

**USAID ECONOMIC GROWTH OFFICERS' WORKSHOP
OCTOBER 15-19, 2007
WASHINGTON, DC**

Session Title: Welcome and Opening Plenary

Date and Time: Monday, October 15, 2007, 9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

Type of Session: Plenary

Speaker(s): Jackee Shafer and Henrietta Holsman Fore

Moderator: Steve Hadley

Overview of Session:

Jackee Shafer, Assistant Administrator for EGAT, gave the initial welcome and introduction to Acting Administrator Henrietta H. Fore (HHR).



Acting Administrator Henrietta H. Fore addresses EG Workshop attendees.

HHR thanked everyone for coming and reminisced about her experience in the private enterprise bureau. She was thrilled to see all the individuals visiting from the field.

Her speech highlighted 4 key issues: power, purpose, people, and partnerships.

Power – The US is still the world's largest bilateral donor and economy and our impacts in poverty are not accidental. They are a result of our field experience and presence which enables us to make sustainable and significant partnerships. We have the power to make a difference and should focus upon leveraging public private partnerships moving forward. Private enterprise officers have made USAID the most market oriented of donor agencies and innovative – best trade capacity building which has spurred the BEE reforms.

Purpose – to help lift nations and their people into better lives through sustainability -- not dependence. Without economic growth all other efforts will fail. It can lift all segments of society. She mentioned that USAID uses better ideas such as expanding trade and investment and improving business climates.

People – power and purpose to achieve must be channeled through people. USAID has the best in the business but needs to reach out to other agencies and departments. She understands USAID has lost 2/3s of its economists and 20% of its private enterprise officers. She is therefore aggressively seeking funding to increase its staff in the field and at home. In her opinion, USAID must disseminate best practice and expand training of staff. USAID must also ask Congress to invest in IT to improve communications. Finally, "being effective means we invest in a flexible workforce" – agricultural economists who understand regulatory reform, etc. The development of a professional certificate program is on the agenda

USAID and foreign assistance have had an economic growth strategy, but not a written one, since 1994 -- this is now changing. A draft economic growth strategy and a strategy for conflict countries are under development. They must be usable across all USG agencies.

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Partnerships – She emphasized the need to focus upon public private partnerships - whether through GDA, DCA, OPIC or EXIM, foundations or chambers of commerce, etc. Through these partnerships USAID must better address challenges to the business environment and creating employment particularly for youth. Pursuit of partnerships should be woven into all USAID activities.

Ideas and challenges:

- 1) Creating Entrepreneurship Funds for Africa and the Middle East – so that after someone comes out of training he/she can have resources to develop a business
- 2) Are there new measurement tools we can develop to assess prosperity and entrepreneurship levels? If what you measure is what people focus on, are there additional metrics that we should be thinking about?
- 3) Creating partnerships with World Bank and others such as with Simeon Djankov's team at Doing Business, and with the MCC, to bring consistency and coherence to foreign assistance. She emphasized that USAID shouldn't limit itself but rather think about how they can become a foreign assistance family.
- 4) Partnerships – Could we have 30% or 50% of our programming with Public Private Partnerships? What kinds of new partnerships should we be developing? What partners do we need financially, operationally etc. to improve our impact?
- 5) How can we better link economic growth to the average person in the street? How can we achieve the greatest impact in achieving economic growth? She gave the example of a group of ministers in Africa who have used the phrase "GDP in your pocket".
- 6) In what ways is USAID the strongest and what ways the weakest in the foreign assistance field?