

THE CARTER CENTER



NEWS

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The Carter Center
One Copenhill
453 Freedom Parkway
Atlanta, GA 30307
(404) 420-5100
www.cartercenter.org

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Carter Center Expands International Health Programs

Around the world, millions are threatened by little-known illnesses because they lack access to health education and simple treatment methods. For more than a decade, The Carter Center has worked to eradicate or control certain diseases in Africa and other regions. Guinea worm disease (*dracunculiasis*)—which causes painful skin sores and possible crippling—and river blindness (*onchocerciasis*)—which inflicts constant itching and potential blindness—are two dramatic examples.

The outlook for people affected by these diseases is now bright. To date, the Center's Global 2000 program and its international partners have wiped out 95 percent of all cases of Guinea worm, soon making it the only disease besides smallpox to be eradicated. And in 1998, staff helped treat almost 6 million people for river blindness, which the Center and its global partners hope to control in Africa by 2007. Building upon its experience fighting both diseases, The Carter Center now is tackling three others:

lymphatic filariasis, schistosomiasis, and trachoma.

"The success of our existing health programs gives the Center a firm foundation upon which to build additional

public health efforts," former U.S. President Jimmy Carter said. "Each new program also will work with governments, health workers, and villagers to

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Allen Foster, M

This African man suffers from trachoma. He holds a pair of tweezers to pluck his in-turned eyelashes, a painful condition that scars the cornea and leads to blindness.

Delegates Observe Elections in Venezuela

Carter Center observers witnessed a historic election in December as Venezuelans voted into office populist presidential candidate Hugo Chavez. The vote was an expression of discontent with a perilous economy and government corruption that had lasted four decades

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More News About Health Projects

Jimmy Carter recently visited the set of the popular television show "ER" to tape a public service announcement about Guinea worm disease (page 5), while five individuals were named Rosalynn Carter Fellows in Mental Health Journalism for 1998-99 (page 3).

China Climbs Democracy's Learning Curve

By Robert Pastor

A decade ago, China began to hold direct elections for mayors and committees in its 905,804 villages. Those who follow China tend to disagree on the significance of these village elections. Skeptics see merely "Potemkin villages"—fake democracy aimed at camouflaging Communist dictatorship to fool the West. Optimists see "Jeffersonian villages"—seeds that will soon sprout into national democracy. Alas, like so many Western perceptions, both sides miss the point.

If the skeptics were right, the Chinese government would make it easy for international journalists to observe the village elections, but the opposite is the case. Beijing-based journalists know the difficulty of accompanying delegations sent to observe these elections, such as the ones I have led on behalf of The Carter Center. I have tried repeatedly and usually unsuccessfully to persuade the Chinese government to allow more foreign journalists to observe elections.

Invited by the Ministry of Civil Affairs, which is responsible for village elections, I have led five Carter Center delegations during the past two years to five provinces to advise them on ways to improve the electoral process.

Our samples were small and not representative, but we have learned that even most of the model villages still fall short of the standards set out in the law. Still, there has been substantial progress with each round of elections.

We were told repeatedly by officials at the highest levels of government that our reports, which contain many criticisms and recommendations, have been very helpful to them.

Robert Pastor serves as senior consultant to The Carter Center's China Village Elections Project and is former director of the Latin American and Caribbean Program.



The Carter Center

A voter casts his ballot in Laichu village in China, where The Carter Center is working to help make elections more efficient.

If the Potemkin skeptics overlook the seriousness of the experiment, Jeffersonian optimists fail to understand that the soil in which "grassroots" elections have been planted in China is very different than in the West. In 5,000 years of civilized history, China has not had direct democratic elections at the village level. Some families give all the ballots to the patriarch and are bewildered when officials insist that each should vote. In one village that was too poor to have separate polling booths, they let five villagers into a schoolroom to vote at five different tables. All five villagers migrated to the same table in the middle to discuss and look at how each wanted to vote. When officials insisted that villagers had to vote individually and secretly, they were disappointed.

Since 1988, the model villages have tried to implant the basic elements of a free election—individual and secret ballots, multiple candidates for each position, transparent counts, and regular elections every three years. But not all

elections follow these procedures. The Ministry asked The Carter Center to help develop a national system for collecting election results and assessing how well the process is doing nationally so they can improve their civic education programs and target them to the areas most in need. We have started installing this system in three pilot provinces—Fujian, Hunan, and Jilin—but it will take years to complete it. Still, our overall impression is that Chinese village elections are climbing up the learning curve of democracy.

