MANAGEMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

INTRODUCTION

As part of USAID's effort to build a 21st century workforce that can meet the challenges of transformational diplomacy, the Agency is strengthening its management capabilities. In FY 2008, the Agency demonstrated significant improvements in key management systems as assessed by OMB and the USAID Office of the Inspector General (OIG). The Agency also conducted a series of after-action reviews as part of its commitment to continuous improvement and modernization of its management capabilities. Implementation of the recommendations of these reviews is ongoing.

HUMAN CAPITAL

Human capital is USAID's strongest asset, and the Agency is making great strides in strengthening its workforce. In FY 2008, USAID released a new five-year Human Capital Strategic Plan for FY 2009–FY 2013, launched the Development Leadership Initiative, began a new internship program, and enhanced diversity awareness.

The cornerstone of the Human Capital Strategic Plan for FY 2009–FY 2013 is USAID's goal to "advance freedom for the benefit of the American people and the international community by helping to build and sustain a more democratic, secure, and prosperous world composed of well-governed states that respond to the needs of their people, reduce widespread poverty, and act responsibly within the international system." Toward this end, USAID is committed to "getting the right people in the right places, doing the right work, at the right time to pursue U.S. national interests abroad." This strategy will drive all of USAID's human capital activities, including talent management, succession planning, diversity, and accountability.

The Development Leadership Initiative (DLI) is a new USAID program aimed at increasing the Agency's ability to meet its development and national security objectives through a strong workforce. The goal of DLI is to double the USAID Foreign Service workforce by hiring 1,200 junior and mid-level foreign service officers by 2012. With strong support from the Secretary of State and the U.S. Congress, USAID received funding and hired 120 Foreign Service Officers in FY 2008, thereby expanding its Foreign Service workforce by 10%. In FY 2009, USAID plans to hire an additional 300 Foreign Service Officers once the FY 2009 appropriation is signed into law.

The Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) used by OMB to assess federal programs shows that USAID is meeting its human capital goals. For calendar year 2008 USAID met 100% of its Agency-wide recruitment goals and 90% of its critical staffing needs, and 100% of employees performance approval plans link to the Agency's mission, goals, and outcomes. In addition, USAID achieved a green score for status and progress on its initiative on Strategic Management of Human Capital. Green is the top rating an agency can receive from OMB on the PMA scorecards.

As part of its human capital initiatives, USAID strives to increase diversity in its workforce and in FY 2008 achieved an increase in applications from minority-servicing colleges from 50 to over 1,100. The Agency also launched a new diversity-focused internship program, working closely with Gallaudet University, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and the Washington Internship for Native Students. During its first year USAID hired 14 interns through this program.

The Agency requires all Washington-based employees to be trained on issues related to diversity and offers workshops that are integral to USAID's objective of supporting a vibrant, world-class, accountable Federal agency. In FY 2008, 28 workshops were completed, more than doubling the number since the program's inception the year before and bringing the total number of employees trained to 735. Additionally, Agency employees who want to advance to the Senior Foreign Service or the Senior Executive Service must now demonstrate a commitment to promoting diversity at USAID.

Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) are host country citizens employed by USAID missions. To improve opportunities for them and to formally recognize their valuable service to the Agency, the Foreign Service National Advisory Council launched a number of initiatives during FY 2008. In addition to the existing FSN of the Year award, these initiatives include establishing a new FSN Senior Executive Corps, conducting an FSN Retention Survey for FSN Grades 10–13, creating an FSN Fellowship, establishing an FSN Corner as a new feature in the USAID Front Lines publication, and developing an FSN communication strategy.

ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT

In support of the PMA, the USAID Electronic Government (E-Gov) program strives to enhance management capabilities

by simplifying and eliminating redundancy in Agency information technology systems. USAID's E-Gov program yielded significant results in FY 2008, especially with implementation of the Electronic Official Personnel File, the WebTA Electronic Time-Keeping System (WebTA), and the E2 Solutions Travel System (E2) and creation of the Global Acquisition and Assistance System (GLAAS). USAID also continued its excellent record of information security.

The new electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF) automates the traditional paper version and makes it available online. USAID employees can now access their own personnel records from any secure government workstation. Personnel actions such as annual pay increases, changes in benefits, and employee transfers are posted to the eOPF, and employees are notified by email when new actions are posted in their folder.

During FY 2008, USAID implemented WebTA for all USAID direct-hire employees, whether in Washington or in USAID missions. WebTA provides Web-based access to the Agency's timekeeping system, allowing direct-hire employees and their supervisors to enter, submit, or approve timecards from anywhere in the world. Requests for leave and premium pay are also processed through WebTA, and overtime, compensatory time, and danger pay can be recorded directly on the timecard. Subsequent phases of implementation will extend access to U.S. Personal Service Contractors and Foreign Service National staff.

USAID also launched the Web-based E2, which replaced the travel authorization and voucher system, to better serve the travel needs of all USAID personnel. E2 is a Government-wide system that offers reduced costs to USAID with no software licensing fees or hardware maintenance costs and unlimited access to users from any Internet-connected computer. E2 is fully deployed in USAID/Washington. Deployment to overseas offices began in June of 2008 and will be completed in FY 2009.

In FY 2008, USAID merged its acquisition and assistance functionalities into one integrated system, GLAAS, which has fully functional, real-time integration with the Agency's financial management system. GLAAS is fully interfaced with other Federal electronic government procurement systems, such as the Federal Assistance Award Data System, Federal Business Opportunities, the Federal Procurement Data System, Grants.gov, and the Online Representations and Certifications Application. Advance preparations for world-wide deployment of GLAAS began in FY 2008 and the system was piloted at select USAID Missions and Washington offices in December 2008, with world-wide deployment to follow thereafter.

USAID has consistently received high marks in information security. On the September 30, 2008, PMA scorecard, USAID earned an A+ in information security for the fourth consecutive year. As for the PART, USAID surpassed its goal of reducing the number of information security vulnerabilities per hardware item for the fifth year in a row and demonstrated for the fourth consecutive year that 100% of its information technology systems are certified and accredited.

MANAGE-TO-BUDGET

FY 2008 was the first full fiscal year of implementation of USAID's manage-to-budget (MTB) initiative to improve the transparency of and accountability for the cost of its operations. The initiative has already made notable progress in changing the way USAID budgets and manages its costs. The objectives of the manage-to-budget initiative are: 1) increase and improve transparency; 2) improve accountability; 3) provide incentives for managers to control costs; and 4) decentralize operating expense budgets to provide more flexibility, so that operating units can manage, control, and account for their own operating expense funds. MTB offers operating units full control over their human resource budget, increasing their flexibility in the number, type, and mix of staff they can recruit.

An audit of USAID's MTB activities released by the USAID OIG in August 2008 found that the Agency had fully met two of its four objectives and partially met the other two. USAID met objectives one and two by establishing (a) a new standard set of expanded object class codes to capture both operating expense and program-funded administrative costs so as to better understand the full cost of doing business at USAID; (b) a compensation tracking system to report on the U.S. direct-hire budgets of each operating unit and provide transparency about the salary and benefit budgets and surpluses realized by each operating unit; and (c) target overhead ratios to help control costs. USAID is now analyzing ways to fully address the recommendations related to employee productivity incentives, and decentralization of space and information technology management.

In sum, USAID's 2008 management accomplishments advanced the Agency's overarching goal of building a 21st century workforce that can meet the challenges of transformational diplomacy and of strengthening its management and operational capabilities.