

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project
Foreign Assistance Series

JUDITH GILMORE

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Initial interview date: March 2, 2018
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This oral history transcription was made possible through support provided by U.S. Agency for International Development, under terms of Cooperative Agreement No. AID-OAA-F-16-00101. The opinions expressed herein are those of the interviewee and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Agency for International Development or the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training.

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INTERVIEW

Q: Today is March 21st and we are very fortunate to be speaking with Judy Gilmore, Judith Gilmore, who has had a long and distinguished career at AID (Agency for International Development) and has done some very interesting things afterwards. But Judy, let's start at the beginning. Tell us a little bit about your background, your childhood, basically how you came to international development?

GILMORE: I come from a family of judges and lawyers. My father and brother were lawyers and then judges, and my mother was trained in the law although she never practiced. So rule of law, justice and fairness were all values that I was exposed to from an early age. The international perspective began with my learning languages, first French in high school and then Spanish in college. I was a French literature major in college, and my visits to France to improve my language skills opened up the whole international arena for me.

Q: Let's just go back to the beginning. Where were you born?

GILMORE: I was born in Portland, Maine.

Q: Okay, Maine, down-easter.

GILMORE: Down-easter, yes, a long time ago. I have lived in the DC area most of my life.

Q: And you went to high school there?

GILMORE: I went to high school there and then I went to prep school at Walnut Hill in Natick, Massachusetts for a couple of years and after that to Wellesley College, also in Massachusetts. I had been hired by the NSA (National Security Agency), but at the last minute after a summer working as an interpreter, I declined the offer and came to Washington, DC to enter a program in translating and interpreting at Georgetown University. This program was international and one of the best in the field. A few years later, I started a Master's in Latin American Affairs at Georgetown's School of Foreign Service.

Q: So, you also had Spanish?

GILMORE: I had both Spanish and French. My French was fluent enough to be an interpreter, but I really didn't feel that my Spanish was good enough. So, I went to Latin America, Colombia, because of its reputation for excellent Spanish and enrolled in the Universidad del Valle in Cali. I lived with a local family for four months and took courses in economics. This was the mid-60's, the time of Padre Camilo Torres' revolutionary movement, a mixture of socialism and Catholicism. I got to meet Padre Torres through a boyfriend, who was a convert to his revolutionary theology.

The contrast between this friend and my group of women friends in Cali, who belonged to the country club yet didn't want to go out in the sun, was quite striking. I split my time between the country club set and my student friends so I got to experience firsthand the kind of disparities in wealth and philosophy that existed in Colombian society at that time. I also got to travel with Congressman John Brademas' delegation when he came to Colombia, which exposed me even further to these differences. This is kind of a cliché: you see for the first time contrasts between the haves and the have-nots and that impacts you so strongly that you change the goals of your career. Well, cliché or not, that is exactly what happened to me.

At the end of my stay in Cali, my Spanish was greatly improved, and eventually I did pass the UN interpreting exam in both languages, but I never followed up. I decided what I really wanted to do was to get into the field of economic development and work internationally. I did feel that this was where I could make a long-term commitment and hopefully a contribution...

Q: Right. Well, the time you were from Maine probably wasn't very diverse.

GILMORE: No, not at all.

Q: So, you hadn't really been exposed to the kinds of extremes that you're talking about in Colombia.

GILMORE: It was a real shock for me, absolutely right.

Q: Yes. Well.

GILMORE: And even at Wellesley, as you know, it was not as diverse when we were there as it is now.

Q: Absolutely.

GILMORE: So, this was a real eye-opener for me. I don't like to talk too much about it because everyone says the same thing. However, in my case, it really had a tremendous impact.

Q: Right. Well, because too, in the '60s it was an exciting time in the U.S. and there was a lot of activism around civil rights and against the Vietnam War and it was the time the Peace Corps was getting going, so you don't have to apologize for it; that was part of the new you.

GILMORE: It was a heady time, and I was happy to be back in DC. The OAS, the Organization of American States, was starting a new initiative called Integrated Projects, funded by European countries, but for Latin America. They needed someone who could do correspondence in English, French and Spanish. I was hired because I had the required language skills. The OAS was my first full-time job, and it was challenging to work in a Latin environment. Just getting out of administrative tasks into something more professional was extremely difficult. I had to rely on my boss to give me special assignments or to let me do his work, which was often the case. The other problem was how women were treated more generally, especially single women.

Q: Did you come up with strategies for dealing with that or did you have protectors?

GILMORE: I just ignored it. Also, I felt I needed to adapt to Latin American cultural norms if I was working there.

Q: Right. So, looking, yes, looking back at it-

GILMORE: It was interesting starting off my career in the Latin American milieu. From the OAS, I was about to get a position with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in 1967. It would have been a great job, a truly professional job.

Q: Right. So, they were hiring women at that time?

GILMORE: They were hiring women, yes. I got married in 1967 and moved to Geneva, where my husband, Rick, was getting a doctorate at the Institut de Hautes Etudes Internationales. So I didn't accept the position. I ended up working at the International Labor Office (ILO) in Geneva.

Q: Was it difficult to find jobs internationally?

GILMORE: Well, I had hoped to do a "license" in French, which is like a Master's in French literature here. Because I was a foreigner, the University gave me this incredibly hard exam; it was really tough. And even though I was a French major, spoke fluent French, and had written many term papers in college, I didn't pass it. Instead, I found an entry-level job at the ILO as a local hire, and I worked there for three years.

Q: What was the job?

GILMORE: It was in the Office of Rural Vocational Training.

Q: Really?

GILMORE: Of all things, I knew nothing about rural vocational training. But it was such a good opportunity. I was put in an office with a team of people: a Russian, an Italian, a Belgian, a Frenchman, who was the head of it, and a Swiss woman, who was in charge of women's issues. Why she was in that office, I can only guess, but I was able to work with her in addition to my other duties. This was my first introduction to "women in development," which remained with me throughout my career. And there was a coterie of fellow Americans working there, all junior professionals.

As for my regular functions, there were three that I can remember. I did a great deal of interagency coordination with UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations).

.Q: Coordinating on projects?

GILMORE: Not so much projects but organizing interagency meetings and conferences. I did a most of the research work. I didn't actually do the vocational training; the staff did that. I was the backup for research and report writing. While I was there, 1967 to 1970, the ILO was already doing basic human needs under the rubric of their World Employment Plan (WEP).

Q: Oh, right. So, this was before the change in the legislation?

GILMORE: That was before the change in the legislation here in 1973. The ILO was in the forefront of this new approach to development. I got to work on those issues, which helped to prepare me for when I came to AID in 1973.

And finally, as you may know, the ILO is made up of workers, employers and governments, three streams, and every year they have a conference. My last year there, I was asked to be part of the secretariat for the conference. It was great to get so involved in everything that the ILO was doing at the time, especially the WEP.

Q: So, in a sense your early career started in the multilateral arena. Can you compare, say, the IDB with the ILO or contrast it later with AID in terms of how it worked? Not too many people go in the direction that you went starting at the multilateral and moving to a bilateral program; it usually works the other way.

GILMORE: That's true. I was so junior at the time it's a hard question to answer, especially because the cultural context of each of these organizations was so different. The OAS was very Latin, and controlled by Latins, while the Americans were minor players. In contrast, the ILO was very international in flavor. Staff came from around the world. The headquarters was in Geneva, and the secretariat was primarily western. David Morse, an American, was the head while I was there.

Q: Did you ever think that you might just continue your career in ILO or in the UN agency realm?

GILMORE: I don't know, Ann, if you were career-oriented early on, but I definitely was not. If I look back at my career it all seems very nicely organized from the beginning, but it really was not. I didn't think ahead, I didn't plan, it just kind of fell into place until I got to AID. Then I started getting more serious. Before then it really was more haphazard, and I was lucky that it fit together in the end. So, to answer your question, I hadn't really planned anything specific. As a matter of fact, when we came back from Geneva and we were buying a house, I turned down a more expensive one because my income would have had to be part of the mortgage calculations. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do employment-wise then. As it turned out, I worked for 40 years with only a couple of months in between, even with children. But at that point I hadn't sorted things out and was too afraid to commit to a mortgage, based partially on my income.

Q: Yes, mine was different, but I certainly understand because at that time there weren't that many people, women, in the professional ranks and still the expectation was that you would stop working when you had children and might go back after they've reached high school.

GILMORE: Or maybe after the children were in elementary school. That was the expectation. And I remember, even when I started getting professional, with recognized positions, people seemed more interested in the dinner parties that I gave rather than my work. Of course, that changed over time, but in the early 70's dinner parties were what mattered. I even baked French bread from scratch!

Q: Right. But you had this experience early of being taken seriously as a professional at ILO.

GILMORE: Yes, and even at the OAS because I was doing some of the work for my boss. He was happy for me to do as much as I could. And I did a lot - drafting reports and developing projects, which gave me experience if not exposure.

Q: Right, even if your name wasn't on it.

GILMORE: Even if my name wasn't on it, and I wasn't paid for it. I would grab all those opportunities to learn, yes.

Q: Right. Well, so after ILO?

GILMORE: Yes. After ILO, we returned to the States with a new-born baby girl and a Saint Bernard.

Q: A baby and a dog.

GILMORE: We bought him when he was a little ball of fur, and by the time we left Geneva he was close to 150 pounds.

Q: Oh my gosh.

GILMORE: And that's another story in itself but not related to my career.

So, I got back to the DC area and found a job with Oxfam America. As you know, Oxfam is a renowned NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) in Britain, and it had just opened an office in the United States in DC. It was in DC for about three years before moving to Boston, where it is located now. There were three staff people and volunteers. I was recruited to manage all the project work. It was during the Bangladesh crisis, and I can remember answering a phone call during the lunch hour when everyone else was away from the office. My job was not to raise money per se, but I knew the program well so I could answer most questions. I picked up the phone, and the person on the line asked me what Oxfam was doing in Bangladesh.

Q: Did you work with refugees?

GILMORE: The internally displaced and the refugees as a result of the sectarian violence, some say massacres, in East Pakistan. This was a horrible time for Bengalis until Bangladesh was created. I explained what we were doing, and we talked for about half an hour. At the end of the phone call, the person contributed \$50,000, which was our biggest donation to date. I was so excited because I am not a fundraiser, I don't plan to be a fundraiser, and yet we got this unbelievable donation. I was really thrilled about that.

Q: Right. You're lucky you didn't get then pulled into more fundraising because you were so effective.

GILMORE: There is a realization, more and more today, that you have to have substantive knowledge of a program to raise money.

Q: What was it like to be basically a foreign NGO with headquarters elsewhere?

GILMORE: Well, it was good and bad because we were totally dependent on the UK headquarters for funding. Essentially, we had to do what they wanted. On the other hand, Oxfam had affiliates around the world working with local NGO partners. I traveled often and got to visit development programs in many different countries and sectors. This was a tremendous educational experience for me.

Q: How did you manage that with a young child?

GILMORE: My husband was also in the international arena, and he traveled as well so we agreed that we would not be away at the same time. But what I discovered was that, in the earlier part of my career, travel assignments were longer, involving evaluations or reports, which required more time in the field. When I got higher up, the visits overseas were representational and could be much shorter. It was difficult to be that far away, especially when communication was so expensive. There was no internet then. Instead of phone calls, we actually wrote letters. I still have most of my letters.

My husband was on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at this time and was in charge of many hearings for the Multinational Subcommittee. His first hearing where he had right of counsel was rudely interrupted by an emergency phone call from home. Since I was away, Senator Dick Clark had to cancel the hearings for the day, and Rick went home. I have never heard the end of that one.

GILMORE: The one trip I remember is a trip to Latin America and, this is very funny, we had a guinea pig at home. We had just bought it for our daughter and kept it in the basement. I was visiting a health project that we funded in Peru.

Q: I know where this is going.

GILMORE: The community had organized a picnic lunch to welcome us. It was very generous and festive, and I felt I had to eat to be polite. I couldn't tell what the meat was and didn't dare to ask. I had an awful feeling but ate it anyway. Afterwards I asked someone what I had just eaten and was quite dismayed to hear that it was guinea pig. I wondered how I was going to tell my daughter about this.

I mentioned that a negative for Oxfam America was being so dependent on the UK. Let me expand on that. I thought it would be helpful for us to register with AID as a new NGO in town.

Q: And you needed that if you were going to receive U.S. Government funding.

GILMORE: Funding, yes. AID had a registration process for NGOs, a prerequisite to receiving funds. Being proactive, I took the initiative and got Oxfam America registered. I was so pleased to report it to the UK; they were furious.

Q: They didn't want anything to do with the U.S. Government.

GILMORE: It was during the Vietnam period. The independence of the NGOs was a critical issue, especially in the context of the foreign policy that was being conducted at the time. Oxfam UK insisted that I deregister their organization because they did not want any relationship with the US government. By then, I had been introduced to John Ulinski, who was the director of the NGO office at AID. Oxfam America was up for significant funding. We had submitted two unsolicited proposals, which were well received. One was a new concept on the role of women in development. No one was doing anything then in this area; my ILO work on women helped me with that. And we did a proposal on collaborating with local institutions as partners. Again, we were ahead of our time.

Q: Right.

GILMORE: This was very discouraging to me as Oxfam America could have had the resources to undertake some very innovative work. So the proposals were shelved ... until I got to AID a few years later.

Q: Yes. That at least has changed.

GILMORE: That changed, it did change over time. But that was kind of a revelation for me, and it made me think, well, maybe I never really want to work for AID. Frank Coffin was deputy administrator of AID at the time. He was from Maine and was a friend of the family. One evening, he invited me out for dinner. I remember telling him that I would never work for AID. I was still naïve enough to be able to say those things to him. He was a good friend and just laughed. He had the last laugh when I finally did come to work for AID, although after his tenure. I still cherish the book he wrote on AID.

GILMORE: Anyway, that's Oxfam. It was a wonderful job. I learned a huge amount about working with local institutions, about NGOs, and how they functioned.

Q: Did they do advocacy work on the Hill at that time?

GILMORE: Another large part of Oxfam America's portfolio was development education, which again was very new for what NGOs were doing at the time. There was a staff person and several volunteers working on advocacy-type activities. Indeed, it was because of the development education program that Oxfam America decided to move to Boston. The advocacy was geared to universities and schools, not so much to the Hill.

Q: Early, yes.

GILMORE: Yes, 1973. Before the move, one of the last things I did was to represent the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) at the UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) meeting in Chile. It was a very exciting and really interesting assignment. It was also at the end of the Allende period when people were standing in line for food and were furious at UNCTAD for consuming the last of the meat in the country.

The meeting was great, and I met Costas Michalopoulos at one of the sessions.

Q: Oh, Costas Michalopoulos

GILMORE: He was the chief economist for AID. I told him what I was doing and my background, and he said you should come to AID. There's a new office at AID that is set up to work with NGOs, the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (PVC), and they really need someone like you who knows the NGO community. He gave me John Ulinski's name. I knew John from previous work with the grants, but I didn't know him very well. So, when I got back and learned that Oxfam America was relocating to Boston. I called John and eventually was hired as the first part-time employee at AID. The regulations for part-time then were quite flexible so this happened relatively quickly.

Q: Yes. Same thing happened with me.

GILMORE: You, Ann Tinker and I were the three part-time women at AID.

Q: In a professional capacity.

GILMORE: Right, I started earlier than you both. I was onboard within six months with security clearance and all. And that was the beginning of my AID career.

Q: Do you know what the background was for setting up the PVC, the Private and Voluntary Cooperation office? Was it a congressional initiative or did AID sort of come up with it on its own? I don't know that history at all.

GILMORE: PVC was created in 1971 to strengthen the capacity of US private and voluntary agencies (PVOs) to do development work. It was also to be the focal point within AID for communication with, and knowledge of, the PVO community. In 1970, there were only 82 registered voluntary agencies, and most of them were doing humanitarian work. Contracts were the primary mechanism used for funding outside of food aid, ocean freight and excess property subventions. At the same time, AID was beginning to realize the advantages of working with PVOs as they worked close to the ground and were linked with local organizations overseas. They also represented a new and vital constituency in the US, which AID was eager to tap.

