imfstaffnews

September 2006


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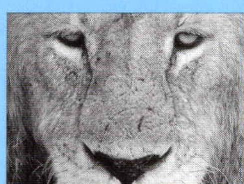
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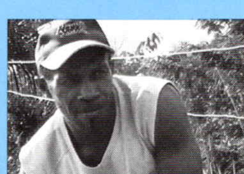
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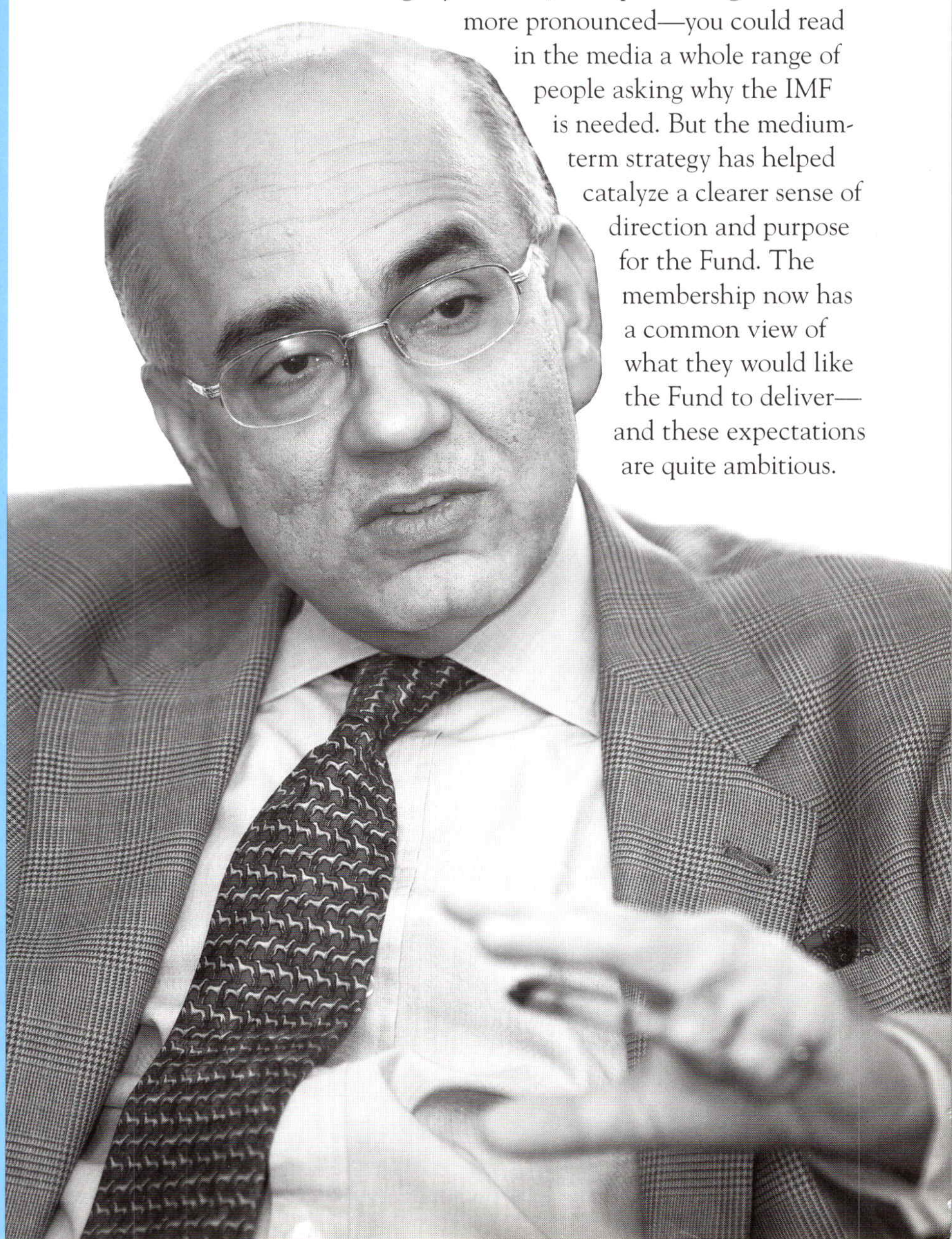
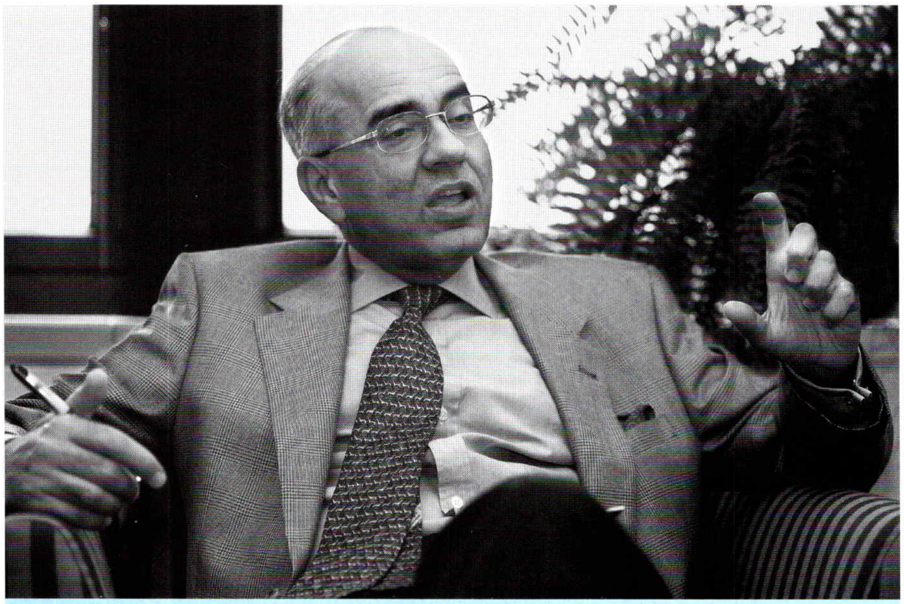
The Fund's chief communicator

On May 1, Masood Ahmed took up the post of EXR Director following a three-year external assignment as Director General, Policy and International, for the U.K.'s Department for International Development. Ahmed had served in a number of senior positions at the World Bank from 1979 to 2000, when he joined the Fund as a Deputy Director of PDR. Staff News *recently sat down with him to discuss his vision for IMF communications.*

You've returned to the Fund at an interesting time. What differences do you see in the institution after having been away?

