



USAID Alumni Association

January 2021 Newsletter

Note from the UAA Board

Happy New Year to all! We wish you a safe, healthy, productive year. With a new Administration arriving in a few weeks, UAA Board members have worked to identify priority issues to discuss with new political leadership. Many thanks to UAA members who suggested issues to raise, and to senior-level recent retirees who helped shape policy issues for presentation. We will seek opportunities to meet with the Biden transition team's Agency Review Team for USAID and with the new Agency leaders when they are nominated.

Calendar of Upcoming UAA Events

Wednesday, January 13, 2021, 12 noon to 1:00 – The UAA/DACOR Development Dialogue will host a virtual discussion led by **George Ingram**, Brookings Senior Fellow (and UAA member), on **“What should the big priorities be for development in the Biden Administration?”** George recently issued the Brookings Report "Making US global development structures and functions fit for purpose: A 2021 agenda." Many Washington think-tanks - and the UAA Board - have issued their own priority lists. This will be a good chance to challenge George and to reflect on which of the many needed tasks deserve the Biden team's immediate - and longer term - attention. Click [here](#) to reserve a place.

Wednesday, January 27, 2021, 1:30-3:30 p.m. -- The UAA Book Club will hold a virtual meeting via Zoom at which Jon O'Rourke has volunteered to review Daniel Kahneman's book, *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (2011, 500 pages). Jon will provide a short review paper beforehand. Please note that this meeting is open only to UAA 2020 contributing members and those who register no later than **January 25** by clicking [here](#). Those who register will receive information on how to join the virtual meeting.

Thursday, January 28, 2021, 2:00-3:30 p.m. -- The Development Issues Committee will hold its first virtual Zoom meeting of 2021, featuring a panel discussion on **Inclusive Agriculture and Rural Development as a Priority for the New Administration**. Panelists will include retired senior FSO David Bathrick, retired USAID AA Emmy Simmons, and Paul Dorosh, the Director of the Development Strategy and Governance Division of IFPRI (the International Food Policy Research Institute). The discussion will center around a recent paper by David Bathrick, titled *Sustained Poverty Reduction via Inclusive Agriculture and Rural Development: Laying the Foundation for a Call to Action*. A link to the paper can be found [here](#). Instructions on registering for the meeting and to join on Zoom will be forthcoming in a separate announcement later in January. The meeting will be open to all UAA members who made a contribution in 2020.

Friday, February 12, 2021, 12 noon to 1:00 p.m. -- **John McArthur, Director of the newly established Brookings Center for Sustainable Development and Senior Fellow**, Global Economy and Development, will address a virtual meeting of the UAA/DACOR Development

Dialogue. McArthur's topic will be "**The Sustainable Development Challenge Ahead**" — which may change based on developments post-January 20. Watch for an email with further details closer to the event.

Sunday, February 14, 2021, 4:00-6:00 p.m. – The **UAA Winterfest**, our first social event of the year, will be held virtually via Zoom. UAA registrants and spouses or partners are invited to beat the winter doldrums and pandemic isolation by sharing this time with friends and former colleagues. Information will be provided later concerning signing up for this event. Please mark your calendar and join us.

New! on USAIDAlumni.org

In Memoriam: The [In Memoriam](#) page features 10 recent obituaries of USAID colleagues, including **Richard Louis Camaur, Ross W. Wherry, Mel F. McBeth, Jerry Wayne Butler, Harry G. Wilkinson, James A. Greene, Rutherford M. Poats, Ambassador Edward J. Perkins, Curtis R. Nissly, and Reimert (Rei) Ravenholt.**

Articles: Under the Development Resources tab, we feature many articles published in December. Some recent posts include:

- [To end a global pandemic, we need global solutions: In my view.](#) *(One Campaign by Gayle Smith, December 23, 2020)*
- [Better Ways to Use Aid in Middle-Income Countries](#) *(CGD by Ranil Dissanaake, Charles Kenny and Mark Plant, December 21, 2020)*
- [The Inner Workings of USAID: If It Ain't Broke, Don't Fix It. But If It Is Broke, Fix It.](#) *(CSIS by Bonnie Glick, December 18, 2020)*
- [US State Department releases Global Fragility Strategy.](#) *(Devex By Teresa Welsh, 19 December 2020)*
- [Global Gag Rule is just the tip of the iceberg: Why Repealing the Helms Amendment matters](#) *(The Hill – Reps. Jan Schakowsky, Barbara Lee, Jackie Speier, and Ayanna Pressley, December 17, 2020)*
- [A Note on the Future of MFAN](#) *(MFAN ExDir Conor Savoy, December 16, 2020)*
- [Executive order to rebrand US assistance: Right question, likely wrong answer](#) *(The Hill – Daniel Runde, December 14, 2020)*
- [Opinion: Revitalizing USAID is essential to reestablishing US global leadership](#) *(Devex – Susan Reichle and Patrick Fine, December 15, 2020)*

Bibliography of USAID Authors: New additions to the Bibliography of USAID authors include: "Fireflies: A Story of Three Encounters" by Barry Veret; "High Tension: FDR's Battle to Power America" by John A. Riggs, and "Advancing Reproductive Choice" by Elizabeth Maguire.

