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From: EXECUTIVE MESSAGE (AID.ES)
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To: W2K MISSION NOTICES Mail List
Subject: The Role of U.S. Volunteers in Promoting Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade

ADMINISTRATOR USAID/General Notice
 A/AID
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SUBJECT: The Role of U.S. Volunteers in Promoting Economic Growth,
Agriculture and Trade

Last year, the Bush Administration launched a major initiative, the USA Freedom Corps, to encourage the American people to seek out opportunities to volunteer their services in their community, across the country, and in the world. President Bush has asked "all Americans to commit at least two years - 4,000 hours over a lifetime - to the service of our neighbors and our nation." This year, President Bush formed a new President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, charged with leading a massive nationwide effort to recognize the dedicated service of Americans and to engage more individuals in volunteer service.

Many Americans have demonstrated their personal commitment to economic development by volunteering to work *pro bono* with businesses and organizations in developing and transition economies. Volunteer organizations working in agriculture, trade and economic growth fields report their capacity to mobilize volunteers is not being matched by a corresponding level of utilization. Volunteers provided by these organizations are often current or recent practitioners in their area of expertise, have great credibility with host country counterparts and utilize their vast professional networks to identify lasting developmental solutions on a very practical and personal level.

USAID is committed to continue to partner with volunteer organizations and to utilize their capacity to mobilize volunteers in meeting USAID strategic objectives in economic growth, agriculture and trade. Evaluations have shown the developmental impact volunteers provide. Experience has shown the ability of volunteer organizations to respond to, manage and deliver, often in partnership with others, integrated assistance packages in a broad strategic area. These programs have achieved and reported measurable results at the strategic objective level.

I am interested in showing USAID's commitment to volunteerism, and look to each Mission and Bureau to consider utilizing the valuable resources volunteer organizations offer in meeting your strategic objectives. To address some of the obstacles volunteer organizations and missions have encountered with current procurement mechanisms, USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade (EGAT) will:

Establish a world-wide Leader with Associate (LWA) Cooperative Agreement to allow USAID missions and bureaus to procure the services of volunteers for a broad spectrum of programmatic activities through a single collaborative organizational structure. The LWA will not only

reduce the paperwork and time involved in mobilizing volunteers, it will also allow missions to work collaboratively with a consortium of providers to design and roll out specific activities for their Associate Agreements. This new simplified procurement instrument will provide programmatic impact through the strategic utilization of volunteers. However, should it be their preference, missions will continue to be free to award contracts or grants directly to individual volunteer organizations.

- Work with volunteer organizations to assist in the dissemination of information to USAID operating units about their organizations' capabilities and successes; and
- Monitor and assess the progress of USAID and Volunteer Organizations in increasing the frequency and effectiveness of volunteer assignments in developing and transition countries. To accomplish this, EGAT will maintain a dialogue with volunteer organizations, Missions and bureaus to assess our progress in effectively mobilizing volunteers and achieving sound developmental impact through volunteer assignments.

The Bush Administration has encouraged Americans to seek out volunteer opportunities. I am committed to utilizing the full capacity of informed, active and knowledgeable volunteers to meet USAID's goals of increased economic growth in developing and transitional countries. **I am challenging you to join me in this endeavor and to explore how together we can expand the horizons and impact of the wealth of volunteer services the United States has to offer the world.**

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