



USAID / MORGANA WINGARD

EVALUATION OF THE BUREAU FOR RESILIENCE AND FOOD SECURITY'S ROLE IN GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

OCTOBER 2023

This publication was produced at the request of the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared independently by Cynthia Clapp-Wincek (evaluation team leader), Nicola Giordano, John Akwetey, Peter Simpson, Micah Frumkin, and the Institute for Development Impact.

ABSTRACT

In July 2020, the Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (RFS) launched a Functional Strategy to articulate how the Bureau contributes to the achievement of existing U.S. Government strategies or policies within its mandate. The strategy named Global Leadership to “strengthen the global environment for achieving inclusive agriculture-led growth, resilience, nutrition, and water security, sanitation, and hygiene” as a main objective of its functions. Two years later, RFS requested an external evaluation of the Bureau's systems, processes, capacities, and resources helping or hindering its global leadership efforts. The purpose of this evaluation was to identify and analyze how RFS can better define and communicate its role in providing global leadership. As the World was struggling with drought particularly in the Horn of Africa and the COVID pandemic, Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 focused the Bureau on the global food crisis. As a result, the scope of work for the evaluation narrowed to global leadership influencing “the global food security agenda and advancing food security for all” but in the context of these multiple crises.

The evaluation was not assessing the Bureau's performance in global leadership but analyzing what led to performance. Therefore, the evaluation used eight cases in which the Bureau reported its global leadership to have influenced outcomes that contributed to changes in the global environment that led to shared development agendas and behaviors of bilateral and multilateral donors, non-governmental actors and private sector entities. Taking an Outcome Harvesting approach, the evidence from the outcome cases led the team to conclude that global leadership outcomes were strongest when all three types of leadership that emerged from the analysis were applied: technical leadership, relationship leadership and financial leadership. Although strongest when all types of leadership were combined to influence an outcome, the evaluation identified cases in which each type of leadership was able to have influence on its own.

RFS has achieved significant outcomes through global leadership with a modest investment in the function. The Bureau must balance the expectations with the resources and decide priority actions and events in that context.

Funding from USAID Feed the Future has allowed women like Hapsatou Ka from Sylla Diongto, Senegal to become thriving entrepreneurs. The cover image depicts Hapsatou with sweet potato crops, which she has trained other women in her community to plant as part of the nutrition program USAID Yaajeende

Photo from USAID Photos. Credit: USAID/ Morgana Wingard.

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

The Bureau for Resilience and Food Security's Role in Global Leadership

October 2023

Contract Number: 7200AA20D00012/7200AA21F00013

DISCLAIMER: This Evaluation Report was produced for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was prepared independently by Cynthia Clapp-Wincek (evaluation team leader), Nicola Giordano, John Akwetey, Peter Simpson, Micah Frumkin, and the Institute for Development Impact for the USAID Monitoring, Evaluation, and Training Services Activity. The contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	v
Acronyms.....	vi
Background.....	1
Evaluation Purpose and Evaluation Questions	1
Evaluation Purpose	1
Evaluation Questions.....	2
Evaluation Methods and Limitations.....	3
Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations	5
Evaluation Question 1	5
Global Leadership & Influence Performance.....	6
Roles.....	8
Evaluation Question 2.....	10
RFS Systems and Processes.....	11
Capacities – Human Resources.....	15
RFS Financial Resources	18
Evaluation Question 3.....	19
Carrying out RFS's Role in Global Leadership.....	20
Cross-Bureau Identification of RFS-Wide Priorities.....	21
Recommendations.....	22
Executing RFS's Role in Global Leadership	22
RFS-wide Priorities	23

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Outcome Cases
Annex 2: Evaluation SOW
Annex 3: Evaluation Methods & Limitations
Annex 4: Data Collection Tools
Annex 5: Sources of Information
Annex 6: Disclosure of Any Conflict of Interest
Annex 7: Evaluation Team Members
Annex 8: Timeline
Annex 9: Excerpts from Design Document

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors wish to acknowledge the following individuals for their kind support and contributions to this evaluation: **Anupa Deshpande** from USAID/RFS who not only decided to undertake this evaluation of the Functional Strategy, but for her amazing work in co-creation and shepherding the evaluation throughout the process; **Alice Riedel** and **Andrew Sheridan** from USAID/RFS for their support throughout the evaluation; **Grace Vottero** from I4DI for her critical assistance in the final stages of producing the report; and **Micah Frumkin** from I4DI who went beyond being a team member, providing support and guidance to the entire team.

The authors appreciate the willingness of the many individuals, particularly from RFS, who interacted with the team and served as respondents for their time and thoughtfulness at this challenging time.

ACRONYMS

AtA	RFS Assistant to the Administrator
AGRA	Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
BFS	Bureau for Food Security
BHA	USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme of the African Union
CGIAR	Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (now known only by its acronym)
CN	Center for Nutrition
DAA	RFS Deputy Assistant Administrators
DEC	Development Evaluation Clearinghouse
EQ	Evaluation Question
EvalNet	Network on Development Evaluation, OECD/DAC
FTF	Feed the Future
FTFCT	Feed the Future Crisis Team
G7	Group of Seven
GAFS	Global Alliance for Food Security
GE	Global Engagement
GET	Global Engagement Team in Office of Policy Analysis and Engagement
I4DI	Institute for Development Impact
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
METS	Monitoring and Evaluation Training Services Activity
N4G	Nutrition for Growth Summit
NSC	National Security Council
OECD/DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee
OH	Outcome Harvesting
OP	Operational Plan
PAE/SE	Office of Policy Analysis and Engagement Strategic Engagement Division
PIATA	Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Transformation in Africa
PPL	USAID Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning
PPR	Performance Plan and Reports
RFS	USAID Bureau for Resilience Food Security
SOW	Statement of Work
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNFSS	United Nations Food Systems Summit
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	US Department of Agriculture
USG	United States Government

BACKGROUND

In July 2022, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (RFS) requested an evaluation of its Functional Strategy for the period of 2020-2022. The Functional Strategy establishes the Bureau's unique role to promote proven, evidence-based approaches to advance development outcomes. The RFS Front Office asked that the evaluation focus on the Strategy's functional objective to provide leadership to "strengthen the global environment for achieving inclusive agriculture-led growth, resilience, nutrition, and water security, sanitation, and hygiene," and narrow the focus to addressing food security. The evaluation was designed to determine how RFS's structure, systems, processes, capacities, and resources helped or hindered its functional role of providing global leadership. The evaluation reviewed eight cases—four strategic engagements and four institutional engagements—in which the Bureau's global leadership influenced development outcomes.

Three factors greatly influenced the context in which RFS operated during this period of performance. Firstly, RFS had undergone, and continued to undergo, significant structural change. USAID established the Bureau for Food Security (BFS) in 2010, primarily to manage the United States Government (USG) global hunger initiative Feed the Future (FTF). In 2019, and simultaneous with other significant structural shifts within USAID, BFS became RFS, consolidating BFS, and the Office of Water, formerly part of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and the Environment. In the same month that RFS was operationalized, COVID emerged as a global pandemic and significantly affected RFS's ability to settle into this reorganized structure. It is also important to note that in 2022, the Bureau began preparing to undertake another reorganization in the summer of 2023, adding over 100+ new staff and new priorities, such as the environment and climate change.

Secondly, there were concurrent and compounding effects from multiple crises during the study timeframe. These included the COVID-19 pandemic mentioned above, recurring droughts in the Horn of Africa, and African Swine Fever and the food, fuel, and fertilizer crises worsened by the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February of 2022. All required modifications in RFS programs and processes.

Thirdly, RFS's role on the global stage has expanded exponentially in the last several years. In 2021, RFS played a large part in the United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) and the Nutrition for Growth Summit (N4G), critical convenings that helped to deepen the international community's understanding of the global food crisis. In 2022, the Russian invasion of Ukraine greatly exacerbated this emergency. In response, the US Government led a pivot by the Group of Seven (G7) to put food security at the top of its global agenda along with the war in Ukraine. RFS's deep expertise in food security provided the technical foundation for this policy agenda.

Given its growing role in addressing global food shortages, RFS has faced unprecedented demands from the U.S. Congress, USAID Administrator's Office, the US Department of State, the US National Security Council (NSC), the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), and even the US Treasury – all agencies that contribute to the interagency response to the global food crisis. This expanded scope of work strained a young Bureau just settling into a new configuration under a new Functional Strategy. It is within this context that USAID undertook an evaluation of RFS's functional objective to provide global leadership.

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

EVALUATION PURPOSE

The purpose of the evaluation was to analyze how RFS defines and communicates the scope of its global leadership role and function to influence the global food security agenda and advance food

security for all. The July 2020 RFS Functional Strategy served as the primary reference for defining RFS's global leadership (Objective 1), specifically global engagement to influence global agendas (IR I.1). The Functional Strategy "outlines the Bureau's unique role in providing technical support to USAID Missions while exerting global leadership" not only through programs but through "the expertise and experience of the staff." Unlike most USAID performance evaluations which primarily examine the extent to which USAID was successful in achieving outcomes, this performance evaluation was designed to understand how RFS's role, structure, system, processes, capacities, and resources helped or hindered its achievement of global leadership outcomes.

To be clear, this evaluation does not examine how well (i.e., "good" or "bad", "successful" or "unsuccessful") RFS performed in strengthening the global environment or aligning development agendas through global leadership. Because of the complex, dynamic, emergent, and fluid nature of these ultimate aims, and considering and respecting that actors have diverse perspectives in the global community, this would not have been a fruitful evaluation. Instead, an examination of how RFS provided global leadership to achieve reported positive outcomes helps the Bureau to understand enabling and challenging conditions within its operations and control to continue in this role. The evaluation timeframe was from 2020 to 2022.

The primary audience for the evaluation is RFS senior leadership, managers, and staff directly involved in global leadership and engagement in the Bureau, both prior to and following the reorganization of the Bureau in the summer of 2023. Evaluation results will provide evidence for decision making to strengthen and streamline Bureau systems, processes, capacities, and resources, including the Functional Strategy. The evaluation can be used by RFS senior leadership, managers, and staff to improve the new Bureau's priorities, capacity, and flexibility and to strengthen the global environment for food security.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation questions (EQ) that bound the scope of this evaluation were developed in a co-design process led by the RFS Monitoring, Evaluation and Training Services (METS) activity and RFS Program Office staff. The evaluation was designed to answer three questions:

1. During the 2020-2022 period of strategy implementation, how has RFS technical assistance shaped its global leadership and how has its leadership contributed to RFS's ability to influence food security agendas and the behavior of bilateral and multilateral donors, non-governmental actors, regional bodies and private sector entities?
2. During the same period, recognizing a set of successive and compounding crises, how have RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources either helped or hindered the Bureau's global leadership efforts to respond quickly to unexpected shifts in context?
3. Has the Bureau's global leadership through global engagement revealed ways in which the RFS Functional Strategy, systems, processes, capacities, and resources need to adapt or evolve to meet the current Agency and global context?

Global leadership by agency staff has not been a common topic for evaluation at USAID or elsewhere, as the team found when researching evaluation methods. Therefore, defining key terms was an important part of building a common understanding for the Bureau for making decisions on global leadership functions. It should be noted that for the purposes of this evaluation, the team is using some terms differently from the way they are used in RFS and is noted below.

- Global leadership is effectively influencing a set of bilateral and multilateral actors, governmental and non-governmental actors, regional bodies and private sector entities to align with, advance and advocate for RFS and the USG's agenda and priorities.
- Global engagement is defined for this evaluation as participation in global events or the process of interacting with a set of bilateral and multilateral actors, governmental and non-governmental actors, regional bodies and private sector. RFS generally refers to global engagement as strategic engagement.

- Institutional engagement refers to influence in the international and regional environment from RFS's programmatic work.
- "GE team" is used by the evaluation team to mean those RFS staff whose full-time job is to facilitate and drive global engagement. This is primarily the Global Engagement Team (GET) in the Strategic Engagement Division in the Office of Policy Analysis and Engagement (PAE). However, because those staff who do global/strategic engagement full time are not limited to the GET- for example, the Director of PAE - the evaluation team generally means to include these actors when they cite the GE team.
- Technical assistance is used in this evaluation to mean the advice and guidance provided by RFS staff in their roles of leadership and influence. USAID generally uses technical assistance to refer to advice and guidance provided by projects and activities.

EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

The evaluation of the RFS Functional Strategy began with a participatory co-design process under the Bureau's METS activity. In that process, RFS senior leadership indicated a need to better understand the Bureau's global leadership. The evaluation team searched the USAID Development Evaluation Clearinghouse (DEC) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) evaluation repository and found no examples of evaluations of global engagement or leadership, as defined above. The evaluation team reviewed extensive documentation provided by the Bureau including strategies, operational policies, and background documents on global events. To gain a deeper understanding of the Bureau's global leadership efforts, the evaluation team needed to understand the efforts of Bureau staff, the results of those efforts, and ideas on how to make adaptations for stronger global engagement.

The evaluation was conducted by a five-person team with technical and evaluation expertise. Only the team leader, Cynthia Clapp-Wincek, had global engagement experience, specifically at the Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet) at OECD/DAC. Team bios can be found in Annex 7.

During the evaluation design phase, following the desk review, the team identified Outcome Harvesting (OH) as the dominant methodology for this evaluation because it reveals such rich information on what factors played a role in the outcomes being achieved. OH is an evaluation method in which achieved outcomes are identified and then, working backwards, actions that brought about the outcomes are identified. The evaluation team selected OH as the best method for understanding Bureau global leadership for several reasons:

- Outcomes were emergent i.e., could not be predicted in advance
- Uncertain causal links i.e., no clearly established theory of change
- Contested— actors have diverse perspectives in the global community
- Dynamic— pace of change is variable and unpredictable

Through interviews, OH was able to capture achieved, planned, and emergent outcomes, in complex and knowledge scarce environments. Then, the evaluation team worked to document contribution pathways specifically from the RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources that helped and hindered the achievement of outcomes. It should be emphasized that the contributions evaluated in this study are those of the RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources; it does not evaluate all of the actors and factors that influenced outcomes in these global events.

Outcomes were initially identified through an analysis of the 2022 Operational Plan (OP) and 2019-2021 Performance Plans and Reports (PPR) which are generally used to succinctly report positive progress. Then Bureau staff, including several in Bureau leadership positions, voted for the eight outcomes that they thought should be included in the evaluation. The evaluation team analyzed the

systems, processes, capacities, and resources that affected these selected cases of positive outcomes. However, it should be clearly noted that this selection approach means that findings cannot be generalized to conclude that the Bureau is successful in all cases. Although there are likely other instances of global leadership achieving intended outcomes, this report has no data or evidence beyond the cases reported.

The team conducted 40 interviews of internal and external informants knowledgeable about the specific outcome cases, as well as an additional 10 interviews with staff knowledgeable about RFS systems processes, capacities, and resources. Those interviewed on outcome cases were also asked questions about what systems, processes, capacities, and resources helped and hindered their work in influencing outcomes.

Of the 40 interviews on outcome cases, 12 were external to RFS and USAID, and an additional four that were external at the time of the interview but had worked for RFS at the time of their participation in the outcome.¹ Of the additional ten interviews on systems, processes, capacities, and resources, four were retired heads of Bureaus in USAID (one was former RFS), and two worked in USAID's Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning's (PPL) Donor Coordination Office. Internal RFS staff were selected because of their area of expertise. Because the OH method focuses on outcome specifics, a limited number of informants is sufficient to agree on the statement of the outcome.

Interview guides were developed for 1) outcome change agents, 2) the 10 interviews of the experts on systems/processes/capacities/resources, 3) senior leadership, and 4) the private sector. An example of each is included in Annex 4.

The evaluation team used several methods for analysis to make the most of the interview evidence. The thematic analysis most significantly identified three types of leadership. The team developed "Influence Maps" for each case. These are a tool used in the Outcome Harvesting method to analyze relationships amongst the multiple actors involved in influencing change. Relationship mapping analyzed the relationships involved in doing the influencing work. The team conducted a focus group discussion with private sector partners to gain some understanding of their engagement in this arena. The team had planned to compare the briefers and talking points prepared for the RFS staff to formal event communiques, but interviews provided more nuance. Further, the fact that key documents were classified caused the team to abandon this approach.

Because this evaluation was on a topic that had not been previously evaluated and for which there was no clear existing theory of change, there were a number of limitations:

- The Strategy was only two years old for this period of performance. While most USAID strategies (e.g., CDCSs) have a five-year time period, the RFS Strategy does not have an associated time period and states it will be revised, as appropriate, based on changes in context and lessons learned in implementation. This is an evaluation of initial implementation during an unprecedented time of changing context and provides an opportunity to document the experience and lessons.
- The selection of outcome cases was built on statements from Performance Plan and Reports (PPR) for the years available, supplemented by the Operational Plan for 2022. The RFS entries to these documents have character limits and therefore **cannot** present the full set of outcomes for consideration. The outcomes included in these documents are generally focused on what would be of interest to high-level stakeholders. Both the transition of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the evolution of the Global Alliance for Food Security (GAFS) were reported as outcomes that were still very much in progress.
- There is limited formal data available on RFS's global leadership. Though there is a monitoring plan accompanying the Strategy, the indicators were not piloted. The fast-paced global changes

¹ Interviewees are only designated as internal or external in the body of the report where such references would not compromise anonymity of respondents.

during this two-year period diverted staff attention from this effort. This meant that the centerpiece of data collected by the evaluation team was the 40 interviews on the outcome cases and the additional 10 interviews of other staff with specific expertise in systems, processes, capacities, and resources.

- Set against the Bureau context of working in the midst of crises and shocks, the number of people able to take the time for interviews was more limited than the team would have preferred. This was raised as a risk in the Design Document. The evaluation team was pleased to have completed the 40 interviews for the outcome cases and 10 additional interviews. An additional 33 individuals were identified and sent requests for interviews but did not respond or were unable to be interviewed.
- Because global leadership is such a fluid concept, it was very difficult for the team to separate the RFS contribution from that of USAID and the USG more broadly.
- The approach called for interviews about outcomes. Recall was a challenge but analyzing multiple interviews for each case helped to shape findings. It was also very hard to limit the discussion to the study timeframe of 2020-2022. It was necessary in some cases to discuss earlier actions and events as they informed understandings of outcomes in the timeframe.
- Statement of Work (SOW) and Resource limitations: Global leadership and engagement touch almost all aspects of the Bureau's work. The team indicated in the Design Document that choices would have to be made to focus on resources in addressing food security for all and the global food crisis. Many cross-cutting issues were identified in the SOW and the team was unable to fully address them all. The team tried to address those that were reported as important to the outcomes, and some were more fully explored than others.

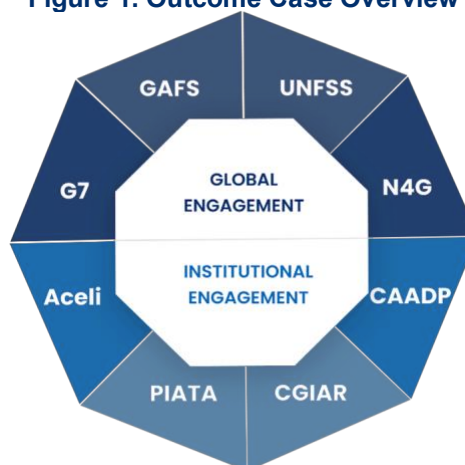
FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

EVALUATION QUESTION 1: Through global engagement, how has RFS's technical assistance contributed to its global leadership and thus its capacity to influence agendas for food security for all and the behavior of bilateral and multilateral donors, non-governmental actors, regional bodies, and private sector entities, during the 2020-2022 period of strategy implementation?

In order to answer this evaluation question, the evaluation team looked at global leadership through two lenses: the Bureau's performance acting as a global leader, and the specific roles that the Bureau plays on the global stage. To understand RFS's role and performance as a global leader, the team used OH to identify and analyze eight distinct outcome cases (see Figures 1, Boxes 1 and 2 below, and case studies provided in Annex I). The evaluation team organized these outcome cases into two categories of engagement to further understand the nature of RFS's global leadership: global engagement on the world stage and institutional engagement with organizations that are partners in USAID's programs.

Global engagement events were identified in the study timeframe of 2020-2022. The year that the organizations included in the Institutional engagements were created demonstrate how long term some of these relationships have been.

Figure 1. Outcome Case Overview



GLOBAL LEADERSHIP & INFLUENCE PERFORMANCE

Performance was evaluated by asking two questions: did RFS influence the specific outcome that was the topic of each interview and did RFS demonstrate leadership? In the OH method that the team used to assess performance, knowledgeable informants are interviewed about one of the eight outcomes identified. The informants then provide their assessment as to whether RFS demonstrated leadership and/or was influential. Although 31 of 40 interviewees indicated that RFS demonstrated leadership and was influential for these eight outcome cases, this cannot be generalized to other RFS global leadership efforts. These eight outcome cases had been intentionally selected as cases where leadership had been demonstrated and the evaluation verified the performance. Some outcomes were more fully realized than others. The strongest performance was reported by all five interviewees for the N4G Summit and all three for Aceli. Interviewees for UNFSS, G7, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), and Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Transformation in Africa (PIATA) had all but one of their interviewees report RFS demonstrated leadership. GAFS had only the external interviewee report leadership. The evaluation confirmed in these eight cases, RFS demonstrated leadership but in some cases more fully than others.

BOX 1: Global Engagement Cases

UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) 2021

RFS Outcome: RFS advanced USAID's leadership role in the UNFSS by taking such actions as making a \$5B multi-year commitment to FTF and expressing intent to expand FTF to an additional eight countries.

RFS Leadership: UNFSS was a whole-of-government endeavor with Administrator Power opening the Summit alongside USDA Secretary Vilsack. RFS's prominent role was considered prescient, as the COVID-induced food crisis went from bad to worse with Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Due to RFS's high level of technical expertise, they were acknowledged as the technical lead by multiple interviewees.

Nutrition For Growth (N4G) Summit 2021

RFS Outcome: The USG Nutrition Champions Group convened actors to commit \$11B of the total \$27B pledged at the summit. One RFS expert facilitated the N4G Advisory Group, working closely with the chair and others in the SUN Donor Network.

RFS Leadership: Beyond the pivotal role played by the RFS expert, multiple RFS staff united to make N4G a success by leveraging technical knowledge to define the 2021 N4G Summit's vision and roadmap. The Nutrition Leadership Council, housed in RFS's Center for Nutrition, reportedly played a significant role in coordinating efforts substantively and financially.

G7 Global Food Security Crisis Response

RFS Outcomes: The USG led the crisis response to the Ukraine invasion in February 2022, mobilizing allies and funds to address urgent food, fertilizer, and fuel needs. In May, GAFS was launched (see below and Case Study). At the June G7 Summit, Biden committed over half of the G7's \$4.5B commitment to address global food security. FTF added eight new countries.

RFS Leadership: USG brought early attention to how severely the war would affect global food security. RFS provided technical briefings for the USAID Administrator. RFS attended all Food Security Working Groups with interviewees reporting that RFS's technical expertise led them to provide support to all of the events.

Global Alliance for Food Security (GAFS)

RFS Outcome: In May 2022 GAFS was launched as an urgent response to the "unfolding global hunger crisis." Later, the Global Food and Nutrition Security Dashboard was launched to "fast-track a rapid response to the unfolding global food security crisis" RFS worked to build the dashboard on the existing GAFS structure to avoid the delays of setting up a new organization.

RFS Leadership: Germany, holding the Presidency of the G7 in 2022, they took the lead to launch these mechanisms, but RFS helped shape the GAFS to address the urgency of the crisis and provided technical expertise and methodological advice on data collection and reporting.

Interviewers went on to ask if the outcomes identified for each of the eight cases were “significant.” 22 of 40 interviewees responded that the case they were interviewed about was significant, although no one responded that the case was “not significant.” The team hypothesizes that the reason only half of respondents reported that outcomes were significant is related to reports that RFS had not achieved all that was intended. The OneCGIAR transition, for example, was reported by all eight interviewees as still unfolding, although three did still report it as “significant” citing its potential. Several of the GAFS interviewees indicated that it did not fully reflect the vision for a streamlined, efficient system because of the risks of overlap with existing data platforms.

BOX 2: Institutional Engagement Cases

Aceli Africa financing for Agricultural SMEs

RFS Outcome: RFS helped to fund Aceli Africa as one of the “first movers in profit dynamics for smallholder finance” in Africa. From 2018 to 2023, Aceli has mobilized over \$600M in agricultural SME finance over five years, filling the gap in financing for small companies, women-owned businesses, food security crops, and climate smart agriculture.

RFS Leadership: RFS’s commitment as the first anchor donor set a precedent and inspired other organizations to join, highlighting the leadership role RFS played in attracting additional funding and enabling Aceli’s pivotal role in addressing the gap in commercial finance for SMEs. Key individuals in RFS played essential roles in activity design, webinars, and technical input and continue to engage in ongoing technical dialogue with Aceli leadership.

Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Transformation in Africa (PIATA)

RFS Outcome: PIATA converged donors around a shared commitment to inclusive agricultural transformation through collaboration, analytic thinking, and evidence-based approaches. Success, built over 15 years of investments (including USAID’s original \$10M), led the MasterCard Foundation to discuss substantially larger commitments.

RFS Leadership: RFS was reported as being particularly influential in the formation of PIATA, both financially and technically. RFS contributed to PIATA’s design and adaptations. Collaboration and technical dialogues continue, but issues providing committed levels of funding have limited RFS’s role. The strength of relationships built on RFS’s technical expertise have helped continue the collaboration in spite of a decreased financial role.

OneCGIAR Transition

RFS Outcome: RFS technical expertise, funding, and collaboration with the Gates Foundation and other partners influenced the OneCGIAR transition. This transition represented a dynamic reformulation of CGIAR’s partnerships, knowledge, assets and global presence, aiming for greater integration and impact in the face of the interdependent challenges.

RFS Leadership: RFS brought their global leadership in funding agricultural research and depth of technical expertise to engage at all levels to encourage a “momentum to move in a better direction” that was reported not to have been possible without their engagement.

Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme’s (CAADP) Biennial Review

RFS Outcome: RFS’ long support to CAADP and advocacy of African leadership in African Development led to improved measurement and reporting systems that provided credible data for the Biennial Review process. Mutual accountability in the process led African governments to take actions to strengthen agriculture policies and programs in their countries.

RFS Leadership: CAADP highlights the RFS ethic of leading from behind. USAID led in establishing CAADP and in championing African ownership of agricultural development. RFS’s continued presence fosters credibility among donors. Several RFS staff served as chair of the Development Partner Coordination Group, working with donors to clarify the importance of the evidence and accountability evolution in CAADP and also worked with other donors to put money behind it.

PIATA is an example in which so many donors played key roles, particularly Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), that none of the interviewees identified the RFS role as significant in the

overall changes. It was reported that RFS provided technical expertise and leadership even when it did not achieve everything that it set out to achieve. For example, it was reported that the OneCGIAR transition “wouldn't [have had] the momentum to move in a better direction...without our engagement.”

ROLES

Emerging from responses to interview questions on RFS's demonstrated leadership, the evaluation identified three types of leadership roles that RFS played in influencing case outcomes:

- RFS demonstrated leadership through technical expertise, making RFS's positions persuasive by being technically strong.
- RFS demonstrated leadership as a relationship builder, building trust particularly with longstanding partners, helpful in reaching agreements.
- RFS demonstrated financial leadership by committing resources to support actions that fit with the RFS agenda as well as using resources as a basis for attracting others' resources.

