

IAWG COUNTRY STUDIES: DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Executive Summary:

The Interagency Working Group on U.S. Government-Sponsored International Exchanges and Training (IAWG) Field Study Team spent a full week in the Dominican Republic, April 25 through April 30, 1999, meeting with the personnel of the U.S. Mission, partner organizations, and exchange and training participants.

Field program officers, trainers, trainees, exchange participants, and partner organizations cooperated willingly and fully when offered the opportunity to discuss their training and exchange experiences and/or recruitment efforts. From the field perspective, players expressed concerns about measuring the success, or gauging the effectiveness, of international training and exchanges within the context of the Government Performance and Results Act.

In addition, those in the field underscored that a main deterrent to good programming rests with competing and uncoordinated requests by federal agencies in Washington. Field officers noted that less clearly developed programs often, however unintentional, create an atmosphere of paternalism rather than true partnership.

Throughout its week of observation, the IAWG team witnessed a professional and cohesive Mission in Santo Domingo. Under the able leadership of the Charge d'Affaires, the Mission appeared to work collectively to advance its foreign policy aims. The series of interviews with Mission personnel revealed both formal and informal networking among staff. The Mission atmosphere encouraged coordination. The level of coordination depends, in part, on the personalities of the staff at the Mission. Currently, coordination is high because cooperative personal attitudes and Embassy leadership tend to discourage stove piping.

The IAWG team learned that the lack of a central source of exchange and training information at the Mission complicated the verification of the IAWG data inventory. A number of agencies sponsor Dominican programming, but have no field presence in-country. In those instances, the team relied generally on information gathered from program offices in Washington.

The IAWG team observed that administrative "best practices" depended on particular mission objectives. For instance, in the context of education and cultural affairs, the U.S. Information Service (USIS) had the most experience. The International Visitors Program was frequently cited as a program that works well within the Mission context. All Mission agency field representatives can participate in the

nomination process. Various Mission field representatives suggest candidates for this program; an IV panel makes the final selections. For the Fulbright student and scholar programs, USIS has developed procedures to identify and select candidates and participants, maximize program objectives, and impact participants personally and significantly.

In the law enforcement and military contexts, "best practices" depend significantly on the degree to which a federal entity maintains direct contact with its Dominican counterparts. In the narcotics, immigration, and military branches, cooperation efforts were high and appeared to foster open and regular communication, appropriate identification and selections of students and participants, and shared program objectives.

In meetings with each U.S. field agency representative, the responses the team received to questions about performance measurement were as varied as the missions of the respective agencies. Across the board, the team learned that most training and exchange programs maintained no precise measurement standards.

One frequently cited problem with performance measures that are developed at Washington headquarters offices is the lack of understanding of the way things operate in the field. Standards must be tailored to meet the local situation. Agency field representatives believe they must be able to establish realistic performance measures that conform to local circumstances.

The Dominicans welcomed partnership in the planning and implementation of exchanges and training programs. They expressed interest in more opportunities for greater participation in training, particularly if the training came with additional resources that would enable them to implement effectively many ideas that they had learned through specialized training. Dominicans repeatedly applauded the efforts of their USG partners and the benefits accrued from their participation in exchanges and training programs. The ability to step away from their normal tasks and challenges and immerse themselves in training and education environments that enhance their ability to effect positive change in their workplaces, and with their constituents, was viewed affirmatively.

Over time, many Dominicans who participated in international exchanges and training programs continue to communicate with each other and work cooperatively through their respective professional associations for the betterment of their country. Many Dominican participants now occupy key positions in military and civilian organizations and ministries in all Dominican sectors.

Introduction:

In previous years, the IAWG had concentrated its data collection and clearinghouse efforts on federal agencies in Washington. This collection effort is an integral component of the IAWG mandate. As a logical next step, the IAWG Executive Committee recommended in its *FY 1997 Annual Report* that the group conduct field studies to examine first-hand the international component of federal programming.

With criteria established and consensus reached, the IAWG Executive Committee selected South Africa, Poland, and the Dominican Republic as country field study sites.

In totality, these country field studies will provide the Washington-based interagency group the first opportunity to examine and verify the range of federal government programming overseas. The country field study teams were charged to examine best practices, complementarity, synergy, possible duplication and administrative overlaps, and to identify effective partnerships, private sector support, and performance measures. The IAWG determined that trip analyses would provide recommendations to Congress and the President, to enrich dialogue on the general state of federally-sponsored international exchanges and training.