Before PVC was established, the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACFVA) managed registration and relationships with NGOs. Earlier on, there was a very small office that worked on registration of humanitarian assistance NGOs,

Q: Right. This is an official advisory committee.

GILMORE: Right, although it has changed in nature. Previously ACVFA comprised primarily NGO leaders; there are many business people now on it, which is a really good thing.

The legislation that you mentioned about the basic human needs mandate happened in 1973, just about the same time that I joined AID.

Q: And this was the legislation that directed AID to put more of its resources directly to the poor.

GILMORE: Instead of doing infrastructure projects, to really focus on growth with equity, basic human needs, and resources directly to the poor. The legislation changed substantially over time what AID was doing and how it was doing it. The timing coincided with the strengthening of this office and making it much more integral to AID overall. In addition, it gave the NGO role more importance because they were looked to as a way of directly reaching the poor. They had local organizations they were working with, they represented civil society not the government in a country, and they had access to new resources in the U.S. - all attributes that were needed to implement the legislation. There was also a push to move the NGOs from relief to development and to provide funding to achieve that. And that is how the office got visibility and support; AID realized that it needed the NGOs to fulfill the Congressional mandate.

Q: Right. And to just underline that, because what you're saying is absolutely correct. Before the early '70s, most of the NGOs that were working internationally were working on emergency programs or quick response or child adoption, child sponsorship programs, things like that, but they were not programing very much in long-term development activities.

GILMORE: And even the more development-oriented NGOs worked under a contract, which was very carefully monitored by AID. They really were implementers of AID's agenda as opposed to organizations with their own priorities and approaches.

Q: Even back in the '70s?

GILMORE: Even back in the '70s. And this became a big issue over time with the agency, how much independence the NGOs would have, whether they could do their own programs, what kind of approvals they would have to get, what kind of travel restrictions; all these questions became very sensitive with the community and with the advisory committee.

Q: Right. Well then, the other thing to say is the community as a whole was smaller. I think the number of NGOs that were working internationally was a tenth of what it is today.

GILMORE: Oh yes, and also in terms of the resources that they generated. What happened, too, was over time the NGO funding from other sources increased; we were the catalyst for this through our matching grants. But we can get to that later.

Q: Right, yes.

GILMORE: When I first joined AID I was in the program office. John Ulinski asked me to work directly with him on all the policy work and the grant mechanisms. Together we wrote a new policy, which emphasized the uniqueness of the NGOs and new ways for AID to relate to the PVO community. We also created new grant mechanisms for the community which would help to build their capacity and help them transform from relief to development organizations.

Q: Right. So, it wasn't just grants to help and implement a particular activity, but it was actually to help them become stronger themselves.

GILMORE: That's a very good point. We wanted to support them as institutions, development institutions, not just for a particular activity that AID needed implemented. We were building a long-term partnership with the PVO community.

We established two grant mechanisms. One was called the Development Program Grant (DPG) and that was the capacity building grant, to be managed out of the Private and Voluntary Cooperation Office. The second grant, called the Operational Program Grant (OPG), was for the regional bureaus to manage and was to implement a specific project. There was a capacity building component to it, but most of it was for service delivery. We did this for two reasons: to get the regional bureaus involved so that they would support the policy and to get them involved to learn more about PVOs, how they worked and what their comparative advantages were.

Q: Because they had traditionally only worked government-to-government.

GILMORE: I think maybe regional bureaus had done some things with NGOs but not in the new way that we were looking at this relationship.

Q: So, where did you get your resistance? Because obviously any time you try to introduce a new program like that there's going to be pushback.

GILMORE: Oh, we got resistance everywhere. Fortunately, we had an ally in PPC, the program and budget office, in Alex Shakow.

Q: Yes, Alex Shakow.

GILMORE: And Alex was the deputy of PPC at the time. When we presented the policy, Alex was chairing the meeting. John presented the overall policy, the different grant mechanisms, the new approaches to AID's relationship with the PVOs, the need for

freedom of movement, and the need for their programmatic independence, all of these innovations. We also developed a new registration process.

Q: Right.

GILMORE: This helped to clarify the different terminology. Organizations that were registered with us were referred to as “PVOs.” We continued to call those organizations not registered “NGOs.”

Q: And has that stuck?

GILMORE: That has stuck, yes. So, most organizations are registered now and are thus PVOs although I just heard that AID is shutting down the registration process after all these years.

So, the policy got through and was approved. You know, Alex Shakow was a big supporter of the NGOs, and when he went to the World Bank, he became their liaison to the NGO community. It was important to have him as a contact at the World Bank.

Q: Did you have any resistance from the Hill?

GILMORE: Oh, no, the Hill was very supportive. I’ll talk about that in a second.

Q: Okay.

GILMORE: After the policy was approved, my role evolved to execution, to developing the selection criteria for these grants, the DPGs and OPGs. On the DPG side, I had to work closely with the PVO community.

Q: Right. And say what DPG is.

GILMORE: Development Program Grant. We held multiple sessions with the PVOs. We had met with them before the policy, but this was much more specific in terms of how the grant would work.

Q: And were there certain PVOs that had a stronger voice?

GILMORE: Sure.

Q: Because PVOs rarely work in lockstep so there probably were some that were much more effective as interlocutors with AID.

GILMORE: One of the things that we tried to do with these grants was to create new organizations in addition to supporting CARE, CRS, the more established organizations.

Q: Right, the big guys.

GILMORE: The bigger ones already had a certain amount of capacity so what we wanted to do was to strengthen their ability in specific sectors. We had a whole methodology for how to approve these grants and, for some of them, we wanted to strengthen their overall capacity. We would let them hire staff for the period of these grants. The expectation was that, in three years, they would be able to cover those cost from their own sources.. It didn't always work out that way, but that was the underlying premise.

So, we also used these grants to experiment with new types of PVOs. We funded two new consortia groups: PACT and CODEL. We helped to create these organizations.

Q: And that was a coalition of NGOs?

GILMORE: It was critical to get PVOs to work together effectively and not to compete with each other. As you said, they all had their own agendas. PACT is still in existence today although in a different form.

My role was also to develop the criteria for the OPGs with the regional bureaus. PVOs didn't want anything to do with these bilateral programs; they wanted their independence to run their own programs. However, the purpose of the OPGs was to figure out a way for PVOs to be able to cooperate with bilateral programs and work with the regional bureaus. We set up a committee of regional bureau PVO representatives to develop OPG criteria, and then we started to implement the grants.

Q: So, did you have to fight for a budget?

GILMORE: We got \$10 million at the beginning, \$5 million for the DPGs and \$5 million for OPGs, which was pretty good amount. Later, the regional bureaus had to fight for their own budgets, and the amount declined a bit. After three years of these grants, not all of them were sustainable. The PVOs' fundraising capacity was not robust enough to cover the costs of all the technical staff they had hired under the DPG. So, we had to think of other mechanisms that could continue this valuable support and that AID management would be willing to approve.

Q: That was late '70s?

GILMORE: That was, around 1978. There were several years where I was involved in the implementation of the program, approving proposals, meeting with PVOs, helping them with their evaluation work, coordinating with the regional bureaus, things like that.

PVC went in the direction of a matching grant program. While this was still a capacity building grant, it was sharing more of the costs. The PVOs would have to contribute more than they had in the past to support their own growth.

Q: And that started toward-

GILMORE: That started around 1978.

Q: And was that where the match had to be 20 percent or 25?

GILMORE: Yes, there was a counterpart contribution. I think it may have been more for the matching grant.

Q: More? Like 50/50?

GILMORE: I believe so.

Q: It was a sizeable amount.

GILMORE: It was a sizeable amount, right, if they wanted this kind of support. For the project-specific grants, the counterpart contribution was 25 percent or less.

Okay. A couple of other things I wanted to mention. And these I did independently, trying to get everyone's agreement. With the end of the DPG grant, there was a realization that contractors were allowed overhead rates and profit, the overhead rates to support administrative costs and then profit on top of that. PVOs, on the other hand, were not allowed to have anything to cover their indirect costs as they were not viewed as profit-making entities. For the DPG that makes sense because we were supporting their institutions as a whole. But for other grants, there was reimbursement for only direct costs. This seemed counterproductive, especially since we realized that the sustainability of these organizations was at stake. So we looked at the whole overhead question and, with the finance office, drafted the first overhead policy for PVOs, allowing them to have a negotiated indirect cost rate. This was a major achievement, both in terms of recognition of the PVOs' worth and their financial strength.

Q: Yes. So, where did you get the resistance on that?

GILMORE: I don't recall any resistance.

Q: The procurement office didn't?

GILMORE: They helped me get it through. They were supportive, which is probably why we didn't have much resistance.

Q: Okay.

GILMORE: Then I went to the development studies program, It was an outstanding program for me because it exposed me much more to bilateral programs and what was going on in AID overall.

Q: And it was a what, three-month?

GILMORE: It was a three-month course. Every participant had to write a major paper for that program. I wrote a paper called New Directions for Private and Voluntary Organizations (https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNAAJ463.pdf). And one of the things that I did in that paper was summarize where we were as an organization in our relationship with PVOs and think about whether AID could ever accommodate to the needs of the PVO community and what that might look like in the future. Even though AID approved all these grants and the overhead rate, there were still major issues about who would run these grants, what approvals would be required - I mentioned those earlier - and then concerns about independence. They, the PVOs, wanted to be in charge of their own programs with very little interference from AID.

Q: And that's what a grant is supposed to be.

GILMORE: Yes, but that was very hard for AID to do except for the PVO office where we had these specific grants; the other grants soon became more restrictive. They started off with criteria that we all developed together, but over time the regional bureaus had difficulty with a more hands-off approach. They understood the theory, but in practice they had bilateral programs to manage, and they had concerns about these PVOs "running around doing their own thing," not fitting into the AID county or regional strategy, and without what they considered adequate accountability. While I didn't understand it at the time, when I moved to the regional bureaus later on, I could see some of these issues from another perspective.

So, I wrote this paper which had three options: two internal to AID and the third to set up a separate PVO foundation outside of AID. And you asked me about the Hill.

Q: Yes.

GILMORE: Somehow, they got a hold of the paper and that particular option was one that they liked; some of the people on the Hill really liked the idea of setting up a separate foundation. And that became - I wasn't so much involved with it except having written the paper - a big issue with ACVFA, whether this was something that should be done. Ultimately, the way it came out was that no, there would not be a separate foundation, but that the PVC office would act like a foundation within AID. There was also a lot of push for AID to be more supportive of the PVOs, their special attributes, and their need for independence.

Q: Right. So, I mean, just to put it in a bigger context, that was also the time that the International Development Cooperation Agency (IDCA) was created - if you remember this.

GILMORE: Yes, I do. *I was seconded to IDCA to work with Malcolm Butler.*

Q: Well, IDCA didn't last long.

GILMORE: No, It was another layer of bureaucracy. I didn't stay there very long either.

Q: Right. Okay, so the Hill was really very eager to see your idea implemented.

GILMORE: Some of the committee staff. That was the main relationship with the Hill that I had. It was on this paper.

In the fall of 1978, I went to long-term training.

Q: Oooh. Was that a penalty for your paper?

GILMORE: No, on the contrary, a reward and preparation for my next position in the Program, Policy and Evaluation Office as division chief for evaluation. I was the first GS employee to be awarded long-term training so it was an important precedent. Tony Schwartzwalder worked very hard to get the training for me. .

Q: And where did you go?

GILMORE: Johns Hopkins SAIS (School of Advanced International Studies) where I was in the first mid-career MIPP (Master of International Public Policy) class. I had considered going to the University of Sussex. Dr. Epstein was doing very innovative work in social analysis there. She was setting up a new program, but it wasn't organized in time. So I went to SAIS instead, which was an excellent experience and prepared me well for my future evaluation work.

Tony Schwartzwalder was the deputy assistant administrator for the bureau, and he really fought for me since long-term training had always been for Foreign Service officers. It was good for me personally as I was transitioning from part-time to full-time employment.

But it was also extremely useful professionally. I was, as I mentioned, a literature major at Wellesley and had avoided taking any hard methodological social science courses there. I wanted to be a psychology major, but I would have had to take statistics so I didn't do that. As the division chief for evaluation, I felt I wasn't conversant enough with evaluation methodologies and data. I understood the larger picture but felt insecure about being able to review contractors who were using sophisticated analytical methods. During the year at SAIS, I dedicated myself to studying data from a lot of different disciplines: population, agriculture, urban development, epidemiology, etc. And then I took courses in evaluation methodology: statistics, multiple regression, and game theory - all courses that I had previously avoided.

Q: You could, you could understand-

GILMORE: I could understand what people were doing. That gave me more confidence when I came back to AID and was-

Q: Was it hard finding the full-time when you came back?

GILMORE: I already had a position.

Q: You already had it?

GILMORE: I knew that I was going to be in evaluation, doing more evaluation work in my career, and I really wanted to strengthen those skills.

May we stop for just a short-?

Q: Sure.

Okay. So, we're resuming the conversation. Judy had just returned from long-term training, where she got a Master's in Public Policy.

GILMORE: International Public Policy. And I have to tell you, I got all As in statistics, game theory and multiple regression, all these courses that I-

Q: Congratulations.

GILMORE: I was kind of proud of myself after having escaped these courses in college, although, I must say, it was very anxiety-producing, especially statistics.

So, then I moved over to the program office in the same bureau and became the chief of a small evaluation unit.

Q: Ah, right. And this was evaluation of, basically, PVO programs?

GILMORE: PVO and Food for Peace.

Q: And Food for Peace.

GILMORE: Yes. Hope Sukin was in my office. She came to help me with the child survival and food aid programs. I moved from building the capacity of PVOs to design and implement projects to building their capacity in the evaluation sphere. Our objective was to make food aid as developmental as possible. Up until then most of it was for emergency purposes. There was a Title II program that was supposed to be development-oriented, but we felt that there could be a number of improvements.

Q: If you could talk a little bit about the food aid program in general because I know it's gone through a lot of iterations and there was the emergency, there was the monetization of the food programs-

GILMORE: When I was there, there were so many different programs, many of them new, very complicated. I will-

Q: Get there?

GILMORE: I will explain them as I go along. I think that would be easier. Ok?

Q: Great.

GILMORE: Over time what happened was our office actually took over most of the evaluation work. We moved from project or grant-specific evaluations much more into capacity building, sectoral evaluations, and policy evaluations. The agency was also getting more involved in evaluation work, and there was great interest in these sectoral and policy evaluations.

The reason we were able to do this so successfully was that we used the evaluation planning process to get the offices on board and to get the commitment of the leadership of the bureau. PVC was very welcoming of our assistance because I'd been in that office and we'd worked well together. Food for Peace, on the other hand, was not. It considered itself an independent office, with its own managers. It was a very busy office with a huge amount of food aid to program; the staff didn't want to be bothered with evaluations on top of everything else that they had to do. Reporting was already hard enough for them. Julia Chang Bloch, who was the assistant administrator, and Walter Bollinger, the deputy assistant administrator, were very supportive of trying to make food aid more developmental and what we were trying to do. We made the evaluation plan into a comprehensive document, outlining every evaluation that we wanted to do, why we wanted to do it, and what program or policy outcomes we hoped to achieve. Through this planning process, the bureau also committed to using the results of the evaluations. We organized debriefings for the policy evaluations, and the bureau leadership, PPC and the regional bureaus would come because we were taking the lead even in the agency for some of these evaluations. So it became a very positive process and reflected well on the bureau.

Q: Was it hard for you to decide which programs you would evaluate and when? Or was that-

GILMORE: We did it through consultation. And we had plenty of consultations. That is the only way to bring people along. I went around to the PVOs and talked with them about some of the things they wanted to learn, what was of interest to them; I tried to do the same thing with Food for Peace staff and did it as much as I could. And then the bureau, the bureau had ideas as to what they needed. We took all of this into consideration and put it together in a planning process, emphasizing the comparative advantages of PVOs and the developmental impact of food aid, the two primary areas of focus. I have a list of some studies that we did that had agency-wide significance. Should I go through them?

