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# **SUPPORTING THE USAID MISSION: STAFFING AND ACTIVITIES FROM INCEPTION TO PRESENT DAY**

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# Supporting the USAID Mission: Staffing and Activities from Inception to the Present Day<sup>1</sup>

## Staffing by Years

Due to a variety of factors,<sup>2</sup> it is difficult to obtain a consistent, single-source accounting of USAID personnel on an annual basis. However, the following chart (which relies on different sources throughout USAID's history) provides information regarding the number and type of staff that USAID has employed throughout its existence, at least via 5-year increments. It indicates that USAID reached its high-water mark in employee numbers during the Vietnam War, and then decreased throughout the following decades, as this narrative will show.

Year <sup>3</sup>	US Direct Hires	Foreign Service Nationals	Total
1965	6828	8270	15098
1970	6959	7547	15050
1975	4365	2226	6591
1980	4058	1900	8256
1985	3623	1281	8017
1990	3488	1070	11401
1995	2981	5261	9152
2000	2124	4420	7474
2005	2398	4931	7320

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<sup>1</sup> The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

<sup>2</sup> This includes different methods of counting throughout USAID's history and the confidential nature of some personnel-related records.

<sup>3</sup> This table is derived from two separate sources: the years 1965 – 1975 are from "Distribution of Personnel – As of June 30, 1948 Through 1976"; the figures for the remaining years were obtained from records provided by USAID's Human Resources department. Please note that the "Total" may include amounts for additional categories (such as PSCs, PASAs, etc.), as well as US Direct Hires and FSNs.

## The Creation of USAID

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) was created in 1961 as mandated by the Act for Foreign Assistance, which was passed the same year. The new agency combined the Development Loan fund, the International Cooperation Administration, the local currency functions of the Export-Import bank, and the agricultural surplus distribution activities of the Department of Agriculture<sup>4</sup> into one overarching foreign assistance agency. Its purpose was, according to the Act for Foreign Assistance, to “[P]rovide economic assistance to promote economic and social development.” More specifically, USAID would provide aid “[t]o improve agriculture, establish transport, communication, power, and other facilities, establish industry, expand education and develop human resources, and build new organizations and institutions in the recipient country.”<sup>5</sup> By the end of the decade family planning had also gained a more prominent place among USAID priorities, as outlined in its appropriations request for 1969.

Organizationally, the new Agency had an Administrator and four regional bureaus - Latin America, the Far East, the Near East and South Asia, and Africa and Europe.<sup>6</sup> It also had other offices designed to provide support, such as an Office of Development Research and Assistance, an Office of Development Financing, an Office of Commodity Assistance, and Office of General Counsel among others.<sup>7</sup>

Foreign assistance programs were divided into three general categories:

- broad development programs;
- stability and security programs; and
- programs devoted to a narrower set of goals.<sup>8</sup>

From 1962-1966, the U.S. conducted major development programs in approximately thirty countries.<sup>9</sup> Nine of those countries received about half of USAID’s funding: Korea, India, Pakistan, Turkey, Nigeria, Tunisia, Brazil, Chile and Columbia. These countries were the focus of so much aid because of their importance to the United States and because the US wanted to further encourage their progress in creating institutions and espousing sound policies.<sup>10</sup>

In the same period, USAID participated in security and stability programs in approximately five countries: Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, the Congo and the Dominican Republic.<sup>11</sup> The main goal of these programs was to control insurgencies or rebellions, or alleviate the conditions that caused them.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> USAID 2007.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. President’s Task Force on Foreign Economic Assistance 1961, 19.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of State Undated, 16.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. President’s Task Force on Foreign Economic Assistance 1961, 91.

<sup>8</sup> Nelson 1969, 36.

<sup>9</sup> Nelson 1969, 36.

<sup>10</sup> Nelson 1969, 36.

<sup>11</sup> Nelson 1969, 36.

<sup>12</sup> Nelson 1969, 38.

The third program category consisted of limited assistance programs devoted to a specific objective or set of objectives. They were implemented in countries for a variety of reasons not necessarily growth-related; instead, they might counter communist influences, confirm U.S. interest in a certain country, or encourage government investment in a particular sector. This category only accounted for about one percent of total USAID assistance.<sup>13</sup>

## **USAID's Mission**

USAID's major goal has remained consistent throughout its existence: it was created with the goal of helping developing countries make the transition to the community of democratic and capitalist countries. To that end USAID worked in developing countries to promote economic growth, expand education and develop human capacity, and develop new institutions and organizations in the recipient country.

