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Description of document: Inter-American Foundation (IAF) Transition Briefing Document for the incoming Biden Administration, 2020

Requested date: 01-January-2021

Release date: 08-January-2021

Posted date: 01-February-2021

Source of document: FOIA Request
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Washington, DC 20004
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FOIA Request submission preference during COVID-19 pandemic:
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FOIA IAF-2021-005

January 8, 2021

Via email

This letter is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) email inquiry, received on January 4, 2021. In that email you submitted the following request:

A digital/electronic copy of the transition briefing document(s) (late 2020) prepared by the Inter-American Foundation for the incoming Biden Administration.

We have assigned your request as IAF-2021-005. Please reference this number on all future communications.

A thorough search was completed and we have one agency record of eight pages responsive to your request. This record is being released in its entirety. You may also find this document on our website at <https://www.iaf.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Presidential-Transition-Brief-2020.pdf>.

Consistent with standard IAF procedure, the IAF's Presidential Transition Brief 2020 was not prepared as a transition brief specifically for the Biden administration, but a document prepared pre-election to assist either Administration, irrespective of the winning candidate. Your request is now considered closed.

Please note that you have the right to file an administrative appeal within 90 days of the date of this letter. By filing an appeal, you preserve your rights under the FOIA and give the IAF a chance to review and reconsider your request and the agency's decision.

If you would like to discuss our response before filing an appeal to attempt to resolve your dispute without going through the appeals process, you may contact me or our FOIA Public Liaison, Ms. Lesley Duncan for assistance at the below listed mailing address or at lduncan@iaf.gov or (202) 688-3047.

If you are unable to resolve your FOIA dispute through our FOIA Public Liaison, the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), the Federal FOIA Ombudsman's office, offers mediation services to help resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies.

The contact information for OGIS is:

National Archives and Records Administration
Office of Government Information Services
8601 Adelphi Road- OGIS
College Park, MD 20740-6001
ogis@nara.gov
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Regards,

Aswathi Zachariah
General Counsel

Presidential Transition Brief 2020

Inter-American Foundation

Organizational Overview

The Inter-American Foundation (IAF) is an independent U.S. government agency established by Congress in 1969 to invest in community-led development across Latin America and the Caribbean. Congress designed the IAF to be small, agile, and innovative, generating and sharing knowledge about the dynamics of community development. The IAF's enabling legislation can be found at [22 U.S. Code § 290f](#).

Vision: A just, peaceful, and prosperous Latin America and Caribbean region in which all people have meaningful opportunities to thrive.

Mission: To identify, support, and partner with underserved people, their enterprises, and grassroots organizations to create thriving communities.

Over the past 50 years, the IAF has honed a unique, cost-effective, bottom-up approach to catalyzing grassroots development in Latin America and the Caribbean by providing funding and technical assistance to community-based organizations to carry out development initiatives they design, lead, implement, and sustain as co-investors. This incentivizes community-level ownership of development for the long term. Since 1972, the IAF has helped launch or expand over 5,000 local organizations in every Latin American and Caribbean country (with the exception of Cuba) via direct small grants valued at \$844 million.

The IAF advances U.S. foreign policy by engaging local organizations as partners in the work of expanding economic opportunity, enhancing peace and security, improving democratic governance, addressing drivers of irregular migration, and promoting community resilience to environmental, economic, social, and political shocks at the grassroots level. Citizens of thriving communities have a higher stake in participating in civic life and resisting incursions of organized crime, the drug trade, and violence. Supporting communities' own development priorities improves their perception of the United States and provides the U.S. government with a direct link to civil societies in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Operations:

The IAF maintains a lean Washington, D.C.-based operation of 47 staff supported by local contractors (technical experts, auditors, and MEL specialists)—no field offices—and uses shared

service providers for core administrative services. This gives the agency a low program support ratio (9%). To ensure initiatives will be sustainable beyond their IAF grants, the agency requires organizations it funds to contribute matching counterpart funding. For every U.S. taxpayer dollar invested, grantee partners contribute \$1.26 of their own resources. IAF grantees comprise a highly valuable network that can be mobilized for effective development. IAF investments in this network of responsible grassroots and civil society organizations furthers the IAF mission and expands the base of U.S. partners abroad. The IAF's model also fosters grantee exchanges and the dissemination of knowledge and best practices to further extend the impact of IAF grants.

