



Society for International Development
Washington Chapter



FY 2020

ANNUAL REPORT

Environment & Sustainability Workgroup

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ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY WORKGROUP

The SID-Washington (SID-W) Environment & Sustainability Workgroup is a set of diverse individuals and constituencies with a common interest and engagement in promoting and enhancing development that is sustainable and environmentally sound. This workgroup intends to explore policy, programmatic, and practical issues impacting sustainability and the environment. Topics and events include risk management and development, constraints to the adoption of environmentally-sound techniques, how markets and states impact sustainability, integrating humanitarian and development approaches, and many more.



Dear Members of the Environment & Sustainability Workgroup,

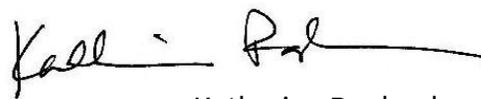
Our Fiscal Year 2020 was an unusual one for us, as it was for so many, ending during a global pandemic. Despite this hurdle, the Workgroup still produced three excellent events including [Working to Solve the Climate Crisis: Entry Points to Sustainable Careers](#) and [The Impact of Climate Change on the Urban Poor and Their Development Prospects: A Peek at Recent USAID Research](#).

Now that we have mastered the art of virtual programming, we look forward to offering more events accessible to a wider audience and providing an even more dynamic community for interaction. We hope to see you at some of our upcoming events. You can see all of our programs on our [website](#) – and please check back often as we add new ones regularly.

Thank you for your continued interest in and support of our Workgroups. If you have any questions, comments or ideas, please feel free to send an email to events@sidw.org.

We hope to see you at future SID-Washington events!

Best regards,



Katherine Raphaelson



Paul A. Sherman





**Arijanto (Arie)
Istandar**

Senior Water Resources
Program Manager,
RTI International

Arijanto (Arie) Istandar is a Senior Water Resources Program Manager at RTI International. He is a Civil and Water Resources Engineer, specializing in WASH development, urban water services reform and improvements. Over the past 15 years, Arie has led various projects in South and Southeast Asia that established policy framework for urban water and environmental services, enabled peer-to-peer partnerships to build capacities of water service providers, and supported utility operational efficiency improvements.

Arie previously served as the Water and Sanitation Team Leader for USAID's 7-year regional Environmental Cooperation – Asia (ECO-Asia) project and COP for USAID's WaterLinks project.



Amy Gambrill
Senior Specialist,
Environmental Incentives

Amy is a Senior Specialist for Environmental Incentives, bringing nearly 25 years of experience in international environmental development and domestic water protection. Amy has spent the past 10 years supporting USAID's water, forestry and biodiversity, energy, climate change, and engineering programs. Previously, she worked in two national parks – Gorongosa National Park in central Mozambique and the Eastern High Atlas National Park in Morocco. Amy also has experience at EPA's Office of Water, working to curb polluted runoff and develop watershed protection plans. Amy holds a Masters in Environmental Sciences and Policy from Johns Hopkins University.

Thursday, August 29, 2019

4:00 PM ET | SID-Washington

The Role of the U.S. African Development Foundation
in African Economic Growth and Development

Wednesday, January 22, 2020

5:30 PM ET | SID-Washington

Working to Solve the Climate Crisis: Entry Points to
Sustainable Careers

Wednesday, February 5, 2020

4:00 PM ET | SID-Washington

The Impact of Climate Change on the Urban Poor
and Their Development Prospects: A Peek at Recent
USAID Research



The Role of the U.S. African Development Foundation in African Economic Growth and Development

Moderator: **C.D. Glin**, President & CEO, U.S. African Development Foundation

Speakers: **Ellington Arnold**, Youth Entrepreneurship Advisor, U.S. African Development Foundation
Anne Griffin, Deputy Director, Office of Program Partnerships, U.S. African Development Foundation

Michelle McKenzie, Senior Program Officer, U.S. African Development Foundation

Yael Nagar, East Africa Grants Management Specialist, U.S. African Development Foundation

Claudia Schwartz, Off-Grid Energy Lead, U.S. African Development Foundation

Event Description: This program provided an overview of the work of the U.S. African Development Foundation, an independent federal agency, whose mission is to combat poverty through development of micro, small, and medium sized enterprises, providing support for groups that have insufficient funding, as well as companies run by young people and women. Panelists discussed the following topics: small-holder farming; off-grid energy; women's financial inclusion; and youth entrepreneurship. This event was followed by a reception sponsored by the U.S. African Development Foundation.