The Fund has a much clearer sense of purpose for where it wants to go and a sense that it now needs to deliver on its agenda. When I left three years ago, staff in the Fund were beginning to question the institution's future role. During my absence, that questioning became more pronounced—you could read in the media a whole range of people asking why the IMF is needed. But the medium-term strategy has helped catalyze a clearer sense of direction and purpose for the Fund. The membership now has a common view of what they would like the Fund to deliver—and these expectations are quite ambitious.





"Effective communications is no longer an add-on for the Fund," says Masood Ahmed.

What are your top priorities for your first year as EXR's Director?

Our first priority is to have an effective communications operation through the Singapore Annual Meetings: clear and targeted messages and disciplined delivery of those messages using the right mix of instruments. Beyond Singapore, we will be developing a medium-term communication strategy for the Fund, which we will take to the Executive Board early next year. This strategy will need to reflect how the Fund's overall business model is changing. The Fund is shifting away from depending primarily on the relationship that it has with program countries—a relationship based on financing, program design, and conditionality—toward helping shape the national and international debate on issues that are core to the Fund's mandate. To be effective at shaping the debate, you have to be much more successful at persuading people and more savvy at how, where, and with whom you engage. Effective communications is no longer an add-on for the Fund, it is an integral part of getting our job done.

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What is the focus of the Fund's communications strategy in the lead-up to the Annual Meetings?

Our communications plan focuses on those elements of the Fund's medium-term strategy that will be addressed at the Singapore meetings—first, the modernization of the Fund's surveillance function and, within that, progress on the new instrument of multilateral consultations. We need to carefully communicate what this new tool is and do so in a way that maximizes the likelihood of success for the first multilateral consultation on global imbalances.

The second important issue is the governance of the Fund. During the Spring Meetings, the IMFC asked the Managing Director to come to Singapore with comprehensive proposals on quotas and voice at the Fund. EXR's role will be to help explain why these governance changes are important for the legitimacy of the Fund and what can realistically be expected from them. Remember, the institution is 60 years old. The changes will have to be gradual, but, at the same time, convey a sense of purpose and momentum.

Finally, we have to demonstrate that the Fund continues to play a core role in helping our low-income members reach their development objectives. Of course, while these institutional issues are very important, we must also be prepared to communicate on the current conjuncture of international economic and financial markets.

What do you see as the biggest challenge in the run-up to Singapore?

We have to manage the expectations for what can be achieved on issues that are complex and will take time to address—such as the issue of global imbalances and the question of rebalancing quotas to reflect the changing economic weights of countries. Neither question will be settled overnight. The challenge for EXR is to show that the Fund is making progress toward resolving these issues and that there is momentum for change.

A number of EXR's activities—such as outreach to civil society organizations, legislators, and think tanks—have sprung up over the past few years. Others, such as print publications, predate the formation of the department. Is it time to step back and take stock of these activities?

Yes, very much so. We will go to the Board next year with a new communications strategy that will help guide the Fund's outreach work over the next three to five years. This presents an opportunity for us to look at our current product range in light of the changing business model, the changing environment within which the Fund operates, and changing technology.

If you look at the Fund now compared to five years ago, we're moving from a period when the primary focus of our work was on greater transparency and on effectively defending ourselves against criticism to an era where we are engaging more strategically with the opinion-shapers who help set the debate on issues that matter to us. EXR's own role is shifting from a gatekeeper to more of a facilitator. EXR has an important role to play as a center of expertise in ensuring the delivery of the right messages. But communications is not just an EXR function—it is the business of Fund staff as a whole.

How can EXR best help the rest of the Fund communicate?

The links between EXR and the area and functional departments need to be strengthened and made more systematic. We should also take greater advantage of the synergies between external and internal communications. By strengthening the information flow across the Fund, we can ensure that staff across the institution are aware of overall corporate priorities. There, I see an important role for the Intranet, which has been revamped to make it a much more effective communication tool.

Better internal communications can also aid in the sharing of experiences across different parts of the Fund. When we go to a country and talk to the authorities about the options for dealing with the scaling up of aid, for example, we are much more effective if we can relay the experiences of other countries that have coped with the same problem. The transfer of expertise and knowledge across departments could be done more quickly and more systematically. Multilateral institutions like the Fund need to exploit their cross-country knowledge base much more rigorously.

The Intranet is one tool for sharing expertise throughout the Fund. What are some others?

When I was in PDR before going on leave in 2003 to work for the U.K. Department for International Development, we started a PRGF mission chiefs' workshop series, which brought together mission chiefs from PRGF countries across the Fund. The mission chiefs initially thought that this was about colleagues in PDR disseminating information to them. After a couple of these workshops, they realized that the purpose of these workshops was instead for them to share their experiences and insights with others dealing with similar issues—for example, on the Fund's role in the PRSP process or in donor coordination. We found this kind of learning across peers enormously powerful. EXR needs to think about how this sort of communication can be facilitated.

The Managing Director has said that the Fund needs to listen more to outside views and adapt its communication strategy accordingly. How can we do this more effectively?

We can become more engaged with the networks of people and organizations that are working on issues of interest to the Fund. We need to engage with them not simply when we have something to say, but also as active participants in the network because we, too, are going to learn from it. For example, there's probably a hundred think tanks around the world that are important players in shaping opinion among policymakers on core issues. And I'm not just referring to the few that are within easy proximity of Fund headquarters—I'm talking about think tanks across the world. If we identified these think tanks more systematically, it would have a high payoff in terms of both leveraging our ideas and ensuring that our ideas take on board the best knowledge and experience from around the world. Sometimes we need to be humble and recognize that others have expertise, knowledge, and information from which we can profit.

How can EXR leverage new communication technologies like webcasts, podcasts, and the Internet, and, at the same time, ensure that audiences who rely on old technologies aren't forgotten?

These new technologies are becoming much more important. Five years ago, virtually no corporation was using blogs. Today, blogs are a big part of the communication strategy—both internal and external—of a whole range of companies, but not yet the Fund. Should we be using blogs or podcasts? This will require more study. But it's clear that we should be using new technologies more than we have been. I recognize that not everybody has access to these technologies. But I think we underestimate how many people interested in the IMF's work do have access to them, even in parts of the world where these technologies are not that prominent. We also probably overestimate the reach of the traditional technologies in those same areas.

