

THE CARTER CENTER NEWS

SPRING 2008

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THE
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Nepal Elections Mark New Political Beginning



D. Hakes

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and Rosalynn Carter witness poll opening procedures in Bhaktapur, Nepal, where long lines of voters mirrored the large turnout across the country.

Carter Center election observers witnessed a historic vote in Nepal on April 10 creating a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution for the country that will likely abolish the 240-year-old monarchy.

"This election was transformational for the people of Nepal," said President Carter. "Traditionally marginalized groups are guaranteed a place in the new government."

Nepal's decade-long Maoist insurgency left more than 12,000 people dead and some 100,000 people displaced. Shortly after a breakthrough peace agreement was made in November 2006, the Maoists joined an interim government, but elections were twice delayed due to political disagreements among the interim government's parties.

Sixty election monitors from 21 nations joined delegation leaders former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, and Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai, former deputy prime minister of Thailand for the election.

Nepal's electoral system, which is a complicated combination of single-

member constituencies and proportional representation, introduced quotas for women and other marginalized groups to create a far more inclusive and elected body than previously existed in Nepal. More than 6,000 candidates representing 73 political parties sought a position for the constituent assembly's 575 directly elected seats. Twenty-six seats will be appointed by the cabinet after election results are final.

"This election was transformational for the people of Nepal. Traditionally marginalized groups are guaranteed a place in the new government."

The Carter Center's observation mission—the only international election observation organization present through-

continues on page 4

From Dr. John Hardman, President and CEO Center Embraces Next Quarter-Century

In practice, waging peace, fighting disease, and building hope are not easy tasks. Yet our mission at The Carter Center is to embrace these difficult respon-



A. Mosher

An Ethiopian man holds his family's allotment of bed nets provided free of charge by The Carter Center. Last year, the Center assisted in the distribution of 3 million long-lasting insecticidal bed nets in Ethiopia to help control malaria.



C. Nelson

The Carter Center continues to work in Liberia (above) to strengthen its judicial system.

sibilities, accepting failure as a possible outcome. In our first 25 years, the Center showed that no matter how insurmountable challenges to global peace or health may seem, there is hope they can be overcome.

After two decades of work, Guinea worm is poised to be the first parasitic disease eliminated from earth. We have reduced occurrences of Guinea worm to fewer than 10,000 cases and are pushing to eliminate it in Ghana and Sudan, where most cases remain.

One offshoot of this historic campaign has been the creation of village-based health care delivery systems throughout Africa. These existing grassroots networks will allow us to continue pioneering cutting-edge approaches to health care in developing countries, especially the delivery of treatments for multiple diseases at once, a tactic already growing in Nigeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Sudan. This integration of disease prevention efforts holds great promise for reducing the cost burden of disease on regional economies.

After witnessing great strides in the



A. Poyo

Dr. John Hardman

understanding and treatment of mental illnesses, our mental health program looks forward to further advancing parity for mental health in the U.S. health care system and to erasing once and for all the stigma against people with mental illnesses, allowing them the dignity they deserve.

In our peace programs, efforts to strengthen freedom and democracy will continue in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. We remain dedicated to resolving conflicts peacefully, strengthening democratic electoral processes, advancing rule of law, and supporting human rights and their defenders. These efforts will continue to lay the foundations for peace with justice and ultimately a more secure world.

Looking toward the next quarter-century and beyond, we have confidence based on experience that, given a real chance, our partners in countries worldwide will continue to demonstrate that they can shape their own futures for the better, creating a more hopeful world for us all.

Conference Explores Citizens' Right to Public Information

More than 120 representatives of government, civil society, media, the private sector, international financial institutions, donors, and academics from 40 countries gathered at The Carter Center Feb. 27–29 to examine the current status of the right to public information and create a set of recommendations to advance the right worldwide.

Participants also explored the impact of access to information on areas such as development and governance and agreed that access to information is a fundamental human right empowering citizens to take part in decision making and to help set public priorities on issues like education, health care, and clean water.

