

MEMORANDUM

TO: Binaifer Nowrojee
FR: Maria Cattai and Chris Stone
CC: Pierre Mirabaud, Moises Naim, Mabel van Oranje, Ethan Zuckerman, Johanna Chao Kreilick, Greg Taylor
DT: April 16, 2015
RE: Strategy Feedback & Guidance: Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO)

Many thanks for joining us in London last month, and for all of the preparation that went into our strategy discussion. This memo includes what the Global Board Committee on Strategy, Budget, and Performance believes to be the most important points that arose in our conversation related to the four (4) country strategies as well as the overarching APRO strategy that is required this year. Our intent with this memo is to share these feedback points as guidance for you to take into consideration as you see fit as you develop the strategies further.

Please know that the entire Committee is very enthusiastic about your vision for the Asia Pacific region and the promise that strategies present for responding to the changing field. We also recognize the thought and care that you have put in to evolving the program, and the effort you have already made.

Issues Arising from Our Discussion

Here are the primary discussion points that we expect will inform the five (5) APRO strategies that you will prepare in the coming months:

TIFA Indonesia

- **Interim Plan for TIFA:** The Committee questioned the value of having the TIFA board draft a full strategy for the foundation while the new staff leadership and team is still pending. We recommend instead that the TIFA board prepare a simpler, interim plan that identifies the specific existing activities and commitments they would like to continue in a future strategy, along with a plan for how to maintain these grants through minimal support from a grant officer. We hope you will dissuade the TIFA board from engaging a consultant to draft a full strategy in this transition period.
- **Managing Reputation and Commitments during TIFA Transition:** Given the significant changes at the Foundation, how will you and the Board manage TIFA and OSF's reputational risk in the region? Is there an exit strategy for grants or other work that will need to be discontinued? How will this be managed until a new Executive Director is in place?
- **Interim Financials:** Severance payments for staff should be funded through accrual rather than through a rollover. We would like OSF's audit department to review TIFA's finances and systems. Additionally, we would like TIFA to submit a budget of \$2.5m (from \$2.7m). Finally, we will look for justification for any headcount requests made to execute the eventual new strategy.

Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia

- We would like to review draft country strategies for Thailand, Malaysia and Cambodia during the May strategy reviews in New York, although we do not expect you to be present. We hope you can send these strategies and the APRO strategy to the Strategy Unit by April 27th. An executive summary for each would be greatly appreciated.
- Finally, please describe how you might approach work on corruption in Thailand.

Asia Pacific Regional Office

- Organizational Structure: The committee understands the breadth and diversity of regional and thematic issues that will be embraced by the APRO office. As you develop the strategy for the regional office, what organizational structure would be the most effective? What are your plans for staff at the regional, sub-regional, and/or country level? How will the responsibilities for implementation (e.g. grantmaking and approvals) be allocated? How will local knowledge be developed and maintained? Is there a role for separate national advisory committees or individual advisors?
- Lower Priority Countries: The Committee is interested in how, if at all, you will conceptualize and manage work in the countries where OSF does not have foundations and where there are not country-level program staff. Some of these are relatively closed countries (you mentioned Bhutan, Laos, North Korea, and Vietnam) while others are more open (you mentioned Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and the Philippines). We note that other OSF regional offices/programs handle such lower-priorities countries differently. LAP, for example, maintains a list of countries in the region where it does no grant making, but there is one or another staff member designated to work with thematic programs in any country in the region where the thematic program has an interest. AfRO, in contrast, maintains a general portfolio able to make grants in any country not covered by a national/regional foundation, without a specific list of countries where no grants are made and without a formal process for accompanying thematic programs in these countries. Are you considering one of these two models or a third?
- Advocacy: Your proposed work on regional and international advocacy raises questions about the engagement of regional powers, the balance you will strike between advocacy and grant making, and what actual opportunities exist regionally, and within authoritarian countries. Please elaborate on the broader goals informing your eventual advocacy focus: what specifically do you hope to achieve using this tool, and how will this work relate to other country strategies in the region?
- Migration Focus: You noted that APRO itself would only engage in migration work that is cross-border, leaving in-country migration work to the country teams. We understand that you have reviewed all the migration-related grant making in the existing portfolios and that you are in active discussions with colleagues in the International Migration Initiative. As a result, we look forward to seeing further detail on APRO's migration focus in a May draft as well as in our discussion with IMI.
- China Development Bank: As China seeks to launch this new development bank, the Committee would welcome reflections on whether you are considering engaging the bank in the APRO strategy.

Going Forward

Regarding the rest of this year's Strategy and Budget process, Johanna and Greg are available to provide further support at your request as you develop your strategies and budgets for the full set of APRO entities.

In terms of next steps related to the five specific strategies in question, we would like to see drafts of written strategies for Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand, and APRO in time for the May 13-15 strategy reviews in New York, although we will not hold a separate meeting with you then. Please note that these next drafts need to be with the Strategy Unit by Monday April 27th if they are to be included in our reading binder.

On May 22nd, as noted on the 2015 Strategy-Budget calendar you will receive your budget targets for 2016 from the Budget Office. This target does not represent an approved budget amount, but can serve as a guide as you craft your strategy document as well as your proposed work plan and 2016 budget (due on July 10th). Please note that the board may eventually approve a different budget amount for 2016; these guiding targets are meant to assist you and others by giving you a concrete sense of the way the committee is currently thinking about allocating the limited budget of the overall network.

This is a relatively new process and we are continuing to refine it. Based on our experience in London, we are going to streamline the conversations with your peers in May by having one Committee member take principal responsibility for each program and open the conversation with the director and chair, though all Committee members will participate in the back-and-forth discussion. We want you to know about this adjustment to our format in case peers ask about what to expect. We thank you for participating in this process and invite other suggestions for ways to improve the value of our time together.

Let us say again how pleased the Committee is to be working with you in this iterative fashion and how much we look forward to seeing how your strategy develops. If this memo has raised any questions that you would find helpful to discuss, please contact Johanna as soon as possible. We are also available to you if necessary.