UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID)

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Phillip Ely Church
Deputy Director, Afghan Agriculture Program, USAID
Islamabad, Pakistan (1988-1991)

Q: What was your next assignment?

CHURCH: Following my detail to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, I was again eligible for an overseas assignment. This time I needed an assignment to an overseas USAID post where there was a high school for our kids, work opportunities for my wife, and, of course a career challenge for me. I found that as I progressed through my foreign service career with the Agency and through raising a family at home, I was encountering a situation that confronts a lot of us as development assistance specialists: a growing tension between professional and personal goals. My kids were getting more and more settled into the United States setting and were reluctant to go overseas. My wife had finished her own CPA studies and had a nice job. Our parents were aging and wanted to be close to their grand children. We were pretty much settled into stateside living, and there were a lot of reasons to stay put in the U.S. It was a little hard to go overseas again. It's unfortunate to hear myself say that because here I was career-wise at the peak of my professional capabilities, with a broad understanding of development concepts, good field experience with what works and what doesn't work. It's probably the best time in the world

to be overseas from the standpoint of contributions a seasoned development officer can make. But, from a family standpoint it was probably the most difficult time given the age of our kids and the career interests of my wife. Where development officers are needed most is in the poorest countries. But those are precisely the countries that lack adequate schools and have the fewest job opportunities for spouses, and very often where USAID has smaller missions with less technical positions in agriculture, health, education, etc. The developing world becomes pretty small when mid-career USAID officers require a post with a high school for their kids and job opportunities for their spouse.

The USAID Afghanistan program in Pakistan at the time offered a way of meeting all those needs for our family. The U.S. government was helping a rebel government in exile in Pakistan prepare itself to return to what was Soviet-occupied territory. The Soviet Union had pulled its troops out of Afghanistan, but fighting continued between forces of the puppet regime they left behind and the *Muhajideen* freedom fighters of the Afghan resistance movement that the West continued to support. The country was strewn with land mines and its damaged road, power and irrigation infrastructure combined to make development work very difficult. It wasn't possible for "official" Americans to go into the country so the program had to be run out of Islamabad, Peshawar, and Quetta in Pakistan. Still in retrospect, working in Pakistan on the Afghan relief and rehabilitation program turned out to be a good choice. Pakistan's capital, Islamabad, where we were based had one of the best international overseas high schools among USAID assisted countries. My wife had opportunities to work for other USAID contractors, and the Afghan program certainly was unique and challenging.

Q: What was the position?

CHURCH: I was Deputy Director of the Afghan Agriculture Program Office and responsible for running a program to smuggle wheat seed and fertilizer into Afghanistan to help resettle areas of the country under Afghan "Muhajideen" rebel control.

Q: How big a staff did that call for?

CHURCH: The Afghan program was very small. We had about 12 USAID American staff and an equal number of local contractors and consultants. But we covered just about all the development sectors -- agriculture, heath, education, infrastructure building. Those of us engaged in the agriculture program focused on getting Afghan food crop production restored again. We bought seed and fertilizer on the world market had it shipped to port in Pakistan and warehoused in Karachi. We then engaged truckers to move it to the Afghan border where it was off loaded into smaller vehicles, or in some cases pack animals, and carted across the mountains through the historically infamous Khyber Pass into Afghanistan to be sold to farmers who were trying to reestablish their former way of life after more than a decade of fighting in the Afghan resistance. We also had programs to supply food to workers restoring roads, bridges and irrigation systems that were critical to get commercial life going again in rural areas. Because most of the draft animals had been killed, we also had a program to bring in breeding livestock.

Many of the Afghan farmers we were trying to reach were in their mid twenties and had left farm families when they were young boys of 14-15 years to pick up a gun to fight in the "Muhajideen"

resistance forces against the occupying Soviet forces. They had been driven from their villages and really had lost most of their farming skills during more than a decade of resistance struggles. These younger Afghans not only needed to get seed and fertilizer but also know-how to get crops growing. Orchard crops like raisins and grapes, cumin and spices that were grown in the country required several seasons to be reestablished after being abandoned by the war. But Afghans needed to eat in the meantime, so our emphasis was on food crop production. In 1988 after the Soviets pulled out, more than 4 million Afghans, mostly women and children were still sheltered in refugee camps in Pakistan and Iran waiting to return. United Nations agencies and other donor programs could not sustain them indefinitely. Our job was to get food crops planted so entire families could return home and rebuild their lives. We really did not have much time to think about development. We were part of a huge multi-donor humanitarian relief and rehabilitation effort.

Q: How could you manage a program not being in the country, or did you visit the country?

CHURCH: Our programs operated out of two Pakistani towns, Peshawar and Quetta which bordered Afghanistan. Our staffs were Afghan, many well educated, skilled and "westernized" who were gravitating back to the area and were anxious to see some sort of peace and prosperity return. We recruited and hired many of them to implement USAID programs. We expected many of them would make up a future Afghan government. So in a way we were supporting a government in exile that was implementing USAID programs as well as programs for other donors. The Ministry of Health, for example, consisted of two nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) who hired all the Afghan staff that USAID hoped would soon return to Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, and form the public agencies of a new democratic government.

One of the challenges we faced was coordinating all of the donor assistance and all of the NGOs to get some semblance of organization out of the program. Too often, donors and NGOs ended up hiring qualified Afghans from each other. The USAID Afghan program was unique in that USAID was just one player and often not the dominant player among many donor and humanitarian relief groups assisting the Afghan population. One of the largest players was the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) which attempted to coordinate and deliver support to the two million Afghans in Pakistani refugee camps.

Q: What was the expectation when you were working there, of where this would evolve?

CHURCH: In 1988 when I arrived the U.S. government anticipated that within a year after the Soviets pulled out, the puppet regime would soon collapse and a pro-western transition government would be established that would welcome assistance programs back into the country. (Remember USAID had conducted a full development assistance program in Afghanistan since the early 1960s and up to the mid 1970s when the Soviets invaded and occupied the country.) So USAID was positioning itself in Pakistan to return to Kabul and help rebuild the country.

We had equipment and staff standing by in temporarily rented facilities in Pakistan running programs in exile while waiting for that moving date to come. After three years and what turned out to be an intervening evacuation from Pakistan by our families during the Gulf War, I decided

that there really wasn't much chance for such an Afghan assistance program any time soon, so I chose to move on.

Q: Did you have any dealings with members of the Afghan government in exile?

CHURCH: The Afghan exile government attempted to distribute the various ministerial responsibilities among the different feuding factions that existed in the country. Each faction came from a different area of Afghanistan. Each had lost a number of lives to the Russians in its struggle to expel the Soviet forces. It turned out that the Minister of Agriculture with whom we had to work was a very fundamentalist Muslim cleric with very little agricultural background. While we gave him support and recognition for the title he held, we had to conduct our programs through more informal means. One of my responsibilities was setting up a system for monitoring what went on inside the country. We had both a high tech and a low tech approach. We were using very simple survey questionnaires at the outset, which were administered by a few Afghans we trained to gather the data. In some cases they were Afghan Americans that we felt were trustworthy enough to be able to vouch for what they saw. We sent them in with Polaroid cameras and cassette recorders to walk into the villages and look and see if they could find the bags of fertilizer with the USAID handclasp on them. We had them take pictures of wheat fields, of roads, of crops being planted and harvested as evidence that the seed and fertilizer were being used the way we intended.

We also set up one of the first high tech "geographic information system" (GIS) entering data into computerized digital maps from a series of satellite images that we were able to obtain from the French and from one of our closest allies in this program, the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), who had been remotely monitoring Russian movements inside Afghanistan for a number of years. The satellite maps had many good images of damaged infrastructure and areas in which there were crops in the crop land. We were able to get that imagery and convert it into computerized maps. We use these maps to track inventory in basically a spatial data base to keep track of and monitor changes that were occurring as a result of what we were sending into the country.

Surveys, satellite maps and GIS software became the tools we used for monitoring USAID development assistance inside a country where physically we could not set foot. I was impressed to see how easy it was to train Afghans to use sophisticated satellite imagery and calculate, from hand- held global positioning system (GPS) units, their positions inside Afghanistan to report what were physical conditions on the ground. The Afghans we were able to recruit for the program definitely had solid technical skills. Of course, it was very encouraging and exciting to see Afghan exiles, American Afghans, French Afghans, all of the Afghans that had been spread around the world during the Soviet occupation, joining efforts to try to bring the country back together again.

Q: Did you find the program useful?

CHURCH: It was the right program but not the right time for it. The Soviet puppet regime in Afghanistan proved more resilient than expected - though it eventually did fall - and the more fundamentalist leaders of the Afghan resistance proved to be too divided. As for the USAID staff

itself, we got caught up in events from another part of the world when, as a precaution during the Gulf War, American families were evacuated from all Muslim countries including, of course, Pakistan. We brought our families back to the United States, found temporary housing and attempted to run the program even more remotely from Washington, DC for nearly a year. My son at that particular time was applying to college. He was in his senior year. He wanted to finish high school back here in the United States. When we were allowed to return to post, I ended up leaving my family in the United States, going back to Afghanistan for a few months, closing out our personal affairs, and moving back to join them.

It was apparent USAID would not be going back into Afghanistan any time soon. Fortunately, many of the NGOs were taking more of a central leadership role in our programs and doing very well with very little USAID supervision. USAID essentially decided to wind down its efforts in Pakistan as much for lack of progress in Afghanistan as for lack of Pakistani cooperation with the U.S. on issues related to narcotics interdiction and nuclear non- proliferation. So, it became a situation where the United States wanted to have a much reduced presence in the area.

Phillip Ely Church
Program Economist, USAID
Bangladesh (1978-1981)

Q: Then you left the Central American region, when?

CHURCH: We transferred directly from Guatemala to Bangladesh around Christmas time 1977. Earlier, I had cast my eyes at a world map trying to decide where I wanted to take my USAID career next. I had no desire yet to go back to what I joked was USAID's only true "hardship post", Washington, DC. I know I could have benefitted from a tour in the U.S., getting to know how the Agency functioned, because I went straight overseas to Guatemala when I joined the Agency. Still, I joined the foreign service to work abroad, not in the U.S.

However, the value of a Washington, DC tour with USAID became apparent in Bangladesh where the Agency had a very high profile program. Bangladesh was a country that Henry Kissinger had called an international "basket case." Bangladesh became independent from Pakistan after a bloody war in 1970s only to be devastated by monsoon floods. Its first decade as a country was one more of disaster relief than economic development. Many doubted that Bangladesh was viable as a country.

The whole South Asian continent was undergoing an exploding population. Despite a "green revolution" that promised significant increases in food grain production, mass starvation was still a real threat. The region at that time was still very unstable both economically and politically and USAID was most anxious for some economic development "success stories."

Q: What was your position in Bangladesh?

CHURCH: I served first as program economist and then an agricultural economist in Bangladesh.

Q: What was the situation when you arrived?

CHURCH: I worked in Bangladesh at perhaps one of the more promising periods in the history of our assistance programs in the country. By 1977 when I arrived in Bangladesh, the country was beginning to recover from a period of floods and droughts that had punctuated its short life as an independent nation since its bloody independence struggle with Pakistan at the beginning of the decade. Large amounts of money - twentyfold what we had for programs in Central America - were budgeted for Bangladesh development programs. In Central America at the time, the population was 15 million. Bangladesh had nearly 90 million people in a much more concentrated geographic setting. Poverty was much more widespread in Bangladesh. For me, the Bangladesh program also required a lot more understanding of how the USAID bureaucracy and donor community conducted and coordinated a large country development assistance effort.

Q: What were the kinds of programs with which you were concerned in Bangladesh?

CHURCH: One of the things in which I became involved was building a better knowledge base of what affect our development dollars were having on people's lives. At the time USAID was working largely at what we called the "outputs" level, focusing on things like how much fertilizer, credit school books or condoms our programs distributed rather than how much more food was produced, how many more kids were educated and how much more income or well being program beneficiaries experienced. USAID's program in Bangladesh was a start, at least for me, of efforts to monitor more closely these "outcomes" of our programs, that is, of what our programs were accomplishing boosting food output, literacy and rural incomes or lowering infant mortality, disease incidence and population growth.

Bangladesh was more about accomplishment because we were working in an environment where life was a make-or-break situation for many people. A failed crop meant hunger, even loss of life, in a setting like Bangladesh. A simple disease or infection was life threatening to children already weak and malnourished. Bangladesh appeared to be on a collision course between population growth and food availability.

USAID needed better information about what was working in our food production assistance programs. Bangladesh offered an opportunity to do something constructive in getting better numbers to people in USAID/Washington and in the Congress who made decisions. So I spent a good share of my time in the field talking to farmers, learning about their problems, learning why they were using a particular seed or fertilizer or cultivation practice. A central question of concern was: "Why, when new high yielding rice and wheat varieties were introduced, was there such a wide gap between the crop yields that scientists obtained at the experiment station and what farmers experienced in their fields?"

Q: Why these gaps?

CHURCH: First, agricultural researchers could control for a number of factors on their experiment stations that farmers could not in their fields -- water availability, pests and plant diseases, for example. Small farmers, however, do not have nice well-defined farms. They cultivate a small plot of land in one place, rent out a piece of land in another area, rent in another

piece of land from a neighboring farmer as well. A farm may consist of say 3 hectares of land total but be made up of a dozen or as many as 20 or 30 small rice paddies or plots scattered over an area many times that size. Each plat has its unique soil conditions and planting schedule. One field may be dry; one may be wet. Our surveys showed that farmers select plots so as to use their labor (and that of their family members) most efficiently over the entire cultivation year, not always to maximize yields.

We quickly realized that research scientists cannot go into a region with a single crop variety or cultivation practice and expect it to be adopted throughout a farmer's land holding. It may be adopted only in part and only on some farm plots because land varies so much by soil type, water regime and fertility across any single farm operation. Farmers purposely select plots with a variety of features in order to spread risks and stagger planting and cultivation times in such a way as to best use their time and labor. So, new crop varieties did not yield on farmer's fields what they did in experiment station trials.

Q: Did you come to any general conclusions about farming in Bangladesh?

CHURCH: I think we came up with conclusions about ourselves and how we should conduct agriculture research in a setting like Bangladesh. The major conclusion, if there is one to be made, is that the client needs to be much more a part of the development equation. I can see that going on much more today in our attempts overseas to partner with our clients.

In Bangladesh in the late 1970s, we were just beginning to look at the farm community and the farmer as a partner in the process, as someone from whom to learn. By comparison, earlier in Central America we essentially carried pre-packed solutions to farmers via mobile school programs, on trucks equipped with special plows and seeders to show farmers how to use this stuff. In Bangladesh, we listened to how framers did it and then examined ways that we could help them maybe do it better or let them look at options. We conducted a lot of on-farm trials in the context of what came to be called "farming systems research", which essentially studied the whole farm unit. For example, how is rice cultivation linked to the livestock enterprises on the farm and how does each compete for limited family labor? We examined the interactions among the several crop and livestock enterprises that made up the whole farm unit that the farmer managed rather than focus exclusively on a single crop.

Q: What was our program in agriculture then? What were we trying to do specifically apart from this approach?

CHURCH: In Bangladesh we were trying to close the domestic food production and consumption gap. The United States was supplying as much as 2-3 million tons of food grains annually to the country and more was coming from other donors, notably Canada and Australia. To put that into perspective, Bangladesh produced at the time I was there about 15 million tons of food grains and the donors provided another 4-5 tons, about 25% of the country's total consumption needs. A country is considered to be in a food vulnerability situation when it depends on imports for more that 5% of its food needs. Bangladesh was nearly five times that level, so the objective was to increase domestic production of basic food to bring that gap down to under 5% or from 5 million tons to about one million tons of grain imports. At the time the

U.S. had food grain surpluses to share, but no one knew what the long run forecast would be for U.S. agriculture. To close that gap in Bangladesh we needed to build capacity to produce more food by the country's own farmers.

Q: The primary strategy for doing that was what?

CHURCH: Improved seed and more and better fertilizer use, or so we thought at the time. I think we came away from that experience realizing that improved farming practices were equally critical. Seed and fertilizer were basic components, but not the whole solution.

An immediate problem was to get fertilizer to farmers, which the government was subsidizing to encourage adoption. Well, it was catching on. Chemical fertilizer was used on about 5% of the crop land in the early 1970s. When I got there in 1977 farmers were applying it to about 30% of the crop land. And when I left in 1981 the figure was at about 60%. Well, the government could afford to subsidize fertilizer when it was used on only 5% of the crop land, but as usage grew, subsidies began eating up the entire agriculture budget leaving little money for research and extension services. Without such services crop yields from added fertilizer use began to level off. Our chemical fertilizer use strategy was not sustainable for the long run.

Q: Were you able to accomplish anything in that respect?

CHURCH: There were two things that USAID can point to as fairly successful. One was the privatization of the fertilizer sector. We got the government out of the fertilizer business. It was entirely a government operation which is a traditional pattern in that part of the world. The fertilizer corporation, the fertilizer marketing, the distribution of fertilizer was all in government hands. We helped the government dismantle that system and introduce private distribution networks. There was a great deal of resistance at first because everyone was sure the middleman would capture the profit, but we demonstrated that enough middlemen would compete and bring down the margins to where they could provide a better service at a cheaper cost than the government.

Secondly, as I already described, we brought farmers into the partnership or into the process as active informants of what was needed and what worked and why, whereas before we were only listening to the research station scientists.

Q: Who was working with the communities to introduce these technologies and concepts?

CHURCH: As far as I could tell, one of the major ways that information was shared was by word of mouth and marketplace, not the extension service. For example, private fertilizer distributors became disseminators of information. I recall now that you mention it, the bags had on them instructions as to how to apply the fertilizer to get the best yield. So we used the market mechanism as a vehicle for getting farm messages as well as chemical fertilizer into farmers' hands.

Q: Did you find the Ministry of Agriculture receptive to doing things this way or did you essentially bypass them in this approach?

CHURCH: The Ministry of Agriculture had strengths and weaknesses. I have never seen more dedicated civil servants than those with whom I worked in the Ministry of Agriculture in Bangladesh. But the Ministry had few resources with which to support its research and extension staff. As I indicated, most of the budget was still going to pay fertilizer subsidies. So agricultural researchers had few vehicles to get around the countryside and had to take bicycles and buses to get to farmers' plots. Their daily meal and lodging allowances were so low and so miserable whenever they left the office or research station they could not afford to travel without using their own money. And, of course, salaries themselves were very modest. That's one of the things we also could point to. To turn around this situation was to say, "OK, we'll reduce the fertilizer subsidy burden, but we want to see the budget savings go into salaries, vehicles and travel allowances for your research people so they can begin to work more with farmers."

Q: Had the agriculture situation changed in that period you were there?

CHURCH: We definitely saw improvements; I think the statistics tell the story. Fertilizer use continued to grow and crop yields improved even as subsidies were lowered and the cost of fertilizer to farmers rose. Bangladesh has its own natural gas resources which it began to use to produce urea fertilizer in the country. It is less import-dependent today, despite a larger population to feed! The research system has continued to maintain contact with its clients. I really can't speak to whether the agricultural researchers' field logistics problems have been solved. I suspect the situation is better today but that Bangladesh still has a ways to go.

Q: Was the food deficit declining?

CHURCH: Not only has the food deficit declined, but in some years Bangladesh has come pretty close to food self sufficiency. Now to claim food self sufficiency is a little misleading in a country like Bangladesh where purchasing power is such a big factor. You can have sufficient rice, on a caloric basis, but if many do not have the income to buy it, they still go hungry. Still Bangladesh has come very close to self sufficiency in terms of meeting its needs in the nutritional basis using, say, the UN caloric minimum acceptable standards of about 2,200 calories a day. Much needs to be done to raise incomes, especially among the poorest so they have the resources to buy the food and other necessities they need to improve their well-being.

Q: How did you find working with the Bangladeshi people?

CHURCH: I enjoyed it very much. It was a dramatic difference to be in a Muslim culture from a Christian culture in Latin America. The Muslim culture is very hospitable and accommodating. Muslim culture practices tolerance for non-Muslims, even though many people look at the Islamic faith as being very traditional. I found it a very pleasant environment.

Q: How did you find working with the government bureaucracy?

CHURCH: I observed very dedicated people enmeshed in a very rigid system. It is a by-the-book type of bureaucracy, very little creativity, very little originality, but a lot of dedication. As I said, it took the USAID program more than a decade to disengage the government from one policy and practice, fertilizer subsidies, for example. We did that not by convincing the

government that a private sector distribution system was more efficient, but by demonstrating the damaging impact that their subsidy program was having on the budget. Still, acknowledging that reality was slow and responding to the reality also took time.

Working in Bangladesh as a development economist, I grew to understand better the interdependency of professional disciplines and program management skills needed to get the job done. The Mission Director in Bangladesh at the time we were running this fertilizer program chose not to push the economic logic of lower subsidies which he believed wouldn't resonate among our Bangladeshi counterparts. Rather he made and won the case on financial and budgetary grounds. Development assistance is more than just coming up with a better economic rationale. It also has to connect at a level that produces the political response and commitment that is needed to change attitudes and to make things happen differently.

Q: Did you have any connection with the Embassy and U.S. political interests in Bangladesh?

CHURCH: Bangladesh at the time was part of what was called the Group of 77 nonaligned United Nations countries. The U.S. Embassy's agenda was securing Bangladesh votes on United Nations issues of importance to U.S. interests. The Embassy viewed our economic assistance and humanitarian relief work in that context.

Q: Did you see any of the cold war tensions affecting the development assistance work?

CHURCH: Thanks to the cold war, development assistance work in Bangladesh and most of South Asia benefitted from large infusions of annual funding. After all, the whole of Indochina was caught up in the aftermath of the Viet Nam war and the fear of a widening regional conflict was always there. If there is one problem we had, it was how to use the money wisely. The USAID program in Bangladesh went from an annual $20 million program to a $100 million program in development assistance alone, plus another $75 million in food aid, plus a number of export credits. Combined with funds from other donors, Bangladesh was receiving a half billion dollars at the end of the decade of the 1970s.

Q: Apart from the fertilizer subsidies that money was going to what?

CHURCH: Food relief, health, education and family planning programs, with some road infrastructure and school construction work, funded often under food-for-work that built dikes, aquiculture ponds and irrigation canals. The Asian Development Bank was putting money into road infrastructure, electric power, and communications. The World Bank was providing a lot of large infrastructure loans, hydroelectric dams, and irrigation systems.

Q: Did you find that kind of overall assistance program worked well?

CHURCH: As an economist, we viewed food aid with a little bit of skepticism because we were fearful it would undermine food prices and discourage crop production. Again the dependency question became important. But it also provided, in some cases, some useful spinoffs. There were a number of food assistance programs built around fish farms, for example. Fish farming became a new enterprise, and the nontraditional food crop of Bangladesh became Tilapia, a

species of rapid reproducing and fast growing fish that originated in the Nile region of Egypt. It became a very popular source of protein and food.

Q: Well, any last comments about the Bangladesh experience?

CHURCH: Guatemala and Latin America served to launch my career. Bangladesh and South Asia helped give it depth. My work in the Asia region provided a different perspective on development than Latin America. I learned that in settings like Bangladesh to spur development you often must change more than economic incentives; you must also change the way people act within the bureaucratic circles.

Lane Holdcroft
Advisor to the National Community Development Program, USAID
Taejon, Korea (1963-1968)

Q: You were first working with an AID contractor in Korea?

HOLDCROFT: Yes, the Near East Foundation had the USOM/K contract to help the Republic of Korea's Government launch a national rural development program. I was assigned to Taejon, capitol of Chung Chong Namdo, located about 100 miles south of Seoul. At the age 26, I became Advisor to the National Community Development Program in four provinces.

Third World rural community development programs have been the focus of a number of analytical studies that have looked at the impact of a multi-sector development approach versus a single sector development approach at the village level. In the 1950s and early 1960s, rural community development was seen as a way of providing technical assistance to improve the levels of living of rural people, and also of developing democratic institutions at the grass roots level.

Over time the community development approach lost host-country political, and external donor, support in most developing countries. By 1965, there were only a small number of community development programs in existence around the world that were being directly supported by national governments and donor organizations. But during the '50s and early '60s, this was a very popular donor-supported movement directed at responding to the spread of totalitarianism, a euphemism for the spread of communism in the rural areas of the developing world.

The lessons learned are many and later in my career I authored a small book about the rise and fall of the community development approach to rural development. I found in my research that the approach worked very well where there was a charismatic national leader who was willing to provide the political and other resources needed to keep it moving forward and expanding. But where there was not a charismatic leader who could provide the kind of environment that encouraged multi-sectoral efforts, community development movements failed.

Q: You may want to include that publication, if you like, as an appendix to this oral history if it's still available.

HOLDCROFT: That early rural community development movement is important in the sense that about every decade, as donor agencies and Third World nations look for ways of getting at basic development problems, they often return to the rural community development approach as a model of some kind for a new rural development effort. There is a tendency to try to reinvent the wheel. For example, you remember the attention and impetus that was given to "integrated rural development", or IRD, in the 1970s and the beginning of the '80s - that effort was modeled on the earlier rural community development movement.

Q: That's very interesting. Were there host-government counterparts?

HOLDCROFT: The way it was organized in every country was quite similar. There would be a national ministry or sub-ministry-level agency that would be attached to the prime minister's or president's office. That agency would have a national training facility, and staff at the national, provincial, and district level that would provide the administrative and technical back-stopping for village-level workers to organize villagers to cooperatively undertake projects that would benefit their communities.

Q: You felt that national level input was one of the keys leading to success?

HOLDCROFT: The record was mixed. But generally those national efforts that had the support of the president or the prime minister, for example Nehru in India and Magsaysay in the Philippines, became major development efforts in those nations. Wherever there was that kind of political support, these movements did well. But in most nations the community development programs were competing with the old-line ministries - agriculture, health, and education - and over time in many instances significant animosities arose. And this carried over to some degree into the donor agency's operations. For example, there was a great deal of bureaucratic animosity between some of the U.S. advisors in the community development division and those in the agricultural division of the USOM in Korea. This did not cause any serious problems at the field level. But there was a good deal of competition for budgetary and personnel resources between those divisions in the mission. Being a contractor in the field, I was not privy to what was going on in that regard at that time, but there have been papers written about this - the controversy surrounding the community development divisions in USAID missions around the world.

Q: Versus the agriculture...

HOLDCROFT: Agriculture, health and education - because most of the community development program that USAID supported had health, education and agriculture elements. And so there was the sense that this multi-sectoral initiative wasn't appropriately utilizing the skills of host country personnel in the technical ministries. In Korea, the community development program was identified with Syngman Rhee and then briefly with Chang Myon. When the coup d'état took place and Park Chung Hee assumed power as chief of state, the national community development entity was abolished. Most of its programs were subsumed by the Ministry of Agriculture, with some by the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Education.

Q: About what time would this have occurred?

HOLDCROFT: After the student uprisings, President Syngman Rhee resigned in April 1960. Then in July, Chang Myon was elected Prime Minister under the new parliamentary cabinet system. The next year in May, some of the military revolted and Park Chung Hee assumed power as Chairman of the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction. Then in late 1963, Park Chung Hee was elected President under the new Constitution that revived the presidential system.

Q: And by that time you had become...

HOLDCROFT: By that time I had become a direct hire foreign service officer. I continued to serve in Taejon, but, after the coup, as the USAID provincial Rural Development Officer. I was advisor to the governors of two provinces until mid-1965. Then I was transferred to the USAID/K headquarters in Seoul and put in charge of an expanded Provincial Rural Development Staff. We had at that time two American advisors in each of the provinces.

It was a rather exciting period because this was the time when all of the earlier development efforts started to come to fruition. The Korean economy, both rural and urban, started to take off. From 1962 through 1976, the Republic of Korea maintained an average annual economic growth rate of about 10 percent. Exports went up very rapidly - from only $50 million in 1962 to nearly $8 billion in 1976. Of course, per capita income also grew very substantially. Agricultural yields increased very dramatically. All of this commenced in the early '60s. The only significant external donor at that time was the United States. We made a very substantial contribution to that effort.

I remained in Korea until 1968. From mid-1968 until mid-1969, I was on the Korea desk in USAID's Washington DC headquarters. My office was in the State Department on the fourth floor above the diplomatic entrance.

Q: You started as a contractor in Korea in 1959?

HOLDCROFT: Yes, and in 1963 I became a direct hire foreign service officer.

Q: And stayed on five years in Korea as a direct hire?

