Foreign Aid Effectiveness

Foreign assistance remains central to achieving a more stable and prosperous world. When properly administered, development assistance remains a bargain for U.S. national security and for our own economic and moral standing in the world.

It is evident that poorly-governed states with impoverished populations can pose grave threats to our national security. Nations that struggle with severe poverty and corrupt governance are at greater risk from terrorism and instability. We have spent hundreds of billions of dollars in recent years fighting wars and preparing for military scenarios in underdeveloped regions of the world. If properly targeted, foreign assistance programs can mitigate national security risks and improve U.S. connections to peoples and governments. They may well save huge military expenditures down the road.

Beyond the national security imperative, no nation that claims to possess the moral high ground can afford to relinquish its leadership in addressing global disease, hunger, and ignorance. We diminish ourselves and our national reputation if we turn our backs on the obvious plight of hundreds of millions of people who are living on less than a dollar a day and facing severe risk from hunger and disease.

"When properly administered, development assistance remains a bargain for U.S. national security and for our own economic and moral standing in the world."

But even as we make these arguments, we must be working hard to ensure efficiency in U.S. assistance programs. Among other management imperatives, the Lugar Center works to promote a higher standard of transparency that enhances the prospect that development dollars will produce the most demonstrable results for impoverished people.

With greater transparency in U.S. aid, both taxpayers and aid recipients can hold aid programs accountable for measurable results. These goals may be demonstrated through both the
monitoring and evaluation of aid programs and projects, as well as through the prompt reporting of aid activities. Equally, emerging and traditional aid donors need to be urged to meet international transparency standards.

The Lugar Center seeks to create a platform and forum for promoting aid effectiveness and greater efficiencies in a period of budget austerity. The foreign assistance environment is changing considerably in line with the Paris/Accra/Busan principles and with the emergence of new donors. The Center will propose policy options for deepening and expanding trilateral cooperative arrangements with emerging donors. Trilateral cooperation is a relatively new model in which the United States partners with an emerging donor, such as Brazil or South Africa, to carry out development enterprises in a third country.

Complementing these activities, the Center strongly advocates for the modernization of U.S. foreign assistance programs and holding government programs accountable for objectives outlined in the President’s Policy Directive on Global Development. The Center will engage with existing organizations to keep this agenda prominently before policymakers.

Media Coverage

Proposed Cuts to Foreign Assistance Will Reverse Decade-Long Bipartisan Reform Effort
Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network, March 16, 2017

Richard Lugar’s groundwork helped pass poverty bills
The Indianapolis Star, July 24, 2016

MFAN Community Shows Support for Senate Passage of the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act
June 30, 2016

U.S. must stay engaged in the world
The Indianapolis Star, March 18, 2016

At fifth anniversary, time to finish a key Dodd-Frank rule
The Hill, July 28, 2015

Who will be the next USAID administrator?
Devex, January 20, 2015

Think big on USAID administrator
The Hill, December 29, 2014
TLC Experts

At fifth anniversary, time to finish a key Dodd-Frank rule
*The Hill*, July 28, 2015

Global Food Security in Facts and Figures
May 7, 2015

Hunger and Whole of Government
March 24, 2015

Think big on USAID administrator
*The Hill*, December 29, 2014