

EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN A 3-D WORLD

Principles and Recommendations From the Retreat

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PRINCIPLES FOR FOREIGN ASSISTANCE REFORM	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The objectives of U.S. foreign policy – and foreign assistance -- vary from country to country and issue to issue, but they should be clearly defined. Include indicators and appropriate timelines upon which to measure success. Maintain long-term development goals even in the face of short-term political or security demands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consolidate foreign assistance, currently scattered over 20 USG entities, into a more cohesive, objective-based strategy; be transparent about all assets across government that will support same objectives.• Recognize that defense, diplomacy, and development (the “3 Ds”) have different objectives, motivations, timelines and operating structures that may not be compatible, especially in the short-term. Aligning all three is not always possible or appropriate.• U.S. foreign assistance must address global issues, like disease, migration, security, and the environment, that do not fit squarely into a state-to-state assistance framework.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appropriate structures and resources across both governmental and non-governmental actors implementing defense, diplomacy and development (“the 3 Ds”) can help make foreign assistance more effective. Meaningful and coherent country policy also needs to account for the flows of trade, investment, and intelligence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a central coordinating mechanism for a whole-of-government collaboration and engagement across the 3 Ds in which each has equal voice.• Redouble efforts (by the Administration and the military, in particular) to advocate for increased 150 account overall.• Learn the lessons of other countries with similar strategy, e.g., the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee.• Strengthen the capacity of the State Department’s Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization; develop and promote – at the highest levels – plans, that will garner Congressional support for the Conflict Response Fund,• Expand country coverage of USAID-run interagency (incl. military) conflict prevention assessment framework used in Sahel, Philippines, Nigeria, et. al., including multilateral and NGO input.• Increase the number of USAID FSOs in the field; move FSO personnel costs from Operating Expenses to Program costs: “the people <i>are</i> the program.”• Fund the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance to reflect increasing number and needs of internally displaced people; match funding for refugee assistance in the field more closely to their actual numbers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The 3 Ds need 3 Ls” – legitimacy (national buy-in), leverage (international buy-in) and leadership (both in the United States and in partner countries). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and adequately fund a communications and outreach strategy to inform the public about reform efforts; seek public comments. • Defend global prosperity, peacebuilding, and poverty reduction as right and smart for America; in the U.S. national interest, and worth promoting in itself. • Use appropriate terminology: development assistance is in our national <i>interests</i>, but not always required for our national <i>security</i>. • Coordinate our assistance with that of other governments and international organizations unless there are strong, evidence-based reasons to pursue a different path. • Engage NGOs, research institutions, other donors in the United States and in recipient countries in reform efforts; consider maintaining an independent advisory group comprised of government (across 3-Ds), Congress, NGO, academia, and former policymakers to inform and debate reform efforts by the Director of Foreign Assistance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development assistance has been effective when focused correctly; it can be better focused – and more effective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance truly geared to growth and poverty reduction does have a measurable positive impact on growth in poor countries; repeat and reinforce its success stories. • Introduce a “Quadrennial Development Review” that assesses progress and relevance of U.S. development assistance policy. • The Executive should consult with Congressional committees to find common ground to modify some of the current restrictions and earmarks on foreign assistance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent impact evaluation and a culture of learning are essential to learning what works; back them with appropriate incentives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not over-promise; social and economic change is complex, and its dynamics can be difficult to measure; • Wherever practical, define objectives, establish baseline data and focus on impact measures. • Track progress continuously against benchmarks; correct midstream; apply the lessons of success and failure. • Support independent evaluation with broad donor and recipient participation that can develop and apply uniform standards across US, other bilateral, and multi-lateral assistance agencies. • Performance is rarely the sole criterion guiding aid allocation. But donors should be willing to cut off aid to countries that misuse it; well-designed evaluation can produce better decisions.