first generation of certified public procurement specialists



Newly appointed state education inspectors in Macedonia learn to achieve results as a team during training.

that," said Valerija Anastasova, SEI inspector supervisor.

"Integrated evaluations have been mandatory by law since 2008. Without the HICD training, we would get 13 different types of reports from 13 different inspectors. Now, when we conduct integrated evaluations, our draft reports include recommendations, and we work with the schools to come up with an action plan that will show results after six months," she added.

Following the training, SEI successfully carried out 66 integrated evaluations during the second semester of the school year, a significant increase from only 10 conducted during the same period

from either the public or private sector.

Luiza Nakova Karduloska, manager of public procurement and commercial relations for Vodovod, the public utility handling water and sewage for the city of Skopje, was one of the first trainers to be certified by the center, and has since been busy training others after work.

"Most people working in public procurement here have had no training in this field, but they want to do well," said Karduloska. "Before, they could learn on the job, sharing their experiences with their colleagues. But

see **MACEDONIA** on page 15 ▶

AFRICA

Hanger Company Invests in Africa and Beyond

By Themba Mathebula



Photo by Lisa Yamoshnik, USAID

USAID's Southern African and West Africa trade hubs helped a fresh cut fruit processor in South Africa meet export requirements and satisfy a retailer's demands. Here, some of South Africa's mangoes await processing at a fresh cut fruit plant before shipping to a retailer in the United Kingdom.

The international garment hanger company Braiform had been considering investing in sub-Saharan Africa when some of its officials attended a USAID-sponsored event in Southern Africa in 2002.

After several meetings in Southern Africa with some of the region's garment makers, company representatives came away convinced there was enough volume to warrant establishing hanger manufacturing facilities in several countries in the region.

The African apparel makers were on board as well. They had traditionally bought hangers from Asian companies, which meant long lead times and massive cargo space for shipments—and the significant costs that come with both.

The event, in Cape Town, South Africa, was the annual Textiles and Apparel

Business-to-Business (B2B) sponsored by USAID's Southern Africa Trade Hub.

Braiform officials followed up with the company leaders they met at B2B, conducted a feasibility study, and invested around \$400,000 in the project. Eight years later, Braiform now produces 7 million hangers in factories in Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, and South Africa that employ nearly 400 people.

"Braiform realized that a valuable business opportunity existed when they met and interacted with regional industry members at the B2B event," said USAID Southern Africa Deputy Director Leslie Reed.

At the B2B event that kicked off the company's expansion into Africa, USAID pre-selected companies it thought would make a good match with Braiform.

Today, the hangers are sold not only in the countries where the factories are located, but also to companies in nearby Swaziland. Additionally, Braiform is an approved supplier—and in some cases, the preferred or exclusive supplier—to U.S. retailers K-Mart, Kohl's, Sears, Target, and Wal-Mart. These relationships promote higher quality standards, consistent production, and increased accountability.

The African apparel manufacturers are also reaping benefits from the deal. Braiform's investments helped cut transport costs for these companies by about \$4,000 per 40-foot container of 200,000 hangers and reduced delivery times for hanger orders from approximately 30 days to one week. This, in turn, has

see **AFRICA** on page 15 ▶

LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN

Fishing Community Goes Digital to Increase Profits and Safety

By Isadora Ferreira

BAHIA, Brazil—Is it a tool to catch fish or a nickname for the Internet? In this small fishing community, the answer is decidedly both.

In Bahia, the word "net" refers to a combination of digital technologies that is improving the local fishing industry and making life better for about 200 families in Santa Cruz Cabrália—a municipality best known as the place where the explorer Pedro Álvares Cabral landed in the 16th century.

The project is called "Fishing with 3G Nets" and was officially launched in August after almost two years of negotiations led by USAID. The goal of the effort is to promote economic development of the local fishing community using digital technology. The project provides broadband access, 3G mobile Internet, custom applications for managing fishing businesses, equipment, and training through a partnership between USAID/Brazil, the city of Cabrália, IABS (Brazil Sustainable Environmental Institute), and technology companies

Qualcomm, Vivo, and ZTE.

Once trained and properly equipped, local fishermen, which includes the Pataxó indigenous community, should be able to broker deals with buyers, access weather information, and manage economic activities in real-time. The upshot: increased business

opportunities for the fishermen and improving safety conditions.

Previously, fishermen had to trust their instincts to evaluate weather conditions, which increased the risks of their activities. They also had to wait until they were back from sea to start negotiations with buyers at the local market.

"This will help us decide when to go out fishing and how long we must stay in order to assure our profits," says fisherman Genival Cerqueira Guerra.

