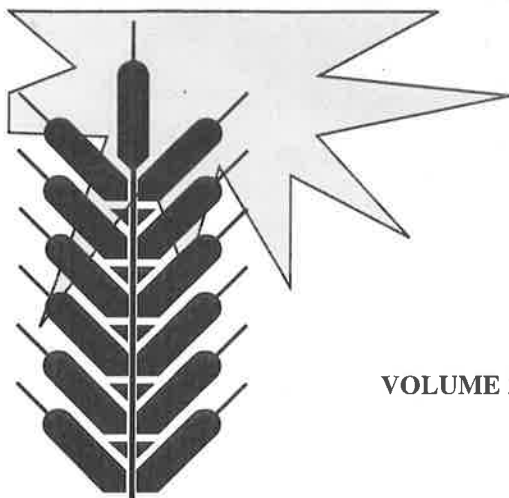




HUNGER NOTES

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WINTER 1997

The GAO Report: USAID and Child Survival



Hunger Notes

A quarterly publication of
World Hunger Education Service

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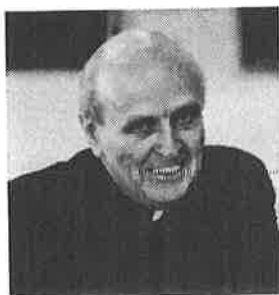
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Cover photo: An Andean Rural Health Care Volunteer in Bolivia Weighing
an Infant During a Home Visit. Photo: USAID

The United States and World Hunger: Testimony Before the House Appropriations Foreign Operations Subcommittee



Robert Drinan, S.J.

Father Robert Drinan, S.J. is a member of the Board of Directors of the World Hunger Education Service. Father Drinan is a professor of law at Georgetown University Law School, specializing in international human rights, constitutional law, and civil liberties. He is the author of *The Fractured Dream—America's Devisive Moral Choices*. Fr. Drinan was a U.S. Congressman from Massachusetts from 1971 to 1981. Photo: Georgetown University

"We are firmly convinced, and we act on that conviction, that with nations, as with individuals, our interests soundly calculated will ever be found inseparable from our moral duties"

— Thomas Jefferson, March 4, 1805

I am Robert Drinan, representing the World Hunger Education Service (WHES). WHES is a non-profit educational organization providing information and facilitating communication on issues of world poverty and hunger. Its principal publication, *Hunger Notes*, has been providing information and analysis on hunger issues for 21 years, and is now beginning an edition on the World Wide Web.¹ Our testimony will be on three steps that the United States and this committee can take to reduce hunger and improve the situation of poor people of the world.

1. We need country-by-country assessments of progress in major areas, such as improving food security, as well as evaluations of major programs of multilateral and bilateral assistance to improve the lives of poor people, including programs of UN organizations such as UNICEF and WHO, and bilateral programs such as USAID.

2. The most important problem facing the people of the world is that they can be dominated by groups that have managed to achieve control over them by—at bottom—military/physical threat means. We need sustained attention to this problem by everyone, including the people and political institutions of the United States.

3. We think the financial and intellectual commitment of the people and political institutions of the United States to the poor people of the world needs to be increased, not diminished, with the end of the Cold War. The U.S. commitment to preventing world hunger, in particular, needs strengthening. In our testimony to this committee we will focus on the financial commitment.

1. The U.S. public, indeed the people of the world, need a more accurate assessment of progress and performance on issues such as world hunger and child survival. We need: a) a

fuller description of where we are with respect to major issues, and, b) evaluations of major programs. Let us explain.

A fuller description of where we are with respect to major issues.

The various descriptions of these issues, such as UNICEF's annual State of the World's Children Report and USAID's Report to Congress on Child Survival are fine as far as they go. They do not get down to "where the rubber hits the road"—the country level. We have recently read two reports, both of which we consider to be good studies—the FAO studies on the world food situation prepared for the World Food Summit, and the USAID study, "Investments in Agriculture." The USAID study essentially says that if you don't have a good country policy framework, money spent on agriculture will be wasted. We believe this to be a key point. But where are the evaluations of "country frameworks" on a coun-

Tom Marchione, New HN Editor

Hunger Notes welcomes Tom Marchione to its editorial board as a contributing editor. Dr. Marchione is an anthropologist and currently serves as an evaluation officer and nutrition advisor to the Bureau for Humanitarian Response of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), where he evaluates assistance programs, edits the World Food Day Report, and advises on the nutritional content of food aid commodities. In 1995, while on leave from USAID, he was an associate professor in World Hunger at Brown University. Dr. Marchione has been committed to nutrition, development and economic justice issues since serving as a sociologist for the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute in the early 1970s. His primary interest is in fostering beneficial links between national and international economic and food policy and programs and the social conditions in communities, locally based organizations, and households. He is currently editing a volume entitled, *Scaling-Up, Scaling Down: Capacities for Overcoming Malnutrition*, which focuses on changing conditions and skills required of donors and NGOs involved in food and nutrition programs since 1989. Please see his article "The Human Right to Food and the Realization of Food Security" in this issue. □

Table 1. Freedom of the World's Population as Estimated by Freedom House

Date	Free Number	%	Partly Free Number	%	Not Free Number	%
1981	1,163.0	35.9	970.9	21.6	1,911.9	42.5
1988	1,924.6	38.3	1,205.4	24.0	1,896.0	37.7
1996	1,114.5	19.55	2,365.8	41.49	2,221.2	39.0

Source: Freedom House

try-by-country basis to be found? They do not exist in a form that is accessible to the public. Yet surely the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the United States Agency for International Development have such assessments of progress and problems or can prepare them relatively easily. Or independent, relatively low cost "delphi style" evaluations can be done. **It is time to make them available.** We would suggest starting with two key issues: 1) food security/world hunger, and 2) child survival, and limit the evaluation to countries that are the most food insecure and with the highest rates of child mortality. These assessments needn't be done every year necessarily, but they should be done every two years. The Internet provides a way to make these assessments widely available and at low cost. Once they are available, hunger advocacy and education institutions can ensure even wider dissemination of the information. Our recommendation to you is report language suggesting that those institutions for which your subcommittee provide funding (or the U.S. agency responsible for administering that funding, e.g., the Treasury for the World Bank) devise a plan for providing country policy and performance information on a regular basis for the key areas of world hunger and child survival.

Good publicly-available evaluations of the programs of major institutions helping to combat hunger and poverty. There are many institutions to which we entrust taxpayer money in order to help those in developed countries combat hunger and poverty. Hundreds of millions and, overall, billions of dollars have been appropriated to UNICEF, the United Nations Development Program, the World Bank, the International Fund for Agriculture Development, the World Health Organization, and the United States Agency for International Development. Hunger Notes is very interested in such evaluations

because of their importance and tries to publish excerpts from them when available. For example, Hunger Notes published an evaluation of IFAD, and with this issue is publishing excerpts from the recently published GAO report on child survival.

Yet, as far as we are able to determine, these evaluations are done much less often than they should be. This makes it very difficult to assess progress, to evaluate institutions and programs, and when, after discussion, it is seen to be desirable, to make changes.

We are faced with situations like the following: In the mid-1980s and into the 1990s, WHO played a large role, with significant appropriations from the United States, in the world effort to prevent AIDS. Yet several years later—lo and behold—the responsibility has been taken away from WHO and given to a new program, UNAIDS, with, as far as we are able to determine, a substantial decrease in donor funding. We didn't see any publicly available evaluations of WHO's AIDS program. Did you? It seems to us that issues of administration and program direction are best evaluated and discussed on a regular basis with all the multilateral and bilateral aid agencies, and we urge you to adopt report language suggesting this. Congress must take this greater amount of evaluative material into consideration but not, if negative, immediately use it as an excuse to cut programs. The business of large international organizations is complicated and worldwide in scope and it is possible for evaluations to be mis-

taken or focus on different aspects of a complicated reality. The parable of the five blind men examining an elephant is appropriate here.

2. The most important problem facing the people of the world is that they can be dominated by a group that has managed to achieve dominance over them by— at bottom—military/physical threat means.

Armed military groups in Somalia. *Organized killing* by those in charge of the government in Rwanda. *Death squads* associated with those in power in Guatemala and previously other Latin American countries. Often the situation can be less dramatic but still very injurious to people's welfare. Government corruption in Mexico, for example, is an important part of the process, but by no means the only part whereby income is steered to those with political power and away from the average person.

There has been progress in some regions and countries, such as South Africa and many countries of Latin America. No longer does the Argentinian military take people with whom it has political differences and drop them from airplanes! The military in many countries, such as Argentina, Bolivia and Chile, is permitting civilian elections, (though the military in these countries still has a far greater political role than would be considered appropriate in the United States). Though there has been substantial attention to humanitarian emergencies/conflict situations/emerging democracies around the world, there has not been enough.

Table 1, abridged from the 1996 Freedom House survey, shows the magnitude of the problem. We wish to point out two major aspects of this table: First, a significant amount of the world's population— 40 percent!— lives in countries that are not free. Second, the percentage of the population that lives in countries that are free has dropped substantially, while those that live in countries that

Table 2. Allocation of USAID Resources to Agriculture, in \$Millions and as a Percent of Total Economic Assistance, FY 1989-94

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
Agriculture all.	806	577	674	626	589	418
Total Econ. Asst.	5,900	6,684	7,543	6,572	6,776	6,641
Percent of total	14	18	16	18	14	19

Source: USAID

are only partially free has risen significantly.

This is, in our judgement, very possibly the most important part of the world hunger problem. It has meant famine in the most extreme cases, and hunger and poverty for many in a large number of other cases. Though this issue has received significant attention over the years, it needs much more attention, and from all of us.

Hunger Notes and the World Hunger Education Service is making this a priority. We have, for example, undertaken a special issue on Rwanda, "What Have Humanitarians Learned," which was an attempt to see what PVOs and others interested in Rwanda might have done beforehand to analyze and act to defuse violence, and what this might mean in terms of a code of conduct that PVOs, bilateral aid agencies, and others might begin to form and act on in other countries. We are planning an issue on human rights approaches to development assistance, as well.

From the Congress we ask the following:

We must understand the possibility and actuality of wrongful violence against others as a fundamental part of human life, and must be prepared to make a contribution to reducing it as a key part of our foreign policy. We have to realize it is an important problem that is by no means confined to other countries. It is universal. It happens frequently in Washington, for example, where "crews" sell drugs, rob, and kill, and thus terrorize, neighborhoods.

We have to realize on an international level that we cannot "go it alone" but must in fact involve ourselves in cooperation with others. This includes the United Nations. We have to understand that our national sovereignty is not being usurped when we work in collaboration with others, which is part of what Congress still does not seem to have understood.

We must realize that progress will be imperfect and "messy." We must adopt to the greatest extent possible a bipartisan approach to the situation of wrongful violence. We need much discussion on this issue on the one hand and on the other, for fingerprinting to be kept to a minimum.

3. We need a significant increase in support for programs that work to end hunger and poverty.

The reduction in Cold War tensions should have released intellectual and financial resources to address other major world problems, such as violence, hunger, and poverty. For the United States government it has done no such thing. Three key points with respect to U.S. support for hunger and poverty are:

1. **The United States cut funding for foreign aid, including initiatives to assist the world's poor, in fiscal 1996, and has not restored that cut subsequently.** USAID development assistance funding was cut by 24 percent, for example.
2. **U.S. foreign assistance devoted to agriculture in particular is down sharply.** Table 2 gives the details.
3. **The United States contribution to development has continued to decline as a percentage of**

GNP. Moreover, the United States is dead last in its share of GNP devoted to foreign aid, as Figure 1 indicates. It agreed to commitments at the World Food Summit, the most important being the commitment to reduce the number of undernourished people to half their present number by 2015. However, this commitment has not shown up in an overall increase in U.S. funding for the reduction of world hunger.