Do you think there's also a generational issue?

That's certainly what my 13-year-old daughter tells me!

You have worked for the World Bank, the Fund's Policy Development and Review Department, and the U.K. Department for International Development. How has your exposure to these different jobs helped you?

One of the things I learned from working for the U.K. government is the importance of communication. When you work in a national government, you see how the media and advocacy groups hold government accountable. This accountability affects the day-to-day work of government officials—they have to be able to explain what they're doing in terms that ordinary people will understand and relate to. That's something that we in the Fund could do better. ◆

Making the top 10 list

Piritta Sorsa (Advisor, EUR)

Anti-IMF demonstrations are usually highly visible, whereas signs of incremental progress in Fund outreach are often more subtle. But there was nothing subtle about one recent indicator of the Fund's good work in a member country: former Fund mission chief Piritta Sorsa (Advisor, EUR) was named the seventh most influential woman in Serbia.

Now leading missions to Slovenia, Sorsa served as the mission chief for Serbia and Montenegro from July 2004 to March 2006. Although Serbia completed a three-year program in February, the economy still faces many challenges, says Sorsa. "It's a typical country in transition," she explains. "There has been some progress in advancing the structural reforms needed to transition to a market economy, but high inflation and a large current account deficit still remain."

The list of the country's 10 most influential women, which was put out by Belgrade newspaper *Blic,* was based on suggestions from journalists, think tanks, politicians, and others. Sorsa, a Finnish national, is not sure how she made it there, but she attributes it at least in part to her good relations with the local media. Topping the list was Carla del Ponte, the Swiss war crimes prosecutor with the United Nations responsible for bringing the late Slobodan Milosevic to justice. Others on the list include mainly prominent Serbian businesswomen.

Perhaps adding to Sorsa's popularity is the fact that the IMF is a relatively new presence in Serbia and Montenegro. During much of the 1990s, the Fund had no relations with the country. After the dissolution of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1992, Serbia and Montenegro ceased to be a member of the Fund until 2000, when the loosely formed union reactivated its IMF membership.

So when Sorsa took up her assignment as mission chief and Harald Hirschhofer arrived in Belgrade as the Fund's resident representative a few months later, Fund outreach was a brand-new phenomeon. Together, they initiated contacts with the press, NGOs, parliamentarians, think tanks, academia, and other civil society groups. Hirschhofer also met frequently with labor union representatives and university students. In March of this year, he launched the res rep office's website, where relevant Fund documents and IMF-related press clippings are posted.

This synergy bolstered the effectiveness of Hirschhofer's and Sorsa's outreach activities. "Both Harald and I believe that outreach is important," Sorsa says. In previous assignments as Honduras mission chief and Bulgaria res rep, Sorsa had actively reached out to media and civil society organizations. In Serbia, such outreach proved particularly helpful—especially given the political difficulties of economic reform there. "When we had tough negotiations, it was good that we were able to explain to the outside why we had to do certain things," she says.

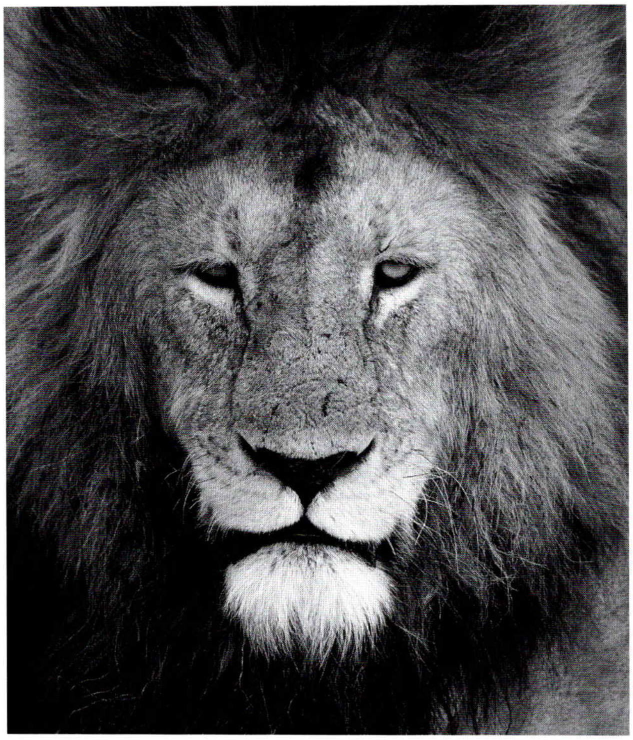
Conducting outreach carries some risks, however. For Sorsa, the possibility of being misquoted is a constant worry. "Even if you ask to see an interview before it's published, you still don't have total control, because you can't check the translation or the headline." There is also the risk of being misunderstood, particularly when explaining complex Fund economic policies to people with no economics background. "You have to try to give concrete examples so people understand how it affects their lives," Sorsa says.

Sorsa is soft-spoken and reserved—a reflection, perhaps, of her northern European culture. The people of the Balkans tend to be outgoing and passionate, while Finns tend to be more calm, says Sorsa. "Sometimes it helps to be calm," she muses.

Serbia and Montenegro are now entering a new phase in their relationship with the IMF, with Montenegro's vote for independence from Serbia in May and its subsequent application for membership in the IMF. Peter Doyle (Division Chief, EUR) has taken over from Sorsa as mission chief. If all goes well, the positive momentum will continue for these newly independent countries in transition.

Harald Hirschhofer (back row, third from left) and Piritta Sorsa (second from right) enjoy an outing with the authorities in Montenegro last year.

