



Center for Faith-Based & Community Initiatives

Dear Newsletter Recipients,

Earlier this week our office convened a meeting to discuss disaster preparedness, response and volunteer coordination, because the United States Government's ability to effectively respond to natural disasters and humanitarian crises is crucial to fostering goodwill around the globe. The meeting was hosted by various USAID officials who shared strategies and helpful tips for working with governments in disaster areas. Since the information shared during the answered so many of the questions we have received from a number of you, I have provided bulleted highlights of the meeting below for this newsletters introduction:

- The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), the primary office within USAID tasked with disaster response, spends approximately 70% of its budget through NGOs.
- OFDA is very field-based and seeks to partner with organizations that have professional capabilities, meet international standards of delivery assistance, and provide needs that local communities cannot provide themselves.
- It is important to visit the [OFDA website](#) before contacting the office to view grant guidelines, geographic contact lists, and the OFDA annual report to see if partnering with OFDA is the best fit for your organization.
- USAID country Missions have discretion over funding opportunities for organizations engaged in rebuilding efforts; now is a good time for NGOs to be engaged in disaster preparedness efforts for the next disaster.
- Each year, GDA puts out an annual program statement (APS) calling for proposals about alliance-based programming that organizations can submit proposals for before a disaster hits -- To view this APS, go to usaid.gov, keyword "GDA."
- A representative from Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Department of Homeland Security (DHS) shared information on the CERT program, which is a domestic program offering 20 hours of emergency preparedness training to volunteers on disaster response, and can be replicated in other willing countries. CERT relies on local community involvement and local government leadership. Because CERT is doing quite a bit internationally, it would be good to consider utilizing this training in NGO programs being run overseas.
- Reach out to private sector for assistance that can be leveraged for an American response to disasters -- Particularly in between disasters, it is imperative for organizations to establish relationships and meet with private donors.
- In the reconstruction phase of a disaster, it was suggested that organizations be unique and indigenize their effort, building an overseas network, and in turn becoming more attractive to USAID for funding opportunities.
- After-action reports are extremely important as well as displaying collaboration among NGOs, which can possibly shape foreign assistance policy.

- Representatives from Microsoft also joined the meeting and mentioned they are starting a Disaster Program with USAID, which they are very interested in exploring partnerships with NGOs through USAID's GDA. They too encourage organizations to share information and to collaborate.

Durability of Bush Administration's Faith-Based Effort At Issue in 2008

Anne Farris and Claire Hughes, correspondents for The Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy, published an article on January 8, 2008 that discussed the legacy that President Bush's Faith-Based and Community Initiative will likely have even after his Administration is complete.

As it approaches its seventh anniversary, the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives has put in place a series of administrative and structural changes that could have implications beyond the end of the Bush administration.

The big question is just how significant - or how permanent - the effort to encourage grassroots religious groups to provide more social services will be. The answer may depend, in part, on the ability of the Initiative's promoters to cement the effort's philosophy and practices in this final year of President Bush's term, observers say.

Beyond outlining the increase of funding to faith-based and community organizations, the article reviews some of the Initiatives accomplishments; from promoting hiring rights to outreach efforts that have led to over 70,000 faith-based and community leaders in workshops since 2001 according to White House estimates. It also speculates on activities some experts expect or hope to see the Initiative pursue in 2008, the final year of President Bush's administration.

Willing to gaze even further into the future, Dilulio predicted the effort that he helped to launch has become ingrained and will enjoy the support of a future President and Administration.

"In the mid-1990s, 'faith-based' drew blank stares, but 'faith-based' is now a permanent part of the public policy vernacular," Dilulio wrote in an e-mail to the Roundtable. "I've studied the various presidential candidates' respective positions on public-private partnerships involving religious nonprofit organizations. I've talked to several candidates or their policy advisors. I'm glad to predict that most candidates in both parties, if elected, would be more sympathetic than not to the centrist vision of 'faith-based and community initiatives' that both Gore and Bush endorsed in 2000, and with which Bush began in 2001."