Q: Yes, just go ahead.

GILMORE: Just a couple of them to give you some examples. And over time I became responsible for all Food for Peace evaluations. The bureau gave me that responsibility, and actually Food for Peace was quite pleased. They didn't have time to do it themselves.

Q: No, but they were happy to have somebody else do it.

GILMORE: Yes, and they would become more and more involved so that was good. In fact, PVC eventually included funding into their grants so that the PVOs could carry out their own evaluations, with supervision from PVC. They had developed the capacity over time to do them on their own.

Q: And they were required to report on them?

GILMORE: They were required to report on their evaluations during the grant reviews. This gave us more time to focus on sector studies for PVC.

So, we did a couple of things. We launched two groundbreaking studies. I don't know if you remember the Tendler Report, Judith Tendler?

Q: Gosh, it's familiar but I don't remember what-

GILMORE: She was a professor at MIT; she was a brilliant. I was able to hire amazing people because they were so committed to NGOs. She reviewed all our PVO studies that we'd done up until then to come up with new approaches for looking at PVO evaluations, the questions we should be asking, and what kinds of methodologies we should be using. It was a great paper. The agency loved it; they used it, everybody used it. And we had a lot of briefings. Her study significantly influenced the way we went about doing sector studies afterwards for the PVO community.

And then, Beryl Levinger, remember Beryl?

Q: I do.

GILMORE: She did a pioneering piece on school feeding that broadened the scope from just a humanitarian feeding program to one that could have significant results, such as keeping girls in school, increased attendance, and even improved learning. These impacts could be tracked and quantified. She outlined a range of outcomes that we should start to look at when we were assessing school feeding in a developmental context and how they could be measured.

So, those were two memorable studies that we did. Next, we conducted sectoral studies in areas where PVOs were taking the lead for the agency. One was in microfinance. Microfinance was just starting in the agency, although we had been funding PVOs to work in this area for a while.

Q: Right. And it did start in the NGO world.

GILMORE: We hired a professor at Wesleyan, an expert in microfinance and small business from an economic perspective. He did an excellent study for us on the strengths and weaknesses of PVO programs. Mike Farbman, who was the head of the microfinance office at the time, used it to help launch his program throughout the agency.

We did two more sector studies on PVO programs: one on organizational development and the other on cost-effectiveness. Again, these were areas that the agency as a whole was beginning to grapple with. Organizational development related somewhat to what we were trying to do with the capacity building grants. How do you evaluate institutional capacity in a development organization? The cost-effectiveness work was in response to critics who were saying that PVOs were spending all this money and not doing it in a diligent way. The study, in addition to refuting those assumptions, laid out guidelines for how programs could be more cost-effective.

On the Title II side, we did a synthesis of Title II evaluations. One of the major conclusions was that food alone was not enough; it was necessary to have some kind of complementary inputs, money, to make the food aid effective. Otherwise, the food was just being given away. This was fine for emergency situations but not if you were looking for developmental impacts. This study had two major results: a reorganization of the Food for Peace office, and I'll talk about that more when I move to Food for Peace; and closer relationships with the regional bureaus to obtain these resources. Eventually, this led to a policy of monetization, where money was allocated to the Food for Peace Office directly or permission was given to sell some of the commodities overseas.

Q: Right. Did the Hill weigh in on any of these policy changes because obviously there was a lot of political interest in the food aid program?

GILMORE: I think that monetization had to be approved by the Hill. Our work, at the evaluation level, was more to raise the issues. And it actually happened, which was great.

Finally, we did a major assessment of African emergency food assistance. This was during the Sahel drought that spread across East Africa. We carried out case studies of emergency food assistance in Sudan, Mali and Chad. I participated in the Chad evaluation. One of the conclusions coming out of that study I remember to this day because it was so unexpected. We were surprised by the extent of the coping mechanisms that people used to survive, such as eating roots and berries. We did some comparison between those who had food aid and those who were only using these coping mechanisms, and there was no difference!

Q: Wow.

GILMORE: It wasn't a foolproof study; it was more qualitative. It hit me that people have their own resilience and that if we understood those coping mechanisms better our food aid programs would be much more successful. For me personally the study reinforced my interest in indigenous practices and social impact assessments.

Q: Did that lead to any policy changes in the program?

GILMORE: *I am* not sure about that particular insight but what this whole series of evaluations led to was the creation of FEWS, the Famine Early Warning System. And that gets at some of these issues. It was an early warning system, initially for the Sahel and then broadened to all of Africa.

Q: I think it is a global program now.

GILMORE: This particular study was received very well by the agency, and the administrator actually used it as a basis for a speech that he gave at the food aid meeting at FAO and the World Food Program.

Q: And that was Peter McPherson?

GILMORE: Yes.

There are a few more examples of studies that influenced food policy. Should I go over them?

Q: Yes, absolutely.

GILMORE: It wasn't enough just to get into Title II, I wanted to take advantage of Titles I and III because policy dialogue was very much a part of those programs. Title I was run by USDA and focused on enhancing export markets. Title III or Food for Development was a more recent program, managed by USAID, for economic development purposes. Both programs used dollar resources generated by the sale of the food in the recipient country. And both programs required policy commitments by the host government and often generated local currencies. The missions didn't pay much attention to monitoring the conditionality once the agreements were concluded.

Q: Because?

GILMORE: The programs sort of ran by themselves. We really didn't maximize the policy dialogue conditionality, and I don't think we paid much attention to the local currencies. The missions reported what they did and that was that. What I wanted to do with the study was to shed light on the program assistance aspect of these programs. We carried out five case studies and then developed agency guidance for Titles I and III. As it turned out, the study had significance for program assistance writ large within the agency,

We were able to expand the impact of what we were doing through meetings with regional bureaus and agency evaluation staff, but most importantly through our bureau leadership who would report on our work at senior staff and other higher level agency meetings.

The last item I want to talk about is the first impact study of a food aid program. Doug Bennett came in as administrator and introduced an agency-wide impact evaluation initiative. This was a big deal, and all the bureaus participated in these evaluations. I was the team leader for this study of the Title II program in Morocco. We looked longitudinally at health and nutrition data and used a comparison group to measure the impact of the nutrition education component. To look at income effects of the food, we visited households throughout the country. No one had ever tried to do that before. We had no existing data and had to collect this on our own. We were privileged to visit so many homes and meet so many women throughout Morocco. One of the indicators we used to assess level of poverty was whether they poured us tea or not.

Q: If they had it-

GILMORE: Most of the women served us tea, and we had to accept it or we would have been perceived as ungracious. Fortunately, we were able to enter these households. Although I felt guilty, it turned out that drinking tea together was an excellent ice-breaker. It was an unbelievable experience, and it was a very successful evaluation. I think that PPC was quite satisfied with it, and it was useful for the Title II program as well.

Q: Right. And on the impact evaluation, I think it took Doug Bennett's leadership to make all of the bureaus take it seriously. Because bureaus were expected to cough up their experts to work on these studies, they couldn't say oh, no, we can't spare this person now. You were supposed to participate if you were on the team. And so, I think some of the best impact evaluation work that the agency did was probably done through that office.

GILMORE: Yes, we had an outstanding team: Carol Adelman, Tony Meyer, and Mel Thorne. It was a huge undertaking to manage as it was a country-wide effort.

Q: So, you must have been in the field for three weeks or longer.

GILMORE: We were in the field for three weeks, and we split up for some of the time in order to reach more centers and households. I got food poisoning during the trip, but we were fortunate to have a doctor on board so I recovered quickly. It was an educational experience, both intellectually and personally, for all of us on the team. And I think it was appreciated by the agency as well.

So, moving right along.

Q: Yes, moving right along.

GILMORE: For a variety of reasons, including the evaluations, the Food for Peace office decided to reorganize regionally instead of programmatically as in the past. Each region would be in charge of all the Food for Peace instrumentalities in its bailiwick.

Q: So, they were separated out-

GILMORE: Right, I was asked to head the Latin America region.

Q: So, you had both emergency food aid and-

GILMORE: Everything; Title I, II, and Title III; 108 came onboard, which was private sector development. The Hill created a slew of things about that time. So, we had all these new mechanisms to figure out.

Q: Right. And this was in the '80s, right?

GILMORE: This was, I can tell you exactly, it was 1987.

Q: Yes.

GILMORE: I was in the office for two years and set up the LAC (Latin America and Caribbean) division and then moved to the Africa division for another year. And then I went over to the Africa Bureau.

What was really interesting for me in this job was setting up an entirely new office, which had to deal with a whole range of programs that before were handled separately. My top challenges were getting the staff up-to-speed on all these different programs and developing relationships with the regional bureau. We were able to develop a good collaboration with the LAC bureau and were included in all of their program reviews and strategy sessions. Food aid became, I wouldn't say it became totally integrated into the regional bureau, but we participated in all the meetings and could present our ideas.

Q: So the resistance wasn't so much from the regional bureaus, but there must have been some resistance internally to every reorganization.

GILMORE: Oh, yes. The staff was quite unhappy at first, not just in Latin America but the whole Food for Peace office. They saw their responsibilities diminished as previously they had been responsible for entire programs. I tried to boost their morale, which was hard when they had to learn a new region and new food aid programs at the same time. This was good training for me as a good part of my future career would have to do with managing reorganization and initiating change.

You asked me earlier how I balanced family and work. An office anecdote is relevant here. It was around the time that men were getting more involved with household tasks. A male staff member asked to leave early because he was cooking dinner that night. It was around 4pm. He was a friend so I was able to humor him. I turned to him and said: of course you can leave, it's fine; you've finished your work, great; you do a terrific job, good. I just want to tell you that I cook dinner every night, and I don't leave at 4pm.

Q: Did he leave?

GILMORE: Of course.

A lot of it had to do with growing the office; a lot of it had to do with strengthening the relationships with the LAC bureau; and, of course, building connections with the interagency group because they had enormous power over our food aid programs.

Q: Right. So, that was State Department-

GILMORE: State, Treasury, Agriculture (USDA) and, OMB (Office of Management and Budget).

Q: So, that was probably the first time that you got involved in interagency processes-

GILMORE: Right. Once in a while I had to do a debriefing for them on an evaluation, but it wasn't to get an approval for an activity. I had to learn how to do that. And it required innovative ways of organizing food aid. Fortunately, because of my evaluation work, I knew these programs well and was able, with my team, to come up with creative ways to make these programs work so that the DCC - that's what it was called, Development Coordinating Committee, would approve it. It was a challenging job. And most of our programs did get approved.

Q: Do you have sort of thoughts on what made you effective in the interagency process? Knowing the programs clearly is one thing.

GILMORE: Right. Knowing the people is another. I really tried to get to know the agency representatives, but there was so much turnover it was hard to do. I think coming up with creative solutions on the spot was critical. Then, I had to go back and sell it to AID. It was a constant balancing act.

Q: You had to be a persuader.

GILMORE: Personal relationships, in-depth knowledge of the programs, and thinking on your feet were what made me most effective, I would say.

I also was asked to do a lot of public speaking on development aspects of food aid - a topic that was in vogue at the time. I spoke to CRS, the Congressional Research Service.

Q: Research Service, yes.

GILMORE: Oh my goodness, I could tell you a story. Maybe I had better not.

Q: Please, tell the story.

GILMORE: This was a really big presentation; we had prepared it for a long time. We summarized the whole history of Latin America and food aid, where we were going, and what we had learned. I had all these slides and relied on CRS for information about the venue. They assured me that I would be able to see the slides from the podium and that I didn't need to bring copies with me. So, I get there, and they have me positioned in front; I couldn't-

Q: See what was behind you.

GILMORE: I couldn't see what was behind me. I had some of my notes, but I didn't have the slides. I had to improvise; it was really awful, I thought. I got through it, I don't know how but I got through it. What was so interesting was afterwards. People came up and said what a wonderful presentation, those slides were great, and you did such an excellent job. I realized that they were looking at the slides, they weren't listening to me. Or if they were listening to me, it didn't matter. And that the slides were really what made the presentation. So I emerged unscathed, which was a big relief. The big takeaway for me was never to make an important presentation without visiting the venue in person prior to the event.

And then the Peace Corps asked me to speak and the University of Sussex in England. We were getting the message out on the developmental impact of food aid and how food aid should be programmed to have these positive effects.

Q: Did the farmers of America have a voice? Or that was not your-

GILMORE: That was USDA. USDA had to bring that to the table. AID had control of the Title II program. It was more the other titles where USDA had a much bigger role. I didn't get too much into the domestic political side of this.

Q: You could stay away from it.

GILMORE: I was able to stay away from it. One thing that I couldn't stay away from was a situation with CRS in El Salvador. I have often been asked if I ever had to compromise my personal values in terms of an AID program that had a foreign policy implication or something that made me feel uncomfortable politically. Actually, I have been very lucky; it only happened once. It was El Salvador, during the time of the dictatorship. We were supporting the government, and CRS had a Title II program there-

Q: This is Catholic Relief Services?

GILMORE: Yes, Catholic Relief Services had a Title II program in El Salvador that was way out in the rural areas doing good work despite all that was going on in the country. However, at one point the government was going to terminate the program unless they let the military deliver the food. CRS really wanted the program, and AID wanted it. I could see that I was going to get pressured. It was against the regulations to have the military distribute food aid plus there were concerns about monitoring where the food was going.

So it became a big issue, politically and for me personally, as I had the approval authority.

Q: And what did CRS do?

GILMORE: CRS knew that I probably was not going to approve it so they had to find a solution to keep the program going. The in-country staff was able to negotiate a compromise with the government - they would continue to deliver the food while the military could be there and observe but not get involved in the distribution. I was comfortable approving that, and the program was saved.

Q: So, they helped you out of a tight corner.

GILMORE: True, but they also helped themselves because they wanted the program; it was a large part of their portfolio. I don't know what AID would have done, whether they would have backed me up or not. Fortunately I didn't have to find out. That is the only time in my entire career that I felt that I might be forced into compromising by values.

Q: Right. You know, I think what you said earlier, and it fits into this, which is if you know the programs you can figure out how to tweak it so that it's acceptable to the people who might otherwise want you to do something that really contravenes your values or your knowledge of how development works, and always finding those little fixes.

GILMORE: Right.

Q: Someone who absolutely is a good negotiator but also knows the program well enough to know what you can do that's not going to undermine the whole value of it.

GILMORE: Yes, and it is harder when there is a political agenda at stake.

Q: Wow. So, that was an exciting time.

GILMORE: USDA asked me to be a member of the advance team for their agricultural trade and development mission to Mexico. Even for advance teams, they had very high-level people; this enabled me to build more relationships with the other agencies on the team.

Q: And what did these missions do?

GILMORE: The focus was on trade and laying the groundwork for the mission.

Q: With the government, with their counterparts-

GILMORE: With their counterparts in the government. It was quite interesting getting into trade issues although most of what we were doing was logistics. This was my

introduction to trade in general and particularly ways that food aid might fit into that agenda. I learned a great deal which helped me later on when I moved to the regional bureaus.

In the meantime, I moved to the Africa section of Food for Peace. That office had already been set up by Bill Pearson, who became AID representative to Ethiopia. I was asked to take over from him as there was a major emergency in Sudan, Ethiopia and Mozambique..

Q: Right, the Horn of Africa.

GILMORE: Yes, it was terrible. This enabled me to build on, and use, the knowledge I had acquired through the emergency food aid evaluations that I managed a few years earlier. I got much more deeply involved in famine relief and refugee programs in the Africa division.

