



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Taking a Short Cut

**Training Module Utilizing Vignettes from the
FPO & COTR Perspectives**

**Version 2
November 16, 2009**



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How to Use These Vignettes

- **Facilitator Notes** – designed to help the facilitator provide context for the training module using the vignettes, as well as curriculum to walk students through the exercise following viewing. These slides are for facilitator eyes only, and not to show students.
- **Participant Briefer** – designed to help students understand the context of the vignette storyline and how to prepare for the exercise following viewing. These slides can be shown directly to the student, or can be paraphrased by facilitators.
- **Conclusions** – designed as a wrap-up to the learning module. It provides information students will need to take away from the module, as well as information that facilitators and students should review together.



- **Internal vs. External Roles**

- Internal - AID's business model (we use contracts and grants in carrying out work, achieving **OUTPUTS**; the domain of COTRs)
- External - our approach to development (what contractors, grantees, other donors, government and local civil society **AND** USAID staff do, which includes **BOTH** outputs and outcomes)

- **Multiple Hats**

- USAID staff aren't just managers of contracts & grants. They may be:
 - Involved with host country in negotiating policy changes
 - Providing technical assistance in ways only a USG employee can do
 - Involved with negotiations, multi-donor discussions, other interactions
 - Defining Agency strategies and policies which define the **OUTCOMES** as opposed to **OUTPUTS** (see next slide for more on this).

Explain to students that many technical USAID staff are both managers of contracts as well as being directly involved in development – in terms of technical leadership, policy reform, and grants. These two vignettes explore both issues.



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Difference between Outcomes & Outputs

An **outcome** is a significant, intended, and measurable change in the condition of a customer, or a change in the host country, institutions, or other entities that will affect the customer directly or indirectly. Results are typically broader than USAID-funded outputs and require support from other donors and partners not within USAID's control.

An **output** is a tangible, immediate, and intended product or consequence of an activity within USAID's control. Examples of outputs include people fed, personnel trained, better technologies developed, and new construction. Deliverables included in contracts will generally be considered outputs, as will tangible products and consequences of USAID grantees. (Reference: ADS Chapters 200-203)

Review this with students when you discuss the key themes from the previous slide. Also print and handout slides 10-14 so they can see a visual representation of this contention.



1. These vignettes are based on a real incident, but do **not** tell the participants that until end. In real incident, the Mission Director was able to move funding and contracts around to meet the objective.
2. Note to students that the term Field Program Officer (FPO), used in these vignettes, is a unique title only used in Afghanistan by USAID.
 - It refers to a USG employee (usually a PSC) posted in a remote location. So far, none of these FPOs are COTRs.
 - They do however have unique authority over some grants, due to a “notwithstanding” waiver. This relates to only one contract in Afghanistan, and is not found in Iraq, where there are also PRTs.
3. While this is based on the extreme situation in Afghanistan, it applies also to COTRs working in non-high threat posts and at the RRB. Confusion of internal and external roles, and having “multiple hats” are chronic problems within USAID.



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Showing the Vignettes

Print and hand out the character sheets presented on slides 14 and 15 so students can see the actors before viewing the vignette.

Open the CD and click on the Start file in the FPO and COTR folders to play the vignettes for the students. Each vignette is roughly 15 minutes. Note that when playing the vignettes you will need to manually go from scene to scene.

The vignettes are best watched in full screen (F5) mode, and require speakers or headphones for audio. If you are having trouble getting the vignettes to play in the proper mode or are encountering sound issues, close the browser window and reload. If the problems persist contact rferrer@irglt.com for technical support.



- The exercise will take roughly 45 minutes.
- Break students up into groups of 3-5 (depending on the size of the class). For very small classes or 7 or less, form one class group.
- Each group will review the key problems, challenges, failures, and successes of the actors. The end goal is to have the students show how the decision making chain could have been improved.
 - Have the groups focus on the FPO and COTR specifically, but take into account the role of all actors.
 - Emphasize that there are no correct answers, and that the failures of the actors are not one dimensional.
 - Encourage the students to take on the roles of the Mission Director, FPO, COTR, Contractors, TCN, and CO so they can understand the motivations and goals of each.
 - Allow them to discuss for 30 minutes (15 minutes for each vignette).
- Reassemble the class, and have a member from each group (or in the case of the small class have each student) present on their findings. Allow 15 minutes for this discussion.



