



Society for International Development
Washington Chapter



FY 2018

ANNUAL REPORT

Young Professionals in Development Network (YPN)

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YOUNG PROFESSIONALS IN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK (YPN)

The SID-Washington (SID-W) Young Professionals in Development Network (YPN) is a group of young professionals in the arena of international development dedicated to strengthening our impact both at home and abroad by building partnerships among peers and facilitating and empowering a peer initiative. Its goal is to promote information-sharing and skill-building for professional development.



Dear Members of the Young Professionals in Development Network (YPN),

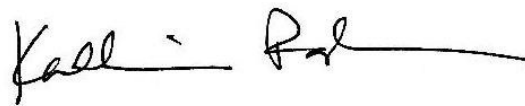
We are happy to re-launch our Annual Reports! We had another exciting year with events ranging from *Design a Brand that Represents Your Best Self* to *Ending the Silence - A Discussion of How to Address Sexual Harassment & Abuse against Aid Workers*.

Last year, we announced the launch of the Young Professionals in Development Network (YPN). Formerly our Young Professionals Workgroup, this group was rebranded as a network to better reflect what its members truly strive to do: share information and network. YPN has hosted several events using a wide range of new formats, from resume and branding workshops to a wine tasting, to fit this purpose. We hope to continue these types of events into the next fiscal year!

Lastly, we would like to thank former Co-Chairs Aaron Pied and Ellie Price. They helped us put on many fantastic events during their tenure. We wish them the best in their future endeavors.

If you have any questions about YPN, please feel free to send an email to events@sidw.org. We have several events in the works, including a new series, so please stay tuned for more information throughout the year. We look forward to seeing you in the near future!

Best regards,



Katherine Raphaelson



Paul A. Sherman





**Lydia
Cardona**

Coordinator,
Conservation International

Lydia Cardona is a bilingual international development professional with 6+ years of experience in training, research, and project administration. In her current role at Conservation International, she helps to build staff capacity on environmental peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity through technical support, training design and facilitation, and development of educational resources. Her interest in supporting gender-sensitive and conflict-sensitive conservation through dialogue and consensus building that integrates diverse stakeholder groups is rooted in prior cross-sectoral experiences and time abroad. This interest has since extended to supporting dialogue and peace initiatives within her own community.

Lydia's past experiences include working domestically in public sector consulting, internationally with UN Women and UNICEF, and teaching English in Georgia and China. She holds a master's degree in International Peace Studies from Trinity College Dublin, with a focus on women, peace, and security, and a B.A. in International Affairs from the University of Georgia.



**Jamila
White**

Senior Manager,
AECOM

Jamila White is an international development professional with almost a decade of experience managing and supporting agribusiness, economic growth, education, and public health programs in Mali, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. Before starting her career in development and economic growth, Jamila obtained a bachelor's degree in Business Management from Hampton University and a Masters in Public Administration with a concentration in Economic Development and International Affairs from Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs.

Jamila is a Senior Manager at AECOM International Development and helps to support the Economic Growth and Agriculture practice. She also serves as the Engagement Manager for USAID Feed the Future's Mali Livestock for Growth Program.

Jamila started her journey in international development after studying abroad in Senegal during her sophomore year of college. Throughout the majority of her career, Jamila has worked in the field on several development initiatives. However, the most personally rewarding was her time spent as an Ebola fighter where she managed the National Ebola Response Call Center.

EVENTS CALENDAR

Thursday, July 13, 2017

4:00PM - 5:30PM | SID-Washington

YPN Planning Meeting

Thursday, September 21, 2017

5:30PM - 7:30PM | 18th Street Lounge

YPN Happy Hour

Friday, December 8, 2017

9:00PM - 12:00AM | Proper 21

YPN Annual Dinner After Party

Wednesday, January 24, 2018

5:00PM - 7:00PM | SID-Washington

YPN Resume Workshop: Day 1

Thursday, January 25, 2018

5:00PM - 7:00PM | SID-Washington

YPN Resume Workshop: Day 2

Tuesday, May 8, 2018

5:30PM - 7:00PM | SID-Washington

Design a Brand that Represents Your Best Self

Tuesday, June 12, 2018

5:00PM - 6:30PM | SID-Washington

Series on Harassment & Exploitation in International Development: Ending the Silence - A Discussion of How to Address Sexual Harassment & Abuse against Aid Workers



Young Professionals in Development Network (YPN) Planning Meeting

Summary: The Young Professionals in Development (YPN) Network met on Thursday, July 13 at 4:00 PM to plan events for the group in the next year. In recent months, the group organized events on the 2017 Presidential Transition with former USAID Administrators. All members were encouraged to join and to bring ideas for event formats and topics.