I also was exposed for the first time to conflict resolution and peace building. Ethiopia and Eritrea were fighting, it was a civil war, and Ethiopia had taken over Eritrea. Janice Weber, from the Africa Bureau, and I went to Ethiopia to work with the mission and the embassy on how to deal with this conflict. I don't know why they asked me to go, but Janice was the Ethiopia desk officer so it made sense for her to go, I guess they needed someone from PL 480 because food aid was such an integral component of what was going on there.

Q: Well, actually, I'd love to hear a little bit more about what you did because one of the interesting things is how does AID actually handle these emergencies and what lessons do you draw from the way you start programs in that situation that- not guarantees, help them to be successful.

GILMORE: These were things that would resonate with me later in my career, but they were very new to me at the time, and I never had worked on negotiating a conflict between countries before. Are you asking about how you program emergency food?

Q: Right. But you're actually doing conflict resolution.

GILMORE: Right. Programming emergency food so that it can lead to sustainability and not create dependency is a constant dilemma. It is like, with OFDA (the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance), trying to program OFDA in a way that it can have a longer-term impact even though it is limited to a short period of time. These are topics that are still being debated, I imagine. These were questions that were thought about and discussed, but we certainly didn't have all the answers.

But in terms of conflict resolution, food aid if programmed correctly can be used as an incentive to peace negotiations. It can also be used to fuel the conflict situation. There was no such thing as a conflict assessment then. Nevertheless, we had to be cognizant about who was getting the food and how it was being used. Sometimes, we were too

concerned with just moving the food that we didn't have a good grasp of these issues. Of course, we relied on our partners who were much closer to the ground.

As to the Ethiopia trip, if I recall correctly, we met with all the parties and reported back to the embassy and made some recommendations. We didn't have the skills to bring the parties together. I have more skills now, but I didn't have them then to bring people together who are fighting each other. It was more information gathering and trying to help the State Department think about what to do next.

Q: Right. So, you met with people from Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Sudan?

GILMORE: No, this was just internal.

Q: Just internal?

GILMORE: Yes, primarily within Ethiopia. I don't believe we met with the Eritreans.

Q: This is a big deal.

GILMORE: Yes, it was. And we were totally, both of us, unprepared.

Q: And the reception at State when you came back and reported?

GILMORE: Oh, that was fine.

So, with that, Walter Bollinger had moved over to the Africa Bureau where there was an opening in the technical resources office for a deputy director. He asked me if I would be interested in taking that position. I was hesitant as I didn't know anything about bilateral programs. What I knew about bilateral programs, I had learned from my work with the LAC Bureau. I had attended all their strategy and program reviews to find ways to integrate food aid more effectively into what they were doing. But that's a far cry from running a large regional program. Also, as I mentioned earlier, I was a generalist with some social science background and some knowledge of data analysis and methodologies, but I wasn't a technical expert. How could I possibly be in charge of multiple technical experts and technical programs? Finally, Walter called me and asked me if I wanted this job or not? I said I didn't think I could do it; he said of course you can do it. And so, I did it.

Q: So, you did it. And did you have resistance from people inside the bureau?

GILMORE: I am sure there was; I didn't feel it though. Dick Cobb was the head of the office, and he was very supportive.

Q: That's good.

GILMORE: And helpful. He was just a wonderful boss, and I learned an enormous amount from him about how to run an office like that. And as it turned out the technical staff were equally wonderful. I didn't try to take over; I tried to learn from them and understand where they were coming from, what they were doing, and how they worked. I like to think that I eventually won them over. It worked out okay

Except that there was a bureau reorganization going on because of the Development Fund for Africa (DFA), which was devastating for the technical resources office. The DFA had been introduced legislatively several years before I arrived, but the amount of money in 1990-91 was at its peak of \$800 million. It required a refocusing of what the bureau was doing away from project-specific activities to more program assistance, sectoral, cross-sectoral activities, and performance measurement. We had a congressional earmark, and we had to be able to report on that earmark. The whole approach of what we were doing as a bureau changed.

Q: Well, wouldn't they be at the core of program, policy-

GILMORE: They were at the core- The mandate of the technical resources office when I came was to assist with the technical work of the bureau and the missions one-on-one, project-by-project; it wasn't so much at the program or sectoral level. The staff did some of that, but the focus was much more on technical assistance and project design. And so, it required a re-visioning of the office and its functions. Many of the people in the office didn't have the higher level functions that were needed.

Q: So, how did you handle that?

GILMORE: Well, I had responsibility for a lot of this. Dick was in charge. We worked together on the visioning part and trying to get people to see their roles in a broader perspective and to retool as necessary, but I had to deal with the nitty gritty stuff. That meant moving people on, it meant finding jobs for people, which I did. I made sure that every single person who had to leave the office found a position.

Q: Wow.

GILMORE: Or help them retrain so they could stay in the office. I was really proud of that. I cared a lot about these people; they were very talented; and they needed to find a job commensurate with their abilities. Many of them went to the central technical bureau, where they were welcomed with open arms because of their strong qualifications. That was how we went from 92 people to 42.

Q: Over a two-year period?

GILMORE: Two-year period. I was there only two years. And that was a huge undertaking.

Q: Yes, that is huge.

GILMORE: We also ran regional projects. Many of them were either transferred, terminated or rejiggered. That was also very difficult for people. So, this was not an easy job especially coming without a lot of the technical expertise.

You want to stop?

Q: No, no, no, I was just looking, reminding myself of the years because I know a lot of people saw the DFA as a model that really worked, that was a very effective tool for policy dialogue but also programming resources and on it being more broadly applied to AID's work. And I think you're talking about the difficulty of transitioning from one type of -

GILMORE: I totally agree. The DFA embodied broad programming, evaluation criteria, and stringent reporting - all things that I would support, definitely, and also because we wanted that earmark. Previously, other regions and sectoral areas were encroaching on the Africa Bureau budget. DFA was a way to protect that budget. We were able to move into these areas, but it was a transition for all the offices, and particularly for this office. So while I supported the new vision, I also had to manage the staff that I admired so much.

So, my particular job, in addition to all this, was managing our analytical agenda, our regional projects and our prep work for bureau/mission strategy, program and project reviews. I was usually the TR representative who went to these meetings, but the technical people provided all the information so that I knew what I was talking about. We were very influential in the bureau.

Q: And the head of the bureau at the time?

GILMORE: Walter Bollinger and Larry Saiers were the people that I worked with.

There were three new sectoral areas that were coming on stream. One was HIV-AIDS. We had a staff person, Bill Lyerly, dedicated to this, who was fighting an uphill battle to get recognition for the program. We were collecting data, looking at the impact on population growth (at that point we didn't have the data to show that it did) and thinking about programming. We were trying to define it and develop research activities to support it.

The other was global warming, and then democracy.

Q: Yes, right. Did we call it democracy then?

GILMORE: Governance, I think we called it first.

Q: Governance of human rights or something.

GILMORE: We did start to call it democracy, though, and I remember that it was placed in Africa DP. Steve Brent was running that. TR was really supportive, but the Africa DP office was the one that took the initiative.

So these were three areas that the bureau was grappling with: what do we do with HIV/AIDS; how do we deal with democracy in the confines of Africa; and global warming, how significant was it really? Those were interesting questions that I got into.

And the other interesting thing that I did was the elephants. I was the key person handling the elephant protection earmark. It was small, but it involved a lot of constituencies: the Defense Department, the Interior Department, all of the big environmental NGOs who were pushing for this program, getting it up and going. And it involved several television appearances on USIA's WorldNet.

GILMORE: I recall the public affairs officer critiquing my performance, telling me that I shouldn't blink so much. Now you try to sit there and not blink. When you are nervous, it really is hard to control the blinking. Eventually I got the hang of it and loved doing it. It gave our work broad exposure in the Africa region. I also had to go to the Hill with the NGOs to defend the earmark. I really enjoyed that program and felt I was doing something worthwhile - saving the elephants - while providing income to local communities. It was very successful, and everyone was pleased with the program.

Q: An ongoing challenge, too.

GILMORE: Yes. I doubt there is an earmark anymore; it probably has been integrated into regular programming.

So, that was Africa TR. And then I moved to the Sahel office.

Q: And did someone ask you to do that?-

GILMORE: Jerry Wolgin, Africa's chief economist, moved into the TR job after it had been reorganized, and I was offered the Sahel Office deputy position. I was pleased because it was a chance for me to run a bilateral program and to get to know the intricacies of a region and a program across the board. This was the first time that I had that type of responsibility, and I got to use my French language skills to boot. There was political ferment at the time as Chad and Niger were moving toward democratic change, and Mali was working on a peace agreement with the Tuaregs in the North, which made the assignment particularly interesting. As it turned out, TR was really helpful with some of the reorganization challenges that we were facing in the Sahel Office. So it was good that I had been there and knew all of the players.

Q: Another reorganization?

GILMORE: This reorganization was different from the DFA reorganization as it was generated internally and not by the Congress.

Q: And this is partly because the Congress was continuing to put pressure on our OE so we just- we didn't have the money to keep as many places open or staffed.

GILMORE: Yes, the goal was to reduce the number of missions. The Sahel was hit badly in terms of closeout countries. I went from the fat into the fire: reorganization in TR to closing out missions in the Sahel.

Q: So, this is the kind of thing you don't want to participate in a lot.

GILMORE: It was challenging in every way. Tim Bork was the office director and Roger Simmons the deputy. Roger was leaving so I was replacing him. He briefed me on everything; Tim, at that time, was quite preoccupied with South Africa.

Q: Yes. I think he actually went.

GILMORE: He was very tied up with our work in South Africa so I basically ran the program. He was always there for support and advice. I really appreciated that because he was quite knowledgeable and a creative thinker. I am much more of an organized thinker so the two of us kind of-

Q: Complemented?

GILMORE: Complemented each other. Yes, so I felt that I had considerable leeway to do what I needed to do with these closeout missions. We were scheduled for two closeout missions, Niger and Chad, and downsizing in other missions.

Q: Did you choose those missions?

GILMORE: I don't think so.

Q: Maybe you were told. Or somebody chose those missions over others.

GILMORE: I don't remember whether they were already determined when I came into the office or not. I do remember feeling that it was really important, in terms of my management style, to develop very close relationships with the mission directors the way I succeeded in doing with the division chiefs in TR. It was especially important in this context of reorganization where there was such anxiety in the missions. Everyone knew that the Sahel was being targeted and that missions were either going to be closed or severely affected. I did develop that relationship personally as well as through the desk officers. I was careful to involve them in the process; we did it together.

We had been given orders by the bureau leadership not to talk about the reorganization with missions. They didn't want to alarm people before final decisions had been made. I just couldn't do that; I just didn't agree with that management approach. As a result of talking with the mission directors and keeping them informed, we were able, for each

country, to develop creative approaches to salvage the key components of the program, either through regional activities, such as health, in collaboration with TR folks or through the Club du Sahel program, which we managed directly. In some cases, with persuasive arguments, we were able to reverse the proposed cuts. I don't think Chad actually, in the end, was a closeout mission. We were able to preserve Chad.

Q: There's an important lesson there about communicating; it's almost never the right solution to keep effective people in the dark.

GILMORE: Yes, especially since they know their programs better than anyone, and you need their buy-in. If you don't have their buy-in, you become an adversary and then you can't get anything done. It was a big decision, but in the long run it helped me professionally. Indeed, my work with missions during the reorganization was singled out in my performance review.

Another big part of our portfolio, which I mentioned above in the context of reorganization, was the Club du Sahel, and your cousin was there, John-

Q: John Lewis, my husband's cousin.

GILMORE: John Lewis, right. He was an excellent contact with the diplomats in Paris and the counterpart organization in the Sahel, Sills, as well as the more specialized organizations, such as INSA (organizational development) and AgriMet (early warning). We had a whole network of activities going on that were independent of AID. We financed the Club as did other donors. And so, we were able to use that network to support some of our own programs that were being dismantled.

Q: So, the activities could continue even if not with the missions.

GILMORE: Yes, either through TR regional programs or through the Club du Sahel. And the Club was going through a reorganization too so we had a great deal of influence on them. John, primarily, and Dana Fisher, his backstop in DC - they were a first-class team.

Q: And then Ray Love - there's a third person.

GILMORE: Oh, he was the DAC (Development Assistance Committee) representative.

Q: I think so, yes.

GILMORE: So, the Club du Sahel made a major contribution to what we were doing. And also, at that time, the Club du Sahel came up with a food aid charter.

Q: Were you involved with that?

GILMORE: I certainly understood the issues. For John, food aid was a big thing, especially his work on disincentive effects. As I recall, the food aid charter focused

primarily on the economic issues, such as disincentive effects and monetization. It was a huge coup having something like that agreed to by all the donors, given their different agricultural markets and food aid policies. The charter was a big achievement on the part of the Club du Sahel.

The most significant event that happened during this period was the devaluation of the CFA, which was highly political with the French and a significant boost to interregional trade in West Africa. .

Q: Oh, the CFA.

GILMORE: This was the African currency, tied to the French franc. It was devalued in January 1994 by 50 percent, the first time since 1943 that the French allowed such a devaluation. Fourteen countries were affected. It was all done under a shroud of secrecy over the prior year while both the French and the African governments along with the World Bank and the IMF (International Monetary Fund) were denying it. Meanwhile, they were all planning for it, and I was invited to participate.

Q: Oh, so you knew this was coming.

GILMORE: Yes, I was the only AID person involved with this. I attended all their meetings, thereby allowing AID and our offices to prepare. Once again, I worked with the mission directors quietly, not only in the Sahel but also West Africa, because many of the West African countries were using the CFA. We had several meetings together to plan what we would do. Regional trade was critical, but we also needed to protect people's income. We had resources to hire a firm to do the data collection for us.

Q: And these were like household surveys?

GILMORE: Household surveys, not exactly, but a whole lot of data collection on interregional trade, markets and purchasing power both prior to and projected after the devaluation. Based on this information, we planned a \$17 million safety net program for these countries in the Sahel and West Africa. It was all designed ahead of time, ready to go, and the day of the devaluation AID approved it. We launched it even ahead of the World Bank and the IMF. It was small, \$17 million, but for our budget that was quite a bit.

Q: And was it food for work kinds of things?

GILMORE: No, no, it was money that went to the missions.

Q: And AID could program it however they-?

GILMORE: It was \$17 million, it was a safety net, and it was for the missions. It had clear priorities and a strategic framework. It had been carefully worked out with the missions, and AID was prepped enough to approve it on the spot. I couldn't talk to

anybody about what was going on. I was trying to plan all this with the missions without telling them too much. They knew that something was in the offing, but they didn't know the details. It was a tightrope walk, which turned out to be incredibly successful.

GILMORE: The devaluation happened on January 11, 1994, and around that time I moved to the ANE Bureau. The Africa Bureau was going to consolidate the two offices, the Sahel and West Africa, which made a lot of sense, particularly in the context of the CFA devaluation. The Sahel couldn't survive by itself without trade with West Africa as a whole.

Q: And how did your move happen? Again, did someone ask you?

GILMORE: In this case, Linda Morse had been after me for a long time to move to the ANE Bureau. She wanted me to be a deputy mission director.

Q: Oh, to go out?

GILMORE: Yes, she had asked me to be the deputy mission director in India. And I really wanted to do that, but I didn't know if it would be approved by the Senior Management Group (SMG). It would have had to go to the SMG, so I am not saying that it would have happened.

Q: Well, but that was a time that a lot of people were actually moving from GS into Foreign Service.

GILMORE: But not at those levels, were they?

Q: Well, Kelly Kammerer

GILMORE: Yes, that's right. What did he do?

Q: He went to Nepal after being head of legislative affairs.

GILMORE: Right. Anyway, I decided for a lot of reasons not to do that. It just didn't work out with family, and my husband had interests in India, professional interests, which would have created conflicts for me in that position. Needless to say, I was very disappointed as I had always wanted to go oversea. So, instead, Linda offered me an ANE office director position. The timing was perfect, and in 1994 I moved to the ANE Bureau as the director of East Asia.

Q: We are resuming our conversation with Judy Gilmore. Today is April 7th, and Judy was going from the Africa Bureau to the Asia Near East Bureau. I'll let her take it from there.