The Dominican Republic, a democratic island nation, contains a broad cross-section of federal programs. To conduct the study in the most efficient manner, the six-member IAWG team received logistical support and guidance from the Embassy-assigned control officer(s), the U.S. Information Service (USIS) Public Affairs and Cultural Affairs officers, with the backup assistance of the State Department Economic/Political Officer. The team interviewed Mission program officers of federal agencies conducting international exchanges and training programs. During these meetings, which also included appropriate visits with host country counterparts and institutions, the attendees addressed field study goals. Mission staff and training and exchange participants who had direct knowledge of federal programs candidly cooperated by addressing the seven country field study goals:

- **Verify the FY 1997 and 1998 inventories of exchanges and training programs.**
- **Determine the level of in-country coordination and information-sharing on exchanges and training programs in the field, and examine programs for complementarity, synergy, duplication and/or overlap issues.**
- **Identify administrative and programmatic "best practices" related to exchanges and training from program officers, mission colleagues, and host-country contacts.**
- **Identify performance measurement standards within exchanges and training programs.**
- **Observe the degree of host country input into exchanges and training program operations.**
- **Learn about private sector initiatives and the degree of support solicitations receive in-country by USG agencies conducting exchanges and training.**
- **Collect suggestions from U.S. Mission staff regarding the strategy and action plan (for 10 percent savings recommendations) for the IAWG FY-98 Annual Report.**

Team Preparation:

Before arrival in country, the IAWG Dominican Republic team had several organizational meetings. The initial session occurred at the White House Conference Center. IAWG Staff Director discussed at some length the details of the country field study. This meeting had a breakout session for the three country field study teams.

At this session, the five-member team received copies of the IAWG *FY 1997 Annual Report*, the

Regional Report on the American Republics, and an IAWG FY 1997 data inventory summary. Sixteen federal agencies reported exchanges and training in the Dominican Republic for FY 1997. The team members selected agencies, in addition to their own, for data verification purposes. The team contacted U.S.-based program officers and identified persons/organizations to learn more about programs and to identify contacts for in-country interviews.

At a second meeting, the team received FY 1998 IAWG clearinghouse data and briefed members on their Washington-based efforts at data gathering. Members received additional background notes, USG briefing materials, a copy of U.S. Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), and Mission Performance Plan materials.

IAWG introductory and country clearance cables were sent to the field. The cables clarified the IAWG's mandate, identified team members, and underscored the nature and purpose of the visit.

At our third meeting, the team devised a tentative scheduling plan and sent it to the control officers. The team's control officers worked diligently to craft a schedule to accommodate the requested interview lists. In turn, the control officers distributed copies of the country field study and definitions, the FY 1997 and FY 1998 data inventories, and the FY 1998 data survey and instruction forms to all Mission training and exchange personnel before the team's arrival.

The IAWG team added a sixth member from the Department of Defense before departure.

On Sunday April 25, 1999, the team convened to solidify final preparations. Team identified additional contacts for the control officers, reviewed the set of study questions, and agreed, for report writing purposes, to continue to track their selected agencies/programs in-country.

Country Field Study Goal 1

- **Verify the FY 1997 and 1998 inventories of exchanges and training programs.**

The IAWG team learned that the lack of a central source of exchange and training information complicated in-country verification of the inventories. With a number of agencies with Dominican programming having no field presence, the team relied generally on information gathered from program offices in Washington.

Before departing the United States, the IAWG team divided responsibilities among its members to contact federal agencies in Washington to determine the accuracy of the FY 1997 and FY 1998 inventories of exchanges and training programs. Based on telephone conversations and in-country meetings, team members learned that the FY 1997 and 1998 inventories did not completely reflect what USG entities did in fact sponsor. Though under-reporting typified both the FY 1997 and 1998 inventories, the team discovered that this problem arose most often in the law enforcement area. (Over the course of the past

year, the IAWG has continued to reach out and collect data from all federal entities with international exchanges and training programs. Better name recognition may contribute to better data reporting in the future.)

Because some federal agencies have not reported all their training and exchanges with the IAWG, they also tend to act outside the established protocol required to initiate and execute international training and exchange programs. Similarly, the team noted that some program offices fail to notify their parent USG Department and their Department's respective country attache. This issue arose most often in the law enforcement community. Perhaps unaware of the need to seek country clearance (Mission/Post approval) to initiate and execute these training and exchange programs, too many law enforcement officials reportedly either appeared in-country without notice or sought post assistance (with little notice) after landing in the host country. Ample lead time enables the Mission to address the concerns a USG sponsor might have regarding the initiation and execution of an international training and exchange program -- anything less than two weeks tasks the Mission with unreasonable duties.

