

ACCESS AMERICA

United States Is Largest Donor of Foreign Aid, Report Says

Americans favor private giving, people-to-people contacts



Chart shows the breakdown of U.S. foreign aid by category. Private giving outweighs government aid, contributing to the report that the United States gives more foreign aid than any other country.

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Washington — The United States is the single largest donor of foreign economic aid, but, unlike many other developed nations, Americans prefer to donate their money through the private sector, according to a new report published by a Washington research organization.

Of the \$122.8 billion of foreign aid provided by Americans in 2005 (the most current data available), \$95.5 billion, or 79 percent, came from

Cont'd on p. 2

From the Ambassador

We all seek to improve the quality of life in our communities and the world through charitable giving or philanthropy. Since the earliest days of the United States of America, leaders such as Benjamin Franklin and President Jimmy Carter have donated money, material support, and volunteer time to charitable causes. Today, the United States, through private and public sector giving, is the largest donor of foreign aid in the world. President George W. Bush has attributed this generosity to our desire to be “be a nation that serves goals larger than self.”

Donations to charity can come from communities, corporations or individuals. From social groups and sports teams to service organizations and religious institutions, different organizations work together to support specific charities or charitable causes. The Muslims Care campaign, under the Council on American-Muslim Relations (CAIR), is one example of an American volunteer program. Launched several years ago, the program encourages Muslims to help their neighbors by assuming “a broad role in society by working to improve the communities in which we live.”

I hope that you all have the opportunity this summer to donate or volunteer to “serve goals larger than self” to the benefit of us all.

—Robert F. Godec

*U.S. is Largest Donor,
cont'd from p. 1*

private foundations, corporations, voluntary organizations, universities, religious organizations and individuals, says the annual Index of Global Philanthropy.

The index was issued May 24 by the Center for Global Prosperity at the Hudson Institute, a Washington-based nonpartisan research organization.

"It isn't like in the 1950s when the Marshall Plan and government flows dominated our economic engagement with the developing world," said Carol A. Adelman, the director of the Center for Global Prosperity. She spoke May 24 at the launching of the report.

For example, U.S. foundations gave more -- in money, time, goods and expertise -- than 11 of the 22 developed-country governments each gave in 2005, and U.S. private voluntary organizations totaled more than the governments of Japan, the United Kingdom, Germany and France each.

More than half of all U.S. assistance to developing countries, \$61.7 billion, came in the form of private remittances by individuals living in the United States to their families abroad, the report says. According to the report, those remittances not only reduce poverty, but, in some cases, increase creditworthiness of countries and underwrite their trade imbalances.

PRIVATE GENEROSITY

The scope of U.S. private giving often is overlooked in statistics that compare the relative generosity of various countries, the authors of the report say. Most of the other developed countries deliver their international aid primarily through official development aid programs run and financed by government agencies.

U.S. official development assistance (ODA) in 2005 was \$28 billion, the largest of all official donations by an individual country. But, according to the often-quoted measure used by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which compares government aid as a percentage of a country's gross national income (GNI), U.S. government aid is only 0.22

From the Archives



U.S. philanthropy and volunteerism have a long history in Tunisia, as captured in these photos of Peace Corps Tunisia volunteers. In fact, the current directors of AMIDEAST and le Centre d'études maghrébines à Tunis (CEMAT), Lee Jennings and Laurence Michalak, were both Peace Corps volunteers in Tunisia.

(left) April, 1968 – PCV Ellen Zimmerman worked with Family Planning in the city of Sfax and also taught English at the Lycée de Jeunes Filles, where she is pictured here with some of her students.

(right) April, 1975 – PCV Jane S. Rath worked for an association dedicated to the safeguarding and reconstruction of the old city (Medina) of Tunis. Here, she is talking with a coworker about renovation projects in progress.

IRC Tips

Here are some selected U.S. Government web sites on volunteerism, development aid, philanthropy and volunteerism courtesy of our friends in the Information Resource Center.

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)

www.opm.gov/cfc/

Charitable giving by employees of the U.S. Federal Government

Corporation for National and Community Service

(CNS)

www.cns.gov/

A network of government-sponsored volunteer organizations

Helping America's Youth

www.helpingamericasyouth.gov/

A presidential initiative to help at-risk youth reach their full potential

Partnership for a Better Life

usinfo.state.gov/partnerships/index.html

U.S. Department of State Office of International Information Programs site on the benefits of U.S. development assistance

Peace Corps

www.peacecorps.gov

America's quintessential international volunteer program, Americans serving the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries

USA Freedom Corps for Kids

www.usafreedomcorpskids.gov/

Ideas and resources to encourage children and young people to volunteer are featured on this site, which contains separate pages for kids, youth, parents, and teachers.

USAID Global Development Alliance (GDA)

www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_partnerships/gda/

U.S. Agency for International Development program focusing on public-private alliances to stimulate economic growth, develop businesses and workforces, address health and environmental issues, and expand access to education and technology.

White House Office of Faith-Based & Community Initiatives

www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/

Office and government-wide Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives created in 2001 to focus on the needs of the homeless, prisoners and at-risk youth, addicts, the frail elderly, and families moving from welfare to work.

*U.S. is Largest Donor,
cont'd from p. 2*

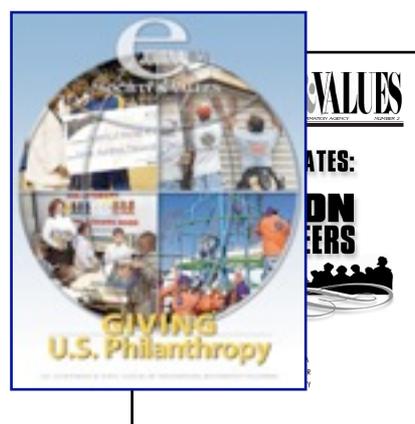
percent of GNI, which ranks the United States as the 20th of the 22 listed donor states.

Index of Global Philanthropy combines all aid from developed countries – government and private – an approach that its authors say is a more accurate measure of a nation's generosity. According to the index, the United States is the top donor in absolute amounts and the seventh of 22 in terms of GNI percentage.

"This shouldn't be a numbers game, but since it always is, since people always are comparing numbers, let them look at what is going on in developing countries. Just looking at government aid flows is not going to help us understand ... what are the best practices, what are the success stories," Adelman said.

The full text of the Index is available on the Hudson Institute Web site www.hudson.org.

*Adapted from a May 24, 2007
USINFO article by Jaroslaw Anders
<http://usinfo.state.gov>*



Read about these topics and more in the Department of State eJournal collection at usinfo.state.gov/pub/ejournalusa.html

Alumni Spotlight



TUNISIAN YOUTH ENGAGE

Inspired by their community service experience in the U.S., Tunisian high school students decided they wanted to do something for their community. So, in honor of Earth Day on Sunday, April 22, Tunisian Youth Exchange and Study (YES) alumni organized a “clean the beach” event. Five alumni and one YES student leaving this fall showed up to clean a part of La Marsa beach.

In just over an hour they managed to fill approximately 10 large garbage bags and arouse the attention of many beachgoers who started picking up some trash themselves and dumping them in the students’ bags.

The students were really proud of their work and vowed to do it again--next time with more people!

IN EARTH DAY COMMUNITY SERVICE

June Events

All these events take place at the American Corner

All month

Fridays 3:30-5:00 PM

Free English Fridays! Come meet new friends and practice your English.

American Corner at AMIDEAST

22, rue Al Amine Al Abassi, Cité des Jardins, 1002 Tunis-Belvédère, tel. 71-790-563 ext. 106

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