Time magazine's Jaime FlorCruz, a journalist who accompanied us on a trip to Jilin Province in March, asked new Premier Zhu Rongji if people wanted to vote directly for county magistrates, provincial governors, and premier and president of the country. Mr. Zhu declared unequivocally that he favored direct democratic elections (similar to those conducted at the village level) for all positions, including his own, but he said the government had not yet studied how long it would take. One should not underestimate the significance of the answer. It established a goal and invites the follow-up question: When and how will China implement procedures for higher level elections?

There are many signs that the government is actively exploring a number of ideas to answer that question—including direct democratic elections at the township level. The nation's leaders show increasing signs of understanding that democratic reforms are essential to providing a framework of stability and the rule of law. China's village elections might not please either skeptics or optimists, but they offer a good base on which to build a more democratic system. ■

Parts of this article first appeared in the Sept. 3, 1998, edition of The Asian Wall Street Journal.

Journalism Fellows Shed Light on Mental Health Issues

"I've always considered Abraham Lincoln to be the essence of American greatness," said Joshua Wolf Shenk, a 1998-99 recipient of the Rosalynn Carter Fellowships for Mental Health Journalism. The nation's 16th president is often remembered—and studied—for his role in the U.S. Civil War. However, Mr. Shenk's interest encompasses something more personal.

"Lincoln had wit, courage, humility, and passion. But there is another side to his story. He suffered from what his contemporaries called gloom or melancholy—what we know today as depression," Mr. Shenk explained. "Thanks to this fellowship, I can bring this aspect of his life to light, showing how views of mental illness have changed since Lincoln's time. We have made great progress in the field of mental health, but we can always learn from the past."

A free-lance writer for such publications as *Harper's*, *The Economist*, and *The Washington Post*, Mr. Shenk joins four other fellows who are working on projects through September 1999. The fellows, each of whom received \$10,000 to study a particular mental health issue, met in September with Mrs. Carter, the Center's Mental Health Task Force, and the Fellowship Advisory Board.

"Journalists can help debunk the myth that most people with mental illnesses are dangerous, which of course they are not," said John Gates, director

of the Center's Mental Health Program. "Over time, we hope the fellows' work will reduce the stigma and discrimination against people with these illnesses."

Now in its second year, the fellowship program already has had significant impact in mental health reporting.

Last fall, Fellow Andrew Skolnick wrote about the treatment of people with mental illness within the criminal justice system for the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. Leslie Sowers, another 1997-98 fellow, researched the role of biology in children's mental illness. Her reporting in *The Houston Chronicle* has won several awards.

"The fellowship was tremendously rewarding and allowed me to do in-depth

research I otherwise would not have had the resources to do," said Ms. Sowers, who will receive another award from the American Psychiatric Association this spring. "What I learned about the brain added another dimension to my understanding of mental health problems."

"We have made great progress in the field of mental health, but we can always learn from the past."

—Fellow Joshua Wolf Shenk

Mr. Shenk hopes to attain similar results with his project. "Mrs. Carter has devoted great energy to promoting awareness and reducing stigma around mental illness," Mr. Shenk concluded. "My project supports those important goals. Although Lincoln battled an illness, he also persevered, dedicating himself to his family, his country, and his love of ideas. His legacy proves that people with mental illnesses have capabilities and talents from which we all can benefit." ■



The 1998-99 Fellows pictured with Rosalynn Carter are Stephen Smith (left), Kathi Wolfe, Susan Brink, Rita Baron-Faust, and Joshua Wolf Shenk.

Kathryn Kolb

Symposium Partners Embrace Emotional Well-Being of Children

"There is no better investment in the future than our children," said Mrs. Carter during the 14th Annual Rosalynn Carter Symposium on Mental Health Policy. "This Symposium has enlightened us about the most effective ways to enhance children's growth and well-being. Armed with that knowledge,

we are better able to help them build confidence and self-reliance—the very tools they need to succeed in life."