HOLDCROFT: Yes, I stayed on five years as a direct hire rural development officer. I was the American direct hire officer in the USAID Mission who had served in Korea the longest, and had tested fluency in the Korean language. So I had the opportunity to become involved in interesting activities beyond my responsibilities for the rural development field operations. For example, I had the opportunity to do the Korean interpreting for many of the American VIP's that visited Korea.

Q: How did you find your Korean counterparts as far as capabilities and willingness to work with you?

HOLDCROFT: They were super; for the most part well trained and highly motivated. At all levels they worked hard and played hard. Their culture stressed a strong work ethic. I could work without an interpreter, so it was easier to form close working and personal relationships with my Korean colleagues. I spent over eleven years in Korea. I went there in the Army in 1957 and I left USAID/Korea in 1968.

Q: You could be called a Korean hand.

HOLDCROFT: I could be called a young, "old Korean hand" at that time. Those were really exciting days to be associated with the U.S. foreign assistance program in Korea, as it was working so well in terms of helping the Koreans succeed in formulating and implementing their ambitious Five Year Economic Development Plans.

I am always quite surprised to hear comments by supposedly knowledgeable people that downplay the significance and importance of America's role in Korea's unusually successful economic development effort. For example, I happened to hear a Mr. Keyes, Republican candidate for president, on the PBS McNeil-Lehrer News Hour a few months ago. When asked about the significance of America's role in Korea's economic development - he stated something to the effect that Americans didn't really do anything much in Korea in terms of foreign aid after 1960!

Not true. In fact, it was during the '60s that our program was so large in terms of personnel - direct hire and contract, technical and administrative - that were working in Korea on behalf of the Korean development effort. We had absolutely outstanding people, some more controversial than others, who provided leadership to the U.S. aid effort in those days. When I arrived, there were a number of Americans in agriculture and industry who had outstanding careers in the States but who felt called to work in Korea. Korea was of importance to the U.S. and free world in the minds of so many Americans with so many personal ties forged during the Korean War.

Semi-retired deans of American universities were coming out on long-term assignments. The outstanding director of the research system of the state of Texas was, for some time, our agricultural research advisor to the Ministry of Agriculture. And a chap who operated a fertilizer producing factory in America was operating the major fertilizer factory in Korea, as advisor to the Korean who was managing that facility. We had some of the outstanding fisheries people from the Pacific Northwest assisting the Koreans in developing their fishing fleets - much to the chagrin of the American fisheries people today.

Q: There wasn't any shortage of American skills who were willing to come forward.

HOLDCROFT: That's right. It was a unique opportunity for young persons like me to work with world class professionals. Those were heady times. One of the outstanding mission directors was Joel Bernstein. Joel was a bright economist, who had earned a Ph.D. at the University of Chicago at a very young age. He and our small economics staff provided a great deal of the intellectual leadership to the Koreans in terms of their macroeconomic planning, their national programs and policies. Joel and his deputy, Roger Ernst, also provided excellent leadership to the several

hundred Americans and Koreans, contract and direct hire, were in the USAID/K Mission at that time.

Q: As I recall it was one of the largest, if not the largest...

HOLDCROFT: It was probably the largest USAID mission in the world at that time. Iran had been - as I recall - the largest mission in the '50s and I believe Korea was the largest in the '60s.

Q: Was that your favorite post of your overseas experience?

HOLDCROFT: It was certainly the one that influenced me the most in terms of my own thinking and understanding of development and the role of the external donor. I also thoroughly enjoyed my other overseas posts which were Ethiopia, where I served for four years and the Philippines, where I also served for four years. There were tours in Washington DC after each of my overseas assignments. Ethiopia was particularly interesting because much of Ethiopia was still as it had been a century or more ago.

Madison Broadnax
Team Leader for Research Extension and Education, USAID
Suwon, Korea (1964-1968)

Deputy Chief of the Food and Agriculture Division
Seoul, Korea (1969-1976)

BROADNAX: I went to Korea in 1964.

Q: And you were there until ?

BROADNAX: I was there until 1968. In 1968, I had an AID's sabbatical to Cornell University.

Q: Then you went back ?

BROADNAX: Then I went back -- they requested me back. After that -- instead of being at Suwon where I was originally, I was Deputy Chief of the Food and Agriculture Division with the responsibility of supervising all the provincial advisors.

Q: Let's talk about the first period you were in Korea.

BROADNAX: My title was Team Leader for Research Extension and Education, and I had six advisors under my supervision. My counterpart was the Administrator of the Office of Rural Development. We were housed in the same office. We traveled together. We organized training programs together. We selected participants for training, all agreed to. Koreans are hard workers.

Q: That was in the Ministry of Agriculture?

BROADNAX: Yes. But in Suwon, not in Seoul.

Q: This was what part of the country?

BROADNAX: Thirty miles south of Seoul. It was a showplace. All of the provinces were under the Korean Office of Rural Agriculture, their agriculture people. And this was the production arm for the Ministry of Agriculture. The Research Station was there and so was the School of Agriculture, and Seoul National University also was there.

Q: What was the agricultural situation, as you found it, in Korea at that time?

BROADNAX: It was rice, rice, rice -- their food crop. We had an horticulture advisor who concentrated on diversifying vegetable and viticulture industries. His expertise led to industrializing their viticulture on a par with Japan.

Q: Were the Koreans able to feed themselves?

BROADNAX: Oh yes, yes.

Q: There wasn't a major food crisis?

BROADNAX: No, no famine. None at all.

Q: What was your primary goal?

BROADNAX: Our goal was to put in place an organization capable of running their own show. And as I said, they were hard workers. If you said let's get up at 6:00 and go on a field trip, they were there. It was a pleasure to work with them, as were the Sudanese. The Sudanese -- once they got in the office, they would work, but they weren't there too long. They were there from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. That was their custom. But the Koreans were a different breed of people. Their work habits were different. We interfaced with the people of the School of Agriculture too, because when they found out that I was a former college administrator, they would call on me to talk to their students. We had a large vegetable garden in the back of my place where we grew vegetables that they didn't know existed because they grew Chinese cabbage for their main delicacy.

Dr. Wang was an Agricultural Economist who studied at the University of Wisconsin. He was in my office once a week. We would exchange ideas on agricultural growth potentials. Here again, he would acquaint me with the culture of the Koreans, which was essential for me. We got along very well. The fine part about it was that they were convinced that the United States was an honest ally; and we were an honest counterpart for them. We utilized IRRI (International Rice Research Institute) a lot for training some of their senior people. We would program some of them to go to IRRI for the latest data on rice production.

Q: In the Philippines?

BROADNAX: In the Philippines, right. That paid off. In fact, we finally got my counterpart on the board for the Philippines. He was on the board until he died. But my first year there, we promoted that training. We emphasized training and research. We had this large administration building as a training facility.

Q: Was there any particular focus to the training?

BROADNAX: We would bring people in from the provinces; they learned about recent research data. They would come in to get the research data. Also how to obtain food production goals for the current growing season.

Q: These were extension people.

BROADNAX: Yes

Q: They already had an extension system.

BROADNAX: Oh, yes, they had one. We had set that up a long time ago. It was operating when I got there.

Q: Was it something the U.S. had helped set up?

BROADNAX: Oh, yes, we did it. So these people would come in, the research people would talk to them - their extension people - information people, and they would make slides on the research findings and their application to provincial growing conditions. Then they would take the findings back to the provinces and teach them to farmers. It had a great multiplying effect.

Q: So this was a further development of the extension system?

BROADNAX: Right.

Q: Were there any particular technologies you were trying to promote?

BROADNAX: All of the newer higher yielding strains of rice, which we took from IRRI to increase their production. The strains from IRRI worked well there. They're still working well.

Q: What were some of the main bottlenecks in making the extension program effective?

BROADNAX: The transfer of personnel. You get somebody trained in one position and, if there is a promotion, they went on the promotion system and if he was senior for it, he went for that position. I found that perplexing, but understandable at times.

Q: A lot of turnover.

BROADNAX: Right. But within the system.

Q: What about the benefit for the Korean farmer?

BROADNAX: It was wonderful. Let me tell you something. Two things happened to me when I was there at Suwon. We had a Presidential visit. President Johnson made a state visit. And Suwon being the showplace for U.S. VIPs, I had to help with the program.

Q: So it was a major area of U.S. visits.

BROADNAX: That was something we could show off. It was an investment that everybody could see was functioning. I had an interesting experience with President Johnson's expediter. He came and he thought that I could just do this unilaterally. Every day while he was there we were planning the visit. The planner would come down from Seoul and they'd stop in Suwon and pick me up. We'd go down to a place called Anyang Hill. It was a place we had chosen for the President to go. It was right at the top of a farming center. It was in the fall and the Koreans turned out every elementary school to come there to see and hear President Johnson. When President Johnson came, he was programmed to stay there 40 minutes. He stayed an hour and 40 minutes. Dean Rusk kept reminding him that "you are over your time." He said, "We'll just cut out some other part of the program." He got there and he and the chief of that village got into it and he looked around and as far as he could see were these school kids standing, listening to him talk. It was in October and the rice harvest and everything was a golden yellow. One of the most beautiful scenes you've ever seen. Johnson was impressed. He was very impressed. He asked the chief of the village if he wanted to go for a ride. The chief of the village thought he asked him if he wanted to go to the United States. So he took the chief for a ride. The Koreans felt good that they were able to host the President of the United States and that he took time to spend so much time with them. I think that was a big plus for the United States, and the U.S. AID Mission to Korea.

Q: Was the development of that area largely the result of U.S. assistance?

BROADNAX: Yes. Definitely.

Q: Farming assistance, varieties, and all that?

BROADNAX: Yes. Mainly training the Koreans. They're the ones who had to do the job. We provided a research advisor, a horticulture advisor, an education advisor, and an extension advisor. Q: How large an area were we working in?

BROADNAX: All over the country.

Q: But in the Suwon area, particularly.

BROADNAX: Right. Suwon was the backstop for the production program in the country. It went very well. But as I said, the visit of the President was a big plus for us. Another VIP visit was Secretary of Agriculture Freeman.

Q: Did you meet with President Johnson when he was there?

BROADNAX: Well, the onus was on me. If that program had failed, I'd have been fired. I knew it.

Q: Did you talk to President Johnson?

BROADNAX: I just met him. I shook his hand because the fact is, the CIA man told me not to get too close to the President. I said, "Well, you know, it just so happened that I organized this program." He said, "You heard what I said." I said, "Yes." Anyway, President Johnson felt good over it. He felt good at his reception and everything. And so did Secretary Freeman when he came. Secretary Freeman landed on our helipad where we had cars there and took him right to the conference center. He's a politician, you know. He and Soapy Williams are about the same. The Koreans were impressed with the President and the Secretary of Agriculture - that was a big thing. They went over very well. They enjoyed it, too.

Q: You came back - let's talk about Cornell in a minute - but you came back again in what year? You came back to Korea in what year? Your second round?

Return to Korea in 1969

BROADNAX: The second round, I came back in 1969.

Q: What was your role then?

BROADNAX: I was the Assistant Chief of Agriculture in the Seoul office for field operations, supervising nine provincial advisors.

Q: I was going to ask how big a staff and program did you have?

BROADNAX: We had nine provinces and an advisor in each province.

Q: How big a budget did you operate with; do you remember?

BROADNAX: No, I don't, but it was adequate. We had two good Mission Directors--Joel Bernstein and Henry Costanzo. Costanzo was the one who requested me to come back after Cornell.

Q: Did you have a particular program you were trying to promote while you were in that position?

BROADNAX: Only the increased food production and get the Koreans to use chemical fertilizer instead of the honey buckets. We did that. In the province around Pusan, the Army had a contract to buy food from the Korean farmers. So the horticultural advisor introduced viticulture. We'd build these greenhouses for viticulture that would keep the heat in so he could get growing seasons with confined heat. That went over very well. We got them to use chemical fertilizer. The Army bought all their vegetables as a result of that change.

Q: What were the conditions for farming in Korea? I always had a picture of it being very difficult. A harsh situation.

BROADNAX: Well, they did rice paddy farming and you know the Korean seasons are just like it is the U.S. The farmers were very good. As I said, we saw that some of their seed varieties weren't of the best and that's why we brought them in connection with IRRI, so we could get the best rice strain, and we increased their production.

Q: Apart from rice, what other crops were particularly significant?

BROADNAX: Vegetables. Fruits. We had a vegetable research sub-station. We experimented with different types of fruits and vegetables. I guess the one that was most productive was grapes. I know it was, because it led to the establishment of a winery, with Suntory Japan. That was productive.

Q: Our overall program must have been very, very large. Didn't we dominate the agricultural scene at that time?

BROADNAX: Our programs?

Q: The USAID Program.

BROADNAX: Yes. It was. Joel Bernstein set that up with the Finance Minister when he was there. They requested a U.S. advisor for each department. That was a plus for us. We had a good staff.

Q: These advisors were working with the extension service?

BROADNAX: Extension was the main thrust. All of these people had extension experience. All of them. They were counterparts to the government from each province. There were some political attachments to it.

Q: But the system of agricultural service was essentially patterned after the U.S.? Very much the same?

BROADNAX: Yes. Definitely. Here again, not so much as to the one-on-one, as we used to do in the United States, visiting farms. We did it through demonstrations. Mass training programs. That's why we had this training center at headquarters, and bringing people in.

Q: Farmers and everybody?

BROADNAX: Yes. Farmers and workers. And we would go out with a follow-up program to the provinces, which had their own training set up. The multiplying effect, I thought, was excellent.

Q: You had the university involved in teaching?

BROADNAX: The university played a role in graduating the personnel. The personnel - most of them we got - were university graduates.

Q: They were involved in the extension program?

BROADNAX: No. That was Office of Rural Development. It was the Office of the Minister of Agriculture with that responsibility.

Q: That was the policy of the Korean Government to promote rural development as well as a big emphasis on industry?

BROADNAX: Very positive. President Park Chung Hee was always ahead of his ministers. He was out front. He'd make a speech and we would always say if the Korean agriculture kept up with the President, everything would be okay. He was a good leader. Too bad that they killed him. They would have rice planting, you know, every year. He'd come and take his shoes off and get right out in the paddy and work with them.

Q: Anything else about your Korean experience you want to add?

BROADNAX: As I said, it was a different one from Sudan. But also a positive one. I was enjoying it so much until I got notice that I had been appointed as Deputy for the Office of Agriculture back in Washington, I didn't want to go.

Q: Well, we'll come to that. Let's talk about what you were doing at Cornell in the middle of this Korean time?

BROADNAX: I got a sabbatical. I wasn't a Diplomat-in-Residence, I was a student. I went and took a full load of graduate studies--Economics, Sociology, and Extension Education. And everybody thought I was crazy. I said, "I think I might want to go back to academia one day." So my professor said, "Anytime you want to do it, we'll trade positions." But I was a student. I always did enjoy studying.

Q: A one-year program.

BROADNAX: Yes. One academic year. That was a good experience. I met a lot of good people there. Met a lot of good people from the Rockefeller Foundation. That's how I met Dr. Cliff Wharton. I was there when we had the student uprising. Cornell has never been the same since. I think for the best. At the close of my school year, I got word that I was to serve on an [AID personnel] evaluation panel in Washington prior to going back to Korea. I did that.

Q: How did you find serving on that panel? I assume you were covering agricultural themes or more general?

BROADNAX: No. Not only for agriculture. What we had - we had a panel - the Director of Personnel at the time had some trouble spots. He wanted a panel to review - a lot of people had been selected out - and he wanted a panel to review it and make a recommendation to him. Of

the six people we reviewed, we recommended an overturn of five. Only one that we agreed probably ought to be selected out. One [of the five] was a Mission Director in Jamaica. He'd been in Jamaica, his most recent post. We read all of the reports and everything, and we felt that he, along with several others, were being railroaded.

Q: How did you find the panel system?

BROADNAX: I found it very interesting. I was fortunate. I went out--my appointment was limited when I went to Sudan. Before my tour was over, I had a permanent appointment. I had to evaluate all of the people under me, which wasn't exactly a new experience because I had to do it for college faculty. I knew what to look for when I got on this panel. I could see personal things creeping in, you know. Ralph Gleeson was on the panel and another Engineer who is dead now. Can't think of his name. Anyway, there were three of us. We had complete agreement on what we had done. Fortunately, one of the fellows that was railroading a technician, I ended up evaluating him when I came to AID Washington. He never knew that I had that information.

Q: Do you think it was a fair system?

BROADNAX: Yes, I do. I think it was fair. You know, human elements will get into these things, but you've got to have a panel that can see through that. I served on that panel and I was sent back to Washington to serve on one after that from Korea.

Phillip Ely Church
Program Economist, USAID
Guatemala (1970-1973)

Regional Office for Central American Programs, USAID
Central America (1973-1978)

Q: So what happened after you finished your graduate work? How did you connect with USAID?

CHURCH: As often happens with graduate students, I ran out of money and time during my research in Guatemala. There was a wonderful Mission Director at the time in Guatemala by the name of Dean Hinton. Shortly after his arrival in Guatemala, Hinton invited a team of economists from Iowa State University to help design a development program for the country. They needed information on conditions in the regions of the country where I had been doing my research. I was able to sign on with the team for six more months to help write a Guatemalan economic assistance strategy focused on the highland of the country. I got to know the mission and the staff at that time, of course, and learned a bit about the USAID program. Dean Hinton encouraged me to consider joining USAID. When I returned to the United States to defend my thesis I submitted an application to the Agency. Several months later very close to graduation, a letter came from USAID inviting me to go back to Guatemala as a USAID foreign service officer. I was thrilled, and, of course, said "Yes." So, in September of 1970s I finished at Oregon, and my

wife and I came to Washington where, in October, I was sworn in as a foreign service officer, given two weeks of orientation and in November packed off to Guatemala as a USAID program economist.

Assignment to the USAID Program in Guatemala (1970-73)

Q: Well let's talk about Guatemala. What was the situation when you arrived there?

CHURCH: I arrived at a very difficult time in Guatemala. A few months earlier, the American Ambassador to Guatemala had been gunned down in the streets of the capital city. There was constant urban guerrilla activity going on. Che Guevara was loose in the mountains of Bolivia. The United States was very concerned about Castro and his impact in the region, and so there had been a concerted effort on the part of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations in the 1960s to provide greater economic assistance to the region.

Of concern to many of us was the entrenched poverty among the highland Indian communities and the fear they might get caught up in a rural revolution. About half of the country's 6.0 million population were of Mayan Indian descent living in the western highlands of the country. The old somewhat "feudal" colonial plantation system was giving way but nothing viable seemed to be emerging in its place. The Indian community in Guatemala traditionally depended on the established landowning class for employment on their large plantations and farms. And the land owners depended on the Indian population for low-cost labor to keep down the prices of their sugar, coffee, cotton and banana exports. In the first half of the century, Guatemala had instated indigent laws that allowed the government to conscript anyone not working into harvesting coffee, sugar cane, cotton, and bananas.

When the indigent laws were abolished, land owners feared the economy would collapse. But lower infant mortality and longer life expectancy led to a growing highland Indian population that needed plantation work to supplement its meager corn cultivation or milpa incomes. Moreover, increasing population was putting pressure on the land and the soil was being depleted by over-cropping and grazing. Because corn cultivation only lasted three or four months out of the year, Indian families migrated to the coast to harvest plantation crops, no longer forced by indigent laws but by population pressures on the land. In short, plantation owners needed to worry no longer over the possibility of labor shortages.

This seasonal migratory labor arrangement also created social problems that disrupted progress in Indian communities. Schooling was difficult to provide to children who migrated with their families from one location to another. Health conditions in the labor camps were very poor. So, it was very difficult to deliver public services to improve living standards of the people who needed them most. Any development assistance program had to come to terms with this.

The USAID mission aimed to increase smallholder farm productivity and incomes as a way of breaking the country's cycle of seasonal underemployment, low-wage migratory labor and poor health and education services that kept the highland Indian population mired in poverty. Based on recommendations from the Iowa State University study on which I participated, USAID sought to reach Guatemala's small Indian farmers with improved "green revolution" maize and

wheat varieties that were coming out of the international institutes like the Corn and Wheat Institute (CIMMYT) in Mexico at that time. Shorter maturing, more rapidly growing varieties would allow areas to get two harvests where they had gotten one previously. This released land for cultivation of irrigated nontraditional high-value vegetable crops that could be exported. It would allow the farm population to remain in place in the highlands throughout the year. In this manner they could then be reached with the health and education services they lacked.

There was some urgency to raising small farm productivity, incomes and jobs as well. The sugar and banana industries were declining under the pressure of falling international market prices and the land was going into cattle grazing which had much less demand for labor. This strategy of boosting yields of traditional food crops and introducing production and marketing opportunity for diversified nontraditional export crops became the focus of the program on which I was working as an economist in Guatemala and the other Central American countries between 1970s and 1977.

In 1973, when the USAID program in Guatemala was well underway and showing some promising results, there was an opportunity to take the strategy "on the road" to the rest of Central America, where similar needs existed in Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Nicaragua. The U.S. was beginning to appreciate the fact that Central American producers could provide fresh fruits and vegetables to the U.S. in the off-season and wouldn't compete directly with U.S. suppliers. We had a challenge in the early years of the Guatemala program convincing U.S. interests, including Congress, that this wouldn't be disruptive to U.S. food producers. Eventually, USAID was able to help Central American countries build a winter season market niche for their high value agricultural produce in the U.S. By the time I left the region, refrigerated trucks were moving by ocean barge from Guatemala to Florida where they were attached to tractor units and moved up the east coast to urban grocery stores. USAID was building links from Guatemala's highland Indian communities to east coast suburban consumers in the U.S.!

Q: Did you have any other successes in the Guatemalan program?

CHURCH: It all depends on how we choose to define "success." To give you an example, USAID support to the cooperative movement among Guatemala's highland communities included setting up a number of warehouses or silos to store corn at harvest time. The goal was to give more marketing power to Indian farmers by providing the alternative of selling grain to their own cooperative rather than to speculators. In the past, truckers would come up to the highlands to buy up much of the corn crop at harvest - when prices were low and production debts needed to be paid. They would hold the corn in their facilities, and then when there was a shortage of corn in the highlands toward the beginning of the new planting season, return and sell it back to the Indians at much higher prices.

The USAID solution was to assist local farmer cooperatives to build small cooperative warehouses using Butler bins - metal silos like you see all over Iowa - and to provide some capital to the cooperatives to buy the corn at harvest. In this way, they could hold it in the silos for resale back to members of the cooperative and the community at a lower price than the truckers would sell it when supplies became scarce. Well, I can remember going into one

community a couple of years after farmer cooperatives had installed the USAID funded corn silos and found them sitting idle. My job was to assess why the program wasn't working, why the grain bins were not being used.

When I started interviewing truckers and local farmer cooperative members, I learned that one very interesting development had taken place. After the silos were built, the first year the truckers came to buy, they couldn't get any corn at the low prices they had offered previously because the cooperatives were now paying more to buy and hold the corn for their farmer members just like the program was designed. But when the truckers started increasing their offering prices to compete, farmers showed no loyalty to their cooperatives. As I mentioned before this was a competitive culture. So farmers again sold to the truckers but, this time, at a higher price. The cooperative wasn't able to buy at what it could offer so the corn silos sat empty. Still the local community had more money because of the better price they were able to command for their maize from the truckers.

Now the question is, was that a success or not? We accomplished our objective which was raising the price of corn for producers by having the corn bins there, but the cooperatives never really functioned as commercial units because farmers sold where they could get the best price, even when that meant dealing with the truckers who earlier had exploited them. A U.S. Congressman visiting one of these villages and seeing an empty USAID funded grain silo might conclude the USAID cooperative program was a failure. While the farmer cooperatives were not successful in using the bins to buy, store and trade their members' corn, they were able to force the truckers to offer a better price. The coops provided the service of a market floor price. So USAID did accomplish the objective of the program which was to improve the marketing position of local farmers by giving them an alternative selling option.

Q: That is a good illustration. Is that still a lesson that USAID can use elsewhere?

CHURCH: Yes. I would say that kind of experience could be replicated in many African country contexts. I think we've seen it in the Asian setting. In fact, I had an opportunity when I left Guatemala for Bangladesh, which was my next post halfway around the world, to take some of those concepts to totally different areas of the world and apply them with similar effectiveness. As I said, I firmly believe from my experience as a USAID economist that people behave in an economically rational way no matter what their stage of development is. They respond rationally to economic incentives anywhere in the world if given the opportunities and the options from which to choose and the capacity to act.

One of the greatest development contributions USAID has made is providing people with more opportunities to exercise economically rational behavior by helping them acquire the resources - skills, land, technologies, markets - to exercise choice. USAID cannot force everyone to become a loyal cooperative member. What USAID can create is an environment for choice. For example, in the case of Guatemala, Indian farmers now have two choices, a trucker or a cooperative to trade their grain where before they only had one, a trucker. That alone was enough to improve their lot.

Q: Did everything go smoothly during your first overseas assignment with USAID in Guatemala?

CHURCH: Hardly. In development work there are always surprises and unexpected challenges. There were two serious setbacks that we experienced during my tenure with the program. One was a devastating earthquake in 1976 which laid waste to large sections of the Guatemalan highlands. For the next year, we were essentially mobilized to restore a lot of the services that were disrupted. The earthquake not only leveled villages but brought down landslides on roads so communications were cut off. We cut down trees along straight stretches of road so the highway could be made into a temporary landing strip for single-engine planes that flew in medical supplies and flew out the seriously injured. That was in February of 1976, and it was a serious blow for Guatemala. It set back the country's economic progress a decade.

Q: What was your role in that disaster?

CHURCH: The USAID mission staff had two roles. First, we found ourselves working with the strategic military assistance command out of Panama which was bringing in U.S. Military C-41 cargo jets with emergency tents and food for the most heavily affected communities. Our immediate job was just getting an assessment of the damage done and determining where the assistance was most needed. I can recall getting in the light planes filled with drums of aviation gas in the back and flying into these remote highway landing strips which served as staging areas. A crash would have been fatal. It was a dangerous thing to do, but it was the only way to get into some of these remote areas to get a good look at what was going on and to deliver short term assistance by getting injured people out and getting doctors and medical supplies in. In the longer run, of course, we had to rethink our assistance program to assess what we could keep running while the relief effort was underway. We really wanted to sustain the long run program without ignoring urgent short run needs. It was not an easy balancing act.

Q: Well, you said there was another event.

CHURCH: The other challenge we faced in Guatemala was a change in U.S. policy toward the country, because of the military's influence in Guatemala's government. Without a larger degree of democratic participation in the political process, the United States was no longer prepared to continue economic assistance at the same scale as when I arrived. One of the most difficult challenges for us as development practitioners is how to help people in need in a political setting that is not very conducive to that assistance. Development funds are often fungible. Giving money, say, for building Guatemala's education system, may not actually add anything in the way of more resources to the country if the recipient government simply cuts back its own education funding and instead buys more military weapons with the savings. If, on the other hand, we refuse to give assistance until more democratic systems and political will is in place, a lot of people at least in the short run, will suffer and the pace of progress will be retarded.

Q: Did it have any effect?

CHURCH: In the long run, yes, but conditions did get worse before improving, with civil war and political strife in the 1980s and up until just a few years ago. It was not until 1995 that Guatemala had a peaceful transition from one democratically elected government to the next. A peace accord had just been signed with rural combatants and development assistance is starting to flow again.

Q: What would you sum up as the impact of that strategy you helped develop during that period?

CHURCH: If you go to Guatemala and visit the highland Indian communities today, you'll find a greater awareness of their capacity to improve their lives than when USAID first started its development assistance programs in the country. Before, people had a more fatalistic approach toward the world and to their livelihood. Now there are widespread aspirations for a better life, and there is a growing confidence in the ability of local communities to make it happen.

Still, the country faces serious problems. Endemic disease, illiteracy, shortage of potable water, and access to sanitation remain serious challenges to development, particularly among the rural Indian population. Child and maternal mortality figures are high. Education services also are still lacking. Guatemala has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world, just ahead of Haiti at the bottom of the list for Latin America. There is a long way to go, but the difference today is that among rural communities there is more awareness of what can be done and among political leaders a bit more commitment to providing support. I don't think the Mayan Indian culture would allow the clock to be turned back. There is more popular pressure on the government to provide these services. I don't think Guatemalan leaders can ignore that today and expect to remain in power.

Assignment to the USAID's Regional Office for Central American Programs (1973-1978)

Q: Let's talk about your experience in USAID's Central American Programs Office (ROCAP). This was at a time when many thought regional economic integration was the way to go in the Central American area. What was your view of that potential? What were you trying to do?