Two areas of increase that we would support are USAID's African food security initiative and restoration of funding for the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

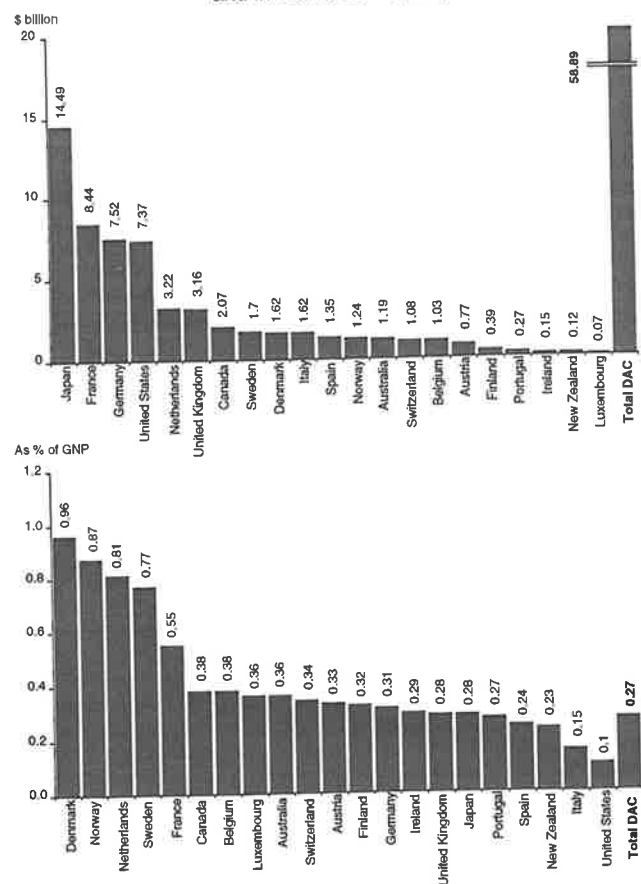
The African food security initiative is not a large initiative at this point: five countries and \$25 million, when compared to a total \$336 million USAID request for "encouraging broad-based economic growth" in Africa.

In 1994, all of IFAD's member countries, including the United States, agreed to an overall replenishment level of \$600 million. The United States was supposed to give just over \$30 million a year for three years, totaling \$92 million. Unfortunately, the Administration finally agreed to pledge just \$5 million over six years, totalling \$30 million.

We would also support increases, not reductions, in child survival and microenterprise. □

1 http://www.brown.edu/Departments/World_Hunger_Program/hungerweb/HN/hungernotes.html

Figure 1: Net Official Development Assistance in 1995
(Performance of DAC Countries as a Percentage of GNP and in Terms of Volume)





From left to right: Tsutomu Hata, former Japanese Prime Minister, Honorary Co-Chair of Microcredit Summit; Pascoal Mocumbi, Prime Minister of Mozambique; Alberto Fujimori, President of Peru; Queen Sofia of Spain, Honorary Co-chair of Microcredit Summit; Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh; Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. First Lady, Honorary Co-Chair of Microcredit Summit; Muhammad Yunus, Founder and Managing Director of the Grameen Bank, Bangladesh; Elizabeth A. DeCalderson Sol, First Lady of El Salvador; Ana Paula Cristovao Lemos dos Santos, First Lady of Angola; Datin Dr. Siti Hasmah Bt Mohd Ali, First Lady of Malaysia; Queen Fabiola of Belgium

Microcredit Summit at the Sheraton Washington Hotel, Feb. 2-4, 1997

The Microcredit Summit

Sam Daley-Harris

Over 2,600 people from 137 countries gathered in Washington this February for the first global Microcredit Summit. Heads of state and Wall Street bankers joined grassroots leaders and microcredit practitioners in their commitment to reaching the world's poorest citizens with access to microcredit.

Such diverse participants as U.S. First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and World Bank President James Wolfensohn stood in partnership with Alice Semosa, a self-employed clothing vendor from South Africa, and Hortensia Contreras, a microentrepreneur and mother of five from El Salvador.

Recently I was asked to participate on a panel entitled, "The Future of Foreign Aid?"

As the founder of RESULTS, an international citizens lobby dedicated to generating the political will to end hunger and poverty, and as the founder of RESULTS Educational Fund, the non-governmental organization that convened the recent Microcredit Sum-

mit, I approach the question of foreign aid with some pretty strong biases. They reside mostly in the area of reaching the poorest—the 1.3 billion inhabitants of this planet who live on less than one dollar a day.

Seven years ago, I asked Peter Adamson, who had produced the *State of the World's Children* reports for Jim Grant and UNICEF for about 15 years, which of the goals of the World Summit for Children was least likely to be reached. Child mortality? Access to clean water? His answer, "It's none of those. What will be hardest to reach will be the bottom 20 percent."

My bias, and that of my organization, is in favor of the poorest, the hardest to reach. The goal of the Microcredit Summit is to reach 100 million of the world's poorest families, especially the women of those families, with credit for self-employment and other financial and business services by the year 2005.

Microcredit has made the transition from theory to practice in thousands of programs, already reaching

millions of families worldwide. Ela Bhatt, General Secretary of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in India tells the story of SEWA's first borrower.

In 1975, when the bank was not taking many risks, a vegetable vendor came who was under such economic pressure that she was absolutely desperate. Her husband was an unemployed textile worker, and he would somehow roam about and fill his belly each day, but it was a very difficult situation for her and her children. The bank decided to extend her a loan of Rs.50 (US\$1.50) and someone went with her to buy green masalas like coriander, mint, ginger, garlic, and chilis. That day SEWA cared for her children, who were sick and hungry. She earned Rs.6 (US\$0.18) profit selling the masalas that day, and she took home food that night. She continued building her business day by day, and the next week she repaid

Rs.51. It was hardly any risk for the bank and it literally meant life or death for that woman. After that we started extending those Rs.50 loans to many women.

Twenty years later, SEWA now reaches over 50,000 women. Giving the world's poorest people access to credit has been hailed by UNDP Administrator Gus Speth as "one of the most powerful development assistance tools we have." The microcredit approach has also captivated the attention of international financial institutions from the World Bank to Citicorp.

Grameen Bank Founder Muhammad Yunus illustrates another point:

In an interview several years ago with Judy Mann of *The Washington Post*, Dr. Yunus described the 350,000 housing loans Grameen has made—loans of \$300, repaid over a 10-year period. The houses (125 square feet each) consist of four cement pillars so the house won't wash away in the monsoon, a tin roof so it won't rain in anymore, and a sanitary latrine.

To qualify, the borrower has to have successfully repaid three one-year self-employment loans. Furthermore, her husband must sign over to her the title to the land on which the house would stand, a "radical" concept in any country, but especially in Bangladesh's Moslem culture.

Mann also asked Yunus if the bank offered marriage counseling. "Yes, but it's informal," he answered, then related a conversation with the husband of a Grameen borrower.

"Are you happy with Grameen Bank?" Yunus asked the husband.

"Yes, I am," the husband replied. "My wife's gotten her loan, and she's working very hard."

"How about the two of you?" Yunus continued, "Are you happy?"

"Yes," the husband replied. "My wife used to complain that we didn't have enough food, but now we have enough."

Then there was a long silence. After awhile, the husband turned to Yunus and said, "There is one thing, however. I used to enjoy beating my wife, but the last time I beat her I made a pact with myself that I would never do it again because the other women in her borrowing group came to

I believe that our countries' greatest chance to create wealth and progress lies in the pride and courage of our smallest entrepreneurs....The government of Peru is about to launch MIBANCO, a credit and financial institution, especially geared at supporting and promoting growth for low income entrepreneurs, energizing a vital sector of our economy. This initiative will dramatically boost microcredit in our country...and allow millions of Peruvians to defeat poverty.

—H.E. Alberto Fujimori, President, Peru

If the poor are to share in the economic growth of their countries, their countries must commit adequate resources to help build the institutions that serve the poor.

—Ela Bhatt, General Secretary, Self-Employed Women's Association

On behalf of the ACCION Network we pledge that we will increase the \$1 billion that we have lent in the last five years by \$11 billion between now and the year 2005. And that the ACCION Network will take its coverage of 275,000 active clients in 1996 to two million by the end of the year 2005.

—Michael Chu, President, ACCION International

As a concrete goal for the future, we are fully committed to urge the Japanese government to allocate 10 percent of its ODA to "grass-roots assistance," of which 1 percent or approximately 100 million dollars should be assigned for the microcredit program. By continuing such microcredit assistance for 10 years, Japan's contribution will cover about 5 percent of the resources to attain the goal of the Microcredit Summit, which is estimated at \$21.6 billion dollars.

—Wakako Hironaka, Member of the House of Councillors, Japan

On behalf of millions of Angolan women I would like to join in as we say yes to the appeal for implementation of the actions listed in the final declaration of this Summit....I hereby pledge all my efforts and influence toward the accomplishment of the goals listed in the Action Plan of this Summit on Microcredit.

—Ana Paula dos Santos, First Lady, Angola

me and they argued with me and shouted at me. When I beat my wife before," the man continued, "no one said anything; no one cared. This is no longer true with the women in her borrowing group."

This kind of empowerment reaches the deepest levels of community building. It links women who have been ostracized, even by their own families.

Each of us has an opportunity to speak out for the life-altering changes found in these stories. The Microcredit Summit Campaign will continue over the next nine years to the year 2005. I urge you to find your way into this campaign by enlisting an institution with which you are involved: your place of worship, a service club, your place of work or your member of Congress. The Microcredit Summit Campaign is in need of leaders—ordinary people who are committed to extraordinary change. Are you such a person? □

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Advancing the Cause of Women in Kenya: Reflections on Our Efforts

Rosa Muraguri-Mwololo

The way gender issues were introduced to Kenya, and perhaps to most of Africa, they not only threatened the status quo but they also left a trail of hostility that made the word WID (Women in Development) offensive to every male who heard it. This concept, which originated from developed countries, was launched aggressively in Kenya mainly by trainers from the North, with good intentions of uplifting the status of their sisters in the South. With little or no cultural orientation, the trainers of trainers introduced loaded key words like empowerment, equality, sharing of power, equal opportunities; words that openly challenged the superior status of men in the society. (In fact, the first-ever gender training of trainers in Kenya was carried out by two Canadian consultants and was funded by CIDA, the Canadian development organization). Many of the Kenyan trainees were converted into strong feminists, and raised women's issues in all development debates. This movement was further favored by the fact that many donor countries made WID assessment mandatory in all their funded development projects, including projects supported through bilateral agreements with the Kenyan Government. WID analysis soon became a precondition for all project funding.

However, as a result of the aggressive way the WID concept was launched into the development scenario, the Kenyan Government and many other NGOs (the leadership at the top being male-dominated) became negative and unwilling to institute any affirmative actions in areas that were begging. Women were deliberately marginalized in some situations just to display the contempt some men felt for the WID issues. In some rural villages, men would prevent women from continuing with their women's groups activities, including attending training seminars, claiming that women were being taught how to disobey their husbands.

Similar negative incidents must have been registered in many other regions, and, perhaps as a way of diluting the negative effects of the WID concept, in Kenya, as in most other countries, WID has been replaced by the term Gender and Development (GAD). People are slowly

being taught that gender issues are about the welfare of both sexes and not about women as previously perceived. I will share some of the personal approaches that I have used successfully in dealing with women's empowerment issues among rural communities that have for generations perceived power and leadership to be men's domain.

