



NOTES -- Partners' Day: *Working with USAID*

Session Title: Briefing by the Ombudsman and Business Forecast 101

Date: December 1, 2015

Time & Location: 3:45 p.m. -- 4:45 p.m. EST Ronald Reagan Building Atrium Ballroom A

Presenters:

- Diane A. Perone, Acting Acquisition and Assistance Ombudsman, USAID/M/OAA
- Jami J. Rodgers, Acting Deputy Director of Washington Operations, USAID/M/OAA
- Kevin Murphy, President, J.E. Austin Associates
- Sylvia, Megret, Vice President of Business Development, University Research Co., LLC., Center for Human Services

Purpose of the Session

The purpose of this session is to provide an overview of the A&A Ombudsman's roles, limitations, and partner inquiry parameters, and provide insight into how the business forecast is generated and used by USAID's partners.

Discussion Topics and Questions:

Topic 1: Ombudsman

- The primary purpose of the Acquisition and Assistance (A&A) Ombudsman is to ensure equitable treatment of all parties participating in USAID's contracts and grants (acquisitions and assistance) pre-award, post-award, and administrative functions,
- Explanation of Ombudsman function as an impartial, informal, and confidential dispute resolution practitioner.
- Listing of top type of Ombudsman Inquiries (Instrument choice, FAR Creep in Assistance Process, Bias)
- Listing of Ombudsman Limits (what the Ombudsman cannot do or perform)
- Partner Inquiry Parameters (questions partners should be prepared to answer when reaching out to the Ombudsman, including whether the partner waives confidentiality, and what redress the partner seeks)
- Ombudsman contact information (ombudsman@usaid.gov)

Topic 2: Business Forecast

- Business Forecast serves as an informational resource on potential funding and partnership at USAID.
- Generating the Business Forecast is used across the Agency by leadership, program officers, and AOs/COs to capture and track planned A&A Process.
- Types of Forecasted Opportunities
- Business Forecast Data Fields
- Staying Up-To-Date (showing how to contact staff)
- Business Forecast contact information (businessforecast@usaid.gov)

Topic 3: Examples of Small Businesses Review and Usage of USAID's Business Forecast

- Presentation by an implementing partner on how their organization is using USAID business tools
- How small businesses use the business forecast is explained
- Key lessons on usage

Topic 4: USAID Business Forecast Improvements

- Review of how the USAID Business Forecast has evolved and provide a more detailed explanation of how this tool is a "snapshot" of business activity at the time that the report is issued.
- Review within 36 hours of release, examine what has been added, left out, changed, etc.



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- Meet with your teams within your organization to identify if your firm can be a part of any of the posted opportunities.

Audience Questions/Answers and Comments:

- Q1:** Why are solicitations being issued around holidays more recently?
A1: The A&A Ombudsman will work to address this issue by issuing updated guidance.
- Q2:** Does contacting Ombudsman affect an organizations' future relationship with USAID? Do organizations contact you on a regular basis? Should my organization contact you?
A2: Some organizations contact the Ombudsman regularly, while other organizations contact the Ombudsman once in a while. Communications with the Ombudsman do not affect a partner's relationship with USAID. The Ombudsman will assume that all communications are confidential unless the partner clearly waives confidentiality.
- Q3:** As a subcontractor, normally the prime contractor is the one that interacts directly with USAID, so how can we get positive feedback and be able to execute what the subcontractor is capable of as prime?
A3: In the past 18-24 months prime contractors have been taking a greater interest and have made efforts to make subcontractors activities more important in developing their proposals. Prime contractors are starting to realize to take their subcontractors' efforts more seriously.
- Comment:** OSDBU made a comment about the importance of utilizing small businesses. Subcontractors can reach out to USAID's OSDBU or SBA.
- Comment:** A partner made a comment about the importance of organizations reaching out to the host country organization and resources at the point of services.