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FRANK PAVICH

*Interviewed by W. Haven North
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KEY WORDS

Aga Khan
agriculture
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Brian Atwood
Bulgaria
Camilla, Pakistan
CARE
civil society
Coverdale group
democracy program
development studies program
divestment of state-owned assets
Doug Bennett
drought relief
drug issue
education program
Egypt
environment
Ethiopia
flood relief
Ghana seed company
Ghana
Guyana
health
horticulture
housing
infrastructure
institutional development support
Iran
Iran Municipal Association
Korea
local development project
local government
Local Development 2 (LDII)
middle income housing project
Montagnard province
Non-governmental organization (NGO)
North West Frontier
Oman
opium production
Pakistan
parliament
participation
Peace Corps

Peshawar
PL480
Plei-ku province
Point IV
political parties
President Sadat
principles of participation
privatization
provincial representative
Public Administration
PVO (Private Voluntary Organization)
re-engineering
reforestation
refugees
results system
roads
rural development office
school feeding
Somalia
subsidies
sustainability
Tanzania
three year workshop
UNHCR
urban planning
Vietnam
water
World Food Program
Yemen Arab Republic
“12 Principles of Participation”

INTERVIEW

Introduction

Q: This is an interview with Frank Pavich. Frank, how many years were you with AID?

PAVICH: I was with AID for thirty years.

Q: When did you start?

PAVICH: I started in 1966.

Q: And you retired when?

PAVICH: I retired in Cairo, Egypt in June of 1996.

Q: Give us a thumb nail sketch of your career so we have the whole picture before we go into the specifics.

PAVICH: I came to AID in the early '60s when the program opened up in Vietnam and they were looking for provincial advisors. I came in at that point and was in Vietnam for six and a half years and then came back to Washington for two years. I then went back out to Ethiopia, the Yemen Arab Republic, Somalia, Ghana, Pakistan, and finally to Egypt.

Early years and education

Q: Okay, let's start out with where you grew up, your early education, and whether there anything during this time that suggested you might get into international development type work.

PAVICH: I was born in 1933 and grew up in San Francisco, California. San Francisco was an international port and I was always intrigued by that. There was a coming and going of ships and people. My father was from Yugoslavia, my mother was Italian-Irish and our friends were Europeans, a mixture of first and second generation Americans. I graduated from high school in San Francisco and was fortunate to get an athletic scholarship to the University of Southern California. I started out as a physical education major, because that seemed to be a natural for a jock.

Q: What was your sport?

PAVICH: I was a football player. I wondered at the time why I should play football for three quarters of the year and then continue to learn the same type of thing about sports and athletics. I wasn't that much into the sports. So, I switched from physical education to Public Administration (PA). One of my friends at the time was in PA, and we talked about it and it seemed to me if I wasn't interested in business I was interested in doing something that seemed to be useful and felt that government would be the proper place to do that. So, I got a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Administration in 1955. Then I went into the Marine Corps as an Infantry officer for two years.

Q: Did you serve overseas in the Marine Corps?

PAVICH: No, I was U.S. based. It was just at the end of the Korean War and I was fortunate. But I did get my first introduction to how a big organization worked and the management dynamics that are present in that kind of environment and what it takes to work with people and be either a leader or a follower. Some of the experience from the athletics carried over into being a Marine officer. It certainly was a rewarding experience.

After the Marine Corps I went to work as a city planner in San Francisco. This was only a

short term assignment. I was filling in for people who were on vacations. I was there for about six months. However, I got my foot in the door and got some exposure to the business of city planning, working with a commission and the public and thinking about urban problems. After San Francisco, I took a job in Mountain View, California, where I was Assistant City Planner. I worked there primarily in annexations, which was a big thing in California in those days. This was bringing in all the unincorporated territory around the cities into the cities to broaden their tax base and develop. I was working in what is now Silicon Valley. I watched that coming from way back.

Joined the Peace Corps - 1962

In 1962 my boss at the City Planning Commission called my attention to a program that had just been initiated by President John Kennedy, the Peace Corps. He thought I might be interested in it, although I don't know why he thought so. I applied and was accepted to join either the program in Tunisia or the program in Iran. It turned out to be the Iranian program. Our group was the second Peace Corps program in the field.

Q: Why were you interested in doing that at that time?

PAVICH: The idea of traveling had been on my mind since I was a kid swimming in San Francisco bay. This seemed to be a legitimate opportunity for getting into something that would take me there and I could learn something at the same time. So, I went to Iran for two years. At first I worked with an Iranian university. Ironically, I was a basketball coach. Then I graduated from that to the Iran Municipal Association, where I was taken on as an Assistant City Planner. I worked there with five Iranian architects and engineers. We did basic city planning for some of the provincial cities, although we worked out of Tehran. A lot of it was design work which wasn't my field. So, it was interesting for me to work with these architects who were doing urban design.

Q: How long did you do that?

PAVICH: For two years. I left Iran in the middle of 1964 and accepted a fellowship to the University of Pittsburgh.

Q: How did you find working with the Iranians at that time?

PAVICH: Oh, I found it to be very interesting and rewarding and a lot of fun. They were very nice, friendly, warm people and good to work with. I enjoyed the experience very much. I learned a lot there. Things that carried me through situations later on when I was working with AID.

I left Iran to go to the University of Pittsburgh to study public and international affairs. It was a new school and new field. I stayed for a year and got my masters in public administration. Then I preceded to look for work overseas. I went to New York and looked at the UN and some of the voluntary agencies like Catholic Relief and CARE. I went to Washington and talked to USAID and they didn't have anything at the time. So, I

went back to California and began doing a job search there for work in urban renewal or development.

First years with USAID in Vietnam - 1966

One morning I had an appointment in Oakland, California to interview for a job in their urban renewal office. I got two telegrams at the same time. One was from AID and one was from CARE. Rather than reading them I stuck them in my pocket and went across the bay to Oakland to do my interview. I didn't want to be distracted. It was a good interview and I got a job offer. I came out of the Oakland City Hall and walked down the street and opened up the telegrams. The one from CARE invited me to take a job in Yugoslavia or Egypt. I opened up the other one from AID and it said they were starting to recruit people for a program in Southeast Asia, Vietnam, and would I be interested.

Q: This was what year?

PAVICH: This was in 1966. I continued walking down the street and I saw a sign that said Western Union. I reached in my pocket, pulled out a quarter, flipped it, and it came up AID. I then sent two telegrams, one to AID saying yes, and one to CARE saying no thank you. That was how the decision was made.

Q: Would you have believed the quarter if it had come out the other way?

PAVICH: Well, in hind sight I think I made the right decision, but at the time I really didn't know. I had worked a little bit with CARE in Iran and I was rather intrigued with what they were doing.

I came to Washington and joined a group at FSI for preparation to go to Vietnam. We were in language training, area studies and were told to play soccer because they thought our counterparts would be playing soccer. They took us down to the Marine Corps base at Quantico and we qualified on the pistol, semi and automatic weapons and were advised to buy a small arm for ourselves.

Q: What was your understanding of what your job was?

PAVICH: Provincial Representative somewhere in Vietnam. They suggested we all have a personal weapon. I mulled that over and didn't buy one at the time. I remember a group of us went out--a mixed group of male and female. We had nurses, former Peace Corps people, people just out of law school, graduate school. I remember one night over a couple of beers we were talking about what was going to be our greatest challenge of this career we were about to set off on. We were all new to this. It was almost like the Peace Corps again. We thought about the danger there and that we might get killed or captured, as some did. Or, we might step on a land mine, or something like that. I thought our biggest problem would probably be our own bureaucracy. I don't know why that came to me at that time. However, for me, throughout all of my career, it has been a battle between myself and the bureaucracy. There has been a sort of give and take on that. I

often wonder what made me think of it then. I knew Public Administration before I went into the Marine , which was my first taste of bureaucracy, and I could see the problem.

We went to Vietnam and the next thing I knew we were being interviewed by John Paul Van, who was the Provincial Coordinator at that time. We were given our assignments. I was assigned to go to Plei-Ku province in the Central Highlands. One morning at sunrise in Saigon I got on a small aircraft and headed for a place called Nha Trang, which was on the coast of Central Vietnam. I got off the plane and went to the regional headquarters and met a man named Hatcher James who was the Deputy Regional Director at that time. He was a former Green Beret and he said, "Okay, Pavich, you are going out to Plei-ku. We are going to send you out to Cheo Reo and Kontum [and one other place which I don't remember], to stay with the Special Forces B Team for a couple of nights just to let you know what you are getting into. If you have any doubts or questions about what you are getting into this will be a good test because the B Teams are small teams out on the frontier. They will have around five Americans and 70 or so militiamen who are defending the out-post." I went out there and sat around for a couple of days. We didn't go out very much because it was dangerous. We got to know the U.S. Army Green Berets who were there and talk to them about what they were doing. I looked at the fortifications and learned about the Vietcong.

Then, I got to Plei-ku and worked with a gentleman named John Rogers, who was the Provincial Representative. I was his assistant "Prov. Rep." We had programs in health, agriculture, fisheries, education and in two or three other areas. These programs were provided through a special budget that was funded by USAID. The purpose was to supplement and improve upon what the Government of Vietnam was doing.

Q: How big a population was there in this area?

PAVICH: I can't remember. Plei-Ku Province is basically a Montagnard province so the population of Vietnamese is very small and the population of Montagnards is probably not even known because they are not settled.

My job was to work with the provincial service chiefs on the implementation of the development programs in each one of these areas.

Q: What was the objective?

PAVICH: To improve the service. To provide the people in the province with the kind of services that they needed in their agricultural development and the education of their children and the health of their families. In some cases where there were refugees coming in from the jungle areas where there was a free fire zone, our goal was to house them and care for them and protect them until they could return home or be resettled.

This meant traveling out into the districts, which we did and this is where the exposure to the U.S. Special Forces was good, because in all of these areas there was a Special Forces Team and you coordinated with them before you drove down any road to make sure it

was clear. All the major roads were cleared every morning at a certain hour. You would find out when they were cleared and safe and then go out there, or, you would go up to a Special Forces camp and use one of their helicopters and fly out to the district.

We were doing water projects with the Montagnards, building small dams around springs and putting plastic pipes in the wall of the dam so that you had a spill of water going onto a concrete apron in front. People used the apron for washing and bathing. It was very popular. They did the work, we provided the material. We also provided material for building schools.

Q: How many in the AID team were doing this?

PAVICH: There were two of us.

Q: So you were expert in all of these fields?

PAVICH: Yes. It was administration. We didn't have to be substance experts because the Vietnamese service chiefs were. We spoke enough Vietnamese to get by and it really wasn't a technical problem, but more of a question of resources.

Q: Were there any problems or events that you remember from that time?

PAVICH: There were attacks by the Vietcong and if you were in a district there would be problems of being cutoff from transportation out and being stuck there for a while. You flew across the plains in helicopters at about 40 feet and sometimes you were shot at. The helicopter pilots liked to fly low, they called it contour flying, because it was hard for anyone to know you were coming until you were there. If you were up high everybody would know you were there and could shoot at you.

I spent a year and a half there and then I had an opportunity to go to Saigon to work in the AID Public Administration Office. There I worked with the Director General of Reconstruction and Urban Planning and the Director General of Housing as an advisor and program manager.

Q: In the government?

PAVICH: In the government. I was physically located in the office of the Director General of Reconstruction and Urban Planning. I was the only American there. I had a staff of about 21 young Vietnamese architects. Our basic program was a Land Use Study which is an inventory of the use of land in the Saigon metropolitan area, which had a 10 million population. We had aerial photographs and maps and checked each parcel of land in that whole area, and categorized it in terms of its use. It took us two years to do this.

Q: This was for planning and laying out development of all kinds?

PAVICH: Planning for infrastructure, for utilities, etc. Almost everything you do is based

on the population and the use of the land. It was also to assist them in determining a zoning program and to decide where they wanted and didn't want to put industry and things like that.

I was there for pretty much three years doing this work and other assignments. We did some housing development plans for relocating people who were burned out of their houses in the TET offensive in 1968.

Q: Were you there in the TET offensive?

PAVICH: Yes, I was there. Actually, I missed it by one day, but I was there for the rebuilding of these areas.

Q: Was there a lot of destruction?

PAVICH: In certain districts where the Vietcong had come in. They would come into areas where there were a lot of squatters. In these areas, there were no facilities like fire hydrants or water. Once a fire started there, there was no way that you could get a truck in because there were no streets, just lanes for bicycles and people, and the area just burned to the ground. There were several thousands of people who were displaced and had to be resettled somewhere else. We were doing a housing program. That pretty much kept me busy until I left Vietnam.

Q: How did you find working with the Vietnamese?

PAVICH: The professionals I worked with were very good. They knew their business. They were very cordial and welcomed what assistance I could give them on the development side. They were very friendly and always polite. I enjoyed their company very much and made some very good friends.

Q: How did you feel about your efforts to do all this development work in the environment of war?

PAVICH: I believe it was making a difference, otherwise the Viet Cong (VC) probably wouldn't have attacked Saigon the way they did. I think there was a point where the business of winning the hearts and minds, for whatever reason, was going our way. There were jobs, lots of money to be made. It might have been a false economy, but still it provided work for people and money for people. I think that was probably the reason that the VC did some of the things they did which were probably not in the guerilla warfare book of tactics. So, I think what we were doing did have an effect.

Q: Was it lasting, or was it all sort of lost when the Vietcong took over?

PAVICH: Well, I think like in the "Cold War" it is a question of who won and who lost. It was pretty clear that the Communists lost almost every place. Who won? I think that is still to be determined.

Q: What about in Vietnam?

PAVICH: I would like to go back and see.

Q: You haven't heard much about it?

PAVICH: No. My wife is Vietnamese and she has been back. My children have been back. But, I have never been back.

Q: How did they find things?

PAVICH: It is very poor. There wasn't much of an economy and the people had very little. They were not very happy with the way things were. The government was every bit as corrupt as it always had been, but I think in Asia as it is apparent these days, corruption is part of the socio-economic fabric.

Q: You saw this when you were working with the government there?

PAVICH: Yes. It was quite common.

Q: What form did it take?

PAVICH: There is always a certain amount of rake-off that happens. You know it is going on but you can't really put your finger on it. They know you know. You try to control it. You couldn't wipe it out, but it was possible to keep it to a minimum because that is the way things worked. People in countries like Vietnam and other developing countries who work in government are paid very low wages and have to have a second job. This means they don't pay much attention to their primary job, and are often taking bribes. As they say, "If you break the rice bowl (the means of livelihood), nothing is going to happen." It is a choice. You want something to happen or not.

Q: You finished there in 1972, before the end of the war. Where did you go from there?

Joined USAID's Housing Office in Washington - 1972

PAVICH: In 1972 I came back to Washington to a job which vanished somewhere between Tokyo and San Francisco. I ended up working in the Population Office. They were doing a Population and Urbanization Policy Project with Johns Hopkins University. I worked there for about six months helping to develop the frame-work for the program. This wasn't quite hands on enough for me, so I talked to Peter Kimm, who was running the Office of Housing, telling him that I would like to work in his program. I was invited to come and work for the Office of Housing. I became a Housing Guarantee Loan Officer. My projects were Taiwan, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam and Iran. I actually got to go to Iran ten years after I left there when I was in the Peace Corps, and was able to see what was going on. I was in the Office of Housing mainly processing the loan

applications which meant a lot of technical work in putting together plans and getting the loans approved.

Q: How did you find working in that unit, which is kind of a unique unit in AID?