GILMORE: Okay, thank you. One of the things that we were talking about at the end of the last session was our children. I have two children, two daughters, Jennifer and

Katherine. I have already told you the story of the guinea pig in Peru when I was at Oxfam America. Jennifer had just gotten a guinea pig as a pet. And I was telling you offline a couple of amusing stories about my younger daughter, particularly in relationship to the food aid program. So, I'll just repeat a couple of those anecdotes to give you some local color.

Kate was about eight or so, and I had told her that I was working with the food aid program and that we were trying to bring food to hungry people in Ethiopia. It was a time of famine and some people were starving. One day, I overheard her talking with a friend who asked what her mother did at work. She responded that her mother was a waiter.

Q: Bringing food to hungry people.

GILMORE: On another occasion, we were at the airport with Ethiopians. I don't know if you remember that, about this time, designer clothes for children were starting to come into the stores, and all the kids wanted clothes with labels.

Q: Right.

GILMORE: My daughter wanted Guess jeans. Well, they cost \$60, which I thought was exorbitant for a little girl, both in terms of cost and values. So we bought regular jeans, and she was upset because many of her friends had Guess jeans. We often go to the airport to pick up my husband from a business trip. One evening we were there, and my daughter noticed an Ethiopian family of diplomats, and they had two children, younger than she was, wearing Guess jeans. Of course, Kate remembered that there was a famine in Ethiopia and that her mother was delivering food. She asked me how come they could afford Guess jeans and we couldn't. The answer to that question became a lesson in income disparities, diplomats, and all of that.

Q: Those are funny stories. Did they get involved in local charity work? I imagine if they were in school here they did community service, or they were aware of disparities in the U.S. as well.

GILMORE: Well actually, at that time, they didn't do community service in the schools. I made an effort with both of my children so that they could understand the less privileged in our society. As a family, we would go every Thanksgiving to a nursing home to help out, we delivered food to the elderly in their homes, and we accompanied inner city kids to the White House and other places. I remember taking, again it was my younger daughter, to a discussion group for children from disadvantaged neighborhoods. The leader of the group was talking to them about their family life in general and then asked casually how many people in their family have been killed.

Q: Have been killed?

GILMORE: Have been killed with guns, for example. And every single person in the group had someone who had been murdered, and they described how their relative had died. And my daughter was listening to all this. It was a powerful experience for both of us, learning about how other people live, not only overseas, but here.

Q: So, here we are, moving to the Asia Near East Bureau in 1994.

GILMORE: 1994. I was the director of East Asia, and the countries in my portfolio were highly political. The Congress was extremely interested in many of the countries, and we had congressional earmarks for several of them. It was a very visible job and politically active portfolio. I had very little knowledge of anything in Asia; most of my experience had been in Africa, except for a couple of evaluations of programs in Asia. In order to get up-to-speed, I had to spend time on my own learning about the history of these countries, especially Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Burma.

Q: There was no Burma program at that time.

GILMORE: We had an earmark, a \$2.5 million earmark for Burmese refugees in Thailand. No, there was no program in Burma, but we did handle the refugee program. I think you were probably involved in that.

Q: Yes.

GILMORE: The Global Bureau helped us a lot. The program languished for a while but, due to pressure from constituency groups, the Burmese diaspora, it finally did take off.

Q: Right. Was this before the Peterson initiative on Vietnam? I mean, did we have any programs there?

GILMORE: Yes, we had a humanitarian program in Vietnam, about \$3 million - it was prosthetics, displaced children, very humanitarian. And it was quite significant politically because we had no other relationship at that time with Vietnam.

Q: Right. I think that was Senator Leahy's initiative and the whole orphans and vulnerable children started with his concern about what we should be doing in Vietnam to help them recover from the Vietnamese War.

GILMORE: Senator Leahy was involved with all of the humanitarian activities, orphans and prosthetics. Then, we decided to recognize Vietnam. Peterson went out later on as the first ambassador. Once we recognized Vietnam, the State Department wanted to stop the humanitarian program as there was no longer a political need for it.

Q: Wanted to stop it?

GILMORE: Yes, despite the success of the program programmatically and politically. It was helping a lot of people in economic and physical need. AID believed it was vital to

continue the program, but the State Department felt it was no longer necessary. They wanted to close the program to appease those in State and the White House who were unhappy with the resumption of diplomatic relations. I was in charge of fighting this battle for AID with the State Department. It went all the way up to the Deputy Secretary for Asia. In the end, we were allowed to keep the program. Not only did we keep the program, we expanded it. We started a HIV-AIDS activity; again the Global Bureau was extremely helpful in getting it going.

Q: Yes.

GILMORE: And later on we began a legal reform program, even before the ambassador got out there. So, we were able to continue and expand the program, little by little. This was the first time that I had to deal with the State Department on something that was so critically important.

Q: Right. Did Congress weigh in?

GILMORE: They may have, I may not have been aware of it, but as far as I knew they did not. It was just the NSC (National Security Council) and State. The NSC was not that eager to continue the program either, but they went along with it. So, AID won that battle.

Q: Congratulations.

GILMORE: Another area where I represented AID with the State Department was regional activities. There were several Asian regional programs; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) were the two that I got involved with. No one was interested in AID. The bureau, at that time, was consumed with reorganization. There was continual upheaval under the rubric of reengineering, closing missions, reduction in force (RIF), etc. They all had different names but were ever-present.

Q: Was Margaret Carpenter-

GILMORE: Margaret Carpenter was the assistant administrator, and she was a highly competent person. However, she was hamstrung by instructions from senior management, which circumscribed any new ideas or initiatives.

Q: Yes. Which was due to Larry Byrne.

GILMORE: And Margaret was a good soldier. I decided these regional organizations were useful for our trade and development agenda so I worked with State and the ambassadors on preparations for regional meetings and helped them with their briefing books. No one really cared at AID so I didn't get much kudos for this, but I thought it was useful to have AID represented at the table.

Q: And were the other agencies interested in the AID perspective?

GILMORE: I tried to interest them as much as I could, but it was more listening to what they were doing, being responsive to any questions or tasks that they wanted us to do for them. It was more passive than active, but we did play a role.

So, that's Vietnam. Have we talked about Cambodia?

Q: Not yet.

GILMORE: Okay. Cambodia. We had a new mission there; it had just opened. Lee Twentyman was the first AID representative. He was a little bit of a cowboy, great guy, and perfect for that job. This was right after the elections. UNTAC, the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia, had just left the country, and there was a coalition government with two prime ministers. It was a pivotal time, and AID played a very prominent role.

I remember, another story, my first trip to Cambodia. Angkor Wat in Siem Reap is a religious monument of enormous historical importance. Lee meets me at the airport and says Judy, before you see any of our projects, do anything, I want you to take a plane to Siem Reap. Visiting Angkor Wat is essential to understanding the history and culture of Cambodia. And I thought wow, this is great, I didn't think I was going to have a chance to get there so I said of course I would go. Then he says well, there's one caveat: the UN has just evacuated its staff due to shooting on the border between Cambodia and Thailand.

Q: And you're thinking of your little girls at home.

GILMORE: I am thinking what do I do here? Lee would have gone in a heartbeat, so I felt that I needed to show that I was as fearless as he was, but then I thought about all these other things, and I had to decide on the spot because the plane was about to leave. Of course, I went, and I was so glad to have had the opportunity. I did not hear a single gunshot when I was there. And since this was before tourism invaded Cambodia, there was hardly anyone there. I stayed at the only hotel in Siem Reap and had a guide to myself. It was an amazing experience.

Q: But it felt like a little bit of a test, right?

GILMORE: Yes, it was very much a test. I think I passed it. But there was more to come. The mission was under the aegis of the regional support mission (RSM) in Thailand. There RSM had to approve all activities and were in charge of the contracting. There were a lot of issues between the missions, personified in the tension between the two mission directors. I was assigned responsibility for working this conflict out. That was my first foray into mediation.

Q: Who was the regional representative?

GILMORE: Linda Lion.

Q: Ah.

GILMORE: And you know, they were both strong, talented individuals; you could see why they might clash. I organized a mediation session with help from Martha Reese in the State Department's crisis office. She was used to working with missions on their problems. I brought them together for two days to work out the sharing of tasks and interpersonal issues. They did work it out and, over time, it was okay. Eventually, however, the Thailand mission had to close, and the support functions were moved to the Philippines.

So, we had to close Thailand. What we did was set up the Kenan Institute Asia to preserve the 45 year legacy of AID.s work there. I think this was the first foundation that was set up for this purpose. Or maybe Eastern Europe was earlier-

Q: Eastern Europe would have been earlier.

GILMORE: We found the resources for an endowment, drafted all the agreements, and the Institute is still there today.

Q: At that time the RSM was set up to make grants to local organizations or was it another kind of foundation? Do you remember if it was grant-giving?

GILMORE: They were working with NGOs and the private sector. I am not sure about the grants, but probably there was some funding through partnerships. Private enterprise was a big focus of theirs. We set them up to continue what they were doing and gave them an endowment to make them sustainable.

Q: Right. And then, to the extent there was management required, was that done from the regional mission in the Philippines or from Washington?

GILMORE: I don't remember that there was any kind of management afterwards from my office.

We created an endowment for them, and they used part of that for their operating costs.

Q: What do you think about the idea of setting up foundations as a way of continuing a U.S. legacy if not presence? Do you think the Thailand example was a positive one?

GILMORE: I do. I think some of them were very successful and some of them weren't. Jim Fox did an evaluation of the Eastern European enterprise funds, and the results were mixed. I know for Thailand, it worked really well, but it was a different type of entity. We had a 45-year history there, and this was a way of leaving something meaningful in place and continuing the relationship. The proof is in the pudding, as they say. Kenan Institute Asia still exists in Thailand as a reputable institution.

The other mission that we had to close was Mongolia. It was the only country that was liberalizing both on the economic and political fronts at the same time. People were watching it to see if that could really happen. We had two major objectives: to assist the parliament and presidency with their economic policies; and to support their energy needs, especially short-term. The Mongolians were totally dependent on Russia for their energy. They needed to update their equipment, the supply from Russia was sporadic, and so we spent a lot of our funds just providing band aids to keep the energy system going. I will never forget visiting those furnaces - pitch black, gigantic, and belching steam.

Q: Because they had central heating throughout the year?

GILMORE: In my apartment, I had to open the windows in mid-winter because there was no way of regulating the heat flow. So much energy was wasted because there were no meters.

I spent three weeks out in Mongolia as the acting mission director and that was a terrific experience. I worked closely with the Asia Foundation and met many of the local NGOs that they were funding. I was surprised by how many of them were women NGOs, and they were very active, committed women.

Q: Led by women or focused on women?

GILMORE: Led by women. The elections were coming up, and they were very involved in preparations. The Asia Foundation had a close relationship with all these local organizations. IRI (International Republican Institute) was out there as well. IRI's approach was interesting. Newt Gingrich had created a charter for America in the U.S to galvanize support for the Republicans. Remember that?

Q: Oh, I do.

GILMORE: IRI used the Contract for America idea as a model. They created this Contract for Mongolia. It wasn't the same concept, obviously, but it was a way of getting people involved. And when - I wasn't there for the elections - the elections took place, close to 90 percent of the population voted. They came by horseback; they came from all over, to vote. By that time, we had just about closed the mission in Mongolia. Because of the successful elections and a \$10 million congressional earmark, we had to reopen it quickly. The same month, the mission was closed and then reopened. The Bureau established a Mongolia Task Force in DC to manage the earmark, and I became the head upon returning from Mongolia. We worked with the Philippines, which was still the support mission for Mongolia, until we had an AID Representative there.

Q: Right. So, I am curious; when you were out there as acting mission director, was the language of the government Russian or was it Mongolian?

GILMORE: No, Mongolian.

Q: It was Mongolian.

GILMORE: Yes, but everybody in the mission spoke English, the local people too. It was surprising how many Mongolians spoke excellent English. I would ask them where they went to learn such good English; they hardly had an accent. Apparently, they learned it right in Mongolia, in school or they were self-taught. As a language major myself, I was extremely impressed with their skill and discipline.

Q: In so many of these places that were under the thumb of the Soviet Union, Russian became the language.

GILMORE: Particularly with the liberalization, the language was Mongolian. Being independent was a crucial factor to the Mongolians.

One of the local hires was married to a monk; he took me to the old library in the monastery. All of the books had been hidden away during the time of the Soviet Union. They were wrapped in this beautiful silk, rolled up carefully, and kept in drawers. It was just magnificent.

Q: Dating back, what? Thousands of years?

GILMORE: Very old. They were so concerned about preserving these manuscripts that they have kept this library closed to the public. It was so moving to see these beautiful scrolls, especially when the monk unrolled them for me, knowing how precious they were.

Q: Wow, you had some wonderful experiences; Angkor Wat by yourself and this monastery and its library.

GILMORE: Oh, another fantastic experience in Mongolia. I was there during the big solar eclipse. There were many tourists who came just for this event. So Mongolia organized a special festival where they consolidated all the holidays that they normally celebrate throughout the year. There was a huge bonfire with throat singing, traditional dancing, and the next day horse processions and falcon hunting. Many AID and World Bank people were there. We stayed in these gers,

Q: That we call yurts.

GILMORE: Yes. There were about eight people to a ger, and every four hours someone would come in and replenish the wood stove to keep us warm during the night. And we were all so excited to see the eclipse with our protective glasses at the ready. We woke up eagerly at 6:30 am and were devastated to see that it was snowing. No one had predicted that. It was such a disappointment. The only ones who got to see the eclipse were the Japanese, who had Imax equipment for filming and a helicopter to fly above the clouds. We saw their photos on television, and that was how we saw the eclipse!

Q: So, it was a very hopeful time.

GILMORE: Very hopeful time.

Q: They appreciated AID, things were liberalizing, the economy was-

GILMORE: Was starting to improve, but it was still a difficult time for them.

Q: And corruption was not obvious? I mean, I know that it was-

GILMORE: I am not sure. Before I was there, there were no vegetables at all. That doesn't relate to corruption, and I don't know why I thought of it when you asked that question. The market was just opening up with China. Mongolia had just started importing vegetables from China, so they had these huge carrots and potatoes in the market. Up until then, most of their food was derived from mutton and yogurt, all produced locally. There were just a couple of hotels, a few restaurants, and no taxi services. We just stopped people in their cars if we needed a ride.

Q: Health conditions; do you remember anything about that?

GILMORE: We didn't do anything with health in our portfolio then.

Q: Right. It was focused on democracy and economic liberalization?

GILMORE: Right, and the energy sector. Those were the three areas that we focused on. They were the appropriate ones because we really made a difference in the elections, we made a huge difference in providing their short-term energy needs, and we started to help them with their economic and energy policies. Yes, it was a very exciting time to be there.

Q: Right. When you said closing down and opening up in the same breath, closing down was part of the mission closure and you just needed a certain number, and then opening up again because-

GILMORE: Because of the spectacular success of the elections, Congress gave us \$10 million and insisted that we reopen the mission. It was really weird closing down and opening up, and it was difficult for the mission staff. The Philippines mission filled the breach. They made frequent trips to Mongolia to develop the country strategy so that when we did finally send a mission director out, he was able to move forward without delay..

What other countries? Indonesia. Yes, Indonesia. The big problem in Indonesia was human rights.

Q: Human rights, yes.

GILMORE: Yes. It was in the final period of Suharto. He followed Sukarno. And Indonesia was supposedly a democracy. The one crisis that I remember working on was the Freeport Grasberg mine in Irian Jaya - the largest gold mine in the world and the second largest copper mine. This was the first time that I had to deal with a situation where the community rose up against a corporation. Freeport had hired the local military to provide security for the mines. And something happened that generated this community opposition.

Q: Someone was killed, I think.

GILMORE: Exactly. How did you remember that?

Q: Well, because I remember dealing with it as well.

