

Recent Events

ACVFA Public Meeting

On October 2, USAID's Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid, held their final meeting of the year. Learn More at:

www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/acvfa/

Upcoming Events

The 2008 SEEP Network Annual Conference

The theme is Powering Connections, is tied to their mission to connect Microfinance and Microenterprise practitioners in a global learning community.

Nov 4-7. Register at:

www.seepnetwork.org/conference/

Recent Publications

Optimizing the Economic Growth And Poverty Reduction Benefits

This study provides the CAFTA-DR countries with a compelling rationale and guide to help identify the key elements that need to be in place to expand small and medium-sized producers' access to and participation in local, regional, and export markets.

Download the report at:
pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADM561.pdf

Recommended Courses

Negotiating Techniques

A two day course for Development Professionals offered by the USDA. This class offers preparation, techniques and strategies for negotiating situations.

<http://grad.usda.gov/>



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Putting Volunteering on the Economic Map of the World

Findings from the John Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies' Comparative Nonprofit Sector and UN Nonprofit Handbook Projects

Volunteering has emerged as a critical "renewable resource" for social and environmental problem-solving throughout the world. While policy-makers are increasingly looking to volunteer work to supplement paid work in a wide variety of fields, from health care to disaster assistance, their ability to access this resource effectively is seriously hampered by the absence in most countries of even the most basic data about the scope, scale, composition, and major fields of volunteer work.

Since 1991, the Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies has been at work increasing knowledge and understanding of the nonprofit sector, and the volunteer effort it mobilizes, at global level. Their findings from studies completed in 37 countries include the following:

- In these 37 countries studied, the number of full-time equivalent volunteers is approximately 140 million people. If volunteers were a nation, they would be the 9th most populous country in the world;
- These volunteers represent the equivalent of 20.8 million full-time equivalent paid positions, much larger than those employed by the utilities industry and just slightly less than those employed in the transportation and construction industries in the 37 countries studied.
- All told, these volunteers make a \$400 billion contribution to the global economy, which averages 1% of GDP in the countries in their study. In Canada, the contribution volunteers make to the GDP is more than that of the agricultural and motor vehicle manufacturing industries.



A recent estimate by Statistics Canada put the volunteer contribution to Canada's GDP at 1.4 percent, roughly equivalent to the share of GDP contributed by Canada's agriculture and forestry industries. Comparable estimates developed by statistical agencies in other countries put the value added by volunteers at 0.8 percent of GDP in Belgium, 2.3 percent of GDP in New Zealand, and 1 percent of GDP in Japan.

In addition to these strictly economic impacts, volunteer work has a variety of broader social impacts that deliver significant added benefits to society and that makes its measurement important. For example, volunteer work is a crucial resource for addressing the Millennium Development Goals. Recent efforts to eradicate smallpox and inoculate children against polio, for example, would not have been possible without the millions of volunteers mobilized for these efforts. Volunteer work enhances social solidarity, social capital, political legitimacy and quality of life in a society.

The aim of the center's research is to put volunteer work on the economic map of the world in a comprehensive and permanent way.

Learn More from Ms. Megan Haddock,
Center for Civil Society Studies, JHU
Megan.Haddock@jhu.edu OR go to
www.jhu.edu/ccss/volunteering.

Background on FAVACA

FAVACA is a private, non-profit 501(c) (3) organization created by former Governor and Senator Bob Graham in 1982, working in the US, Caribbean and Central America.

FAVACA's programs have included assisting in increasing product yields and uses; developing linkages, marketing strategies, and trade promotion; providing skills in information technology; and improving the management of natural resources.

Other FAVACA Projects

The Nicaragua Small Business Professional Exchange Program

- Funded by the US Department of State, FAVACA will recruit young professionals, including women, from indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, throughout Nicaragua eager to build their skills to make their tourism-related businesses more productive. The participants will take part in a professional exchange program and a residency program.

Farmer-to-Farmer

- Under a sub-grant from Partners of the Americas through USAID, FAVACA is assisting in the implementation of the Farmer-to-Farmer Program in the Caribbean to provide technical assistance in the areas of crop diversification, market development, organic products and strengthening producer organizations in Jamaica, Haiti and Guyana.



Learn More at
www.favaca.org

SPOTLIGHT on VEGA Member Organization FAVACA

The Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas

FAVACA Responds to Recent Natural Events in Haiti



With Haiti still reeling from the effects of Hurricanes Fay, Gustav, Hanna and Ike, an estimated 800 people have died and thousands of others across the country are homeless. These hurricanes dumped rain on the already saturated ground causing damaging floods and dangerous mudslides. Roads are impassable, major towns are submerged by mud hampering access to many towns and rural areas. Many committed Haitian-Americans are working feverishly to assist their devastated country. FAVACA stays committed to its mission by building their capacity during these times of crisis.