To facilitate “breaking the ice” at this happy hour, especially for the introverted among us, the network asked all participants to consider the following question for discussion: Given shifting global circumstances, and the evolution in the way international development work is funded, should young professionals from western/north countries expect to play a different role later in their career than “experts” do today?

Former YPN Co-Chairs **Ellie Price** and **Aaron Pied** introduced themselves and welcomed participants to the planning meeting.

Ellie Price, FHI 360, began with the core question of the Planning Meeting – “Given shifting global circumstances, and the evolution in the way international development work is funded, should young professionals from western/northern countries expect to play a different role later in their career than “experts” do today?”

From this discussion, 4 major points were raised in response to this question.

Current Challenges

One participant commented on how young professionals will thrive if they are able to balance their personal and professional goals. Additionally, individuals must go further than altruistic goals like saving children. Instead, one participant remarked that many should learn how to defend that statement with work in civil society and leadership practices, while taking into consideration all the stakeholders that are involved in achieving these ambitious goals.

Media representation

Another participant commented on how accurate representation on global issues are key to the shifting global circumstances in society today.

Integration and Transition

Some participants shared their perceptions on what “good” development means throughout the world. Many agreed that a more integrated approach where local communities have the agency to create and sustain various projects on their own as a key to success.

Aaron Pied, Realizing Global Health, commented that the basic mantra for development practitioners in Western states is

ultimately working ourselves out of a job. In other words, the integration and autonomous transfer of skills and infrastructure would be an ideal situation.

Working in the field

Regardless of the changing global circumstances, one participant commented on how it is crucial for development professionals to work and engage in the field they seek to make an impact in.

One participant commented on how his work in the field exposed him to the various dynamics of corruption and nepotism that is characteristic of private and public institutions. Having this sort of wake-up call, he argued, is necessary for any young professional who seeks to get involved in the international development circle.

Next on the agenda was working on reforming the mission statement of the YPN.

The original statement reads:

This group of young professionals in the arena of international development is dedicated to strengthening our impact both at home and abroad, by building partnerships among peers and facilitating information-sharing and skill building for professional development.

After some deliberation, the participants agreed to the following edits:

The YPN is a group of young professionals in the arena of international development, dedicated to strengthening our impact at home and abroad by building grassroots partnerships, and facilitating professional development through skill building and knowledge-sharing.

EVENT SUMMARIES

Last on the agenda was to discuss ideas for future events. Below is a list of some of the ideas raised:

- Workshops – How to communicate and engage with stakeholders from different cultures
- Communication strategies from groups and institutions from different cultural backgrounds
- Technical workshops
- Software such as GIS and R
- Skill-sharing within the Network
- Using the skilled talent within YPN to share
- Monthly discussion series
- Network individuals can share their work on projects of which they are most proud
- YPN Facebook Page
- Posting ideas for projects, potential meet ups and informal gatherings
- Post-Event Debrief Sessions
- Create time for YPN to discuss and debrief after an event related to international development

Ms. Price and Mr. Pied thanked the participants for sharing their input and ended the meeting.



Design a Brand that Represents Your Best Self

Speaker: **Christa Davis**, Owner, Christa Davis Coaching

Summary: When we think of personal branding, we often reflect on all the things we should be doing to market ourselves: building an online presence, putting ourselves out there, networking in our sectors, etc. However, in order to be successful in these activities, it is crucial we design and present a brand that feels genuine to us, aligns with what we want to achieve, and highlights our distinct value. This workshop explored the ins and outs of building a “brand” that is authentic to who you are. Attendees learned how to leverage your unique strengths and attributes to develop your brand, make intentional branding decisions that align with your professional goals and explore how to overcome any barriers that are holding you back from presenting your best “branded” self.

Key Takeaways

1) Your Story

Christa Davis described personal branding as your authentic self. It aligns with who you are and with your goals to help you. It is not the restrictive, robotic process of which most people think when they hear personal branding. Vision is less of what you are doing, and more of who you want to be, and how you want to be remembered. It is important to think through and understand the intangible aspects of personal branding. This helps you pull out your core personal themes in your life. To find your personal brand, you need to ask yourself the right kind of questions.

2) What is Personal Branding?

Your story is the most valuable tool you can leverage. Why do you do what you do? How can you demonstrate your impact and authenticity of your story? You should use your story in an interview, on your resume, on social media and in your elevator pitch to convey your message. You can use your voice when sharing your story and be excited to share it. People will receive your message better when it is said in an exciting and interesting way.

3) “Who, What, and How” Activity

Christa Davis lead an activity so that each participant could understand the “Who, What, and How” of their personal branding.

- The who is you. It is your strengths, attributes, talents, passions, values, weaknesses, etc. To define your who, you must think about your values, strengths, passions and what you want to be known for. Recognizing these values and strengths will help you deliver your story.
- The what is everything you are doing in your life to create this brand. It is your job, hobbies, day-to-day activities, networking, online presence, thought leadership, career highlights, accomplishments, etc.