Letting citizens participate “increases the common interest of leaders and citizens in shaping a fruitful and progressive future for the nation,” said former U.S. President Jimmy Carter during his opening remarks.

While nearly 70 nations have freedom of information laws, the right faces numerous threats, including government retreat toward secrecy and ambiguity about whether the benefits of such legislation are fully reaching the most disadvantaged people.

Conference participants concurred that the absence of information allows corruption to flourish and disproportionately affects the poor, disadvantaged, and women.

“Powerful leaders in order to stay in office deprive their citizens of a right to know,” said Carter. “Access to information can change the landscape of an entire society.”

Changes to implement a more transparent culture increase the level of trust between citizens and their government. In the West African country of Mali, one major improvement was the installation of a welcome desk at select agencies.

“Citizens feel very welcome when they come into an office now, there’s somebody

to greet them, direct them, and answer their questions,” said Modibo Makalou, adviser to Mali President Amadou Toumani Touré. “Access to information has improved the democratic process in Mali because citizens know that the administration is working for them, whereas before they really had to make efforts to get any answers from the administration. Now they know that the civil servants who are sitting there are working for them.”

Conference participants, including key advocates and decision-makers, will continue the push for information access in their own countries and around the world, according to Laura Neuman, project manager for the Carter Center’s access to information initiative.

Attendees represented countries with established transparency laws, like the United States and Jamaica; those with new initiatives, like Mali; and those emerging from traditionally closed societies, like China and Liberia.

Following the conference, participants released a declaration stating that “access to information is a fundamental human right; it is essential for human dignity, equity, and peace with justice; and a lack of access to information disproportionately affects the poor, women, and other vulnerable and marginalized people.”

It also establishes a series of principles, stating that transparency provides more safety and security than secrecy and that the right of access to information should apply to all branches of government at all levels, to all divisions of international bodies, and sometimes even to private corporations. The declaration includes a set of tenets that should be included in any law.



In a session titled “Are We Safer With Secrecy?,” panelists Tom Blanton, executive director of the National Security Archive; Michelle Roberts, reporter for The Oregonian newspaper; Kevin Dunion, information commissioner for Scotland; and moderator Laura Neuman, manager of the Center’s access to information initiative, discuss national security and freedom of information.

“This conference brought together people who are committed to openness, who want to explore the way together, so we can ensure that all citizens enjoy the fundamental human right to information,” Neuman said.

The Carter Center has led access to public information efforts since 1999, working extensively in Jamaica, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Mali, and at the regional level to support the establishment of comprehensive laws and assist their implementation and enforcement.

Review Aims to Legitimize Congo Mining Contracts

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the most mineral-rich nations on earth, but its citizens do not benefit from those resources. In fact, 5.4 million Congolese have died since 1996 in wars waged to control these riches.

Rising citizen demands for accountability and pressure from international groups recently spurred a national reform effort and a request by the Congolese government for The Carter Center to assist in a review of mining contracts signed during the war years. The project builds on the Center's neutral presence and support for democratic transition established during

its observation of the 2006 Democratic Republic of the Congo elections.

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“The goal is to achieve equity in the country’s extractive industries and to create a process for their permanent regulation,”

said Karin Ryan, director of the Carter Center’s Human Rights Program. “Helping the government renegotiate these contracts and make the process more transparent is essential to good governance and vital to the Congo’s recovery.”

Partnering with the Columbia Law School Human Rights Clinic, the Center offered legal, financial, and economic analyses of the contracts and recommendations for renegotiating them to bring them in line with international standards.

Looking more broadly, Ryan hopes the new Congolese government will restore its full legitimacy by adopting policies that enhance economic development, curtail corruption, and respect human rights.

“Completion of the contract review and renegotiation doesn’t mean everything is fine and settled,” she said. “But it is a significant first step in improving accountability.”

continued from cover page

Nepal

out Nepal’s entire electoral process — established its field office and deployed long-term observers in March 2007. They traveled throughout the country’s 75 districts multiple times during the pre-election period. On election day, Carter Center observers visited more than 400 polling centers in 28 districts.

