Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration: United States Government

Department of Agriculture Case Study

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ACRONYMS

AAA	Accra Agenda of Action
APHIS	Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service, USDA
F	Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance, Department of State
FAS	Foreign Agriculture Service, Department of Agriculture
GAO	Government Accountability Office of the U.S. Congress
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
IG	Inspector General
MfR	Managing for Results
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
OCBD	Office of Capacity Building and Development in FAS
PART	Program Assessment Rating Tool of the Office of Management and Budget
PD	Paris Declaration
PL 480	Public Law 480
SI	Social Impact, Inc.
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USG	United States Government
WFP	World Food Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This case study is one of seven being conducted of U.S. government foreign assistance agencies to assess the extent to which U.S. assistance is consistent with the principles of Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (PD), an international agreement signed by the United States in 2005. The purpose of this report is to provide insights into the achievements, challenges, and varying incentives and disincentives to USDA in implementing the PD principles.

USDA's international assistance takes three forms: humanitarian, developmental, and conflict/post-conflict assistance. Food aid from U.S. farms can be used in any of these contexts and USDA administers a substantial share of that food aid in coordination with USAID. USDA also supports international cocoa research, carries out trade facilitation actions in developing countries, and enables Agricultural Research Service, Forest Service and other professional staff to participate in research and technical assistance activities that have at least partial development purposes. More recently, activities in Afghanistan and other post-conflict areas have become a significant part of USDA activities.

Foreign assistance (including food aid) comprises only a small part of USDA's mission. Within USDA, the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) holds primary responsibility for international activities and food aid. Technical assistance is the last of FAS' four stated objectives. The priority given to trade affects USDA's ability to be consistent with the Paris Declaration principles. Reflecting this prioritization, USDA capacity to implement foreign assistance is limited. Only one-third of the FAS staff works directly in development or food assistance. Other USDA staff plays a role in international activities, but with only a secondary focus on foreign assistance and the developmental focus of building capacity worldwide.

Although USDA has no policy on PD principles, the president's 'Feed the Future' initiative is based on those principles and evidence suggests Feed the Future will increasingly guide USDA's foreign assistance programs. The Social Impact (SI) Evaluation Team found the greatest awareness of PD principles in the leadership and selected field staff the Team was able to contact. These are the USDA staff with the greatest awareness of the Feed the Future Initiative.

USDA's role in foreign assistance is at the center of a complex set of issues that include U.S. domestic agriculture and shipping issues; varying foreign policy goals and objectives; multiple funding streams and acts of Congress; overlapping federal bureaucracies; and ever-emerging food crises in multiple parts of the world. The Team concluded that, although there are areas where FAS staff does operate according to Paris Declaration principles, on balance the constraints upon the agency outweigh the good efforts of the staff. The issues of legislative constraints on food aid, the expectations of domestic constituency, the need to be reimbursed (by USAID, for example, or by recipients), tied aid, and the overall structure of the USG foreign assistance bureaucracy combine to keep USDA in the role of supporting player. Several factors limit implementation of Paris Declaration principles:

- issues of legislative constraints on food aid;
- expectations of USDA's domestic constituency;
- the need to be reimbursed (by USAID or by recipients);
- tied aid; and
- the overall structure of the USG foreign assistance bureaucracy.

Staff will make good faith efforts to follow Paris Declaration principles, but implementation according to the Paris Declaration will be limited by the extent to which it conflicts with the primary focus of FAS and USDA: to promote U.S. agriculture.

1 INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

Over 150 countries, donors and international organizations signed the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (PD) in 2005, in an effort to improve the quality and effectiveness of development assistance. The Declaration was further elaborated on at the Accra workshop in 2008. This study focuses on the PD principles, including the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) of 2008.

> Paris Declaration Principles*
>
> Ownership - *Developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction, improve their institutions and tackle corruption.*
>
> Alignment - *Donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems.*
>
> Harmonization - *Donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication.*
>
> Results - *Developing countries and donors shift focus to development results and results get measured.*
>
> Mutual Accountability - *Donors and partners are accountable for development results.*
>
> **www.oecd.org*

The PD is built around five principles: ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability. This evaluation is part of an independent international evaluation of the PD to examine its implementation and explore its impacts. Beginning in 2007 and ending in 2010, over thirty developing partner countries, and almost twenty donor countries and international organizations, will participate in case study evaluations. The case study results will be incorporated into a Synthesis Report to be presented to the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in December 2011 in Busan, Korea.

The U.S. government (USG) is participating in this effort by conducting an independent evaluation of its commitment to and efforts towards implementing the PD. To better reflect the reality of USG Foreign Assistance (FA), SI has prepared separate case studies for each of the four main agencies involved in providing U.S. foreign assistance: United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Department of State (DOS), Health and Human Services (HHS), and Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and three smaller case studies on the Department of Labor (DOL), Department of Treasury (TREAS), and the U.S. Department of Agricultural (USDA). To enable comparative analysis, all case studies have used the same conceptual framework. A synthesis report draws on the data and information generated by the case studies.

1.1 The assessment approach and methodology

The USG study, along with all the donor studies, assesses four broad areas:

1) Leadership and staff commitment to the PD principles;

2) The agency's (or agencies') capacity to implement the Paris Declaration and the steps that it has undertaken to enhance its capacity;
3) Incentives and disincentives for implementing the PD principles; and
4) Coherence, political framework and coordination.

The Paris Declaration is directed at the effectiveness of development aid, and specifically Official Development Assistance (ODA),[1] as the endorsers of the PD are governments and official agencies. This may include humanitarian and emergency assistance, and other aid in fragile situations.[2] The international evaluation team's guidance provided to the USG Evaluation Team stated that this should also include "vertical funds" that combine resources from several types of donors (bilateral, multilateral, private, corporations, etc.).

They continued, "[a]t the same time, the Paris Declaration and AAA are also explicitly and repeatedly concerned with 'other development resources' and their inter-relations with the aid flows most targeted by the Declaration. . . .The Evaluation design aims to place aid in its proper context. For this reason, the substantial domestic and external resources available for development other than ODA will be given major attention in the contextual analysis. Beyond their contextual importance, moreover, the Evaluation approach recognizes that other providers of development aid and finance are concerned with ensuring and improving the effectiveness of their own contributions. Even if they have not been so directly targeted by the Declaration, they have nevertheless been participating or taking account of global reform initiatives."

The SI Evaluation Team's substantive approach to assessing these areas started with the question: "To what extent are U.S. foreign assistance policies and practices consistent with the five principles of the Paris Declaration?", rather than limiting our research to those policies and practices specifically labeled, "Paris Declaration." The team used a mixed-methods approach, including literature and documentation review, semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews of senior and other selected agency headquarters staff. The SI Evaluation Team designed a Key Informant (KI) interview guide that included content and rating scales for the interviewers and interviewees to provide ratings and rankings on important topics/questions. This helped to ensure consistency in data gathering and allowed for greater comparability across agencies. Twenty-five of the fifty-five commitments apply to donors; the Team determined that eleven (at least one under each of the five principles) of them were key commitments that should be analyzed for the USG evaluation, as they are relevant and operational in the USG context. A commitment guide was created and used in interviews as a probe for interviewees less familiar with the Paris Declaration. It allowed the evaluators to find out what practices or processes are

[1] ODA as defined by the OECD/DAC: "Grants or Loans to countries and territories on Part I of the DAC List of Aid Recipients (developing countries) which are: (a) undertaken by the official sector; (b) with promotion of economic development and welfare as the main objective; (c) at concessional financial terms [if a loan, having a Grant Element (q.v.) of at least 25 per cent]. In addition to financial flows, Technical Co-operation (q.v.) is included in aid. Grants, Loans and Credits for military purposes are excluded. For the treatment of the forgiveness of Loans originally extended for military purposes, see Notes on Definitions and Measurement below. Transfer payments to private individuals (e.g. pensions, reparations or insurance payouts) are in general not counted."

