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STEPHEN HAYKIN

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INTERVIEW

Introduction

Q: Good morning. This is John Pielemeier on January 8, 2024, beginning an interview with Stephen Haykin. Steve has been with AID for many years, recently retired, a multi Mission Director, mostly in Africa. Steve, we'll start with asking you where you grew up, and what may have led you towards international work?

HAYKIN: Well, thank you, John. Thank you for this opportunity to participate in this very important program. I was born in Omaha, Nebraska. And at the age of nine, my family moved to Seattle, Washington; the Seattle area. I grew up there. I went to high school and college in the Pacific Northwest.

Education: Reed College, The Evergreen State College, Georgetown University

Q: Where did you go to college?

HAYKIN: I spent my first year and a half at Reed College. And then I transferred to a new school, which was the Evergreen State College. Evergreen State College has a rather unique curriculum and style.

Q: What was unique about it?

HAYKIN: No grades, self-evaluations, a lot of independent and small group study in blocks rather than the sort of traditional course work. It was towards the end of that period that I was trying to figure out what I wanted to do after college. In my last year of college, there was a public program on the events in Chile in the '70s. It got me thinking about international matters. I knew that I wanted to go into public service. But I hadn't until that point, really focused on the idea of working internationally rather than domestically. Still, I was a bit uncertain. I went to work in some clerical jobs for the state of Washington since my school was based in Olympia, and that was the main employer there. Then I started applying to graduate schools, I decided to apply in international relations, and ended up going to Georgetown University for the Master in Foreign Service. Ultimately, I ended up with two masters from Georgetown because they offered a joint degree with economics and I thought that was more compelling.

Q: Moving to the east coast, had you been on the east coast before?

HAYKIN: Well, I checked it out. I had never lived on the East Coast. That was a change, culturally a change. For a number of reasons I don't necessarily need to go into. But yes.

Q: You were in the master's program. I graduated from Georgetown as an undergraduate and later on, I taught at their International Human Development Program. But you were not in that program you were in—

HAYKIN: I was in the development track in the Masters of Science Foreign Service program. I took a course in economic development. That's where I really learned about USAID. I didn't know what USAID was before that, but definitely the more I got into it, the more I felt like economic development was a field I wanted to go into. When I announced this to my parents, my mother said 'good, there are a lot of development opportunities in Alaska.'

Q: What years were those?

HAYKIN: I moved to Washington in 1977. Drove across the country in my gray Volvo, listening to a lot of Elvis' music because he had just died, and settled in. The rest is history in a sense.

Q: Was there anybody in particular Georgetown who influenced you? Any teachers?

HAYKIN: That's a tough question. I mean, I really liked George Viksnins who was the Economic Development teacher. I can't say that we were necessarily close or anything. There was great camaraderie, especially among my class and the class after ours because it was a two-year program. Those friendships last to this day.

For my second year at Georgetown, I was on a fellowship from the Center for Strategic and International Studies where I worked under Ambassador Michael Samuels in the Africa program. Together, we produced a historical monogram on US and Portuguese diplomacy regarding Angola. (Citation: Samuels, Michael A., and Stephen M. Haykin. "ANDERSON PLAN-AMERICAN ATTEMPT TO SEDUCE PORTUGAL OUT OF AFRICA." ORBIS-A JOURNAL OF WORLD AFFAIRS 23.3 (1979): 649-669.)

IFPRI - International Food Policy Research Institute

Q: What did that lead you towards?

HAYKIN: Well, I gave myself two years and then I needed to find a job. I hadn't quite completed all of my degree requirements, especially with a dual degree. I went to work.

My initial job out of graduate school was with the International Food Policy Research Institute, as a research assistant, then as a research analyst. And actually, that was a range of things. But I did a lot of data work, econometric work. That was fascinating. I had some of the skills from University that I drew upon. I did that for about five years. During that time, I had two opportunities to travel internationally for IFPRI. One was spending six months in Zambia, supervising collection of data for a household survey. I had a little 125cc motorbike, and I would go out to villages and pick up questionnaires, interact with the survey enumerators, and etc. That was fascinating. I spent a little bit of time in Lusaka and most of the time in the Eastern Province, Chipata, right on the border with Malawi. Lilongwe was the next big city. And in those days Lilongwe had nothing, but it still had a beer and a Time Magazine, which where I was in Zambia, not so much.

Q: What years were those?

HAYKIN: That would have been '80-'81, six months. Later, I was seconded from IFPRI to the World Food Program for three or four weeks to do some evaluation work in Mali, Mauritania, and Niger. That was an interesting international experience as well.

Q: Did you have French to that point?

HAYKIN: Yes. Although my French got better later on.

Q: Where did you learn French?

HAYKIN: I started in seventh grade. Poor Mrs. White who couldn't pronounce anything in French, didn't help me in that regard. I took it up through, I want to say, my first semester of college, and then I dropped it. At Georgetown, I had a language requirement. I did a little bit of work with Alliance Francaise and with a private tutor, to get through that. Then later, I had to test out in the Foreign Service. And I did a little more work on that. When I was posted to Zaire in 1988, I had the good fortune to take French language-immersion training In Villefranche, near Nice. Now I'm happy to say my wife is Francophone. That's helped me improve my French a lot. We speak French at home.

Q: Well, Zambia was—you're living alone and you were in rural, Eastern Zambia.

HAYKIN: I was living in a government guest house and eating a lot of maize meal. But yeah, that was fun. I was young. It was great. It was quite a different experience. I remember very vividly, I left Washington. I flew to Paris. I overnighted there. Then I flew overnight to Lusaka, transferred planes, went out to Chipata, had lunch at the guest house and then we were out in the field measuring—there was a part of the survey that included

measuring baby's weight and taking wrist circumference measurements. What a contrast from Paris to the bush in twenty-four hours.

Q: You say we, who are you working with?

HAYKIN: Again, it was an IFPRI, International Food Policy Research Institute, with local Zambian government authorities that were engaged in the research as well.

Q: What was the objective of the research?

HAYKIN: It was to look at, as I recall, the impact of household income on nutrition on a seasonal basis. So was a sort of a Panel Survey, a household Survey.

Q: Did it ever get published?

HAYKIN: Apparently it is an unpublished manuscript used in other work. The lead author is Shubh Kumar, from IFPRI. (Citation: IFPRI/NFNC/RDSB (International Food Policy Research Institute/National 'Food and Nutrition Commission, Zambia/Rural Development Studies Bureau, University of Zambia. 1985. Maize policies and nutrition in Zambia: A case study in Eastern Province. Project report. Mimeo.)

Q: When you finished that research, you came directly back to Washington?

HAYKIN: I came back. Well, I traveled a little bit in Africa actually. I took advantage, I traveled to east Africa, and then West Africa. Also in Europe, because I didn't know that I'd ever go back to Africa again. So I wanted to take advantage of that. Towards the end of the trip, somewhere along the way, I managed to pick up hepatitis. That set back a number of things including working and also finishing graduate school, because I still had some outstanding requirements at Georgetown. Eventually, it worked out.

Q: How did it affect you?

HAYKIN: Just physically, I mean, I couldn't do anything. When I got back, I had a really excellent doctor who had a specialty in tropical medicine, by chance and he told me, ‘Steve, anything you're planning to do in the next six months, forget about it completely.’ That was the best advice. At about five months or something, I was starting to get close to resuming my regular routine. But if I hadn't really just sat back, I would have had relapse after relapse, I'm sure. I followed his advice. I mean, that was an interesting period. But I did go back to IFPRI.

Note: I was named by Amar Siamwalla as his co-author on Research Report 39: The World Rice Market: Structure, Conduct and Performance, 1983. I also contributed some fairly intensive econometric work for an IFPRI report working under Yair Mundlak. (Citation: Cavallo, Domingo, and Yair Mundlak. 1982. Agriculture and economic growth: The case of Argentina. Research Report 36. Washington, D.C.: International Food Policy Research Institute.)

I applied to AID, this gets interesting. It took five years from the time I applied to AID till the time I started working. It was the early 80s. I applied, I guess, before I went to the Sahel with IFPRI. I was eventually called for oral interviews, but I was already scheduled to be in Mali on the date they had chosen. So we worked out with the USAID mission and the human resources office that I would be interviewed on videotapes in Bamako. The appointed day came and it turned out that the videotaping formats were incompatible. So they canceled it, and scheduled me for six months later. I eventually did have my interview, and eventually was placed on a recruitment roster. Then President Reagan was reelected and there was a hiring freeze. Days before the hiring freeze, I had a good friend who was working at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and had insight into what was coming. I had also had a job offer from the Department of Agriculture. My friend, Gary Moser, who unfortunately, passed away at a young age and had worked for USAID for a while, advised me to take the USDA job. I did and I worked there for two years, until I got a call from AID and I was in the first new hire class after the hiring freeze in 1986.

USDA Economic Research Service 1984-86

Q: What were you doing at USDA?

HAYKIN: I was working for the Economic Research Service, I was an agricultural economist and analyst for ten countries across the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. That was actually an interesting period. One of note. We're talking about '84- '86, the period roughly, and this is when one of the big droughts in the Horn of Africa was happening. I was an analyst for Ethiopia. I would go to these huge interagency meetings at the State Department on the government response to the drought. My only direct involvement was that USDA had an USAID funded program to estimate food needs for countries around the world. I would be working on the food needs estimates for the countries that I covered, I think the ten countries, Ethiopia being one of them. It got interesting when suddenly, there was a big commitment of American food aid to Ethiopia, to respond to the drought - it's about '84- '85. But the numbers on which it's based were very different from the numbers that we had at USDA or that USAID had been using up to that point. Somehow politics got involved in the decision on how much food aid we were going to

give. It was worked backwards. The United States government decided how much we were going to give, and then decided that would be 50 percent of the need, and therefore the need was twice what we gave. I should have known right there to stay away from USAID, but I didn't. I was still idealistic and thinking I can make a difference.

Q: Did you rebel against that?

HAYKIN: I really didn't have a forum. I mean, I'm sure I raised it with my superiors. But that decision was taken at a level that was in the stratosphere compared to where I was in the bureaucracy.

Q: You didn't travel to the region?

HAYKIN: Oh, no, I did once for USDA. It was a little bit later than that. I did a trip to Rome, to the FAO and World Food Program, and then to Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia. All in one trip.

Q: The purpose of that trip was?

HAYKIN: Familiarization for my job as an analyst for the region. I think my control officers for that trip were USAID in each case. That was also a very fascinating window into things. During my time at USDA, I was also part of a group that was seconded to the Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome for one month to help draft an annual report on trends in agriculture across the globe.

Joining USAID 1986

Q: You said two years with USDA?

HAYKIN: Yes, then I got the call from USAID and eventually was scheduled to enter International Development Intern (IDI) class, in September 1986.

Q: That was the first class when they started back up again.

HAYKIN: Yeah.

Q: Large class?

HAYKIN: I want to say twenty to twenty-five. Civil service and Foreign Service.

Q: At that point were you married?

HAYKIN: No.

USAID/Kenya 1987 - 1988- Program Economist

Q: You had to be assigned. And how does that process work?

HAYKIN: I can't remember exactly how the process happened. But at some point during that year, I was told that I would be assigned to Nairobi. Pretty nice first post. But there was a bit of a complication. I was an International Development Intern. I was to do one year in Washington and then go overseas. But, during the course of the year of training, I find out that once I've done my first year there's no position for me in the Nairobi mission.

Q: What backstop were you?

HAYKIN: I forgot to mention that I was a program economist. I went to work for Kiert Toh in Nairobi, who I noticed has an oral history in the collection. So the complication was that I did not have an onward assignment. Eventually I ended up talking to Steve Sinding, who was the mission director. The decision was that I would just come and we'd sort that out later. I had an interesting time. I mean, it was a great experience. Living in Nairobi, getting to know about USAID. I became the monitoring and evaluation specialist in the program office among other tasks, and I supported different teams in project designs. Those were my main functions.

Kiert Toh was on leave when it came time to release a tranche of funding under a large non-project assistance program that we had. As I recall, I worked closely with the Mission's lawyer to review progress against conditions precedent and to update them for the coming year. This program supported fiscal reforms, financial management of the National Cereals Board and fertilizer pricing.

As the year progressed, I was given a choice for my onward assignment. I could move to the Regional Economic Development Support Office, REDSO East Africa. There was a vacancy coming up there. There were three economists in REDSO, which was very helpful for me, because I had Kiert as my supervisor and then the three REDSO economists to talk to and sort of informally mentor me, including Roberta Mahoney, who I have been in contact with all of these years, and is now very active in the USAID alumni association with us. I could either do that, or I could go to Kinshasa, to Zaire at the time, and take a position that was much more senior. It was an FS-01 position. At this

point, I'm still an FS-04. I opted for that. And I'm glad I did. Part of the reason I opted for that is, I was single, and I just didn't feel like a REDSO job, effectively living out of a suitcase, was going to work for me what with traveling so much of the time. I wanted to dig in one place and develop a support system, such as it is in the Foreign Service.

USAID/Zaire 1988 -1991, Program Economist

Q: So you move directly to Kinshasa?

HAYKIN: After a year, I moved to Kinshasa. I should note that I was in Kinshasa for three days, then off to Villefranche, just outside of Nice in France, for two months of French language immersion training.

Q: Who was your boss in Kinshasa?

HAYKIN: John Bierke. John was a very good, very proficient, fascinating program officer. I learned a lot. I've got some important memories from that time. Let me go back just a little bit, because you've asked about influential people in my career, and certainly my supervisor and sort of mentor during my year in Washington, a lot of which was in the Africa Bureau, was Jerry Wolgin, who was a chief economist for the Africa Bureau for years and that was really wonderful and important.

Q: Can you remember things that Jerry influenced you about?

HAYKIN: It's a good question. Certainly, sort of opening me up to opportunities including later on, I think being an active participant in a program economists' conference that was held during that period. This was the period of Structural Adjustment Programs. In my first year at USAID, I coordinated a set of evaluations on five of USAID's first Structural Adjustment Programs (aka non-project assistance) and I was a co-author of the report on Mali.

Q: So now we're back in Kinshasa.

HAYKIN: We're in Kinshasa at this point.

Q: What are your responsibilities?