PAVICH: I liked it because it was an urban development program and that was my field at the time. Although, again, it wasn't quite hands on enough for me. Being a loan officer wasn't really what I wanted to do, but working in urban development was, so it was a compromise. I stayed there...

Q: Do you remember any of the projects particularly that stood out in your mind?

PAVICH: Well, we did several projects. We did them in Taiwan and...

Q: What kind of projects were they?

PAVICH: It was a middle income housing project. All of them were middle income housing projects. We did start to think about low income housing, but it was tough because the Office of Housing was a unique organization. It paid its own way, there wasn't a subsidy there, only a guarantee by the U.S. government. The money came from private investors. So, you couldn't get into programs like low income housing where you needed a big subsidy. You had to find things that would pay for themselves. So, we did middle income housing.

Q: Did it work?

PAVICH: Yes, it did work.

Q: You thought it was quite successful?

PAVICH: Yes, it was, particularly in Korea later on.

Q: Do you remember the scale of any of these projects?

PAVICH: These were 50, 70 million dollar projects. This was in the late '60s and early '70s.

Q: This wasn't sites and services only?

PAVICH: No, the whole thing was housing. At that point we were trying to figure out how you could do the sites and services. Subsequently, after I left, they did do sites and services but I don't know on how big a scale.

Q: Were there any typical issues that you had to address?

PAVICH: Issues were pretty clear cut. Could they qualify for the loan? Did they have a

good plan? Was the rate of return sufficient to pay back the loan?

Q: You didn't have problems with private business?

PAVICH: You did have administrative problems where they were slow on the paper work or something like that. Or slow on construction, not getting things built on schedule or cost over runs. That sort of thing.

Q: Did you get involved with local institutions and their housing institutions?

PAVICH: I did in Iran. They had a particular problem in Iran which was typical but I guess hard to understand from the Washington perspective. The housing project was in a city named Isfahan and was far behind schedule and beginning to go over budget. So, three of us went to Isfahan to try and troubleshoot the situation. To see what was going on and what could be done. The Shah of Iran had brought back a number of young Iranians who had gone to the United States and received their training and settled here. They were engineers, architects, and other professionals. He brought them back to Iran and put them into sort of special organizations within the government that paid a higher salary than the normal. It was sort of a hybrid organization. The head of this new organization was not one of the young returnees. You had these young Iranian professionals who had been educated in the United States who had worked in the United States and were used to a different way of doing things, back in a culture where the patriarch always had the final word, right or wrong. There was constant fighting among everybody on their team, no one agreed with anybody because they were back in the old system and nobody could make decisions, only the "old man." Nobody would fess up to the problems with the head of the organization because that is not the way things are done in the Iranian culture. The only way we found this out about the cause of the problems was through interviews with each of the young Iranians. They told us that they couldn't do anything because of the system. They were stuck in the old system, "we think in a different way but have to do it in the old way and the "old man" doesn't know what we are talking about. We are fighting among ourselves and he is not settling the differences, so, nothing is happening."

That was pretty much as we left it. We tried to get them step-by-step to make some decisions and I think probably very painfully they did, but I don't know if the overall problem was resolved because I left the Office of Housing to take an assignment in Ethiopia.

Q: What year was this?

Transfer to USAID/Ethiopia in Rural Development - 1975

PAVICH: In 1975.

Q: Right after the coup.

PAVICH: Right. Haile Selassie was under house arrest. Teferi Benti was the chairman of the Dergue which was a secret organization that ran the country. It was a very tense time. There was a lot going on there that wasn't very nice. People were getting killed at night. There were mass executions. It was pretty bad. I was assigned to the Rural Development Office. My job was drought relief in the four southern provinces of Ethiopia.

Q: Which ones were these?

PAVICH: Bale, Sidamo, Gamo-Gofa and Harar. It was an ideal job for me.

Q: What were you supposed to do?

PAVICH: There were thousands of refugees who were stuck in the huge area of southeastern Ethiopia called the Ogaden. These people were Somalis, and Oromo peoples. Because of the drought their livestock were dead and they were starving to death. Our job was basically to organize a group to go out and find them, get them settled, organize a program of relief for them and try to find ways to put them into productive work to grow their own food or do something for themselves.

Q: You worked with the Ethiopian Relief Commission?

PAVICH: I worked with a very wonderful gentleman, Shamalis Arjuna. Because USAID had the capacity, we would put together four or five vehicle safaris to the drought stricken areas about once every six weeks. We would send the vehicles out to jumping off points. The travelers would fly out there and join the vehicles and go for five or seven days into the Ogaden to the areas where the refugees were located. We would have medical people, relief people and other donor agency people with us. We would do an assessment, file a report. Based on the report findings, regular relief mechanism would take over, consolidate the refugees into staging areas, settle them, feed them, get them back to health. Once the refugees were taken care of, we would try to put them into agriculture or road work cutting new roads so relief vehicles could get into isolated areas with food and medical supplies, or redoing the regular roads which were in pretty bad shape.

Q: Your job was mostly the reconnaissance aspect?

PAVICH: My job was to organize our trips and coordinate them with the other agencies and do a trip report. Then I would work on follow up things like a project to provide whatever assistance the U.S. could to support refugee development activities. It was pretty interesting. It took me all through southern Ethiopia. There were some wonderful areas that were pretty primitive and wild. It was camping out. It was a good experience. People were paying thousands of dollars to go on Safari to do what I was doing every six weeks.

Q: You had an Ethiopian team you went with?

PAVICH: Yes. I had two Ethiopian assistants and a team of drivers that did the driving and cooking. Some agencies and donor offices didn't have the capacity to go to the field, so we provided this service.

Q: So, you took them along with you?

PAVICH: Yes. We took UN and World Food Program people along and anybody who had a legitimate reason to go. You didn't go there on your own because it was dangerous. There were bandits who would rob you and kill you. If you broke down and you were alone, you were at risk, after the jump off point there were no more gas stations.

Q: Where was the jump off point?

PAVICH: There were a number of them. We would take a truck full of 55 gallon drums of gasoline. Often we would send it ahead and stash it at the police post, so we could go there and get our gas.

Q: How was the situation in Ethiopia at that time? It was getting rather difficult wasn't it?

PAVICH: It was pretty difficult and probably the worst it had been. Teferi Benti, who was the chairman of the Dergue, was murdered in a staff meeting by Haile Mariam Mengistu and there was a reign of terror. They were throwing people out of windows and doing all kinds of terrible things. It was very bad.

Q: Was it dangerous for you and your family?

PAVICH: There was a curfew and you just didn't go out after that time because that was when all these terrible things happened. It was secure during the day. (End of tape)

So the development program there was really in agriculture and we did get involved a little bit in that trying to work with the drought victims. In the Western part of Ethiopia we were doing road projects, pretty much putting roads in areas where there were no roads and working with some very primitive people who were basically pastoralists who were also affected by the drought, but not as seriously as the people on the eastern side. One of our main programs was the roads program. We would go out and do the survey work for the roads and develop a project to do the roads and bring in technical assistance.

Q: Did you have to work with the government?

PAVICH: Yes, with the water authority, road authority, etc.

Q: How did you find that?

PAVICH: Pretty good. The Ethiopians liked us. There were a lot of AID people there who had been there for years and were running these agencies and had been taught their

trade by an American technician. I can remember sitting on the banks of the Omo river in Southwest Ethiopia with these old water engineers around a camp fire and they were telling us about Mr. So-and-so their AID teacher. They would do their water business during the day and at night the AID technician would teach them their job, help them understand new methods while sitting around a camp fire. They were still doing the same work, the way they were taught by the AID technicians.

Q: Was the politics at the moment making it more difficult to work with them?

PAVICH: What do you mean?

Q: They were hostile toward AID at one point weren't they?

PAVICH: Well, they were, but once you got out of the city and away from the provincial flag pole, people were people and a lot of them were in bad shape and needed help. They didn't mind the Americans, in fact, they liked us. Quietly they would say, "Can't you do anything about this?" Unfortunately, there wasn't much we could do.

There was a reign of terror going on in the country. The government had organized what they called "Kabellies," or cells. Everyone was in a Kabelli and had to report to somebody. There was always somebody in the system who was accusing someone of being a traitor to the revolution and the next thing you knew after curfew that person would be taken off and sometimes never seen again. A lot of personal vendettas were worked out that way. It was a bad time.

Q: The AID program had to phase out at some point didn't it?

PAVICH: It phased out because the Ethiopian government defaulted on a loan. I was in the United States in the Development Studies Program and was told that we couldn't go back.

Q: This was what year now?

PAVICH: This was 1977. For me that was really a sad situation because I looked forward to going back to Ethiopia, I loved the work. It was incredible.

Q: Were you able to get people settled and back into productive life at all?

PAVICH: The Horn of Africa has always been a problem. The area went from drought to floods so we went from drought relief to flood relief. Then there was a war so there were refugees. It is still going on today and I guess it will always be going on. It is a very bad situation because the area is over populated and the people and their animals can't really support themselves on the land any more, and there isn't any industry. Agriculture is sparse. It is a very problematic area.

Q: Were you able to develop a sort of permanent indigenous capacity to address these

problems as opposed to having outsiders do it?

PAVICH: The nomadic people have been coping with disasters for ages, they could learn very little about survival from outsiders. They needed food and medicine when the situation got very bad.

Q: I mean Ethiopian government or private institutions.

PAVICH: No. There was a certain amount of capacity in individuals, but the longer they labored under that kind of regime the less effective they could be.

Q: What about this relief and rehabilitation commission?

PAVICH: The “RRC” did all right. They were helping the people. The reason that they brought down Haile Selassie was that he was not able to take care of the people during one of the droughts. So, the RRC was under pressure to do a good job or the same thing might happen to them. They did a good job and had a lot of help from the outside. Unless there was an on-going World Bank or FAO project on the area, there wasn’t much going on in terms of government service in any sector.

Q: Were you involved in any of the long term development projects?

PAVICH: Yes.

Q: Which ones?

PAVICH: I don’t remember the names but they were agricultural mainly. There were some test farms and seed farms and developing different crops that were drought resistant. That was pretty much it. We did have a pretty big agricultural program there.

Q: Did you have any contact with the agricultural university?

PAVICH: I personally did not. My relationships were basically with the relief and rehabilitation people and the water and roads people.

Q: Did you have any contact with the embassy at all at that time?

PAVICH: Yes. They were always interested in what we were doing because we were out in the field, the frontier. Sometimes I think we were across the frontier. We were sometimes the embassy’s eyes and ears in the eastern and southwestern parts of Ethiopia.

Q: They were getting reports from you about what was going on in these areas?

PAVICH: They always read our reports and if there was something else they were interested in they would call and ask questions.

Q: Was the AID mission shrinking at that time?

PAVICH: It was a large mission.

Q: Who was the director?

PAVICH: John Withers and then Princeton Lyman. It was a great working setup. Some of the people who were there went on to bigger and better things.

I left in 1977 and went to the Development Studies Program after which I couldn't go back to Ethiopia.

Attended the USAID Development Studies Program - 1977

Q: How did you find the development studies program?

PAVICH: It was very good. That was really my first formal introduction to development economics and population dynamics and other subjects.

Q: Anything stand out in your mind from that course?

PAVICH: Yes, as a matter of fact. They sat us down when we first got there and had each one of us write our theory on development. Then a few days later we got together and made brief presentations of our theory. What they said and what we found out is that there is no one theory of development. There are many theories of development depending on your perspective. After we had done the theory, they divided us up into groups, mixing the various development theories. So we were mixed with people who had different views of development. When we did our on site development training, which was in North Carolina, we went as a team and did a development study of an area and tried to solve some of the development problems. There were people there who had a social, economic, and administrative perspectives on development. It was very good.

I learned at that time what my perspective on development was. It had to do with consensus building, planning and management, and getting people to participate in developing the consensus and decision making. That is how I saw development because of my planning and administration background. That is what I had been doing, even as a Marine officer. And that was my work in drought relief. It was always a matter of getting people to work together to define a problem and find a technical solution for it, and then doing the things that needed to be done to get the program on the ground and running, then monitoring the process and making changes as you gain experience.

Q: Very much a kind of from bottom up sort of process?

PAVICH: Yes, bottoms up approach. All of the good words that were said about my performance had been that working with people was my strong point. I was able to relate well with people I work with and get something done in that context. The principles are

pretty much what guided me. But, at that point I really learned something more about development because it doesn't happen in isolation. I could see my theory developing through experience, trial and error, as it related to the others and how it supported other approaches or how it could be supported.

Q: Do you remember what some of the others might have been?

PAVICH: Obviously there is the economic approach. The social, anthropological approach which was pretty much coming from the people depending on who they are and where they were coming from, perspective, vision, context.

Of course there were more, there was quite a mixture. It was the pull of leverage. You pull it towards economy. How do you get things moving. Consequently, I have learned to work in all of these during the balance of my experience after the development studies program.

Q: How long was the course?

PAVICH: It was about three months. After that I went to the Yemen Arab Republic. I was assigned to the Rural Development Office. I was the Rural Development Branch of some other division.

Rural development in Yemen Arab Republic - 1977

Q: What was the situation in Yemen at that time?

PAVICH: Well, the president, Al-Hamidi, who was in office when we arrived was shortly afterwards assassinated. Then there was an attempt to assassinate Ali Abdullah Saleh. I think he is gone now too. So, politically for Americans in Yemen it was okay, but politically for the Yemeni it wasn't okay, there was a lot of outside influence trying to gain control over Yemen, particularly the Libyans. We almost got run over by Qadhafi one day walking downtown. He came to town and allegedly bought one of the military divisions. Shortly thereafter, there was an attempted coup, which was thwarted. There were a lot of stories about that which were very intriguing.

My job was basically to design a project for development using local resources. Now this has got to be a laugh because this is before the days of computers and we typed cables on stencils. My job was to write the entire project paper, every part of it. I didn't type. I wrote the thing in long hand and then it had to be transcribed into typed pages and I had no one to help in the beginning. Fortunately, after working on the project for a while, we had a team of technical people come in. A fellow named Norm Nicholson was one, who later came and worked with AID.

We all (the team) went to the field and looked over the situation and then tried to decide what the problems were. We had a seminar and invited some of the Yemeni NGO people and some of the government people and some U.S. and European NGO people to talk

about the problems of rural Yemen and what could be done to support them. Basically it was water, roads, agriculture, health and education. It didn't take much to guess that.

Norm Nicholson arrived and we drove out one day with a Yemeni colleague to one of the distant villages. We talked to some of the people there and coming back we designed the project. We pretty much developed the concept of the project. After they all left I put it together. It was very rough because I was writing things I knew nothing about. I had to write the social part, the economic parts and all of the different sections. Fortunately my wife was out of the country so I could work all day and most of the night. When I would pack it up at night a guy named Harry Johnson, who was The Program Officer, would come in after I had gotten the draft together and typed. He worked from about 3 in the morning until about 8 in the morning on the draft. And, we got it finished.

Q: You were under pressure to get it done, I would guess.

PAVICH: Yes. We got the thing together and I came to Washington and talked to Jim Dalton, one of the old timers, a rural development guru. We had a presentation and they basically approved the project we had to do. We had to clean up the writing a bit to make it fit the format at the time. And, that was it.

Q: How big a project was it?

PAVICH: It was \$15 million, which was big for Yemen. There was a young anthropologist who had just come into agency as an IDI [International Development Intern], Diane Ponasik, who is now a regular AID officer assigned to Haiti. She helped me with the project in Washington. We worked with Jim Dalton. After approval I went back out to Yemen and Diane came out and worked for me in her first field job. We got Cornell University and Chemonics to come out and do the project.