Another objective of the project is to increase the environmental sustainability of fishing activities in Cabrália, which is already suffering from overfishing of certain species.

The fishermen will provide information about the fish caught



Photo by Alex Araújo, USAID

The Fishing with 3G Nets project donated a training center, formerly a county jail, and 18 computers to a Brazilian fishing community.

and sold in the city that will be fed into a database to help map out which species are being overfished. The data will allow the fishermen to stay informed about both the best times of year to catch a certain species, as well as alternative species to fish to avoid depleting the population.

Fishermen are also learning how to cultivate oysters. André Brugger, president of IABS, the organization that will provide training, explains: "The cultivation of oysters helps ease pressure on fish stocks and on the mangroves, where oysters come from. It also offers income opportunities for women, because [oyster cultivation] is lighter work than fishing."

see **BRAZIL** on page 14 ▶

MIDDLE EAST

Community Center Paves Way for Green Building in the West Bank

NABLUS, West Bank

The new Safer Children's Center, located on the outskirts of the Askar Refugee Camp here, is one of the first buildings in the West Bank designed and constructed entirely with green methods that will save natural resources and promote environmental awareness.

Now camp residents—many of whom live in modest housing and depend on outside

assistance—will have a modern facility for community activities and events. And the building's backers—USAID in collaboration with the Palestinian organization SAFEER and CHF International—hope it will serve as a model for other green-building initiatives in the West Bank.

The \$309,000 center replaces a crowded, unventilated facility that could only

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Photo by Khalid Huseini, CHF

The eco-friendly construction of the Safer Children's Center is expected to save a significant amount of energy.

CONTINUED...

SOLOMON from page 2

get funds out the door more quickly and to help countries avoid some of the common policy mistakes that they can make in an economic crisis. As we get through this crisis, however, the Bank will have to reduce its lending to somewhere near its pre-crisis levels.

Going forward, it is clear that resources are going to be scarce, and we need to be selective about what the Bank and other development partners decide to engage in. That requires working more closely with USAID and other USG agencies undertaking development programs, each with different comparative advantages, to help us all prioritize and be more selective. This doesn't mean we shouldn't be flexible to take on new challenges as they arise. But in my view, the Bank is going to need to focus on pro-growth initiatives, women and girls, and being responsive to key global challenges like food security, climate change, youth unemployment, and of being responsive and effective in fragile and post-conflict states.

Q: In the past, the Bank has been dealt a wide array of critiques. Things like creating indebtedness, being formulaic in the support of development, its structural adjustment policies, policies on water privatization. Going ahead, how would you like to see the World Bank adapting to respond to these and future critiques?

SOLOMON: I myself have at times been a very harsh critic of some of the Bank's policies. And these days, I still see my role as being a critic; but also a constructive part of an institution that is striving to improve itself and the results it achieves.

Addressing some of the critiques, the Bank has actually made a lot of important strides. One, the Bank is much more open than it has been previously; much less opaque with its processes. It's opening up its data; it has a new access-to-information

policy, where almost all of its documents are made public. It has basically adopted something similar to the U.S. version of the Freedom of Information Act. That's an important change.

The Bank also does a much better job of talking to and listening to civil society, in the U.S., globally, and also in client countries. So that's another area where the Bank used to be perceived as very arrogant but has made some real progress.

I think the Bank also learned that it can't be as rigid with some of its views about macroeconomic policy, and it has learned some flexibility in how it treats individual countries. It is not one-size-fits-all. The Bank also takes the issue of safety nets much more seriously. There was a time when the Bank was certainly criticized for having policies that may not have been sensitive to the needs of the poorest. The Bank now is being much more sensitive to those needs, and the importance of having robust safety nets.

I also think that the Bank's board has done a lot to try and make itself more legitimate. We've seen some recent improvements in voice and participation, and giving greater voice on the board to developing countries and emerging countries.

Q: Can you talk about your expectations for the upcoming IDA (International Development Association) replenishment?

SOLOMON: Because we're in the negotiation process, I can't talk about actual figures at this point. IDA is a critically important resource for the poorest countries in the world and it has achieved real results, saving millions of lives, improving education and health-care systems, strengthening public financial management, supporting economic growth, and leveraging donor funds for country-owned development.

The United States has been and intends to continue to be one

of the top donors to IDA. We are hopeful that the United States, with the support of Congress, and other donors can deliver the resources that IDA needs to achieve the development goals of the poorest. Of course, this is a challenging fiscal time for all governments, and most importantly, for taxpayers. We all are going to need to find ways to be creative and be resourceful and discover new ways of working together to make our money go further. We know that IDA is a good return on our investment.