HAYKIN: I'm the Program Economist for the mission. Basically an advisor in the program office. I had some involvement, engagement. John Bierke felt very strongly, and I think this was useful, that in negotiations with government, we should never send in a

Foreign Service National (FSN) alone. There should be an American with them to protect them. And we had a lead FSN Victor Magandula, who had a long career, who would be having discussions with the government on specifics of food aid programs, Title II and Title I programs that we had at the time. I would accompany him. That was one of the things we did. We also had a rather complex non-project assistance program which is basically a cash transfer program that was linked to reforms at the central bank. There was a Commodity Import component that generated local currency that was then programmed in coordination with the Zairean government. My role in that project was handling the side of it that had to do with the interfacing with the central bank, supporting banking reforms.

Q: Sounds intriguing.

HAYKIN: At some point, things in Zaire fell apart. There had been a lot of Zairian soldiers who had been in peacekeeping, if I'm not mistaken, in Rwanda. As they were coming back, there was a little bit more liquidity in the economy, and somebody mounted a very successful Ponzi scheme. And a lot of the returning soldiers lost a lot of money in this Ponzi scheme. There were other things going on and eventually there was civil unrest that really shook the Mobutu government.-

I bring this up in terms of the program. The finances of the country were getting really shaky, and the compliance with the terms of the non-project assistance that was conditional. I can't remember the specifics. We were needing to pull away basically, from that, but there was an added complication because, for some reason at that time, Zaire was a member of the UN Security Council. And there was something else going on in the world, so we needed to keep them happy. Just as we were on the brink of winding down this program, a decision was made to add funding to the non-project assistance to encourage a vote in a certain way. This was around the time of the first Gulf War.

Q: That sort of threw off your mission's plan.

HAYKIN: A little bit. Eventually, we did have to evacuate and I was evacuated out of Kinshasa in 1991.

Q: Because of unrest?

HAYKIN: Because of civil unrest. I mean, there was rioting and looting and it was dangerous. As it turns out, Americans and Israelis were not targeted because they were relatively protected by the government. But we didn't know that. In some cases, looters

were coming over people's fences and things like that. So we were consolidated and evacuated.

Q: Where were you evacuated to?

HAYKIN: We crossed the river by ferry to Brazzaville and then flew to Andrews Air Force Base. We were told to bring one suitcase and one carry-on only and we were staged in groups on the tarmac near the ferries. At one point, a friend asked me to watch her bags because she had left her passport in her apartment that was walking distance from the staging area. While she was away, it came time to move forward. As I was struggling to move two peoples' luggage towards the ferries, a rather large and commanding French Foreign Legionnaire approached. "May I help you?" he asked. That was my first and only encounter with the French Foreign Legion.

I came back to Washington. Of the people who were evacuated from USAID, I may have been the first to go back out in the field because already, early on, there were discussions about my onward assignment to Guinea-Conakry. I am trying to think of what else is notable in terms of my responsibilities in Kinshasa. I interacted a lot with the economic growth team and we had a separate project development office that was responsible for evaluations as well and had road projects and things like that. I interacted with them a lot and some with the health office.

Q: Were you traveling around Zaire a lot?

HAYKIN: Not a lot but some. I remember taking a couple of trips to the Bandundu region.

Q: Where's that?

HAYKIN: That's to the east of Kinshasa, but it's an area where we had a lot of our agricultural development work and other things. I did go down to Lubumbashi in the south too. I can't remember exactly what the context of that was.

Q: Remind me, did you mention who the mission director was?

HAYKIN: Let's see. No, I didn't. First there was Charles Johnson, then Dennis Chandler came in.

Q: Was it a big mission?

HAYKIN: Yeah, it was pretty big. It was a large mission.

Q: And a large program.

HAYKIN: Yes, well over $50 million per year.

I have fond memories of living in Kinshasa. We had a large group of young professionals in the Embassy. We would often go out in large groups, late on weekend nights, to go dancing in the Matonge district. This was a high point in the music scene in Kinshasa and the music was known all over Africa, Zaiko Langa Langa, Papa Wemba, Tshala Muana, etc.….

Q: So everybody got evacuated, the program was closed down?

HAYKIN: No, not everybody was evacuated. The program wasn't completely closed down. It was a major drawdown. There were a very limited number of people who could be in Kinshasa. Some of the folks would stay in Brazzaville and then they'd swap out. So there was kind of a cycling of people from Brazzaville to Kinshasa. I wasn't in that group. It was a smaller group. There were a few people still maintaining operations in Kinshasa, but families were gone and I was early in my career then so I wasn't one of the people who stayed.

USAID/Guinea 1991-1994- Program Economist

Q: So you actually physically came back to Washington and then moved quickly to Guinea or how did that work?

HAYKIN: Yeah, fairly quickly, I think, probably within two or three months I went back out to Guinea. Guinea was not a huge mission. It wasn't small. It was kind of medium size. I don't know the exact numbers. You'd asked about whether I was single when I went overseas. I met my wife, Constantine, in Kinshasa. It was rather tricky but I eventually got her to join me in Guinea. We weren't married at that point, but after she joined me in Guinea we got married.

Q: You had family housing in Guinea?

HAYKIN: Yeah.

Q: All right. So Conakry is a much smaller country and it has its own history of coups and other things. What was going on in Guinea when you were there?

HAYKIN: Guinea was politically fairly stable when I was there. We, of course, were trying to get the economy going. And we had the usual range of health and I presume education programs. A little bit of private enterprise. I remember managing, with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, a large trade mission of U.S. business representatives. I think family planning was part of the mix, too.

At one point, we had an issue with a proposed World Bank project. In working with Ambassador Joseph Saloom, I learned, early on, that the field can wield substantial influence on the U.S. Treasury Department and the U.S. Executive Director at the World Bank on country-specific issues.

I remember the education program there because I was part of it. Education also had a non-project assistance component, which was rather interesting, and I worked a lot on that. The idea was that since the country was fairly corrupt, we didn't want to give just direct cash to the Treasury. The way the program was designed before I got there is that the U.S. government would help Guinea to pay down some of its debts in exchange for the Ministry of Finance allocating money to the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Education undertaking reforms. I think the mission had a lot of confidence in the Minister of Education at the time, maybe not so much in other parts of the government, but the Minister of Education was a reliable partner. The problem was that there was a structural flaw in the program because paying down Guinea's debts didn't really give the Ministry of Finance any incentive to give money to the Ministry of Education. There was also a technical assistance component for education including financial management. But the problem was they still weren't getting the money from the Ministry of Finance. And then, the debt repayment wasn't working very well, because the government wasn't really sharing adequate information on what their debts were for us to pay down the debt. I spent a lot of my time during that tour, again, at the Central Bank, trying to identify the eligible debts and the exact amounts and things like that, and helping them to pay it down. We did make some good progress in spending down the money that we had allocated for that. I think some good things happened in education, but just not as much as we had anticipated because the incentives that were built into the program didn't work as well as we would have liked.

Q: These were not World Bank or IMF debts?

HAYKIN: Some were. There was some question of whether the design was consistent with Paris Club_ understandings. I thought it was though I think I had a U.S. Treasury counterpart who wasn't sure about that.

Q: How long were you in Guinea?

HAYKIN: I want to say, three years.

Q: Did you travel around, were you happy to be there?

HAYKIN: I traveled just a little bit in the country. I didn't like Guinea that much. Of all the tours I have had, Guinea was a country that I didn't like so much. Partly, it's got a rather brutal history that precedes when I was there. I think it really affected the ethos of the country, probably to this day. They're important ethnic divisions in the country. The government, as I mentioned, was corrupt. The creature comforts weren't as comfortable there as other places, even for those of us who were well off. So it wasn't great. But it was a fascinating professional experience.

Q: Who is your mission director?

HAYKIN: Well, I had two. Bill Kaschak was one. Wilbur Thomas came in after Bill. We're still in contact with his family to this day. Note: Wilbur Thomas passed away shortly after this interview. After Ambassador Saloom left, Dane Smith became Ambassador. My supervisors were David Hess, then Sally Sharpe.

Q: So, again, you're still a program economist.

HAYKIN: Yes, at this point, still.

USAID/Ghana 1995-1997

Q: What was your next assignment?

HAYKIN: From there I went to Ghana. Accra. I was recruited by Joe Goodwin who had been deputy in Kinshasa, but he left by the time I got to Accra.

Q: What was the position?

HAYKIN: I was a program economist there as well. And the mission director first was Barbara Sandoval and the second was Myron Golden. My supervisor was Stafford Baker, then Denise Rollins. I worked in Ghana following the macro economy. I worked on a program with the economic growth office that was basically to increase so called non-traditional exports. We worked with the people managing the food aid program. I was doing various economic analyses, probably some monitoring and evaluation and

reporting work. We were also engaged in policy dialogue to improve trade policies and the environment for private enterprises.

Q: Was it a big mission at the time?

HAYKIN: Yeah, again, it was kind of medium to large.

Q: Who was running the country?

HAYKIN: This was Jerry Rawlings at this point. But it was when he was in his more democratic phase, not in his early, brutal years.

Q: We had a positive relationship with the government at that point?

HAYKIN: As I recall, yeah.

Q: Ghana is a much bigger and more interesting country. Did you get around?

HAYKIN: Yeah, I did. A lot of it was personal travel.

I forgot, Barbara Sandoval decided that, as a program economist, what I really needed was some project management experience. She was right. So I was given this delightful project, which was basically a tourism development project, an economic growth program that had several components. One of the components was assistance to developing a national park near Cape Coast, Ghana, implemented by Conservation International, the prime on the cooperative agreement. So I would go up there; Kakum National Park. That was one component. Another component was with the Smithsonian Institution, helping put in interpretive museum type displays and also some rehabilitation of the castles in Cape Coast and Elmira that had been used for the slave trade. It was important, particularly for attracting American tourists, among others, to do "roots" tours. Then there was some assistance to the hotel and restaurant industry as well; that was another component of it. I would travel up there a fair amount to interact with the implementing partners. Then also to take visitors. I was up and down there. That was my main sort of work related travel. Then on a personal basis, I went up to Kumasi, which is the second city, fascinating just to understand and see the country more.

Q: Did the tourism project get completed and is that what people see when they go now?

HAYKIN: Yeah. I mean, it's still there as far as I understand. One of the highlights of the National Park component was we put in a canopy walkway, it was actually started before

I got there. It is basically a suspension bridge between various large trees in the forest. So that you're at some point about forty-fifty feet off the forest floor and you can look down and you can see the flora, fauna, the bug life, bird life. As far as I know, that still exists. Certainly the interpretive stuff, the Smithsonian displays at the Cape Coast Castle and Elmina Castle, should be there. So yeah, I'm sure that had lasting impact.

Canopy Walkway, Kakum National Park, Ghana. Photo: Stephen Haykin

AID/Washington Asia, Near East and Europe and Eurasia Bureaus 1998-2000

Q. So at this point, you had three tours as a program economist. Have you had any promotions at this point?

HAYKIN: Yeah. I think I was hired as a four. Anyway, at some point, I went from four to three. But then I was stuck in the threes for quite a while.

Let's see, in Guinea, one summer, we were very short handed. I was acting program officer. I had thought in Ghana that I might have an opportunity to do more of that, but it just didn't play out that way. That was one of the reasons that, after three years in Ghana, I left. I remember as I was looking at what to do next at that point, Jim Govan, who was deputy of the development planning office in Africa Bureau, said, Steve, 'you've been out in the field for several years now and people in Washington don't really know you. You should think about coming back.' For that, and a variety of personal reasons I came back to Washington. It had been about ten years.

I ended up in what was then the Asia Near East Bureau, as a program economist. There were three of us. And little over a year later, walking from the Metro Center to the Ronald Reagan Building. I bumped into an old friend from the African Bureau, Colette Cowey, and we said hi. I didn't think too much of it until a couple days later when I bumped into her again in the elevator in the Ronald Reagan Building, and she says 'you wouldn't be interested in a program officer position in the European & Eurasia Bureau, would you?' I said, well, actually, I would. So that's how I ended up making a move to E&E and becoming a program officer, section head in the program office for the former Soviet Union.

Q: Had that program just started?

HAYKIN: I'm going to have to think about this. But I think it was a bit more than five years. What was happening at that time is the program for the former Soviet Union started up first as a kind of an Emergency Task Force and emergency program, a lot of things put together. They had a way of structuring the country strategies for all those countries. There was some consistency, a menu that the missions would choose from, so that the bureau could add up and talk in consistent terms about what it was doing, which was good. They'd been there long enough to get their feet on the ground, start up, and then put together five year strategies, which were coming to an end.

Colette and I had worked together in the Africa Bureau, in the program office. So here you have a bureau that doesn't have a lot of history, that's going into a cycle of new strategic plans for all of its or most of its missions, pretty much in lockstep. Her experience and my experience in Africa Bureau in strategic planning were relevant. I hadn't mentioned in all the narratives before that I had been involved in many strategic planning exercises, including in Zaire. I had experience both from early days when I was backstopping in Washington to being in the field and working on them. I had experience and knew how Africa Bureau did things. One of the things I did was help manage the second round, I'm not sure if they were called CDCSs (Country Development Strategy Statements), whether we call them that or not at that point, but we did a number of these. One thing I remember in particular from my experiences: I'm looking at the process and what each of the operating units is doing. I said, well, where are the required environmental analyses? 'Oh, well, it was an emergency. We didn't do those the first time around.' I said, 'I don't think we're gonna get away with not doing those a second time around.' I worked with the bureau environmental officers and worked with each of the missions to do their Biodiversity and Tropical Forestry Assessments. We produced a number of those, which was good.

Q: Did you go to the region to do that?

HAYKIN: Not so much. I did do a long TDY to Ukraine and one to Kazakhstan. I'm trying to think if I did another one during that period. Yes, Azerbaijan with a brief time in Georgia. Prior to that, and when I was with ANE, just to back up a little bit, I had gone to Egypt. So I went to Egypt, to Jordan, and to Mongolia. Anyway, now we are in E&E. It was getting close to ten years in since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the startup of programs in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. I think it was George Ingram (DAA) or maybe Don Presley (Assistant Administrator). They were both involved, and wanted a study of what had we accomplished in the first ten years of assistance to that region. So I worked very closely with the PSC we had at the time, who was Catherine Balsas, who developed the terms of reference for that, and then got that started. But I wasn't around when it was completed.

