

International Developmental Assistance

A statement by
the TASK FORCE on
International Developmental Assistance and International Education
National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges
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on

International Developmental Assistance and International Education

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Preface

The Senate of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges established a Task Force on International Developmental Assistance and International Education. The Task Force was charged with responsibility:

- (a) to restate the philosophy, purposes and objectives which justify and obligate our Nation's commitment to the assistance of developing peoples;
- (b) to state its views on how this effort should be organized and administered;
- (c) to express its judgment on the approximate levels and conditions under which funds should be appropriated with optimum prospect of achieving the purposes;
- (d) to identify the functions our universities are peculiarly fitted to perform and must be expected to perform if the programs of developmental assistance are to be effective;
- (e) to indicate in both general and specific terms the conditions under which university competence can be most effectively employed; and
- (f) consistent with the findings, to propose remedial legislative and executive measures.

The Task Force has made an extensive review of recent studies in this area, and discussed the issues with many experienced and informed persons on university campuses, in government, at foundations, and elsewhere.* The following position statement is a result of this effort.

The term "developmental assistance," as used in this statement, includes those programs of education, research, institution building, financial implementation, and professional consultation, which may be

expected to make a contribution to social and economic progress in the less developed countries. It does not encompass military assistance or any materials or services directly related thereto.

Publication and distribution of this report has been authorized by the Executive Committee on behalf of the Association.

*Although individual citations are not included in the text which follows, a full bibliography is available upon request to the International Programs Office, National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, 1555 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

International Developmental Assistance

There is need for a fundamental reassessment of the U.S. position in international affairs. First we must accept, as a people and as a government, the obvious fact that the United States is one member of the world community of nations. We cannot rescind our historical development, nor abdicate the responsibilities of power.

The old "cold war" split of the world into two camps has lost much of its meaning. The most coercive fact of our age is that the poor people of the world have learned that poverty and deprivation are not necessarily inevitable. The gap between the "have" and the "have-not" peoples is growing wider. The emergence of a compatible and congenial environment in an interdependent world of increasingly modernized states is an appropriate international goal.

Our commitment as a nation should be a willingness to assist disadvantaged peoples who seek help in their desire to improve their lives and their opportunities for human development. To be effective, this commitment should be sustained and continuous, as independent as possible of intermittent shifts in government-to-government relationships. America has no mandate to shape the world in its own image, but we do have an obligation to contribute to its betterment. Such sustained commitment to human development would not only benefit those being assisted, but would coincide with our long-term security interests, our economic interests, our cultural and social interests, and our deep historical and moral concern for the welfare of mankind—of all races, all colors, all religions, all over the world.

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Universities have a responsibility to cultivate understanding of the past, to relate this understanding to the problems of the present, and to speak out in reasoned and creative effort to help shape the future.

Pessimists have been led to despair by shifts in the international balance of power, by evidence of possible diminution of U.S. influence

in some areas of the world, and by the magnitude of the population growth in countries least able to provide adequate food and opportunities for their peoples. The emerging revolution in world food production and its promise for vastly increased food supplies casts hope on an otherwise bleak prospect.

With two decades of direct international involvement and experience by our institutions, our deep concern for both the immediate and the long-range self interest of our nation compels us to press for vigorous and realistic commitment to international developmental assistance abroad and international education at home.

Developmental Assistance Comes of Age

After two decades of experience—with much trial and some error—we are beginning to understand what needs to be done to make international developmental assistance more effective and more efficient.

Just as the automobiles, airplanes, radios, and highway systems of the 1940's have become obsolete, and we have learned to build better versions, so our developmental assistance operations have been evolving. New models have replaced old ones, and we are learning how to put together programs which will have greater impact, more long-run effectiveness, and which may even cost less. Our successes and our failures deserve thorough study; the results should guide our planning for the future.

Experience has demonstrated that:

1. The full development of a country requires a multiplicity of institutions—political, economic, and social.
2. Human resource development is the most critical need throughout the world.
3. An ample food supply is essential to stability in economic and political development.
4. The most effective and enduring contribution to human resource development is through the building of indigenous educational institutions which will enable a nation to help itself by educating its own people to enter and sustain themselves in the modern world.

5. The building of enduring institutions is a long-term proposition and is fundamental to success of our developmental assistance policy. It therefore requires funding of appropriate duration—not limited by annual authorization—and should not be subject to interruption by day-to-day developments in relationships between governments.
6. The criteria for initiation and phase-out of institution building projects are considerably different from the criteria for capital assistance projects and the technical assistance which typically accompanies it.
7. The best continuing sources of competent and experienced professional personnel to carry out many programs of institution building abroad are American universities and colleges, with their depth and spread of professional expertise, secure base of operations, and the intellectual environment which stimulates individuals to keep abreast of new ideas and professionally active.
8. Ineptness in cross-cultural communication and ignorance on the part of participating Americans of the geographic, historic, linguistic, and other cultural aspects of the nations in which they worked, have been major problems.
9. The myth that Americans had the “know-how” to solve all of the world’s problems misled us. The assumption that we had unlimited resources, human and material, that could be widely scattered, built false hopes that could not be realized. Too often, the formulation of our foreign aid and technical assistance measures were a hasty response to cold war competition for host country favor. Failures resulting from faulty objectives and programs produced disappointments, frustrations, and antagonisms both at home and abroad.
10. The full range of analytic and research resources (public and private; domestic and foreign) should be mobilized in order to improve understanding, for each overseas area, of the biological and physical resources, and the economic, social, political, and psychological forces at work; the critical obstacles to effective modernization; and the alternative ways that outside human and

financial resources can be brought to bear in helping the host country to deal with those obstacles.

