



**MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

**FSVC**  
Financial Services Volunteer Corps

The **Financial Services Volunteer Corps (FSVC)** is a not-for-profit, private-public partnership whose mission is to help build sound banking and financial systems in transition and developing countries. FSVC's core work concentrates on strengthening commercial banking systems, developing central bank capabilities, and building capital markets. Other areas of work include structuring the legal framework for financial systems, payments system development, pension reform, and the combating of money laundering and financial corruption. FSVC is guided by the idea that sound financial infrastructure, together with the rule of law, is necessary to mobilize domestic savings, attract foreign investment, deepen international trade linkages, and create conditions that promote lasting economic opportunity.

FSVC's Volunteers are financial sector practitioners. By recruiting currently employed professionals at the peak of their careers to serve as volunteers, FSVC is able to provide technical assistance that is objective, independent and state-of-the-art. In addition, recipients of FSVC's assistance develop valuable professional relationships with volunteers and establish institutional linkages with sponsoring institutions. Over the past fifteen years, more than 7,000 experts from the financial, legal and regulatory communities have taken part in more than 1,400 FSVC missions, reaching nearly 30,000 counterparts in 30 developing and transition countries.

FSVC is an implementing organization of **VEGA/Business Trade Development (BTD)** in Bulgaria, along with VEGA members **Citizens Development Corps (CDC)** and **International Executive Services Corps (IESC)**. The program provides assistance to help strengthen the capacity of existing business service organizations (BSOs) that can, on a market-driven basis, provide a combination of general and industry-specific technical/managerial services to support the long-term growth of SMEs in Bulgaria.

FSVC's President, **J. Andrew Spindler**, serves on VEGA's Board of Directors. **Sal Pappalardo**, FSVC Managing Director and Senior Advisor, serves on VEGA's Associate Design Committee (ADC) and **Chad Kilbourne**, Managing Director, External Affairs, serves on the Leader Steering Committee (LSC). **Joseph J. Thomas**, Senior Advisor, is also involved with VEGA. See FSVC's website at <http://www.fsvc.org>.



**2<sup>ND</sup> QUARTER CASE STUDIES NOW AVAILABLE**

Thanks to all member organizations that have submitted their second quarter models of **Case Studies in Best Practices**. As many of you are aware, these Case Studies will be used to showcase members' expertise in utilizing volunteers to assist USAID in achieving its goals. In order to maximize the value to USAID, member organizations and VEGA, the Case Studies in Best Practices underscore both a regional and technical specialty chosen by the submitting organization, yet each Case Study is linked by the common thread of highlighting the successful use of volunteer technical assistance to implement the core of the program. In addition to the previously submitted Case Studies in Best Practices, this quarter's Case Studies in Best Practices can be downloaded from the Case Studies page at <http://www.vegaalliance.org/best.asp> >> Case Studies.

**NEW BUSINESS GENERATED FROM EXISTING VEGA PROGRAMS**

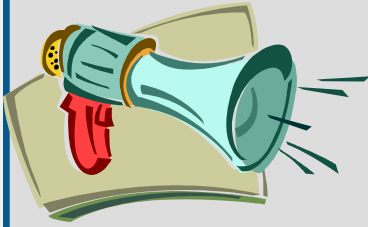
**VEGA/Africa Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA+)** in Ethiopia has realized continued success in the field and, as a result of the program's progress, USAID/Ethiopia plans to commit an additional \$500,000 in funding and an extension of 15 months to the project (to September 20, 2008). VEGA salutes Chief of Party, **Addis Alemayehou**, and the VEGA/AGOA+ team for their effective and hard work on this program. The outgoing AGOA+ CTO, Bruno Cornelio, commented that VEGA/AGOA+ "is driving a very important trade-led job creation agenda (economic growth) in a much more sustained and focused way than ever before." The objectives of the program extension include:

- Strengthening Chambers of Commerce and Industry Associations to provide services to their members to enable them to take better advantage of AGOA trade opportunities.
- Providing firm level assistance to companies with potential to take advantage of AGOA trade opportunities.
- Arranging trade missions, reverse trade missions and/or individualized tours and/or private sector invitational travel to the U.S. to participate in key trade shows.