- After you finish the exercise, describe the real situation that inspired the vignette story.
 - Print and hand out the Frontline story on the dam which is presented on slide 16.
 - Inform the student that the vignette storyline is based on a real situation in Afghanistan.
 - The road project from the vignettes was inspired from a dam project in Afghanistan, but instead of the events that unfolded in the vignettes the situation was worked out with a clearly articulated agreement to realign funds and work within the parameters of the contract.
 - The Mission addressed both the contractual issues with the CO, RLA, and Mission Director, as well as dealt with the external issues related to GOA expectations.
- For more information, provide the URL of the Skip Waskin (former USAID/Afghanistan Mission Director) audio interview to your students:

http://www.develebridge.net/assets/USAIDLearningCenter/Conversations/Skip_Waskin_Interview/player.html

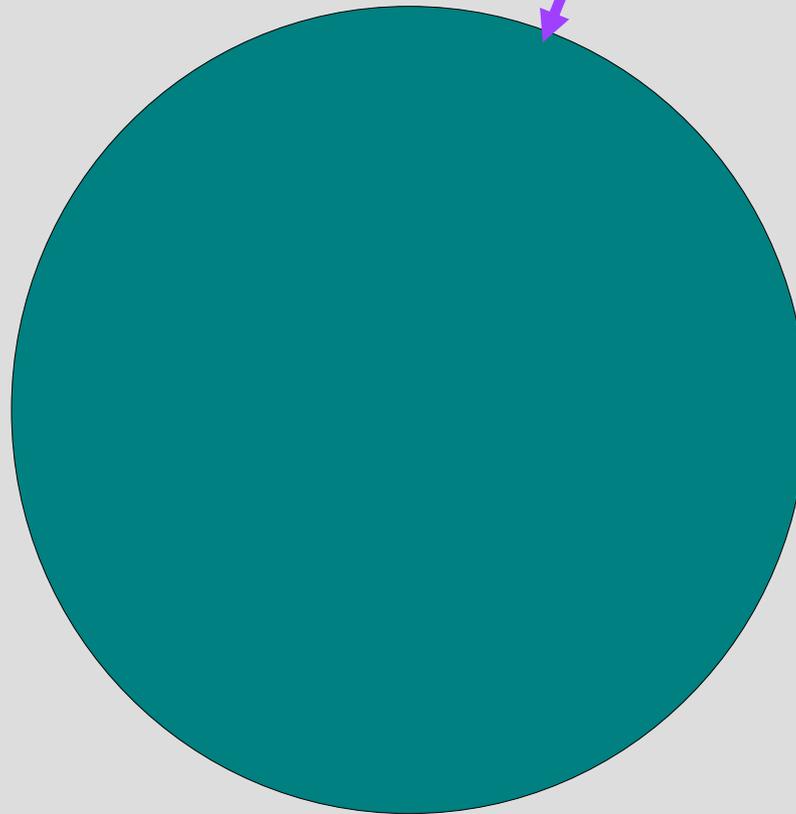
- Finally, skip to the final three slides (17-19), and review the Conclusion information with students. You may want to hand out copies of those slides as well, or show them on a projector.



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Outcomes vs. Output Handout I