Leadership Through Technical Expertise

Technical expertise was reported as one of the Bureau's greatest strengths, cited in 36 of 40 interviews. The Private Sector Focus Group also acknowledged RFS's technical expertise. In the G7 and GAFS cases, it was reported that RFS's “deep [ability] to understand the trends...and a good understanding of G7 issues and food security” allowed RFS to be the technical leader behind the myriad USG actors. Another interviewee cited the importance of “technical knowledge “in shaping the USG position on food security.” Similarly, an interviewee said that in preparation for the UNFSS, “RFS demonstrated leadership in the sense that [it was] the technical arm of the Agency.” Also, for the UNFSS, “we made ourselves visible as leaders promoting inclusive and equitable livelihoods” was reported in an interview. One interviewee reported that the way expertise led to influence was “by making science an integral part of the conversation, it becomes a powerful tool for conveying the merits of certain approaches and engaging diverse stakeholders.”

“RFS demonstrated leadership in the sense that we were the technical arm of the Agency.”

In the Institutional Engagements, RFS technical expertise was also cited as a key factor in being influential. One interviewee reported that his role in working on CAADP's Biennial Reviews was “focused on technical accuracy, ensuring that joint sector reviews and accountability systems were designed with the appropriate policies and indicators” in coordination with the African Union (AU) technical committees and USAID missions. An Aceli interviewee reported that RFS provided “a sounding board on development finance and agriculture” in the context of “market driven, data driven, collaborative access to [small and medium enterprises] SMEs.”

One interviewee identified “reputational influence” as a result of RFS's technical strength: “Feed the Future has been out there for ten years. Our partners have a certain level of confidence in USAID's work...because of what we've been able to achieve.” Another stated that, “We've been able to speak confidently about what we've achieved with FTF” and that made RFS influential in the technical discussions around the food crisis of 2022. The evaluation team found that analytics and learning were forms of technical expertise that played a role in leadership both for institutional and global cases. It was a study partially funded by the RFS predecessor which established the case for addressing a gap in agricultural SME finance that led to the creation of Aceli. RFS supported the International Food Policy

Research Institute (IFPRI) and Akademiya2063 to strengthen the data used in the CAADP Biennial Reviews. The RFS Analytics and Learning Division reported providing technical advice to GAFS.

Leadership Through Relationships

Personal relationships were considered almost as important as technical expertise in demonstrating leadership and were cited in 29 of 40 interviews. The Private Sector Focus Group stressed the importance of relationships in working with USAID as well. The UNFSS was a large, global engagement and all six of the outcome case interviewees talked about the importance of their relationships in navigating those complexities. One interviewee reported that he was more successful in planning for the UNFSS because of the relationships he had built in Rome when he worked there previously. The relationships of the RFS chief nutritionist, as well as others, were cited as essential to the success of the N4G Summit as this role was directly involved with the planning for the event and liaising significantly with the government counterpart in Japan. One RFS senior leader reported, “he felt he was able to influence most successfully when we had personal relationships.” RFS staff proudly reported engaging non-traditional donors such as humanitarian assistance from the Gulf States pledged at the UNFSS and bringing in middle income countries like Indonesia to the N4G donors.

Institutional engagements did not have quite as high a percentage of interviewees citing their relationships as important, but there were still multiple examples identified in the interviews. A CAADP interview cited RFS “championing of African leadership” as a clear demonstration of RFS’s relationship leadership enabling African leaders to unify their voice on the global stage due to a common process. Interestingly, the cases selected for Institutional Engagements showed RFS playing very strong roles, frequently through participation in multi-donor groups. Aceli Africa is a good example of RFS participating in the Multi-Donor Steering Committee rather than convening the meetings showing its role as a technical partner rather than acting as a main coordinator. PIATA is a platform for cooperation between AGRA and a group of donors around agricultural transformation in which AGRA takes the lead. One interviewee stated “multi-donor collaborations are essential for the success of many programs and RFS plays a significant role in providing leadership in these collaborations.” RFS used these relationships to help forge common understanding on shared agendas. In CAADP and CGIAR cases, the length of the relationships was cited as being critical, but relationships were cited even more often in the newer Aceli and PIATA cases.

“Multi-donor collaborations are essential for the success of many programs and RFS plays a significant role in providing leadership in these collaborations.”

Leadership Through Financial Resources

It was stated by interviewees more than once that participants must bring financial resources to the table in order to enter into coalitions, negotiations, or alliances. Financial leadership was more important in some instances than others but was mentioned by at least one interviewee for every case (in a total of 27 of 40 interviews). Financial resources were mentioned as significant factors in fewer of the GAFS interviews (1 of 3) and G7 (1 of 5). As GAFS was launched by Germany and is now being managed by the World Bank, RFS played a smaller financial role. It should be noted that the interview questions for the G7 centered around Blinken’s Ministerial Summit in May 2022 and financial resources were not such a big part of that Summit and that the substantial resources the U.S. committed in 2022 came from many USG agencies.

Financial resources were cited as an important factor in influence in several other cases. Before the N4G Summit, RFS staff reached out to partners, telling them that the US was committing \$11 billion and asked partners “if they could join” i.e., increase their commitments. One interviewee reported

that the N4G Summit in 2021 resulted in larger financial commitments by all actors at the Summit than any of the previous N4G summits. In 2021, commitments totaled \$27 billion compared to \$3.4 billion at the previous Summit in 2017. Institutional engagements were transactional and relied on RFS investing resources. Although their nature was somewhat different because there wasn't an event needing a public "deliverable", the external interviews made clear that partners were well aware of the level of resources involved. For example, an external interviewee on PIATA reported that RFS was "waning in influence" due to being constrained in providing funding. This was in line with the Private Sector Focus Group identifying resource leverage as an important factor in influence by all parties.

The RFS Functional Strategy identified convening as an important role in Global Leadership. Because there were no reported examples of events convened by RFS in the eight cases, it will be further elaborated in the section on RFS Systems and Processes.

Conclusion: The evaluation team concluded that it was relationships built through RFS technical expertise were consistently the most effective and that greater effect was possible when financial resources were brought to bear as well.

RFS Used Quiet Leadership to Achieve Outcomes

The rich interview data shed light on the RFS role and performance in global leadership. The most telling theme that emerged from analysis was the theme of "leading from behind." Both external sources and RFS staff reported that the Bureau was influential and demonstrated leadership. Interviewees talked about "leading from behind", "quiet leadership", "showing up when requested", "sometimes leadership is about sharing information and communication" and being "a high-level advocate." An interviewee stated, "How you get a win at the UN is not about leveraging resources or cajoling or holding people's feet to the fire. It's about finding win-wins and building consensus that way." Because this came up in interviews on all eight outcome cases, it was widespread and reported as playing a role in performance. Moreover, decades of evaluations of all types of projects and programs have demonstrated the success of a big donor like USAID playing a quiet role rather than dominating.

"Quiet leadership": "leading from behind," "showing up when requested," "sometimes leadership is about sharing information and communication" and being "a high-level advocate."

Conclusion: The evaluation team concluded that quiet leadership is an important principle that RFS needs to consider in planning going forward.

EVALUATION QUESTION 2: During the 2020-2022 period of Functional Strategy implementation, including a set of successive and compounding crises, how have RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources either helped or hindered the Bureau's global leadership efforts to respond quickly to unexpected shifts in context?

The eight outcome cases demonstrated examples of RFS leadership and influence. Together with data from the relationship mapping and the additional ten interviews specifically on systems, processes, capacities, and resources, the cases provided evidence of how the structure and nature of the Bureau

influenced the outcomes in order to answer the second evaluation question. This analysis is based on the questions in the interview guide asking which of these factors affected the interviewee's ability to play their role in the outcome and what factors influenced the outcomes.

To reach conclusions about which factors "helped" or "hindered" achievement of outcomes, the evaluation identified factors that are both within the Bureau's control and factors that are baked into how USAID operates and therefore were beyond the Bureau's control. Both types of factors affected how the Bureau played a role in global leadership, and how well they were able to play that role.

The RFS Functional Strategy included three Crosscutting Intermediate Results: (1) Analytics and Learning, (2) Operational Systems, and (3) Talent Management. Analytics and Learning was discussed under the first evaluation question as one type of technical leadership. The other two are considered in this section under the second evaluation question. The outcome cases in Annex I provide additional information on what factors helped and hindered the achievement of each outcome.

RFS SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

In this section, the evaluation team presents the findings and conclusions associated with RFS's formal systems, such as how the Bureau is organized, as well as the less formal processes the Bureau has developed to address challenges in conducting global leadership.

How RFS Global Leadership Efforts Were Organized

During the design of the evaluation, it became evident that the key actors for global and strategic engagement was the Global Engagement Team (GET) whose entire role was global engagement, and secondly the RFS Assistant to the Administrator (AtA) and Deputy Assistant Administrators (DAAs) for whom this was a primary responsibility, but amongst many others. In the past year, the Administrator designated the AtA as the Global Food Crisis Coordinator in addition to her role as the Feed the Future Co-Coordinator. This raised her profile in global engagements, as reported in interviews both within and outside RFS. Interviews with all of the DAAs and the relationship mapping analysis indicated that DAAs were actively engaged in global events and played representational roles in the institutional engagements as well. Senior managers of Centers and offices also played prominent roles. The Communications team in the RFS Front Office was reported by the GE team to have led the UN engagement. Two ad-hoc structures that played a role in global engagement will be discussed in the section on RFS processes later in the report: the FTFCT and the Strategic Engagement Team Leads group. During the study period, there was also a [REDACTED] that several interviewees reported made lines of authority unclear, though that problem has since been resolved. There continued to be a [REDACTED] who played what was reported to be a useful resource in engaging with the food agencies in [REDACTED].

Eleven interviews raised the issue of where the GE team was placed in the Bureau. A couple raised the issue of how much authority the GE team had over the colleagues they relied on to accomplish the work. Another suggested that placement in the Front Office would make them more aware of the important political dimensions of the work.

Helped & Hindered: The many actors carrying out global engagement roles across multiple offices complicated efficiency in responding in spite of the widely reported commitment and hard work of the GE team. The evaluation team concluded that this organization of global and strategic engagement responsibilities was workable but not necessarily optimal.

As discussed in the section on technical leadership, 36 of 40 interviewees identified the importance of strong technical input from the Centers for Agriculture, Nutrition, Resilience, and Water in successfully leading and influencing. Although many interviewees tied the four centers to the Bureau being "decentralized" and "siloeed," in the case of the N4G summit, this was cited as a factor in success.

Because N4G came close on the heels of UNFSS which had demanded so much of so many Bureau staff, the Center for Nutrition successfully fulfilled this priority quite independently which one interviewee reported had made things easier. The relationship mapping showed that interviewees reported working with few RFS staff outside the Center for Nutrition (CN) in their work on influencing outcomes of the N4G Summit. Generally, the lack of coordination across offices is considered an issue, but in this instance, it had a positive aspect.

“Global engagement is sometimes ‘an afterthought compared to programmatic work.’”

Another kind of siloing in the Bureau presented challenges. Staff from the GE team indicated that it was a real challenge to clarify “the priority positions” to convey the “clear and succinct” points needed in briefers and talking points. Technical staff reported that non-technical staff in the GE team, the Front Office and sometimes the FTF Crisis Team (FTFCT) were making decisions about priorities with insufficient technical input. This was reported as “not without tension around the divide between the highly technical staff and “those who play critical roles such as PAE, the Program Office and the Office of Country Support.” Another interviewee reported the perception of GE as “an afterthought compared to programmatic work.”

It should be noted that the siloing of the Centers was reported as having worsened after the BFS/RFS reorganization. Specifically, one interviewee noted that Centers now seemed to work more across the Agency than they worked across the Bureau. This raised the issue of finding the right balance in the coming reorganization.

Helped & Hindered: Organizing the Bureau primarily around the technical centers contributed to the great strength of the technical expertise that the Bureau brought to bear on all its work but hindered setting priorities and cross-office coordination.

Semi-Formal Mechanisms to Support RFS GE Efforts

In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Bureau created the Feed the Future Crisis Team, which was formalized in April of 2022. Interviewees reported that the FTFCT streamlined the usual bureaucratic processes of budgeting and clearances. FTFCT was reported as a successful way to efficiently program the Supplemental funding that Congress passed in 2022 as part of the response to the Global Food Crisis— or at least more efficiently than was normally possible with the complicated USG budget processes. The other Bureau bureaucratic process that was streamlined was clearances which were cited in over a quarter of the case interviews as a challenge as well. Taking a non-random sample of documents from one of the global engagement outcome cases, the team noted that the documents included an average of 17 clearances. The Bureau accounted for between three and ten of them, frequently by Front Office staff. Because the FTFCT's first priority was the crisis and they had a clear line to the Front Office, the myriad clearances involved in the G7 preparations were reported to have moved more efficiently. It was reported that the Bureau did complete a several month review to revamp the clearance process in December 2022 that is not reflected in the comments due to the timeframe.

In addition, an interviewee reported that the FTFCT “enabled a more coherent and coordinated approach” to responding to the crisis. The FTFCT prioritized the many issues proposed for briefers and talking points through the crisis lens. One interview reported, “it focused the Bureau on crisis management and what we needed to achieve in that realm and deprioritized other areas.” Another

interviewee pointed out that “the response to the immediate crisis led to reprioritization of resources and narrowing of focus” which made the response to the crisis coherent and coordinated, but functionally deprioritized the Bureau’s long term development work.” As was noted earlier, this prioritization was questioned by some interviewees.

Another Bureau structure created to address Global Leadership challenges was the Strategic Engagement Team Leads that met monthly to discuss “policy priorities and implementation plans.” It was reported that the Team Leads were helpful in providing input into the global engagement work and helpful with clearances. An interviewee reported that the informal nature of this structure meant that the person designated to be the lead for their office may not have the necessary strategic engagement skills and that the GED staff responsible for producing briefers and talking points had no authority to manage the relationships. It was reported that “the GE team was caught in the middle.”

Helped: Both the FTFCT and the Strategic Engagement Team Leads made global engagement more efficient and effective but with tradeoffs with other Bureau priorities.

Process To Establish All-RFS Priorities

Staff reported that successful engagement, both global and institutional, required clear and succinct messaging that communicated RFS and US priorities. 17 case interviewees and several of the others mentioned the issue of priorities. Particularly in the institutional engagements, staff reported that they weren’t sure that the Front Office saw their outcome as a priority. They could not see how they fit in the prioritization. With respect to global engagements, short deadlines, and the urgency created by tasking from the Administrator, the Department of State, and even the NSC and White House, required very quick turnaround and multiple clearances as evidenced by analysis of a selection of talking points and briefers. One person reported that “I get pulled into last minute discussions of priorities.” Moreover, “lack of clarity around who is responsible for creating priorities causes tension between the top down and bottom-up approach” catching the GE team in the middle.

“Lack of clarity around who is responsible for creating priorities causes tension between the top down and bottom-up approach’ catching the GE team in the middle.”

One interviewee pointed out that what was missing was a process to “prioritize the priorities” for this complex and multisectoral Bureau which will become increasingly so after the imminent reorganization. The Research Community of Practice was another way the Bureau dealt with coordination to identify priorities, but only for priorities within one sub-sector.

Hindered: A process for prioritization of Bureau priorities was needed but not evident.

Convening Power

The RFS Functional Strategy described convening power as one way the Bureau exercised leadership, however, in the context of the 8 outcome cases, no interviewees reported examples of RFS convening events. About a quarter of interviewees (11 of 40 interviews) mentioned the Bureaus’ convening power. It should be noted that the original interview guide did not include a question on convening and questions were introduced later in the data collection primarily with RFS staff. Interestingly,

participants in the Private Sector Focus Group reported that they appreciated RFS's role as a convenor because it enabled them to participate in multilateral collaborations that augment their initiatives' impact.

During the study time period of 2020 to 2022, there were two factors that may have explained the limited convening. In the global engagement outcome cases, other actors were responsible for convening. For example, the United Nations clearly convened the 2021 Food Systems Summit and when Germany held the presidency of the G7 in 2022, they were the convenors. In tandem with the German convening of the G7 Development Ministers in Berlin in May 2022, Secretary Blinken convened the Global Food Security Ministerial event in New York, when the United States assumed the presidency of the UN Security Council which gave the US standing to convene such a meeting. The second factor was that this was the period of the COVID Pandemic, and in-person events were curtailed. Convening of events was clearly diminished during this period.

Although there were not any examples reported of RFS convening events, there were numerous examples of RFS and other USG actors convening multiple preparatory virtual meetings to work with close allies to coalesce around positions for the global G7 engagements, the UNFSS, and N4G. In the case of GAFS, RFS particularly worked with Germany, who proposed the idea, to understand the scope and purpose. One interviewee reported "convening conversations" with 2-3 other partners as common practice in preparation for the G7 Food Security Working Group meetings. A DAA reported the strategy of "convening" virtual meetings with 1-2 colleagues at a time to discuss, prepare and come to common positions prior to big planning events as well as the UNFSS Summit in September 2021 itself. These actors can be seen on the influence maps in Annex I. Other interviewees reported similar strategies. In the N4G Summit convened by the Japanese Foreign Ministry (due to the convention that it is convened by the host of that year's Olympics), the senior nutritionist took an active role in the management group and was therefore in a formal position to convene. However, it was more about the technical leadership that led to that position rather than USG's role in convening.

Helped in a particular way: RFS convening power exemplified the lead-from-behind principle in a way that was helpful in achieving outcomes.

Interagency Coordination

Although interagency coordination was not included in the scope of the study, most of the interviews made at least some mention of working with other USG agencies. Several interviewees explicitly stated that without strong interagency coordination, none of the global engagements would have been possible; the Department of State, the NSC, the Interagency Policy Committee, PPL and many others were essential partners in developing positions and identifying resources. The G7 work was particularly intertwined with the interagency to the degree that the outcome statement for that case references USG rather than RFS. The interagency community was important for institutional engagements as well. The International Development Finance Corporation played an important role in Aceli. FTF is a 12-agency initiative so engagements like CGIAR and CAADP entailed coordination as well. A significant number of interviewees talked more about interagency coordination than coordination with external partners. Because interagency coordination was not included in the scope of this evaluation, it was not investigated so these findings are considered preliminary.

Helped and Hindered: Preliminary findings indicate that interagency coordination played an important role.

Senior Leadership

Senior leadership commitment was cited in more interviews than any other topic (37 of 40 plus most of the non-case interviews). These findings are consistent with countless evaluations. The Bureau's role in the multiple G7 meetings addressing the food crisis that was exacerbated by Putin's war in Ukraine was a notable example. Senior leadership participation was clearly demonstrated as part of a whole of Government response including the President, the Secretaries of State, Agriculture, and Treasury, the Administrator of USAID, and of course the RFS AtA and DAAs. With this high-level commitment, the USG demonstrated clear leadership and exerted influence at the highest levels. RFS provided critical technical leadership which was reflected in the substance for the position papers, briefers and talking points and participated in many of the G7 meetings as well as preparatory meetings negotiating positions and resources. The Administrator's support of the N4G Summit was reported as an element in its success.

Senior leadership was also important in the institutional engagements. CAADP interviewee reported that they believed that attention from senior leadership could have in some way made up for the modest budget available. Other interviewees talked about not being priorities of the Front Office as making it harder to make as much contribution through those cases as might have been possible otherwise.

Helped when present; **Hindered** when not: Senior leadership was critical to performance.

CAPACITIES – HUMAN RESOURCES

Analysis of the outcomes, interviews with Bureau staff knowledgeable about human resources, and relationship mapping identified significant factors with respect to human resource capacities in what helped and hindered the outcomes evaluated in the eight cases. The RFS Functional Strategy included a crosscutting Intermedia Result for talent management: "RFS attracts and retains diverse, high-performing staff and improves competencies of staff and the field." This section addressed talent management as part of human resources.

Size of GE Team

The Global Engagement Team, the part of PAE/SED most directly responsible for this work, was composed of four staff as reported by the Director of the Office of Administrative Services on May 22, 2023. This represented less than 2% of Bureau staff. Interviews with other staff benchmarked this against the USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) which had 40 people working on global leadership and PPL that had 30 working on donor coordination. Although it was noted that the scope of the GE work in those Bureaus was much greater, it is clear that there is a perception by Bureau staff of the differential.

The small size of the Global Engagement Team was recognized as a limitation by interviewees from the Front Office, one citing that they "were stretched" in supporting UNFSS, although that interviewee indicated that they had "staffed up now" (to four). This was also raised by interviewees for the G7 outcome case because there were over 20 G7 events alone in 2022, not to mention the bilateral meetings the Team supported and other types of global engagements. Several interviewees noted that

Hindered: The limited share of the Bureau's human resources allocated to global engagement was not balanced with the magnitude and complexity of demands.

the GE Team worked nights and weekends, particularly during the challenges of 2022. "Staffing constraints limit their ability to be proactive and strategic" reported another interviewee.

Skills, Expertise, and Talent of RFS Staff

The "sheer talent" reported by an interviewee and multiple comments already mentioned recognized the role technical expertise played in both global and institutional engagements. The "talented team" was cited in 31 of the 40 case interviews, evenly split between global and institutional engagement. This talent played a role in the "reputation" of RFS, again split between global and institutional. Some of the RFS reputation was around the work, as quoted earlier in the discussion of the role that Feed the Future's reputation played in the UNFSS example. The reputation of the RFS staff that carried out those roles was equally important. Examples cited included the long but quiet relationship with CAADP and all four of the PIATA interviewees cited talent.

The staff that were reported to have such strong reputations tended to be staff that had worked in RFS and its predecessors for a long time. This was identified by interviewees that reported certain colleagues' reputations but also what the staff members themselves reported about how long they had worked on their technical area in RFS and predecessors. Although this was evident in both the CAADP and CGIAR interviews, long-term relationships were also reported for UNFSS and the G7 Food Security Working Group.

It should be noted that the comment about "sheer talent" was extended to the GE team as well. The GE team was commended by colleagues as "committed and hardworking." Global engagement was an expertise summarized by one interviewee as "translating Bureau positions into a product that is understandable and written in a voice that a person can present" at an event. At the senior leadership level, the skills identified were interpersonal skills, political awareness, and strategic thinking. Two interviewees raised the importance of the skill levels of the GE Team Leads (and that there was variability of these amongst the members of this group).

It was also reported that having strong relationships in the Bureau, in the Agency and in the interagency community was essential in the quick-turnaround timeframe of global events. The GE team played a role in the institutional engagements but mostly as those outcomes interplayed with the global events.

Helped: Technical and global engagement expertise were strengths in Global Leadership. Length of tenure meant very strong reputations and relationships that strengthened ability to influence outcomes.

USAID Human Resources Configuration

Juxtaposed against the importance of relationships and the degree to which long-standing relationships were mentioned as important, 20% of the 222 positions in RFS were vacant at the time of the interview. It was reported that 56 people (25%) had left in the prior 12 months. The disruptions caused by COVID led to this being reported as likely worse than "normal", but reorganizations were also cited; the BFS/RFS reorganization of several years ago and the imminent reorganization as well. Turnover due to COVID was specifically cited as hindering the budget function with turnover at the many offices (Office of Foreign Assistance at Department of State, and USAID's Bureaus for Resource Management, Legislative and Public Affairs and General Counsel) that play key roles.

Moreover, only 23% of the Bureau positions below the Senior Executive Service level were fully permanent in RFS (52 GS positions). FSOs are "permanent" positions but because they rotate every several years, their tenure in RFS was not permanent and were not factored in the percentage. FSOs represent 10% of Bureau positions (22 FSOs). The rest of the Bureau positions were made up

of the usual configuration of Foreign Service Limited appointments and contractors. And, of course, the seven senior staff were comprised of political appointees and SES, also not permanent.

Another challenge was that the FTFCT pulled staff away from their normal jobs. "Because the Bureau doesn't have enough staff for redundancies, folks on FTFCT doubled their workload." It was also reported that the colleagues in the offices left behind had to take on some of their responsibilities.

Hindered: The importance of strong technical skills and length of tenure were at odds with the percentage of permanent positions in the Bureau and the unusually high rate of vacancies due to COVID and reorganizations.

Communications Team

One of the non-case interviewees reported that the Communications, or "Comms" Team was half the size that it had been previously. The Comms Team is located in the Front Office and senior leaders reported that they relied on them for speeches and media. However, one interviewee reported that with the smaller team "we can't get anything out of them anymore...we have to figure it out ourselves." The Comms Team was unable to find time to be interviewed for the evaluation.

Hindered: A smaller Comms Team meant that Bureau staff often carried out those tasks themselves.

Private Sector Engagement Team

RFS's Strategic Engagement Division has two teams: one for Global Engagement and one for Private Sector Engagement. Although Aceli and PIATA addressed private sector financing, none of the other 6 outcome cases had significant private sector elements. Private sector actors played roles in the UNFSS and N4G Summits but did not get mentioned in the interviews as actors that interviewees engaged with actively. Some entities are noted in the Influence Maps in Annex I as actors that were important but not actively with the interviewees. For this reason, the evaluation team conducted a focus group interview with six industry representatives that led to a rich conversation that has been shared with the Private Sector Engagement Team. Several key issues touched on RFS's global engagement role. The participants lauded RFS's role as a convenor because it enabled them to partake in multilateral collaborations that add value to their own initiatives. Participants also appreciated the opportunity for knowledge sharing and technical exchange, particularly in webinars and conferences. Because they see missions as having programming and strategies that are independent of RFS in Washington, they appreciate when RFS acts as a conduit to reaching the missions which is so challenging for them.

Helped: Private Sector Engagement Team's engagement with the private sector actors.

Training

The only training related to global engagement reported was a briefer training by the Comms Team, although none of the interviewees mentioned participating in the training. The Strategic Engagement Team Leads meetings, composed of representatives from each Center and Office, served de facto as a form of informal training but that was not their purpose. Senior Bureau leaders reported having attended the Federal Executive Institute for "leadership training," but it was reported not to include global engagement. Several reported that global engagement in a pillar bureau is unlike donor coordination in missions; they said they learned on the job. A PolicyLINK Webinar presented April

18, 2023, on leadership training with RFS overseas partners demonstrated that leadership was a skill that can be taught. Some staff had had prior experience working with international organizations but that was the exception in the pool of interviews.

Echoing the findings reported in the Skills, Expertise and Talent of RFS Staff section above, the skills identified as necessary for senior leaders were interpersonal skills, political awareness, and strategic thinking. The skills needed by working level staff were translating Bureau positions into a product that was understandable and in a voice that a person could present. Having observed the demands on the working GET, the evaluation team would add a strong ability to juggle, or at least track, the myriad events, demands and clearances.

Hindered: Global leadership training might have expanded skills at staff level and for senior leaders but there was essentially none available.

RFS FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Specific Global Engagement Funds

In addition to the several Bureau leaders that reported that “in order to enter into coalitions, negotiations, or alliances, you need to bring your own resources to the table,” 26 interviewees cited ability to access financial resources as a challenge. Due to the nature of the USAID/USG budget process, which is planned three years in advance with all resources allocated, interviews reported that there are no “fungible” funds available to offer as commitments for global events or alliances. At the N4G Summit, Administrator Powers announced the intention of investing up to \$11 billion over three years with the necessary caveat of: “subject to Congressional appropriations” (source: [press release](#)). It was noted by an RFS budget specialist that in those outyears “tradeoffs can be made; leadership and technical offices choose not to make those tradeoffs generally speaking.” Interviews reinforced the sense that funding was locked in, in spite of changes actually being possible.

“In order to enter into coalitions, negotiations, or alliances, you need to bring your own resources to the table.”