Into Africa

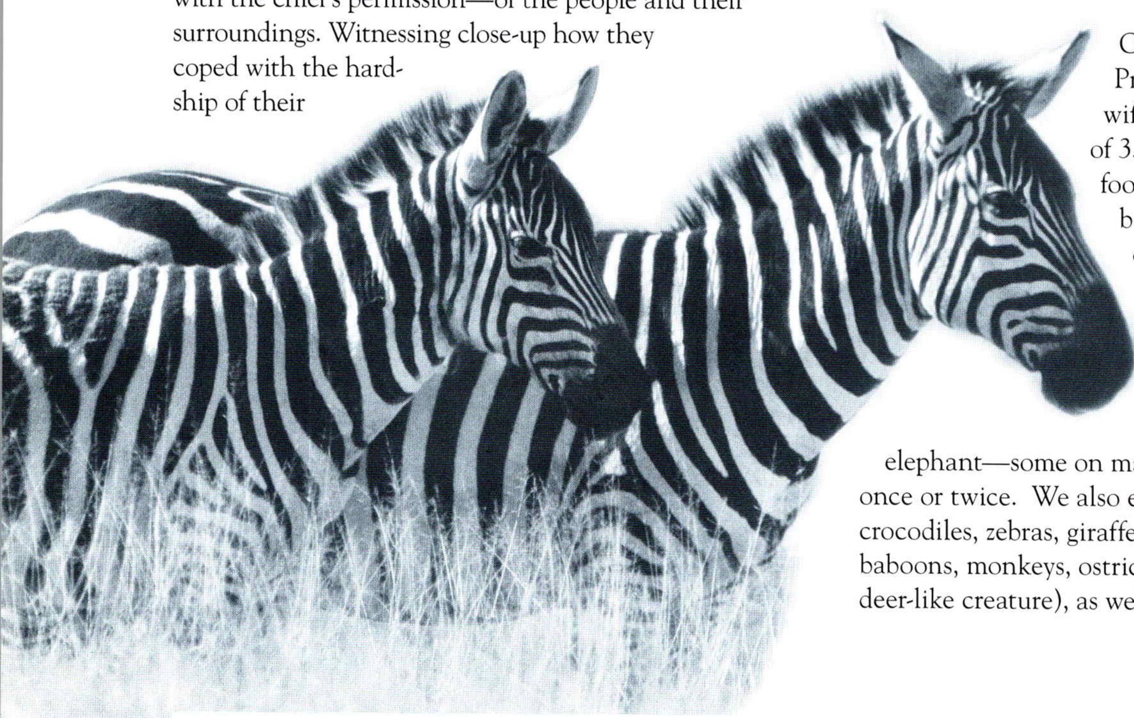


The Fund-Bank International Photographic Society (IPS) periodically holds field trips for its members. One of our trips this year was a little farther afield than usual—5,000 miles from Washington.

We met in mid-June in Arusha (Northern Tanzania) for an eight-day photographic safari organized by Bassirou Sarr—the Center Coordinator for the Fund's East-AFRITAC in Tanzania and former Vice President of the IPS—and his wife, Louise.

Often referred to as the safari capital of East Africa, Arusha is located on a plateau in the Great Rift Valley, in the foothills of Mount Meru. It lies amid a host of natural wonders, including the Serengeti Plain, Lake Manyara, Ngorongoro Crater, Oldupai Gorge, Tarangire, Arusha, and Mount Kilimanjaro National Parks. The area is also home to the Masai people, many of whom maintain their traditional pastoral lifestyle.

Our photo safari began with Manyara National Park, home to 380 bird species (such as red admiral, grey-headed kingfisher, southern red bishop, and huge ground hornbills—that appear to defy gravity when perched in trees). We stayed at a lodge where we were treated to a traditional Masai tribal dance. While there, we visited a functioning Masai *boma* (homestead) to take photos—with the chief's permission—of the people and their surroundings. Witnessing close-up how they coped with the hardship of their lives was a very powerful experience. I will never forget visiting inside one of the huts, which were built by the women of the tribe using dirt and cow manure for the walls and grass for the roof. There were no windows and it was hot, smoky, and completely dark inside.



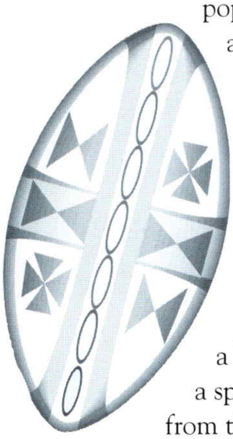
We also visited Oldupai Gorge, where, in the 1950s, Professor Louis Leakey and his wife Mary discovered the remains of 3.5 million-year-old hominoid footprints. The footprints can be seen at the small museum on the premises where Masai jewelry is also sold.

During our visit, we were lucky enough to see the "Big Five"—lion, leopard, rhinoceros, buffalo, and elephant—some on many occasions, others only once or twice. We also encountered hippopotamuses, crocodiles, zebras, giraffes, wildebeests, cheetahs, baboons, monkeys, ostriches, Kirks dik-dik (a tiny deer-like creature), as well as impalas, gazelles, flamingos, and many other exotic birds.

Front row (l–r): Gerard and Emilio, the Tanzanian drivers. Second row (l–r): Mary Wilson, Louise Sarr, Sandy LeBrun-Evans, Wayne Leadbetter, and Sigrid Vollerthun. Back row (l–r): Manuella Palmioli, Caroline Helou, Jose Carlas, Samuel Otoo, Carol Leadbetter, and Bassirou Sarr.

One morning on a drive through the Serengeti (which means "endless plain" in Masai), we noticed several vehicles at a watering hole where a large hippo was wading and hundreds of zebras and wildebeests were jostling for a drink. No sooner had we parked to enjoy the spectacle than suddenly there was a commotion and stampede of animals. At first we thought the hippo was exiting the pond and had startled the zebras and wildebeests—but then we heard someone shout, "Lion!" We then saw a lioness with a wildebeest clenched in her jaws.

Ngorongoro Crater has been described as one of the eight wonders of the world. It is the largest intact volcanic caldera in the world, at 600 meters deep and 265 square kilometers wide, and home to a permanent population of more than 25,000 wild animals. The beauty of the landscape in the early morning light simply has to be seen to be believed.

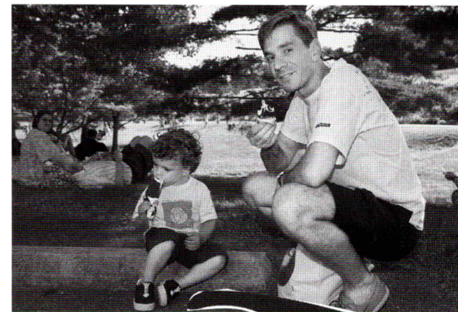


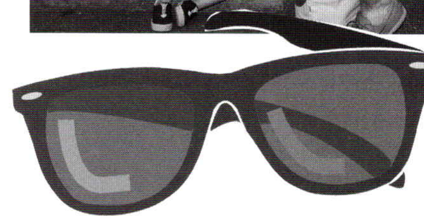
On one of our last nights, I was startled to come across a scorpion inside my tent. I summoned the courage to take a photo before it was forcibly and carefully removed.