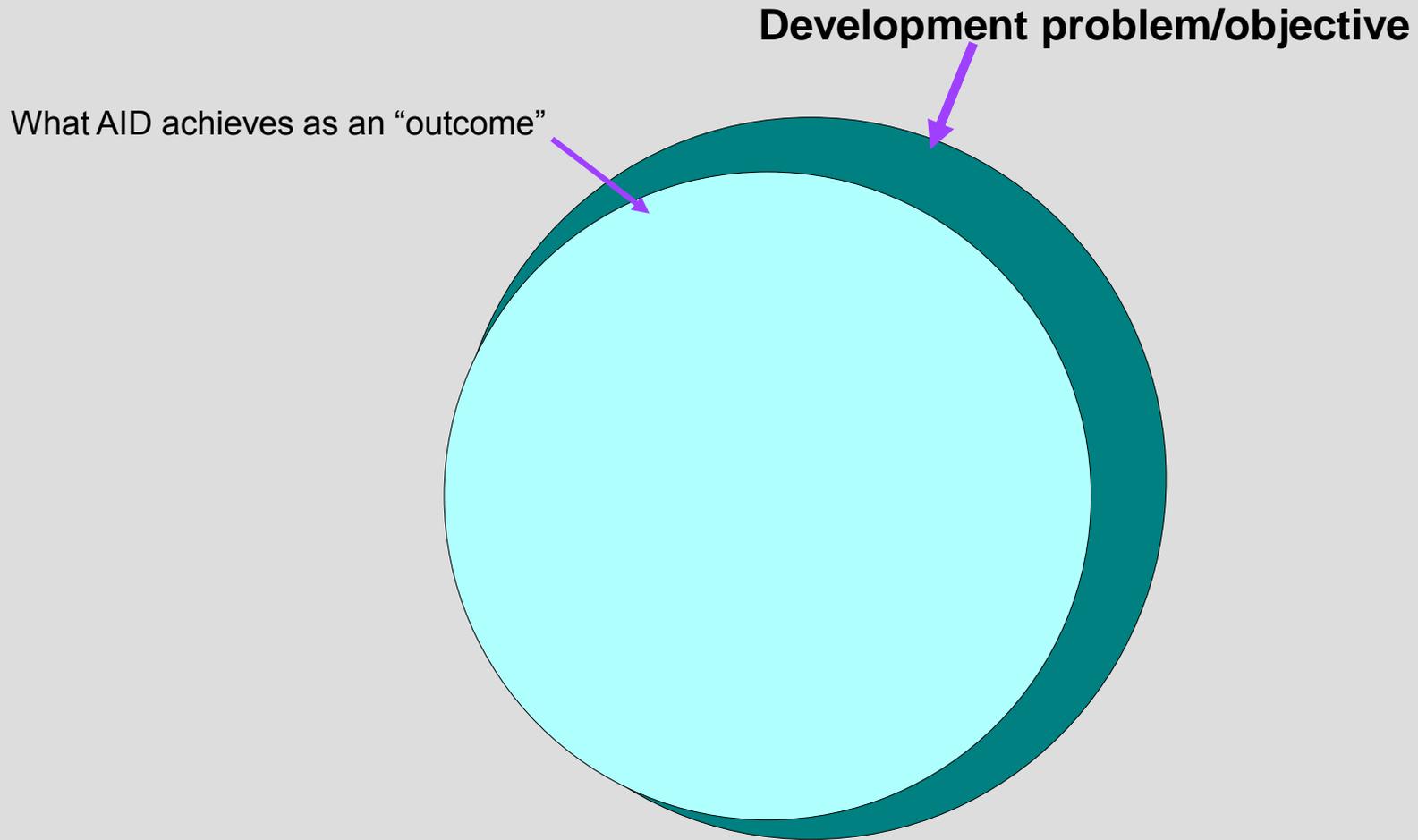
Development problem/objective





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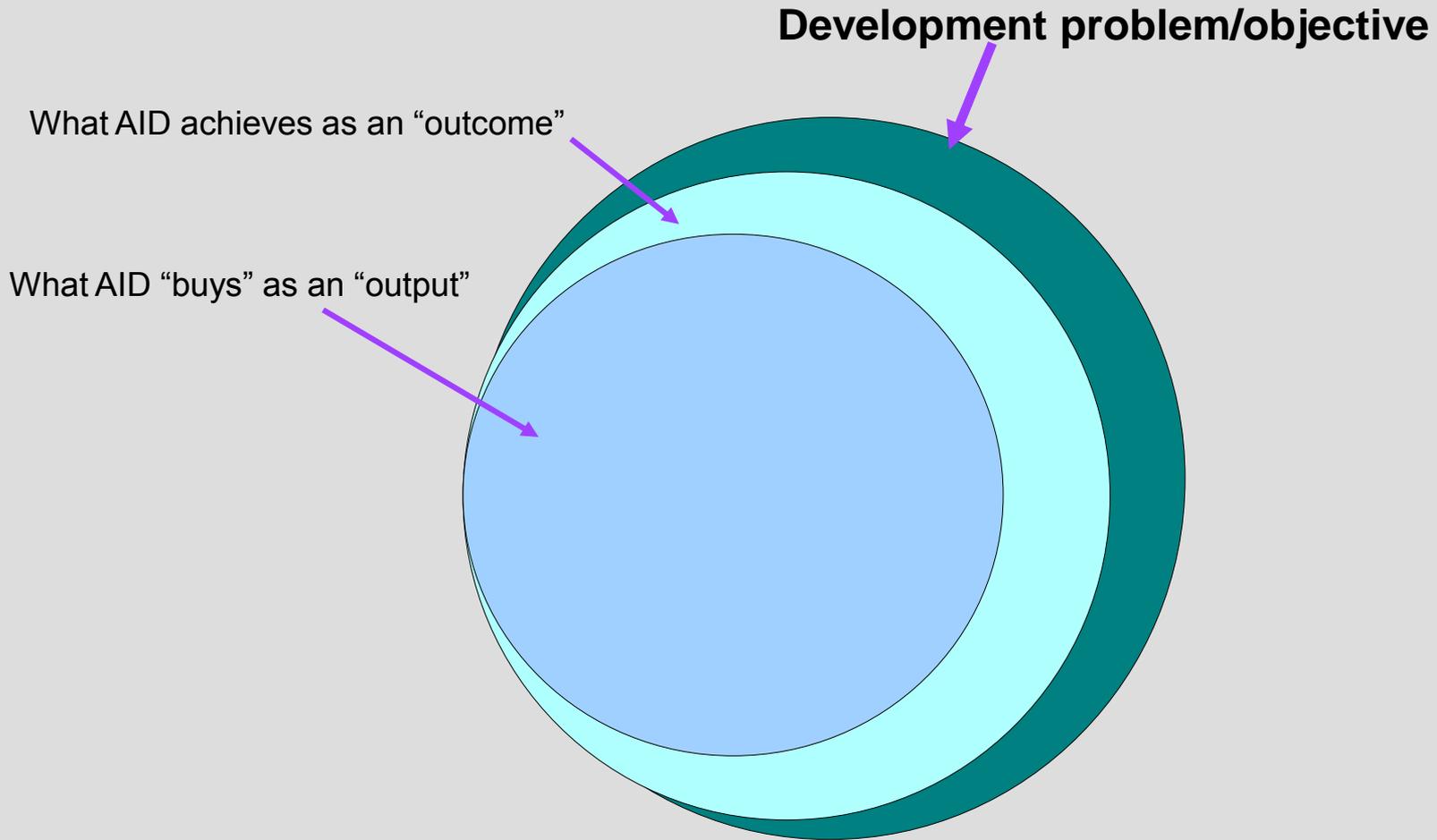