Current Scope:

The IAF currently has over 330 grantee partner organizations in 26 countries across Latin America and the Caribbean. Grantee partner organizations pursue a variety of objectives, including [sustainable agriculture and food security](#), [enterprise development and job skills preparation](#), [leadership training](#), [civic engagement and human rights](#), and [natural resource management](#). The IAF has also been a leading investor in the growing community philanthropy sector, an effort that aims to build up domestic sources of development funding to complement U.S. foreign assistance. In awarding grants, the IAF works to ensure the participation and social and economic inclusion of women, youth, indigenous people, Afro-descendants, migrants, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable or underserved groups. The IAF launched a multi-year \$23 million initiative, Women Investing in Growth and Security (WINGS), in 2018 to support women-led enterprises and organizations that increase opportunities for civic engagement, provide greater access to finance, and generate management and business training opportunities for women.

The IAF's model complements the work of other U.S. government agencies by providing a pipeline for particularly small, incipient, and geographically remote civil society organizations and community enterprises to build up their technical and organizational capacity and prepare to engage effectively with U.S. private and public entities. The IAF actively participates in the Summit of the Americas process, refining U.S. objectives and contributing to U.S. initiatives, as well as covering travel expenses for select beneficiaries of IAF investment to participate in the Summit Civil Society and Youth Forums, respectively. IAF partner and traditional Youth Forum co-host Young Americas Business Trust plans to showcase InnovAction Challenge finalists during the upcoming Youth Forum associated with the 2021 Summit. The InnovAction Challenge, born of the IAF/YABT partnership, provides seed funding and technical assistance for young entrepreneurs with business solutions for reactivating local economies that have been drastically affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

The IAF also participates actively in several interagency initiatives and working groups, including the U.S. Caribbean-Resilience Partnership, the Global Food Security Strategy, and the Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative, in addition to interagency policy working groups on issues like Venezuela migration crises. The agency has been closely involved in interagency efforts to address the root causes of irregular migration in Central America, directly funding grassroots organizations addressing violent crime, weak local governance, and poverty. The IAF also participates in several Small Agency Council committees: Finance Committee, Human Capital Committee, Chief Information Officer Committee, and Procurement Committee.

In addition to addressing chronic development issues throughout the region, the IAF can rapidly respond to changing conditions by turning on or off, pivoting, or accelerating grant flows, a rare characteristic in traditional foreign assistance models. As the Venezuelan exodus started to reach critical levels, the IAF tapped its extensive network of more than 750 experienced community-based organizations to support projects addressing the longer-term needs of Venezuelan migrants and the communities where they have settled, investing \$4.7 million in 24 grantee partners in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago. Of the \$4.7 million investment supporting Venezuelan migrants, \$2.2 million was directed towards COVID-19 relief.

Crisis Management and Emergency Response:

The IAF builds communities' capacity to withstand and prepare for crises and natural disasters across its portfolio. Its \$5 million joint initiative with USAID, Building Community Resilience in the Eastern & Southern Caribbean, focuses special attention on small island nations whose infrastructure and major industries have been disrupted by intensifying natural disasters. While the IAF does not specialize in disaster response, it has responded effectively to natural disasters including hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, droughts, and crop diseases by leveraging local partners' expertise. Most recently, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, the IAF has invested approximately \$22 million to date throughout Latin America and the Caribbean to ensure that U.S. government assistance reaches particularly isolated and vulnerable groups.

The Chief Operating Officer for the IAF is responsible for overseeing the safety and security of both personnel and property at the IAF. In case of an emergency situation while on official travel, IAF staff are covered by U.S. Embassy-provided overseas medical and safety and security support, through the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services system. The IAF's Continuity of Operations (COOP) plan ensures the agency can continue performing essential functions under a broad range of circumstances, including threats to the safety and security of

IAF personnel. The primary COOP point of contact is Chief Operating Officer Lesley Duncan, lduncan@iaf.gov.