[2] The general principles of the Paris Declaration are expected to apply in "challenging and complex situations." to these forms of aid, with some special requirements for adaptation. (See PD para. 7). In the main, however, humanitarian assistance is excluded from coverage under the Paris Declaration and AAA.

consistent with a PD principle, but not necessarily labeled as such.[3] The Team also met with representatives from USDA and the Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance (F) and the USG Reference Group, consisting of representatives from each case study agency, to discuss and confirm the evaluation process and design. With a few exceptions, the case study evaluations do not include interviews with field staff. However, field perspectives will be assessed in the team's synthesis report, through survey and field interview data.

Each case study team worked with their agency representative to identify key informants from program, policy, and functional offices, in addition to senior leadership. The final list of key informants was subject to participant availability and willingness to participate. All interviews are confidential.

Successful implementation of the Paris Declaration principles is not the responsibility, nor even within the reach, of any single government agency. Rather, it relies upon the combined efforts and actions of the agency being reviewed, as well as the host countries it intends to help, other U.S. government donor agencies, other donor countries, and non-government organizations. The purpose and nature of the assistance provided can also have an effect. This report will provide insights into the achievements, challenges, and varying incentives and disincentives to implementing the PD Principles, and present relevant considerations or implications to the USDA.

1.2 Key Informants and Document Review

Methods used specifically for the USDA case study include document review, analysis of agency procedures, and structured key informant interviews. Documents are included in the bibliography.

The team interviewed twenty-nine individuals using four approaches:

- Thirteen individual interviews with USDA staff (although more than one person attended these interviews);
- Two group interviews that included seven USDA staff;
- Interviews with seven external key informants knowledgeable about USDA programs; and
- Two e-mail "interviews" with USDA field staff.

Of the twenty-two USDA staff interviewed, nine could be considered senior leadership, i.e., office director or above.

The Evaluation Team modified the format (but not the substance) of the interview guide for use in USDA interviews.[4] Most questions addressed respondents' perceptions; responses to questions posed are presented in the relevant sections of this report. In addition, the small number of responses requires that this information be considered more suggestive than definitive.

USDA requested that the team use an interview guide developed by USDA staff for the interview with the Administrator of the Foreign Agricultural Service. Because this interview

[3] Both the interview guide and commitment guide can be found in Annex 1
[4] Annex 1, "Interview and Commitment Guides".

guide was derived from the one developed by the PD Evaluation Team leaders,[5] it remained similar enough that questions asked of the administrator were closely aligned with those asked in the other USDA interviews. The Evaluation Team also sent an e-mail questionnaire, functionally the same as the USDA interview guide, to three field staff; two of the three responded.

The findings and conclusions in this report are supported by evidence, although the evidence gathering was summary in nature. The team was not able to delve into each program, funding stream and/or office to assure that every statement is equally correct for all subsections of USDA.

2 THE USDA PROGRAM

USDA's international assistance takes three forms: humanitarian, developmental, and post-conflict assistance. Food aid from U.S. farms can be used in any of these contexts. USDA also supports international cocoa research, carries out trade facilitation actions in developing countries, and enables Agricultural Research Service, Forest Service and other professional staff to participate in research and technical assistance activities that have at least partial development purposes.

USDA's humanitarian assistance programs, most involving some type of food aid, are addressed more fully in the think tank reports generated with each Farm Bill, the academic literature and the careful attention from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) than can possibly be captured here. A number of these were reviewed by the team and Table 1, on page 6, attempts to outline the structure of food aid programs and responsibilities.

USDA's developmental assistance is a patchwork of projects and funding streams. Much of the Department's development work is reimbursable by other agencies, such as USAID, and multiple interviewees reported that USDA development programs largely play a supportive role to other agencies. Perhaps this was part of the reason it was difficult for the Team to clarify funding sources and programs for developmental work, even after repeated requests. USDA did provide partial information stating that the agency funds roughly $6.5 million a year in exchanges and fellowship programs. Multiple interviewees reported that USDA development programs primarily play a supporting role to other agencies, like USAID.

Programs in Afghanistan and Iraq now constitute a significant part of USDA foreign assistance. Although overall figures are not presented, the January 2010 USDA Fact Sheet for Afghanistan reports over $50 million in food assistance in 2008; over fifty staff residing in Afghanistan; and multiple development, fellowship and exchange programs. The November 2009 USDA Fact Sheet on Iraq reports thirty-eight USDA resident staff, as well as multiple technical assistance activities to revitalize the agricultural sector, including exchanges and fellowships.

Foreign assistance (including food aid) comprises only a small part of USDA's mission. This evaluation focuses on the Foreign Agriculture Service. Three other agencies at USDA carry out foreign assistance activities: the Forestry Service, the Agricultural Research Service and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. These programs are examined in a limited fashion. The Economic Research Service carries out national food assessments worldwide and other

[5] Annex 1 Section B, "PDE Senior Management Questions".

analytic tasks, including assessments of global food supply and prices[6], but not foreign assistance programs. The Office of Capacity Building and Development within the Foreign Agricultural Service is where the bulk of the interviews were conducted, because it is responsible for both food aid and development programs.

The Foreign Agricultural Service holds primary responsibility for international activities. According to the USDA website: "The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture works to improve foreign market access for U.S. products, build new markets, improve the competitive position of U.S. agriculture in the global marketplace, and provide food aid and technical assistance to foreign countries."

Foreign assistance, i.e., food aid and technical assistance, is the last of FAS's four priorities.[7] Only one-third of approximately 260 FAS staff members engage in developmental or humanitarian assistance. Other staff members in USDA provide international training, technical assistance, and/or capacity building and can be called on to support developmental or humanitarian activities.

The new presidential initiative for food security—now called 'Feed the Future'—is likely to have a significant impact on USDA programs and activities. President Obama at the L'Aquila G8 Summit (July, 2009) introduced Feed the Future principles; the initiative was launched in May of 2010 as a whole-of-government effort to sustainably reduce hunger and poverty worldwide. USDA appears to be playing a substantial role.

[6] GAO 10-352 page 62
[7] USDA, Strategic Plan 2006-2011.Foreign Agricultural Service.

Table 1, USDA Food Aid Programs 2008[8]				
Program	Purpose	Administered by/ through	$ 2008	Original date of authorization
Food for Progress	To support democracy & private enterprise	USDA/NGOs, foreign governments, WFP	$166m	1985
McGovern/Dole International Food for Education & Child Nutrition	Education Child Development Food Security	USDA/NGOs, cooperatives, intergovernmental organizations, foreign governments	$99m	2002
Food for Peace PL 480				
• Title I	Trade and Development Assistance[1]	USDA/ Government to government	0	1954
• Title II	Emergency and Private Assistance[9]	USAID/ World Food Program/ NGOs (USDA's Farm Service Agency does logistics & procurement)	$2,351m	1954
• Title V	John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Program	USAID	$9.8	1985
416(b) of Farm Bill	n/a	Commodity Credit Corporation	0	1949 (Recently inactive)
Local and Regional Procurement Project (Pilot Program)	Urgent food needs due to crisis and disaster	USDA	$ 5 million (2009)	2008
Budget from USDA fact sheet	Urgent humanitarian needs	USAID only	$125 million (2009)	2008
Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust	Food Reserve for emergency food needs	USDA/ when USAID Administrator determines that Title II is insufficient for emergency needs	$256 million	1980

[8] Chart based on USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, "Fact Sheet Food Assistance." 4/2009, supplemented by Emmy B. Simmons, "Reconsidering Food Aid: the Dialogue Continues", Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa, 2007 as well as USAID 2008 Food Aid Report. All budgets from GAO, March 2010 except Local & Regional Procurement (text and annex p. 62).

[9] The P.L. 480 Title I authorization in the 2008 Farm Bill changes the focus to food security; the new name is Economic Assistance and Food Security. Source: Hanrahan, page 5

3 FINDINGS

3.1 Leadership and Commitment

The team observed greatest awareness of Paris Declaration principles when communicating with the leadership and the selected field staff the team contacted. With few exceptions, mid-level and program staff showed less awareness.

3.1.1 Leadership awareness

Several of the interviewees reported that FAS and Departmental leadership demonstrated greatest awareness of the Paris Declaration and its principles, compared to the rest of the staff. Although variation in the depth of knowledge of PD exists among USDA leaders, spoken commitment to many of the principles was quite strong. For example, one respondent reported, "My deputy administrator is very focused on country ownership and alignment. She talks about alignment with our country plans."

