



**Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA)
Public Meeting Notes
July 19, 2017
Point Four Conference Room
Ronald Reagan Building**

USAID
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20523

Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid

Wednesday, July 19, 2017

Horizon Ballroom

Ronald Reagan Building
1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20004

Agenda:

2:00 p.m. Registration

2:30 p.m. Introductions and Welcome (ACVFA Chair, Jack Leslie)

2:35 p.m. Opening Remarks (USAID Acting Administrator, Wade Warren)

2:55 p.m. Panel Discussion: Reforming Aid

Moderator: Sam Worthington, InterAction

Panelists:

- Nisha Biswal, Albright Stonebridge Group
- Lester Munson, BGR Group
- Connie Veillette, The Lugar Center

3:30 p.m. Public Comment

4:00 p.m. Closing Remarks (USAID Acting Administrator, Wade Warren)

4:00 p.m. Public Meeting Adjourns

ACVFA Public Meeting Notes
2:30 pm, July 19, 2017
Horizon Ballroom, Ronald Reagan Building

CHAIR'S WELCOME

ACVFA Chair Jack Leslie opened the public meeting by thanking everyone for attending and Acting Administrator Warren for his leadership during a time of transition. Mr. Leslie remarked that while the U.S. Senate has not yet confirmed Ambassador Mark Green, and he is therefore unable to attend the meeting today, he is sure to bring a deep and genuine understanding of the Agency and its role in making America a leader in global development. Mr. Leslie noted that one of the key considerations for USAID, and Federal Government agencies more generally, will be navigating the White House's call for efficiency in reorganization. In response, ACVFA established the Efficiency and Effectiveness in Organization (EEO) Working Group. Under the guidance of Carolyn Miles, this EEO Working Group has dedicated itself to gaining a comprehensive understanding of the research, public conversation, and best practices related to efficiency in international development, and developed a set of recommendations that emphasize the paramount importance of humanitarian assistance and international development. Mr. Leslie indicated that the audience would hear more about the work of the EEO Working Group from Sam Worthington later on as he leads a panel discussion on reorganization and reform recommendations for USAID.

ACTING ADMINISTRATOR'S OPENING REMARKS

Acting Administrator Warren began by thanking Mr. Leslie and the staff at USAID who have supported him in the transition period. The Acting Administrator provided an update on the status of Ambassador Green's nomination process, and the support he has from the Agency, the development community, and on the Hill. Acting Administrator Warren shared three messages to sum up Ambassador Green's priorities:

- The sustainability of our work is important, and foreign aid should be designed to eventually become obsolete as countries grow and develop;
- Innovative financing, such as public-private partnerships, domestic resource-mobilization, and alternatives to contracts and grants are a high priority; and
- The Agency needs to think seriously about what we leave behind when we transition from traditional aid-based relationships with countries to new forms of international cooperation.

Acting Administrator Warren provided an update on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, 2018, and 2019 budgets, and emphasized that Ambassador Green's guidance will be essential through the budget planning process.

Acting Administrator Warren explained that the Redesign process has accelerated sharply following the release of results from the Secretary's Listening Survey to all State Department and USAID employees. An Executive Steering Committee meets weekly to provide overall guidance to five Working Groups: Information Technology, Human Resources, Management Support, Foreign Assistance, and Overseas Alignment and Approaches. Each of these Working Groups contains members from State and USAID, and they are working now to prepare recommendations to the Steering Committee and the Secretary. USAID is aware that the public wants to weigh in on the Redesign process, and the Redesign teams will create opportunities for public comments. In addition to the joint Redesign effort with State, a USAID-only internal transformation effort will identify reforms to improve USAID's efficiency and effectiveness, which Ambassador Green will begin as soon as he arrives.

PANEL DISCUSSION: REFORMING AID

Sam Worthington (Chief Executive Officer, InterAction) moderated a panel conversation with Lester Munson (Vice President, International BGR Government Affairs, BGR Group), Connie Veillette (Senior Fellow, Global Food Security and Aid Effectiveness, The Lugar Center), and Nisha Biswal (Senior Advisor, Albright Stonebridge Group). Mr. Worthington presented on ACVFA's EEO Working Group's efforts to produce an overview/synthesis of various studies and reports recently published on USAID and U.S. development policy. He gave an overview of the initial recommendations, which the Working Group will sharpen over the coming weeks and share on the ACVFA [website](#).

The panelists considered the questions, "What does victory look like," "What kind of structures should remain," and "How can the Agency better tap the trend in evidence-based development?" The panelists commented that:

- Evidence-based frameworks are essential for identifying when transition happens on a country-by-country basis;
- Sustainability and resilience are at the core of victory in development, and countries must be able to bounce back from adversity;
- The approach should be Government-wide, and a decision to graduate a country should be made in conjunction with all the U.S. Government Departments and Agencies that do development work overseas;
- Enterprise funds have been established in several countries, and while they have been controversial, leave-behind development funds that involve US, local enterprise, and host-government funding should be explored in greater detail;
- As private capital outpaces official development assistance around the world, the U.S. Government misses opportunities to provide tools and flexibility that could leverage larger sums; and
- USAID must know what outputs are worth measuring, and as difficult as it is to discern which measurements are most feasible and useful, should continue to refine our processes and best practices.

CLOSING REMARKS

Acting Administrator Warren closed the meeting by taking few moments to react and respond to some themes raised during the panel and public comment. The Acting Administrator invited all those present to send any input, ideas, or further questions to acvfa@usaid.gov, and thanked everyone once again for their participation in the meeting.