Q: What was the basic strategy of the project?

PAVICH: Basically the strategy was to improve access to isolated villages which were high in distant mountains in Yemen.

Q: Was there a special area that you were concerned with?

PAVICH: There are three areas in Yemen. There is the Tihama, which is the lowland area on the Red Sea, that runs into a mountainous area that then becomes a plateau. Both of the villages that we were working with were in the mountainous area. They were really pinnacles, on tops of mountains, because that is the way they built them for security reasons. We went up to these villages and talked to the head of the village or chief of the district. They didn't have office hours. The only way you got to talk to them was from 4 until 7 in the afternoon in the "Mufraj," which was a big men only room, where you sat on cushions along the walls. The chief sat at the far end, in the center, and the honored guests sat to his left. Everybody else sat around him. They smoked water pipes and chewed "quat," which is an amphetamine. You had to go in there and do what they did.

Q: I suppose they didn't speak English?

PAVICH: No, we had a translator. We would go in and sit there for a couple of hours just watching the scene and watching the business transactions. All business was transacted there. People would come in and shout or write little notes and wad them up in a ball and throw them across the room at each other. That is how they communicated with each other. We would be sitting up at the far end on the left of the chief and would be given an arm full of quat to chew. So, typically, Diane and I and our interpreter would sit there and chew until around 6:00 pm and then we would tell the chief what was on our mind. He would say yes or no or maybe or whatever. And then we would go back and do some more work on it. That is how we negotiated.

Q: There weren't any documents exchanged?

PAVICH: No. We did have a government agency in town to sign the documents but each one of these areas was sort of owned by a Sheikh who ran it March 23, 2001 and you did what they did. That is why you had to go to the "Mufraj." Never mind going to the office because nothing happened in the office, it was just there. Nobody paid any attention to it.

I can remember taking Doug Bennett, our AID Administrator at the time, and a Senator, up to the "Mufraj." The village really wanted a water project very much. Water projects were not a great problem, but the fact that the villages were on top of mountains was a problem. There was about 3,000 feet of lift involved bringing the water up from the river. It would cost a fortune and we kept telling them no, no, no for a year. On the way up there, it took three or four hours to get there, it was all off road stuff, up mountains, through rivers, etc. We kept telling Bennett not to mention water because they would ask for a water project and he should stay away from that subject. We got into the "Mufraj," sat down - I don't know what happened, but the first words out of Bennett's mouth were "I hear you are looking for a water project." That was it. We had a good stay there, they were very happy, but then we spent the next year wiggling out the water project.

Q: You didn't do a water project?

PAVICH: Well, we did but we didn't do it all. We did part of it, I think the pumps and somebody else did the pipes and the rest of it. But, that was funny. I wish I could remember the name of the other gentleman who was there because that was just about the time that I was thinking about my next assignment. Things were happening in the Straits of Hormuz and I wanted to go to Oman. I was talking to Mr. Bennett and said, "If you are ever going to do anything in Oman, I would be interested." He said, "We have no intentions of doing anything in Oman." About three months later we were there!

Q: What were some of the projects that you did that worked in Yemen?

PAVICH: Programs in animal husbandry and agriculture, particularly horticulture with orchards and vegetable crop production. That was what they could grow in these wadies.

You didn't need a lot of land but you needed water and good soil. We did water and tried to do some training in health and roads maintenance.

Q: Did this involve a lot of local participation and organizing your philosophy of development and that approach?

PAVICH: Yes, it was all that. It was getting the people to commit to a project and to invest. They had a lot of money. Money wasn't the problem. Half the population was working in Saudi Arabia and sending back money. They would take their money to a dealer and say they needed pump. No specifications. So, when they took the pump back they discovered it wouldn't work. They lacked the technology. Through various projects we were able to help them decide what they wanted to do—what they wanted to do with the water, what kind of pumps they needed and what kind of access was required, etc. They paid for half of the project.

Q: What was the role of Cornell and Chemonics?

PAVICH: Cornell provided us with Joan Swanson and Mary Abers who were two Arabic speaking anthropologists. They worked basically in the project area full time. Mary and Joan worked with the Confederation of Yemeni Development Associations, which was basically the government, although it wasn't the government, it was an NGO, but it was the only form of organization they had. They were able to get into the community structure and understand who the good guys were and who the bad guys were and what was going on with this project, etc. so it was pretty clear what was happening. What was needed basically was to go in and do a social survey and find out what the needs were. We had other people who could look at agriculture or use Yemeni technicians for that. We would go there pretty much once a month and stay with them for a few days and go around and look at projects, talk to the people and keep the enthusiasm up and do the endless troubleshooting that you have. There was always a problem. The money is not getting there in time. There is a problem in Sanaa, the capital city. There is a problem with the district chief. There is a problem with this one and that one. Somebody is always not doing something. Our job was going in and out of the situation and reminding people what the commitments were, what had to be done, etc. and try to get some leverage from the head people.

Chemonics provided us with technical people who worked in the districts.

Q: How many people all together on the project?

PAVICH: Oh, we had two teams. One in the highlands and one in the Tihama. I would say there were about seven Americans and probably twice that number Yemeni.

Q: Did you train Yemeni technical people?

PAVICH: We weren't doing training per se. We were training people in the villages to drill wells.

Q: I mean people to work with you in agriculture and water projects. Were they already available?

PAVICH: Well, there wasn't any government so you were working with a group of farmers. If you introduced a new seed variety or a new insecticide or fertilizer or you helped them to decide what they needed, or go with them to the market and buy the right stuff and not the wrong stuff, that was on-the-job training.

Q: You said there were Yemeni on the projects, itself.

PAVICH: We had Yemeni who had been trained. The first Yemeni college graduate was about 47 years old and in the government. There weren't many people who were qualified to do any thing. It was really the "Wild West" and you were working with some pretty basic systems and basic skills. No lack of intelligence, just lack of education.

Q: Were you training people to carry out this work?

PAVICH: The people who worked for AID got good training in project development. This was back in 1977, I know a lot more has been done in training the government people since then, because the young man that worked for me, a Rough Neck on one of the water crews, whom I grabbed and put to work as an assistant, eventually went to the United States and got his degree in public administration at Fresno State University. He is now a deputy minister back in Yemen. I met him playing volley ball one day and he spoke English and struck me as being a good kind of person. He worked for me a couple of years. I later discovered his father had been the minister of education. He had a good background but was just doing the manual labor for the money.

The snack bar for our office was called a camp because it literally was a camp outside of town that had a huge packing box. They had cut a window in and put a stove and refrigerator in it. There was one man in there who was cooking stew, making sandwiches, coffee and tea for the whole mission. He always had one hand in pocket and was doing his job with the other hand. We wondered for the longest time what was going on and finally learned he only had one hand. He had been caught stealing and his hand had been cut off, according to their law.

Q: What kind of accommodations did the mission have?

PAVICH: Very meager buildings with electricity and kerosene stoves but no phones.

Q: Where did you live?

PAVICH: In town. The housing was pretty good. But, we had to do our washing in the old washing machines with the old fashion rollers. We had two kids in diapers and used the rollers quite often. We couldn't get Pampers or anything like that.

Q: Was food available generally?

PAVICH: Food was very short. We could get chickens and eggs and some vegetables. It was kind of tough. In those days we had a consumable allowance to bring in consumer items and Peterson Justesen (a European mail/shipping order firm) came to the rescue often.

Q: Was there any consideration of how to maintain your projects over time or were they dependent on our being there?

PAVICH: There was a Peace Corps project there that had been developed to work with the water authority to do water projects in the villages. The Peace Corps people had been there for over a year, but and they had done nothing because the Yemeni didn't want them because they didn't think they were qualified for the job. The Yemeni couldn't accept the concept of volunteerism. "Why would somebody come to Yemen and work for nothing? Anybody who comes to work for nothing doesn't have any talent. So, we don't want them." It was a very sad situation because the young people were talented and they were just languishing because they had nothing to do.

We worked out a deal with the Peace Corps and the government of Yemen and some U.S. universities that we would recruit engineering students in their last year before they graduated and bring them to Yemen through the Peace Corps. They would work in these villages as engineers. The Yemeni recognized them as being qualified and the universities recognized that the students were applying their skills and were given credit for their time in Yemen. They learned to speak Arabic. It was one of the most successful Peace Corps programs I have ever seen.

Q: This was a Peace Corps project with the university's and AID support.

PAVICH: Right. It was an outstanding project. That project went on for years, at least four years after I left.

Q: Mostly in water?

PAVICH: Mostly in water. Water is essential. Without water you couldn't do anything.

Q: Mostly drilling for water?

PAVICH: Drilling for water, water distribution, water related health. You can do a lot of things with water. You can even get into family planning and sanitation. It goes on and on.

Q: So they had a fairly broad approach to it.

PAVICH: Yes. The first thing was to get the water. Once you did that then you had a real basis for working with the community because you had a frame of reference, the water

which you helped them get. In that society you help them and they appreciate it and there develops a very strong bond.

Q: How many volunteers were involved in such projects?

PAVICH: The first group, unfortunately, was 9, 10, 11 people who were pretty much out of it. The second group was about the same number, and I think it got larger as it went on. I talked to people who were there after that and it became a very good project. We had a contractor involved, so it was actually with AID, Peace Corps, a U.S. university and a contractor.

Q: Which university was it?

PAVICH: It was a university consortium.

Q: What was our role? Were we financing supplies and equipment?

PAVICH: We were bank rolling it. We hired a contractor to come in and provide the back up.

Q: So, the volunteers had a technical and supply support system. They weren't just out on their own.

PAVICH: Having been a Peace Corps volunteer and working with them in Ethiopia and other countries, I learned that the more successful volunteers are the ones who have good back up. I have seen volunteers out in the middle of nowhere who just had to survive. I was one of those for a while. That is no fun. But, once they had a little back up through an agency like AID or even the World Food Program or UNDP, they could do much more. I don't know if that is a lesson they have learned but I hope it is.

Q: It sounds like the right approach, but I know the Peace Corps used to resist such connections.

PAVICH: They had some strange ideas. I know what it is to be a volunteer and I can say that that is silly. If you can get support then you can do something. Just sticking somebody out there who has to just live from hand to mouth and beg, that is stupid.

Q: Any other projects in Yemen that you were involved in?

PAVICH: We had local resources for development and the water project. Those were the two main projects.

Q: What do you think the lasting effects of those programs might be?

PAVICH: I know AID is worried about the sustainability. In a place like Yemen at that time it is difficult to think about sustainability in terms of fixing up a government that is

going to work and having the government establish an equitable tax base that is going to generate money to pay for maintenance. That just wasn't feasible when I was there. I don't know where they are now in that regard. But, politically, what we were doing for those people was important and they liked us and respected us for helping them. We got into political problems later on, but I doubt seriously that any of the people that the Peace Corps and AID worked with in the Tihama and in those isolated villages in the mountains disliked the American aid. I think they appreciated it.

Q: Did you get any recognition from the government?

PAVICH: No, I think the government was too busy sort of selling the country every day. The country sort of went up for bid to anyone who wanted to buy it. The government was a joke. The Sheikhs would come into Sanaa led by Toyota pickup trucks with 50 caliber machine guns mounted on them. Then, we followed in their Toyota land cruisers and then trucks full of armed guards. That was law and order. Those were the people who ran the country, the sheiks.

Once my assistant, Khalid, and a driver, blew a tire in the middle of the Tihama and went into this village where Khalid happened to know somebody, he knew the Sheikh. He told the Sheikh what happened and was told they, the party, had to stay the night. The next morning when they got up the Sheikh had put four new tires on the land cruiser, so they continued their trip up to where they were going. When they came back and reported to the mission director. The director invited the Sheikh in and gave him a set of dishes, the USAID hospitality kit. So, in exchange for the tires we gave him a set of dishes and that was fine. That was the way you did business in Yemen in those days. I would be very surprised if it has changed a hell of a lot.

So, sustainability, how do you measure that? I don't know.

There are villages in Yemen where people speak only American English and most of the people carry American passports because they were born in Detroit or migrated to Detroit and came back to Yemen. So, you will go in there and a young man will come up to you and start speaking American English to you and you just do a double take because he is standing there in his skirt with his dagger and turban on and just doesn't look like someone who would speak English with a Detroit accent. So, Yemen is a very interesting place.

Q: Did the Yemeni keep your projects going on their own at all?

PAVICH: Technology is what they need. If you can impart technology to a technical person in the government or a person in a village, to somebody, that is what they need and it will sustain itself. Money they have, but they need technology.

Q: Is there any other dimension of your experience in Yemen that you would like to note?

PAVICH: Well, the people were very friendly. My wife worked for a Yemeni company

and we made some very good friends. They were very good to us. We have fond memories of the Yemeni and our AID comrades there.

Q: Did you work with the embassy there at all?

PAVICH: Yes, we did.

Q: What was their role in this?

PAVICH: They were always interested in what we were doing because we were always out there where the people were. They wanted to know what was going on and what the people were thinking. We had the entree to some of the important Sheiks. Skip Gnehm, the DCM [deputy chief of mission] in Kuwait, was there then and I can't remember who was the ambassador at that time, but they were both fluent Arab speakers and got along famously. The Yemeni really liked us but couldn't understand why we did things sometimes. They would say, "You are the biggest, strongest country in the world so why do you take all this crap?" What could we say?

Q: You finished up in Yemen when?

New assignment with USAID/Somalia and refugee programs - 1981

PAVICH: I finished up in Yemen in 1980 or 1981. I took an assignment in Somalia. I remember my colleague, Diane Ponasik said, "Why do you want to go there? It is such a problem." I thought to myself that that was where I want to be, where there are problems.

Q: Why did she think Somalia was a problem?

PAVICH: Because there were starving refugees there. This is after the war between Ethiopia and Somalia when all the Somalis were chased out of Ethiopia and clustered in district capitals all over the country and starving to death. I like that kind of action because there is something going on there that you can do something about and feel like you have done something at the end of the tour. That has always attracted me. If you look back on my history so far, I went to Vietnam, etc. and there has always been that element in it for me. So, we went to Somalia.

The USAID Director at the time was Jim Kelly. My title there was Rural Development and Refugee Assistance, something like that. There were somewhere between a million and two million refugees out there in 15 or 17 camps. My job was to go and visit the camps and talk to the officials to find out how many refugees were there and make sure the food was being delivered and distribution was being managed properly and that our contractors and grantees were doing the job. We had a contract with CARE to do distribution of food and we were doing some development things.

We were in the process of developing two projects for development with these refugee people. One of the projects was basically in forestry and the other one was in rural

development. I worked on the design of both of those projects. We had people coming in from our regional office in Nairobi and other places to help us do the studies for the design work. Here was a situation where I wasn't doing it singlehandedly, but with a lot of good help. Basically the first year was designing the projects. We got them approved and began the programs. The work was managing the projects and the camps.

Then I was invited to leave AID and go to work for the State Department in the embassy as the Refugee Coordinator Officer (RefCord). I was first secretary for refugee affairs, or something. That struck me as being very interesting because I had been around embassies a lot but never worked inside. This was an excellent opportunity to do so.

Q: Why would the State Department need someone when they had the AID mission and you there?

PAVICH: Because State (Department) had a \$60 to \$80 million program for refugee relief. All the money that was going into refugees was coming through the State Department.

Q: It wasn't run by AID?

PAVICH: No.