The Bank has done a lot to mobilize internal resources so that the burden for this next IDA replenishment is not all on donors. Internal resources come from areas such as the income the Bank earns on lending to middle-income countries, lending that the IFC (International Finance Corporation, which focuses on private sector investments) makes to the private sector, and previous IDA donors repaying their loans. Besides grants, some of IDA's lending is done in the form of concessional, no-interest loans that get repaid over longer periods of time.

Q: Do you have a vision for your tenure here?

SOLOMON: Yes, My vision is for the Bank to be as effective as possible in advancing the Obama administration's global development policy. So that means the U.S. strengthens its multilateral capabilities to continuously improve results on the ground; to promote game-changing innovations; to enhance transparency and accountability, including to the citizens in the countries we're seeking to serve; and to strengthen partnerships with the private sector and other partners in development.

You know, I think those are the themes of our global policy, so my vision is that the Bank is at the cutting edge of helping us to achieve those objectives. ★

a training center. Once a county jail, the building is now the Computer Center Casa do Pescador, equipped with 18 computers donated by the project. The center doubles as a place to expand access to the Internet in the community beyond the fishermen.

The Fishing with 3G Nets project is part of a larger initiative known as the +Unidos Group, a network of over 100 American companies established in Brazil to promote corporate social responsibility and public-private partnerships and to support environmental and socio-economic projects. ★

SRI LANKA from page 12

the Buddhist clergy and providing them with tools, such as Tamil language and conflict mediation and negotiation skills, the program helps them reach out to people of all faiths and promote religious and ethnic harmony.

The program, implemented by the Social Scientist Association, is one of many where USAID engages religious and non-religious community leaders to promote and sustain positive changes in the social norms and behaviors that affect development.

"In the development context, we really are seeing religious leaders as practitioners. They are

already doing development in their role as leaders of influence," said Afeefa Syeed, senior culture and development advisor in USAID's Asia and Middle East Bureaus. "They are already involved in conflict resolution, education, and delivery of services. Why not engage with them on that? We look to religious leaders as being important to engage to build development strategies, not just as messengers of a program or activity."

Added Chandananda: "What we can do as religious leaders is discuss and talk about the issues people have and agree on a means to address them." ★

NABLUS from page 13

accommodate 1,500 people. The new center, which officially opens in November, has space for 10,000 people and includes a computer lab, library, and large hall, and vast outdoor space for events. The center hosts an array of educational and health activities, summer camps, child-friendly entertainment, and counseling.

"Now we are free to conduct all the activities we want to and can serve the entire area around Askar," said Mohammad Abu Kishk, the center's chairman.

Community members are pleased with the new facility and the green concepts it promotes.

"Without a doubt, there is growing interest in the community in buildings that are environmentally friendly. The idea of being green and protecting the environment is a new concept for us, and the construction of the Children's Center is increasing our knowledge in this area," said Amjad Al Asmar, a resident of the Askar Refugee Camp. "We are happy that USAID funded the construction of this building in our community, as it will be cheaper to run since the green ideas reduce the consumption of water and electricity."

Energy is an essential component in the social, industrial, technological, and economic development of any country. In the West Bank, where energy resources are scarce, smart use of resources is especially crucial.

The eco-friendly construction of the center is expected to generate energy savings of up to 59 percent when compared with buildings constructed using standard methods. It was built with

recycled wood; its skylights and energy-saving illumination reduce power use; and the building's orientation and structural window shading cut down on heat from the sun. Also, double pane windows reduce external noise and improve the building's insulation, reducing heating costs in the winter. And wall openings create ventilation and control temperature naturally.

The center also has a rainwater harvesting system and a gray water treatment plant to process water for reuse to irrigate outdoor plants. The facility's gardens feature local plants that require fewer pesticides and less water for irrigation than non-native species.

To increase community members' understanding and appreciation of energy efficiency and environmental issues, the center provides learning tools and permanent displays, ranging from cut-outs showing the building's insulation layers to plaques alongside each green element in the building explaining its function.

Palestinian engineers involved in the project say they gained valuable experience they can apply to future energy-efficient building projects. "[We now] have skills that put us ahead of many of our peers who do not yet have experience working with green methods," said Ghada Ibrahim, a civil engineer involved in the planning and implementation of the project.

USAID's Emergency Jobs Program, which funded the construction of the center, aims to create work opportunities through small-scale infrastructure projects to provide immediate economic and humanitarian relief to thousands of Palestinians. ★

BRAZIL from page 13

Project backers arranged to use a boat to bring the training programs directly to fishing communities located further from the city.