When a crisis becomes a priority, funds are found. Due to the strong US reaction to the invasion of Ukraine, the US Congress authorized \$113 billion in Supplemental funding for the Ukraine response. The very large commitment to Ukraine was an example of the importance of “deliverables” when undertaking global engagement, something tangible to demonstrate the level of USG commitment. Announcing new money such as this was reported as demonstrating strong US leadership, but it was a key aspect of the discussions on interagency coordination.

By definition, supplemental funds are new money that are allocated in response to a crisis. Supplemental funds made possible President Biden’s pledge of \$2.76 billion in “additional US government resources” at the G7 Leaders Summit in 2022 (source: [press release](#)). It was because supplemental funds were budgeted outside the normal budget process that interviewees reported how helpful it was that the staff of the FTFCT had time and knowledge to help program these funds.

Contrarily, interviewees also reported that the usual process for identifying funding to pledge was to attribute existing funding and spending and announce it is a commitment. The \$5 billion that President Biden announced at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in the fall of 2021, also announced by Administrator Powers at the UNFFS, was just such a commitment based on the money budgeted for FTF reported in interviews. This required intensive effort by Bureau staff interviewed to work with USAID Missions to see what could be attributed and committed this way.

Helped but was **Hindered** by processes: Resources were an essential element in the success of the global engagements evaluated but the process of identifying funds for global engagements was problematic.

“Leveraging” Financial Resources

The discussion of resource leadership in the section on EQ 1 described the strategy of using the size of the USG to announce resources as a demonstration to encourage other countries to commit more. A notable example was the \$2.76 billion that President Biden announced at the UN Leaders' Summit in 2022 was more than half of the \$4.5 billion that G7 leaders committed. One interviewee for the N4G Summit case reported “When the US commits a big number, it sets the tone.” Several reported that they worked with colleagues in BHA to “call other donors and say “can you join us? Can you leverage other money?” These actions were reported by interviewees to have contributed to the N4G Summit of 2021 vastly exceeding funds pledged at earlier Summits.

RFS also attracted investments and new resources through strategic partnerships and initiatives through institutional engagements. In one example, by investing in research that demonstrated the viability of the Aceli model, RFS played a significant role in the creation of Aceli Africa, attracting investments from social impact investors such as Brooke Capital. Through funding and advocacy from USAID, Mastercard Foundation, and MacArthur Foundation, Aceli's initiatives led to the leveraging of new resources. Similarly, collaboration between RFS and AGRA attracted investments and resources for the Resilient Agri-Food Systems program and facilitated partnerships with other entities such as USDA which leveraged investments for coordinated efforts.

Helped: Resource leadership resulted in RFS/USG funds leveraging other financial resources.

Amount Of Funding Available

Not having enough financial resources was reported in 23 of the 40 interviews and several of the non-case interviews as well. With an historic Congressional earmark of \$1 billion for FTF and much smaller earmarks reported for climate, nutrition and water, some parts of the Bureau are better funded than others. One third of the RFS budget was reported to be allocated to agricultural research alone, which was reported as “hard to defend” in internal RFS budget discussions.

On the plus side, 19 interviews mentioned the supplemental funds with most of them talking about them as helpfully bringing additional resources. For example, the Center for Agriculture “triangulated with the USAID missions to program Supplemental funds to accelerate delivery of CGIAR innovations.”

Helped: Available funds contributed to RFS outcomes and staff reported frequently that additional resources would have been even more helpful.

EVALUATION QUESTION 3: Has the performance of the Bureau's global leadership through global engagement revealed ways in which the RFS Functional Strategy, systems, processes, capacities, and resources need to adapt or evolve to meet the current agency and global context?

The previous sections presented a complicated picture of factors that both helped and hindered the achievement of outcomes, a complex web of relationships, and multiple, multifaceted priorities. This section tries to weave that together to answer evaluation question number three.

The interviews included two questions seeking input from interviewees that provided additional insights in responding to this evaluation question:

- Based on your experience influencing this change, how can RFS strengthen its role in influencing similar changes?
- What could USAID/RFS do to improve support to those that play influencing roles?

The answers to these questions, in light of analysis and conclusions for EQs 1 and 2, resulted in both ideas shared by the respondents and issues revealed that the Bureau needs to consider when discussing how the Bureau may want to adapt or evolve in response to shifting operational contexts. They are grouped around carrying out RFS's role in global leadership and Cross-Bureau Identification of RFS-wide Priorities. This section presents ideas that are interesting but do not have strength from being widely held. They are included just for consideration.

CARRYING OUT RFS'S ROLE IN GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

EQ 1 explored the three primary roles RFS played in global leadership—technical, reputational, and financial—and identified the principle of quiet leadership that many staff apply when playing those roles.

Ideas Shared by Respondents

The Private Sector Focus Group highlighted RFS's convening power as its biggest asset. Participants proposed that this convening power could be leveraged and used to create a more robust coalition around certain interest areas.

Bureau staff working on gender-related technical issues identified that they had drafted a "Gender Policy" designed to give the GE team pre-approved material to insert in briefers and talking points. They highlighted this as a successful approach in streamlining GE work that could be a possible model to apply more broadly to make the GE team's role more efficient and effective on other issues as well.

Issues Revealed

In various interviews, discussion of the COVID crisis and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and how they exacerbated the Global Food Crisis revealed just how complex and challenging the 2020-2022 study period was. Discussions during co-design similarly suggested that earlier crises such as drought in the Horn of Africa were woven into the multiplicity of crises to be addressed and that these recurring and ongoing crises seriously impact RFS's ability to fill global leadership functions. An example of this comes from the G7's role in the worsening Global Food Crisis—following the invasion of Ukraine—which revealed that food security was at the top of the global agenda in 2022; whether or not it stays there could affect how and the extent to which the Bureau would need to adapt and how publicly and prominently the Bureau chooses to lead.

Another issue that arose from the evaluation is that of global leadership training. Desk review and interviews identified that there was no specific global leadership training to expand skills either at the senior level or the working level. This kind of training was identified in an interview as necessary for evening out the skills of the Strategic Engagement Team Leads. It is unclear what level of global leadership skills staff will have following the reorganization, but global leadership training may be a key area for adaptation.

Staffing structure, and the GE team's lack of direct authority over the Strategic Engagement Team Leads arose as another issue, since this lack of direct authority made it more challenging for GET to accomplish their objectives. The evaluation team has seen examples in other instances in which the relationship was somewhat formalized by including that function, in this case global engagement, in their work plans. For this work plan approach to allow the GE team any authority, they would also need to have input into that part of the staff's Performance Reviews.

The FTFCT was another area where issues were identified. While respondents acknowledged the important role the FTFCT has played, interviews revealed several associated challenges, particularly with composition of the team. The FTFCT was staffed with personnel that were on

detail, which was considered a drain on ongoing Bureau functions. The fact that staff rotated on and off the FTFCT meant that ensuring they had a high level of global engagement knowledge and skills was an ongoing challenge. This was similar to the challenge with the Strategic Engagement Team Leads. The evaluation revealed that the acknowledged contributions of these two groups to global leadership might have been masking the limitations of the GE and Comms teams rather than finding permanent or structural solutions to those limitations.

A revision of the Functional Strategy would need to recognize that crises are ongoing and recurring and therefore should be factored into the global leadership function. As the new Bureau adapts or evolves the global leadership function, Strategic Objective 1 in the Functional Strategy would likely need to evolve to reflect decisions or changes.

Conclusion: Ideas provided by interviewees revealed opportunities in the way the Bureau works to be fully efficient and effective and if priorities permit, the function could evolve to be regularized. Challenges need to be considered while adapting to the new Bureau reorganization.

CROSS-BUREAU IDENTIFICATION OF RFS-WIDE PRIORITIES

Analysis of EQ 2 led the team to conclude that a process for prioritization of Bureau priorities was needed but not evident. Prioritization issues were raised repeatedly by interviewees and resulted in a number of ideas about how priorities could improve the global leadership work.

Ideas Shared by Respondents

One idea suggested by several interviewees was that priorities could help the Bureau to advance donor and private sector engagement to be more strategic and less reactive. A theory of change developed by the staff involved could help in the priority setting and work planning process by identifying intended short- and longer-term outcomes, associated actions (e.g., events) and related messaging (e.g., technical priorities, agendas) and underlying assumptions.

One interviewee suggested that creating a Bureau policy office in the Program Office could help to guide the processes for understanding Bureau priorities, monitor situations that could change priorities and lead processes to adapt and evolve accordingly. It should be noted that the Bureau has a Policy Office, but that office supports policy work in the field as opposed to at the Bureau level.

A crisis Pause and Reflect learning event was suggested as a way to review the status of crises and how they are impacting the Bureau's priorities. This could be conducted every several months. Another suggested practice was to revisit the Global Learning and Evaluation Exchanges conducted prior to 2016 that shared learning from evaluations to inform decisions and practices in order to adjust priorities.

Issues Revealed

First and foremost, topline priorities are needed for the clear succinct messaging that is required for effective global engagement. This was raised by internal interviewees as well as the interviewees from PPL. RFS comprises four centers, each of which have priorities, but the number of times that interviewees raised concerns about priorities indicates that RFS staff are not clear on the priorities across the Bureau. Several interviewees expressed explicit frustration that they didn't understand the Bureau-wide priorities. Some also stated that they did not understand why what they worked on was not a priority. The Global Food Crisis in 2022 was perceived as the highest priority. Interviewees reported that this provided clarity, but it was also at the cost of other work. Transparency gives the staff the information they need to adapt to the Bureau priorities, even if their work is not very high in

the priorities. In the reorganization, the new Bureau will have seven centers and five offices and the need for cross-bureau priorities will escalate.

Because the Global Engagement Team was very small and had few resources, its place in the Bureau priorities was questioned by interviewees. One interviewee said it was sometimes considered as “an afterthought.” Priorities are reflected in a number of ways: staffing levels, whether positions are permanent, funding levels and attention from the Front Office (to attend events etc.) that could inform adaptations in capacities and resources.

Conclusion: The absence of transparent topline priorities revealed ways in which the Bureau's work was hindered. Identifying topline priorities is a necessary adaptation in the context of the evolving status of the Global Food Crisis and the Bureau reorganization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous sections highlighted many areas for possible recommendations and adaptations. That said, the evaluation team is cognizant of the difficult trade-offs the Bureau has been making and has too little information about the upcoming reorganization to confidently make the usual actionable recommendations that an evaluation should include. There are recommendations that the evaluation team considered (such as: the Program Office should work with the Federal Executive Institute to develop a global leadership module to be added to senior leader training) and rejected because of the context of the Bureau reorganization. That said, to continue to perform at the level that the eight case studies demonstrated was possible, the evaluation team determined that three things stand out as needing attention even in the context of the reorganization – and to some degree because of it.

EXECUTING RFS'S ROLE IN GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

The conclusion in the previous section identified that there were challenges that need to be considered when adapting to the reorganization and standing up the new Bureau. Several challenges related to the GE team having limited capacity and that using the FTFCT and Strategic Engagement Team Leads group can augment that capacity but would bring other challenges. The evaluation team agrees with the interviewee suggestion in the previous section that the Bureau would increase efficiency and effectiveness by taking a more strategic and less reactive approach. Whatever priority is given to global leadership functions, planning would allow the GE team to make strategic choices about their work, give the Front Office staff a set of priorities to inform their choices of events to attend, leaders in the Centers could plan for what global engagement they would be expected to engage in, and the rest of the Bureau could better prepare to support them.

Recommendation: PAE should work with senior leadership and the Comms team to establish a rolling action plan for global engagement priority actions and events that reflect Bureau-wide priorities for the next 6-month period. This would need to be within the context of how high a priority global engagement is determined to be, how it is organized and how many resources are allocated to it. This is discussed further in the next recommendation.

Recognizing that the Bureau staff most often use quiet leadership, this action plan should identify whether there should be events that would be lead-from-the-front to garner attention. The action plan should be updated through a form of Pause and Reflect every couple of months to readjust the priorities and avoid just layering on new things that come up. Within the action plan, the demands from the interagency that were deemed non-priority would need to be managed or those demands would overwhelm any planning.

RFS-WIDE PRIORITIES

A key principle of strong global leadership requires clear and succinct messages which is not possible without clear priorities. The conclusion from the previous section is that the Bureau lacks transparent topline priorities and that identifying these cross-bureau priorities is a necessary adaptation in the context of the evolving Global Food Crisis and the Bureau's reorganization.

The Global Food Crisis was a topline priority in 2022, but the new issues being added as part of the reorganization may change the priority configuration. The creation of new centers or offices that will come with their own set of priorities will escalate the need for priority-setting across the new Bureau further.

Recommendation: Program Office or PAE leads a facilitated, transparent Bureau process to discuss, document, and disseminate RFS-wide priorities. The evaluation team recommends the following:

- A participatory group of staff with representation from all Bureau units should first work to establish criteria for how to prioritize e.g., Administrator priorities, demands from the interagency community, size or scope of global events.
- That group would work together to draft priorities in terms of messaging on sectors and issues, financial resource allocations, staffing decisions (number and type of position), bureau organization, and where to prioritize senior leadership time.
- That material would be shared with Bureau leadership to come to a determination of priorities; Bureau staff are looking to leadership for those decisions.
- When senior leadership has determined priorities, they should be communicated to Bureau staff. They should explain, to the degree possible, why choices were made.

One priority that needs to be clarified is that of the global leadership function itself. The analysis on Capacities under EQ 2 made clear that there was an imbalance in the demands and resources at the working staff level. In the section on EQ 3, the evaluation team concluded that the global leadership function could evolve to be regularized if priorities permit.

Recommendation: Senior Leadership should determine how high a priority global leadership should be in RFS and align resources accordingly so that demands and resources are brought into balance. Depending on the level of priority, consider how this should be organized in terms of permanent units and ad hoc working groups.

At minimum, the Bureau needs to bring into balance the demands and resources for global leadership. Establishing an action plan for global leadership would strengthen RFS ability to carry out global leadership more efficiently and effectively under any circumstances. This evaluation offers many ways to strengthen the function through the suggestions and identification of challenges that could be addressed, but a better-balanced global leadership function with an action plan could begin to make a real difference.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: OUTCOME CASES

As discussed in the Evaluation Methods section of the report, the primary method used in this evaluation was Outcome Harvesting. OH is a method in which outcomes are identified and then working backwards, the actions that were reported to have brought about these outcomes were analyzed to understand how to strengthen the Bureau's work in the area being evaluated – in this instance, Global Leadership. This means that the evaluation team led a process to identify cases in which Bureau staff reported global leadership outcomes that had occurred in PPRs and OPs. These outcomes were verified in the evaluation process and the evaluation team found that some outcomes had been more fully realized than others but that all cases had led to leadership and influence outcomes.

The following case descriptions describe the outcomes, the significance of those outcomes, how RFS demonstrated leadership and influence, and what actions (in the context of RFS systems, process, capacities, and resources) affected those outcomes.

As indicated in section on EQ 1, these outcomes are of two types: global engagement and institutional engagement.

Figure 1. Outcome Case Overview



Each outcome case description includes an Influence Map, which is a tool used in the Outcome Harvesting method to analyze relationships amongst the multiple actors involved in influencing change. The palest blue is the "Sphere of Change" and identifies who had a role in implementing the changes. The medium blue is the "Sphere of Influence" with those actors that had influence in what changes occurred. Other actors that were involved but not considered as influential are included in the darkest blue "Sphere of Interest

To better understand how RFS implemented its Functional Strategy, the Bureau commissioned an external evaluation of one of its two main objectives: to provide global leadership. The evaluation team identified and examined eight cases where the Bureau's global leadership contributed to changes in the global environment and led to shared development agendas. This resource presents an overview of one of the eight outcome cases identified and explored by the evaluation team.

GROUP OF SEVEN (G7) RESPONSE TO THE FOOD SECURITY CRISIS 2022

The Group of Seven (G7) is a group of advanced economies that coordinate global economic policy and address transnational issues, with membership including Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In addition to the annual G7 Summit attended by the seven country leaders, meetings of G7 foreign ministers, development ministers, agriculture ministers, finance ministers, and meetings of the G7 Food Security Working Group comprise a variety of annual touchpoints among G7 members. In 2022, the G7 convened additional meetings to respond to the global food crisis resulting from the compounding shock and stressors of the COVID-19 pandemic, recurring droughts in the horn of Africa, and Putin's war on Ukraine, among

Global Leadership Outcome

In response to Putin's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the US Government led a pivot in G7 priorities to address the deepened global food security crisis. In a May 2022 meeting of the foreign ministers, the Global Alliance for Food Security (GAFS) was launched (see GAFS Case Study). At the time of the June 2022 G7 Summit in Elmau, Germany, President Biden committed more than half of the \$4.5 billion that G7 leaders contributed to address global food insecurity. As part of the package to address food security, eight additional countries were added to the Feed the Future Initiative, expanding US support.

Significance

The G7 elevated food security to the top of its global agenda in 2022, addressing the related fertilizer and fuel shortages in all of its engagements (at leaders' summits and with foreign ministers, development ministers, agricultural ministers, and finance ministers). Putin's war in Ukraine worsened a crisis in food security and exacerbated fertilizer and fuel shortages as well. US support was ongoing: from early 2022 to the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May 2023, the U.S. committed \$13.5 billion in acute and medium to long term assistance for food security.

others.

RFS Leadership and Influence

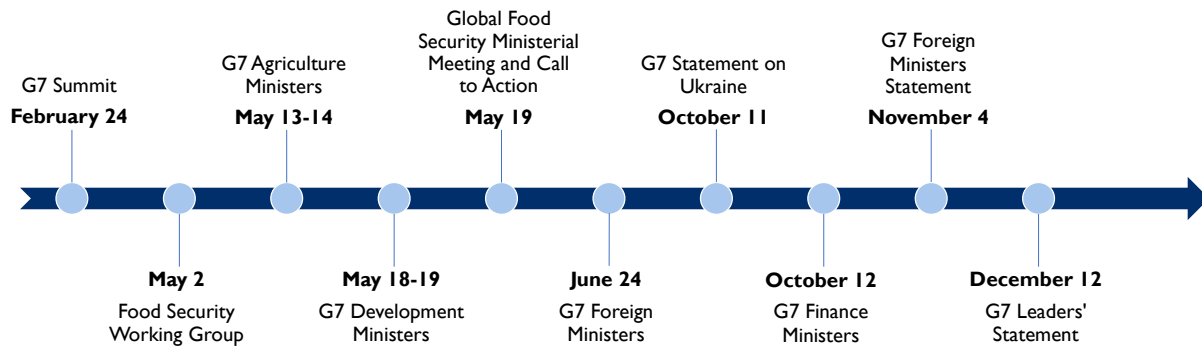
USG leadership brought early attention to how severely Putin's war in Ukraine would affect the global food security crisis. Throughout 2022, RFS provided the key technical underpinning that shaped the positions, briefings, and talking points that informed the USG response, in coordination with the USAID Administrator, Department of State, and Department of Agriculture.

During the course of this evaluation, multiple interviewees reported that RFS staff contributed "true technical expertise" in support of G7 events. This expertise took many forms: the RFS AtA attended all G7 Food Security Working Group meetings, RFS technical staff and Global Engagement team members from RFS provided support to multiple G7 Foreign, Development and Agriculture Ministers meetings. One senior leader in RFS specifically indicated that by providing knowledge content, shaping statements, and participating in working groups, the Bureau was heavily involved in shaping the *USG's Leader Statement* and the *UN Roadmap for Food Security*.

Technical expertise and support RFS provided during the 2022 G7 summit and ministerial meetings was enhanced by the Bureau's financial leadership and relationship building efforts to ensure USG policy priorities were adequately represented. RFS ensured that approaches encouraged partner country leadership, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, to take the lead in identifying their own solutions and reflected in the nature of the technical work provided. The US was reported to have initiated discussions and participated in working groups with G7 members and others to respond to issues in Ukraine such as negotiations, shipping storage, and the

Black Sea Grain Initiative. A key area of influence cited was the participation of the USG and RFS technical staff in the working groups that drafted and edited the conference communique and statements used to communicate what conference participants agreed upon. Furthermore, RFS was reported as being “instrumental in streamlining” the allocation of resources to the field quickly by using an existing mechanism. In one example, RFS rapidly mobilized support to Nigeria for expanding Nigeria’s capacity to produce fertilizer.

Figure I. Major G7 Events in 2022



What RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources helped and hindered?

Despite the series of successes RFS supported in the 2022 G7 year, this case demonstrates the challenges posed to RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources by the need to navigate and influence high-level stakeholders through a rapid series of events to address a global food crisis. One Bureau leader stated that “the Administrator, the Deputy Administrator and the [RFS] Front Office are demanding in a good way”, but you need the tools and staff “to address this problem set.”

Hindered: All of the meetings shown in Figure I involved food security and therefore required significant support by the GE team at RFS, including numerous additional bilateral meetings for preparation and follow-up. Furthermore, requests for drafting and clearance of talking points and briefers came from within and outside the Bureau: RFS Front office, the Administrator and Deputy Administrator’s offices, the Department of State, USDA, Treasury, and many other agencies. In addition, the UN General Assembly in September addressed the Food Security crisis, supported by the Communications team. The press of events may have also complicated setting priorities in the Bureau, particularly between technical and non-technical staff. The number of clearances tied to these events was staggering. In response, the Bureau revamped the clearance process in late December 2022.

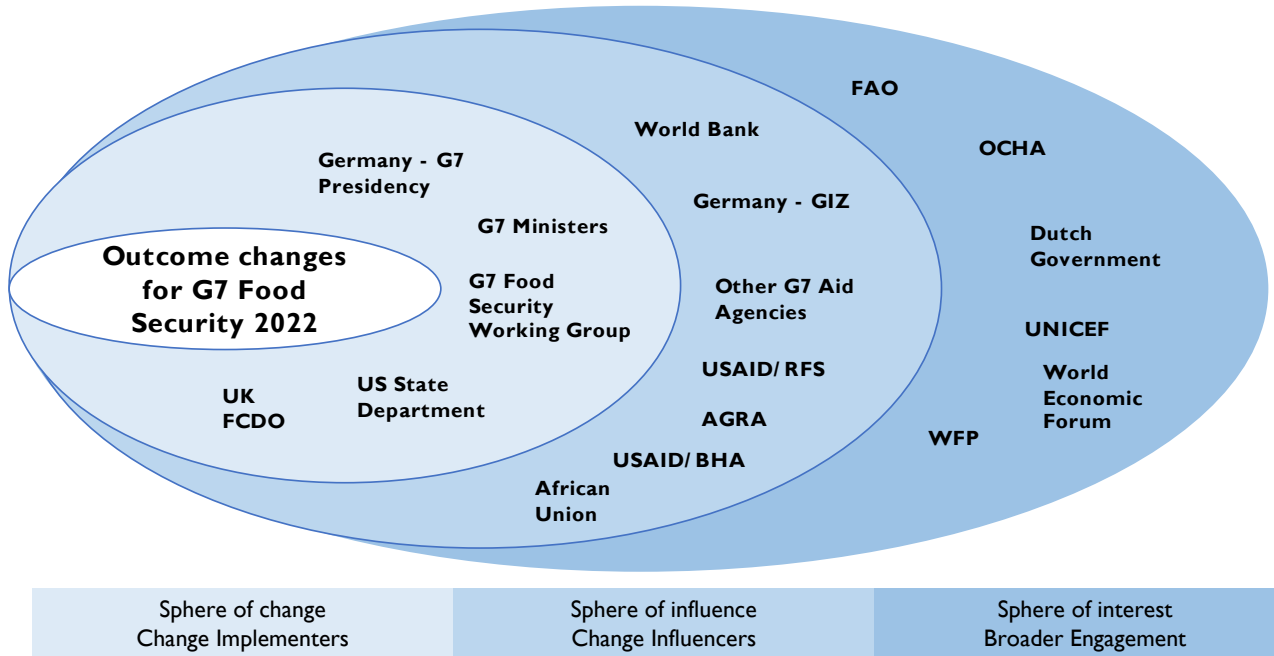
Helped: On the other hand, food security was such a USG priority in its response to Putin’s war in Ukraine, the substantial resources that Congress allocated contributed to US influence.

Helped: The strength of the Bureau’s technical expertise in food security and resilience was demonstrated with the AtA’s participation in the Food Security Working Groups and led RFS to play a central role in preparations for all of the G7 meetings as well as execution of pledges. The Bureau was able to use an existing mechanism to program pledged resources in partner countries quickly.

Hindered: There was common agreement that the GE team was too small for the demands placed upon it, particularly during 2022, which involved an unprecedented workload. Several issues with respect to how RFS was organized to conduct Global Leadership were identified in interviews. While the response to the food security crisis in 2022 involved many Bureau staff, there were reports that some staff tried to avoid getting involved, in order to sustain focus on long-term development work. It was identified that this, in turn, put more burden on the FTFCT.

Included in each case is an influence map, demonstrating the actors present in spheres of change, influence, and interest:

Figure 2. Influence Map (G7 Response to Food Security)



To better understand how RFS implemented its Functional Strategy, the Bureau commissioned an external evaluation of one of its two main objectives: to provide global leadership. The evaluation team identified and examined eight cases where the Bureau's global leadership contributed to changes in the global environment and led to shared development agendas. This resource presents an overview of one of the eight outcome cases identified and explored by the evaluation team.

GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR FOOD SECURITY (GAFS)

Global Leadership Outcome

Following Putin's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the Global Alliance for Food Security (GAFS) was launched on May 19, 2023, as a tangible response to the "unfolding global hunger crisis." GAFS was launched jointly by the Germans who held the Presidency of the G7 and the World Bank, at the G7 Ministers meeting in Berlin. In the later part of 2022, the G7 and World Bank also launched the Global Food and Nutrition Security Dashboard, a "fast-track, rapid response to the unfolding global food security crisis."

Significance

Announced as a way to "bring countries and institutions together to support and leverage existing structures, mechanisms, and programs to respond with urgency to the surge in food prices," GAFS allowed quick replenishment of funds to address the global hunger crisis.

RFS Leadership and Influence

Through its collaboration with the G7 Presidency and others, RFS worked with USG partners to influence GAFS to build upon the existing Global Alliance for Food Security Program (GAFSP) to provide urgent response and avoid the delays associated with building a completely new organization. GAFSP was a program launched by the G20 in response to the 2007-8 food price crisis. The new GAFS was intended to "capture crisis response resources and not duplicate other sources of data." RFS supported partner countries taking the lead resulting in an "inclusive approach... that allowed multiple solutions... depending on the country's context."

The Global Food and Nutrition Security Dashboard was created in November to track crisis response resources. While it had initially included plans for the capture of real-time data on fast-tracked assistance, the design plans shifted to ensure the dashboard endure beyond a single crisis and could draw on existing data from other sources. The Analysis and Learning Division at RFS shared methodological expertise with the World Bank team responsible for the dashboard.

RFS staff participated in GAFS Steering Group Meetings in June, July, September, and December of 2022 and was cited as providing valuable contributions and active participation in various GAFS workstreams. Coordinating across USG, the GE team collected ideas and inputs which supported RFS staff in their attendance at "thought leadership" meetings with GAFS as well GAFS steering group meetings. Through this, RFS provided perspectives to ensure that the Bureau's interests were reflected in final USG positions.