At the end of our trip, we stayed at a beautiful inn just outside Arusha with a spectacular view of Mount Kilimanjaro from the "English-style" garden—a fitting finale to a memorable voyage.

For more information or to inquire about membership in the International Photographic Society, please contact Mary Wilson, chairperson for membership, at mwilson2@imf.org or 202-623-0004.

Mary Wilson





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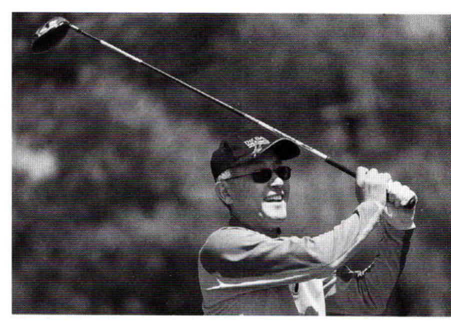

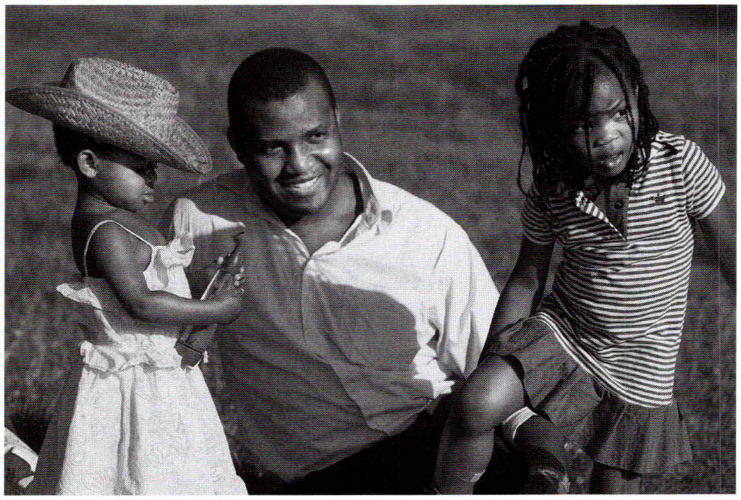

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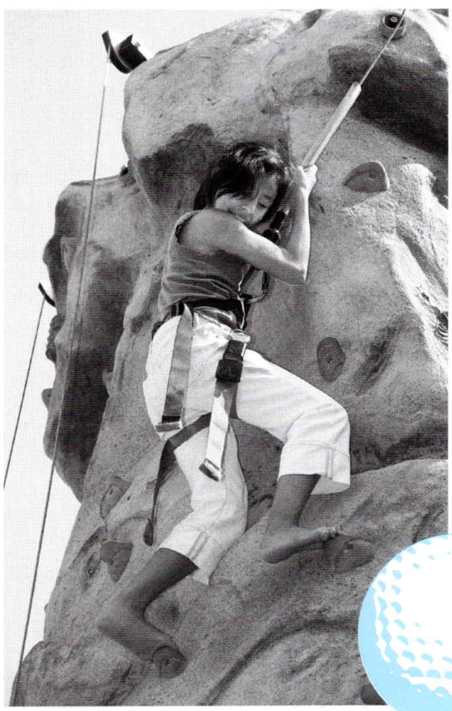
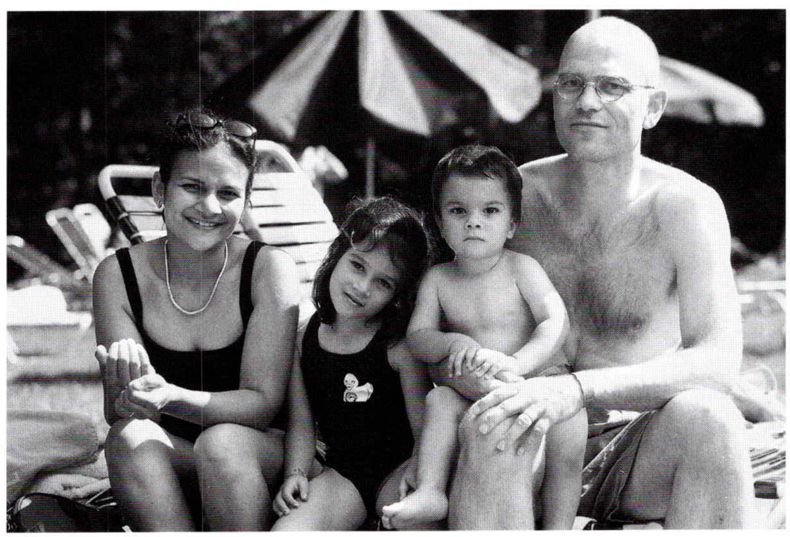
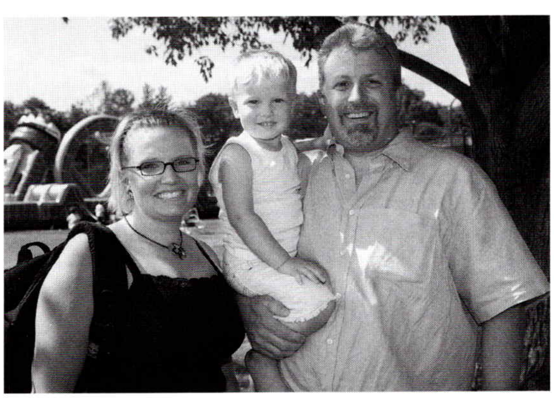






An inside look at the Annual Meetings

Since 1991, Patricia Davies (Manager, Joint Bank-Fund Conferences Office) has been organizing the IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings. As she prepares for this year's Meetings—her last before retirement—she takes a look back at this gargantuan task and how it has evolved over the past 16 years.

How is the venue of the overseas Annual Meetings selected?