Outcomes vs. Output Handout II





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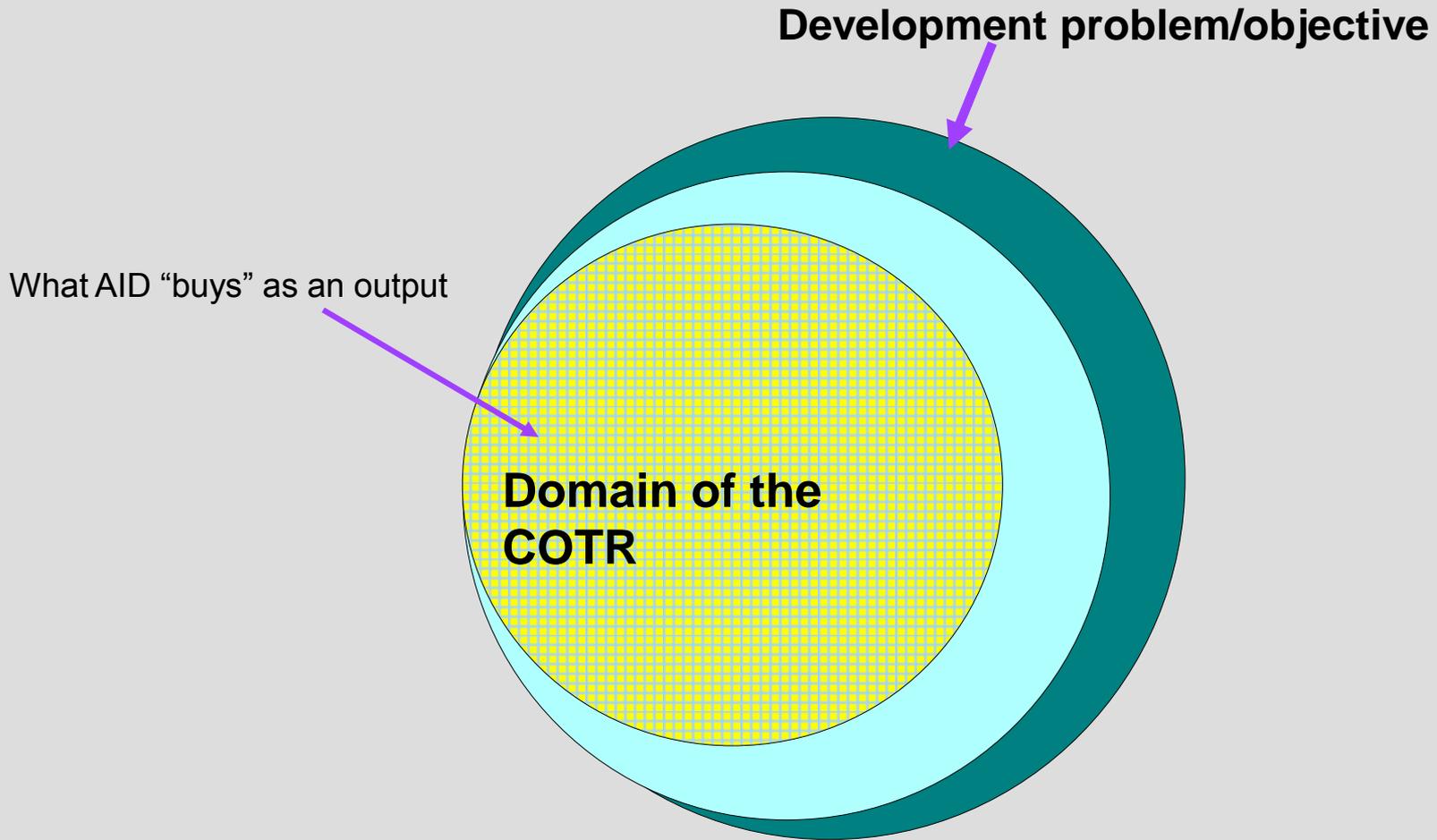
Outcomes vs. Output Handout III





