

STRETCHING THE TAXPAYER DOLLAR: The Volunteer Multiplier Effect

IMPACT Highlights

VEGA programs stretch the U.S. development assistance budget, **saving** taxpayer dollars, by **donating** their time.



EMDAP Adviser Elizabeth Haffa with local district representative in Kasese, Uganda.

Volunteers are professionals who bring their **know-how**, sometimes their own equipment and resources, and most importantly, their **goodwill** to serve others. They represent **America's best**, whether they are new professionals or seasoned practitioners. Available to U.S. foreign assistance programs as volunteers they save the Government money, and **improve** the quality of programs.

The VEGA Emerging Markets Development Advisers Program (EMDAP), implemented by VEGA member Institute of International Education, offers long-term volunteer assistance to institutions such as the American Chambers of Commerce (pictured above with EMDAP Adviser Ravi Dutta). USAID benefits from cost-effective talent and hosts receive targeted technical assistance

from graduates of advanced degree programs. Benefits

accrue domestically as well: case studies written by EMDAP Advisers are provided to educational institutions to internationalize their curricula with the challenges and opportunities faced by entrepreneurs in emerging markets; and the U.S. business and nonprofit community gains an enlarged reservoir of employees with international experience.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

ACCOMPLISHED

COST-EFFECTIVE

VALUED

GENEROUS

EMDAP Program

Through EMDAP, recent graduates of MBA and other advanced degree programs contribute to business and organizational development in emerging markets.

29,000 person days of time



95 advisers embedded in institutions for 1 year

\$13.6m of value



Donated value to the U.S. taxpayers:



The USAID Mission in Uganda designed an innovative approach to help district governments to coordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate use of donor funds within their respective districts. To be successful, it needed a full-time person dedicated to visiting each district to provide support and assistance. But USAID and its implementing partner faced a barrier - placing a long-term adviser to work in a hands-on way with 35 districts was a costly venture. ➤

So USAID turned to the EMDAP program to place two successive volunteers, Reilly Ross, and Elizabeth Haffa, as long-term advisers (with one-year terms) to represent USAID and strengthen coordination. Shortly after Reilly arrived, USAID had to close its Northern field office, which shifted her scope to focus on the 19 northern districts and made her presence there all the more critical.

The two volunteers traveled throughout northern Uganda to help district governments facilitate planning, monitor and evaluate projects, and report progress. They have ensured

that all voices at planning meetings – often in remote areas far from USAID’s office in Kampala – are heard, and reported back to USAID leadership so that development programs account for local voices and needs, and are coordinated with the government of Uganda and other donors.

Their work has helped create a collaborative atmosphere between USAID, other donors active in the region and local government. District governments have enthusiastically approached the process, and they have become empowered to lead development initiatives.



Biz+ beneficiary White Stone Bakery sold 11,000 muffins, 2,000 donuts, 1,000 curry buns and 200 peanut cookies to the throngs who assembled at the Shrine during Pope Francis’ visit in 2015.

RELATED Project

After 26 years of conflict and the 2004 tsunami, many Sri Lankans had lost productive assets and access to financial services. BIZ+, a USAID-funded program implemented by VEGA member Land O’ Lakes International Development, has created **5,000 new livelihood opportunities** through a small grants program paired with business advisory services that cover everything from financial recordkeeping to energy efficiency. BIZ+ has stretched its USAID funding by providing over **\$50,000 worth of skilled expertise through volunteers** who, as business owners in similar industries, bring an added measure of insight and credibility. Entrepreneurs receive step-by-step assistance from people who understand the industry, whether it’s

tourism, agroprocessing, construction, manufacturing or running a bakery, as they develop their plans.

“If we were to hire all of those experts to come on site without the use of a VEGA mechanism, there is no way that we would be able to work with that variety of companies,” states USAID/ Sri Lanka’s Acting Mission Director Kimberley Bell. “At the end of the day what we are really doing in the VEGA alliance with USAID is transforming lives. In Sri Lanka, ...the areas where we have chosen to work are those areas most severely affected by the 26-year civil war. ...These volunteers are coming in and serving as a catalytic force ... changing the lives of people who are now able to get a job, feed their families and send their kids to school.”

“**Volunteers** were a hallmark of our program that **leveraged USAID’s funding** to bring in additional **expertise** not only around business development, but also **specialized expertise** for particular industries.”

– **Jennifer Brinkerhoff, former Chief of Party of VEGA’s Sri Lanka Biz+ program. Biz+ has already leveraged over \$14m in Sri Lankan Partner Investments**



“The volunteers who came had very **wide knowledge** of the market and were able to guide us. We now have almost **500 customers**. VEGA Biz+ **made our dreams come true.**”

– **Durairaj Jeyakumar (pictured), Owner, Kings Ice Manufacturers**



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