GILMORE: In addition, OPIC (Overseas Private Investment Corporation) withdrew its insurance because, not only were there issues with regard to the killing, but also the community was up in arms because of pollution, because the mines were polluting the rivers, and people were not getting clean drinking water. It was a terrible situation for us, and it took a long time to resolve. These were the first community dialogues with corporations, and it was an interesting time from that perspective.

Q: Was it your perspective that AID was sympathetic to the company or to the community?

GILMORE: AID was trying to find a balance owing to our relationship with the government. Freeport was a substantial part of their income. The mission was trying to act as an intermediary and trying just to work it out. There were public relations issues for Freeport in the United States as well as in Indonesia. We tried to deal with public outrage while supporting the mission. It finally got resolved, at least temporarily. Freeport made an effort to respond to the community's demands; they gave them money and cleaned up the water supply.

Q: Did you make trips out to Indonesia during your time-?

GILMORE: Yes, I took two trips. The first was to get to know the mission and our program. This was before Freeport erupted. Another time I went primarily for environmental issues, visiting some of the islands, the fishing villages, and distant towns.

Q: Oh, with 17,000 islands-

GILMORE: It was very remote. On one excursion, I remember meeting local people in the jungle, who were frightened of us as the first white people they had ever seen. That was quite an upsetting experience for me. We also saw some monkey species that were indigenous to that particular place. On a boat trip to a fishing village, there was a really bad storm. Our boat was quite small and the waves extremely large. It was terrifying, but we got to shore safely.

Q: You haven't mentioned the Philippines and I guess-

GILMORE: Yes, I am going to get to that. China too.

Q: Yes, absolutely. And then, I don't know whether you had anything to do with Japan as a fellow donor or whether that was really something that the policy bureau handled.

GILMORE: No, that wasn't part of my portfolio. I know this was a valuable partnership for AID through the-

Q: Common agenda.

GILMORE: I did get involved with Japan when I went back to PVC because the government wanted to strengthen its relationship with NGOs and wanted to learn more about how our PVO programs evolved. More on that later.

Let me talk about China first, in particular human rights and NGOs. The women's conference in 1995 was in Beijing, as you know, and the First Lady went and gave this magnificent speech. There was also a parallel conference for NGOs, which was a big deal when it actually happened. It seemed that China might be moving towards some progress on human rights. As a result, there was an initiative with State Department and NSC to support some of the local Chinese NGOs. In China, NGOs are not independent from the government; they are semi-autonomous. We developed a program and went to the Hill for support. Unfortunately, we didn't get their approval.

Q: Do you remember where on the Hill the opposition was or was it just uniform?

GILMORE: Actually the NSC and State Department dealt with the Hill on all China-related matters.

Q: Didn't work.

GILMORE: Didn't work. And everybody was really disappointed because it was an entree to follow up on the Beijing conference and some of the other human rights issues. I suspect that the Hill was concerned that the NGOs were too controlled by the government, which was true to a certain extent, and didn't want to fund these quasi-organizations.

Q: Right. And the human rights record was just too-

GILMORE: Abysmal.

Q: And, I guess, the abortion issue certainly played a role,

GILMORE: Actually, I am not sure about that, but it may have. You mean the one child policy.

Q: Yes. So, did you attend the conference?

GILMORE: No.

Q: Well, I think they were limiting the number of people.

GILMORE: Did you go?

Q: Sally Shelton went.

GILMORE: Okay, the Philippines. At that time, we were pulling out of our bases there.

Q: There's pulling out and being pushed out, too, you know.

GILMORE: That is true. We developed this initiative called the MAI (Multilateral Assistance Initiative) as a way of providing resources to the Philippine government to compensate for our leaving. We were spending a lot of money on these bases and hired a lot of people who would be unemployed. Elliot Richardson was the ambassador to the MAI and had been there for several years. This was a long-term effort, and I only joined for the last couple of years. We developed a good relationship. By working with him, AID had a big influence on the agenda. I was able to move the discussion from economic growth and trade to sustainable development and democracy. Ambassador Richardson was very supportive of that.

Funny thing about Elliot - he doodles. Since I sat next to him at all these meetings, I could see all these wonderful doodles that he did. And he did one of a dragon; he liked dragons. At the end of one meeting, I got my nerve up and asked if I could have one. They were really quite beautiful in red, black, and blue ink

Q: All in the meetings?

GILMORE: All in the meetings so you wonder how much he was paying attention, but I am pretty sure he was. He gave me one and signed it. I still have it somewhere in my papers.

I spent most of my time on the MAI but also with the AID program. We had a very competent and independent mission director, who really didn't need much support.

Q: Who was that?

GILMORE: Tom Stukel

Q: But the MAI would actually create resources that AID would then program, right?

GILMORE: No, it was more like a consultative group meeting when donors make pledges to the government.

Q: Right. So, did we actually close all of our bases?

GILMORE: Yes. We had to close them all and totally pulled out from there, yes.

Q: Was the Mindanao program or insurgency going at this time?

GILMORE: It was, and I did visit some of those programs. Peace negotiations were just beginning then too.

Q: Sounds like you did a lot of traveling when you were in the Asia Near East Bureau.

GILMORE: I did. I did in all the regional bureaus. It was a way of seeing the programs, of meeting the people involved in the government, missions and in the field. You can't be effective if you don't develop these relationships. And then we worked with the missions on their strategies, on their budgets, all those kinds of things that regional bureaus do, representing them on the Hill, with the Global Bureau, with all the other AID bureaus as needed..

Q: So, what were your years in Asia Near East?

GILMORE: 1994 to 1997.

Q: 1997, alright.

GILMORE: The one thing I didn't mention was during my tenure we had the first 150 account consolidated budget review with the State Department. Everybody was concerned that the State Department was going to try to take over our resources. Contrary to expectations, it turned out to be very positive. We had plenty of time to present our program, and State was very supportive. From the ANE perspective, it worked out well for us.

Q: Well, I think AID had been doing program reviews for so long that there was a real professional expertise.

GILMORE: Compared to State, absolutely.

Q: Absolutely, yes.

Q: They were probably very impressed.

GILMORE: Right. The ANE budget staff did an excellent job.

So, from there I went to the Latin America Bureau.

Q: Okay. So, we've gone to Africa, Asia Near East and now Latin America. Wow.

GILMORE: Latin America. Yes. You know, this interview has given me a chance to, because to me they were all kind of separate jobs, to look at them as a whole and see the trajectory.

Q: Right. And moving to Latin America you're now thoroughly acquainted with the role of the regional bureau and the systems that are required to make it effective.

GILMORE: And, you mentioned evaluation earlier. I think my evaluation background was very useful in the regional bureaus because many of them were struggling, like in the Africa Bureau there was the DFA, which focused on performance and reporting. In the Asia Bureau, I was also helpful in conceptualizing some of these concerns. And in Latin America, I introduced trends analysis, but more about that later.

So, what was interesting about the Latin America Bureau, just kind of an overview. In the early '60s, I mentioned I worked at the OAS.

Q: So, you already had Spanish too.

GILMORE: Yes, I had Spanish, and I also knew a lot, I thought. Moving to Latin America was a change in two ways. When I first started my career at the OAS, Latin America was more authoritarian with centralized planning as the systemic model. In 1997, the Latin American program for democracy was the first and most advanced of all the regions. Democracy, civil society and good governance were pervasive themes in strategies and regional activities. Similarly the contrast in management styles between ANE and LAC leadership was striking. Margaret followed direction from the upper echelons, thereby limiting new initiatives and consolidating offices and staff. She was a team player.

Q: Right. Mark was not?

GILMORE: No, Mark Schneider was not. Mark was a Latin American specialist. He'd been working in Latin America all his life. He had an agenda for the Bureau, and he was able to carry it out because he had this outside constituency supporting him. Everybody in the bureau respected him, they knew what he wanted, and he was a difficult person to challenge. Keeping up with Mark was not always easy because he had an idea a minute. And the regional sustainable development office (RSD) was often the office that he turned to implement all these ideas.

Q: Right. You said he had an agenda; what- can you characterize it briefly?

GILMORE: He had so many things he wanted to accomplish. I am not sure what his overarching agenda was except to be a preeminent player in what went on in the region.

And he was able to accomplish this through two mechanisms: the Summit of the Americas and the First Ladies Conference.

The Summit of the Americas, the meeting of the 34 democratic Heads of State, set the agenda for priority activities in the region. Mark made sure that we were involved, RSD particularly but himself as well, in everything that went on in the planning of the Summit of Americas, the meeting itself, and the follow-up. We worked closely with State, OAS, and Summit officials. From my perspective, going from a bureau that didn't pay much attention to regional institutions to a bureau that focused intently on the regional agenda was quite a change. And we were flush with resources, no downsizing or reorganizing!

When I was there, our budget increased tremendously: \$20 million in education; \$20 million for economic growth and trade; \$17 million for microenterprise; and \$110 million for Hurricane Mitch to disperse among other US government agencies. Because we were implementing the regional agenda and because Mark was so effective, we were able to leverage significant resources from AID.

Q: How large an office was it?

GILMORE: Well, we had agriculture, economic growth and trade; health; environment; education; and democracy. There were about 3-4 direct hire staff in each division and some contractors. So it was pretty big.

Q: Sizable, yes.

GILMORE: And it was a challenge. Fortunately, Tim Mahoney was the director of the office. I was the deputy director. I was delighted to have Tim because he could handle Mark in a way that I couldn't. Tim was able to focus on the tasks that we really could do and do well and not get into everything that Mark wanted. He was able to say no, and Mark would listen to him. I really appreciated that.

Q: But you mentioned that Mark brought you over and one of the questions that I wanted to ask was what made you decide to move from Africa to Asia Near East and then from Asia Near East to Latin America?

GILMORE: The same reason in both cases. In the Africa Bureau, they merged the Sahel office with the West Africa office after the CFA devaluation, and since ANE had been after me for a while to come there, it was a good time to move. A similar consolidation happened in ANE; they combined East Asia with South Asia. So, I had another opportunity to change jobs. I knew Mark, he'd just come onboard, and the timing worked out well. I was happy to get back to Latin America, but I was sorry to leave Asia. I would have loved to stay. Reorganization wasn't just overseas; it was merging offices in Washington as well. The ambiance in Latin America was quite different. I had an expanding portfolio, I didn't have to worry about budget cuts, and I didn't have the responsibility of closing missions. It was a nice change.

And the other approach that Mark took to getting attention to his agenda was access to the First Lady through the First Ladies Conferences, Vital Voices - all the meetings with Mrs. Clinton. Mark knew Mrs. Clinton quite well so he was able to get the bureau into the planning for all of those meetings. And since I was the most senior woman in the bureau, I was his designee for the women's issues. At first, I was a little put off, but it became a thoroughly interesting assignment, working with the White House staff. I attended the First Ladies Conference in Toronto. Mrs. Clinton was delayed in arriving so I had to replace her as First Lady for the first evening's festivities.

Q: Oh, my goodness.

GILMORE: It was really terrific. I went with all the First Ladies to the - this was Friday night, she came on Saturday for the actual meetings but for the opening ceremony I was Hillary Clinton. I sat on the bus with the first lady of Colombia. She was a former model, a lovely woman, had an ambitious agenda of things that she wanted to accomplish for her country and was very much involved in the peace effort, which was in the beginning stages. I also met the first lady from Venezuela. I can see her now this blonde, almost teenager with pigtails, Chavez's wife. He had just been elected president. And she came to the meeting. She didn't know what she was doing, but she was adorable. Chavez at that time was a fairly big name, and we had expectations for him so I spent some time with her. Then, Cuba was represented for the first time at this meeting.

Q: Cuba?

GILMORE: Cuba was present. In the past, Cuba was not allowed to attend any of these meetings. Fidel's sister came. I didn't meet her, but she was there.

Q: Were you instructed not to meet her?

GILMORE: No, I just didn't have the opportunity to meet her. In a way, I was glad because I really wasn't sure what our official position should be towards her. No one had briefed me on that.

And then at the dinner all the First Ladies had to walk across the stage and shake hands with the prime minister and his wife. So, I walked across the stage, everybody clapped, shook hands; it was a bit over the top, but it was kind of fun.

Q: Were there any of the First Ladies that really impressed you other than the-

GILMORE: The Colombian one.

Q: The Colombian one because of her agenda.

GILMORE: For her agenda, yes. And the Central American ones too. They all had specific programs that they proposed at the meeting, what they wanted to do independently and in support of their husbands. It wasn't frivolous in any way. These

were activities that they had gotten funding for; some of them talked about the impact of their programs. It was very professional.

Q: And what was the U.S. position? Were we there as listeners or did we have an agenda?

GILMORE: Well, we presented what we were doing to implement the Summit of the Americas. Mrs. Clinton came in time to make the presentation. She covered not only what AID was doing
But what the rest of the US government was doing as well. I was staff at that point so my role changed considerably.

And then there was Vital Voices. Now, Vital Voices is an independent NGO, but it was originally a State Department program.

Q: I remember that.

GILMORE: There had been several meetings previously in Europe; the one in Uruguay was the first in Latin America. Hattie Babbitt, the deputy administrator, and I attended that meeting with 400 prominent women leaders in the region to discuss women's role in strengthening democracy and building networks. Mrs. Clinton was the main presenter, and we were part of her delegation. AID had developed several technical workshops on democracy with Partners of the Americas. My role was to oversee the technical aspects of the workshops and to support Hattie.

And she had her own presentation?

GILMORE: Yes, she did. Latin America had some amazing women, high-powered, successful women doing great things. Just listening to what they were doing and meeting some of them was a fantastic experience.

Q: Right, yes.

GILMORE: That was in response to Mark's agenda; that's how we got into everything through the Summit of the Americas and through these high-level meetings with the First Lady. We worked with the White House whenever we could, and Mark made sure that he or his staff were there as often as possible.

Q: So, Tim didn't want to go to any of these or was it just he thought better that he-

GILMORE: No, Tim was very much involved. I usually handled the women's agenda, and Tim went often with Mark to the Summit of the Americas meetings. Tim would represent us at the sectoral meetings or I would, depending on who was managing the particular sector portfolio at the time. The sectors that I worked on primarily were education, economic growth and trade, and some democracy. Tim worked on the environment. I can't remember who handled health.

Q: Probably population and health because he had that background.

GILMORE: Right, right, probably health and also democracy. So, we kind of divided it up that way.

Another regional priority was the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

Q: Right. And was Mercosur being discussed?

GILMORE: Mercosur comprises Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay and had been in place for several years. What we were working on was a Latin America-wide trade agreement. State was very involved as was USTR (US Trade Representative). As a result of those meetings, we created two new programs in RSD. First, we introduced a regional program on trade, which we didn't have before. And then we had our economic growth and democracy teams work together on a civil society trade initiative, to be implemented by a network of democracy organizations, headquartered in Buenos Aires. The goal was for these NGOs throughout the region to learn about trade issues so that they could educate their country representatives attending the FTAA meetings.

That was another thing I tried to do, to bring the different sectors together. We were really stove-piped as an office; there were so many cross-sectoral issues that we should have taken advantage of. This was one that we actually got money for and could implement. The idea came out of a trade meeting in Mexico where the Mexicans refused to have any NGO representation at any of the sessions. The US delegation was quite upset. I came away thinking that, if we're not going to allow NGO representation, we need to figure out a way for NGOs to be heard. That was the origin of the initiative.

Hurricane Mitch was a huge disaster.

Q: When was that, 1998, 1999?

GILMORE: End of 1998.

Q: Right.

GILMORE: Hurricane Mitch was devastating to the people of Honduras and Nicaragua although all of Central America was affected in some way. There was \$110 million set aside by Congress for other US government organizations to participate in the recovery effort. We were given the management responsibility for those funds. Our sectoral experts worked with the missions and the 13 US government agencies to develop programs. It was a massive coordinating effort to make sure that it all held together and made sense.

Q: Well, and an educating effort because some of these U.S. Government agencies-

GILMORE: Knew nothing about contracting, knew nothing about overseas work.

