

USAID Alumni Association Organizing Committee
Inaugural Meeting
November 6, 2008

Issues for Discussion

Issue 1. What should the principle objectives of the association be?

Discussion: At the September 18th brainstorming session participants identified three objectives for a USAID alumni association:

- (1) to harness the experience and expertise of the USAID alumni community for the purpose of providing sound and timely professional counsel and public education in support of U.S. foreign assistance to promote effective international development;
- (2) to serve as an independent voice to support USAID and its development mission by facilitating professional development and the exchange of knowledge related to the effective use of foreign assistance;
- (3) to foster a network of former USAID employees who wish to utilize their public service skills to promote effective international development in their current community.

Issue 2. What should the membership requirements of the association be?

Discussion: At the September 18th brainstorming session participants recommended that membership in the association be open to any individual who has been employed by USAID, whether as a USDH, FSN, PSC, Fellow, PASA/RASA, appointee or through any other contractual relationship that involved a direct employer-employee relationship between USAID and the individual. There was discussion of whether institutional contractors should be admitted but the consensus was that the association should be limited to those individuals who have had a direct employee relationship with USAID.

Issue 3: Should the Association charge dues and if so, at what level?

Discussion: There was a general recognition that an association would need to have some resources to carry out its purposes and that, therefore, dues should be charged. There was no discussion of the amount or frequency of dues.

Issue 4: What activities should the association initiate during its first year?

Discussion: Participants at the September 18th meeting recommended a range of potential activities for the association. Activities fell within four thematic areas. Those present indicated which areas they were most interested in working on and whether they were willing to serve as the chair of a committee working on that area. The four areas are:

1. Public Outreach/Alliances
2. Strengthening USAID
3. Membership and Alumni Networking
4. Development Issues

Issue 5. What should the legal structure and governance arrangements of the association be?

Discussion: While there was unanimity on the issue of forming an association, and agreement that a governing structure is needed, there were different views on how the association should be legally constituted. Two options were discussed:

- (a) maintain the status of a working group under SID
- (b) incorporate as a 501(c)3 non-profit association

Under either option, the association needs to draft a constitution, form a board of directors, and appoint officers. One option would be for the organizing committee to serve as an interim board of directors. The interim board would prepare a constitution, collect dues, and appoint officers for the period of one year. This would provide a start up period to undertake initial activities and gage the viability of the association.

**Notes of the
MEETING OF THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE - USAID ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION
November 6, 2008**

Aaron Williams/Stacy Rhodes (co-chairs): Welcome and Introductions with those Present: Terry Brown, Linda W-Brown, Paula Goddard, Doug Tinsler, Jock Conly, Bill Douglas, Dick Loudis, Frank Kenifeck, Roy Stacy, Ray Love, Curt Farrar, Bob Jordan, Hank Bassford, Tony Pryor, George Hill, Jim Michel, Frank Young, Barbara Turner, Gary Merritt, Sally Patton, Rosalie Fanale (**23 total**)

ISSUES PAPER (circulated with Meeting Agenda) – (Patrick Fine can attach)

- 1. Purposes/Objectives of the Association– Jim Michel chairs discussion**
 - a. “Advocacy” vs. lobbying issue**

- Barbara Turner – Notes that that draft issues paper specifically avoids terms like “lobbying” and “advisory” (to USAID) as primary purposes of the association, due to the FACA (federal legislation on advisory committees) and a desire to set aside (at least temporarily) concerns about the legal/tax requirements on lobbying orgs. But notes that “Advocacy” and ‘Public Education’ are distinct from lobbying (e.g. InterAction is a 501c3 that does not ‘lobby’ but has an active Congressional Affairs Committee that educates Hill staff/members on wide variety of development issues.
- JM – We don’t want to make any binding decision on this kind of issue yet; we are deciding not to decide the issue at this time, until explored further by the proposed Public Outreach committee and discussed with counsel.
- HankB – We should first figure out what all it is that we want to do as an association, then determine if it constitutes formal “lobbying” or something else. The issues paper proposes several good options for discussion.
- JM - Are there things not in the paper that people thinks the association should do?
- Tony P – You can work around the limits on ‘lobbying’ in the way that other of SID/W affiliates do – you don’t speak for SID/W but for yourselves only (on the Hill), even though you are a SID ‘working group’.
- Roy Stacy – What is the role that USAID want us to play? Mainly #2 purpose listed; help strengthen the agency in the human resources area (eg., DLI mentoring)
- Curt Farrar – Do we want to put ourselves in a position to be consulted by Congressional committees on the future of foreign assistance? Not easy to do this – need to get ready for it via an agreed-upon mechanism. Need to have quality input.
- DickL. - What is the process by which we develop/articulate the positions we take?
- BarbT. – If we take a position as the “Alumni Association position”, need a structure/mechanism to develop and vet it – needs staff time and work. Need to be sure we have a working relationship with USAID. Not an easy task. Maybe we shouldn’t take a collective position (formally) but serve as a source of expertise on a variety of issues (but with opinions remaining individual to the expert)
- FYoung – What would be the limits (or what is “off limits”) of our involvement and engagement with USAID ? Need to discuss this with USAID/counsel.
- JM – The Public Outreach/Alliances committee is needed to review these issues