11. Technological development, like human resource development, is crucial to effective international developmental assistance. This technology can best be developed through evolution of a world-wide network of interconnected and mutually supportive research and training institutions.
12. There is critical need for a limited number of high quality research and training centers in developing countries to concentrate on food and population problems that will have application on a regional or international basis. Through such centers the best scientific and technical resources of the developed world could be focused on these problems. The need is for carefully planned, sharply focused, production-oriented research and training programs that are adequately staffed, adequately financed, and continued for sufficiently long periods of time to produce significant results.
13. Capital development is often required to make human resource development and technological development possible. It should be administered by banking officials experienced in international finance. To the extent feasible, funds for capital assistance should be made available through international agencies.
14. There should be a vigorous program of encouragement to U.S. business for investment in development operations abroad.
15. Business and private research laboratories can be an important and valuable source of professional personnel. Government and universities can learn much from international business and foundations about personnel and other policies essential to provide incentives for effectiveness and efficiency overseas. We are unfavorably impressed with the usefulness of the U.S. policy of shifting so many non-diplomatic overseas personnel every two years.
16. The memory factor in U.S. developmental assistance abroad has been particularly weak. An organized information gathering, storage, and retrieval system in this field is needed to discourage repetitious errors, with new programs and new personnel repeating the mistakes made by their predecessors.

17. There is a real need for a grass-roots nationwide understanding of why support of international developmental assistance abroad and of international education at home is in the long-range U.S. national interest.
18. There is a fundamental relationship between developmental problems overseas and domestic developmental problems. The cleavage between the "haves" and the "have-nots," and the frictions between races, are essentially the same phenomena, whether on an international scale, or on a neighborhood scale. Some of the lessons learned overseas can have direct application at home, and vice-versa.
19. Direct gifts of food, while aiding in emergency situations, in some instances appear to have been a disservice to developing nations by diverting attention from the critical need to increase food production at home.
20. The United States should be increasing its annual investment in the development of peoples in the disadvantaged nations. While the United States ranks first among the nations of the world in national income per capita, it ranks eighth in total aid given per capita and sixth in official contributions per capita. This nation, which is now contributing approximately 1/30th of one percent of its gross national product to the technical assistance aspects of official aid, could well increase that percentage.

University Service Abroad

In response to the fourth point in President Harry S. Truman's inaugural address, the then president of this association wrote the President on February 4, 1949, in part: ". . . being fully aware that sacrifices are involved in a world program such as you have outlined, I am personally convinced and our member institutions collectively are convinced, that the stability, welfare, and democratic freedom of the world demand the cooperation of all Americans in such a program. We feel that this responsibility is particularly incumbent on us as colleges and universities supported by state and federal funds and carrying on in a long democratic tradition."

The universities and colleges of the United States, after two decades of partnership with the U.S. government and private foundations in the worldwide work of international developmental assistance, have grown from a period of high expectations with minimal skill and competence to greater international sophistication, but still lack the needed full complement of skills, competencies, and knowledge in international developmental assistance.

Whatever is done to enhance the capability of the universities to understand realistically and transmit firsthand the experience of a struggling world will increase the competence of the entire nation to deal with the problems and opportunities of developmental assistance.

We still have much to learn, but we have as a base the accumulated experience and knowledge, successes and failures, of twenty years. To advance university participation in developmental assistance, present and future arrangements should include:

1. Provision for exploration in depth by teams of university personnel, and the development of appropriate long-range strategy (acceptable to the host country, relevant to the U.S. university's academic program, and consistent with the program of the funding agency), prior to university commitment to participate.
2. Vigorous, searching, and continuous recruitment and selection of the most competent personnel for overseas development assistance assignments.
3. Appropriate prior preparation of personnel for each particular overseas assignment.
4. Continued research that is relevant both to the overseas assignment and to the career interest of the individual scholar, during the period of overseas residence and after return to the home campus.
5. Provision for feedback into the curriculum and appropriate course syllabi of selected overseas experience.
6. Programmatic commitment of sufficient duration that universities may staff themselves to cover responsibilities both at home and abroad.
7. Replacement of the present "buyer-seller" type of contract used by AID in its relationships with universities, which has demonstrated itself to be seriously less than adequate as an instrument

to further this partnership, by a variety of longer term grants and project agreements.

8. Periodic critical evaluation of these programs.

Responsibility for achieving provisions such as these rests both with agencies of government and with the universities.

