

Last Mile Initiative

Bulletin 2

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Guatemala Tests Innovative Business Model

Several export promotion centers in Guatemala will be selected to test a franchise business model for wireless voice and data communications. The objective is to extend Internet connectivity from the centers to additional paying customers. According to Noreene Janus of EGAT/EIT/IT and David Mendoza of Alexius International, the extra revenue from wireless services will improve the chances for each center to achieve long-term sustainability.



*Tourism entrepreneurs in Livingston, Guatemala utilize Web services in export promotion center.
Photo by D. Mendoza.*

Mr. Mendoza and Dr. Janus recently hosted a brown bag in AID/W to share plans for the Last Mile program in Guatemala, and to solicit input. Mr. Mendoza is also the senior consultant to the Last Mile Initiative in Peru.

Loren Stoddard is AID/Guatemala's Last Mile Coordinator. He says the initiative will support wireless links to important organizations, including secondary schools, small businesses, and health clinics that are of particular strategic importance to the Mission, in addition to any other customers the franchisees may wish to target. ■



*AID/Tanzania is exploring links to communities around national parks.
Photo by J. Cochrane.*

Last Mile Programs for 2005 Considered

Six USAID missions are implementing Last Mile programs with \$2.25 million in FY 2004 budget assistance from Administrator Natsios. An additional six missions identified by their regional bureau IT Coordinators received a total of \$400,000 to explore designs for FY 2005 programs. Some 20 missions overall are considering FY 2005 participation in the Last Mile Initiative.

For example, Tanzania is looking at ways to link national parks with surrounding communities. In Madagascar, communities in three key ecological zones are the focus of consideration. Other countries (or regions) under consideration include Kenya, West Africa, Southern Africa, Yemen, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Jamaica, the Caribbean, and Columbia.

All USAID Missions, not just those that received exploratory funding, should consider whether their programs are appropriate for participation in the Last Mile Initiative. The Last Mile technical team in Washington is prepared to encourage and support Last Mile programs, even if fiscal resources are not provided from Washington. Visit the Last Mile website for guidance, or speak with the appropriate regional bureau IT Coordinator. ■



Last Mile is an Initiative of USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios

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