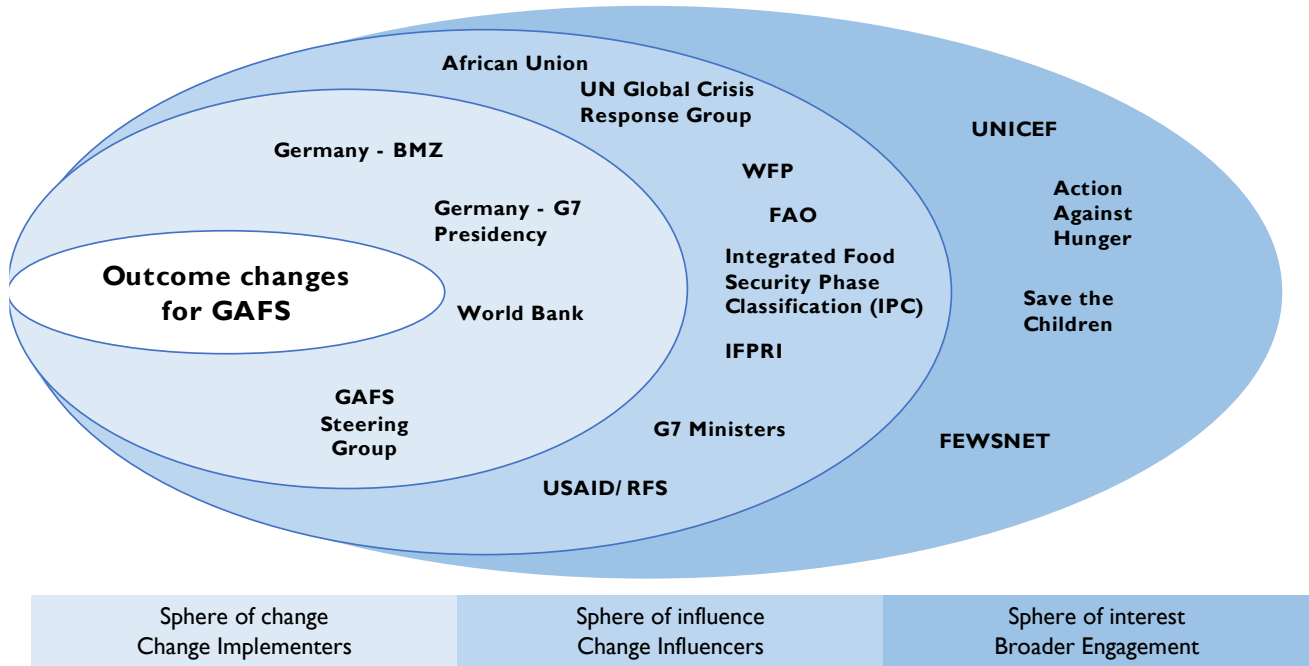
What RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources helped and hindered?

Helped: The case of GAFS provides a clear example in which RFS was able to lead through expertise in analytics and learning technical expertise. The RFS Analysis and Learning Division contributed expertise to the discussion of the GAFS Dashboard allowing them to work with the World Bank shaping the Dashboard, the primary tangible result of GAFS.

Helped: RFS worked through a coordinated approach across the US Department of State, USDA, and US Treasury, in a lead-from-behind approach to help shape GAFS initiatives and advocate for minimized duplication. It was a multi-pronged approach to accomplish RFS's technical analytics positions.

Included in each case is an influence map, demonstrating the actors present in spheres of change, influence, and interest:

Figure I. Influence Map (GAFS)



To better understand how RFS implemented its Functional Strategy, the Bureau commissioned an external evaluation of one of its two main objectives: to provide global leadership. The evaluation team identified and examined eight cases where the Bureau's global leadership contributed to changes in the global environment and led to shared development agendas. This resource presents an overview of one of the eight outcome cases identified and explored by the evaluation team.

UN FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT (UNFSS) 2021

The United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) was a convening held in New York in September 2021, in association with the UN General Assembly. Centered around the complexity of food systems including civil society, private sector and governments throughout the world, the Summit prompted the creation of coalitions and establishment of national pathways to transform food systems and accelerate action toward achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The previous summit was in September of 2019.

Global Leadership Outcome

RFS drove USAID's participation in the UN Food Systems Summit including the \$5 billion multi-year commitment of FTF funds that President Biden announced at the UNGA. USAID also announced eight new FTF priority countries bringing the total to 20.

Significance

One interviewee indicated that the significance of the Summit was that it set the stage for the global pivot to food security as the primary issue of 2022. The progress made on attention to food systems and forming coalitions was undercut just five months later by the pivot to urgent food security due to the invasion of Ukraine. One interviewee said the invasion was a "defining moment— it amplified concerns that everybody was already seeing." Another interviewee noted "the significance of the systems themselves, the outcomes, and the various workstreams of the summit was much less significant" than it would have been had the crisis not occurred.

At the UN General Assembly and the Summit, US leadership was prominent. One interviewee indicated that leadership "...proved to be very prescient because the COVID-induced food crisis went from bad to worse with Russia's invasion of Ukraine." The Summit was in the days just before the UNGA during which President Biden committed \$5 billion over 5 years in his UNGA speech. USAID Administrator Power and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack gave joint statements at the opening, underscoring the how high a priority food security had become for the US.

RFS Leadership and Influence

As the technical lead for food security, RFS ensured that technical staff in the Bureau and other agencies participated in the various working groups and other types of discussions in preparation for the Summit. One interviewee reported that they and another colleague had been particularly focused on "top line talking points, how the USG wanted to show up, what were the commitments we wanted to put on the table, to try to rally other countries around additional contributions with a key focus on food security." Technical discussions varied greatly depending on who took leadership within the USG. The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) developed a coalition that they have been "still driving forward" but their focus is more on issues of domestic importance.

As an example of RFS's leadership role, [REDACTED] went to a pre-Summit meeting in Rome "to try to work out how to collapse all the coalitions that had been proposed... hundreds were proposed." They reported that they were "successful in bringing the two food-loss and waste coalitions together...but unsuccessful in others, such as not collapsing nutrition and sustainable diets." In these unsuccessful efforts, the [REDACTED] noted that there was NOT "sufficient member states' support to go the direction we wanted to go in... Because that is the UN; all about consensus building."

RFS's reputation was also cited as influential, with one interviewee noting that "FTF has been out there for 10 years... our partners have a certain level of confidence in USAID's work...because of what we have been able to achieve." Moreover, because RFS had "a close relationship with Agnes Kalibata, the special envoy for the FSS, USAID met with her regularly in the lead-up to the Summit and even organized a meeting with the Administrator." RFS and USAID "rallied behind the African voice and leadership; and female leadership." In this same vein, RFS wanted to facilitate AGRA's participation in the Summit, and ultimately provided financial support to AGRA to work with countries on their food systems plans, which helped to prepare them for presentation at the Summit. The interviewee that talked about this said, "Many of these plans will be presented at the stocktaking event in July in Rome" in 2023. Another interviewee linked this to the CAADP outcome case as having played a role in the Biennial Review process.

RFS also cited work with emerging donors, particularly on the humanitarian side with the Gulf States. For example, RFS staff reported collaboration with organizations AGRA and Akademiya2063, relationships it had "...built up over time. AGRA has regular calls with permanent secretaries to discuss why they needed to keep their borders open and Akademiya2063 was doing analysis on why we need to keep trade open."

What RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources helped and hindered?

Helped: The relationships that RFS developed while working on the UNFSS in 2021 carried over into the Bureau's facilitation of the global response to the food crisis worsened by Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

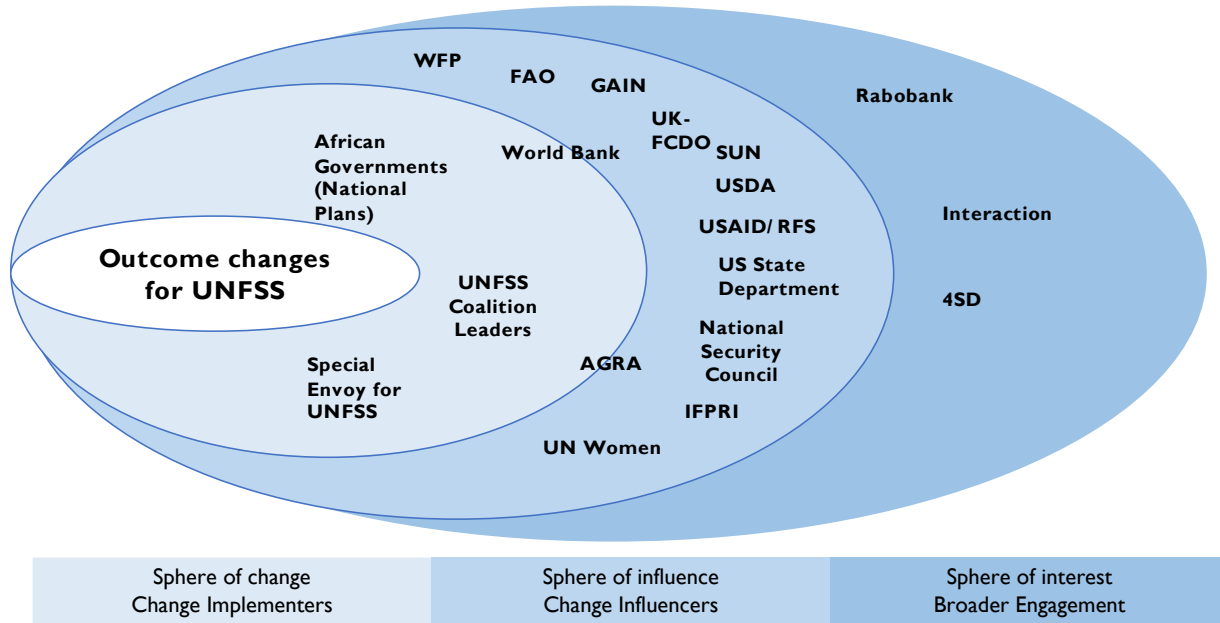
Hindered: When the 2021 UNFSS was held, the COVID pandemic was a significant factor. There was considerable conversation on whether it would be virtual or in person, which distracted from preparations for the substantive work. What was called a "Hybrid work structure for the planning" was reported as "not comfortable" and as having hindered the work because "you are trying to influence and inform conversations with people you don't know from different countries and build that trust, and it is so much harder to do that right" in a hybrid/virtual environment.

Helped and hindered: Interviews raised the issues of budget level and the budget process. One interview concluded "Budget is always tough. While we were able to announce 5 billion, resource constraints are always a factor. It's really difficult in the hydraulics of the US budget process."

Helped: Two staffing factors were reported by another interviewee as significant in RFS influence. "PAE [(he office of the GE team) did fabulous work in getting us all ready and supported. They had to work with the Program Office and the Communications team on the actual deliverables. Those intramural relationships were critical to making sure that we could accomplish the announcements and do the negotiations" at the presummit in Rome. Then [REDACTED] was detailed to Rome to liaise with FAO and other Development and agriculture attachés. We wouldn't have been half as successful if we hadn't sent [this person] to Rome."

Included in each case is an influence map, demonstrating the actors present in spheres of change, influence, and interest:

Figure 1. Influence Map (UNFSS)



To better understand how RFS implemented its Functional Strategy, the Bureau commissioned an external evaluation of one of its two main objectives: to provide global leadership. The evaluation team identified and examined eight cases where the Bureau's global leadership contributed to changes in the global environment and led to shared development agendas. This resource presents an overview of one of the eight outcome cases identified and explored by the evaluation team.

NUTRITION FOR GROWTH SUMMIT (N4G) 2021

The goal of the Nutrition for Growth Summit is to galvanize commitments from governments, civil society, the private sector, donor agencies, and the United Nations (UN) to end malnutrition in all of its forms by 2030, and to strengthen the link between diet, food systems and health which are two of the SDG targets. In 2021, the N4G Summit was held in December in Tokyo, in line with the practice of hosting in the country that hosts the Olympics.

Global Leadership Outcome

RFS's Chief Nutritionist worked closely with the Summit's advisory group, the Summit chair and others in the SUN Donor Network and was recognized as a champion leading this global technical work. The Office of Nutrition coordinated a cross-USG group that led to a financial commitment of \$11 billion.

Significance

During N4G Summit in Tokyo, 156 stakeholders made commitments totaling \$27 billion. This was the largest financial commitment of any of the N4G Summits and included financial and policy commitments from lower- and middle- income countries, such as Indonesia and Bangladesh, as well as from civil society organizations. The Nutrition Accountability Framework tracks progress in implementing commitments.

USAID RFS & Global Health (GH) Leadership and Influence

With deep technical expertise and longstanding relationships in the nutrition community, RFS' Chief Nutritionist took a leadership role in guiding the Summit in coordination with the N4G Advisory Group, the Summit chair, Japan, and with others in the SUN Donor Network.

USAID was involved in the first N4G Summit in 2014 which had established a precedent for bold commitments. One interviewee indicated that "When the US commits a big number, it sets the tone." The [Chief Nutritionist] and RFS colleagues and Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) were able to call other donors and say "can you join us? Can you leverage other money?" As the largest donor for nutrition, it was noted by one interviewee "...when it [USAID] makes a commitment it affects what others commit", demonstrating the financial leadership from USAID, especially RFS, GH, and BHA. RFS also actively worked with State Department and the White House to mobilize commitments from countries around the world.

Multiple staffing factors came together to make the Summit a success, in addition to the pivotal role played by the Chief Nutritionist. RFS staff brought their technical knowledge and understanding to help define the vision and roadmap for the 2021 N4G Summit. The USG Nutrition Champions Group played a key role by bringing actors from various agencies together to identify money for the US' \$11 billion commitment. The Nutrition Leadership Council, housed in the RFS Center for Nutrition, was reported to have played a significant role in coordinating technical efforts and identifying and obtaining financial resources. Since identifying money for the commitment would need to draw on resources allocated to USAID missions, the Nutrition Leadership Council and Center for Nutrition staff made calls to the missions to understand what their important issues were and what they were willing to make commitments for. There was coordination on many levels.

What RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources helped and hindered?

Helped: Relationship mapping demonstrated that the Center for Nutrition was the dominant player in RFS in achieving the significant financial contribution made by USG at the N4G Summit. This is in contrast to most of the other outcome cases, which displayed much more interaction throughout the Bureau. Center for Nutrition interviewees reported very little interaction with the GE team. It was reported that this independence was due, at least in part, to the timing of the Summit, which was impacted by the pandemic. With the Summit taking place

just three months after UNFSS, competing priorities were a serious challenge. In a glass-half-full characterization, one interviewee reported this “bottom-up approach of support from the Center for Nutrition” as having contributed to success. It was reported that the potential USAID influence could have been greater if the RFS Front Office had elevated the issue to the Administrator earlier. By the time of the Summit, the Chief Nutritionist had a clear line of communication with the Administrator to clarify talking points, etc. The team concluded that the direct line may have streamlined processes and led to the “glass-half-full” conclusion.

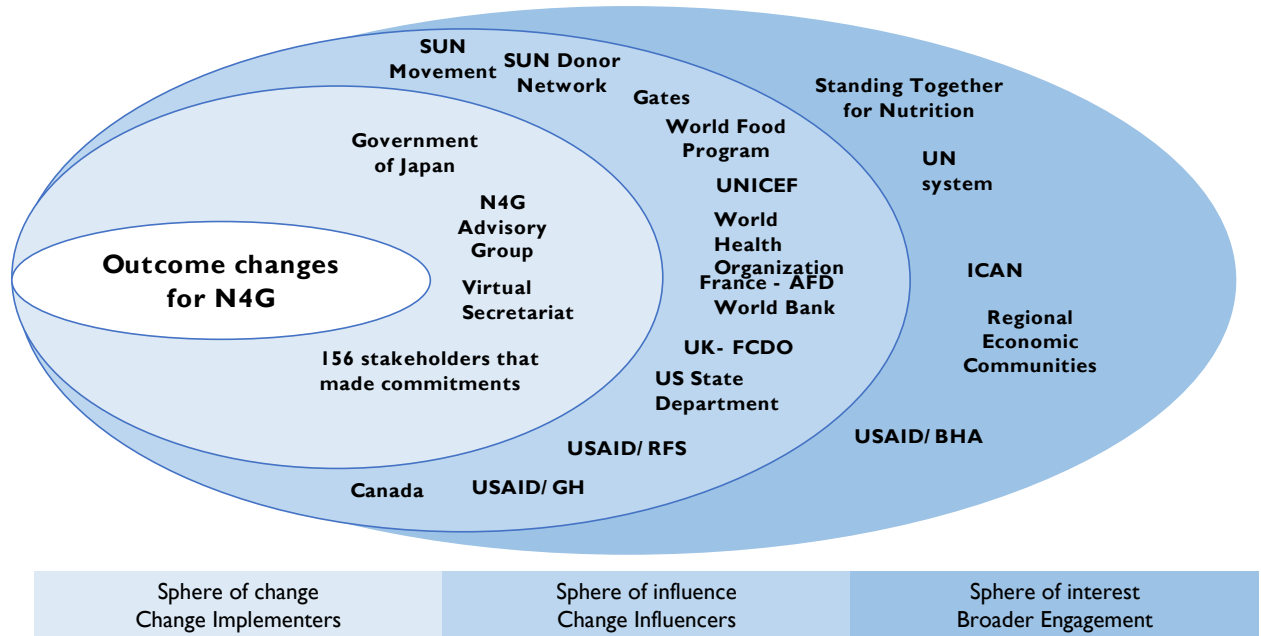
Coordination in USAID was reported to have begun in Global Health, starting with the Global Nutrition Coordination Platform drew in the US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), USDA and Peace Corps who continued to play important roles even as leadership shifted to RFS. For this global event, leadership by RFS rested predominantly with the Center for Nutrition but included a broader set of actors outside the Bureau.

Hindered: The N4G 2021 outcome case shares resource and budgeting issues as reported in other cases, as well as a few issues unique to this case. Concern was expressed by an external interviewee that the “need for funds for Ukraine [is] a risk for achieving commitments to N4G” which would be true for any of the outcome cases. As a more unique constraint, RFS resources are allocated for agriculture, and one interviewee indicated that this would make it hard for nutrition priorities to compete. Necessary collaboration between RFS, and GH and BHA, which also house nutrition programs, further complicated the process. With its role in crisis response, BHA has had a practice of not making any projections for future funding levels, which made it difficult to develop the resource commitment to be announced at the Summit. In addition to the review of available funds, trend analyses were conducted to try to ascertain what levels of funding would be realistic over several years.

Helped and Hindered: As was mentioned, the N4G Summit was postponed a year due to the pandemic. Both factors made the N4G Summit a greater challenge. COVID raised the profile of the nutrition issues, causing all of the nutrition indicators to “backtrack.” This higher profile may have played some role in making the Summit such a success.

Included in each case is an influence map, demonstrating the actors present in spheres of change, influence, and interest:

Figure I. Influence Map (N4G Summit 2021)



To better understand how RFS implemented its Functional Strategy, the Bureau commissioned an external evaluation of one of its two main objectives: to provide global leadership. The evaluation team identified and examined eight cases where the Bureau's global leadership contributed to changes in the global environment and led to shared development agendas. This resource presents an overview of one of the eight outcome cases identified and explored by the evaluation team.

ACELI AFRICA

Aceli Africa is a blended finance mechanism which incentivizes and facilitates lending to the “least served and most impactful” segments of the market. Aceli Africa was established in 2018 and reaches agricultural Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Africa.

Global Leadership Outcome

RFS was instrumental both in the research and analysis work that demonstrated that the financing model that became Aceli was viable and for contributing funding to the creation of Aceli.

Significance

Aceli committed to mobilizing over \$600 million in agricultural small and medium enterprise (SME) finance within five years to serve smaller companies, women-owned businesses, food security crops and climate-smart agriculture. Aceli established that market-driven, data-driven, collaborative access to finance for SMEs and other underserved segments of the market was viable. By the end of 2021, Aceli had already mobilized \$87 million, reaching 750 SMEs and 450,000 smallholder farms.

Prior to the creation of Aceli, there was an untested assumption that commercial lending to agricultural SMEs was not viable. Through a study funded by USAID, it was established that a market-driven approach based on data from 2000 loans from 20 different lenders could identify the costs and risks, showing how this gap could be addressed. By collaborating with market lenders, banks, and international impact investors who offered a variety of financial products, Aceli's approach provided incentives for financial institutions reaching underserved market segments – for example, lending to SMEs, especially women- or youth- owned SMEs. Aceli has also worked with AGRA on policy constraints and building capacity to manage finance and have partnered with TechnoServe and local organizations to provide technical assistance to the smaller companies, women owned businesses for food security crops and climate smart agriculture.

RFS Leadership and Influence

RFS was a leader in establishing the viability of the model and the initiative leading to the creation of Aceli. RFS was active in the Council on Smallholder Agricultural Finance (CSAF) where the issue of finance for SMEs was discussed. In these early discussions, RFS participated through relationship building and technical support and not through financing. When the question arose about whether commercial lending to smallholder financing was profitable, USAID funded the first study on profit dynamics for smallholder agriculture, which ultimately clarified that there were ways to make SME agriculture financing viable. Soon after this study was finalized, Aceli was conceived by one of the CSAF participants. Through a Global Development Alliance (GDA) open window, Aceli applied for USAID funding to co-fund a private sector-oriented intervention.

RFS was one of the first movers in profit dynamics for smallholder finance, participating in the early discussions that led to assessment of the viability of this type of finance. In activity design, webinars, and technical input engaging in technical conversations with Aceli, key individuals in RFS played essential roles. RFS technical staff were partners in defining Aceli's reach – RFS staff reported weekly dialogues with Aceli leadership – and as a whole, RFS was cited by an external interviewee as a “major donor that can significantly influence the project”.

RFS demonstrated leadership in influencing the changes in Aceli providing crucial support and advocacy for Aceli from its inception. As the first anchor donor, RFS's commitment set a precedent and inspired other organizations to join, highlighting the leadership role RFS played in attracting additional funding and enabling Aceli's growth. USAID provided the initial \$10 million anchor commitment and was in active dialogue with other donors. USAID

resources were reported as catalytic, and were followed by commitments from the MasterCard Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, the IKEA Foundation, and from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), and the Swiss Development Corporation.

What RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources helped and hindered?

Helped: Characterized as “not a typical USAID program”, Aceli was not developed through a typical procurement process. For decades, challenges related to procurement rules have been present in USAID – but in this case, an RFS interviewee reported that “Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA) staff worked with us to find the GDA solution.”

Hindered: Aceli is managed out of RFS. It was reported that in this case, headquarters was “operating as its own mission leading to a disconnect between central operations and the country operations.” This necessitated flexibility and communication to try to find the missions that have the interest and resources in working with Aceli.

Hindered: Communication was reported as more difficult due to the way in which staff, particularly Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) “...rotates every couple of years. Most FSOs are not familiar with finance so one form of flexibility is to work with those officers who do understand it.”

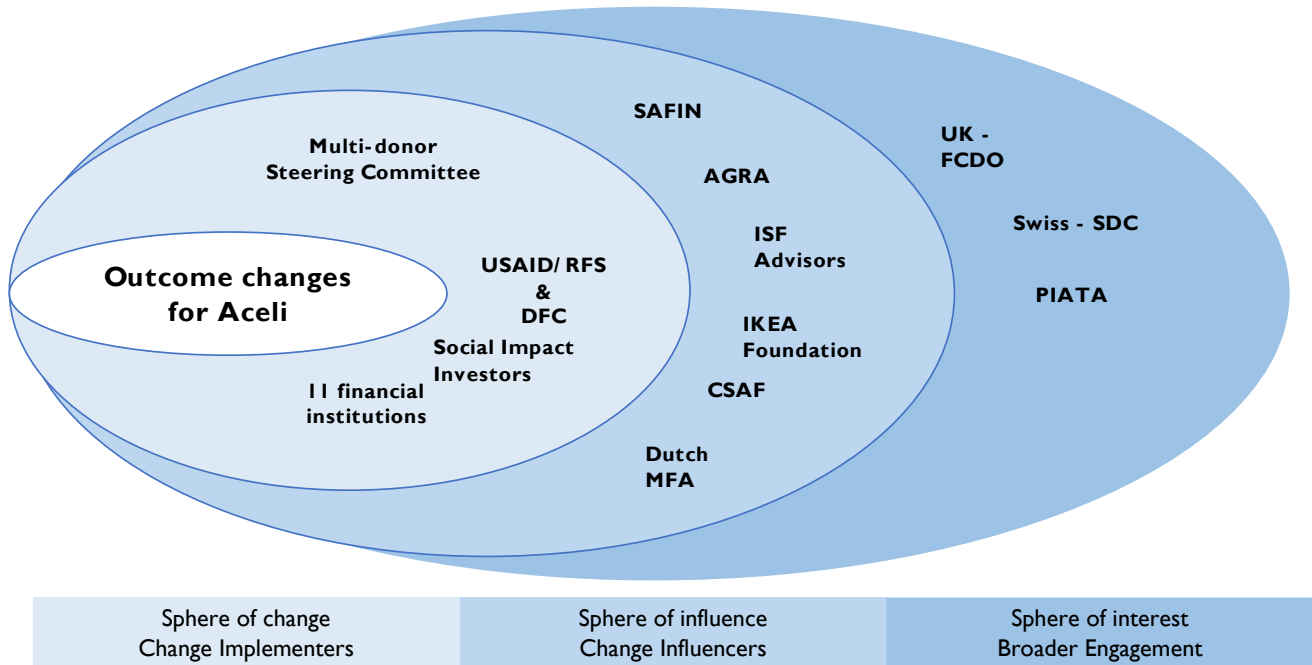
Hindered: At the time the interviews were conducted, only two staff in the Bureau worked on Aceli, and one interviewee indicated that they had previously been “a team of one.”

Helped: Aceli is an outcome case in which the role of analytics and learning was prominently important. USAID funded the initial studies to gather data on the risks and costs involved, ultimately leading to the identification of funding solutions and the creation of the organization. The solution is data- and evidence- driven: the members of the Collaborative for Smallholder Finance shared their confidential information to a third party who anonymized it. With that data, the third party was able to determine the cost and risk of such loans.

Helped: The Aceli approach to financing was a groundbreaking solution and prompted additional exchanges and collaboration to continue learnings. One interviewee reported that “in November 2019, a community of practice was established, bringing partners together and facilitating exchanges between lenders about their experiences with risks and strategies. This led to unexpected emulation-driven learning with many lenders returning to their countries with insights gleaned from other commercial actors.”

Included in each case is an influence map, demonstrating the actors present in spheres of change, influence, and interest:

Figure 1. Influence Map (Aceli)



To better understand how RFS implemented its Functional Strategy, the Bureau commissioned an external evaluation of one of its two main objectives: to provide global leadership. The evaluation team identified and examined eight cases where the Bureau's global leadership contributed to changes in the global environment and led to shared development agendas. This resource presents an overview of one of the eight outcome cases identified and explored by the evaluation team.

PARTNERSHIP FOR INCLUSIVE AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICA (PIATA)

PIATA is a strategic partnership created in 2017 to enable African agriculture actors to do business differently and support leaders to drive an inclusive agricultural transformation. It is led by AGRA, an African-led organization focused on scaling agricultural innovations that help small farmers and PIATA includes the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, USAID, the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, and the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development.

Global Leadership Outcome

The PIATA platform brought together AGRA and multiple donors, including USAID, through around a shared commitment to driving inclusive agricultural transformation through collaboration, analytic thinking, and evidence-based approaches. Because of PIATA's early success, the MasterCard Foundation saw AGRA as an attractive opportunity for them to help build on a legacy that had been built over 15 years of investment from various donors including Rockefeller and USAID. The MasterCard Foundation has recently been discussing a substantially larger commitment than the original investment of \$10 million by RFS's predecessor BFS.

