



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



# USAID OPEN GOVERNMENT PLAN

*“Our objective each day is to seek out best practices, learn from them, and adapt them to everything we do. We are committed to transparency in both our successes and our failures—viewing both as opportunities to learn and improve.”*

--Dr. Rajiv Shah, USAID Administrator, 3/3/2010

USAID Open Government Taskforce  
[www.usaid.gov/open](http://www.usaid.gov/open)  
04/07/2010

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# Introduction

For almost five decades, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has been providing foreign assistance and humanitarian relief around the world. As such, USAID is a recognized leader in international development and has amassed a wealth of knowledge to assist a world in need. We have a **responsibility to share** this knowledge with the general public, broader U.S. government, international donors, implementing partners, host countries, and beneficiaries—all with the objective of addressing development needs.

This is being done on a regular basis across the worldwide USAID organization. With missions in over 80 countries, we must also be able to learn from each other and our partners so that we can increase our impact. To do so, the full extent of the Agency's own knowledge must be made available in a way it can easily be shared **without borders**—across countries and development sectors.

In the following sections of the plan, USAID outlines its existing activities related to transparency, participation and collaboration—the key principles of the Open Government Initiative. These principles are being demonstrated on a daily basis in support of **our strategic goal** areas:

- Peace and Security
- Governing Justly and Democratically
- Investing in People
- Promoting Economic Growth and Prosperity
- Providing Humanitarian Assistance
- Strengthening Management Capabilities

USAID also recognizes that Open Government is about more than just tools and **technology**. Agency **culture** and **policy** are also key components in order to ensure the full benefits of Open Government are realized. This requires the active engagement of many operational areas within the Agency towards these objectives. These operational areas include:

- Strategic Planning
- Internal Directives
- Legal
- Performance
- Employee Relations
- Public Affairs
- Agency Operations
- Partnerships
- Security and Privacy
- Infrastructure

- Enterprise Architecture
- Program Management

The requirement to develop an Open Government Plan has given USAID an opportunity to present a comprehensive view of both our programmatic and operational activities already underway that relate to the Open Government Directive. However, this document does not provide a true road map for USAID's Open Government response. In order to do so, it must also include the Agency's vision for Open Government and the steps we will take to get there. This vision should be shaped by our senior leadership—just coming on board as this plan is being drafted.

Furthermore, the selected flagship initiative—Global Pulse 2010—will be occurring from March 29 – 31, 2010—just before the Open Government Plan is due. We believe that the Global Pulse event and the active engagement of our senior leadership will inform our vision and will help us better define our Open Government roadmap. Therefore, we are committing to revisit this plan in 90 days in order to provide a more strategic view of Open Government at USAID.

# 1.0 Transparency

*“Transparency promotes accountability by providing the public with information about what the Government is doing.”* – Open Government Directive, 12/08/2009

Throughout USAID, there are numerous examples of programs that are conducting work transparently. In 1975, USAID established the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) in order to strengthen development activities by making development experience documents available to a wide variety of audiences. Since the early 1990’s, USAID has maintained a public web presence that enables openness by publishing quality and timely information online for sharing with the general public, broader U.S. government, international donors, implementing partners, host countries, and beneficiaries. More recently, the Global Development Commons website, <http://commons.usaid.gov/categories>, created in 2008, has augmented USAID’s website with an inventory of hundreds of USAID-funded websites.

Now, with the Open Government Initiative, USAID will move beyond information contained in published documents and reports to information created on demand in the process of performing the Agency’s work. As such, USAID will strive towards publishing information online in an open format that can be retrieved, downloaded, indexed, and searched by commonly used web search applications. Based on the directive, the presumption will be in favor of openness (to the extent permitted by law and subject to valid privacy, confidentiality, security, or other restrictions).

## Transparency Objectives

By making our information accessible to the public, we are:

- Contributing to greater understanding on the part of the **tax-paying public** of the depth and breadth of USAID’s work in international development;
- More actively engaging **stakeholders** in the foreign assistance dialogue as both successes and failures are appropriately noted and analyzed;
- Making our data available to **implementing partners** to inform as they work side by side with us to address development challenges; and
- Putting the information in the hands of **people who benefit from our assistance**-- thus empowering them with information that could lead to their own solutions.

## 1.1 - Strategic Action Plan

The Open Government Directive defines “high-value information” as information that can be used to:

- Increase agency accountability and responsiveness;
- Improve public knowledge of the agency and its operations;
- Further the core mission of the agency;
- Create economic opportunity;
- Respond to need and demand as identified through public consultations.

USAID recognizes that high-value information, published online in open formats, can be very valuable to staff and partners alike. By using new technologies for organizing and aggregating the data, it is much easier to group data sets, map them, visualize them, and otherwise add value to use the data more effectively.

### 1.1.1 - Inventory High Value Data Currently Available

The “Three Faces of USAID” is a frame of reference for the different transparency efforts across the Agency. Information captured and shared by each face are critical in helping USAID accomplish its development objectives. The faces of USAID are:

- **Operational:** Encompasses the management services, processes, and support functions of the Agency;
- **Strategic:** Found both within USAID/Washington and within each mission, this facet defines Agency policy, Bureau and country strategies and program plans; and,
- **Technical:** Provides development and humanitarian assistance that involves partners who are crucial to knowledge generation, and who are an extension of the USAID organization.

The table in Appendix A shows USAID’s high-value information currently available to the public. The next step will be to identify high-value information not yet available online in an open format with a timeline for publication.

### 1.1.2 - Foster Public’s Use of Agency Information

The success of USAID’s development effort lies precisely in the degree to which the Agency can leverage its accumulated knowledge through strategic facilitation

of global learning to spread innovation and opportunity far beyond the particular programs it funds. Success comes from taking the learning generated through implementing Agency programs and facilitating its widespread adaptation, replication and scaling up by governments, civil society organizations and the private sector.

Throughout its history, USAID has had great success in leveraging its knowledge to achieve impact across entire global sectors. An early and celebrated example was the Green Revolution, which leveraged innovations in plant breeding and crop management to dramatically increase agricultural yields through improved technology and sharing best practices. A current example is the microLINKS knowledge sharing program, which combines traditional face-to-face forums with Web 2.0 technologies to spread learning about innovations in sustainable microfinance, enterprise development and market access far beyond the reach of USAID's own programs.

### **1.1.3 - High Value Data Not Yet Available**

As part of its normal business, USAID generates both operational and programmatic data. Operational data sets, used as part of central planning, budget and reporting, are coordinated centrally. For USAID programmatic data - our future plans will address not only public access but also internal coordination to gather and standardize data from across the Agency's technical offices and country Missions.

## **1.2 - Already Public Information**

USAID has a long history of making the Agency's rich development experience available to the public. In 1975, USAID established the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC). Its purpose is to strengthen development activities by making development experience documents available to a wide variety of audiences including USAID offices and mission staff, non-governmental organizations, universities and research institutions, developing countries, and the public worldwide.

Originally, all source documents were stored on microfilm and their associated metadata stored on computer tapes running on a mainframe with no online access. Now, the DEC is the largest online resource for USAID funded technical and program documentation. Over 72,000 documents are currently available for electronic download at <http://dec.usaid.gov/>. With a recent infusion of resources, the entire document collection is being scanned and stored electronically. When it's complete, the entire collection, more than 150,000 documents, will be available online for easy electronic download.

The DEC is such a rich collection of development experience because contributing to it is written into the terms of USAID contracts and grants. According to Acquisition & Assistance Policy Directive 04-06: Submission of Development Experience Documents:

*The Contractor shall submit to USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) copies of reports and information products which describe, communicate or organize program/project development assistance activities, methods, technologies, management, research, results and experience as outlined in the Agency's ADS Chapter 540. ... These reports include: assessments, evaluations, studies, development experience documents, technical reports and annual reports. The Contractor shall also submit copies of information products including training materials, publications, databases, computer software programs, videos and other intellectual deliverable materials required under the Contract Schedule.*

In 2008, the Agency's Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapter 540: USAID Development Experience Information, was amended to accept electronic information in all National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)-approved formats as described in NARA guidelines related to the transfer of permanent e-Records. (See <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/initiatives/transfer-to-nara.html>).

In addition, the software used by the DEC was recently upgraded to a product that improves full text searches, expand options to save and share documents and allow collaboration through comments, ranking and blogs.

All of this paves the way for taking DEC to the next level—collecting and publishing underlying data in the most accessible forms and formats as called for in the Open Government Directive. This will require an aggressive plan to: 1) educate our Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTRs); 2) possibly implement additional software/ hardware upgrades to automate content tagging and expand data holdings to include geospatial data and multi-media and 3) enforce the policy with implementing partners. Through revised Agency guidance in the Automated Directives System. By adding geospatial data to the DEC collection, USAID will be able to share the supporting data from its projects and analysis directly with the public in ways previously not possible.