A long-range goal, for the nation and for its universities, is a dynamic interaction among scholars, interrelating educational programs around the world. Universities in the developing countries will become respected partners of U.S. universities, fully able to educate the thinkers, leaders and technicians required for development of their nation's potential, and with research capability to keep up with the demands of modernizing agriculture, expanding industry, improving health, and other change. Reciprocally, the academic process at home will develop new generations well prepared to cope with the worldwide problems they will face.

Organizational Readjustment

The essential change required is a reorientation of foreign aid doctrine. We believe it to be vital that there be increased emphasis on technical assistance and institution building, and on the improvement of the relationships between the aid agencies of the U.S. Department of State and other units of the federal government, foundations, voluntary organizations, business, higher education and the public.

There should continue to be an organization within the federal government, presumably within the U.S. Department of State, to handle overall coordination of our international policies.

In addition, however, we believe that a new and separate instrumentality within government is required. It should be as insulated as possible from the day-to-day crisis adjustments of short-run U.S. foreign and domestic policy. The need for continuity, independence and the greatest competence of staff suggest separating this unit completely from the U.S. Department of State. It should be a new agency, responsible to the President, with built-in provision for coordination with appropriate agencies of government.*

*Members of the Task Force are both aware and appreciative of the interest of those responsible for the administration of the Agency for International Development in recent years in university and other participation in technical assistance, and of their sincere efforts to improve this participation through studies and extensive consultation. These recommendations are based on the belief that the improvements necessary cannot be accomplished within the framework of administrative and policy relationships within the State Department.

The new agency would be particularly concerned with high level scientific and academic technical assistance, institution building, and international institution-to-institution relationships, and it would:

1. Encourage sustained and professional programs of international developmental assistance.
2. Sponsor research on all aspects of international development, particularly the institution building process, economic development, population control, and agricultural and industrial productivity.
3. Strengthen the competence of the educational, governmental and other institutions of the U.S.A. to improve the quality of development assistance abroad.

To achieve such goals, the unit should:

1. Have a small, highly professional staff of sufficient prestige, tenure, and stature, to assure its independence and functional integrity.
2. Be capable of supporting long-range as well as short-term agreements with universities, government departments, and private organizations.

The program of this agency would include:

1. *Technical assistance: institution building.* To assist the long-time nurturing of new or modified institutions of education, research, and public service, including the training of staff for such institutions, development of program, facilities, and equipment, and the tailoring of such institutions to fit local needs.
2. *Technical assistance: developmental.* To promote applied research and development efforts designed to overcome technological gaps which stand in the way of national or international growth.
3. *Research.* To expand knowledge and improve understanding, for each overseas area, of (a) the biological, physical, economic, social, political, and psychological forces at work; (b) the critical obstacles to effective modernization; and (c) the alternative

ways that outside human and financial resources can be brought to bear in helping the host country to deal with those obstacles.

4. *International institution-to-institution relationships.* To maintain long-range linkages among institutions, particularly in research and higher education, involving the U.S. with countries in which economic assistance programs may have phased out, and those in which there have not been such programs.
5. *Educational activity within the U.S.A.* To build an appreciation for and appreciation of the entire developmental assistance effort and its relationship to our nation's long-range interests.
6. *Assistance to various U.S. and international agencies in:*
 - (a) Identifying universities and other research and educational institutions for appropriate international assignments.
 - (b) Evaluation of development assistance programs and portions thereof.
 - (c) Facilitating of personnel selection and exchange among government agencies and universities.
7. *Supporting university centers* in various studies related to development assistance abroad.
8. *Provision for an organized information gathering, storage, and retrieval system* on international developmental assistance.*
9. *Development of basic information* on which intelligent judgments can be made by government and others who are responsible for making priority decisions on international assistance.

The staff of the agency, a relatively small group of professional personnel, would administer grants and project agreements, rather than operate programs themselves. Many of them might be drawn from among the most expert citizens in the field, serving on a full-time basis for rotating tours, thus making place for continuous infusions of fresh ideas.

In order to insure sustained capability of the United States in developmental assistance, there should also be continuous support of academic

*Utilizing, for example, such material as the *Outline of World Cultures* which the Human Relations Area Files, Inc., of New Haven, Connecticut, has been publishing since the mid 1940's.

exchange programs involving students, faculty, research, and library resources, sponsored either through the unit described above or through other government agencies.

Continuity of program, sustained financial support, and maximum emphasis in maintaining an outstanding professional staff are all keys to the success of this effort.

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It should be increasingly clear to all of the peoples of the world that mankind's only hope for enduring peace must be based on recognition that the significant problems of all peoples—of all races, all colors, all religions, all cultural backgrounds—may have implications for all others. The people of the United States, in their own self-interest, must be willing to do their fair share to respond to requests for assistance from less advantaged peoples to help them create and sustain programs and institutions designed to develop their own resources—human and material—to improve the lives of their own people and their opportunities for human development.

That is what international developmental assistance is all about.