3.1.2 Mid-level or program-level staff awareness

In Washington, mid-level staff in the FAS demonstrated varying degrees of awareness. One respondent explained that only one-third of the FAS staff actually deals with development or food assistance; trade is the primary objective of FAS as a whole. Staff who deal with trade programs are less likely to be aware of PD principles, although several interviewees who had worked on assistance programs in the past were aware of them.

The Team independently assessed fifteen of the USDA staff—at all levels. These results proved to be quite similar to the self-reporting shown in Table 2.[10] Several people interviewed admitted honestly that they had never heard of the Paris Declaration before receiving the request for an interview.

Table 2, USDA staff awareness of the Paris Declaration Principles

	High	Modest	Limited	None
Self-assessment[11]	2	8	3	1
Team assessment	2	7	4	2

[10] This assessment was made in reviewing answers to the questions, "How and when did you first learn about the Paris Declaration principles?" and, "What can you tell me about them?" Only after these questions were asked did the team show the page elaborating on the PD Principles to the interviewees.
[11] One person did not provide a self-assessment.

3.1.3 Field staff awareness

In addition, the Evaluation Team asked Washington, D.C. staff for its assessment of USDA field staff awareness of the PD principles. Table 3 below shows that the headquarters staff judged field staff to have only modest or limited awareness. One significant factor explaining the score is that most field staff are not in developing countries that receive foreign aid. Most respondents indicated that they would have attributed much greater knowledge and awareness levels to staff in posts with food aid and developmental programs. Table 3 reports their assessment of field staff overall, not just for relevant posts. The two field staff who responded to team questions by e-mail were highly informed.

Table 3, USDA headquarters staff reporting of level of field staff awareness

	High	Modest	Limited	None
Field staff awareness	2	5	5	0

3.1.4 Political Commitment

Commitment to PD principles is clear in the president's Feed the Future initiative. One field staffer stated, "The awareness is very high with the new administration—the PD principles form the basis of the initiative." Approximately half the people interviewed made the link between PD principles and Feed the Future.

Figure 1: Slide from presentation to USDA Global Outlook, February 2010

USDA plays a significant role in the Feed the Future initiative, even though overall coordination appears to reside in the Department of State. The Secretary of Agriculture introduced the Secretary of State at the launch of Feed the Future in Chicago on May 20, 2010. Although the Secretary of Agriculture's remarks did not reference the PD principles explicitly, he did indicate the importance of USDA playing a key role in implementing the Feed the Future initiative. The Department's Coordinator for the Global Food Security Initiative, who sits in the Office of the Secretary of USDA, presented the Feed the Future initiative at the USDA Global Outlook Forum February 18–19, 2010. This presentation included a slide (Figure 1) that links the initiative to the Paris Declaration principles.

The PD principle of mutual accountability was included in the presentation for the Global Outlook Forum stating: "Hold U.S. programs publicly accountable, using benchmarks and targets to measure progress towards our goal."

Establishing those benchmarks and targets is both politically and technically complex and may keep the initiative from fulfilling this objective, but high-level political commitment is there. This was the only evidence of mutual accountability that the Team observed. Perhaps the high

priority of the new initiative will allow this principle to filter down to USDA programs and activities in a way that has not been evident so far.

The team found evidence that the USDA senior leadership, and leadership in both FAS and OCBD, articulates political commitment to the PD principles of host country ownership, aligning with national development strategies, harmonization with other donors and managing for results. However, multiple aspects of legislation for food aid limit the USDA's ability to operate in concert with the PD principles:

- Legislative support for food aid budgets is strongly tied to provision of U.S. commodities;
- Largely, U.S. food aid must be procured, processed, bagged and shipped from the U.S. There are specific requirements with regard to processing and others regarding use of U.S.-flagged ships. According to the GAO, transportation costs have accounted for roughly half of the value of the food assistance[12];
- There are legislative prohibitions (the "Bumpers Amendment") on supporting developing countries' efforts to increase production of commodities that "will result in increased competition" with US products unless certain conditions are met. For example, support to cotton production was prohibited for many years (Section 407 of the Farm Bill), but negotiations under the Doha Development Agenda indicated that a limited amount of support to West African countries for new cotton technologies could facilitate trade agreements; and
- All U.S. government policies and regulations that pertain to commercial objectives and require the use of U.S. products and services, apply as well. Although some donors have untied aid, the USG and therefore USDA have not.[13]

3.2 Capacity to Implement

3.2.1 Current strategy, policies and practices

The strategies and capacity to implement international activities derive from the dual goals of USDA to "help promote agriculture production and biotechnology exports as America works to increase food security."[14] In the context of the limited role of foreign assistance in USDA, the staff interviewed reported instances where the dual goals were pursued.

Interestingly, many staff in FAS reported the Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS) as an example of overseas capacity building. This is surprising for two reasons:

1) APHIS is a separate agency, and
2) According to the APHIS website, its "basic charge" is "protecting American agriculture".

Specifically, when the U.S. imports meat and fish from developing country sources, it is important that diseases endemic to those countries not be imported to the U.S. where they could affect domestic producers.

[12] GAO-08-83T, Table page 2.
[13] Clay et al, page 8.
[14] USDA, "2011 Budget" (slides), February 2010, from the website.

The most significant development in policy and strategy related to USDA international activities is the president's Feed the Future initiative. Many USDA staff interviewed mentioned the importance of the initiative *vis a vis* implementation of USDA programs. The USDA food security coordinator's presentation included the slide in Figure 1 that demonstrates just how closely their approach tracks with Paris Declaration principles.

Feed the Future is the only direct instance the Team identified of policy, strategy or guidance that referenced the Paris Declaration. None of the other documents provided by interviewees or found on the USDA website directly addressed Paris Declaration principles.

American Soybean Association's World Initiative Supporting Human Health (WISHH) was formed in 2000 to promote exports of U.S. soybeans for use in human diets in developing countries.
WISHH has worked with numerous private voluntary organizations and commercial companies in 23 different developing countries in Africa, Asia and Central America, training people how to use soy for economic and nutritional advantages. Many of these groups are using U.S. high-protein soy provided under the food aid programs to improve diets and health as well as encourage growth of food industries in developing countries. The USDA Market Access Program funding continued efforts in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Costa Rica and more recently in Afghanistan.

Source: Foreign Agricultural Service Office of Trade Programs "Export Programs at Work", April 2009.

3.2.2 Capacity to Implement the Paris Declaration

FAS staff reported substantial capacity to implement Paris Declaration principles, summarized in Table 4. These answers represent, not so much the overall capacity to carry out foreign assistance activities but rather, the degree to which existing staff and programs could follow Paris Declaration principles in carrying out those activities. Several factors come into play.

Table 4, Reported assessment of guidance and capacity to implement PD

	High	Modest	Limited	None
USDA staff assessment of capacity	7	2	3	0

FAS was reorganized in 2006, and bringing more strategic focus to its development assistance programs was among the reorganization's goals. The Office of Capacity Building and Development (OCBD), a new program, operates food aid programs; trade, science, and regulatory capacity-building projects, including training and technical assistance programs; and supports USDA's post-conflict and post-disaster reconstruction efforts. The policy coordination staff was created under OCBD, as was the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) staff. Staff in OCBD reported on their efforts to build capacity for "Results Oriented Management", as they call their systems and procedures for managing for results. OCBD has recently invested in staff

training and technical assistance to build OCBD skills in this area.[15] In the year and half since this effort began, approximately 50 percent of OCBD staff has participated in at least one training. It does not appear that a formal USDA policy requiring Results Oriented Management has been approved. OCBD staff all cited these implementation efforts as examples not of direct implementation of the Paris Declaration but as example of the degree to which they support many of the same principles. Although the Evaluation Team did find some evidence of improved managing for results in USDA, no evidence was found that USDA was strengthening host country capacity for these functions.