CHURCH: After the USAID program got under way among Guatemala's highland Indians, I had the opportunity to bring my experiences to other countries in the Central American region. USAID through its regional office was supporting the Central American Common Market as a vehicle for development through trade and economic integration. In the regional program I had an opportunity to work and collaborate with two other very influential USAID colleagues in my life - Oliver Sause and Ed Marasciulo who both were Mission Directors in ROCAP. In 1973 I moved from the Guatemala program to the regional office where I spent four more years traveling and working in Central America, helping put together agriculture sector strategies for El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras and Costa Rica. Our goal was to bring in the new technology which was emerging out of the international agricultural research centers, connecting it with some of the marketing opportunities that existed in the Caribbean, and drawing on U.S. university and private sector expertise to assist.

We were all hopeful that the Central American Common Market would succeed and worked hard to bring the concept to fruition. Early common market efforts had focused on the industrial sector and strove to achieve in the region the economic efficiencies that were possible from specialization and trade. On paper it clearly made more sense for there to be, say, one tire manufacturer, one pharmaceutical plant, one caustic soda factory, etc in a region of only 15 million people than for each country to try to foster these industries within its borders. And, indeed, in the early years, agreements were reached to distribute these "integration industries" among countries in the region and to remove trade barriers to the movement of their products so

that they could produce volumes of output sufficient to keep costs low and prices competitive with those of imported goods.

After initial early successes with selected industries, USAID believed it was timely to attempt to make some progress as well in the agricultural sector. Again, the view was that Central American countries by specializing in producing surplus exports of basic food crops - say, Guatemala in corn and wheat exports, El Salvador and Nicaragua in rice exports and Honduras and Costa Rica in bean exports - could trade with each other at lower food prices than if each country tried to be self sufficient in all these crops. Moreover, land freed up from such specialization could be shifted to production of high value export crops, which, again, the Central America countries could specialize in to assure volumes sufficiently great and reliable to penetrate U.S. markets.

Q: That's the theory, of course. But what actually happened during your time with the program?

CHURCH: As you might expect, not what we hoped for! First, it was difficult to convince the Central American countries to depend on each other for their food needs. A bad crop year in, say, Guatemala, would mean skyrocketing corn and wheat prices in the other countries in the region. If El Salvador exported too much rice to meet the demands of its neighbors it might experience shortages and rising prices at home. The risks of these outcomes - and the likelihood of these outcomes given the often fickle meteorological conditions of the region - dictated against agreeing to any kind of food grain production and trade arrangements within the Common Market. Even our offer to set up a regional buffer stock program for these grains, to sell in times of scarcity and buy in times of surplus, was not sufficient to precipitate cooperation in regional food grain production and trade.

As it was, all of the Central American countries were in the early stages of development during which they are importers of capital and production inputs and, as a result, net deficit countries. It is difficult to achieve trade cooperation among countries at that stage of development when all are looking for ways to finance their trade deficits by increasing exports. All the Central American countries were happy to boost exports, but none wanted to import from its neighbors. The aggressive exporting countries were Costa Rica and El Salvador. They also attracted a disproportionate share of investment in the Common Market's "integration industries." This left Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua on the defensive and consequently resistant to opening trade in the region. With that kind of environment, it was very hard to get a Central American trading agreement going and to make it viable.

It is interesting that nearly two decades later there is talk again today about regional markets in the western hemisphere, this time expanding NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement] to include, in addition to Canada, U.S. and Mexico, the entire hemisphere from Chile to Canada in one "Free Trade Area of the Americas!" I think we have an environment today that may be a bit more appropriate for freer Western Hemispheric trade. While we did not get very far with regional economic integration in the 1970s, we at least helped Central American countries build capacity to be more active trading partners today. My contribution was to help boost the productive capacity of the agricultural sector which USAID still views as an essential building block for that type of a regional trading agreement.

Q: How did that work? How did you figure you were able to introduce these ideas?

CHURCH: The reservoir of "green revolution" technical knowledge had some application in each of the Central American countries. Each had tremendous scope to boost the productivity of traditional food crops and to diversify into higher value export crops using available technologies. In the 1970s Central America was still very much an agricultural region. To modernize the sector meant to reach the largest proportion of their populations with more productive jobs and better more stable incomes. I think USAID provided not only the resources but also awakened governments to the need to support its traditional small farm agriculture sector with training, technology and inputs to achieve and sustain national economic growth.

One of the questions we've asked ourselves is what happens after USAID pulls out? Is the country's economic growth and prosperity sustainable? In fact, the two big questions are sustainability and replicability. Did the countries have the capacity to continue efforts, say, in food production, education or health beyond support from outside donors; did governments have the capacity to expand these programs beyond just the immediate target communities that our initial assistance programs reach at their start-up by building local institutions that could spread that type of activity throughout the country?

Q: You were really trying to replicate your experience in Guatemala. How did you find the reception in the other Central American countries?

CHURCH: Our reception in each Central American country was unique. We had again some very wide ranging political situations with which to deal, from a military dictatorship in Nicaragua to a popular democracy in neighboring Costa Rica. USAID had to adjust its program to accommodate the political realities that existed. For a young foreign service economic officer like myself at the time, it was a real learning experience. There was nobody there with the answers, so we were learning by doing.

We made mistakes. For example, USAID set up subsidized credit programs to attract farmers that banks considered to be either poor credit risks or too costly to reach with loans. But farmers often felt no obligation to repay their debts because in too many cases, banks issued subsidized loans as political gifts under pressure from parties in power. Moreover, credit agents lacked the will or the way to enforce collections, particularly among larger more powerful farmers who managed to capture many of the loans intended originally for smaller more resource limited producers.

Good intentions aren't necessarily sustainable. We learned that lesson but only after investing several years and several millions of dollars in subsidized and "supervised" farm credit programs. We now know that credit must be bankable, that giving credit for fertilizer and seed without looking at the marketing outlets and income earning potential will lead to failure. Credit may boost production at the outset, but if farmers have no place to sell what they produce at a price that will cover costs, they won't have the income to repay loans or to continue on their own.

An excellent example where we did get it right was the involvement of USAID and other donors in promoting Costa Rican cut flower exports in the off-season to the United States. Here is an

example where we looked at market opportunities first and then we looked at production needs. We provided market incentives more than we provided capital, and we provided opportunities for local investment, equity participation. I think this was one of the greatest and most interesting programs that USAID supported.

At the regional level, USAID sponsored a small program that financed an intermediate financial institution called the Latin American Agribusiness Development Corporation (LAAD) which took equity positions in local Central American agribusiness companies. But USAID leadership was not comfortable handing taxpayer money to for-profit organizations at that time. USAID failed, I think, to recognize that profits provide incentives for others to come into that industry and compete and eventually lead to sustainable system with broad development benefits. In the 1970s and 1980s USAID was not as commercial or pragmatic an Agency as it is today. Early USAID efforts were more in the social area: the health, population management, family planning, and education sectors. USAID was a long time in learning that sustainable and replicable development requires both an entrepreneurial driven incentive system as well as social programs.

Q: Anything more on your Guatemala and Central American experience before we move on?

CHURCH: Guatemala and its Central American partners were my first exposure to work in the developing world. They were where I did my USAID "apprenticeship." I was fortunate to be assigned to a very interesting region and a very challenging and diversified set of countries in which to begin a USAID career. It certainly is a region where, at the time, there was a development need and where the U.S. government had a direct interest in building capacity in the region to achieve stable and sustainable economic growth and social progress.

Moreover, I had the good fortune to work with a number of excellent USAID colleagues during my assignments in Guatemala and Central America. We were unique, I think, at that time in USAID's history. We stood out as the first USAID generation of trained development professionals. We were among the first to come out of the U.S. university system with formal course work and graduate degrees in international development. Our predecessors, and in some cases our mentors in the field, who participated in earlier U.S. government overseas assistance going back as far as the Marshall Plan in Europe and the Point Four plan in Latin America, were all career specialists in engineering, agricultural marketing, research and extension, infectious diseases, or education administration. None were development practitioners by trade and training. We were the first trained development specialists, so to speak, in the Agency. International development was still an emerging career field.

Q: How do you characterize that development orientation as different from the others? Were there features that set you apart?

CHURCH: My first overseas assignment as an economics officer with USAID made me aware that development requires a problem-solving approach, looking at the situation, sizing it up, and then cooperating with beneficiaries to find a workable solution. Coming at development with preconceived solutions seldom works. For example, some of the old guard agriculturalists would look at Guatemala or Central America and say the answer was "cucumbers" or "farm credit" or

"corn silos." That was because they knew marketing cucumber, managing credit or building corn silos from their work in U.S. agriculture.

But a successful development strategy requires a lot of improvisation, motivation and problem solving. You build answers as you encounter problems. You are identifying incentives to make people go after and solve their own problems. USAID's early efforts in Central America were very much aimed at importing solutions rather than working with local communities on solving problems. I'd like to believe that we were one of the first generations of development practitioners who tried to bring that broader problem solving and social engagement approach to the region's needs. My assignment to Guatemala and Central America afforded me the opportunity to work with and appreciate the knowledge of many brilliant and dedicated U.S. professionals, but in the end I had to learn how to adapt that knowledge to the unique set of development challenges the region presented.

Lane Holdcroft
Chief of Agriculture and Rural Development, USAID
Philippines (1976-1980)

Q: This was September of 1976.

HOLDCROFT: Yes. You were there and I remember you said that the reception that you hosted the evening we arrived was the first time that the USAID staff had had a social function since his death.

Q: It was a farewell for your predecessor and a welcome for...

HOLDCROFT: The evening of the day that we arrived. It was at the Sea Front dining room. It seems like only yesterday, doesn't it?

Q: Yes, yes.

HOLDCROFT: At any rate, my time in the Philippines was really kind of fun too, although as you'll recall it had its ups and downs. But the dynamic leadership that the Philippine agricultural sector being provided by the Minister of Agriculture was something to behold. The way that various public and private resources were mobilized in this push for rice and food self-sufficiency was most impressive.

Q: How were your working relationships with your counterparts?

HOLDCROFT: They were really super. I had good personal and professional relations with all of my colleagues in the Philippines. It was rather expected for a number of reasons. I had had the good fortune of having been in and out of the Philippines on short-term visits since the '50s. So I knew something about the people and the country. I had known a number of the Filipino

agricultural leaders for some years. Also I had worked in 1975 on the strategy that the USAID Mission was employing for its agriculture and rural development efforts. Therefore, I was well prepared to head up the USAID Agricultural Development Office in the Philippines.

Q: Did you find them competent?

HOLDCROFT: Very competent. Mostly they were trained at U.S. graduate schools. They were very well prepared, but unfortunately caught in a situation where they had to walk the line between doing what was expected of them by their President and a political system that wanted to maintain the status quo. They knew what needed to be done in order to move forward their programs directed to helping the poor people - the poor farmers, the poor urban dwellers. But change would usually be at some cost to those few hundred families that controlled the political economy. So reform was a slow process.

Q: Was this politics versus economic development? Was that the way you saw it?

HOLDCROFT: Yes, in most regards that is correct. The "patron" mentality and the application of the "patron" system to political organizations inhibited change that addressed the real problems of the poor and otherwise disadvantaged. The "patron" system is the old social system the Spaniards brought to their colonies around the world. It involves unquestioning loyalty to the big man, the hacienda owner, or the political leader. Then the "patron" is required to look after the welfare of his followers.

Q: Did the program suffer in the late Marcos years due to the known shortcomings of that administration?

HOLDCROFT: Yes. Increasingly those programs that were directed at improving levels of living of the poorer segments of Philippine society were less effective. For example, in terms of reaching its stated objectives, the land reform program was increasingly watered down. The bottom line was that the rich were getting richer and the poor were getting poorer. Studies that we helped finance by the University of the Philippines/Diliman indicated that the distribution of income nationwide was becoming more skewed.

Fortunately, since that time the situation has improved immensely. And although now I'm not following the Philippines closely, my sense is that the economy is probably doing better now than it has in any number of years. Perhaps as well or better than it has done since the early years of Marcos.

Q: The technocrats, I gather, were making considerable progress in the early Marcos years.

HOLDCROFT: That's right. There were a lot of institutional and technological innovations that could and did quickly impact favorably on the economy in the early Marcos years.

Q: Do you remember any of your most prominent success stories or failures there?

HOLDCROFT: It started before I arrived and continued on after I departed, but the most successful efforts that we were involved in were those that were associated with the rice and food self-sufficiency programs. We played a very key role in linking the expertise being trained and technology being produced at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) to the Filipino farmer. We were the catalysts that made it possible for IRRI's world-renown resources to be made available very quickly to Philippine agriculture. That's particularly noteworthy with rice, but the same applies to other crops as we made available the work of other international research centers. The newest technology in maize and wheat came from CIMMYT in Mexico, and in horticultural crops from the Asian Vegetable Research Center on Taiwan. At any rate, agricultural technology development and transfer was a very successful program and we were the major - and usually the only donor - supporting those kind of activities. Of course, our support to the educational and research institutions, the numerous colleges of agriculture and Philippine Agricultural Research Council, also had very high returns. Incidentally, the Philippines Agricultural Research Council has become a model for countries around the world to use in setting up institutions to develop effective and efficient national agricultural research efforts.

Q: How was it that the University of Kansas or Kansas State that had a large project out there? Did it ever succeed?

HOLDCROFT: You know that that program was still going on when I left. Certainly it was successful in terms of the part of it that was supporting Central Luzon State University and its college of agriculture. I don't have good handles on what the marketing component contributed to the growth of the Philippine agricultural sector. Certainly the educational part of it was very effective. The mechanisms for developing packages of technology that small farmers could easily use to increase their output in some areas - even while I was there - was successful. But I don't know what happened after 1980.

Q: Did you experience the clash between provincial development and agriculture, as you were exposed to with community development in Korea?

HOLDCROFT: No. It's interesting that we had a close working relationship among the Bicol Program, the Provincial Development Office, and the Agricultural Development Offices. We cooperated very closely. I don't remember even one controversy. I think it's in part a function of the cordial relationships of the office heads, namely Don Wadley, Bill Sommers and myself. We never had any problems.

I do remember a kind of turf problem between my office and Capital Development Office, headed by Dick Dangler, with regard to which office should have the small scale irrigation project. It came to my office from the Capital Development Office and he wanted it back. The issue was whether or not that it should be in the Agricultural Development Office with its agricultural technical staff or in the Capital Development Office with its civil engineering staff. I didn't feel strongly about it, but the U.S. contract staff on the project maintained that they would get better support if it stayed in our office. My recollection now is that it went back to the Capital Development Office about the time that I departed Manila. These kinds of issues were minimal... Generally, the Philippines was a neat place to work.

Q: The climate there was both a hindrance and conducive to agricultural development, I suppose.

HOLDCROFT: Yes, it's a tough place, agriculturally speaking, because the land resource has been much abused. In 1955, something like 90 percent of the country was covered in forest and now it's less than five percent. There has been so much erosion and leaching, and so many associated problems that the productive capacity of those tropical soils is greatly reduced. Pest and disease problems are extreme because of the climate and people pressure on the land. On the positive side, crops can be raised the year around. Three crops of rice per annum is common.

Madison Broadnax
International Cooperation Agency
Khartoum, Sudan (1958-1964)

AID Affairs Officer, USAID
Khartoum, Sudan (1972-1975)

BROADNAX: 1958. Just before the coup.

Q: At that time it was ICA [International Cooperation Administration]?

BROADNAX: Right. So I started meeting with the officials in the Sudanese Department of Agriculture and they gave a reception for me the first week I was there. I met these principals and the Dean of the College of Agriculture. They knew from my background that I was in college work, so he and I had a long conversation at that cocktail party. I asked him if he was familiar with the concepts of agricultural extension--out of school training and... He said "No, I'm not." I said, "Well, that's the program we started through our land grant colleges in the United States, and I'm a product of that system. I'm here to help your government establish a (they requested me to come) national agricultural extension service. The college has always played a key role in this because they train the students that we employ. I'd like to know what you think about doing this through the university." He said, "What are the terms of doing this if I can sell it to my faculty?" I said, "The terms are education and preparing graduates to go out through Sudan and help farmers improve their agriculture. That's the term. You don't owe us anything." He said, "Well, we'd like to talk about this some more." We did from time to time.

That year, there was a dearth of trained personnel in Sudan. That year, he had nine graduates from the School of Agriculture. When the government of Sudan staffed their first extension workers, they gave me six of the nine. All college graduates. Also, they had a post-secondary training institute called Shambat Institute [in the Khartoum area], where they trained junior officers beyond high school. We had the exposure to all of those students.

I taught a course in extension to the Shambat Institute people. That helped me in two ways: they got to know me and I got to know them, and I got to learn a lot about their culture, how they did things, how the building organization functioned, and how you go through the leaders in those villages to get things done. It worked out very well, so after we had agreed upon staff--

Americans--and the localities where they would be working throughout the Sudan, the Ministry of Agriculture decided that they wanted to initiate this program in southern Sudan. I had been to the southern Sudan and I took my camera when I went. In every village I stopped, I took pictures. The next time, when I returned to the southern Sudan, I distributed the pictures to the people, whom I had taken. One of them was Chief Jambo. That was the best thing to introduce me to the people of southern Sudan. I was accepted. Q: What was the agricultural situation in Sudan at that time, both in terms of the overall agriculture scene and the capacity of the government?

BROADNAX: They had an administrative role that was really tattered. They had an agricultural officer in each province and they were administrators. They had nothing to do with teaching the farmers. If a farmer didn't do what they told him to do, they'd incarcerate him in some fashion.

Q: Were they technically trained?

BROADNAX: They were all graduates of the University of Khartoum.

Q: What was the program like at the University?

BROADNAX: They had a good program. The British had set up a university. They had put good people there to teach. They had some smart Sudanese coming out of that program. I went to south Sudan once with the former British Director of Agriculture Research Station. I learned more from him than I had learned from anybody, other than Joe Walker. When Joe Walker went there, he came back and gave me all of his notes from his visit out there. But he and I went to southern Sudan in a place called Yambio [Western Equatorial Province], where there was an agriculture research station. They had a Canadian operating that station. He gave me the ins and outs. Just like a professor, you know. It was of great assistance for me to learn about agriculture in the south.

When the government asked to introduce the program in the south, it turned out it was the best thing that could ever happen. We initially got an agricultural advisor at a place called Maridi [Western Equatorial Province]. He was stationed there. He had a senior counterpart assigned there, one of the six people they had assigned to me, and he had three junior agricultural officers from Shambat Institute. There we built offices; we built houses, and we had a horticulture advisor to come on board shortly after that. Due to the shortage of houses, he had to be stationed in Juba, the capital of the Equatorial Province. I told the Sudanese that we did a lot of one-on-one farm visitations in the United States, but that's too expensive for you. We've got to do it in a mass training manner. One of the best ways we can do it is through demonstration. They said, "Well, we've got plenty land in the south. We'll get a million acre farm demonstration for them." I said, "No, that won't work. Those farmers there have plots. They're small farmers. They can't even imagine themselves owning a million acres of land. Why don't we do 250? We'll grow every type of crop it's possible to cultivate in southern Sudan on that farm." We did that.

Q: How big a farm?

BROADNAX: 250 acres.

Q: That's still big.

BROADNAX: Yes, that was too big, but that's a compromise. We could bring the chiefs in to give them training. Then we had satellite village farms. That's where these junior officers were. They brought people into those satellite village farms. That program went very well until the wrong people got in charge of the government.

Q: How did you find the Sudanese to work with?

BROADNAX: Very easy. Very easy. In fact, I was surprise at the quickness in which they accepted me. Our adversaries had said all kind of things. They said I was a spy. It's a long story. But anyway, they didn't buy it. Everywhere I went in the country, my counterpart was with me. I never went out unilaterally, even with this British Director of Research. We were all together. They found out I was serious. They found out I knew my stuff. They found out I was genuinely interested in helping them.

Q: Was the main project in the south, or did you have projects all over the country?

BROADNAX: That was where the Sudanese wanted to start it because they thought the north was too sophisticated for an extension program. That's what they thought.

Q: What did you think?

BROADNAX: I said they were not. But anyway, I didn't tell them that. The reason why I said this was best place for the extension program to start in the south was because that's where the demonstration farm was going and we had a military general [who was] Minister of Agriculture. He made a visit to the south. He visited Maridi Demonstration Farm. The Director of Agriculture was there. Bob Kitchen was there as Mission Director. Joe Walker was there - my Chief. And all of us - my counterparts and all. He said to the Director of Agriculture, "Why can't we have something like this in the north?" The Director of Agriculture said, "Well, we thought this place had the highest priority." He went on to enumerate. He said, "We've got extension offices set up for the Blue Nile, White Nile, Kordofan, Khartoum, and the Northern provinces." Which we did. That satisfied the Minister. But he thought that was the greatest thing he had seen. I must admit that my horticultural advisor, who was the advisor to the development of the demonstration farms, did a wonderful job. He had hard-working Sudanese right with him.

Q: Did you have demonstration farms in all the provinces?

BROADNAX: We only had demonstration farms in the southern provinces. In the northern provinces, we used the farms that the government had already established and we improved them. You see, this is what we were up against. Sudan's major product is cotton. They had this two million acre cotton farm in the Gezira [Al-Jazirah Province] where we wanted the extension offices. When we made a reconnaissance survey of the farmers in the Gezira, we found out that some of their practices were not giving them maximum returns. We organized the extension program around food crops. But we had an Extension Information Officer in Khartoum, which was a strategic input at that time. He and his counterpart organized some slides and film and we

used them in educational meetings throughout the Extension Service project area. That was the way we got an entré into that area. In Khartoum Province, where the Shambat Institute was, the program was organized around information. We were bringing farmers into Shambat for field days and show them a variety of vegetable crops and practices. In El-Obeid, Kordofan Province, we organized a demonstration in a village about 60 miles from there. We set up demonstration farms there too. We brought in seeds from the United States. USDA [U.S. Department of Agriculture] backstopped us on selecting seed varieties that they thought would do well, and I must admit we didn't fail on any. We had extension advisers posted in the capital, who taught cultural practices conducive to the region.

Eventually, they requested a Home Extension Agent. I said, "We can get you one, but tell me with whom will she work. We can't bring one unless there is a Sudanese counterpart. So you're going to have to find a Home Economist as her counterpart." The person we wanted was in education. But they did find somebody who was assigned to be the counterpart to the U.S. Advisor. She coordinated Home Economic programs among the Sudanese women, including 4-H Clubs with girls. The 4-H program was recommended by the Director of Education for Southern Sudan. It was begun in all elementary schools based on the project concept with food as a major.

Q: How did the demonstration farms work? Did they have the impact you had in mind?

BROADNAX: Oh, yes! Yes! Very much so. The demonstration farms revolutionized farming practices and systems throughout the Maridi area. One of the greatest impacts was the change of crop variety that they were using, to those that we brought in on the demonstration farm. We brought open pollinated seeds so they could save the seeds. They would take these varieties back and try them.

Q: What was a Sudanese farm like in the south?

BROADNAX: Well, in the south they were small. They were primitive. In some places, they were using sticks as implements.

Q: How large a farm did they have?

BROADNAX: Some of them had an acre. Some had more. But an acre was plenty. We improved the crops they were growing - vegetable crops. And eventually, we put in a small tropical tree crops as a cash enterprise, including coffee and pineapple. We put one of those Shambat Extension Officers in charge. At the time that we had to close that program out, we had increased the farmers' income in that locality by five percent, which was a great achievement at that time. We were there long enough to learn how long it took a coffee tree to come into production - it took about three years. When they were able to sell their first crop, that was just like their first Christmas. They really went for it. There was a Lebanese merchant there who grew coffee, and he had his own coffee mill and everything, and that was a ready market for them. It went very well.

Q: Do you have any sense of scale? How many farmers participated in this program in the south?

BROADNAX: No, I don't. Every time we had a field day or a training program, it was well attended by village chiefs and their tribesmen.

Q: The impact was quite widespread?

BROADNAX: Yes. Very widespread. We had two top advisors. They didn't mind working. They didn't mind getting out in the village, teaching the junior agriculture people how they want things done. All the farmers had to do was to see it and they would do it themselves. One of the best thing that happened in the south: we had a Director of Education in the southern provinces. His name was Sir al-Khatim al-Khalifa. When we went there and introduced the 4-H Program, he recommended it in a bulletin and put the American 4-H emblem - cloverleaf - on the cover. He sent it out to all of the schools. I'm telling you, shortly after that you could go along and see 4-H Club cloverleafs on different projects. Sir al-Khatim was elected President of Sudan when General Abboud was ousted. He did very well. During this time, I was free to visit Army installations, and I met Army officers and everybody. Numeri, who finally became President, was a Colonel in the south when I met him. When I went back to Khartoum as AID Affairs Officer, all of those people had moved up in the various ministries. Of course, this did not have the effect it could have, due to lack of objectivity, insight, continuity, and coordination.

Q: Before we get into that period, which was interesting, were there any major problems or issues you had to deal with in expanding this agricultural program?

BROADNAX: Well, I had to sell it because they always say that the line of least resistance is the best thing to do, especially if you're not industrious. Many of the agricultural officers were administrators. Some of them were slow to accept the extension program. They saw this as competition to their esteem. The Director of Agriculture had to put the responsibility on them because they were the chief agricultural officers for the various provinces. So I visited all of them. Finally they came around. Then I had a counterpart who was in school with many of them. He'd gone to the University of Wisconsin and got his doctorate in Agricultural Extension Education. He was my counterpart and he sold it to them. But the program in the south was the thing that put everybody on notice. That it was something they needed, not only in the south, but all over the country.

Q: Throughout the south?

BROADNAX: Yes. Yes.

Q: How were conditions in the south at that time?

BROADNAX: Fine. I mean the Army was there, but they weren't mistreating anybody. They were there because that was one of their commands and that's where they had to serve, you know. The people seeing me were pleased they were going about their business. We were aware that there was a Catholic bishop, who was known to be a rabble rouser. He took offense against some of the things that the northerners were doing, and he let it be known. They got tired of him. They tried to incarcerate him. He escaped. So you had those upheavals there. I couldn't let it bother me, but I was fully aware of it.

Q: What about the competition among the different ethnic groups in the south?

BROADNAX: They were more or less located in different areas. You take the Dinkas in the area of Maridi and Yambio Districts [in Western Equatorial Province], where this project was initiated. On the east bank, there was another group of tribesmen. There wasn't any conflict with them. In the Bhar-El-Ghazal Province, they were Dinkas. Dinkas are tall, slim people. Most of them go naked. We didn't have any problem with them. In the Upper Nile Province, the land wasn't too conducive for agriculture, but most people lived on the Nile River where the fish were plentiful. We encouraged that.

Q: Large nomadic livestock herders?

BROADNAX: Oh, yes. On the east bank, livestock was used to buy a wife. They had large herds, and when you got married, you had to give so many heads of cattle for a wife. Ambassador Rountree and I visited a wedding where this was evidenced. We were invited to the village engagement party. The wife was there and the intended husband and all, and the cattle. It was a wonderful experience. We were fully accepted. We took pictures. No problem. But we knew there was this undercurrent because there had been a mutiny there during the British rule. A lot of southerners and northerners were killed. A lot of people had never forgotten that. We were aware, but we couldn't let them know that we were aware. I think one of my successes was that I never did get into their politics. I couldn't dare get into it. In spite of what the Russians said about me, and the Egyptians at the time, and the Chinese, the Sudanese didn't buy it.

Q: What did they say about you?

BROADNAX: They told them I was a spy because I remembered faces and things too well. I never did go out by myself. That was one of the things. I told Wadie Habashi, Director of Agriculture, "When I go anyplace, my counterpart has got to go with me. You've got to give permission for him to do that. We can't do it by hanging around offices here in Khartoum." He said, "I'm glad to hear you say that." I said, "Okay."

Q: How did you find traveling throughout that area?

BROADNAX: Found it okay. I had to fly from the north to the south because that's 1200 miles. But we got transportation. We bought vehicles for extension personnel. I want to tell you this. One of the last programs I conducted before I transferred to Korea, was to teach boys and girlelementary agriculture at the Tang school. That's in the Bhar-El-Ghazal Province. I was there for a week. I had 30 students and a counterpart. We got along very well. We'd organized the class around an acre of land. I had seed varieties of crops that they ate. On a Friday evening, the Sudanese rebel army went in and massacred every northern merchant in that town...sixty-seven

Q: Northern merchants?

BROADNAX: Yes, that's what they did. Like carpetbaggers, they were in charge of all commerce, police, the Sudanese club and the Post and Telegraph - everything of a business nature.

Q: This was the southern army?

BROADNAX: This was the southern army.

Q: Rebel groups?