Strengthening policy environments for inclusive agricultural transformation through synergizing the efforts and objectives of multiple players was the foundation for PIATA's agenda. The recent transition to PIATA 2.0 aimed to address perceived shortcomings in the work on strengthening policy environments by strengthening country systems for analytic thinking and evidence-based approaches. These efforts to address shortcomings were reported as building a foundation for strong decision making and adaptation. Moreover, interviewees cited the PIATA commitment for inclusive transition that mainstreamed gender and youth activities – one interviewee reported that targeting extension services to women farmers and young farmers to have been “the most significant contribution” of PIATA 2.0. Demonstrating the business case for working with youth to financial providers was cited as another of PIATA 2.0's important contributions.

One interviewee concluded that PIATA was a venue for cross-fertilization of ideas among donors in support of the common agenda. For example, the Value4Her activity was proposed by AGRA to RFS, and the Bureau became an early supporter. In that vein, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in Germany (BMZ) reached out to USAID for collaboration with AGRA on the African Rice Initiative.

Significance

Due to both its collaboration with key donors under the PIATA strategy and because of the perceptions of its reported strong connections to donors, AGRA has been able to play a leading role in international fora on food systems such as UNFSS, the African Green Revolution Forum, and the US-Africa Summit in Washington, DC. AGRA extended collaboration on the PIATA agenda to play a trusted role in fostering collaboration working with various partners including USAID and African stakeholders.

The PIATA platform promoted collaboration towards an agreed upon set of objectives to achieve inclusive agricultural transformation in Africa. It has transitioned to a revised theory of change with stronger analytic and evidence-based tools for adaptive decision making. To do so, it has concentrated significant and increasing resources.

RFS Leadership and Influence

RFS predecessor, the Bureau for Food Security, was reported to have been influential particularly during the 2017 PIATA formation. It was reported by an external interviewee that while collaboration and technical dialogue continue in important ways, issues maintaining committed levels of funding have limited the scope of

RFS's role. In addition to early funding, RFS played a technical role in overall PIATA design, revisions to the theory of change, testing assumptions, and adapting to the changing context. The strength of the relationships built on the technical expertise of several RFS staff has helped continue the collaboration in spite of a decreased financial role.

What RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources helped and hindered?

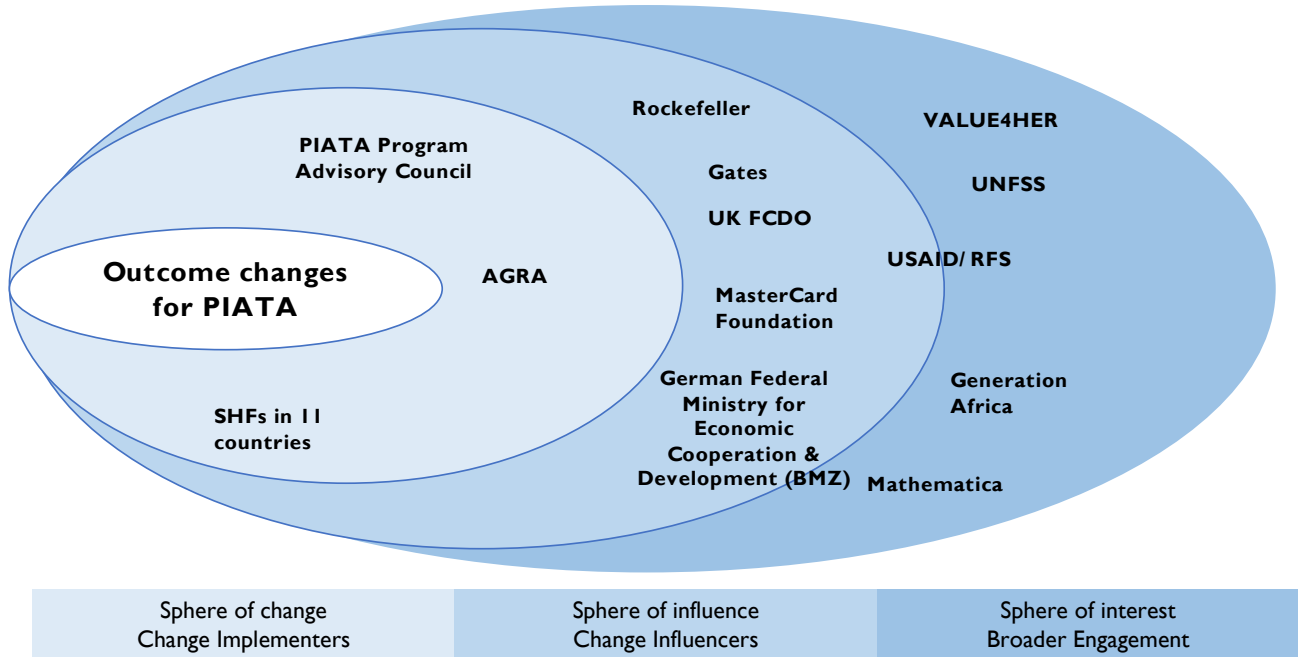
Hindered: The PIATA outcome case offers an example of the way programming financial resources can hinder full achievement of plans; programming was executed with core funding from the Bureau and additional funding from mission participation. PIATA used a Global Development Alliance (GDA) mechanism designed to “foster partnerships between fairly equal partners.” RFS committed \$90 million to the GDA, but then only provided \$15 million, the difference to be coming from mechanism buy-ins from USAID missions. There were reported successes, such as in Ghana, where AGRA was reported to be “playing a crucial role” in supporting Ghana’s response to multiple challenges and shocks, including COVID and the fertilizer crisis. The mission collaborated through PIATA to provide matching funds for discounted fertilizer and support to the agricultural sector.

Hindered: The structure of the GDA which required AGRA to identify activities in the African missions put PIATA in a position of what one interviewee called “any other NGO competing for funding opportunities.” USAID missions have their own strategies and priorities, which ultimately were not as good a match with PIATA as originally envisioned. One interviewee characterized the result as “a fragmented approach that did not foster a collaborative environment in which agreed upon priorities and investments could be effectively implemented.” USAID only realized \$47 million of the original commitment, a diminished contribution which limited its impact. An external interviewee thought that RFS had a diminished role in donor meetings. This challenge in aligning a centrally funded GDA that must be implemented in the field with the missions’ objectives and resources was also reported in the Aceli outcome case.

Helped: Although resource leadership was not realized in the PIATA outcome case, strong technical relationships were reported to have continued because of the RFS technical staff’s ongoing connections to PIATA. The evaluation team concluded that this mitigated the diminishing resource leadership.

Included in each case is an influence map, demonstrating the actors present in spheres of change, influence, and interest:

Figure 1. Influence Map (PIATA)



To better understand how RFS implemented its Functional Strategy, the Bureau commissioned an external evaluation of one of its two main objectives: to provide global leadership. The evaluation team identified and examined eight cases where the Bureau's global leadership contributed to changes in the global environment and led to shared development agendas. This resource presents an overview of one of the eight outcome cases identified and explored by the evaluation team.

COMPREHENSIVE AFRICA AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (CAADP)

CAADP is an Africa-wide initiative to help African countries eliminate hunger and reduce poverty by raising economic growth through agriculture-led development. It was created in 2003 as part of the African Union's New Partnership for Africa's Development.

Global Leadership Outcome

RFS's long support to CAADP and championing of African leadership in African development led to recent improvements in measurement and reporting systems that have provided credible data for the CAADP Biennial Review (BR) process. The mutual accountability of the BR process has led African governments to take actions to strengthen agriculture policies and programs in their countries.

Significance

The CAADP Biennial Review process enhanced mutual accountability amongst African Union (AU) member states for meeting targets for food and nutrition security that they set together at the 2014 AU Assembly in Malabo. Recent improvements in measurement and reporting systems have provided credible data that has led African governments to take action to strengthen agriculture policies and programs in their countries.

As part of ongoing efforts to improve the quality of the Biennial Review process, data and reporting, a group of institutions including RFS' PolicyLINK activity, have studied the use of the Reviews. This provided evidence that governments have changed policies and priorities due to the Biennial Review process in which Heads of State came together to review progress or lack thereof. A post on USAID web platform AgriLinks identified several instances. This included Mozambique – which made several policy adjustments including revisions to the National Agricultural Investment Plan, and Côte d'Ivoire and Niger – which adopted laws to promote private sector agriculture investments.

This level of public accountability was reported as “unprecedented” and representing a “major innovation.” Building public institutions that use evidence to drive decision making and having a public conversation about progress in achieving stated targets shifted perceptions in AU countries of how planning and decision making are done. The Biennial Review process was also reported as being held up as a model to other parts of the world.

USAID Leadership and Influence

CAADP has become a quintessential example of the RFS ethic of leading from behind. USAID was a leader in the establishment of CAADP several decades ago and was cited as championing African leadership and ownership of agricultural development. RFS' continued presence was seen as fostering credibility among donors. USAID supported where needed and continued to engage in technical dialogue. Several RFS technical staff served as chair of the Development Partner Coordination Group. In that group, they worked with other donors to help them understand the importance of this evolution in CAADP to an evidence-based process and also worked with other donors to put money behind it. In response to the ending of the multi-donor trust fund managed by the World Bank, RFS staff worked with other donors to try to make three-year commitments which would be instrumental in the African Union's ability to plan strategically for the end of the Malabo commitments in 2024.

It was reported that USAID has been the “most reliable partner” with CAADP, over a long period and that this led to trusting relationships between USAID and the AU – including trust that AU and CAADP had built with RFS partners, such as through PolicyLINK. Several interviewees reported that there was a cadre of USAID and CAADP staff that had worked together for 10-15 year, and these trusted relationships are indicative of RFS technical leadership that puts African leadership first.

RFS has consistently supported the technical underpinning of CAADP. During the study period of 2020 to 2022, RFS supported a dashboard with the data for all the indices for the Malabo targets using the countries' own data. Technical experts from RFS reported participating in the deliberations on indicators along with multiple technical institutions. Both International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and Akademiya2063 received RFS support to strengthen the indicators "to be measurable, trackable and legitimate to all involved." RFS staff reported that they championed the Biennial Review with African governments and with other donors. The Malabo Policy Learning Event was another form of technical support – originally co-hosted by USAID's Africa Bureau when that was the home of this work, it has become a CAADP hosted event with the support of PolicyLINK.

What RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources helped and hindered?

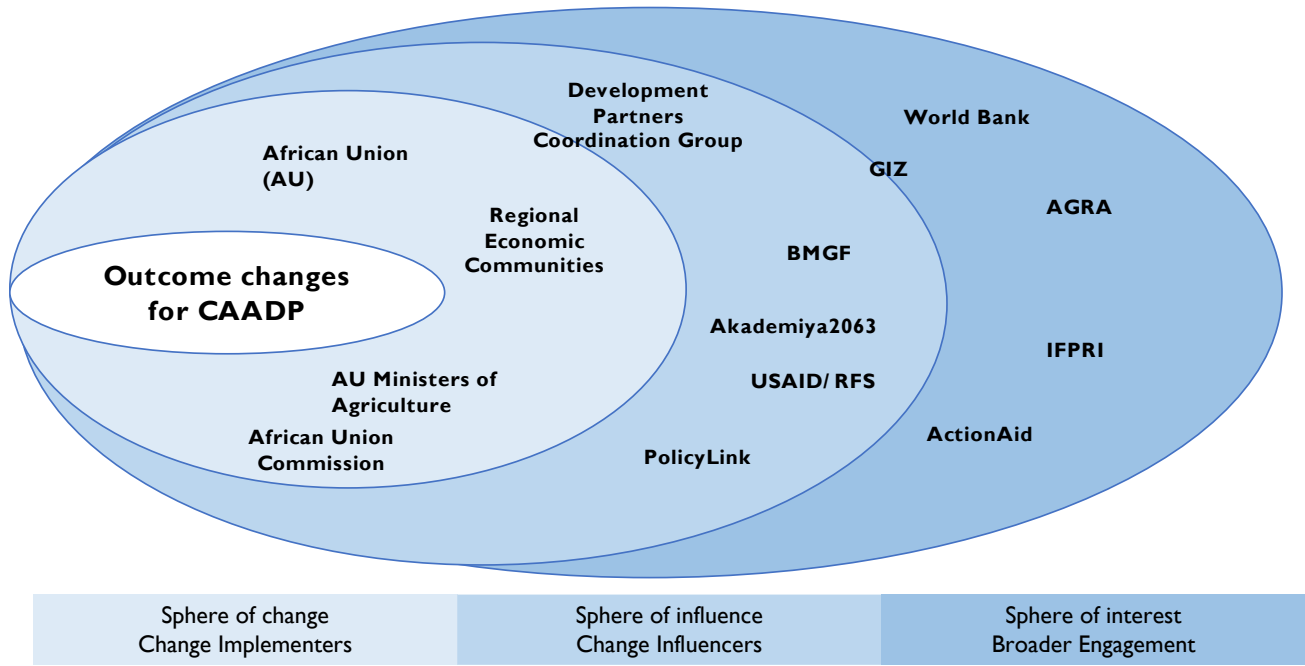
Helped: RFS's deep technical expertise and long relationships with CAADP are mentioned above as significant in RFS influence and leadership. The technical expertise with analytics and learning helped contribute to the Biennial Review process.

Helped, then Hindered: Budget was raised repeatedly as a constraint in ongoing support to CAADP. Support for CAADP moved to BFS during the last reorganization from the Africa Bureau, putting it in an environment that an interviewee conveyed as less suited to supporting a regional institution. One staffer noted that "it is resources that has allowed us to stay committed to the [CAADP] agenda and continue to support all the African institutions that are a part of it." Finding sufficient resources was reported as becoming "a real challenge." The inability to make a commitment that lasted three years to allow the AU to plan better was reported as another financial resource issue.

Helped and Hindered: Although there have been notable examples of RFS staff committed to African leadership for agricultural development, one interviewee pointed out that not all staff are as committed to this more supportive role. There was not always the skill and ability to work truly collaboratively with partners.

Included in each case is an influence map, demonstrating the actors present in spheres of change, influence, and interest:

Figure I. Influence Map (CAADP)



To better understand how RFS implemented its Functional Strategy, the Bureau commissioned an external evaluation of one of its two main objectives: to provide global leadership. The evaluation team identified and examined eight cases where the Bureau's global leadership contributed to changes in the global environment and led to shared development agendas. This resource presents an overview of one of the eight outcome cases identified and explored by the evaluation team.

ONE CGIAR

The Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) has been the premier agricultural research consortium in the world since 1971. Today, the consortium is known as OneCGIAR, a change which reflects the consolidation of centers to allow for optimization of resources.

Global Leadership Outcome

RFS technical expertise, funding, and collaboration with Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and other partners influenced the OneCGIAR transition, according to multiple interviewees. One interview characterized the transition as "...a dynamic reformulation of CGIAR's partnerships, knowledge, assets and global presence, aiming for greater integration and impact in the face of the interdependent challenges facing today's world."

Significance

For 60 years, CGIAR was a consortium of independent agricultural research centers around the world. During the CGIAR reform process in 2020-2022, interviewees reported that the transition to OneCGIAR aimed to consolidate administrative tasks, promote collaboration, and achieve greater impact through system initiatives. The 2022 signing of the agreement by all parties involved was indicative of the intention to break down barriers and foster collaboration among CGIAR centers, enhancing their influence on agricultural research and policy reforms. CGIAR was well networked within and attuned to the needs of the Global South.

From a USAID perspective reported by several interviewees, the significance of the OneCGIAR transition was that we traded "some of our very USAID-centric priorities" for the ability to "leverage other donors' investments for an overall more impactful agenda" and "seeking higher impact, stronger partnerships, and bringing thematic research areas together such as crop improvement on seeds and agronomy and soils." The franker interviewees indicated that the expectations of the transition had not yet been realized. At the time of the interview, there were 33 OneCGIAR initiatives which the interviewee said was "a concern that they are not prioritizing and concentrating resources" in ways that the transition potential might have made possible. Reflecting on the expectations from the transition, another interview noted, "it [the transition agreement] just got signed in January. There are challenges that are being addressed in specific ways in formal processes" – indicating hopefulness that the full potential would be realized.

RFS Leadership and Influence

The recent transition "was influenced by USAID/RFS funding and technical expertise, particularly through successful collaboration with the Gates Foundation and other partners" reported an interviewee. Two interviewees reported attending multiple meetings including the CGIAR Systems Council where decisions were being made. An outside interviewee stated that during the transition process, "USAID plays the role of the glue that keeps them in good dialogue and working together" and that USAID's representatives were "always asking the right questions in diplomatic way[s]." One interview summarized by noting that "Without [USAID] engagement, there wouldn't be the momentum to move in a better direction."

Even during the transition process, USAID continued its long collaboration with CGIAR. Examples provided by a number of interviewees reflected the depth of this collaboration, in areas that included:

- Shaping agri-food systems programs "working with a range of donors and scientists",
- Genetics innovation
- Revitalizing the breeding program,
- A friends-of-gender donor group

- Continuing earlier work on Crops to End Hunger

CGIAR is an example of how three types of leadership combined to have a strong influence. Several interviewees reported that the US is the leader in funding agricultural research globally and that makes it influential. An interviewee communicated that this financial leadership was combined “with having the technical expertise to engage at all levels.” A third talked about USAID reputation citing “the visibility that USAID brings to any initiative [it] get[s] behind.” This person talked about how the \$25million RFS invested “into Crops to End Hunger and that convinced other funders.” The fact that RFS was able to make a multi-year commitment to CGIAR for climate “signaled to everybody that the USG stands behind the CGIAR reform. So, when we sit at a table, people understand that it is not just us speaking as an individual technical expert, but we’re representing a solid Government effort.” RFS’s financial leadership was combined with strong technical leadership and RFS and the USG’s reputation to influence CGIAR technical outcomes as well as the transition to OneCGIAR.

What RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources helped and hindered?

Helped: USAID’s technical expertise in agriculture, and specifically agriculture research, which is now largely concentrated in RFS, has been globally recognized for decades. Multiple interviewees report “the depth of highly technical staff resources on agricultural research.” As one stated, USAID has “high capacity both individually and in the way [it’s] structured so [it] can pull in technical experts as needed and stay engaged as a team.” One example cited was that when Australia raised the idea of a gender group, RFS was able to respond. Overall, the role of technical expertise was explained as: “[RFS is] influencing these global agendas where technical staff are really important. If [RFS] goes in with a sort of less than very proficient technical capacity, people don’t listen.”

Helped: Several issues were raised with respect to RFS organization around technical centers. One said that having technical staff “centrally based” in Washington gave them freedom to collaborate with an organization such as CGIAR.

Hindered: CAADP interviewees noted that in the previous Administration, there was a move to make all RFS staff members generalists. One interviewee talked about the importance of keeping a chief scientist in the front office so technical staff have a voice; another noted the challenges of priorities, briefers and talking points getting “so simplified that important technical details get lost.”

Helped: The depth of RFS technical expertise for agricultural research was matched by the budget. One interviewee reported that “The Feed the Future research budget took a third of the Bureau’s budget. We had to fight for it because there were always competing priorities” was stated by one interviewee but referenced by others. Because of the CGIAR mechanism and also perhaps because of the depth of staffing, the Supplemental funding allocated in response to the food, fuel and fertilizer crisis exacerbated by Putin’s invasion of Ukraine became an opportunity. One interviewee reported “triangulating with missions” to understand their needs and priorities, they were able to use those funds to accelerate delivery of CGIAR innovations to the missions.

Hindered: The COVID Pandemic was reported to have impeded the OneCGIAR transition, with one interviewee noting that “The main barrier on the CGIAR reform process was that communication with host countries was crucial but hindered by the COVID-19 pandemic.” It was explained that it was difficult for reformers to travel to the countries that hosted the agricultural research centers and engage in the necessary face to face communication with all relevant stakeholders. As another interviewee stated that “I can think of frictions that developed that could possibly have been avoided had the communication been in person.”

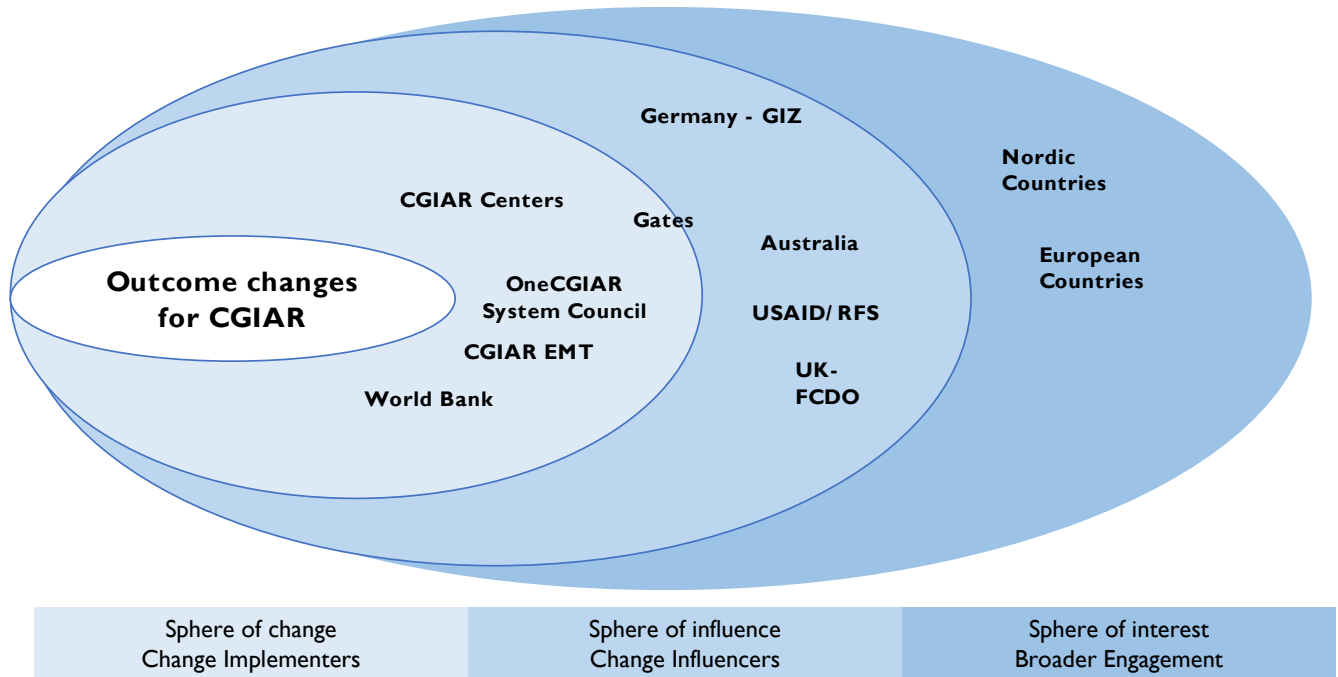
Hindered: RFS has become complicated after the reorganization from BFS to RFS by including new priorities that competed with agricultural research. The transition taking place as this report is written includes even more new priorities including climate change and the environment.

Hindered: One external interviewee noted that he had “observed a trend of relatively short tenures, lasting 2-3 years, for those directly managing the CGIAR portfolio at USAID. This frequent turnover, coupled with periodic strategy changes, posed challenges to the stability and continuity of ag research efforts.”

Helped: One interviewee cited “terrific collaboration” with the General Counsel’s Office on a PIO grant.

Included in each case is an influence map, demonstrating the actors present in spheres of change, influence, and interest:

Figure 1. Influence Map (OneCGIAR)



ANNEX 2: EVALUATION SOW

RFS' role in providing global leadership to influence the global food security agenda
An Evaluation of the RFS Functional Strategy

STATEMENT OF WORK

Modified: February 23, 2023

I. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

This evaluation will explore the role that the USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (USAID/RFS), as a central Bureau, plays **to provide global leadership, influence the global food security agenda and advance food security for all**. The evaluation will use the July 2020 [RFS Functional Strategy](#) (the Strategy) as the primary reference that defines RFS's role in global leadership (Objective 1), specifically global engagement to influence global agendas (IR1.1). The Strategy "outlines the Bureau's unique role in providing technical support...while exerting global leadership" not only through programs but through the expertise and experience of the staff. This evaluation will examine RFS's role, structure, systems, processes, capacity and resources to provide global leadership for advancing food security for all through global engagement and influence and its intersections with water, nutrition, climate, and resilience as well as the cross-cutting themes inclusive development, analytics and learning, and policy. Echoing the Administrator's vision for Progress Beyond Programs, this first evaluation of the Functional Strategy captures that different perspective and will assess RFS' role in global leadership through engagement and influence. The evaluation aims to reveal ways in which the Strategy, systems, processes, capacities and resources have supported and need to adapt or evolve to improve the Bureau's role in providing global leadership in food security for all.

The evaluation will focus on the period of performance from 2020-2022 which includes a series of consecutive and compounding shocks and stressors contributing to a global food crisis, specifically the USAID response to African Swine Fever (2021, led by RFS), the 2021-2022 droughts in the horn of Africa (lead by AFR), and Putin's war on Ukraine (2022, led by RFS/FTFCT). It will incorporate relevant findings from the evaluations and learning exercises on USAID's response to COVID-19 led by the Bureau for Global Health (BGH) and the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning (PPL). It is important to remember that the RFS Functional Strategy was developed and launched before the release of the 2022-2026 Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS) was released (February 2021) and the USAID Climate Strategy (April 2022). As a result of these important documents, climate has become a growing part of the new Bureau's work in food security and will continue through the forthcoming restructuring. It will also include the 2022 work where global food security intersects with climate.

This evaluation will identify and analyze how a central bureau can **better define and communicate its role in providing global leadership through engagement to influence the global food security agenda** and advance food security for all. It will organize, prepare and act with the defined set of global actors in future scenarios, including an anticipated Bureau reorganization (USAID Bureau for Resilience, Environment and Food Security (REFS) as well as future shocks and stressors. This evaluation is conducted concurrently and parallel with a Bureau-level reorganization to incorporate DDI/EEI. This reorganization entails significant structural changes likely to happen alongside this evaluation that will, in turn, evolve systems, processes, and resources. In this context, evaluation results will be used by RFS senior leadership, managers, and staff to improve REFS capacity and flexibility to strengthen the global environment supporting food security for all, and to inform decision-making in response to future shocks, stressors and crises addressed by the new Bureau. Whereas this evaluation will not provide recommendations, the utility of the evaluation findings and conclusions will be evident through a post-evaluation action plan (required by ADS) developed outside this scope of work. Secondary audiences include USAID Front Office, missions, other central bureaus at USAID and the other parts of USAID that work with them.

II. SUMMARY INFORMATION

Strategy/Project/Activity Name(s)	USAID/RFS Functional Strategy
USAID Office(s)	USAID/RFS/Program Office
Life of Strategy	RFS's Functional Strategy was approved in July 2020 and is currently active
Functional Strategy Objective(s) and Intermediate Result(s)	IR 1.1 (Influence and Investment: Key external partners are advancing and investing in shared development agendas) under Objective 1 (Provide Global Leadership)
Required evaluation?	Yes
External or internal evaluation?	External

III. BACKGROUND

In March 2020 USAID/RFS was formally established and operationalized as part of USAID's transformation effort. The Bureau then implemented an [RFS Functional Strategy](#) which details its mission, vision, and goals, and the approaches it takes to achieve them. It includes a Results Framework outlining the Bureau's objectives to provide global leadership and country support through seven intermediate results (IRs). RFS developed an associated [MEL Plan](#) with performance metrics within the first year of launching the strategy.