Think of Your Daughters

One approach: think of your daughters. Given that most of my work involves dealing with communities directly, I inevitably find myself doing a lot of unstructured training. Having made many mistakes and many male enemies in my various WID approaches, I have learned new and less antagonistic ways of giving the same message. Experience has again painfully taught me that when dealing with the issue of women's empowerment, I will get a more attentive male audience when I talk of what we can do for their daughters and mothers than when I speak of women in general. In most men's perceptions, women are tantamount to wives; when you talk of powersharing, equality empowerment etc., men immediately see their personal positions and the power dynamics of their families getting hugely threatened.

For instance, the first thing I do when I encounter a project where the leadership is male-dominated, and I would like the leadership to be gender balanced, is to avoid a direct debate on issues about equality and power sharing. Instead, I try to point out to them the link between lack of female role models in our villages, and the absence of their daughters from positions of power in their employment places. I continue to explain that it is precisely because their daughters never saw their mothers or aunties lead in community activities that they are turning down responsible appointments in their places of work. In effect, I make them realize that their daughters are missing high-paying jobs, and that this inhibiting pattern of behavior can be traced in them and can only be broken by them.

My emphasis is that women have to start accepting positions of power and leadership in the village activities for their daughters to start doing the same in their jobs. (In Kenya we have countless incidents, especially in the

banks, where women have turned down high positions of responsibility because the small voice in them tells them they will make enemies and become unpopular when they start playing boss. This need to be accepted often wins and a man takes up the job. However, the man never loses acceptance; that is our tragedy).

Many rural people are aware of cases where male contemporaries of their daughters, who even might not have passed their exams as well, are 'big managers' in some organization. I take them to task, and ask them how they feel that their daughters with good education are bypassed in their careers by their male contemporaries, and many others that are younger, because their daughters are afraid of taking up leadership positions. When I use the example of their daughters, men are the first to see the unfairness of the situation, much different than when you talk generally about women. In all the instances that I have used this approach, the male-dominated committees have, without any hard feelings, been able to surrender some positions of power within the management to women members.

You obviously can have a gender integrated committee without going round in circles to show them all kinds of linkages, but then you risk making people feel manipulated and generating negative feelings toward women who will have been given opportunities to lead. The important thing in integrating women in development is to cultivate sustainable mental attitudes and modes of behavior within the community. **For there to be change people must understand the question of why; the change must have a benefit of some kind; and they must believe in it for it to be internalized. Sustainable development is about changing peoples' perceptions and behavior permanently.** You must strive to impact on the attitudes of the community members to have lasting solutions to existing problems.

I have successfully revolutionized many of my projects' committees by using this approach. The concept of sharing power will initially take them aback, but afterwards these committees have run smoothly, and, most importantly, without generating feelings of hostility. As an approach it is sustainable because it poses no threats

to any gender, and it is based on a mutual understanding that their girl-children deserve better in life, and hence the need for female leaders' role-models within their environment.

Difficult Tasks

A second approach that I use to empower women is to ask them to perform unfamiliar, and commonly perceived to be difficult, tasks. For instance, once women are in leadership positions they have to make money decisions, including opening bank accounts, and run the financial side efficiently. Most rural women have never been to a bank, first, because they would never have money to bank (most family money belongs to the man); second, because banks are located in urban areas far away, demanding a lot of travel, and last, because banks are highly bureaucratic and intimidating for most rural illiterate people. For women who have never made money decisions in their households, being able to manage efficiently, and with minimum guidance, up to Can\$10,000 is commendable. (Most community projects that benefit women have budgets between Can\$2,000 to \$50,000). Many of these projects which involve bringing clean and safe water nearer to their homesteads using gravity-fed systems or well rehabilitations require a lot of running around. Communities have to visit government offices to get structural drawings for their projects, seek estimates, environmental assessment letters, and get different letters of authority from different offices, get costs and estimates of materials, and make purchases; all activities that are normally handled by men.

Initially, many women are scared stiff of the demands of a project and make a lot of excuses about not knowing where to go for various things. With a lot of trials and inevitably a few errors, the previously naive and shy women are transformed into women in charge of their lives, and the destinies of their villages. At the end of the project, these women are totally empowered, and nobody can take away from them the confidence, the self-worth and the skills they have acquired. This sense of self-worth does not stop at the project level, it is seen in the household level when the battering stops, when the woman starts her own income-generating activities, when the sanitary conditions of her house improve, etc. Tomorrow, if you

tell this woman that it is possible to build a dam in the neighborhood or a dispensary or an access road, she will not doubt her ability, she will be ready to participate in the project. This is empowerment!

Women will often lose newly acquired skills, leadership, accounting, water and sanitation, project management, etc., if they are not presented with opportunities to put into use what they have acquired. Training as an empowerment tool must involve a lot of practical responsibilities for it to be internalized. The way to women's empowerment is to involve them as much as possible, however difficult and alien the task may seem to them at the beginning.

Experts and Participation

The area of participation is one that most development experts and volunteers least understand. Participation has to go beyond decision-making and planning to hands-on management. Most development experts end up managing and running projects with little or no delegation to community members. All this is done in the name of helping, but development is about building the capacities of the community you are working with so that they can sustain the project. When this aspect is not put into consideration, projects collapse as soon as the experts leave and what seemed like a successful project becomes another "white elephant". Poor and illiterate people will often look unsure of themselves and will tend to look up to people for help. However, given responsibilities and proper guidance it has been proved they learn quickly, they acquire confidence and are capable of taking charge of their lives. Human beings will internalize new things more easily if they are given opportunities to practice them.

Many of the end-of-project reports that come to my desk after my experiments have things like this to say: "We never thought we would ever be able to achieve so much for ourselves." "My husband now listens to me and respects my decisions."

If you ask me, I will say that is what we refer to as empowerment. These women will never lose the abilities acquired through this project process. Best of all, they are able to take on bigger personal and community challenges because they believe and know they can control their destinies. The empowerment process should al-

ways aim at destroying the syndrome of dependency and helplessness and aspire to build within these communities a lasting sense of confidence.

A third approach I often use to empower women is to have them travel from the villages to collect payment checks for their projects from our offices in Nairobi. (CIDA is located in the Canadian High Commission). For most people, let alone villagers, Embassies and High Commissions are unapproachable. The guards, security checks and expensively furnished receptions, even to the most opulent and learned, can be highly intimidating. A visit to a place of this nature, which among other things, gives them the rare opportunity to meet the Development Counsellor or the High Commissioner, places them at a level they have never dreamed of. Their sense of worth is multiplied many times over and the sense of importance and confidence acquired is visible from both the way they conduct themselves in the village and in the running of the project. The visits, which I facilitate yearly, are aimed at creating an assurance among women that they are not as worthless as they have been made to believe and that they are capable and eligible for any responsibility, given equal opportunities with men.

Exchange visits to other similar, but progressive communities, not only opens and broadens women's horizons, but it also gives them yardsticks to measure themselves against. How is empowerment measured? By looking at communities' capacities, self-perceptions, skills and knowledge before and after your intervention, you will be able to determine whether a community is empowered. However, you must set clear indicators at the beginning of the project to be able to measure accurately.

When all is said and done, I want to emphasize that literacy skills are fundamental to total self-confidence of members of any community. Education is highly valued in Kenya, and is a measure for empowerment even in rural communities. □

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The Human Right to Food and the Realization of Food Security

Thomas J. Marchione



Child with Rice Photo: World Vision/K. Homer

The Human Right to Food

In November, 1996, the human right to food was an issue at the World Food Summit and was hotly debated at the forum conducted in Rome at the same time by interested nongovernmental organizations. The Summit's crowning achievement was the acceptance by 186 countries, including the United States, of the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Summit Plan of Action. The Declaration reaffirms "the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger." In the Plan of Action's seventh commitment, the heads of state and government agreed "to clarify the content of the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, as stated in the International Covenant on Economic,

Social and Cultural Rights and other relevant international and regional instruments, and to give particular attention to implementation and full and progressive realization of this right as a means of achieving food security for all." Endorsers committed to efforts to implement the provision of Article 11 of the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and invited international bodies to help monitor and clarify that right. The pertinent part of Article 11 states:

"(1) States and Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions...(2) The States and Parties to the present Covenant, recognizing the fundamen-

tal rights of everyone to be free from hunger, shall take, individually and through international cooperation, the measures, including specific programs, which are needed: (a) to improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge by disseminating knowledge of the principles of nutrition and by developing or reforming development and utilization of natural resources; (b) taking into account the problems of both food-importing and food-exporting countries, to ensure an equitable distribution of world food supplied in relation to need."

The United States issued a clarification following the Summit that "the United States believes that the attainment of any 'right to adequate food or fundamental right to be free from hunger' is a goal or aspiration to be realized progressively that does not give rise to any international obligations nor diminish the responsibilities of national governments toward their citizens." It recognizes in the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, the right to an adequate standard of living, including the "opportunity to secure food." The United States is among the minority of countries, including China, that have not ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and is listed among the handful of countries, including Honduras, that have not ratified the Covenant, yet have ratified the companion Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Rights advocates generally take the position that economic rights are not fully achieved without civil rights guarantees and that civil rights cannot be fully realized where economic rights are being denied.

The Rome Declaration represents another, albeit modest, achievement added to a series of victories for human rights advocates since the end of the Cold War in 1989. The human rights movement is freeing itself from global ideological paralysis. Political summits have been replaced by human rights summits. No less than nine international conferences related to the right to food have been completed successfully, starting with the Bellagio conference and the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989, going on

to the World Summit for Children in 1990, the International Conference on Nutrition in 1992, plus summits on population (1994), human rights (1993) and environment (1992). In addition, there has been an acceleration in the ratification of both the economic and the civil and political international covenants.

By the end of 1994, the majority of the countries of the world had ratified 10 conventions closely related to the right to food, ranging from just under 60 percent for the Convention Against the Crime of Genocide to 85 percent for the Geneva Conventions and the Rights of the Child. To date just under 70 percent have ratified the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including the United States in 1992 (derived from Messer, 1995). The ratification of these later conventions was rapid as new states were formed after the end of the Cold War. Although the later two covenants were open for signature 30 years ago, 30 percent of the states that have ratified have done so during the period from 1990 to 1994. Clearly, hopes ran high immediately following the end of the Cold War that the right to food would not only be ratified but also realized in practice.

Cynics, including the leading American media, are quick to point

out such human rights "progress" is little more than the usual promises of soft-hearted idealists. These critics ignore the relevance of international expressions of global decency and rights. The current discourse toward the right to food harkens back to when the abolition of slavery was resisted by powerful political and economic figures who could not conceive of a world without it. History teaches us that, given time, persistence and inherent justice, expressions of social norms work their way into our behavior and our laws. The right to food is just such a norm. Although the world may not be ready to form a body of enforceable international law, the World Food Summit demonstrated that with some very conspicuous exceptions, the world is ready to go on the record in solid support of the right to food and freedom from hunger.

Realization of Food Security

The lingering battles to achieve universal recognition to the right to food should not distract from the tasks ahead. Although the human right to food is necessary to achieve a fully food secure world, in practice fighting world hunger is intimately tied to overcoming financial, technical, political, and cultural constraints. The most critical question is how the right to food can help us overcome such

constraints.

Declarations of human rights goals are necessary, but are far from sufficient to improve the lives of the food insecure and hungry. Improvement requires an understanding of what works and how to make it happen. Food security policy should aspire to achieve human rights goals, and new or existing policy should be tested to ensure it in no way hinders the respect, protection and fulfillment of the right to food (Oshaug, 1995).