KIs reported that most of the Paris Declaration principles are staff intensive, particularly in the early stages where consultation with the host government and with other donors is necessarily demanding. This poses a challenge in light of the small number of USDA field staff in countries receiving foreign assistance. For example, only three USDA field staff members are stationed in all of sub-Saharan Africa, although several more are being sent at the time of this report. One field person shared the perspective that limitations on staff in the field will be a bottleneck for implementing Feed the Future:

> The USDA presence in [food insecure countries] is growing modestly, but more short-term technical and administrative[16] (such as monitoring and evaluation) staff is needed. To support more staff, we also need more funding so that this initiative doesn't drain resources from the FAS core functions of promoting trade and supporting U.S. exports.

Capacity is always a function of priorities; this raises the question of the extent to which the new food security initiative will trump the existing mission of FAS. Overlap between USDA's primary international role as a promoter of U.S. agricultural exports and Feed the Future's commitment to global food security is modest. When resources are scarce and choices must be made, evidence suggests that the capacity to do both is not there and the role of supporting U.S. agriculture will take precedence.

3.3 Incentives and Disincentives

At USDA, there are currently neither incentives nor disincentives specific to the Paris Declaration. There are general constraints that staff viewed as "disincentives".

It is clear that the primary incentive to implement the Paris Declaration principles is the professionalism of the staff—"professional pride", as one person said. In their commitment to positive developmental change in the world and to responding to humanitarian crises, they recognize that there is much in the PD principles that reflects good management practice that will lead to sustained and effective assistance. Most staff consider there to be some limited incentives (Table 5).

[15] One of the authors provided one training program in January 2010 as part of OCBD's project with Management Systems International.
[16] The Team members do not see M&E as "administrative", but that is what the key informant stated.

Table 5, Incentives/Disincentives to implement the Paris Declaration and/or its principles				
	High	Modest	Limited	None
Incentives	2	4	4	0
Disincentives	0	4	3	1

The principles of managing for results, host country ownership and harmonization are all principles that USDA staff indicated they already follow (the principles of project management/procurement alignment and mutual accountability are constrained by the factors described in Section 2.1.4, "Political Commitment", of this report). Incentives to pursue these principles identified by interviewees include staff performance appraisals, performance bonuses, and the avoidance of "GAO and IG looking over our shoulders". One person reported that scarcity of resources was an incentive because "scarcity is good for quality".

Most interviewees reported some disincentives and constraints. Only one person specified a disincentive directly related to the Paris Declarations principles: "The focus on U.S. exports and strict bilateral assistance that benefit U.S. interests detract from [the] Paris Declaration". Several other interviewees identified the "cumbersome bureaucratic structure" as a disincentive. This reinforces evidence of modest progress in efforts to improve managing for results reported above. Several factors identified as constraints included:

- "The strong push to chase the dollar…" for the programs that are only on a reimbursable basis;
- Resource limitations characterized as the "tug of war with resources and FTEs" (personnel);
- Annual budget allocations for money that must be used that fiscal year—making it difficult to be responsive to host country counterparts because there is a fairly small window in which to program money. One staffer reported in May that the office still had not had funding allocated for their programs (this budget must be programmed by the end of the USG fiscal year, on September 30).

In addition, USG laws and policies that require auditable procedures for allocation of USG resources prohibit USDA in many circumstances from being able to use country systems and procedures to maximum extent. Several USDA staff also mentioned limited capacity within host governments as a constraint to using those governments' systems and procedures.

Interviews with experts outside USDA also pointed out the constraints of USDA's limited capacity, and the limited capacity of the host governments. They specifically raised the question of conflict between host government and U.S. government policies: *what if a country is taking leadership and it conflicts with U.S. policy?* For example, the government of Malawi provides fertilizers and other agricultural inputs at highly discounted prices, but U.S. policy dictates that agricultural input distribution should be market driven. In testimony in March, 2010 on food security strategy, GAO concluded: "policy differences between the United States and host

governments with regard to agricultural development and food security may complicate efforts to align U.S. assistance with host country strategies."

3.4 Coherence, Political Framework and Coordination

The Department of Agriculture clearly is not the lead in foreign assistance in the USG. Although many policies and practices of USDA foreign assistance are congruent with Paris Declaration, the purpose of the Department is to support U.S. agriculture. The split nature of USDA is evident in the first goal in the 2011 budget presentation:

Source: USDA, 2011Budget (slides), February 2010

Review of the USDA 2011 Budget and USDA 2010 Combined Performance and Accountability Report[17] clearly demonstrates that the focus of USDA international work is to maximize U.S. agricultural exports. It is difficult to identify work supported by foreign assistance within the USDA budget, perhaps in part because of the level of generality necessary for this, the USG's largest department. Although the USDA is prominent in the USG, its role in food aid is most evident in the foreign assistance community.

USDA and USAID share responsibility for food aid; the orders of magnitude previously outlined in Table 1 indicate that USAID has the larger role in programming food aid overseas, although the Farm Service Agency of USDA is crucial for procurement and shipping. USDA's role in food assistance was expanded with the 2008 Farm Bill by the creation of the McGovern Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Act. External observers agree that this has not led to greater coordination within the USG community.[18] The number and complexity of programs and authorities continue to constrain coordination and integration. GAO recommended that the administration determine an overall government strategy for food security to address these constraints, and that Feed the Future is the administration's strategy for food security.

Secretary Vilsack's prominent role in the announcement of Feed the Future suggested that USDA is expected to play an important role in food security programs. The Evaluation Team observed that senior USDA staff played an active role in the development of the initiative. In interviews, USDA staff reported that this had not filtered down to the working level, other than "being tasked with short deadlines". They felt they had little understanding of the context and stated that USAID does not keep them in the loop when developing policy and strategy issues. The Team observed that USAID staff has the same complaint about the Department of State, which may indicate that whole-of-government coordination has not fully developed for the Feed the Future initiative.

FAS has had some difficult experiences, moving too aggressively in the direction of Administration priorities. In the last year, FAS requested $200 million to support agriculture programs in Afghanistan and Iraq. Traditional FAS supporters (e.g., the agriculture industry in

[17] USDA, Combined Performance and Accountability Report, Washington DC 11-25-2009
[18] The GAO reports address this issue in detail e.g., page 3 GAO 09-977SP.

the U.S.) wanted to be sure that FAS stayed focused on their mission of supporting U.S. agriculture, while Senator Richard Lugar expressed concern that they were taking on too much of USAID's role. Substantial programs in Afghanistan and Iraq continue, but several interviewees conveyed that the focus of FAS work would be on the more traditional role of supporting U.S. exports.

The Team noted that, when asking USDA staff about harmonization with other donors, the KIs most often cited issues with interagency coordination and whole-of-government coordination instead. Interviewees pointed repeatedly to the coordination with the World Food Program to harmonize food aid and the Food Aid Convention is a coordination structure as well. Several staff mentioned WTO standards. Bilateral harmonization is the responsibility of the few USDA staff in the field. Because much of USDA's developmental work is reimbursed by other agencies, including USAID, harmonization would be their responsibility. These reported links between whole-of-government coordination and harmonization led the Team to conclude that solving interagency issues will be necessary before USDA international programs focus more on donor harmonization.

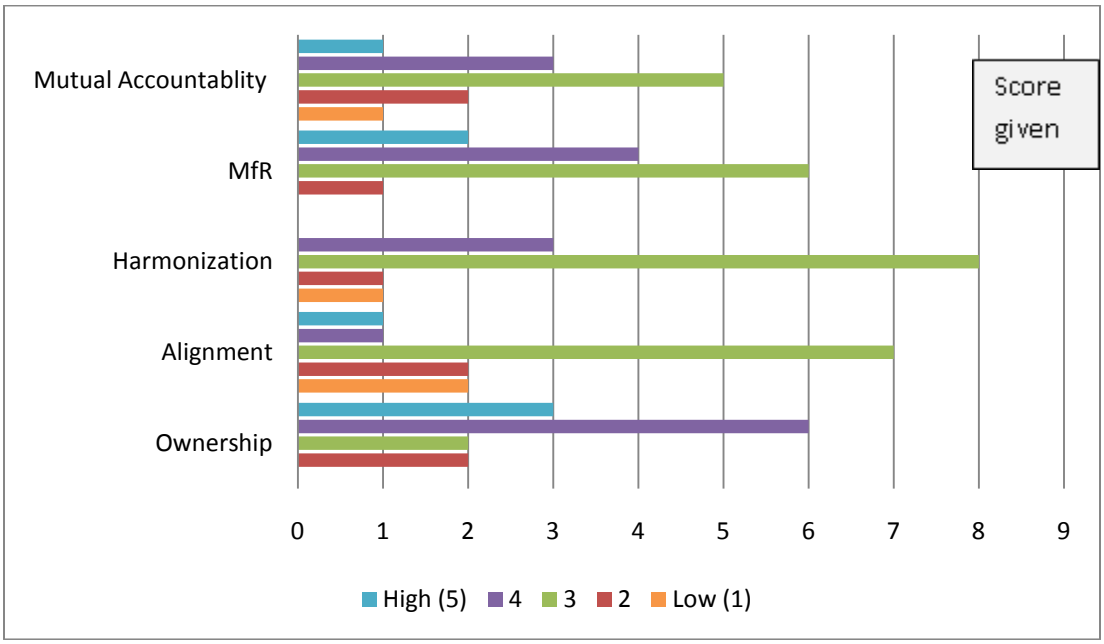
4 AGENCY ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