However, the means of reaching those goals have shifted throughout USAID's existence. In the 1960s, USAID focused on economic sectors and large-scale capital improvement projects; this was derived from the theory that the benefits of such investments would eventually wend their way to the poorest groups.<sup>14</sup> However, such benefits were found to be elusive and in the 1970s Congress's "New Directions" mandated that USAID address the basic needs of the poor more directly, including food, healthcare, and shelter.<sup>15</sup>

In the 1980s the Reagan Administration had USAID incorporate the 'Four Pillars' initiative. This included:

- encouraging a sound economic framework in host countries;
- technology transfer in areas such as biomedical research, agriculture, and family planning;
- developing institutions by encouraging decentralizing organizations; and
- increasing the use of the private sector in addressing development problems.<sup>16</sup>

As the Cold War wound down, USAID was tasked with additional responsibilities that took note of trans-national issues, including international debt, narcotics control, HIV/AIDS, and the environment. USAID also helped facilitate democracy in Eastern Europe and in Central American countries.<sup>17</sup>

In the current decade, 9/11 has made USAID's mission even more essential. USAID has special expertise in democracy promotion, and in fact is the largest

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<sup>13</sup> Nelson 1968, 41-2. These countries, according to Nelson, received about one percent of total USAID assistance.

<sup>14</sup> GAO 1993, 18.

<sup>15</sup> GAO 1993, 18.

<sup>16</sup> GAO 1993, 18.

<sup>17</sup> GAO 1993, 18.

donor in that field.<sup>18</sup> In response to 9/11, USAID initiated new democracy programs in Afghanistan and Iraq, and has expanded support for political reform throughout the Islamic world.

## **USAID Staffing in the 1960s**

Soon after its inception USAID found itself increasingly tied to assisting U.S. efforts to combat the insurgency in Vietnam. As a result, USAID's level of staffing – both in Vietnam and overall – was directly tied to the US's efforts in that country. In both cases, troop and USAID staffing levels increased consistently until 1968, and then dropped off every year through the end of the war.

USAID faced a number of obstacles after 1968 due to several factors in the domestic and international environments. These factors can be broken down into two major issues:

- *Decreasing domestic support:* the American public perceived that foreign assistance came at the expense of domestic needs, and could entangle the US in future conflicts in developing countries.<sup>19</sup>
- *Stakeholder issues:* USAID's stake-holders were usually developing foreign governments that did not purchase much in the way of American goods and services, so they had difficulty in cultivating a domestic constituency. Also, they tended not to be traditional allies, but countries from distant parts of the world.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, USAID was often dependent on the host country's ability to distribute foreign assistance effectively. Finally, these countries often had different foreign policy aims than the US, which created a perception of ingratitude.<sup>21</sup>

Because of these hurdles and the reduced USG presence in Vietnam after 1968, USAID became vulnerable to budget cuts and restrictions on its activities.

## **The Vietnam Era**

USAID's experience in Vietnam is of particular interest from a staffing perspective, because it was during that war that USAID recruited and hired the largest number of its staff. After the war – in fact, after 1968 – USAID's staffing levels dropped significantly and consistently.

Just as Vietnam was a prime concern for the U.S. government in the region, it was a prime concern for USAID through the 1960s. USAID's program in Southeast Asia was tied to the broader US government goals in the region –

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<sup>18</sup> USAID 2005, 1.

<sup>19</sup> Tandler 1975, 44.

<sup>20</sup> Tandler 1975, 13.

<sup>21</sup> Mason 1968, 8.

trying to prevent a Communist takeover. For example, in 1964 the East Asia program had a strategic focus on the “[C]overt campaign of Communist conquest in Southeast Asia”<sup>22</sup> and USAID considered its economic assistance programs in the Southeast Asian countries as essential aspects of the US policy there. USAID’s primary mission in Vietnam, as outlined in the 1964 congressional presentation, was “[T]o win the war”.<sup>23</sup> USAID also played a critical role in what President Johnson termed ‘The Other War’, the fight to stabilize and strengthen the economic and social structure of South Vietnam.