Acceptance of a range of related rights can also help in the design and implementation of programs. Rights give us goals but also inform the process of food and nutrition programming. As Urban Jonsson so ably states in his advocacy for nutritional rights: "Both outcome-focused and process-focused approaches are needed to realize children's nutritional rights. ...Most of the World Summit for Children goals, including the nutritional goals, are 'moral minima,' representing a cross cultural consensus that stimulates a process of poor people's participation. On the other hand, a process that recognizes poor people as key actors is likely to result in selection of outcome goals that are moral minima. ..." For example donors and international PVOs can strive for agricultural and nutrition policies that seek to satisfy the externally de-



Child Resting on Bag Photo: World Vision/T.Owens

defined nutritional needs of poor people in countries around the world. Yet involving the poor with full respect for their democratic right to participate in the formulation of policies that affect their lives will lead to policies that are unlikely to fall short of accepting minimum nutritional standards or to impose food goals while ignoring more serious threats to life and livelihood in the local context.

The Cold War ended a five-decade-long bipolar dogmatic standoff that stifled innovation and needed changes in society. Governments, effective, or ineffective and corrupt, were legitimated for the sake of their bloc alignments. Development resources, food and cash, were used to maintain and build bloc loyalty, with secondary regard to democratic and food security consequences. Consider how the current post-Cold War has changed the array of constraints and opportunities for advancing food security. How might the right to food help?

Whereas the end of the Cold War helped end ideologically-based conflicts, such as those in southern Africa and Central America, the relaxation of authoritarian control has played a part in the proliferation of complex humanitarian emergencies with ethnic dimensions that undermine the food security of millions of refugees and internally displaced persons. How much would a better application and articulation of rights to food help prevent these emergencies, or could it help bring adequate food and nutrition to those affected, when emergencies cannot be prevented? Might it help hasten rehabilitation and recovery in places like Rwanda and Sierra Leone?

Democratic governance, so essential for public participation in food policy, has made widespread progress leading up to and since the end of the Cold War, both because of the decline of communist regimes, but also the decline of western support for undemocratic bloc allies such as Haiti under Papa Doc or Guatemala under Rios Mont. Under Cold War conditions non-governmental organizations involving participatory local health and nutrition programs were often disallowed, ignored, or viewed with suspicion by central governments, in some instances leading to the persecution of such organizations such as the Behrhorst clinics in Guatemala highlands. Given today's freedom to oper-

ate, will international NGOs redouble their participatory programs, building up grassroots organizations seeking to solve their own food access problems? Poor countries no longer have the option of building their policies primarily upon equity and basic needs. There is only one game in town: market-based development and economic policy reform. As it has turned out, markets work better than command economies. However, deregulated and open free markets, advocated in the World Food Summit and enacted in the post-Cold War GATT agreement, threaten to bring to an end 40 years of declining real world food prices and to accelerate income inequalities that are endemic to unregulated free market food systems. Take Vietnam for example. Since 1990, Save the Children/USA has built nutritional programs in response to decollectivization of agriculture, and the growing gap of the haves and have-nots resulting from the introduction of a successfully liberalized rice market. How can the right to food and related rights be used for tailoring economic policy reform and market strategies and for evaluating and reforming their contribution to both economic growth and child growth? Would a right to food rekindle support for agricultural development?

With the possible exception of the Ethiopian war in the later 1980s, the Reagan policy of "a hungry child knows no politics," was rarely practiced during the Cold War. International challenge to the sovereignty of governments involved in the starvation of their own people was equally rare. Cross-border relief operations, common since the end of the Cold War, were unacceptable when the alignment of a country might have been at stake. The tragedy of Cambodia was unparalleled; more innocents died of starvation in the Biafran conflict than in any African war since the end of World War II. What should the new international humanitarian policies consistent with the right to food be? For example, how should the world respond to the North Korean famine in the face of its belligerent government's likely misuse of food resources?

Finally, although the world's leaders are now committed to enabling the eradication of poverty, access to food, and participatory and sustainable agriculture, the end of the Cold War has resulted in the loss of official

development resources, calling into question the very nature of the American commitment to development. Food aid commitments have been radically cut since the end of the Cold War. How will the projected doubling of world food needs in the next eight years be met or be avoided? Would the universal acceptance of the right to food help in solving this immediate problem or in longer-term solutions? Could better leadership of the right to food in particular or economic rights in general awaken the generosity of the American people? I contend that the answers to these questions are complex, and challenge the readers to debate these questions in future issues of *Hunger Notes*. Emerging from the interchange will be answers with the technical strength and moral energy needed to advance the cause of a food-secure world. In the turbulent post-Cold War developing world, composed of activities ranging from grassroots NGOs to transnational corporations and international organizations, rights provide a moral compass and motive power, indispensable to the voyage, but no more indispensable than a sound ship. □

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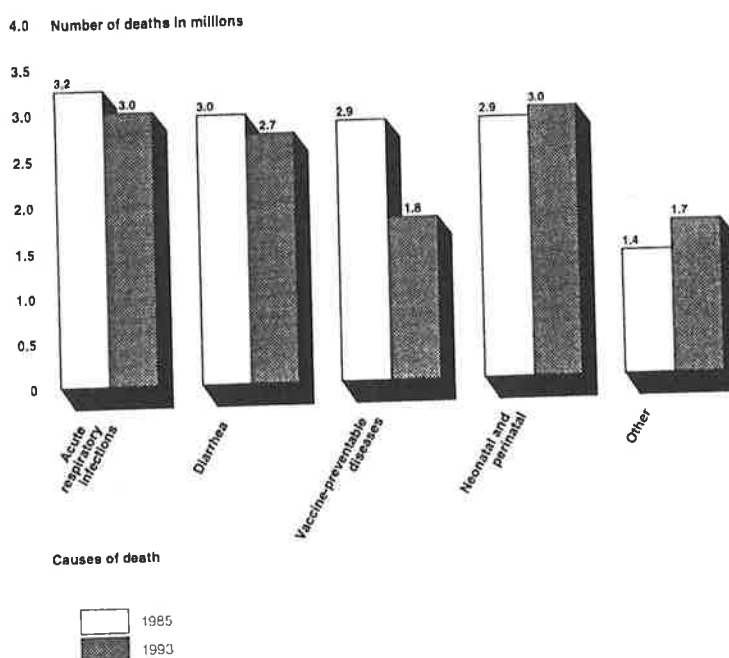
USAID Contributions to Child Survival Are Significant, but Challenges Remain

According to a 1995 World Health Organization (WHO) report, the three major threats to the survival of children under age five in developing countries are diarrheal dehydration, acute respiratory infections (e.g., pneumonia), and vaccine-preventable diseases. WHO's 1995 report stated that 13.4 million children under age five died in developing countries in 1985 and that 12.2 million children under age five died in 1993. Figure 1 shows the causes of death for children under age five in developing countries.

Since 1954, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and its predecessor agencies have been involved in activities to improve child survival in the developing countries. Since the passage of Public Law 480 in 1954, U.S. food assistance has been provided to children and pregnant and lactating women. In the 1960s, USAID began building health clinics and funding research on treatments for diarrheal disease and the prevention of malaria. One of the specific objectives of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, the primary legislation governing U.S. foreign aid, was to reduce infant mortality.

In the 1970s, USAID began to focus on providing appropriate health interventions for common health problems in communities with the greatest needs. Activities related to child health

Figure 1: Causes of Deaths Among Children Under Age 5 in Developing Countries, 1985-1993



Note: Neonatal and perinatal causes include birth asphyxia, neonatal tetanus, congenital anomalies, birth trauma, prematurity, and neonatal sepsis and meningitis. Other causes include malaria, accidents, malnutrition, congenital syphilis, meningitis, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-related complications, and other causes.

Source: WHO.

Table 1: Obligations for USAID Child Survival Activities Through Central Programs and by Geographic Region, Fiscal Years 1985-95

Dollars in thousands

Fiscal year	Central programs	Africa	Asia and the Near East	Europe and the New Independent States	Latin America and the Caribbean	Total
1985	\$44,695	\$27,242	\$27,287	0	\$33,009	\$132,233
1986	30,452	30,203	56,181	0	38,774	155,610
1987	39,655	36,650	59,586	0	48,579	184,470
1988	42,795	36,347	39,148	0	54,329	172,619
1989	42,228	67,548	52,477	0	41,095	203,348
1990	47,840	45,379	44,746	\$2,311	45,311	185,587
1991	59,574	57,342	67,424	3,549	63,237	251,126
1992	98,639	60,220	45,723	6,704	61,162	272,448
1993	102,995	61,931	54,107	12,285	60,087	291,405
1994	94,010	48,973	39,578	19,378	41,204	243,143
1995	107,104	58,234	47,818	44,227 ^a	28,431	285,815
Total	\$709,987	\$530,069	\$534,075	\$88,454	\$515,218	\$2,377,804

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding.

^a USAID officials said that fiscal year 1995 available from the Bureau for Europe and the New Independent States were not final, as of August 1996, and therefore may not be accurate.

Source: USAID/Center for International Health Information.

Table 2: Ten Countries Receiving the Most USAID Mission-Level Assistance to Child Survival and Their Mortality Rates for Children Under Age 5

Dollars in thousands

Country	Region	Funding		Under-5 mortality rate ^a	
		FY 1985-95	FY 1995	1980	1994
Egypt	Asia/Near East	\$136,860	\$27,001	180	52
El Salvador	Latin America/ Caribbean	81,230	2,587	120	56
Haiti	Latin America/ Caribbean	78,440	10,887	195	127
India	Asia/Near East	68,772	900	177	119
Mozambique	Africa	62,494	9,793	269	277
Bolivia	Latin America/ Caribbean	60,566	3,264	170	110
Philippines	Asia/Near East	58,194	0	70	57
Honduras	Latin America/ Caribbean	53,550	2,201	100	54
Peru	Latin America/ Caribbean	50,443	1,388	130	58
Bangladesh	Asia/Near East	48,001	2	211	117

^a The mortality rate represents the number of deaths per 1,000 live births. Source: USAID/Center for International Health Information and UNICEF.

included field studies on oral rehydration and vitamin A therapy and malaria research.

In 1984, Congress enacted legislation requiring a program designed to address child survival. Section 104(c)(2)(A) of the act, as amended, provides in relevant part that:

"In carrying out the purposes of this subsection, the President shall promote, encourage, and undertake activities designed to deal directly with the special health needs of children and mothers. Such activities should utilize simple, available technologies which can significantly reduce childhood mortality, such as improved and expanded immunization programs, oral rehydration to combat diarrheal diseases, and education programs aimed at improving nutrition and sanitation and at promoting child spacing."

Because the statutory language is broad and emphasizes, but does not limit, USAID to the specified interventions, USAID has considerable latitude in developing child survival activities appropriate to the community being served.

In February, 1985, in response to the authorizing legislation, some of USAID's ongoing child health efforts were consolidated into a child survival program. USAID provided mission-level child survival assistance to 31 countries in 1985, but it placed special emphasis on 22 countries that had especially high mortality rates. For each of these 22 countries, USAID developed a detailed child survival strategy, in cooperation with the host government, to deal with the country's specific needs and circumstances.

USAID's policy was to sustain bilateral child survival funding in these countries for at least three to five years and provide technical support and training on a priority basis.

Over the years, the congressional appropriations committees have continued to emphasize the importance of the basic interventions mentioned in the authorizing statute, particularly immunizations and oral rehydration therapy. In some years, the committees have also directed USAID to support particular activities, including the promotion of breast-feeding, research and development of vaccines, and prevention of vitamin A and other micronutrient deficiencies through food fortification, tablets, and injections.

