

I. Mr. Foley's Superior Leadership

Jason Foley joined USAID in late 2008 as the agency's Deputy Policy Director. President Obama has just been elected and the White House and the Department of State had begun substantive discussions on how best to elevate development as a key aspect of U.S. foreign policy. Once the President took office in early 2009, USAID's political appointees left and career officers were asked to take on acting leadership roles on an interim basis. As it turned out, new political leadership did not arrive for a year, and so career officers faced the difficult task of negotiating sensitive transition issues for an extended period.

Mr. Foley stepped up to help to lead the agency. The Chief Operating Officer (COO) was asked to become Acting Administrator, who in turn elevated Mr. Foley first to the agency's Policy Director and then to acting COO. In this capacity, Mr. Foley played a leading role in helping the agency develop input for the President's Policy Directive on Global Development (PPD-6), the first-ever President's policy on development. He also helped to direct the agency's early involvement in the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), Secretary Clinton's strategic review of the joint working of State and USAID, modeled after the Department of Defense's Quadrennial Defense Review.

Mr. Foley led an internal task force that managed the agency's involvement in both of these high-level planning processes. He represented USAID at Interagency Policy Committee (IPC) meetings led by the National Security Council staff, and helped draft and negotiate directive language. He engaged in regular discussions with the acting Administrator, the Deputy Secretary of State and the Secretary's Chief of Staff, and Policy Planning Director to negotiate the QDDR scope, objectives, and timelines.

The key outcomes of the PPD-6 and QDDR were to elevate development as one of the three critical components of U.S. foreign policy and national security, along with diplomacy and defense. This foreshadowed major reforms at USAID. Under the previous Administration, the agency had eliminated its policy and strategic planning unit, its budget office, and its evaluation functions, transferring them to a State Department bureau (F). Over the previous 15 years, USAID had suffered a 40 percent decline in staffing, resulting in a development model that relied almost exclusively on private contractors and non-governmental organizations to plan, implement and evaluation development projects. President Obama, Secretary Clinton, and Administrator Shah (when he was appointed) recognized that in order for development to become a key pillar of foreign policy, USAID needed to be reconstituted not only as the leading USG development agency, but also as an even higher goal – the pre-eminent development agency in the world.

These changes were later encompassed under the banner of "*USAID Forward*," a set of reforms designed to restore USAID's leadership in such areas as budget formulation, talent management, application of science and technology, monitoring and evaluation, and support for host country ownership. To demonstrate that USAID was capable of these changes, Mr. Foley took the initiative in developing and launching a pilot program to establish country-specific development programs, now known as "Country Development Cooperation Strategies" (CDCS).

This innovation has fundamentally changed how USAID does its business. CDCSs are five-year plans developed by USAID's missions in close coordination with a range of development

stakeholders, including the host country government, civil society, the private sector, other donor, and other USG agencies in country. The strategies were a critical step for USAID to regain its authority and responsibility to define the development outcomes that we intended to achieve within a realistic budget framework. Mr. Foley also helped to outline a process by which USAID would formulate its own budget request to the Secretary of State and assume greater authority and accountability to allocate and reprogram program resources.

These efforts were largely responsible for the President's decision under the Policy Directive on Global Development to restore USAID's core functions. Specifically, the directive stated: "USAID will work in collaboration with other agencies to formulate country development cooperation strategies that are results oriented and will partner with host countries to focus investments in key areas that shape countries' overall stability and prosperity."

With Administrator Shah's nomination in late 2009, Mr. Foley was asked to continue his leadership of the QDDR working group tasked to reform the State and USAID policy and planning processes, which helped inform the *USAID Forward* reforms. One of the central components of USAID Forward was the re-establishment of agency-wide policy and planning functions. Mr. Foley drafted the concept papers that led to the establishment of USAID's Bureau of Policy, Planning, and Learning, and the Office of Budget and Resource Management.

Before implementing new functions, Mr. Foley realized that many of the old processes had to be rationalized and streamlined or field staff would not have time to undertake the new reforms. He organized a joint State/USAID project team and led a six-month intensive study of the usefulness and workload issues associated with the numerous planning and reporting processes. The result was a streamlining initiative that is on the road to eliminating unnecessary reporting to the tune of about 50,000 person-days each year: a 10 percent savings of field officers' time.

This freed up time was used in part to develop Country Development Cooperation Strategies. Mr. Foley and his team supported 60 Missions develop these strategies including through TDY support and workshops. Mr. Foley's guidance on how to develop these country strategies was influenced by the policy direction provided in the President's Policy Directive that we must focus and concentrate the use of resources. In the past, given the lack of a strategic planning process to inform resource allocation, budget analysts often appropriated funds through compromises that lead to "a thousand flowers blooming." Small pots of money were spread across many countries and often were not at levels that could produce sustainable impact. In developing the country strategies, Missions had to make strategic choices about where phase down investments where outcomes could not be demonstrated. Mr. Foley's direct support and assistance helped Missions reduce the number of active sectors by 30 percent.

The five-year CDCSs provided a high-level framework for planned investments, but further project information was needed to support the award of contracts and grants. In the past, this additional planning detail was largely provided by the same contractors or non-governmental organizations that implemented the work. USAID Forward brought the discipline of development back to the Agency and required that Missions design projects in-house. Mr. Foley oversaw the agency's efforts to revitalize project design to ensure that interventions have maximum development impact, balancing the need for a rigorous process with the reality that development is complex and not static. Blending advanced knowledge of technical, program, and business systems disciplines, he led the development and implementation of formal project

design guidance. This guidance now serves as the basis for all agency projects and resulting contracts and grants. In addition to detailing what specific interventions will lead to what results, the project designs also detail how performance will be monitored and how outcomes will be evaluated.

In sum, Mr. Foley's contributions have fundamentally changed and improved how USAID does its business, leading to a substantially improved reputation for the agency as a good and efficient steward of scarce taxpayers' dollars and substantially improved development results abroad. The result is reflected in the saving of children's and mothers' lives, improved nutrition, better education outcomes, and a reduction of global poverty.