Assessing USDA foreign assistance as a whole, the Evaluation Team concludes that staff is making good faith efforts within the structural constraints of their assistance programs and of the goals and priorities of USDA as a whole. They are able to only modestly fulfill the Paris Declaration principles. This section addresses both their self-assessment and the Team's assessment.

The Interview Guide included a question on respondents' assessment of their agency's effectiveness in implementing the Paris Declaration principles. It should be noted that what is reported here is how well respondents think their Agency implements *according* to the principles, but in almost every case they stated that implementation was not due to the principles or U.S. signature to the Paris Declaration.

Figure 2 below shows the range of responses. The vertical axis is the score given (on a scale of 1–5, with '5' being the highest) and the horizontal axis is the number of respondents who gave a particular score.

Figure 2, Number of interviewees who scored agency implementation of the principles by level of effectiveness[19]



# of respondents

Table 6 identifies the agency's overall rating determined by the SI Evaluation Team. The Team used a 1-5 scale, with "5" being the highest, to rate the agency on each PD principle. The rating considers how the principle is practiced by the agency and its staff, any agency policies or procedures related to the principle and overall commitment to the principle by agency leadership and staff.

Table 6, Team assessment of USDA implementation of Paris Declaration principles

PD Principle	Host-Country Ownership	Alignment	Harmonization	Mutual Accountability	Managing for Results
USDA Foreign Assistance Programs	2	3	3	1	2

The data in Figure 2 indicates that the staff believes their agency most effectively implements the principle of **host-country ownership**. But at the same time, most reported that this is a function of the field staff or of implementing NGOs. Field staff members cover multiple countries and must address both trade and development portfolios, limiting their ability to have any depth of

[19] "Agency" was defined somewhat differently by the respondents. In most cases, the agency they spoke to was FAS. In some cases, staff only felt comfortable assessing OCBD. In two cases, they spoke to USDA as a whole.

interaction with a host country government around priorities and strategies. NGOs can have good coordination with their host country counterparts but they are generally limited to implementation of the USDA programs—the parameters of this role are not likely to include any scope for negotiating policy or **aligning** strategy. In some programs, USDA can respond to host government priorities, but the Evaluation Team would assess these cases as quite limited. The Team concluded that staff was committed to following this principle and would try to support host country ownership at every opportunity. Feed the Future will clearly play a role in maintaining focus on the principle of host country ownership.

The Team considers USDA staff's more modest assessments of the other principles a better reflection of the realities that USDA staff faces. For programs that are primarily intended to promote U.S. trade or protect the safety of imported foodstuffs, potential exists to also support capacity building in the host country. A number of staff cited APHIS as an example in which building capacity for inspections supports both host country and U.S. trade. However, one external informant reported an instance in Latin America in which capacity building was intentionally limited to what was necessary for U.S. interests. When it was pointed out by a third party how easy it would be to strengthen the overall inspection process, the U.S. agent explained that his job only extended to protecting U.S. interests. The objective of building international agricultural research capacity seems to be a shared objective of the USG and host governments, although that is not to say that their interests are identical. The area of overlap may allow for the scope in a more equal partnership that staff reported to the team.

USDA tries to accomplish strategy **alignment,** but U.S. legislative requirements for the accounting of foreign assistance funds, reinforced by repeated GAO and IG audits, function as a disincentive to use of host country procurement and accountability systems. Not many examples of alignment were identified at USDA. When Food for Progress is provided to local governments, it may go into the local budget, making the local government responsible for project management and completion of projects. A steering committee of Georgian nationals was formed to run animal health programs. The interviewee at the Agricultural Research Service reported that they developed research plans jointly with counterparts, and then researchers in the U.S. and in partner countries conducted the research independently but USG resources were not being used for the research in partner countries, so there was not alignment as defined by the principle.

Another aspect of the alignment principle, i.e., following the host country's national development strategy, is supported by USDA, but was addressed in this evaluation as host-country ownership.

Perhaps the best example of **harmonization** is the allocation of food aid to countries in need by working in partnership with the World Food Program. Several staff mentioned the WTO standards, which bring consistency worldwide in areas such as the environment. In terms of harmonizing donor programs to minimize the burden of donor requirements on recipient countries in the bilateral setting, USDA has too few in-country resources to robustly address this.

The principles of **managing for results** are built on strategic planning and learning in order to improve effectiveness and impact of foreign assistance. OCBD has invested in building their own capacity in recent years and some other offices demonstrated use of systematic data—particularly when reporting for the Government Performance and Results Act required by Congress or the Performance Assessment Rating Tool required by OMB. By contrast, GAO

reports cite difficulties in obtaining clear budget numbers from the agencies; such budget levels would form the fundamental basis for the managing for results process. In interviews, GAO also mentioned that there have been no impact evaluations in the last decade for USDA international activities. The Team concluded that there is much progress to be made here; they found no evidence of working with partners to build up planning and learning capacity, other than efforts in agricultural research, and even that is more scientific learning than programmatic learning.

Mutual accountability is the principle where USDA has the most progress to make. Mutual accountability was only referenced in a single, but significant, instance of Feed the Future and will be addressed below. Even the transparency in foreign assistance budgets is a challenge; this is an issue that GAO has raised repeatedly. Including this principle in Feed the Future may create some positive momentum.

USDA's role in foreign assistance is at the center of a complex set of issues that include domestic agriculture and shipping issues; varying foreign policy goals and objectives; multiple funding streams and acts of Congress; overlapping federal bureaucracy; and ever emerging food crises in multiple parts of the world. The Evaluation Team concluded that, although there are areas where FAS staff does operate according to Paris Declaration principles, on balance the constraints under which they must operate outweigh the good efforts of the staff. Legislative constraints on food aid; expectations of the Department's domestic constituency; the requirement of reimbursable, tied aid; and the overall structure of the USG foreign assistance bureaucracy that keeps USDA in a supporting role combine to limit implementation of Paris Declaration principles. There will be good faith efforts to follow Paris Declaration principles by staff but to the extent that the principles conflict with the primary focus of FAS and USDA to promote U.S. agriculture, implementation of Paris Declaration will be limited.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1 Interview and Commitment Guides

Introduction

The Paris Declaration (PD) on Aid Effectiveness 2005 has become a major milestone in development assistance. Designed to improve the quality and effectiveness of development assistance, it is built around five principles – ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability. These principles are meant to guide interactions, relationships, and partnerships between development agencies and partnering countries. In addition to monitoring the progress of the implementation of the PD, OECD/DAC has launched a major evaluation of the PD to examine its implementation and explore its impacts.

The USG has joined this international effort and is committed to conducting an independent review of its commitment to and efforts towards implementing the PD. Since the USG review is a part of a larger study, its primary focus is consistent with those of other reviews conducted by participating donor countries. Consequently, the USG review will primarily focus on: commitment to PD principles, capacity to implement, and incentives.

The USG has contracted our firm, Social Impact, to carry out this project. To better reflect the reality of USG foreign assistance, we will prepare separate case studies for each of the participating organizations: USAID, DOS, HHS, MCC, DOL, Treasury and USDA. All case studies will use the same conceptual framework, approach and variables to enable comparative analysis. A synthesis report will then be written using data and information generated by case studies.