USAID's child survival program has evolved in the 1990s to where it no longer is a separate program, but is encompassed within USAID's sustainable development strategy as a component of its population, nutrition, and health sector.

How Child Survival Funds Are Used

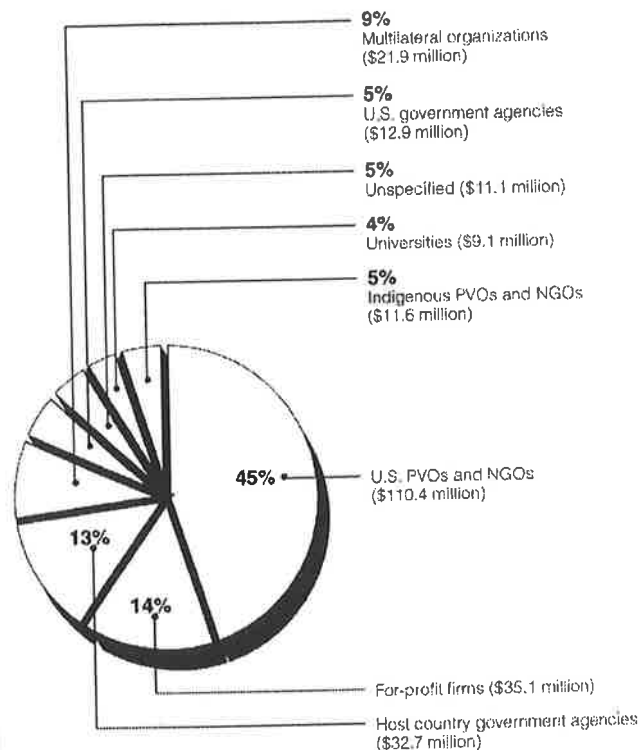
Between fiscal years 1985 and 1995, USAID reported that it obligated over \$2.3 billion for the child survival program. Child survival projects and other activities attributed to child survival may be funded through USAID's overseas missions directly or through its four regional bureaus or its central bureaus (see Table 1).

The number of countries receiving mission-level child survival assistance in a single fiscal year increased from 31 in 1985 to about 43 in 1995. During this 11-year period, USAID provided mission-level assistance on a continuing basis for some countries, such as Egypt, whereas other countries received funding in only one year. A total of 83 developing countries received some mission-level child survival funding during this period. The amounts ranged from \$9,000 for Oman to \$137 million for Egypt. As shown in Table 2, of the 10 countries that have received the most child survival assistance from USAID missions, 5 were in the Latin America and Caribbean region, 4 were in the Asia and Near East region, and one was in the Africa region.

USAID provides funding to other organizations to implement health and population services. USAID guidance states that U.S. assistance must help build the capacity to develop and sustain host country political commitment to health and population programs, as well as enhance the ability of local organizations to define policies and design and manage their own programs. USAID's policy is to involve both the public and private sectors and give special attention to building, supporting, and empowering nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) wherever feasible.

USAID-supported child survival activities involve U.S. and foreign not-for-profit NGOs, including private voluntary organizations (PVOs); universities; for-profit contractors; multilateral organizations; and U.S. and foreign government agencies. Figure 2 shows that U.S. NGOs received about 45 percent of fiscal year 1994 child survival funding. At least 35 U.S. PVOs and 22 other U.S. NGOs participated in USAID's child survival programs during that year as

Figure 2: Types of Organizations That Received USAID Child Survival Funds, Fiscal Year 1994



Note: The total of these obligations does not correspond to those in Table 1 because the data used to develop this chart came from a different source. However, the difference is not material (less than 1 percent)
Source: USAID

primary grantees. For-profit businesses and host country governments together accounted for another one-quarter of the funding. The remainder went to multilateral organizations, such as UNICEF; U.S. government agencies, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and indigenous NGOs.

USAID generally uses the different types of organizations for different purposes or for implementing different types of activities. No one single group or organization typically performs the full range of activities that the agency sponsors. For example, in all the countries we visited, PVOs were involved at the community level with direct delivery of some of the basic health interventions. In Guatemala, a for-profit contractor provided technical assistance for the computer hardware and software programs that USAID installed in the Ministry of Health to computerize its health data.

Funding Supports Different Types of Activities

Between 1985 and 1995, activities related to the three major causes of death among young children, acute respiratory infections, diarrheal diseases, and vaccine-preventable diseases, received about \$972 million, or 41 percent of the child survival funds. Table 3 shows funding levels attributed to child survival by type of activity from 1985 to 1995.

USAID's Contribution to Child Survival

USAID has made significant contributions, in collaboration with other donors, in reducing under-five mortality rates. Among the 10 countries receiving the most USAID mission-level child

survival assistance, all but one improved their under-five mortality rate between 1980 and 1994. Five countries achieved the World Summit goal of 70 or fewer deaths per 1,000 live births. The number of deaths from the three major causes of under-five mortality declined during this time, but the largest decrease was for vaccine-preventable diseases.

USAID can claim some far-reaching accomplishments in immunizations. Between 1985 and 1994, 26 of the 59 countries that received some mission-level assistance specifically for immunization activities achieved USAID's goal of 80 percent immunization rates. Through collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), UNICEF, Rotary International, other international organizations, and the individual countries, USAID helped to bring about the eradication of poliomyelitis in the Americas. USAID's Children's Vaccine Initiative project supports a revolving fund, called the Vaccine Independence Initiative, that is managed by PAHO and UNICEF. This fund, which received \$3.8 million of child survival funding between 1992 and 1995, is used to help developing countries purchase vaccines.

One of USAID's most important accomplishments in diarrheal disease control occurred before 1985 with the discovery that oral rehydration salts could be used to treat the dehydration that occurs with diarrheal diseases and causes death. USAID has also had positive results in efforts to increase usage of oral rehydration therapy, although only four countries where USAID has provided mission-level child survival assistance have usage rates above 80 percent.

USAID's recent diarrheal disease control efforts have been aimed at promoting sustainability by transferring technology to developing countries so that they can manufacture the salts. USAID has also contributed to research on the importance of vitamin A supplementation and efforts to incorporate vitamin A into local food supplies around the world.

USAID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE) concluded in a 1993 report that USAID's child survival activities had achieved many successes and made a significant contribution in expanding child survival services and reducing infant mortality in many countries. The CDIE report cited the importance of USAID's role in vaccinations and stated that the agency had supported other major donors such as UNICEF, through coordination and the provision of needed resources. Another evaluation conducted independently by RESULTS Educational Fund and the Bread for the World Institute concluded in a January, 1995 report that USAID's child survival activities had made an important contribution to reducing deaths among children under age five in countries receiving USAID assistance.

In the four countries we visited, USAID's contributions through child survival activities were evident. For example, in Mozambique, USAID supports private voluntary organizations (PVOs) that provide child survival services and other types of humanitarian and development assistance. We visited several sites where World Vision Relief and Development was implementing a child survival project. Among the activities we observed were vaccinations for children under age three, monitoring of children's growth,

prenatal examinations, and the construction of latrines.

In Bolivia, PROSALUD health clinics we visited offered general medical services; childbirth and pediatric care; immunizations; family planning; and dental, pharmacy, and laboratory services. PROSALUD is a Bolivian private, nonprofit organization initiated and operated with USAID child survival funds. Between 1991 and 1996, USAID provided the PROSALUD project with \$6.5 million, of which \$6.2 million, or 95 percent, was attributed to child survival. The 26 PROSALUD clinics and its hospital charge small user fees that enable the organization to partially self-finance its operations.

We also visited Andean Rural Health Care, a U.S. PVO that provides community health care in Bolivia through clinics and volunteers. The volunteers are trained at the health centers on how to make home visits to (1) provide families with oral rehydration salts, (2) treat diarrheal diseases and acute respiratory infections, (3) promote vaccinations by health center staff, and (4) monitor the growth and health of family members.

In Guatemala, we visited a clinic operated by APROFAM, which is a private, nonprofit organization that provides family planning services as well as selected maternal-child health services, such as pre- and postnatal care, child growth monitoring, and oral rehydration therapy. Under the current USAID grant, APROFAM received about \$2.5 million in child survival funding, representing 15 percent of its total USAID funds. We also visited a pharmaceutical plant in Guatemala where USAID provided equipment and technical assistance to manufacture packets of oral rehydration salts used in the treatment of diarrheal disease dehydration. The packets are to be distributed through Ministry of Health facilities. This plant was a component of USAID'S \$20 million child survival project started in 1985 to assist the Ministry of Health.

In Egypt, we visited urban and rural health clinics that administered vaccinations and oral rehydration therapy and had laboratories that were equipped to perform medical tests. According to USAID officials, these health clinics also provided treatment for acute respiratory infections and family planning activities.

Additional Activities Address Child Survival Objectives

For fiscal years 1993-95, USAID reportedly spent about \$478.9 million, or 58 percent of child survival funding, on interventions that directly address the causes of death of children under the age of five-- immunizations, diarrheal disease control, nutrition, and acute respiratory infections. However, the amounts used for immunizations and diarrheal disease control were less in 1994 and 1995 than they had been in 1993. During the same period, USAID spent about \$341.5 million on such areas as health systems development, health care financing, water quality, and environmental health (a new area).

In Mozambique, USAID attributed child survival funds for the construction of a water supply system in Chimoio by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency to serve as many as 25,000 residents. About \$2.5 million, or 40 percent, of the project's almost \$6.2 million cost was attributed to child survival. USAID described this project as an exception where such infrastructure activities would be appropriately attributed to child survival.

Since 1992, the USAID mission in Egypt has designated as child survival about \$6.5 million for water and

wastewater infrastructure development. Egypt's sewerage projects include the design, construction, and operation of wastewater treatment plants and systems, and water projects include the construction of water treatment plants, which provide potable water to urban areas.

The 1993 USAID/CDIE report recommended that water infrastructure projects not be funded as child survival because child survival resources were not considered adequate to construct enough water systems to have a measurable impact on national health indicators. The report also stated that the results of other child survival interventions appear to be greater than the results obtained from investing in water and sanitation and that oral rehydration therapy and interventions related to acute respiratory infections should be given higher priority.

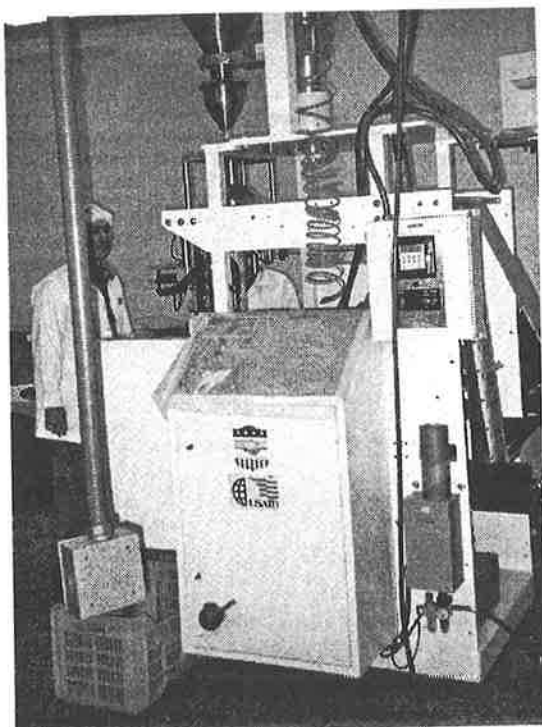
In Mozambique, reconstruction of a railroad bridge crossing the Zambezi River between Sena and Mutarara was considered child survival. The goal of this project was to rehabilitate roads so that land movement of food and other relief assistance, the return of displaced persons and refugees, and drought recovery activities could occur. The railroad bridge was modified to accommodate vehicles and pedestrian traffic. Of the

Table 3: USAID Funding by Type of Child Survival Activity, Fiscal Years 1985-95

Dollars in thousands			
Activity	1985	1986	1987
Immunization	\$30,313	\$50,370	\$50,898
Nutrition ^a	27,534	22,261	26,319
Diarrheal disease control/oral rehydration therapy	38,060	34,769	45,200
Health systems development	N/A	N/A	N/A
Child spacing/high-risk births	6,346	7,540	10,001
Water quality/health	N/A	N/A	N/A
Acute respiratory infections	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maternal health ^b	N/A	N/A	N/A
Malaria	N/A	N/A	N/A
Health care financing	N/A	N/A	N/A
Orphans and displaced children	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vector control and tropical diseases	N/A	N/A	N/A
Environmental health	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other	29,980	40,670	52,052
Total	\$132,233	\$155,610	\$184,470

Note: N/A indicates an activity category that was not specified in USAID coding procedures during that year. Before 1989, many of the activities that were not listed as separate categories were included in the "other" category. Numbers may not add due to rounding.