This was a joint event with the Food Security & Agriculture Workgroup.

Key Takeaways

1) Creating pathways for prosperity

As an independent agency, the United States African Development Foundation (USADF) takes the traditional model of development and turns it on its head, starting in areas where others might think the road ends. **C.D. Glin** (U.S. African Development Foundation) explained to the audience that Africa today boasts some of the fastest growing economies in the world, and USADF recognizes this potential by working to bring grant capital and technical assistance to organizations that seek to make the most of this opportunity. By meeting organizations where they are to co-create and progress forward, simultaneously encouraging and embracing local knowledge, expertise, and technical assistance, USADF acts as “a specific tool in the foreign assistance tool kit,” said Glin. In particular, USADF focuses on addressing three areas of need: agriculture, off-grid energy, and entrepreneurship, assessing those that apply for their grants and seeing how their goals empower the underserved communities and people.

2) Meeting the people where they are

In the panel portion of the event, **Anne Griffin** (U.S. African Development Foundation) moderated and led the discussion on how USADF differs from other independent agencies. Anne opened the conversation with a question on how USADF works

in innovative and dynamic ways, to which the panelists agreed that being demand driven allows them to meet the people where they are. Instead of pushing solutions, **Ellington Arnold** (U.S. African Development Foundation) emphasized that being response driven allows entrepreneurs to utilize their knowledge of their own communities and its needs. **Michelle McKenzie** (U.S. African Development Foundation), clarified that “because [the] work is demand driven, it looks sort of different in each country, but at the heart of all of it is making sure we meet the needs of those who come to us.”

3) Partnerships that pay off

A key part of the success of USADF grantees is due to the invaluable support from the local experts, their staff on the ground. With this assistance, **Yael Nagar** (U.S. African Development Foundation), East Africa Grants Management Specialist, recounted how a partner organization in South Sudan suggested another foundation that might be a good candidate for funding from USADF. After looking into the foundation and granting them the necessary capital, USADF worked with them on a revised business plan, allowing the foundation to execute campaigns beyond their initial goals and even expand to open more branches. **Claudia Schwartz**, Off-Grid Energy Lead, also mentioned how the flexibility of being an independent agency allows USADF to partner with smaller and women-owned groups, putting them in contact with local experts and simultaneously building the domestic sector while

aiding in their growth as organizations. These local experts and technical assistants allow USADF to work with their grantees in ways that solidify their foundations to succeed and continue to progress in their growth stage.

4) “Find, fund, support. Develop, grow, and link”

As a US-based agency, USADF recognizes their platform in working with local African governments; strategic partnership agreements with local governments and ministries allow USADF to maximize their impact in the ongoing growth of Africa. When discussing USADF’s partnership with large funders, Ellington highlighted the question of “Who’s in our space, and how can we work together?” C.D. echoed this thinking in explaining how USADF can act as the intermediary between large funders and small ultra-local businesses, understanding more closely how this money needs to be utilized and thus, giving these funders a pipeline to small African enterprises. By providing two types of grants, USADF can more accurately identify their applicants and how they can best be helped in their growth. On the importance of capital and capacity building, Michelle stressed USADF’s commitment to helping organizations grow and develop past their initial stages. The concept of acting as a link between large and small might be fairly new, as C.D. explained, but to be part of this relay race and to provide these small African organizations with the continuum to carry on is what USADF aims to stand for, since its inception to present day.