For example, the Mission may not be able to identify the appropriate students or participants for an exchange or training program. The proposed exchange or training may conflict with the Embassy's calendar, or the proposed exchange or training may be inconsistent with Mission goals, or unnecessarily overlap with a previous training or exchange program.

Generally speaking, the IAWG team realized that the inventory included some in-country training activities. Apparently, some Washington agencies may have misinterpreted the FY 1997 and FY 1998 IAWG data survey's instructions on counting participants. To resolve this issue for future data collections, the team recommends that the IAWG Executive Committee reexamine the issue of in-country training and the current definition of a participant in an international exchange or training program. To be counted, a participant must "cross a border" in the exchange and training exercise. Theoretically, that definition eliminates reporting on U.S. and foreign participants giving or receiving in-country training. Incorporating in-country training in future inventories would enable the IAWG to get a broader and more comprehensive perspective, particularly in training programs, and enrich the data the IAWG collects. According to USAID, in-country training increasingly is provided by authentically indigenous and independent local institutions. USAID may provide the training but it is not otherwise "international" in any sense and not covered by the IAWG mandate. USAID will be unable to give any reporting on in-country training if IAWG needs data on individual trainees. USAID gets summary data from missions on in-country training programs: overall cost and number of total trainees for activities of three days' length or more.

Also, Mission staff explained that exchanges are not necessarily captured in the inventory when the exchange is field driven, such as when Dominicans are sent to trade shows and workshops in the United States that do not involve Washington coordination. (USAID team member believes this type of programming should *not* be counted.)

In summary, efforts to verify cross-federal agency data underscored the need for overseas Missions to

develop an interagency depository for appropriate international exchanges and training activities/program data.

Country Field Study Goal 2

- **Determine the level of in-country coordination and information-sharing on exchanges and training programs in the field, and examine programs for complementarity, synergy, duplication and/or overlap issues.**

Throughout its week of observation, the IAWG team witnessed a professional and cohesive Mission in Santo Domingo. Under the able leadership of the Charge d'Affaires, the Mission appeared to work collectively to advance its foreign policy aims. The series of interviews with Mission personnel revealed both formal and informal networking among staff. The Mission atmosphere encouraged coordination. The level of coordination depends, in part, on the personalities of Mission staffers. Currently, coordination is high because cooperative personal attitudes and Embassy leadership tend to discourage stove piping.

The State Department's Mission Performance Plan (MPP), the Mission's foreign policy directive, provides a framework for Mission goals that link all United States Government programs and activities in the field. It serves as the centerpiece by which interagency review and consensus can be achieved on country-level goals and strategies. The MPP process in Santo Domingo required a coordinated effort among personnel and created a focused, energized environment in which to tailor programs to meet country goals.

Out of this process, the Embassy sees the strengths and weaknesses of its programming. The MPP apparently offers a common framework of vision and purpose, as well as control at the Mission level.

Apart from the MPP, the team learned about the Integrated Program and Budgeting Strategy Plan and the Theatre Engagement Plan for Southern Command. The Peace Corps develops the Integrated Program and Budgeting Strategy Plan, which is included as an appendix to the Dominican Republic's Mission Performance Plan. The U.S. Military Group carries out its training and exchanges as part of the Department of Defense Theatre Engagement Plan (TEP) for Southern Command. TEP is administered in coordination with the MPP process in the Dominican Republic.

The team learned that the Mission team meets weekly to discuss significant issues for the Embassy as a whole. At these meetings, country attaches formally or informally address a training or exchange program. In addition to other events, formal announcements often arise for programs that undoubtedly require the Chief of Mission's approval. Less formal announcements often take place between or among country attaches who may have an interest in a particular international training and exchange program.

Besides weekly Dominican Republic Mission team meetings, the most effective sharing of Mission

program information occurs at monthly all-agency issue meetings. The Mission has formal, specialized team meetings to discuss democracy and human rights, law enforcement issues, and economic and commercial interests and, on an ad hoc basis, women's issues. Out of this instructive-constructive environment, Mission planning can focus on areas of mutual concern. Through these monthly and ad hoc meetings, the appropriate Mission personnel assess the merits of prospective international training and exchange programs, as well as coordinate any logistical, programmatic, and administrative concerns.

While each in-country U.S. Government entity had its own specific objectives and goals, it was evident that those agencies at Mission whose purposes and target audience were closely linked, had a better understanding of each other's activities than those whose missions were more disparate.