Q: This was refugee money, I suppose.

PAVICH: Yes. They needed somebody with AID experience to work on it. So, I was the refugee coordinator. I left AID and went into the embassy. I still had some contacts with AID but was under the direction of and being rated by the DCM.

Q: What was the function of the refugee coordinator?

PAVICH: Well, we had a major program with the UNHCR [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees], with the World Food Program and other UN agencies, and a whole string of private volunteer organizations. So, it mainly was coordinating.

Q: The U.S. was to be the coordinator of all this and not the UN?

PAVICH: Well, the U.S. wanted to coordinate its part.

Q: Was there some overall coordinator?

PAVICH: The overall coordinator was the head of the UNHCR, but the United States didn't always agree with UNHCR on a lot of issues. I was the liaison with the UNHCR person and other UN agencies.

Q: What were some of the issues?

PAVICH: How many refugees there are? How much food they are getting? Where is the money going? Are the health programs being managed effectively? Are other kinds of programs, including education, effective? Are the refugees being taken care of properly? The big one was how many refugees are there?

Q: I gather that was a political issue with the government?

PAVICH: Yes, very political.

Q: Why was that?

PAVICH: Each refugee was issued a ration card that entitled the refugee to a certain amount of grain, sugar, blankets, etc. So, anybody in Somalia who had a ration card was rich. If you had two ration cards you were doing pretty well. If you had 10, 15, 20 or 100 ration cards, as some people did or had control of, you had a lot.

Q: Through their family or clan or individually?

PAVICH: Every way you can imagine. Through family, clan, individuals, the administration. People who were loyal party members in the government, working in a refugee organization, got ration cards or had control of ration cards.

Q: Who gave out the ration cards?

PAVICH: The government. Well, the UNHCR gave them out to the refugees. So, then you had the question of who was a refugee. In a line of 20,000 people, how many of them were refugees? Twenty, 18, 5? That was the question. No one could really tell.

Q: How did you settle this question?

PAVICH: It was never really settled. I had a young woman working for me, Michelle Savoy, and she and I would go the camps and walk through every compound and look in every hut and determine in our own minds based on our experience whether that hut was inhabited or not. You could tell if it was inhabited because there would be three stones where the people were making their fire, cooking utensils around, clothes hanging on sticks, dogs hanging around, etc. There would be others that were not inhabited. There may be the three stones, but no ashes. The more often you go through the more you learn about whether it is inhabited or not. You would just divide up the camp into sections and determine what percent of each section was inhabited.

Q: How many people do you count per hut?

PAVICH: Probably between six and eight. Mom and dad, three kids and grandma and grandpa.

Q: The people weren't there to count?

PAVICH: No. I did this for five years. At the end of a year, or so, we had a pretty good idea who was there and who wasn't there. We would be told those not around were out with the goats. Well, they weren't suppose to have goats. If they had goats they wouldn't be in the camp. There was a continual argument with the camp officials about how many refugees there were.

And then we would go to town, to the market and look around and find a rebagging facility where individuals were rebagging all of this food that was given out as rations. They would put it back into the same bags they had emptied, sew them up, put them in a truck and take them into Mogadishu to sell at the market. We would spot it, go back and tell the district officials who were astonished that this was happening. Of course, they knew it was happening, but would go and close it down immediately. Three weeks later we would come back and find another one and we would go through the same exercise.

Remember that movie Casablanca where they had the illegal gambling in the back room, where the police officer would go in and close it down and then pick up his winnings? Well, it was sort of like that. It was a constant thing.

One day we were counting refugees. The counters would dip the finger of the refugee in a pot of ink when we counted them. Later on, they would take some of the chlorine that they used to purify the water and wipe the ink off their finger and come back through the line. Of course, they could never get all the ink off and we would catch them and report them to the camp officials who would pretend to beat them and send them off. Then you would find them coming back again.

Q: How many people were in these camps?

PAVICH: Thousands. Twenty or forty thousand in each camp.

Q: And you counted them all?

PAVICH: Yes, we did. There were allegedly two million refugees and we were saying there were not more than a million and probably it was more like 700 thousand. We would go back and forth on how much food to bring in so we would have control. But, they had control too because you would find starving people and they would say it was our fault, we hadn't brought in enough food. It was a constant tug of war.

Q: What was the definition of a refugee?

PAVICH: Someone who had come across the border from Ethiopia and was a resident of Ethiopia, who had left the place where they lived. They were pastoralists and didn't live in one place. All their animals were dead and they were completely destitute.

Q: How could you tell the difference between them and the regular Somali?

PAVICH: You couldn't. Some of these people were starving to death, were dying.

Q: I suppose they weren't necessarily refugees. The Somalis must have been effected by the drought.

PAVICH: These people were war refugees, they were chased across the border. Some of the clan was on both sides of the border. You would have say 50 percent of a family in Somalia and 50 percent in Ethiopia and both would be in camp. So, how do you figure out who is and isn't a refugee? That was the question.

Q: What were some of your other major problems besides the numbers.

PAVICH: Relief people were getting beat up. The major programs were health, rehabilitating people, giving them food.

Q: How did you rehabilitate them? I suppose the main objective was to get them back across the border?

PAVICH: Feed them so they could regain their strength. Getting them to the point where they could get some more animals and go back out on the range.

Q: Would they go back out?

PAVICH: Well, they wouldn't go back to Ethiopia because they would get shot at. They were at war. That was the problem and I'm sure it still is. There is really no law and order because people did what they wanted to do and if you pushed too hard you were likely to get beat up or something. You weren't in a town but out in the bush where there was nothing except refugee camps. The only law out there was the army if they were around and the camp officials. It was kind of tough.

In terms of development, we tried to get some to grow some crops along the river, but that was pretty meager.

Q: What about health and education programs?

PAVICH: All of that was done through voluntary agencies.

Q: What kind of programs were you carrying out in the health area?

PAVICH: Mother and child health, nutrition, special feeding programs for malnourished kids and primary education for kids.

Q: They were receptive to having those programs?

PAVICH: Oh yes, sure. Being in a refugee camp was considered probably the best place to be because you had the best medical assistance in the country. You had doctors and

nurses there who were fully equipped with medicine. If you were going to get sick, you wanted to do so out in the bush, not in town, because all the doctors were out in the bush.

Q: Let's go back to the projects. What were the two projects?

PAVICH: It was trying to get those refugees who could, who had some experience in agriculture and who wanted to settle on the land. Trouble was, most of these pastoral people didn't want to have anything to do with being settled. They wanted to be taken care of until they could go back to the range lands. But, there were those who were willing to go into agriculture so we could provide them with work with the Somali agriculture extension person in that region to get them started with seed, etc. Or, get them into doing some reforestation activities. Or give them some chickens and into poultry production. Or give them some goats and try getting them back on the range to the limited extent that they could. To keep them busy mainly, and to the extent possible, productive.

Q: This was all for the refugees not the regular Somalis?

PAVICH: There weren't any regular Somalis out there. The mission had agricultural programs but they were big ag programs on the big rivers, Juba and Shebeli. It was sort of a stock aid agricultural program and we, on the refugee side, didn't get much involved in that because we were away from those areas. It was just refugees and trying to figure out how many there were and getting the government to take care of them.

Q: You mentioned reforestation by refugees.

PAVICH: To some extent we were trying to get them to plant trees. It was kind of meager because there wasn't much they could do. They couldn't go far from where they were and had to do whatever they could do around the camp area. The camps were just bad. They were needed mainly to make the logistics of caring for the refugees easier to manage, but the camps were a bad situation because they created a dependency. Without the camps people couldn't do anything, or didn't feel disposed to do anything so long as they were being cared for by the government and the donor countries.

We had a rehabilitation program where we got road crews filling up pot holes. The roads were just tracks. It was pretty basic stuff. I did that for five years.

Q: Any special events during that time, any revolution or, was it pretty much the same from beginning to end?

PAVICH: There was a crisis every week. Somebody was starving, a ship wasn't getting unloaded, food got stolen, the refugees were rebellious, an outbreak of cholera, etc. There was never a dull moment.

Q: Was there any sense of progress in terms of beginning to minimize the population by people moving away?

PAVICH: They couldn't move away. The only possibility was to get them being productive where they were.

Q: Was this before the drought problem or was this at the same time?

PAVICH: Same time.

Q: One had the sense that for a while there was a very serious problem but after a while when food was getting to them you didn't have such a serious problem?

PAVICH: Well, there was always the problem of how many refugees there are. Everybody wanted to be a refugee, to get into a camp and get a ration card. So, there was this constant tension of keeping the numbers at a controllable level.

Q: But, there wasn't any real change over the five years in terms of numbers or conditions of people?

PAVICH: The health of the people improved. We saved lots of lives, something that doesn't seem to get recognized. People focus on the corruption and all, but a lot of people were dying. So, lots of lives were saved and brought back to health. This doesn't happen overnight. Between these times there were outbreaks of different diseases.

Q: But there weren't permanent solutions?

PAVICH: Well, peace would be one such solution as well as finding something productive for these people to do off the range lands because the range lands were getting smaller and the population was getting bigger. It is a dilemma. They have the exact same problems today (1988) in the Horn of Africa as were there ten years ago, nothing has changed. And, it won't change. It is going to be a maintenance problem for the rest of the world.

Q: Are the refugee camps pretty much still there as they were when you were there?

PAVICH: I don't know. I haven't been back. After all the different wars they have had there it is hard to know.

Q: Were you having clan fights while you were there?

PAVICH: No, the president, Siyad Barre, pretty much had the population under control. But a lot of these camps were used as bases for military operations. There was a very strong group of armed people who were under the control of the government who sort of kept things under control in the camps. The refugees did pretty much what they were told to do by the government, including getting ration cards when they weren't refugees.

Q: You were talking about the UN agencies, etc. How did you formally function as a coordinating effort?

PAVICH: So much of what I had done in Somalia was outside the normal AID context. I felt my main contribution was in facilitating with and between the United States and the government of Somalia and UN agencies (about 25 agencies that were working in the area). The way that I did that was to be at and contribute at the meetings. As I learned from Ambassador Oakley (ambassador at the time) to “say it as I saw it” and not pull any punches. I let them know I knew what was going on. I tried to get the good things done and do things about was not being done properly. As I said earlier, every week there was a new crisis. It wasn’t a tranquil situation, it was a five year crisis, at least for me, as well as everybody else there including both sides of the government and among the UN and private agencies. So, communications between all of these diverse groups and having the interests of each group represented fairly at a meeting was important. Quite often the U.S. would be heavy handed on some food issue whereas the government was not always wrong or corrupt, so the good had to be brought forward. It was the same between other agencies as well. Communications was a constant job, finding out what was really going on and what were really the issues. Developing a rapport with these people was important. They relied on you as being fair, not being just the American mouth piece. Somebody who would represent the situation as you saw it. That was important.

Q: Did you meet formally regularly?

PAVICH: Yes.

Q: How did that work?

PAVICH: Monthly meetings with all of the voluntary agencies, the government and the donors.

Q: The government came to these meetings?

PAVICH: Yes. This is the forum where we discuss what was going on within the voluntary community, and in camps.

Q: Who chaired that general meeting?

PAVICH: There was a former State Department person who was working for the UNHCR. He was an old Asian hand and in Vietnam at the same time I was. He was a good chair. Everybody liked him because he ran a one hour meeting and would never allowed it to go beyond an hour. He kept it moving along.

Q: How many people would be involved in these meetings?

PAVICH: Easily 100-150 people. It was a big program. There were 40 different voluntary agencies in addition to all the UN agencies and the donors and the government. There were lots of people there. They all had a stake in the program for one reason or another.

There was also a food aid meeting.

Q: Who chaired that meeting?

PAVICH: The World Food Program.

Q: That was a smaller group I guess?

PAVICH: It was a smaller group but a very important group because that is where the level of food was negotiated.

Q: They negotiated numbers?

PAVICH: Yes.

Q: The government was involved in that too?

PAVICH: Everybody was there. And then there were meetings between the American embassy and UNHCR, the American embassy and the Relief Commission, etc. Most of the time the ambassador was representing the U.S. and that was about as high level as you could get. We had a good ambassador there who was a very strong and determined man.

Q: Ambassador Oakley.

PAVICH: Yes. Then we had Ambassador Bridges, too. He had the same strengths but a different personality. So, there was a lot of very hard negotiating meetings that went on on all sorts of issues. Stealing of food, stealing of trucks, how many refugees there were, etc.

Q: Did you have big transport problems?

PAVICH: Oh, yes. CARE was running the whole operation. They had hundreds of big trucks. Sometimes they would lose a truck which would be full of food and driven out into the bush and just disappear. You would have to chase that down.

Q: I understand they had an Indian group that did that work. Is that right?

PAVICH: The Indians did a remarkable job. Nobody could have done what they did. They stood out in the blistering sun every day in those refugee camps and managed the food distribution for years, and no one can do that.

Q: They were the CARE people?

PAVICH: Right. It was the most difficult job that I have ever seen because there was

nothing good about it. There was lots of hostility towards them because they were the monitors. The weather was hot, hot, hot and there wasn't any shade. It was just dusty and dirty. They did a wonderful job. We were lucky we had them.

Q: Did any of the other agencies stand out in your mind?

PAVICH: They all stood out. From my perspective they all did a heroic job. They lived in the camps in tents or lean-tos. The same kind of housing the refugees had. They cooked out every night under the stars. There was nothing comfortable about it except when somebody like me would drive in with a container full of cold beer. That was the main luxury.

Q: Any idea how large the PVO community was?

Private Voluntary Organizations

PAVICH: There must have been at least 40 PVOs and about 20 people with each PVO. So there would be 800 or more.

Q: From all countries?

PAVICH: Yes. There were Czechs, Japanese, Europeans, Islamic groups, etc.

Q: They were all part of this group you were coordinating?

PAVICH: Yes. I would go to Geneva, to Rome and Vienna on trips to coordinate things. It was a wonderful out-of-AID experience for me, more of the diplomatic end of development.

Q: What was the average dollar value of food we were bringing in?

PAVICH: Oh, you are talking about hundreds of thousands of tons of food and millions and millions of dollars. The annual food budget was about \$40 million or something like that.

Q: Were you involved in programming and calling forward that kind of food?

PAVICH: Yes, that was part of my function.

When I worked for AID the Food for Peace Officer worked for me and we made the allocation.

Q: He worked quite closely with the AID mission?

PAVICH: Yes, he was part of it.

Q: Anything else you would like to talk about? Any personal happenings securitywise, etc?

PAVICH: Well, being part of the embassy at that time, I was involved in selecting the refugees who were immigrating to the United States, which was a new twist. I was working with the consul on that aspect by coordinating the interviews. Many of the refugees went from the camps to the United States.

Q: What criteria did you use as to who should go and who shouldn't?

PAVICH: If they were political refugees who could not go back to the country they came from and they met all the other criteria that INS sets up, they would go.

Q: How do you determine who is a political refugee in that kind of environment?

PAVICH: Through extensive interviews and background checks. Some of them were pretty obvious because they were political figures before and they were known at the embassy.

Q: Were there other areas of your activity that we haven't touched on? Five years is a long time.

PAVICH: Yes. My kids were with me. There was a very, very high level of comradery between the internationals. Much more so than any other place I have ever been. Our circle of friends was Ethiopians, Somalis, French, Italians, etc. a real good mixture. Everybody was working very hard and every night was sort of open house to come over and chat and have dinner or do something together. There were lots of kids. So, in a situation that was very grim, there was a side of it that was very good.