To inform the individual case studies, we are conducting informational interviews with senior and mid-level leadership at each organization. These interviews will be completely confidential and no names will be referred to in the reports generated. In addition, we would like to emphasize that this review is an attempt to understand the current state of affairs surrounding the USG's implementation of the PD, not to act as a grading system. Your candid responses will allow us to gain insight into the achievements, challenges, and varying incentives and disincentives to implementing the PD principles, and present relevant recommendations to the USG.

Section A: PDE Key Informant Interview guide (core questions)

Interviewer: _____ Date: _____

Respondent: _____ Gender: ☐ Male ☐Female

Office/Title/Rank: _____ Length of Service: _____

Thank you for meeting with me today. As introduced in the email from X, I would like to ask several questions about the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2005 and how you see [your Department's/Agency's/Unit's] response to it. Please remember that this discussion will remain confidential.

1) How and when did you first learn about the Paris Declaration principles?
2) What can you tell me about them?

Scale for interviewer: (based on the answers, circle the most relevant answer below)

Highly aware	Modestly aware	Limited awareness	None

Commitment:

1) How would you characterize the extent of awareness of the PD principles and their implications by the top leadership of your agency?

Scale for interviewer: (based on the answers, circle the most relevant answer below)

High	Modest	Limited	None

Probing Questions:

- How has top leadership shown commitment to implementation of PD principles?
- If they have reservations about implementing the PD what are the underlying reasons?

2) [If applicable] How would you characterize the extent of awareness of the PD principles and their implications by the leadership of your agency in field missions or offices?

High	Modest	Limited	None

Probing Questions:

- How does their understanding compare with that of top leadership at headquarters?
- Why?

3) How has your agency taken steps to adopt the PD principles and incorporate them into your strategic plans?

Scale for interviewer: Based on answer, rate the KI's awareness level of agency steps

Highly aware	Modestly aware	Limited awareness	None

4) To what extent have these attempts been successful?

Scale for interviewer: (based on the answers, circle the most relevant answer below)

High	Modest	Limited	None

Probing Questions:

- What attempts have been made to translate PD principles into policies, guidelines, and operational directives?
- If successful, cite some examples. If not successful, can you give reasons?
- Are there documents where these are reflected? E.g. guidance or policy documents. If so, cam we have copies of them?

Capacity:

1) To what degree do you believe your agency has the guidance and capacity to support implementation of the PD?
    - If little or none, what are the main things that are weak or missing?

Scale for Interviewer: Based on answer, rate the capacity:

High	Modest	Limited	None

2) What steps, if any, are being taken to strengthen capabilities?

3) How has the PD affected cost-effectiveness of USG delivery of bilateral foreign assistance?
    a. If so, how?

Scale For Interviewer: Based on answer, rate the effect:

High	Modest	Limited	None

Incentives:

1) Are there any positive incentives provided to staff to implement PD principles?

(Provide examples, if any.) If so, how effective are they?

5)

High	Modest	Limited	None

2) Are there perceived disincentives amongst staff (at home and in the field) to implementing PD principles?
    - If so, how constraining are they?

Scale for Interviewer: Based on answer, rate the level/intensity of disincentives present

High	Modest	Limited	None

General:

1) How would you rate your agency on implementation of the each of the five PD principles on a scale of 1-5, with 5 the highest?
2) How would you rank the five PD principles in terms of effectiveness of implementation by your agency?
3) What would be reasons for the least effectively implemented principles?
4) How would you rate the USG, beyond your agency, on implementation of each of the PD principles on a scale of 1–5?

For the interviewer: Effectiveness of Implementation: Scale 1–5, with '5' being the highest.

	Ownership	Alignment	Harmonization	Managing for Results	Mutual Accountability
KI's Agency					
USG as a whole					

5) What recommendations do you have to better facilitate effective implementation of the PD principles by the USG in general and by your agency?

SECTION B: PDE SENIOR MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS

Selected questions about aid processes/ elements that reflect the Paris Declaration Principles

Thank you for meeting with me today. As introduced in the email from Brenda Freeman, I would like to ask several questions about the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2005 and the aid processes that lie behind it in relation to USDA. Please remember that this discussion will remain confidential.

1. What role, if any, do host countries or other donors play in the process by which USDA formulates its development/food aid programs in a country?

   If needed for illustrative specificity:
   - To what extent does USDA/FAS coordinate with other donors or with the host country in developing its purposes, strategies, policy dialogues, programs, periodic reviews and the like? What are the mechanisms for doing that?

   - Is there a common framework of conditions or indicators jointly developed by USDA with other donors in the areas of programming*?* Is there any mechanism to ensure that your operating units have been using that common framework? To what extent do they share the common framework?

2. Turning from planning to implementation: to what extent, if any, does USDA/FAS use or rely on the recipient country's project implementation systems? What guidance, if any, is provided regarding use of recipient country systems?

   - For example, how common is it to use the recipient country's own institutions and systems for Procurement, Accounting, Project management, Project monitoring , and Project assessment?

   - What factors inhibit your greater use of host-country systems?

3. What about other donors? Does USDA ever work out a division of labor with other donors, for example in carving out areas for your respective programming? If so, to what extent? Is it common or rare?

   - To what extent does USDA join in consortiums of donors? To what extent, in general, does USDA act as the lead donor in a consortium of donors? To what extent does it follow the lead of some other donor or delegate responsibility to another donor?

   - To what extent has USDA collaborated with other donors on joint missions for e.g. analytic work, planning, monitoring, or evaluation?

4. To what extent, if any, has USDA used its funds to augment the capacity of the recipient countries to formulate, manage, monitor or assess the programs it funds?

- What has been your experience in doing that? In general, has it made any difference in your subsequent reliance on the mechanisms of the host country?

5. What measures do you use to assess the development outcomes or results of your [overall] assistance program (or activity) in a given country?

- Do you use host country sources of information for this assessment? Why or why not?

6. How do you use information on the results being achieved by your assistance?

7. Have you used results information (i.e. monitoring or evaluation) in decisions about the implementation of your current programs and in the design of future programs?

8. Does FAS staff meet with representatives of the host country to assess the performance of your assistance program and propose plans for future assistance?

9. How and when did you first learn about the Paris Declaration principles? What can you tell me about them?

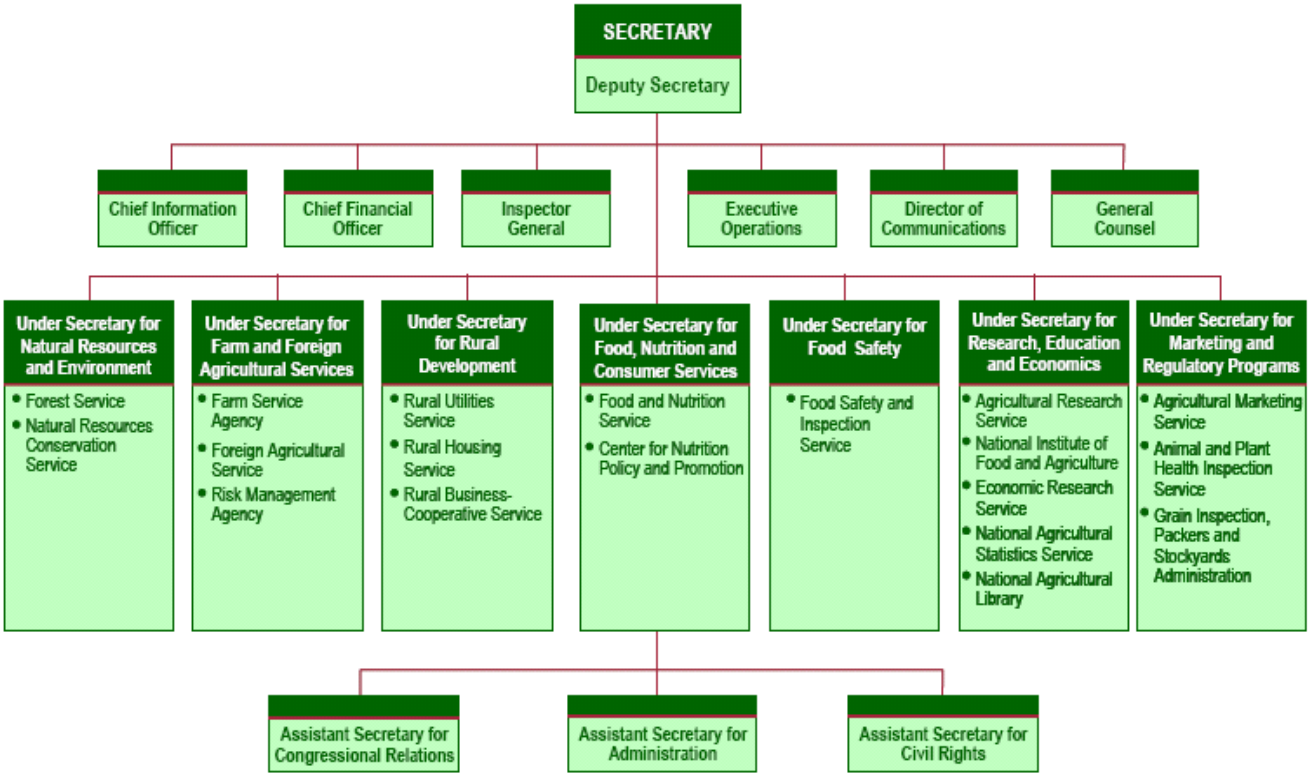
Section C: Paris Declaration Commitments