Center observers found that most polling stations opened on time or with only a brief delay and followed the correct procedures. In a postelection statement, the Center noted that a significant number of eligible young voters were left out due to insufficient time to update the voter roll prior to the elections, but overall the majority of Nepali voters participated in a remarkable and relatively peaceful constituent assembly election.

“These elections are another step for Nepal on its path to peace and political stability,” said David Pottie, associate director of the Carter Center’s Democracy Program. “But there is still a long road ahead for the country,

and it is essential for the international community to remain engaged.” The Carter Center will continue to observe the district counting and national tabulation until complete and comment on the electoral process periodically through public statements.



Nepal’s constituent assembly elections were the 70th elections observed by The Carter Center. All Carter Center reports on Nepal’s election process are available at www.cartercenter.org.



In Bhaktapur, a woman presents her identification card before voting (left) and a man casts his vote for the Nepal’s constituent assembly (above).

Photos: D. Hakes

Ecuador Border Town Residents Face Complicated Problems

Buenaventura Morales and his family fled their village in Colombia more than three years ago after armed groups repeatedly attacked the area. His wife died during the journey, leaving him with four children to support on his own. Today he lives in a rural area near the town of Lago Agrio, Ecuador, close to the Colombian border. Unable to find a job, he would like to rent a small plot of land nearby to grow rice and trade it for other goods among the large refugee community here. Life on the border between the two countries is tough.

“Ecuador and Colombia share a border with complicated problems from underdevelopment, guerrillas, and drugs,” said Jennifer McCoy, director of the Americas Program at The Carter Center. “The ongoing conflict in Colombia spills over, in particular with many refugees fleeing into Ecuador. This puts additional burdens on Ecuador’s poor northern border province.”

The Carter Center is conducting a conflict-related development analysis in two towns of the Ecuador northern border with support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and in collaboration with two grassroots Ecuadorian nongovernmental organizations: Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano and Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progresion. The analysis focuses on development in the border zone, including access to justice and human rights, citizen



Photos: D. Hakes

Buenaventura Morales found himself living in an Ecuador border town after violence forced him to leave his native Colombia.

security, and youth and social inclusion. The analysis will serve as input for the creation of public policies for the northern border zone by Ecuador’s government.

The conflict analysis methodology used by The Carter Center and UNDP is unique in its approach, which can be applied to conflict situations around the world.

“For each issue, we determine the dimensions in the border zone that are feeding the conflicts as well as the actors, organizations, and players in the northern border zone that have potential to be agents for peace,” said Michael Brown, coordinator of the UNDP in the northern border zone of Ecuador. “The analysis is also unique because it looks at things from a development programming perspective, so you understand the realities of the border zone; you understand the challenges that are faced and the potential for change.”

One conflict the analysis identifies is the massive environmental and health damage caused by oil companies, which have left some 71,000 polluted areas across Ecuador.

Carlos Rodriguez is a resident of Barrio La Florida, a community where the primary water source glistens with petroleum and the air is thick with the stench of oil.

“My wife has breast cancer, and I have respiratory problems,” he said. “My livestock have all died, and no crops will grow.”

The analysis also identifies the different actors in the conflict, including indigenous communities, who are against oil extraction in the Amazon, and local authorities, who highlight the employment provided through oil. Without substantial reforms in regulating the oil industry, the conflicts may not be resolved.

Improving conditions in the area, which is crowded with asylum seekers, underdeveloped, and heavily polluted, will take time. Investing in the region, promoting binational initiatives, and giving opportunity where there was none before are important first steps toward change. And change is what refugees like Buenaventura Morales and his children desperately need.



The town of General Farfan, home to many Colombian refugees, is located directly on the Ecuador border.