Q: Was there any place where people could congregate?

PAVICH: The beach on the weekend was the big thing. There weren't any clubs or bars. There was one international club but it really wasn't very much. There were a couple of restaurants, but most of the time people would come to your house and you would entertain at home.

Q: How were living conditions?

PAVICH: They were better than Yemen. We had a regular washing machine. However, we still had to bring in a lot of the food. The school was pretty decent.

Q: What about communications?

PAVICH: Communication was okay. There were no telephones but we had radios.

Q: Was food always available?

PAVICH: We could go to Nairobi and buy food. We had food that we brought in and there was a lot of seafood. My wife would go to the market and they would be slaughtering a cow or something and she could buy just what she wanted right there. My wife is Vietnamese and coming from her environment, that wasn't unusual, so it worked out.

Q: After five years in Somalia where did you go?

PAVICH: What I didn't realize when I took the assignment with the State Department for all the good I did, and I did get formally recognized for what I did, along with a lot of other people who worked in that emergency, it did my AID career no good.

Q: Why was that?

PAVICH: Because I was basically out of the "mainstream," the so called career path.

Q: You were not seconded but actually transferred to the State rolls?

PAVICH: Yes. So, the conventional wisdom was once you take an assignment like that, that is pretty much it for your career because you are out of the mainstream. But, as I look back on my career, I was always out of the mainstream. When I came back from Vietnam the agency really did try to get rid of the people they had in Vietnam.

Q: Why do you think was that?

PAVICH: Maybe the Agency felt guilty. I don't know. But, a lot of good people who served in Vietnam, sacrificed their lives to support the U.S. government policy and programs, were not welcome in the Agency. I think that was bad. A few did survive. I did because I had the Public Administration background and AID had that kind of a program. Others were just pushed out. That is the side of the bureaucracy I am not proud of.

Trying to come back into AID I had missed the bidding process so I had to call my State Department boss in Washington to get me back to Washington so I could find myself a job.

Q: What position was that person in?

PAVICH: He was deputy head of the refugee office in the State Department. I had to leave Somalia where there were no phones and go to Nairobi where I used the phone of an AID colleague. I was on the phone most of the day calling and explaining I had no onward assignment and I didn't want to return to Washington without a job.

Q: Your assignment to Somalia had come to an end?

PAVICH: Yes. I asked if I could be brought back to Washington on consultation. To

make a long story short I was told, “Yes.” So, I went back and went into the system and found a job. My next job was in Ghana.

Transfer to USAID/Ghana - 1986

Q: This was in what year now?

PAVICH: It would have been 1986. At that point in Ghana our program had sort of hit bottom, politically and otherwise. The U.S. government and the Ghanaian government had a falling out over incidents in the embassy where some of the CIA people were compromised and some of the Ghanians who were working for the “Agency” were compromised. Politically our situation was bad which meant our program was being cut back. It was the worse time for the Ghanaian economy. There was nothing on the Ghanaian market. It was very bad and that is when we got there.

There were only six of us in the mission. I was head of the Rural Development Office but also had food for peace, education and whatever we were doing with agriculture. We were doing some private enterprise activities. We were trying to privatize the Ghana seed company and one of my main jobs was to work with the people in the government who were running the company. That was a long process.

Q: Did it work?

PAVICH: Eventually it worked. I was there for two years and it didn’t work until the year after I left.

Q: What was the problem of getting it to work?

PAVICH: It was a problem because it was staffed by 3,000 people and they probably needed 150. That was one problem. They weren’t producing or marketing any seed. They were pretty much defunct. The only seeds they were selling were seeds they had received through the AID program. They had a brand new seed processing plant that was capable of producing seed but they didn’t have the wherewithal to make it produce. So, we had to go through a long process of finding all this out and developing a strategy for the government to divest its interest in the seed company and convince the government that nobody is going to want to buy 40 percent of it because as long as the government has part of it is not going to be any good. If they really want it to survive as a company they pretty much have to give it away at what the equipment is worth, which was about a million and a half dollars. We worked on that for quite a while.

Q: Did you have some interested outside investors?

PAVICH: We were trying to put together a package that would be attractive to outside investors. Eventually we did, but it wasn’t during my time.

We were trying to design a new project that would sort of continue the divestment of

state-owned assets and do retraining for the redundant employees and get them back on the job market.

Q: How did you go about that?

PAVICH: We did a lot of feasibility studies. We brought in experts who could look at the economy and try to figure what the value of these organizations were.

Q: Do you remember which organizations you particularly worked with?

PAVICH: There was a list of about 20 different companies. The ones I got involved with were for branches of Pepsi Cola and Star Kist Tuna. We had to look at them and see what they were doing. Those two were doing well, mainly because they were franchises. These companies were franchised. If they didn't do what they were supposed to do, then the franchise would be cut and they would be out of business. So, they were able to do well. But, most of the other companies that were operated by the government were not doing well at all for the same reasons the seed company wasn't doing well. They were overstaffed, mismanaged and not generating a profit. So, it was a long process of bringing people in and talking to the government and negotiating what needed to be done.

Q: Was the government positive about it?

PAVICH: Well, our relations with the government were at a low ebb.

Q: So, it wasn't very welcomed.

PAVICH: No, they weren't very anxious to talk with us. We really didn't have very much to offer because the program was getting smaller, not bigger.

We had residual programs in education and agriculture that we were running. And we managed to work up a program with the Peace Corps and the government and local voluntary agencies to do reforestation and conservation work and developing kitchen gardens and things.

Q: How did that work?

PAVICH: It worked pretty well. One of these programs turned out pretty well.

Q: These were local voluntary agencies or international ones?

PAVICH: Both. The Peace Corps organized a meeting in Kenya of Peace Corps and voluntary agencies. They invited six or eight African countries from East and West Africa, and Ghana was one. So, we went and brought some of the volunteer agriculture and Ghanaian government people there. We went through a team organizing exercise and once we got that developed we went into the problem solving process and developed a framework of a plan to do something about reforestation, conservation, kitchen gardens

and something to do with watching out for forest fires.

We had virtually no program money but began to work with the group we had taken with us. Then the World Bank eventually contributed \$100,000 and got things started.

Q: Not AID?

PAVICH: No. The only thing that AID could provide was food through the Catholic Relief Agency.

So, the program developed and we brought in somebody who had been at this conference to facilitate the next stage of our team development which was to broaden the base, bringing in more local people. We developed a program to do this and we did bring in more donors. We managed to get a million dollars.

Q: From AID?

PAVICH: No. Then I left, but the program continued. I got feedback years after that that it continued, had finally got some money from AID and was doing well.

Q: You must think positively about that process for getting things going.

PAVICH: Yes. This is a facilitation process that I am discovering has always been a part of what I have done. I realized a few years back that when I went to school at the University of Pittsburgh, I did my masters thesis on urban community development, which meant city, county, state, federal, local organization and people involved in development process. What I developed in my mind then while studying and writing about it was a development theory which I came to practice all through my career. I was so happy when Brian Atwood came forward with his 12 principles of participation, which were exactly what I was trying to do. For me it was very interesting and gratifying.

Q: Who ran this group or did they just run themselves?

PAVICH: They ran themselves with a self-selected committee.

Q: Who chaired it?

PAVICH: It revolved. There was a core with some of the volunteer agriculturalists and AID. The World Bank was in there occasionally and some of the UN agencies came in and out.

Q: The government was not involved?

PAVICH: Yes, they were always part of the core.

Q: But they didn't lead it or dominate it at all?

PAVICH: No, no.

Another thing we did there was to set on paper the beginnings of an environmental protection agency. Everybody in AID has acquired some back ground in environment. I have some background in government and organization with my public administration experience. We put together the framework of an environmental protection agency with the government because they asked for it.

Q: Did it come to be?

PAVICH: I don't know. This was my last year. It took about six months to write up the table of organization and describe the function of each part of the organization and then decide what help they needed from the outside to develop the parts.

Q: It wasn't clear where the million dollars came from. Guess I missed that point.

PAVICH: The million dollars came from a combination of the World Bank, UN agencies, AID and the World Food Program. I can't remember where else. But, we went from virtually nothing to a million.

Q: Did you have a common program or strategy? How did the program get characterized?

PAVICH: The framework, the strategy began in Kenya.

Q: What did you have to work with in Ghana?

PAVICH: The same thing.

Q: What defined the program?

PAVICH: What defined the program initially were the activities that were defined in Kenya. Subsequently, in Ghana, they gained substance and funding through various donor agencies.

Q: The agencies did their own thing?

PAVICH: Well, the Peace Corps was involved in the villages and the volunteers were involved on the ground in the villages with the Peace Corps and the government. There were two volunteer agencies...

Q: In the same village?

PAVICH: Yes.

Q: So they worked together in the villages?

PAVICH: Yes. It was the same approach that was taken from Kenya to Ghana and then into the villages. It was the same groups.

Q: What were the principal activities?

PAVICH: I don't remember exactly what the conservation things were but there were kitchen gardens and I am sure there was some reforestation, seedling programs and caring for them. Firemen from the United States came in to them with the fire program. Range fires are a major problem there.

Q: So you all worked on the same projects pretty much in the same locations?

PAVICH: We all worked on the organization and then as it left Accra, the capital of Ghana, it became teams of people doing things. At this point I am gone, but I am sure they weren't doing exactly the same thing at each place.

Q: But there were teams for each place?

PAVICH: Yes. The organizing principle was Peace Corps, AID, NGO involvement.

Q: Create a team for a particular area.

PAVICH: Exactly.

Q: Would there be any particular team leader in that process?

PAVICH: It just depended on the teams. The funny thing is I was just in Tanzania and I ran into one of the people who was in on that project. He is working with Catholic Relief and was a team leader.

Q: Any other dimension of your work in Ghana? How did you find working with the Ghanaian people?

PAVICH: It was a great country to work in because the people were very friendly and happy. In their poverty they were so happy. I don't see how they could do it. They had little more than their shirt on their back. We had lots of friends. My wife being Vietnamese could relate with the local people more easily I think. She is a very outgoing and gregarious person. So, we always had lots of friends.

Q: How did you relate to the government given the circumstances?

PAVICH: Again, there were a few people you could really talk to and a lot of people who were just there with no pencils or paper. There was no air conditioning so it was really hard to stay awake in the very hot, humid climate. The only air conditioning in the

government offices was in the ministers' offices or their deputies. Everybody else sat there and roasted. It was difficult. Our relations when I got there were bad, although by the time I left things were beginning to improve a little bit.

Q: Did the program expand while you were there?

PAVICH: Yes. Subsequently the program did expand.

Q: But that was after you left?

PAVICH: Yes. I was AID rep for a while after the mission director left and AID didn't bring a mission director back, until another AID rep came in. Eventually, I think a year or so after I left, the mission was upgraded and the AID rep was made director.

Q: You are saying the program amounted to very little?

PAVICH: It was about \$12-\$15 million, but most of that was food aid, Title II.

Q: Where was the food going?

PAVICH: To the poor.

Q: Was it monetized or commodity aid?

PAVICH: Most of it was monetized. Food for work programs, feeding programs, education. We did bring in some other food which came in through the World Food Program.

Q: Well, what do you think about PL 480 Title II as an AID instrument?

PAVICH: I have seen it be very successful. Of course, you can see where it has been abused. I went out with the Peace Corps and monitored Title II and saw them just throw it away. It has to be monitored very closely. There has to be a distinct start and finish, and concrete outcome after it has been used. You just can't throw it out there because it makes more problems than it solves. But, it can be used effectively if it is done properly.

Q: What do you think are some of the more effective uses in the Ghana situation?

PAVICH: Giving the food to organizations like the Catholic Relief, where they monetized it and used the money to train people and take care of poor people working with the churches. The priests knew who the needy people were.

Q: Was it mainly school feeding or something else?

PAVICH: There was an element of school feeding, but most of it was social welfare activities and training. Training women to sew and get into small businesses, etc. There

were just lots of things you could do that way. You have small amounts of money but you have to have people do it who you can rely on. There is no way that you can hire people to do that, they have to be volunteers and this is where the volunteer agencies can do a good job. And, the local people helped as they became volunteers.

Q: Anything else you want to touch on concerning your Ghana experience?

PAVICH: There is a lot more to be said but it doesn't fall into AID interests.

Q: Like what?

PAVICH: The social life, what the mission was going through, etc.

Q: You can certainly comment on that.

PAVICH: The mission had a small staff, small budget, small program. The government was not receptive which didn't help the morale.

Q: You found the mission had very low morale?

PAVICH: Among the Americans, I think it was high, but in terms of where things were going it was kind of depressing.

Q: What about the Ghanaian staff, what was their situation?

PAVICH: They were concerned. I'm sure losing their job was on their minds, and some of them did.

Q: Did they have difficulty getting food or did we help them out?

PAVICH: Everybody did. We did too. If we had to live on the market we would have been in bad shape. But, we brought things with us and we could drive to Lome for food.

Q: Were you helping to feed the Ghanaian staff too?

PAVICH: A little. There was always some way you could help. Not giving them money but having them over for dinner, going to the beach with them, having a barbeque, having an office party, etc. AID people get very close to the people they work with. I think we have more opportunities than other agencies not only with our mission staff but people who work in the ministries and in the villages. I think that pretty much finishes Ghana.

Q: What was your next assignment?

Chief of the Rural Development Division, USAID/Pakistan - 1988

PAVICH: My next assignment was Pakistan from 1988-93. In Pakistan I was the head of

the Rural Development Division. We managed a number of very large rural development projects in three of the provinces in Pakistan: in Baluchistan and the North West Frontier.

Q: Before we get into those projects, what was the situation in Pakistan at that time?

PAVICH: The situation was that President Zia of Pakistan was killed along with our ambassador in a plane crash. They suspected that it wasn't an accident, that there was something in the plane that went off and brought it down. A few years earlier they had burned the American embassy and there was still some of that. It wasn't overt, but people would talk about it now and again with some concern about what could happen if the political situation got out of hand in Pakistan.

Q: What about the economic situation?

PAVICH: The economic situation was pretty good, I think. It wasn't as good as it could have been but it wasn't bad. There were a lot of people who were undereducated and poor by most standards and who weren't getting much help, but there were a lot of productive areas in the economy and there was a lot of money in the country.

Q: How about the rural area that you were working on?

PAVICH: The rural area was going through a slow change of modernization, mainly in agriculture. There were different crops, application of fertilizer, and basic modernization. There were programs to support the environment, conservation. There were major problems with soil erosion and major programs to deal with it. Pakistan at that time was, I think, the third largest AID recipient in the world, after Israel and Egypt. So, there was plenty of money there and lots of things going on. It was not as big as the program in Egypt, but it was big.

Q: Who was the director then?

PAVICH: I was there for five years and Jim Norris was the director for three of the five years. John Blackton was the follow on director. It was a big mission and had big projects. The rural development division had a major share of the money. We had close to \$300 million in projects. A lot of it was in area development projects which were primarily designed to do opium poppy abatement in the North West Frontier and to a lesser extent in tribal agencies. We also had projects in Baluchistan. We had offices in Karachi, in Baluchistan, in Peshawar and throughout the North West Frontier and the tribal agencies. Big program. We had lots of staff, something in the area of 25-27 professional Pakistani engineers and other kinds of professionals.

Q: How about the American staff?

PAVICH: There were only three of us. Because of the geographical dispersion of the projects, the head of the division resided in Islamabad, the capital city, and my colleague, John Tucker, resided in Peshawar, which was the jumping off base for activities in the

tribal agencies and the North West Frontier. We did have a FSN in Baluchistan and Karachi.

