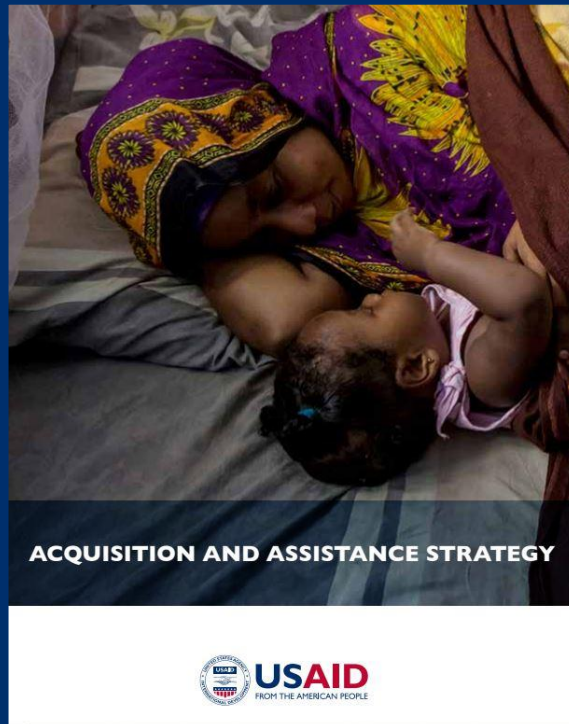




2022 Acquisition and Assistance (A&A) Strategy: Driven by A&A Workforce Feedback and New Administration Priorities

May 16, 2022



Agenda

- **Welcome and Intros (Management Bureau DAA Mark Walther)**
- **Intro to the A&A Strategy Refresh (Acting M/OAA Director Luis Rivera)**
- **Overview of A&A Strategy & Next Steps (M/OAA Strategy Team Lead Chris Nikola)**
- **Questions and Discussion (Facilitated by Industry Liaison Matt Johnson)**

A&A Strategy Stocktaking Overview

Background

M/OAA launched a review of the 2018 [A&A Strategy](#) in January 2021.

Goal: To identify progress made with the 2018 A&A Strategy and inform the refresh so that the new strategy:

- Reflects the current context and priorities
- Is informed and driven by the A&A workforce.

A&A Guiding Principles (2018)

1. Diversifying the Partner Base
2. How we Partner
3. Connecting Design, Procurement, and Implementation
4. Focusing on Value
5. Enabling and Equipping the Workforce

A&A Strategy Stocktaking & Drafting Process

- Beginning in January 2021, M/OAA carried out a stocktaking of the 2018 A&A Strategy, including the following activities:
 - Feedback from A&A workforce:
 - Listening tour with A&A professionals (over 300 people)
 - 6 consultations w/ Agreement/Contracting Officer Representative (AOR/COR) home bureau
 - Partner feedback including surveys
 - Alignment w/ Agency priorities: localization; climate change; diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA)
- Programmatic case studies
- Iterative drafting process for the 2022 A&A Strategy and Implementation Plan

2018 A&A Strategy Key Successes

- Establishment of New Partnerships Initiative (NPI)
- Increase in Agency-wide use of co-creation (30% of new awards in FY21 used co-creation)
- Launch of [WorkwithUSAID.org](https://workwithusa.org), a one-stop shop for partners
- Development of the Agency's first Local Capacity Strengthening (LCS) Policy and a new indicator for measuring local capacity (CBLD-9)
- Facilitate use of Fixed Amount Awards (FAAs) by allowing for the renewal of FAAs after 3 years

Context: Crisis in the USAID A&A Workforce

“Over several years, USAID’s workforce has been sorely depleted, and our current numbers of Civil Service and Foreign Service staff are well short of our needs, even as global conflicts are lasting longer, development needs are accelerating, and the number of complex emergencies we deal with each year has ballooned in the past 20 years from 16 to 44.” ~*Administrator Samantha Power*

- Foreign Service Contracting Officers staffed at only 64% of need
 - In the field, this shortage of CO/AOs filters down to local A&A Specialists
- Washington Civil Service Contract Specialists staffed at only 60% of need
- Staffing shortages push A&A workforce into increasingly transactional roles, limit collaboration with colleagues and partners, and reduce capacity to respond to crises and emerging development needs.