Q. Do you have any idea what the results of that study was?

HAYKIN: It's published. There is a nice report on the first ten years. Nice, slick, good, I think, well researched, well documented report. (Citation: A Decade of Change: Profiles of USAID Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, USAID 2000).

Q: You recall what the substance of that was?

HAYKIN: As I recall, it documents the many reforms that USAID supported and our contributions to private enterprise development.

Q: So it wasn't necessarily very positive or?

HAYKIN: I think it was positive. I think there certainly was progress in sort of institutional development, democracy, private sector development, and those kinds of things. Maybe not so much in health—there were other things going on that were affecting our health outcomes in that part of the world at the time. All that time I was based in Washington. When I moved to E&E Bureau, again, I switched into the Program Officer backstop.

Q: How long were you in that job?

HAYKIN: About a year and a half or two because then another sort of serendipitous thing happened. I get a call out of the blue from a friend (Laura McPherson) who had been a contractor, I guess, at one point a PSC, and then followed up by a discussion with the mission director in Madagascar. Was I interested in coming out as a supervisory project development officer and de facto deputy director of USAID, Madagascar? They needed

somebody to come out. I went out to Madagascar to work for Karen Poe. So I left the E&E bureau.

USAID/Madagascar PDO, Deputy Mission Director, Mission Director 2000-2005

Q: What year would that have been?

HAYKIN: So that was 2000. That starts a new chapter of my career right there. Let me just say, since we were talking E&E bureau. One of the formative experiences of my career, I think, was walking into the E&E job. Because here I was in a region that I didn't know as much about. The way the E&E was staffing at the time was with a lot of personal services contractors in Washington, I guess, coming out of the rapid scale up to the program. So I walked into the job, this was one of my earlier supervisory jobs. And suddenly, I was supervising a lot of people who were older than me with a lot more experience than I had. So I just kind of took one look in the mirror and said to myself, 'you'd be crazy if you didn't keep your ears open and listen to these people. 'That was very formative for me because it cemented for me the importance of really listening to the advice of the people that you're supervising and respecting them for their professional knowledge and experience without shirking the responsibilities and making decisions when it's necessary, but certainly being open. And I think that's reflected in how I manage.

Q: Do you remember some of the things you learned from those people?

HAYKIN: For the most part, I was talking about that in terms of how to resolve technical questions, or to advise missions or setting priorities on what's important to focus on. And also empowering them to do the work that they were working on. Specifically, I would have to wrack my brain a little bit more, but certainly supporting Missions on strategic planning and budgeting questions.

Q: You're learning management skills basically.

HAYKIN: Yeah. Important.

Q: 2000 in Madagascar, Karen Poe was the mission director? You were the program /project development officer. What was your role again?

HAYKIN: Formally, it was a supervisory project development officer, PDO. Skip Waskin, the outgoing PDO, and I had a hand-over lunch, across the street from the Ronald Reagan Building. We must have talked for about two hours. He was just doing a

brain dump. Everything he told me was just spot on. There's one thing about one employee that during the first year I didn't think he was right. And then it proved to be right, it was spot on. The handover was very helpful in getting started there. One of the things that he told me was, basically Steve, you got to make a choice. You can either run the program office, or you can be the deputy mission director, in effect. There was a lot of truth to that. I played a much stronger support role to the mission director as essentially, again, de facto deputy. We had a very strong FSN program officer, Agnes Rakotamalala who handled a lot of the day-to -day sort of program office functions because it was a combined program/project office. So, that first year is a bit of a blur (see below). I do remember that I was asked during the first summer, the summer of 2001, to be acting Deputy Chief of Mission for about six weeks or two months. I did that. That was very interesting. That went well.

Q: Do you remember who the ambassador was?

HAYKIN: Shirley Barnes. Later, we had Wanda Nesbitt.

I did take an R&R at the end of summer and came back. Just as I was coming back to post what happened? Karen Poe, who was the mission director, curtailed. So I came back after my R&R after my first year to be acting mission director in Madagascar, and again, it was a medium to large mission, a pretty diversified program. I went to the office, but I was still jet lagged. And I think the first or second day I came home early from work to catch up on sleep because I just couldn't function anymore. I'm fast asleep when my wife walks in and says, a plane has hit a building in New York. I kind of rolled over and went, “Oh, that's terrible”, rolled over again and went back to sleep. She comes in a couple minutes later and says a second plane has hit a building, I stood right up, and I immediately was at attention, thinking “oh, man, this is serious”. I thought maybe the first one was just a small craft that just was an accident or something. But it was clear there was something going on. I recall that another immediate reaction was that civil rights will never be the same again in the United States.

Needless to say, I was the acting Mission Director on 9/11 and all that implied. Shortly thereafter, Madagascar had presidential elections. The outcome was disputed. It was the mayor of Antananarivo Marc Ravalomanana, versus the incumbent President Didier Ratsiraka and it became a standoff. Now the Malagasy way of doing things meant that this was a fairly bloodless standoff. There was a standoff nevertheless and it lasted for months. And Ratsiraka had his stronghold on the coast and Ravalomanana had stronghold in the highlands

Q: They are different ethnic groups?

HAYKIN: Yeah, a little bit. There's an element of that. Anyway, the standoff went on, and it became essentially a blockade of the Capitol. Eventually, we drew down and evacuated most of our staff while this played out. There were a few deaths but in the scheme of things it was a relatively bloodless standoff. Eventually Ravalomanana prevailed and the situation stabilized and then we had to bring people back and rebuild the program. But you had the curtailment of the Mission Director, 9/11, this failed political or problematic political situation, and then the evacuation of families all in the space of about six months. That was pretty intense.

There were a lot of emotions and a bit of awkwardness between those in the Mission who felt they deserved compassion because they had to stay in Madagascar during the drawdown and those who felt that they had the short end of the stick because they had been ordered to leave. These wounds only healed with time.

I remained acting Mission Director for another couple of years, I was an FS-02 at this point. There was some reluctance to make an FS-02 a mission director. I guess I understand that. Eventually, in 2004, someone was selected to come in as Mission Director and two days before their arrival, the assignment was canceled because of a medical clearance issue. At this point, I was given the opportunity to stay on. Somewhere in there, my promotion to a FS-01 came through and the agency decided that they could name me a mission director. My last year in Madagascar, I stayed for a fifth year, my last year I was mission director. I sometimes say I was an accidental mission director because of all these events. Note: Ironically, I had been selected as Mission Director to Benin, but it was not until 2024, 20 years later, that I ended up working in Benin.

Q: Madagascar, I've been there, I ended up going there a lot after retiring from AID.

HAYKIN: We had met there originally.

Q: I worked mostly on the Environment Program, but doing other things from the mission too. I thought it was an extraordinarily positive environment program.

HAYKIN: Yeah, it was. You would have worked with Lisa Gaylord, who is still living in Madagascar. I understand. Note: Gaylord has returned to USAID Madagascar as a USPSC.

Q: And Helen Gunther originally

HAYKIN: Yeah. I met Helen, but she had left just before I got there. She came back to visit and she was well loved.

Q: Right. What else about the program? What were you pleased about with the program?

HAYKIN: I think one of the great things about my experience overall, I mean, clearly the civil unrest and poverty were sad. The positive experience professionally for me is that basically, by being there five years, and also being there at the end of the political unrest. When Ravalomanana became president, we developed a new country strategy to fit in with the new government. By extending to a fifth year, I was able to stay on not only through the strategy development and approval, but through the period of new awards, and the startup and early execution of new projects. So rarely, in AID, do you get that kind of sweep of the program cycle in one tour, and I was able to get a lot of it. It is really nice to see the fruition of your strategic planning work and have it come to execution. So that went well.

Another thing that was happening is that I had the opportunity to play a fairly instrumental role in the Millennium Challenge Corporation's first compact. Every time the MCC would send out a team. I would work with them, share contacts, advise them, and accompany them to meetings, quite often, with senior officials. We were under instructions as Mission Directors in MCC countries to keep a low profile. MCC was this new hot item, they let them do their thing, etcetera, etcetera. But they needed a lot of help and facilitation. I was able to somehow play that role of essentially publicly keeping under the radar for the most part and still help them succeed. I'm still not a great believer that necessarily that program (the MCC) ever should have been created. I think AID could have done the same thing, but once the decision was made, I felt a responsibility to help them succeed. And I think we did.

My early involvement was with Ellyette Rasendratsirofo—the Chief of Staff to Jacques Sylla, the Prime Minister—who I had gotten to know fairly well. They were struggling on putting together the data to show that they were eligible for a compact and I pointed out to them that they had a presidential commission on HIV/AIDS and that that money counted as health expenditure in the MCC criteria, and therefore, they were able to meet the threshold of expenditures on health as a percentage of budget or whatever the criteria was at the time. So that helped. And in successive visits again, including up to the CEO of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (Paul V. Applegarth), I participated in various ways to support MCC. So as chance would have it, I mean, there's the new Ravalomanana government, there's a new MCC agency, they're both really wanting to put points on the scoreboard. And so it all came together and Madagascar became the first country to have a compact from Millennium Challenge Corporation.

Q: You remember what the compact was supposed to do?

HAYKIN: Yeah, let's see if I can remember all of them. One of them basically had to do with land registration. I think one component had to do with agricultural development. The third had to do with stimulating the private sector. Then the program came along. Again, the word was, let MCC do their thing. MCC then needed an implementing partner and they eventually picked a German one, GTZ (German Agency for Technical Cooperation). GTZ at the time was the German development agency, but there was also a private sector counterpart—a non-governmental counterpart—that worked like a consulting firm or an executing agency. I think they were the ones that were contracted to do the implementation. In the interim, there was a need to put together a monitoring and evaluation plan for the compact. MCC didn't have systems up to do that yet. So they turned to us. One of the last things I did while I was in country was to help them contract to do the monitoring and evaluation plan. Note: A few years after I left, the MCA compact was cut short due to a non-democratic change in government.

I did visit all corners of Madagascar. Again, as you mentioned, we had a very active environmental program, tropical forestry program. I think we made a lot of progress in helping them both institutionally and policy-wise. Unfortunately, political events later have meant that a lot of that progress has been lost in subsequent years. But at the time, we were going great guns. I think we felt we were doing good work in the democracy and governance area. Particularly in strengthening the electoral authorities, notwithstanding the standoff that happened later. In the health area, we had very active health programs. Our programs vaccinated 300,000 children. Those were the early days of PEPFAR, as I recall, starting in Congo or Zaire as well.

Q: I also think, as I recall, before AID started working in the health field, or when we started working in the health field, there were really very few programs out in the rural areas and no NGOs. I think we helped set up a number of Malagasy NGOs.

HAYKIN: I think so.

Q: They made great progress in terms of dealing with child survival and family planning.

HAYKIN: I remember. Oh, another important feature I overlooked, and I guess this relates to the first year in Madagascar. People will remember, maybe, the CNN footage of the big cyclone that hit Mozambique. This would have been about '99. With pregnant women hanging in trees to get above floodwaters and things like that, it was very dramatic. But that cyclone also hit Madagascar. When there was a regional relief

package, Madagascar received a fair chunk of change. So the mission was, of course, in charge of programming that. I came in, I think, as we were still finishing up designing programs and starting implementation of the cyclone relief program. That was a very important phase of just trying to move things along. The agency, we were told, had had issues after Hurricane Mitch in Central America in that the funds hadn't been dispersed as promptly as Congress might have liked. That's what we were told. So we were under some pressure to make sure we got things moving quickly. That is where a lot of energies went.

Q: And how did you move the money?

HAYKIN: Again, I think it was a range of programs, some infrastructure support. There was a fun program, you may remember, of helping the government to rehabilitate a rail line that went from Fianarantsoa to the coast, in central southern Madagascar.

Railway Station, Madagascar. Photo: Stephen Haykin

Q: I just saw a Facebook post about that rail line, it is still working.

HAYKIN: Yeah. That was fascinating. I've been on that train. And there was a lot of work done with rehabilitating the infrastructure for that. There are other components that seemed to expand our whole portfolio. I'm a little bit fuzzy on the details of that.

Q: Who was your deputy during those periods?

HAYKIN: Let's see. Again, I mean, there was no formal deputy position in Madagascar. I think that after I left the PDO role, I believe it was Robert Rhodes, who came in as the head of that office, so he would have been second or third tour at that point.

Q: Were there other people in the mission you were happy to work with?

HAYKIN: Yeah, just about everybody. As I mentioned, Lisa Gaylord was there on the environmental program. PSC Wendy Benzergawas running the health program. Agnes Rakotomalala in the Program Office was great.

Q: She was just like Lisa, they were both long term PSCs, right?

HAYKIN: Yeah, I think last I heard Wendy was working in Swaziland as a PSC. I think she might still be there. Catie Lott came in as a DG officer at some point in there and did great work. During the period when we were drawn down, at one point it was just me and Paul Kramer, the comptroller, that is, we were the only two direct hires there in the mission. I learned a lot. I mean, I wouldn't know anything about the comptroller side of the operation if it wasn't for Paul. Malagasy we had on staff (in-country) during that period was Pedro Carillo, who was a longtime PSC, a Food for Peace Officer. I believe he's back in Peru at the moment. I have fond memories. Clearly what we all know or come to know is that the Foreign Service national (FSN) staff really stepped up and helped carry the operation during that period as well.

Q: All right. I remember Karen Poe in part because of her jewelry. When I went out there after maybe my first trip or second. I ended up going nine times. I linked up with Karen and realized that you could buy many precious stones, very inexpensively, in the market. Also there were a lot of jewelers around, and they could make things for you. I would go out and look at their catalogs and had a friend who just wanted pieces of jewelry to be done and was very happy to have them done in Madagascar.

HAYKIN: Yep. This lesson wasn't lost on us either.

Q: Is that right?

HAYKIN: Yeah, we also have some beautiful polished stones and things like that, too. We have fond memories. Unfortunately, our artifacts from Zaire (DR Congo) were all stolen. So, we don't have that. But we do have a collection of the art and things that we collected in Madagascar.

