

USAID and the President's Global Development Policy

As we enter our 50th year as the principal U.S. development agency providing assistance to improve the lives of millions worldwide, USAID is pleased to play a leading role in implementing President Obama's vision for global development.

Committed to the President's Policy Priorities

USAID's new approach to high-impact development is built on four core areas of focus—priorities that reflect the overriding objectives of the U.S. global development policy. The core areas include:

- Recommitting ourselves to the Millennium Development Goals by building sustainable governance and delivery systems to support healthy and productive lives.
- Investing in country-owned models of inclusive growth and development in a focused set of countries that are well-governed, economically stable, globally connected and market-oriented.
- Developing and delivering scientific and technological breakthroughs.
- Utilizing our expertise on humanitarian response and recovery in conflict settings.

Transforming Our Capabilities

USAID is already transforming its capabilities to support the President's new development policy and reclaim its position as the world's premiere development agency.

- Building sustainable capacity in the countries where we serve. USAID has embarked on an ambitious procurement reform agenda that will build more local capacity so that American assistance strengthens the local actors and institutions that are ultimately responsible for transforming their countries.
- Driving policy leadership by rebuilding USAID's development policy and strategic planning capabilities, and placing evidence-based policy-making at the core of leadership and decision-making.
- Strengthening performance monitoring and impact evaluation capabilities so the Agency can easily identify what works, what doesn't and why. These new capabilities will inform best practices for development actors at USAID, within the USG, and around the world.
- Managing resources effectively with increased responsibilities for budgeting that expand the Agency's capacity to align resources against country strategies, make difficult trade-offs, and re-deploy resources toward programs that are demonstrating meaningful results.
- Restoring Agency leadership and core competencies by attracting and retaining high quality development professionals and putting them to work against the Administration's top development priorities.
- Bringing game-changing innovations to scale by deepening USAID capacity and engaging thought leaders from throughout the world. The Agency's new Development Innovation Ventures will fund creative solutions with the potential for significant scale. Its new Office of Science and Technology will build capacity to focus emerging science and technology on future development challenges.

This combined effort, called "USAID Forward," is an early outcome of the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR). The reform package will contribute significantly to the QDDR's objective of elevating development as the third pillar of U.S. foreign policy and will ensure that USAID can deliver on the President's new global development policy.

Leadership for Implementation

USAID is focused on achieving the goals of the Presidential initiatives in food security, global health, and global climate change.

In support of the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future, USAID has a leadership role in shaping the food security strategy and implementation. USAID is working to accelerate agricultural sector growth and improve nutritional status, especially of women and children. The Agency is providing significant technical guidance and programmatic support as developing country partners develop their priorities, helping to align donor resources around country-owned plans, and fostering sustained, multi-stakeholder partnerships to reduce hunger and poverty. In addition to organizing around country priorities, USAID's approach emphasizes technology innovations such as drought tolerant crops that can dramatically improve food production, market solutions to ensure sustainable demand for food, prioritization of women who are the majority of smallholder farmers, and rewarding countries for policy advancements that can promote food security.

Working in more than 85 countries, USAID's contributions to President Obama's Global Health Initiative build on an impressive record of dramatic improvements in health over the last 50 years. The Agency currently deploys more global health professionals and technical experts than any development agency in the world. With a focus on women, girls, and gender equality, USAID supports sustainable community based health systems that are appropriately staffed and stocked to deliver a broader set of health services to more patients. USAID is applying its core technical and in-country strengths to help partner countries integrate service delivery platforms and design evidence based interventions that get the maximum impact for every dollar spent in health.

To respond to the threat that global climate change poses, USAID investments are working to spur reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions and to promote climate change adaptation in vulnerable countries and communities. As the USG's lead for bilateral and regional assistance, USAID will focus on helping partner countries to establish the policy environments, improved governance, and financial incentives to set their economies on a low-emissions path of sustainable development and reduce vulnerability to climate impacts. USAID will also continue to build and deliver excellence in core areas to:

- Foster private sector development and sustainable economic growth that is inclusive and empowers women and youth, while developing human capacity. With a large foreign service cadre of trained economists and private sector specialists, USAID is recognized as the leading donor in promoting pro-growth policy reforms and facilitating private sector development.
- Promote democracy, human rights and governance. With more than 400 experts worldwide, USAID manages the vast majority of the U.S. Government's democratic governance budget. USAID is stepping up its support to a full array of innovative programs and integrating democratic governance and human rights into our activities across all sectors.
- Provide life-saving disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, including food aid and protection, to people affected by natural disasters and complex or human-made crises. USAID is the global leader in international humanitarian response and plays a vital role within the U.S. Government.
- Stabilize fragile and conflict-affected states and support peaceful, democratic transitions. Operating in conflict areas around the world, USAID will continue to pursue innovative and effective solutions to respond to the far-reaching challenges posed by fragile and post-conflict states in the 21st century. USAID's active engagement in these settings ensures that a development perspective is incorporated into the consideration of broader USG interests.

[September 28, 2010]