The city of Cabralia, with support from the city council, also donated a building to the fishing community to be used as

VOLCANO from page 1



Janu, right, played with two of his friends after receiving a family kit from World Vision Indonesia at the Caturharjo evacuation center.

“My mother woke me up when I was still asleep. She forced me to run away from my house. I had no chance even to put on my sandals,” he said showing his bare feet. “I was afraid my house was about to collapse. Everything around me was shaking.”

Janu’s mother, Rianti, added: “We were all terrified. I heard flying gravel hit the roof tiles. We ran away from our house covering our heads with motorcycle helmets and buckets. The air was very hot.”

Mt. Merapi has erupted more than a half dozen times since the initial explosion on Oct. 26. It has spewed flows of hot gas down the mountainside and expunged ash into the atmosphere, which has hampered air travel to Yogyakarta. An ash cloud cut short President Barack Obama’s recent visit here.

The Mt. Merapi eruption came just days after a tsunami killed at least 448 people in the Mentawai Islands chain, located in West Sumatra province in the northwestern portion of the disaster-prone Indonesian archipelago. Indonesia, a collection of more than 17,500 islands, lies in a region known as the “ring of fire,” where earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are commonplace.

In response to both the earthquake and the tsunami, USAID has made available at least \$2 million in humanitarian assistance and support for displaced persons to eventually return to their homes and resume normal livelihoods. USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) rapidly deployed staff to both sites, supporting relief agencies to distribute items such as blankets, kitchen kits, and hygiene kits, and to assist with water and sanitation. OFDA also monitored and assessed the

situation in both places in conjunction with the Indonesian government. That effort helped thousands to get out of harm’s way.

OFDA has supported disaster relief and disaster risk reduction efforts in Indonesia many times over the years, most notably after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, which left 200,000 dead in Banda Aceh.

USAID’s Volcano Disaster Assistance Program has partnered with the Indonesian government for decades to monitor volcanic activity throughout the archipelago. It recently upgraded seismic monitoring capabilities at Mt. Merapi.

Janu and his family live about 15 kilometers from the peak of Merapi, the most active mountain in Indonesia. Prior to Nov. 5, the government decided that the area 10 kilometers from the peak was safe. But authorities were forced to expand the danger area to 15 kilometers and then again to 20 kilometers as the volcano erupted again and again, with ever-increasing force.

The decision forced people in 32 villages in a 20-kilometer radius around Mt. Merapi to abandon their properties and raised the number of internally displaced persons to around 380,000 from about 70,000. Many have been housed at the 578 evacuation centers the government established.

“We brought almost nothing of value when we rushed to abandon our properties. We’re grateful for the support from donors. The preceding night we could not sleep as we had no blankets and the weather was very cold,” said Rianti.

Janu and his parents at first fled to Sleman Sports Center, but the facility was already overcrowded. They decided to leave the compound and move to the Caturharjo Community Center, 35 kilometers from the peak of Merapi.

“It was hard even to find an empty space to sit in the Sleman Sports Center as it was swarmed by so many villagers. It’s much better here, although we have almost nothing with us,” Rianti added.

Finally, on Nov. 6—after a two-day delay caused by the decision to move the evacuation site—USAID grantee World

Vision distributed 1,200 family kits to the displaced people from Caturharjo village. Rianti’s family was among those that received the kits, which consisted of mats, sarongs, blankets, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, tissue rolls, and sanitary napkins.

“I could smile again. I saw that people hadn’t forgotten us,” said Rianti as she collected her aid package. “My wish is to remain safe amidst this rage of nature. I want to see my children and grandchildren grow. I know that it’s hard to fight raging nature,” she said, casting her eyes to the peak of Merapi, as it continued to shower the Caturharjo evacuation center with ashes after yet another explosion.

As of mid-November, the volcanic activity at Mt. Merapi had leveled off. Eruptions have been less forceful, spewing debris to a

lower height, with only intermittent flows of gas and lava down the hillside. But an active volcano is never completely predictable, and the threat Mt. Merapi poses will continue into the foreseeable future. Indonesian experts will continue to monitor Mt. Merapi’s volcanic activity and hope that the surrounding population will react quickly the next time it becomes life threatening. ★

Ikene Sere Edwina is with World Vision.

MACEDONIA from page 12

with the new Public Procurement Law, without the training, there is no way to do this job now.

