



REPORT TO MEMBERS ON ACTIVITIES IN 2016 AND ON PROPOSED ACTIVITIES IN 2017-2019 TO ACHIEVE PROGRESS TOWARD UAA STRATEGIC GOALS

September 2016

In February 2016 the Board of Directors of the USAID Alumni Association approved strategic goals and proposed implementing measures for 2016-2018. This strategic plan benefited from input provided by UAA members in response to requests from the Board. The strategic plan sets out six operational goals and relies primarily upon the Association's six operating committees, each of which takes a lead role for implementing activities in furtherance of a strategic goal.

The Board intends to update the strategic plan in December 2016 by reviewing the existing goals and 2016 results and then proposing implementing activities for 2017-2019. As a part of that process, it has prepared this report to members on progress toward the goals and projected implementing actions. The Annual General Meeting on October 21, 2016, will provide an opportunity for membership to reflect on the responsiveness to their interest of the current UAA goals and implementation plan. In addition, the Board will request membership views through an email survey following the Annual General Meeting. The views of UAA members will be a primary source of guidance in updating the strategic plan for 2017-2019.

PART I. REPORT ON PROGRESS TOWARD UAA GOALS IN 2016

The six goals adopted for 2016-2019 and the implementing actions taken or planned during 2016 are summarized below to inform UAA members and to elicit their comments, questions, and suggestions.

Goal 1. Expand, maintain, and enhance beneficial relationships with other organizations and facilitate opportunities for USAID alumni to inform audiences and communities about development and the role of the United States and USAID. Lead: Public Outreach Committee.

In furtherance of this goal, in 2016 UAA undertook the following actions:

- UAA strengthened collaborative relationships with DACOR, through expanding the jointly sponsored Development Dialogue programs – see below under Goal 4 for detailed list of speakers.
- UAA facilitated dialogue between USAID and the United States Diplomacy Center, which is expected to open by the end of CY 2016.

- UAA collaborated with the Santa Fe World Affairs Forum as a “partner” to facilitate reduced price access for USAID alumni to this year’s two-day April symposium in Santa Fe, NM on “The Crisis in Human Migration.” UAA also recommended an alumni speaker for the event.
- UAA collaborated with USAID to arrange for training and to share informational materials for USAID alumni interested in communicating to the public on USAID priority issues (initially ending extreme poverty and promoting democratic institutions). Eleven USAID alumni participated in a training session in Spring 2016.
- Dialogue with USAID continues as the Agency plans to expand public outreach activities, including domestic assignment of two USAID staff members, one on the West Coast and one in the Southeastern U.S. UAA will work to connect these new USAID “development diplomats in residence” officers with alumni in those areas.
- UAA has strengthened relations with other related organizations, e.g., by becoming an ex officio member of the board of the Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) and maintaining active engagement with the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN), including discussions with multiple groups preparing recommendations for the next Presidential Administration.
- UAA continues to collaborate with AFSA on outreach to universities and communities through its speakers’ roster.
- UAA raised its profile and connected with USAID alumni around the world through its Linked-In page, which now has approximately one thousand followers.
- The UAA maintains an annotated bibliography, now more than 60 pages long, of publications written by USAID alumni. The bibliography continues to grow; more than 30 publications were added to the list this year.” The committee also organized presentations at the Woodrow Wilson Center and DACOR for four USAID alumni authors.
- UAA collaborated with ADST to submit an unsolicited proposal to USAID for funds to do 50 histories of former USAID employees over the next two years. These would include interviews of all categories of employees. Funds were obligated on September 29, 2016.

Goal 2. Compile and publish a readable independent history of USAID’s 55 years of development experience to increase understanding of lessons learned that can guide current and future programs. Lead: History Project Committee

In furtherance of this goal, in 2016 UAA undertook the following actions:

- Continued efforts were made – without success - to raise from foundations and individuals additional resources to match the \$160,000 already pledged by UAA members in order to finance a two-year effort by serious author(s)
- Explored subject with more than a dozen potential author candidates but without a sure financial base have not been able to make a commitment
- Continued to seek advice from numerous knowledgeable people as to how the history might be organized and managed.