### **1.3 – U.S. Government Transparency Initiatives**

USAID is currently meeting its legal information dissemination obligations as defined in the Paperwork Reduction Act, Public Law. No. 104-13, section 3506(d). USAID is ensuring that the public has timely and equitable access to the agency's public information, including ensuring such access through:



1. Providing timely and equitable access to the underlying data (in whole or in part) in cases in which the agency provides public information maintained in electronic format;
2. Agency dissemination of public information in an efficient, effective, and economical manner;
3. Regularly soliciting and consider public input on the agency's information dissemination activities;
4. Providing adequate notice when initiating, substantially modifying, or terminating significant information dissemination products; and
5. Not, except where specifically authorized by statute--
  - (a) establishing an exclusive, restricted, or other distribution arrangement that interferes with timely and equitable availability of public information to the public;
  - (b) establishing user fees for public information that exceed the cost of dissemination.

The following sections provide additional information about USAID's participation in a variety of U.S. Government transparency initiatives.

### **1.3.1 - Data.gov**

The purpose of the Data.gov initiative is to make data generated by the Federal government available to the public. "Increasing the ability of the public to discover, understand and use the vast stores of government data increases government accountability and unlocks additional economic and social value<sup>1</sup>."

With a physical presence, Data.gov is the platform by which the public can evaluate the Federal government and each government agency's commitment to transparency. The Open Government Directive (OGD) instructs each agency to identify and publish high-value information<sup>2</sup>. For data that is already in the public domain, Data.gov facilitates discovery and presentation of data in a user-friendly format. For data historically limited to internal agency use, USAID plans to provide the data while ensuring privacy, confidentiality, and security regulations are protected.

USAID's Chief Information Officer (CIO) is responsible for populating Data.gov with high-value, authoritative data that explains and supports the Agency's core development mission. The CIO appoints a Point of Contact (POC) who is responsible for implementing Data.gov submission procedures and coordinating

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<sup>1</sup> Draft Data.gov Concept of Operations, version 0.7, December 3, 2009, pg 6. (put link)

<sup>2</sup> Open Government Directive Attachment section 3.a.i defines "high-value information" as "information that can be used to increase agency accountability and responsiveness; improve public knowledge of the agency and its operations; further the core mission of the agency; create economic opportunity; or respond to need and demand as identified through public consultation." (Place link.)

compliance requirements both within USAID and between the Agency and the Data.gov Program Management Office.

As USAID prepares to evaluate data for suitability for posting to Data.gov, the Agency will incorporate applicable policies and procedures from the Automated Directives System (ADS), USAID's directives management program.

- Chapter 557, Public Information, describes the responsibility of the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs to ensure information released to the public is in an appropriate style for public distribution and consistent with Agency policies.
- Chapter 578, Information Quality Guidelines, adopts Office of Management and Budget (OMB)—the Executive Office of the President—guidelines on information quality and USAID-specific procedures to implement the OMB guidelines. In this chapter, USAID uses six categories to classify Agency information:
  - Planning and Management;
  - Programs, Products, and Services;
  - Policy, Legislative, Regulatory Standards, and Enforcement;
  - Research and Statistical;
  - General Reference; and
  - Influential Scientific, Financial, or Statistical.

Both chapters will require revision to include the new standards of data dissemination contained in the Open Government Directive. A working group composed of the Agency data quality subject matter experts, the Information Technology (IT) legal advisor, the POC of Data.gov, the Office of Security, the Privacy Office and others working in information technology have been directed to establish a review and approval process to qualify data for Data.gov.

January 22, 2010 marked the official launch of Data.gov and the requirement for each agency to post three high-value datasets for public inspection. The datasets USAID posted are: 1) U.S. Official Development Assistance Data (place link here); 2) U.S. Trade Capacity Data (place line here); and 3) U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants. <http://www.data.gov/open> Data currently posted on data.gov are described in Appendix B

### **1.3.2 - Regulations.gov**

The E-Government Act of 2002 required agencies to become more transparent and accountable by providing Web-based access to records and by allowing a broader spectrum of the public to participate in the rulemaking process. The website [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) is the public face of the U.S. Government's eRulemaking Initiative and facilitates public participation in the federal regulatory

process by providing a single location where the public can view and comment on federal regulatory actions.

The Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) is the “behind the scenes” on-line regulatory system where agencies create and organize electronic files through which:

- Rules and notices published in the Federal Register are posted;
- Public comments can be received through [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov); and
- Agency comments can be posted to be viewed by the public.

FDMS requires each agency to designate FDMS Agency Administrators who are responsible for the application of Agency-specific configurations and user administration. For USAID, this is in the Office of Management Policy, Budget and Performance (M/MPBP).

### **1.3.3 - IT Dashboard Requirements**

USAID is fully compliant with IT Dashboard reporting requirements. The CIO has evaluated all four of the Agency’s major information technology (IT) investments. A representative within USAID’s Office of the Chief Information Officer issues a monthly data call to the Project Manager (PM) for each major IT investment. After all of the PMs have responded, the completed evaluations are submitted to the CIO for review. With the CIO’s approval, the evaluations are used to update the IT Dashboard at the end of each month.

### **1.3.4 - Recovery.gov**

Recovery.gov is the U.S. government’s official website providing easy access to data related to Recovery Act spending and allows for the reporting of potential fraud, waste, and abuse.

Given the high priority placed on the accuracy and reliance of information on USASpending.gov, and specifically information related to American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) reporting on Recovery.gov, USAID has established internal controls, procedures and data quality standards to assure data is submitted accurately, completely, timely and in the proper format. As prescribed by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) and the Recovery Act, USAID is responsible for pre-dissemination review of all information being submitted to USASpending.gov and Recovery.gov. All agencies must ensure all reporting is complete and accurate and complies with the agency’s Information Quality Act guidelines.

To align with these guidelines for Recovery Act related information, USAID has established a Senior Risk Management Council and a supporting Recovery Act working group composed of individuals across business areas accountable for acquisitions, contracts, technology, finance, legal, policy, OMB compliance and risk management. The group meets weekly, and reviews/facilitates clearance of all Recovery Act information that ultimately is made available to the public, as well as manages tasks as required to assure compliance with OMB directives/mandates for Recovery Act. A Separate Risk management group independently tracks agency risks in accordance with A-123 requirements. The USAID Office of Inspector General (OIG) attends all meetings and provides advice as appropriate.

To date, USAID has received \$38M dollars in stimulus funds. Weekly financial reports are posted on [www.USAID.gov](http://www.USAID.gov) and [www.Recovery.gov](http://www.Recovery.gov) and available for public review/comment. In addition, information about contract awards, modifications and new opportunities are posted on Federal Business Opportunities ([FBO.gov](http://FBO.gov)). Information on [USASpending.gov](http://USASpending.gov) is updated through contract actions within the Agency's acquisition and assistance systems.

[Recovery.gov](http://Recovery.gov) is not updated directly; rather, information is pulled from our Agency website and other government sites as defined in the published [recovery.gov](http://recovery.gov) architecture. To assure accuracy and quality of data, the working group team members, including the OIG, frequently review website content and recommend changes. Currently, minor gaps exist in how some Recovery Act information is "classified" that the team has documented and has been tasked to resolve.

### **1.3.5 - USASpending.gov**

USAID is committed to data integrity and compliance with all OMB directives relative to data collection, quality and transparency in general and in accordance with USASpending requirements. It is Agency policy that information about all applicable contracts, grants and loans are available for public review on [USASpending.gov](http://USASpending.gov) in accordance with the various applicable OMB Directives. Specifically this means that all contractual actions are automatically transferred from our internal systems to the government wide Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) per an agreed upon schedule. Currently, the Agency has two internal automated data collection systems that perform this function, the Global Acquisition and Assistance System (GLAAS) and the Electronic Procurement Information Collection System (EPICS). GLAAS is the Agency's new acquisition and assistance system,. Deployment of GLAAS is currently underway and expected to be completed by the end of 2011. In the interim, EPICS acts as the agency's data collection system for those users not yet on GLAAS. Both GLAAS and EPICS are directly linked to FPDS, so once data has been entered into one of these systems and validated, it is immediately available on [www.FPDS.gov](http://www.FPDS.gov).

USASpending.gov retrieves its contractual data from FPDS.gov and other websites. Information to be made available to the public is reviewed for data quality errors and issues are reported as appropriate. In the Agency's recent FPDS Data Quality Report, USAID reported that 92% of all applicable actions had been successfully posted. The remaining 8 percent are the result of the transition to the GLAAS system and it is expected that all actions will be complete by March 31, 2010. In addition, GLAAS is being modified in March 2010 to institute a system requirement, which would mandate the entry of FPDS data into GLAAS before an acquisition action can be fully completed. This will ensure 100 percent compliance going forward. The Agency is also performing Independent Verification and Validation efforts on FPDS data, in accordance with OMB Directives. This requires statistically sampling data submitted to FPDS and comparing it to actual data as presented in the original contractual documents. This process will help identify any reported errors and the need for enhanced training and guidance, if applicable. For Assistance actions (grants and cooperative agreements) and loans, the Agency submits a batch process containing all relevant actions for the reporting period to USASpending, twice a month in accordance with governing guidance. All submissions have been successfully received and posted to USASpending.gov. The Agency is committed to systemically providing training and enhancing guidance relative to data reporting.