The IMF and World Bank Executive Boards select the venue about four years in advance. Countries express interest in hosting the Annual Meetings, then a small Joint Secretariat team conducts technical assessment missions to each of those countries. Among other things, we look at whether they have—or are planning to build—a suitable convention center with space for 1,000 offices, 27 large meeting rooms, a press center, and a registration area. We also consider whether they can admit all member countries, provide appropriate security, and offer a pool of sufficiently qualified local staff. Then we provide our assessments to the Bank and Fund Executive Boards, and they make a recommendation to the member countries.

Once a venue is selected, what goes into the planning?

The host country sets up a counterpart planning team whose responsibility it is to provide all the facilities and all the services. We have a huge "Annual Meetings Requirements Manual" that sets out all the specifications for the meetings, including details of the offices, equipment, furniture, and audiovisual services. This manual, together with frequent interaction with staff of the Bank-Fund Conferences Office and the Joint Secretariat, guides the host country through everything that needs to be done, from arranging for the construction of temporary offices to installing furniture, computers, phone lines, air-conditioning, and lighting.

When potential host countries submit their bid, they are given the Requirements Manual, which is based on the previous overseas Annual Meetings. Technology and voice communications evolve a lot over that period, so certain specifications have to be revisited, and the Manual is revised after every overseas meeting.

Besides technology, what are some of the major changes that you've seen?

Security is a huge area. The 1999 World Trade Organization Meeting in Seattle was a turning point; we first put up security perimeters for the 2000 Spring Meetings. Previously, registration had always taken place neatly inside the convention center, but since people could no longer come inside the secure perimeter without a badge, we had to work out a way for them to get a badge. We had to devise ways of doing registration at a remote location and then busing them in. Security considerations have really changed the way we do things in recent years.

Tell me about the challenges of the Prague meetings in 2000.

Some street demonstrations got out of hand. At one point, the convention center had to be evacuated. The demonstrations were quite violent near the convention center, so it was decided to evacuate people using the metro station directly beneath the convention center. People could take an underground train to the other side of town.

How many people had to be evacuated?

Several thousand. This incident was a learning experience and prompted us to review our communications procedures and put in place an emergency communications plan. In fact, we appointed a Joint Secretariat Communications Officer to be responsible for managing the plan, including a call tree, pop-up messages, public address systems, alert monitors, etc.

Historically, haven't there always been demonstrations at the Annual Meetings?

Yes, but apart from the much earlier meetings—such as Berlin in 1988 and Denmark in 1970—they were considerably smaller in scale. In 2000, demonstrators were actually threatening to try and stop the participants from getting into the meetings, and the threat of violent demonstrations was higher. After 9/11, of course, the threat of terrorism added yet another dimension.

What are some other major changes that you've seen?

I believe it was Michel Camdessus that once said that if the Annual Meetings didn't take place, somebody would have to invent them. It is a unique opportunity for all the different constituent groups—the 184 member country delegations, international financial institutions, the private sector, civil society organizations, academia, media representatives—to get together in one place. A lot of business goes on. People have said that we should consider having virtual meetings, but I'm not sure how practical that is when there are so many different groups attending from so many different countries.

It's been suggested that the Annual Meetings always be held in Washington. Do you think there's value to having them overseas?

Overseas, countries host it as a one-off event and use it as an opportunity to promote the country. So they're willing to allow additional time for full-scale meetings. In Washington, for the foreseeable future, things may have to continue to be on a reduced scale. There's a limit to what we can handle here. When you're squeezing several thousand additional people into Bank and Fund headquarters, it is difficult to provide multiple rooms for delegations, or make available working space for others, such as observer organizations.

Does each Annual Meeting have its own distinct flavor?

They're all different. We work very closely with the host government, and we like to think of ourselves as one big team. We really do build good relationships with our counterparts in the host country.

How many people does the Joint Secretariat employ?

Just eight people year-round. But at the meetings, we have about 16 Joint Secretariat Offices dealing with the meetings' different facets—security, finance, procurement, documents and records, registration, hotel, interpretation, audiovisual, IT, and more. There are roughly 220 people going to Singapore from the Bank and the Fund. We have a much higher number working when the meetings are in Washington, but we take as few people abroad as we can. Overseas, we'll recruit about 250 additional local people to work at the meetings. Two of my colleagues are in Singapore now interviewing about 600–700 people, from which the 250 local staff will be selected.

The local government also has its staff. In Hong Kong, we registered 9,000 local host government staff,

Total attendance for official participants at recent overseas Annual Meetings has been 10,000–11,000 (including spouses).

including the local security staff, cleaning people, wait staff, catering staff, and engineering staff—but that was exceptional. In Dubai, it was more like 6,000.

The host countries can inject their own national character into the meetings. Any interesting examples of how a host country has done this?

Some of the welcome receptions or the governors' dinners have been remarkable. In Bangkok, they had a very nice reception with food stalls, cultural activities, music, and dancing. In Dubai, they did something similar, with henna painting and local traditional folk dancing and singing.

Do you and your staff study up on the local culture?

Yes. In Dubai, for example, the weekend was different. Often businesses close down Thursday afternoon and Friday, then open up again Saturday and Sunday. This left you with a window of only 3 ½ days in the earlier days when we were working from headquarters. That took a bit of getting used to. And of course with Singapore and the Far East, it's a 12-hour time difference. So when you're holding a conference call there, it has to be 7:30 in the morning or 7:30 at night, which is difficult, especially if you have both extremes on one day.

After the meetings, do you have to dismantle everything?

Yes—Finance and Procurement have to pay all the bills, so they remain a week or so after the meetings are over. The IT people have to stay to support them. And shipments staff have to ensure everything is shipped back.

You are retiring after Singapore. What will you do in your retirement?

Immediately after the Annual Meetings, I'm going to do a bit of touring in Cambodia and Vietnam. Following that, I will go to Uganda, where I will visit the Ugandan Children's Charity Foundation. I hope to continue to be involved in conference planning—it's in my blood; I've done it for about 35 years now.

Anything else?

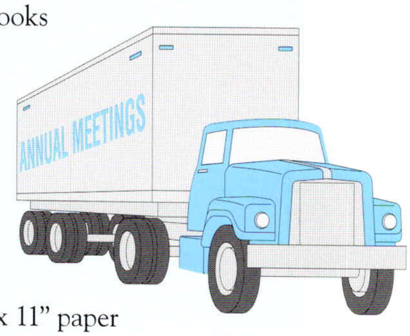
It's been a fantastic experience. I find it so stimulating to work at the Bank and the Fund with people of so many different nationalities. I'm going to miss that. But I also know that after 16 Annual Meetings, it's time to do something else! ◆

What does it take to run the Annual Meetings?