USAID’s Vietnam-related goals were based on the broader goals of assisting in the development of poorer countries. In the Vietnamese case, they included:

- to prevent run-away inflation and severe dislocations;
- to ease the suffering of civilians displaced or injured by the war;
- to assist the Government of South Vietnam in expanding its protection and influence over increasing segments of the population – especially in the rural areas; and
- to help South Vietnam develop greater national cohesion.<sup>24</sup>

USAID’s goals changed during the course of the war as the military strategy altered. From the establishment of USAID until 1966, USAID was focused primarily on counterinsurgency, at least in the broader sense of addressing conditions that facilitated the successes of the Viet Cong. This included such strategies as:

- maintaining economic stability;
- helping with pacification by making the South Vietnamese government more effective and visible in villages;
- relieving the economic and social consequences of military operations;
- creating economic growth in secure areas.<sup>25</sup>

In 1967 the US’s approach to the war changed, and with it so did USAID’s mission. For example, the military took a larger role in pacification efforts, which had been USAID’s responsibility, and the Vietnamization strategy, which stressed training and equipping the South Vietnamese Army to become self-sufficient, would reduce the US’s role in Vietnam. From 1967 to 1972 USAID’s role in Vietnam reflected these shifts. During this period USAID focused on the following:

- maintaining economic stability;
- easing the suffering of civilians adversely affected by the war; and
- developing Vietnamese institutions and economic and social services.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> USAID 1964, 121.

<sup>23</sup> USAID 1964, 123.

<sup>24</sup> USAID 1964, 121.

<sup>25</sup> USAID Bureau for Asia, Office of Residual Indochina Affairs 1975b, 5.

<sup>26</sup> USAID Bureau for Asia, Office of Residual Indochina Affairs 1975b, 5.

From 1973 until the North Vietnamese takeover in 1975, USAID's objectives were again changed to reflect the changing circumstances in Vietnam. The Easter Offensive in April of 1972, the Paris Accords (January 1973), and aid reduction emanating from troop withdrawals and inflationary pressures altered USAID's objectives, which now stressed:

- providing humanitarian aid to alleviate the suffering caused by increased hostilities; and
- creating a self-sufficient South Vietnamese economy.<sup>27</sup>

USAID staffing patterns closely paralleled overall troop levels in Vietnam. In both cases, personnel increased on an annual basis from 1961 until 1968 when the Tet Offensive occurred and American support for the war began to decline drastically. After 1968 the Vietnamization program entailed a lessening need for US troop levels, and this corresponded with USAID personnel. The following chart reflects this activity, as USAID personnel in Vietnam increased annually until 1968, when it began to decline each year.

**USAID Staffing in Vietnam<sup>28</sup>**

Year	U.S. Direct Hires	Foreign Nationals Direct Hire	Total in Vietnam	Overall USAID Total
1961	202	603	805	14751
1962	208	628	836	15495
1963	289	735	1024	16782
1964	357	864	1221	15642
1965	543	1086	1629	15098
1966	843	1144	1987	15472
1967	1674	1848	3522	17311
1968	1977	3118	5095	18030
1969	1847	2690	4537	16290
1970	1527	2100	3627	15050
1971	1279	1872	3151	14050
1972	984	1464	2448	12072
1973	611	1255	1866	10423
1974	386	975	1361	9278
1975	344	927	1271	6591

### **The Carter Administration – Mid to Late 1970s**

As a result of political shifts, budget constraints and organizational changes, USAID saw a continued drop in its funding and subsequent staffing abilities after the Vietnam Conflict ended in 1975. Congress passed the New Directions Mandate, which shifted foreign assistance toward programs requiring more

<sup>27</sup>USAID Bureau for Asia, Office of Residual Indochina Affairs 1975b, 6.

<sup>28</sup> USAID 1977. From 1967 until 1973, many USAID personnel were assigned to CORDS (Civil Operations, Revolutionary Development Support), which had taken over pacification efforts.

specific technical expertise, for example in agriculture and farm commodities; this inevitably reduced funding in other areas. The assistance of the private sector was sought in order to help facilitate development. Efforts were made to prohibit use of USAID funds in certain countries especially for security-supporting assistance, countries such as what would become Vietnam, Cambodia or Laos.

USAID underwent an organizational restructuring that merged generalist and technical staffs, in order to draw on experiences from both types of personnel. This restructuring saw USAID establish liaisons with relevant State Department offices and bureaus, although without losing its independence. Regional bureaus were also given more authority as well as the field.<sup>29</sup>

In this decade USAID found itself grappling with several staffing-related issues. This included the following:<sup>30</sup>

- Dissatisfaction and morale problems among managers and officers alike (much of this stemmed from the problem that those in the field had little influence in funding and/or programmatic decision-making);<sup>31</sup>
- A perceived “bottom-heaviness” in that it was slow to react in Washington and was more vulnerable to changing political or economic times than most government agencies;<sup>32</sup>
- Budgetary constraints set by Congress or executive agencies and ever-changing degrees of support from the President limited the discretion of USAID mission heads abroad.