To align with the additionally data fields required for tracking Recovery Act funds, USAID currently manually creates and transfers a data and program file to FPDS as appropriate. This file enables USASpending.gov to accurately report Recovery Act contractual data to the public.

### **1.3.6 – Fido.gov/MTS**

Federal Information Databases Online (Fido.gov) was established 13 years ago to share information over the Internet and to support reporting and data collection projects for multiple agencies of the Executive Branch and the Congress. General Services Administration (GSA) is the registered owner of the Fido.gov domain. The Metric Tracking System (MTS) is a performance measurement system that captures key financial management performance indicators across the Federal Government:

- **Fund Balance with Treasury (Net):** This indicator identifies the difference between the fund balance reported in Treasury reports and the Agency fund balance with Treasury recorded in its general ledger on a net basis. Smaller reconciliation differences translate to greater integrity of financial reports and budget results.
- **Amount in Suspense (Absolute) Greater than 60 Days Old:** This indicator measures the timeliness of clearing and reconciling suspense accounts. This metric is reported quarterly. Prompt clearance of amounts in suspense

- Delinquent Accounts Receivable from Public Over 180 Days: Reported quarterly, this indicator measures [the success in reducing or eliminating delinquent accounts receivable from the public.](#) It shows how well the agency actively collects debt. Actively collecting debt improves management accountability, reduces Treasury borrowing, and increases accuracy in reporting.
- Electronic Payments: The number of electronic payments measures the extent to which vendors are paid electronically. A high use of electronic funds transfer saves money, reduces paperwork, and improves cash management.
- Percent Invoices Paid on Time: This indicator measures [how many invoices are paid on time in accordance with the Prompt Payment Act \(PPA\).](#) Timely payment reduces interest charges and reflects a high degree of accountability and integrity.
- Interest Penalties Paid: This indicator measures [the effect of late payments in the amount of interest penalties paid relative to the total dollars of invoices paid. Smaller amounts of interest paid shows that an agency is paying its bills in a timely manner in accordance with the Prompt Payment Act. Not having to pay interest saves agencies money and allows funds to be used for their intended purpose.](#)
- [Travel Card Delinquency Rates:](#) This indicator measures the percent of travel card balances outstanding over 61 days for individually billed accounts as well as centrally billed accounts. Reducing outstanding travel card balances helps increase rebates to agencies.
- Purchase Card Delinquency Rate: This indicator measures the percent of purchase card balances outstanding over 61 days. Reducing outstanding purchase card balances helps increase rebates to agencies and reduces interest payments.

The collection of the Suspense Clearing and Delinquent Accounts Receivable information began in May 2003. Over time, some new information was added. Travel and Purchase Card Delinquencies were added in 2005. The tool's intent is to provide government managers, Congress, and other stakeholders the information to assess the financial management health of the Federal Government as a whole and for each individual agency. Tracking performance on indicators helps to guide financial management reforms and targets resources to areas where better stewardship of Federal financial resources is needed.

Federal agencies are owed debts from a variety of individuals and entities. A few examples of debt are loan repayments, duplicate or erroneous grant or entitlement payments, as well as fines or penalties and other debts. These debts total billions of dollars government-wide. Improving the management of these debts – especially improved performance in the collection of outstanding debts – is important to ensuring that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and efficiently.

USAID is diligently working to reduce the amount of delinquent debt by improving the screening of potential borrowers and improving internal agency collection practices. In the case of credit programs, improvements are also being made in litigating the debt at the Department of Justice, and transferring the debt to the Department of the Treasury for cross-servicing and administrative offset opportunities.

#### **1.4 - Public Forums**

USAID embraces a practice of broad public consultation in the development and implementation of its foreign assistance programs. Several of these forums are described in detail in Section 3.2.

#### **1.5 - Records Management**

The Records Division oversees the Agency's management of both paper and electronic records. Tools are currently in place to manage records from creation to destruction to permanent archiving. The effective management of the Agency's official records results in improvements in searching and retrieving information. This provides for transparency within the Agency.

Realizing the proliferation of electronic records, the Records Division is making a very assertive effort to put additional tools in place to address the emphasis by the Obama Administration for accountability. The Administration has emphasized automation and harnessing current technological advances. In response to this, the Electronic Records Team has plans to test an electronic records application. The Team's purpose is to determine if this tool might begin to provide some solutions to address the need to manage the various forms of electronic records. This includes those records currently created, produced, generated and stored on various electronic infrastructures throughout the Agency.

The emphasis by the Obama Administration upon openness, transparency, participation and collaboration lends itself to prioritizing initiatives that address the effective management of information and records. In summary, the Records Division is attempting to address this initiative by:

- The launching of a new online training course to provide training for all employees, and to promote the importance of Records Management;
- Participating in various workshops, presentations, and forums in order to teach records management and provide information on what the Records Team has in place to meet the challenges of records management. Plans are also currently in place for overseas meetings to reach out to the missions for teaching and dissemination of records management instruction and resources;

- Participating in the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) activities in order to assure that Vital Records are available and accessible should the situation presents itself;
- The efforts of the Electronic Records Team that includes: the testing of Electronic Record Application, the scanning of retired paper records, the scheduling to the Information records applications throughout the Agency, and the compiling of records management training guide;
- Realizing that records management is everyone's responsibility, the Records Team's task is the oversight of Records Management throughout the Agency. There are five team members assigned as records client analyst for specific regions.

For additional information, see <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/500/502.pdf> -- the Automated Directives System (ADS) chapter on Records Management.

## **1.6 - Freedom of Information Act**

The following section describes USAID's capacity to respond to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

### Process of analyzing and responding to FOIA requests

The FOIA team analyzes requests by reviewing each document line by line to determine exempt material. The FOIA guide is used as a resource to determine the proper exemption to use. Input is gathered from the authoring offices of the documents as to the sensitivity of items. The FOIA team consults with the Office of the General Counsel on sensitive issues and any cases that may potentially go into litigation.

After all responsive documents have been received, the documents are reviewed, the office comments, and the proper exemptions are applied. A letter explaining why certain information has been withheld is written to the missions.

### Capacity to analyze, coordinate and respond in a timely manner

The FOIA office does not have any documents. A search for documents requests is sent to the Washington and overseas office to obtain documents. The result of a search may reveal numerous, potential responsive documents. As a first review, the FOIA team asks the offices to provide recommendations on withholding of any sensitive items. After receiving the documents, the office does the final review to determine the types of exemptions to apply to exempt items.

This coordination may take some time particularly if there are numerous documents and offices to submit documents. If it's determined that submitter's comments are needed, under Executive Order 12600, time is given to the office to review and send comments (10 days). This can be a lengthy process.



Because of these circumstances, responses to requests cannot always be made within the statutory time limits.

To help with the initial processing of requests, a new tracking system, FOIAXpress, was obtained and started live in FY 2008. This system allows the FOIA team to put documents and information about cases in one place. Request that consists of putting in the requester's contact information and the request letter are put into the system. An acknowledgement letter is sent to the requester that includes the tracking number and the contact information of the specialist assigned to the case. A request for documents through the system using Form 810 FOIA Action Control Record is also sent out.

#### Steps to reduce the backlog

Before securing supplemental processing assistance, the six-member FOIA team worked consistently to reduce the backlog. As the number of high profile and complex cases increased, USAID found it necessary to obtain additional help with processing.

USAID secured the services of a FOIA consultant in 2005. The consultant is a former FOIA officer. The consultant focuses on referrals and consultations from other agencies. These are time-sensitive requests that need immediate attention. The consultant gives full attention to these sensitive requests. In our backlog efforts, the direct-hire staff is involved with high profile and current requests. During this period, the consultant has closed over 85% of the assigned cases.

USAID secured a FOIA services contract on September 27, 2007. The first contingent of three contract employees arrived during the period of December 2007 through December 2008.

The initial goal for the contract staff was to eliminate the pre-2005 cases. Then the contractor would work on the remaining initial backlog. The contractor staff has closed almost 70% of the initial backlog. As the contractors work on this backlog, the FOIA team continues to process and close current years' requests.

The FOIA team receives requests on a continuous basis. In anticipation of more high profile and complex requests, the Office of the Director of Administrative Services submitted a request to hire additional staff.

Steps to reduce the backlog by 10% each fiscal year include:

- Inventory of requests to identify duplicates and closed cases which are classified as open
- Grouping and classifying requests by actions necessary
- Grouping and classifying requests by records holding offices
- Follow up on search actions or search actions sent to records holding offices

- Reminder search actions sent for searches not completed within prescribed timeframe
- Reviews conducted, redactions and withholdings made if necessary
- Draft responses prepared
- General Counsel clearance obtained as necessary
- Final responses prepared and sent to requesters

### Milestones

- Inventory of requests – Completed by November 1 of new fiscal year
- Grouping and classification of requests – Completed by December 1 of new fiscal year
- Follow up on search actions or search actions sent to records holding offices – Completed by January 15 of new fiscal year

For additional information about USAID's (FOIA) process, see <http://www.usaid.gov/about/foia/> .