Q: And probably some of them were a little resistant to learn what you had to do.

GILMORE: Well, that's true. They thought they knew a lot of it. They had their areas of strength, like HUD's (Housing and Urban Development) knowledge of housing. And that was great; we needed their expertise. But it had to all fit together, the \$110 million had to fit together as a whole, and then each of the pieces had to fit together with the strategy of the missions. Our sectoral people really worked hard at trying to make that all happen. Tom Nicastro came over to help us with it. We got it all done in four months, can you believe it?

Q: Yes, no. Do you know why the funds were earmarked for multiple government agencies as opposed to just giving it to AID to implement?

GILMORE: That is a really good question. We asked ourselves that as well as it would have been much easier to give it to the missions. It was a congressional mandate. A hypothesis might be that the Hill wanted to get more US government agencies involved in overseas programs. Several government agencies, such as HHS and EPA, were already involved with AID operations. I think this was an attempt to get more agencies involved in what was going on overseas.

Q: Did you go down to Nicaragua and visit?

GILMORE: I did. I went down with Kate McKee, who was the head of the Microfinance Office. We went to Nicaragua and Honduras to develop an emergency program for microenterprise institutions and clients affected by the hurricane. We went there prepared to grant loan forgiveness because we felt people would not be able to pay their debts, that they would be overwhelmed by this crisis. The finance institutions were ready to provide debt relief as well. We went out and talked with the clients; what was really surprising was that the recipients, mostly women, were committed to paying back their loans. They felt this tremendous responsibility even though many of them had been seriously affected by the hurricane or by the mudslides in Nicaragua. What they really wanted was an extension of their loans so that they could repay them and then be eligible for future loans. They were definitive in their desire to pay back the loans and in their requests for more time. Our field trip really paid off; what we learned from the clients was very insightful and quite different from our expectations.

Q: Right. And they probably did pay them back.

GILMORE: I assume they did because they were very keen on doing that. And so, we worked with the finance institutions there to arrange loan extensions. Upon our return, we developed a \$17 million microfinance program. The IDB was involved with it, then the White House endorsed it, and AID gave us the funding - all within 3 months. I spent most of my time on making that happen.

Q: On the microfinance?

GILMORE: On the microfinance program, trying to get that done because it also had regional implications. The IDB was providing a line of credit, at the same time, to some of the microfinance institutions in the region. So, it was a great collaboration and then the White House decided that they wanted to get involved as well.

Q: Right. Well, it was a time when there was a lot of attention to microfinance. I think Congressman Sam Gejdenson was really pushing AID to do much more in this area, thought that this was a better approach to development than some of the larger scale things. I don't know whether that affected your program or not.

GILMORE: I don't think so. Microfinance was very important to the Summit of the Americas as well. That was one of the big programs, along with education. So, there was a regional commitment to do this. But from Kate's point of view, it was probably influential. I know there was an agency-wide earmark that this would have contributed to.

Oh, there was one other thing I wanted to mention about Latin America. In addition to all these other initiatives, RSD technical staff took the lead in strategic analysis for the bureau. And we designed strategic plans for all our regional programs as well as reviewing the mission strategic plans. One of the things that we initiated was trends analysis.

Q: Oh, yes.

GILMORE: What we did was not only examine where we were going in the various sectors in our own programs but what was going on in the countries themselves and in the region more widely, and how we could complement that.

Q: Right, which makes sense.

GILMORE: Which makes a lot of sense, but we weren't always looking at the broader context in our reviews, at least not in Latin America. I don't think we were in Asia, either, at the time. So, this seemed to be something new. At first, when we introduced it the technical staff felt that it was just another exercise they would have to do. Eventually, they really embraced it. They did a superb job and developed all these fancy PowerPoint presentations.

GILMORE: These analyses contributed to the budget allocation process in the bureau. PPC and some of the regional bureaus got involved so our efforts were recognized by the agency.

Q: That was a time when, I think, it seemed almost every year AID was trying a new strategic planning approach. There was so much wasted energy within these new systems so if you actually were able to make something sensible happen it was great.

GILMORE: It was a positive thing for the bureau.

Q: Do you want to take a break?

GILMORE: Yes, let's take a break for a minute. Good idea.

Q: Resuming now.

GILMORE: From Latin America, I became the director of the Office of Private Voluntary Cooperation. I was excited to return to the office where I had begun my career at AID as the director. I realized when I accepted the position that the role of PVOs within the agency had not changed significantly and that they were now totally integrated into our work. Moreover, there was a highly visible association, InterAction, to represent their interests. Then, Andrew Natsios became the administrator, and he came from the PVO community. He knew the PVO leadership well, and they tended to gravitate to him directly. So, the office had a quite different role. It collaborated with all these organizations, with Andrew, with InterAction, but it no longer was the sole spokesperson for the PVO community the way it was 30 years earlier.

Yet it had another very important function - to build the capacity of local NGOs the way the office had strengthened the US PVOs in previous decades. It was about time to move the focus away from these US organizations to that of local institutions overseas. That was the mandate I hoped to pursue.

Q: Right. So, it's like coming home.

GILMORE: It was a coming home. It turned out to be a little less interesting than I thought because of budget challenges and reorganization – once again. These were totally unforeseen when I accepted the position. Nevertheless, we developed a new strategy to support local NGOs and networks in collaboration with US organizations. Since our constituency was US PVOs, it was critical to incorporate them in the process.

Q: And the PVOs were a little nervous, were they not?

GILMORE: Yes, it was really challenging bringing them along, but we were able to win their support.

Q: Right. Could you just say why you chose to leave Latin America to go to the PVC office or bureau?

GILMORE: Well, I knew that I was not going to be at AID that much longer, that I-

Q: So, it was a transition.

GILMORE: that I wanted to retire at some point for a lot of reasons. Foreign Service officers tend to leave at a much earlier age than GS folks. The GS employees were

considerably older, and it felt, for me at least, that it was time to think about the future. I thought this would be a good way to close the circle.

Q: To wrap up your career.

GILMORE: To wrap up my career, to go back to where I was before, to focus more on NGOs because I hadn't worked with them that much in the interim. In retrospect, I am not sure that was the right decision, given the changes that happened during my time there, but it was still a very interesting job and a way to reconnect with the PVO community.

The office had three priorities: building the capacity of local NGOs; helping some new US organizations get off the ground, and responding to conflict. We had a bureau where addressing conflict was a growing concern; a new office was being created, CMM, Conflict Mitigation and Management. And even the democracy office had a division focused on conflict. The bureau was moving away from development, and we needed to adapt..

Q: Emergency.

GILMORE: OFDA was in the bureau but somewhat more independent. PVC, along with the democracy office, represented the development arm of the bureau. However, we had to link our work to the other offices to be influential. And so, we spent a lot of time trying to figure out how to do that. In addition to our mandate of building the capacity of local NGOs, we designed programs in conflict countries and an analytical agenda to look at some of these issues.

Q: Right, or indigenous.

GILMORE: Yes, local or indigenous NGOs. So, our role was to move the American PVOs into more analytical thinking, working more with conflict situations, and strengthening their local partners overseas.

The first week that I was there, I was asked to go to Japan to meet with their Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of Finance, and Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to help them design new and more responsive programs for their NGOs, who were organizationally weak and humanitarian in scope. The Japanese Government had asked the Deputy AID administrator to send someone experienced in this area.

We developed a presentation giving the history of our work with PVOs over the past 30 years - a challenging task as I had just arrived in the office and hadn't been dealing specifically with these organizations for a long time. The meetings were successful, and we followed up with a training proposal and papers on capacity building and indirect costs. This was the best introduction I could have had to my new position and contributed to the development of a new strategy for PVC.

Q: Did you take a team or were you alone?

GILMORE: No, it was just me. Needless to say, I was quite apprehensive.

Q: And was there an AID rep there who helped?

GILMORE: Yes, Connie Carrino was the AID Representative; Rie Yamaki, her assistant, helped with logistics, especially setting up NGO meetings for me.

I didn't expect so many people. All the ministries were represented by senior staff. And they asked lots of questions, much to my surprise as I had been advised that Japanese officials are more reticent. This was a very high priority for them; they were serious about working with their NGO community in a more effective way.

Upon my return, we prepared several documents for them. One was a proposal for a more in-depth training program. Another had to do with indirect costs, because when I met with some Japanese NGOs before my presentation, they highlighted the need for headquarters support not just program funds.

Q: And do you know whether they actually implemented, whether they got more funding?

GILMORE: They did introduce a policy for indirect costs. I was really pleased that they took our advice and listened to their NGOs' needs. We followed up with them for a while.

So, that was the first thing I did. Then we had to start thinking about a new strategy. In preparation, I tried to develop relationships with all the other offices in the bureau because I realized we had a lot of money that could be vulnerable.

Q: Because of emergencies.

GILMORE: No, because of our wide ranging programs. We had the cooperative development, the matching grant, child survival, development education, and the ocean freight programs. We had about \$70 million, and the bureau was eyeing that money for other purposes. Much of it was earmarked so they couldn't take it, but some of it was not. I realized that if we were going to protect this money, and also to do something that was constructive within the bureau and its strategy, I had to develop much closer relationships with the other offices and figure out a way to work with them. So, I spent some time doing that while developing a strategy. Once developed, the strategy was approved right away by the bureau and by PPC.

Q: Was this before 2001?

GILMORE: No, this was 2003. It took some time to carry out consultations with the PVO community, the other offices in the bureau, and to unify my own office around a conceptual framework.

Q: Oh, okay. So, you had a transition, a new administration.

GILMORE: Right. And then, we had this portfolio review. Janet Ballantyne went around to all the bureaus.

Q: Right.

GILMORE: As it turned out, we lost many of our programs anyway, not to our own bureau but to technical offices in other bureaus. Several of the more technical programs - child survival, development education, and cooperative development - were transferred. The goal of the portfolio review was to centralize as many of the programs as possible, for technical reasons. Fortunately, we kept our matching grant program so Janet was trying to be balanced in her approach.

Q: Okay.

GILMORE: So, child survival went to health.

Q: Which just meant moving all the grants over-

GILMORE: The program went to the health office, and it did very well there.

Q: And Janet did that as counselor? Why was she in that role?

GILMORE: Yes, she was counselor if I recall correctly.

GILMORE: She was tasked with going around to all the bureaus, review their portfolios, and figure out where they should be located. As a result, the cooperative development program went to the agriculture office, the development education program went to the public affairs office, and child survival went to the health office. These were not wrong decisions in terms of where the technical expertise resided in the agency. Of course, I didn't like losing the budget and the programs - we lost about 45% of our budget - but I think the programs prospered in the technical offices.

Q: And you lost staff, too.

GILMORE: About 4 staff, program managers, were transferred.

Q: So, the mandate of your office changed with that portfolio review?

GILMORE: Not really. Our focus was still on local NGOs. We did finish our strategy and got it approved very quickly. Then PPC says to us, okay, it's a wonderful strategy, we love it; however, in order to get the budget for it, you will need regional bureau approval. That was a bit of a blow and quite unexpected as PPC had control of budget

allocation within the agency. Undaunted, I went to each of the regional bureaus and asked them to sign off on the strategy.

Q: Three of which you had already been in.

GILMORE: I was lucky as I knew people in all of them and had good relationships with them. But that doesn't always mean that they will approve it when it comes to resources.

Q: Right, yes.

GILMORE: Fortunately, they all did. Since they hadn't attended the strategy review, I had to present again the strategy in each of the bureaus, but we did get their approval. We developed programs along the strategy lines, got those implemented, and everything was going great. While we had a little smaller office and less budget, we had a very clear mandate. We had consulted with the PVOs; everyone seemed to be on the same page. We were moving forward.

Enter reorganization again!

Q: Well, of course.

GILMORE: As part of the bureau reorganization, it was decided that ASHA, American Schools and Hospitals Abroad, should be moved to our office. The program didn't really fit anywhere else, and the bureau felt that it shouldn't continue as an independent office. ASHA had been an independent office forever, plus it had a strong congressional support and a substantial budget earmark of about \$20 million. At first, I was very reluctant because we had just restructured what we were doing in PVC. We had a new strategy, and bringing the office together with all that upheaval was not easy. I had to figure out how to integrate a new office into our current mandate and keep up ASHA staff morale.

It turned out to be a boon to the office, broadening out outreach, and fortifying their programs. It is a unique program once you get to know it with enormous potential. We worked on trying to make it as developmental as possible within its parameters of supporting American-style institutions. We established ASHA relationships with the regional bureaus for the first time. We opened up the review process so that regional staff could participate, and the missions got involved. ASHA was pleased as well, but it took a great deal of effort.

Q: Right. Were new schools added during your-?

GILMORE: Yes, there were. They were more development-oriented even though they still had to meet the ASHA program criteria. Instead of construction-type projects or operational support and the like, we funded specific programmatic-type activities. Because ASHA was well liked on the Hill and had an active constituency, we didn't have to worry about supporting the budget.

Q: Right. You just had to report on it.

GILMORE: Yes and the regional bureaus became quite enthusiastic; to them this was a newly discovered source of funds that they could influence. So, it did work out quite well, and I had the good fortune to visit some of the schools and hospitals in the Middle East, a new region for me.

Q: Did you?

GILMORE: Yes. I went to Israel to visit several universities (Tel Aviv, Hebrew, and Weizmann Institute) and hospitals (Hadassah and Shaare Zedek) and to Egypt to meet with the American University of Cairo. I had hoped to see the American University of Beirut, but security was a concern so I didn't go. These are all outstanding institutions.

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Q: They are.

GILMORE: We tried to make the program more self-sustaining. ASHA was providing resources to some of these institutions every year; the organization counted on a certain amount of money from us, kind of like core support. We tried to wean them off it, but it was not going to happen. They had strong support on the Hill. We could change things incrementally, but we could not end any of these programs.

Q: Right. So, did you have to meet with the advocates for these schools and hospitals? Because the two you mentioned, Beirut and Cairo, they had a full-time lobbyist.

GILMORE: Yes. I met with them frequently. We had a collaborative relationship. They went to the Hill so I didn't have to deal with Congress at all. And they were very persuasive. We introduced evaluation criteria, which ASHA didn't have before, not just how many buildings they constructed or numbers of staff hired, but more significant measures from the developmental perspective. We held training workshops for ASHA staff and grantees and did our best to integrate their work into our office strategy.

GDA (Global Development Alliance) was happening around that time. The White House had all these new initiatives as well. I don't think GDA was a White House initiative.

Q: I don't think so.

GILMORE: It was an AID initiative. Our office had actually been working with corporations for a long time.

Q: Maybe just in parentheses explain what GDA is.

GILMORE: The idea was to work more closely with corporations and develop joint programming. It was a way of leveraging our funding base, but to do it in a very collaborative style so that both the corporations and AID could get something positive out of it. Holly Wise was in charge of the task force established to develop the concept.

Our office had already been working with corporations; we had several partnerships between PVOs and corporation as part of our matching grants. We had done studies on the effectiveness of these partnerships, what worked and what didn't, and how to improve the relationship. The task force utilized our materials in developing the initiative. While we continued these partnerships within our small matching grant program, over time GDA became very significant in terms of resources for development.

Q: I think it was at a time when corporations were becoming much more international and their shareholders were demanding that they take some responsibility in the communities where they were working, so the corporations were getting pressure to demonstrate some sort of positive developmental-

GILMORE: Corporate social responsibility.

Q: Exactly. It wasn't just an idea out of the blue.

GILMORE: The timing was propitious. Going back to Freeport, as an example of the kind of problem corporations were facing with local communities around the world, they were taking more of an interest in what they could do to improve their relationship with the local people. They called that corporate social responsibility. With GDA it became not only part of a separate kind of foundation or responsibility, but integral to the corporation's bottom line. So, we were involved in the birth of GDA and were very useful at the initial stages in terms of what we had learned and our relationships with the corporations.

We acquired the victims of torture program thanks to you. You were in PPC when you asked us to take it on.

Q: Right.

