



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

September 19, 2013

**Higher Education for Development (HED) Advisory Board**  
American Council on Education  
American Association of Community Colleges  
American Association of State Colleges and Universities  
Association of American Universities  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

Dear HED Advisory Board,

As discussed at your Board meeting today, USAID intends to honor our commitments to the 41 current partnerships under the HED program. While all USAID agreements are “subject to the availability of funds” and “barring any unforeseen circumstances,” I give you my assurance that USAID will do everything possible to continue the partnerships to their scheduled end dates with minimal disruption to program activities. Our commitment reflects USAID’s respect for the efforts already expended under these partnerships, the importance of good-faith relations between U.S. and partner country institutions, and USAID’s commitment to higher education institutions and their role in development.

Second, I would like to be sure you know the reason USAID plans not to continue the HED Leader with Associates award after 2015. We wish to be working more closely with your universities in a direct relationship.

Third, both USAID and HED need to review every line item in our awards to determine how to best provide cost-effective supervision to these partnerships from Washington. Given no new partnerships will be undertaken via HED and the current agreement will end in 2015, we need to further reduce the \$11 million in operational costs that HED plans to incur for its role with the existing 41 partnerships. We think that, with effort on the part of USAID and HED, these costs can be brought down by another 15 to 20 percent.

Lastly, USAID is highly committed to increasing our engagement with higher education institutions. We provided over \$1.13 billion to colleges and universities between FY 2005 and FY 2008. Under the Obama administration, that amount has increased by 22 percent, up to \$1.38 billion between FY 2009 and FY 2012. HED and its predecessor the ALO represent around \$120 million of that \$2.5 billion in USAID support. USAID and the higher education community have, together, accomplished significant results: training thousands of students and faculty, supporting applied research in cutting edge areas, improving institutional systems and governance, reaching out to communities with critical extension services, and developing long-lasting programs and partnerships that have reached millions. USAID is currently reviewing its approach to higher education development with a view to increasing and deepening our

engagement with the higher education community. In the coming months, we hope to speak with you further about our exciting plans -- including that of hiring a senior level Higher Education Coordinator, engaging in the nascent massive open online course movement, and providing opportunities for more and better direct relationships between U.S. and partner country institutions.

Please feel free to contact me ([epostel@usaid.gov](mailto:epostel@usaid.gov) or 202-712-0670) or my staff, through HED or directly, if you would like to discuss this or have ideas for the future. I look forward to continued partnership with all of you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Postel", written in a cursive style.

Eric G. Postel  
Assistant Administrator  
Bureau of Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (E3)  
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)