The US's disengagement from Vietnam reduced the need for USAID to employ as many personnel as it had during the war. This was accordingly reflected in the number of USAID employees during and after the war. Despite the drop in DC-based staff, their percentage of USAID actually increased during this period - from 35% of total staff in 1961 to 64% in 1977.<sup>33</sup> This occurred for several reasons:

- the Agency began to use more contractors overseas;
- the Agency needed Washington-based staff in order to review, approve, and manage projects; and
- the Agency became interested in addressing long-term development issues, which required extensive research.

The Agency strove for a size of about 3700 – 4000 Direct Hire personnel. By 1977, 15% of the staff was involved in agriculture, education, health or population while 65% fit into economics, administration, legal, comptroller, audit and general services roles.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Babb 1977, 119.

<sup>30</sup> Babb 1977, 171.

<sup>31</sup> Committee on International Relations of the United States House of Representatives 1976, 171.

<sup>32</sup> Committee on International Relations of the United States House of Representatives 1976, 171.

<sup>33</sup> Babb 1977, 174.

<sup>34</sup> Babb 1977, 174.



## The 1980s

Reductions in USAID staff continued throughout the 1980s. Continued tight budgets were one reason for this; however, other factors reduced staff as well. In 1979 the Obey Amendment was passed by Congress; its goal was to create a unified personnel system. However, it inadvertently made being a GS (General Service) employee less attractive because the new system did not give credit for overseas experience and it limited their job mobility and opportunities for advancement.<sup>35</sup> This resulted in a wave of GS employees leaving USAID and transferring to FS positions.<sup>36</sup> Additionally, the continued move toward awarding and overseeing grants instead of actual program implementation reduced the need for staff.<sup>37</sup>

During the period FY 1986-1992, US direct hire staff decreased by 2 percent while direct hire overseas staff decreased by 19 percent. Some criticisms of staffing problems included:

- not replacing former workers;
- an assignment process that was not fair to many employees; and
- training programs were too ad hoc and lacking in career development objectives to be useful.

## The 1990s

The 1990s saw a continued reduction in the amount of USAID U.S. direct-hire employees, sliding by 37% from 1992 until 2003.<sup>38</sup> This occurred despite USAID almost doubling the amount of countries where it had programs.<sup>39</sup> Much of this decrease came from budgetary pressures, poor technology investments, the Reduction In Force (RIF) government initiative, along with the inability to hire replacements for departing staff.<sup>40</sup> This continued attrition created a shortage of experienced foreign service officers, and forced USAID to sometimes rely on staff without the needed skills for the positions that they filled. USAID also continued the shift from directly implementing development projects to overseeing contractors and grantees who carried them out.<sup>41</sup> Personal Service Contracts (or PSCs) played an increasingly important role in running these projects.

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<sup>35</sup> Kimball 1989, 36.

<sup>36</sup> Kimball 1989, 36.

<sup>37</sup> The Kimball Report noted that this was financially sensible, because salary and travel for non-direct hires came from program funds, which was financially advantageous for USAID. Contracting out positions was also in-line with USG policy at the time, which emphasized contracting out all but the most important government functions (Kimball, p. 41).

<sup>38</sup> GAO 2003, cover page.

<sup>39</sup> GAO 2003, cover page.

<sup>40</sup> GAO 2003, 14.

<sup>41</sup> GAO 2003, 2.

During this decade, direct-hire staff continued to shrink, from more than 3000 to less than 2000. In 1996, a Reduction In Force (RIF) mandate ensued from poor technology investments and budget constraints; over 150 direct hire employees left. The Agency suffered disruptions, civil service “bumping” and the departure of some of its most talented and experienced people. There was also high staff attrition and an elimination of training, penalizing a generation of new employees.<sup>42</sup>

The Agency confronted the human capital crisis by several ways:

- USAID instituted a variety of training programs especially for new FSOs (Foreign Service Officers) and program managers;
- It hired more than 200 new midlevel field officers through the NEP (New Entry Professional) program and 47 new staff via the PMF (Presidential Management Fellow) program;
- It reinstated the IDI (International Development Intern) program in 2003 despite the fact it was hard to find mentors and supervisors for new employees;
- USAID moved budget management responsibility from M (Management) to PPC (Policy and Program Coordination – the Agency’s policy development bureau) in order to more closely align resource allocation with strategic priorities;
- It realigned Washington staff, especially technical staff, to support USAID programs and eliminate redundancies between regional and technical bureaus; and
- The Agency improved the Washington supervisor-to-staff ratio, setting a new standard ratio of 1:7.<sup>43</sup>