Targeted sectors include garments, category 9 textile products, flowers and spices. In addition **VEGA/AGOA+** will collaborate with Fintrac (contractor of the Mission's Agribusiness and Trade Expansion Activity) in supporting trade under AGOA for other sectors including coffee, hides/skins and leather products, fruits and vegetables, and oilseeds.

Expanding existing programs is one of the best sources of new project implementation opportunity for VEGA and many of our programs have effectively contributed to this new business generation. For example, **VEGA/BTD** in Bulgaria was expanded last year for an additional \$1,200,000 to include an Economic Growth and Investment Policy (EGIP) component. In addition, VEGA is presently in discussion with the Missions in Jordan, Indonesia, Armenia, and the Office of Microenterprise Development regarding **VEGA/Long Term Business Adviser (LTBA)** programs for the upcoming year.

## STAFF UPDATES



On August 1, **Van Nguyen**, current Administrative Assistant, will be re-assigned to the position of Outreach Associate. **Julie Hasel**, formerly VEGA's Outreach Intern, will continue to support VEGA remotely as Outreach Consultant until the staffing transition is completed and she moves to Chicago, IL. For all Outreach, Public Relations, Newsletter, Case Studies, and Website inquiries, please contact Van at [vnguyen@vegaalliance.org](mailto:vnguyen@vegaalliance.org).

### Job Opportunity at VEGA:

VEGA has an immediate job opening for an **Administrative Assistant**. This position will report to the Executive Director.

Duties include: Provide clerical, office administration support, and assistance in development and implementation of VEGA's programs, including information technology (IT) support, oversight of website operations, and maintenance of electronic files and hard-copies of work documents. Assist in the preparation of outreach and general public awareness materials. Coordinate travel arrangements, including liaising with travel agents to develop itineraries; making lodging reservations; and, scheduling of meetings and other work activities. Draft, edit, and finalize internal and external memos, letters, reports, and other documentation.

Professional requirements: BA preferred; knowledge and understanding of USG/USAID regulations and procedures; proficient in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook) and internet search engines; working knowledge of Publisher, Adobe; excellent written and oral communication skills.

Please submit a cover letter, your resume, and your salary history or requirement to [info@vegaalliance.org](mailto:info@vegaalliance.org) with the subject title, "Administrative Assistant".

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*Please check VEGA members' websites for other professional and volunteer opportunities.*

## PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

### SMALL BUSINESSES TARGETED BY VEGA/AMED TRAINING PROGRAM IN RUMBEEK, SOUTHERN SUDAN

In mid-July, **VEGA/Agriculture Marketing and Enterprise Development (AMED)** sponsored a small business management training course in Rumbek, Southern Sudan. The mayor of Rumbek had asked the VEGA/AMED team to locate a Diaspora volunteer who could design and teach a course to help improve business knowledge and skills of small business owners in the Rumbek area. The mayor noted, "The private sector languished during the more than twenty years of war in Southern Sudan but is now quickly picking up and persons entering or expanding their business badly need knowledge of modern business practices to better manage and grow their businesses."

In response, VEGA/AMED recruited a Diaspora volunteer, **Abram Kau**, to prepare and teach a three-week course. Abram was born in Rumbek and left Sudan for Australia at the age of 24, as a result of the war. In Australia, he obtained a master's degree in banking and finance, in addition to a masters in business administration. He is now interested in remaining in Southern Sudan to start up his own business and is completing his Ph.D. thesis in finance from a university in Australia.

The training program consisted of introductory business management, economics, accounting, business law and legal practices. Abram taught the course in Dinka, the local language, and used local examples to illustrate theoretical points so they would be more relevant for the participants.

Certificates of completion were distributed to more than 40 participants at the end of the final session. The Rumbek State Minister of Finance also attended the conference. He commented, "VEGA is the first organization, which has recognized the needs of the business community in Rumbek," and added that he hoped VEGA/AMED would "hold additional training programs to benefit the business community in Rumbek and Southern Sudan."



