

Center for American Progress



A National Strategy for Global Development

Protecting America and Our World Through Sustainable Security

Reuben Brigety and Sabina Dewan May 2009

“To the people of poor nations, we pledge to work alongside you to make your farms flourish and let clean waters flow; to nourish starved bodies and feed hungry minds. And to those nations like ours that enjoy relative plenty, we say we can no longer afford indifference to the suffering outside our borders, nor can we consume the world’s resources without regard to effect. For the world has changed, and we must change with it.”

– *President Barack Obama, January 20, 2009*

“After all, it is the real possibility of progress—of that better life, free from fear and want and discord—that offers our most compelling message to the rest of the world.”

– *Secretary of State Hillary R. Clinton, confirmation hearing*

“One of the most important lessons of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is that military success is not sufficient to win: economic development, institution building and the rule of law, promoting internal reconciliation, good governance, providing basic services to the people, training and equipping indigenous military and police forces, strategic communications, and more—these, along with security, are essential ingredients for long-term success.”

– *Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Landon Lecture*

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Executive summary

Recent events in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as complex challenges throughout the world demonstrate the importance of effective development assistance across a wide array of circumstances. Whether responding to the tsunami in Indonesia, reacting to food riots in Egypt, promoting good governance in post-conflict Liberia, or supporting counterinsurgency efforts in the Philippines, the ability of the U.S. government to address the needs of civilian populations in various circumstances must be a key component of American foreign policy.

Although the United States is the largest national provider of overseas development assistance, it does not have a comprehensive strategy to guide the delivery of these resources. The increasing connectivity among the deprivation of essential human needs, state fragility, regional stability, and U.S. foreign policy interests suggests that our government must approach development assistance with coherent and complementary policies.

To do so, the administration should produce a National Strategy for Global Development. The NSGD would be modeled after the National Military Strategy that is developed by the White House. Just as the National Military Strategy is derived from the National Security Strategy and articulates how our military forces will be used to advance U.S. national security objectives worldwide, so should the NSGD be derived from the National Security Strategy and articulate how development assistance will be used to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives worldwide.

This document is divided into seven sections:

- Introduction
- Strategic guidance
- Types of assistance
- Objectives of a National Strategy for Global Development
- Challenges confronting development
- The strategy
- The relative roles of U.S. agencies and necessary structural improvements
- Conclusion

The introduction argues for a sustainable security approach to many of the challenges to U.S. interests. Citing numerous examples of the current state of disarray in our foreign assistance architecture, this section demonstrates why robust development mechanisms and programs are essential to this effort.

In a brief section, the strategic guidance shows that the NSGD is derived from the National Security Strategy. Though the Obama administration has yet to write a National Security Strategy of its own, this section extrapolates foreign policy objectives from recent documents and infers the role of development assistance in a future Obama strategy. An actual NSGD would ultimately be linked to the National Security Strategy of the current administration once such a document has been promulgated.

The next section proposes a categorization to differentiate multiple motivations for the performance of assistance activities that have a developmental impact. Specifically, this section notes three types:

- Fundamental assistance, which seeks improvement of the lives of its beneficiaries as its main objective
- Instrumental assistance, which sees improvement of the lives of individuals as a means to some other strategic or tactical end
- Diplomatic assistance, which is meant to improve relations with a recipient government or otherwise serve specific diplomatic objectives

The “Objectives of a National Strategy for Global Development” section articulates three broad areas in which development assistance can support U.S. national interests. Those areas in particular are national security—defined as the protection of the United States—human security, or improving the lives of individuals around the world in order to promote stability, and collective security, or the ability to work with other sovereign states and international organizations to counter common threats.

The section “Challenges confronting development” chronicles the three principal problems that a foreign assistance program will have to overcome to institute successful, sustainable development. In the NSGD, we argue that economic challenges (specifically the absence of decent work for unemployed youth), political challenges (manifested by state fragility), and social challenges (such as various levels of armed conflict which repeatedly stifle development gains) are of the greatest concern.