BROADNAX: Yes. They cut off communication by capturing the Post and Telegraph. They slaughtered every Northern Sudanese merchant, gate guards, and prison guards. I was about two miles away in the rest house and I heard volleys. In the city and about half an hour later I heard one right outside my rest house at the prison. That was a guard at the prison. In about ten minutes, I heard another one. They knocked off that guard and freed all of the prisoners for their army. They went out and harvested peanuts and joined the southern army. That's how they got their food and forces. So the next morning, there were four of us alive in that little town--my counterpart, my cook, my driver, and me. I asked my counterpart what happened? He told me. "You remember when we were out there in the field working with the kids? You saw a man going up and down the road?" I said, "Yes." He said, "That was their intelligence officer. He wanted to know who you were, why you were here." So what they did, when they decided to massacre the people in the town, they threw a guard around the rest house to make sure nothing would happen to me.

Q: Your counterpart was from southern Sudan?

BROADNAX: Yes. I said, "There's a just God who secured my life then and henceforth." That was my last activity before I left for Korea. But, you know, it's ironic that two weeks before I went there Ambassador Rountree called me to his office. He said, "Mr. Broadnax, we have a problem. My intelligence people can't travel. They are barred from traveling. You are free to travel all over the country. I want to ask you to report to me any intelligence information." After that massacre, I got back to Khartoum. Well before I got back, they heard about it and they called my wife. The Ambassador called my wife and said, "Mrs. Broadnax, where is Madison?" She said, "He's in the south." He said, "I want you to know he's okay. We had some trouble there, but he's safe. I don't know what you heard, but I want you to know he's okay." When I got back to Khartoum, I reported this and he called in his Chief of Intelligence, CIA and all those people. I debriefed them all on what I knew. I told them there were volleys and they said that was the most important thing I could tell them. If there were volleys, they knew the source.

Q: How did you feel about gathering counterintelligence?

BROADNAX: Well, I felt that I was trusted to do it. I didn't have any skepticism. If there had been some other ambassador, I would have, because I think they would have tried to sacrifice me because I was popular with the Sudanese.

Q: Wasn't there something of a gamble if you became known to the authorities?

BROADNAX: Well, if it had been an established fact, that would have played right into the hands of our adversaries. That's what they were saying all the time. But, as I say, that was the last thing I did before I left Sudan. It was time to go. What made that so interesting, I was in my

house one night. My wife and I and some friends had been to a movie. We were sitting there having a drink and a Sudanese knocked on the door--tall, elegant fellow. Had his turban on. He said, "Mr. Broadnax, you don't know me, but I know you. I want to talk to you." I said, "Okay. Come in." He said, "You've got guests. I want to talk to you alone." We sat out on the patio. He said, "I want you to be aware of Mr. Wheeler. Mr. Wheeler's an agent. I work for him. We've had a falling out. But one of my assignments was to track you. I don't work for him anymore, but I want you to know."

Q: Mr. Wheeler was with?

BROADNAX: He was with AID in the Program Office.

Q: What was his first name?

BROADNAX: I really don't know. I forgot. You know, that was something I shared with the Chief Officer of Intelligence. I didn't tell my wife and I didn't tell anybody in my own shop. But I was aware of it, and I appreciated it. Shortly after that, I got orders for transfer. I knew it was time to go. And I did.

Q: Let's go back a little bit and review what you thought were your accomplishments over your seven years there.

BROADNAX: I think one of the accomplishments was we trained 83 Sudanese in agriculture. I don't know how many the mission trained in education but in agriculture we trained 83. We sent them to the United States for short and long-term training. They came back and worked in the Ministry of Agriculture until opportunities came for better jobs, salary wise. They wanted to build houses and that sort of thing. Some of them went off to Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and places like that. I think that was one of the best things because there's no substitute for knowledge. They were in the system and when the army took over, most of them had enough seniority to retire. They would not work for the army regime. The goodwill towards the Sudanese at that time was very high. I think for my country and for the Sudanese -- in fact, my counterpart said when they gave a reception in the garden of the Minister of Agriculture, the Ambassador and all were there, he said, "I have never seen a person come to a country and learn the culture as quickly as Madison Broadnax did." The Minister of Agriculture thanked the U.S. Ambassador, through the United States, for my having been there.

Q: What did you do that made you able to understand the culture compared to what other visitors do?

BROADNAX: One thing, we were required to learn 100 hours of conversational Arabic. I had a counterpart who was in education. He and I used to sit down toe to toe and talk about it. I mean everything that happened to human beings. I said, "When you get married, what do you do? When somebody dies, what do you do?" And that sort of thing. And I said, "As a visitor, somebody dies that I know, and I want to go to the funeral, what do I do?" I became a student of the culture. I had been told that. Indeed, in education myself, I knew it was a must. I told all my advisors the same thing. I said, "Don't just work with your senior advisors. You're going to have

people at all levels of the nation including people at the bottom of the ladder; you're going to have people at the middle; and you're going to have people at the top. But you've got to treat all of them equally. The same people you think are insignificant may be the same people who will save your life one day." So that was my attitude all the way through my tenure.

Q: How do you build up the extension service?

BROADNAX: It went very well. It went quicker than I thought. However, I must admit it never achieved the institutional level anticipated because of the instability of the Sudanese Government. The Abboud regime was ousted, and Sir al-Khatim, former Director of Education in the south was elected President. When I went back, all of the other junior officers, with whom I had worked in the south, were senior officers, many of them ministers. As I said, the U.S. Team at the time did not take advantage of opportunities available for the U.S. objectives.

Q: Let's go to that time you returned to the Sudan, so we get the continuity of the Sudanese experience. Then we'll deal with Korea separately. What was the occasion that brought you back to Sudan? What year was this?

Returned to Sudan as AID Affairs Officer - 1972

BROADNAX: For several years, the USAID Mission was closed and all AID personnel were reassigned to other missions or AID/W [AID/Washington]. But in 1972 the political climate changed, and this prompted some discussions relative to resuming a modified AID program based on some of the critical needs of the Sudan which complemented U.S. aims and objectives. Out of these discussions, it was agreed that the U.S. would send an economic team to Sudan to explore some priority assistance programs vital to the Sudanese Government at that time.

The economic team was formed, and Edward B. Hogan of PPC was designated team leader. As Deputy Assistant Director for Food and Agriculture of the Technical Assistance Bureau, and with previous Sudanese experience, I was asked to join the team. We came away with a consensus on some Food for Peace efforts and the Rahad Agricultural Diversification project. Accordingly, the team made those recommendations which were approved by AID/W.

Subsequently, I was asked to return to the Sudan as the AID Affairs Officer. I accepted the appointment and returned to Khartoum in 1972. My appointment had the approval of Ambassador Cleo Noel. However, he, together with our Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM), were assassinated prior to my return to Khartoum. This placed a lull on our duties, but the decision was made to proceed with the development programs as previously agreed. We had to work with a new country team while doing business in an unusual atmosphere.

Meanwhile, the terrorists were incarcerated and were awaiting trial by the GOS [government of Sudan]. They were brought to trial, tried and released. Releasing the terrorists without U.S. approval brought a halt to our normal relations. The terrorists were apprehended in Cairo, Egypt by the Sadat regime whose stock accelerated and diplomatic relations were greatly improved.

Q: How did you find returning to Sudan?

BROADNAX: When the Sudanese found out I was on the team, you'd of thought I was the queen of somebody coming in. We had a busy week there, and one of the things the Minister of Agriculture wanted us to do was the project called Rahad. It was a diversified program, not just all cotton. He wanted me to go there and make an assessment of what the possibilities were. In fact, he went with me. That was one of the things we came back and recommended: that we support the Rahad Project and leave the equipment and that sort of thing. We came back and made that recommendation. So then they decided that they wanted to reopen the mission. That's when Sam Adams called me. He said, "I've gotten good reports on your activities when you went back there with the team. I want to know if you'd consider going out as the AID Affairs Officer." I told him I thought that would be an honor, but I have to discuss it with my wife. And I did, and she got along well with the Sudanese, so I ended up going back to Sudan as AID Affairs Officer.

Q: When was this?

BROADNAX: It was in 1972. As I said, all the people I knew as junior officers at this time were Ministers and I had an entré to them.

Q: These were not military personnel at the time?

BROADNAX: Some of them were military. There was Numeri. He was a junior officer and he was the President. Two of my former participants were Ministers in the government.

Q: What about our relations with Sudan?

BROADNAX: It was at a standstill and finally downhill. We had a new Ambassador at that time. I was the duty officer, and was ordered to go to the Minister of Foreign Affairs to see if I could get the release of documents for those prisoners. I thought immediately that I was possibly being sacrificed because his political people should have done that. I went. The man on duty was a former Ambassador, Sudanese Ambassador to India, whom I met when I took some Sudanese there to a seminar in 1960. So we were set up there and had coffee and tea. He said, "You're not going nowhere, are you?" I said, "Not that I know of." He said, "We don't want you to go." I said, "Okay. What about those papers?" He said, "I can't release them." I went back and told my Ambassador that.

Q: They terrorists were in Egypt.

BROADNAX: Yes. We wanted the paper giving the details of the trial and all that. The Foreign Minister didn't release it. We wanted a copy of it, but I couldn't get it.

Q: This was a release of the report of the trial?

BROADNAX: Yes.

Q: Not of the people?

BROADNAX: No. Not of the people. The station chief of the CIA there saw the wisdom of my being there. He even told the Ambassador that he thought at this time a junior officer should have been sent. The Ambassador didn't like it but he told him nevertheless. The program was at a standstill and diminished.

Q: No projects work going on?

BROADNAX: Nothing. Other than we had the Rahad Project. That's what I worked on most of the time I was there. I wrote my backstop a letter. I didn't send him a cable; I wrote him a letter, and told him that my being in Sudan was too expensive to the government; I wasn't doing anything and that, "I recommend that my car and all of my furniture be shipped to Ethiopia for use by the Mission Director." I was transferred to Nairobi.

Q: When did you leave Sudan then?

BROADNAX: I left Sudan in 1975. Came back to the United States. Went up to Michigan State University and gave a Seminar on Title XII.

Q: Let's come to that. Let's go back to the Sudan. You said you had the Rahad Project?

BROADNAX: Yes, Rahad.

Q: Tell us about that project.

BROADNAX: It was one of the large projects - a diversified project with vegetables, peanuts, and wheat. But it needed some equipment.

Q: Irrigation?

BROADNAX: Yes. We brought out a Caterpillar [Motors] expert to draw up the specifications for the type of equipment that we needed at Rahad. We sent out bids on it. Caterpillar didn't get the contract, somebody else got it, but the equipment arrived in Port Sudan and they loaded it on boxcars and shipped it to Rahad. When that boxcar came through Sudan, that mammoth piece of equipment attracted everybody's attention. Of course, we had the big AID emblem on it. You could hear the people who went out to see it, say "mauna" - Arabic for American AID. That was what we had called AID. It went well, but I wasn't there. I wasn't there long enough to see how the project unfolded. We had a Project Commodity Officer who went from Nairobi up there. He reported it was being used okay.

Q: But you don't know what happened to the project?

BROADNAX: I don't.

Q: Before we leave Sudan, it might be interesting if you could give an overview of what you understood to be the agricultural situation in Sudan. It's a big order because it's such a huge place and so contrasting, but how did you find the agriculture of the country?

BROADNAX: I'm glad you asked that because I gave a seminar when I was back there as AID Director in conjunction with USIS on Sudan's potential as a world food supply. And I had their ministers in the various agricultural divisions there as spokesmen. We laid out the possibility of Sudan as the world food supply, especially for Africa with all that vast land they had. All they had to do was organize it and manage it to the fullest potential. They all agreed that this was true.

Q: What was the potential? How do you characterize it?

BROADNAX: They had good land. Plenty of excellent land. They had excellent livestock. We set up a dairy and poultry project there in Khartoum North to demonstrate that they could grow cattle, fatten them, and put them on the market, and have beef. They could grow chickens and could produce eggs, commercially.

Q: What was the main crop?

BROADNAX: Sudan's main food crop was dura, similar to sugar cane. That's what people were eating. That was their main food crop. But through the International Research Center at IRRI (International Rice Research Institute), we brought wheat and rice varieties. We didn't announce what we were driving at, but we were trying to diversify the diets and did somewhat. We got them to agree to put some of their acreage in wheat to take advantage of the water, because the farmers were wasting a lot of water. That went over very well. The Sudanese started eating wheat flour instead of dura. Bread from dura was altogether different. This was one of the topics that we talked about. Then we talked about the south. The south was a prolific agricultural region for many crops. They had the manpower, smart people, and it was just a matter of setting the priorities. They wasted too much money on the army.

Q: I guess it was during your time when the Saudi Arabians and others poured enormous sums into irrigated wheat. Was that something they were starting when you were there?

BROADNAX: They were there. And another thing, the whole north was diversified similar to part of the United States. But when they built the high dam, all that land was inundated. They had to transfer all of those people from that area to a place called New Halfa, in eastern Sudan, which again had a great potential for growing wheat. We provided a Food for Peace Program for some of the families. They didn't eat all of it. They planted some of the wheat. I went out there on a survey with my counterpart and I saw some of the most beautiful wheat fields growing where these people had planted this wheat on irrigated fields. So the potential was there. And we knew that. And that's what this seminar was all about. It's still there. They've still got good land.

Q: I heard some question whether it was wise to try to irrigate wheat production.

BROADNAX: Well, as I said, in the Gezira, to make maximum use of the water, the water was already there, so it was being wasted. The people f rom IRRI came up and said yes. It wasn't just something that somebody thought. We brought the scientists from IRRI. They're the ones who said. It's something similar to the same thing in Egypt, too. Egypt wastes a lot of water from the Nile River. Oh, the Sudan is so big! And good land! We built a farm machinery center right in the heart of the dura production section, demonstrating the use of machinery and growing dura,

and changing cultural practices. They were wasting land there. I mean, growing land and no intercropping or anything. We taught them that they could maximize their production and double yields if they would use farm production compatible with equipment that we were bringing in. That was another demonstration that proved helpful to them. The Minister and the Director of Agriculture saw the benefits. But anytime there was an opportunity for multiplying the benefits, there was a military uprising. You can't do anything in a situation like that. But I wouldn't take anything for my experience.

Q: Some people describe Sudan as a potential breadbasket for the Middle East. Is that right?

BROADNAX: Well, that was the theme of this seminar that we put on. They can produce the food, but you've got to have the climate in which to do it. Political climate in which to do it.

Q: What was your understanding of the issues that kept the country so unstable?

BROADNAX: Well, the Arab against the south. Very political. The Arab north against the south. President Abate tried to calm the waters when he was President. He brought in a southerner as Minister of Animal Resource, Mr. Francis Deng.

Q: Francis Deng, yes.

BROADNAX: He did a good job. We programmed an observation program in the United States for him and when he got off the plane, some of the people back in Washington said, "Oh, my god, he's a southerner." I thought that was the most asinine thing that could have happened for his observation tour. Also, this prevented him from observing animal production practices adaptable to the Sudan. We had learned through village farming practices and research data from the Yambio Research Station, that the climate in the south was conducive for a variety of farm systems.

Q: Were there any other programs or projects you haven't mentioned that you'd like to make note of?

BROADNAX: Well, as I said, we were there to help them improve agriculture. We did some other good things too. I mean, as far as getting the Sudanese to know Americans and that sort of thing. When the Russians agreed to build the Aswan Dam, and we knew the farmers' land would be inundated with water, I was invited there as an outsider to go to the northern Sudan with seven Sudanese senior officials to make an assessment of the farmers' holdings and evaluate them prior to their being relocated at what they called New Halfa. I did that, and I'll never forget it because two things happened on that trip. Prince Bernhard of The Netherlands was making a state visit, and he found out that there was this delegation there in the hotel, the Athara Hotel. He gave a State dinner for us and invited me to be his guest of honor. That was an honor I'll never forget. The following day, we drove along the Nile making our assessment, and that was the day that John Glenn made his orbit. We stayed at the rest house at the Second Cataracon the Nile River. I was hosted that night. They were singing the praises of the U.S. for this achievement. I got all the adulation and everything from that, and I felt genuinely proud in accepting this recognition for my country.

Q: What about the program? What did you conclude about your survey?

BROADNAX: We did a lot of good. We had a team out there--research people that didn't mind getting their hands dirty, we had farm machinery people who came and worked with the Sudanese hand-in-hand, and from the standpoint of public relations and the inter-cultural relations, we did a lot of good diplomatically. And we did a lot of good agriculturally too. But a lot of the research and a lot of the practices that we ushered in never got to be made maximum use of due to the upheavals. Due to the southern crises, we transferred our personnel from the southern Sudan to New Halfa where the farmers from the Wadi Halfa area had been relocated.

Maury D. Brown
Head of Computer Programming, USAID
Washington, DC (1967-1989)

BROWN: I didn't go to Paris, I stayed on this project because I was a company guy. I mean I was still in my 20's. There was a guy in AID named Vic Porlier who worked with me back in early '60s who had taken over and he was doing some kind of MIS project management job in Management Planning. Vic was going to go to Korea with AID. He called me one day and said, "Would you like to come back to AID and take my job?" It was a GS-14 and it was more money than I was making at that time. I was really upset, because I had lost that chance to go to Paris and I just saw myself sticking there with the Navy for a long time. So, I came back and said I would take the position. In the meantime, Vic failed his physical and couldn't go to Korea, after they told me they wanted me to take his job. So, what do I do now. But, they came back and offered me the Chief of Programming at AID in the data processing shop.

Returned to AID to head computer programming - 1967

Q: Programming and data assistant?

BROWN: Computer programming, yes. I still thought that was okay and I came back. Shortly after I came back they got rid of the head of data processing and brought in another person from the outside, a person named David Dale and they named me the Deputy to him. I was already a GS-15. It was a pretty quick jump, but I think because of my PRC background they thought I knew more than I probably did. But, I got into management at that point and shortly after that David left. At that time, data processing was just a branch within Management Planning. It was very, very small. Even though there were a lot of people there, it was looked at by the agency as a very minor function. Almost a blue collar function. The Head of Management Planning was a man named Manny Deangelis and we reported directly to Manny. Manny then suffered a heart attack. This was in 1970, '69-'70. He was going to recover, but AID management felt that there was too much stress on him to have both the Management Planning side and a data processing side. There's a man named Jim Kerns who was the Deputy AA for management. Governor Lane Dwinell was the head of management of AID and former Governor of New Hampshire. They said we're going to split it off and we're going to make the data processing branch a whole office, just like Management Planning is. They asked me to apply. I applied. I think they had somebody

else they wanted to bring in to do the job. But at that time, there was the Peterson Commission which recommended that AID be abolished in 1970. This man came in and-

Q: Where from?

BROWN: He was from an aircraft company in California. He came out and talked to me and he said, "I know you're looking for this job, but I think they want me to have it. What do you think about the job?" I talked to him. He said, "I'm very nervous about coming here and taking your job when the Agency is about to be abolished." I said, "Well, I'm sure I wouldn't do it either coming from California." So, he turned the job down and they selected me to be the Director. So, then I got a GS-16, and I took over the data processing office and I stayed in that position for six years.

Q: What was the function? What was the job on the data processing?

BROWN: Well, it was the same as what it is now. We still have our old computer systems. They're 30-35 computer systems and mainly financial systems, personnel systems. They have programming assistants, people under that. There was also the records management program which is new in Administrative Services. To my dismay the focus was always on financial management. It's been that way since the day they brought the computer in 1961 and it's still that way today. AID considered itself a bank and the money aspects were the most important. Probably 90, 95 percent of the effort for the computer office was to support the controller's work. That's all we did. I guess it was in '70, Administrator Dan Parker came to me when I was first started. Parker had a different view. Parker was a techy. He came from Parker Penz and he was a good friend of David Packard. He was a roommate of Packard so the HP stuff was dear to him and he and I talked a lot. Probably if there's one man that influenced me more than anybody it was Dan Parker. I liked him personally. He was an extremely interesting man, down to earth, easy to talk to. We talked about everything from technology to cancer. I remember the first time I had to give him a briefing. I went in with the Head of the Administration at that time. I had a beard and they got really upset that I was going to brief the Administrator with a beard. Very upset about it. But, it didn't bother Parker any. What Parker had me do was to set up a series of seminars for the AA's. We did it over a weekend. I brought in speakers from Anheuser Busch from IBM headquarters in Armonk, New York. I brought in some professors, we did modeling, we talked about how computers can be used in business applications. Some of the AA's, like Curt Farrar and Alex Shakow took to it right away. They loved it. Others, I can't remember the man's name who was head of the African Bureau, was not particularly pleased with that. He felt he was being put in a box.

Q: Sam Adams?

BROWN: Right. Sam said, "Don't put me in a box." Systems put me in a box. I don't have any flexibility. We had all kinds. There was Herman Klein from LAC who I respect probably most of all of the AA's that I have dealt with in those days. Herman Klein gave his people lots of leeway to experiment, to work on things. They developed systems, they brought in very bright people. LAC was like it's own agency. Of course, all of the Bureaus were like their own agencies, but this one stood out. I always felt that management wise and inventive wise they really were far

ahead of the other Bureaus. The African Bureau kind of dragged behind. As a homework assignment from that, Parker told each AA to come up with some ideas on how they could use computers, because all they were doing with computers was the financial part. He wanted me to then go to see them the following week and get a list from them of applications for their bureaus. Some people, like Curt Farrar had a 10 page list on how things could help him. Others needed more help. We went further and did the same kind of seminars with the DAA's which was also interesting. But, at that point we started getting into negative thinking. That's when the frustration began. Johnny Murphy was the Deputy Administrator. Johnny Murphy was a former controller of AID and his close associates were people from the controller side. Ed Kosters was another former controller and a very big ally of Johnny. They didn't like all of this stuff. They thought this was Buck Rogers and they felt it wouldn't work. What Parker wanted to do at one time was to get little HP hand-held calculators, which did more than calculating. He wanted me to give these out to all the projects overseas so a paramedic could go out in to the field and do their work with these hand-held computers. Through interviews, they could try to look up diseases and do other kinds of things with it if they could tie it in. He was really ahead of where we were in the world at that time. Well, Murphy, he just couldn't stand that, and he asked, "Where are you going to get the money for this? This is crazy. Where are they going to get trained? How are they going to learn how to do this?" It ended up in a very, very bad situation. So bad that eventually they told me that I was going to be relieved. They felt that I was too much involved in pushing the program side of the agency and I was taking resources that they thought were good resources away from the controller and putting them on others' administrative tasks that we were trying to build up. One of the systems was to work with disaster relief staff and start building profiles of countries before the disasters occurred.

Q: Early warning system?

BROWN: An early warning system, right. The Controller said they weren't getting good enough support. I was warned and one day, Christmas Eve, I was called in to Charles Mann who was the head of the Management Bureau at that time and told that I was going to be relieved of my position. I was called down there and I thought they were going to have a party. There and there was nobody in the room. I said to the secretary, "Are we having a party?" She said, "No, no, he just wants to see you." I said, "Oh, okay" At that time I was told that I would be reassigned to a system called PBAR.

Q: What's that?

BROWN: Program, Budget, Accounting and Reporting System. One of those sub parts of PBAR was an institutional memory part. Carter Ide, who was former Mission Director in Nepal complained once to the Administrator that projects were being repeated. Isn't there some way that we can discover what happened in these projects before, and, of course, at that time there wasn't any way. Carter had come back from Nepal and was working the Office of Public Affairs. When they did the PBAR exercise, Carter was put in charge of a little task force to look at creating an institutional memory and that was one of the sub units of PBAR. When I was told that I'm going to be leaving the computer office, they told me that I would go with Carter to start up an office to maintain an institutional memory. I could care less about the institutional memory. I didn't want it. I felt that I was a computer professional all this time and they're taking me out of

my profession. I told that to the Agency and I started out interviewing other agencies, but to go to work for the Interior Department just never seemed right to me. I felt I had to work in an international arena somehow. I felt I had to work Washington, even though I was working in an administrative capacity in Washington as a Civil Servant, the work I did overseas in helping people, the travel that I did have, because I did a lot of travel when I was even with the computer group, I couldn't see leaving anything like that.

Helped AID establish its institutional memory program - 1976

So, I decided with Carter, that we'd make the best of what we got. Well, the two of us sat in Rosslyn - no secretary, no staff, no budget, nothing. I left the data processing office at the end of January, 1976. For two or three months Carter took sick leave and I sat around trying to figure out what I should be doing with my life. I was very discouraged, probably the lowest part of my life. Then one day, we were still in the Administrative Bureau, they gave us some money, 15,000 dollars and said, "If you want, you can get a contract for somebody to help put together your concept of what this is all about. We gave the contract to Practical Concepts, Inc., the inventor of the log frame. We had Leon Rosenberg, Molly Hageboeck came over with a couple of others and develop a kind of framework for the office which I understood. Carter had trouble with it, because Molly did a lot of charts and graphs and turned Carter off. But, we understood what had to be done and we began to do abstracting as a first step. We got some money for that. We gave a contract to a company, who is still here now, LTs Corporation to do abstracts of the projects.

Q: What was the concept to it at that time?

BROWN: The concept at that time was that we needed to be able to tell a project designer what happened in the past about projects that were similar to the one they were designing. The idea was at that time, it would be an automated system. So, the project designer produced what we called a PID, a Project Identification Document, saying this is the basic idea of what my project is all about. That was submitted, because projects were only approved in Washington at that time, I think. So, it would come to Washington for approval. The PID would automatically be sent to the computer, and it would go into our system and match the project to other similar projects. It would print out an abstract of what the project was, including log frame information and would be sent automatically to the designers, saying, you didn't ask for this, but here is something that you might want.

The problem was that it was too difficult in an automated way to identify the sectors because the codes that were used to categorize the projects could not fully describe the nature of these projects. So, it didn't work that way. What we did the first year or two was just write abstracts to create the data base. We would write descriptions of the projects, abstract other documents in addition to the designed document, abstract the evaluation documents, and feasibility studies.

We then added a research staff, but it did not have an immediate impact. For one thing, all of the correspondence with the field was done through the pouch. So, if we would get something in a cable, coming in, but we had to send documents out, we'd put them in the pouch and it would take six weeks for somebody to get it. Well, by that time, they forgot what they asked. And, there was no dialogue, there was little interaction with the requester. It was very, very slow.

Q: All these documents were not on a computer, they were on?

BROWN: There were on Microfiche. They'd be printed out on hard copy to be mailed out there. We wanted the field to have Microfiche and although some missions had the equipment, nobody wanted to read Microfiche. I remember talking once to Fred Schieck who was Deputy AA for Latin America at that time. Fred said to me, "I want a document. I don't want even to get into Microfiche. I don't want to go looking through this Buck Rogers stuff, I want the book in front of me. I'm going to keep one finger on this page and one finger on this page and be able to look at things. If you can't do that, it's not worth it." The agency, up until this time was still anti-automation. I mean, the whole time I was in charge of the data management program, I was fighting to try to get people to accept automation as a tool that can be used in development. But, nobody wanted to do that. There were a few enlightened people who could see the benefits of it, but most people said, we're too busy for all of that. The Agency just bucked it the whole time.

Q: Was this true of the Controller?

BROWN: Even the Controller was, yes. They preferred the old accounting machines and calculators if they could. They never developed systems people who could think beyond the way we were doing things back in 1961. They just carried the same concept through systems, such as loan accounting, instead of trying to buy off-the-shelf packages that could be adapted. They insisted that their way was the right way and it's still the old accounting system methods. And, G.A.O., I remember a man named Frank Zappacoasta who was head of the team that came in from G.A.O. to look at our accounting system and he would say to me, "This is so antiquated and this is back in the late 60's. It's so antiquated and nobody here has any desire to try and change it. They may try to make it go faster, but they don't make it better, they make it faster." So no, I don't think that even the Controller understood how information could be modernized and they preferred doing it the old way. You look at the new management system and it's not much better today. I don't know if we've ever learned a lesson from that.

Q: We will come back to that. So, you got this little unit going and obviously it was growing a bit.

BROWN: It was growing a bit.

Q: Where were you located organizationally?

BROWN: Organizationally we had been moved in to PPC and been combined with the library. There was a small little library down in the State Department on the first floor. That library was transferred to us. There was another organization in PPC called the Statistics and Reports Division. There use to be a man named Al Huntington who ran that division. Very large division.

Q: Economic statistics?

BROWN: Right. Economic statistics and they kept what was known as the green book. All the official statistics of the agency. Well, they were doing all of that manually. So, a decision was made to move that Statistics and Reports Division into the Development Information (DI) function in PPC as well.

Q: Was it called DI then?