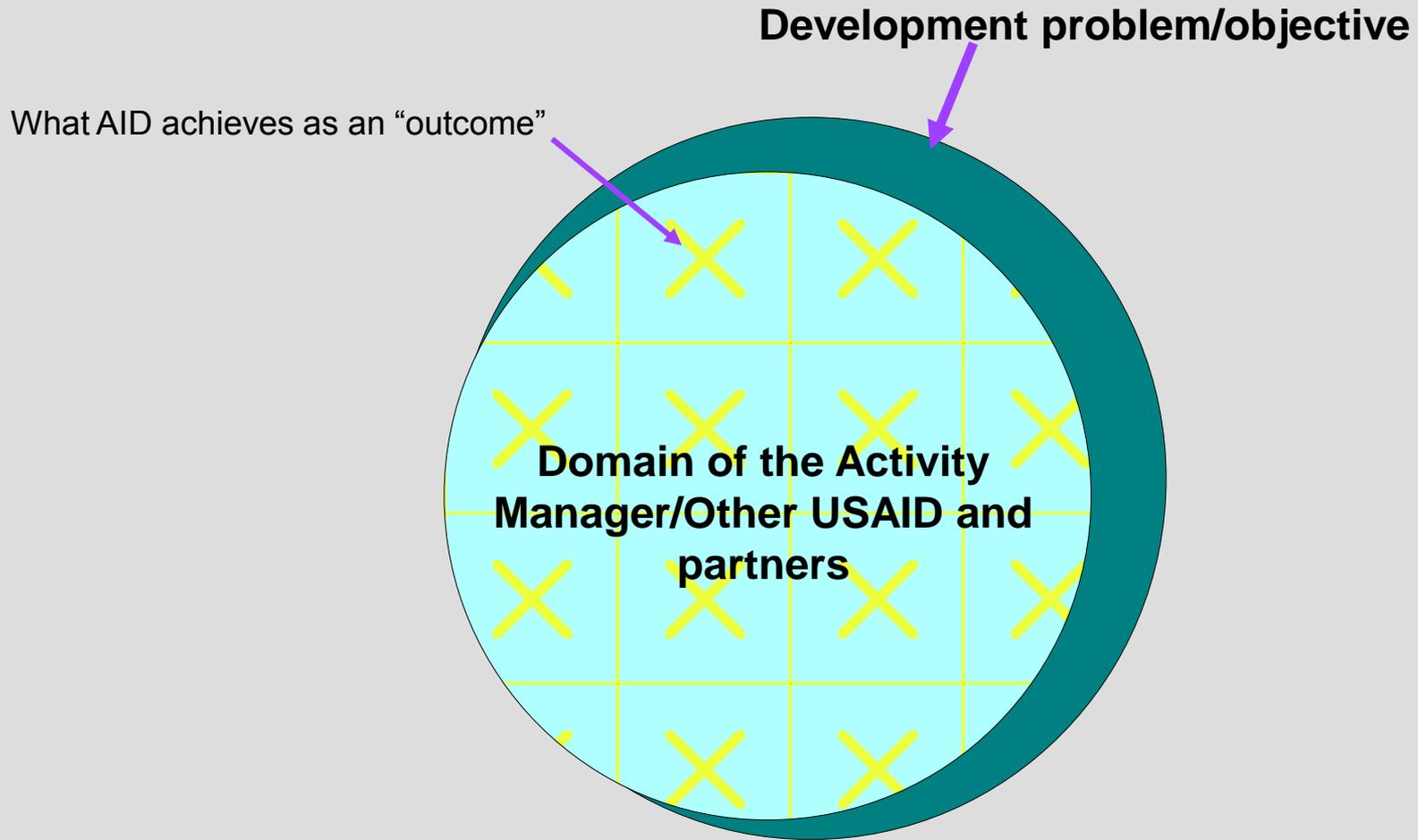
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Outcomes vs. Output Handout IV





