



Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network Welcomes New Co-Chair, Executive Director and Members to its Coalition

Washington, DC, September 6, 2023 — The Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN) is pleased to announce the selection of Ritu Sharma, Vice President of U.S. Programs and Policy Advocacy at CARE USA, as its new co-chair and the promotion of Tod Preston as the organization's new Executive Director. It is also delighted to welcome four new members to the coalition: Counterpart International as an institutional member and Bonnie Glick, James Mazzarella, and Richard Parker as individual members. Collectively, these appointments will further enhance the expertise of the coalition's work to advance key policy reforms to further strengthen the effectiveness of U.S. foreign assistance.

Ritu Sharma, MPH, will be replacing Tessie San Martin, CEO of FHI 360, who is stepping down as co-chair after serving two terms in that role. Ritu is the Vice President for US Programs and Policy Advocacy at CARE USA. She guides the organization's advocacy towards the US Government, international institutions, and across 42 national governments. In addition, Ritu leads CARE's nascent

work across the United States providing emergency response to disasters and economic opportunities for women post-disaster. Earlier in her career, Ritu founded Women Thrive Worldwide (in 1998) to give women and families living in the poorest countries around the world a voice in the U.S. Congress and before executive branch agencies. Under her leadership, Women Thrive grew into a broad, inclusive, and impactful coalition that leveraged North-South advocacy to shape numerous U.S. policies to benefit women and girls and promote locally-led development. These achievements include the Millennium Challenge Account's Gender Policy (2007), the White House Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally (2012), and USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (2012), among others. Ritu holds a degree in international economics from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, a Master of Public Health from the Johns Hopkins University's Bloomberg School of Public Health, and is a Certified Diversity Professional.

"This is an important moment for us to unite and push forward locally-led, innovative, and inclusive aid programs to maximize U.S. taxpayers' money and have more impact around the world. I am honored and delighted to join MFAN's co-chairs and I'm ready for the task in front of us!" said Sharma.

"Ritu is a real trailblazer in Washington with a tremendous career in global development. She has an impressive track record of advancing key policy changes that have broadened the reach of U.S. foreign assistance programs and made them even more meaningful and impactful. MFAN is fortunate to have her as part of our leadership team," said MFAN Co-Chair Lester Munson. "MFAN also is immensely grateful to the service Tessie has provided our coalition as co-chair. Having served as co-chair alongside Tessie for several years, I can directly attest to the impact of her dedication and spirited

leadership on MFAN's mission," said Munson.

Tod Preston, MFAN'S new Executive Director, has served as MFAN's Policy Director since 2022 and is a veteran of Washington, DC policy and political circles. He joined MFAN from the former Glover Park Group and Finsbury Glover Hering (now FGS Global), where starting in 2015 he served as Managing Director and Senior Vice President in its international affairs practice. Earlier in his career, Tod served as Director of Government Relations for the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition (USGLC) for six years and nearly a decade on Capitol Hill serving both as professional committee staff and as a legislative aide on personal staff, including for former Congresswoman Nita Lowey (D-NY), the Chairwoman of the House Appropriations Committee and its Subcommittee on State-Foreign Operations. Tod graduated summa cum laude with a BA in Government from Connecticut College and is a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

"Tod's leadership over the past year at MFAN has been outstanding, and our coalition is delighted that he's stepping into the role of Executive Director. We know his strategic vision and extensive experience in foreign affairs advocacy will serve our coalition well in advancing our aid effectiveness policy agenda," said Larry Nowels, MFAN Co-Chair.

Along with the appointments of Ritu and Tod, the addition of five new members will further enhance MFAN's work to advance accountability, localization, and innovation in foreign assistance.

[Counterpart International](#) is an international non-profit that partners with local organizations to build inclusive, sustainable communities in which people thrive. Based on the fundamental principles of creating local ownership and

building problem-solving capabilities at the local level, Counterpart takes a building block approach with local partners to support stronger and more resilient communities by developing leaders, strengthening organizations, and fostering multi-sector community partnerships. With a focus on governance, food security, climate resilience and women's empowerment, Counterpart has been a recognized global leader in supporting civil society and community-based development since its founding in 1965. With a focus on governance, Counterpart has partnered with local civic leaders and organizations to elevate the diverse voices of citizens in decision-making, improve the delivery of public services and advance civic and human rights. The organization also supports locally led efforts to reduce food insecurity and malnutrition and works with communities and local organizations to implement programs that sustainably manage vital ecosystems in order to support livelihoods in the face of climate change.

With over 60 years of collective experience, MFAN's three new individual members profiled below have worked in all facets of foreign assistance – including senior positions at the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), National Security Council, and USAID. The depth of this collective experience will further enhance the impact of MFAN's coalition and provide an even greater level of knowledge in advocating for more effective foreign assistance.

Bonnie Glick is an American diplomat and businesswoman who served as the Deputy Administrator of USAID from 2019 to 2020. Glick's prior experience includes 12 years as a US Foreign Service Officer in the Department of State with overseas tours in Ethiopia and Nicaragua and domestic tours in the State Department, the NSC, and the US Mission to the United Nations. After leaving the State Department, she spent 12 years with IBM, including five years in IBM's R&D Division where she co-authored three patents related to

semiconductors and emerging technologies. Her career spans public, private, and non-profit sectors. Glick has a BA in Government/International Relations from Cornell University, an MA in International Affairs from Columbia University, and an MBA from the University of Maryland. She advises numerous companies and non-profits and serves as an Independent Board Member.

James Mazarella is an independent consultant providing strategic public affairs and communications advice to non-profit organizations and for-profit companies seeking to understand or influence the U.S. and other governments. Previously, Jim was Senior Vice President of Public Policy and Communications at the Global Innovation Fund, a non-profit, impact-first investment fund seeking to catalyze positive economic benefits in the world's poorest countries. Immediately prior to joining GIF, Jim was the Senior Vice President for Policy and Government Affairs for the World Wildlife Fund. Jim served on the White House's National Security Council and the National Economic Council, as Director of International Development and then as Senior Director for Global Economics and Development. Prior to his work in the White House, Jim served as Deputy Vice President of Congressional and Public Affairs for the MCC. He is currently a Senior Associate (non-resident) at the Center for Strategic & International Studies. He has a BA in International Relations from Michigan State University's James Madison College.

Richard Parker serves as the Vice President of External Affairs at Food for the Hungry, leading the advocacy, policy, and visibility efforts of the organization's work in 20 countries to create resilient, flourishing communities. Prior to joining Food for the Hungry, Mr. Parker served as Assistant Administrator for Legislative & Public Affairs at USAID, where he oversaw all external and internal communications efforts within the U.S. and globally with missions and offices in more than 100 countries. He was previously the Vice President of

External Affairs at Project Concern International (PCI), leading its global brand and marketing strategies, media relationships, and online tools in 18 countries. He previously oversaw the communications teams for the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition and the U.S. Peace Corps and served at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), where he focused on international health issues, including the creation of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. He holds a Master's degree in public policy from Regent University and a Bachelor's degree in business management from North Carolina State University.

About MFAN

MFAN is a bipartisan reform coalition composed of international development and foreign policy practitioners, policy advocates, and experts from the U.S. and Global South. We promote more effective and accountable U.S. foreign assistance that advances American interests, delivering greater results for people in need and U.S. taxpayers. Centered around two guiding principles of accountability and locally led development, we advocate for programs that focus on long-term outcomes and impact, including new and innovative approaches and models for development.

[To learn more about MFAN, visit our website.](#)



Copyright © MFAN 2020, All rights reserved.

www.modernizeaid.net

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)