Web Sites Create Stage for Political Debate in China

Web sites sponsored by The Carter Center have become an important portal for political reform in China, engaging their audiences with news articles translated into both Chinese and English and offering a platform to debate current affairs in a traditionally closed society.

The goal of the Web sites, www.chinaelections.org (Chinese language) and www.chinaelections.net (English language), is to promote better governance and elections in China.

“The Web site is quite famous in China,” said Yawei Liu, director of the Carter Center’s China Program. “People go to the site because they know they can get up-to-date news and commentary. Other similar sites have been shut down.”

When articles are posted that contain sensitive words, the Center receives a phone call asking that the offending article be removed. Noncompliance results in the disabling of the site, meaning it cannot be viewed in China.

“We are observant of the line,” said Liu. “We pull back when requested by the censors. Our goal is to encourage debate about democracy while respecting the

English-language and Chinese-language Web sites sponsored by The Carter Center provide a place for debate about political and democracy issues in China.



Chinese government’s policies.”

The Chinese-language Web site features Western literature on democracy translated into Chinese as well as commentaries on current events to encourage debate. Its audience is government officials, university faculty, students, and others interested in political reform in China. About 200,000 people visit the site each



month from within China.

The Center tracks which articles are the most popular. Currently, the most-viewed articles deal with recent elections in Taiwan.

“Initially, we wanted a one-stop Web site for those interested in elections and governance in China,” said Liu. “But as the site grew it became a platform to encourage debate on multiple issues. It’s exciting to watch it develop.”

The English-language Web site highlights news articles from both Western and Chinese media sources. Carter Center interns translate important Chinese articles into English — stories on political reform, democracy in China, and commentaries — accounts that a Western audience may not typically see.

“We try to bridge the media gap,” said Liu. “By bringing both sides of the debate to one place, people can make up their minds for themselves.”

The Center also sponsors <http://www.chinarural.org/>, the most comprehensive Web site on village elections and villager self-government in China.



Results are tallied following elections in Shidong village, China, in 2006.

Jian Yi

Profile: Paul Emerson

Fly Expert Tackles Trachoma in Africa

Growing up in England, Dr. Paul Emerson dreamed of becoming a scientist and an educator, the kind of individual who would have both the technical knowledge and practical skills to show people how to better their lives. That dream led him first to teach in England and Africa, then to become a medical entomologist, and now to The Carter Center, which he joined three years ago as director of the Trachoma Control Program. “My specialty is the humble house fly and the diseases it transmits,” he said. One of the worst of these is trachoma, a bacterial infection of the eyes.

Trachoma infects some 84 million people, primarily in developing countries in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. The disease cripples—and ultimately blinds—hard-working people living on the edge of survival, leaving them dependent on others for care and impeding the economic development of their countries. Some 7 million people are blind today

Children greet Dr. Paul Emerson in Ethiopia.

because of trachoma. And yet, said Dr. Emerson, the ailment is easy to prevent via a combination of education and control.

“Education is the key to empowering people,” he said. “If you can get people to say, ‘It doesn’t have to be like this; my children don’t have to go blind,’ then they’ll change their behaviors.” Working to control trachoma makes good sense, said Dr. Emerson. “The disease can be controlled with several simple tools,” he explained. “We don’t need to tell people to wait—that sometime in the future we’ll have a vaccine or miracle drug. There are steps they can take now.”

Controlling trachoma is largely a matter of improving hygiene. The disease



Photos: L. Guibb

is spread via a fly called *Musca sorbens*, which breeds in human feces lying on the ground. Flies transmit the blinding ailment when they land on peoples’ eyes. But, happily, the flies do not breed in pit latrines. “That’s the first step, building covered latrines,” said Dr. Emerson, whose previous research in The Gambia demonstrated the importance of simple, covered pit toilets in trachoma control. People also can be infected via bacteria-contaminated fingers, towels, and sheets. “That means villagers also need to learn the importance of washing their hands and faces and of refraining from sharing towels and sheets,” he said. “None of this is glamorous, but it works, and people don’t suffer the pain of trachoma or lose their eyesight. And that transforms peoples’ lives.”