Donors commit to: (11 commitments, chosen by the Evaluation team for emphasis. We have changed the wording slightly to fit better with the U.S. context)

1) Ownership. Respect host country leadership and help strengthen their capacity to exercise it. (This is the only PD commitment for donors under "Ownership." It received a lot of emphasis in Accra.)
2) Alignment. Donors should base their overall support -country aid strategies, policy dialogues and development cooperation programs - on the country's national development strategy and periodic reviews of progress in implementation.
3) Alignment. Use country systems and procedures to maximum extent possible.
    - Avoid creating dedicated structures for day-to-day management and implementation of aid-financed projects and programs. [i.e., Project Implementation Units – “PIUs” - this is]
    - Progressively rely on host country systems for procurement when the country has implemented mutually agreed standards and processes.
4) Alignment. Predictability. Provide reliable indicative commitments of aid over a multi-year framework and disburse aid in a timely and predictable fashion according to agreed schedules.

5) Harmonization. Work together to reduce the number of separate, duplicative, missions to the field.
6) Harmonization. Make full use of the respective comparative advantages of donors at sector and country levels by delegating, where appropriate, authority to lead donors for the execution of programs, activities and tasks.
7) Harmonization. Reform procedures and strengthen incentives, including for recruitment, appraisal, and training, for management and staff to work towards harmonization, alignment and results.
8) Harmonization. Harmonized activities with respect to cross-cutting issues, including fragile states, gender equality, and environment.
9) Managing for Results. Countries and donors work together in a participatory approach to strengthen country capacities and the demand for results based management.
10) Mutual Accountability. Provide timely, transparent and comprehensive information on aid flows so as to enable host country authorities to present comprehensive budget reports to their legislatures and citizens.
11) Mutual Accountability. Jointly assess through existing ("and increasingly objective") country level mechanisms mutual progress in implementing agreed commitments on aid effectiveness, including the [55] Partnership Commitments.

ANNEX 2 USDA ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



ANNEX 3 SCOPE OF WORK

EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PARIS DECLATION BY USG FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ORGANIZATIONS

1. Background

The Paris Declaration (PD) on Aid Effectiveness was endorsed in 2005 and has become a major milestone in development assistance. Designed to improve the quality and effectiveness of development assistance, it is built around five mutually reinforcing principles which should guide interactions, relationships and partnerships between development agencies and partnering countries:

**Ownership*: Developing countries must lead their own development policies and strategies, and manage their own development work on the ground. Donors must support developing countries in building up their capacity to exercise this kind of leadership by strengthening local expertise, institutions and management systems.

**Alignment*: Donors must line up their aid firmly behind the priorities outlined in developing countries' national development strategies. Wherever possible, they must use local institutions and procedures for managing aid in order to build sustainable structures.

* *Harmonization*: Donors must coordinate their development work better amongst themselves to avoid duplication and high transaction costs for poor countries. In the Paris Declaration, they are committed to coordinate better at the country level to ease the strain on recipient governments.

**Managing for results*: All parties in the aid relationship must place more focus on the end result of aid, the tangible difference it makes in poor people's lives. They must develop better tools and systems to measure this impact.

**Mutual accountability*: Donors and developing countries must be accountable to each other for their use of aid funds, and to their citizens and parliaments for the impact of their aid.

The Paris Declaration provides a practical, action-oriented roadmap with specific targets to be met by 2010. It is a major international agreement on aid relationships which identifies appropriate roles for all major actors, specifies12 indicators to provide a measurable and evidence-based way to track progress, and sets targets for the indicators to be met by 2010. At the Third High Level Forum (HLF 3) on Aid Effectiveness held in Accra in 2008, both donors and developing countries reaffirmed their commitment to the Paris Declaration and agreed to speed up the process of fulfilling the Declaration's pledges. This agreement was codified in the Accra Agenda for Action, which was endorsed at the HLF 3.

2. Purpose of Statement of Work

In addition to monitoring the progress of the implementation of the Paris Declaration, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) has launched a major evaluation of the Paris Declaration. The overall objective of the evaluation is to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the Paris Declaration and its contribution to aid effectiveness and poverty alleviation. The evaluation is being carried out in two phases.

The Phase 1 evaluation assessed the early implementation of the Paris Declaration. It focused on four central questions: What important trends or events have been emerging during the implementation? What factors and forces are affecting the behavior of recipient and donor countries in relation to implementing their respective commitments? And, is the implementation leading towards the adoption of the PD principles? If not, why not? The Phase I findings of the assessments have been finalized and a synthesis report has been written which provides empirically grounded conclusions and recommendations. [20]

The overall objective of this Phase 2 evaluation is to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the Paris Declaration and its contribution to aid effectiveness and ultimately to development effectiveness, including poverty alleviation. The evaluation is expected to document the results achieved through implementing the Paris Declaration, highlight the barriers and constraints which might limit its effectiveness and impacts, and strengthen "the knowledge base as to the ways in which development partnerships can most effectively and efficiently help maximize development results through aid in different contexts – including varying degrees of 'fragility'." Phase 2 evaluation plans to undertake 15 country case studies to examine in depth the effects of the Paris Declaration on aid and development effectiveness. In addition, it also plans to commission five special studies to examine critical issues. The evaluation will then synthesize the findings, conclusions and recommendation of all the studies, reports and documents in a comprehensive report.

As a contribution to the Phase 2 evaluation, the USG has committed to conducting an independent evaluation ("USG Evaluation") of its headquarters' commitment to, and efforts towards, implementing the Paris Declaration, consistent with the terms of reference provided for such studies as part of the overall evaluation. The purpose of this SOW is to outline the requirements and deliverables for the design and implementation of the USG Evaluation. The SOW specifies evaluation questions, evaluation design criteria, data collection approaches, estimated level of effort required, time table, evaluation criteria and the deliverables.

3. Evaluation Questions

Since the USG evaluation is a part of a larger evaluation study, its primary focus must be consistent with those of other evaluations conducted or being conducted by participating donor countries. It must also take into account the multi-agency management structure of foreign assistance that is used by the USG. By agreement among international participants in the overall PD evaluation, individual donor evaluations are largely undertaken at headquarters and focus on three broad areas; commitment to the PD principles at the different levels of the foreign assistance agency, the agency's capacity to implement the Paris Declaration and the steps that it

[20] Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration: http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Subweb/paris_evaluation_web/index.htm.

has undertaken to enhance its capacity, and incentives and disincentives for implementing the PD principles. In view of this focus, the following questions shall be answered by the evaluation:

Commitment

1. Are the top leaders of bilateral foreign assistance organizations aware of the five PD principles and their implications for the delivery of foreign assistance? Do they interpret them correctly? What sort of misconceptions, if any, do they seem to harbor?
2. Are the top leaders committed to implementing the Paris Declaration? Do they have any reservations about it? If so, what are these reservations? What are the underlying reasons for their reservations and concerns?
3. Are the managers of foreign assistance programs aware of their leadership's commitment to the five principles and their implications for the programs they manage? Has the implementation of PD affected foreign assistance program's priority setting?
4. How is foreign assistance agencies' commitment affected by the mandates and requirements of the Congress and Office of the budget and management and the demands of the civil society?
5. Has each bilateral foreign assistance organization formulated and implemented a coherent strategy to adopt the PD principles in its policies and programs? If so, what are the major elements of its strategy? If not, what are their reasons for not developing a strategy to internalize and implement the Paris Declaration?