BROWN: It was called DI, yes. PPC/DIt might have been DIS, I'm not sure. Then in '78, there was another re-organization of the agency. That re-organization, led by a person named Tony Babb, didn't go over real well with a lot of people. They put our office and a small little office in the old Technical Assistance Bureau together and formed something called DIU which stood for Development Information and Utilization. The Utilization function, which was under a guy named Del Myron, worked on how you can take the results of a project and transfer it so that people can use it properly. They didn't do that. They didn't know how to do that. There was one project which they called Knowledge Synthesis. They spent about a million dollars on this project, which was to take, I don't remember if it was in water or what the sector was, and try to create handbooks and textbooks which would become the Bible on that particular sector. It never worked, they couldn't do it and eventually --

Q: Do you know why?

BROWN: It was too big. They tried to do too much. Too big a subject and also getting concurrence from all of the other Bureaus makes was too difficult. One thing this Agency always has is lots of experts in particular areas who don't believe that anybody else in that area is an expert. So, there's all this controlling of the turf because you feel that your way is the only way. If you ever try to get concurrence across the board, you're never going to get anything done. That fell apart. DI existed because the information part was still useful, but when we got merged in to what was called, I guess at that time, the Development Support Bureau, things began to change. The Deputy there was Curt Farrar who was an old friend from my computer days. But, Curt didn't share our philosophy of what DI should be. Curt felt that we should not be providing analytical services, we should not be doing work supporting the field, and we should not be abstracting evaluations. What we should be doing is collecting technical state of the art articles, research findings, being basically a library and don't do anything if you're not asked to do it. No proactive work. If you're asked for something, get them a book, get them an article, get them what they want. They brought in a woman named Leda Allen who came out of the Library of Congress and the Agricultural Library who was a cataloger and put her in charge of this group, and of me. Leda was a librarian and that's all she wanted to do. Well, it was very frustrating to work in this environment.

There were studies done of our office. The studies were always concluding that we're not making any impact, that we have too many people and there was a decision to cut back on the people. One of the first decisions was to get rid of Deputies and that was me. So, my job was abolished, but they didn't have a place for me to go. I was interviewed by Rocky Staples in the Far East Bureau or whatever it was called at that time, to be the Head of Management, because there was a woman named Kay Harley who was leaving and Kay suggested me. I thought I was going to get that job, it sounded interesting. But, Rocky said, "No, you don't have enough personnel experience to have this job. The job is a personnel job." I said, "No, it's not a personnel job." A good management guy can start bringing your communications together better in the Bureau and create a lot better infrastructure for communications. You can't do personnel only. That agreement went nowhere.

So, they kept me in DIU, and shortly after that the GAO came in, that was in '82. The GAO came in and did the same kind of study that all of these other guys were doing, but their conclusion went to the Administrator, not to the Head of the Development Support Bureau. Their conclusion was that we have a lot of resources that were not being used properly in the Agency, the field is not benefitting from any of it, there is no analytical capability, it needs to have analysts who can interpret results of projects, who can interpret design, who can then feed that interpretation to a designer instead of just being a laid-back library. The Administrator created a task force under Kelly Kammerer and the task force started looking at some of the possibilities to answer the GAO criticism. The head of Evaluation in the PPC Bureau at that time was Dick Blue and I think John Bolton was the head of PPC at that time. Dick Blue had as one of his division chiefs, Molly Hageboeck, who was of course one of the people instrumental in putting our concept together in the first place. They went to the Deputy Administrator and suggested that DIU be taken out of the Development Support Bureau, or it might have been the S and T Bureau by that time, and be put in to PPC, combined with the Office of Evaluation and to create a new office called CDIE, the Center for Development Information and Evaluation. The Deputy Administrator called Nyle Brady in who was head of the S and T Bureau, called John Bolton in, or maybe Dick Blue too, and asked for their opinions. Brady just answered that it should be in the S and T Bureau, because it's always been in the S and T Bureau and that if it's not in the S and T Bureau, all of his research contractors won't have access to the library. Well, that made no sense to anybody and the decision was made rather quickly to create CDIand move us out or back to PPC and to create an analytical unit as well. A man named Haven North was brought in to head it up. When Haven came in, it was difficult, because we really didn't know what all this analytical stuff meant. Marion Warren at this time, I think, was head of evaluation and Annette Binnendijk who was running the economic and social data work that we had taken over from Bureau of Statistics and Reports Division. We put her in charge of the analytical function, but Annette really couldn't figure out what that meant and neither could we. So, at the beginning it was kind of difficult, because we weren't really sure what our roles were supposed to be. But, the best part about it was that the DI part was given the authority to get contractors in to do the analytical work.

Q: At that time you had a RSSA group?

BROWN: Nothing. We just had a library. We got a RSSA with the Department of Agriculture Graduate School. That's what was good, because I was given the authority to go out and get people, who would provide "value added services."

Q: How large was the staff before that?

BROWN: At one time we had a staff of over 30 direct hires.

Q: In DIU?

BROWN: Yes. Counting the utilization people and counting the economic and social data people, we had a staff of over 30 people, direct hires. We had contractors doing abstracting and we had contractors doing the warehousing, but the rest were direct-hires. We hired a librarian from Notre Dame, a man named David Donovan who was in charge of the library function. It was a very large bureaucracy, actually. Then, as these cuts came in, including mine, it just kept getting

smaller and smaller. In 1978 or '80, there was a decision under an OMB circular called A-76, which was to contract out more functions that could be done by contractors. They used as an example, librarians as one of the functions that could be done. Well, that's all that AID needed. Get rid of all the librarians and they were forced-placed in to other parts of the agency and contractors were then brought in. We interviewed and hired through the USDA Graduate School. The nice thing about the RSSA was these were not employees of the Graduate School, they were people that I found and said they hired them. So, it was just like a body shop to bring people in to our office. That was for only one year. And, one year later the Agency was criticized, because we weren't the only people in the Agency doing that. Lots of people were doing it. So, we had to drop the RSSA and had to write an RFP and go out on the street to get a contract to do the same thing with the private sector.

Q: It was also the time when there was a big push for private sector.

BROWN: There was a very big push for private sector, right. When we sent out the RFP we had several companies that proposed. Several companies submitted the names of the same people that we had working under the RSSA. There were about 12 people at that time. The Academy for Educational Development won that contract and they've been there ever since. This was about 1984. They've won several bids after that and that's been built up considerably, of course, over the years. Once AED came in and I could turn it over to a contractor, things were a lot easier for me, as well, because they really took care of carving out a way of handling questions and working with the field better. I think the relationships with the field just started to improve.

Q: What was your concept of the development information function at that time?

BROWN: My concept then was to do more outreach to the missions. I felt strongly that the missions were not being taken care of. They needed to have more interaction with our office. I took a lot of trips to missions. We did a lot of P.R. work with the missions.

Q: Did you find them receptive?

BROWN: They were receptive to the idea, but they weren't receptive to the methodology. We still had the pouch and it was still difficult to interact easily with the mission. We used phone calls more so that we could at least find out what the person wanted instead of just guessing from a cable. But, the dialogue still wasn't there and it was not easy. It wasn't until a few years later, I don't know which year it was any more, when Alan Woods came as the Administrator. He brought in Mike Doyle as head of management and he brought Molly Hageboeckback as a special assistant. Molly said, "In the agency that we were working at before, we all had pc's on our desk, why can't we all have pc's now?" And, although IRM didn't feel that that was a good thing to do, they were forced in to doing it.

Q: Why were they opposed to it?

BROWN: IRM has always had a mainframe mentality that they felt everything should be controlled by IRM. Part of it was due to me, because when I took over my job back in 1970, the Bureaus that had their own computer expertise were creating systems that were fighting the

central systems. They weren't compatible, they were often being misused, they were hiring contractors at prices that were ridiculous and they were doing things that we already had. We especially had trouble with the Latin American Bureau, because they had some very good computer people. They had a RSSA with the Census Bureau and the Census Bureau provided a lot of data processing expertise in the agency, especially overseas. It broadened my staff. My staff felt that they wanted to control more and we worked very hard at trying to centralize the control of all systems and data processing people to a point where personnel would not allow a system analyst to be placed in any other Bureau. They all have to be centralized. Well, I have to live with that nightmare that I invented the rest of my life and it has bothered me ever since. But, IRM has always felt that they wanted to control all of the systems and it would have to be as central as possible and they used the mainframe mentality to do it. PC's give you too much freedom. You can design your own programs, you can do things yourself. It's the kind of problem that they always had with the desk records. People would keep records in their desk and there would be conflicts with Congressional testimony because they had different numbers than the controllers. Well, PCs just magnified that. If you have a computer you can do modeling, you can do all kinds of stuff and that would just add to the multi-headed monster that the Congress saw all the time. So, IRM all along still felt that this was not a good idea.

I think ever since the PCs came in you can say a lot of good things have happened. Communications have happened, e-mail has happened, but you can also look at it from IRM's point of view that it's harder than ever to try to develop any kind of central management information system because of that. What happened in DI was that we began to have the ability to communicate with the field and dialogue then begin with the missions. We were able to send responses through e-mail to the field. That's when the field actually accepted what we did.

I remember one time there was a request from the Philippines that was going out. I went down to the library to see what we were going to send them and there were 20 boxes of reports. I said, "What is this?" They said, "Well, that's what they wanted." I said, "They didn't ask for 20 boxes. They wanted to know something about a particular project and you're sending them everything you have. They're all big reports and they're not going to read this." But, that was the way we did it. By the time the 20 boxes even got there who was going to care about it? So, the automation and the ability to use new technology really was the answer to creating a good working relationship with the field. The other thing that happened was that we dramatically improved our research capabilities. However, even though the field and the field liked us and gave us good reviews, if you said CDIE in Washington they would think of evaluation. Haven was the head of it and the Washington staff had more exposure to that part of CDIE. If you said CDIE in the field it was more likely that they would think of DI because that was their communication. So, you had two views of what CDIE was. I think it stayed that way for a long, long time. It was good with the field, but we were very frustrated that we never --

Q: Wasn't there some attempt to integrate it in to the Bureaus or provide a service in the headquarters?

BROWN: Not until late 80's. We may have paid lip service, but we really didn't push it. We put a couple of people in and they couldn't do it on their own. They sat in the Bureau. They thought people should come to them. They didn't know how to go out and try to attract business. We had

the wrong staff for it. Then, when we were still in PPC, Reggie Brown came in as the head of PPC and one day I gave him a tour of our facility in Rosslyn. Reggie said, "How much does this cost? This is very impressive seeing this factory-like condition, all these books coming in and being abstracted and catalogued and micro-filmed." So, I told him how much it cost. At that time the whole office was running at three million dollars a year.

He said, "How much do you charge for your service?" I said, "We don't charge for our service." He said, "Well, how do you know your service is any good?" I said, "Well, we had X thousand requests and everybody is asking." He said that everyone was asking because it's free. If it were good they would be willing to pay for it. I'm not going to give you three million dollars this year, I'm only going to give you two million dollars this year. You collect one million dollars some other way." I said, "Well how am I going to do that?" He said, "I don't know." I said, "Am I going to charge everybody that comes into the library a dollar and if I get a million visitors I'll have my million dollars? I mean, how do I do it?" He said, "That's for you to figure out, but you're going to have to get a million dollars somewhere." So, we sat down and strategized for awhile and we came up with the idea that the Bureaus are going to have to pay for it. They were always worried, because in the past the concept was we were like frosting on a cake. When you can't get the ingredients for the cake, the frosting is the first thing that's going to go. The libraries will be the first thing cut in the mission, the information function is not highly valued that it would hold up to budget cuts. We had no choice here. We had to do it. What I did was to go to each regional Bureau and I tell them, depending on the size of the Bureau and the number of requests that came in, that they're going to have to pay a prorated share of the million dollar deficit. Africa Bureau had to pay the most. I think they had to pay $225,000 or 230,000 or something. There was a man named John Westley, who I still think of as one of the guardian angels of our office. John was the one who said, "It's worth every penny. If you divide the number of projects into this amount of money and to pay a couple thousand dollars per projects for this research." Made sense to me. John said, "Yes." He broke the ice. Then, I was able to go to the other Bureaus. I went to the Latin American Bureau and they said, "No." I said, "Well, Africa Bureau is doing it, but you don't have to, we just won't be able to support you. We'll support those Bureaus that pay a fee. So, they said, "Well, we'll do it for one year, but we think it should be all PPC money." I said, "Well, let's see how it goes after one year." So, they put their money in. Each of the others put their money in. Some questioned why they were paying more than another Bureau. They all wanted to know what all the Bureaus were paying. But, we collected the million dollars.

In order to make it easier for them to give us the million dollars, I offered them one person from the research staff per Bureau to live in the Bureau. We picked some good people this time to go over there. The first one was Ann Langhaug who went to the Latin America Bureau and Ann had experience in Ecuador and the library there. She was a very maternal person who knew how to take care of people. Did more than she was supposed to, but became invaluable to them. So, after the first year, I needed money again, because PPC and the budget office was still saying, "The only way you're going to prove your worth is by continuing to do this. And, until we tell you otherwise, you're going to have to keep doing it." So, the next year, we raised a little bit more, but it was easier, because if they didn't pay it they weren't going to get their person that was working there. By this time they had become somewhat dependent on that person. They came back then and said, "Can we get more than one person? We like what Ann does, can we get a

second person?" I said, "Well, in addition to your fee, if you want to buy additional services, you can buy them. If you want analytical services on economics and social data you can buy a person to come in from that group. If you want to do something else let me know. If it fits our scope of work we can do that. So, the first thing that people wanted was economic and social data people, because the economists were being cut back in the agency and they didn't have economists in the Bureaus. Having these people living on site and doing a lot of their work for them was something that they really wanted. So, we had people in each Bureau from that group of economists from our staff, from our contractors. Then, we had a person come in named Ann Williams.

Q: She was a lawyer.

BROWN: She was a lawyer and she was a librarian also. This was before. We had somebody first come in from Guatemala. They wanted to know if we could provide an information center in Guatemala. We had it in our scope of work. It was going to cost a little more, because they had to pay for the facility to be created in Guatemala City, but we were able to go through the scope of work and pull out those things that we felt that we could do. They wrote a new contract with us.

Q: This was in the mission?

BROWN: It was in the mission. It was in ROCAP. It was to support the regional projects in Central America, doing newsletters, communications, but trying to coordinate what everybody was doing, what we knew about regional activities and then have that go out to all the various missions in Central America all in Spanish. Provide training in Spanish, training programs on computers, some Internet stuff. But, it was our first attempt of doing something in an overseas environment and it worked very well. It lasted for two or three years before the funding dried up and we couldn't keep it any more. We started doing other kinds of --

Q: You had a center in Egypt, didn't you?

BROWN: No, that was the mission. The mission had its own center. We supported it from Washington, but they didn't pay us for that. We just provided some technical assistance. We sent people out there. We did a lot of that. We sent people to various missions to help them with their work, maybe develop a scope of work for a new person that they wanted, to hire a person, or to work on their catalogs or try to unify things, but that was all done as part of our responsibilities. We never felt that that should be paid for. When we did that the mission only paid for our transportation and per diem, but they didn't pay for the contractors' salaries or any of that. We paid that ourselves. The only one in the field that we ran was in Guatemala. We had a lot of large efforts. We had one called the Center for Trade and Investment Services, where the Private Investment Bureau came to us and wanted to know if we could provide research services for their helping U.S. businesses find work on commodities they could ship to AID projects. That was very large. We had 10 or 12 people physically moved over to that Bureau to work over there. We got a large contract from the Africa Bureau on something called the Leland initiative, which was to hook up 20 Sub-Saharan African countries to the Internet. But, actually what we were asked to do was to go out and do studies of the various countries in Africa to see whether or not they're capable of handling an Internet.

Q: This is the country again, not the mission?

BROWN: This was the country. These are institutions within the country. The mission was the control office, but the work was with educational institutions, consulting firms, research institutions. The idea was to find organizations within each country that could be an Internet mode and the missions would be able to capitalize on that expertise. That's still going on. They've established Internet facilities in several sub-Saharan African countries.

Q: What does that mean specifically? To have Internet facility in a country?

BROWN: That you would be able to have country institutions have access to local Internet providers in the country.

Q: What they call a server?

BROWN: Well, it would be similar to AOL. We would look at questions such as: can these institutions afford to pay the monthly charges to use Internet; what kinds of applications will the institution use; will it be work that is development oriented; and can it relate to what the mission wants to have done. We are trying to find ways to use world wide communication data bases that would help in the development process. We want the missions to do that. We did training. Part of the work that we've done in the past was to go to Jamaica and to Indonesia to show them how Internet facilities, how the data bases on the Internet, can be useful in meeting their strategic objectives. So that you would sit down with the environment group in the Indonesia Mission and show them what environment data bases are available for them, how they can use them and how it can help them in doing their strategic plans. I don't know if that's still continuing now, but it was a big success in Jamaica and Indonesia and we were looking to do it again in West Africa and looking for other possibilities when I retired. I don't know what has happened since then, but I still believe that the niche for DI now is in that area, not in providing research services any more. I believe that there's enough out there that a lot of people can be self sufficient. You might need some help in looking at AID experience, but if you want to go beyond AID, which a lot of people need to do, the Internet can be useful for you. No one in AID understands the content of the Internet, except DI people and that's where DI really could make a mark.

Q: Let's go back a little bit. What was the kind of information that you were collecting? What scale are we talking about in the DI operation that related to AID?

BROWN: We collected all the documentation that had any substantive reflection of the AID projects. Feasibility studies, design documents, evaluative documents, and some program documents. But, the idea was to try to present as much substantive information to a designer about how that project was designed and what happened to it as possible. I think what's happened since then, since the original concept of providing that kind of experiential information, was that the people in the field seemed to know more about it and also felt that a lot of the old projects were no longer relevant. They don't design the same projects any more. They don't even have projects any more. The activities are different. The subjects changed and the methodologies have changed a lot. Even on the medical side, the methodologies changed. So, they're more interested now in new approaches, what other people are doing, what other donors are doing and the

technology itself. I think that, in the last year or two, there have been more questions that way than there are questions about what is AID's experience in a particular category.

Q: But does DI still keep AID documents?

BROWN: Yes.

Q: What kind of requirements?

BROWN: Because there's still a requirement to have an institutional memory for the agency. Scholars use it for other purposes. Sometimes its useful in testimony on the hill that you might want to be able to show them. But, I don't know how much relevance it still has in the way it does its business any more. What happened over the last year before I retired was a new management system was created and a whole new way of designing activities and working with your resources that are available. It wasn't possible any more to find documents that capture the information the way we did it in the past. So, now you're going to have to design a whole new system to try to capture activities as it reflects the agency's strategic planning process which we don't have. It's still not been done.

Q: That would get into the Requirements Results Report Systems?

BROWN: No. One of the frustrating parts of this job was ability to get into the new management system design at an early stage. We kept trying and we were never allowed to even sit in the meetings where we would have an impact that meant something. They gave lip service, yes we know, we know, we know, but it was never thought of until now when they're starting to see that they can't get it? How are you going to get it. So, the office is really struggling with that. Now I understand that there is a change occurring that the DI office is being merged with the operations unit of the re-engineering group. That's the group that will be looking at the documentation of how the agency captures this documentation. Perhaps, by combining those two units it will --

Q: That's separated out away from the evaluation function isn't it?

BROWN: No. Well, it's separating that part of it out of evaluation, but it's still part of CDIIt's still part of the overall. It's just bringing in a fourth function, just adding it to DI or adding DI to it, but putting that into CDIE.

Q: What is this function?

BROWN: It's the operations element of the new management system that deals with all the documentation and notes collected. Larry Tanner is the person in charge of it.

Q: Give us some sense of the scale of the development information function as it changed over time. What are we talking about?

BROWN: We are talking about at the time we went in to the cost recovery program, 1990. We had maybe 20 research analysts working on the AED contract. It had gone up from 12 to 20 by

that time. Our budget had gone from three million dollars, well it was three million dollars a year in 1990. Once the fees began and the buy-ins began, the number of research of staff and librarian staff went up to between 50 and 60. The economic and social data staff went from three to 14. The clearing house pretty much stayed the same level. Total budget went from three million dollars to almost nine million dollars. It almost tripled. The ratio of the buy-ins and the fees that the Bureau pay are still pretty much the same, except what happened is that now it is reversed. At the beginning, the Agency, through PPC, was paying two-thirds of the operation. The rest of the Bureaus were paying one-third. Now through the buy-ins and fees, the Bureaus are paying two-thirds of the operation and PPC is paying one-third of the operation. So, if you look at it as I do, as a company, then the stockholders, the stockholders are now the Bureaus. DI works for the Bureaus, not for PPSo, PPC's interest, even though it's still there because they are paying a third, doesn't have the same weight as the rest of the Bureaus. The Bureaus now own it.

Q: Technically it's management is structurally under the PPC.

BROWN: Yes, still structurally under PPC, but the money that goes into it now really represents the entire agency and they owe it to the agency to serve them, because that's where two-thirds of the budget is coming from. What's missing is to have some kind of advisory group within the agency who could get their wishes and their priorities known to DThey are paying for it. We tried it a couple of times. We didn't get anybody coming to the meetings, but now, the Bureaus are questioning, why is it I'm spending this much money? What did you do for us? What did you do last year? The accounting has become very, very difficult. The guy who was my Deputy, Lee White spent hours and hours, months, trying to pull together all of the work we did for the Latin American Bureau or the Near East Bureau to show them what their money went for. Well, if we had an advisory group, we would be meeting periodically and they could see what was happening. It would be so much easier to run this operation. But, that hasn't happened yet. I think it's being considered again now. I've been asked to come back next Monday to talk about a new functional statement and hopefully, something like this might be created. I think that's really possible.

Q: Talk a little bit about the role of the research analysts.

BROWN: We went from generalists to specialists over the years. What we had when I left was several people who were environment specialists, several people who were health and population specialists; a couple of people who specialized in democracy issues. Oh, that's what Ann Williams -- forgive me for a minute to go back. Ann Williams wanted to set up an Africa Bureau Information Center. What she wanted was to set up an Information Center on democratization in Africa, only Africa. She had a scope of work and she came to me and said, "Here's the scope, do you have people that can do this?" So, we split it to show what we could do and what other contractors should do. We established that Information Center for people in the African Bureau on Democracy and Governance. It's probably expanded a bit now into wider use than democracy.

Q: Is it still under the DI?

BROWN: It's still under DI and it still works, fully funded by the Africa Bureau. That was really one of our most successful things. In addition, when the Democracy Center was established in

the Global Bureau, they also came to us and wanted people. So, we also have three or four people in the Democracy Center, another three or four people in the Africa Bureau. So there's eight people working just in the democracy area.

Q: What do these people actually do?

BROWN: In the Africa Bureau, one of them is an editor and they write newsletters for the Bureau. Another collects documentation to send out to the various missions about democracy activities, conferences, events that are going on. Another one is a research analyst who will answer questions in the democracy sector from Africa Bureau Missions who want to know anything from AID experience to where we're going or what other groups are doing, some worldwide stuff. The Democracy Center side focuses pretty much in the same area as the Africa Bureau, focusing on writing newsletters and trying to reach as many people throughout the agency, throughout the world actually, on what AID is doing in the democracy side. They don't have research analysts there as much as they have people who are writing. Democracy officers will send people out to conferences. They will send them into the field itself and work with people. One of the people that we had working on the democracy center was selected as an IDI. Her name was Michelle Schimpp and she ended up going to Haiti as a democracy officer. Another person we had working in the private sector was a guy named Scott Kleinber. He was also selected as an IDI and he also was sent to Haiti. Some of the research analysts got selected as personal service contractors. The education officer in South Africa is one of our former research analysts. An officer in Armenia is a PSC that came out of the economic and social data service group. So, these people are finding as they get known, they are being hired as personal service contractors or as IDI's or as contractors in the field. One person helped prepare a project design on a TDY in Egypt and then the company who won it ended up giving her a job in Egypt, so she left our office and went to work in Egypt. A research analyst's main job is to interpret, analyze and synthesize experience in a given project that they could give to somebody else or try to find out information in new technologies or in what other people are doing as a kind of information broker as a referral to other people who can be helpful. These are people who know the contractors, know who is doing what in the environment sector so that they can tell the AID missions about it. Research analysts also do a lot of traveling now, where they do things like I talked about before. How can we tell you about all of the data that is available to you in your sector so that we could work with you on developing your strategic plan. So, the research analysts are becoming more like consultants than the type who just sit back, get a request, answer the request and send it out.

Q: How would you characterize the change? How would you characterize the volume of requests?

BROWN: The volume of requests is cut back. We've gone from maybe 12,000 requests when CDIE originally was started.

Q: 12,000 a year?

BROWN: 12,000 individual requests a year to about 50,000 requests a year.

Q: 50,000 a year? I thought you said cut back?

BROWN: No. We went up to 50 maybe two or three years ago and in the last two or three years it's been cut back. We don't keep our records the same way, but my guess is we're probably between 30 and 40 now.

Q: Thousand requests?

BROWN: Yes. The differences are, however, the requests now are much more complicated and take a lot longer to do than they were before. The number of new projects have been cut back significantly. Activities are kind of one big activity covering many things and there may be one or two requests that come in over that.

Q: But, they cover more a sector rather than a project?

BROWN: They cover more sectors and they're harder to work on, because it's going to be a group of people having to do it. The number of missions has cut back considerably. It's hard to know. The new management system created lots of morale problems and people are not doing the same kinds of things they use to do. There are a lot of factors that go in to that. I would like to see an evaluation done this year; it's supposed to be done this year before the next RFP goes out on replacing the AED contract. Somebody has to sit down and figure out why this has happened. I don't really know. I have a lot of guesses, which I said, but I don't know why. Is it because the Internet is used more and the people out in the field have access to that information where they didn't have it before? Is it that through the Internet and e-mail they're able to ask other people to help them get information that they may know? I remember once going to Indonesia and I talked to the Irrigation Officer and I asked him, "Where do you get your information?" He said, "From my mom." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "She sends me articles about irrigation in Israel and she sends me newspaper articles all the time."

Q: She's on the Web?

BROWN: No. This was before the Web. She just mailed it to him. She mailed him articles. So, people have their own way of getting information. They have contractors who also have ways of getting information. It could be that people now understand how to get information more readily than they were able to in the past. Then maybe what they look for is interpreting AID experience, rather than this other information that's available for them on the Internet. Again, I can only guess what it is.

Q: What data bases do you connect with? Do you have more than just the AID information?

BROWN: Our staff has the developmental information system, which is basically the AID projects. All the AID projects and evaluations and attending reports with the projects. We also have the economic and social data system, which is a collection of data bases from the IMF World Bank, UNDP, UN Statistical Office, FAO of Statistical Information that relate to developmental, not necessarily AID. This is all economic and social data that our offices pulls in from all of these various resources and combines it in to a central data base that can be used by the agency. That's the data base that we used. All the other data is through the Internet. I don't

know which ones they use any more, but the data that they have to get information on a particular topic on --

Q: The USDA for example, did they use their information?

BROWN: I don't know. We used to have a RSSA with the USDA to provide technical information on agriculture. That RSSA was dropped many years ago. I don't know what they do. We have exchange agreements with the World Bank so that the World Bank was able to give us information one on one that was not available to the rest of the users, but that had limited use for us, as well. It wasn't good enough for us to be able to send out. Basically, the information that they use is information that you can get, along as you know what it is that you want and how to find it and how to interpret it when you get it.

Q: So, the research analyst is the key in the link of the process?

BROWN: Right. The research analyst now is really more again like a good reference librarian would be in the Arlington County Library. A good reference librarian and a subject matter expert person who understands the subjects well. Not so much an international relations person, but they have to know the AID program, because they have to know how this information relates to the AID program.

Alexander Shakow
Deputy Assistant Administrator, Program and Policy Coordination, USAID
Washington, DC (1975-1981)

A new role as USAID Assistant Administrator for Program and Policy Coordination - 1975

Q: Well, you move on then to PPC, as a Deputy Assistant Administrator.

SHAKOW: That's right.

Q: And who was the Administrator at that time?

SHAKOW: Well, the Administrator of AID at that point, was it Dan Parker or John Hannah? I guess Dan Parker came in 1973, I see, from your list here. It would have been in -- definitely about 1974-1975 -- so it was in Dan Parker's regime that I moved into the Deputy's job. As I say, when Lloyd Jonnes decided to retire, go off to study Greece and archaeology and all that stuff. So Dan Parker was the Administrator and Phil Birnbaum was the Assistant Administrator.

Q: What was your responsibility; what was the role that you played? We're talking about how many years?