^a Nutrition is further broken out into the following activity areas: micronutrients; vitamin A; breastfeeding; growth monitoring and weaning foods; nutrition management; planning, and policy; and other nutrition.



USAID-Funded Equipment at a Plant That Manufactures Oral Rehydration Salts in Guatemala
Photo: USAID

project's \$10.8 million budget, \$1.9 million was attributed to child survival as nutrition in 1993 and 1994.

Although the railroad bridge in Mozambique was considered a nutrition intervention, other infrastructure projects that have used child survival funding were classified as water quality/health, health systems development, and health care financing. Between 1993 and 1995, USAID attributed about \$38.6 million in child survival funds to water quality/health, \$113.5 million to health systems development, and \$24.6 million to health care financing. Examples of activities related to health systems development include the construction of warehouses for government medical supplies in Hon-

duras. An example of a health care financing activity in Bolivia is PROSALUD, which USAID established to be a self-financing health care provider.

USAID attributed \$30 million of the international disaster assistance funds to child survival in fiscal year 1995. The projects that USAID's budget office counted as child survival included activities that benefited children, such as health and winterization activities in the former Yugoslavia, a water drilling program in northern Iraq, an emergency medical and nutrition project for

displaced persons in Sudan, the purchase of four water purification/chlorination systems in Djibouti, and community health care in two regions of Somalia. Additionally, the conference report accompanying the fiscal year 1996 foreign operations appropriations act authorized USAID to attribute \$30 million of disaster assistance funding to child survival.

Identifying Amounts Used Specifically for Child Survival is Difficult

USAID is unable to determine with any degree of precision how much funding is actually being used for child survival activities because: 1) of the way Congress has directed funding; 2) USAID guidance allows considerable flexibility and variation in attributing child survival funds; 3) the amounts reported are based on estimated percentages of projected budgets, which sometimes are not adjusted at the end of the year to reflect any changes that may have occurred; and 4) the amounts reported are not directly based on specific project expenditures. USAID plans a new information management system that may improve the precision of the data for its child survival activities.

From fiscal year 1985, when the third survival program officially began, through fiscal year 1995, appropriations statutes have mandated spending of at least \$1.8 billion for child survival activities. From fiscal

1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Total
\$38,495	\$44,017	\$32,184	\$37,785	\$51,752	\$67,378	\$58,903	\$36,236	\$498,331
25,542	31,386	29,192	51,041	51,692	52,284	43,903	80,684	441,838
37,469	42,996	29,653	31,904	39,053	38,252	26,037	26,855	390,248
N/A	22,293	21,600	41,393	58,170	46,085	40,406	26,967	256,914
16,144	13,567	11,475	17,092	13,135	21,412	17,259	15,154	149,125
N/A	10,289	10,119	10,547	14,593	12,260	15,293	11,059	84,160
N/A	5,907	5,990	9,582	14,058	15,096	14,868	18,391	83,892
N/A	4,889	9,317	10,178	8,197	8,685	6,766	18,338	66,370
N/A	5,530	6,746	9,812	9,395	11,946	8,456	10,877	62,762
N/A	N/A	6,332	9,970	8,139	5,892	6,215	12,474	49,022
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,429	9,874	2,844	19,025	35,172
N/A	1,124	1,733	2,353	835	2,241	2,193	6,681	17,160
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,075	3,075
54,969	21,350	21,246	19,469	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	239,736
\$172,619	\$203,348	\$185,587	\$251,126	\$272,448	\$291,405	\$243,143	\$285,815	\$2,377,804

^a Before 1989, maternal health activities were supported under the high-risk birth category.

Source: USAID/Center for International Health Information

years 1985 to 1991, funds appropriated by Congress for child survival went into a separate functional account under USAID'S development assistance account. Additionally, for several years prior to fiscal year 1992, the appropriations laws not only earmarked money for child survival, but the appropriations committees' reports also expressed the intention that other accounts within the development assistance account should provide substantially more money for child survival activities. Beginning in fiscal year 1992, the functional account was eliminated and subsequent laws appropriating monies to USAID contained an earmark for child survival activities that could be drawn from any USAID assistance account. Since 1991, Congress has substantially increased the level of funds designated for child survival through earmarks (from \$100 million in direct appropriations in fiscal year 1991 to \$250 million in fiscal year 1992).

USAID issued guidance in 1992 and 1996 about the types of activities that were allowed to be attributed to child survival. Additionally, the agency's budget office issues annual instructions for reporting on project activities. These instructions name types of activities that may be attributed to child survival and give broad discretion to USAID officials to determine the percentage of funding that can be reported as child survival. How-

ever, the instructions do not provide specific indicators for determining attribution, such as the percent of children in the population served for water projects. Moreover, some mission officials responsible for recording project activities told us that the guidance for making attributions was not clear to them.

In our discussions with USAID officials, we found that the process of attributing funds to child survival activities was imprecise and that mistakes occurred. As a result, the percentage of funds designated as child survival varied widely for similar activities. For example, USAID used child survival funds for the construction of water systems in all four countries we visited. USAID guidance suggested 30 percent of the total budget of water and sewerage projects as an appropriate level to attribute to child survival, but child survival funds comprised from 3 to 100 percent of the funding for some of these projects.

According to an official at the USAID mission in Egypt, the mission has a policy of attributing 3 percent of sewerage projects and 6 percent of water projects to child survival. In contrast, the Health Sector II project in Honduras attributed 70 percent of the \$16.9 million water and sanitation component to child survival. According to a mission official, the justification for this level of attribution was that children under age five comprised



Water Tower in Mozambique That Was Partially Funded as Child Survival

Photo: USAID

approximately 70 percent of the deaths due to water-borne diseases in rural areas. Another activity funded by this project was the construction of area warehouses. About \$72,000, which was 26 percent of the cost, was attributed to child survival. The justification USAID provided for this attribution was that these warehouses, which were used to store medical supplies,

have contributed to the decline in the infant mortality rate in Honduras.

The funding amounts reported as child survival are based on estimated percentages of total project obligations for types of child survival activities carried out under individual projects. These estimates are made by project or budget officers and are supposed to be based on a knowledge of project plans and activities. However, mission officials told us that they generally did not change the activity assignments or percentages, even though changes in available funding or project plans may occur during the year. For example, \$800,000 in child survival funding was attributed to a basic education project in Ethiopia in 1994. A mission official told us that the child survival ac-



"I forgot to say I was breast-fed."

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Railroad Bridge in Mozambique That Was Repaired With Child Survival Funding Photo: USAID

tivity did not actually take place, but the reports provided to us by USAID included child survival funding for this project.

USAID reports on funds attributed to child survival and other activities are not based on expenditures. USAID stated that its activity reporting system was never intended to track expenditures for programs and that Congress was aware that reported funding represented estimates of obligations. However, according to USAID officials, a new information system is underway that will link budgets, obligations, and expenditures and enable the agency to track funds more accurately.

USAID officials said that the new system would be able to link some child survival assistance with actual expenditures in cases in which a distinct child survival activity has been defined. However, in other cases, reported funding will continue to be based on the project manager's estimate of the percentage of funding attributable to child survival. USAID began implementing the new system in July, 1996 for all new commitments made at headquarters, and it plans to extend the system to the overseas missions by October, 1996.

USAID Does Not Assist Some Countries with Severe Child Survival Problems

USAID's guidance states that child survival assistance will be provided to countries with mortality rates for children under age five at or above 150 per 1,000 live births. However, USAID does not provide assistance to some of the 30 countries with the most serious under-five mortality problems. For example, many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, which have the most serious child survival problems, do not receive USAID child survival assistance for mission-level projects. According to USAID, the agency does not have a mission in these countries, had closed out assistance, or was in the process of closing out assistance because of budgetary or legal reasons or because sustainable development programs were not considered feasible.

On the other hand, USAID attributes mission-level child survival funds to activities in 17 countries that have a mortality rate of 70 or fewer deaths per 1,000 live births. In fiscal year 1995, USAID used about \$89.5 million of child survival funding for activities in these 17 countries. Among these countries were several in the former Soviet Union, including Georgia, which had an under-five mortality rate of 27 per 1,000 live births. By contrast, in fiscal year 1995, USAID used \$53.4 million of child survival funding in 15

of the 30 countries that had the most serious problems with under-five mortality rates above 150 per 1,000 live births.

In 1995, Egypt continued to have the largest share of mission-level assistance attributed to child survival (\$27 million), as it has over the last decade. UNICEF reported Egypt's under-five mortality rate in 1994 as 52; however, USAID indicated that its most recent data showed that the rate was 80.6.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

In commenting on a draft of this report, USAID indicated that it focused its child survival efforts in countries with high rates of under-five mortality and other factors that indicated a great need for assistance. USAID stated that (1) national mortality rates are averages that often mask pockets of high child mortality, (2) the achievement of a target mortality rate is not a reason to stop support of efforts because gains need to be sustainable, and (3) child survival programs are not in some of the most needy countries because of legal, budgetary, and sustainability reasons.

USAID issued new guidance in April, 1996 that indicates that infrastructure is not generally considered to be an appropriate use of child survival funds. USAID stated that the infrastructure cases we cited, all of which began before April, 1996, were isolated examples. USAID further stated that the bridge rehabilitation and water works construction projects in Mozambique were needed to reduce child mortality after the civil turmoil in that country.

USAID also commented that its current financial reporting system was never intended to be used to track any program area on an expenditure basis. USAID indicated that a new information management system that is being implemented has been designed to track funding for each activity by linking budgets, obligations, procurements, and expenditures.

After reviewing USAID's comments, we have deleted the recommendations that we presented in our draft report. In its comments and subsequent discussions, USAID provided us with sufficiently detailed information to adequately explain the reasons why some countries with very severe child mortality problems do not receive direct U.S. aid and others with lower mortality rates do. USAID's new operating procedures have the potential to address, for the most part, how its child survival activities will be linked to USAID's objectives and how its project activities will be measured. Our concern that USAID's new information management system provide accurate obligation and expenditure data is being addressed by USAID. We are still concerned, however, about the clarity of the guidance provided to USAID's activity managers for determining the percentage of funding and expenditures attributable to child survival when a broader activity contributes to USAID's child survival objectives. We are, however, making no specific recommendations in these areas. □

The above report was researched and compiled by the U.S. General Accounting Office and submitted to the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights of the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives on Nov. 8, 1996.