- The how concerns the delivery of this brand. This ranges from interpersonal skills such as your energy, confidence, communication style, body language and influence on others to tangible products such as your logo, your resume, and your presence on social media.

Next Steps

Christa ended the event by explaining how to take her advice and put it into practice. Christa provided the following questions:

- Which of your current habits and practices support your brand and will move you toward your goal?
- What changes do you want to make to adapt your brand and move toward your goal?
- How can you put this into action? What can you do to get you one step closer to achieving your personal branding goal this week, this month, this year? (action steps)
- How are you going to approach these actions, so they are “intentional”?

She said this process of personal reflection on our goals will constantly change, so our stories and brands will be changing with it. Now we have the tools we need to address any changes that come up, so we can rebrand our personal branding.

Series on Harassment & Exploitation in International Development: Ending the Silence - A Discussion of How to Address Sexual Harassment & Abuse against Aid Workers

Speaker: **Megan Nobert**, Founder and Former Director, Report the Abuse (Switzerland)

Summary: This was the second in our Series on Harassment and Exploitation in International Development and a joint event with InterAction. Megan Nobert describes herself as a “lawyer, humanitarian, sexual violence survivor, sock knitter.” She is also the Founder and former Director of Report the Abuse, the first and only global NGO to work solely on the issue of sexual violence against humanitarian aid workers. Megan talked about her experience, her work with Report the Abuse, and what needs to be done going forward. This event was aimed at our Young Professionals in Development Network (YPN) since we believe we must build awareness among those entering the work force on how to recognize and report issues of concern. A reception sponsored by AECOM followed the discussion.

Key Takeaways

1) Organizations need to have proper policies and procedures in place to adequately address sexual harassment, exploitation, and gender-based violence.

As Megan Nobert described her personal experiences with sexual abuse while serving as an aid worker in South Sudan, she emphasized the need for organizations to have proper foundation and infrastructure to assist victims of sexual abuse. She advises that organizations (1) care for the female and male employees who experience sexual abuse and clearly provide a support network, which includes psycho-social support for rape incidents and (2) set up a notification system that sends out warnings through the NGO Safety Forum notifying people of reported sexual abuse incidents. These simple measures, as well as many others, can go a long way for victims of sexual abuse and possibly prevent future incidents. Nobert stressed that an organization’s response to abuse and residual effects can be as traumatizing as the actual moment of violation; thus highlighting the need for organizations to enact proper policies and procedures on sexual abuse for the safety and well-being of their employees.

2) Organizations should provide their employees with training on how to approach their fellow colleagues sexual abuse experiences.

Nobert stated that when she decided to tell her colleagues in her organization about her sexual abuse incident, their response was non-existent. Only one colleague acknowledged her story and wrote her back; others didn’t know how to approach the situation. She said that if proper training were provided for co-workers to adequately address such incidents, then the intensity of the emotional and physical strain on her and other victims wouldn’t have been as severe. Because her colleagues had no training on how to respond, they thought that saying nothing was better than saying the wrong thing. In some regard that might be right, but Nobert said that if colleagues were to simply say, ‘I am sorry for what happened to you’, it would go a long way for the healing process of the victim

than nothing at all.

3) It’s not enough to acknowledge that there’s a problem – a path needs to be created for survivors to succeed.

Megan Nobert’s organization, Report the Abuse, the global anonymized platform for survivors of the humanitarian community, surveyed 92 major aid organizations and found that only 16% of these organizations had a policy on protecting their staff from workplace violence. This statistic exemplifies Nobert’s point that just talking about the issue isn’t enough – survivors need a substantial support system from their employer that can assist in their healing process. She mentioned that one of the best practices is for senior management to take the issue of sexual abuse seriously because that can set the tone and the appropriate space on how the rest of the members of the organization will address the problem. This measure doesn’t just apply to the humanitarian community, but also to universities, the government, and any entity, according to Nobert.

4) Safe reporting procedures for survivors are crucial. Reporting procedures are another best practice highlighted by Report the Abuse.

Reporting procedures must work at all levels of an organization, not just the regional office or the headquarters, but even to the most remote field sites. Reporting procedures for survivors must be as creative and inclusive as possible. These procedures can’t just entail sending an email, making a phone call or sending a text because those in the most-remote field sites won’t necessarily have access to those tools. Reporting procedures must be gender-inclusive, race-inclusive, sexual-orientation-inclusive, and religiously-inclusive to make it truly transparent and accessible. The first person a survivor reports to usually sets the tone for how the survivor heals, according to Nobert. If that person, such as a human resources representative, is awkward about the survivor’s sexual abuse experience, then the survivor will likely discontinue speaking out or healing.



For more information, contact us at:

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