## **1.7 - Congressional Response**

Every year Congress asks USAID to submit a series of reports on various matters of concern. In an effort to provide a maximum of transparency to the general public, these reports are now being made available at the following web site: <http://www.usaid.gov/press/congressional/>

For FY2009, these reports include:

- [Assistance by the People's Republic of China to Governments and Entities in Latin America and Africa](#) (pdf, 177kb)
- [Agriculture Strategy Report, FY 2009](#) (pdf, 115kb)
- [Biodiversity Conservation and Forestry Programs Report, FY 2009](#) (pdf, 6.1mb)
- [Gender Integration and Programming Report, FY 2009](#) (pdf, 261kb)
- [Health-Related Research and Development Activities at USAID, FY 2009](#) (pdf, 447kb)
- [Third Annual Report to Congress on Highly Vulnerable Children](#) (pdf, 2mb)
- [USAID Jamaica Community-Based Police Report, FY 2009](#) (pdf, 352kb)
- [Pakistan Assistance Strategy Report](#) (pdf, 367kb)
- [The USAID Strategic Plan for Microbicide Research and Development: Current Initiatives and Next-Generation Leads, September 2009](#) (pdf, 216kb)
- [University Programs Report, FY 2009](#) (pdf, 259kb)

## **1.8 - Declassification Program**

The USAID Systemic Declassification Program resides with the Information Records Division, Office of Administrative Services. The Information Records Division also handles Mandatory Declassification Review requests that are made by the public in accordance with Executive Order 12958 and Executive Order 13526.

USAID does not have the authority to declassify documents that are not originally classified by USAID's Original Classification Authorities. Documents that are originally classified outside of USAID, with the exception of State Department, must be sent to that respective agency to be reviewed for declassification.

The USAID Declassification Team consists of four employees who work on a part-time basis and are currently reviewing documents at the Washington National Records Center (WNRC). These individuals follow the guidance included in Executive Orders 12958 and 13526 to determine when to declassify particular documents.

Referrals made to USAID by other agencies are reviewed by State Department employees located at the national Archives, College Park (NARA II) in accordance with State's authority to declassify USAID documents and vice versa. Some referrals from CIA are reviewed by a member of the USAID declassification team at International Point.

A recent Presidential Memorandum on December 29, 2009 refers to the new Executive Order 13526. This memorandum is focused on the modification of the current declassification system. The National Declassification Center (NDC) recognizes the need for a review of the current declassification process that is handling a backlog of more than 400 million pages. This review will take place and further direction will be given to ensure that access to all declassified records from this backlog will be made available to the public.

## 2.0 Participation

*“Participation allows members of the public to contribute ideas and expertise so that their government can make policies with the benefit of information that is widely dispersed in society.”* – Open Government Directive, 12/08/2009

USAID is committed to engaging the public in a proactive and transparent exchange of ideas, providing opportunities for the public to provide input into agency programs and activities. Public engagement impacts the Agency’s activities as new foreign assistance projects are designed and implemented. Many offices within USAID’s pillar bureaus and overseas missions engage with stakeholders on an ongoing basis to evaluate program successes and improve program design.

### Participation Objectives

By participating with the public, we are:

- Promoting opportunities for the public to participate throughout the decision-making process;
- Offering a more open forum to engage the public in the foreign assistance dialogue;
- Providing an outlet to inform partners, stakeholders and the public of development challenges; and
- Creating an interactive platform for the people who benefit from our assistance.

### 2.1 - Public Engagement in Existing Participatory Processes

#### Public Information and Participation

Stakeholders and the general public can engage with USAID in a number of venues. USAID’s Public Information, Publications, and Online Services division engages the public through written correspondence, the agency phone operator, and the USAID Public Web Site (<http://www.usaid.gov/contact.html>). Feedback and suggestions received from the public are routed internally to appropriate offices for action.

#### Portal Participation

A number of portal web sites in specific topic areas allow stakeholders and the general public to discuss best practices in development projects. Several of these examples are described in Appendix C.

## **Social Media Participation**

USAID has also begun interfacing with the public on social media portals, including Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/USAID.News> ), Twitter ([http://twitter.com/usaid\\_news](http://twitter.com/usaid_news) ), YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/usaidvideo> ), and LinkedIn (<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=118430> ). These are being used as avenues for information dissemination as well as obtaining feedback from citizens, stakeholders, and beneficiaries. USAID also maintains multiple email lists and Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds, available via the Public Web Site for dissemination of updates and current information on USAID activities.

## **2.2 - New and Easier Methods for Public Engagement**

### **Participating more openly**

USAID, in the interest of the Open Government Directive, will implement the maximum practical and manageable participation methods available on its [www.USAID.gov/open/](http://www.USAID.gov/open/) page, to include linking to:

- FOIA Request Forms
- USAID Senior Accountable Officials and contact information
- USAID Open Government Representative and contact information
- USAID Organization and Leaders
- USAID Organizational Structure Chart
- USAID Physical Address
- USAID Employee Directory
- USAID Open Government Directive email, i.e., [opengov@usaid.gov](mailto:opengov@usaid.gov)
- Link to 'Share' through Social Media Portals
- Links to visit USAID Official Social Media page, e.i., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Blogs/RSS, Slideshare, et al.
- Forms for submitting ideas to USAID
- Newsletter/Update subscription forms
- Events calendar for 'Open Public' meetings, speeches, events, etc.
- Other Open Government Links
  - [Open Government Directive](#)
  - [Data.gov](#)
  - [USASpending.gov](#)
  - [Recovery.gov](#)

- [IT Dashboard](#)
- [Regulations.gov](#)
- Provide Press Releases in Social Media News Release (SMNR) format for third party ease-of-use.
- List USAID Offices hours of operation
- Import RSS feed of USAID updates linked to platforms allowing participation
- List USAID publications and collateral

USAID official social media pages will allow commenting from the public and be moderated accordingly.

## 3.0 Collaboration

*“Collaboration improves the effectiveness of Government by encouraging partnerships and cooperation within the Federal Government, across levels of Government, and between the Government and private institutions.” – Open Government Directive, 12/08/2009*

USAID collaborates with a range of partners through sharing of networks, expertise, and joint innovation to address development challenges that no one organization can solve on its own. Our partnerships span relationships with more than 3,500 American companies and over 300 U.S.-based voluntary organizations. Working in over 100 countries in five regions of the world, USAID programs support long-term development and equitable economic growth and advances U.S. foreign policy objectives. Our work is focused on economic growth, agriculture and trade; global health; and democracy, conflict prevention, and humanitarian assistance. We are committed to improving collaboration through partnerships and cooperation with other Federal government agencies, across levels of government, and with the range of existing and possible development partners from the private sector, the non-profit community, educational institutions, think tanks, community and civic associations, and the public.

Drivers for USAID’s improved collaboration and partnership include:

- Leadership among and synergy with other development actors
- Accountability – improved and more clearly-conveyed performance results
- Relevance – accomplishing development objectives in a multi-faceted development assistance arena that is shared with a range of development partners
- Improved development practice and scalability – better, faster, smarter accomplishment of USAID’s mission and objectives; ability to translate and transfer up and across
- Effective development process – technology and tools as enablers of knowledge generation, sharing, exchange, application and use
- Innovation as a source of fresh ideas, new solutions and approaches, and conversations about challenges being addressed

### 3.1 - Organizing for Collaboration and Partnership

USAID's commitment to engage and collaborate is governed by our equally important commitment to good development practice. The agency has a range of central collaboration and knowledge-sharing platforms and tools, which are being applied in many collaborative programmatic activities. USAID works with development agencies, other USG departments, and numerous partners including development practitioners, other bilateral and multilateral organizations, indigenous organizations, educational institutions, research entities and think tanks, and the private and not-for-profit sectors.

USAID's collaboration and partnership tools and technology serve nearly all of our technical sectors, geographic locations, individual offices and missions. In addition, they support important aspects of our internal operations (e.g., budget and finance, contracting, performance monitoring and reporting, human resources, legal and regulatory, public affairs, etc.). Some tools and technology platforms – whether commercially available or open source – are centralized, supported through USAID's Office of the Chief Information Officer. Others are deployed and maintained based on program need, situational challenges, specific requirements, or innovative solutions.

USAID is a decentralized organization, with much of its programmatic power and decision making decentralized to the in-country Missions, working closest to the realities of developing countries and the challenges they face. The Office of Development Partners (ODP) works across all foreign assistance program objectives through partnerships, alliances, and collaboration. ODP's placement and cross-cutting role enables it to look across the development landscape to identify trends and potential partnership avenues, opportunities for strategic alliances, and ways to convene parties with shared interests both inside and outside the agency and the U.S. government.

### **3.2 - Leveraging our Collaboration Platforms and Technology**

Part of USAID's Knowledge Management mandate is to support and leverage better knowledge exchange, application, and use – enabling our staff and our institutional partners to work better, faster, and smarter. Collaboration is an important contributor to institutional learning. The platforms, tools, and processes for USAID collaboration range from those that support internal agency business and operations, to others that enable better dialogue and cooperation in programmatic activities in field missions and in Washington, to ones that extend into the interagency or inter-governmental arenas. The examples below are a small slice into a broader set of tools and platforms that USAID has in place, to encourage and enable more effective collaboration.