“More than just understanding the law, you need an understanding of implementation of the law. And the procedures we learned make the public procurement process more transparent,” she said. ★

AFRICA from page 13

allowed companies to fulfill orders more quickly and reliably, a necessary requirement for their American buyers.

The Southern African Trade Hub was established in 2002 to support the Africa Growth and Competitiveness Initiative, a multi-year effort to help sub-Saharan Africa countries improve competitiveness and gain greater access to global markets.

For the 2010 African Textile and Apparel B2B event, held in May, the trade hub recruited the largest number of buyers in the six-year history of the event, with the majority of them coming from the United States for the first time. Last year’s B2B resulted in approximately \$12 million worth of sales and this year’s event is expected to at least match that amount. ★

FRONTLINES

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“I realize that there are among us those who are weary of sustaining this continual effort to help other nations. But I would ask them to look at a map and recognize that many of those whom we help live on the ‘front lines’ of the long twilight struggle for freedom—that others are new nations posed between order and chaos—and the rest are older nations now undergoing a turbulent transition of new expectations. Our efforts to help them help themselves, to demonstrate and to strengthen the vitality of free institutions, are small in cost compared to our military outlays for the defense of freedom.”

—John F. Kennedy, Special Message to the Congress on Foreign Aid, March 13, 1962

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M – Lauren Gabler; **ME** – Hope Bryer, Jan Cartwright;

SEC – Dwayne Moore, Lorraine Meehan

Submit notices, story ideas, feedback to **FRONTLINES** articles and requests to be added to the mailing list to FrontLines@usaid.gov.

The icon  at the end of a story indicates that associated videos are available through the online version of *FrontLines*. Go to www.usaid.gov/frontlines to view these videos.



AND THE WINNER IS...

The competition was impressive and picking one top winner for the *FrontLines* photo contest left judges in a temporary quandary.

But the results are in and Kendra Helmer, a USAID press officer working in Haiti, came out on top. Her image, seen at right, was among the nearly 40 entries from *FrontLines* readers for the photo contest, which was held over the last several weeks.

The winning photo shows a training facility for farmers in Kenscoff, Haiti, that is part of USAID's Watershed Initiative for National Natural Environmental Resources program.

FrontLines also selected two runner-up photos—one from Nigeria, and the other from Uganda.

The photo contest, announced last month, attracted images from all the regions where USAID works. The rules were simple: Send in your best images that showcase USAID development in action. Photos came not only from USAID staffers, but also from people who work in NGOs, the private sector, and other institutions.

Eight judges from USAID's Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs narrowed the



WINNER, FRONTLINES PHOTO CONTEST. Amid rows of cabbage, John Atis talks about the crop grown at the Wynne Farm, a mountaintop training facility for farmers in Kenscoff, Haiti. Atis is the Kenscoff regional director for USAID's Watershed Initiative for National Natural Environmental Resources (WINNER) program. WINNER is a five-year, \$126 million project to build Haiti's agricultural infrastructure, capacity, and productivity in a sustainable way. Oct. 6, 2010.

► Photo by Kendra Helmer, USAID

submissions to the top 12 images. And, after a few rounds of voting, they declared a winner.

Check out USAID's homepage, where the winning photo will be prominently displayed.

Continue to the *FrontLines* webpage (www.usaid.gov/frontlines) to see the top 12 contest picks.

All of the images entered into

the competition can be downloaded

from USAID's photo gallery—www.usaid.gov/press/photos. ★

Entries for the next photo contest are due on January 10! Good luck!



RUNNER-UP, FRONTLINES PHOTO CONTEST. Participants in a Ugandan cash-for-work program build a road to link their community with the nearest market as part of the 2009 Horn Food Price Crisis Response (HFPCR). HFPCR is implemented by Mercy Corps, the International Rescue Committee, and Medair. Nov. 11, 2009.

► Photo by Kaarli Sundsmo, USAID



RUNNER-UP, FRONTLINES PHOTO CONTEST. Hope is the first baby treated by D-Rev's Brilliance device in a neonatal care intensive unit in Ogbomoso, Nigeria. He had been diagnosed with severe jaundice and needed an exchange blood transfusion to prevent brain damage or death. Due to the baby's low birth weight (about 2.6 pounds), a local doctor was unwilling to do an exchange transfusion. After sleeping one night under Brilliance, Hope no longer required a transfusion. Severe neonatal jaundice affects more than 10 percent of newborns and, left untreated, can be fatal. The low-energy device uses strategically placed, high-intensity blue LEDs to treat severe jaundice in newborns. Feb. 23, 2009.

► Photo by Ben Cline, D-Rev