Dr. Emerson regards the local villagers who are putting this knowledge into practice as “true heroes.” “These villagers aren’t being paid for what they do,” he said. “They want to help because they don’t want their children to get sick. We’re merely giving them the knowledge they need” through on-site trachoma volunteers. And people have embraced this knowledge. By the end of 2008, villagers in six African countries will have built 500,000 latrines by hand—fostering a new generation that will never know the devastating effects of trachoma.



Dr. Paul Emerson (center); Nazeed Fusheini, Carter Center field officer for trachoma; and a Ghanaian woman discuss her family’s latrine.

Guinea Worm Cases Drop to Fewer Than 10,000

The countdown to complete elimination of Guinea worm disease is ticking closer to zero. Ethiopia, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, and Togo now have joined the list of countries reporting an end to transmission of the disease.

No Guinea worm disease was reported in each of the four countries since 2006. In a ceremony in early April, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter honored the nations for their success in eliminating the disease. Only five endemic countries remain, accounting for fewer than 10,000 reported cases during 2007. This number is the lowest annual case count recorded by the campaign in its 22-year history. The Carter Center leads the international coalition fighting the disease.

Sudan and Ghana shoulder about 96 percent of the remaining cases. Mali, Nigeria, and Niger are expected to break the transmission cycle soon. In 2007, Ghana reported its lowest case numbers since its first case search was conducted

in 1989. The Sudan program reported approximately 6,000 cases, a reduction of more than half from the previous year.

Known as the "forgotten disease of forgotten people," Guinea worm is an ancient parasite that is contracted when people consume water contaminated with infective larvae. After one year, the mature worm slowly emerges from the body through a blister in the skin. The debilitating pain of this process often drives victims to immerse themselves in cool water; in doing so, they allow the worm to release new larvae into the water supply, perpetuating the disease. Once this cycle is broken, the disease will be gone.

That is not as easy as it may sound, especially in the final phases of eradication. Guinea worm's one-year incubation period makes tracking progress challenging. Setbacks can emerge at any time, requiring vigilance by health workers and maintenance of costly surveillance systems throughout endemic countries even when



Photos: L. Gubb

A traditional birth attendant (left) explains to a Ghanaian woman how to use a cloth water filter to prevent Guinea worm disease.

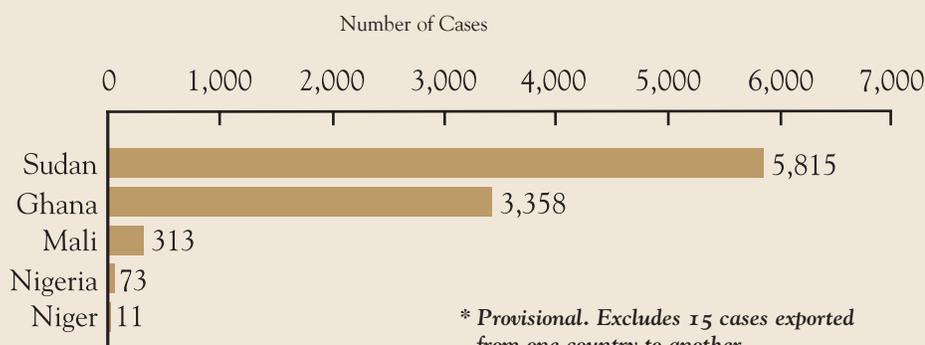
only a handful of cases remain.

Preserving financial and political support for the eradication campaign is equally tricky. With the substantial reduction of cases, global health institutions are eager to apply limited financial and human resources to other pressing needs, particularly those that are life-threatening.

On the ground level, health education workers try to convince communities that behavioral changes are the solution to a disease many cannot intuitively understand. The effective use of household and pipe filters, application of a safe chemical larvicide to the water supply, and treatment of Guinea worm symptoms requires nurturing. And the stakes are high: one case of a victim contaminating a water source, for example, puts an entire community at risk.