Featuring the topic "Promoting Positive and Healthy Behaviors in Children," the two-day event in November brought together nearly 200 members

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International Health Programs

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establish community-based health education and treatment programs. Our field staff will continue to emphasize training and supervision of village health workers.”

Efforts to control—and possibly eradicate—lymphatic filariasis, a tropical disease often called “elephantiasis,” are just beginning in Nigeria, the country with the highest number of infected people. The Center’s work will be linked to its river blindness program there.

One of only six infectious diseases in the world considered eradicable, lymphatic filariasis is transmitted by the bite of a mosquito. “Victims are afflicted with grotesque swelling of the limbs or genitals,” Donald Hopkins, M.D., associate executive director of the Center, explained. “Inside the body, adult parasitic worms produce embryos called microfilaria, which circulate in the blood and frequently damage internal organs.”

Experts estimate that 120 million



G.O. Ufomadu/Nigeria Institute for Trypanosomiasis

Lymphatic filariasis causes grotesque swelling of the legs and other limbs. The disease can be eradicated.

people in 73 countries are infected and another 900 million are at risk in tropical Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

As with river blindness, the Center is working to establish community-based health education and treatment programs to halt transmission of lymphatic filariasis. Local health workers treat infected people once a year, for four to

six years, with a single-dose combination of oral medicines. SmithKline Beecham is supporting the Center’s efforts in Nigeria with the hope that by 2015 lymphatic filariasis no longer will be a health problem there.

Helping People With Schistosomiasis

The Center’s battle against schistosomiasis also is just beginning with a pilot project in Nigeria. Also known as “snail fever,” schistosomiasis is the “second most important parasitic disease in tropical countries, after malaria, because of its impact on rural economies and public health,” Dr. Hopkins said.

People become infected by bathing or swimming in water contaminated with parasitic larvae that emerge from certain snails. Larvae then penetrate the skin and lay thousands of spiny eggs that tear and scar human tissue in the intestines, bladder, liver, and lungs. The result is chronic debility and sometimes premature death. Children ages 5-14 often are victims. About 200 million people infected with schistosomiasis live in

Well-Being of Children

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of 60 mental health organizations, universities, and children’s groups nationwide.

“Various factors influence the mental and emotional well-being of children,” said Jane Delgado, president and chief executive officer of the National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Service Organizations. “For example, girls who are Hispanic immigrants are less likely to become pregnant than those of Hispanic descent born and raised in the United States. Why is that? This symposium at least raised the idea of looking at such issues and how best to deal with them.”

Other organizations represented were the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the Early Head Start National Resource Center,

the National Resilience Resource Center, and the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. Key participants included David Hamburg, president emeritus of the Carnegie Corporation and member of the Carter Center Board

of Trustees, and William Foege, M.D., Carter Center senior health policy fellow. The Center’s Mental Health Program will publish a report on the Symposium’s findings in early 1999.

“The health and development of today’s children are imperative—especially in light of problems such as drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, and school drop-out rates,” said John Gates, Mental Health Program director. “This meeting focused on promoting behaviors, skills, and characteristics that strengthen children’s capacity to reach their full potential—and hopefully avoid problems later in life.” ■



Kathryn Kolb

The mental health symposium focused on ways to promote healthy and positive behaviors in children.

Africa. However, more than 70 countries are affected, including those in Asia and South America.

Like river blindness and lymphatic filariasis, schistosomiasis can be treated with one annual oral dose of medicine. Controlling it depends on helping villages implement health education and drug distribution programs.

A "SAFE" Strategy for Trachoma

Finally, the Center has launched an initiative against the world's leading cause of preventable blindness—trachoma. A chronic bacterial infection, trachoma spreads easily because of poor hygiene. Inflammation of the upper eyelid causes scarring, which can lead to in-turned eyelashes. This condition irritates the cornea, which is painful and results in blindness.

"Worldwide, only cataracts cause more blindness than trachoma," Dr. Hopkins said. "Unlike cataracts, trachoma can be prevented. Simple hygiene is the best defense against it." Ninety-eight percent of 146 million trachoma cases exist in developing countries, particularly in areas where water is scarce, such as Africa's Sahel region.

Thanks to a grant from the Conrad Hilton Foundation, the Center is working in Mali and Ghana with the World Health Organization, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, Pfizer, and several other partners to control trachoma. The primary weapon is the SAFE strategy:

S—surgery to correct scarring from advanced trachoma.