The team observed that the Mission recognizes the potential for unnecessary duplication and overlap; it strives to achieve synergy and complementarity. There did not appear to be a deliberate attempt to duplicate activities falling within the portfolios of the various agencies. Given the budgetary and resource needs of USG agencies, the field representatives felt tremendous pressure to streamline their administrative and programmatic operations, which have, in effect, helped eliminate some duplication in programming. Agency field representatives candidly assessed how various taskings from Washington affected their ability to engage in the many activities of their agencies. In the law enforcement area, for example, military and law enforcement attaches often work together in the Dominican Republic, though their respective federal parent offices in Washington, D.C., may not.

Mission officials remarked on the difficulty of maintaining data on the various programs and projects they must implement. In several instances, the team heard that certain USG agencies at the Mission declined to accept funds for specific projects because they did not have the resources to implement these activities. The perception on the part of some field personnel was that Washington, at times, appears more interested in "throwing money at a particular problem" without due consideration of the Mission personnel and the Mission and country's resources to properly plan and execute the activity.

A significant portion of training and exchanges in the Dominican Republic is conducted in the field of law enforcement and administration of justice. A few months prior to the IAWG's team visit, for example, USIS sponsored a two-week-long U.S. Speaker program on intellectual property rights. USIS has hosted U.S. Speaker programs focusing on money laundering, Dominican economic issues, alternative dispute resolution, and civic education topics. In addition, USIS supports many international visitors in the administration of justice field and citizen exchanges in alternate dispute resolution. Intellectual property rights (IPR) is the driving issue for the Department of Commerce's Foreign Commercial Service (FCS). Patent infringement and piracy, central issues to IPR, provide a common base for activities, with USIS funding some targeted exchange activities.

USAID's rule of law program is its major initiative designed to strengthen respect for human rights through effective administration of justice, enhanced access to justice, and good governance through anti-corruption initiatives, transparency, and accountability.

International narcotics and crime control is a top foreign policy priority for the United States Government. The Department of State, through the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), manages the international aspects of the counter narcotics and crime control program, in cooperation with the U.S. domestic law enforcement agencies that have programs that work within that mandate – the Department of Justice and its agencies: the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Immigration and Naturalization Service; and the Department of the Treasury and its agencies: the U.S. Customs Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; the Department of Transportation's U.S. Coast Guard; and the Department of Defense. The Dominican military's principal mission is national defense and its armed services -- Army, Navy, Air Force -- participate in counter narcotics efforts, and efforts to control contraband and illegal immigration from Haiti to the Dominican Republic and from the Dominican Republic to the United States.

The Dominican Police Chief pledged that when officers who receive specialized USG law enforcement training return home, they will be placed in assignments geared to capitalize on their training experiences – a practice that had not been carried out in previous administrations. Working with Mission representatives, Dominican law enforcement officials are developing a training and technical assistance plan. The DEA provides training to its counterpart agency, the Dominican National Directorate for Drug Control (DNCD). The DEA coordinates its training efforts with other elements of the Embassy, including the U.S. Military Group, Defense Attache, and State INL officers.

With a plethora of programs and USG civilian and military agencies engaged in international efforts in the training of Dominican police and military, the Mission itself can be viewed as a control environment that offers opportunities for effective cross-training. Given the individuality of each agency and its mandate, however, the team saw inherent potential for duplication of efforts and lack of clarity and focus.

The Mission identified inconsistency in programming and planned a law enforcement conference in Santo Domingo, which took place in late May, to address procedural and coordination issues and a range of topics of mutual interest, including drug trafficking, money laundering, and extradition. In addition, this year the Mission developed a database to track and coordinate training of Dominican law enforcement personnel and to help coordinate the training efforts of various federal agencies to avoid potential duplication.

Unlike its Mission team members Peace Corps (PC) representatives respond directly to the needs of the country, not to other federal government agencies' directives. Synergy with other agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is opportunistic and occurs primarily on an ad hoc basis. With Dominican Government approval, the Peace Corps works at the community level. All Peace Corps sectors in the Dominican Republic are linked to economic development and institutional strengthening. PC assistant directors stay current with USAID activities in their site selection and sector selection.

USAID focuses its efforts in four areas: 1) availability of health care, 2) increasing economic opportunity, 3) improving participation in the democratic process and the administration of justice, and 4) environmentally sound energy production. Ninety percent of USAID resources are channeled through

non-governmental organizations within the country.