Continued vigilance is the key to eventual eradication of Guinea worm disease. The substantial gains of 2007 bring The Carter Center closer to being able to celebrate the end of a scourge.

DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTRY OF 9,570 CASES OF DRACUNCULIASIS REPORTED DURING 2007*



To date, 15 countries have stopped Guinea worm transmission: Burkina Faso, 2006; Cote d'Ivoire, 2006; Ethiopia, 2006; Togo, 2006; Benin, 2004; Mauritania, 2004; Uganda, 2003; Central African Republic, 2001; Chad, 1998; Cameroon, 1997; Yemen, 1997; Senegal, 1997; India, 1996; Kenya, 1994; Pakistan, 1993.

Free From Guinea Worm Disease, Girl Tends to Family, Chores

A little more than a year ago, 10-year-old Hubeida Iddirisu faced long days of pain as three Guinea worms began to emerge from blisters on her body. Every day for two weeks, a vol-

unteer came to her home in Savelugu town, Ghana, to extract the worms slowly by rolling them on pieces of gauze, a little each day. As is the case with most Guinea worm disease victims, Iddirisu was unable

to handle her household tasks while the worms were emerging. Her family relies on her income from selling charcoal.

Iddirisu was one victim of a large Guinea worm outbreak in her town in February 2007. During the outbreak, the Ghana Guinea Worm Eradication Program, assisted by The Carter Center and its partners, stepped up efforts to halt the disease, including making sure all families' household drinking water was filtered before use and treating water sources with a safe chemical.

A year later, Iddirisu is free of Guinea worm disease. She is able to carry out her daily chores plus her job selling charcoal that helps support her grandmother and three siblings and pay their school fees. She's a bright "A" student, who gets high grades despite her long hours of work. Other children who have had Guinea worm disease are not so fortunate. Many miss school due to the disease, causing them to fall behind in their studies and never catch up.



Top and above: In February 2008, Hubeida Iddirisu is all smiles as she makes her rounds selling charcoal in her village.



But one year earlier, in 2007, Iddirisu was undergoing painful Guinea worm removal by volunteer Sulley Zakaria.

In South Africa, a Journalist Finds Words for Unspeakable Tragedies

It was a recurring headline in South African newspapers: “Cop Murder-Suicide Claims Family.” Dozens of sons, fathers, and husbands working in the South African Police Service had committed these crimes against their own families, but the stories of what motivated them were rarely told.

Tamar Kahn, a South African journalist for Business Day, decided to investigate what was driving so many of the country’s law enforcement officers over the edge.

“I wasn’t seeing a lot of stories in the local media exploring why so many policemen were committing suicide or committing acts of violence against their loved ones. I wondered what systems were in place to safeguard their mental health and the extent to which they felt able to draw on these kinds of resources,” Kahn explained.

Kahn applied for a Rosalynn Carter Mental Health Fellowship because she saw it as an opportunity to work on a series of in-depth investigative articles about a range of mental health issues affecting police officers in post-apartheid South Africa.

Her reporting brought her face to face with police officers who were haunted by flashbacks and experienced breakdowns due to severe posttraumatic stress disorder. She went on patrol with an elite police squad, accompa-

nying officers on their often violent and dangerous night beat. She spoke with the lone survivors of family murder-suicides and interviewed traumatized volunteers who had filled the breach in communities where the inadequately resourced police services were overwhelmed by violent crime.

Through her interviews, Kahn uncovered a “tough-man” mentality among most policemen, a common cultural trait in South African men that was further exacerbated by working in law enforcement. As a result, many officers, who face constant exposure to dangerous, high-stress situations, lack the skills or inclination to seek the help they need.

The eight-month investigation was both exhilarating and draining for her.

“Each story affected me more deeply. You’re not human if it doesn’t affect you. You know the old line that journalists have a chip of ice in their hearts? Well, I came away thinking, I wish I had an iceberg in mine,” said Kahn.