Examples of internal collaboration platforms, tools, and mechanisms include:



- **AIDnet blogs and communities** – online collaboration space, available through the USAID Intranet, for agency staff with network access. Provides space for people to share opinions, ideas, resources, and knowledge.
- **AIDSPEAK** – Developed by USAID’s Chief Operating Officer (COO), this blog’s primary objective is to improve information sharing and initiate a dialogue about the work carried out by the COO, as well as agency initiatives, events, and activities.
- **Chief Operating Officer’s Newsletter** – communication from the Office of the Administrator to every level of the Agency, with a commitment to ensuring accurate, timely, and useful information flow.
- **Developedia**, <http://developedia.usaid.gov>, a wiki-based tool that USAID and Department of State colleagues can use to collect and share information about the full range of agency programs, practices, and operations. Featured pages range from descriptions of current programs or activities, to YouTube videos, to Mission or Bureau-specific pages, to toolkits that enable staff to better carry out their work.
- **Foreign Assistance Coordination and Tracking System (FACTSInfo)**, a database of budget information, used inside USAID and Department of State, to track foreign assistance budget information, annually and programmatically.
- **Private and Voluntary Organization (PVO) Registry** – USAID’s registry comprises a diverse group of organizations engaged in foreign assistance and development worldwide. This ranges from institutions with global reach that annual deliver hundreds of millions of dollars of aid, to less experienced organizations with limited resources.
- **Program Officers Tool Kit** – portion of ProgramNet, offering Wikipedia-style information for USAID program officers, organized thematically. This knowledge management tool allows program staff to share knowledge and experiences with one another to better carry out their work.
- **Sounding Board** – Initiated by the office of Chief Operating Office, provides a forum for USAID employees to submit concrete ideas to transform the way our agency does its business.
- **USAID ALLNET**, <http://www.usaidallnet.gov/>, the online collaborative space for information and knowledge-sharing between USAID and its partners. ALLNET offers a shared environment for improving interaction, information sharing, and discussions. This environment hosts the newest

incarnation of foreignassistance.net, used for foreign assistance budget-related planning by employees within USAID and Department of State.

Examples of partnership or inter-governmental collaboration platforms, tools, and mechanisms include:

- **Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA)**, [http://www.usaid.gov/about\\_usaid/acvfa/index.html](http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/acvfa/index.html), this presidentially mandated committee was established after World War II, to provide a link between the U.S. government and private voluntary organizations. Comprised of 30 private citizens with extensive knowledge of international development, ACVFA helps provide the underpinning for cooperation between the public and private sectors in U.S. foreign assistance programs. ACVFA meetings, held three times a year, focus on timely topics, issues, and challenges that affect the relationship between the official foreign assistance program and the private voluntary community. ACVFA recommendations are presented to the USAID Administrator, offering a consultative avenue into agency planning efforts.
- **Inter-agency Policy Committee (IPC)** – supports intra-U.S. government agency collaboration and coordination, convened and organized as needed.
- **Intelink**, <https://www.intelink.gov>, hosted by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, this secure intranet was developed by the U.S. intelligence community to promote information sharing between Development, Diplomatic, Defense, and Intelligence staffs.
- **Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTS) (Iraq/Afghanistan)**, in collaboration with Department of State and Department of Defense, PRTS are inter-agency teams that work to stabilize, rebuild, and reconstruct within unstable environments. Inter-agency collaboration is supported within and among these teams.
- **USAID Seminar Series**, <http://www.usaid.gov/km/seminars/index.html>, provides a workshop format for presentations and panel discussions exploring special topics in performance, implementation, measurement and evaluation, policy, management, and business operations. Presenters come from USAID, other government agencies, and from the development partner community.

### 3.3 - Sustaining our Commitment to Open Government

Participation in an Open Government environment means using USAID's collaboration and partnership activities, to enable:

- Learning: best practices, lessons from success or failure
- Capturing and sharing knowledge and information (content that informs how USAID plans, implements, manages, monitors/reports, etc. to do development better)
- Dialogue or collaboration with partners (to exchange, inform, and help us carry out our development business more effectively and efficiently)
- Scaling programs for broader impact

USAID is committed to staying current, as Open Government standards and processes evolve. Ideas will be enlisted from the public, from within USAID, and from our agency and institutional partners in development assistance for more efficient, and more effective ways to manage feedback.

Already, suggestions, ideas, and feedback from the public are being posted on IdeaScale, [www.open.usaid.ideascale.com](http://www.open.usaid.ideascale.com). Sample contributions from the group posted to date include recommendations to:

- Establish a pilot project to build a next-gen USAID portal for the Federal Community Cloud – part of a suite of open social portal
- Set up a national network for cooperation and information sharing, to connect with other organizations in the U.S. and overseas, to implement strong cooperation programs
- Develop an online social networking community for young adults interested in international development; the idea included ambassadors and educators who can reach into the student community, and contests for students to propose ways to solve complex development problems
- Help develop small self-regulating cooperating nonprofit organizations, that are socially and environmentally responsible and encourage direct action from and with their communities

Collecting these ideas through various public-facing websites will better enable USAID to provide effective development assistance and facilitate others to do the same. This process can spur further dialogue and engagement with the public.

### **3.4 - USAID's Collaboration and Partnership Websites**

USAID missions, bureaus, and offices have created and supported websites and other repositories to store and share knowledge and information about specific

programs, development activities, partnerships, collaborative endeavors, products, new ideas and their solutions. In addition, USAID websites are used to manage data and report on how development activities are being carried out. USAID will maintain and update these sites, to reflect current activities in collaboration and partnerships.

- USAID mission websites can be accessed through the “Locations” tab on the public website: <http://www.usaid.gov/missions/>.
- A USAID public website, <http://commons.usaid.gov/categories>, is a collection of program websites that shows USAID-funded program activities in technical areas, geographic regions, and cross-cutting activities.
- The Global Development Commons created [www.GlobalDevelopmentCommons.net](http://www.GlobalDevelopmentCommons.net), a site that profiles and promotes successful applications of technology to international development efforts.
- Following OMB’s guidance for Open Government, USAID is populating the public site, <http://www.usaid.gov/open>, which is a central portal into the activities and results of our Open Government work.

### **3.5 - Innovative Methods for Obtaining Ideas and Increasing Collaboration**

#### **3.5.1 - Overview**

Technology and entrepreneurship are the two classic wellsprings of innovation. In a development context, USAID sees innovation as the intersection among development practice, technology, and entrepreneurship. USAID is positioning itself at the forefront of development practice that leverages technologies and fosters entrepreneurship because these approaches lead to positive development outcomes. There is a methodology component to the “new nature” of innovation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. That is, open, collaborative approaches to problem solving that involve multiple stakeholders, especially end-users, are more likely to yield positive, sustainable results. Good development practice necessitates collaboration with, and commitment from, beneficiaries/communities to make a development program a success.

International development efforts are now being undertaken by many interested, skilled and, in some cases, well resourced actors. This environment demands a different approach however from when the development landscape was dominated by a few, large government donors, multilateral aid organizations and charities. The concepts of openness and sharing are more important than ever given the significant increase in the number of actors, and given our own understanding of the importance of involving local actors in sustainable

development. The skills to listen to these actors, identify common interests and construct shared programs that can leverage each actor's strengths, and satisfy beneficiaries' needs, while meeting USAID objectives, are key for professionals in 21<sup>st</sup> century development craft.

USAID leadership is discussing an internal proposal to bring a holistic, integrated innovation approach to how our agency does business. We see the programmatic basis for innovation as comprising three core areas: technology, entrepreneurship, and open, networked development. The overall approach will be to:

- Communicate innovations from inside USAID for replication and scaling and externally for replication, scaling, partnership opportunities and branding.
- Identify innovations in development practice from outside USAID and bring into USAID.
- Build a community of development innovation stakeholders, including USAID leadership and employees, thought leaders, partners, traditional and non-traditional development actors, and media.
- Launch new programs and support existing programs within the Agency that meet the following criteria:
  - √ **Impact:** Does the program deliver tangible results in the triangle (the intersection of the three legs of innovation)?
  - √ **Disrupt:** Does the program signal a new, more efficient or engaging way of doing business?
  - √ **Innovate:** Does the program promote innovation within (as culture change) or outside the Agency (+ branding)?
  - √ **Lead:** Does the program have leadership and existing USAID assets behind it?
  - √ **Partner:** Does the program leverage existing Partner resources, networks and assets?
  - √ **Network:** Does the program catalyze action from non-traditional development actors or beneficiaries?
  - √ **Achieve:** Is it program implementable, given the resources available?
  - √ **Motivate:** Does the program excite and inspire?
  - √ **Align:** Does the program offer long-term strategic value to USAID's mission?
  - √ **Support:** Bureaus and missions to coordinate, catalyze and integrate innovations

- √ **Transcend:** Surface and break down institutional barriers (cultural, bureaucratic, and/or logistical) to innovation