GILMORE: We collaborated with the Center for Victims of Torture in Minnesota and hired Barbara Kennedy to design and manage the program. There was an earmark of \$10 million to support victims of torture around the world.

Q: It started out less but ended up at \$10 million.

GILMORE: What we had to do was look throughout the agency to see what programs were already working with victims of torture or were related in some way to the topic, and then we would fill in the additional amount with our own programming. I don't know how many offices you asked before you asked us.

Q: No, you were the obvious one.

GILMORE: It fit in very well with what we were doing, and it became an active part of PVC's portfolio.

In addition to that program, there were two other initiatives that we piloted as part of the 21 presidential initiatives that the Bush White House asked AID to implement: the Faith-Based Office and Volunteers for Prosperity.

Most government agencies had to develop a faith-based office. It was logical for us to do this given our close working relationship with the faith-based PVOs; we knew them well. We were asked to develop this initiative.

Q: And this one did come from the White House. It reflected the president's and that administration's commitment to faith-based concerns.

GILMORE: Yes. We had everything prepared and ready to go, and Natsios wanted it to be in PVC. We assumed it would happen, but the White House had a different view. It wanted an independent office reporting directly to the administrator. In my opinion, the real issue wasn't so much the independence of the office but its level in the hierarchy. The White House wanted a highly visible office reporting directly to the administrator.

Q: Right.

GILMORE: So, AID set up a separate office with a couple of staff, more like a coordinating function. They didn't have a huge amount of money - we still had the grant money - but they took over that function.

Q: I remember one of the issues, maybe you could discuss this, was confirming that they were not proselytizing.

GILMORE: This was a big issue. Thanks for reminding me. Previously, there was a complete separation of church and state - the establishment clause of the Constitution. Our funds could not be used for any religious activity whatsoever. The Bush administration and the courts moved the needle to more acceptance of religious activity. As a result, instead of total separation, the same space could now be used for religious activities, i.e. prayers or religious schooling, but not at the same time as the AID-funded program. All of these changes had to be monitored diligently by the missions, and the lawyers were deeply involved. There was even, a court case about it.

Q: Right.

GILMORE: This affected ASHA mostly because the ASHA program was implemented, in many cases, by religious organizations.

Volunteers for Prosperity was the second initiative. We worked directly with the NSC on that one. I am now a volunteer, and I receive these certificates from the White House, signed by the president. I got one from Obama thanking me for my service. I was delighted. The origin of that was the Volunteers for Prosperity program.

Q: And what is it, what was it?

GILMORE: Many of the PVOs that we worked with had independent volunteer programs, whereby they would send people overseas to work for short periods of time. We asked them if they would share with us the names of all their volunteers. We wanted to provide the names to the White House so they could be recognized for their service. Most of them, not all, but most of them agreed. Thus, we were able to provide 10,000 names to the White House, and now I hear it is up to 50,000 - 60,000 names. The NSC was pleased because they had no idea how to get this program off the ground.

Q: So, this is mainly to give recognition to the volunteers.

GILMORE: Right.

Q: It wasn't programming?

GILMORE: No, it wasn't programming at all; it was just recognition. It was a way of showing the flag, promoting America. And that is why some of the PVOs didn't want to be a part of it. It started under Bush and continued under Obama. The White House was very satisfied as were the PVOs and their volunteers, who were receiving these certificates. I didn't realize how rewarding it could be until I got one myself.

Q: Right, these certificates.

GILMORE: Yes. We kept that program. It wasn't a huge amount of work once it got started because the White House dealt directly with the PVOs on the names and logistics.

Q: Okay, so.

GILMORE: So, I decided to retire in 2006 for two reasons. One I mentioned earlier; there were a lot of gray hairs around, and I didn't want to be one of them. But more seriously, I had always promised myself that I would leave when I was no longer having fun, that I would never stay just to stay, that when I really had had it, I would know it was time to call it quits. I had had it with budgets; I had had it with reorganization; I had had it with staff problems. I just couldn't face another administration, even though it was Obama, whom I campaigned for and supported. I just couldn't deal with another transition and all that would entail.

Q: I hit that point one administration previous to you, but this- exactly the same thing.

GILMORE: Plus, the thing that really pushed me out the door was the assistant administrator in my bureau decided to take some of our matching grant money away and to allocate it to other offices. I fought it as much as I could, and I finally decided I couldn't deal with this anymore.

Q: Yes. Who was the administrator?

GILMORE: I can see him now. I think I blocked out his name. He was a nice man, really lovely man, but he-

Q: You weren't able to protect the program and-

GILMORE: I was totally blindsided. It had nothing to do with the senior people in the agency. It was reallocating funds within the bureau so the higher-ups were not involved. And no one in the bureau gave me any inkling that this was coming, neither Len Rogers, my boss, or Bill Garvelink, the deputy administrator, who was not a supporter of PVC. After I retired, the office was moved as a division to the new donor coordination/partnership bureau and received another \$50 million congressional earmark to work with new US PVOs.

Q: So, did you have- when you retired did you have an idea of what was next, or did you want to-

GILMORE: I did. I did. I knew exactly what I wanted to do. I wanted to do two things; one worked out and one didn't. I knew I did not want to come back as a contractor. I know a lot of former employees do that.

Q: Right, the revolving door.

GILMORE: I wanted to work on human trafficking issues as a transition to getting more involved in human rights. Human trafficking is both a development and human rights problem. Although I had never worked professionally on that issue, I hoped to use my evaluation skills as the entree. And then I planned to do mediation. I had been trained in mediation in 2003 while I was still working at AID. I just never had time to do much with it because I was too tired when I got home from work, and weekends were devoted to other things. You have to be really focused and calm to practice mediation, and I wasn't that relaxed coming home so late at night.

Q: So, why were you trained in 2003?

GILMORE: Good question. There was an opportunity that arose in Maryland. The Court of Appeals asked each of the counties to set up conflict resolution centers. The first one was located in Montgomery County, where I live. The county was looking for volunteers to be trained, and I thought this might be a good thing to do.

Q: And you took a leave of absence?

GILMORE: No, they did the training on weekends. It took several weekends to complete it. And I thought, wow, this was something that I really liked and had some aptitude for. It seemed perfect for my personality and my voice. My voice is quite low and doesn't project that well so sometimes people in a public setting don't hear me all that well, but it is perfect for mediation. I thought well maybe this is something that I could do later in life. By the time I actually retired, I needed to be retrained to keep myself current.

With regard to human trafficking, I met with every international NGO working in this area.

Q: Polaris and all of them?

GILMORE: Mainly the organizations that I knew from my PVC work that had trafficking programs. The people in charge of these programs were smart, young, attractive women, who were human rights lawyers. It was really interesting to see how the field attracted such talented women.

Q: So, intelligent young women who were lawyers.

GILMORE: Yes. And they were doing exciting work, and they were so well trained. I think you need to be a lawyer to do some of these things. And then I became aware of a coterie of individuals who had been doing evaluation in this area for a long time, who knew each other well, and who had access to most of the contract work.

Q: Closed shop?

GILMORE: Yes, kind of. That's a fair description of the situation, particularly since I hadn't had any hands-on experience in the field managing trafficking programs. I thought that my AID background and my evaluation experience would substitute for that, but it didn't, at least in terms of procurement. I recall one particular contract that I was especially interested in, which was to draft a strategy on human trafficking for Vietnam. I thought I would be the perfect person for that work. I was familiar with all the trafficking issues, I knew Vietnam, and I had certainly done a lot of strategy work. The procurement required at least 5 years of experience running a human trafficking program overseas so I didn't meet the minimum criteria to apply.

Q: Their loss.

GILMORE: Well, I don't know about that, but thanks. I did have a few exciting assignments.

Lori Forman, Julia Chang Bloch's former special assistant, was in charge of the human trafficking program at Microsoft in Singapore. Lori needed someone to evaluate this program. When I told her that I had an interest in working in this area, she immediately hired me, remembering my earlier evaluation work with Food for Peace and PVC. My task was to look at computer training for trafficking survivors, how successful the programs were, and how they could be better integrated into ongoing NGO programs in Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Singapore and India.

Q: And what did you find?

GILMORE: What was most surprising to me and to Microsoft was that even illiterate women could learn how to use computers when well trained.

Q: And were eager to learn?

GILMORE: Very. It was also a very emotional experience as I had never worked with survivors before. They had suffered horrible abuse, but they wanted to improve their lives, and the computer was a way for them to do that. Of course, I had recommendations for each of the programs on how they could be more effective, but overall it was a positive initiative that Microsoft was funding. I had broken my foot four or five days before and went with a boot to these 5 countries - 26 airports in all in a wheelchair, but I managed. .

So, I returned to DC. I hadn't started to write up the report, but fortunately I had done write-ups before leaving each country and was going to do the comparative analysis when I got home. I got a call from Microsoft in Seattle, telling me that they were about to allocate budget to this program and which activities were the most effective. I hadn't done that analysis yet, which required extensive data compilation. They gave me a few days to respond as they were making decisions the following week. I figured if I was going to have any impact at all, which is the purpose of an evaluation, not to do it in a vacuum, I had better somehow do this. What I finally decided was to take the write-ups that I had already completed and give them an analysis of each country program and then let them determine how they wanted to allocate the resources - a win-win for everyone.

Q: Do you know whether they're continuing to fund that?

GILMORE: I don't think so. Lori left, and the program was her initiative.

Q: Too bad.

GILMORE: So, I had done all this evaluation work, I was really raring to go, but it was just hard to find the assignments without having had more hands-on experience. And I probably could have done the strategy. In fact, I helped Free the Slaves and Esquel with their strategic planning.

Q: Right. So, that's probably in the nature of AID's contracting procedures and the sort of rules that had been put into competition requirements.

GILMORE: Yes, that's my sense. What happened was that, as I did more and more mediations, I increased my proficiency and got asked to do even more. So, I ended up doing mediations as often as I could, from custody to small claims to employment discrimination and workplace disputes.

Q: So, you were referred by the courts?

GILMORE: I started out with CRCMC, the Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County, where I was originally trained in 2003. CRCMC does all kinds of mediation free of charge for residents. I started there and, at the same time, was retrained by Multi-Door in the DC Superior Court for their child protection mediation program.

Q: Is that also volunteer?

GILMORE: I get paid an honorarium. I looked at a couple of the jobs that were being posted for mediation; it is a much lower level than what we were getting at AID, even within the government.

Q: Right.

GILMORE: I was kind of surprised.

Q: Yes. Well, I think we often- our society doesn't pay for what's really important. If you look at what public school teachers get-

GILMORE: Right, that's right. I was not doing this for the money. Several people suggested that I go commercial and set up my own business. I would have had to do public speaking and promote myself, and that was not what I was trying to do. I wanted just to do the work.

Q: So, you're as busy as you want to be.

GILMORE: I often have cases three or four times a week. Mediation is like a second career for me. When I applied to the Sharing Neutrals program - this is the US government program - they ask you all kinds of questions, such as how much training you have had, how many cases you've done, all of that. I had to figure out how many cases I had mediated since 2006. It was about 1,000 cases then and that was four or five years ago. I had to do the equivalent of a resumé for them. I never thought of doing that as a mediator because it wasn't something I was going to use professionally. So, now I have a mediator resumé, too.

Q: Wow. That is very impressive.

GILMORE: Yes. I really like mediation, and I feel as though I am making a contribution. I had a big employment case-

Q: Employment?

GILMORE: Yes, where there is some kind of discrimination - age, sex, race, religion. I mediate at the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights and the Sharing Neutrals program. Being retired, I am considered more flexible in terms of time. I have mediated for several different federal agencies but am not allowed to mediate for AID.

Q: I'll bet you know a lot about agencies that you never did before. But you really feel or at least you said earlier in the interview that a lot of your experiences at AID helped prepare you for this because so much of your work there was involved with bringing groups together or sort of negotiating different agendas.

GILMORE: Right. It's a little different in the sense that at AID I had a task to perform and, therefore, wasn't completely neutral. For example, in the mediation between Cambodia and RSM, the East Asia office had an agenda as well, so you are trying to bring people together but within the framework of what the office wants. When you're doing mediation, you have no agenda. In fact you try very hard not to be judgmental in any way. It's quite different.

Q: Other than getting to some agreement.

GILMORE: Getting to some, hopefully getting to some agreement, but maybe even not. I had a case at CRCMC just recently, between two sisters, and they didn't reach an agreement. Nevertheless-

Q: But they heard each other.

GILMORE: They heard each other. It is the only time I got a letter from a participant. One of the sisters wrote a letter to CRCMC and to me personally expressing her gratitude about how the mediation process had changed her life, even though they hadn't reached an agreement.

Q: Wow. That must be so satisfying.

GILMORE: Yes, it is. You get a lot of appreciation, where people tell you at the end of the mediation: thank you; I never thought I could do this; it has really affected my life. And you get to see what people have to contend with in this world. Some people are struggling, really struggling to pay even \$60. And so, you are witness to the inequality that we are all so concerned about in the US.

Q: Right.

GILMORE: And then the cross-cultural work that we did. That certainly helped with mediation. Several mediations that I have done are between people from the same country who are upset about how they have been treated by their compatriots. Many don't understand our judicial system either.

Q: Have you ever had to use your language skills?

GILMORE: I have been asked to mediate in both French and Spanish. I tried, but it is much too difficult unless you are totally bilingual. It is difficult because the listening that you are doing is so profound, hearing not only the words that are spoken but also observing body language and underlying meanings. If you are worried about

understanding a foreign language and grammar considerations, it is an impossible task. I frequently have interpreters in my mediations, and I can assess if they are doing a good job. And sometimes I'll respond when I shouldn't because I've understood what the person has said. But no, I really can't do the mediation myself in another language.

Q: What are the challenges not intruding your own personality in- because you have to be as anonymous as possible, right?

GILMORE: Neutral, totally neutral, and you try not to judge the participants. You have to learn-

Q: Is that hard?

GILMORE: For me, it was very hard at first as I am a very strong J in the Myers-Briggs test. That means I have strong opinions and want things decided quickly - the antithesis of what a mediator needs to be - impartial and patient. Once I realized that there is always more than one side to an issue and that I needed to understand both perspectives, it became much easier for me. That is much harder to do in your own personal life when you have a stake in the outcome, but as a mediator it is imperative. I have a very expressive face so I practiced in front of a mirror to keep my face neutral, so it doesn't show anything except support. You have to try to support the people that you are listening to be a good mediator.

Q: I have to say, this is one of the most profound and productive post-USAID careers that I've heard of. It's, I mean, you're done-

GILMORE: Thanks, Ann. That means a lot to me

Q: I mean, you're influencing a lot of people, you're obviously very much engaged in this.

GILMORE: Oh, I love what I do, and it has influenced my life in such personal ways. UAA (USAID Alumni Association) gave me one of the alumni awards.

Q: Yes, I know, I know. And I think it is just wonderful.

GILMORE: It was great. I am not getting a huge amount of money but that was never my intention.

Q: No, but that wasn't the point anyway. And this is something you can continue to do for as long as you feel you've got the energy and time to do it, right?

GILMORE: Absolutely. Another very important part of my after-AID life is my work on two boards. I am vice chair of Mediators Beyond Borders International (MBBI) and head of the finance committee for the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ). These organizations are involved in rule of law, gender, human trafficking and mediation

programs. It takes a good deal my time, but I have the opportunity to work with amazing people - judges and mediators both in the US and abroad.

Q: Wow. I am full of admiration, I really am.

GILMORE: Oh, well thank you.

Q: What an amazing career you've had.

GILMORE: It has been rewarding. Despite all the highs and lows, the highs have it by far. It was a fascinating career. AID staff is second to none. I met so many interesting people and visited a good part of the world. I am so proud of AID's accomplishments and of the small contribution that I might have made to the success of our work.

Q: Well, thank you.

GILMORE: Well, thank you. You're a great interviewer, Ann. You asked a lot of very probing questions that I will need to think about.

Q: That's alright. You've answered more than enough.

End of interview