*VEGA/AMED Diaspora Volunteer, Abram Kau and Technical Advisor H Schar present certificate to a Rumbek business person*

## PROGRAM SNAPSHOT (CONTINUED)

### VEGA/BTD ASSISTS BULGARIAN GOVERNMENT IN ADAPTATION OF INVESTMENT LAWS



In July, **VEGA/Business and Trade Development (BTD)** completed an initiative for drafting amendments to the existing investment law for Bulgaria. Representatives from **Invest Bulgaria Agency (IBA)** and the **Ministry of Economy and Energy (MEE)** who are responsible for making amendments to the law reviewed similar laws in the region. They concluded that, while the Czech and Hungarian versions have proven effective at accessing and implementing the European Union (EU) structural funds, the most clear and straight-forward is the Croatian Investment Law.

Therefore, VEGA/BTD brought in two world-class consultants: **Mark Frazier**, who drafted the first version of Croatia's Investment Law and the Fiscal Impact Assessment that accompanied it, and **Jan Havelka**, former head of Czech Invest. They identified several areas for further work in the incentives and structures, which will ensure the productive use of EU structural funds. Their recommendations were well accepted by the working committee and the deadline for completing the amendments was postponed in order to include the suggested changes. Meanwhile, MEE is coordinating the adopted recommendations with other ministries before a final decision is made for next steps in the process. It is expected that the amendments to the law will be introduced into the Parliament in the fall, and hopefully accepted by the end of the year.

### VEGA ETHIOPIA REACHES OUT TO DIASPORA VOLUNTEERS

During the month of June, VEGA Ethiopia completed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with **EthiCorp**, a US-Based Ethiopian American NGO working with the Ethiopian American community on development efforts in Ethiopia. EthiCorp was established in 2003 to meet the strong demand for a program that would allow students, recent graduates, and young professionals to engage in long-term/short term public service opportunities in Ethiopia. Its mission is to provide its volunteers with a life changing, professional and educational experience while contributing to the reversal of the brain drain.

In June, **VEGA/AGOA+** was present at the annual Ethiopian American Soccer and Cultural event held at the Los Angeles Coliseum. The event attracted over 30,000 Ethiopian Americans from all over the United States and Canada. It provided the perfect opportunity to introduce the VEGA/AGOA+ program to a whole new audience.

During the event, the VEGA/AGOA+ Chief of Party, **Addis Alemayehou** was invited to join a panel discussion on development efforts in Ethiopia and how the Diaspora community can get involved. As a result of the panel presentation, an Ethiopian VOA reporter interviewed Alemayehou for the International VOA Amharic program, which aired on July 12, 2006. The program was aired to a global audience of close to 40 million Ethiopians living in-country and all over the world.



*VEGA COP Addis Alemayehou and EthiCorp Board Member Sophie Genet sign the MOU*



*(L-R): LINK II Program Manager David Mashilwane, recipient of tender Simon Ngwenya, and Izanabo Construction employee at the site for future school in Krugersdorp, Johannesburg, South Africa*

### VEGA/SAAGA SUBGRANTEES ACHIEVING SUCCESS

Now that the **VEGA/South Africa APS Grants Administration (SAAGA)** subgrantee programs are well underway, these small, micro- and medium enterprise (SMME) development programs are realizing many successes!

One success story was carried out by **World Education**, which is running the Ntinga LINK II program. The subgrantees alerted a construction client of an available tender worth R6.7 Million (over USD 930,500). They successfully assisted him in putting together the bid and helped him to access the working capital required once the tender was awarded. The tender is for a school building site in Krugersdorp, Johannesburg, South Africa.

**ECIAfrica** has also begun to see the benefits of its grant with VEGA/SAAGA. At the beginning of its project, ECIAfrica found a lack of organized and available data about vegetable and poultry farmers in the area to create employment through agribusiness and SMME development. Now ECIAfrica has collected information for over 30 "historically disadvantaged" farmers in two areas. Its project was covered by local media in the Free State Province of South Africa. In addition, an established farmer involved in hydroponic vegetable production has shown keen interest in mentoring new farmers through the project.