From its vantage point, USAID does not see a problem of training duplication, but a lack of synergy in programs. Each agency has its own operational requirements and performance indicators to fulfill its training and exchanges, making courses of more universal application to country team members harder to design, or to find useful. A common approach to follow-on activities may be the key solution. USAID Santo Domingo also sponsors short-term training programs, in part because of difficulties with immigration rules and regulations that have tended to frustrate long-term education programs that USAID administers.

To accomplish its goals, the U.S. Information Service coordinates its programming with all Mission agencies. In general, many of its programs are flexible and tailored to meet in-country needs. Notably, the International Visitor Program provides the Mission with a program that crosses all agencies. Mission staff members nominate candidates for the program. USIS panels the nominations and makes selections to Washington program offices; the program then is set into motion.

The Foreign Commercial Service represents the Department of Commerce's International Trade Agency in-country. The FCS does not inventory Washington-driven training programs. The Department of Commerce closely coordinates its annual strategic plan with the MPP at Mission. However, the FCS officer's duties focus on the region as a whole, serving not only the Dominican Republic but four other Caribbean nations. Typically, programs springing from Commerce's Washington offices bypass the FCS. The team concluded that no central point of contact at Main Commerce relays exchange and training information out to the field.

In the Dominican Republic, the FCS officer interacts with field representatives of the Department of State, U.S. Information Service (USIS), and the Department of Defense through the U.S. Military Assistance Group (USMAAG).

Country Field Study Goal 3

- **Identify administrative and programmatic "best practices" related to exchanges and training from program officers, mission colleagues, and host-country contacts.**

The IAWG team observed that administrative and programmatic "best practices" depended on particular mission objectives. For instance, in the context of education and cultural affairs, USIS perhaps has the most experience. The International Visitor Program was frequently cited as a program that works well within the Mission context. All Mission agency field representatives can participate in the nomination process. Candidates for this program are suggested by various Mission field representatives and an IV panel then makes selections for the program. For the Fulbright student and scholar programs, USIS has developed procedures to identify and select candidates and participants, maximize program objectives, and impact participants personally and significantly.

The IAWG team met with individuals who participated in and benefited from exchanges and training programs. The participants underscored the merits of working with the USIS exchange officers, who appear to have more flexibility in their programming than other field agencies.

Though USAID also funds short-term training programs, its strength better rests with how it selects and funds programs to meet specific USAID objectives, such as a rule of law initiative. USAID creates a major objective that overseas Posts can choose to purchase. One impressive example arose with the National Center for State Courts' program for modernization within the Dominican justice sector.

In the law enforcement and military contexts, "best practices" depend significantly on the degree to which a federal entity maintains direct contact with its Dominican counterparts. The team saw, for instance, that how well law enforcement and military officials developed and executed training and exchanges depended on the degree of cooperation. In the areas of narcotics, immigration, and the military branches, cooperative efforts fostered open and regular communication, appropriate identification and selection of students and participants, and shared program objectives. As one official described the approach, Mission personnel will generate an initiative and route it to the respective federal offices in Washington for review. On receipt from headquarters, the Mission will consider the main offices' input to determine whether and how -- if at all -- to proceed.

The U.S. Coast Guard, an arm of the U.S. Department of Transportation, works closely with USMAAG, and with its own counterparts in the Dominican Navy. U.S. Coast Guard training is regionally based, with a mobile team of U.S. professional trainers (fluent in Spanish) functioning out of Miami, Florida. The team travels to each Coast Guard site twice a year to train their personnel, as well as their Dominican counterparts. Coast Guard training offers a "Train-the-Trainer" component to ensure a multiplier effect. A boarding officer course is most popular, instructing Dominican Navy personnel on procedures relating to at-sea interdiction. (In any case, to the extent that enforcement authorities' aims and objectives significantly differ from those of USIS' or USAID's objectives, universalizing "best practices" should be discouraged.)

The Dominican IAWG team attempted to discover whether "best practices" could be gleaned from other sources. The team learned that other countries, such as Japan, France, Germany, Spain, Chile, and Argentina, or intergovernmental organizations, such as the Inter-American Development Bank or the Organization of American States, have developed their own practices to facilitate international training and exchange, but no federal official or Dominican beneficiary articulated with any specificity an accurate comparison.

Country Field Study Goal 4

- **Identify performance measurement standards within exchanges and training programs.**

Throughout its week of observation, the Dominican IAWG team heard many and varied performance

measurement standards for international training and exchange programs. In meetings with each U.S. agency representative, the responses the team received were as varied as the missions of the respective agencies. Across the board, the team learned that most training and exchange programs maintained no precise measurement standards. Standards ranged from broad policy objectives, such as democracy and governance, to measurement criteria, such as number of cases not rejected. Follow-up inconsistency appeared in performance measurement standards. Some measurement standards are made with the cooperation of the host country, while others are not.