Goal 3. Maintain and enhance a continuing relationship with USAID that will make alumni available to support the mentoring of USAID staff on a systematic basis.

Lead: Strengthening USAID Committee.

In furtherance of this goal, in 2016 UAA undertook the following actions:

- UAA met with senior USAID staff in March 2016 and with the Administrator in September 2016 to discuss various ways in which alumni could be supportive of USAID initiatives and USAID could strengthen knowledge of the UAA within USAID.
- UAA and USAID participated in a successful evaluation of the UAA mentoring program that included mentor and mentee surveys to identify success factors and areas for improvement. Recommendations from the evaluation will be implemented through adjustments to the Cohort 6 program due to commence in November of this year. These should result in substantial improvements to performance overall.
- UAA recruited additional volunteer mentors to meet the expanded demand from field missions. The expanded program included more than 35 mentors and 36 mentees in Missions around the world during 2016. A new program cohort is tentatively scheduled to begin in November.
- UAA published on its website information provided by USAID periodically on assignments, promotions, and departures of USAID staff (formerly published in USAID's "Frontlines"). This information has proven to be of interest to alumni as well as to current USAID employees.

Goal 4. Facilitate contributions by alumni and sharing of information with respect to USAID policies and developments and trends in development cooperation.

Lead: Development Issues Committee.

In furtherance of this goal, in 2016 UAA undertook the following actions:

- Following the departure of Jim Michel as Co-chair in January after two years leading the Development Issues Committee, Steve Giddings became a new Co-chair, joining Jim Fox. Jim Michel remains an active member of the committee, providing summary notes on invited speakers.
- Current Committee Co-chairs, Jim Fox and Steve Giddings, met with PPL/AA Wade Warren in June to offer our Association’s ability to draw upon previous experience to provide suggestions regarding future policy papers. Wade agreed to provide the Committee with an update on policy issues, and would look forward into ways that PPL could collaborate with UAA on agency policy issues. Unlike in 2015, however, when the UAA’s paper on the draft “extreme poverty” paper were seen by USAID as very helpful, no such opportunities have arisen so far in 2016.
- The Committee has met four times so far this year, all at the PADF Conference Room at the OAS Building. Continuing an approach that began in 2015, the Committee now includes a featured speaker at each meeting. This seems to have increased participation, typically 15-20 participants. This year’s speakers so far include:
 - **January 21.** Michael Metzler, Director of the Development Credit Authority, discussed the extensive use of this vehicle by USAID, and the value it offered for multiplying the impact of USAID funds. Jim Fox also summarized what he saw at the 2016 American Economic Association convention.
 - **March 30.** Kamran Khan, Director of Operations at MCC (and a former USAID employee), provided an analysis of MCC’s operations and strategy.
 - **June 23.** Ken Lanza talked about “USAID contracting for private sector work: Then and Now,” announcing the USAID admission that the *average* time between first announcement to contactors of a possible project and its award was 503 days. He argued that large firms can manage this, but small firms can’t.
 - **September 29.** Mike Crosswell, recently retired senior economist at USAID, talked about the shifts in USAID policy during the six presidential transitions that he observed.
 - Another meeting is planned for November, possibly with Patricia Rader, Deputy Director of PPL.
- UAA continued to support “Perspectives” on the “Development Resources” section of the UAA website. USAID alumni are invited to submit to perspectives@usaidalumni.org short essays on development issues of interest to them and to comment on the posted essays. Initial submissions have addressed climate change, economic growth, and institutional capacity strengthening.
- UAA organized interactive conversations on a broad range of topics relevant to the interests of international development and foreign affairs professionals. These are

primarily the jointly sponsored UAA/DACOR Development Dialogues, which include both lunches and less formal Monday morning conversations over coffee. Events are publicized in the UAA newsletter and website. Audio transcriptions of these events are posted on the UAA website. Discussions in 2016 included:

- January 2016 – Amar Bhattacharya on “The Road from the Paris Climate Summit: The Critical Role of Sustainable Infrastructure”
 - March 2016 – Jim Michel on “Beyond Aid: The Integration of Sustainable Development in a Coherent International Agenda”
 - March 2016 – Alan Bjerga on “To Feed Everyone: Food Security in the 21st Century”
 - March 2016 – Eric Chetwynd on “USAID’s Pioneering Work in Urban Development”_co-sponsored and hosted by the Wilson Center
 - May 2016 – Don Steinberg on “Trading Places: USAID Forward and the Global Development Environment – A Partner’s Perspective”
 - June 2016 – Dan Miller on Photos and Tales of Asian Nomads: The Experience of a USAID Author/Photographer
 - June 2016 - Alex Thier on “The U.S. Development Agenda 2020: What the Next Four Years Could (Should) Bring?”
 - August 2016 – Sam Worthington on “The Change We Seek: The Evolving Roles of NGOs in a Shifting Aid Landscape”
 - September 2016 – Sir Gordon Conway on “Sustainable Intensification is the Answer to Global Food Insecurity” co-sponsored and hosted by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
 - October 2016 – Paul and Kathleen Vitale on “Endangered Threads Documentaries and the Maya Textile Tradition”
- On behalf of the Committee, Juan Buttari launched a luncheon series providing an opportunity to discuss recent writing on development. There have been five presentations to date. They have been on writings by:
 - Angus Deaton’s book, *The Great Escape*
 - Acemoglu & Robinson’s magisterial volume, *Why Nations Fail*
 - Robert Gordon’s also magisterial book, *The Rise and Fall of American Economic Growth*
 - Ricardo Hausmann’s essay on Venezuela Today
 - Gregory Clark’s book on neo Malthusianism, *A Farewell to Alms*
 - A sixth presentation is planned for November 18. The discussion will focus on the challenges in education in developing countries.

Goal 5. Ascertain alumni interests on a continuing basis; expand UAA membership, including by adding new contributing members who reside outside the

Washington area; increase opportunities for social events and interaction among alumni. Lead: Membership Committee.

In furtherance of this goal, in 2016 UAA undertook the following actions:

- In January UAA conducted a survey of member interests and views on UAA priorities to guide completion of the current strategic plan. Responses were received from 94 alumni, many from outside the D. C. area.
- In February UAA continued its sponsorship of “Winterfest” at the home of Dave Eckerson with an estimated 60 participants.
- In June UAA held its annual spring reception at DACOR with over a 100 alumni and USAID guests.
- In August UAA organized its annual summer picnic at Fort Hunt Park in Alexandria, Virginia attended by some 60 alumni and family members.
- UAA continued to expand communication with alumni to encourage increased registration on the UAA directory, increased membership (by making annual contributions), and active participation in the UAA. Activities included:
 - UAA participated in quarterly retirement seminars for USAID staff.
 - UAA provided UAA membership brochures to USAID to be included in departure materials for retiring and separating USAID staff. UAA also requested USAID to reach out to overseas missions, advising them of the UAA and encouraging former FSNs to consider membership.
 - UAA engaged in outreach to alumni groups outside the Washington area.
- UAA revised the by-laws to include an associate membership category – the initial approved category of persons for this associate status is prior spouses or partners of those eligible for membership.
- As a result, at the end of September 2016, the number of UAA members exceeds 300, an all-time high and already exceeding the 2015 total of 284 with three months left in the 2016 calendar year. Almost 40% of members in 2016 are contributing at the “Friends of the UAA” category (over \$100). The number of USAID alumni registered in the UAA directory has reached 949 at the end of September, also an all-time high and on our way to the goal of 1,000 registered alumni.
- UAA presented at the 2015 AGM annual alumni awards to two members for their outstanding contributions to their communities. The Awards Committee actively solicited nominees for 2016; awards will be presented at the October 21, 2016 AGM.

Goal 6. Assure that internal UAA systems and procedures provide effective, efficient and transparent management of resources and services to USAID alumni. Lead: Finance and Administration Committee.