## **The Current Decade**

During this decade USAID has had to face increased retirements and loss of institutional knowledge, a dearth of junior and midlevel officers at the FS 04 and GS 11 and below to fill frontline jobs, elimination of many essential training programs, and a lack of surge capacity to respond to emergencies, post-conflict situations (Iraq and Afghanistan) or new strategic priorities (Pakistan).<sup>44</sup>

Since 2002, the major concerns for USAID have been:

- the future of the Agency as a whole;
- recovering from previous management missteps and lack of insufficient technical training for staff;
- a perceived lack of transparency regarding hiring for management positions;
- lack of accountability with regard to poor performers and their supervisors;

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<sup>42</sup> USAID 2004, 3.

<sup>43</sup> USAID 2004, 3.

<sup>44</sup> USAID 2004, 33.

- a pervasive belief in a class system within USAID, and irrelevant incentive and performance awards.<sup>45</sup>

USAID has tried to rectify these shortfalls through various hiring mechanisms that it had used in the past, including the New Entry Professional (NEP) program (many NEPs are former USAID contractors so they join the Agency with some relevant experience); this is the most-utilized mechanism. Also, as mentioned earlier, the International Development Intern (IDI) program was re-established and it also fills a portion of the Agency's needs.<sup>46</sup>

Yet the primary USAID staffer is still the USDH or foreign service officer who is the prime mover of a program abroad. Because he or she is a civil servant, the DH has greater responsibility for accountability and oversight, and is expected to be able to effectively manage the tasks required of program management. Unfortunately, the number of overseas officers declined by 37 percent between 1995 and 2002.<sup>47</sup> To try to fill that shortfall, USAID has increased hiring in the last five years of Personal Service Contractors (PSCs), a measure designed to address the decreasing number of USDH staff. PSCs can be obtained and assigned quickly and are seen as essentially government employees who are less expensive than institutional contractors or another government employee. PSCs are most effective as technical officers but many also serve as program officers, Project Design Officers, and controllers.<sup>48</sup> Third Country Nationals (TCNs) are similar to PSCs in that they can be quickly hired and with little cost. They sometimes have mission experience making them invaluable excepting the instances when they have yet to acquire security clearance.

FSOs are currently recruited and deployed under more than 20 professional backstops and can be broken down into senior managers, program managers, technical officers and support officers. USAID personnel serve in over 78 countries in the developing world as well as in five developed countries coordinating development assistance with other donors. USAID runs programs in 74 countries with no resident direct-hire staff.<sup>49</sup>

## **Present-Day Structure of USAID**

Today, the Agency implements programs in 88 countries within four USAID-designated global regions - Sub-Saharan Africa (AFR), Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), Asia and the Near East (ANE), and Europe & Eurasia (E&E). The four regional bureaus are supported by three functional bureaus: Global Health, Democracy Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), and Economic Growth and Agricultural Trade (EGAT).

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<sup>45</sup> USAID 2004, 49.

<sup>46</sup> USAID 2004, 66.

<sup>47</sup> Eckerson & Depp 2003, 25.

<sup>48</sup> Eckerson & Depp 2003, 19.

<sup>49</sup> USAID 2004, 24.

The three functional bureaus work on providing technical assistance and expertise on development issues. The issues include democracy and governance, conflict management and mitigation, humanitarian assistance, trade opportunities, economic growth, agricultural productivity and technology, and global health challenges such as maternal and child health and HIV/AIDS.

Many of USAID's technical programs are designed and implemented by field missions. Field mission staff consist of Direct Hires, Foreign Service Nationals, and Personal Services Contractors. "USAID missions operate under decentralized program authorities, allowing them to design and implement programs and execute agreements."<sup>50</sup> The Field Missions vary both by size and responsibility. Large missions have 9-15 USAID Direct Hire employees. Medium missions have 5-8 USAID Direct Hire employees, while small missions have 3-4 USAID Direct Hire employees.<sup>51</sup>

Regional Hubs provide support to small and medium missions as well as countries with USAID funding without USAID presence. They usually have 16-22 USAID Direct Hire employees. In countries that don't have integrated strategies but still need aid, regional hub missions work with partner organizations and non-governmental organizations in order to smooth the progress of emerging civil societies, meet basic human needs, mitigate conflict, enhance food security, and/or alleviate repression. Regional missions also may manage their own bilateral programs, if needed. Each USAID region has its own unique regional challenges and approaches.