Examples of effective performance measurement standards include a point system that USIS employs to assess performance measurement and the law enforcement community's "certification" report to Congress. The Drug Enforcement Administration, in particular, uses "certification" in part to measure the effectiveness of law enforcement training and exchanges. The Immigration and Naturalization Service employs a system that tracks document fraud intercepts and alien smuggling routes. Other USG sponsors measure by the number of attendees, success stories, and absence of professional turnover. The degree to which the host country "buys into" a training or exchange program is a consideration in measuring performance effectiveness.

Another example is the Peace Corps' system. Peace Corps recruitment has specific criteria: specific skills as needed and the "suitability factor": social sensitivity, productive competence, and emotional maturity. This is monitored throughout training as well as recruitment. Training consists of "scenario setting," creating conditions for development.

Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) are assigned projects and assessed according to their fulfillment of project goals. Three assessment visits per PCV assignment. Peace Corps program officers interview local PCV counterparts at the worksite. But there is no formal assessment of PCVs at the end of their tours. Peace Corps is more interested in the PCV experience for purposes of project redesign. Institutional strengthening is the focus, not the level of organizational production.

The Department of Commerce's Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) measures the volume of trade conducted at trade fairs by the people it sponsors to those fairs, not the impact of training per se. Training is not a critical concern, and is usually managed from Commerce entities in Washington. Trade promotion is the FCS' main mission.

The U.S. Coast Guard's mobile team assesses trainees' learning at the end of a course. Performance is gauged more broadly by the number of successful at-sea interdictions performed by the Dominican Navy, for instance.

In some cases, a standard might be how many arrests were made for drug trafficking or cases successfully prosecuted through the justice system. Still another measure might be the number of teachers or police officers trained. Implementing a successful performance measurement process requires resources and a vigilance to keep accurate records. The fact that most USG agencies' budgets are tied, to the extent to which they can justify continued funding, by showing measurable results of past funding,

forces even reluctant agency representatives to follow through with performance measurement processes even if it is difficult to obtain the appropriate data.

One frequently cited problem with developing performance measures in Washington headquarters offices is the lack of understanding by program managers of the way things operate in the field. Standards must be tailored to meet the local situation. Several agency representatives have had notable successes in developing appropriate measures when they were able to adjust such standards to make them suitable for the Dominican Republic's cultural, political, and economic circumstances. Field staff must be able to establish realistic performance measures that conform to local circumstances. While standard measurement approaches should be applied in many situations, one standard does not fit every circumstance. USG field representatives have been flexible and creative in collecting appropriate data that will enable them to gauge whether their programs are having the desired impact. Field personnel lamented the onerous task of numbers counting. They felt that additional activities in this area were not welcomed. Thus, processes of accountability need to be streamlined or merged so that the taskings will be less burdensome on thinly-staffed offices. Perhaps Washington offices and overseas Missions can assist each other by improving the coordination of activities and creating shared databases and other electronic vehicles which will require less intensive responses from end-users.

In some instances, agencies had clearly defined measures in place by which to judge the success of their training and exchange programs. However, applying these measures tended to be difficult. The issue of turnover and ever-changing civil service personnel rosters in the Dominican Government presented challenges in accounting for changes in local government that could be attributed to USG training and exchange programs.

Field personnel identified a number of different issues that can impact how -- if at all -- to measure performance effectiveness. One focuses on the participant's or student's position within the host country. The Mission underscored that exchanges and training programs involving higher ranking Dominican officials often led to less specific performance measurements, while exchanges and training involving lower ranking officials could be more readily observed and assessed. Another issue dealt with measuring over time. For instance, USAID has funded four participants for observational travel to the United States for justice sector professionals. While the immediate impact of that program might have measured one way, now that a third of Dominican Supreme Court judges have participated in a similar type of programming, results might show greater impact of the training experience.

In summary, performance measures are very hard to specify, and there is always the problem of attributing an effect to a training intervention that may be caused by something else happening at the same time.

USIS gauged a U.S. Speaker program on intellectual property rights as an example of effective programming. As a result of the visit and the speaker's continued linkage with Dominican officials, USIS noted that the Dominican Government has created an enforcement mechanism for effective widespread seizures of pirated materials. USAID noted that the Dominican Government's decision to move toward

private capitalization of its national electric system can be linked to a Dominican official's USAID-sponsored study tour of privatization efforts in Chile.