Examples of USAID's innovative activities, currently underway, include:

- **African Diaspora Marketplace (ADM):** A competition, marketplace, and idea generation forum for entrepreneurs to spur job creation in their native countries. ADM was carried out in partnership between USAID, The Western Union Company, and the Western Union Foundation as well as through Western Union Agency Giving Circles. From an initial pool of 733 applicant business plan proposals, 60 finalists were chosen. At a Washington-based forum and marketplace event in January 2010, 14 diaspora-driven businesses in seven countries were awarded matching grants ranging from \$50,00 to \$100,000. Winning entries ranged from a commercial plant tissue culture business using biotechnology to increase yield and quality of produce for Ethiopian agriculture producers, to a franchise business model that will empower female nurse entrepreneurs to improve access to healthcare and reduce the burden on government hospitals in Ghana.
- **Office of Democracy and Governance (DCHA/DG) Community of Practice Blog:** A discussion of innovation in the democracy and governance sector. With the intent of capturing best practices and informing the fields, an online discussion commenced in January 2010 to spark conversation, pose challenges, collect ideas and best practices. As the democracy and governance sector continues to evolve, it is important to provide technical and intellectual leadership and services. Recognizing that the majority of innovations are field-driven, this blog begins with discussions that define innovation; highlight new programs, approaches, or ways of engaging new or non-traditional partners; explore new technical innovations and opportunities; and explore how to encourage more open, collaborative approaches to problem solving with a full range of partners.
- **Global Pulse 2010:** A 72-hour online dialogue, led by USAID in partnership with The White House, the Departments of Commerce, Education, Health and Human Services, and State. (GP 2010 is featured as USAID's Flagship Initiative, discussed in more detail in Section 4.)
- **LAUNCH:** A collaboration with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to develop a concept and event series to create a dynamic new platform to promote and share disruptive innovations in sustainability and development. USAID will work with NASA in developing and rolling out a series of collaborative partnerships to accelerate new innovations to scale. The activity is slated to begin in mid-2010.

- Partnership to Monitor Election Related Violence in Afghanistan:** an on-the-ground partnership with FortiusOne's GeoCommons, Google, OpenStreetMap, Stamen, Development Seed, the Synergy Strike Force, and others who map data on election-related violence and trends around the Afghanistan 2009 Elections. A map is available in real time to anyone with an Internet connection, creating an unprecedented degree of transparency. Also, any user can upload data to build this out further. Ushahidi's platform is collecting data from mobile phones via Short Message Service (SMS). These partnerships are demonstrating the potential for new ways to document events surrounding elections in general, which can be useful in similar situations around the world.

### 3.5.2 - Prizes, Competitions, Challenges, and Incentives

The Open Government Directive recognizes prizes, competitions, challenges, and incentives as motivators to spur new ideas, approaches, and partnerships. In 2008, USAID's Global Development Commons team initiated the Development 2.0 Challenge, and the activity was honored as a finalist for the 2009 Service to America Award. See [www.servicetoamericamedals.org/SAM/finalists09/](http://www.servicetoamericamedals.org/SAM/finalists09/)

With over four billion subscribers in the world, the mobile phone is often the key to connecting and exchanging information with people in developing countries. The 2008 USAID Development 2.0 Challenge, implemented by the Global Development Commons, invited innovators and entrepreneurs from around the world to participate in a global competition to seek access to information and build new connections to the global community. Crowdsourcing and Open Innovation have become increasingly important engines of innovation globally, leveraged by the commercial, non-profit, academic and government sectors to identify opportunities and solve problems. USAID's Development 2.0 Challenge yielded 115 submissions using high impact, low-cost, open source solutions.

The top three finalists presented their projects at an awards ceremony in Washington, DC, attended by international development practitioners, private sector partners, potential investors, media, and students. RapidSMS Child Malnutrition Surveillance, a startup from six graduate students at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs working in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), was the winning project, receiving a \$10,000 grant. The two runners-up, Click Diagnostics and Ushahidi, were commended and received grants of \$5,000 each. For more information about the Development 2.0 Challenge, see [www.usaid.gov/about\\_usaid/gdc/](http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/gdc/)

Building on lessons from the Development 2.0 Challenge, USAID intends to identify and implement the next Development 2.0 Challenge to highlight innovative social enterprises developing cutting-edge development technologies. As offices, programs, missions, and bureaus in USAID stand up their own

development challenges, USAID continues to hone its innovation advisory capabilities. We will offer challenge advisory services to internal USAID clients. These include design, technology identification, partnership access, marketing and communications support, and a potential online platform.

USAID recognizes the important role that incentives can play in sharing best practices about innovation, as well as surfacing innovative ideas and solutions that can help advance the broader development agenda. These include

- Experimenting with new technologies,
- Taking a whole-of-government approach to leverage expertise, both within USAID and in collaboration with other Federal Government agencies and departments, and
- Forming high-impact collaborations with researchers, the private sector, and civil society.

### **3.6 - Policy Implications**

USAID views innovation as one lever of a more dynamic partnership and collaboration environment. As Open Government gains traction among U.S. Federal government agencies, engaging with the public can enrich our collaboration and partnership activities. We recognize the value of honing our collaboration systems and methods by which we develop, track, and communicate about development activities, in relationship to other development partners.

USAID is committed to improving foreign assistance planning and execution in an ever-evolving interagency arena, working with a range of traditional and non-traditional partners. An Open Government approach to collaboration and partnership tools, methods, and technology will reinforce our ability to plan for, engage in, and communicate about ongoing and new partnerships and alliances. Platforms and other engagement modes for knowledge-sharing and information use will allow more effective access to data about collaboration and partnerships. This should enable USAID and our partners to advance the important work of development with a complete range of collaborators, development practitioners and the local community in overseas missions. We expect that an Open Government will better equip us to draw lessons from experience, explore new tools and models, and learn from good practices in innovation, partnership, and collaboration through ongoing engagement with development partners, other agencies and departments, universities, think tanks, private companies, non-governmental organizations, and interested citizens.



## 4.0 Flagship Initiative

On March 29 – 31, 2010, the U.S. Government will be hosting, Global Pulse 2010, a 72-hour, online collaboration event that will turn dialogue into partnerships, ideas into opportunities, and rhetoric into action.

Implemented by an interagency team led by USAID, Global Pulse 2010 is a US Government initiative that identifies ten hot-button issues facing the global community across the fields of science and technology, entrepreneurship and human development (see text box). The Global Pulse 2010 event will give thousands of participants from around the world an opportunity to discuss these issues and connect with others who have shared interests. The

platform will be used to capture the pulse of live, online collaboration sessions with analytic tools that identify the key ideas and major thematic areas that emerge. The goal of the Global Pulse 2010 event is to connect individuals to resources, and to inform U.S. foreign assistance and diplomatic strategy in an effort to bring sustainable innovation to communities around the world.

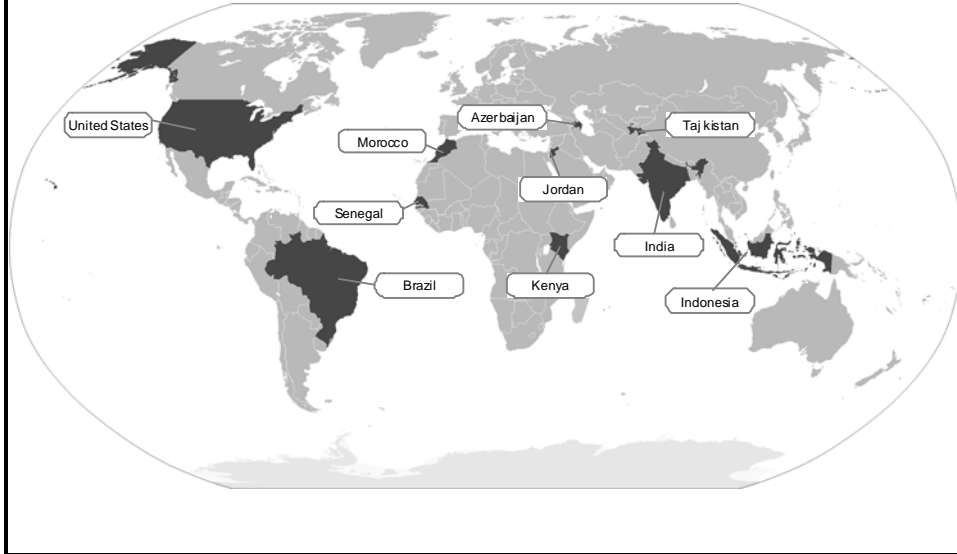
Globalization has given local problems a global reach. Sustainable solutions therefore require collaboration on a global scale. Global Pulse 2010 will be an open call for solutions, rallying participants who are interested in partnering with individuals or organizations to turn great ideas into action. Governments and private businesses are learning that the best ideas do not always come from the top. Global Pulse 2010 participants will share ideas and co-create solutions in collaboration with governments, private sector entities, and civil society organizations.

Updates and information on the Global Pulse 2010 event are available to the public at [www.GlobalPulse2010.gov](http://www.GlobalPulse2010.gov).

