

**REPORT ON
USAID ALUMNI ASSOCIATION 2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
November 3, 2017 – Center for Global Development
Washington, D.C.**

USAID’S COMMERCIAL AND INTELLECTUAL PARTNERSHIPS

This report is intended to provide the many USAID Alumni Association (UAA) members who were not able to attend the annual general meeting (AGM) a sense of the outstanding presentations and discussions that marked this day-long gathering focused on “USAID’s Commercial and Intellectual Partnerships.”

Through partnerships with the private sector, USAID drives inclusive and sustainable economic growth and job creation. Private sector growth, in turn, requires quality education to prepare a skilled workforce and leaders to direct that growth. The 2017 AGM reviewed USAID’s past and current partnerships, including perspectives on the opportunities and challenges of brokering and sustaining partnerships with commercial actors and with U.S. and international universities. In his remarks, USAID Administrator Ambassador Mark Green spoke of a “strategic transition” in USAID bilateral relationships from “aid” to “trade and investment,” a theme the aid reform panel echoed in their discussion.

This summary can neither do justice to the richness of the discussion nor capture the value of another primary objective of this gathering—the opportunity for friends and former colleagues to see each other again and to meet a number of the younger generation of USAID staff who were invited to attend.

The following paragraphs will guide you through the day’s events. Follow the links to the appropriate document. If you wish to view the entire event, videos are available. The [first video](#) contains an introduction and UAA overview and a panel on USAID/Private Sector partnership. The [second video](#) includes UAA Board election results, presentation of the Alumni of the Year awards, comments and Q&A with Administrator Mark Green, and a panel on Reforming USAID.

The agenda for the day and the speakers’ bio-data can be found [here](#).

Co-Chair Introduction. The AGM provides a brief opportunity to bring members up-to-date on organizational developments. Carol Peasley announced that the UAA now has more than 1,000 registered members and 370 contributing members. Attendees were asked to help ensure that more former colleagues, including FSNs, are made aware of the UAA and its many activities. The UAA, of course, depends entirely on volunteers and members were urged to become more active participants in the various committees. Members were urged to review and comment upon the [UAA Strategic Plan](#) UAA Strategic Plan that details 2017 activities and preliminary 2018 plans. (See a full summary of Carol’s remarks [here](#).)



First Panel—“Review of USAID Partnerships With the Private Sector.” Jim Michel moderated a panel including John Sanbrailo, Richard Crespin, and Sean Jones that looked at how USAID is helping private sector

partnerships fit into evolving development policy. The panelists provided a brief history of USAID’s engagement with the private sector, reviewed shifting partnership paradigms, and took a closer look at recent USAID partnerships including Power Africa, Feed the Future, and the Learning Lab.

(See a summary [here](#).)



Second Panel—“Review of USAID University Partnerships.” In this panel organized and moderated by Dr. Montague Demment, World Food Prize laureate Dr. Gebisa Ejeta gave a moving account of how USAID investments in higher education offered him—and many others—a path out of poverty. USAID’s Dennis Carroll and Ticora Jones discussed current USAID university partnerships to, respectively, build a multidisciplinary workforce to tackle emerging diseases and to “drive research to impact.” (See summary [here](#)).

Board Election Results—The re-election to the Board of Franklin Moore and John Heard and the election for first terms of Nancy Tumavick and Christopher Crowley were announced; they are succeeding Carol Peasley and Juan Buttari. Carol completed her second two-year term; Juan resigned due to personal circumstances.



Annual Alumni Awards—Bette Cook, Chair of the Awards Committee, announced that Marcy Bernbaum and Ray Martin were this year’s awardees. (See the text of the presentations [here](#).)



USAID Administrator Ambassador Mark Green summarized highlights from his first three months in office and laid out priorities for the coming years, including building on past successes such as Feed the Future and strengthening tools such as Grand Challenges to improve impact. Looking forward, he called for “strategic transitions” to help countries build capacity to meet their own needs and to transform bilateral relationships from “aid” to “trade and investment.” He called USAID “the face of the compassion of the American tax payer,” and especially commended its work on humanitarian response. (See a full summary of his remarks [here](#).)



Panel on Reforming USAID—Scott Morris from the Center for Global Development moderated a panel on USAID reform. The bipartisan panelists agreed that now is a unique moment in which there is relative consensus on both sides of the aisle and between Congress and the Executive Branch on the direction for reform and a commitment to making it happen. Echoing Ambassador Green, the panelists described the need for “strategic transitions,” including greater reliance on trade and the private sector in countries’ relationships with the United States. (See a full summary [here](#).)

Attendance of 140 broken down as follows: UAA Members—114; Speakers and guests— 17; USAID Young Professionals—4; Center for Global Development staff—5.