

DIASPORAS IN DEVELOPMENT

October 12, 2016

Session Title: USAID Regional Diaspora Download

Presenter:

- Sarah-Ann Lynch, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, Latin America and Caribbean Bureau
- Ann Marie Yastishock, Deputy Assistant Administrator for South Asia, Asia Bureau
- Oren Whyche-Shaw, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Africa Bureau
- Mona Yacoubian, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Middle East Bureau
- Joakim Parker, Deputy Assistant to the Administrator, USAID Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs
- **Moderator:** Chris Jurgens, Director, Center for Transformational Partnerships, U.S. Global Development Lab

Session Summary:

Deputy Assistant Administrators from USAID Bureaus (Middle East, Latin America & Caribbean, Europe and Eurasia, Africa, Asia, OAPA) presented overviews of diaspora engagement strategies in their respective regions, including relevant case studies and success stories. This panel, moderated by Chris Jurgens, took an introspective look into USAID's interaction with diaspora communities and the challenges and opportunities they've faced in working with a wide variety of local, national, and international partners.

Key Themes:

- **Theme 1:** Diaspora-centered initiatives require patience, consistency and effective communication strategies
- **Theme 2:** Development should be viewed as a partnership, especially if the intention is to make it sustainable
- **Theme 3:** Understanding the context (parameters, limitations, and opportunities) is an essential component in determining how to engage with a diaspora community.

Best Practices/Recommendations/Suggestions:

- Best Practices (from India): The election of a new President in India presented a special opportunity to partner with both the President and the Calvert Foundation to begin working on diaspora-related initiatives. USAID was able to produce a survey on where the diaspora was interested in investing. Although it has been a slow process, this partnership is re-orienting the diaspora community to transparent transactions, noticing that communities are extremely interested in seeing where their money is going before investing further.
- Suggestions: Marketing and content matters; once you begin to make or see progress, it is important to get the word out to members of the diaspora community that a specific program can make a difference and shape diaspora engagement in that region.
- Best practices and Recommendations (from Africa Bureau): AFR has had experience with specific grants to diaspora organizations through the creation of the African Diaspora Marketplace – a project that supported entrepreneurs (in the U.S.) that were interested in establishing businesses in their home countries. This was a component of AFR Bureau’s strategy to try and disseminate knowledge, resources, and skills into African markets.
- By working jointly with the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) , Africa Bureau is looking to help diaspora on both the entrepreneurial and procurement fronts. They are doing this by hosting small and medium business opportunity events (like the one they are hosting in South Africa in the coming months and by reaching out during the first quarter of next year for an outreach event geared toward the African diplomatic corps that will be the distribution channel for information updates.
- Best Practices (from Latin America): Latin America receives over \$68.3 billion from the diaspora community in remittances, which speaks to the importance of that community and how powerful they are. However, converting that energy into investments in other areas is both a challenging and exciting way for USAID to engage in development in the region.

Discussion Topics/Audience Questions:

- *On spurring FDI in Pakistan:* What is the view on the state department's approach? How do we package our intent and show that we can be a viable partner?