Q: Did you have American contractors?

PAVICH: We had a number of contractors working for us doing these projects. At the time I got there we began a changeover. We tried to turn the projects back to the Pakistanis and reduce the number of contractors. Development Alternatives Incorporated had a big project there in the North West Frontier and the tribal agencies and DMJM had a big project in Baluchistan. They did roads, agriculture and other kinds of infrastructure like utilities and training.

Q: For crop substitution or reduce the poppy cultivation?

PAVICH: Not in Baluchistan. It was just a straight rural development program there. In the North West Frontier we were working in what had been very high opium production areas. The object was to get the farmers to switch over from opium to other cash crops. We were very successful at that. The main reason we were successful was because the farmers didn't really make a lot of money growing the poppies. The real money was made by the middle man and the people who take the poppy gum and refine it into the basic product. And, the farmers were not all that interested in producing something that obviously was harmful. So, when there were opportunities to raise different kinds of wheat varieties and vegetables, they were willing to go along with it. The other incentive, as part of the package, was the development of roads, the establishment of schools, etc. So, it was a good package and worth it for the farmers to go along with the program. In earlier times the government just wasn't there so they had no compunction about growing the poppy because that was the only way they had to make a living.

When I say we were successful, I have to qualify it. We were successful in getting the poppy out of the North West Frontier, but it moved into Afghanistan where there were no programs and no law and order.

Q: Was there a specific strategy that you were following for rural development in Pakistan?

PAVICH: Basically it was infrastructure because there was none. It was to get the infrastructure and get the public services in. Get the schools operating and follow that with the agricultural extension with the reforestation. That was basically the strategy. We were working with women's group to develop them economically.

Q: Were there any particular approaches to the people in the communities in carrying out this kind of program?

PAVICH: Yes. When I got there the mission was calling for a change in our approach. The change was basically (1) to move from a model where the project provided everything to a model where the government provided basic infrastructure and sources

and the people contribute their labor and skills and (2) reduce the number of subsidies that had been developed on certain crops as an incentive. Our approach was to work with the government and the local people to develop a strategy for basically reducing and zeroing out the subsidies, and to get the local people to make a greater contribution for maintenance of infrastructure. And get the government to fulfill its responsibilities in terms of doing maintenance on roads, providing teachers for school, medical people for clinics and continuing their programs for reforestation, etc. To some extent we were doing training programs with local people to develop the skills in order to reach their objectives.

Q: We talk these days about local participation. Was there any particular approach to that involvement and commitment?

PAVICH: Yes, we developed a number of approaches. It is interesting today when I go out on some of these jobs I see a lot of people using workshops and focus groups, which we basically were doing in 1988. We would encourage people just to talk about the issues they confronted. Or talk about what they understand about the government program. All of these programs were government programs in spite of the fact that AID was paying most of the costs. To get them to talk about their concerns, identify issues and ask questions about the programs so that basically they would be better educated. From that process to develop a priority agenda of what needed to be done in that particular area. It wasn't the same in every area because in some areas they were more interested in getting teachers in the school or medical people in the clinics or getting some kind of sanitation system in the village. It varied from place to place. We encouraged these meetings.

This required a lot of training of our USAID Pakistani staff as well as the Pakistani government and local people because they had not been exposed to this approach. The approach they were accustomed to was mainly from the top down. The head man telling somebody what to do; everybody sitting there not doing anything until someone told them. Well, we tried to develop a more dynamic process where people could interact and come up with an action plan.

Q: Were they responsive to this?

PAVICH: Yes, they were. We had something that we called the "Three Year Workshop." We contracted out to an organization, Coverdale Organization, a company which set up in the North West Frontier to do basically seminars in training. Whatever kind of training or workshop we needed they would set up and subsequently provide certain kinds of technical assistance are not found on the local market. They also hired local experts to come in and work with a group to solve a particular problem.

We used that approach in everything we did. In agriculture, the conservation work, and the road work to develop an understanding between the local people and the government about what was involved in having a road and the requirement for maintenance. Building the road is the easy part, keeping it maintained is the hard part.

Q: You spoke of a three year cycle.

PAVICH: It was the Three Year Workshop, because we continued to have it in Peshawar, in Karachi or somewhere in Baluchistan, or anywhere where you had to do it. We would get the local people and put them through sort of a basic program learning how to work together in ways that they probably weren't used to. Learning to work without one person giving directions. Once we got through that process, then we would move into another phase where we actually got into rural case studies. What are your problems, etc. In Baluchistan they wanted to be more responsive to the business community but they didn't have a good idea how they should approach that. So, we put them through the training for the first three days and the next three days they worked on developing their own action plan. It worked very well.

It was the same basic approach we had used in Mombasa and to Ghana, working together with different groups, bringing them together to identify problems and organize a plan of action. It was very effective, I thought.

Q: Did you find that it became integrated into the government assistance, that they picked up on it and used it themselves without the contractor?

PAVICH: We did this several times with the government. They were very happy with it. They would come and ask us if they could borrow our facilitators so they could do it with their other staff. I would suspect that once the project lapsed a number of those people who were our facilitators probably went right back to do this kind of work. There were one or two firms in Pakistan that did this kind of workshop facilitation.

Q: So you really introduced technology through this process into Pakistan.

PAVICH: I felt we did. At the time I was pretty proud of it. Of course, you never realize these things until long after you do it. Another thing that we did using the same process was to develop a workshop between Pakistani government officials at the provincial level and the federal level as well as UN and other donor people at the provincial and federal levels about the drug problem. There is a real division in Pakistan between provincial and federal government because provincial government in Pakistan has everything, it could be a self-contained government. They have their own assembly and all the rest. There is a federation with the central government but the working relationship with the federal government isn't always that great. The central government controls the money, so naturally it has the leverage.

But on the drug issue, which was very complex because you were dealing with the production of poppies, the processing of the raw materials, drug addicts, law enforcement, etc. there were a number of agencies, Pakistani as well as international, who needed to get together to develop a common frame of reference. So, again we used our Coverdale group and had a number of workshops at the province level to develop clear ideas of where they thought they were, what they thought the problems were with regard to the drug issues, and what their problems were with regards to working with

international organizations and the federal government. Then we brought them all together and each reported what they thought about the situation, the issue, the opportunities for problem solving. They all got the other's perspective. The process produced a coordinated action plan. I believe we were able to develop a better understanding of the needs and stimulated some measure of greater participation than was there before we started. I am sure that some of the antagonisms between the government agencies are still there, but I think we did get them to make some headway.

Q: What about the problem of sustainability. Were your results maintained?

PAVICH: I would say yes. We were doing was very basic like roads, water, agriculture, and conservation. I think what the people learned in the decade or more that AID was there about roads, the costs and maintenance, and who has the responsibility to maintain them. The same thing with the water. I think that there was enough of an increase in economic growth there that they could go out and buy or rent a rig to drill a well and get it producing water and all the rest. A lot of the rest they had been doing for centuries. I think in terms of sustainability, yes, the skills were sustainable but the levels of funding were not because AID was putting \$100s of million into Pakistan at that time.

Q: How did you find the Pakistan government people to work with?

PAVICH: Wonderful. They were highly qualified, well trained, probably too bureaucratic for our tastes, but they were very good at what they did. There were problems, they would only do so much. There were lots of opportunities for corruption, particularly from the drug money. That was always a problem. You never quite knew what impact that was having on the decisions made. But, technically, I thought they were very good. The engineers were good, the water people were good, the agriculture people were good and well trained.

Q: Are you familiar with the Aga Khan project participated in by AID and other international agencies up in the Northwest Frontier?

PAVICH: Yes.

Q: It had some special characteristics didn't it?

PAVICH: We worked quite closely with the Aga Khan Foundation. The Aga Khan asked AID if we wouldn't create an NGO, a non-governmental organization. They didn't want to do it themselves. They had good people who would be involved in it. We worked with them on the charter, got the NGO properly organized and eventually were able to give them a grant to do projects.

Q: Do you remember what it was called?

PAVICH: SARHAD. I think it means sunrise.

Q: I understand there were some unique features to the project they were running in the Northwest Frontier area.

PAVICH: They were up in an area that is contiguous with the Chinese border. It was the old “Silk Route” that came down from China into Pakistan. They had an approach that was very participatory where they would go in and do a dialogue with the people. I was fortunate enough to go and spend several days with them and sit down with them and go through the dialogue. It was of very inspirational speaking with the head of the Aga Khan Foundation at that time.

Q: About that project?

PAVICH: Yes. He would say that you have to find the “Activists” and the only way you can do that is through the dialogue. Eventually the Activists will make themselves known in one way or another and you work with those people because they are the movers and the shakers. He was right.

The only reservation I had about the Aga Khan was the big money. They had a fleet of vehicles and helicopters, and without Aga Khan they couldn’t sustain anything like that.

Q: I understand there was a tough line of approach to the village in a sense that the people really had to produce in order to get the support.

PAVICH: Yes, that is right. They were rigorous about making people do what they had decided to do. They were doing some major things.

Q: Were they successful?

PAVICH: Well we tried to borrow the best aspects of the NGO but we couldn’t provide a fleet of vehicles or helicopters. We helped set up the organization and they used the dialogue approach in the village. It worked very successfully. I worked with it for three years from the beginning to when they could pretty much take off on their own. I understand they are still in operation.

My approach to that one was sort of benign neglect. I didn’t want to get too involved in it because I knew if I did they would depend on it. I tried to stay out of as much as I could.

Q: The NGO?

PAVICH: Yes. I tried to stay out of it and spent a lot of time going up into the areas where they were working.

Q: Were they just working in the north?

PAVICH: In the Northwest Frontier, yes.

Q: Some people say that such a group depends on a particular personality. Did you find that was significant because you can't replicate a personality?

PAVICH: There was another older gentleman, in his '80s, named Aethar Hamid Khan, who was the grand "Guru" of rural development, and began his work with the Camilla project in East Pakistan. It is interesting because when I was at Pittsburgh I was working with a local organization that was run by a Mr. Bernard Lashbaum who had been with the Ford Foundation in India. He had worked with Mr. Khan in the first rural development program. He brought the approach they were using back to Pittsburgh. I got involved in this urban development thing and found out Mr. Lashbaum had studied under Mr. Khan who I came to meet many, many years later and who is the grand guru. I mean that in the strictest sense. Anytime I, or any of my senior staff would go to Mr. Khan they would literally drop to their knees and kiss his feet and sit on the floor and he would talk to them. I was always there.

Q: His main tool was the dialogue technique?

PAVICH: He would dialogue. I was rather skeptical about it in the beginning, but I felt that over a period of about three years that what he said made a lot of sense. Of course he had written books too. It was not only what he said, but he sort of provided spiritual guidance. This was the charismatic leader. But, he was also producing people who I am sure eventually are going to be like him - highly dedicated, fixed on principles and discipline. That was his approach.

Q: This was in the NGO community rather than in the government?

PAVICH: Yes. It doesn't belong in government it belongs in either the NGO community or local organizations.

I could talk for hours about this man. I guess I was a convert. I have to say that Pakistan was an incredible experience, personally in so many ways. Just the physical beauty of the country and the incredible responsibility that I had. We are talking about \$280 million in projects. There are many missions that don't even come close to that. We had a huge staff all over the country. I had never had comparable responsibility.

Q: How can two people keep their hands on a big program like that?

PAVICH: It required a lot of traveling. Fortunately in Pakistan you can fly a lot of places and wherever we flew there was one of our staff that could pick us up and drive us the rest of the way. We had good staff and gave them good training. We had regular meetings and they were some of the best people I ever worked with.

Q: Were they on the AID payroll and then integrated into the government? What happened to them?

PAVICH: The ones I just mentioned were AID staff. But, we had a close relationship

with a lot of the district government people because we worked very closely with them. We also had a good relationship with some of the higher level people in the government. In fact, I took the Chief Secretary of the Northwest Frontier, the highest level of civil servant in the Northwest Frontier, he is not political, on a trip to the United States where we visited the Appalachians to see some of the NGOs that were working there. We went to New York and looked at a drug rehabilitation program and NGOs that were doing neighborhood work. We were together for two weeks.

Q: Did you find a lot that was relevant to the work in Pakistan?

PAVICH: Yes. In 1988 when I got there there weren't any NGOs except the Aga Khan and the government wasn't interested in them. They did become interested in them, however, because they saw what they were doing in Afghanistan, relief work. While there weren't any in the Northwest Frontier when I got there, there were lots of them that lived in the Northwest Frontier but operated across the border in Afghanistan. So, we eventually got the Aga Khan clone NGO which was the first one. After that we worked with several of the community groups who were in these poppy abatement projects and brought them into NGOs. AID had sponsored a number of women's training centers and we spent about two years developing those people in those centers to take over the centers and run them as an NGO. We worked also with several local villages to prevent a take over of what they had been working on.

Q: Did they get their funding mostly from the government?

PAVICH: AID set up a \$40 million revolving fund for NGOs. So, there was a lot of money there. It got hung up for a couple of years because the government was managing it and they were afraid of spending it and they weren't very well organized. It took a couple of years to sort that out and they finally were moving the money.

Q: What do you mean by revolving fund?

PAVICH: Money would go into a fund where it would accrue interest. They would use the money for grants to some of these NGOs.

Q: AID was able to set up an endowment type operation at that time?

PAVICH: Yes.

Q: With local currency or dollars?

PAVICH: That is a good question. I think it was dollars, but now I'm not certain about that. But it went through a long period when nothing happened because the Fund's Board of Directors was not functioning and they didn't really understand what they were supposed to do. But, once everything was sorted out it began to work. There were other problems after that because they were running it all out of Islamabad and I thought what they needed to do was to allocate chunks of it for different regions and set up an office in

that location as opposed to making everybody come to a small office in Islamabad.

Q: Were there any particular features of your sector work that was unique or special?

PAVICH: I have mentioned the three year workshop.

Q: Right. But, in terms of the technology that was used in Washington, education, etc?

PAVICH: Well, using the workshops in a participatory methodology was unique at the time.

Q: Were you involved in curriculum developed or materials or anything of that sort?

PAVICH: No, we didn't do that. AID had a huge education program. We were working at lower levels.

Q: You were doing the basic facilities?

PAVICH: Yes, rural development program.

Q: Were there any techniques involved in doing construction work? There was this F.A.R. technique which was supposed to be reimbursed after people built it.

PAVICH: We used the Fixed Amount and Reimbursement system and I think it worked very well. Mainly it worked well because the government understood it and knew how to work with it.

Q: They had the capacity to manage it and the resources to?

PAVICH: But AID had the largest staff of AID engineers of anywhere in the world just for that.

Q: For working with you on these projects?

PAVICH: They were working for us on our projects but it seemed liked the head engineer wanted to run them and there was always sort of a bureaucratic tug of war concerning who they actually worked for. They were working under rural development projects and should come under some management, but it didn't always work out that way. That sort of stuff went on in Islamabad, but once you got to the field it didn't matter. Once you got out somewhere you are all AID. But, we did have to have a lot of engineers. We only had one or two U.S. engineers but maybe 14-15 or more local engineers, Pakistanis who would go out and check these jobs. They had to have that or otherwise the FAR wouldn't work.

Q: Are there other dimensions of your life in Pakistan? Any particular events or things that happened during that period?

PAVICH: Well, working with the United Nations on the drug issues was important. I think the high point of this work was a week long narcotics workshop that we put together. I felt that was a milestone, getting that organized and having it come off successfully.