## PROGRAM SNAPSHOT (CONTINUED)

### VEGA/ETT PRESENTS IMPORT/EXPORT MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING WORKSHOP IN BAHRAIN



*Attendees at VEGA/ETT  
Import/Export Management and  
Marketing Workshop  
in Bahrain,  
June 2006*

**VEGA/Export and Trade Training (ETT)** presented its second training workshop on June 11 and 12, 2006. IESC Volunteer Executive, **Gary Mutz**, conducted the two-day training workshop at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Manama, Bahrain. The Import/Export Management and Marketing workshop was attended by 62 participants who own or operate small and medium enterprises in Bahrain and are interested in exporting their products or services to the United States. The workshop consisted of four segments: export marketing planning, export sales strategy, intercultural awareness training and discussion groups, and was divided into three sessions. The sessions included:

- **Marketing:** The training covered product definition, segmentation strategies, competitive analysis, and routes to market.
- **Sales Skills:** The seven step Customer Relationship Management (CRM) sales process was used as the foundation of the training.
- **Intercultural:** The training was based on Fons Trompenaars's seven D's, high context and low context communications, corporate cultural styles and cultural values. The specific cultural differences between the US and Bahrain were highlighted in each of the modules.

VEGA/ETT will present the final training program, **M-Commerce and E-Commerce & Services in Global Trade** in September.

### VEGA/LTBAS ASSIST MULTIPLE ECONOMIC GROWTH PROJECTS IN ARMENIA

Four **VEGA/Long Term Business Advisers** have been providing technical assistance to projects identified by USAID/Armenia's Economic Growth office. Coordinated by VEGA member **Institute of International Education (IIE)** through its **Emerging Market Development Advisers Program (EMDAP)**, the first volunteer arrived in Yerevan in November 2005, followed by three additional volunteers in February of this year. Each Adviser's assignment is ten months in length.

These four Advisers are supporting:

- **MDF-Kamurj**, an Armenian microfinance NGO, where Adviser **Saurin Nanavati** is developing a partnership proposal to establish a micro franchise network; working on a partnership with farm supply providers in Armenia; seeking funding for a pilot project leasing solar panels; and establishing a new product/service market for MDF-Kamurj.
- **Microenterprise Development Initiative (MEDI)**, administered since 2003 by Chemonics International and in its final year. Two Advisers are working with MEDI this year. Adviser **Melissa Sia** is researching the feasibility of an Angel Investors Association, focusing on diaspora business leaders; assisting in the creation of the "MEDIator", a newsletter created by and for the MEDI project; and assisting MEDI's Chief of Party in designing and implementing hand-off plan for the Entrepreneur's roadmap as MEDI's activity wraps up as planned. Adviser **Fernando Maldonado's** work plan goals include increasing the number of jobs in Armenia through market driven initiatives; raising over \$1 million in new sales in the Northern regions (Marz) of Armenia; and helping to create an efficient network, linking business service providers, and Small and Medium Enterprises.
- USAID/Armenia's **Competitive Armenian Private Sector Project (CAPS)**, implemented in collaboration with Nathan Associates. Adviser **Michael Grifka** was assigned to develop a pilot tourism cluster in Dilijan, a key tourism destination in northwest Armenia. Prior to his departure in August 2006, Michael was able to assist CAPS in developing the pilot economic cluster design, identify a local project coordinator, and initiate local tourism and tourism-supporting stakeholder support for the cluster concept. This pilot may serve as a replicable model for other locations and for other sector clusters.



*LTBA, Michael Grifka, & beekeeper  
Ashot Davtyan inspect Davtyan's honey  
for inclusion in a new 'Dilijan Fresh'  
culinary tourism branding collective.*

As part of their assignments, each Adviser underwent specific skill training, either through the SME Cluster and Network Development Training or Microfinance Training Program, both offered at the International Labor Organization training center in Turin, Italy. USAID/Armenia has expressed its appreciation and support for the LTBA's work this year and is identifying follow-on assignments for Armenia LTBA's in the coming year.