

## Essay 2:

**Lloyd Pierson** has built the United States African Development Foundation into a federal government agency that serves as a model for economic development, with managers who have the support, responsibility and authority to perform. Both are necessary for the success of USADF's mission and operations.

When Lloyd began, the Agency had a cacophony of staffing in core and senior positions – civil servants, personal services contractors, and institutional contractors. Roles and responsibilities were muddy, as were lines of authority. The organization was top-heavy. Similarly titled posts had different job descriptions and compensation levels. Who was in charge of grant programs, what USADF was founded for, and what supporting finance, monitoring, and legal units and managers did, was up for debate.

To institutionalize the changes needed, not only to provide the personnel infrastructure that would deliver on the Agency's program mandate, but also to ensure managers and staff were in place and empowered to act, Lloyd Pierson did the following:

First, Field Operations Focus: The Agency's President put field operations – the grant-making work – at the center of USADF. He rationalized the organization chart, eradicating a layer of bureaucracy, and streamlined operations field operations could more effectively and efficiently carry out USADF's work, and flourish. The work environment and staff interactions became more collaborative, constructive, and value-added. The whole agency benefits, as do the Africans who are awarded USADF grants.

In April 2007, Lloyd delegated greater authority to the Regional Program Directors, who are responsible for USADF's grant-making and performance. Regional Directors have clear authorities on core program operations, with more decision-making directly in their hands as they are closest to ongoing work, outlooks, and challenges and solutions. They manage each country program, field personnel, and financial activities in ways that improve program performance and general cost-effectiveness.

This responsibility to get the job done, with the commensurate authority to do so, has been coupled with increased accountability for results. Structures are in place to provide regular management oversight, ensuring country by country program performance, program compliance with USADF policies, and cost effective resource management. Program management and performance has improved, and Regional Directors are empowered to lead. The result has been that the Agency has the structure and senior managers the responsibility and authority to carry out the mission; this is facilitated by greater accountability for results, more streamlined processes, and a better separation of duties –with other units facilitating the work of Field Operations. USADF internally functions well, and everyone values that clarity, as well as and the greater level of operational openness and transparency that Lloyd Pierson intentionally created and instituted with regular reporting meetings and broad access to program data. This latter initiative aligns with the intention and spirit of the 2007 Coburn-Obama Act.

Second, Portfolio Analysts Build Up: Lloyd Pierson saw that the Agency primarily had senior managers at the GS-14 and -15 levels without junior staff to rely on for nuts and bolts work. Field Operations was especially victim to this, with managers having to strategize, plan, and pay attention to the minutiae of day to day grant-making, implementation and performance activities. USADF could not expand with this structure, and senior managers could not work smart.

Lloyd has added over a dozen positions of Portfolio Analyst, when in more of 2007 there was one. These staffers are in their 20's and 30's, and come to USADF with on-the-ground experience living and working in Africa and emerging market countries elsewhere on the globe. They bring first-hand knowledge of grassroots economic development, and are eager to learn more and contribute to USADF. Creating this cadre of young professionals has been a sea change for the Agency – with operations at headquarters and in Africa being carried out to broader reaches and further depths, and with their new ideas and energy invigorating the Agency and compelling the leadership to do more, faster and better.

The portfolio analysts (PAs) themselves are in a singular position to be mentored, trained, and work as development professionals. They interact closely with Regional Program Directors, conduct day-to-day and longer-term operations, and are the main conduit to staff, grantees, and implementing partners in the field. They travel to Africa to work directly with grantees and solve problems on the ground. USADF's size and the criticality of our work – that impacts people and their lives, not disparate or far away government entities – means that the PAs are intimately engaged in, and responsible for, core and critical program work and relationship-building. PAs, most with Master's degrees and many with Peace Corps volunteer experience they bring to USADF, have proven themselves extraordinary individuals and assets, ever-ready to learn and do more, and make a difference in development outcomes. They are committed to government service, and the unique role that USADF plays as part of the United States' foreign assistance package.

Lloyd Pierson supports the Presidential Management Fellows' Program. He has encouraged ten PMFs in their learning and contributions at USADF as Portfolio Analysts, and in the early part of their federal careers. Many have taken the hands-on opportunities and commitment to federal service they were exposed to at USADF to mid-level positions at the State Department, USAID and Peace Corps. All are providing a solid base of stellar professionals for the next wave of leadership in the federal government.

One other measure of change in USADF's team is the positive results of the biannual OPM survey. In both 2009 and 2011, USADF Survey responses surpass Federal benchmarks. Staff, managers, and leadership are working together, and indicate this feedback on the four areas of measure: Leadership and Knowledge Management (positive response 19% above federal government average); Results oriented performance culture (12% above average); Talent Management (15% above average); and Job satisfaction (3% above average). USADF is a well-oiled machine, with dedicated staff and managers delivering on its mandate. Lloyd Pierson's commitment to USADF has manifested itself through his commitment to senior managers and junior staff, and their view toward the Agency and their place in it.