The privatization of our rural development projects, breaking them up into small NGOs as opposed to big AID projects, was another break through.

Q: So there was a big shift to using NGOs. Was the business sector involved in that at all?

PAVICH: To some extent we were working with the business community, the small holders. We were trying to encourage some growers who could produce strawberries for export to Europe, flowers for export and that sort of thing.

Another thing we worked on was the elimination of the subsidies and turning things over to the government which was a major accomplishment. I think we did a successful job. The mission was phasing out at this point. It closed down two years after I left. That was it. I would love to go back to see what is there.

Q: I get the impression that maybe it was through the AID resources that there was this sudden growth of NGO community or was there some other factors involved?

PAVICH: I think it was a combination of things. I think we pioneered parts of it. We gave the Aga Khan approach a new life in a new area. I think it proved itself.

Q: Were there other factors that facilitated its growth?

PAVICH: Well, there were so many things that went on. For example, one group of people came down for one of our basic training courses. They came from a very remote area in the Tribal Agencies to Peshawar. They were there for five days. We gave them a per diem, a small amount of money. They saved their money, didn't spend the per diem, and went back and used the money to build a bridge. It is a small thing but significant because they learned how to organize themselves in a way they probably wouldn't have known how to do (if it were not for the training). Most rural people know how to get together to do things, but probably it was that they were always waiting for somebody else to do it. But, we gave them the inspiration to do it and not worry about the government until later on. You decide what needs to be done, find your resources where you can and do it.

Q: Anything else you would like to mention about your Pakistan experience?

PAVICH: No, I think we have covered it all.

Q: Well, after five years in Pakistan where did you move on from there?

PAVICH: After five years in Pakistan it was Egypt.

Q: What years was that?

A new role in USAID/Egypt - 1993

PAVICH: Egypt was 1993-96. I retired from AID in June, 1996.

Q: What was the situation in Egypt at that time?

PAVICH: At that time politically Egypt was beginning to play a slightly stronger role in the Middle East peace process. There was a lot of local opposition to the government, particularly from what people called the Islamic fundamentalist groups, terrorists in some instances. I remember the first day I walked into the office I heard an explosion. Someone had set off a bomb right around the corner which killed a number of people in an attempt to assassinate the leaders from the Ministry of Interior. The target might have been the minister of interior, himself. That was my introduction to Egyptian politics. Mubarak was the president. He was a strong man running a pretty tight ship, I guess, in order to keep all actors under control.

The atmosphere was pretty friendly. You would sense sometimes a certain amount of hostility towards foreigners, depending on where you were in town. This would be offset in other places with friendliness and camaraderie. Egyptians are great cosmopolitan people, at least the ones you meet in Cairo. They were very easy to work with and well qualified.

Q: What was the mission like at that time?

PAVICH: Huge. I guess it was the biggest AID mission. It was like working in Washington with lots of bureaucracy.

Q: Who was the director when you were there?

PAVICH: Hank Bassford was the director when I got there. He was a very effective director. He was a hard nosed kind of man. He was demanding of his staff and he could be as demanding with counterparts in the government. In a program like that where there is so much money involved, it is not a question of if they are going to get it, but when. It is a tough game to play. I think Bassford was probably one of the more effective mission directors they ever had out there in doing that.

Q: What was your situation?

PAVICH: My title was Supervisory Special Projects Officer. I was in the office of institutional development support, which was the democracy office. They called it institutional development support because you could not say democracy in Egypt at that

time.

Q: This was not a rural development program?

PAVICH: This was different. Back in Pakistan I realized that the old rural development was rapidly becoming a thing of the past and there were other things developing that were also interesting and have parallels to everything I had been doing up til then and democracy was one of them. It was new and AID was trying to establish itself in this field. They had begun to do some things in Pakistan which I tried to get involved in but the mission wasn't really pushing it too hard. However, it became clear to me that this was an area that had growth potential and required certain kinds of skills that I had many of. For example, working with local government, working with local groups, understanding the basics and principles of government from my Public Administration background. The only areas I didn't have experience in at that point was the political side, the development of political parties and things along that line. But, I thought that there was an opportunity in Egypt to do that, to become a democracy officer.

Q: Was this a big program?

PAVICH: Yes. Moneywise it was probably the biggest democracy program in the world. We had a number of activities that we were just starting. We had an activity that was to work with the Ministry of Justice to develop the justice system and improve the judicial process, to reduce the caseload burden and upgrade the skills of judges and advocates and make it work and user friendly. We had a lawyer, Ana Klenike, on our staff who was in charge of that.

I was responsible for two activities. One was with the Parliament and the other was Civil Society. We had a project that had been designed that needed to be tightened up, more focused. That was when I got there and worked with a young woman, Connie Peraskova, to develop a request for proposals, an RFP, for bids on this project. In order to do that we had to go back into the project and define more clearly what the mission wanted. That was one part of it.

The other part was negotiating with the Parliament, the Speaker of the House and the two Secretaries General. They have the Parliament and the Shura assembly which was a religious group that worked with the Parliament. I was to work with the Secretaries General and basically educate them about the USAID programs and procedures. They had never, never had any kind of bilateral program. This was high profile for the Egyptian politicians, they didn't want to have very many meetings with USAID and we couldn't use the term democracy. It was a very delicate process. In the beginning, and I think all through out, it is still going on now, to tell them what AID does and assure them this wouldn't infringe in any way on their sovereignty, and to help them in whatever way we could to persuade the political powers that this was okay to do. There were lots of stops and starts, advances and retreats. The Egyptian press was taking pot shots at the project saying the Americans were coming in to run the Parliament, etc.

Q: Did you get something done?

PAVICH: We did eventually.

Q: What were you doing?

PAVICH: Eventually we got a project together to work with the staff of the Parliament, to upgrade their skills, to work with the Library of Parliament to develop the capacity of the library to provide the kinds of information decision makers needed. To introduce information technologies by establishing a network of computers so people in the Parliament could connect with the web and get information that way. We brought people in from the outside to discuss Parliamentary procedures, political processes and a number of things like that. We had the U.S. Library of our Congress involved in a project. We had Syracuse University involved in the program in bringing in people and training them. We brought people to the United States and other places to see how Parliaments work and our Congress. In fact, I just talked to someone who works on the project just the other day and they had been doing well, but now they have another political problem so things have sort of stopped for a while.

Q: Political in the sense of sensitivity towards American organizations?

PAVICH: Too much American influence. People don't understand that we are not into politics but involved in the organizational development. But, how can you not be involved in politics?

Q: Hard to separate them.

PAVICH: Yes, in that case. We made some good relationships. I think everybody in the Parliament we worked with were converted. But, by now a lot of them have moved on and there is a new bunch in there. They are the ones who are asking the questions.

Q: You were working with the elected people rather than the staff?

PAVICH: We weren't working directly with the elected members, but they were working with the staff. It could be they have a new Speaker of the House, that could be the problem, but I'm not sure.

The other activity that we were working with was developing civil society and that was a little more difficult. AID had in Egypt its largest rural development program in the world. It was the Local Development Project (LDII). It was a huge billion dollar project that went on for ten years. I mentioned Jim Dalton to you. He sat with President Sadat. President Sadat said that he wanted to see the AID handshake in every village in Egypt and in that way they will be local development projects. So, it was everywhere and did everything. Everywhere you went you saw the USAID logo. It was very effective. It was criticized widely because there was such a large amount of money that was being given out and AID didn't have enough control over the money, so accountability came into

question at times. I guess there were other economists who could argue that you could use that money in different ways and have a greater effect. But, let's face it, it was a political thing.

Q: What was the money used for specifically?

PAVICH: Infrastructure, education, health, everything.

Q: Did this go through the line ministries in the government?

PAVICH: Yes. It was much the same as what we were doing in Vietnam with the establishment of the budget at the local level. A sort of supplemental budget that the local governments had access to for virtually anything. At the same time it trained local governments in upgrading their skills and developing their capacity to administer the program. Once it got rolling it was doing everything.

Q: Was it countrywide?

PAVICH: Yes.

Q: All parts?

PAVICH: Yes, all parts. It was very effective. When I got there Hank Bassford went to the government and told them LDII was over. I remember he said the government has to be more transparent in the operations, that is, include the citizens in the planning, and privatize state owned enterprises, a number of other conditions. That was the environment when I got there.

The Egyptians were all expecting another LDII to come along. But the mission's maximum amount of money USAID was going to provide for new activities was probably be around \$20 million as opposed to a couple hundred or more. So that was the atmosphere. But, before that we had to define our terms, or what are we talking about. Civil Society, what is that? Participation, what is that? So, I kind of applied one of the methodologies that we developed in Pakistan, the workshop approach. We got a group of missionary people and Egyptians together and had a one day workshop to define "participation." You got a whole range of definitions from the Americans and from the Egyptians. There was a lot of misunderstanding. Now, this was in 1992. This is precursor to Brian Atwood's "Twelve Principles of Participation." These things were new, sort of cutting edge stuff.

I don't think we really came up with one clear definition of what is participation. I think what we did do, at least within the mission at that point, was to establish a common understanding that participation means a range of things and here is the range. We wrote this up and talked about it a lot. Participation was definitely going to be the main theme of our Civil Society approach.

Q: Was there a core concept of participation?

PAVICH: The concept was participation and development bringing local groups and government together to work on development problems. That was the theme.

Then I was fortunate enough to get a license to travel, to go out and see what was going on in Egypt. I took about four months going out to the different provinces and interviewing people in the government and the NGO sector to see how things were running and if the government people had any idea of the change that had just been made, that the big local development program was finished and there wouldn't be another one but something new would be coming along. That was a very difficult job because nobody believed it or wanted to believe it. We would spend an hour talking about the change and where AID thought their programs should be going and they would return to the question, "When do we get our next LDII block grant?"

Q: You mean that program just came to an end and stopped construction?

PAVICH: It didn't leave things hanging but gradually phased out.

Our problem then was convincing the government at the central level and the local level that there was no more LDII and we needed to come up with something different.

Q: How did the government react to these new ideas? Did they consider them fairly revolutionary or not?

PAVICH: Well, the major problems there were two. One, they just didn't want to accept the fact that there was no more LDII and two, they were not willing to think of anything that smacked of decentralization. What I didn't mention was that we wanted to develop an activity that would be based at the local level not based at the central ministry level.

Q: Was it a fairly central government situation?

PAVICH: Very, even with the provincial level. Egypt is a big country but the people are packed into a small area. Going back and forth between places is quick, by plane or train. The central government pretty much runs it all. I thought by putting people at the local level who could work government and with local organizations to facilitate...

Q: There were local organizations?

PAVICH: There weren't a lot of engineers but there were organizations. You really don't need an organization, you just need a group of people who want to do something. I have to say that in the three years I was in Egypt the first year was spent mainly on getting the project up and running in the Parliament. We had to send out bids, select a contractor and mobilize them on the ground. While we were doing that we were negotiating a little bit with the government about what they can and can't do, defining an activity that everybody in the mission would agree to as an alternative to the old program and visiting

the local government. That pretty much took up the first year.

The second year was trying to get something on the Civil Society side negotiated with the government, pulling together a critical mass of Egyptian and international NGOs to start thinking about the process. What we wanted to do was to pull them all into a process of defining the project. By this time “re-engineering” had just started and the 12 Principles of Participation had been promulgated by USAID/W. So, this fell in line with all that. We would take all of the stakeholders, bring them together and design a project. If we could get the government to agree to let something like this happen, we could do it.

Q: Who in the government were you relating to about this sort of thing?

PAVICH: Mostly Minister of the Interior and a Deputy Minister of Interior.

Q: Were they really interested in this kind of change?

PAVICH: This is what happened as I see it. In this year and a half that we spent telling the government that there was not going to be another LDII (Local Development 2), they would have to think in different terms. During that period they came up with a scheme of their own, called Shrouk. Shrouk was the Egyptian version of LDII. Just about the time I thought I had negotiated the other (new) concept with the people I was dealing with in the Ministry of Interior, a new person came on the scene who was in charge of the Shourk project. That was the end of Frank Pavich.

Q: Because you weren't supporting it?

PAVICH: It wasn't that I wasn't supporting it, I was supporting mission policy and they didn't want it. This person had the backing of the Minister and Mubarak and that was it.

Q: Did they get an LDII project?

PAVICH: No. As far as I know, even today, I have talked to people recently and it is still up in the air.

Q: So, that project never got off the ground?

PAVICH: No. I think we were able to salvage some things working with the NGOs but I don't think we ever got the government to come around.

Q: You were working against a very tough odds, I guess.

PAVICH: Yes. The Agency let me down a little bit in this one because they jumped off one band wagon and jumped on another band wagon and sort of left me in the dust. This was a disappointment.

Q: What did they shift to?

PAVICH: Well, it wasn't so much the whole mission, it was more or less individuals that saw an opportunity in something the government really wanted that we could go with it and forget the other thing. That upset me because I thought the other thing was based on every principle that AID was trying to develop at that point. I can appreciate that if the government doesn't want it you have to go with what they do want. The Egyptian man with whom I was negotiating with sensed immediately what the situation was and just said that there was no need for Mr. Pavich to come to the next meeting. And that was it. I was pretty much out of it. What disappointed me was that my people in the mission didn't say, "You can't do that. He is the person in charge of this project. If we decide to change our strategy, it is the mission's strategy, not his strategy." But it didn't work out that way.

Q: You would have identified with it?

PAVICH: I would have identified with it. It was a good lesson. I don't feel too bad about it.

Q: But the mission was bought into it at that point?

PAVICH: Yes, they bought into Shrouk. We tried not to have it that way. I continued to work on it but I just couldn't go down and be up front with the Ministry.

Q: But it was the same program?

PAVICH: Well, it wasn't the program that the mission had approved and I was trying to negotiate.

Q: But the local development program was the same as the one you were...

PAVICH: It had a lot of the same elements in it. It required a lot of money.

Q: To local government and things of that sort?

PAVICH: Yes. I think the problem was that it was a situation where it was questionable how much control you would have over the money. Who was going to get what? There would have been a lot of jobs involved and a lot of sticky points that had to be ironed out. I don't know if they ever ironed them out. They keep trying.

Q: In fact the mission caved into the government that wanted to stay pretty much with the old concept.

PAVICH: I think the mission people did what they felt they needed to do in order to continue negotiating with the government.

Q: There wasn't much latitude for holding out.

PAVICH: Right. This is Egypt and the program is going to be there no matter what. It is not a matter of “if” you get the money it is a matter of “when.”

Q: So, you were caught up in this political situation?

PAVICH: Yes. I was a little bit disappointed but continued to work on the stuff with the NGOs, which I understand is continuing.

Q: Building up their capacity?

PAVICH: Trying to sit down and have them participate in the design of a project to build up their capacity.

Q: Were there a lot of NGOs in Egypt?

PAVICH: There were a lot of associations and a number of NGOs and a program like this would probably develop a lot more. But, they had problems on the government side because the government wanted to be very much in control of the NGO movement.

Q: Anything else on your Egyptian experience?

PAVICH: Yes. The other thing about my experience in Egypt was that this was when the re-engineering concept was introduced and it was tested around the AID world and in Egypt. It was an opportunity to learn a lot about what they were calling re-engineering. In a big mission like Egypt where you have 30 large organizations within a big organization, re-engineering was a formidable challenge.

Q: What did re-engineering mean to you?

PAVICH: The essence of re-engineering is giving authority to the level of management that is responsible for doing the work and eliminating a lot of the people in between. That is what it was supposed to do. But, I don't think it accomplished that.