This evaluation will focus on aspects of the Bureau's leadership in strengthening the global enabling environment for achieving food security for all including intersections with agriculture, resilience, nutrition, climate water security, sanitation and hygiene by specifically addressing Objective 1, Intermediate Result 1.1 and also considering the contributions of RFS's cross-cutting themes of policy, inclusive development, and analytics and learning. It aims to understand how RFS has influenced the agendas and behavior of regional and global development actors such as donors, UN agencies, regional bodies and private sector entities to carry out its its mandate with its current systems, processes, and resources including but not limited to in responding to these three shocks that exacerbated a global food crisis.¹ The study will reflect on the extent to which the RFS Functional Strategy adequately articulates the Bureau's unique role in exerting its capacity (including human and financial resources), convening power and other tools of influence to catalyze transformative change globally. It provides an opportunity for all staff involved in a response to provide feedback and play a participatory role in improving RFS's capacity, systems, processes, and relationships for future responses.

The proposed evaluation is one of a set that meet ADS 201 evaluation requirements for Operating Units (OUs) to conduct at least one evaluation per IR in their strategy. The evaluation also contributes to the USAID Learning Agenda 2022-2026 on Operational Effectiveness, and aims to

¹ Recap: The Functional Strategy outlines how we carry out the RFS mandate to implement the WftW Act of 2014 and the GFSA of 2016. The bureau uses the USAID's MSNS, and USAID Building Resilience to Recurrent Crises Policy and Program Guidance to guide implementation for these two key pieces of development assistance legislation. [The strategy was written before the USAID Climate Strategy was released and the GFSS was refreshed.]

inform Bureau leadership on how processes and approaches might be improved to increase achievement of objectives and results, especially in times of crises.

During the first two years of strategy implementation, RFS has operated under the unprecedented conditions of addressing concurrent and compounding shocks that contributed to the current global food security crisis. Specifically, Putin's war on Ukraine, repeated droughts in the Horn of Africa, and the African Swine Fever (all happening concurrently with the onset and initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic) offer an opportunity to examine RFS's role and flexibility to adapt to current contexts at the global level.² It is important to note that the Bureau continues to respond to these shocks at the global and country levels. Global crises, shocks and stresses have a profound effect on lower-middle income countries (LMICs), and within each country, a disproportionate effect on women, girls, and vulnerable populations. The Agency's response requires immediate functional and operational pivots and tradeoffs. To respond to global crises, typically USAID sets up crisis response centers within a lead Bureau which can draw staff from many parts of the Agency. Working groups and task forces address specific aspects of the crisis, balancing the need to meet ongoing country needs with strengthening the global environment to pivot in response to shocks and stressors. Most recently, Putin's war on Ukraine has compounded the effects of climate change on food, fertilizer and fuel on the world market. RFS has played a lead role in the USAID and USG response to this unjust war through a Feed the Future Crisis Team (FTFCT). The RFS Agricultural Threats Working Group leads the Agency's response to the African Swine Fever epidemic. The Center for Resilience has played an important role with USAID's Bureau for Africa to address the effects of the recurring droughts in the Horn of Africa. These efforts have diverted RFS staff and resources, required re-prioritization of the Bureau's attention, and has had the subsequent effect of overshadowing much of the Bureau's intended efforts. This evaluation will help the Bureau understand how it can strengthen its role in global leadership alongside supporting flexible programming to address future shocks and stressors.

IV. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Note that the following questions were developed through a co-design process led by the RFS Monitoring, Evaluation, and Training Services (METS) activity and with significant input from RFS Front Office. The evaluation team has and will continue to consult with colleagues from RFS's Strategic Engagement (SE) team and leadership in the Office of Policy, Analytics, and Learning (PAE) to further focus and refine questions. The desk review conducted by the evaluation team may also inform revisions to questions and this will be reflected in the Evaluation Design Document and a modified SOW, as needed.

1. What has been the role and performance of RFS technical assistance in global leadership through global engagement to influence the agendas for food security for all and behavior of bilateral and multilateral donors, non-governmental actors, regional bodies and private sector entities, during the 2020-2022 period of strategy implementation?
2. During the 2020-2022 period of Functional Strategy implementation, including a set of successive and compounding crises, how have RFS systems, processes, capacities and resources either helped or hindered the Bureau's global leadership efforts to respond quickly to unexpected shifts in context?
3. Has the performance of the Bureau's global leadership through global engagement revealed ways in which the RFS Functional Strategy, systems, processes, capacities and resources need to adapt or evolve to meet the current Agency and global context?

² During this period of performance, RFS placed immediate and significant emphasis and importance on supporting Missions to develop country-specific responses to these shocks. This support was well-received and the programmatic results will begin to become evident with the FY2023 PPR data.

Although final evaluation methods will be determined by the evaluation team and presented in the Evaluation Design Document, there are a number of terms used in the evaluation questions that need further clarification.

- **Outcome** – this is generally used to identify an intended change in status on the ground e.g. # families suffering from hunger. That is well beyond the manageable interest of the RFS staff. Although we will refine the definition of outcome in the Evaluation Design Document, it is expected that we will define “outcome” as *the degree to which agendas are shared between USAID and global partners, degree to which agendas are evidence-based as well as partner entity investments*. This would not include what changed either in activities or on the ground because of that global leadership. Too many other factors come into play to associate that with RFS staff. Although the team will track instances where such changes are reported.
- **Performance** – will look at instances of shared and evidence-based agendas as well as trends in investment
- **Leadership** – includes partnering in global and regional fora, influencing agendas, and behaviors such as the use of evidence and investments.
- **RFS staff advice** and/or **TA** – Verbal or written advice and support provided by RFS staff. This does not include TA provided through Implementing Mechanisms.
- **Role** – The function assumed or part played by RFS staff i.e. their technical and non-technical actions and deliverables, in support of the Functional Strategy specifically to provide Global Leadership
- **Crises and shocks** – Putin’s War in Ukraine, 2021-2022 droughts, African Swine Fever. Lessons from COVID developed by the Bureau for Global Health’s evaluation work will be included.

V. EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This will be a process evaluation to assess how RFS implemented Objective 1, IR 1.1 of its Functional Strategy over the past two years to address food security for all and will inform how appropriate the strategy is with respect to providing global leadership and to communicating its unique role as part of the response to future shocks and stressors. The evaluation will focus on the Functional Results Framework and does not answer questions of overall effectiveness of the Bureau’s response.

Given the organizational culture of the Bureau that is currently evolving to a new Bureau that includes Climate more centrally, the evaluation must be designed in such a way that it can meet certain expectations, namely:

- Incorporate **real-time learning** and feedback to managers and leadership for use in making adaptive management decisions and ensure proper accountability in these complex and evolving circumstances.
- Be **flexible and responsive** to Bureau needs. A lot can happen from the inception to a final report, so data collection and analysis plans must be adaptable to the dynamic contexts addressed in the evaluation.
- Be **participatory**, engaging stakeholders in a manner where they are brought into the process and determine recommendations to ensure they are feasible, actionable, time-bound, etc.

The evaluation team, in collaboration with USAID, will finalize the evaluation methods before fieldwork begins and will submit a formal evaluation design document, including data collection instruments, for review and approval. USAID expects that, at a minimum, the evaluation team will:

- Familiarize themselves with documentation about the RFS Functional Strategy as well as allied strategies; the Bureau’s organizational structure, portfolio, processes and products; performance indicator data; selected evaluations; portfolio review documentation;
- Review and assess the existing performance and effectiveness information or data, including past Operational Plans and PPR data and what is available from awards to Public International Organizations (PIOs);
- Interview RFS staff, Regional Bureau counterparts, and counterparts from other central bureaus as relevant.
- Importantly, the team will interview “Key External Partners” and seek advice from the SE team on the best way to contact and ensure participation of key regional and global development actors as respondents through interviews and/or surveys.
- Because interviews will comprise a large part of data collection, the design will include:
 - Sampling framework for interviews.
 - Interview guides - a common template will be developed to address the three evaluation questions but guides will be focused on what is relevant to that group of interviewees (e.g. the guide for USAID bureau interviewees will look different from external partners).

Products from the desk review are expected to include:

- Systems mapping to understand who RFS plans to influence in global and regional forums and with private sector entities;
- Organizational analysis to understand RFS’ role in global leadership (existing policies, procedures and structures).

In short, the evaluation is anticipated to have several steps:

- Using documentation, the team will analyze the **planned**, formal structures, portfolio, processes and/or products
- Using largely interviews, the team will evaluate the **actual** structures, portfolio, processes and or products by which USAID, and specifically RFS, provide global leadership.
- Identification, primarily through interviews, of **reported outcomes** by RFS staff and clients.
- Process tracing may be used to plausibly associate RFS staff responses to taskers with an increased evidence base and technical soundness of decisions, policies and positions (e.g. speeches) contributing to planning for global and regional events and negotiations. Process tracing may also be used to understand the role of RFS staff on crisis task forces and how it contributes to global leadership. With an assessment of outcomes and analysis of the processes traced, the team will analyze those processes in the context of the RFS’s Functional Strategy, the structures and staffing.

In addition to the data collection methods outlined above, the evaluation team will capitalize on additional sources of information as they become available.

Study limitations

The Strategy is only two years old with an accompanying MEL plan paused in the pilot phase. There is limited formal data available on RFS’s role in Global Leadership, making the data collected by the evaluation team the centerpiece of findings on the subject. Pending review of documentation in the desk review, the team expects that outcome data and much of the evidence used in the process analysis will come from interviews.

By definition, a period of crisis and/or shock will limit the number of people willing to take the time for interviews. With interviews as the primary source of significant portions of the analysis, sufficient interviews of the appropriate staff is essential. There are several ways to deal with staff's hesitancy to take time for interviews. One is to have the senior bureau leadership in RFS highlight the importance of the evaluation; and potentially reach out to leaders in other bureaus. Another is to plan for sufficient elapsed time in the data collection process for interviews to be scheduled, postponed and rescheduled.

The planned approach calls for interviews to elicit **recall** of instances of outcome. Asking the question can bias the response. The interview question will be carefully worded to avoid bias as much as possible. In order to strengthen confidence in this reported evidence, interview evidence will be triangulated against other interviews and, where possible, to written evidence.

Similarly, process tracing is being used to plausibly associate RFS staff actions with outcomes. The team will seek competing explanations (e.g. similar advice from multiple parties) to try to clarify the strength of the association.

VI. DELIVERABLES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Evaluation Design Document:

Following desk review and prior to data collection the evaluation team will submit an evaluation design document to USAID for review, feedback, and approval. The design will be shared with relevant stakeholders and partners for comment before being finalized and will become an annex to the evaluation report.

The evaluation design will include:

- Proposed evaluation schedule and milestones;
- Detailed evaluation design matrix that links the Evaluation Questions from the SOW (in their finalized form) to data sources, methods, and the data analysis plan;
- Draft questionnaires and other data collection instruments or their main features;
- List of potential interviewees and sites to be visited and proposed selection criteria and/or sampling plan (must include sampling methodology and methods, including a justification of sample size and any applicable calculations);
- Limitations to the evaluation design; and
- Dissemination plan (designed in collaboration with USAID)

Interim touchpoints with RFS as needed for feedback and adaptive management:

As part of being **flexible and responsive** to needs and the dynamic context of the Bureau, this evaluation includes touchpoints to inform any necessary and feasible adaptations to data collection and the analysis plan. These touchpoints include FO and OU Directors meetings requested in response to routine Info Memos on the evaluation's progress and learnings; and briefing PAE/SE and leadership after the data collection period review to ensure data was collected as comprehensively as possible (e.g., address any non-response we can; validate); and reviewing the analysis plan to update as needed so it is relevant to the Bureau's current needs.

Draft Evaluation Report:

The draft evaluation report should be consistent with the guidance provided in Section IX of this SOW, Final Report Format. The report will address each of the questions identified in the SOW. The submission date for the draft evaluation report will be determined in the evaluation work plan.

Note that the draft report will include findings, analysis and conclusions but not recommendations. Recommendations will be developed in a USAID-led Recommendations and Validation Workshop and included in the final report.

Workshop to Validate Findings Validation and Prioritize Recommendations:

The evaluation team is expected to facilitate a recommendations co-creation session where RFS staff, stakeholders, and the evaluation team can discuss potential recommendations based on findings and conclusions presented in the draft evaluation report. This approach allows USAID to determine the most relevant and appropriate recommendations for a post-evaluation action plan (a USAID requirement outlined in ADS 201.3.6.10 Use of Evaluations) while also accessing the evaluation team to fully understand the nuances of findings and conclusions which may not be fully transparent in the report itself.

Final Evaluation Report:

The evaluation team will be asked to take no more than 10 working days (or as agreed upon) to respond to and incorporate comments from RFS based on the draft evaluation report and the recommendations co-creation session. The evaluation team lead will then submit the final report to USAID for approval.

Submission of Dataset(s) to the Development Data Library:

Per USAID's Open Data policy (see ADS 579, USAID Development Data) the contractor will submit to the AOR/COR and the Development Data Library (DDL), at www.usaid.gov/data, in a machine-readable, non-proprietary format, a copy of any dataset created or obtained in performance of this award, if such a dataset is determined in the evaluation design.

Submission of Final Evaluation Report to the Development Experience Clearinghouse:

Per USAID policy (ADS 201.3.6.9) the contractor will submit the evaluation final report and its summary or summaries to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) within three months of final approval by USAID.

VII. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION

RFS is seeking an external evaluation led by an external evaluation team leader. The evaluation team lead must be an evaluation specialist with a minimum of ten years experience designing and leading performance evaluations and a Master's degree in a relevant field. This individual must hold an intimate knowledge of USAID evaluation practices, policies, and requirements as well as a deep working knowledge of evaluation theory and the inner workings of USAID in order to design and execute a strategy-level evaluation such as the one proposed.

The rest of the evaluation team must include, at minimum, an Evaluation Specialist with a deep knowledge and experience in performance evaluation, a working knowledge of USAID, and preferably sector experience in resilience, food security, and/or global leadership. Additional team members can be proposed, as relevant. All team members should be familiar with USAID's ADS 201, the USAID Evaluation Policy, and the USAID Evaluation Toolkit available on USAID's Learning Lab. All team members will be required to provide a signed statement attesting that they have no conflict of interest or describing an existing conflict of interest.

VIII. EVALUATION SCHEDULE

The LOE table and evaluation schedule Gantt Chart are illustrative and intended for use by METS in establishing a work order timeline and budget. These will be refined in collaboration with USAID prior to finalization of the Evaluation Design Document.

Illustrative Evaluation LOE Table

	Evaluation Team Lead	Sr Eval Specialist	Mid-Level Eval Specialist	Jr. Eval Support & Logistics
Desk Review	9	7	1	1
Eval Design	5	5	1	1
Meetings w/RFS	3	3	1	1
Data Collection	16	23	15	15
Data Analysis	9	9	9	9
Draft Report	10	8	1	1
Final Report	5	2		1
Knowledge Sharing	3	5		4
Total LOE (days)	60	62	28	33

IX. FINAL REPORT FORMAT

1. Abstract
2. Executive Summary (2-5 pages)
3. Evaluation Purpose
4. Background on the RFS Functional Strategy in the context of global leadership and operating under successive crises and shocks
5. Evaluation Questions
6. Methodology
7. Limitations and Risks to the Evaluation
8. Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations (as co-developed with USAID)
9. Annexes

Annexes to the report must include:

- Final Evaluation SOW;
- Evaluation methods including limitations associated with evaluation methods;
- All data collection and analysis tools used in conducting the evaluation, such as questionnaires, checklists, and discussion guides;
- All sources of information or data, identified and listed, preferably in the form of an annotated bibliography;
- Statements of difference, if applicable;
- Signed disclosure of conflict of interest forms for all evaluation team members; and
- Relevant evaluation data or a link to the data.

X. CRITERIA TO ENSURE THE QUALITY OF THE EVALUATION

Per ADS 201maa, Criteria to Ensure the Quality of the Evaluation Report, draft and final evaluation reports will be evaluated against the following criteria to ensure quality.

- Evaluations must have the required sections outlined in ADS 201, USAID Evaluation Report Requirements.
- Evaluation reports should represent a thoughtful, well-researched, and well-organized effort to objectively evaluate the subject of the evaluation (e.g., strategy, project, activity).
- Evaluation reports should use clear language per the USAID Style Guide.
- Evaluation reports should adequately address all evaluation questions included in the statement of work, or the evaluation questions subsequently revised and documented in consultation and agreement with USAID.
- According to the ADS 201.3.6.2 principle that evaluations should be based on the best methods of appropriate rigor, evaluations must produce well documented findings that are verifiable, reproducible, and on which stakeholders can confidently rely, while providing clear explanations of limitations. Evaluation methodology should be explained in detail and sources of information properly identified. Sufficient information on methodology and data collection should be included to allow for stakeholders to make informed judgements about the quality and accuracy of the findings, and to allow other evaluators to replicate the protocol.

- In support of ADS 201.3.6.2 principle that evaluations should be independent, objective, and unbiased in measuring and reporting, limitations to the evaluation should be adequately disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.). Evaluators should strive for objectivity in the planning and conduct of evaluations and in the interpretation and dissemination of findings, avoiding conflicts of interest, bias, and other partiality.
- Evaluation reports should adequately capture the situations and experiences of both males and females. If evaluation findings or data include people-level indicators they must be disaggregated by sex. For more information, see How-To Note: Engendering Evaluation at USAID.
- Findings, conclusions, and recommendations (if any) should be specific, concise, and supported by strong quantitative and/or qualitative evidence.
 - Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence, and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay, or simply the compilation of people's opinions.
 - Conclusions should clearly be based on the evaluation findings.

Recommendations should be supported by a specific set of referenced findings, and should be prioritized, action-oriented, practical, and specific. To support the [ADS 201.3.6.2](#) evaluation principle that evaluations should be oriented to reinforcing local ownership, when possible, evaluators should include relevant local stakeholders in joint development of recommendations. See [ADS 201mah, USAID Evaluation Report Requirements](#) and the [Evaluation Report Checklist and Review Template](#) from the [Evaluation Toolkit](#) for additional guidance.

ANNEX 3: EVALUATION METHODS & LIMITATIONS

EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

The USAID/RFS Global Leadership Evaluation Design Document submitted March 15, 2023 has a detailed discussion of the co-design process for the evaluation, an unsuccessful exploration of the evaluation literature to look for methodologies used on similar global leadership evaluations, a full discussion of how and why evaluation methods and approaches were chosen (and analyzed a number of methods that were not a good fit), planned data collection approaches and limitations that were identified from the outset. This appendix will focus on what changes the evaluation team made and how they ultimately conducted the evaluation. Excerpts from the Design Document are included in Annex 11.

ITERATIVE, PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION DESIGN

The desk review revealed that global leadership is not a common evaluation topic at USAID or other public development organizations. It should be noted that few bureaus have functional strategies that would even specify global leadership objectives. The search for other evaluations of global leadership in the Development Experience Clearinghouse as well as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) evaluation repository turned up only evaluations of tangential relevance (See Sources of Information in Annex 5). This became a factor in what methods the team ultimately applied.

In the evaluation SOW (Annex 2), the Bureau requested that this evaluation incorporate real-time learning and be flexible, responsive and participatory. Therefore, the team stayed in close communication with the evaluation manager, the Bureau MEL officer. At the time of the original statement of work, the focus of the evaluation was RFS support to missions during a time of multiple crises. Senior leadership communicated that more could be learned from an evaluation of Global Engagement and the focus of the evaluation changed. Bureau staff continued to be involved throughout the evaluation and participated in identifying the outcome cases to study. Real time learning events included briefings to the Strategic Engagement team on June 1, RFS Office Directors and Division chiefs on June 5, and RFS senior leadership also on June 5.

DEFINITIONS

Global leadership by agency staff has not been a common topic for evaluation at USAID or elsewhere, as the team found when researching evaluation methods. Therefore, defining key terms was an important part of building a common understanding for the Bureau for making decisions on global leadership functions. It should be noted that for the purposes of this evaluation, the team is using some terms differently from the way they are used in RFS and is noted below.

- **Global leadership** is effectively influencing a set of individuals, groups, or organizations across the globe to align with, advance, and advocate for RFS's and USG's agenda and priorities.
- **Global engagement** is participation in global events or the process of interacting with a set of individuals, groups or organizations across the globe. RFS generally refers to global engagement as strategic engagement.
- **Institutional engagement** refers to influence in the global environment from RFS's programmatic work.
- **Influence** is used two ways in the report. As a noun, we define influence as the capacity to have an effect on agendas and behaviors. As a verb, influence is when actions affect change, i.e. the degree to which RFS actions affect change.
- **GE team** is used by the evaluation team to mean those staff in the Bureau who do global/strategic engagement as their full-time job. This is primarily the Strategic Engagement Team in the Global Engagement Division in the Office of Policy Analysis and Engagement. But

because it is not limited to that team, including, for example, the Director of PAE, the evaluation team characterizes these primary actors as the GE team.

EVALUATION METHODS

Outcome Harvesting (OH) was selected as the primary data collection approach for a number of reasons:

- There was no universe of Global Leadership outcomes to sample from
- Global leadership met the criteria for this approach
 - Outcomes are emergent i.e. cannot be predicted in advance
 - Uncertain causal links i.e. no clearly established theory of change
 - Contested – actors have diverse perspectives in the global community
 - Dynamic – pace of change is variable and unpredictable.
- OH can capture outcomes in complex and knowledge scarce environments and capture outcomes (both planned and emergent) and work backwards to document pathways of contribution. It should be noted that the contributions evaluated in this study are those of the RFS systems, processes, capacities and resources; not the fully dynamic interplay of factors that influenced outcomes.

OH is well-suited to capture rich data on 1) global leadership outcomes, that is, instances when bilateral and multilateral donors, non-governmental actors, regional bodies and private sector entities make observable changes in food security agendas, policies, and behaviors such as investments, 2) the contribution of RFS staff and others to those outcomes, as well as 3) the significance of the outcomes. Together these are the basis for the analysis that will allow RFS to improve and streamline their global leadership efforts. Data collection methods will include document review, interviews, and textual analysis comparing USAID/USG's agenda (specifically talking points) with agreed event statements and communiques (described more in the section below on analysis).

This Outcome harvesting approach was tailored to the specifics of evaluating RFS's global leadership efforts and conducted through six iterative steps:

1. **Design the approach to evaluating "Influence Outcomes":** the evaluation reviewed Bureau Performance Plans and Reports (PPRs) for 2019-2021 and the Operating Plan (OP) for 2022 (because the PPR had not yet been completed) to identify examples in which the Bureau identified outcomes they had achieved in influencing global engagements.
2. **Identify the preliminary influence outcomes to be evaluated:** The team developed a list of outcomes and, in keeping with the participatory approach, had RFS Bureau staff vote on which outcomes they thought would be the best to evaluate to understand what RFS systems, processes, capacities and resources helped and hindered in the achievement of those outcomes. Because the evaluation was not trying to establish how successful the Bureau had been in Global Engagement, there was no bias introduced by having the Bureau staff pick the cases to evaluate.
3. **Interview influencers (i.e. change agents):** The team conducted 40 interviews on the outcome cases to collect data on
 - a. The global leadership outcomes (who and what changed), and
 - b. The influencing pathways (how did RFS and key change agents contribute to the change) and
 - c. The significance of the outcome.
 - d. Identification of what RFS systems, processes, capacities and resources helped and hindered the achievement of those changes.
4. **Verify:** The team verified changes by interviewing a knowledgeable key informants that were external to USAID. The team had planned to compare RFS agendas (by looking at talking points

and briefers) to the outcomes of global events. As the internal documents were classified, this approach was dropped.

5. **Analyze and interpret:** The evaluation team analyzed the evidence in several ways to be discussed below.
6. **Support Bureau learning and recommendation development:** Originally the team was instructed not to develop recommendations based on the findings and conclusions. After the presentation of Emerging Findings in early June, the team was asked to draft findings to include in the report.

DATA COLLECTION PROCESSES AND INSTRUMENTS

In addition to the Outcome Harvesting interviews mentioned above, the evaluation team used several additional approaches to data collection. An additional 10 interviews were conducted to learn more about the perspectives of senior leaders as key players in global engagement and specific issues such as budgeting and staffing. Because none of the cases selected included significant private sector participation, the expanded evaluation team conducted a Focus Group Interview to broaden what was learned through the outcome cases.

The team had planned on conducting a mini-survey with outside verifiers. Instead the team conducted interviews with knowledgeable external key informants.

Interviewees were initially identified by RFS staff. Then the evaluators asked the interviewees to identify additional knowledgeable individuals. This was intended to avoid bias although only with the external interviewees. There were also several interviews within USAID but from other Bureaus; these interviewees were not considered verifiers. Although this process did not actually broaden the interviews beyond a fairly small circle of knowledgeable RFS staff, it did result in rich depth on systems, processes, capacities and resources that helped and hindered the achievement of performance. This would not, however, have worked if we were trying to establish how successful the Bureau was in Global Engagement.

Interview guides for 1) outcome change agents, 2) a sample of a systems/process/capacities and resources interview guide and 3) the senior leadership interview guide are included in annex 4. Each outcome case had a specific interview guide and a sample is provided. Similarly, the guide for staffing questions is included as a sample for the additional systems, processes, capacities and resources interviews and a sample of the senior leadership interview guide as well. The interview guide for the Private Sector Focus Group is also included.

ANALYSIS

As the Design Matrix in the Design Document indicated, several types of analysis were planned, although some proved unworkable. These are presented below:

- **Textual analysis** was planned to compare USAID/USG's agenda (as conveyed in briefers and talking points) with agreed event statements and communiques. This was particularly planned for the G7 outcome case; but the documents were classified and this approach was not used.
- **Thematic analysis** identified most notably the three types of leadership for the Bureau but also informed the types of issues that were most important for answering evaluation question # 2 on systems, processes, capacities and resources. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the findings and conclusions in sections A, B and C to determine recommendations in Section D.
- **Case study research** led to the eight outcome cases in Annex 1. It should be noted that these were outcome harvesting cases and not fully developed case studies.

- **Interaction Web Maps** – This became known as “Relationship Mapping”. Each outcome case interview asked what individuals and organizations the interviewee had worked with in their role in influencing the outcome. The analysis was based on the organizations and not the individuals. The biggest shortcoming was that interviewees seem to have referred to the staff whose primary job was supporting “global engagement” inconsistently – sometimes it was global engagement division, sometimes Strategic engagement team, sometimes the office they were in: PAE. Because Global Engagement was so complex, these provided tools for the team to analyze but no readable graphics to include in the report. Several that the team found most useful are included in Annex 4.