2. Membership and Dues Requirements?

- consensus agreement on it “as stated” in the Issues paper (all classes of former employees of USAID, but not institutional contractor’s staff).
- Should we charge dues? Consensus is affirmative. The amount? Forest Service is at \$25, but today this seems very modest. There are costs just to start up as well.
- Incorporation costs, stationary/staff, making copies/interns, mailings, website maintenance (listserv), etc. We need initial “walk-around \$” in addition to dues.
- HB – How much do we need? Is \$25/\$50 enough now? Short term vs. long term questions – Agreement reached that those in the room who wish should contribute \$50 or more if possible now to get our funding started -- Aaron Williams to serve as Treasurer. Almost \$600 collected from those present – kudos!

3. What are the main Functions/Activities we should start in first year?

- Independent body with a ‘special relationship’ with USAID – we can support, discuss, critique etc. – what will USAID become in the new Administration?
- How can “this group” constructively advise/support the new USAID?
 - The new Administration may seek advice from those with experience
 - Congressional Committees may seek views of former career experts
 - USAID may find our ‘unsolicited views’ interesting (not as “Advisory Committee”)
- Issue of timing: Is there really time for us as a group to truly form up to advise the Transition Team? Probably not as an entity. We should focus on our longer-term objectives as a UAA, and serve as a source of experts/ expertise.
- GM – But who speaks for UAA? No one per se right now.
- We are not going to be offering “officially approved positions” or messages on behalf of the group, but we are a body of experienced voices. (We know stuff)
- What is the model here? If Transition Team wants help, we can give it; find it, experts on countries, development issues, structural issues on foreign aid.

b. Legal Structure/Arrangements

- DougT – We should go forward on an ad hoc basis as aSID/W working group, for the time being? Then give ourselves 6 mos. (Or a year?) Yes, consensus agreement on this – need to maintain momentum, get this thing going now.

- Roy S. – what should we call ourselves? – alternative names for Alumni Association – e.g., U.S. Development Professionals (too broad?).
- Let's leave the final name to the Membership & Alumni Network Committees
- Agreement that the present group declare ourselves the official “Organizing Committee” and serve as the Steering Committee and/or Provisional Board of the Association for an interim period. Discussion on how long?
- Maximum of one year agreed, but with a requirement that by end of first 6 months (e.g., June 2009) we must present a plan of action to act on these various issues, a draft charter for a more permanent basis, and submit recommendations to the broader membership, seek broader authority from the membership.
- Governing committee (executive) needs to be formed as well as functional committees (4). Nominations for the Executive Committee discussed/volunteers.

Functions of the four sub-committees:

- I. Outreach to the public – Public Outreach/Alliances Committee
- II. Outreach to USAID – Strengthen USAID Committee
- III. Outreach to the Alumni – Membership Committee
- IV. Development Issues Committee

Volunteers from the Organizing Committee for initial membership on Executive and the 4 Committees:

I. Executive Committee:

Co-Chairs: Patrick Fine and Hank Bassford

- Secretary, Stacy Rhodes

- Treasurer, Aaron Williams

- Need to **add a Lawyer** from those interested (Wayne King, Tom Geiger, Ted Carter?). Review the list of volunteers from the initial Sept. 18 meeting to add others? Also the EC could include one (or more?) co-chairs from the other 4 Committees.

- Executive Committee members can also serve on the other committees as desired.

- Four Committees formed with co-chairs designated (see asterisked names):

II. Public Outreach/Strategic Alliances:

-*Doug Tinsler

- *Frank Young

-Ray Love

-Roy Stacy

-Dick Loudis

-Frank Kenifeck

-Paula Goddard

III. Strengthening USAID

-***Barb Turner**

-***Terry Brown**

-***Tony Pryor**

-Bill Douglas

-Ray Love

-Roy Stacy

-Frank Kenefeck

-Doug Tinsley

-Rosalie Fanale

-Sally Patton

IV. Membership

-***Gary Merritt**

-***Jack Conly**

-* **Linda W-Brown**

-Bob Jordan

V. Development Issues

-***Curt Farrar**

-***George Hill**

-***Jim Michel**

-Gary Merritt

-Ray Love (others? not sure I got all names of those who volunteered for DI)

Haven North and Dick Blue were recommended as additions to DI

NB: The lists of volunteers developed by Tom Lent (Facilitator at the 9/18 alumni retreat at USAID) need to be mined/used by co-chairs to add committee members amongst those who volunteered at that time but were not able to be present today.