Q: All right. So we're finishing up in Madagascar. I note from your resume that you were on the school board, the American school in Madagascar as well as other places. How many children did you have at this point?

HAYKIN: Three.

Q: How old were they?

HAYKIN: At this point, let's see. My oldest daughter graduated from high school in Madagascar.

Q: I didn't know the school went that far.

HAYKIN: She was in a class of five. Actually, we also had my brother-in-law and niece with us. So, in 2000 when we got there, our oldest was going into her senior year of high school. This is one of the issues in going to Madagascar. I asked her how she would feel about going overseas for senior year of high school. I thought it was important to get her buy in. And she hesitated for just a second and said, 'Well, I guess I'd miss my senior prom, but otherwise I'm ready to go.' So she went to somebody else's senior prom as a junior and got that out of her system and just went out, got done with high school and went off to college. Our son, then, would have been in middle school when we first got there. He was in the international school and then our other daughter would have been in about second grade. As I mentioned, our niece would have been with us. And then my brother in law was also with us, because he had been kind of stuck in Kinshasa and Kinshasa wasn't doing so well. So we brought him for the first year or so.

Q: Quite a big household.

HAYKIN: Yeah. You were asking about the school board. I was active in the school board. It got very interesting when we had that civil unrest. I could see the writing on the wall that we were probably headed towards an evacuation because I was in the Emergency Action Committee meetings and things like that. Within bounds, I spoke to the other school board members, and suggested that we accelerate the educational program so that if kids were pulled out early, they would have gotten as much of the year in as possible. I think we added Saturday school or something like that. Something like that to speed up the school year, maybe canceled a vacation or something. Then, in April, families were evacuated. So we had done the right thing. Then, we had a problem, because schools like that, particularly in smaller posts, the finances of the school are problematic. Going into a crisis like that, we knew we were in trouble. But the principal was able to renegotiate a lot of the leases that we had on housing and on the school building to bring the prices down. That saved us some money, and somehow we muddled through the crisis period, and eventually, were able to build the school back up then the next year.

Q: Wow. That's a very unusual situation. But you'd been on a school board previously. And you were afterwards too, you enjoyed that work?

HAYKIN: Yeah. No, it's good. What was nice about it, and I think this came home significantly in Ghana is that, being a diplomat, you're shielded from a lot of the things that private businesses have to go through. You aren't living that, you're aware of it, but you're not living that experience. But when you're involved with the school, you're more subjected on the business side of things to local law, etc. You become much more familiar with just how much of a hassle it is, particularly in corrupt countries, to get anything done. How to navigate that. Even in countries that are less corrupt, just kind of navigating the system, getting things done. In Ghana, we had a major capital project. We built a multipurpose pavilion that was open air, but it had a stage and also a basketball court, so it could be used for assemblies and dramatic productions, as well as for sports.

Q: As you were finishing up in Madagascar, you knew you were going to leave? You had a timetable?

HAYKIN: Well, as I say, I was going to leave. I was slated to go to the Benin as Mission Director but then I was asked if I wanted to stay in Madagascar, and I said, "Yes". So I stayed for the fifth year. Then initially, I was assigned to Malawi, which was concerning because there wasn't really any adequate kind of schooling, except remotely, for my son. But by some strange set of coincidences, one family member didn't get cleared medically to go to Malawi. Then a position opened up in Kenya. I became mission director in Kenya

Q: Anything else you want to say about Madagascar? Anything you are particularly proud of?

HAYKIN: Let me reflect on that. I mean, again, the environmental program was absolutely fascinating. We did have other cyclone emergencies and other emergency responses. So dealing with that was all a challenge and I interacted a fair amount with the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance people during that period. Learned a little bit more about that which was useful. Those were the early days of ICASS, the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services. So, there were a lot of challenging issues just around interagency cooperation on the administrative side, and then who had what authorities and things like that. So, I would say there were some challenges in navigating that.

Q: All right.

HAYKIN: Madagascar. There's so many fond memories. I'm sure in our next session, I will remember about twenty things that I forgot to mention that were really important.

Q: You traveled around the country a lot?

HAYKIN: A lot. I went to just about every corner, one of my last trips with Lisa was up to Masoala, the north- eastern area where you've got tropical forests that come down to the ocean, and it is just absolutely beautiful and fascinating. We were doing some important environmental work and protecting forests and endangered species. That was fascinating.

USAID/Kenya Mission Director 2005-2007

Q: All right. It's a fascinating country. I think we have time to move on to Kenya.

HAYKIN: I was in Kenya for two years. I did travel around the country a fair amount. I remember we were preparing for the elections, which unfortunately, shortly after I left just, went really terribly. There was a lot of post- electoral violence. That would have been 2007 when the elections occurred. But we were very optimistic during the time I was there. Sheryl Stumbras was our DG officer, she was working very closely with the head of the Electoral Commission. Things looked like they were headed administratively in a really good direction. It was very sad when things didn't work out.

Q: Explain what happened.

HAYKIN: At the end, there was basically ethnic warfare after the outcome of the election.

Q: Who was doing that?

HAYKIN: I knew you were gonna ask that. It was Raila Odinga and Mwai Kibaki.

What else was going on in Kenya? A lot of promising work, private sector work and work in the education sector. We were really scaling up the HIV/AIDS, the PEPFAR program. Budgets increased tremendously over the two years I was there. The health office proposed, and I think it was a good idea given the massive size of the program, that we cut a series of parallel contracts for each of the provinces. Ten provinces. So ten contracts for PEPFAR implementation that would become integrated programs at the provincial level with provincial health ministries and authorities. There was one that was a little bit different, I think, for the North, because just institutionally and culturally there

were some differences, but otherwise, it was a bit of a cookie cutter for the other provinces. So that design and award I think all happened while I was there, and as far as I know, those programs did fine in terms of really increasing the delivery of HIV/AIDS support and achieving impacts. I know that we planned to maintain anti-retroviral therapy for over 50,000 Kenyans and provide essential care for over 200,000 orphans and vulnerable children. That was a major thing going on while I was there.

Q: Any idea what the volume of money was; how much money?

HAYKIN: We were pushing three or four hundred million dollars per year at that point, I think it may have been even higher than that at some point.

Q: Those contracts were all with international organizations, American organizations, Kenyan organizations?

HAYKIN: The primes tended to be American consulting firms. There were primes and subs, and I think there was some sharing of subs and some flipping. One would be the prime and another one of the subs would become the prime on a different contract, things like that. There was a patchwork as I recall.

Q: This is focused mostly on prevention at the time, or?

HAYKIN: That would have been treatment as well.

Another thing that happened during that period is that we were given the opportunity to do a Millennium Challenge Corporation threshold program. And I credit the late, Dwight Smith, my de facto deputy at the time, an old friend. Anyway, I credit him for some of the inspiration for that. Kenya had an organization of public procurement officials, I think it was the Kenya Association of Supply Chain Managers. They had a fairly strong association and were an important voice in fighting corruption. The threshold program gave us an opportunity to work with them. The idea was, in a sense, that the threshold program was designed to help countries qualify for compacts and Kenya had issues around corruption; we decided to focus on public financial management integrity. By working with this NGO which was an association of professionals, as one of the beneficiaries, we would work on that. We decided that in terms of a sectoral approach because we were so heavily invested as the U.S. government in the health sector, that the application of the work we were doing on public financial management should be skewed to some extent to the health sector. That was one area. That's what we worked on. So putting that program together and negotiating that. Again, I wasn't there very long, so I wasn't there for the execution of it.

Q: At this point, your kids, was your daughter still in school?

HAYKIN: My oldest daughter then had started college and my son eventually graduated from the International School of Kenya, the ISK, which was a nice school. I was on the Board of Governors there, they had a different structure. I was less involved in the day-to-day management. Again, we did approve a huge capital development project to expand the campus while I was there.

Another interesting program I thought was brought forward by the health office and I was a bit skeptical, but decided to take the risk. The idea is that we would help with the training of additional health professionals and then pay like the first year or so of their salaries and the government would then pick up the salaries afterwards. I thought, hmm, that's kind of risky. In the end, staff made a good argument for it and we received some assurances, and lo and behold, the government did meet its commitments to paying the salaries after that when it came time. That was a gamble that did pay off.

Q: Very good. Do you remember the size of the program at that point?

HAYKIN: The Kenya program? Overall? I want to say by the time I left, it had grown to close to five hundred million dollars. We were getting massive amounts of PEPFAR money at this point.

Q: Any other programs growing?

HAYKIN: Any other programs growing? As I recall, maybe the rest of the program was fairly stable in size. This was the second time in Kenya. That's what I'm remembering.

Q: Who was your deputy?

HAYKIN: My de facto deputy, Dwight Smith.

Q: How come you never get a formal deputy?

HAYKIN: No. I was encouraged during that period of time to create a deputy slot. Of course, a lot of the work fell on me to do that. We put together the paperwork and submitted it to Washington, where it languished for some considerable period of time. Then I went off to my next post after that, which we'll get to, which was Kinshasa again, as Mission Director. I was encouraged by bureau management to create a deputy position there too. I said, look, this is incredible, I'm just gonna get pegged as the guy who's

always asking for deputies, and we're not gonna end up with either of them because I've overplayed my hand. Africa Bureau combined the memos and put them forward and, ultimately, recruited deputy positions for both countries.

Q: Well, before we go back to Kinshasa, anything else about Kenya?

HAYKIN: There must be a lot more. We had an education program. We had an economic growth program. I remember, we were working with the Ministry of Justice as well. I guess that would have been the Kibaki government had come in. They'd come in sort of on this wave of all these reformers, but by the time I got to the country, they were a couple years into their administration and things had started to calcify. We just weren't making lots of progress on many fronts, or it seemed like that, in terms of our relationship with the government. I don't remember it as being a particularly rewarding period in terms of bilateral economic development or international development relationship. Again, I think we did have active private sector programs.

Senator Obama Visit

Senator Barack Obama after meeting with local leaders in Wajir, Kenya, 2006. Photo Stephen Haykin

HAYKIN: There is a little vignette. Again, there was another drought. We argued effectively for some famine assistance for the North, and I spent a fair amount of time working on that. At one point, we had a very interesting visitor, Senator Barack Obama came to Kenya where, of course, the minute he set foot in the country, he was a national hero. There were already whispers that he might run for president. That was really interesting. We all traveled north to the drought region on military aircraft—.

Q: With him?

HAYKIN: With him. It was very noisy as you can imagine. On the way up, he was in the cockpit or cabin, in some area up front that I never got into. I don't know what it looked like exactly. But on the way back, he sat back with all of us regulars, in the back of the plane, but it was so noisy, you could barely hear him. I didn't have that much interaction. But what really touched me is when we landed back in Nairobi, and we get off the plane, and we're walking into the terminal, there's Michelle, waiting. He took the time to introduce each of us individually, as we walked by, to his wife very proudly. That made quite an impression.

Q: She's an impressive woman.

HAYKIN: Yes, an impressive woman all in all.

Q: That was your contact with the Obama family?

HAYKIN: That was all of it. But it was positive.

One of the issues for HIV/AIDS is, if your drugs are going to be effective, then you need to have adequate nutrition. But our laws at the time weren't set up such that we couldn't use PEPFAR money for food, as I recall, and we couldn't necessarily use food aid or it wasn't clear that we could use food aid for HIV patients or families. But we had an interesting visit, a CODEL from, I want to say McGovern, Jim McGovern, I think it is, who was interested and understood this problem. I think that he later sponsored some legislation that helped alleviate the constraint that we had. That was a rewarding episode during that time too.

Q: We're past twelve o'clock, so I think we better stop this session.

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More on Madagascar and Kenya

Q: Good afternoon. This is John Pielemeier, with our second interview of Stephen Haykin, who spent roughly twenty years as an AID mission director, or the equivalent. Steve let's go back and look at some things we didn't cover enough starting with Madagascar?

HAYKIN: I mentioned that in Madagascar, there were a series of crises, including an impasse over the elections; I believe it was in early 2002. I wanted to give a little bit more detail on how we managed to program through that crisis. And in particular, I wanted to highlight the fact that because it was a nonviolent kind of impasse, we tried to maintain activities. Because of a blockade, we had to really draw down staff and we were very reliant on FSNs. On the other hand, we were able to maintain programming, despite the fact that we had reduced staff. One of the areas that was really important was in trying to adapt our health interventions, such that we could maintain vaccination programs that ultimately reached about 300,000 infants. We kept those going, despite the impasse, and we used the infrastructure that we had, from that program, also to provide more emergency types of interventions on health, than we might have had there not been a crisis. It showed real flexibility and adaptability in our programs.

Q: What kind of infrastructure are you speaking of?

HAYKIN: We had a network of implementing partners, local partners that were subs, and we were able to continue to provide commodities to them, to provide technical assistance to them, and also help them adapt to the situation.

Another thing that I was tasked with after the crisis was to relocate our offices. This was a unique experience. Even before I had gotten to Madagascar, the mission had been looking to move. There had been long term consultations with the government that really went nowhere. Finally, at about the same time as some of these other things were going on, USAID's security office identified a new building that was being built and said that that's where we should relocate. So I said, 'great, we're happy to do that, our current offices aren't very adequate. Who's the contracting officer?' And the answer I got is, 'you will be.' Ultimately, I got two ad hoc warrants of a million dollars each, one to negotiate basically taking the office space from a shell to outfitting it to be used, two floors of a building plus warehouse space to be used. It was two floors of a building to be used for AID offices. It was a new modern building; it had just been built. Already, the European Union had leased space above us. It was very nice, because we could just get into the elevator and go up and have consultations with them anytime we wanted to. Then the second part was the ten-year lease. Anyway, that was a rather unique experience in my career, and becoming a contracting officer for USAID in the midst of being acting Mission Director.

Q: I remember the old space, which had been at one point the North Korean headquarters as I recall.