LIMITATIONS

- The outcome harvesting approach could not and did not comprehensively collect data on all possible outcomes. Due to the complex nature of evaluating global leadership influence, it was not possible to construct a complete and accurate sampling frame of global leadership outcomes; consequently, outcomes harvested did not answer the question of how successful the Bureau was in achieving its global leadership outcomes. Bureau “performance”, asked in EQ1, was only analyzed in the context of each case to inform the discussion of what systems, processes, capacities and resources helped and hindered the achievement of those outcomes (EQ2).
- The Strategy is only two years old and. The selection of outcome cases was built on statements (one might say “claims”) from the PPRs for the years available supplemented by the OP for 2022 to cover the study period. Both CGIAR and GAFS were reported as outcomes that were still very much in progress.
- There is limited formal data available on RFS’s role in Global Leadership. This meant that the centerpiece of data collected by the evaluation team was the 40 interviews on the outcome cases and an additional 10 interviews of other staff with specific expertise in systems processes capacities and resources and there was less performance reporting or evaluations than the evaluation team generally relied on.
- Set against the Bureau context of working in the midst of crises and shocks, the number of people able to take the time for interviews was more limited than the team would have preferred. Although this had been raised as a risk in the Design Document. The evaluation team was pleased to have completed the 40 interviews for the outcome cases and 10 additional interviews. An additional 33 candidates were included in the Contacts and Relationship Tracker that the team developed to capture contact information on the interviewees and the identify who was interviewed and when. Interestingly the biggest shortcoming was the non-programmatic staff in the Bureau. They clearly did not have experience of being interviewed for evaluations and asked the evaluation team what questions they would be asked. Although it is not normal practice, the evaluation team sent questions ahead of time in some cases to try to alleviate the concerns. The 4 additional interviews conducted on systems, processes, capacities and resources (that were not senior leadership) were very informative and the team would have liked to have learned more.
- Because Global Leadership was so interactive, it was very difficult for the team to separate the RFS contribution from that of USAID and the USG more broadly in most cases.
- The planned approach calls for interviews to elicit recall of instances of outcome. Recall was of course an issue, but comparing what was learned from the multiple interviews for each case did generally help to fill out the picture. It was very hard to limit the discussion to the study timeframe of 2020 to 2022; indeed it was necessary to discuss earlier actions and events as they informed the understanding of the outcomes that were in the study timeframe.

- SOW and Resource limitations: Global leadership and engagement touch almost all aspects of the Bureau's work. The team had indicated in the Design Document that choices would have to be made. This was largely around cross cutting issues. The team tried to address those that were reported as important to the outcome cases, but some were more fully explored than others.

ANNEX 4: DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

A. Change Agent Interview Guide for Outcome Cases

The change agent interview guides were modified for each of the cases. Before Question 1, the draft outcome statement for each case is included to communicate the context of the questioning to the interviewee. An example from the CAADP case is included (this sample is dated March 24, 2023:

Introduction:

We're interested in learning more about important changes that have taken place related to CAADP Biennial Reviews during [2020-2022]. The information we gather will only be used for the purposes of this evaluation and subsequent action planning, but no other purpose. The evaluation report will be made public.

[If consent has not been received] On this basis, could you:

- Consent to be interviewed? Y/N
- Consent to be recorded? Y/N

First, we would like to learn a few details about you.

1. Name
2. Current Organization
3. Current Position
4. Length of time working in current role
5. Did you occupy the same organization and position during the time you were involved in influencing [specific global leadership influence outcome]? If not, what organization and position did you occupy at that time?

As I mentioned, this evaluation is interested in learning more about outcomes related to CAADP during the 2020-2022 period, which is the evaluation period of study.

[Provide short definition of the OUTCOME.]

The African Union and member states demonstrated mutual accountability using the CAADP Biennial Review to track, measure and report progress achieved against agreed result areas.

1. How familiar are you with CAADP?

1.1. What changes related to CAADP and the Biennial Reviews took place?

1.2 What: What changes took place in [agendas] behavior, practices? What changes in policies or resources? Prompt: were resources leveraged?

1.3 When: When did this change take place?

1.4 Where: Where did the change take place?

1.4.1. Were there specific meetings of importance? Where?

When

Who participated

2. What role, if any, did you play in these changes?

2.1 [If yes,] How did you influence these changes? (e.g. persuading, supporting, facilitating, assisting, leveraging resources, exerting pressure, political positioning)

2.2 [If no] How and what do you know about these changes?

2.3 Who else knows about these changes that we could speak to?

3. Who specifically (individuals and organizations) did you work with to influence these changes?

3.1. What other organizations/individuals did you work with that played an important role?

3.2. Can you share contact details.

4. Is the Biennial Review process the most significant outcome with respect to CAADP?

4.1 Why do you consider it significant? Prompt: In what ways?

4.2 Is it the most significant outcome/change in the timeframe?

4.2 If not, what was the most significant outcome?

5. Was RFS influential in this change(s)?

Prompt: Were they influential in this change coming about?

5.1 Did RFS demonstrate leadership? How?

6. Please describe any (other) ways that RFS influenced [*the outcome*]?

7. What enabled or supported you (or the Bureau) to influence these changes?

7.1 Prompt: What processes or systems in RFS supported your efforts to influence these changes?

7.2 Prompt: What resources or capacities in the Bureau?

7.3 Prompt: Were there particular individuals that you worked with?

8. What barriers did you encounter in RFS?

8.2 What processes or systems in RFS were barriers in your efforts to influences in CAADP?

8.2. What resources or capacities?

Prompt after exploring barriers and enablers fully: These changes took place during multiple challenges: food crisis triggered by Putin's war in Ukraine; droughts in the Horn of Africa, restructuring of the Bureau, COVID's restrictions on RFS staff.

9. Based on your experience influencing this change, how can RFS strengthen its role in influencing similar changes?

10. What could RFS do to improve support to those that play influencing roles?

B. Systems, Processes, Capacities, and Resources Interview Guides

Interview guides were crafted for each of the additional 10 interviewees focused on their area of expertise such as budget and staffing (the latter included below). One guide used in 5 interviews was Senior Leaders; noting that there were other senior leaders interviewed about Outcome cases with those specific guides.

Interview Guide for RFS Staffing Issues

1. What percent of Bureau's approved positions are currently vacant? (and what is the approved FTE level?)
2. What rate of turnover has the Bureau had in 2020, 2021 and 2022? i.e. how many staff have left in each of those years? And was this higher than the preceding three years, lower, or about the same? (We would settle for your impression on this if it is too hard to look up all the earlier years)
3. How hard is it to recruit technical staff? And why?

C. Senior Leaders Interview Guide

Name:

Current position:

Position in Bureau before retirement:

Can you think of an example in which (the Bureau you headed) demonstrated global leadership by influencing agendas, policies or practices in the global or regional community?

What changed (looking for more specifics)?

When did this happen? And **where** did it take place?

Was this a significant outcome?

Did (your Bureau) demonstrate leadership? How would you characterize that leadership?

What role did you play?

How did you influence these changes (persuading, supporting, facilitating , assisting, leveraging resources, exerting pressure, political positioning etc.)?

What individuals and organizations did you work with to influence these changes? Within and outside of USAID.

Did (this Bureau) have systems, processes, resources or capacities that supported you to influence these changes?

What barriers did you encounter?

Did you have any training or briefing to help prepare you for this role?

What could USAID do to improve support to those who play influencing roles?

D. Private Sector Focus Group Interview Guide

Questions:

1. Please introduce yourself, and briefly explain how you have collaborated or interacted with RFS in the last couple of years?

Prompts:

- Collaboration or interaction doesn't have to be formal
 - Have you participated in knowledge sharing, webinars, conferences, or otherwise used evidence generated by RFS
 - Give specific examples
2. How have your interactions with RFS influenced or informed your organization's strategies and decision-making processes in the global food security sector and related areas of agriculture, nutrition, WASH, and climate?

Prompts:

- More or less investment in any specific approaches, technologies, or geographies
 - Increased or decreased interest in more collaborations with RFS
 - Encouraged seeking additional evidence on impactful approaches or technologies
 - Encouraged stronger local relationships in the geographies where you work
3. When reflecting upon your interactions with RFS since 2020, are there any aspects of those interactions that were particularly effective at helping your organization make strategic programming or investment decisions?

Prompts:

- RFS staff knowledge and expertise
 - Personal relationships within RFS
 - Quality, rigor, and availability of evidence
 - Collaborative working styles
 - RFS's convening power
 - RFS' influence over our competitors
 - Strong intermediary to support implementation
4. Conversely, could you describe any factors or circumstances that you feel may have hindered or otherwise adversely influenced the dynamics of your collaboration and interactions with RFS, and how these have affected your efforts towards achieving a shared agenda?

Prompts:

- Challenges faced in establishing formal partnership mechanisms with RFS, and how these impact collaborative efforts
- Communication barriers
- Misalignment of expectations/not being on the same page with regards to understanding of roles and responsibilities

- Rigid funding mechanisms (complex rules and regulations or stringent compliance and reporting requirements attached to funding)
 - Changes in administration or leadership
5. Looking to the future, how can RFS improve the ways in which it interacts with the private sector and other development actors in the global arena to achieve increased food security for all?

Prompts:

- Increased knowledge sharing
- More targeted communications that use private sector language more than development speak
- Easier mechanisms to formally partner and collaborate
- Fewer bureaucratic obstacles
- Invite private sector to participate more fully in global development conversations

ANNEX 5: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Aceli Africa. (n.d.). *Unlocking private capital for African agriculture* [Learning Report].
https://aceli africa.ams3.digitaloceanspaces.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/30161122/AceliAfrica_Year2_LearningReport.pdf
- African Development Bank. (2019). *Lessons on the effectiveness of development partnerships: An evaluation synthesis*. https://idev.afdb.org/sites/default/files/Evaluations/2020-03/Lessons%20on%20the%20Effectiveness%20of%20Development%20Partnerships_Report_Eng.pdf
- African Union (n.d.). *Synthesis of the malabo declaration on African agriculture and CAADP*.
- AgriLinks. (n.d.). *The 3rd CAADP biennial review: From data to policy implementation*.
<https://agrilinks.org/events/3rd-caadp-biennial-review-data-policy-implementation>
- Anguko, A. (2019). *Process tracing as a methodology for evaluating small sample size interventions*. African Development Bank.
<https://idev.afdb.org/sites/default/files/documents/files/Process%20Tracing%20as%20a%20methodology%20for%20evaluating%20small%20sample%20sizes.pdf>
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (2022). *Global food crisis messaging*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *2022 USAID green climate fund engagement plan*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Adaptation book for Bonn climate change conference*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Ambassador food security meeting*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Briefer for G7 May 2022 ministerial – climate*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Briefer for Rick Duke meeting on fertilizer proposals for fiscal year 22*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Briefing on USAID climate strategy*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *COP27 on the horizon*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *DA Coleman's meeting with Rodger Voorhies*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Examples of USAID's frontline adaptation work*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *First steering group meeting of the global alliance for food security*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *G7 foreign ministers' meeting*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Global alliance for food security as a coordination mechanism*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Global agriculture and food security program response capability to address food security crisis*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Inception meeting of the global alliance for food security*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Interagency principals meeting on international climate strategy*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Revised draft global food security resolution*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *RFS talking points on building climate resilience into food price crisis response*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Second steering group meeting of the global alliance for food security*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Special envoy for global food security*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Strengthening the recovery and resilience in developing countries, LDCs and SIDs to withstand future crises*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *Uniting for global food security conference*.
- Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (n.d.). *UN ministerial global food security*.
- Collier, D. (2011). Understanding process training. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 44(4), 823-830.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096511001429>
- Ebuenga, N., Jitthai, N., & Petraud, JP. (2022). *CLA for evaluation use: The case for stakeholder engagement*. United States Agency for International Development.
https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/86_pi_-_jean_paul_petraud_ce_0.pdf

- Engel, P., Anneke, S., Laanouni, F., Bizzotto Molina, P., Seters, J.v., D'Alessandro, C., Dekeyser, K., Smail, T., Meller, M., Pra, M., Hamad, M., & Escudier, L. *EU support to sustainable agri-food systems in partner countries 2014-2020*. European Union. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2841/563166>
- European Commission. (2016). *Evaluation of cottonou partnership agreement*. https://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2016_devco_016_evaluation_cotonou_en.pdf
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2015). *Evaluation of FAO's contribution to climate change adaptation and mitigation*. <https://www.fao.org/3/bd903e/BD903E.pdf>
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, & International Fund for Agricultural Development. (2016). *FAO's and IFAD's engagement in pastoral development joint evaluation synthesis*. <https://www.fao.org/3/bd503e/BD503E.pdf>
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2018). *Evaluation of FAO strategic objective 1: Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition*. <https://www.fao.org/3/i9575en/I9575EN.pdf>
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2018). *Evaluation of the global programme to support the implementation of the voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests (2012–2016)*. <https://www.fao.org/3/i9031en/I9031EN.pdf>
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2019). *Evaluation of the FAO strategy for partnerships with the private sector*. <https://www.fao.org/3/ca6678en/CA6678EN.pdf>
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2020). *Evaluation of the FAO strategy for partnerships with civil society organizations*. <https://www.fao.org/3/cb1382en/cb1382en.pdf>
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2020). *FAO strategy for private sector engagement 2021-2025*. <https://www.fao.org/3/cb3352en/cb3352en.pdf>
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2022 May, 9). *Deputy administrator's May 3 meeting with the FAO director-general to discuss how USAID and FAO can work together*.
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2022 June, 8). *DA Coleman's meeting with FAO DG Beth Bechdol and Rein Paulsen*.
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2022 June, 8). *Deputy administrator Coleman's meeting with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations leadership*.
- G7 Germany. (2022 May, 14). *Commitments on the global food security consequences of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine*. <https://www.g7germany.de/resource/blob/997532/2039908/0b73ee6adba25af4cba0958830f574e5/2022-05-15-f7-food-security-data.pdf?download=1>
- G7 Germany. (2022 June, 28). *G7 Leaders' Communiqué*. <https://www.governo.it/sites/governo.it/files/2022-06-28-abschlusserklaerung-eng-web-data.pdf>
- G20. (n.d.). *G20 Indonesia 2022 eleventh meeting of agricultural chief scientists zero draft communiqué*.
- G20. (n.d.). *G20 ministerial vision statement: Multilateralism for SDGs decade of action*.
- G20. (n.d.). *G20 principles to scale up blended finance in developing countries, least developed countries and small island developing states*.
- G20. (n.d.). *Outline ministerial vision statement*.
- Global Affairs Canada. (2019). *Evaluation of the international humanitarian assistance program*. <https://www.international.gc.ca/gac-amc/assets/pdfs/publications/evaluation/2020/iha-evaluation-ahi-eng.pdf>
- Global Affairs Canada. (2021). *Evaluation of the partnerships for development innovation branch 2015-16 to 2019-20*. <https://www.international.gc.ca/gac-amc/assets/pdfs/publications/evaluation/2021/evaluation-report-en.pdf>
- Global Alliance for Food Security. (n.d.). *What is the global alliance for food security?* <https://www.gafs.info/about/>
- Global Partnership for Education. (2019). *MOPAN assessments*. <https://www.mopanonline.org/assessments/gpe2017-18/GPE%20Report.pdf>

- Global Partnership for Education. (2020). *Independent summative evaluation of the global partnership for education 2020*.
<https://www.globalpartnership.org/node/document/download?file=document/file/2020-06-GPE-Independent-summative-evaluation.pdf>
- Gupta, J., Termeer, C., Klostermann, J., Meijerink, S., van den Brink, M., Jong, P., Nooteboom, S., & Bergsma, E. (2010). The adaptive capacity wheel: A method to assess the inherent characteristics of institutions to enable the adaptive capacity of society. *Environmental Science & Policy*, 13(6), 459-471. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2010.05.006>
- Habel, V., Orth-Rempel, M., Richter, J., & Schimko, S. (2021). *Evaluation synthesis - private sector engagement*. German Institute for Development Evaluation.
https://www.deval.org/fileadmin/Redaktion/PDF/05-Publikationen/Berichte/2021_Synthese_ZmPW/DEval_2021_Private_Sector_Engagement_Synthese_web.pdf
- Hayes, M., Chumney, F., Wright, C., & Buckingham, M. (2018). *The Global Study of Engagement Technical Report*. ADP Research Institute. https://www.adpri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/R0101_0718_v2_GE_ResearchReport.pdf
- Leppert, G., Köngeter, A., Moull, K., Nawrotzki, R., Römling, C., & Schmitt, J. (2021). *Evaluation of interventions for climate change adaptation: Instruments for managing residual climate risks*. German Institute for Development Evaluation.
https://www.deval.org/fileadmin/Redaktion/PDF/05-Publikationen/Berichte/2021_Klima_Residuale_Klimarisiken/DEval_Bericht_2021_Evaluation_of_interventions_for_climate_change_adaptation_web.pdf
- MAPLE. (n.d.). *MAPLE 2022 event schedule*. <https://maple.aucaadp.org/>
- Menocal, A.R., Cassidy, M., Swift, S., Jacobstein, D., Rothblum, C., & Tservil, L. (2018). *Thinking and working politically through applied political economy analysis*. United States Agency for International Development. <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/PEA2018.pdf>
- Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation. (2009). *Global aid architecture and the health millennium development goals*. <https://www.norad.no/globalassets/import-2162015-80434-am/www.norad.no-ny/filarkiv/global-aid-architecture-and-the-health-millennium-development-goals.pdf>
- Policy Link Global. (n.d.). *African Union Commission hosts 'critical analysis' of the biennial review process*. <https://policylinkglobal.org/newsroom/african-union-commission-hosts-critical-analysis-of-the-biennial-review-process>
- Policy Link Global. (n.d.). *USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security*. <https://policylinkglobal.org/usaaid-bureau-for-resilience-and-food-security>
- Salib, M. (2016). *Walking the talk: An iterative approach to developing the collaborating, learning, and adapting maturity matrix*. United States Agency for International Development.
<https://usaideallearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/walking-the-talk-an-iterative-approach-to-developing-the-collaborating-learning-and-adapting-maturity-matrix.pdf>
- Schwedersky, T., Hermanns, K., Steckhan, H., & Kunert, L. (2020). *Institutional evaluation of engagement global*. German Institute for Development Cooperation.
https://www.deval.org/fileadmin/Redaktion/PDF/05-Publikationen/Berichte/2020_Engagement_Global/DEval_Report_Engagement_Global_EN_web.pdf
- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. (2015). *Evaluation of SDC's global programmes climate change; water initiatives; food security; migration and development and health*.
<https://www.aramis.admin.ch/Default?DocumentID=67852&Load=true>
- Szczepański, M. (2022). *The 2022 G7 Summit: Against the backdrop of Russia's war on Ukraine*. European Parliament.
[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2022/733575/EPRS_ATA\(2022\)733575_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2022/733575/EPRS_ATA(2022)733575_EN.pdf)

The White House. (n.d.). *President Biden and G7 leaders announce further efforts to counter Putin's attack on food security* [Fact sheet].
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/05/21/fact-sheet-the-2023-g7-summit-in-hiroshima-japan/>

The White House. (n.d.). *The 2023 G7 Summit in Hiroshima, Japan* [Fact sheet].
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/05/21/fact-sheet-the-2023-g7-summit-in-hiroshima-japan/>

United States Agency for International Development. (2021 September, 23). *Administrator Power announces \$5 billion in food systems investments to combat global hunger and malnutrition* [Press release]. <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/sep-23-2021-administrator-power-announces-5-billion-food-systems-investments-combat-global-hunger-and-malnutrition>

United States Agency for International Development. (2021 December, 7). *Administrator Power announces \$11 billion to combat malnutrition and safeguard the lives of women and children* [Press release]. <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/dec-07-2021-administrator-power-announces-11-billion-combat-malnutrition-and-safeguard-lives-women-and-children#:~:text=At%20the%202021%20Nutrition%20for,half%20of%20childhood%20deaths%20globally.>

United States Agency for International Development. (2022 June, 28). *United States announces new commitments to respond to global food security crisis* [Press release].
<https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/jun-28-2022-united-states-announces-new-commitments-respond-global-food-security-crisis>

United States Agency for International Development. (2022 August, 4). *Donor and multilateral engagement Ukraine talking points.*

United States Department of State. (2022 September, 21). *Food security action report.*
<https://www.state.gov/food-security-action-report/>

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *Administrator power's virtual participation in the G7 ministerial conference uniting for global food security.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *AID power call with UK minister James Cleverly.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *AFR copy of AtA Sumilas briefer for G7.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *AFR copy of AtA Sumilas briefer for G7 ministerial Africa.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *Assistant to the administrator Michele Sumilas' meeting with Niels Annen.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *Briefer, AtA Jim Barnhart meeting with foreign, commonwealth and development office, Ukraine, feed the future.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *Briefer, DAA Butler's meeting with OECD in Paris.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *Briefer DA_AID Coleman meeting with UNDP administrator Achim Steiner.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *Briefer for bilateral meeting with EU commissioner Jutta Urpilainen.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *Briefer for bilateral meeting with minister Jochen Flasbarth of Germany.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *Briefer, Jim Barnhart's participation in global donor platform for rural development AGA.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *Comments FARM two pager.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *DAA Michener's meeting on upcoming IFAD election.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *DA_AID briefer for G7 ministerial – climate.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *DA_AID briefer for G7 ministerial – Ukraine.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *Donor announcements at G7 Leaders' Summit.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *G7 agriculture ministers communiqué second draft.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *G7 FMM - working lunch - Russia crisis – IMA.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *G7 ministerial conference for global food security.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *G7 ministerial briefer for welcome buffet hosted by Germany.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *G7 statement on global food security.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *G7 statement on support for Ukraine.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *Response to multiple crises on the African continent focusing on food security.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *USAID commentary.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *U.S. global leadership coalition's global impact forum.*

United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.). *U.S. response to French G7 FARM proposal.*

ANNEX 6: DISCLOSURE OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST

PROGRAM CYCLE



Annex : USAID Disclosure of Real or Potential Conflict of Interest for External Evaluation Team Members

Name	Cynthia Clapp-Wincek
Title	Senior Evaluation Specialist
Organization	I4DI
Evaluation Position	<input type="checkbox"/> Team Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Team member
Evaluation Award Number <i>(contract or other instrument)</i>	#: 7200AA20D00012/7200AA21F00013
USAID Activity(s) Evaluated <i>(Include activity name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)</i>	RFS Role in Global Leadership
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: <i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the activity(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose activities are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the activity(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the activity design or previous iterations of the activity. 	
CONTINUED	
If yes answered above, I	

DISCLOSURE OF REAL OR POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

<p>disclose the following facts:</p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular activities and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.	
--	--

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Date	April 25, 2023	
Signature	Cynthia Claff Wood	

DISCLOSURE OF REAL OR POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

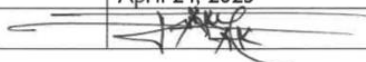
TEMPLATE: USAID Disclosure of Real or Potential Conflict of Interest for External Evaluation Team Members

Name	John F. Akwetey
Title	Evaluation Expert
Organization	Institute for Development Impact - I4DI
Evaluation Position	<input type="checkbox"/> Team Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team member
Evaluation Award Number <i>(contract or other instrument)</i>	
USAID Activity(s) Evaluated <i>(Include activity name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)</i>	The Evaluation of USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (USAID/RFS) Functional Strategy, to evaluate a series of consecutive and compounding shocks and stressors contributing to a global food crisis, specifically the USAID response to African Swine Fever (2021, led by RFS), the 2021-2022 droughts in the horn of Africa (led by AFR), and Putin's war on Ukraine (2022, led by RFS/FTFCT). It will incorporate relevant findings from the evaluations and learning exercises on USAID's response to COVID-19 led by the Bureau for Global Health (BGH) and the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning (PPL).
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: <i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the activity(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose activities are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 	

DISCLOSURE OF REAL OR POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

<p>3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the activity(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the activity design or previous iterations of the activity.</p>	
<p>CONTINUED</p> <p>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <p>4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.</p> <p>5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.</p> <p>6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular activities and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.</p>	

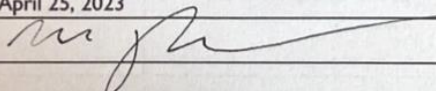
I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Date	April 24, 2023
Signature	

Name	Micah Frumkin
Title	Evaluation Specialist
Organization	Institute For Development Impact
Evaluation Position	<input type="checkbox"/> Team Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team member
Evaluation Award Number <i>(contract or other instrument)</i>	#: 7200AA20D00012/7200AA21F00013
USAID Activity(s) Evaluated <i>(Include activity name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)</i>	RFS Role in Global Leadership
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: <i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i> 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the activity(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose activities are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3. Current or previous direct or	

<p>significant though indirect experience with the activity(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the activity design or previous iterations of the activity.</p>	
<p>CONTINUED</p> <p>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated. 5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated. 6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular activities and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation. 	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Date	April 25, 2023
Signature	

PROGRAM CYCLE



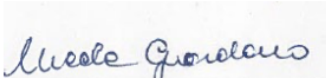
TEMPLATE: USAID Disclosure of Real or Potential Conflict of Interest for External Evaluation Team Members

Name	Nicola Giordano
Title	Senior Evaluation Specialist
Organization	I4DI
Evaluation Position	<input type="checkbox"/> Team Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team member
Evaluation Award Number <i>(contract or other instrument)</i>	7200AA20D00012/7200AA21F00013
USAID Activity(s) Evaluated <i>(Include activity name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)</i>	METS RFS Functional Strategy Evaluation of Global Leadership
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: <i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the activity(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose activities are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the activity(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the activity design or previous iterations of the activity. 	

DISCLOSURE OF REAL OR POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

<p>CONTINUED</p> <p>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated. 5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated. 6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular activities and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation. 	
---	--

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Date	18/04/2023
Signature	<p>Nicola Giordano</p> 

DISCLOSURE OF REAL OR POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

TEMPLATE: USAID Disclosure of Real or Potential Conflict of Interest for External Evaluation Team Members

Name	Peter Simpson
Title	Evaluation Associate
Organization	Institute for Development Impact
Evaluation Position	<input type="checkbox"/> Team Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team member
Evaluation Award Number (contract or other instrument)	7200 AA20 D00012 / 7200 AA21 F00013
USAID Activity(s) Evaluated (Include activity name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)	METS RFS Functional Strategy Evaluation of Global Leadership
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: <i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the activity(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated. 2 Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose activities are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3 Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the activity(s) being evaluated. 	

DISCLOSURE OF REAL OR POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

including involvement in the activity design or previous iterations of the activity.	
<p>CONTINUED</p> <p>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated. 5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated. 6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular activities and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation. 	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Date	April 12, 2023
Signature	Peter Cooper

ANNEX 7: EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS

EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS

Cynthia Clapp-Wincek, team leader, has over 40 years of experience with evaluation, performance monitoring, and learning. She has worked in the US government and as an independent consultant. In her 20 years of consulting, she worked with clients of all types -- public, non-profit, for profit, foundations; from large to small. As a former Director of the Office of Learning, Evaluation and Research, Ms. Clapp-Wincek led the rebuilding of USAID's evaluation program and strengthened evaluation, learning, and performance monitoring in USAID's Program Cycle. This integrated evaluation program demonstrated evidence of improvement in quality, quantity and use of evaluation throughout USAID in the three years of her tenure.

Micah Frumkin is a Senior Director-level monitoring, evaluation, research, learning, and adaption (MERLA) expert in the field of international development. He has more than fifteen years of experience supporting U.S. government agencies, philanthropic organizations, and implementing partners on designing, maintaining, and improving MERLA approaches at policy, portfolio, and activity levels. His experience includes a proven track record of identifying and developing innovative solutions to organizational challenges for clients and their partners, incorporating client learning into adapting, identifying and pursuing competitive business development opportunities, and applying human centered designs to MERLA-related training, guidance, tools, and templates. Micah has extensive experience supporting MERLA initiatives virtually and in-person in a variety of countries including Jordan, Kenya, South Sudan, and Pakistan, among others. Mr. Frumkin's current position as the Senior MEL Director for the Institute for Development Impact (I4DI) includes overseeing the I4DI's MEL portfolio which implements programming for prominent public and private sector clients including USAID, Mars Inc., and others

Nicola Giordano has over 12 years of experience working within the humanitarian and development sector as a MEAL consultant. From 2018 to 2022, Nicola has coordinated and overseen over 40 MEAL services through [Action Against Hunger UK](#) and as independent consultant. Nicola has led evaluations across thematic areas like food security, advocacy, social protection, financial inclusion and climate change resilience for a range of organizations like UNHCR, UNICEF, DFID, USAID, SAVE, CARE and other agencies. In his previous role at [CARE International UK](#), UNCDF in Rwanda, [MicroSave](#) in India, and for the Italian Development Cooperation in Tanzania, Nicola led on organizational MEAL strategies, the management of large-scale evaluations, and leadership on internal programme evaluations.

