

DIASPORAS IN DEVELOPMENT

October 12, 2016

Session Title: Successful Healthcare Partnerships in Countries of Residence and Origin

Presenter:

- Dr. Nasar Qureshi, President, Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent of North America (APPNA)
- Atiya Khan, Chairperson, Human Development Foundation
- Steven Lucas, Portfolio Monitoring Specialist, Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC)
- Julie McBride, Lead Member, Social Franchising Task Force, International Franchising Association
- Moderator: **Kanwal Bokharey**, Deputy Director, Innovation and Partnerships Unit, USAID/Pakistan

Session Summary:

Panelists shared best practices for diaspora engagement in the health sector.

Key Themes:

- **Theme 1:** Diaspora members with healthcare expertise are in a unique position to give back to their communities, both in the U.S. and their countries of origin. They not only have a specialized knowledge, but also unique connections and a strong desire to serve.
- **Theme 2:** Diaspora organizations have accomplished impressive impact in the health sector by building hospital facilities, providing for technology transfer, and educating communities.
- **Theme 3:** There are opportunities for diaspora in healthcare to collaborate with the U.S. government to achieve impact in their countries of origin, although they have yet to be pursued to their full potential.

Best Practices/Recommendations/Suggestions:

If a diaspora organization wants to work with OPIC, it's key to have a U.S. nexus of funding. For OPIC to support a project, it needs for 25% of equity investment to come from other sources.

Discussion Topics/Audience Questions:

Please note any interesting questions or discussion topics raised in the Q&A or small group conversations.

How can diaspora organizations collaborate with OPIC to invest in ICT education in countries with poor infrastructure?

A starting point is to work with the diaspora community in the U.S. that has a sustainable business model that has been proven and can be applied in that country. From there, OPIC has an “applicant screener” with 10-12 guidelines to make sure client meets them. Like, “Will it hurt the U.S. economy by supporting this investment? Are you working in one of the countries we are active in? Have you addressed whether private financing in the U.S. is available?”

Can you speak to the risk in lending/investment in infrastructure development in countries where there is corruption risk—how does OPIC take that into account? Why do other countries move faster on certain development projects than the U.S.?

OPIC, USAID, and the U.S. Government approaches development the best way we know how and uses international best practices that ensures our development work supports worker rights, human rights, and other standards to make sure everyone benefits from our work.

Is there a place to go to learn of diaspora organizations working specifically in health?

Not that the panelists were aware of.

Does OPIC provide financing to healthcare businesses in the U.S.?

OPIC only provides services if businesses are looking to expanding abroad.

There are a number of diaspora organizations out there raising their own money and doing excellent work. Is USAID open to matching the work of diaspora organizations where they are doing something good?

Panelists had various responses.

- If we ask for money from USAID as a nonprofit, I’m not sure we would succeed in accomplishing our development goals, given USAID’s processes and our smaller structures.
- We want a relationship and a level of comfort with each other first. As a diaspora community we first need to develop a relationship of co-sharing. Then maybe they will have a level of trust to go outside of the traditional contractor relationship.
- USAID isn’t taking into account the entire expertise of diaspora into its work and this is a downfall.

- USAID Pakistan is a late entrant into engaging with diaspora. It took some time to plan. Because much funding is already programmed, they have worked to identify opportunities within existing implementation mechanisms where diaspora could get involved. They'll then work with contracting firms to work with diaspora organizations. The first activity set up this way will begin at the end of this month.