A—antibiotics to treat early trachoma infections.

F—face and hand washing.

E—environmental changes to improve water supplies and sanitation.

The Center is using steps A, F, and E and hopes to add three or more countries over the next several years.

"We welcome the challenge of fighting three additional diseases," Dr. Hopkins said. "By working closely with the people most affected by them, we can help them improve their health—and their lives." ■

The Fight to Halt Preventable Diseases

The Carter Center's Global 2000 program now has five international health initiatives in place against disease:

Guinea worm (*dracunculiasis*): People become infected with this parasitic disease by drinking stagnant water contaminated with fleas carrying Guinea worm larvae. Once ingested, the larvae grow to as long as 3 feet. A year later, threadlike worms emerge through painful blisters on the skin. People can prevent the disease by filtering their drinking water, using a nontoxic larvicide to kill larvae, or drilling borehole wells for fresh drinking water. Only 150,000 cases remain today compared to more than 3.2 million in 1986.

River blindness (*onchocerciasis*): Blackflies that breed near fast-flowing rivers and streams spread this disease, which causes constant itching, skin rashes, eyesight damage, and often blindness. River blindness can be prevented with one yearly oral dose of Mectizan®, a drug discovered and donated by Merck & Co. Inc. The Carter Center and other partners have provided more than 100 million treatments worldwide since 1987.

Lymphatic filariasis (also called "elephantiasis"): Carried by mosquitoes, this parasitic disease causes grotesque swelling of the limbs or genitals and also harms internal organs. It is treatable with a single-dose combination of oral medicines, given annually for four to six years.

Schistosomiasis (also known as "snail fever"): This illness also can be controlled with an annual dose of medicine. People become infected when they bathe or swim in water contaminated with parasitic larvae that scar internal tissue.

Trachoma: A bacterial infection that inflames the upper eyelid and causes blindness, trachoma can be prevented by using antibiotics, promoting proper face and hand washing, and improving water supplies and sanitation. ■



President Carter and "ER" Star Tape Guinea Worm Message

Last fall, Jimmy Carter visited the set of "ER," the No. 1-rated television show in the United States, to film a public service announcement (PSA) with actor Noah Wyle. The PSA, which depicts The Carter Center's work to eradicate Guinea worm disease, transpired as a result of an ER episode that aired early last year. In that show, Mr. Wyle's character, John Carter, M.D., treated a man with Guinea worm.

Warner Bros. Studios

Two Program Directors Are Named

The Carter Center is pleased to welcome two new program directors. Charles Costello, former director of the Center for Democracy and Governance at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), joined the Center as director of the Democracy Program in December. Jennifer McCoy, associate professor at Georgia State University (GSU), became director of the Latin American and Caribbean Program (LACP) in September.

Mr. Costello has led U.S. government programs to promote democracy worldwide since becoming director of the USAID Center for Democracy and Governance in 1994. From 1993-94, he directed the USAID mission in post-conflict El Salvador, overseeing programs to help demobilize forces, support reformed political institutions, and rebuild civil society. Previously, he headed USAID missions in Ecuador and Guatemala and also served in Kenya and Bolivia.

"Mr. Costello brings to The Carter Center a wealth of experience in his field," said John Hardman, M.D., Carter Center executive director. "We are fortunate to have his leadership as The Carter Center seeks new ways to strengthen peace, freedom, and democratic civil societies."

Dr. McCoy was LACP associate director from 1987-88 before heading the Center's 1989 Nicaragua election monitoring project. Since then, she has been a senior research associate at the Center while teaching political science at GSU



Charles Costello



Jennifer McCoy



and serving as a research associate at the university's Policy Research Center.

"Dr. McCoy helped organize Carter Center election monitoring missions in the Western Hemisphere this past decade," Dr. Hardman said. "The relationships she established with leaders in Latin America, and her academic expertise in democratization and economic reform in the region, will help us in strengthening new democracies." ■

Carter Center Revamps World Wide Web Site

The Carter Center has a new Web site, www.cartercenter.org.

"Our overall goal was to make the site visually more appealing and navigable for users," said Nadara Wade, Web site content manager.

Audio and video, illustrations, animation, and more photos are integrated throughout the new site. Program-specific icons at the top of each page and a contents page make it easier for users to navigate the site. Also, people can now make donations online.