Capacity

6. What attempts have been made by these organizations to translate the PD principles into their policies, guidelines and operational directives? To what extent, have such attempts been successful (cite examples)? If they did not make efforts to revise their policies, guidelines and operational directives, what were the main reasons for this omission?
7. Did foreign assistance agencies launch special training programs to prepare their staff for implementing PD principles?
8. Are assistance organizations' mandates, organizational structures, budgetary processes, and capacities suitable to implement the Paris Declaration? What specific mandates, organizational structures, budgetary processes, and operational procedures have facilitated or impeded the adoption and implementation of the PD?
9. Has the Paris Declaration affected USG delivery of bilateral foreign assistance and its interactions with the recipient countries? If so, in what way? What are the examples of such effects? Are there major differences in the commitment and behavior of different USG assistance organizations?

Incentives

10. Are their perceived disincentives to implement PD principles both at the headquarters and the field?
11. Do bilateral foreign assistance organizations provide incentives to their headquarters and field staff to implement the PD principles? If so, what are these incentives? Did these

incentives produce concrete, positive results (cite examples)? Did they also provide additional training to the staff in the field?

General

12. What factors have affected or are likely to affect the implementation or non-implementation of the Paris Declaration by bilateral USG foreign assistance organizations? How can they be categorized?

13. How do partner organizations, civil society organizations and host countries assess USG commitment to and efforts to adopt the PD principles? Do they have concerns about them? Are their perceptions justified and, if so, to what extent?

14. What recommendations can be made to facilitate the effective implementation of the PD principles by USG bilateral foreign assistance agencies and organizations individually and collectively? What general lessons can be drawn from the USG experience for other bilateral and multilateral donor agencies?

4. Multi-Case Study Evaluation Design

Unlike most bilateral donor agencies, there is no single unit of the USG which administers bilateral foreign assistance programs. Presently there are five organizations that manage the great majority of US bilateral foreign aid – the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Department of State (State), Department of Defense (DOD), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). In addition, there are 22 other USG agencies and organizations that manage the remaining bilateral foreign assistance. Although the volume of assistance they administer is relatively small as compared to the above mentioned organizations, it is nonetheless significant. This undoubtedly creates a major challenge to any evaluation of foreign assistance programs.

The problem is compounded by the fact that there are significant differences in the mandates and organizational structures of these entities. For example, the mandate, policies and programs of the MCC are very different from the projects run by the State Department. The HHS works within its sectoral mandate, while USAID programs are highly diversified. Agencies managing smaller proportions of bilateral assistance also have different approaches – for example, the use of more headquarter line staff; fewer long-term field activities or presence. Their mandates tend to be predominantly domestic. To capture these differences, the proposed evaluation shall follow a multi-case study method, focusing on both major and minor foreign assistance agencies and organizations.

The evaluation undertaken as part of this SOW shall primarily focus on four of the five major bilateral foreign assistance organizations – USAID, the State Department, HSS and MCC. In addition, up to 3 smaller US bilateral donors organization shall be selected on the basis of mutually agreed criteria between the evaluation COTR and the contractor. The contractor shall prepare separate case studies for each of these organizations. All case studies shall use the same

conceptual framework, approach and variables to enable comparative analysis. A synthesis report shall be written using the data and information generated by case studies.

Each case study focus on the topics identified below; the list is illustrative and not comprehensive. It is important that each case study individually examine each of the five principles (ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results and mutual accountability), as there are likely to be variations in their acceptance, internalizations and implementation within an organization.

1. Awareness of the five PD Principles and their Implications

   - Awareness of the five PD principles among leadership in headquarters
   - Awareness of PD principles by operating units in the field in the case of major agencies and organizations that have field presence
   - Misconception and misunderstandings about PD principles, if any

2. Political Commitment to the Five PD Principles

   - Leadership's commitment to PD principles
   - The rationale for commitment
   - Reservations and doubts

3. Strategy for implementing the Paris Declaration, if any

4. Translation of PD Principles into Policies, Guidelines and Operational Directives

   - Extent of revisions and changes, if any
   - Effectiveness of such efforts

5. Training for facilitating adoption of the PD principles

   - Introduction of new training programs
   - Effectiveness of new training programs

6. Institutional capacity to implement the Paris Declaration

   This section shall analyze the mandate, organizational structure, transfer of authority to the field, budgetary processes including congressional earmarks, reporting requirements and general procedures to determine the extent to which they facilitate or inhibit the adoption of the PD principles.

7. Assessment of the direct or indirect impacts of PD on the organization/agency's

   - Allocation of resources for capacity building in host nations
   - Use of host-country organizations to manage USG assistance programs
   - Coordination with other USG agencies to avoid duplication and waste
   - Coordination with other bilateral and multilateral agencies in the field
   - Partnerships with host countries in performance management and evaluation

8. Findings, Lessons Learned , and Recommendations

   On the basis of the information, data and findings of the case studies, a synthesis report shall be prepared. This report shall address the topics above and shall include appendices on methodology, interviews and documents.

5. Data Collection Methods

The contractor shall use the following data collection methods to generate the needed information, ideas and recommendations:

i) Content analysis of the mandates, policies, budgetary allocation processes, procedures and selected programs documents of foreign assistance organizations.

ii) Review of principal reports, analyses, evaluations and other documents on PD implementation issued by participating bilateral and multilateral agencies, NGOs, think tanks and other creditable sources. (Note: There now exist a plethora of information which will be helpful in framing questions, sharpening the focus of case studies and developing suitable recommendations.)

iii) Interviews with the senior congressional Staffers, OMB, staff at the selected USG agencies.

iv) Semi-structured interviews with the senior officials of the foreign assistance organizations for which case studies shall be prepared.

v) Key informant interviews with partnering organizations, including contractors and non-profit organizations which implement foreign assistance programs and projects

vi) Telephone interviews with 1-2 host country officials in up to 10 countries based on selection criteria determined jointly by evaluation COTR and the contractor. Such interviews are necessary to understand their perceptions, concerns and assessment of USG's commitment to and efforts towards implementing the Paris Declaration. (Note: at least some of the countries selected shall be those undertaking country-level evaluations in Phase 2)

vii) Mini-surveys through internet and/or telephone with USG managers of assistance programs and projects in the field. It is suggested that each case study conduct one survey. The number of respondents shall depend upon the size of assistance programs, the number of countries in which they are located and the sectors in which they operate. (Note: at least some of the countries selected shall be those undertaking country-level evaluations in Phase 2)

viii) Attendance at up to three international meetings in Europe; no other international travel is anticipated.

6. Deliverables

The Contractor shall propose dates to deliver the following in accordance with their technical approach and specific evaluation design. Exact dates will be determined upon the approval of a final management plan within one week after award:

1. A management plan
2. A comprehensive outline of the organizational case studies based on preliminary interviews with concerned agencies
3. Draft of organizational case studies

4. Revised case studies
5. Draft of the synthesis report*
6. Submission of the final synthesis report
7. A policy brief of no more than four pages summarizing the main findings and recommendations of the synthesis report
8. Three briefings or seminars** on the content of the synthesis report, accompanied by a Power Point presentation.
9. Brief monthly progress reports

* The contractor shall arrange for 2 peer reviewers of the draft. The reviewers must be approved by COTR.

**For planning purposes, the Contractor shall assume that the venue and duration of the briefings and seminars is: (1) Paris at the meeting of bilateral and multilateral donors – duration 3 hours; (2) Meeting of the US bilateral donor agencies in Washington D.C, - duration 3 hours, and; (3) Briefing to the senior officials of the State and USAID in Washington D.C., - duration 1hour.

ANNEX 4: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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