In furtherance of this goal, in 2016 UAA undertook the following actions:

- UAA organized a substantive 2016 Annual General Meeting on the timely theme of “Learning from History” scheduled for October 21, 2016. Panels will include former USAID Administrators, academics, and development experts.
- UAA recruited for the 2016 election of Board members an excellent slate of capable leaders to help manage UAA activities and resources.
- Under leadership of the UAA’s part-time Administrative Assistant, membership and directory databases have been reconciled, thereby improving outreach and communication to the membership.
- Recognizing the growing administrative requirements of the UAA, new co-chairs for the Finance and Administration committee were appointed.
- The Executive Committee reviewed the need for insurance and entered into a new policy in August 2016. This will provide needed protection at a reasonable cost.
- UAA further expanded and refined the content of its website to increase its value to alumni. The number of visits to the website increased as this site has become an increasingly useful and user-friendly source of information. During the first eight months of 2016, the average number of website users was 4,080 per month vs. an average of 3,235 in 2015.

PART II. UAA GOALS PROPOSED FOR 2017-2019 AND PROJECTED IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

For the period 2017-2019 the Board proposes to retain the six goals adopted for 2016-2018. This will permit an additional year of experience to be gained with a projection of UAA activities to a more extended horizon. UAA members are encouraged to offer comments, questions, and suggestions regarding these proposals.

Goal 1. Expand, maintain, and enhance beneficial relationships with other organizations and facilitate opportunities for USAID alumni to inform audiences and communities about development and the role of the United States and USAID. Lead: Public Outreach Committee.

In furtherance of this goal, in 2017-2019 UAA proposes to take the following actions:

- UAA will strengthen its collaboration with organizations such as the American Foreign Service Association, the Center for Global Development, Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network, National Peace Corps Association, U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, the Brookings Institution, and the Washington Chapter of the Society for International Development. This will include collaboration with partners on “think pieces” advising the post-2016 Election Transition Team.
- UAA will continue to add to the bibliography of USAID authors published on the UAA website.
- UAA will continue to work with USAID to inform and prepare alumni interested in public speaking on development themes, including coordination of “media training” programs on-line.
- UAA will collaborate with the Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) to expand the number of USAID oral histories in the ADST collection. As part of the new cooperative agreement from USAID to ADST, UAA will participate as interviewers.
- As an ex officio member of the ADST board of directors, UAA will also work to expand USAID-related materials on ADST’s U.S. Diplomacy website.
- UAA will support USAID’s participation in the U.S. Diplomacy Center.

Goal 2. Compile and publish a readable independent history of USAID’s 55 years of development experience to increase understanding of lessons learned that can guide current and future programs. Lead: History Project Committee

In furtherance of this goal, in 2017-2019 UAA proposes to take the following actions:

- In 2017 UAA will:
 - Complete fundraising effort to finance the compilation and publication of the USAID history;
 - Identify one or more authors, researchers, and an advisory board;
 - Formalize arrangements with the Center for Global Development for a site for the work of researching, writing, and publishing the history; and
 - Conduct extensive research, including the collection and organization of copies of USAID files retained by USAID alumni to fill gaps in the record and replace documents of historical significance that have been lost over the years.
- In 2018, UAA will:

- Complete the writing and editing of the history;
- Arrange for the history’s publication and related launch events to publicize it with a broad audience;
- Develop related formats (e.g., on-line and via social media) to distribute the historical material more broadly; and
- Establish a relationship with a university for future collaboration on updates and dissemination of the history on a continuing basis.

Goal 3. Maintain and enhance a continuing relationship with USAID that will make alumni available to support the training, mentoring, and coaching of USAID staff on a systematic basis. Lead: Strengthening USAID Committee.

In furtherance of this goal, in 2017-2019 UAA proposes to take the following actions:

- UAA will apply recommendations from the 2016 evaluation of the Mentoring Program that should result in substantial improvements in the quality and impact of relationships to be established in the future (Cohort 6). This will include strengthened mentor training and monitoring, as well as stronger involvement by Bureau Coordinators in program management and mentee relationships.
- UAA will begin recruitment for the 2017 program (Cohort 6) in September 2016 with the goal of program kick-off in November. The next cohort will be smaller to facilitate higher quality selection, vetting, and monitoring of candidates on both sides of the equation.
- 2018 and 2019 programs are expected to follow a similar course.