"We hope the changes make it easier for people to learn about the Center's work and to contribute to our efforts," said Carrie Harmon, director of the Office of Public Information. "We will

continue to build on and refine the site, taking into account user suggestions."

Many will notice the new site name no longer includes the "emory.edu" designation that indicates the site is part of the Emory University system. Emory still hosts and supports the Web site.

"The name change represents a more defined Internet identity for The Carter Center," Ms. Harmon said. "It was important to make it easier for people to find us by shortening and clarifying the address." ■

Carters Publish New Books

Jimmy Carter's new book, *The Virtues of Aging* (Ballantine Publishing Group, 1998), became an instant best seller soon after publication in November. In his 13th book, President Carter discusses the personal process of growing older—how he went from despair to denial to a sense of freedom and exhilaration, turning his mature years into the most productive and joyful period of his life.

Rosalynn Carter's book, *Helping Someone With Mental Illness: A Compassionate Guide for Family, Friends, and Caregivers* (Times Books, 1998), was published last May. Her book covers the scientific, social, and health care aspects of mental illness; symptoms; and treatment. She also discusses the emotional and psychological aspects of caring for people with mental illnesses and offers suggestions to help erase the prejudice and discrimination against people who suffer from these disorders.

Helping Someone With Mental Illness and *The Virtues of Aging* are available in local bookstores. ■

New Projects Support Democracy in Liberia

Carter Center staff are working with government and civil society organizations in Liberia to help build strong institutions that reinforce human rights and democracy.

To learn more about
The Carter Center,
visit our new Web site at:
<http://www.cartercenter.org>.

In collaboration with local human rights organizations, the Center is undertaking projects to improve relations between the government and the media and to train news organizations in the roles and responsibilities of a free press.

"All Liberians share the goal of building strong institutions to promote human rights and consolidate democracy. Training media professionals and building the capacity of human rights organizations are an important part of this," said former U.S. President Jimmy Carter. "I am pleased that the Center is working with the Liberian government and organizations, including the Justice and Peace Commission and the Center for Democratic Empowerment, to help them achieve their goals."

Phyllis Cox, field office director, and Sara Tindall, associate director, oversee the Liberia office in Monrovia, the nation's capital. The Center first established an office there in 1992 to support negotiations among warring parties in Liberia's civil war. Following the signing of the final peace accord in 1996, the Center sponsored projects in human rights and observed the 1997 electoral process. Since then, staff members have maintained the Monrovia office to continue the Center's work, which is organized by its Democracy Program. ■

United Nations Honors President Carter

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and four other human rights advocates have received the United Nations Human Rights Prize. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan recognized the winners on Dec. 10, the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Awarded every five years, the prize recognizes the activists' "outstanding contributions to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in other U.N. human rights instruments."

"My wife, Rosalynn, and I are deeply touched and inspired by the recognition of our commitment to human rights,"

President Carter said. "Our work is grounded in the belief that every person who is armed with freedom and resources can find solutions to any challenge."

Those honored with President Carter were Sunila Abeysekera of Sri Lanka for working on women's rights and armed conflict, Angelina Acheng Atyam of Uganda for defending families whose children have been abducted, Jose

Gregori of Brazil for strengthening support for human rights and democracy in Brazil, and Anna Sabatova of the Czech Republic for advocating human rights in communist Czechoslovakia.

A sixth prize was awarded to honor all human rights defenders who struggle to protect fundamental rights in their communities or in other parts of the world. ■

A Testimony to Gift Planning

Dear Carter Center Friends,

Over the years, my husband, Charlie, and I saved as much as possible while meeting the financial challenges of raising a family. It was not until recently that I discovered we could afford to support our charitable interests as well. My desire to make a difference in the lives of people around the world drew me to The Carter Center. The creative, tangible ways the Center approaches international concerns and the tremendous respect I have for President and Mrs. Carter made my choice an easy one.

I viewed establishing a Charitable Gift Annuity with The Carter Center as an investment in good works. It has proved to be a wise charitable and financial investment. The tax benefits were worth it alone! The Office of Gift Planning made the process a smooth one and was always available for any questions. I have recommended such a gift arrangement to family and friends and plan to establish a second annuity with The Carter Center in the very near future.

