



August 22, 2017

The Honorable Mark Green
Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development
Ronald Reagan Building
Washington, D.C. 20523
Attn: Bill Steiger, Jim Richardson

Dear Administrator Green:

On behalf of the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN), we wish to congratulate you on your confirmation as Administrator of USAID. We stand ready to work with you to address the numerous development challenges and humanitarian crises around the world, while strengthening the United States' ability to respond effectively to them.

Reforming U.S. foreign aid to achieve greater reach and impact and reduce the need for aid itself would be a profound legacy of this Administration. In our view, elements of long-term success would include an articulated development strategy, an independent lead development agency with fully restored policy and budget authority, adequate resources, enhanced coordination across development agencies and programs, and a meaningful partnership with Congress and the development community.

To help save more lives, relieve suffering, and spur greater economic growth around the world, we hope you will urgently prioritize the following:

1. A State/USAID redesign that strengthens foreign aid and U.S. leadership

Reforms to U.S. foreign assistance should be pursued jointly with Congress, in consultation with the development community, guided by a comprehensive review of U.S. efforts, a coherent Global Development Strategy, and [MFAN's Guiding Principles for Effective U.S. Assistance](#), which are endorsed by over 140 organizations and prominent individuals.

In alignment with these principles, the MFAN Co-Chairs have released a draft proposal – [A New Foreign Aid Architecture Fit for Purpose](#) – that illustrates how an elevated aid agency with full policy and budget authority could work alongside both a mission-focused State Department and a strengthened development finance corporation.

2. A path for aid transition through local ownership of resources, priorities, and implementation

Where countries are willing, U.S. assistance can be transformational: by unlocking private sector investment and encouraging countries to generate more of their own revenue and spend it on their development priorities, countries can pave a path toward long-term poverty reduction and self-reliance. USAID can lead the way in scaling up public sector domestic resource mobilization efforts across agencies – including the Treasury Department and PEPFAR – consistent with [MFAN's principles of public sector domestic resource mobilization](#). The Agency should also consider exploring ways to better help the private sector spur inclusive economic growth and job creation.

To better align aid with country priorities, we encourage USAID to work with the development community and Congress to reduce earmarks and directives and to end the glaring inefficiencies of the food aid program. To better catalyze local leadership for sustained development, USAID can advance recent positive revisions to the program cycle in Chapter 201 of the Agency's Automated

Directives System by working more intentionally through local implementers as the first and default option. This ownership approach will better enable stable and prosperous partner countries to initiate a responsible, benchmarked transition from aid to new forms of partnership with the United States.

3. Measuring impact and the sustainability of results

Your high-level commitment is needed to drive the Agency's work on sustainability and country ownership. USAID has made progress creating inclusive country strategies and programs that work with local partners to build country ownership. Yet embedding this approach across the agency to strengthen U.S. development assistance will require both your political leadership and the establishment of agency-wide metrics of sustainability and country ownership. [MFAN's Metrics for Implementing Country Ownership](#) paper and a recent GAO report (GAO-15-377) both called for metrics to assess partner-country capacity, ownership, and sustainability.

We urge you to champion evidence-based decision-making and ensure that USAID publicly releases and implements agency-wide indicators of sustainability and country ownership, so that progress in these areas can be evaluated.

4. Greater foreign aid transparency and accountability

Led by the vitally important Policy, Planning & Learning Bureau, USAID has made significant gains in the accountability, transparency, and efficiency of its spending, as called for by the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act of 2016 (FATAA). Instead of proposed budget cuts to these key functions, efforts should be redoubled to establish measurable goals, performance metrics, and monitoring and evaluation plans as dictated by FATAA to achieve the best possible outcomes.

We further encourage you to share best practices across government, including working with the Office of Management and Budget to ensure that FATAA's smart requirements for transparency, evaluation, and learning are applied to all U.S. foreign aid programs.

5. Renewed partnerships with Congress and the development community

As you know, a close partnership with Congress and the development community will help to facilitate stronger and lasting results in each of these areas. In addition, progress in development demands adequate resources, and we see opportunities to work together with Congress to ensure every dollar is maximized to maintain United States global leadership and our ability to aid the world's most vulnerable people.

In closing, we greatly appreciate your willingness to serve and your recognition of the importance of an effective USAID. We respectfully request a meeting with you to discuss how we can be of assistance as you further the Agency's leadership in projecting core American values to the world.

MFAN's Deputy Director, Stephanie Cappa, can be reached at 202-971-1486 or scappa@modernizeaid.net to receive your response.

With warm regards,



George Ingram
MFAN Co-Chair
Senior Fellow, Brookings
Institution



Tessie San Martin
MFAN Co-Chair
President & CEO, Plan International



Connie Veillette
MFAN Co-Chair
Senior Fellow, The Lugar Center