Little Drops of Water, Despite the Ocean

Anita Anand with Debasree Banerjee

Twenty-year-old Rani was six months pregnant with her second child when her husband abandoned her and started living with another woman. Unceremoniously thrown out of her one room home in Dakshinpuri, (one of the poorer slums in New Delhi) and nowhere to go, Rani contemplated suicide.

That was three years ago. Today Rani is a confident young woman wanting to live-- alone.

"I don't want to go near a man again. I'm financially independent and can raise my two sons without any help," she says with steely determination.

Rani and other women in Delhi slums are learning to reconstruct their lives after their men have left them, with help of Jagori, a Delhi-based women's organization. Jagori, in Hindi means 'woman awake'.

Six years ago Jagori began working to rehabilitate single women in the slums of Dakshinpuri, Nandnagri, Jehangirpuri and Seemapuri-- in and around the capital city of Delhi.

Jagori volunteers-- Shanti and Saavra-- helped Rani to get a job in a cassette making company, and arranged a small room for her to live in. The single women of Dakshinpuri have organized themselves into a group called "Mahila Sammoh" or women's group. They meet every Tuesday late at night.

"Without the help of my sisters here, I would have never survived," says Rani at a weekly meeting in Dakshinpuri, organized by Jagori.

"We work throughout the day, and cook in the evenings, it's only late at night, that we have the time to share our experiences and work out solutions to our problems," says 40-year-old Haseena, a widow, who says she has attended all the meetings for the last three years.

"Our main struggle is the injustice single women face. Shunned by society and maligned by their own family members, many of these women have nowhere to go. We give them the strength to struggle alone," says Saavra.

In India nearly 35 percent of the households living below the poverty line are headed by women, and their numbers are growing every day.

"We try to arrange for better paying jobs for the women so that they can feed and educate their children. We help them with a legal battle for the custody of their children. Many times we have had to get rough with the men who have treated women callously. All the men in Dakshinpuri are now wary of our group," says Saavra with a triumphant smile.

Jagori's coordinator, 45-year old Shanti, says that it was easy for her to identify with the problems of single women, because she had faced them too.

"My husband died 10 years ago, but I was financially independent, so I could take care of my children. But my

brother-in-law thought I should be easily available to him."

"There is no place in society for women living outside the institution of marriage-- widows, deserted women, unmarried women and prostitutes-- they are constantly harassed and made to feel insecure," says Shanti.

Take the case of housing. Single women, unless they have connections, find it impossible to find apartments, as landlords are afraid of renting to them. The women are made to feel aware of their sexual identity all the time, whether they wish to or not.

In patriarchal societies, such as India, a single woman threatens men and women. She is perceived as a sexual threat to married women and an easy target for men.

Munni, thirty-five years old, is a resident of Subhash camp near Dakshinpuri. She was almost starving when her husband left her and their three children.

"I was working as a domestic help but I earned barely enough to feed my children. Sometimes when there was no food in the house I used to stuff my mouth with charcoal to stop the hunger," she says.

But her life changed after she came in touch with the Jagori volunteers.

"I have a better paying job now and I don't feel insecure. My sisters from the women's group will come to my help, if I need them," says Munni.

Jagori's efforts have changed the lives of many poor and unhappy women fighting a lone battle in this city. Rani and Munni survived, but many others didn't.

Daily, the media carries reports of young girls and women committing suicide, being sexually harassed, abducted or raped. Violence against women is rampant, across classes. In the case of Rani and Munni, whose husbands abandoned them, they may be better off. Many working class women, before they become single women, face beatings and alcoholic husbands.

What recourse do women have when they face violence in the hands of men? There are almost no half-way houses or shelters for women. Public policy initiatives and action are desperately needed in this area. Working women's hostels are not often available to working class women, especially women with children.

Jagori's attempts to intervene in making the lives of single women better is a little drop in the ocean. Much more could be done. □

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Rice Scientists Awarded World Food Prize for New Rice Strains



Henry M. Beachell



Gurdev Singh Khush

The 1996 World Food Prize has been jointly awarded to Dr. Henry Beachell and Dr. Gurdev Singh Khush, rice breeders whose work has revolutionized Asian agriculture, improving the diets of hundreds of millions of people.

The World Food Prize, which is awarded this year for the 10th time, is given annually in recognition of those who have advanced human development by improving the quality, quantity or availability of the world's food supply. Dr. Beachell and Dr. Khush will share the \$200,000 cash award.

"The impact of Dr. Beachell's and Dr. Khush's work upon the lives of the world's

poorest people is incalculable," said Dr. Norman Borlaug, the Nobel Prize-winning scientist whose work led to the "Green Revolution" in world wheat production. Dr. Borlaug serves as a member of the Council of Advisors to the World Food Prize.

Dr. Beachell and Dr. Khush, both individually and together, have been among the world's leading figures in rice breeding for a generation. The rice varieties and genetic lines developed under their direction at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines more than doubled the world's rice production over the last three decades. □

Beachell and Khush- 30 Years of Rice Research

Exactly where the "Green Revolution" in rice farming began can be stated precisely: At the third plant, in row 288, on an experimental field operated by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines.

It was there, in late 1963, that

Dr. Henry Beachell, recently retired from a successful 32-year career as a rice breeder for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, saw exactly what he was looking for.

What Beachell had spotted was a short, thick-stemmed, sturdy rice plant, that would respond more effectively to the application of fertilizer, mature early, and yield much more than the traditional varieties.

The plant was the hybrid product of a cross between a short, stiff-strawed variety from Taiwan and a taller, pest-resistant variety from Indonesia. It was tagged IR8 because it was the eighth cross that IRRI scientists had made.

When it was released to farmers three years later, IR8 changed the face of Asian agriculture. On experimental fields in India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, IR8 set records ranging from 6 to 8 tons per hectare (1 hectare=2.47 acres), usually more than doubling previous yields.

On one IRRI experimental field, agronomists grew an astonishing 10 tons of rice from one hectare of the new "miracle rice." With good management on irrigated land, a farmer using IR8 could produce four or five tons per hectare, compared to one or two tons using traditional rice varieties.

Over the next two decades Beachell traveled widely and worked to improve IR8, correct its defects, as well as adapt it to other growing conditions and taste preferences.

Among its flaws was a low resistance to certain pests and diseases and cooking qualities that were considered inferior by some. But in one respect IR8 was unsurpassed; it was the highest-yielding rice plant in existence at that time, and formed the genetic base for most of the modern varieties grown today.

Beachell is considered to be "the individual most responsible for the Green Revolution in rice," wrote Robert F. Barnes and E.C.A. Runge of the American Society of Agronomy.

Even as Dr. Beachell was developing superior rice, he also

was developing a new generation of rice breeders at IRRI and at experiment stations around the world to carry on his work. One of those young colleagues has succeeded in spectacular fashion.

In 1967, Dr. Gurdev Singh Khush came to the International Rice Research Institute as a young Indian geneticist trained at the University of California-Davis. In less than five years, he was head of IRRI's plant breeding department and had developed his own new variety of "miracle rice."

Using IR8 as a genetic base and cross breeding it with 13 parent varieties from six nations, Dr. Khush developed IR36, a semi-dwarf variety that proved highly resistant to a number of the major insect pests and diseases.

IR36 matures rapidly-- 105 days compared to 130 days for IR8 and 150-170 days for traditional types-- and produces a slender grain that is preferred in many Asian countries. The combination of these characteristics soon made IR36 one of the most widely planted food crop varieties the world has ever known. About 11 million hectares (2.7 million acres) are planted with IR36 worldwide.

The improved varieties of rice developed under Dr. Beachell and Dr. Khush are now planted on about 70 percent of the world's rice-growing land and have more than doubled worldwide rice production. This increase feeds about 700 million more people than traditional varieties would feed, and provides an additional \$1 billion income to Asian farmers, who grow 92 percent of the world's rice.

The increased availability of rice has also lowered costs to consumers and enhanced the nutrition of millions of people. Caloric intake in almost all Asian nations has improved. For example, caloric intake in Indonesia increased from 81 percent of the daily requirement in 1965 to 120 percent in 1990. And all of this happened while the population of rice consumers was growing by more than two percent annually, and the availability of rice production land remained stable.

Dr. Khush has continued to press for improvements in rice at IRRI's research stations, and in 1994 they announced that a new type of "super rice" was in development, which may have the potential to increase yields by 25 percent. The new rice should be released around the turn of the century.

Foreign Policy into the 21st Century: The U.S. Leadership Challenge

Douglas Johnson, editor

"We move into the 21st century much too unfocused as to our nation's role and responsibilities." So begins this book, published in September, 1996, whose principal purpose is to identify the United States' national interests (as they relate to international affairs), to prioritize these interests as "vital," "important," or "beneficial," and then recommend policies to serve them.

It is an ambitious, 160-page report, the consensus of two years of study and debate by a bipartisan steering committee and seven working groups, organized by the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, and co-chaired by Zbigniew Brzezinski, Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-Ind.) and Sen. Richard Lugar (R-Ind.). Almost all of the 50-plus participants in the project were former U.S. government officials.

The book reflects the diplomatic outlook and experience of its multiple authors, with most of its recommendations falling within traditional geopolitical boundaries. Major attention is given to relations with the rising East Asian states, Europe, the Middle East, and Russia, as well as to overall international security strategies.

Many of the book's prescriptions look ahead over a relatively short time span, but there are others which respond to a second stated purpose of the project—namely, to call attention to "those significant but 'nonvital' issues (often global in nature) that, if left unattended today, could become the 'vital' problems of tomorrow."

The section on Asia sets out an agenda that calls for: strengthening policies and security ties with Japan; working with China to develop a mutually beneficial framework for Chinese integration into the international economic, political, and security order; reconfirming U.S. determination to see a peaceful evolution of relations between China and Taiwan; taking steps to increase stability on the Korean peninsula; and developing an integrative strategy toward South Asia. Then the report goes on to say:

"Left unmentioned in the above listing of interests and policy prescriptions is what might be catalogued as a beneficial interest, i.e., supporting initiatives to maintain the ecological health of Asia...Beijing has openly stated that it will not sacrifice economic growth for the sake of the environment...Yet, for Beijing to feed its people, it must either find a way to double its grain output over the next 20 years or be prepared to make massive purchases in the international markets. Asia's ecological problems in the coming century are likely to prove severe, if not overwhelming, to the states in the region and will most certainly pose a special challenge to U.S. leadership."

In the Middle East section, the report calls for continuing U.S. support for the Middle East peace process. But in a break with the accepted thinking of the recent past, although without actually naming Egypt or Israel, it holds that the United States should "reevaluate the practice of specifying precise amounts of foreign assistance for selected states."

Two of the project's seven working groups, those on "U.S. International Economic Interests" and on "Global Problems and Opportunities" dealt with some of the issues of particular interest to readers of *Hunger Notes*—development, environmental degradation, migration, and human rights. For the least developed countries, the report recommends focusing support on project assistance aimed at institution building and the creation of private sector jobs "in order to fortify civil society and the center of the political spectrum against destabilizing threats from the right and left." To the extent possible, the report adds, this aid should be channeled through the private sector and NGOs. But these issues are touched on lightly in the book—so lightly, in fact, that although there are brief references to poverty, the word "hunger" never appears in the text.

In short, "Foreign Policy into the 21st Century: The U.S. Leadership Challenge" presents a generally enlightened but largely traditional diplomatic foreign policy "establishment" view of the future. To this reviewer, it gives inadequate attention to such phenomena as the growing importance of "non-state actors" in the emer-

gence of civil society as an organized force, or the goals set by the UN global conference of the past five years. If the United States is to provide full leadership into the 21st century, it must also take account of these new global realities.