SHAKOW: I was Deputy Assistant Administrator until the change of Administration, and when the Democrats came in 1977, and Jack Gilligan became the Administrator of AID, I was asked to

become the Assistant Administrator; Phil Birnbaum went to work on setting up IFAD [International Fund for Agricultural Development]. I guess I was a couple of years as the Deputy Assistant Administrator.

Q: Any particular issues that you had to address?

SHAKOW: We had to address every issue. That was the thing about PPC. In those days, PPC had the budget responsibilities, which I have told successive AID Administrators they would be wise to resume. PPC had not only the policy issues connected with the sectors in which the Bank worked; but the chief economist also worked in PPC. There was also the beginning of some of these evaluation functions that you know so well, an information function, the links to the United Nations and to the DAC [Development Assistance Committee] and the OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development], and so forth. All of that was part of PPC, but the key part probably was the combination of budget with policy.

The way I saw PPC, it was to be the honest broker on behalf of the Administrator for the work of the entire institution. This was the time of "New Directions" policies on the Hill. So, of course, we had a lot of responsibility to work with the Congress on defining AID's view of the "New Directions" legislation. Johnny Murphy was the Deputy Administrator at that time, and was very much involved with not only trying to keep the place running, but also dealing with the Hill. So we had all the issues that the Hill was raising about the directions of AID -- whether it should be going toward support of basic human needs or something like that, which was what the "New Directions" was all about, or the extent to which we should be dealing with the kind of program we have just been describing in Indonesia or some appropriate mix. Program support and large loans for balance of payments purposes were not considered by Congress to be a key feature of AID programs.

The Administrator, I felt, should be able to turn to the head of PPC, which in the formal rank ordering of AID officers was number three (based on the glory days when you had people like Gus Ranis and other really senior people as head of PPC, I'm sure) as the source of relatively unbiased judgment. For instance, should we take scarce budget money away from the Africa Bureau, where Haven North was trying to squirrel it away to support projects, or from Asia, or the central bureaus? So it was all the usual struggles. I don't think we solved any of them. But we tried to achieve a proper balance in the budget -- as, for example, between the amount spent on research, as compared to that spent on technical assistance in the field, and how it would divide up between the regions and the center. As for the regions, we introduced an effort built on World Bank experience. We tried to set up a reasonably objective set of indicators to give us a normative number for country allocations, based on judgments about the country's population, number of poor people, poverty reduction, improvement in policies, and so on. I know this drove you and others in the regions crazy, especially since this system, which we thought was very sensible to have, was constantly put in jeopardy. We might start with a budget that was 'X' and get everybody to do the exercise of figuring out what the relationship ought to be of a region's budget to that total. Then we'd go to Congress and they would cut AID by 40 percent. Then we'd have to go through the exercise all over again -- all in an effort to be more objective on developmental grounds and less subject to political pressure.

So, although AA-PPC was not an easy place to be in, it was a fascinating position. We were arbiters of the budget, although ultimately decisions were made by the Administrator. But PPC was in the position of digging away at it and coming up with judgments. We were the ones who had to work with OMB to try and establish support for that overall budget. At the same time, we were into major debates about policy. One that I remember, in particular, was on population. There was very strong support in AID for a direct population program; delivery of large numbers of contraceptives and other very direct methods, on the assumption that if you simply put enough contraceptives in enough places, that that would be enough to bring down the birth rate. I'm exaggerating slightly, but that was one side of the issue, as you know. We thought that that was very important, but that work was also needed on other aspects on the demand side, which included enhanced education for girls, improved health measures, greater access of information and better management and sensitivity to local conditions.

Q: Those ideas were prevalent at that time such as girls' education and so on?

SHAKOW: This was fairly ground breaking and PPC was a very active player. There were a certain number of people who understood this, and were supporting it. But in AID at that time, the strength was in the Population Office. That was where Ray Ravenholt, and his colleagues were just gung-ho and missionary-like in supporting this program. You have to give them a lot of credit. They did accomplish an enormous amount. While I was still working on Indonesia, we brought in a very good guy, Jared Clinton, to open the family planning program. He was sensitive to getting local support and getting local organizations, and even the private sector, involved in the effort. That program didn't just push contraceptives to the exclusion of other aspects, or have AID take over control of the program. In other countries it wasn't always like that. There were lots of stories of, allegedly, planes dropping condoms over Pakistan, and that kind of thing. But we had major debates in Washington over policy. We finally got through a policy which we was much more balanced, and then tried to get that introduced throughout the system.

Environment was just beginning to be important at that time. AID was way ahead of other aid agencies, although the World Bank had someone called an environmental coordinator beginning in 1972. Even when I got here in 1981, and not really until about 1985, was there real attention paid on a broader basis to this, when President Barber Conable came in. But in AID, we had the environment advisor in PPC and really began to do some interesting things in the late 70s, far ahead of most anybody else, I think. And food aid: we were trying desperately to do something about trying to improve the development impact of food aid. Then, of course, the standard argument was that when a lot of food aid in introduced into countries, it acts as a disincentive to production.

Q: Beginning of PL 480 Title III?

SHAKOW: Well, I think it led to Title III. I think Title III actually came in about the time I left, or it was being debated then. But we looked at all sorts of possibilities. We, in fact, worked with the Agriculture Department, and our colleagues in other parts of the U.S. Government, to try to come up with something. It became a little difficult to put too much emphasis on this, though, when Henry Kissinger in effect became the Desk Officer for PL480. We were talking about

doing things in a developmental way, and Henry Kissinger was looking for an easy way to find the equivalent of cash to hand out to politically important countries without much conditionality. So, while the State Department was in many respects a very good partner of ours, in other respects this kind of desire on the part of the Secretary for unlimited numbers of initiatives, and for being able to respond quickly to needs in developing countries, was difficult.

Q: Well, let's go back. You talked of this as a very creative, open and dynamic period. You were there when all of these things were initiated. Let's go back to the "New Directions." What is your recollection of the beginnings of that? Why did that evolve and begin to be a sharp contrast with what you were doing in Indonesia in terms of economic stabilization, for example?

SHAKOW: It really grew out of efforts on Capitol Hill which were in part derived from the writings of a few people in AID. I've always thought that the most significant changes that occur, at least in the government bureaucracies I know, and, in a sense, I think of the World Bank in that way, too, rarely come about solely as the result of terrific, intelligent, creative people inside the institutions just burrowing away with these great visions. Ideas very often start inside an institution or an agency such as AID. But it takes exposure to the outside, and then some push from the outside, to get them really adopted. And then you hear lots of people talking about the importance of AID becoming more focused; paying more attention to people; paying more attention to the social sectors; being more concerned with basic human needs as opposed to program lending, or large industrial projects, or big road projects, and so on.

Q: Do you have an understanding why that began to emerge?

SHAKOW: I'm sure AID had always been doing that sort of thing, going back to the beginning. But I think there was a kind of discouragement. First of all, that AID wasn't going to have unlimited resources; that there were other players in the game that were beginning to be much bigger. I mean, whether it's the World Bank, or others. AID had to be a bit more focused to be sure it did a better job at the things that it did do, as opposed to trying to do everything, and therefore not doing anything particularly well. There was also, I think, a good deal of skepticism that some of these big dollops of funding were actually very effective, and, you'll know better than I, whether there were some evaluation results, and so on, that would have suggested that. Certainly, I think, there was also a kind of resistance to the idea that AID was simply a political payoff.

Q: Was there some sort of reaction against the foreign aid program at that time that came out of Vietnam and all that issue. Do you remember some of that?

SHAKOW: You're right. There was a time that there was even some question whether AID would be funded, isn't that right? I've forgotten some of those details.

Q: You were there.

SHAKOW: Right. I've repressed them. But Indonesia was always going to get funded. On Capitol Hill the House International Relations Committee, or what I guess was still the House Foreign Affairs Committee, set people to work on the restructuring of the foreign aid program.

Their assumption was that it could no longer be funded the way it had been with this kind of open-ended, "we do everything", approach. You're right. You've reminded me of that. That it was time to restructure it. And this was all during, I guess, John Hannah's time. John Hannah himself came from a background which was devoted to, probably quite interested in, education and agriculture and technical assistance of a more traditional variety; probably he wasn't as sympathetic to big open-ended program loans, as I recall.

In any case, it really was the fact that AID was being seen as money down foreign rat holes; that the time had come, and particularly with the Nixon administration and others looking very hard at all this, saying what are we doing this for? The Congress decided to take their own look because they did not think that the Administration could come up with anything, and it probably didn't trust the Administration. This was a period when trust was not very high, as I recall. So there were people in AID who had been writing about this.

Ted Owens who had written *Development Reconsidered*, or what was the name of that book? It's somewhere on my shelf here. And that, I think, drew the attention of some of the people on the Hill who saw that maybe this was the one last great hope for the AID program. So you had Representative Clem Zablocki, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee for many years, and Jack Sullivan, who was one of the key guys there and later came to work at AID in the Carter Administration. And you had Charlie Paolillo, who had been working for Senator Javits of New York and then went to work for Zablocki, and others there. They started work on a long report entitled the "New Directions for Foreign Assistance," and it then fell to us to respond. As I'm talking, I'm trying to recreate all this. There was a major report from the committee, and the Administration was asked to come up with a response.

I chaired a group that pulled together the response to the "New Directions." which Johnnie Murphy as Deputy Administrator guided. We went up and testified quite a lot up there. The tension, of course, was between those who wanted to use the words of the" New Direction" to cover everything that AID was already doing, and those who saw it as really setting new parameters. And in writing this, of course, we had to try to balance all this and we needed to explain what the "New Directions" was really all about, define what we were likely to do and what we were not likely to do. There were extreme views among certain people on the Hill. Working for Senator Inouye, the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Sub-Committee on the was a staff member named Bill Jourdan whose view was that the "New Directions," (which applied to AID and not PL480) were to promote a direct link between the AID giver and the AID recipient.

Q: The people, not the government?

SHAKOW: Right. The ultimate recipient. He thought anything indirect was inconsistent with the "New Directions." So, for example, his favorite program was the Inter-American Foundation; it was small; it was hands-on, with an individual from the Foundation going and checking out some village in Latin America and supporting that activity. And that's what he thought all aid should be like. Which meant that life was fairly difficult for anything that was not as direct as that, as indeed most AID programs were not.

Congress used to apply all sorts of tests, as well. Jourdan's view on PL480, for example, was that Title I Programs were no good because in that case commodities are simply shipped in a large amount, given to an Indonesia distribution agency, and then put into the market system. No. What we had to do was make sure that AID was handing out bags of food to people directly. Even Title II wasn't direct enough for him.

That was one extreme, and we did try to deal with it, we argued against it, and there were others on the Hill, of course, who thought this was much too extreme. But it did mean that at the other extreme in AID there were many people who didn't believe very much in the "New Directions," who thought this was the approach that PVOs (private voluntary organizations), or other do-good organizations, should carry out, and that AID's real impact would come about through support of major investments. So what PPC was trying to do was bridge this vast gulf.

I haven't been back to look at it for some time. I do remember trying to write this in such a way that it would leave room for many of the important activities that AID would need to continue to do, even if it didn't quite match the less carefully worded language of the legislation.

Q: What was in effect left out, though?

SHAKOW: One of the questions was could you do major infrastructure? Part of AID didn't have very much money, but partly also there was this ideological view that AID simply ought not to be in the big infrastructure area. I guess typically in Africa we were not prepared to do railways, or we were not prepared to do highways. But we would do secondary roads or feeder roads, agricultural feeder roads, or something like that.

But everything was a struggle -- and then there were the Human Rights issues. During the Carter Administration legislation stated that AID could not support countries that were violating, or were egregiously violating, human rights. I've forgotten the precise wording. Only BHN projects (humanitarian or basic human needs projects) could be carried out in such countries. The same kind of language is being used now in connection with India and Pakistan, because of their nuclear tests. The U.S. Government will vote against such loans, or keep then from coming to the World Bank Board -- for example, major power projects or other such projects in India. So it is very much the same sort of thing now. But we did manage to keep a door open for a reasonable interpretation. And there was a major increase in the proportion of AID lending for family planning, population, health, education and other social sectors and a decrease, as compared to earlier years, for infrastructure.

Q: Do you recall the terminology that became part of the discussion, i.e., the 'poorest of the poor' versus the 'poor majority'? What was your view on that?

SHAKOW: Just as the extreme view about having to give food directly to the poor was what some people thought should be the qualifying criterion for aid eligibility, we, of course, said was totally impossible. The expense of doing that, aside from the ineffectiveness of doing it, would be ridiculously high. If we took the "New Directions" legislation too literally, and limited programs yourself to the 'poorest of the poor', then vast numbers of people who were appropriate targets for AID programs would be left out. We said, that, yes, the poorest of the poor were

important to try to reach, but they also were among the most difficult to reach and nobody had yet figured out how to do that very effectively. But if we excluded people who were just plain poor, of which there are very large numbers, we would exclude most of the activities that AID can do well -- and it would also not promote development very effectively. That was another thing we were trying to counteract -- these extreme views about who was eligible.

One of the other efforts that we tried to develop was the strengthening of our evaluation capacity, both during the time I was Deputy, and when I was Assistant Administrator for PPC. Doug Bennet became the Administrator of AID, and he was very interested in even greater assessment of the impact of AID's programs and projects. He introduced systems that made it easier to learn more quickly what the benefits were of AID-supported projects were. During that period the system of log frames and other design and evaluation devices were developed. One of the questions we kept asking was "who benefits?" We kept trying to determine who the beneficiaries would be of AID supported projects.

Q: Do you remember how the strategic planning process characterized who benefits, who should be the ones, who were the poor majority?

SHAKOW: I'm not quite sure how much of that I remember other than knowing that the crucial question, and the one that Bob Berg, then head of evaluation had, was "who benefits". So we kept pressing people in operations and regions of AID to keep asking that question. We kept looking for ways of trying to measure who actually would benefit. And every time a project came forward, we needed to be able to answer that question as best we could, recognizing that this was an imperfect system. That certainly did become, I'm sure, a great bone of contention as we argued who the beneficiaries were, whether a project was sufficiently focused on the poorest of the poor, and so on and so forth. Is there some aspect of this you're leading me toward?

Q: PPC, I believe, as I recall, was the main reason the African bureau was involved in developing guidelines to the field on defining the strategy for addressing the poor. In those guidelines there was an approach to the question of defining who the poor were.

SHAKOW: Oh, yes, yes. Okay. We did try to explain who might be in the poor, or who might not be in the poor, and what measures of per capita income, and all that sort of thing, using available data. When our people asked the Bank, they discovered that, of course, this was also a major effort in the Bank. McNamara loved to count up the number of people benefitted by Bank projects. When I came to the Bank, I began to see how those numbers were calculated. One of the first things being worked on when I came here was an assessment of how erroneous those figures could be, and how weak the original starting point was for many of those statistics. It was very important from AID's standpoint to be able to go up to the Hill and tell them, especially after the "New Directions" policy had been in place for a year or two, how many poor people were actually benefitting, and demonstrating how that was done. We had to report regularly on the impact of "New Directions" during the 1976-80 period at least.

Q: What was your impression of Congress's expectations of how fast or how quickly this was going to have an impact?

SHAKOW: The Congress had mixed views about all aspects of this. The strongest supporters of the "New Directions" legislation were members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, because it really had come out of that Committee. The Senate Appropriations Committee, for its own reasons, gave it strong support, but more because they were trying to cut AID programs. It's probably not entirely fair, but their interest was seen to be cutting back.

The authorizing committees in both Houses, that is, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House International Relations Committee, were both very strong supporters of this legislation. But the appropriations committees in both places were the ones who were much more hardnosed about it. Hardnosed because they were trying to cut the budgets back. But you could certainly play different committees off against one another; not that we were, of course, doing that. But it was very confusing. That's really more to the point, I guess, that the signals from Congress about this were very different, depending on the committee you were listening to. And while in a general sense, yes, there was great support when you got to specifics. Congress was very deeply engaged in the specifics of the individual programs, as you will recall, and then as now, I guess, every project must be described in the Congressional Presentation.

If we changed anything, or planned to change anything to drop a project or add a project, or even modify a project significantly, we had to go back up to them. That kind of pressure meant you were in and out of those congressional committees and dealing in particular with the staff members, over and over and over again. And those staff members tended to be real powers in their own right. I was mentioning Bill Jourdan before, but there were equivalents in these other appropriations committees. And we were constantly at their beck and call. I spent a lot of time working on the Hill. I testified a lot in my role as Assistant Administrator, and so I was talking with them all the time.

Q: Let's go off on that tangent a little bit. There are other areas to touch on, but how would you characterize your experience working with Congress? You were right at the heart of this period of transformation of the program and policy change and all that.

SHAKOW: Again, it's a mixed story. I found testifying before the House Foreign Affairs Committee to be a very interesting and stimulating opportunity, particularly for markups. I know you had to go up and talk about Africa before Africa's subcommittee. But my involvement was to talk with the committee staff on a fairly regular basis, particularly on the follow-up of "New Directions."

But going up to testify at markups where we'd be dealing with the entire spectrum of the AID budget was fascinating. Because on that committee, first of all, most of the members came to the meetings, and they stayed and they had, many of them, been there for many years. There were outstanding people like Solarz and Buchanan and Lee Hamilton. Lots of those who in those days found that this was an important committee. And they spent considerable time at the committee and knew the subject matter very well.

They would press us on important questions. They would get into interesting colloquies among themselves on important issues, and very thoughtfully debate them. So that committee I always looked forward to. Yes, you had to be on your toes, of course, but basically it was a sympathetic

group. The minute you get started on some of these appropriations committees, then it was hell, of course, because they were interested, I think, in cutting back the budget, in finding error, in putting people on the spot. They were not really terribly interested in the finer points of development, or even some of the major points of development. They had a target, which was, say, 60 percent of the total. Now, how are we going to get down there? So their job was to try to find weaknesses wherever they could.

Q: Do you remember who the chairman was?

SHAKOW: Well, you had Otto Passman, to start with, on the House Appropriations side. Then Doc Long. I mean, two people who were extraordinarily eccentric, at best. Some of their staff members were a little more reasonable, but you could never tell with these people if they were going to go flying off the handle. Doc Long on the one hand, was an economist who had written many books and taught economics, as he constantly reminded us. But he had very special interests, too. What was his...applied technology...something like that. As a result, a small institute was set up to deal with that alone. But in Otto Passman's case it was PL480 that was his great interest, because he was in a major rice growing area from Louisiana. I mean, these guys ruled the world from these appropriations seats, and if you didn't work out some deals with them, then you didn't get anywhere. Luckily, our terrific congressional people did most of the deal making. Like Dennis Neill before 1977, then Genta Hawkins as Assistant Administrator, who was there during the Carter Administration. There was a great deal of close collaboration between the congressional liaison office and PPC.

Q: What about the Senate side?

SHAKOW: When I first started going up to the Hill, there were some real giants, people like Hubert Humphrey and Jacob Davits. Both of them, as members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, knew what they were talking about. They were very involved with foreign affairs, very sharp, and they had great ideas. Of course, Humphrey had his proposal for bringing all the pieces of foreign economic policy together in IDCA [International Development Cooperation Agency], which passed just about the time he was dying. People like that meant there were very insightful members of the Senate.

The trouble was when we testified. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee was probably the best example of this. These Senators were in and out all the time. I contrast it with the House, where the members were there and were engaged with you, and would listen to what you were saying. Most of these Senators were there to tell you something. They came in, they spent ten minutes there, they told you what they thought, interrupted their colleagues and asked the same questions somebody had asked while they weren't there. So it was always much less satisfying on the Senate side.

On the Appropriations side, you did have, as I say, Senator Inouye. He dug in to this a lot and his staff members were constantly badgering us about one thing or another. They were most obviously worried about the operating expense account of AID, and would do whatever they could to cut back on benefits in any possible way. But they also were prepared to cut out aid to entire countries, and wanted as well to cut out whole sectors of AID programs. So on the Hill,

overall, it was a frustrating experience, with the exception of the House International Relations Committee. It is indicative that at least two of IHRC staff members came down and worked for AID, Jack Sullivan and Charlie Paolillo. Charlie became my deputy; Jack first, helped to manage all AID personnel decisions for the new Carter Administration team, and, then, became Assistant Administrator for East Asia. But working with the Hill was frustrating. But each year we got a Bill out of it, most of the time, even if it was only a Continuing Resolution!

Q: But the parallel with that, of course, you were the key person in the linkage with the State Department, were you not, on the budget decisions? To what extent did they try to impose on AID allocations by country or regions and so on?

SHAKOW: It was most different during the Nixon-Ford period. Then the State Department, particularly under Henry Kissinger, had very clear ideas about what they wanted to do, and State's views were, of course, highly politicized. It was not an easy time to be trying to put together AID budgets, which in the end the State Department had a very strong role in determining. The Carter Administration was very different and very interesting, in that Tony Lake, Head of Policy Planning, was our main link. Tony Lake was very close to Secretary Vance, and was not only his speech- writer in policy planning, but was also his key policy guide. There were constantly tensions about Security Assistance, which was a major responsibility of State Department, but we would try to adapt and twist and turn and even limit the size of the Israel-Egypt programs. In the end, the Secretary returned them to their Camp David levels. There were efforts even then which are beginning again now to cut back on those aid programs. But Security Assistance programs were obviously always a source of contention. Parts of AID loved the idea that they might get in under the Security Assistance blanket, because that was the budget area that tended to be growing at that time.

Q: And more flexible?

SHAKOW: And more flexible, of course. It was not covered by the basic "New Directions" legislation. And so lots of things were thrown in there. Everything from base rights considerations to an Africa fund of some kind, as I recall, in Security Assistance. But the distinction I was going to make was when Tony Lake became Head of Policy Planning. He was very easy to work with; in fact, he was much more "like us" than he was his State Department colleagues. I'm sure it was very difficult for him. He believed in development. He believed in the importance of country allocations that followed some sort of objective basis. There were times when budgets needed to move one way or another for foreign policy reasons, but he understood why it was important to know the objective starting point, then you could decide why you were doing something, rather than simply chucking a lot of money in the direction of a country because that happened to be our favorite that week.

We found Lake to be a very strong ally, and a strong ally especially with the Secretary. Deputy Secretary Christopher was also very good to work with. My impression was that, in general, we had very close working relationships with the State Department during that time, although I am not sure the Administration found it too easy. I think there were some natural tensions at the regional level, I guess, more overt than the ones we faced. But I found the working relationship

with the State Department to be a joy at that time. Partly because they did, indeed, respect what we were doing.

I was also in charge of the international organization account for UN programs, and so on, that came into the AID budget. So there was sometimes more tension on that than on the rest of the budget, because there we were in the position of cutting back programs that the State Department particularly wanted. Some of these UN agencies AID had nothing to do with, but we had to fit them within a much narrower budget mark that came from OMB.

Now there was a period when we got half way through the Carter period - after Gilligan left and Doug Bennet came in as AID Administrator - we had the creation, as a result of the Humphrey initiative, of IDCA, put another layer into the relationship.

Q: You were in your office when IDCA was created? What was your experience with it?

SHAKOW: I always thought the idea was very good. The original Humphrey idea, supported by a number of others who had promoted this idea at various stages, was that the U.S. international assistance programs were too diffuse with centers of power in Treasury, Agriculture, OMB, AID, State, and, perhaps, half a dozen other agencies. An overall czar was needed who would be able to bring a coherent policy together. Now you hear a lot of talk in DAC and elsewhere about how important it is to have coherent policies. Well, the proposal by Humphrey was that you put a structure around this, and you put in charge a person who would be the one to determine what the policies of the U.S. Government would be in its international assistance programs. This was very good theoretically, and sitting on Capitol Hill it sounded like the perfect thing. Then you could call on one person to tell you exactly what the U.S. Government was doing.

Q: And this person was to report to the President? Is that right?

SHAKOW: And this person was to report to the President. The problem was that, while you got the legislation, by the time it was put into place by the Administration all the powerful forces had managed to opt out. So Treasury managed to get the multilateral banks out of it. There was some fig leaf there, but basically Treasury remained in control of the MDBs; Agriculture in control of PL480, and these were the two big elements; and State Department was left in charge of Security Assistance. So when you came right down to it, IDCA was in charge of only one group of programs: AID and the associated parts of AID.I think they may still have had OPIC [Overseas Private Investment Corporation], and the trade and development programs.

Q: Peace Corps?

SHAKOW: Oh, no. Peace Corps was kept very separate. The head of IDCA, Tom Ehrlich, had come from Legal Services Corporation. He was a very good guy, a lawyer, but with no particular background in development. He tried to make it into something. He couldn't really do anything other than call meetings, which some people from other agencies might come to, but many didn't. I think after the first meeting nobody came, at least at the senior level. The only institution that he had real control over was AID. So poor Doug Bennet, having come in as Administrator of AID, and normally with responsibilities to the Secretary of State directly, and very often the

White House, found himself with another layer. Tom Ehrlich brought in a dozen very bright people and their job was to try to ride herd over AID.

One of their theories was, and its not entirely without sense, that the administrative costs of running an AID mission were very high, and when the program was very small it didn't make a lot of sense to do business that way. So, in their view, 20 or 25 AID programs, most of them in Africa, but not entirely, should be phased out quickly because they were not cost effective. If it cost two and a half million dollars to run a two million dollar program, that wasn't very sensible. That's logical and it was sensible to find other ways of doing this.

For the State Department this was horrendous, because for the ambassadors in these small countries, about the only thing they had to work with was the AID program and it didn't matter if it was small, at least they had something. So they unleashed holy hell and we spent a lot of time being caught between State Department and IDCA. IDCA technically was in charge of us, but in a lot of ways they were not. It was a constant struggle for Doug Bennet, because he wanted the kind of freedom that previous AID Directors had had, and yet he was caught. It wasn't that he didn't ultimately win most of the battles, but it was so enervating to have to go through all that, over and over and over again. For me it was really bad, because I was dealing with the budget, and whereas I had normally dealt only with State Department and OMB, now I had IDCA in there. They had their own, in my view, crazy schemes. So, in practice it turned out that it was only a duplicate of AID, essentially, without the resources and getting in the way of the really competent people.

Q: But the example you cite suggests that IDCA really wasn't addressing the broader question of development policy.

SHAKOW: Well, they tried to do that, too. In some ways helpfully, but it was just that we already had that capacity. So they were constantly on the lookout for things that they could do. It's already a question mark as to what PPC's role is in some of these areas, as you know well, when you have a big technical bureau as well. So policy questions have always been hard for AID to cope with. Who's in charge of policy? You had a group in PPC that was primarily made up of economists who were asking questions about policy in AID, whether it was population, or education or something of that kind. You also had a whole bunch of people in the central technical bureau who were educators or other skilled people, who thought they knew about policy. The issue on population, as I've said, was a real confrontation. In the end, I think that the best course won out. But it was always tricky. The minute you instituted a whole other group, looking to do the same sort of thing PPC was doing, it was utter chaos. So we spent a lot of time spinning our wheels and fighting ourselves, which was a waste of time at a time when there were many other things to do with Congress and all the rest.

Q: Any other area you worked while in PPC?

SHAKOW: Let me say a few things about the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), and then, maybe, since I did take a quick look at some of this old material, about the "New Directions." PPC was responsible for our relations with the DAC. There were a lot of DAC meetings where we defended the U.S. aid program to other donors. But more than that, I

think it's the degree to which AID was a leading partner, along with the other aid givers, in this organization. Of course, with the Americans in charge of the DAC, whether it was Joe Wheeler, Ray Love, Rud Poats, John Lewis...I'm trying to think back to those days. I guess I'm confusing it a bit with some of the people who were there during my World Bank days, but I've always thought that the DAC was a much-underrated institution. I guess that, when it started in 1960, it was seen as a more forceful outfit.

Q: What was your understanding of why it was created in the first place?

SHAKOW: In 1960 or '61, there was a sense that you needed to have more peer review of aid programs in order to increase the quality, or improve the quality and quantity of AID flows. The OECD was in existence (albeit with a slightly different name); the creation of a development assistance committee with a resident chairman and a group of representatives from all the major and some minor AID donors, was an interesting proposition. I don't remember exactly how it got formulated. It clearly was an opportunity encouraged by the U.S., to spread the burden on aid, and to get more and more donors involved.