Bulletin Board: Three recent items on the Bulletin Board include:

- "Modernizing Foreign Assistance in Turbulent times: Recommendations for a New Administration" (MFAN);
- "A New Approach to Foreign Aid – CSIS's Global Forecast 2021 Essay Series" (Daniel Runde, CSIS); and
- "Alonzo Fulgham Appointed New Vice Chair for the American Academy of Diplomacy (Statement by the President AAD President).
- "Sustained Poverty Reduction via Inclusive Agricultural and Rural Development: Laying the Foundation for a Call to Action" (David D. Bathrick)

Job and Volunteer Opportunities: Retired USAID Controller sought for CFO position with the American University of Afghanistan with option for work location outside of Afghanistan; see UAA website link [here](#).

The UAA Book Club held a virtual meeting via Zoom on December 9, 2020, during which Richard Blue reviewed and led a discussion with 26 participants of *Good Economics for Hard Times*, 2019, by Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo. The authors claim that there are too many discrepancies between what theory predicts and what actually happens, especially as economics undergo major transformations. They point out the despair and rage of those left behind in America, in Eastern Germany, the Brexit heartland, and in large parts of Brazil and Mexico. "The rich and the talented step nimbly into the glittering pockets of economic success but all too many of the rest have to hang back. This is the world that produced Donald Trump, Jair Bolsonaro and Brexit..." (p.324). Banerjee and Duflo also summarize the incredible changes that have occurred over the last forty years, including: "the fall of communism, the rise of China, the halving and halving again of world poverty, ... the rise of inequality, the spread of authoritarian nationalism, and looming environmental catastrophes..." Finally, they issue a "Call to Action, not just for economists -- - it is for all of us who want a better saner, more humane world. Economics is too important to be left to economists." For a comprehensive review by Richard Blue and others, visit the UAA website by clicking [here](#).

USAID History Project

John Norris' book titled, *The Enduring Struggle: The History of the U.S. Agency for International Development and America's Uneasy Transformation of the World*, is now with the publisher with a publication date in mid-2021. In coordination with the publisher, we shall now turn our attention to developing a plan to publicize and promote sales of the book, including through USAID alumni and other contacts. We shall call upon UAA members for assistance in those efforts and welcome your suggestions [here](#).

Call for 2021 Membership Contributions

In 2021, the UAA plans to continue increasing its membership while also expanding and extending the reach of activities of interest to our members, no matter where you reside. To make this happen, we need your active participation, ideas, and generous financial support. We encourage you to become a contributing member of the UAA for calendar year 2021 by making a tax-deductible financial contribution in one of two ways:

1. Contribute electronically. Most members and prospective members will likely continue to find it most convenient to pay dues and other contributions online. [Click here to make your contribution](#). Or go to USAID Alumni Association website and click on the blue button in the blue panel to the left on the opening page.
2. Contribute by check. For those who wish to pay by check, please note the address for UAA dues and other contribution checks. We have rented a post office box for the receipt of dues and other contributions, which will enable quicker deposit and acknowledgement of checks as they are received. Please send checks for dues and other contributions, made out to "USAID Alumni Association" and with a note on the memo line as to the purpose of the check to:

Treasurer, USAID Alumni Association
P.O. Box 16723
Alexandria, VA 22302

The suggested contribution levels for 2021 are:

- \$75 Those who live within 50 miles of Washington, DC
- \$25 Those who live elsewhere in the United States
- \$25 Residents of foreign countries
- \$25 Former Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs), wherever they live, or
- \$25 Associate Membership for widows, widowers, and former spouses

and partners of USAID alumni eligible for UAA.

And, of course, we welcome you to join with UAA and other "angels" who have generously contributed \$100 or more as "Friends of UAA."

So, don't delay! Make your 2021 annual membership contribution today, and encourage your friends and former colleagues to sign up and contribute to UAA as well. Please don't hesitate to let us know if you have questions or comments, at office@usaidalumni.org or if you know of other alumni who are eligible to join the UAA. Everyone is welcome, including former Foreign Service Officers, Civil Servants, Foreign Service Nationals, Personal Service Contractors and other contract personnel, and political appointees.

Another way to Financially Support the UAA

If you are 70½ or older, did you know that you can distribute previously untaxed funds from your traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to a 501(c)(3) charitable organization such as the USAID Alumni Association (UAA)? That distribution could offset all or part of your required minimum distribution for the year, and would not be included in your annual adjusted gross income. This is called a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). You could avoid paying tax on a QCD donated directly to the UAA from your IRA financial custodian. For more information on this potential tax advantage for you while assisting the UAA to achieve its leadership objectives of fostering collegial networks of former USAID employees, please refer to the UAA website at [here](#).

Newsletter Schedule

This is the first UAA newsletter of 2021; subsequent issues will be published on the first Monday of each month. If you have information you would like to share with your fellow alumni, your contributions are welcomed. Please send the information and, if possible, include a captioned picture of the event, date, and people shown to office@usaidalumni.org.

Make Your 2021 UAA Membership Contribution
USAID Alumni Association