The Annual Meetings Requirements Manual, which is supplied to governments hosting the event, spells out in detail what the host will need to supply, including everything from press and interpretation facilities to audiovisual needs, print shop specifications, hotel accommodation needs, and security requirements.

In furniture and supplies alone, the requirements are daunting. The following selected items from the latest manual give some idea of the magnitude of the logistical arrangements:

- 3,000 bottles of water a day to be delivered to individual offices and workstations for a 10-day period
- 1,000 pitchers of ice
- 60,000 disposable cups for hot and cold drinks
- 13,110 chairs of various types
- 5,000 tables for office spaces
- 800 tables for meeting space
- 500 stenographic notebooks
- 6,000 envelopes
- 400 rolls of tape
- 30 boxes of thumbtacks
- 300 extension cords
- 50 clipboards
- 2,500,000 sheets of 8½ x 11" paper
- 75,000 sheets of 8½ x 14" paper
- 10,000 sheets of 8½ x 11" paper, 3-hole-punched
- 50 packages of paper towels
- 6 tape measures, metric and U.S. standards
- 400 doorstops
- 120 dozen "Post-it" note pads
- 12 gavels



imfstaff 35 years

Marta Chiari

imfstaff 30 years

Can T. Demir
James L. Dowell
Cheryl Shotwell

imfstaff 25 years

James M. Boughton
David M. Hicks
Donogh Colm McDonald

imfstaff 20 years

Sally C. Baldwin
Scott Bradley Brown
Effie Demiris
Edwin A. Gurski
Marta Linares
David Hill Naismith
Bernadette R. Shannon
Harry J. G. Trines

Separations

Paul Anthony Armknecht
Torbjorn Becker
Ashok Bhundia
Cherry M. Chin
Duangsamorn Chudabuddhi
Thomas C. Dawson II
Margaret Colter Donovan
Andrew Griffin
Thomas Laursen
Alice I. McGann
Maria Mendez
Pau Rabanal Minguella
Tapio O. Saavalainen
Tao Wang

Transfers

Maria A. Albino to WHD from FAD
Alfredo Ercole Baldini to AFR from FAD
Geoffrey J. Bannister to WHD from ICM
Peter Berezin to RES from APD
Pamela J. Bradley to SEC from JVI
Selim Cakir to MCD from FAD
Jean-Pierre Chauffour to AFR from EUO
Charles V.A. Collyns to RES from WHD
Giovanni Dell'Ariccia to RES from APD
Christine B. Dieterich to MCD from EUR
Jeanne Helene Gobat to MFD from PDR
Mangal Goswami to ICM from MCD
Michele Hassine to EUR from STA
Verona Madonna Itam to SEC from SSG
Magda Elsayed Kandil to WHD from INS
Sarmad Khawaja to STA from MCD
Jung Yeon Kim to PDR from AFR
Chee Sung Lee to OAP from MFD
Jorge Marquez-Ruarte to PDR from HRD
Wayne Mitchell to AFR from PDR
Lynge Nielsen to UNO from PDR
Claudio Augusto Paiva to WHD from INS
Axel R. Palmason to PDR from UNO
Alvaro Piris Chavarri to WHD from MFD
Alexander Pitt to APD from PDR
Jaume Puig Forne to MCD from SEC
Jurgen T. Reitmaier to STA from AFR
David J. Robinson to WHD from RES
Ratna Sahay to FIN from WHD
Yan Sun to PDR from WHD
Leslie Teo to APD from MFD
Anna Unigovskaya to PDR from EUR
Eric Verreydt to INS from WHD
Mary Jocelyn Villacorte to WHD from EUR
Ivanna Vladkova Hollar to WHD from PDR

new imf staff

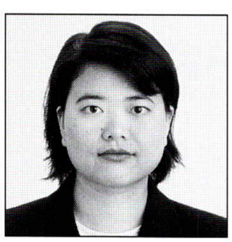
Camilo Amezquita
Colombian, is a Research Assistant, APD. Formerly a contractual staff member with TGS's CATS team, he holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from the Universidad de la Sabana, Bogota, Colombia. He is interested in snowboarding, motorcycling, and movies.

Jochen Andritzky
German, is in the Economist Program, ICM. Educated at the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland, he enjoys traveling, moutaineering, and brewing beer.

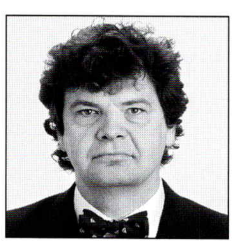
Emine Boz
Turkish, is in the Economist Program, INS. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland.

Eduardo Castro
Brazilian, is an Economist, AFR. Previously a balance of payments analyst at the Central Bank of Brazil, he holds a Ph.D. in political economy from Princeton University. He lists cinema, sailing, and gastronomy among his interests.

Chuling Chen
Chinese, is in the Economist Program, MFD. Formerly a senior economist at Freddie Mac, she holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of California at Los Angeles. She likes travel, movies, and cooking. She is married.



Kirill G. Denisin
A dual Russian/U.S. national, is an Accounts Officer, FIN. Formerly a tax manager with Ross & Moncure, Inc., in Alexandria, he holds an M.S. in economics from All Russia Academy for Foreign Trade, Moscow. He lists fast cars, sail racing, and old prints among his interests. He is married with one daughter.



new imf staff

Gavin Gray
A U.K national, is a Senior Economist, EUR. Previously team leader, E.U. Country Analysis Unit in the U.K. Treasury, he holds an M.S. in economics from the London School of Economics. He enjoys French culture, sampling Bulgarian food and wine, and vigorous exercise.

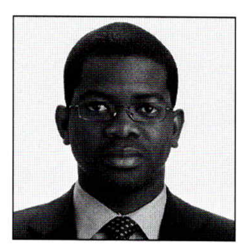
Maria Salome Gutierrez
A U.S. national, is a Staff Assistant, WHD. Formerly a contractual staff assistant with IEO, she studied accounting at Montgomery College. She is interested in volleyball and traveling, and is married with two children.