By using the peer pressure of reviews of AID programs, you could, hopefully, raise the level of overall contributions to development assistance. Of course, at that time the U.S. was in the lead there, and the U.S. was in the chair, but lost out on that responsibility at the latest the elections. For many, many years, of course, the U.S. was the largest single contributor of foreign aid. It's now slipped a little bit from that in absolute terms. And, of course, in relative terms it's very much at the bottom of the heap. Whereas the aid goal the UN set for ODA, Official Development Assistance, to be .7 percent of GNP, the U.S., I think, at the moment, is at .07 percent of GNP. So, what's that? Ten times? Whatever it is, the absolute amounts are still significant, but the proportions are very small. But I think that it did serve a good purpose. The U.S. Congress and maybe the U.S. Administration has not taken it very seriously, and the views of the DAC, when they were critical of U.S. aid programs, were not instrumental in bringing about reversal of pressures to reduce AID levels. But for other countries, I think it has really served a useful purpose; in European countries, and, I think, even Japan, the fact that the group of peers were critical and encouraged action did have some impact. It gained more public attention.

Q: What you're saying is that it had really no impact on U.S. foreign assistance policy or practice?

SHAKOW: My impression is that, if you're talking about the peer reviews, that is probably right. I think that the working groups within the DAC, of which there were many, and in which the U.S. always played an active role, probably did have a good impact. Views came from other AID donors, some of whom had quite advanced programs and did very good work. Others were less good. There was a time, of course, when the U.S. was without peer in terms of the quality of its AID program, the size, and its diversity. In 1960, in 1965 even into the late '60s, this was true. But after awhile, of course, many of the donors began to pick up and the U.S. began to move into decline in this area. So, while we still had enormous resources and many skilled people, it wasn't in nearly as dominant a position. One could easily learn additional techniques from others.

You, I know, were active in the evaluation group of the DAC later on. That has turned out to be, I think, quite a useful source of information: a place where the U.S., along with others who have taken evaluation seriously, can promote understanding in other institutions. So there has been a lot of gain, I think, in lessons learned and experience shared.

Q: Do you think it has improved the quality of aid?

SHAKOW: I think it certainly has improved the quality of aid. Many countries, many donors, weren't very much concerned with quality. They were concerned with export promotion or other very narrow interests and took very little interest in how the resources were used, or coordinating with others, and so on. Aid coordination issues are still very much an area where there is a lot of room for change. My impression is that other donors have learned quite a lot from being put under scrutiny by DAC; that the findings and the conclusions of some of these groups led to joint statements that were issued by the DAC. Most recently, those statements focus on goals for the 21st century. They concentrate attention on five or six global goals, which have been adapted to individual country circumstances. All of that, I think, is just a very useful series of steps to enhance the quality of bilateral aid programs, and even multilateral programs.

Q: Was there any particular area of the AID operation that had a particularly significant impact that stands out in your mind?

SHAKOW: There were some. I guess I have not thought about that for awhile. I know the DAC had worked very hard on trying to emphasize increased in-country aid coordination. There have been useful efforts at trying to strengthen World Bank Consultative Groups and UN Round Table processes. We used, in fact, when I came to the Bank in the late '80s, a lot of DAC material to provide guidance to our own staff here in the World Bank on what lessons could be learned from experience on aid coordination, and the running of Consultative Groups [CGs]. Strangely enough there was no single office in the World Bank that had an overview of that. The closest thing to an overview was the Department I then headed.

Our staff member in Paris, who attended most of the Consultant Groups (almost all were held in Paris at that time) and the DAC, which maintained a watching brief on all of these and reported on them, reviewed every single one of these aid CGs. Now, of course, the Consultative Group itself is only, in a sense, the tip of the iceberg on the AID coordination issues. What goes on in-country, and what leads up to a CG, is very important. In this area there has been a lot of emphasis on strengthening local coordination. Working to strengthen the capacity of the government to take the lead on some of these things is important. This is now rhetoric that the World Bank and everyone else now espouse. You would think that much of this should be considered a given, that it isn't a complicated concept. Yet it wasn't something that many donors would accept, the idea that the AID recipient is at the center of decision-making and so on. And, of course, the problem is that very often these countries have not yet been capable of taking on those roles. The DAC, years and years ago, was talking about the importance of strengthening local capacity to do this, to take ownership.

Q: What about donor procedures?

SHAKOW: Procurement was an area of considerable attention and on that there has been some progress. The untying of aid became a matter of considerable controversy. The untying issue is a complicated one. There are donors who say the more you untie; the less you will have in the way of resources, that there is a tradeoff between quantity and quality. While no one will deny the virtue of untied AID, they will say that in practical terms if we untie AID completely, or as far as sometimes the DAC has proposed, or some members of the DAC have proposed, that will then result in a reduction in overall AID levels. That has been one of the arguments used in the United States.

Q: Was it an issue for the U.S., or did we go along or what? How were we involved in that?

SHAKOW: There were certain areas in which we were prepared to untie, but wholesale untying we were not prepared to do, as long as I remember. And, again, it was a case of volume versus quality. But if you look at what has actually happened over the years, a very substantial amount of aid has actually been untied. The Japanese went much further, at least on paper, in untying. There is some question as to whether the specs for procurement are written in Japan in such terms; so that inevitably, even though it is an untied program, much of the purchasing still ends up in Japan. There has been a lot of progress in many quarters for untying, so that a substantial amount of AID is now untied in one way or another. But, we are not there yet.

Another particularly important area was the debate about export credits and the degree to which aid could be mixed with export credits. The object was to avoid a situation where export credits were sweetened by aid. The motivation was really to promote export credits and exports, rather than development assistance. The commingling of those two has come under a lot of attack, and it has been severely constrained. There are now rules and guidelines that the OECD, through the DAC, has established. So these are among the things that the DAC has done.

It has been a place where an American, distinguished in the aid field, could travel the world and speak on behalf of AID donors. To press donors to perform better, but also to encourage developing countries to undertake sensible policies and programs, to work with each bilateral donor to see if there was something more that could be done.

Q: What about the areas that you were concerned with at that time? With the "New Directions", basic human needs and human rights, was the DAC a forum for those sorts of things?

SHAKOW: Well, certainly there was a lot of explanation then of what the "New Directions" program was all about, and the changing nature of the U.S. aid program. That was something that we would explain to the DAC members. In many respects, I suppose that served as a basis for other donors picking it up. Look around the world at many of the aid programs today, and at the World Bank for that matter. You see the concentration upon strengthening the social sectors, emphasizing more of a participatory approach to development. The importance of seeing the benefits accrue to the poor, and staying away from some massive infrastructure projects, and the strengthening of the private sector role. These kinds of elements, which I think were key parts of the "New Directions", are really very common throughout many aid programs around the world now. Not exclusively, but that is now much more the feature of them. In the early 70s or before

that, I would say, there was much more concentration on major, big investment projects and less on some of these other aspects.

Q: Did you attend any of the DAC meetings?

SHAKOW: When I was head of PPC, I used to go to defend or explain the AID program to the DAC. So, on a regular basis I did go to DAC meetings at that time. There were a lot of other meetings, which were more technical. These were attended by people throughout the agency who were specialized in these areas.

Q: Some people say that the DAC's usefulness was limited because representation, apart from the U.S., was largely local embassy people, who didn't really know much about development.

SHAKOW: That wasn't true. Most of the people at the DAC in Paris were permanent representatives sent from capitols. With rare exception these were people who came out of their development ministries or their aid programs. So it was a good forum for discussion among AID professionals. The quality of those people varied a lot, but there were periods when you had very, very good people there.

Q: Did you participate in High Level Meetings which the Administrator attended?

SHAKOW: Yes. On some occasions the Administrator didn't attend, and as head of PPC, I was the higher representative.

Q: How would you characterize those meetings?

SHAKOW: Again, they varied in quality. It depended upon what the issues were at the time. Some of these countries have very articulate and effective spokespersons, especially from those countries that take their aid program seriously. So it was, I think, a good occasion for the heads of aid programs to get together, whether they were aid ministers or the head of aid agencies.

The attendance at those meetings tended to be pretty good. So for a day and a half you were able to hear quite directly what the political problems were these people faced, or what was happening at the time aid was under pressure, say, in the United States, but going up in many other countries. You also got a flavor of how far some of the issues could be pushed, whether it was untying or human rights, or any other of the issues that were particularly controversial over the last 25 years. You heard the degree to which aid donors wanted to get involved in governance questions; how much they were willing to encourage developing countries to move along sensible paths economically.

The World Bank, UNDP and the IMF played an active role in these meetings, too. It was not just the bilateral donors that played very active roles. When I started going to some of these meetings with World Bank officials, people like Ernie Stern and others were going and making a very significant contribution. It helped to bring multilateral and bilateral AID together a bit more than it had been.

Q: One of the features of the DAC was the annual Chairman's Report, particularly the first section, which was a personal report. What has been the significance of that document in looking at it from the World Bank, which writes a lot of this material anyway? Was this a useful device in your day?

SHAKOW: I always found the Chairman's Report to be exceedingly useful. It was not so much because of those chapters by the DAC Chairman, although they were helpful in providing an overview of developments. But I found the most value was in the data provided on AID flows and the assessment of trends and directions on other donors, which was always useful for our own work. One of my decisions was to buy 200 or 250 copies of the Chairman's Report and make it available to every desk officer or equivalent in AID to make sure that everybody had access to this report. I'm sure that is not done anymore, but it was, I thought, a useful way to at least have it available to everybody. If you wanted a sense of what was happening in the donor community, there was no better source than the DAC Chairman's Report. As you say, it had an opening section by the DAC chairman, but the rest of it was prepared by the Development Cooperation Secretariat in the OECD.

Q: One of the other criticisms of the DAC was that it didn't really relate to the recipient country. Therefore, it was an internal debate of donors among themselves about developing countries, but not learning from them.

SHAKOW: It has been and still is a donor's club, just as the OECD is an industrialized country's club. That's changing now as they are reaching out to include countries that are in transition. Mexico and Korea and Turkey and Greece, and others, are now, some of them, members of the European community. So, the OECD/DAC is reaching out to countries that have grown quickly. But there is a value in having a place where donors can talk to each other and not feel inhibited in any way, other than by whatever normal inhibitions they may have had. There are other places to talk with the developing countries, so it was important to have this forum. Times are changing, however, and they need to continue to adapt.

Q: Any other dimensions of the DAC business?

SHAKOW: Given the decline in U.S. aid, other countries occasionally suggested that the DAC Chairmanship should go to a country that demonstrated its generosity more clearly than the United States. The U.S. might be a large donor, or maybe even the largest donor, but in terms of proportion of GNP it was certainly not in the lead. There were occasional efforts by the Swedes, and maybe others that they would like to take over the Chair. But I think the major deterrent was the fact that the house of the DAC Chairman had been bought by the United States; that house did not go with the job. If anybody else took over the Chairmanship, they would have to find a way to house the DAC Chairman. I think that ended up being quite a persuasive reason to allow the United States to continue in the Chair, in addition to whatever other reasons there might be.

I think on the subject of the DAC, that is probably all at this stage that is worth saying.

Q: Were there other dimensions of your work there that we haven't touched on?

SHAKOW: Let's go back for a minute to the implementation of "New Directions." Again, it was PPC that was charged with interpreting this "New Directions" legislation that the Congress had issued in 1974. During 1975, we worked quite hard in coming up with a full-scale report to the Congress on implementation of the "New Directions." We were trying to tell them both what we were doing, and how we interpreted it; to point out certain goals which we felt were either impossible, or were being misinterpreted, and so on. I mentioned last time this problem caused by the use of the word "direct", which often appeared in the "New Directions" legislation, and which might imply to some people that aid should virtually be provided by giving it directly to the poor person. Actually, of course, much of what AID was doing was indirect, through institutions in developing countries. We had to explain that kind of thing.

We also wanted to demonstrate that we understood some of the concepts and words that are thrown around so easily in the legislation, such as "participation", were very, very difficult. Ten, twelve years later in the World Bank we encouraged the Bank-NGO Committee, a group of Bank staff and nongovernmental organization representatives, to begin a program to understand how participation could be made to work above the village level. So a learning group was set up at that time, which took several years. Gradually the Bank has taken this on as a major preoccupation. But it is still certainly learning about it.

While we were charged in the "New Directions" with making sure that programs were participatory, in 1975 we were trying to explain that while we were working toward that, one shouldn't assume this was going to happen overnight. It's a fairly thick report in which we've detailed the approach we were taking. That was received quite well in the Congress. There was never any doubt that we still had a long way to go and many NGOs/PVOs, and others would, of course, push us and attack us. But I think that this study, done by PPC and presented to the Congress, on which the then Deputy Administrator, Johnny Murphy testified, was considered a very positive response from AID. The problem in getting it accepted inside AID, was, of course, one that we had to keep coming back to over and over again.

Q: I was going to ask about that. You're in a policy position and, of course, its one thing to have a policy and another to get it implemented. How did you find the agency responding to this? How did you go about making sure the agency took the policy?

SHAKOW: I don't remember all the details. But certainly we tried to publicize not only the "New Directions" legislation, but also the implementation report. We went around and talked to people. Regularly several of us would go around and do dog and pony shows, to try to clarify what was meant, and to indicate the responsibilities of various parts of AID to implementation of this. We had a group set up that was devoted to looking after implementation and pushing people in regions and elsewhere to follow through.

Leaving aside AID's operating expenses, each project, each program, had to be presented in a Congressional Presentation. We had that responsibility, too. To go through and make sure these descriptions of projects, programs, were consistent with the "New Directions" legislation. Or, if they weren't, to make sure we made clear why. We had to explain the functional categories that defined the five areas where AID would be allowed to operate. We worked on these definitions. Then we had to swap project proposals into those categories. Now some of them, one or two of

them, were broad enough that you could put a fair variety of things in. Others were quite specific in terms of education, health, nutrition, that sort of thing. And I guess that was another part of the way that Congress would be sure that we would implement this, implement at least in the sense that the proposals that would come forward for funding would fit within this overall rubric of the important categories. If we budget that way and describe them that way in the Congressional Presentation, we'd begin to get locked into these programs.

Q: Did you find the agency's field missions responsive?

SHAKOW: It was very mixed. It took a lot of time. We were going through all sorts of internal upheavals, too, because IDCA was established. My recollection is that by and large there was a favorable response, but there were still many places that did not, many staff members who did not, really understand what this was all about. Who considered -- who considered it, many ways, to be just a PR gimmick. I mean, infrastructure, for example. One of the implications of the "New Directions" legislation was that we wouldn't really be into infrastructure. But I do recall that in our report to the Congress on implementation, we made clear that you couldn't be dogmatic about that; that in Africa, infrastructure, whether we're talking about feeder roads or any number of other things, is crucially absent. While you might not need to do major highways in Asia any more, you needed to do certain kinds of things in Africa that would still be categorized under infrastructure. Within functional categories the amount of funding was limited. Congress often put a lid on these accounts as a way of sending a message. I think the Agency responded, but far less than would have been desirable.

Q: Well, any other part of your PPC responsibilities that we haven't talked about?

SHAKOW: Let's see. Where are we now? 1977-1978? I guess I mentioned that I did a lot of Congressional Presentation work. I did talk about that. We worked as the eyes and ears of the AID Administrator on budget and policy matters. We worked very closely with OMB in trying to get the budget through, and that was always a struggle and a trial. We had to fight those battles within the U.S. Administration before we would even get to the Congress. We also worked closely with the State Department; I guess I mentioned before that Tony Lake was a very good person with whom to work.

Q: Did you have dealings with AID agencies, Treasury, Department of Agriculture?

SHAKOW: Some dealings with Treasury. PL480 was a subject which gave us a great deal of contact with other agencies.

Q: Along with Title III initiatives?

SHAKOW: Initially Title I. I may have mentioned last time that Henry Kissinger turned out to be the PL480 Program Officer. We were trying to keep politics out of decision-making on PL480. We tried to emphasize the economic basis and a rational approach to its allocation, but that was hard with the State Department so deeply involved. But on this we worked very closely with the Agriculture Department that had its set of interests. OMB had its interests. Treasury even had

some interest in this area. It was a very interesting time because PL480 was an enormous resource.

We dealt with the White House quite a lot, and during the Carter Administration there was a figure in the White House who was very deeply involved in the AID business, and that was Henry Owen, an assistant or senior advisor to Zbigniew Brzezinski. He had been head of Policy Planning in State; had many interests throughout the world, particularly in developing countries, and wanted the Carter Administration to play a much more active role than had been played by AID in the past.

So, in effect, Henry Owen became the President's eyes and ears. and stick. on AID matters. And the other thing about Henry Owen that was quite unusual was that he had no compunctions about picking up the phone and calling anybody to find out information, or to ask for help, or to tell them what to do. So, I was frequently on the phone with Henry, who called, for example, about what could be done to get more resources into Indonesia before a visit by the Vice President, or how we deal with the Central American republics in terms of PL480. We had a lot of contact with the White House, because Henry was a very active person. In fact, he had a lot of contact himself with the World Bank at that time. He would engage World Bank agriculturalists, or others, in meetings with U.S. Government officials from AID and elsewhere. He almost single handedly was a bridge to many different parts of the U.S. Government. In fact, when IDCA was formed, the real coordinator of the international assistance program in the United States was Henry Owen, because he was sitting there in the White House and the President was giving instructions. Decisions being made on budgets and other things, and it was Henry who was always on top of all of that stuff. And as I say, he had no hesitation in making phone calls and getting things done. You probably got some phone calls from him in your day, too.

So there were a lot of interagency discussions of that kind. Now, of course, PPC, while it had this role with the outside, also had a very important role inside AID with the regions, and with the central technical assistance bureau, and elsewhere.

Q: You were reviewing all projects at that time?

SHAKOW: PPC people reviewed all projects. They reviewed all budget requests. Because we had the budget responsibilities, which no longer exist within PPC, that gave us a good deal of responsibility for helping to ensure that the policies that we were formulating (along with others in AID) were also being more or less represented by the kinds of projects that were coming up. Budget discussions with the regions were always difficult, but in the end our common effort was to try to find a rational way to present the Administration with something sensible. I remember, in fact, difficult discussions with the Africa region, because we always had our eyes on larger amounts of money than we ultimately received.

I think I said the last time we spoke that we tried to develop a rational allocation system, based on the size of the country, number of poor people, policy adherence, sound policy, something that here in the World Bank IDA uses quite effectively. Of course, IDA knows how much money it is going to have. In AID, we didn't know that. We would often find ourselves having to go back to the Region, and tell them that while we originally thought they were going to have five

hundred million dollars, the actual amount was only going to be $350 million or something like that. The problem we often encountered was that the regional views were that, if that was the case, they would shave all the projects rather than stop any of them. Grant funds could be provided that way, and the assumption was that the next year the additional funding would be provided as needed.

Through this process, late in my tenure in PPC, we had mortgaged so many resources, it was practically impossible to start anything new in the Africa region. The budget had been cut back sharply, but the projects were still going ahead. You and your colleagues had very little room to maneuver, as I recall. You and I had some discussions about that.

Q: That's right.

SHAKOW: And I think that's not a unique problem to AID, or to the Africa region. I've forgotten too much, but I've always thought that PPC was an extraordinarily interesting place to be and a very important function, if the Administrator wanted to use it.

Q: Did the Administrator use it in your day?

SHAKOW: In my day, certainly the Administrator did.

Q: With whom did you work?

SHAKOW: Well, I worked for Dan Parker and Jack Gilligan and Doug Bennet. I guess that was it during the period I was at PPC. Each of the Administrators used PPC in a way that I think was appropriate because this was the central place for budget -- except for the administrative budget -- and the central point for policy. Although, again, this function was shared with others and there was a little bit of tension there.

The Administrator of AID could look to PPC as a relatively unbiased, relatively objective source of information and guidance. Our views were not always accepted, of course, but on budget matters and on certain policy matters, I think we had more than our share of support. I hope, if I'm remembering this correctly, which I may not be, of course, it was because we were seen as relatively honest brokers throughout that period. Even though there were times when, of course, people were very upset because budgets were cut.

We also were responsible for the international organization account in the State Department, and worked with each State Department officer who was responsible for one of these very small UN agencies for which there were U.S. contributions. These were not assessed contributions, but voluntary contributions. These agencies would have a budget as small as a few hundred thousand dollars or maybe 30, 50 or 60 million dollars. Must be more than that, I guess, because we also had UNDP.

So there were about a dozen agencies and there was never enough money. OMB would always be trying to cut those back, so then we had to make these terrible choices: 750 thousand for this and a million for that. We had many more problems with these small amounts than with the AID

regions. This put an important premium on the PPC staff, working both in the budget area and in the policy area, to be really up on things. Otherwise, AID and State were not really getting value out of all this, and I'm sure in some cases many of you felt we were not adding much.

Q: Did PPC have any of its own projects?

SHAKOW: There were a few things. In those days this was discouraged, but we had taken over certain responsibilities, including -- although I don't remember when this was -- the evaluation and information functions. And also some of our people working in the sectors....

Q: Policy research.

SHAKOW: Policy research. So there were occasions when people thought that maybe we were biased, because we had to allocate money to ourselves, but we tried to be reasonable about that, and not excessive.

Q: But there weren't any especially significant enterprises in that area?

SHAKOW: I think that most of it was designed to provide support on policy questions. I used the example the last time of what we did on population. We really did want to open up the debate in AID on population. That meant that while we spent very little, I think, on policy-oriented research, it was important to get out on the table that it wasn't simply the provision of family planning services, and particularly contraceptives, that was the whole story, if you wanted to change the behavior of people. So there were some consultants used for that purpose. We also had the chief economist working for us, and there was a bit of work of that kind. I'm sure there were some very useful things that were done on the economic side, but I'm just not remembering precisely at the moment.

Q: Okay. Anything else about the PPC role, or we can move on to some broader questions.

SHAKOW: No. I think I've made known to successive AID Administrators that by taking away the budgetary responsibilities of PPC, it really diminished significantly the value of PPC to the Administrator. While a brilliant head of PPC can, of course, be influential in AID, it's a very hard role to play, if you're simply having to always come up with better ideas than anybody else does.

Q: But you still have to be able to implement them; you have to put them into effect.

SHAKOW: Yes, and the budgetary clout and what went on in trying to understand how funds were being used, and what they should be used for, is just a very important component of that. I think it ought to be tied to policy much more than it has been of late. I think that really has diminished the role of PPC and of PPC's Assistant Administrator.

Observations on U.S. foreign assistance

Q: Well, let's turn to your observations about U.S. foreign assistance. First, about the agency itself, you've already touched on a lot about it, but what is your impression of the agency as a development organization, at the time you were serving in it?

SHAKOW: The first thing, I think, that always impressed me was the enormous number of very talented people there. I came to AID in January, 1968. I was not there during the formation of AID, and even, of course, during some of the earlier periods in the 50s. I had studied this, and you know I had done work in the beginning of the 60s with Indonesia. There were a very large number of people who were knowledgeable about assistance programs, who had worked in developing countries, and who were very good at working with their counterparts. There were obviously some people who didn't fit that description, but it was a very impressive group, I thought.

I guess that over the years that quality has eroded, as the amount of resources available to AID declined. More and more time and attention was spent trying to address Congressional problems, or answer bureaucratic concerns. I remember Jack Gilligan saying that he thought that the rules and regulations of AID, most of which were imposed directly or indirectly by the Congress, were designed as if every member of AID's staff was a thief or a crook. You needed to be able to protect yourself against malfeasance. So, there were endless numbers of rules and regulations and controls put in. While that maybe did stop certain things that should have been stopped, it also, in practice, impeded the efficiency and effectiveness of AID programs.

There was emphasis placed upon the field missions. What I saw in the 60s in Indonesia, and in other places, was just very impressive. I think it has been very sad to see that decline. I suppose it is inevitable, as some of the older people left, and some of the problems just became so immense. One of the exciting things about the staffing of AID during the time I was there, and I'm sure its continued, is that it has benefitted a very large degree from the Peace Corps. There were large numbers of Peace Corps volunteers coming into AID as staff, many of whom had learned how to work well with their counterparts through the Peace Corps experience. That, I think, is one of the many, many benefits that the Peace Corps has provided the United States.

Q: Some people feel the agency was too process-oriented. Was too caught up in its own ways of processing, in programming, logical frameworks and all that sort of thing, and therefore was not really giving adequate attention to the substance, and to working with the country.

SHAKOW: Well, maybe it has become more so lately. It was not my impression that that was the case during the 1960s and early 70s. Of course, there were procedures, there were processes, people were always complaining about the bureaucracy, but it was very important to have methods of evaluating what we had done. AID was the first to really put in place some of these valuable evaluation systems; to establish benchmarks, to know actually what was happening. While I, unlike you, have not kept up with that sort of thing, I just think that was a very important part of this. If that is seen as process oriented, well, undoubtedly it could have been done in different ways. But my impression is that it was AID in one way or another, and particularly AID people in the field, who were at the cutting edge of many of the important new developments in how development was to be carried out.

You can go back, I suppose, and look at all the work that was done on health issues, on agriculture, on urban questions. Technical assistance was provided over several decades by American university people who spent their lifetimes working both in the U.S. and in the field. The AID programs had a very strong component of dedication and often great impact. I think if you look at the performance of a lot of developing countries over the years, the AID role is strong in that. Much less so recently.

Q: Viewing the U.S. foreign assistance program and AID's role and so on. Was there something unique about its contribution to the development business over the years, or not? You only mention a couple of those, but what else would you think was significant?

SHAKOW: Well, first of all, it was a global program. I guess that characterized it. Probably because the United States was the big power, and had an interest for foreign policy reasons in having programs nearly everywhere. And to the extent that that also meant there was learning taking place across these different geographic lines, it gave the U.S. AID program an opportunity to be both a better teacher, as well as, in a sense, a better conveyor of ideas from one place to another. No other aid program, I think, had that kind of reach. The resident mission approach was also a critical factor. There actually were a sufficient number of people in each country to carry out a program. Some people would say that there were too many AID people simply there to help the AID staff, to take care of the housing and all the rest. Maybe that is true. But the fact that there were large numbers of Americans working with counterparts was very important at the time that this was going on. Many of these countries did not have very much contact with the outside world.

I'll contrast, and I suppose I did this the last time, the Indonesia program in 1960, when it had a very heavy technical assistance component. There were 300 Americans there. The whole cost, I think, was 25 million dollars. In 1970, when we were very much into program lending, balance of payments support and PL480, it was 300 million dollars with only 25 Americans. But it was very important early on to have a lot of these Americans there, working in different fields. You could say maybe that was excessive, and in some countries the numbers diminished and gained more focus, so it wasn't quite so disparate. But that, I think, was certainly an advantage of AID in those days.

What's really interesting to me at this point is that when I first came to the Bank in the early 1980s, I couldn't understand how the Bank could accomplish all its goals operating from Washington. So I went around and talked with people here and was told it was very important not to have these large field missions, because people would go native, they would become agents of the government, they would become a crutch for the government, and so on. So the Bank didn't really buy into the notion that had led AID to establish these very significant resident missions.

In the last year and a half, the World Bank has radically moved in the direction of putting people into the field, with Headquarters' people and local people, of which there are now, of course, many more who are capable of working in these programs. So in the Bank we see total reversal, a substantially changed approach. We now have something like 22 country Directors in the field with the responsibility for running those country programs, essentially real resident missions of

the kind AID used to have in the field, and which now AID has very few of, I guess. And this is because the Bank has now concluded that it can be much more effective in working with governments if it is there, on the ground. I came in 1981, so it is now 15 years later that the Bank finally came around to what AID was pioneering and doing very effectively many years ago.

Q: What about some of the sectors or technical areas? Where would you think AID's role was particularly significant, or of the U.S. foreign assistance program?

SHAKOW: Well, if you go back far enough -- and I remember when I first came to AID and began working on Indonesia -- it was AID that was responsible for helping to build the big fertilizer plants, and some of these other significant investments, which in places like Korea and Indonesia and elsewhere were very important. So I wouldn't diminish the importance of that. AID had quite a lot of resources, working with the World Bank and others who could put this kind of program together. Later that became less important, partly because the World Bank was there with larger amounts of money, and AID began to focus more on the social sectors and some other areas.

I think AID led the way in these sectors, particularly when we moved to the period of the "New Directions" legislation. AID had begun, in the early '70s, a lot of investment in human capital. The World Bank's 1980 World Development Report stressed the importance of education, health, nutrition, family planning and so on. These were areas in which AID had been central, and a lot of the learning had come from that. A lot of the experienced people who came to the World Bank, in fact, were people who had cut their teeth in India and elsewhere working on these subjects.

The Bank was able to capitalize on that. I suppose, for a while, it was U.S. experience, expertise and knowledge that was predominant in virtually every field in which AID worked. That's one reason we had all these field missions filled with people in technical assistance and agriculture. The emphasis upon the revolution in rice production and other things, while it came from IRRI [International Rice Research Institute], a lot of the work was being done by U.S. agriculturalists in the field, whether they came from the University of Kentucky, or from some other American universities. They were part of the USAID program and carrying the message out. Virtually every field you touch, it seems to me, AID could probably claim at an early stage to have been the promoters.