USAID believes that when well organized and with appropriate follow-up, this type of programming can have a powerful impact on policy reforms and economic development in a country. By capitalizing on the strength of Dominican professional commercial entities, the national electric system is working in partnership with the private sector to solve Dominican energy problems.

Country Field Study Goal 5

- **Observe the degree of host country input into program operations.**

The team met with a host of Dominicans in private, nonprofit, and governmental sectors who have participated in and benefited from exchange or training programs. Their perspectives revealed the degree to which such activities helped to improve systems and processes that would enable the Dominican Republic to better administer its national and local affairs. USG field representatives were well plugged into local organizations and groups for their respective areas of interest and expertise. The contacts they make are frequent and involve a significant amount of collaboration in the planning and implementation of educational exchanges and training programs.

Attempting to deliver exchanges or training programs to Dominicans without following through with the necessary preparatory work was considered ill-advised. The Dominicans the team met welcomed contact with Americans to receive the benefits of training offered. They welcomed partnership in the planning and implementation of these activities. The Dominicans expressed interest in more opportunities for greater participation in training, particularly if the training came with additional resources that would enable them to effectively implement many of the ideas that they had learned through specialized training.

In general, the partners characterized their relationships with USG field program representatives in glowing terms. Dominicans repeatedly applauded the efforts of their USG partners and the benefits accrued from their participation in exchanges and training programs. They appreciated the opportunity to step away from their normal tasks and challenges and immerse themselves in training and education environments that enhance their ability to effect positive change in their work places and with their constituents. Once such relationships were formed with USG field program officers and participants, whether from the Dominican Republic or other countries, a positive synergy and network was established that continued beyond the term of the training or exchange. Over time, many professionals and other personnel trained through USG programs have continued to communicate with each other and work cooperatively through their respective professional associations for the betterment of their country. Many of these participants now occupy positions of importance and wield influence in guiding key military and civilian organizations.

While Dominicans desire to support exchanges and training programs, they are limited in their ability to augment such activities on a broad scale. They depend on USG programs and funding to implement needed training for key personnel charged with reforming various national and local government operations. There is some leveraging, but with limited resources, the Dominican Republic depends on American assistance to improve its infrastructure. USG field representatives have access to appropriate Dominican officials and organizations. These partnerships -- formal or informal -- are effectively nurtured and have resulted in a significant number of successes in the training and exchanges area. Returned participants continue to form an active alumni group who respond positively and readily when called on to participate as resources and informants for appropriate causes and activities. USG programs build and sustain a loyal and supportive following among Dominicans. This growing alumni group of training and exchange participants constitutes a vital resource that can be leveraged in a variety of ways.

Throughout its week of observation, the team learned that the degree of host country input depends, in part, on the area being addressed. Although there appears to be discontinuity in the Dominican civil service system, in the law enforcement and military areas, for instance, the IAWG team heard from United States and Dominican officials that little turnover occurs within that sector's ranks with administrative changes in the Government. Given limited turnover, law enforcement and military officials work hand-in-hand to design and execute USG-sponsored training and exchange programs. This mutual understanding and cooperation has not only generated visible bonds between United States and Dominican officials, but has also given rise to a corps of Dominican officials, trained in part with USG support, who have assumed leadership roles and who will pass on their knowledge and skills to future Dominican leaders.

The U.S. Coast Guard has very good planning interdiction between the U.S. Mission's Military Group and its Dominican military counterparts. The Dominican military pays a portion of its training and coordination costs; the United States Government assists in some instances.

Outside the law enforcement and military areas, the team learned that discontinuity in the Dominican civil service seriously disrupts a USG entity's ability to work with Dominican officials in the development of other training and exchange programs. Often in the educational and cultural exchanges, Mission personnel must cultivate and recultivate local contacts because of the absence of an institutionalized civil service. While the short term impact is arguably less significant when weighed against other areas of current U.S. interest, the long term ramifications are potentially more significant, insofar as this discontinuity undermines institutionalization and stabilization of a democratic system.

For the Peace Corps program, the Dominican Government must not only agree to a proposed project, but also must share full ownership in it by contributing financially or in kind to the agreed-to activity. Peace Corps must have its programs approved by the host government; NGO institutional strengthening can involve publicly-funded local institutions; and in cases of disaster relief, as with Hurricane Georges, the Peace Corps works with public agencies of the Dominican Republic. When a host government is uncooperative in a given sector because of political or resource problems, USAID will work for bureaucratic change and postpone work in that sector. USAID requires host country participation in planning a program's objectives and in carrying them out, with some negotiated measure of cost-sharing

to assure host-government commitment.