Accountability and Transparency:

The agency reports progress on the five-year goals established in the IAF's [Strategic Plan 2018–2022](#) and is in compliance with DataAct, USASpending and other reporting requirements. The USAID Office of Inspector General (OIG) has provided [independent oversight](#) to the IAF since 1999. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) has not recently reported on the IAF specifically but has included the IAF among other foreign assistance agencies in its recent reporting on the Global Food Security Strategy.

The IAF cooperates with U.S. embassies to vet potential grantee partners, and the agency's Office of the General Counsel reviews potential grants for legal sufficiency before finalizing any grant agreements. A summary of every grant is posted on the agency's publicly-available [website](#). A grant oversight committee chaired by the Chief Operating Officer takes corrective action in cases of non-compliance with grant terms or other issues with financial management. Donor and partner vetting ensures contributions to the agency are appropriate from a legal and reputational risk perspective.

Top Operational Items

1. **Virtual grassroots development:** Maintaining the IAF's signature high-touch approach to grassroots development in a virtual environment has represented a challenge. Without in-person access to grantees for grantmaking, monitoring, learning, auditing, and reporting, the agency has developed virtual approaches to programming, while supporting grantees' abilities to better connect with their own communities through improved technologies. As some countries reopen their borders, the agency must establish procedures for how to resume travel to field sites.
2. **Regional COVID-19 programming strategy:** The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered the worst economic recession in the history of the Latin America and Caribbean region, disproportionately affecting underserved and vulnerable groups. It has also exacerbated pre-existing tensions and challenges, sparking associated epidemics of gender-based violence and insecurity. The IAF is well positioned to expand its regional strategy to channel funding to local organizations with grounded solutions to these challenges. An increase in IAF resources would help mitigate the effects of the regional economic recession and attendant social ramifications from reversing the gains from the IAF's investments.

3. **Strong interagency cooperation:** Regional-level challenges and accelerating natural disasters, compounded by the pandemic, require a coordinated approach. The IAF will continue to build on its current interagency collaboration to ensure maximum strategic impact.
4. **Transition from remote work:** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the IAF rapidly transitioned to a remote working environment, providing the necessary IT and HR support to staff to continue functioning effectively. The agency has been securing its office space with physical enhancements and developing new processes to promote pandemic safety and productivity. Moving forward, the IAF will continue to provide clear guidance during the transition back into the office. The agency will also incorporate best practices and lessons learned from the adaptations to remote work and crisis response into daily practice.
5. **Private sector and multi-donor partnerships:** The IAF's founding legislation enables and encourages the agency to work with the private sector, both through partnerships to jointly support initiatives and the IAF's ability to raise private funds to expand its grantmaking efforts. The IAF will continue to build on its current public-private partnerships to identify potential new partners and multi-donor funding opportunities to scale its efforts to help communities rebuild in the wake of COVID-19.

Budget Overview

Funding for the programs the IAF supports comes from Congressional appropriations, private donations, private sector partners, reimbursements or transfers from other federal foreign assistance agencies, and grantee partners themselves. In compliance with OMB guidance, the IAF has shared services agreements with the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Bureau of Fiscal Services' Administrative Resource Center for most of its financial management, procurement, and travel services; the U.S. Department of the Interior, Interior Business Center for most human resources functions; and the U.S. Geological Service for equal employment opportunity functions. This enables the IAF to acquire the full range of functional expertise in each area efficiently and deploy the agency's limited human resources for mission-critical activities.

Over 90 percent of IAF funding, including grantee counterpart, goes directly into grants and other program implementation activities. Program implementation includes all activities essential to the IAF's central programmatic purpose of supporting initiatives proposed by organized underserved communities in Latin America and the Caribbean to improve their quality of life. The result is increased support for democracy and strengthened bonds of friendship and understanding in the Western Hemisphere. In terms of budget, this encompasses all expenses and "objects" directly tied to grant making, evaluation, technical assistance, and strategic initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean, including the corresponding portion of personnel/benefits, travel, contractual

services, and rent.