Working to Solve the Climate Crisis: Entry Points to Sustainable Careers

Moderator: **Megan Evansen**, Conservation Science and Policy Analyst, Defenders of Wildlife

Speakers: **Erin Beasley**, Manager, Climate Change Policy, Conservation International
Milena Gonzalez Vasquez, Climate Change Specialist, Global Environment Facility (GEF)
Whitney Muse, Senior Consultant, Deloitte
Kathryn Stratos, Director, Office of Global Climate Change (E3/GCC), USAID

Event Description: Climate change has been called by many as one of the greatest global issues of our time. The impacts of climate change know no boundaries, making it a “threat multiplier” associated with conflict, migration, and global security implications. Earlier this year, climate scientists issued a dire warning: the world has one decade to act decisively to avoid 1.5C of warming and the catastrophic impacts that would follow. The catalytic moment we are living in has brought social and political conflict around this theme, as well as intrepid leadership from youth like Greta Thunberg. With so much momentum focused around this issue of global scale, young or established professionals alike may be wondering how to shift their career focus to contribute to generating key solutions. What does it really mean to work on climate change and international development, and what are entry points for professionals new to this field?

This panel discussion brought together professionals from diverse sectors, including government, environment, and business, who are working on addressing climate change from varied entry points. Panelists shared insights on entering into this field and discussed key sectors that must be engaged to generate meaningful impact on this issue.

This was a joint event with the Young Professionals in Development Network (YPN).

Key Takeaways

1) Challenges of Working in the Field

Erin Beasley (Conservation International) explained the challenges of keeping up with exponential change. In her experience, it can be difficult to develop a specific world view, learn new tools and concepts, and get used to particular spaces of work while also assisting the growing urgency of the work that needs to be done.

Kathryn Stratos (USAID) added that communicating effectively about climate change and making it understandable to colleagues in other disciplines can also be very challenging. Although she appreciates that the urgency of the matter is increasing its presence on different social media outlets, it is still a challenge to engage others in the community as many senior managers are busy with other pressing issues. Stratos concluded by saying that the success of working in climate change will happen when we can engage effectively in economic policy and finance.

Milena Gonzalez Vasquez (Global Environment Facility) explained that regulatory work is challenging when keeping up with the changing pace of things (innovation, environment, culture, etc.). In particular, Gonzalez Vasquez finds it difficult to wait and see how a project is executed and how its results might exceed expectations. Gonzalez Vasquez believes that, with the rapid change of innovations on the ground, it can be especially difficult to provide tangible results while managing the time lag of funding because it requires thinking five to 10 years ahead.

2) Working with Institutional Models

Whitney Muse (Deloitte) shared that the field needs more professionals on the risk finance, management, and transportation areas.

Milena Gonzalez Vasquez discussed that the field needs more people in its Green Finance area since many companies either hire a technical or finance person. Gonzalez Vasquez further explained that having someone who specializes on Green Finance brings both technical expertise and the finance knowledge.

3) Advice for Someone Looking into the Field

Stratos discussed the importance of social justice and practical solutions. Stratos advised that if facing a challenge where communities have to be resettled, strategically come up with a practical way to support other people and think about the benefits of the work and the solution.

Muse added the importance of having the ability to communicate clearly so others can understand the importance and benefits of the work being done.

Lastly, Beasley shared the significance of filling the gap in the scientific knowledge. Beasley advised the audience to read more science-based articles and look for partnerships in coalitions to contribute to the work that is already being done.

4) Surprises in the Work of International Climate Change

Beasley noted that she is very impressed by the engagement of other countries. She explained that although governments are

not designed to solve climate change, they have been provided the responsibility to contribute to the solution under the Climate Agreement.

Stratos shared her challenge in understanding what it will take for senior managers and colleagues in other disciplines to take climate change seriously. Stratos also added her surprise on seeing theory put into practice.