Outcomes vs. Output Handout V





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FPO Perspective: Cast of Characters



Russell Quinn
Mission Director
USAID/Afghanistan



Joe Smith
Field Program Officer
Ghazni PRT
USAID/Afghanistan



Joan Uppington
COTR
USAID/Afghanistan



Ann Bennett
PRT Advisor
US State Department



Lt. Col. De Sousa
NATO Representative
Ghazni PRT



Basheer
Field Coordinator
General Contracting Inc.



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COTR Perspective: Cast of Characters



Russell Quinn
Mission Director
USAID/Afghanistan



Joe Smith
Field Program Officer
Ghazni PRT
USAID/Afghanistan



Joan Uppington
COTR
USAID/Afghanistan



William deKoop
Regional Contracting Officer
USAID/Thailand



Natasha Stolovina
Third Country National
USAID/Afghanistan



Jeff Taylor
General Contracting Inc.
Representative



FRONTLINES

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Kyrgyzstan farmers are getting access to land once available only to the well-connected. See page 3.



Photo by Penny Galley/Cheremets

Gulyumkan Salieva bid at a 2007 land auction in northern Kyrgyzstan and now has a field of wheat.

FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVES:

Peace and Security

"My mission is to help bring hope and stability" to Anbar Province in Iraq. SEE PAGE 6

Governing Justly and Democratically

Azerbaijan schoolchildren hold mock jury trial. SEE PAGE 5

Investing in People

People with HIV in India gain access to group health insurance. SEE PAGE 5

Economic Growth

ATMs on wheels bring banking to poor. SEE PAGE 6

Humanitarian Assistance

Haiti receives relief after storms. SEE PAGE 12

READER ALERT

Convoy Delivers USAID Turbine to Kajaki Dam

KABUL —A convoy of 4,000 coalition troops spent one week fighting off Taliban attacks to clear the way for the delivery of a powerful new turbine to the Kajaki Dam in southern Afghanistan Sept. 2.

It was the latest move by USAID to rejuvenate a major U.S. aid project that was installed five decades ago and to supply electricity to millions of Afghans.

The turbine was flown into Kandahar airport aboard one of the world's largest cargo planes and then was escorted 110 miles to the dam site across territory contested by Taliban militants who have tried to derail the dam repair project.

The new turbine, plus the refurbishing of a second turbine, should



Photo by Louisa Bar

Delivery of a new turbine to the Kajaki Dam in southern Afghanistan is expected to triple electrical power to residents. The dam was constructed by USAID in the 1950s.

see **CONVOY** on page 11 ▶



- There are practical consequence of the differences between outputs (what A&A “buys”) and outcomes (what the overall program is trying to achieve).
- Documentation, information sharing, leaving a paper trail, drafting (and requesting) handover notes are all critical in projects that last longer than tours.
- The rest of the USAID team involved with an activity needs to understand the COTR’s role and authority. *It is critical that you understand that many of them will never take this course, and won’t know what your duties are.*



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Take-aways II

- The risk is not always within one's own personal control; you can be at risk because of the actions of others
- Being careful does **NOT** mean that one shouldn't take risks, or that change is to be avoided.
- These situations can happen in any country, and in RRB, not just in times of conflict or stress

- Be alert to misperceptions/assumptions of approval and authorization.
- The Mission Director is affected by this in two ways – as head of the development program, AND as the HCA (Head of Contracting Authority) at the Mission.
- Programs where the COTR is removed from the point of implementation pose risks, and threaten either to be roadblocks or landmines.