Country Field Study Goal 6

- **Learn about private sector initiatives and the degree of support solicitations received in-country by USG agencies conducting exchanges and training.**

There are efforts underway to improve and enhance the educational, cultural, and economic opportunities of the Dominican Republic sponsored by private organizations and agencies. The team met with representatives of several of these groups. They provided a perspective of the Dominican Republic that was hopeful and progressive. While all did not depend on federal programs for their total support, they collaborated on a number of projects. In many cases, these joint ventures enabled Mission program officers to gain entree to certain sectors of the Dominican Republic that would have remained inaccessible otherwise. Private organizations are linked to USG programs by previous affiliations and an understanding of their mutual goals. While they maintain their independence, these private sector partners have used United States Government funds in creative and positive ways. In planning for their annual training and exchange activities, federal agencies represented in the field factored the ideas and resources of these organizations into their strategies. The networks formed by federal agency representatives in the field helped to leverage funds and extend the reach of their resources.

Dominican private sector initiatives currently comprise a small portion of the exchange and training funding. The Dominican IAWG team, however, spoke with a university professor about one nascent initiative arising in the Fulbright context. With USIS' assistance, members of the Dominican Fulbright Alumni group are in the process of soliciting contributions to an endowment that will fund future Fulbright student and scholar grantees. This ambitious program shows promise and may serve as a model for future private sector initiatives in-country. The team also learned about private foundations from the United States and other countries, such as Germany, that contribute to programs that the USG sponsors in part. Though most pronounced in the areas of trade, finance, and commerce, private support also arose in the context of education and cultural training and exchanges.

USAID's programs often benefit from cost-sharing by the training institution, particularly in cases of academic long-term training, in the form of tuition waivers and housing arrangements. Similar arrangements occur occasionally in country, even though host country institutions may not have the same level of resources. In the Dominican Republic, this is hard to gauge since training is almost entirely managed as a subactivity by technical assistance contractors, and not broken out separately. However, a reported 90 percent of USAID in-country funds support the activities of private NGOs. Peace Corps solicits some funds from private sector institutions in support of Peace Corps local projects, but is careful about it so as to maintain its independence. The Foreign Commercial Service works with local businesses and the American Chamber of Commerce in Santo Domingo.

Country Field Study Goal 7

- **Collect suggestions from U.S. Mission staff regarding the strategy and action plan (for 10 percent savings recommendations) for the FY-98 Annual Report.**

Mission personnel expressed the opinion that many agencies had already reduced costs of their programs by well over ten percent since the Executive Order went into effect. Staff did underscore the need for greater flexibility in financing, promoting, and delivering training and exchange programs.

Administratively, for example, providing the Mission with field-controlled training and exchange funds that are not function specific would allow the Mission to use whatever tools necessary to achieve Mission Performance Plan goals.

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Lessons Learned

- Set travel dates at least three to six months in advance of departure.
- Develop and maintain a pool of candidates with appropriate expertise to undertake future country field studies and projects.
- Allow Mission staff more lead time to review and respond to country field study goals.

Recommendations

International exchanges and training are critical components to the U.S. Government's foreign policy goals. Their strategic value is in developing and expanding a permissive environment for projecting U.S. national interests. The value of this investment should be recognized prominently in the United States Strategic Plan for International Affairs. The IAWG team recommends the following:

- Institute an international strategic goal of sustaining and promoting international exchanges and training, a global anchor to mutual understanding and human capacity development.
- Review the IAWG definition of training in the broad context of activities that support the Mission Performance Plan process and better reflect U.S. Government investment, rather than training defined in the narrow context of a "border crossing."
- Develop a pilot project in which appropriate Mission personnel capture all training and exchange data using a common, government-wide format.
- Require all Mission Country Teams to develop and maintain a common database of information on international exchanges and training.
- Require the adoption of a "Train-the-Trainer" component to all appropriate training programs.
- Provide Mission field officers with greater flexibility in financing, promoting, and delivering training and exchange programs.
- Provide field-controlled training and exchange funds that are not function-specific but allow the Mission Country Teams to use whatever tools necessary to achieve a Mission Performance Plan

goal.

- Explore the feasibility of developing or utilizing local in-country learning centers to fill some training needs.
- Conduct longitudinal studies to track training benefits over time.