Goal 4. Facilitate contributions by alumni and sharing of information with respect to USAID policies and developments and trends in development cooperation. Lead: Development Issues Committee.

In furtherance of this goal, in 2017-2019 UAA proposes to take the following actions:

- UAA will organize discussion programs focused on current development issues of interest to alumni. This will include at least eight “Development Dialogue” events jointly sponsored with DACOR. To the extent possible, these programs will be recorded and made available for listening on the UAA website.
- UAA will continue to sponsor its “book club” discussions led by volunteer alumni members.

- UAA will seek to identify at least one opportunity each year for a discussion program outside the Washington, DC area.
- UAA will elicit and publish as “Perspectives” on its website brief papers from alumni on major development themes, along with comments on such papers, to promote the exchange of ideas and dissemination of knowledge within the alumni community.
- UAA will include links to books, published research papers, and Perspectives by USAID alumni on its website and encourage commentary on the issues addressed.

Goal 5. Ascertain alumni interests on a continuing basis; expand UAA membership, including by adding new contributing members who reside outside the Washington area; increase opportunities for social events and interaction among alumni. Lead: Membership Committee.

In furtherance of this goal, in 2017-2019 UAA proposes to take the following actions:

- Early in each year UAA intends to conduct a survey of alumni interests and priorities for UAA programs and activities, as well as communications preferences.
- UAA will circulate each month a newsletter containing articles of interest to alumni residing inside and outside the Washington area, including alumni profiles and photos of membership events. [All newsletters are also archived on the UAA website.]
- UAA will schedule each year a range of programs and social events intended to respond to interests of members and potential members, including events outside the Washington area. Activities planned include:
 - Annual Winterfest in February
 - Annual spring reception in May
 - Annual summer picnic in July or August
 - Annual General Meeting in October
 - Publicize post-USAID options for employment, volunteerism, and other activities on the UAA website.
 - Seek new opportunities to engage FSN alumni and increase their participation in UAA activities.
- UAA will seek each year to expand UAA membership and active membership participation in UAA programs. The goal in 2017 is to reach a total of 1,100 registered alumni, of whom at least 350 contribute at the appropriate amount for their category (i.e., in the DC area or elsewhere.)
- Efforts to expand membership will include:

- Recruiting new USAID retirees, including through participation in retirement seminars at Headquarters for FS and GS employees;
 - Encouraging USAID alumni to update their contact information, become and remain UAA members, and help to identify other alumni who might be interested in joining the UAA;
 - Expanding outreach to former FSN employees and to non-Foreign Service alumni and encouraging their participation in the UAA.
 - Expanding outreach to new geographic regions in which large numbers of USAID reside – e.g., North Carolina and Oregon.
- UAA will continue to recognize each year at the AGM the contributions of outstanding USAID alumni who have provided significant post-retirement service in their communities or internationally.

Goal 6. Assure that internal UAA systems and procedures provide effective, efficient and transparent management of resources and services to USAID alumni. Lead: Finance and Administration Committee.

In furtherance of this goal, in 2017-2019 UAA proposes to take the following actions:

- UAA will publish the minutes of Executive Committee meetings, including monthly financial and membership reports, on the UAA website.
- UAA will organize each year a General Meeting to report to members on the Association’s management, finances, and current activities and to provide a substantive program on issues of broad interest to USAID alumni.
- UAA will recruit from among its members capable leaders to maintain sound management of activities and resources and will recruit additional volunteers willing to serve actively on UAA committees and carry out activities on the Association’s behalf.
- UAA will maintain a high quality website to inform and engage the Association membership community. The site will include such items as a calendar of events, articles, obituaries, employment opportunities, an alumni directory, and timely reports on UAA activities, including newsletters and audio recordings of events.
- UAA will monitor how its website is used and will continuously refine and improve the website’s content and presentation to ensure it is of interest and easily accessible to USAID alumni.

- In 2017, UAA will review all of its systems and the scope of work of its part-time administrative assistant to determine whether that scope needs to be expanded to include additional functions reliant on volunteer membership efforts.