HAYKIN: Yes, it had been the North Korean embassy in Madagascar long before we had it. It had another feature, which was that it had gas tanks in the courtyard in the back. This became important because as fuel supplies became very scarce, we, U.S. embassy officials, Americans, were getting fuel at the embassy compound, where they also had fuel tanks. But the problem was that it was very, very close to the French Embassy. As things got a little bit more tense, there was a fear that there might be a more of a security risk there. It was decided that the principal gas tanks for the American community would be at the USAID compound. I like to say that during that period, not only did we work on a rail project in Fianarantsoa, I was running a railroad. Not only were we asked to charter an airplane and put a USAID logo on it to help the World Food Program get food up country, but also I was also running a gas station during that period. Anyway, you never know in USAID what you're going to be tasked to do.

Q: (Laughter) Who was your exec officer?

HAYKIN: Initially it was Paul Guild. Then he left post and then it was Frank Adrianarisandy, an FSN, who did a great job filling in after that, along with his staff.

I also wanted to highlight during the Madagascar period: I'm often asked to say, of all the projects that I oversaw or managed, which were the ones that I liked the most? And that's a hard question because they're all like babies. And I have many fond memories of many different activities. But in Madagascar, we had one in particular that was interesting. It was a civic education program. It's a relatively modest program that worked with youth for, basically, an after-school curriculum on how democracy is supposed to work, etc. There were some applied activities where kids worked in their communities. We had a very dynamic team managing it. What was interesting about it is that Madagascar followed the rote French pedagogy in the regular curriculum. Because this was extracurricular, and done a little bit outside of regular hours, there was a more innovative approach—the project used more American interactive pedagogy. It really had an important impact because the kids and the teachers and the administrators all loved the engagement of the children in this classwork. So, not only did we have the benefit of teaching civic education, but we also kind of introduced people to a new way of learning. That was an exciting output of that period.

I'm going to jump ahead to Kenya. I believe I mentioned the 2005 drought emergency. And I worked very closely with our team and we were able to mobilize very quickly, over 56 million dollars in additional assistance, including emergency food aid for about 3.5 million Kenyans. That was gratifying. I traveled back and forth to the region a few times. It was really harrowing. I mean, everything you see in a humanitarian crisis was very

much present there. Then, of course, we had international visitors or we had high level visitors, including the Obama visit that I mentioned.

Q. You mentioned mobilizing, from whom?

HAYKIN: We had to work with the office of Food for Peace to get emergency food assistance. Everything was restructured then. I'm going to skip ahead. Let's see when we finished the other day- in Kenya, maybe?

Q: Yes, I think we were finished with Kenya.

USAID/DRC Mission Director 2007-2011

Q: We'll come back to some of these comments and issues when we do some summary questions. You move to the Democratic Republic of Congo, not known as a garden spot, in AID terminology. But a large program and with a certain sort of political showbiz circumstances around it. What was going on there politically?

HAYKIN: Yes. When I arrived there, let's see. This is already during the presidency of the younger Kabila after the father died, and the younger one took over in 2001. I arrived in 2007. The country, or at least, the east and south of the country had largely re-stabilized; after many years of crisis, it was going a little bit better.

I'll talk about significant conflict in the north and east of the country. But during that period, we had fairly robust health and education programs. I believe we're doing some work in democracy and governance, particularly anti-corruption, with an attempt to work in the mining sector, to reduce corruption and in agriculture. One of the things that I directed is sort of rebuilding or building a new agriculture program in the west of the country, in the Bas Congo region, maybe something in Bandundu as well. Areas where we had worked historically. But at some point things had shifted. I understand that later, there were some problems with that program, and that it didn't go full term and resources were shifted elsewhere. But that was after I left. But I think it was a very promising program at the time.

But as I mentioned, a significant amount of my energy went to trying to figure out how to address the issues in the east of the country, which were riddled by all sorts of militias having all sorts of basically battles and raids and large vulnerable populations, large displaced populations. Cross border elements were involved with all of this. Since the government was so weak, it was very important to work very closely with the UN group that was led by the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Congo.

Q: Was that Bill Swing at the time?

HAYKIN: I overlapped with Bill Swing just a little bit. And then another dynamic person came in, Alan Doss. I worked a lot with the deputy SRSG Ross Mountain and his chief of staff, Lise Grande, who is now head of the U.S. Institute of Peace. I bumped into her not too long ago. It was nice to see her again. So there are a number of things that went on. I must say, lasting peace was not achieved there. Again, the crisis goes on to this day.

At some point, actually while I was on a home leave, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton came and visited, and apparently in her senior staff meetings at State Department, talked about Congo for months. She had a lot of assistant secretaries scrambling to try to figure out how they could help to improve the situation. And this led to significant flows of funding, including, I think, over time, over 40 million dollars or so, just to address the survivors of sexual and gender- based violence, since rape was very much a weapon of war. We did a significant amount of programming in that area, working in particular with Panzi hospital, which was headed by Denis Mukwege who later became a Nobel Peace Prize winner for his work there. He was recently a failed candidate for the presidency, as I understand.

Q: He was a Congolese?

HAYKIN: Congolese, yeah. There was also an American based group, Heal Africa, that was in Goma and he was near Bukavu. So we worked with these organizations, both of which were heavily engaged in fistula repair, and worked with a lot of survivors. But as more money poured in, we were designing new programs, and I was working with our deputy program officer, Allyson Gardner. Instead of just doing programs to help women get back on their feet, emotionally, physically, and economically, with their families, and also, because victims of rape were typically outcasts socially, help them reestablish themselves. We were wondering, is there anything we can do to maybe get more ahead of the curve? We did work with an interesting group, I think they might have been the International Resource Group, to devise a program whereby we would be addressing men, interacting with men at the local level through our implementing partners, to have them understand the significance, what rape does to families. Basically, encourage particularly young men from getting co-opted into joining militias and becoming perpetrators. My understanding is that the program went pretty well and got greater acceptance than we initially thought it would. So that was just a small piece of the sexual and gender-based violence portfolio. The one that was especially meaningful to me.

Q: You were probably one of the first countries in AID to do that work.

HAYKIN: Yeah, and I think we probably did it at a scale that may not have been repeated anywhere else because the problem was just enormous. There was, of course, support from Washington for that work, but very harrowing, the stories of what women went through, and the surgeries that were required, that were performed at these couple of hospitals that we worked with in particular.

Q: Did you ever run into Hillary again?

Refugee camp near Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo c. 2008.
Photo Stephen Haykin

HAYKIN: No. She did come to Georgia, but her entourage—she only interacted with all of the embassy staff all at the same time in a town hall meeting and there was no one-on -one opportunity. I never had that opportunity.

Our humanitarian programs in Eastern Congo were large and protracted given the tragic, complex emergency there that persists to this day. One employee who stands out is Jay Nash, who dedicated many years of his life to this effort, as a representative of the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance in the DRC.

Related to the violence in the east of Congo, at one point there was a proposal to hold a peace conference with all of the factions -all the many disparate groups that were engaged in the conflict or affected by the conflict. I think this idea had some Congolese sort of sponsors, I can't remember who exactly, but also it was really pushed by the UN. The concept didn't have any funding behind it. I was able in consultation, of course, with

the embassy and with Washington to identify 300,000 dollars to provide material and logistical support for the startup of the conference. Once the United States was in, we were able to leverage two million dollars from other donors, other sources, so that there was a long conference that had 1,600 participants. A lot of mutual understanding and nice statements that somewhere along the line, of course, didn't lead to a lasting solution.

Q: Was this in Goma or was this in Kinshasa?

HAYKIN: As I recall, it was out in Goma. I didn't actually go to that. But we would get regular reports. We had contractors who were out there and following and providing some of the logistical support.

Q: One of the other areas in that region that's maybe known to a lot of people is Virunga national park. Did you go to Virunga?

HAYKIN: I got near it, but never in it. It was sort of a no-go zone. To the extent that we were doing a lot of work, because as I was Mission Director for the Congo, I was also the mission director for the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE). So we did have support to Virunga. But one of the issues there was that poachers were often killing park wardens. So park security was something that we supported to some measure, but it wasn't safe enough for us to travel there ourselves.

Q: I went there when I was doing an evaluation of the first phase of CARPE and you still could travel there. But I have pictures of going into the park with a cadre of park rangers and police and military folks escorting us and talking to park rangers whose colleagues had been killed.

HAYKIN: At some point there had been an eruption of a volcano near Goma as well. One of the things that we did was to support NGOs to build a water system in a part of town that was heavily affected by the volcano, which was not easy work, because that meant going through volcanic rock to lay pipes. I remember making a couple of site visits to that and being very impressed by the work that was being done.

Q: I recall walking on lava streets, which were not smooth at all.

HAYKIN: To say nothing of the lava covered runway in Goma. They had to shorten the runway considerably, so only certain planes could go in with a rather tight landing.

Q: Definitely a difficult part of the world and still is as you mentioned?

HAYKIN: Yeah. I interacted a lot—I think one of the ministries that we had better cooperation with in Congo was the Ministry of Health. We had large programs, we had PEPFAR, which I discussed in other contexts before. There was significant funding from the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. The way that is structured is there's a country coordinating mechanism in each country, often chaired by the Minister of Health. In Congo, I had the opportunity to be one of the vice presidents, I think there were several of us. I even chaired one meeting, I think when the minister was out, but I was very active in trying to help coordinate the use of global fund resources with the large PEPFAR resources and other things that others were doing on HIV/AIDS and malaria and tuberculosis for that matter as well.

Q: Was that country wide?

HAYKIN: Yes, I mean, ostensibly, I think between PEPFAR and the Global Fund and others we were talking, as I recall, on a national basis.

Q: Right. And HIV was probably the most significant cause of mortality in the country, I suppose.

HAYKIN: Well, the violence. I mean, I wouldn't discount malaria. I don't really remember exactly. But certainly disease, poverty, even malnutrition, which is a quiet killer, and then the violence in the east. A very difficult country. I remember launching the DRC's participation in the Presidential Malaria Initiative with Ambassador Garvelink and Rear Adm. Timothy Ziemer.

Q: Were you able to recruit staff? Often that's a problem.

HAYKIN: Yeah, we did fairly well. As I recall, one year we weren't as successful. So we put in a concerted effort and really staffed up. I was able, as I recall, to leave a pretty full staff behind. We also relied on personal services contractors to complement the direct hire staff. There were some strong, long- term foreign service nationals as well.

Q: Who was your deputy?

HAYKIN: I did get a deputy in during that period, and in fact, I'm in contact with him on a regular basis. Art Brown came in, I think, two years before I left and stayed till after. Art is designated as Ambassador to Ecuador, but his nomination is hung up for the moment. (Note: Brown was confirmed in May 2024.) It was great to have him. Before that I relied a lot on the Senior Program Officer, who, when I got there, was Nicolas Jenks who subsequently retired.

Q: One more question on staffing. Was John Flynn still running the CARPE program?

HAYKIN: Yes, very much so. And John was a great resource. I had high confidence in his management of the program. And so I didn't have to spend as much time on that. But also, it was good to have him as a senior person to advise and encourage me. John did amazing work in developing local institutional capacity in the region and exploiting satellite imagery to document loss of tropical forest cover.

Q: I've been trying to get him to do an oral history and I haven't been successful.

HAYKIN: I went out at the same time as Bill Garvelink went out as Ambassador. He had a long career in USAID largely on the humanitarian assistance side. We had a nice dinner together at the Old Ebbitt Grill before we both went out. He told me that he had no intention of micromanaging me as a former AID person, as Ambassador. Sure enough, he didn't micromanage. There was a lot of mutual trust and respect. And I got a lot of support from him. The late Sam Brock was the DCM. And we had a wonderful working relationship -the three of us. I think it would be the envy of anybody. Just a lot of mutual confidence and trust; we worked quite well together. Good communication. That's great. That was a real pleasure.

Q: In four years, you did two tours then, right?

HAYKIN: Yeah, I did two tours. My youngest daughter graduated from The American School of Kinshasa (TASOK).

Q: Oh my, with how many students?

HAYKIN: There were a lot more in her class. I don't know, like twenty-five or something like that. The school was coming back. It had been huge before the problems in 9/11. But, by the time I got there, ten years later, it started to build back up. I think maybe it had five hundred students compared to over 1,000 in its heyday. So it still had the same very nice, large property and physical plant that it had way back when but with fewer students on it.

USAID/Caucasus Mission Director 2011 - 2015

Q: Well, as you were looking forward from this tour, what were your options?

HAYKIN: I mean, there was some talk about my possibly going to Sudan, but with my youngest daughter going off to college, and the fact that my four years in DRC had been

so intense, I thought it would be good to take a break from that a little bit. I did have some options in other bureaus, but the one that I ended up taking was in Tbilisi, Georgia, in the Caucasus mission. Again, old contacts have helped to bring that to my attention. I was fortunate to get that, and I was excited about it, since I joined AID because I was really interested in the international development aspect of the work. The humanitarian work that I was doing, particularly starting in Madagascar, and in Kenya and in Congo, is very rewarding and very important. But I also thought that it might be an opportunity to sort of rebalance and see a country that was further along the development continuum, and get a different kind of experience by going to Georgia. That, indeed, is what happened. That was great.

Q: Tell us more about what you found when you got there in 2011.

HAYKIN: I ended up kind of, with induced schizophrenia in the Caucasus. I arrived in 2011. There had been the short war between Georgia and Russia prior to that, in 2008. The United States government had committed a billion dollars in emergency relief. More than half of that went through AID, about two hundred fifty million dollars was a direct cash transfer, budgetary support. So that was already a done deal. But most of the rest of the aid portion of the budget was still on the books at that point. On the one hand, we had this large pipeline to spend down. On the other hand, our budget going forward was more I think, forty or fifty million dollars a year. We needed to be thinking forward on how we were going to continue at that level.

To return to the billion dollars, a lot of that was tied up in infrastructure projects. Both roads, and power system, power transmission, also gas pipeline. So that was very interesting. The approach that was taken prior to my arrival was, rather than just bringing in U.S. firms to do the infrastructure work, it was to work through Government of Georgia ministries and agencies to implement it—public works agencies, basically, or utilities agencies to do the rebuilding. It was essentially both reconstruction and institution building. As I later opined, basically there were dual objectives. As a consequence, the implementation didn't go as quickly as I think was probably originally anticipated, for better or worse. My four years in Georgia, pretty much the whole time, were very devoted to getting these things implemented, bringing them to fruition in the way designed, but to keep the momentum. We had some very talented staff who were working on that. So we did work through the different government of Georgia agencies and of course, with the traditional implementing partners as well. Electrical transmission lines went forward, road infrastructure went in and other things we were doing got completed.