Context: Key Feedback from Partners

- Barriers to working with USAID persist and discourage capable partners from working with the Agency.
 - Difficulty navigating U.S. government systems like registering in SAM, finding funding opps in Grants.gov and Sam.gov.
 - Size and complexity of awards.
 - Cost to prepare a proposal / application for a funding opportunity.
 - Long timelines to award.
- Overly prescriptive awards limit partners' ability to be innovative.
- Improvement needed to ensure Business Forecast includes accurate information about eligibility, location, and scope of work.

Context: Agency Priorities and the A&A Strategy

“Moving forward, we are going to **provide at least a quarter of all our funds directly to local partners** within the course of the next four years...We will **expand our capacity to issue and manage awards across the Agency, and expand the authorization for our Foreign Service Nationals**, our locally-employed staff, to play a larger role in awarding and managing assistance.” **(November 2021)**



Context: Agency Priorities and the A&A Strategy

“We will publish an updated risk appetite statement to guide the new way of working, an **updated acquisition and assistance strategy to become more innovative in our approaches...**”

- Assistant to the Administrator Michele Sumilas, HFAC testimony (March 2022)

“USAID is updating the **Acquisition and Assistance (A&A) Strategy to embed DEIA principles and locally led development in our procurement processes, expand our partner base, and make better use of innovative mechanisms.** The strategy will focus on equipping and empowering the A&A workforce, involving them more consistently throughout the Program Cycle, and improving business processes.”

- Draft Policy Framework (February 2022)

— Overview of the 2022 A&A Strategy and Next Steps

2022 A&A Strategy: Vision and Objectives

- **Vision** of the 2022 A&A Strategy
 - **Acquisition and assistance drives USAID and its partners to achieve sustainable, inclusive, and locally-led development results.**
- Expands on 2018 A&A Strategy by highlighting the critical role of the A&A workforce, and articulating how A&A approaches can help USAID meet its critical development objectives
- Shift away from 5 principles of 2018 A&A Strategy to 3 results-oriented objectives

<p>Objective 1: A&A workforce is enabled, equipped, and empowered to advance USAID's development mission.</p>	<p>Objective 2: Streamlined, inclusive and effective A&A integrated throughout the Agency's development approach.</p>	<p>Objective 3: USAID engages with a more diverse set of partners through our A&A practices to implement locally led development solutions</p>
<p>KEY THEMES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase hiring & retention of CO/AO and A&A Specialists to meet operational needs ● Professional development equips A&A professionals for role as business advisors ● Career opportunities available to locally employed A&A professionals (CCNs) 	<p>KEY THEMES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A&A lifecycle integrated throughout the program cycle ● Internal process & policy improvements (e.g. reduction of administrative burdens) ● New and improved innovative A&A tools & systems 	<p>KEY THEMES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● External partnerships are flexible to meet the needs of our partners ● Reducing barriers for local partners, and strengthening our commitment to locally-led development ● Partnership approaches with U.S. Small Businesses and Minority Serving Institutions

2022 A&A Strategy: Localization

- **25% direct funding goal**
 - Facilitate prime partnerships with local actors (courtesy translations of solicitations, use of Fixed Amount Awards, funded local capacity development, reducing barriers to partner with USAID)
- **50% local leadership goal**
 - Involve leadership of local communities in priority setting, co-creation, implementation and evaluation
- Engagement with Congress on authorizing and appropriations language to support localization, and decreasing regulatory barriers

2022 A&A Strategy: Next Steps

GOAL:

- Launch **A&A Strategy** publicly in **Summer 2022**.
- **A&A Strategy** implementation plan to follow shortly after launch.
- Seek partner feedback on effective implementation of the A&A Strategy.



Areas of Input from Partners

- What are unnecessary burdens that USAID imposes on you?
- What barriers can be removed for new and local partners?
- How can we better track/manage use of sub-awards/sub-grants?
- What role can traditional partners play in helping USAID achieve its localization and partnership goals?
- What competencies and behaviors from USAID's A&A workforce (CO/AOs, A&A Specialists and COR/AORs) would improve the partnership experience?

— Questions & Discussion