While little change has been initiated in the internal systems of the South African Police Service, Kahn feels she has succeeded in bringing some serious issues to light.

About the Fellowships

Each year, 10 experienced journalists are chosen to participate in the Rosalynn Carter Fellowships for Mental Health Journalism program. The journalists research and report on topics of their choosing in the field of mental health. The goal of the fellowships is to increase accurate reporting on mental health issues and decrease incorrect, stereotypical information. To date, 88 journalists have participated in the fellowship program.

The publication of her work was accompanied by a surge in coverage of mental health issues by South African newspapers and radio shows. When asked about her experience as a Rosalynn Carter fellow, Kahn believes it gave her the opportunity to bring pressing issues into the public spotlight, which may help initiate change.

“It’s a way of taking our readers, I hope, to places that they would never go. And by showing them these places, perhaps they will be better informed about the challenges facing our police force and in turn pressure our policy-makers to improve mental health services for police men and women.”



Journalism fellow Tamar Kahn examined police officer suicides and violence in South Africa in a series of articles for Business Day.

Deborah Hakes

International Community Supports Nepal Mission

The Nepal election observation mission undertaken by The Carter Center over the past year saw broad support from various countries, a testament to the international community's interest in free and fair elections there. Last year, long-term observers were deployed to the field, followed recently by short-term observers who arrived in Nepal to monitor election-day activities on April 10.

The top four donors provided \$2.39 million for the mission, some providing additional grants when the elections were twice delayed, which allowed The Carter Center to keep a core staff in country during a tenuous pre-election period.

Major donors included Denmark, the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Canadian International Development Agency,

and Belgium. These contributors have also provided support for previous election observation missions and other peace work at the Center, including conflict resolution and human rights projects. The McConnell Foundation, which is particularly interested in long-term peace in Nepal, provided support for the Center's early conflict resolution work in Nepal that laid the groundwork for the recent election mission.

Google Grant Funds Ghana Program

Google.org became the latest partner to join the Guinea worm eradication campaign in Ghana by making a grant of \$1.45 million to The Carter Center. The grant will help support the Center's assistance to the Ghana Guinea Worm Eradication Program in calendar year 2008. The Carter Center will match this amount dollar for dollar for the same purpose.

Ghana made strides in the fight against Guinea worm disease in the last year. Cases of the disease dropped nearly 20 percent from 2006 to 2007—from 4,136 to approximately 3,300, respectively. Following a large outbreak in the town of Savelugu more than a year ago, the country has intensified interventions to ensure that Ghanaians in endemic areas drink only filtered water, which prevents the parasitic disease.

Parents Inspire Generosity

Franklin Shourds and Bertha Oster Shourds believed in treating all people fairly and with humanity. Even during the Great Depression, they were kind to the people of their community— young and old and from all walks of life.

Their example of unqualified compassion set an example for their daughter, Alvera Cushion, who set up a charitable gift annuity through The Carter Center in her parents' memory. Now her generosity will help fund the Center's work to help people in need through our health and peace programs, while at the same time providing Cushion with guaranteed income for life.

Cushion is part of the Carter Legacy Circle, a select group of donors who provide support to the Center through estate and financial planning. Legacy Circle members receive first-hand accounts of the Center's work through events and updates during the year.

For more information on the Center's planned giving programs, call (800) 550-3560, ext. 860, or see www.cartercenter.org/legacy.

For those interested in making a gift of stock or securities to The Carter Center, the account information has changed. Contact Karen Roop at (800) 550-3560, ext. 192 or at kroop@emory.edu for more information.

Auction Raises \$1.2 Million



Maple bench handcrafted by President Carter

This bench made of hard maple wood handcrafted by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter sold for \$300,000 at an auction in Port St. Lucie, Fla., on Feb. 9 to benefit The Carter Center. Items in the silent and live auctions combined raised \$1.2 million for the Center.