Q: Interesting.

HAYKIN: There was one episode when we were working on a small rural road in the center of the country. The implementing partner contacted the contracting officer's technical representative and said, 'look, we've got an issue here, we're going to have to stop work.' They had discovered Bronze Age artifacts in the roadbed, probably from the old Silk Road. My staff called in the local university and archaeology department and there was some excavation that went on and everything was taken care of, and then they went back to constructing the road. Then a roadside interpretive site was set up where they had made the findings.

3,000 year old gold hair piece from D'vani Georgia. Photos: Stephen Haykin

Q: Was Bob Ichord one of the people who worked with you on the energy side?

HAYKIN: I had worked with Bob before that, but as I recall, yes, I think he was still there. In the beginning. I think he moved over to State, as I recall, about that time. He was very aware and probably knew more about what we were doing than I did in terms of some of the details of it.

Q: I did a nice interview with him. Should be online by now.

HAYKIN: I had met him earlier when we worked in the E&E bureau. Right.

Q: The infrastructure program. You were there for what?

HAYKIN: Four years.

Q: Was anything going on politically during that time?

HAYKIN: Oh, yes. A lot. There was an election. Georgia had gone through a very interesting period and a fairly tumultuous period long before I got there. Then, before I

got there, President Saakashvili had been elected and was a fairly energetic reformer and did a lot of interesting things to the country and was very oriented towards the West. He was, I think, so driven to reform the country that he took some democratic shortcuts that eventually caught up with him. So while we were there, we gave assistance to the electoral process to the government Electoral Commission. We assisted with parallel vote tabulations, for instance. We supported civil society groups to do election monitoring and to do outreach to minority and disabled voters, to promote women's participation. I mean, through the efforts of the groups we supported, in the parliamentary part of the elections, a lot more women were elected to Parliament as well. A new government came in, and we worked very closely. In fact, I engaged personally, as well as the embassy, of course in lockstep with them, with the new government, the new prime minister to help identify priorities, provide technical assistance, and bring in experts on issues such as constitutional reform and justice reform. As I recall, there were significant reforms in the health delivery system.

During this period, I worked very closely with the Minister of Agriculture in Georgia. We were in the project cycle such that our major agricultural sector interventions were ending. We were designing new ones. And we came up with what we thought was a fairly great idea. I went in to brief the Minister of Agriculture. He said, no, we don't want to do it that way. Here's my vision. And he laid it out. He had different roles for different partners of the country. He wanted us to focus on certain aspects of the private sector development angle, the enterprise development angle. So we retooled because he had a clear vision that was, I think, consistent with our larger goals, just a different approach. And it was showing the local initiative, and vision and we were able to buy into that program and develop what I believe was a successful intervention. He eventually left government. But he and I remain in contact to this day.

Q: That's an interesting example of host country leadership in programming, and I'm wondering whether some of your AID staff who have been pushing for the original idea were not happy with that.

HAYKIN: I'm not sure. I mean, my relationship with the minister actually grew out of a relationship that the head of our economic growth office had had. So I imagine he felt a bit eclipsed, because obviously, the Minister ultimately became more interested in talking to me than him, but they maintained good relations. I think that there was enough sort of buy into the general concepts and understanding of the context that I don't remember that as being a point of contention, per se.

Q: All right, everybody saluted and moved forward.

HAYKIN: Apparently, yes. Because it meant a retooling of the design and maybe a little bit extra work, but a good design came out of it.

Q: Do you have any idea how that program worked out in the end?

HAYKIN: I believe it continued to flourish and was successful. That was a period when the agriculture sector was growing, and I believe it continued to grow with that support. Somewhere in my notes that I reviewed recently, there was a year in there where the agriculture sector in Georgia grew by 10 percent. I don't know that I can establish the cause and effect.

Q: Georgia is a unique region. Did you do any traveling around outside of Georgia?

HAYKIN: Part of the job was—we had the regional support services basically in the Tbilisi mission, and there were smaller missions in Baku and Yerevan. But we provided the legal support, backstopping of the controller function and EXO support. Among other things.

Q: That is Armenia?

HAYKIN: Armenia and Azerbaijan. I went to Armenia once for a long weekend, kind of personal travel. Then I went to Azerbaijan once for consultations. But no, I didn't get much opportunity to go there. We did have some programming in the health sector and I believe in education, NGO support, in Abkhazia, which is one of the Russian dominated areas. We weren't able to actually travel to South Ossetia, and I didn't think I would ever go to Abkhazia. Because of a multi donor mission, I was able to go and also to see some of our activities in Abkhazia. This was just before the Sochi Olympics. It was an interesting time. Sochi is not too far away. But what you see as you drive into Abkhazia, across a rickety bridge, is just all these bombed out buildings and kind of a wasteland, and then a very Soviet sort of provincial capital. A few people were willing to talk a little bit more openly, but still it was a fairly repressed political environment. We had been able to provide some support to one the hospitals, working through UN agencies, etc. We were able to talk, go to the university there and talk to some of the academics. That was a fascinating experience.

The time in Georgia was very rewarding. Again, we had health programs, not as large as some of the ones in Africa, but it's also a smaller country. Multidrug-resistant tuberculosis is a significant problem that received some USAID support. I remember in particular, one meeting with the Minister of Health, in which we were talking about our future cooperation. He said something that I thought was rather unique in my experience.

He says, ‘frankly, we don't need your money. But what we do need is your support in terms of technical assistance because the way that Georgian government procurement is set up, there's just no money or no flexibility to hire international consultants to do the specialized work that USAID can acquire for us.’ I thought that was absolutely fascinating, frank, and a good example. That was repeated in other ways, but less overtly, I think, in my experience in Georgia, where they really did have capacity.

Q: By that time, had Georgia mostly jettisoned the old Soviet approaches to health and education and agriculture?

HAYKIN: Yeah, largely. Certainly, they were trying. It was a paradoxical country because in many ways, a very conservative society, and yet they had embraced all these really extreme reforms. Under Saakashvili, when I first got there, it was sort of a model of a libertarian economy in a way, which was an interesting experiment with all the pluses and minuses that might entail, but they had moved—. I often felt that when I was interacting with government officials that they were saying the right things in terms of sort of a more democratic, enlightened approach to things. But old habits die hard and when they actually were executing or doing anything, they tended to be more rigid and directive and hadn't quite broken out of some of the Soviet era habits. That's a subjective observation.

Q: Do you have any examples of that?

Were you working with the private sector as well?

HAYKIN: Yeah, very definitely. Actually, that's one of the examples because there were those in the government that were very distrustful of microenterprise credit programs. They believed in more centralized control, even if they didn't necessarily talk that way. But in practice there was a real shakedown of the microcredit industry, and I think, in other industries, but this is one we were supporting. At one point one of our partners was actually jailed on some pretense and his NGO was really squeezed. We were definitely working on trying to get credit to small farmers and others. We did have private enterprise programs too, larger programs. We were working on reforms.

Georgia was also interesting, because it had decided to sort of play a game of raising its score on the World Bank's “doing business” index, which was very much the thing at that point in history. And one year, I think Georgia had the largest, or the greatest jump in its rankings. It's like someone who was cramming for the SATs or something like that. The country was cramming for the doing business index. So they had made a number of reforms in key areas that would move those indicators. And done very astutely. In many

cases. I mean, it did free things up. But there were vested interests also that had to be addressed. It's paradoxical. But that's how societal change happens.

Q: It was an interesting time to be there. And did you want to stay in the region? Or were you interested in doing something else?

HAYKIN: It was time for me to come back to Washington. In fact, I think ultimately, I was told I needed to come back to Washington because I'd been out a long time again. But yes, I'm trying to think if there's anything else I want to say about the Caucasus? It was a fascinating experience. It was a really good time in Georgia. I had a number of excellent colleagues. Notably, Joachim Parker, who was Deputy Mission Director when I arrived, really helped me to hit the ground running in Georgia, drawing upon his great knowledge of the country. Georgia has had some rougher times more recently, as I understand. There's been some challenges on the governance front. Another thing that the country decided it wanted to do was become a player in the global initiative on anti-corruption transparency. They wanted to be sort of a regional leader or a global leader in that.

What was important is that they did get to the point of holding a regional meeting of this international body on anti-corruption (The Open Government Partnership). What was notable is that you had the Presidency, the Parliament, and the Supreme Court all represented in three days of meetings that were happening with other countries in the region, really demonstrating the country's commitment to addressing corruption.

Q: Did you attend that?

HAYKIN: I had meetings. Yes, I think I did part of it or some of it was like opening sessions and things like that, where the international community was invited. And then some of them were working sessions.

Q: Interesting. Your family was happy there? Your kids are all gone, right?

HAYKIN: My kids are all gone. We had family visits. And yes, we had a good time. My wife really enjoyed it. Wonderful skiing, which I hadn't expected to do in my AID career.

Q: Who replaced you?

HAYKIN: Doug Ball. I replaced Jock Conley who accused me of following him around the globe because he had been in Kenya before me as well.

Back to AID/Washington Liaison with the Foreign Service Institute 2015-2017

Q: They wanted you to go back to Washington. Did your wife agree with that?

HAYKIN: She said, I will be fine, as long as you remodel the kitchen. So we did.

Q: A very foreign service thing to say.

HAYKIN: It needed it.

Q: What choices did you have in Washington?

HAYKIN: I didn't get what I wanted to get in Washington. Finally, when I was asked if I would be USAID's liaison to the Foreign Service Institute, I said yes. That was not my favorite assignment of my career. Let's put it that way. But the high point of it was that I was responsible for a few sessions of the training of Mission Directors and deputy directors. I succeeded and overlapped slightly with Jim Bever, who had the job before me. This was initially the job, I think, that Janet Ballantyne had. She had been the first to go over there and develop that. USAID wants a relationship with a Foreign Service Institute, but it's a big institution with lots of other things going on and development, try as we may, is kind of tangential to a lot of what they're focused on. The positive of the experience was that I was housed in the Leadership and Management School. I thought State Department was doing some really good and creative things in terms of leadership training. I would liaise a lot with HCTM, the Human Capital Talent Management Bureau and also with what was then the Washington Learning Center, USAID's training facility. I was able to just kind of get a sense of where the agency was and share some thoughts and interact.

At one point, I tried to look and see what could be done to enhance training on development at FSI. And I identified that there was an online course that they had on the books. I read through the materials for the online course and it was outdated. By this point, the Sustainable Development Goals had been agreed upon internationally. The materials for instance, still had the old Millennium Development Goals, which were the earlier generation of these things. So there was just a lot that needed to be updated. I identified where changes would be needed. I did some extensive work on that. Then I lobbied within FSI. I reached out, I found out there was a small office that sort of advocates for the Sustainable Development at State that was somewhat interested, but adapting learning materials to go online learning is a certain expense and I just was not successful in getting buy in from FSI or anybody else to invest the money in it. That didn't happen. I subsequently learned of a very good course by Jeffrey Sachs on Coursera.

So, at that time, I would recommend anybody who wants to take an online course to take that, rather than take what I think is the old FSI course, I don't think it's used much anymore.

So during my time there, I did contribute to other courses. I listened and learned a lot. But I also felt that my time was underutilized. So I reached out to different parts of USAID to see where I could get engaged and have some traction. Not everything worked according to plan. But one thing that was very rewarding was when I worked with a subcommittee of HCTM that was working on revising the Foreign Service performance management evaluation system. This particular subcommittee was working on the skills matrix that was used to help people plan their careers and it was using the evaluation process, etc. Of all of the teams that I've ever worked on, it was a really dynamic and energetic team. We produced, I think, a really well thought out product. A version of it is used to this day in the revised performance system. It was part of a larger reform that I think was very significant, and recognized, and really listened to staff on what the problems of the old evaluation system used to be. It's an ambitious undertaking, and I think it's still a work in progress. But it's come a long way. It's much better than what we had before.

Q: Well, I noticed that when you sent me your resume, you used that format to describe your accomplishments and skills.

HAYKIN: A little bit I mean, that's not exactly. But I mean, my choice of the resume. Another thing I did while I was at FSI was I audited some of the job search course.

Q: Retirement course.

HAYKIN: The retirement course sessions that were of interest. And then that turned out to be fortuitous because when it actually became my time to take the course, it was online because of COVID. The fact that I'd had a little bit of the in-house exposure was nice. Then I also worked with those people and helped them a little bit identifying speakers, etc. So, it was out of that the format of my resume was structured; I took their advice. For better or worse. There are some folks who only want to see sort of a more traditional formatted chronological resume.

Q: So you basically went to the site at FSI every day. Is that where your home office was?

HAYKIN: Yes, I did. I have a small office in the FSI building for the Leadership and Management School. I was there. At least a half day a week I would spend at USAID. I would go to HCTM staff meetings because that was my nominal link and meet my supervisor and sometimes interact on other things.

Q: Tell us a little bit more about the training course for Mission Directors and deputies.

HAYKIN: At that point, we were basically given a week and then I think there was an add-on of a couple of days for procurement related training that I didn't manage. A lot of my responsibility, I did have a professional trainer that I worked with, but I was the one who knew a lot of the content. I was a resource person. Also I was the one who organized the speakers and a lot of logistics and so it was like being a glorified conference organizer in some respects. Substance wise, we wanted to bring in the interagency and a high level executive government kind of perspective on that. We definitely had senior people from State Department come in. We also wanted Mission Directors and deputies to have a good sense of the resources that the agency has to offer. We brought in a lot of people from different support offices, certainly contracting, certainly personnel, legal, security, and much, much more. There were some sessions on what it means to be a manager, what it means to be a manager in government, those kinds of things.

One of the things that I thought was somewhat lacking initially, and so we found a way of working it in, is that USAID—and this was echoed recently by a comment from a colleague from a different direction. USAID staff don't necessarily sort of move up in their careers with a lot of interagency exposure, although obviously, some with State when you're overseas. But when you're working at the Mission Director, Deputy Mission director level, you're engaged a lot more in interagency negotiations, and that kind of thing. Yet, we haven't exposed our staff or trained folks in negotiation. The USAID style tends to be much more sort of collaborative and consensus building relative to other parts of government. There are some counterpart agencies that shall go unnamed, who follow more of a go –for- the- jugular approach so basically, AID walks in the room, tries to find consensus and finds itself swatted down. Anyway, we were able to introduce a component at that point on interagency negotiation and relations. I think that was useful. I understand now the course has been expanded, I think it's two weeks, if I'm not mistaken. There's a lot more in there. That's good.