John Akwetey is a professional evaluator with over 12+ years in designing, planning, leading, and conducting evaluations. He served on this evaluation project as the Evaluation Expert contracted by I4DI to work on the Evaluation of USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (USAID/RFS) Functional Strategy, to evaluate a series of consecutive and compounding shocks and stressors contributing to a global food crisis, specifically the USAID response to African Swine Fever (2021, led by RFS), the 2021-2022 droughts in the horn of Africa (lead by AFR), and Putin's war on Ukraine (2022, led by RFS/FTFCT). It will incorporate relevant findings from the evaluations and learning exercises on USAID's response to COVID-19 led by the Bureau for Global Health (BGH) and the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning (PPL). He is pursuing an Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Evaluation from Western Michigan University.

Peter Simpson has over two years of experience conducting applied research, technical assistance, monitoring and evaluation. His primary focus areas are higher education, workforce and skills development, and public-private partnerships. He applies a variety of methods (qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods) across the respective areas.

ANNEX 8: TIMELINE

Evaluation Schedule and Milestones Proposed in the Design Document (March 2023)

The evaluation team recognizes that the process of evaluating outcomes for RFS global leadership is not a straightforward and linear one. Rather, it involves an iterative approach that requires flexibility and adaptability. While the team will aim to adhere to the timeline, they expect that this timeline may need to be modified or adjusted as new information is uncovered, or as unexpected challenges or opportunities arise during the evaluation process. The team plans to be flexible and adaptable in its approach, but is highly committed to completing the work on time.

Table 1: Timeline and key engagements with USAID

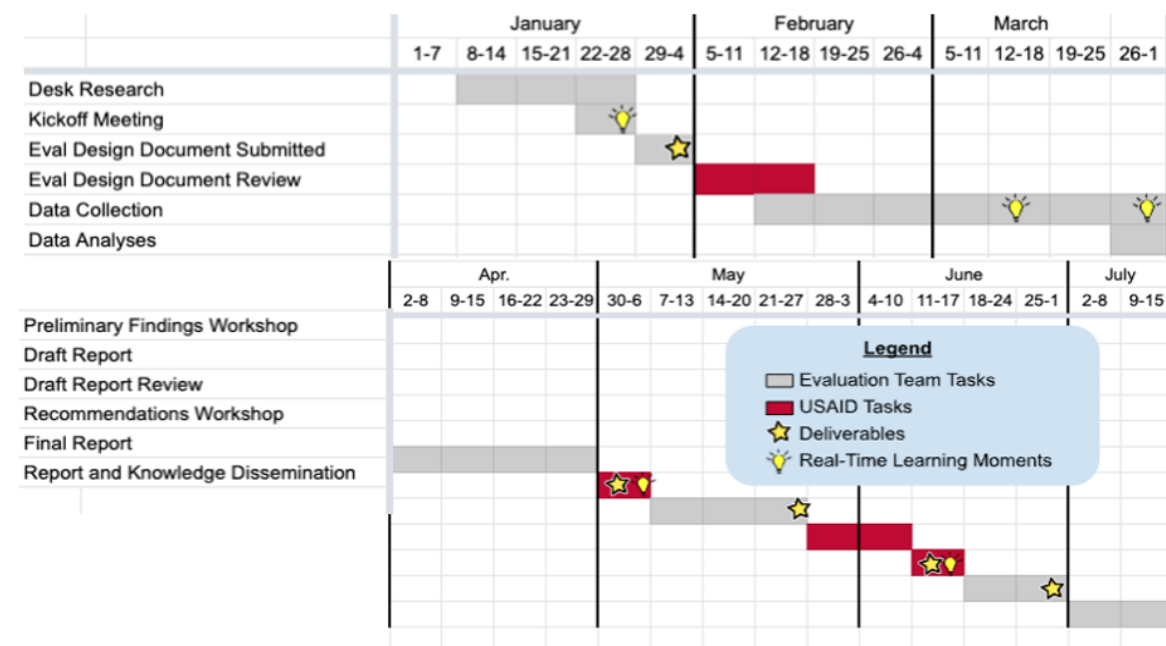


Table 2: Key milestones and expected dates

Milestone	Date
Evaluation Design Document submitted to USAID	February 3
Meet with USAID on Evaluation Design	February 16
Final set of Influence Outcomes accepted by USAID	February 25
Data collection & Analysis	Mid-February to May
Draft report	May 27
Real-time Learning	February, March, first week May, June/July

Evaluation Schedule and Milestones as Executed

Table 3: Key milestones and expected dates

Milestone	Date
Evaluation Design Document submitted to USAID	March 15
Meet with USAID on Evaluation Design	March 15
Final set of Influence Outcomes accepted by USAID	March 13
Data collection & Analysis	March 24- May 22
Draft report	July 17
Real-time Learning	February 13, June 5 and August/September

ANNEX 9: EXCERPTS FROM DESIGN DOCUMENT

Selected Excerpts: USAID/RFS Global Leadership Evaluation Draft Design Document (March 15, 2023)

Acronyms

Acronym / Abbreviation	
ADS	Automated Directives System
CLA	Collaborating Learning and Adapting
COVID	Coronavirus; respiratory illness
DDI	Development, Democracy, and Innovation
EEl	Environment, Energy, and Infrastructure
EQ	Evaluation Question
G7	Group of Seven
GFSS	Global Food Security Strategy
I4DI	Institute for Development Impact
IR	Intermediate Result
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
METS	Monitoring and Evaluation Training Services
MSC	Most Significant Change
N/A	Not Applicable
Obj	Objective
OECD/DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Development Assistance Committee
OH	Outcome Harvesting
OU	Operating Units

PAE/SE	Office of Policy Analysis and Engagement Strategic Engagement Division
PPR	Past Performance Review
RFS	USAID’s Bureau for Resilience and Food Security
SOW	Statement of Work
TA	Technical Assistance (Because this is an evaluation of the RFS Functional Strategy, TA refers initially to the written and verbal advice and support provided by RFS staff)
TOC	Theory of Change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

Background and Purpose of the Evaluation

This evaluation will identify and analyze how a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) central, technical bureau can better define and communicate its role in providing global leadership to influence the global food security agenda and advance food security for all. The evaluation will examine the role USAID’s Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (USAID/RFS) plays in providing global leadership at the intersection of food security for all with agriculture, water, nutrition, climate and resilience as well as the cross-cutting themes of inclusive development, analytics and learning, and policy. The evaluation will use the July 2020 [RFS Functional Strategy](#) as the primary reference that defines RFS’s role in global leadership (Objective 1), specifically to influence global agendas (IR1.1). The Strategy “outlines the Bureau’s unique role in providing technical support while exerting global leadership” not only through programs but through the expertise and experience of the staff.

RFS Functional Strategy 2020 Global Leadership Results

The evaluation will focus on whether and how RFS’ role, structure, system, processes, capacities and resources help and/or hinder its effectiveness in achieving global leadership outcomes that advance food security for all. The focus will be on the period of performance from 2020-2022.

Summary Information

Strategy/Project/Activity Name(s)	USAID/RFS Functional Strategy
USAID Office(s)	USAID/RFS/Program Office

Life of Strategy	RFS's Functional Strategy was approved in July 2020 and is currently active
Functional Strategy Objective(s) and Intermediate Result(s)	Objective 1 (Provide Global Leadership) and IR 1.1 (Influence and Investment: Key external partners are advancing and investing in shared development agendas)
Required evaluation?	Yes
External or internal evaluation?	External

Context

In March 2020, USAID/RFS was formally established and operationalized as part of USAID's transformation effort. The Bureau then implemented an [RFS Functional Strategy](#) which details its mission, vision, and goals, and the approaches it takes to achieve them. It includes a Results Framework outlining the Bureau's objectives to provide global leadership and country support through seven intermediate results (IRs). RFS developed an associated [MEL Plan](#) with performance metrics within the first year of launching the strategy. This Functional Strategy captures the Bureau's unique role in providing technical support to USAID Missions while also **exerting global leadership** to promote proven, evidenced-based approaches. The evaluation will focus on the latter, specifically through the efforts of Bureau staff as opposed to the awards and interventions which are usually addressed in USAID evaluations. This was reflected in the Global Leadership Evaluation Statement of Work (SOW) (Annex A).

This evaluation is conducted in parallel with an Agency-level reorganization that will affect the Bureau through the incorporation of aspects of climate and environment (expected to include the Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation (DDI) and Bureau for Environment, Energy, and Infrastructure (EEI)). The RFS Functional Strategy was developed and launched before the release of the 2022-2026 Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS) in February 2021 and the USAID Climate Strategy in April 2022. As a result of these important documents, climate has become a growing part of the Bureau's work in food security and will continue through the forthcoming restructuring. It will also include the 2022 work where global food security for all intersects with climate. This reorganization entails significant structural changes likely to happen alongside this evaluation that will, in turn, evolve systems, processes, and resources.

During the period of the Functional Strategy, there was a series of consecutive and compounding shocks and stressors contributing to a global food crisis in food, fuel and fertilizer. These included Putin's war in Ukraine, the droughts in the Horn of Africa, African Swine Fever, and the ongoing coronavirus (COVID) crisis. The Global Health Bureau and the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning are concurrently conducting an evaluation of the COVID response that will inform this evaluation. These crises, shocks and stresses are also contextual factors driving RFS efforts in global engagement. Collectively, these factors, as well as the fact that the evaluation is looking at the Bureau as a whole while it is constantly responding to a shifting and dynamic development landscape will necessitate a participatory and iterative approach to ensure it remains relevant and informs RFS as it makes important strategic decisions.

Audience and use of the evaluation

The primary audience for this evaluation is RFS senior leadership, managers and staff directly involved in global leadership and engagement. The evaluation results are intended to provide a basis for decisions on strengthening and streamlining Bureau systems, processes, resources, capacities

and the Strategy itself. In addition, evaluation results will be used by RFS senior leadership, managers, and staff to improve the reorganized Bureau's capacity and flexibility to strengthen the global environment supporting food security for all, and to inform decision-making in response to future shocks, stressors and crises addressed by the new Bureau.

Global leadership is dynamic and therefore evaluation results should inform current as well as future RFS decision making and planning. Emerging learning will be communicated to the Bureau as it becomes reliable for decision making.

The evaluation results will be used to:

- Improve the Bureau's capacity to engage with key partners to strengthen the global environment supporting food security for all.
- Inform decision-making in response to future contextual changes driven by external factors (shocks, stressors, crisis) or internal changes in context such as reorganization or budget cuts.
- Benefit RFS in identifying ways in which the Functional Strategy, systems, processes, capacities, and resources have supported and need to adapt or evolve to improve the Bureau's role in providing global leadership in food security for all.

The evaluation will not provide specific recommendations but rather areas of analysis and reflection. These will be used in a participatory co-creation meeting with RFS staff to identify recommendations for key actions to improve RFS' role in providing global leadership through engagement to influence the global food security agenda and advance food security for all.

This global leadership evaluation is one of a set of studies that will help RFS meet USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) 201 evaluation requirements for Operating Units (OUs) to conduct at least one evaluation per IR in their strategy. The evaluation may also contribute to the USAID Learning Agenda 2022-2026 on Operational Effectiveness with its unusual emphasis on effectiveness in global leadership.

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation questions that bound the scope of this evaluation were developed in a co-design process led by the RFS Monitoring, Evaluation and Training Services activity and RFS Bureau staff. The evaluation is designed to answer three questions:

1. What has been the role and performance of RFS technical assistance in global leadership to influence the global food security agenda and behavior of bilateral and multilateral donors, non-governmental actors, regional bodies and private sector entities, during the 2020-2022 period of strategy implementation? (Technical assistance refers to staff expertise and experience as well as implementing mechanisms including PIOs.)
2. During the 2020-2022 period of Functional Strategy implementation, including a set of successive and compounding crises, how have RFS systems, processes, capacities and resources either helped or hindered the Bureau's global leadership efforts to respond quickly to unexpected shifts in context?
3. Has the performance of the Bureau's global leadership to influence the global food security agenda and advance food security for all revealed ways in which the RFS Functional Strategy, systems, processes, capacities and resources need to adapt or evolve to meet the current Agency and global context?

The Glossary in Annex B defines many of the key terms in these questions. Several are terms that are defined quite specifically for the purposes of this evaluation and perhaps differ from their use in other contexts. Therefore several are included here:

Definitions	
Global leadership	The process of influencing a set of individuals, groups, or organizations across the globe to align with, advance, and advocate for USAID/RFS's development agenda
Global engagement	The process of interacting with a set of individuals, groups or organizations across the globe with the ability to set, evolve, or influence development agendas in order to collaborate, share knowledge, and mutually align and advance targeted development agendas.
Influence	The outcome of RFS's global leadership efforts in terms of shared agendas and changed behavior (including investments and evidence-based policies) between USAID and global partners.
Influencing	Actions taken to lead to changes in outcomes e.g. changes in agendas or levels of resources.
Role	The function assumed, or part played by RFS staff i.e., their technical actions and deliverables in support to provide technical support and deliverables in line with the Functional Strategy, specifically to provide global leadership.
RFS staff advice or technical assistance (TA):	Verbal or written advice and support provided by RFS staff. This does not include TA provided through Implementing Mechanisms except for PIOs. During the evaluation, this definition is expected to expand with greater understanding of the way RFS has influence.
Performance:	Instances of the degree to which the outcomes show shared and evidence-based agendas and investment leveraged.

Evaluation Approach and Methods

Iterative, Participatory Evaluation Design

The desk review completed to date has revealed that global leadership is not a common evaluation topic at USAID or other public development organizations. It should be noted that few bureaus have functional strategies that would even specify global leadership objectives. The search for other evaluations of global leadership in the Development Experience Clearinghouse as well as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) evaluation repository turned up only evaluations of tangential relevance (See bibliography in Annex D).

In the evaluation SOW, the Bureau requested that this evaluation incorporate real-time learning and be flexible, responsive and participatory. Therefore, the evaluation will apply an iterative, participatory design throughout its implementation. There will be key collaborative design and analysis touchpoints, beginning in the design phase, where RFS staff will be actively engaged to: come

to agreement on key definitions, determine influence outcomes to be studied, and gather input and feedback on the proposed methodology, data collection instruments, and analysis plans. These inputs will be used to refine and improve the evaluation design, ensuring that it is responsive to the needs and perspectives of key stakeholders while also taking into account changes in the contextual factors driving RFS work and USAID priorities.

This iterative, participatory process will continue throughout the evaluation to ensure that the results are meaningful and relevant to the key stakeholders and to inform and prepare them for how to use the evaluation results. For example, the Bureau may want to meet with the team to discuss what preliminary findings may inform the Bureau reorganization or a similar ongoing challenge. Other touchpoints could include Front Office and Office Director meetings requested in response to routine information memorandums on the evaluation's progress and learning; briefing RFS Policy Analysis and Engagement Office/Strategic Engagement Division (PAE/SE) and leadership after the data collection period to ensure that there are no other resources RFS wants to be sure the team includes; and workshops to validate findings and co-create recommendations, as mentioned earlier.

Challenges and Solutions for Evaluating Global Leadership

Early data collection, including discussions with USAID staff in and outside the Bureau, review of the Bureau's Functional Strategy and initial information from the desk review, confirmed that the concept of global leadership is complex in several ways:

- **Emergent:** Outcomes, and contribution pathways, cannot be adequately predicted in advance; the evaluation team must be prepared to respond to new opportunities and challenges as they arise.
- **Uncertain causal links:** The evaluation team is working with insufficient information about how outcomes are achieved (or fall short).
- **Contested:** Major players in this space have diverse perspectives on desirable outcomes and ways to achieve them. Agreement with all major stakeholders is not unrealistic. Alliances are likely to shift across time and context.
- **Dynamic:** The pace of change is variable and unpredictably so. One outcome may be achieved quickly and progress towards another may be slow, erratic or marked by setbacks.

Another common challenge in evaluating influence is that those who are the target of the work, those whose actions we seek to change, are not a source of accurate and complete information about the desired changes and how they occurred. For example, some actors may not want to publicly admit that they had been influenced. Other actors, such as officials from other major donors or private sector organizations, may be unavailable to the evaluators or they may be unwilling or unable to provide useful information.

The complex nature of engagement done to influence other actors means that program theory-driven evaluation approaches are not a good fit. Program theory-driven evaluation is a large family of evaluation approaches that rely on a clear, explicit, evidence-based theory of change (TOC). For evaluation purposes, TOCs must specify desired outcomes and corresponding causal pathways with sufficient detail to guide the evaluation. Agreement about the desired outcomes and certainty (based on evidence and/or experience) about ways to achieve them must be high, and the pace of change predictable. The influence of external causal factors must be minimal or well-understood.

The SOW for this evaluation included process tracing as a possible method. Process tracing is an evaluation method within the family of program theory-driven evaluation approaches. It is a method that tests whether the theory of change held true during implementation. While we can sketch an implicit TOC for RFS's global leadership engagement to influence others, that TOC sketch is not sufficiently detailed to be vetted through process tracing. In addition, process tracing evaluations

require that the outcome has been achieved. In some cases, RFS’s outcomes of interest may be ongoing, rather than fully achieved. Perhaps, if this evaluation’s findings contribute to a more explicit and robust TOC for global engagement, a future evaluation may fruitfully use process tracking.

Moreover, if emerging outcomes and adapting pathways are likely to comprise a sizable proportion of what is being evaluated, or if they have a significant influence, then it is best to look outside of the program-theory driven evaluation family of approaches.

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the value of goal-free MEL approaches that can capture outcomes in complex and knowledge-scarce situations. Goal-free and complexity-aware approaches are a good fit for evaluations of influencing initiatives because they capture outcomes (both planned and emergent) and work backwards to document pathways of contribution.

The evaluation team recommends outcome harvesting as the best (but not only) method for this evaluation because the approach can be quite effective at addressing the challenges with evaluating RFS’s global leadership, engagement and influence that were stated earlier. The following table demonstrates how. Definitions of key terms applied to this evaluation are found in Annex B: Glossary.

Challenges of RFS Global Leadership	Outcome Harvesting (OH) Solutions
<p>Outcomes are emergent and dynamic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desired outcomes are broadly defined and/or cannot be predicted in advance Activities are likely to contribute to unpredicted and unpredictable outcomes The evaluation is unable to obtain accurate information from the actors that RFS seeks to influence. In Outcome Harvesting, these people are called “social actors.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OH captures richly detailed descriptions of outcomes, regardless of whether they were predicted in advance. OH collects data from the change agents that influence key social actors that RFS does not have direct access to. In Outcome Harvesting, “change agents” are the internal or external actors that do the influencing and persuading.
<p>Pathways of change are emergent and dynamic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncertain: The team is working with insufficient information about how outcomes are achieved (or fall short). Evolving: Successful achievement of outcomes requires adaptive management; the evaluation team must be prepared to adapt activities to respond to new opportunities and challenges as they arise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OH collects data from change agents that RFS works with to reveal “behind the scenes” descriptions of how change happens and how RFS can contribute more effectively OH captures richly detailed descriptions of pathways of change, regardless of whether they were planned in advance or they evolved to respond to changes in context.

<p>Contested</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major players in this space have diverse perspectives on desirable outcomes and ways to achieve them but agreement with all major stakeholders could be possible. Alliances are likely to shift across time and context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OH can capture diverse perspectives on the significance of outcomes. OH counterbalances natural bias in favor of the evaluation commissioner by verifying findings with those who are independent from RFS and the change agents that it works with directly.
<p>Pace of change is dynamic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pace of change is variable and unpredictably so. One outcome may be achieved quickly and progress towards another may be slow, erratic or marked by setbacks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OH can capture interim outcomes and progress towards outcomes

Most Significant Change (MSC) is another goal-free evaluation approach that does a good job of capturing emergent outcomes. However, MSC does not do a good job of documenting contribution, nor does it offer verification options. These are what bring rigor to outcome harvesting. Also, MSC is a highly participatory approach that involves collaborative processes by which respondents reach consensus on the value, significance and worth of outcomes. This is too time consuming when balanced with the method’s limitations in minimizing bias.

The majority of the methods explored were qualitative in nature due to the nature of the topic and the lack of quantitative data available. Although we will be quantitatively analyzing information on resources leveraged to the extent possible, we have prioritized the application of highly rigorous qualitative methods as the most effective means of providing RFS with actionable relevant findings

Evaluation Methods

After reviewing all of the methods and approaches mentioned above, the evaluation team determined that the primary method to evaluate influence outcomes will be Outcome Harvesting. OH is a participatory method to identify, formulate, verify, analyze and interpret outcomes to answer actionable questions. The approach captures outcomes – predicted/unpredicted, positive/negative – regardless of whether they were included in planning documents or not. This method rigorously works backwards to describe and verify the contribution of what is being evaluated – in this case RFS’s global leadership – to the achievement of specified outcomes.

OH is well-suited to capture rich data on 1) global leadership outcomes, that is, instances when bilateral and multilateral donors, non-governmental actors, regional bodies and private sector entities make observable changes in food security agendas, policies, and behaviors such as investments, 2) the contribution of RFS staff and others to those outcomes, as well as 3) the significance of the outcomes. Together these are the basis for the analysis that will allow RFS to improve and streamline their global leadership efforts. Data collection methods will include document review, interviews, and textual analysis comparing USAID/USG’s agenda (specifically talking points) with agreed event statements and communiques (described more in the section below on analysis).

This Outcome harvesting approach is being tailored to the specifics of evaluating RFS’s global leadership efforts and conducted through six iterative steps:

- 1. Design the approach to evaluating “Influence Outcomes”:** the evaluation team will focus on actionable information and outcome priorities for RFS. The evaluation team will continue to adapt the design with RFS input throughout the evaluation.

2. **Identify the preliminary influence outcomes to be evaluated:** The team will use the material provided by RFS (included in the Bibliography, Annex D) and interview key bureau staff to identify the set of approximately eight global leadership influence outcomes that will be the primary basis of outcome harvesting to answer the first evaluation questions. The evaluation team will determine the final set of outcomes collaboratively with the Bureau.
3. **Interview influencers (or change agents):** Collect data on global leadership outcomes (who and what changed), and influencing pathways (how did RFS and key change agents contribute to the change) and the significance of the outcome
4. **Verify:** Analyze documents to assess alignment with RFS/USG agenda; collect data from knowledgeable, independent individuals
5. **Analyze and interpret:** Provide evidence-based answers to evaluation questions
6. **Support Bureau learning and recommendation development**

To identify the eight influence outcomes, the evaluation team used the 2019-2022 PPRs and the 2022 Operational Plan. To strengthen the set of strategic engagement outcomes, the team turned to materials shared by the Strategic Engagement Division. From all of these resources, a set of 16 outcomes were identified which included actors and global/regional fora. To solicit Bureau input on the actors/fora to be included in the evaluation, an email was sent to managers in the Bureau with a request that they vote for eight of the 16. This elicited further suggestions from the Bureau which informed the teams final selection.

Outcome harvest findings will also inform evaluation questions 2 and 3. To supplement what the evaluation team learns through outcome harvesting findings, the evaluation team will conduct further interviews directly with RFS staff to investigate Bureau systems, processes, capacities and resources that have helped and hindered their global engagement efforts. The team will conduct case study investigation on a subset of the outcomes to deepen the understanding of whether and how internal Bureau systems, processes, capacities and resources enabled staff to provide written and verbal advice to those well-positioned to influence bilateral and multilateral donors, non-governmental actors, regional bodies and private sector entities.

Evaluation Design Matrix

Table 1: Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Question (EQ)	Data Source	Data Collection Method	Sampling Method	Analysis Method
EQ1: What has been the role and performance of RFS technical assistance in global leadership to influence the agendas for food security for all and behavior of bilateral and multilateral donors, non-governmental actors, regional bodies and private sector entities, during the 2020-2022 period of strategy implementation?	RFS documents to identify influencing outcomes (OH steps 1 and 2)	Desk review of technical docs, press reports, financial info	N/A	Thematic analysis to identify outcomes
	Change agents (OH step 3) or their closest colleague(s)	Interviews	Purposive	Thematic analysis
	Third parties knowledgeable and independent of outcomes (OH step 4, verification)	Mini-survey	Purposive	Confirm outcome descriptions, contribution stories, and significance

	Global engagement agendas and talking points for priority outcomes (OH step 4, verification)	Desk review	N/A	Textual analysis of talking points vs. statements/communiques; analysis of resources leveraged
EQ 2: During the 2020-2022 period of Functional Strategy implementation, including a set of successive and compounding crises, how have RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources either helped or hindered the Bureau's global leadership efforts to respond quickly to unexpected shifts in context?	RFS TA focal points involved in actions contributing to outcomes	Key informant interviews	Snowball	Case study research and thematic analysis of RFS technical role to outcome
	Documentation on RFS systems, processes, capacities, and resources	Desk review of key technical documents	N/A	Thematic analysis of RFS technical role to outcome
EQ 3: Has the performance of the Bureau's global leadership revealed ways in which the RFS Functional Strategy, systems, processes, capacities, and resources need to adapt or evolve to meet the current Agency and global context?	RFS staff with knowledge of Bureau internal systems, processes, capacities and resources, functional to outcomes	Key informant interviews	Snowball	Thematic analysis of role and responsiveness of RFS processes and systems in support of outcomes
	Bureau Operations Plans and performance reports	Review	N/A	Analysis of relevant global engagement plans and, if possible, progress

Limitations

- **The outcome harvesting approach does not comprehensively collect data on all possible outcomes.** Due to the complex nature of evaluating global leadership influence, it is not possible to construct a complete and accurate sampling frame of global leadership outcomes; consequently, outcomes harvested cannot be said to represent the full extent of the Bureau's success in achieving its global leadership outcomes. Outcome harvesting captures significant examples of outcomes that can shed light on the Bureau's contributions to those outcomes (both positive and negative, planned and unplanned).
- **The Strategy is only two years old and there is limited formal data available** on RFS's role in Global Leadership, making the data collected by the evaluation team the centerpiece of findings on the subject. That said, the team is using the information provided to the fullest.
- Set against the Bureau context of working crises and shocks, **the number of people able to take the time for interviews may be more limited than the team would prefer.** With interviews as the primary source of significant portions of the analysis, sufficient interviews of the appropriate staff is essential. There are several ways to deal with staff's hesitancy to take time for interviews. One is to have the senior bureau leadership in RFS highlight the

importance of the evaluation; and potentially reach out to leaders in other bureaus. Another is to plan for sufficient elapsed time in the data collection process for interviews to be scheduled, postponed and rescheduled.

- **The planned approach calls for interviews to elicit recall of instances of outcome.** Asking the question can bias the response. The interview question will be carefully worded to avoid bias as much as possible. In order to strengthen confidence in this reported evidence, interview evidence will be triangulated against other interviews and, where possible, to written evidence.
- **SOW and Resource limitations:** Global leadership and engagement touch almost all aspects of the Bureau's work. Interactions during co-design led to many interesting issues to explore and requests for deeper understanding. Resource and time limitations mean that this evaluation cannot cover all aspects of the Bureau's work. Choices will be made that will necessarily put a boundary around what parts of global leadership and engagement for influence can be included.

U.S. Agency for International Development

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20523