5) Hopes for the Future

Beasley shared that her hopes come from the youth climate movement. By listening to the words shared by youth climate activists, Beasley explained that their urgency helps create a sense of reality regarding what is going on.

Gonzalez Vasquez noted that energy transition is something that gives her hopes as it is good news from the finance side.

Muse shared that the increasing engagements between the local and national level initiatives is something that keeps her hopeful.



The Impact of Climate Change on the Urban Poor and Their Development Prospects: A Peek at Recent USAID Research

Speaker: **Matthew Jelacic**, Infrastructure Policy Adviser, USAID E3 Bureau's Office of Energy & Infrastructure

Event Description: Cities worldwide are experiencing increasing effects of climate change. Coastal cities are facing sea level rise at the same time that the destructive power of hurricanes and cyclones are intensifying as they come ashore. Many inland cities are experiencing drought that threatens already overstressed water supply services. The same drought conditions are driving rural families off the land and into already crowded urban centers – large and small. Heat in some cities is peaking at levels that literally melt the asphalt of the streets while turning some houses into ovens. The increasing use of air conditioning in cities around the world is pushing up the peak demand for power, and where power supply is already poor this is leading to longer and longer periods of interrupted power.

In short, climate change is overtaxing the urban infrastructure that more and more people depend upon. For some, this problem is an inconvenience or even a major inconvenience. For others, especially the urban poor, the threat is literally existential. USAID is well aware of the many impacts of climate change on development, but is always striving to understand the implications in more detail. Matt Jelacic of the USAID Office of Energy & Infrastructure has been leading a multi-country study on the impact of climate change on cities. In this Workgroup event he gave us a look at some of his initial findings about the way that climate change is affecting the urban poor.

This was a joint event with the Infrastructure & Urban Development Workgroup.

Key Takeaways

1) Regional differences in construction

Matthew Jelacic (USAID, Office of Energy & Infrastructure), gave examples of urban planning and infrastructure projects that he had been a part of in Colombia and the Philippines. He talked about construction codes and standards in the Philippines, which are set nationally but implemented on a regional/community level. Colombian engineers and architects are licensed immediately after college and do not need separate licensing for different kinds of construction. Thus, varied codes can also make it difficult for organizations like USAID to work with local engineers and architects. As a potential solution, Jelacic also emphasized that a structure, such as a decision tree for the hiring of local engineers and architects, can be created.

2) The challenges in constructing refugee camps

Jelacic talked about how the current layout of refugee camps is based on ancient Roman designs for military camps. Initially, they were adopted by contemporary militaries to house soldiers, which were later used by Red Cross to treat patients and house refugees during World War I. This trend has continued today and shaped how modern-day refugee camps are designed. Jelacic emphasized that the military grid design and uniform houses do not reflect how families housed in each

of these are different. He thus encourages the idea that the design and construction of refugee camps should evolve as a means of providing a better environment for the families and individuals that are housed there for years, and sometimes decades. Similarly, Jelacic stated how climate migration has also led to a lack of urban infrastructure to house people moving to cities, many of whom then move into slums.

3) Shifting the focus from rural development to urban infrastructure

Jelacic stated that cities make us smarter. He explained that cities allow their inhabitants to interact with each other more, lead to progress, and thus have also been a draw for people from rural regions moving to cities. The lack of advancement in urban planning and infrastructure to house and provide resources for people moving to cities leads to a rise in number of slums. Jelacic states that slums are poverty traps and can lead to multigenerational poverty. Jelacic introduced the urban acupuncture approach. This theory suggests using funds to provide smaller resources within slums, such as plumbing, health clinics, access to education, etc., which leads to these communities identifying what their needs are and improving from within. Jelacic also identified that implementing this theory in cities has complexities, one of the biggest being finding appropriate funding. He suggests diverting the attention and funding from rural to urban areas, as population density in cities is a lot larger than in rural regions. He also encourages



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Photo Credit

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