Q: Any training on conflict resolution or negotiation skills in general?

HAYKIN: From the management side, in terms of interpersonal, how you manage difficult employees. I think there was a bit of that, as I recall, but not how you manage peace support or those kinds of things. I think we did have one segment where we had people who were working on non-permissive environments. There was an officer that was working on a strategy on that. We had a speaker on that. A couple of related things, but no real training, per se.

Q: How many AID officers, mission directors, came through that course while you were there?

HAYKIN: I think I did three or four sessions, so would have been—. I want to say about fifty or so. I've never stopped to count, but fifty or sixty probably.

Q: They were all new. First time?

HAYKIN: Pretty much. I think there may have been one or two who had slipped through and never taken it before. There were one or two office directors from Washington that were able to get into the course too. But that was a rarity. So pretty much first time. Another thing that was really rewarding about that was you'd spend a week with these people. It's a fairly small group and interacting and getting to know them. And it's like, yes, the up and coming folks are gonna do just fine. The agency is in good hands and that was good. That was really nice to know. And indeed they have.

Q: Good to have that reaction from you. When you're back in Washington, you don't necessarily have to do a two year tour but you did only two years.

HAYKIN: Normally you would do three. But as I said, all in all I felt underutilized and was approaching retirement age too, and I didn't want to miss the opportunity to get back out again. Initially, I wasn't getting a very warm reception from people I was working for. But there was a change in management and I raised it, and I learned that the Nigeria mission was looking for a mission director. And so I broached that, and that worked. And so ended up becoming mission director for Nigeria. I am grateful to Sharon Cromer for her support on that.

USAID/Nigeria Mission Director 2017-2020

Q: Another post that is not high on the desirability list for many, many people in AID.

HAYKIN: Yeah. But actually, Abuja at the time, with some caveats, was actually a fairly nice post. The main caveat is we had travel restrictions and we were confined to inside the ring road, which is equivalent to the beltway. So you can imagine living in Washington, DC and not being able to go outside the Beltway, except on rare occasions. That's not too exciting. But it was a good post particularly for young families with younger children or even singles. Shopping and restaurants and creature comforts were there. Recreational opportunities in the city. Not like the national parks and things like that, like we have in the United States.

Q: You went there in 2017 is that right?

HAYKIN: Yes, and we did fairly well in terms of recruiting over time. That was difficult and remains difficult. It was difficult to staff the health officer positions because there's just such a premium on those in the agency and Nigeria is not the top choice for some of the people in high demand. Over time we did well, but there were gaps. Some very good people served there and we had some very good short-term coverage too.

Q: What was the portfolio like?

HAYKIN: Everything. I felt like everything I've done in my career prepared me to go to Nigeria, because we had you name it, we had it there. Again, I devoted a disproportionate amount of my time to the problems, basically the counterterrorism and humanitarian impacts and also stabilization efforts in northeastern Nigeria. A disproportionate amount of my time there. A lot of time, I think on mission management issues and we had to be fairly aggressive in terms of staffing. There was a large mission, there were always a lot of vacancies. Just kind of keep up the pressure in terms of hiring FSN staff and PSC staff, as well. When I arrived, the Mission was in the process of designing several new activities. I worked to facilitate design discussions between technical and acquisition and assistance staff, to get new programs up and running.

Going back to the northeast, there was a lot of interagency work. And also, we had Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) team, a small team. We initially had a DART, Disaster Assistance Response Team. In both cases I didn't have direct authority over the programs, but I had some responsibility and a lot of interaction, a lot of influence and a lot of exchange of information. In fact, I would say that the OTI and OFDA collaboration with me as Mission Director was excellent and a model for how different elements of USAID should work together. So, even within USAID we had a fairly complex structure. Then we had a full embassy. I must say that it took the defense, diplomacy and the development elements all to address issues in the Northeast.

Q: Take a minute to explain what was going on there.

HAYKIN: Many people would be familiar with Boko Haram and the activities of Boko Haram. It wasn't as clear to some that there was another set of actors, at least one other set of actors, which is basically the Islamic State affiliate in the region that was also active. There was a lot of displacement and attacks on local populations and on government infrastructure. Just a very unstable and dangerous situation. There were attempts, often successful, to usurp the authority of local officials or drive them out. A lot of violence, and a lot of displacement. Our OTI program tried to work with communities

to slow the recruitment of terrorists or reestablish communities that had been affected, bring communities together after they had been affected by violence. And our humanitarian activities were largely devoted to those people who were displaced or lost their livelihoods. We did a heck of a lot, but the needs were just tremendous. And some of these issues have expanded to other parts of the country since I've left.

Q: Is that largely a Hausa region?

HAYKIN: No, though Hausa make up part of the population.

Q: It was mostly Muslim.

HAYKIN: Yes, in particular in Borno, yes largely Muslim. There was some spill over into other provinces. As you get a little further away there, there's a mix of Christians and Muslims.

There's a whole other set of issues in that, there were farmer-herder conflicts outside of that area, in fact, pretty much all over the country. That often took on the tone of Muslim versus Christian, although not necessarily. That also was high profile in the United States and United States politics. And a large vocal community in the United States perceived that as being largely a religious war kind of situation. My own feeling is that it's much more complex, and there's a large economic and trust element to it. But there certainly is a religious overlay. That's going on, but that was a separate set of issues. We did some really good programming in our bilateral program, in terms of trying to bring communities together, and with some successes. I think one evaluation even showed that in communities where we had been active, there was less violence than in communities where we hadn't been active that were nearby. That was a different set of issues. That also took a fair amount of energy.

Q: Was that essentially for the seasonal use of water? What was the—.

HAYKIN: It certainly is exacerbated by the migration of herders, largely Muslim, through other communities and within rapidly increasing populations and climate change and large livestock populations, things like that. I guess you would say it is somewhat inevitable, or certainly needs to be managed and there were definitely flare ups. That was a whole separate component of the program that was going on.

Then, of course, we had health programs, education programs, a really interesting subset of our health activities were agreements that involved provincial governments, UNICEF, I believe, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Our role was largely the technical

assistance side of that. Governments had certain commitments to increase personnel and spending at the provincial level. UNICEF and Gates Foundation, their role was some technical assistance, but also largely helping to provide financing up front facing down as provinces owned up to their commitments over time to increase funding. So, that was important. Oh, I forgot there was one other- the Dangote Foundation. Dangote is a large business interest in Nigeria and has a foundation. Aliko Dangote and Bill Gates were very much partners in this effort.

Q: Interesting. USAID didn't have any regional offices, everything was run out of Abuja, is that right?

HAYKIN: We could draw a little bit of support from Accra. We were in the process of developing a private sector development program, a trade program. So was USAID West Africa. Shortly before I got there, the decision was made to team up and do a joint design. So some components of the program would be funded bilaterally and some components are regionally. And anyway, as you can imagine, that increased the complexity of everything and extended the timeline for making the award. But the program was designed and launched and did good work. It was eventually overshadowed by another trade initiative (Prosper Africa) out of Washington. But that was after my time as well.

Q: All right. Did any of the activities in the Sahel affect your program? Any relationship to what was going on in Chad and Niger and especially in Mali?

HAYKIN: Yes. Because particularly the ISIS related groups were operating across border, there was definitely some communication on that and some concerns. Again, State and AID are more organized bilaterally on these issues. So that was more of the focus. But the DOD component was a little bit more regional. I had some interesting experiences, but I don't think they're appropriate for public documents in terms of sort of what went on in the security area, though positive.

Somewhere in there COVID hit. We had a large CDC operation, and the embassy that was very concerned with it. Our role eventually became managing a fair amount of the commodities that came from the U.S. government, but that took some time. But the other thing we did that was a little bit almost under the radar was we had good relations with the Ministry of Health again with some other government officials and also the Nigerian Center for Disease Control. We had very talented staff particularly in the supply chain management area. So we basically, virtually seconded staff to the government, not through any formal written agreement. We allowed several of our FSN staff to spend a lot of time at the Ministry helping them pull together what they needed to pull together from

their side to manage internal operation, which was mutually beneficial too in terms of being able to target our assistance and have the information we needed to respond.

Q: As you were moving through that period, did you pretty much decide this was going to be your last post?

HAYKIN: Well, after the first year, I turned sixty-five. So I was up against mandatory retirement. But in consultation with the Africa Bureau, I got a couple of limited career extensions. Technically, I think I had three, one for my second year and one for my third year. Then I was asked to stay on a month, at the very end. I retired a month later than I expected to. So I knew that was happening.

Before we leave this I do want to mention that it was an interesting time for the PEPFAR program. There were some challenges, it was a huge PEPFAR program, and there was a big push from Washington, from the Office of Global AIDS Coordinator to move assistance through local partners rather than international implementing partners. We made that transition. There was some rebalancing of the geography between USAID and CDC. That was somewhat contentious at the time and also led to some dissatisfaction among staff that had to be addressed. But the other thing that was going on is that CDC was the lead agency for was the PEPFAR's largest ever AIDS indicator survey, which is a survey to really provide refined data on the sort of the dimensions of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and down to the very local level, so that assistance can be better targeted. That was going on. That on balance, was a very important thing. It also took a tremendous amount of resources. That combined with the security situation in parts of the country made it very, very difficult during much of my time in Nigeria, to get staff out to the field to do proper monitoring and evaluation. That really stuck with me because I don't think that we were given the resources that we needed to be able to do our job as effectively as we should have been able to. Maybe we'll talk about this a little bit in the non- permissive environment discussion but we had to do what we could creatively to plug the gap on monitoring and evaluation.

Retirement 2020

Q: All right, you were extended another month after and then what was the plan? You're going to go back to Washington for a little bit and then retire formally or?

HAYKIN: No. I left the service. It must have been October or November when I took the retirement seminar. I wasn't on the payroll but I was still allowed in. I moved back in. When I was in Congo many years before on a home leave, I had bought a house in Silver Spring. I don't recommend buying a house during a home leave. It doesn't give you the

rest and relaxation that you otherwise need. But I'm glad I did it because that's where we're living now.

Q: That was 2020.

HAYKIN: That's 2020.

Q: And you came back and some people decide, I'm going to take time to grow a garden or work on my house. Some people say, I want to do consulting, I want to get back into the business. What did you think?

HAYKIN: I wanted to do a mix a little bit on, a little bit off. As I was just sharing this with a friend who's retired more recently, I was amazed at how long it took to decompress from all those years of just being full out in one respect or another and in other roles. Also, as of a few months ago, we're up to seven grandchildren. It was time to reconnect with family and to spend a lot of time with family. As I recall, I did some work in 2021, a little bit of consulting, but not a whole lot. In 2022, I had the opportunity to go out to Cote d'Ivoire, for three months as an acting country representative. 2023, I had a couple of things that were on the hook, but they didn't pan out. It was a little slower than I had expected on the work side. But now I've got something lined up for 2024 in Benin so I'll be going off at the end of next month as acting country rep. Other things I was doing were spending time with family, spending some time getting a house in order. I've also had a long term hobby of woodworking and I didn't get to do very much of that when I was overseas. So, such as it is in my small garage, that's used for other things as well, I've got my lathe and other woodworking equipment setup. When nothing else is going on, I spent a fair amount of time down there. Then I've been active in the USAID Alumni Association and a couple other exercises, training and mentoring oriented. I don't know where all the time goes, but life is good.

Q: You're busy?

HAYKIN: Yeah. Busy enough. And when I'm not busy, I'm happy to not be too busy.

Q: Do you do a lot of reading?

HAYKIN: I don't belong to a book group. I read in spurts. Right now is not one of those spurts. I have a couple of books on my bedside table, but I haven't picked them up lately.

Q: Sounds like you got a good mix there. You don't have a goal of working half a year or three months a year or how much you want to work for money versus Volunteer work?

HAYKIN: Originally I was going to work up until December 2023 and then call it a day but I've kind of extended that. I'm not sure, 2024 is kind of spoken for now. We'll see how I feel in 2025. We've done some traveling too. I forgot to mention that my wife and I spent a fair amount of time in 2023 down in Florida helping my daughter who was pregnant and then had her fourth daughter.

Summary Questions

Q: Well, that's a good mix. All right. I do want to ask you some summary questions.

HAYKIN: Sure. I'm just trying to see if there's anything else that I wanted to mention here. All right, the things that I absolutely needed to say up till now I think I've said and there'll be some things I'll probably add along the way. So yes. To your summary questions, I guess.

Q: I've got a few that we are asked to do in these interviews, and one of them is related to working with conflict countries and dealing with conflict resolution. You have been in several countries that are full of that. Certainly the Congo and Nigeria. Do you have any examples of programs that you and AID were involved with in dealing with conflict resolution that you would highlight?

HAYKIN: Yes. The first ones coming to mind is what I alluded to in Nigeria, in Plateau state, where there was an NGO that was co-headed by a Muslim and a Christian, the Interfaith Mediation Center. This group did training of local leaders and worked with communities to basically develop early warning systems, develop lines of communication to prevent or defuse conflicts before they got blown out of control. For instance, if somebody's cow was stolen, or something like that, rather than leading to a raid they would get two groups together and find some way of agreeing on restitution and that kind of thing. In the Congo, of course, there was the larger conference. Again, we tried to the extent that we could at a more local level to work on trying to prevent or mitigate gender based violence, with our leverage on that rather limited. There was a peace conference that I mentioned.

We did have a program—in eastern Congo, some of the sources of revenue for these armed militias were natural resources, gold, coal, tin, and other minerals. We did have a program where we were trying to work with legitimate producers and with government officials to try to put some of that through more legitimate channels, and help to defuse conflict there. But so that's an indirect relationship to sort of creating peace. A number of things we've done were at a community level.