Current Project Highlights

• ENTREPRENEURSHIP SEMINAR IN GONAIVES, HAITI

The city of Gonaives, the third largest city in Haiti, is a bustling port city, which is still feeling the effects of the destruction of Hurricane Jeanne in 2004. Due to the hurricane, a large segment of the population in the city lost their businesses due to the collapse of infrastructure and the loss of resources such as supplies and materials to maintain the initial store operations. The President of Solidarites Pour Le Developpement des Entreprises et de L'Emplois (SOLIDEE) contacted FAVACA because his organization felt a great need to provide the people of Gonaives with the necessary training to reopen businesses or create new enterprises.

In order to reopen or create new businesses, SOLIDEE wanted to have entrepreneurs in the area participate in a training that would provide information on how to create businesses and to learn how to access the necessary capital in order to grow. A well established entrepreneur and venture capitalist, Dufirstson Neree from Miami,

Florida traveled to Gonaives, Haiti to provide a seminar covering topics such as business development, business investment strategies in the United States, capital venture and capital risk, as well as covering methods for entrepreneurs on how to convert a business from the informal sector of the economy to the formal sector. Learn more about FAVACA's Haiti Initiative on the FAVACA website by going to: www.floridahaiti.org.

• ECO-FRIENDLY AGRO-PROCESSING SOUGHT IN DOMINICA

With the establishment of governmental regulations limiting land use in Dominica's National Parks, including hunting and protections for wildlife, specifically sea turtles, demand for alternative resources increased. One solution established the "La Plaine Hi Grade Pork Processing" program which involved construction of pig pens and provided for the purchase and fattening of livestock for meat production. In order to add value to the finished product expertise in construction and operation of a smokehouse was sought. Elizabeth St. Jean of National Pig Producers Cooperative in cooperation with Albert Belot of the United Nations Global Environmental Fund hosted first time volunteer Cortez Dequir, Tallahassee, to train local masons and cooperative members in construction of smokehouses.

The training provided focused on interpreting and building to architectural design, preparing and laying a foundation, and ensuring proper smoke and heat flow. Dequir, owner of Cortez Dequir Masonry in Tallahassee, Florida has more than 20 years of experience and donated his time as well as more than \$700 in tools and cash toward the project.

FAVACA has been able to attain a 1.5:1 return on investment through in-kind contributions. Through FAVACA, the State of Florida has created a unique program that addresses international challenges directly impacting our State and has become a leader in providing sustainable and effective development solutions. FAVACA is expected to continue this support and seeks to leverage additional funding from federal and private dollars at a rate of 3:1. Additional outside sources include the federal government (USAID), private corporations, foundations (i.e. Levis Strauss) and private individual donors.

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Director's Corner



This Director's Corner is focusing on www.Eldis.org. Most of us are familiar with Facebook and My Space, social networks that are web based. Eldis is focused on us, development professionals. Funded principally by the major European donors, Eldis' focus is on bringing the best in development to the development professional. It is part of the Institute of Development Studies (<http://www.ids.ac.uk>) in the UK with a very user friendly staff. You can browse more than 24,000 summarized documents from over 4,500 development organizations - all available free to download. Share your work with over 80,000 development practitioners. There isn't much in the development community

that you cannot find on Eldis. And, you can have your own space from which to link up with others. Check out my own space on Eldis (<http://community.eldis.org/awarman>).

There is a fairly good and active job board that is internationally focused. We are using Eldis at VEGA to help us on monitoring and evaluation. Really good tools are found on the site, and linking to actual professionals working on a specific subject matter is very helpful. I find that Africa is extremely well represented on Eldis in terms of membership, country profiles, reports, discussion groups, among others. I believe that once you become familiar with Eldis you will want to join, and best of all its free.

Kind Regards,

Southern Sudan Women Entrepreneurs Rise to the Fore

Shea Butter is a natural botanical oil derived from the nut of the *vitellaria nilotica*, a forest tree found only in Africa. In Sudan, it is called *lulu*, Arabic for the treasured pearl. Lulu is valued by locals and increasingly sought after by international companies specializing in cosmetics and personal care products. To capitalize on the demand for the resource, Lulu Works was established with the assistance of MEDIC International in 2000 to provide a source of sustainable revenue for the women of South Sudan. Comprising 40 women-owned-and-operated lulu processing centers, and employing almost 400 women entrepreneurs, Lulu Works ensures the profit from the production and sale of Lulu Life products returns to these women, while also providing an incentive to protect the natural resource.

Financial support was necessary to subsidize operation expenses since the inception of the business. However, it is critical for Lulu Works to become financially independent if the endeavor is to result in a sustainable source of revenue for women. In this regard, VEGA/AMED provided technical assistance to Lulu Works to help them design a business plan and expand sales of their Lulu Life products in the Juba market. Working with the sales manager and operations manager, VEGA/AMED conducted market assessments, assisted with financial analysis and budgeting, formulated a marketing plan and advised on overall business strategy.

This resulted in an initial 15% increase in sales and the opening of a Lulu Works retail store in Juba targeting an international clientele, which reduced subsidized financial support by 24%.