FUNDING SOURCES BY PROGRAM ACTIVITY AND TYPE OF FUND

Source of Funds	FY 2019 Actuals	FY 2020 Actuals	FY 2021* Estimate
CY Appropriated Funds	22,500,000	37,500,000	37,500,000
PY Appropriated Funds (Carryover)	501,996	2,259,176	6,908,108
Recoveries (Appropriated)	798,581	367,965	500,000
Carryover to CY+1 (Appropriated)	(2,259,176)	(6,908,108)	(2,300,000)
Gift Funds/Interagency Transfers	10,105,812	11,363,821	1,200,000
TOTAL OBLIGATION AUTHORITY	31,647,213	44,582,854	43,808,108
Grants, Investments and Audits			
Appropriated Funds	10,985,939	21,690,007	25,790,551
Gift Funds/Interagency Transfers	8,064,975	8,886,934	1,450,000
Subtotal - Grants/Investments	19,050,914	30,576,941	27,240,551
Program Implementation Activities			
Appropriated Funds	6,061,118	5,398,985	9,040,430
Gift Funds/Interagency Transfers	1,140,837	1,500,000	120,000
Subtotal - Program Implementation Activities	7,201,955	6,898,985	9,160,430
Total Program Activities	26,252,869	37,475,926	36,400,981
Program Support Activities			
Appropriated Funds	4,494,344	6,106,928	7,407,127
Gift Funds/Interagency Transfers	900,000	1,000,000	-
Total Program Support Activities	5,394,344	7,106,928	7,407,127
TOTAL OBLIGATION	31,647,213	44,582,854	43,808,108
Counterpart Committed or Mobilized by Grantees	19,974,025	33,552,943	34,466,212
Total (including Grantee Counterpart)	51,621,238	78,135,797	78,274,320
Program Support/Total (incl. Grantee Counterpart)	10.45%	9.10%	9.46%
Program Support/Total (excl. Grantee Counterpart)	17.05%	13.70%	16.91%
Full-Time Equivalent Usage	40	45	48

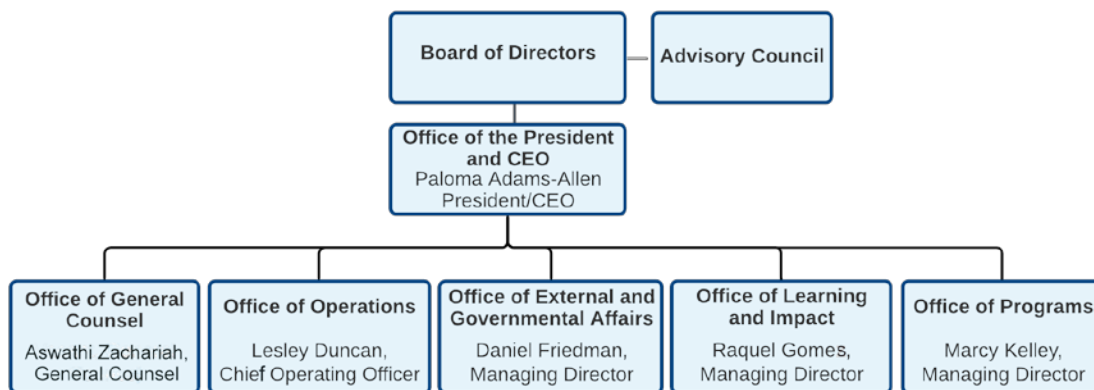
* Based on Funding at the FY 2020 Appropriation Level