Veena Jayadeva
A U.S. national, is a Staff Assistant, EXR. Previously a consultant in microfinance with the World Bank, she holds an M.A. in international relations and economics from Johns Hopkins University. She is interested in languages, travel, cooking, and salsa dancing.

Sarah Hussein Kamal
A U.S. national, is a Translation Editorial Assistant, TGS. Previously employed by the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, she holds a B.A. in sociology from the University of Cairo. She enjoys cooking, swimming, and reading. She is married and has three children.

Ina Kota
Canadian, is an External Relations Officer, EXR. Formerly a senior practice specialist at McKinsey & Company, Inc., New York, she holds an M.A. from Columbia University. An opera singer, she performed her first role as Papagena in Mozart's Die Zauberflote with the New Operafestival di Roma in Rome, Italy, in 2003. She is married and has a dog.

Roland Kangni Kpodar
Togolese, is in the Economist Program, MCD. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Auvergne (CERDI). He enjoys travel and soccer.



new imf staff

Myrtho Mercier
Haitian, is a Staff Assistant, LEG. Previously employed by the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, she includes reading, gardening, and spending time with her family among her interests.

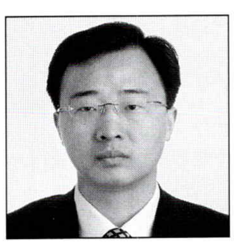
Paul Pottinger
Jamaican, is a Translator, TGS. Formerly a translator at the World Bank, he holds an M.A. in French from the University of the West Indies and holds diplomas in translation and interpreting from the University of Geneva. He likes travel, good food, and swimming.

Gerry Rice
A U.K. national, is a Deputy Director, EXR. Formerly with the World Bank, his positions included communications director, strategy manager, and presidential speechwriter. He holds a Ph.D. in modern history from Glasgow University and was a Kennedy Scholar at Harvard. Author of several books, he also enjoys music and soccer.

Steve Sakach
A U.S. national, is a Senior Facilities Officer, TGS. Previously with Facilities Engineering Associates in Fairfax, Virginia, he was educated at Georgetown University. He is a certified facility manager (CFM) and a certified plant engineer (CPE). He enjoys ooaching Little League baseball.

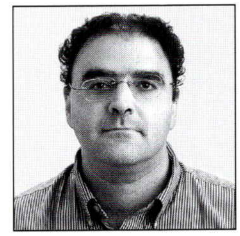
Magnus Saxegaard
Norwegian, is in the Economist Program, AFR. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Oxford. He includes tennis, squash, scuba diving, and traveling among his interests.

Jian Guang Shen
Finnish, is an Economist, AFR. Previously a senior economist at the European Central Bank, he holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Helsinki. He enjoys traveling.



new imf staff

Ioannis Tokatlidis
Greek, is a Senior Research Officer, RES. Previously a contractual research officer with RES, he holds an M.P.P. in international security and economic policy from the University of Maryland, College Park.



Sarah Wilson
Canadian, is a Translator, TGS. Formerly a translator/reviser at the Free Trade Area of the Americas Secretariat in Puebla, Mexico, she holds an M.A. in conference interpretation from the Monterey Institute of International Studies in California, and an M.A. in translation from the University of Ottawa in Canada.

Silvia Zucchini
Italian, is a Board Operations Officer, SEC. Formerly an advisor at the Italian Ministry of the Economy in Rome, she holds an M.A. in international economics and international relations from SAIS (Johns Hopkins University) in Washington, D.C. She enjoys traveling, cooking, opera, and ballet.

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Joining forces to help Suriname

Last May's floods in Suriname went largely unnoticed by the world, but for many citizens of the country, it was a major disaster. The official death toll was not high, but the flooding brought on by several days of heavy rainfall damaged much of the infrastructure of the country's interior. Crops were destroyed, and roughly 40,000 Surinamese citizens—or approximately 10 percent of the country's population—were displaced.

When Gillmore Hoefdraad (Senior Economist, STA) heard about the disaster, he wanted to help. The Fund's only Surinamese staff member, he began talking with his compatriots at the Surinamese Embassy and the Organization of American States to determine what could be done. Charmaine Robinson, Chair of the Bank-Fund Caribbean Association (CAWI), also contacted Hoefdraad and offered CAWI's assistance in organizing a fund drive at the IMF and World Bank. With Hoefdraad, Robinson approached the IMF Civic and Community Relations program about setting up tables in the HQ1 and HQ2 lobbies to collect money for humanitarian relief to Suriname.

Not surprisingly, says Hoefdraad, most staff had not even heard about the floods. "There are bigger problems in the world," he explains. "This was never really in the news, except in Holland and the Caribbean." In some ways, though, this natural disaster was more devastating than most, since the flooding affected the country's impoverished interior—home to a quarter of the country's population (mostly indigenous groups and descendants of Africans who fled slavery). Without assistance from the outside, these communities would have difficulty rebuilding their economy.

The fundraising efforts of Hoefdraad and his colleagues from CAWI paid off. With matching funds from the Civic Program Advisory Committee, the IMF gave a total of $8,298 for Suriname disaster relief through the Pan American Development Foundation. The fundraising stint also gave Hoefdraad a chance to tell staff about his country. Many were not familiar with Suriname and were curious to learn more. A few had visited the country and reminisced about their experiences there. "It was nice to hear that staff cared," Hoefdraad says.

The efforts to help the country did not stop there. When visiting family in Suriname earlier this summer, Hoefdraad had the chance to visit the flood-damaged areas with staff from the Ministry of Health and nongovernmental organizations. "It was quite affecting," he says, to see firsthand the extensive damage to homes and schools and to become aware of the plight of the country's elderly. "Most of them had nowhere to go, and they were living in makeshift camps under the most miserable conditions," he explains.

Upon his return to the United States, Hoefdraad worked with Kathy DeBoe of the IMF Civic and Community Relations Office to organize donations of clothing and school supplies to be shipped to a nongovernmental organization in Suriname. In a personal capacity, he is also working with other Surinamese expatriates to aid long-term development in the country by identifying worthwhile NGO projects and seeking funding for them.

When asked why he does all this, Hoefdraad shrugs. "I love my country—if there's anything I can do to help it, I will do it." ◆

This Surinamese family attempts to carry on with daily life after the May floods.