Key impacts and accomplishments:

September 13, 2008 marked the date of the Lulu Works Opening Day event in Juba. The Opening Day was a tremendous success, resulting in \$1,500 worth of sales in just 3 hours! The demand for Lulu Life products at the Opening Day event was greater than the supply of products available. Lulu Works' Juba store will serve as both the retail and wholesale outlet for Lulu Life products. All of the other Lulu Works centers in Southern Sudan are operational centers located in small towns throughout the country. Previously, most of Lulu Work's sales have occurred in Nairobi, Kenya. Projected sales growth is almost 30% per month for the first year, based upon the average monthly sales growth in Nairobi of 43% for the first year.



Visit our website: www.vegaalliance.org

VEGA Welcomes New Staff



Soeun Seng Accountant

Soeun Seng has worked in Finance and Administration for over 10 years in his native Cambodia. He has supervised and trained finance and program management teams for organizations such as the Danish Red Cross, World Wildlife Fund, the Arbitration Council Foundation (ACF) Cambodia and World Vision.

Two VEGA Member Organizations Have Moved

Please Note the New Addresses Below:

Citizens Development Corps

1420 K Street, NW
7th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

OIC International

1500 Walnut Street
Suite 1304
Philadelphia, PA 19102

About the Case Study Author

Michael Anthony Gonzalez,

Private Sector Adviser,
American Chamber of
Commerce – Indonesia
Sep 2007– Aug 2008

Michael Gonzalez, a graduate of The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy, was assigned to the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in Indonesia through USAID's Emerging Markets Development Advisers Program, implemented by the Institute for International Education (IIE).

He completed two major objectives: 1) the creation AmCham Indonesia's first Disaster Relief Plan, and 2) the completion of AmCham Indonesia's magazine as a first-step toward increasing brand value perception.

Case Study Lessons Learned

Gonzalez's case study shows that IJP-Centrilift developed their Corporate Social Responsibility program out of a need to satisfy the demands of villagers in their operation sites and in doing so there were Lessons Learned:

- Even smaller companies can play a role in Community Enrichment
- Do not assume that communities will ask for the financially impractical
- Listen to the community by incorporating it into your planning process
- Bring foreign management to special events to show sincere intent
- Be honest about your capabilities, limitations and how long the program will last
- Always be consistent—credibility can be lost in an instant

Long Term Business Adviser in Indonesia: Case Study

A Look at One American Company's Corporate Social Responsibility Turnaround

Background

IJP-Centrilift is a division of The Baker Hughes Corporation. The division operates in Indonesia as a small pump service contractor to an oil major that conducts oil and gas pump servicing operations around the world. Due to huge income disparities and poverty, community members in the operation area of Duri, Sumatra, felt that it was not benefiting from the company's presence in terms of employment. The community created havoc and increased security tension for the company.

The challenge was that everyone wanted a job, and there was no way to satisfy the need, especially with a 50% unemployment rate. This led to IJP-Centrilift to close operations for 5 business days and evacuating its management personnel from the route town of Duri, Sumatra. The company was losing approximately US\$10,000 per day during the closure and management needed to resolve the situation innovatively. To reduce the security tension, they involved the community to work on a Corporate Social Responsibility Plan that would create a win-win situation for the company and surrounding communities. The goal was to find employment for the villagers and establish a community development program.

Innovative Solutions

- IJP-Centrilift turned to a security expert in the field to provide security training for local villagers & coordinate equal opportunities among the various ethnic groups.
- They did not directly hire, rather they partnered with a local university who would assess candidates and provide them with applications. This way the hiring process was legitimized and the blame shifted from IJP-Centrilift when they could not extend jobs to the masses.
- They engaged the villages by creating a grassroots development program
- Eventually they restructured their Community Development Program by recruiting a community leader to brainstorm and lead the effort as Community Relations Officer.

IJP-Centrilift worried that their Community Development Program (CDP) would be ex-

pected to deliver large investments such as schools, roads and hospitals for the villages. However, dialogue with the community proved otherwise. The key to the implementation of the program was involving the community and asking the villagers what they needed—it turns out these needs were basic.



Syafri Slam, Hamzah and Pak Supari sit with village leaders to discuss the Community Development Program.

As the Community Development Plan began, guidelines were laid out:

- Never give money—The company donated sports equipment to schools.
- Communication—Every month, 3 villages received packages with sports equipment donations. They established a public calendar and every village knew their place on the calendar.
- Quick Action & Consistency—Within 6 months, 17 villages had received donation packages.
- Involve Local Leaders—Before distributing packages, they followed a protocol for requesting permission to enter the village and made the donation delivery into a very transparent public ceremony including the local leaders.

Results

There were no further vehicle seizures or attacks and communication is better than ever between the company and the village communities.

What is not evident to big companies is the lower level development that can have massive impact to these villages. That's why our program is working."
- IJP-Centrilift Site Manager