### Global Pulse 2010 Topics

- Advancing Entrepreneurship, Trade, and Economic Opportunity
- Building Strong Partnerships
- Empowering Women and Girls
- Enabling Essential Education
- Exercising Political and Civil Rights
- Fostering Science, Technology, and Innovation
- Inspiring a New Generation
- Promoting Global Health
- Pursuing Grand Challenges
- Supporting a Sustainable Planet

## Global Pulse 2010 Target Countries



Global Pulse 2010 is an unprecedented event sponsored by the US Government. Participation is planned to be global. We are designing the outreach program globally to encourage participation from:

- Non-governmental organizations
- Universities and community colleges
- Private sector companies
- Diaspora communities
- Governments

Participation and collaboration are the openness principles that will be addressed by this event. Outreach efforts are focused on reaching organizations that have broad networks of individuals with authority and/or expertise to contribute value to the discussion topics identified for Global Pulse 2010. We are expecting a global mix of participants across all themes and geographic areas. We appreciate the fact that Internet access is a prerequisite to participate in the 72-hour event, and understand that this excludes many interested parties. However, we are focusing on including voices that might otherwise be under-represented if they are not drawn in (e.g., women). We will set up facilities to invite participation during the event, using central gathering spots such as schools and community meeting areas to better enable groups of people to participate and contribute together. Additional cross-cultural engagement and exchange will come in through locations in the U.S. Department of State's American Corners – an extensive cultural exchange network in missions and posts around the globe. In

addition to providing physical hubs for information and knowledge-sharing, American Corners locations make available their collections of electronic media, books, music, videos, other resources and information about history, politics, history, literature, culture, and geography.

Through the interagency planning process, USAID was asked to take the lead. A core group of agencies have come together to plan and execute this event. They include:

- USAID – Lead Implementing Agency
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Education
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of State

A broader group of non-governmental organizations are also directly involved with the planning of the event directly with the interagency group identified above. Participants have included:

- Aga Khan Foundation
- Babson College
- Brookings Institute
- IBM Foundation
- Mercy Corps

Facilitation of the content and outreach elements of the program is underway.

While the actual Global Pulse 2010 event will take place from March 29 to 31, 2010, we expect that its impact will be felt for months after the on-line part of event wraps up.

- Broad participation and discussion about the specific topics should illuminate diverse points of view and opportunities for participation and collaboration. Without the Global Pulse 2010 event itself, they might not be identified or prioritized appropriately.
- We plan to analyze and use data obtained, to inform USAID and U.S. government's policy and programming activities in international development.
- We expect that USAID and the other agencies directly involved will identify ideas and approaches that can be adopted directly or that can meaningfully influence policy and programming efforts.
- We anticipate that the Global Pulse 2010 will impact not only the sponsoring agencies, but also the participants. We expect to carry out a

- We will publish a Global Pulse 2010 report on our [www.USAID.gov/open](http://www.USAID.gov/open) website.
- We will present findings from this experience at conferences and in journal articles.

The timing of this flagship initiative coincides with the drafting of USAID's Open Government Plan. We anticipate that lessons from the Global Pulse 2010 experience will inform planning and implementation of future global engagement activities. Even if these are different in scope and approach, the information and ideas can be discussed broadly. At this time, the exact program for related follow-on engagement that will be carried out by USAID and other participating agencies is under development.

## **5.0 Public and Agency Involvement**

The Open Government Plan is about the current and future activities of the agency to take advantage of the benefits of a transparent, participatory and collaborative approach to the work of the Agency. It is only fitting that we exercise these skills within the agency in support of the creation, refinement and finalization of the USAID Open Government Plan.

### **5.1 - USAID's Open Government Initiative Task Force**

This draft plan and the process for seeking and integrating feedback from both inside and outside the agency are being managed by an Open Government Task Force within USAID. It is co-chaired by the Director of the Office of Management Policy, Budget and Performance in the Management Bureau and the Director of the Office of Development Partners. The task force has been in place since the beginning of January 2010. It includes representation from each of the organizations with direct responsibility for some aspect of the Open Government Initiative. They are:

- Office of Management Policy, Budget and Performance (M/MPBP)
- Office of the Chief Information Officer (M/CIO)
- Office of the Chief Financial Officer (M/CFO)
- Office of Acquisitions and Assistance (M/OAA)
- Office of Administrative Services (M/AS)
- Office of Development Partners (ODP)
- Office of the Chief Operating Officer (COO)
- Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA)
- Office of the General Council (GC)
- Office of Security (SEC)

### **5.2 - Open Government Initiative Public and Agency Involvement**

USAID's Open Government Initiative Taskforce is leveraging expertise from around the agency to support the creation of the Open Government Plan that we intend to provide for broader comment. As we build the plan, we anticipate a five day comment period from March 15-19, 2010, per the guidance received from the Office of Management and Budget's Open Government Working Group. During this comment period, USAID will seek comments, feedback and input from:

- USAID employees
- Other U.S. Agencies and Departments
- Implementing partners
- The general public

We will use a number of mechanisms to reach these constituents, depending on the group. For example, for USAID employees, these could include:

- Agency Notices
- The Foreign Affairs Bulletin (operational and programmatic guidance, information, and communication about noteworthy activities and decisions, disseminated to USAID and Department of State employees in missions and posts around the world)
- The Chief Operating Officer Bi-Weekly Report
- FrontLines (published by USAID's Legislative and Public Affairs bureau, reaching employees in missions and posts around the world, plus interested development professionals worldwide)
- Mentions or more expanded descriptions in various internal organization blogs and web site postings

For U.S. government agencies and departments involved in international development:

- Direct contact with the individual agencies and departments themselves
- Open government forums and workshops

For implementing partners:

- Communication through industry organizations, such as the Advisory Council on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACFVA); InterAction (a coalition of over 150 humanitarian organizations providing disaster relief, refugee assistance and sustainable development programs worldwide); and the Professional Services Council (PSC), the unified voice of the government services community.
- Convene an Open Government Plan meeting to review what we have and seek their comments.
- Present at Society for International Development working group meetings, to increase understanding and encourage participation among development practitioners, students, retirees, and others who are interested in international development.

For the general public:

- Post the plan for comment on the OpenGov website.
- Promote it and encourage discussion via Facebook, Twitter, and other social networking avenues.
- Push requests for comment and engagement through existing mechanisms including IdeaSource.
- Connect to USAID-related collaboration sites. (For more about this, refer to the list of USAID collaboration mechanisms, described in the plan under "Leveraging our Collaboration Platforms and Technology")

- Use appropriate resources to process and respond to feedback collected from USAID employees and the public, during the plan's initial comment period.

Once this feedback/comment period is complete, we will refine the plan and publish USAID's Open Government Plan according to the schedule prepared by the Office of Management and Budget's Open Government Working Group. At this time, April 7, 2010 is listed as the date when all government agencies must post their plans. We envision this as the beginning of an ongoing process whereby we more effectively take a participatory and collaborative approach to engaging with others about our international development work. We anticipate receiving input and ideas from USAID employees, employees of other government agencies and departments, key stakeholders in the private and non-profit sectors, and the general public.

## Appendix A

The following table serves an inventory of existing USAID activities that embrace the open government principles of transparency, participation and collaboration.

### USAID-Managed Public Websites

Website	URL	Description
USAID Main Web Site	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov">www.usaid.gov</a>	This is the primary USAID web site that conveys to the public its history, organization, U.S. foreign development/humanitarian policy, aid programs/projects by region/country, and other information.
USAID Mission Web Sites	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/missions">www.usaid.gov/missions</a>	USAID missions have an internet presence available to the public that provide country-specific budget/financial data and USAID assistance profiles. Many sites provide information in the language of the aid-recipient country.
USAID Performance Trends	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/policy/performance">www.usaid.gov/policy/performance</a>	Summarized results achieved for a representative set of approximately 38 performance indicators with results from FY2005-2008 and targets for FY2009 and FY2010.
USAID Budget and Performance	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget">www.usaid.gov/policy/budget</a>	For budget, performance and accountability information, USAID produces several key planning and reporting documents that define the primary goals and progress of U.S. foreign policy, development and humanitarian assistance as well as related aid levels and flows.
Where Does USAID's Money Go?	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/money/">www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/money/</a>	A snapshot and related details on how USAID obligated its budgetary resources in FY2008 forward
Congressional Budget Justification	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/cbj2010/">http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/cbj2010/</a>	The FY 2011 Foreign Operations Budget Request reflects the continuing process to provide improved strategic focus, data quality, and information on topics of greater Congressional



		interest.
Agency Financial Report	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/policy/afr09/">http://www.usaid.gov/policy/afr09/</a>	Provides an overview of the Agency's financial and performance data to help Congress, the President, and the public assess USAID's stewardship over resources
We Are USAID Brochure	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/policy/afr08/afr08_brochure.pdf">http://www.usaid.gov/policy/afr08/afr08_brochure.pdf</a>	Highlights agency finances, successes, and accomplishments in a visually appealing, clear and understandable format for a general audience.
Annual Performance Report	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/apr09/">http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/apr09/</a>	The Annual Performance Report presents an assessment of USAID and the Department of State's performance for the fiscal year
Citizen's Report	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/citrep09/">http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/citrep09/</a>	The <a href="#">Citizens' Report</a> provides a summary of USAID and the State Department's performance for the fiscal year

## Appendix B

To date, USAID has submitted the high value data in the table below to the data.gov website.