Q: What were some of the characteristics?

PAVICH: We had two processes. The traditionally AID project process where you did your feasibility study, and project paper, etc. and then they were developing at that time the Results Framework and all of the things that go along with that. At one point we had two systems. Instead of making it easier and less bureaucratic, made it twice as hard because you had to work it both ways.

Q: What was the results system?

PAVICH: The main difference was you no longer had a project. You had an activity which had a number of results that were supporting an over-arching objective. For

example, if you want to strengthen civil society, then one of your results might be better organized NGOs working with community groups. There is a tangible result there and you are given money to achieve that result. Once your strategy is approved, you got the money and then you develop your program, your “Result Package,” as they call it now, to achieve those results.

Q: You didn't have to do all of the analysis that you do for project papers?

PAVICH: Yes and no. You can't just do things. You need analysis. It sort of duplicates the old process and calls it something different. But, the thing that was promising about it was that it tended to eliminate a lot of other decision makers in the process, so theoretically it would be more responsive and quicker. I don't think the Agency has gotten there yet. I just came back from a mission where they are working with it. Some things have improved, but it has a ways to go. Not everybody understands it.

Q: Anything more you would like to mention about your Egyptian experience?

PAVICH: No, I think that covers it.

Q: You retired from Egypt in June 1996?

PAVICH: Yes.

After USAID, work on democracy programs - 1996

Q: Touch on some of the things you have done since before we go for a wrap up.

PAVICH: I retired in June 1996 and came back to the Job Search program. In March 1997 I took an assignment in Bulgaria to evaluate the Democracy Network Program. I worked for a U.S. firm, Management Systems International (MSI). A two person team, Larry Hileman and myself, went out to the mission and in three weeks we did a rather superficial evaluation of the Democracy Network Program.

Q: What was the program?

PAVICH: The Democracy Network Program is a regional program to allow countries to develop their own democracy network projects or activities with NGOs.

Q: What is a democracy network?

PAVICH: The democracy network, I guess, is the network of countries that are working on this program.

Q: Not within the country?

PAVICH: Inter-region and/or their country. Working with local organizations, local

governments, with any of the institutions that you normally associate with a democracy program, such as political parties, the justice system, civil society, the military. When I said it was sort of a superficial evaluation it is because the time allotted was very short, only 15 working days, and we covered a lot of territory without very much background material to work with. So, we had to rely a lot on what we saw and what we heard in interviewing people.

Q: What were the kind of activities we were supporting?

PAVICH: We were supporting activities to get local groups organized and get them focused on democracy issues. I thought the idea was good. I think the Democracy Network Program is excellent. The problem I had with the way it was being applied in Bulgaria was it was very centralized. It was operating the way the government operated. I felt that the mission wouldn't achieve its Strategic Objective unless they got it out and started working at the lower levels. Of course, I have a bias there, but that was pretty much what I saw. We traveled to all of the major population centers and interviewed well over 200 people, mainly NGO people because there wasn't really any government to speak of at that time.

Q: What kind of assistance did we supply? What were we doing with our funds?

PAVICH: We were just getting started.

Q: What were we planning?

PAVICH: The usual, training, management systems, information technology, probably setting up grants to try to get people to work together. It was pretty much in the formative stages. It was a dream place to work because the Bulgarians are highly intelligent, highly educated, highly motivated and dying to be democratic, wanting to do everything under the sun. They had energy to burn. Just to work with them was a pleasure because they are so eager. It was just a matter of explaining to them new ideas. They had been behind the "Iron Curtain" for 40 years and had missed out on many things and needed to learn quickly. I am sure that they are and they will. Being part of that process is one of my ambitions. To get back to situations like that because that is where the action is in democracy. So, I had a good experience in Bulgaria. A lot of the approaches that I worked with and developed in my experience in rural development in the past, the things that were developed in the Three Year Workshops (in Pakistan), all fit very well into this new context, into the re-engineering phase and to what the agency is trying to do.

Q: Any other interesting assignment after you retired?

PAVICH: After I left Bulgaria in April 1997 I took an assigned in November 1997 to develop a democracy strategy in Guyana in South America. That was another interesting experience because as the Guyanese would say "We are a lot like you Americans because none of us are natives, we either came from Africa or India. There is a small group of natives pushed off in the background. We were all under the British colonial system and

we broke out and are trying to find our way and form our own democracy.” We worked with the mission there in an assessment of the democracy situation there and helped them with their Results Framework. It was a three week assignment. Guyana is a big country but there aren’t many places to go because there is nothing in most of the country other than rain forests. So, we worked mainly in Georgetown, talking to people in the government and NGOs and working on strategy with the mission.

After Guyana, in December 1997 I went to Tanzania from December 12 until March 18.

Q: What was this assignment?

PAVICH: Again, it was a democracy assessment to develop their Results Framework and their Performance Monitoring and Evaluation system and give them a list of examples of things that they could do in their democracy program.

Q: How did you find the democracy situation in Tanzania?

PAVICH: They broke the colonial rule and went into a period of “Scientific Socialism” which sort of went bankrupt after the Soviet Union went under. Now they are converting to a free market economy and democracy. It is not going to be easy. I guess it is easier to do the economic things, at least to get the policies set up and going. There is a lot of suffering there because things are in short supply and many people are out of work. There is likely to be more people out of work, but the investment climate is improving and some medium size businesses are beginning to develop. So, I think they are going to do well there. On the democracy side, in order to get the IMF [International Monetary Fund] to come in and give them the credits, etc. they had to recognize that they couldn’t run the country politically the way they were. So, instead of a one party system they...

Q: Was it an IMF condition to liberalize the political situation?

PAVICH: No, I don’t think it was that, but it was part of the logic of where they had to go. It is going to be difficult because they don’t have much experience in a multi-party system and the party that is in control doesn’t want to lose control, and that is the party that was the party when there was only one party. There is virtually no opposition at this point. A political system needs to be developed, the party system has to be developed, civil society needs to be developed, the justice system needs over hauling, and the civil service also needs to be over hauled, retrained, taught how to operate a decentralized system. The government has to decentralize their activities and be more participatory in the way they govern. That was pretty much what we said in our assessment and what is reflected in their strategic plan.

Q: What is the mainline of what the activities are going to be?

PAVICH: It is developing civil society, NGOs and to help the government in its reform process in specific areas where it can work closely with civil society organizations and doing things in communities on a democratic basis. Try to stimulate more participatory

government at the district and village levels. Then, as I said before, we developed their Performance Monitoring plan which is how you measure your success in achieving these things.

That was my last assignment. I think, in my career, I made the metamorphose from what they used to call “cowboys” in Vietnam to “Rural Development Jocks” to something more professional in places like Pakistan and then to “Democracy” in Egypt and more Democracy in other areas.

Concluding observations

Q: Let’s talk a little more generally. What do you see as the key guidelines, key principles that you find people should be following and have in mind when working for AID?

PAVICH: For me, Brian Atwood’s “12 Principles of Participation,” summed up everything that I have learned and thought about from 1962 when I joined the Peace Corps to 1989 when these “Principles” came out. I think that is where things are. People have to be involved in development in order for it to be sustainable. You can’t just develop institutions and pour money into economies without getting people involved in the process so that they will support it. In order to support it, I feel, they must have a stake in it. The way they get a stake in it is being involved in the processes. That is a very basic principle of development, as I see it. I remember back in the early ‘80s when I took the Development Studies Course and they asked us what was our theory of development, I was saying participation, although not exactly in those words. That is what I was thinking at that time and I still think that is where it is. Yes, you have to have the economic development and you have to have discipline and the technology and the policy framework and the government structure to go with that, but you also have to have people involved in and supporting the process.

Q: Any particular technique for involving people? That is not a particularly easy thing to do.

PAVICH: When I wrote my thesis at the University of Pittsburgh on “Urban Community Development” I identified three things that had to happen—organization, education and development. You had to identify some form of organization or some common theme that people are in agreement about or disagreement about, something that is going to bring them together in an organized way. Once you had that communication then you can begin the process of educating and development. To me, that is the way you do it. If you look at a lot of the methodologies that they are using now, this Rapid Participatory Development approach, it is that you have to find something that people agree upon or want to organize around and begin communicating. When you are able to communicate with them you begin a process of educating. This is what we did in the Three Year workshop. It was bringing people together who had a common problem or who had a common concern or common question and organizing them in a systematic way through various methodologies to begin to talk about it and recognize what they were talking about, giving them a common frame of reference. Once this happens you get them to start

prioritizing, to think about what is important. What can you do about it? Who can do this and who can do that? What are your resources? That sort of dialogue.

Q: I get the impression that this has recently been discovered. Is it really that new?

PAVICH: No.

Q: What happened to make people act like this was a new thing?

PAVICH: I think it is re-engineering.

Q: What was wrong before with the old approach to rural development?

PAVICH: The old approach didn't really fade away, it was interest in it that faded away.

Q: But the approach was not that different, it was still participatory and all?

PAVICH: Basically I think the approach was similar, but if you worked with village people you had to communicate with them. What are you going to communicate about? Something called development and usually that begins with a problem. So, I think it is quite the same. It is just that it has been reinvented. It is not just something that you can do at the lower level, you can do it at various levels, wherever there is a group of people.

Q: Why then did rural development get such a bad name?

PAVICH: I don't know, it is hard to say.

Q: You were so involved in it over the years when it was a big thing and then it faded away.

PAVICH: It evolved, I guess, from the "Point IV" program after World War II (Marshall Plan) when you really had technical people (Project Officers) on the staff and working on these activities. Eventually the number of technicians became smaller and smaller and you had more people who were Program Officers. Then they invented something that was in between a Program Officer and a Project Officer, which also created a new layer of bureaucracy. In a cynical way, I think a lot of it had to do with people's desire to make a career, to get to the top fast as opposed to working at the project level. This afforded an opportunity to do project work for a couple of years somewhere and then become a Project Development Officer and then eventually a Program Officer where you never had to deal with the local stuff. They would be doing the very important programming work, developing the conceptual framework for a program, working on policy issues and all the rest of it. That became very important stepping stones to advancement and promotion. I think a need was created for more of that and less for technical people who could always be hired. In rural development you had thousands of small projects and who wants to fool around with keeping books on so many activities, you can never keep it straight.

Q: How do you make the participation process which takes a lot of patience and time, etc. consistent with the bureaucratic drive and pressure to commit money and all that? Did you find yourself always caught in a bind on this sort of thing?

PAVICH: Always caught in a bind. That is why I was so happy when re-engineering came along because - push the responsibility down to the operations level - I thought it was going to save the day, but it hasn't yet. It talks the talk but hasn't walked the walk yet. I think there is a lot of vested interest in keeping the existing procedure the way it is because that is how people got where they are. Also, to push the responsibilities down is a problem. People no longer have the experience. I was just in several missions in the last year and the level of experience isn't what it used to be.

Q: In terms of...?

PAVICH: Well, everything I say has a bias because I come from one aspect of AID work. I have always thought that the best thing for an AID officer would be to spend his first five or seven years as a project officer doing projects out in the field. Once he or she got that experience then they would qualify to become a Program Officer. I think if the Agency had followed a rule like that they probably would have been better off. They would have had more people with that kind of experience, which they don't have anymore.

Q: They have lost this sort of technical and local development orientation.

PAVICH: Yes. When you develop a strategy, somebody has to have a vision of what it is going to look like and/or be like on the ground. With a lot of people who have a very well developed theoretical grasp of the subject matter, democracy for example, they have been trained in political science and know the subject matter. But, taking it down two or three notches, how does it work in the context of a community with personalities, real people and real government with all the things that are involved there, human, political and otherwise, and how do you make something work and how do you see that? How do you take \$12 million and visualize that amount in six different places in a big country? The only way you can visualize such things is by having been out there once or twice and seen what's there. My experience has been that there aren't a lot of people who have that experience any more because the bureaucracy thinks there is no need for it.

Q: Was the tendency to rely on NGOs for this? What is your feeling about NGOs?

PAVICH: Yes, there is that tendency. But, here again, in dealing with NGOs you are dealing with young people. Where did they get their experience? The people who created the NGOs probably got their experience the way we did years ago. But the people currently in the NGOs are learning it on the job. They are very dedicated people. I have worked for a lot of NGOs and there is a real high factor of inexperience at ground level. Willingness, commitment and everything good is there, but the practical experience just hasn't developed yet. So, you need a lot of what I did in several countries, to be out there with the local people assuring them they were doing the right thing. Staying with them

and telling them to do this and do that, think about this, think about that. I was basing that on the early experience that I had, which by comparison was a lot.

Q: Looking back over the years, do you think the foreign assistance program has had a useful impact?

PAVICH: I think we helped shape the law of the world with our foreign assistance. There are many people out there who have benefitted from AID people being near by, coming into their villages, talking with them, working with their government.

Q: Any particular areas or aspects that you think significant?

PAVICH: I have to say the rural development activities were good because that is when you are dealing with people. I have been in situations where people have looked up at me with lots of respect because they have achieved something. It wasn't that they were getting something, it was that they had achieved something. That is one of life's rewards. If you can get a reward like that from your job you have benefitted enormously.

From my perspective the AID countries where we have worked these countries have benefitted a lot from the assistance to their people, in developing the skills of their people and their government and in the private and voluntary sectors, development of their agriculture, health, education and everything else we have done. Who else has done that? No one else has done it at the scale we have done it in the past and everybody has always looked to us as a leader. They may not always give us credit for it or say that we were the leader in these things, but you look at what they do and see what it is modeled after. More times than not it is modeled after the work AID has done. Look at re-engineering. We started re-engineering five or six years ago and everybody in the development world is doing it now.

Q: Were there others things in your earlier years that you saw in AID as pioneering?

PAVICH: I think we helped the NGO movement worldwide. Certainly in disaster relief we have been a pioneer. We have added immensely to the structure of the disaster assistance in different countries in organizing groups to do things like that. We did so many good things. By in large, I do not think it was money wasted.

Q: How do you feel about your career and working for AID as an agency?

PAVICH: I think I was very lucky. If it hadn't been for the Peace Corps and Vietnam a person like me probably would not have ended up in. I feel I was lucky because AID was a reward and it shaped my life and I feel good about it as a career. The one thing I am concerned about is that all the good AID has done isn't overlooked, which is why I am grateful that you have this oral history.

Q: What would you say to somebody who was looking for a career these days? Would you recommend going into this business?

PAVICH: It is a different world today. If I were telling my daughter what she should do I would say, “Look, if you have a mind to, and you want to help out and do something for humanity, join the Peace Corps. Get an education, develop a marketable skills, and join the Peace Corps. Go out and learn about people in the developing world. Work with AID for some years, but don’t depend on it because it probably won’t be around that long.”

Again, I think we were all lucky because we were in for a lifetime, but I don’t know whether it is going to be that way in the future. There is going to be a need for assistance, but you may have a smaller AID organization with an out source contractor for the people you need. The British have a small organization and they would go out and hire people to bring in and do their programs, but now they are sort of going the other way and bringing them all into one organization, but I think AID is going the other way. The AID organization is going to shrink and use private contractors and private organizations more in the future. The young people of today have to be flexible. They have to be able to do a number of things. Working in development, humanitarian assistance might be part of a longer term career that takes them in and out of government.

Q: Anything else you would like to add?

PAVICH: Not at this time, perhaps after I review the interview.

Q: Well, it has been an interesting interview and thank you very much for taking the time to talk to me.

PAVICH: It was great.

End of interview