PERSONNEL AND NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES BY PROGRAM ACTIVITY & OBJECT CLASS

Object Class	Category	FY 2019 Actuals	FY 2020 Actuals	FY 2021* Estimate
PROGRAM SUPPORT				
	<u>Staff Program Support Salaries & Related Expenses</u>			
11	Personnel Compensation (salaries)	1,901,523	2,276,359	2,484,124
11.5	Other Personnel Compensation	61,161	74,100	124,176
12	Civilian Personnel Benefits	722,827	851,017	813,085
13.0	Benefits to Former Personnel	-	-	-
	<u>Travel and transportation</u>			
21	Travel and transportation of persons	85,165	21,219	21,300
22	Transportation of things	-	-	-
	<u>Program Support Services</u>			
23.2	Rental Payments to Others*	-	-	-
23.3	Communications, Utilities, & Misc Charges	133,546	236,612	313,742
24	Printing and Reproduction	19,043	10,582	12,250
25.1	Management and Professional Support Services	183,393	303,781	475,000
25.1	Engineering & Technical Services (IT)	608,442	1,235,412	1,115,430
25.1	Staff Training	33,759	57,558	71,750
25.2	Representation Allowance	2,860	-	4,000
25.2	Miscellaneous Services	12,959	38,432	37,214
25.3	Services from Other Gov Agencies	1,526,380	1,637,047	1,551,772
25.4/25.7	Maintenance - Equipment & Facility	39,716	27,351	48,137
26	Supplies and Materials	30,911	46,444	55,348
31/32	Equipment & Leasehold Improvements	32,659	291,014	279,799
	<i>Total Program Support</i>	5,394,344	7,106,928	7,407,127
PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES				
	<u>Staff Program Salaries & Related Expenses</u>			
11	Personnel Compensation (salaries)	2,628,405	2,817,118	3,205,665
11.5	Other Personnel Compensation	4,161	2,985	5,500
12	Civilian Personnel Benefits	856,918	997,742	1,118,850
	<u>Travel & Other Program Implementation Costs</u>			
21	Travel and Transportation of Persons	320,299	196,729	200,000
23.2	Rental Payment to Others*	-	-	-
	<u>Learning & Dissemination</u>			
25.1	Studies & Evaluations	8,136	10,000	150,000
25.1	Fellowship Program	34,428	-	350,000
25.1	Translations & Other Services	50,181	308,684	85,000
	<u>Technical Assistance to Grantees</u>			
25.1	Local Advisory Service (LLAS)	1,944,538	1,775,462	2,070,655
25.1	Data Verifiers (DV)	1,044,994	480,820	1,664,865
25.1	Program Conference Support	309,895	309,895	309,895
	<i>Subtotal - Program Implementation</i>	7,201,955	6,899,435	9,160,430
	<u>Grants & Investments</u>			
33	Investments	1,564,791	-	-
41	Grants/Grant Audits	17,486,123	30,576,491	27,240,551
	<i>Total Program Activities</i>	26,252,869	37,475,926	36,400,981
Total Program Support and Program Activities		31,647,213	44,582,854	43,808,108
Counterpart Committed or Mobilized by Grantees		19,974,025	33,552,943	34,466,212
Total (including Grantee Counterpart)		51,621,238	78,135,797	78,274,320

Current Leadership Team

The IAF is governed by a bipartisan [board of directors](#) drawn from the private sector and federal government, appointed by the president of the United States and confirmed by the Senate. The board appoints a President who serves as the agency's chief executive officer, carrying out day-to-day decision making regarding funding actions, grant making, partnerships, monitoring and evaluation, and administrative and operational functions, consistent with law and established policy. In fulfilling these responsibilities, the President is supported by the agency's leadership team, which consists of a General Counsel, Chief Operating Officer, and three Managing Directors for Programs, External & Government Affairs, and Learning & Impact. Information on the members of the IAF's Board of Directors, Advisory Council, and Management Team is available on the [IAF Website](#).



Congressional Considerations

In 2020, Congress expressed bipartisan, bicameral support for the IAF through a pair of resolutions that were approved by the [House Foreign Affairs Committee](#) and the [Senate Foreign Relations Committee](#). Congressional oversight is largely exercised by the respective subcommittees of the [House Foreign Affairs](#) and [Senate Foreign Relations](#) committees (authorizers) and the [House](#) and [Senate](#) Appropriations committees (appropriators).