Data Set	URL	What makes the dataset high-value?
U.S. Official Development Assistance Data	<a href="http://www.data.gov/raw/1596/">http://www.data.gov/raw/1596/</a>	USAID has a twofold purpose of furthering America's foreign policy interests in expanding democracy and free markets while improving the lives of citizens in the development world. As the principal U.S. agency extending foreign assistance dollars overseas, approximately 40%, data is organized to conform to guidelines established by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), Paris, France. Called Official Development Assistance (ODA), USAID submits the report to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OECD. DAC is the principal body dealing with issues relating to international cooperation with developing countries and by using OECD's definitions comparisons by international donor are possible.
U.S. Trade Capacity Data	<a href="http://www.data.gov/raw/1605/">http://www.data.gov/raw/1605/</a>	USAID supports on-the-ground activities in economic growth and trade to sustain foreign policy interests in expanding free markets. Since 2001, all U.S. government trade capacity building activities in development countries and transitional economies is quantified and submitted to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR). The data is used to promote and conduct trade within World Trade Organization rules.
U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants	<a href="http://www.data.gov/raw/1554/">http://www.data.gov/raw/1554/</a>	Commonly known as the Greenbook (the bound copy always sports a green cover), the report provides a complete historical record, since 1945, of U.S. foreign aid to the rest of the world. Data

		is reported by fiscal year—October 1 to September 30 of the following year <sup>3</sup> . Congress mandates <sup>4</sup> the submission of foreign assistance data on all loans and grants authorized by the U.S. government and categorized as either economic assistance or military assistance. Non-concessional support <sup>5</sup> is also presented.
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<sup>3</sup> Previous to 1976, the fiscal year began on July 1 and ran until June 30 of the following year.

<sup>4</sup> A binding obligation

<sup>5</sup> Loans based on market rates which must be repaid.

## Appendix C

A number of portal web sites in specific topic areas allow stakeholders and the general public to discuss best practices in development projects. These examples include:

Website	URL	Description
<b>Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD)</b>	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/agriculture/bifad/index.html">www.usaid.gov/our_work/agriculture/bifad/index.html</a>	Supports a board of experts appointed by the President. BIFAD the USAID administrator on food security and monitors the Title XII activities implemented by USAID.
<b>Business Growth Initiative</b>	<a href="http://www.businessgrowthinitiative.org">www.businessgrowthinitiative.org</a>	This portal includes a global challenge, inviting a private enterprise to contribute to international development initiatives in a specified region. The site includes newsletters, links to videos and publications, and other resource tools about competitiveness, alliances, and business development. In addition, it has a mailing list and places to collect input and simple survey data from the public.
<b>Climate Change Initiative</b>	<a href="http://www.climate.org.ua">www.climate.org.ua</a>	Enabling collaboration on matters of environmental compliance. The project is jointly funded by USAID, with assistance from the Canada International Development Agency (CIDA).
<b>Cities Alliance</b>	<a href="http://www.citiesalliance.org/ca/Organisation">www.citiesalliance.org/ca/Organisation</a>	A global coalition of cities and their development partners committed to scaling up successful approaches to poverty reduction. Membership is drawn from local governments, international government organizations, non-governmental organizations, and multilaterals. USAID and Department of State are members.
<b>Collaborative</b>	<a href="http://www.crsps.org">www.crsps.org</a>	These long-term programs focus the

<b>Research Support Programs (CRSPS)</b>		capabilities of U.S. land grant universities to carry out the international food and agricultural research mandate of the U.S. government. CRSPS are funded by USAID and collaborating organizations in the U.S. and in other countries.
<b>Development Resource Management Portal</b>	rmportal.net	An online collaboration space offering collaborative tools and global, open access communications exchange for USAID, development partners, and the public.
<b>FRAMEweb</b>	<a href="http://www.frameweb.org">www.frameweb.org</a>	A USAID program that fosters collaboration and peer-to-peer connection between practitioners and decision makers in natural resource management and agriculture. The site offers tools and resources, discussion forums, and a network to find and follow other practitioners with similar specialties, interests, and experience.
<b>Famine Early Warning System (FEWSNET)</b>	<a href="http://www.fews.net">www.fews.net</a>	A collaborative USAID-funded activity carried out in partnership with NASA, NOAA, U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, and Chemonics. FEWSNET provides tools for communicating and supporting decisions to mitigate food insecurity, including updates for 25 countries, food security outlooks, and briefings to support and respond to planning activities.
<b>GeoCafe</b>	edcintl.cr.usgs.gov/ip/goecafe	A collaboration between USAID and the U.S. Geological Survey. The project uses online tools to provide support to coffee production.
<b>Global Development Commons</b>	<a href="http://www.globaldevelopmentcommons.net">www.globaldevelopmentcommons.net</a>	With a focus on innovation, partnerships, and collaborative problem-solving, the Commons site offers a home for sharing information,

		showcasing innovative solutions, collaborative work with non-traditional partners, and a range of global events and activities. The Commons team recognizes the importance of co-creating solutions to common problems because no single actor can solve today's global challenges.
<b>Global Learning Portal</b>	<a href="http://www.glp.net">www.glp.net</a>	A product of the Global Learning Alliance. This international education resources portal facilitates knowledge sharing on education, with collaborative activities that involve a range of partners.
<b>Intra-Health OPEN Initiative</b>	<a href="http://www.intrahealth.org/section/open">www.intrahealth.org/section/open</a>	A suite of free open source solutions to supply health sector leaders and managers with a collection of new tools. The initiative's HRIS software provides information needed to assess HR problems, plan effective interventions and evaluate those interventions. In addition, the initiative highlights the need to form global alliances, expand access to infrastructure, and develop new cost-efficient tools and skills and tools that are technically viable at the country level. OPEN platforms help citizens learn critical thinking skills and modify systems as they enhance their health system for better use in their country's continually changing health care environment.
<b>Knowledge for Health</b>	<a href="http://www.k4health.org">www.k4health.org</a>	A one-stop shop where users can search for, organize, adapt and use up-to-date, evidence-based health information. The site contains tools for implementation and collaboration, a range of technical resources, a multi-author blog location for knowledge sharing, and also serves as a gateway into other global health-related sites.
<b>MicroLinks</b>	<a href="http://www.microlinks.org">www.microlinks.org</a>	A USAID-supported family of knowledge-sharing tools, applications, events, collaboration discussion

		forums, and resources. The winner of the 2007 e-gov Knowledge Management award, MicroLINKS provides information on best practices and proven approaches, a library of key documents and reports, and a collaboration space for communities of practice.
<b>Natural Resources Management Communities</b>	<a href="http://www.frameweb.org">www.frameweb.org</a>	Hosts several communities of practice to allow mission staff and development professionals to engage on natural resources management topics.
<b>Neglected Tropical Diseases Initiative</b>	<a href="http://www.neglecteddiseases.gov">www.neglecteddiseases.gov</a>	A Presidential Initiative-established comprehensive health strategy to address some of the world's biggest health challenges. A full list of collaborators can be found on the website.
<b>NGOConnect</b>	<a href="http://www.ngoconnect.net">www.ngoconnect.net</a>	A dynamic and interactive portal dedicated to connecting and strengthening NGOs, networks, and NGO support organizations worldwide.
<b>PEPFAR</b>	<a href="http://www.pepfar.gov">www.pepfar.gov</a>	United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief – a collaborative alliance established through the Global Health Initiative working to reduce the burden of HIV/AIDS worldwide. PEPFAR programs and activities are carried out in partnership with host country nations, supporting work in treatment, prevention and care.
<b>Poverty Frontiers</b>	<a href="http://www.povertyfrontiers.org/">www.povertyfrontiers.org/</a>	A knowledge-sharing resource for poverty reduction, asset-based approaches to development, and poverty-related issues. The site supports USAID's activities in Poverty Analysis and Social Safety Nets, carried out through the Office of Microenterprise Development. USAID and partners working in this area can find opportunities for collaboration,

		dialogue, and knowledge exchange.
<b>SERVIR</b>	<a href="http://www.servir.net">www.servir.net</a>	A partnership between NASA, USAID, and the Water Center for Humid Tropics of Latin America and the Caribbean (CATHALAC), the Central American Commission for the Environment and Development (CCAD), the World Bank Group, and others. Focus is on using space-based technology to benefit international development.
<b>USAID-CIFOR-ICRAF</b>	<a href="http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/carbofor/projects/climate">www.cifor.cgiar.org/carbofor/projects/climate</a>	Carried out in collaboration with World Agroforestry Center and the Center for International Forestry research, this project analyzes implications of USAID's forestry programming, increasing the capacity of USAID staff and partners to implement climate-friendly projects.