I think, when it gets to the governmental level, certainly in Nigeria, I mean, on an interagency basis with the leadership of the Deputy Chief of Mission in particular, we would go in, DoD, State and USAID, and talk to the Prime Minister and the National Security Staff of Nigeria about our concerns, particularly about displacement of populations and threats and information that we had that in some cases they may or may not have had about what was going on in parts of the country. One of the advantages that I had that I think was notable is with the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) program. On the ground OTI was doing a lot of work, again, as I said at the community level, trying to bring communities together and also, making sure people are aware and prepared for things that were going on. Even going so far as to help communities reopen markets by interacting with the military that was shutting them down because they thought that there would be operatives, terrorist operatives in the marketplace. We did definitely work on conflict. And the reason I was raising that is because OTI was so effectively integrated in some of the communities. They had a lot of local staff, some really brilliant Nigerians working with them. We were very well informed on what was going on to the ground, and sometimes better informed than our other interagency counterparts. But because of the nature of the way we were working, this was unclassified information on what was going on. When I was interacting with other donor agencies, and other foreign governments, the UK, Germany, and Swiss and others, I was able to bring information to the table about what the actual situation on the ground was, that they just didn't have, because they didn't have the networks that we did. And I thought it was important to share that.

Q: After the Madagascar dispute over the presidential election, was there anything that AID did there to try to resolve conflict?

HAYKIN: To bring the parties together? Not that I can recall. In terms of actual kind of mediation, kinds of things. There may have been some things that were done diplomatically, probably by State Department, but no, there weren't any activities. But partly that was because it wasn't community to community, it was sort of leadership to leadership, where the breakdown was and so that was dealt with on a different level than we would normally operate. I think one of the takeaways from all of this is that it is really important in these situations to be in contact with and supportive of civil society, both to understand where the people are, and essentially help empower people to advocate for themselves. I think that's a common thread along the work that we do.

Q: Is there any special way you do that?

HAYKIN: Again, there were formal programs, such as some of the ones I described. But sometimes it was just person to person outreach of me or my staff or embassy staff with NGO leaders. Sometimes just showing up or just having a conversation is reassuring and empowering.

Q: Right. You mentioned working with donors, and I think you mentioned earlier, to me, we have some successful donor coordination programs that you'd talk about.

HAYKIN: Allow me to put my economist hat on a little bit and speak from there. There are many resources that AID brings to the table. But in terms of investment in countries, we're just one source of investment resources. Certainly, each of the countries in which we work has its own domestic resources, some of which are devoted to development and, all too often in some of the countries I worked in, they're diverted. To the extent that they're applied, they are used with resources from other sources, from the private sector of course, and from other donor countries', the UN system, and many international organizations of which the United States may be party. From an economic point of view and from the country's point of view, this constitutes one pot of resources that, ideally, should be allocated optimally to the development of the country and to the well-being of the people. It is for that reason that I've really valued interaction with other donors, among others, as well as the NGOs and private sector and host governments. It has been very important to coordinate, influence and leverage use of resources and to improve the enabling environment for development.. I would add that the US plays a large role in the Global Fund for AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis, the Global Alliance for Vaccination and Immunization, the World Bank, part of the UN System and more. At the country level, it is often the USAID Mission that has the best sense of how these parts come together with respect to humanitarian and development priorities. I believe this presents a powerful opportunity and a responsibility to engage in collaboration to advance shared objectives. I've done a lot on this.

I think of experiences along those lines. We had a very good dialogue among donors—I certainly had one in Madagascar, but I'm thinking, in particular, maybe of Congo. One of the things we were able to do, I think for the year 2008, was to do a fairly comprehensive mapping of who was doing what because that's rarely done. Host governments rarely have an idea of what's really coming in. And quite often, it's difficult to have that communication. We're able to do that, and we do some joint planning.

More recently, in Nigeria, also, we did a lot of joint consultation. And we were to the point too where other donors such as the UK actually provided funding to USAID programs for us to implement. I think both in the electoral area, and the health area, as well, possibly even stabilization. Sometimes it's gone that far. I talked about coordination

around the Global Fund. Again, in Congo, that took place, and in other countries including Madagascar. Generally speaking, I think that we've had a lot of positive experiences with that. Certainly, when it came to Eastern Congo, again, it was very important to be on the same page with other donors. Again, with the COVID response in Nigeria, or the response to terrorism in Northeastern Nigeria, all these are areas for which coordination was particularly important. The coordination around stabilization in Eastern Congo, mentioned earlier, is another example of critical coordination with other development actors.

Q: Were there any opportunities you had, or any times you were working directly with the U.S. Military?

HAYKIN: Yeah, in Nigeria, we would have pretty much weekly consultations on the Northeast, where first we'd get sort of a security report or assessment and that kind of information. But as we went down the line, we would share what we know about the humanitarian response and our OTI work and other things. Then, as I mentioned, we had joint meetings with government officials to press for certain actions to stabilize the situation, or to alert them to what we thought were security threats, basically, or stability threats. That's the main place, let me think, eastern Congo less so because the military intervention was with the UN peacekeeping force where we interacted. When I would travel to Eastern Congo I usually had briefings with them on the security situation and on the activities that were being done to stabilize or serve affected populations. In eastern Congo, we were able to rely on them for security support when traveling to the field. This, I think, is a good model. I wish we had been able to do that elsewhere. The UN was very willing to take us around in northeastern Nigeria, but our security officer wasn't as keen to do that that way.

Q: Interesting. How about any lessons from working with the embassy and with the ambassadors as many countries you worked in?

HAYKIN: Complex relationships. Some have been very good, some maybe more challenging. I think one of my top line takeaways is that the mission leadership, embassy leadership really sets the tone for a post. I've been fortunate in most cases, there's been a concerted effort by ambassadors and DCMs, and I'd like to say me as Mission Director, to encourage folks to work together and where appropriate look beyond the lines of the agency and really work as a team. I think a couple times that was really a dream. I would say, as I mentioned earlier, working with Ambassador Bill Garvelink and Sam Brock in Kinshasa, we really had that, and I think that the tone was good. And also, I've worked very closely with some political officers and economic growth officers and others. In Nigeria, I thought particularly in the whole kind of peace and security realm, that we had

very good collaborative communications and collaboration across the different parts of USAID with your parts of the embassy and DOD and others. Earlier, in Kenya, I found the political and economic counselors to be particularly collaborative.

I think, in some parts of my career, there have been more challenges around some of the administrative aspects. I mean, I know there are those within State who would just like to take over our human resources functions and some of our other functions. I don't necessarily advocate that. But shy of that, I mean, I think there was a lot of new territory to be trod in the early days of the ICASS Program and decisions that AID was able to make. So those relationships are much more collegial now than they had been. I mean, for example, during the switch to a single property manager, we had already assigned a USAID employee to a house and suddenly the State management officer just pulled that out from under us at the last minute, and we had to go scrambling to find another place for a person to live. That was back in the days of the battles.

As I alluded to earlier, getting to the field, particularly when you have a motor pool that is controlled by embassy—you've got embassy security officers making decisions on what acceptable risk is. I certainly respect the view, and I would never contradict a security officer on that but I didn't always agree with some of their judgments, or I didn't think they showed the flexibility. I've discussed this with even the head of AID's security through the years, when I've had concerns. But that's one of the inherent challenges we have.

Georgia was interesting because I'd mentioned there was the billion dollars after the war with Russia and I came in the middle of all that, or later in the game. I came into an embassy where, initially the Ambassador, John Bass, and the DCM knew our programs much better than I did. There was more of a micromanagement kind of element there too. And so that took some time, it was a different region too than I had worked in. I find each region has its own character in terms of management styles. There was a bit of an adjustment there. And then towards the end, as I was developing more of a rapport with the outgoing Ambassador. I said, ‘you realize we have something like thirty scheduled meetings a month’ and I said, ‘we've had a lot of meetings, but I'm not sure we've had as much communication as we should have.’ He kind of nodded in agreement. But that was water under the bridge at that point.

Q: Goodness. Let’s change tempo a little bit here. Let's talk about AID effectiveness. What can you tell us about what you feel about programs that AID does best; what are our strengths? What do we do well? What don’t we not do well?

HAYKIN: Wow! That's such a huge topic. I mean, I think that's a perennial challenge across fields. I think we still are grappling with how best to tell our story. One of the considerations is that AID is mandated to do a lot of things that are developmental, that have very distinct and clear development objectives. And it's also tasked to do things that are essentially highly political, where the achieving impact may be a secondary consideration, to showing up essentially, in the situation. Then we're in so many different sectors, some easier to measure, some inherently have shorter term impact, some inherently have longer term impacts. It's very difficult to sort out. One has to sort of go through, I mean, almost taxonomically, to address all of that and to answer the question.

Q: Okay, what programs are you proud of?

HAYKIN: Oh, lots of programs. Again, the health outcomes are a bit easier to measure than a lot of the other ones. I think those are particularly rewarding. I think educational outcomes can be sometimes clear to measure as well. I think we've had across the globe, and in programs that I've managed, important impacts on education, particularly primary education. One program in Nigeria, where we, I should say Denise O'Toole and her team, were developing reading materials in local languages. And it worked so well—Nigeria has hundreds of local languages, but a few dominant ones—our program worked so well that there was interest from other Nigerian states, where we weren't providing assistance, in getting access to the materials and assistance in translating those materials into their language. I think education comes to mind as an area.

I think there's no doubt that we've helped in creating environments for business and helped entrepreneurs to operate in those environments. Although it's a little less easy to add all of that up, I do think that there are measurable successes in that area. Our work in Ghana in the 1990s, boosting non-traditional exports, comes to mind. Democracy and governance work, conflict prevention, that kind of thing is more subjective, but I do think we'd get traction from time to time. But quite often, in that area, and even in other areas, like economic growth, the resources that we're putting on are just not necessarily enough to tip the balance, to change the equation completely, although we can help a lot of individuals and communities, I'm sure. Humanitarian assistance is, again, very rewarding because you can see tangible impacts. It's a never ending struggle. I mean, the needs are always there and until we can get a handle on some of the drivers of the humanitarian crisis, particularly conflict. It's a very frustrating area to work in.

Q: You've been involved more recently with the USAID Alumni Association. We appreciate your involvement and leadership there. But I'm sure you also run into younger people who are interested in perhaps doing international work, either at universities in graduate schools or in jobs where they're working for a development partner who would

come to you and ask you what you would recommend in terms of a career? What would you recommend to them?

HAYKIN: Well, it can be difficult to break into the international affairs or international development field. So one of the things is to just encourage people to get experience, to be able to say that they've lived or worked overseas. They do that through Peace Corps, study abroad, or volunteer work or missionary work, or what have you. I would say that would be one element of it. I think, in terms of breaking in, not everybody's going to get hired off the bat by AID. If the goal is to work in that area, there are certainly other organizations, and particularly if you want to really get your hands into the soil, so to speak, working for an NGO, or for some of the implementing partners is actually a much more direct relationship with development than even AID. So I would recommend people look at that. But also, I think some of the entry level positions may be things like administrative assistants in implementing partners, NGOs, or private. They may initially start out as doing things like organizing other people's travels but might lead to an opportunity to fill in or to join one of the trips over time. So I think there's plenty of things, clearly studies and the attitude of being open to differences and change, and personal sacrifice.

Q: Any changes in the kinds of skills one needs these days from when you started?

HAYKIN: Oh, tough question. Tough question. I mean, there are some things that are—technical knowledge is useful. And I always kind of approach the career by trying to collect skills, in a sense, collect as many tools as I could. Whether just knowledge about how things are done or technical knowledge because in a USAID career, I mean, you're hit with so many diverse things. Just having a reservoir of experience and knowledge to draw on is very helpful, as well as a network of people to draw on. That is important. I think one of the things you learn is just how important interpersonal skills are in an international development career. It's not just what you know, or what you can do, but also how you interact and respect people, respect people of different cultures. I'm always a big advocate of listening. Not sure if I answered your question, but those are some thoughts.

Q: All right. Well, if there are any other questions I should have asked you but I didn't.

HAYKIN: Let's see. You talked about maybe ask me more questions about management too—

Q: Management.

HAYKIN: I sprinkled some of that through the discussion. But I'm trying to think of some of the formative experiences in my career. I mean, the first formative experience was probably in the orientation when I first joined as an IDI. And I learned a lot about myself because frankly, although it was excellent orientation, it was long, and the parts of it were boring. And I had an opportunity to reflect on how I learned. So that was interesting.

I was surrounded by very good people in the African Bureau. And then when I went overseas to Kenya and to Congo to my first two assignments. Certainly learning to respect what others do in a mission. Particularly, I made it a point to kind of monitor the new first tour employees that I've had based on my experience to make sure that they're showing proper respect to the Foreign Service National employees because you quickly learned that we can't be effective without them, but also, it's the right thing to do. I think that was something that I acquired early on. Again, my experience in the Europe and Eurasia Bureau, when I had more supervisory responsibility for the first time of just recognizing what others who I was supervising were bringing to the table and empowering that and respecting that and learning from it was important to me.

Q: Did you ever take any management courses?

HAYKIN: I think there was a supervisory skills course. Then there was somewhere along the line an intermediate management course. I did the executive leadership training at the Federal Executive Institute, which I thought was particularly useful and a good opportunity for self-reflection, mid-career, coming early in my senior management phase. I think the management course was in Swaziland just before I was evacuated from Kinshasa. I think that I certainly became much better over time in handling situations where they were challenging employees or conflict among others, and some of the tools that I drew upon were from the management training. So I think that definitely, you do take that stuff in and then it's available in your memory somewhere when you need it. There was a monitoring and evaluation training I took when I was an IDI and then I undertook to bring the same trainers out to Kenya to train the mission. That was MSI, Larry Cooley and Janet Tuthill, at the time. So those are some of the things that are on top of my mind at the moment, I guess.

Q: All right. Well, again, you can also add things to your editing. Well, Steve, I think this has been a very, very productive interview and will be a valuable resource to a lot of people.

HAYKIN: Thank you. All that I have been able to contribute involved teamwork with so many individuals over the years. I would especially like to acknowledge the support that I

received from Jerry Wolgin, Roberta Mahoney, Dirk Djikerman, Keith Brown and Sharon Cromer at critical points in my career. Above all, the love and support of my wife, Constantine, and our three children have enriched my life and my passion to serve.

End of interview