Through my membership in the Carter Legacy Circle, my husband and I have had the opportunity to spend time with President and Mrs. Carter as well as receive invitations to special events and informative publications regarding Carter Center activities. My pride in being part of The Carter Center family grows each day. I continue to be impressed with what my gift is helping to accomplish around the globe.

Yours truly,
Mrs. Lois Clark
Charlotte, N.C.

The Carter Center offers charter memberships in the Carter Legacy Circle to friends who commit to planned gifts. Anyone who pledges support through bequests, charitable gift annuities, charitable trusts, gifts of life insurance, and similar deferred and life income instruments are invited to join. For more information, please write to Christopher Conway, Office of Gift Planning, The Carter Center, One Copenhill, 453 Freedom Parkway, Atlanta, Ga. 30307, or call (404) 420-5131. You can also visit our Web site at: www.cartercenter.org.



Amy Middle

Charlie and Lois Clark met Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter during a visit to The Carter Center.

Elections in Venezuela

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and was dominated by two political parties.

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, co-leader of the 43-person Carter Center delegation, called the vote "a peaceful revolution" by democratic means. Delegate Sánchez de Lozada, former president of Bolivia, added that the election could have a dramatic impact on the rest of Latin America, prompting established parties in other countries to re-evaluate their policies.

"The atmosphere of political uncertainty caused by the populace's clear discontent with the major traditional parties, Accion Democratica and COPEI, led Venezuela's National Electoral Council to invite international election observers for the first time in the history of their democracy," said Jennifer McCoy, director of The Carter Center's Latin American and Caribbean Program. "Although the election was peaceful and calm, challenges remain. The country faces a staggering deficit, rampant inflation, and depressed prices for its main export product—oil."

Presidents Carter and de Lozada, former Chile President Patricio Aylwin, and former U.S. Treasury Secretary



Renato Cappelloni

Nicholas Brady co-led the Center delegation, which observed voting at 252 sites. Observers from the Organization of American States, the European Union, and the International Republican Institute, as well as domestic observers,

Interpreter Mary Lee Jisurum (left) and Rosalynn Carter check on voting procedures at one of 252 polling sites monitored by the Carter Center delegation in Venezuela.

also were present for the Dec. 6 election.

The Carter Center delegation praised the effectiveness of the country's new automated vote count system—the first national electronic system in the hemisphere—for bringing "a new level of transparency and confidence to the process." By 6:30 p.m., Mr. Chavez was projected the winner over his major challenger, Salas Romer, with percentage totals of 57 and 39 percent of the vote.

The day after the election, delegation officials met with business leaders, former Venezuela President Carlos Andrés Pérez, Mr. Romer, and Mr. Chavez to encourage reconciliation as they seek solutions to economic problems.

"Under the best of circumstances, Venezuela's new leadership faces formidable challenges in reducing its budget deficit and in controlling high unemployment and inflation," President Carter said. "The Carter Center has a long history of supporting democracy and economic development in the region, and we stand ready to assist." ■

New Project Takes Aim at Corruption in the Americas

What steps can nations take to ensure that government transactions are above board and honest? A new Carter Center project is tackling that question to strengthen confidence in democratic institutions, improve public services, and increase investment potential in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Jamaica are participating in the first phase of "Transparency for Growth in the Americas," offering testimony on their own problems with corruption, past or present, and their attempts to address them.

In November, former U.S. President

Jimmy Carter, former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, and Jennifer McCoy, director of the Center's Latin American and Caribbean Program, met with government, civic, and business leaders in Ecuador and Costa Rica to discuss how to improve methods for ensuring transparency in government-business transactions.

Newly elected Ecuador President Jamil Mahuad has appointed an independent Anti-Corruption Commission. Additionally, his country will participate in a World Bank survey of the problem, develop a long-term plan, and take short-term steps to fight corruption.

In Costa Rica, which has one of the

best reputations for transparency in Latin America, a recent poll found citizens are highly concerned about potential corruption. Officials there recently concluded a national dialogue to recommend legal reforms to strengthen their anti-corruption efforts and to comply with the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption.

"Our goal is to ensure that public transactions are fair and accountable, improving citizen and investor confidence," Dr. McCoy said. "We will work with governments and civil society to learn from existing practices and devise new ways to fight corruption." ■