They then fed into the World Bank and the Bank picked up and became, with more resources, very dominant in that area. But even in some areas you still think of the U.S. as being the most effective. Recently, I guess, that has been much less true. In looking at country strategies, and working with countries to develop strategies, there has been coherent approach. We probably talked a lot better game than we actually implemented. Partly because we were working in a number of areas, partly because we were less prone than others to be simply pushing exports from the United States, unlike some of the other AID donors. It meant we had a better chance at agreeing with governments on priorities, and knowing what the left hand was doing when the right hand was doing something else. Now, again, this may be an overly rosy view, because I'm sure a lot of mistakes were made. But I think we were sensitive to those kinds of issues in AID, and we kept on asking those questions. We always railed against the Congress, of course, because it was a pain in the neck.

I don't think, as I was saying last time, that we would have had this emphasis in the AID program in the mid 70s, in fact, we may not have had an AID program in the mid 70s, if it had not been for some farsighted people in the Congress who picked up on what some even more farsighted people in AID saw as important ways for us to make our contribution. I think one of the problems with the AID program today or recently has been that they haven't been able to really focus very much and that has been a lot harder for them.

Q: Turning to another dimension. Of course in your role in PPC, there was this interaction between U.S. security, political/interests and development objectives. Do you think that those security interests and the pressure behind them help or hinder the development process? How would you characterize the interrelationship of the two?

SHAKOW: I guess, offhand, I'd have to say it hindered the development process. The determinations of allocations under the Security Assistance program were not made on the basis of development priorities. They were made for political reasons. I'm quick to say, as I said a little earlier, that the U.S. foreign aid program is an expression of U.S. foreign policy and one always has to keep that in mind. That's why I think it is important to have both bilateral and multilateral programs. It is in the U.S. interests that there be multilateral programs which are designed and developed without reference to political interests of the United States. But it is perfectly fair that the U.S. should be able to allocate resources to places where it is important that the U.S. Government have an influence. Now the Security Assistance programs are obviously the most overt programs of that kind and justified on that basis.

We spent a lot of time trying to influence the allocation of resources to Israel and Egypt after political decisions were made about those sums. We worked very hard to see if we couldn't change the nature of that relationship so that any reduction in these massive programs that had been decided on political grounds could be undertaken without seeming to be losing respect for, or indicating a lack of love for, these particular countries. We sometimes got a little move in that direction, but we never got very far. Those AID programs today, in Israel, Egypt, a few other places, are still of doubtful impact for those reasons.

Base rights were always one of those things that made life complicated. Because there were big AID contributions to bases in the Philippines, for example, we tried to make clear that these were to be programs solely for political purposes, and we should not even pretend to try to make them developmental -- get them out of AID's budget, put them in the Pentagon's budget. But, no, efforts were made to mix these two to pretend to do something developmental; the political priority was clearly there, and we had no choice about it. The Pentagon didn't want them in their budget, as it would enlarge their budget. They were in the Security Assistance budget, and that is where they stayed. Probably State Department wanted to keep them, too; I've forgotten the details. Anyway, there were years in which obviously there were tradeoffs between Security Assistance and Developmental Assistance. When you come right down to it, the bottom line on foreign aid included these pieces, as well as a few others. And so there were struggles with the State Department at that time on trying to see what we were prepared to propose, and then there would be arguments with OMB on how the ultimate amounts were allocated.

I suppose Egypt was probably the best case where there was a very big program. In the case of Israel, there was no real effort at development at all. I mean, that was just writing a check. But Egypt was a country in great need of development, and without substantial resources. We had a very big mission there, as you know. So everything was 'projectized' or in one form or another was designed to be a development project. The only problem was the total amount was known in advance to the Egyptians. It was obviously very difficult for the AID people in that country to be very tough about negotiating terms, if everybody knew that in the end that they'd have to concede that the full program was going to be delivered no matter what. We made some inroads. I think I told you that people like Cyrus Vance and Warren Christopher and Tony Lake were interested in making the most effective use of some of this aid. But, frankly, I doubt that we really accomplished very much from a developmental standpoint.

Q: Was that also happening in the Developmental Assistance category?

SHAKOW: We were allowed more latitude. I guess there was a time, and this is an area you know better than I do, when there was some Security Assistance to Africa, too. You worked very hard to make that useful and substantive and so on. I've forgotten exactly how we came out on all that. On the Developmental Assistance side, the State Department had little influence on how that was used, as I recall. We were battling among ourselves, and we would have to go up to the Congress and present details about every single project. The State Department came into it when they wanted to influence overall allocations to countries. And I mentioned, I think, the time that IDCA wanted to eliminate certain countries. It was State that insisted that their Ambassadors needed some money in these countries, and so we couldn't cut then out. But, by and large, the number of cases where there were fundamental arguments with the State Department on country allocations were relatively few and far between.

Q: And were there specific projects that they wanted done for political reasons?

SHAKOW: Not very many. I don't remember any overt cases of that kind. I'm sure there must have been some things that they were pushing, but for the most part, no. I think they did visualize the country allocation amounts as being particularly important.

Q: Did you travel around to these countries?

SHAKOW: I traveled to some. I can't remember exactly where I went, but I certainly did travel around and saw some things in the field. Not as much as I'm sure you thought I should have, and as much as I would have liked to, because there were too many things going on in Washington. But PPC staff traveled quite a lot, and the budget people and others were going out to the field to at least get a flavor of it. So they were not totally "bean counting" types.

Q: Looking back over the years, and we're talking now about the U.S. foreign assistance program, did it make a difference? People are always worrying about impact and people go back and say, well, we don't know where all that money went, we don't see any impact, it just seemed to all go down that proverbial rat hole and all that. We can't see any evidence that U.S. assistance made a difference. How would you respond to that?

SHAKOW: I think that's completely wrong, of course. We're always frustrated by not seeing as much progress as we would like, and there is no doubt that certain things that money was invested in have ended up rotting by the roadside, or not being sustained. But if you go back, and you think about what the world was like in 1960 or 1955 or 1950, for many of these countries, and if you think about what it would have been like without U.S. leadership on getting some of these programs started, the contribution is great.

I mean, just take the family planning programs. Probably the U.S. has been the leader in introducing the importance of information and adequate understanding of the issues and provision of supplies, and all the other aspects of family planning, to address population programs. And while certainly the growth population of the world has still been significant and continues to be, it is so far below where it was before, or where it would have been without any interventions. You don't have to get into debate, with Julian Simon and others, about the importance of this. Certainly the limits that have been placed by families, by couples, on the size of their families, has been an enormous contribution in just making it possible for the standard of living, and the welfare of surviving children and families, to be much, much better.

You start looking at the statistics and the data on level of nutrition, and child mortality, and a lot of other things. It seems to me that was a very important part of the AID effort. Now it is not AID by itself. It is AID working in concert, of course, with the governments, with UN agencies. Certainly some of the kinds of things UNICEF was involved in when Jim Grant was there. A lot of things of that kind. But AID was there right at the beginning, whether it was family planning or focus on health or education. I think the world has seen enormous strides in those areas. There are certain countries that are still far behind. I mean it is pathetic the degree to which education -- particularly for girls -- has not been attended to in places like Pakistan. But there are a lot of cases you can look at in terms of these social sectors, the investments in some of these is very substantial indeed.

I think we all look with some concern at what has happened in Korea recently. But Korea is a case where even when I came to AID, it was a basket case, not quite like Bangladesh, but people were calling it one, I think, in about 1963. And then you saw what happened there, and I think AID, particularly, was heavily responsible for the support that it was able to give and substantial amounts not only of technical assistance, but financial assistance, that helped put them on the track.

Intellectually there just isn't any question that the American contribution and thinking about development, and approaches to the issues, were paramount, in the 60s anyway. And, again, some of those people came to the World Bank. So some of that moved over into the World Bank and AID, perhaps less so, and the Bank more so, whether it was people like Hollis Chenery or Ernie Stern or other people. But they all cut their teeth with AID, in the 60s particularly. And Indonesia, which is now in a very depressing state, certainly a lot of the changes that took place there AID was deeply a part of. And I think if you look around Africa, where there are successes, though there are not as many as one would want, AID has been a part of that, too.

Q: Of course, we think a lot of the earlier projects were successful when we were active and they looked like they were doing their thing. But they weren't sustained. What were we missing? What were we not doing? What did we miss in the process of our assistance program?

SHAKOW: I guess what we argue today is that projects done in isolation from sensible policies don't work. I think that you can exaggerate that point too much. In some cases AID was, of course, working on policies. In Latin America, I guess, some of these program loans were designed to improve policies. I don't know that story too well, but to an extent. In the end we learned (and maybe it is strange that we didn't realize all this at the same time, but it comes from experience) about the importance of the mix of attending to human capital development, human resource development, family planning issues and so on. At the same time, you're trying to get the policies in place that permit people to actually carry these programs through, their investments through, and sustain them, taking more and more responsibility upon themselves. But it seemed to be in a lot of those areas AID was doing some of those things.

Q: Were we worried very much about what they now call governance, about the political processes in the country?

SHAKOW: I'm trying to think back to Indonesia in the early 60s, if we go back that far. It was not thought very much that AID donors could impose their will on the politics of countries at that early stage, although what was driving things was the Communist menace. So the U.S. was prepared to put a lot of money into Zaire, and elsewhere, when it really didn't make sense to do that, because it was crucial for political reasons. So I suppose from that standpoint everybody was a little bit behind. Even today there are arguments as to how far you can go for that sort of thing. So I suppose that's right, but there are changes that have to take place from inside the countries and they couldn't have been taking place from the outside. I doubt that if AID had simply held off putting money in, it wasn't going to change the world at that stage. I don't know. But every one of these countries needs to be looked at carefully, and on an individual basis, as you know better than I do. Some took the initiative themselves and others failed to.

Q: Any other general observations you'd like to make about AID or the U.S. foreign assistance program in your experience?

SHAKOW: Not at this stage. I think I've probably talked too much already. For me, personally, it was a terrific experience. AID treated me very, very well. I had a wonderful time. I had a chance to move from working on a specific country which was very exciting to me, and very interesting, at a time when it was just really moving up the scale from a disaster; to taking on all sorts of interesting new approaches; to being responsible for this really fascinating bureau of policy, and having an overview of the entire system. So I learned an enormous amount from that, and am very grateful to AID for the opportunity to have done that.

Phillip Ely Church
Office of Agriculture, USAID Bureau of Science and Technology
Washington, DC (1981-1987)

Q: What was your USAID assignment in Washington, DC?

CHURCH: I headed up the Agriculture Policy Division of the Office of Agriculture in USAID's Bureau of Science and Technology. I had essentially two large projects to oversee with a staff of six development economists. One that was already in place was a global farming systems research support project implemented by the University of Florida. The project aimed to spread the farming systems research "gospel" to other USAID country programs, particularly in Africa and Latin America. The other was a new economic policy reform project initiative to support USAID country programs aimed at getting governments out of intervening in agriculture markets with subsidies and price controls.

The two projects built very nicely on my personal overseas experience. They also were very complementary. For example, USAID evaluations were revealing that it was futile to put money into agricultural research, if there were price controls that discouraged the very crop production that the research supported. In some cases, which really alarmed us from an environmental standpoint, we found farmers were removing forests on steeper and steeper hillsides because subsidized fertilizer made it profitable to cultivate these marginal lands. However, with the trees removed, the hillsides were subject to erosion and the lower valley irrigation systems were filling up with silt from that erosion. Subsidized inputs were promoting agricultural practices that were degrading the environment and were not sustainable. Working in Washington provided the opportunity to bring together two themes in my career, sound market incentives and appropriate agricultural technologies.

Q: The policy project, where was it the most active and what were the most important breakthroughs you felt you were able to accomplish for the project?

CHURCH: The major challenge in the policy area was demonstrating convincingly the consequences of pursuing policies that actually were counterproductive. I mentioned earlier fertilizer subsidies in Bangladesh. That certainly was one. Price controls on basic food crops were a second concern. Many developing countries feared that without controls, the prices of urban food supplies would soar. More than one government has fallen by popular protests over rising bread prices. Our challenge was to show that relaxing price controls would increase incentives to produce more, which in turn would act to dampen the effects of any price increases in the long run.

Most of USAID's economic policy work in agriculture was directed toward input pricing issues: low interest rates on farm credit, subsidized prices for chemical fertilizer, pesticides and irrigation water. There were three goals there. One was a fiscal goal to keep governments solvent by reducing budget-busting subsidies. A second goal was to provide resources to assure efficient input delivery. For example, free water often meant that irrigation systems weren't maintained for lack of operating revenue, and cheap credit meant that rural banks eventually went bankrupt and closed down because they could not cover their operating costs from their small interest rate spreads. Third, was the goal of equity. Subsidized fertilizer, for example, most often went not to poorer remote farmers but to the richest farmers with the most local power and influence.

Q: Any particular country where you found this receptive or was it hard to tell?

CHURCH: Our challenge was first to educate USAID field missions to these realities, then to help them win over their developing country counterparts. In many cases, USAID missions were taking the expedient approach of helping governments subsidize fertilizer or credit to get farmers to use them. While this produced some results in the short run, it was not sustainable over time, nor did it reach some of the most needy of farmers. I will grant that it is hard to distinguish between the impact of our project and the impact of budget realities, but either way, these inputs are subsidized much less today than in the past. And governments now have in place the capacity to better assess just who is benefitting from these services and who isn't.

Q: Do you have an example of those things that worked?

CHURCH: I pointed already to the Bangladesh fertilizer experience. There were others: reduced use of subsidized credit in the Dominican Republic where USAID introduced a graduation scheme for moving farmers to commercial borrowing; in Indonesia USAID participated with other donors in promoting integrated pest management (IPM) as an alternative to unchecked use of subsidized pesticides.

Q: What did you find were the principal reasons or factors that worked against making these policy changes in agriculture?

CHURCH: A lack of clear information to determine cause and effect certainly was a factor. USAID has not really invested much in measuring the impact of the policy changes that its programs have fostered, particularly in agriculture. USAID mission staffs were rewarded for how fast they could get program money obligated and funding pipelines drawn down. Less recognition is given to what programs have accomplished, partly a result of the fact that by the time impact is evidenced most mission staff have moved on to other country assignments. So, little time and attention is given to gathering baseline data and monitoring the progress of projects in terms of the impact on participants. This is one of the things the policy project attempted to do... to measure and document some of our program accomplishments. We funded case studies of particular initiatives that USAID had implemented over the years to determine just how much of an impact they had. We made up for the fact that most agriculture projects seldom included sufficient funds to benchmark and track the impact of their activities.

We weren't always popular for the conclusions we reached from these impact surveys. It's never easy to tell a USAID project officer his or her program is not producing desired results, or worse, that it is further aggravating the situation because, say, big and rich not small and poor farmers may be benefitting most from our support. We comforted ourselves, though, in knowing that we were helping to make it harder for people to make bad decisions. Of course, USAID funded programs for political, often "cold war," reasons at the time. At least we could help those making such decisions by demonstrating what economic and social costs of such programs might be. As a result, I think we did prevent some bad decisions from being made, and we did stop USAID from dumping money into some of these programs that were not sustainable, that were not reaching intended beneficiaries.

Q: You also directed USAID's global farming systems research program. Approaching it on a global basis, is there anything particularly different about its characteristics?

CHURCH: One thing I found interesting was the receptivity to the farming systems research methodology in Africa. It was not all that popular in Latin America, perhaps because the region already had more developed, and somewhat entrenched, research establishments in place. In Africa, where research systems were less mature, farming systems approaches appeared more welcome. Also, in Africa there is no dominant crop in many settings. So, as a necessity you almost had to address a variety of farm crop and livestock enterprises in order to have any impact.

Q: Do you have some examples or instances where it took hold?

CHURCH: You see it more in East Africa in places like Kenya, in Malawi, in Zambia, where agriculture research programs are built almost exclusively around a farming systems approach. It certainly isn't widespread among developing countries, but where there has been a concerted effort over a sustained period of time, I think it has led to an entirely new type of institutional framework that probably will prevail. But in Africa, agricultural research, like most development efforts, takes a long time to evolve into something substantive and sustainable.

Q: Were there any other particular lessons or themes that have come out of farming system research work apart from those we have already talked about?

CHURCH: Well, my sense is that the Agency, in its current configuration with smaller staffs and more limited budgets, could do better by pursuing these kinds of agricultural research initiatives through already existing international frameworks like the international agriculture research centers. I would argue that sustaining an international research network to carry out some of these programs in developing countries is probably more effective than attempting to mount these kinds of initiatives independently in every country where USAID has field missions. We might provide some country level support through training grants to send people to the centers for skills upgrading and to integrate our U.S. land grant agricultural universities into the global research system. I'd even encourage USAID to leave logistic support for vehicles, equipment, etc., to the international banks to fund. I think USAID is probably better positioned to support agriculture policy work than it is to work in food crop production technology development and dissemination.

Q: In your work with farming systems research over the years, were there any common findings from the research or lessons that stood out for you no matter where you did it?

CHURCH: Farming systems research is very site specific. That is perhaps the only common theme right there. Research must be tailored to the particular setting and resources. In my view farmers, even poor farmers, apply their own version of the scientific method of hypothesis testing. They constantly test to see if new seed or different cultivation practices work better than before. We don't give small farmers the credit they are due in their roles as "applied scientists." The only difference is they must live from their experiments. Farming systems research, where I've seen it applied systematically and conscientiously, has achieved significant returns through farmer involvement in the process. It takes a longer time to get reliable results and the results may be very location specific. Still, while scientists could double crop yields in experiment station trials in less than half the time than to do so in farmers fields, there is no guarantee that experiment station results will work as well in the real farming world.

There are a number of benefits from this approach. It gives the researcher a better understanding of the realities of farming. It also gives farmers a more immediate opportunity to draw on and respond to what works and what doesn't work. Granted, it may slow down the research process and introduce a lot of variables that make it hard for a scientist to talk about the qualities of a new variety or a new practice. Application of the scientific method to field trials is also more complicated in a real world setting. It may draw out the results, but at the same time you may get a better product. So there is a trade off there, time versus reliability versus reality.

The willingness of a donor agency like USAID to stay the course is also important. If a donor is not willing to support this type of research activity for at least a couple of decades, it should not begin in the first place. USAID and other bilateral and multilateral donors have funded an impressive international agricultural research and genetic resources infrastructure out of the green revolution and fears of global famine in the 1950s and 1960s. It is a system that has proven that it works. It warrants continued support. There should be a clear awareness that these programs are essential to global survival to assure that we have the best knowledge to meet the next challenges to come be it a new generation of crop disease or pest or changed environmental conditions.

…Q: After that you came back to the U.S. What year was that? What was your assignment?

CHURCH: I returned to the Unites States in the fall of 1991, about a year after the Gulf War ended. During the evacuation period when I was working in Washington, D.C., I learned about USAID's plans to expand the Agency's evaluation work under the Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination (PPC). John Erickson at that time had just come in from the field where he was Mission Director in Thailand and Sri Lanka I believe, to take over PPC's Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE). He was interested in building USAID's capacity for conducting global impact evaluations of country programs in an effort to distill lessons that the Agency might learn from nearly 30 years of overseas economic development assistance work. He offered me a position in CDIE's evaluation office heading up a new series of impact assessments of Agency environmental programs.

So I came back to Washington where I spent the last five years of my USAID career. In retrospect, it was a good way to wind up an interesting 25 years of USAID international development work. There aren't many who have the opportunity to spend the last few years of their career in the Foreign Service reflecting on some of the broader development challenges.

In all my years in USAID, I never worked in what I call the last step of the project cycle - evaluation. Anybody who comes into the agency understands that the Agency works through projects. In its simplest form, the project cycle has four steps: 1) analysis of the problem; 2) design of an intervention to correct the problem; 3) implementation of a program to solve the problem; and, 4) evaluation of the results.

We actually organize a lot of our daily living around this project model without being aware of it. When I've trained new development officers in project management, I have used the example of

going to the movies. Whenever we go to the movies we first look at the papers and decide what movies are playing, where and at what time. That's Step #1, information gathering and analysis. Then we came up with a plan -- who's going, in whose car at what time, dinner before or after, etc. That's Step #2, design and development of a plan. Then we put that plan into practice; we go to the movie and dinner and enjoy ourselves. That's Step #3, implementation of the plan. Afterwards, we sit and talk about the evening - did we really enjoy the movie; was it too crowded at the time we went, could we have gone at a different hour at a cheaper price for a better seat, etc.. That's Step #4, evaluation. The project cycle is something we do unconsciously on a day-to-day basis, and in development work we do it the same way on a much larger scale.

USAID evaluation work is really fascinating. It's applied research. Unfortunately, USAID project evaluation, because it is left till last, is too often left out of project work altogether. When I arrived in USAID's evaluation office, the Agency was getting serious about better evaluation of the impact of its programs partly because Congress was pressing USAID to demonstrate that foreign aid dollars were producing results. Accountability was becoming a key concern across the entire federal government and particularly in U.S. foreign assistance programs. The disintegration of the centrally planned economies of Central Europe and the breakup of the Soviet Union had removed the pretext for giving money to developing countries to win friends in the "cold war." As we moved into the decade of the '90s, we found a great deal more attention was being focused on whether our programs were having an impact on intended beneficiaries - were crop yields and farm incomes increasing and for whom as a result of our assistance. So USAID needed to come up with much sounder and objectively obtained evidence of the impact of its programs.

Project and program evaluations became a very critical component of development assistance activities in the 1990s. It was a fascinating time. There was so much more information available about the impact of USAID programs than when I joined the Agency two decades earlier. First, however, we had to come up with a sounder evaluation methodology than the Agency had employed in the past, partly because we were being asking more difficult and pointed questions. For example, the question of attribution - the extent to which we could trace a change back to assistance provided by the U.S. government through USAID - was complicated by the fact that the Agency was not the only donor in many country programs. To what extent could we find USAID's fingerprints on programs in which the Agency was only one partner?

Another issue was the question of effectiveness. Did USAID pursue the best approach in coming up with a result? Could it have saved money or time by pursuing another course of action? For example, USAID programs to encourage food production offer several strategies for achieving that goal - investing in research and technology, funding production credits, training extension workers, encouraging better market pricing policies. But which is the most cost effective way in a particular setting? The last few years I was with USAID, I had an opportunity to contribute evaluation methodologies to measure results and document the Agency's experience for future generations of development assistance officers.

Q: Describe a couple of those evaluation studies and how you carried them out.

CHURCH: We started off by looking at programs in what we called "sustainable agriculture", that is, small farm assistance programs that wouldn't lead to environmental degradation. For example, USAID's subsidized fertilizer programs in the past had made farming marginal lands profitable. But the result often was cultivation on hillsides that were prone to erosion and in the long-run to lower crop yields. Such agricultural programs were not sustainable. We conducted several evaluation case studies of more sustainable approaches to food production that USAID had sponsored. We looked at programs in the Philippines, The Gambia, Mali, Jamaica, Thailand, Sri Lanka for answers to questions as to how farmers had succeeded in developing production systems through inter-planting of soil-retaining trees and food crops, where they could both provide a livelihood and conserve the land in steep hilly areas. We also conducted a series of studies on conserving biological diversity through USAID support for setting up parks and protected areas in countries like Nepal, Madagascar, Jamaica, Thailand, Costa Rica, and Sri Lanka. Our goal was to identify ways to protect biological resources in situ, as part of protected national parks, while at the same time providing a livelihood for members of communities in and around those areas who previously had made a living by hunting, farming, fishing or logging inside those protected areas. Our objective was to find ways to provide alternative sources of income from national parks by converting hunters into tour guides and loggers into nature lodge employees.

One of the most salient findings of these studies was that success is directly tied to the degree in which local individuals and communities were involved in the development program. USAID is now doing a lot of this in the environmental area where we are concerned about conserving biological diversity and villages around parks and protected areas. If we don't include those affected when setting up a wildlife refuge or protected area, they are going to continue to cultivate crops, fell trees and poach animals on the land. Where we can engage local communities in planning and managing protected areas and involved them in opportunities to generate income from nature tourism and that sort of thing, then our programs have a much better chance of success.

The findings of those studies have since made their way into program guidance for USAID and its development partners. Each of these global evaluation studies synthesized conclusions across countries and have come up with recommendations for project and country level activities that are environmentally more sound than practices followed in the past.

Q: Were there any particular issues or experiences you picked up in trying to do these kinds of studies? We can see the reports and by reading them we can get the content, but in the process was there anything you learned?

CHURCH: The process of doing evaluations is a mixture of both art and science. The scientific method still applies. Sampling must be statistically sound and measurement biases must be avoided in collecting data. There is a lot of science involved in identifying representative projects and selecting representative project participants. If we cannot do that, we cannot extend our findings to the broader population of projects and settings where USAID works.

But there is also an art involved. The art begins when a USAID country mission is approached and told that one or more of its projects have been selected as part of a global program evaluation.

USAID mission staff can be a bit apprehensive when somebody calls them from Washington and asks to come out and do a study in their backyard! USAID/Washington visitors inevitably place demands for time and resources on a USAID field mission. Evaluation finding potentially could either help or hurt the mission's future programs. Working with a field mission becomes a delicate diplomatic process particularly when you tell them you are coming to do an objective assessment of programs that have gone on for some time and may be an integral part of the USAID mission's country strategy.

On occasion we have wanted to go into a country at a time when the mission was trying to negotiate a new project with the government. We'd call and say we'd like to come and talk to government officials and visit old project sites. When you come from Washington and you are identified with USAID, you are perceived as part of the negotiation process whether you intend it or not. Even traveling on our own resources, working independent of the missions, renting our own transportation and office space, we still are identified with the USAID mission in the country from the standpoint of the government and locals.

Another challenge is how to conduct meaningful global program assessments with limited budgets, time and staff. Assembling teams quickly, doing the field work in a matter of weeks and putting out a report in time to move on to the next country and study requires a lot of orchestration. Looking at agriculture and natural resources programs was particularly demanding because it involved travel to more remote areas of a developing country. Traveling in the rainy season where roads are closed or blocked and it is hard to get through imposes a physical restraint on your ability to move to a large enough number of sites to get a representative sample of data that will produce a result with a confidence level high enough that people won't question the validity of what you have been doing... these are the realities we faced when doing evaluation work. Add to this, training people to follow the same methodology in different parts of the world and selecting evaluators that can get around in different languages and you can begin to appreciate the challenges that evaluations face.

Q: How did you come out on the issue of attribution?

CHURCH: In the last analysis attribution is not really the issue. USAID's most vital development strategy is "leverage." The ability to put a small amount of money into a program to leverage the use of large amounts of local resources in a more effective fashion is what the development process is about. The challenge is know how to use a small amount of development assistance to get people to do things differently and better... whether or not USAID gets credit for making things happen. This is particularly true at a time when USAID budgets and staff are shrinking and the Agency is being asked to do more with less.

If we can posit a "plausible association" between the provision of USAID assistance and development results we should be content. For example, over USAID's 30 years of economic assistance in Costa Rica, a country which has "graduated" from USAID assistance, there is a strong plausible association between USAID support and the strides that country has made on all development fronts. We can directly attribute to USAID assistance the emerging fresh vegetable or cut flower industries that Costa Rica has today. We can point to loans we have given, agribusiness loans, technical assistance, training and whatnot to those programs to the

agricultural sector in the country, but it is hard to separate out USAID's assistance from other donors. Over the long run with the level of activity and the support that USAID gave to the country, we are justified in saying that there is a plausible association between what USAID contributed and the changes that have since taken place.

Q: Any other aspects of your work in the evaluation business?

CHURCH: The Agency's evaluation work afforded the opportunity to identify new directions to follow after ending my USAID career. I maintain an active interest in evaluation work. I think it is the overlooked area of development assistance. USAID's senior management appears now to recognize the value of sound evaluation and results. USAID management never constrained the evaluation work we did or asked us to modify the findings.

Remember, the Agency runs evaluation work from the Policy and Program Coordination (PPC) Bureau, which reports directly to the USAID Administrator and serves to provide unbiased information to Agency senior management. Because of where they are based in the USAID organization, evaluators are about as popular as auditors. In fact we viewed ourselves as "development auditors" in some respects, not always a popular role to play in the Agency. But, I think for those reasons, we have produced quality findings and lessons learned and quality products in which development practitioners can have a high degree of confidence that they provide some useful, constructive, and unbiased contributions to improving the state of the art of development assistance. For me an ideal way to wind up a 25 year career with the Agency was spending those last few years pulling together the USAID's experience base as a legacy for future USAID development officers.