## **2006-7 USAID Restructuring**

USAID has been restructured throughout the years in order to improve its performance and adapt to new realities. The most recent changes to USAID were announced by Secretary of State Rice in January 2006 and implemented in FY 2007; these reforms include focusing on integrating planning structures, maximizing effectiveness of foreign assistance and avoiding uncoordinated strategies, increasing accountability, and avoiding misdirection of resources.

Secretary Rice created the Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance as part of the reform strategy. The current director, Henrietta Fore, serves concurrently as the USAID Administrator. As the most recent USAID Performance and Accountability Report notes, "The Director of Foreign Assistance has authority over USAID and Department of State foreign assistance funding and programs, bringing together various bureaus and offices within the two agencies to participate in joint program planning, implementation, and oversight."<sup>52</sup> In order

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<sup>50</sup> USAID 2006c, 13.

<sup>51</sup> USAID 2006c, 13.

<sup>52</sup> USAID 2006c, 12.

to ease the consolidation of policies and procedures, staff from the former USAID Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination (PPC) have been detailed to State/F Bureau.

These Foreign Assistance reforms mark major changes in both the planning and the implementation of USAID plans to more closely align the foreign assistance activities carried out by USAID and the State Department. In May of 2007, the State Department and USAID released a joint *Strategic Plan* for 2007-2012 that illustrates how the two agencies coordinate development with diplomacy and supports the policy positions described in the 2006 *National Security Strategy*.

These changes fell under Secretary Rice's overarching diplomatic theme of 'Transformational Diplomacy', which works to "[T]o help build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that respond to the needs of their people, reduce widespread poverty and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system."<sup>53</sup> In order for the United States to promote the goal of transformational diplomacy, the Department of State and USAID use the seven Strategic Goals outlined in the *Strategic Plan* to create their strategic planning frameworks. The performance plans at the Department, regional and pillar bureaus and mission networks are composed of this framework and the Foreign Assistance Strategic Framework. The intent of the Strategic Framework is to support the efforts of the receiving country to "[M]ove from a relationship defined by dependence on traditional foreign assistance to one defined by full sustaining partnership status."

The five objectives which make up the Foreign Assistance Strategic framework focus on the underlying causes of persistent poverty, despotic governance, insecurity, and economic stagnation throughout the world. The objectives are peace and security, governing justly and democratically, investing in people, economic growth, and humanitarian assistance. Five categories of states make up the rest of the Framework: Rebuilding States, Developing States, Transforming States, Sustaining Partnership States, and Restrictive States. In order to maximize country progress, the new Strategic Framework categorizes each country receiving US foreign assistance based on their similarities and placement within the framework and then puts them on the optimal path to realize their transformational diplomacy objectives.

## **Staffing Issues Today**

According to the 2004 – 2008 USAID Human Capital Strategic Plan, methods to address future staffing needs of USAID will revolve around four key elements:

- filling vacant FS positions using existing authorities such as limited appointments, streamlined civil service conversions or recall of former

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<sup>53</sup> Department of State and USAID 2007a, 1.

- employees, and if necessary, making more aggressive use of directed assignments to meet needs overseas;
- implementing the workforce planning model (successor to the overseas staffing template) to further rationalize the current allocation of field and Washington staff
  - having staffing reflect USAID's priorities and needs, and reducing duplicative work;
  - expanding the use of supported ceilings to create a training and reassignment buffer or "float" that will provide flexibility to cover positions during vacancy periods or between assignments or allow essential language, leadership, supervisory and program management training.<sup>54</sup>

Along with the above specific goals, the Agency needs to more broadly achieve a high-performing workforce, strategically align staff with priorities, establish a more flexible workforce, create a more diverse workforce and increase the Office of Human Resources's capacity to support USAID's mission and implement its Human Capital Strategic Plan.

Health, education, and contract officers are still especially needed especially in Africa. In addition USAID will augment strategies that promise to dramatically increase resources devoted to development; respond to new and pressing mandates; and rise to the challenges of leadership in the development field. This will require increasing personnel in new categories from country crisis managers to regional economic growth and democratic governance advisors to new alliance and donor leveragers to information-communication-internet-media officers.

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<sup>54</sup> USAID 2004, 4.

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