Meeting with USAID M/OAA Director Jami Rodgers

- A&A workforce is the priority and driving force behind all that USAID does
- Examine policies, processes, and people to drive efficiency, burden reduction
- Inclusivity, resilience, and accountability as key values
- Slight uptick in staffing numbers, but not enough to keep up with obligations
- A&A strategy is aspirational—we haven't achieved it yet
    o Goal—an additional multiple hundred more staff members
    o Partnering with HBCUs and MSIs to recruit; pilot program to get folks certified so they can join A&A after graduation
    o Working on retention package
- Visited Kigali to meet with A&A team from across the continent
    o Localization was a major theme
    o Spent time with CCNs and FSNs
    o Looking to expand the CCN and FSN warrant program
- Burden busting
    o Leader in the agency—translated almost 200 documents
    o Revamping workwithusaid.gov website – translating into more languages
    o March 22nd- French and Spanish version
    o More than half a million users
    o Automating the unsolicited proposal process (mid-late April)
    o Sub-opportunities portal (launched about a year ago)—voluntary
        ▪ Centralized place for orgs looking for subawards and subcontract opportunities
    o 6200 organizations—70% new to USAID, 65% local partners
- Wants to empower individuals to try new approaches and question existing practices
- Focus on customer service
    o Rolling out an external burden busting program
- Will issue A&A strategy update

Q&A

- RTI
    o Celebrating Matt and his team for posting translations on workwithusaid.gov (a lot of organizations are paying to have translations done for local partners, not an efficient use of resources)
    o A&A strategy- expanding the warranted program for FSNs and CCNs

- We wonder what kind of training programs are being put in place to ensure they have the sufficient level of expertise—certain rules that don't need to be applied are being applied, confusion between contracts and co-ags
- FSNs get a lot of technical training, but training program focused on leadership and soft skills
- If there are inconsistencies, raise them to the AO or CO directly
- FAR creep—imposing this on assistance
- Allow AOs and COs to have flexibility—need standardization with flexibility

- NDI
  - In the past, have been directed to the Ombudsman rather than the AO/CO—what role does the Ombudsman play?
  - Crista Wise is a great resource—she meets with Jami Rodgers regularly to feed back
  - Updated 2CFR—are there any plans to roll them out?
    - Developing brown bags and training to prepare for this and socialize the changes
    - Plan to revise internal guidance—standard provisions and ADS

- ECODIT
  - Registering grantees in SAM? Is this new general guidance?
  - Looking at having some sort of SAM Help Desk to make the registration process easier
  - Hoping there will be some sort of flexibility on SAM in 2CFR updates
  - Guide blog: Work With USAID

- PATH
  - How does USAID make the ADS applicable to implementers in an award? ADS is USAID's internal policies and rules/regs—there appears to be a disconnect
    - Fully recognize that ADS is internal guidance, ensure that they don't contain requirements for implementers; rules are not always followed 100%-- get back to the AO/CO to confirm that award terms should not reference ADS provision
    - Trying to establish requirements on the contract side first, and then the assistance side

- Humentum
  - Risk appetite—want to reinvigorate A&A labs—make a business case to try something different
  - Need to free up AOs and COs to present business cases to try something in a different way

- RTI
  - Has anyone on your team heard the term 'recoverable grant'? Sounds like a rolling loan program—give a grantee a pot of money and they implement, then the money rolls to another grantee

- No, this is a new term—will see which lab this is coming out of
- CNFA
    - AEPG 1602—IT acquisition under contracts—lots of inconsistencies about what requires approval
        - In the process of finalizing a rulemaking process that will incorporate those requirements into the ADAR
    - Section889
        - Did see in a recent solicitation that you could receive the award up until September 2028 (when the waiver expires) with the last year being an option year—will this be standard practice moving forward now that we're within the 5 year window for waiver expiry?
        - Need to take stock closer to the date the waiver expires
- Concern Worldwide
    - Prior approvals timeline—wanting a quicker approval process, coming up against timeline challenges (seasonality for agriculture)
        - Discuss timelines and approvals at the kickoff meeting
- TearFund
    - Consistency in geocodes—sometimes a call for proposal has come from assistance, geocode stated as 937—this suggests that it is around procurement, vendors, contractors; sometimes American primes are unwilling to take TearFund as a sub because they feel that geocode 937 means they can't take a UK based NGO
        - Can geocode ever refer to subawardees nationality?
        - Raise with the AO while the solicitation is still open, and raise to Ombudsman
- Aurum Institute
    - Being required to report more frequently than what the regulation states
        - This does go against the burden busting initiative; raise to the warranted officer, this may be a specific requirement
        - Want to ensure we are not asking for what we don't need