—Andrew E. Rice,
Chairman Emeritus
International Development
Conference

To Order: Center for Strategic and International Studies. Attn. Heidi Schinn. 1800 K St. NW. Washington, D.C. 20006. Tel: 202-775-3119 \$20 plus \$3.85 shipping and handling.

WHO WILL FEED CHINA? Wake-Up Call for a Small Planet

by Lester R. Brown

NI CHELE FAN NE MEIJOU? ("Have You Eaten Rice Today?")

For the Chinese, rice provides the sustenance of life. Having sufficient food has remained a central theme throughout the centuries. The age-old greeting "Ni chele fan ne meijou" reminds the Chinese people of the Great Famine of 1959-1961 which claimed roughly 30 million lives, leaving an indelible impression on China's national psyche.

In "Who Will Feed China?", Lester Brown again urges us to respond to the warning signs of high population, shrinking cropland, and water scarcity in formulating global development policy for the 21st century. Reminding us that the Chinese account for 20 percent of the world's people, Brown states: "In an integrated world economy, China's rising food prices will become the world's rising food prices. China's land scarcity will become everyone's land scarcity. And water scarcity in China will affect the entire world."

China's route to development has been fundamentally different than that of the West: it was already densely populated before it industrialized. The pressure of industrialization has dis-

placed cropland, leading to a net decline in food production despite rising land productivity. Only three other countries have faced a similar situation: Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, who (over the past few decades) lost 52 percent, 46 percent, and 42 percent of their grain-harvested areas, respectively. Cropland losses soon exceeded rises in land productivity, leading to declining output: since a peak in 1960, grain production has fallen 32 percent in Japan; and 24 percent in both South Korea and Taiwan since 1977. Brown warns that China's rising industrialization may result in the same fate.

In addition to loss of cropland, China also faces an extensive diversion of irrigation water to non-farm uses. This problem is particularly acute in a country where nearly 80 percent of the grain harvest comes from irrigated land.

The problem of shrinking resources is compounded by rising grain consumption. As incomes rise, people diversify traditional diets by adding meat, poultry, dairy, and even beer, foods which are higher in the food chain and can demand even more grain for production. China's enormous population—projected to be 1.5 billion by 2017—adds even more stress on grain reserves. Sheer numbers make keeping grain production in pace with population growth a daunting and improbable task. Although China has succeeded in slowing the momentum of population growth rate from 2.7 percent in 1970 to 1.1 percent in 1994, it is still adding approximately 12 million people each year to its population. Even a small increase in per capita grain consumption will have a substantial cumulative effect: Brown cites that just two additional beers per person in China will demand the entire Norwegian grain harvest.

To avert a crisis, Brown calls for stabilizing population growth (as set forth in the Cairo Platform for Action in 1994), protecting the environmental resource base (soils, aquifers, and the climate system), ensuring that cropland is utilized for food crops (for example, switching from tobacco to grain), and undertaking adequate agricultural research to maximize the value of new technological advances, augmenting food production.

In concluding, Brown remarks that "...China's emergence as a massive grain importer will be the wake-up call that will signal trouble in the

relationship between ourselves...and the natural systems and resources on which we depend. It may well force a redefinition of security, a recognition that food scarcity and the associated economic instability are far greater threats to security than military aggression."

—Cate Johnson, Ph.D., RD

Worldwatch Institute, 1995. ISBN 0-393-03897-1 ISBN 0-393-31409-X (Pbk)

Books in Brief:

World Development Report 1996: From Plan to Market discusses the global economy and the transitional phases in the development of a market based economy. Human resources, environmental stability, and socioeconomic indicators are included, summarizing the data for 133 countries and territories. This report is available in English, Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. To order contact The World Bank, P.O. Box 7247, Philadelphia, PA 19101-9630, tel (202) 473-1155, fax (202) 522-2627, e-mail <books@worldbank.org>.

Shattered Lives: Sexual Violence during the Rwandan Genocide and its Aftermath discusses the issues surrounding the violence against women during the war in Rwanda in 1994. Personal accounts of the violence during the war and the ongoing problems victims face, as well as recommendations and international and national responses to these issues are discussed. To order contact Human Rights Watch, 485 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10017-6104, tel (212) 972-8400, fax (212) 972-0905, e-mail <hrwnyc@hrw.org>.

War and Public Health, edited by Barry S. Levy and Victor W. Sidel, co-published with the American Public Health Association, describes the relationship of war and public health. It explores the roles of health professionals and health organizations during war, and describes what health professionals can do to help prevent war. The book includes chapters on the effects of war on health, human rights, and the environment, and pays special attention to vulnerable populations such as women, children, and refugees. The public health effects of

nuclear, chemical and biological weapons systems are examined, as well as the consequences of the Vietnam War, The Persian Gulf War, and the war in Central America. In addition to discussing the direct results of the use of conventional weapons, the editors consider the role of the international arms trade, including the diversion of resources that could otherwise be used for health and human welfare. To order contact Order Dept, Oxford University Press, 2001 Evans Rd, Cary, NC, 27513, tel (800) 451-7556.

Third World Resources is published quarterly by Third World Resources to alert concerned educators and activists to new resources related to Third World regions and issues. The editors do not necessarily endorse resources that appear in this review. An expanded and updated edition of the "Directory of Organizations" that appeared in the *Third World Resource Directory 1994-1995* is now available in print and electronic formats. The 42-page list contains names and addresses of major national and international publishers and/or distributors of Third World-related resources. Price varies according to the use that will be made of the list. Write or call for details: Third World Resources, 464 19 St., Oakland, CA 94612-2297 USA. Tel: (510) 835-4692, ext. 113. Fax: (510) 835-3017.

Improving the Quality of Life of Girls, by Kathleen M. Kurz and Cynthia Prather. This important work explores the constraints limiting the quality of life of girls, especially related to their health, education, and social well-being. Programs and policies that show promise for overcoming those constraints are also discussed. Produced cooperatively by the Association for Women in Development (AWID) and UNICEF. Write AWID at 1511 K St., N.W., Ste. 825, Washington, D.C. 20005, or call (202) 628-0440.

The Challenge of Cultural Development by D. Paul Schafer is new from the World Culture Project. The basic thesis is that national and international attention should be focused in the future on the development of cultures. To be effective, cultures should be comprehensive, coherent, cohesive, humane and properly contextualized in the natural and historical environment. Contact: World Culture Project, 19 Sir Gawaine Place, Markham, Ontario, Canada L3P 3A1.

The Careless Society: Community and Its Counterfeits by John McKnight

A communitarian by conviction and contrarian by nature, John McKnight uses both probe lights in this collection of essays to examine how America has become "so dispirited." His conclusion? People are right to point to the burgeoning professional class. We know we are in trouble when we seek the approval of those who have commodified and packaged the emotions of normal human passages, such as grief, and referred them for specialized "treatment" by "experts." In so doing, we become less and less able to form the mutual commitments that are the roots of community. The professionalization of our relationships gnaws away at the emotional ligatures that bind communities together and, as community is disabled at the local level, so is the hope for a nation of spirited people.

How, according to McKnight, does this happen? Services to assist the poor transform citizens into professional "clients" and engender impotence-- psychological and social. The worst emasculators are those that pose as community counterfeits: the human service, criminal justice, and medical systems. These are especially pernicious, in his view, because they undermine a community's confidence in its ability to address its own problems, all the while masquerading as its more knowledgeable substitutes. They spawn a "serviced society" whose culture feeds on management in lieu of community, commodities in lieu of care, and curricula where the oral wisdom of stories once nurtured the next generation's survival.

The worst "institutional invader" of community life, as far as McKnight is concerned, is the medicalized health "care industry," whose very name reveals it as a social oxymoron. Furthermore, the mystification of the medical field has given it so much power that its language and ideology-- labeling a person's "needs" and offering specialized "therapy"-- have been adopted throughout the service sector, which is a service-producing economy, yet he seems as dispirited as most when it comes to how individuals and communities can address that. Not surprisingly, perhaps, given the globalization of the economy and its increasing social and economic stratification. Yet one finds oneself hoping that so lucid a critic would have some guiding insights. Maybe this is too much to ask. Perhaps it is a symptom of the very malady he is talking about. After all, it is not just the

poor who are anesthetized by professionalism. The service sector's growth (to 90 percent of the workforce by the year 2000) means that, until we retire, we all participate-- as servers and as the clients who serve to keep the servers in business-- in an alienating game of musical chairs.

For those who would like to know how to engage in community building at home, McKnight suggested in an interview that we look into the Movement for a Living Wage and some of the trade unions (such as AFSCME and the SEIU) that are taking the lead in the struggle to obtain adequate incomes. Income is income, he notes, and cannot be siphoned off or tailored according to race and location, as are many services.

How might McKnight's book apply to "development" work? We developers don the "expert" label and are foreign experts to boot. Our macro "clients" tend to be entire nations or regions of nations. Even those of us who flinch at many of the notions underlying such roles know that we must maintain our voices of authority-- even as we espouse the sanctity of local community-- or what? Is the only authentic alternative to quit and go live among those whose lot we are paid to think we are improving?

It may be the kind of revisionism McKnight abhors, but it seems that at a minimum we could design our projects and analyze policies to strengthen rather than obstruct local community. At first glance, that may make sense; we will be considering strengthening NGOs, for instance, and since that emphasis has been in vogue since the Reagan years, cannot we sit back and breathe more easily?

But are NGOs necessarily more authentic representatives of the communities in which they work? Do they promote a shared and consistent charter of human rights, income distribution, and local participatory democracy? Do the communities from which they spring? Policies that enhance civil society, democratization, and the improvement of the quality of life should be furthered; those that do not should be scuttled. Nothing novel here. But how often do we review our projects explicitly with this in mind? And even if we do, does that make us truer to local communities? Or are we crashing against long-held "community" values as we select and strengthen some of its players?

It could all boil down to what we mean by community. Existing "community" may throttle the creativity, health, and human rights-- as we see them-- of women, indigenous populations, vast numbers of children, most of the poorer classes. In that sense, devel-

opment work deliberately subverts some community authority, the way campaigns against domestic violence and discrimination against immigrants do that at home. Do the language and concerns about sustainability and local participation cover these contingencies? Where does sustainability of a health project intersect with the sustainability of the community it serves? And how does that community's sustainability intersect with the sustainability of the larger community or culture? When we espouse family planning and the empowerment of women, for one, aren't we knowingly and exuberantly hoping to alter those very things? And when we invoke "community participation" is that not a tad paternalistic, when "origination" might be more democratic?

There is no such thing as "technical" development work. It is all value-laden. So let's accept that and take it from there. If we believe that the disruption we cause is ethical, we must believe that we are offering an ethical alternative and do so wholeheartedly, without the pretense of "technical neutrality."

Are we inherently disrespecting the integrity of the communities whose problems and needs we take it upon ourselves to identify and set out to repair? The mere fact that we do so implies we know something more or better. Do we ultimately benefit from the existence of those we are supposed to be benefitting? Yes. That's how we earn our livings. And there is no doubt that our language, like that against which McKnight rails, is often laden with turgid bureaucratic prose that would set us apart from and implicitly disqualify those who don't use it.

What does this mean we should do? When we evaluate our work with open eyes at the end of the day, do we still feel that, on balance, the good outweighs whatever community disruption it unleashes? Have we kept our promises and commitments? Have we done our work in such a way that we have strengthened rather than weakened local capacity, autonomy, well-being, whatever our values are? Have we deliberately considered "their" values in the process? Have we made any difference at all? That, I think, is up to each of us to determine.

— Ellen E. Wasserman
Consultant

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