[Click here](#) to read the entire article

Arthur C. Brooks Comments on "The Upside of Bush's Foreign Policy"

Arthur Brooks, a visiting scholar at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), published an article in the January 8, 2008 New York Sun about the 'upside of President Bush's foreign policy.' In it he discusses President Bush's unprecedented development assistance particularly to Africa. Below are a few bulleted points from the article:

- In 1995, the American government cut development assistance to Africa--increasingly in the grip of an AIDS epidemic--by about 25%. By 1998, most estimates said Africa was receiving at least \$100 million less a year in aid from America than it had received in the early 1990s.
- The president (President Bush) raised development assistance by 30% between 2001 and 2003, bringing aid to sub-Saharan Africa to the highest levels in American history.
- He (President Bush) also raised global HIV-AIDS funding by 36% his first year in office. By 2006, annual American aid to Africa had topped \$4 billion.

- The achievements in Africa have been about saving lives and improving the lot of the world's most desperate people. These are the same people largely forgotten by past administrations, and who may very well be forgotten again after Mr. Bush leaves office.

[Click here](#) to read the entire article on the AEI website

USAID Awards Contract for Capacity Building Program in Pakistan

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has awarded Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI) a contract to implement a capacity building program to improve economic and social conditions in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan. The contract is valued at \$43 million over a three-year period, with an initial funding of \$15 million.

USAID's overall FATA program will provide technical assistance and training to private and public organizations to support projects that strengthen livelihoods, expand economic opportunities, and improve basic education and health care. USAID's program awarded to DAI will strengthen the capacity of Pakistani government and non-government institutions in FATA to plan, implement and monitor programs at the regional, agency and community level; to improve coordination between security and development organizations; to strengthen communications; and to increase the ability of FATA-based civil society organizations to contribute to development. USAID and DAI will collaborate in developing and executing specific projects that will attain these objectives and USAID will monitor the use of funds and each project's progress.

For more information about USAID projects in Pakistan, visit <http://www.usaid.gov/pk>.

The Advisory Committee On Voluntary Foreign Aid Public Meeting has been Announced

The Advisory Committee On Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA) was established by Presidential directive after World War II to serve as a link between the U.S. Government and private voluntary organizations (PVOs) active in humanitarian assistance and development work overseas. The Committee brings together USAID and PVO officials, representatives from universities, international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), U.S. businesses, and government, multilateral, and private organizations to foster understanding, communication, and cooperation. Comprised of 24 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 public meetings are held three times a year and provide opportunities for information exchange and consultation between USAID and other governmental agencies and the nongovernmental community. The meetings focus on timely topics selected from a wide range of issues and challenges that affect the relationship between the official foreign assistance program and the private voluntary community. Following these deliberations, the ACVFA provides specific recommendations to the USAID Administrator.

The upcoming meeting will be held at the National Press Club (529 14th Street NW; Washington, DC 20004) and will discuss the Global Development Commons and Democracy Governance and Economic Growth -- More details are forthcoming.

[Click here](#) to pre-register or to learn more about ACVFA

ILO Partners with Gates Foundation to Develop Microinsurance Innovation Facility

The International Labour Organization announced a partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation that aims to develop new kinds of insurance and improve existing products. The \$34 million grant will create the Microinsurance Innovation Facility, a five-year initiative that will provide grants and technical assistance to organizations serving the poor with a goal of providing access to insurance to 25 million people by the year 2012.

[Click here](#) to read the press release

USAID Announces Upcoming Poverty Assessment Tools Training of Trainers

USAID announced plans for three [Poverty Assessment Tools](#) (PATs) Training of Trainers to be conducted in 2008 by the University of Maryland's IRIS Center. Per U.S. law, FY 2008 is the second year in which poverty tools will be implemented, but only organizations with programs in countries with a certified tool are required to use it as part of their FY 2008 reporting requirements to the Microenterprise Results Reporting system (MRR). Participants will learn how to implement a PAT and how to train others in the implementation process. These trainings are primarily for those NGOs, PVO networks, and for-profit organizations who need to implement a PAT in order to meet USAID's microenterprise reporting requirements.

The first training will take place **February 26-29** in Washington, DC. Two additional regional PAT trainings are tentatively scheduled for Ethiopia in March or early April and for Azerbaijan in May.

[Click here](#) for a current list of certified tools and reporting requirements

[Click here](#) for registration information

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