Other top bids in the live auction were \$210,000 for a one-of-a-kind photo signed by Rosalynn Carter, Jimmy Carter, Al Gore, Tipper Gore, George H. W. Bush, Hillary Clinton, Bill Clinton, Betty Ford, and Gerald Ford; \$125,000 for a fly-fishing vacation with the Carters in the North Georgia mountains; \$60,000 for a copy of the Camp David Accords with signatures by President Carter, Prime Minister Begin, Anwar Sadat, and Dr. Jehan Sadat, his widow; and \$45,000 for a photograph of five presidents autographed by all of them.



Resource Center to Support Human Rights

The Carter Center launched an office in March dedicated to furthering human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Located in the capital of Kinshasa, the Human Rights House will serve as a resource center for nongovernmental organizations, providing technical and organizational training workshops. Other services include a library, Internet access, and meeting rooms.



The Center also has undertaken a project in the DRC to provide human rights training for police and judges and provide assistance to the ministry of justice on preparation of performance reports for international treaty bodies.



D. Hakes

As the Democratic Republic of the Congo struggles to rebuild its infrastructure following war, The Carter Center is working to help bolster and protect its citizens' human rights.

River Blindness Halted in Colombia

Colombia has become the first country to interrupt transmission of onchocerciasis (also known as river blindness) on a countrywide basis, according to officials of the Onchocerciasis Elimination Program in the Americas (OEPA). Transmission also has been stopped in endemic areas of Ecuador and Guatemala, and no new cases of blindness due to the disease have been seen anywhere since 1995 in the Latin American regions where it is still found. Elimination in the Americas is due to mass treatment twice yearly with the anti-parasitic drug Mectizan[®], provided free of charge by Merck & Co. in the Americas and in Africa. The Carter Center and its partners, including Lions Clubs International Foundation, are working toward elimination in five remaining Western Hemisphere countries: Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, Guatemala, and Ecuador.

New Book a Loving Tribute to Carter's 'Remarkable' Mother

Known around the world simply as "Miss Lillian," the mother of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter became America's First Mother—irrepressible and always a fighter on behalf of the underdog. President Carter presents an affectionate, funny, and moving portrait of Bessie Lillian Gordy Carter in his new book, "A Remarkable Mother."

President Carter's book is an homage to the woman whom he credits as the inspiration for his own life's work of politics, advocacy, and service. Yet it is also a timely tribute to the best in all mothers—a reminder of how fundamentally they form us, and of how deep their influence remains throughout our lives.

A product of the Old South, Miss Lillian was a strong and independent woman ahead of her time in many ways—she became a registered nurse and ran her own pecan farm. At the age of 68, she joined the Peace Corps and was sent to India, where she cared for the poorest of the poor and condemned the caste system.

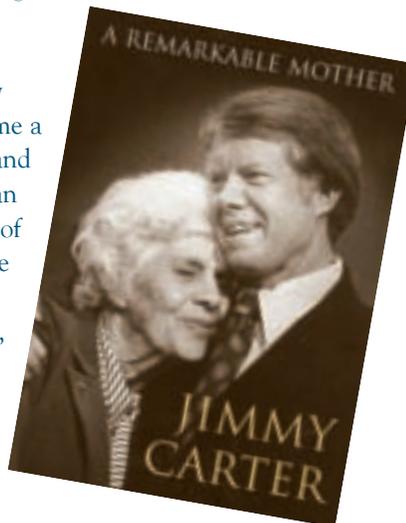


Exhibit Depicts Life Underwater

This summer, visitors to the Jimmy Carter Library and Museum will learn about the mysteries of submarines and the adventurous nature of those who serve on them in an exhibit titled "A View from the Periscope."

Open May 10 through Aug. 3, the exhibit celebrates the 60th anniversary of President Carter becoming a submariner. The 30 paintings and drawings on display, part of the U.S. Naval Historical Center's collection, provide a look at the unique role of the U.S. Navy Submarine Force.