The strategy section lists the eight key actions that the U.S. government should undertake in its foreign assistance efforts. While the principles are largely self-explanatory, they are described in detail in this section and summarized below:

- Economic integration and growth
- Reducing vulnerability and poverty
- Effective governance and accountability
- Capacity building for sound institutions
- Addressing urgent humanitarian needs
- Protecting the environment
- Supporting U.S. government instrumental initiatives in nonpermissive environments
- Working with other partners and stakeholders

The core policy proposals of the NSGD are contained in the relative roles of U.S. agencies and necessary structural improvements section. While the specifics of each option are detailed in the body of the report, the proposals in brief are the following:

- Mandate clear leadership for development in the executive branch and specific responsibilities for individual agencies
- Create a Development Interagency Policy Committee
- Give the U.S. Agency for International Development officers flexibility for development assistance comparable to the flexibility inherent in the disbursement of humanitarian assistance programs, humanitarian and civic assistance programs and Commanders Emergency Response Program, or CERP funds, by the Defense Department
- Build U.S. government capacity by increasing the number of development personnel
- Assign development officers as tactical development advisors for regular deployment with tactical Army and Marine Corps units at the brigade and battalion levels
- Make a commitment to international assistance mechanisms

Finally, the conclusion reemphasizes the importance of robust development assistance for meeting the challenges of a complex world. It notes that the NSGD should be updated at regular intervals, and that development assistance efforts must be coordinated across the U.S. government.

This proposed National Strategy for Global Development is intended both as an example and an argument. As an example, it demonstrates what a NSGD might look like and, in so doing, might serve as a template for future drafting efforts. As an argument, it represents the Sustainable Security Program's position on a variety of strategic development issues ranging from bureaucratic structure to cooperation with international partners.

In both cases, we hope that it sparks a meaningful debate among development, defense, and diplomatic practitioners about how to think strategically about our overseas assistance programs and how to coordinate the efforts of our government accordingly.

We are very grateful to a number of people who have contributed to this effort. We owe many thanks to the Hewlett Foundation, which has generously supported the Sustainable Security Program. Center for American Progress Senior Vice President for National Security and International Policy Rudy deLeon and Vice President for Economic Policy Michael Ettlinger provided critical insight and support. Finally, we owe a great debt of gratitude to Gayle Smith, former Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress, for her initial vision of the Sustainable Security Program and her early contributions to this effort.

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Introduction: The case for sustainable security

The United States has a compelling and enduring interest in helping the world's poor improve their lives while supporting the emergence of capable and responsible states in the developing world. By strengthening the economies of developing countries, the United States can create new markets for its own products and services and can alleviate the traditional reliance on the American consumer to propel global economic growth. By helping to restore normal patterns of commerce and civic activity after violent conflict, the United States can promote stability and improve the prospects for peace. And by fostering good governance, the United States can help increase the number of capable states that can provide for their citizens, evolve into regional political and economic leaders, and become capable partners for the United States to promote a range of common interests.

Recent experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan have shed light on the fact that decisive military operations can win a war, but they are not enough to win the peace. As such, the importance of development has gained renewed recognition across the board. Democrats and Republicans together supported substantial increases in U.S. foreign assistance during the Bush administration. In their capacity as leaders of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senators John Kerry (D-MA) and Richard Lugar (R-IN) have stressed “eradicating global hunger”¹ and that “support for development and good governance, and our role in defending human rights and alleviating suffering in the world, reflects our values and advances our interests.”²

But the gap between rhetoric and reality is enormous. To date, the United States has not had a National Strategy for Global Development. This has contributed to a lack of clarity in how investing in development supports our national security and economic interests. The absence of a strategy has also contributed to a lack of coherence and coordination across the U.S. government in the way that development is conducted. As such, the development tools that the United States might effectively deploy are in great disarray. Specifically:

- Foreign assistance tools, instruments, and resources are now spread across 24 government agencies, offices, and departments, and are neither centrally coordinated nor guided by clear goals or a national strategy.

- Five institutions—the Department of Defense, State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, or MCC, and the President’s Emergency Program for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, manage the bulk of foreign assistance, but without the benefit of a clear division of labor based on comparative advantage.
- The Department of Defense has operational capabilities to rapidly and robustly respond to crises, and has surplus humanitarian capacity that the other agencies do not. It has therefore gained from the lion’s share of foreign aid increases, but it has also gradually expanded its role to provide other forms of assistance beyond humanitarian assistance in times of crises.
- Meanwhile, the State Department has grown increasingly involved in the provision of foreign aid by funding specific programs while lacking the flexibility enjoyed by the Department of Defense.
- The U.S. Agency for International Development is significantly constrained by a lack of resources. Where it once had approximately 15,000 staff during the Vietnam War era, today it has just 3,000. Its weakened capacity has forced it to rely heavily on expensive outside contractors.
- The Millennium Challenge Corporation that provides grants to countries that perform well against a set of economic and political criteria operates independently of other government programs and policies.
- Funding for the President’s Emergency Program for AIDS Relief has increased significantly while other key sectors such as agriculture, education, and private sector development are short of funds.
- There is a lack of clarity in understanding how “development,” “stability operations,” and “humanitarian operations” relate to one another, and in the institutional linkages necessary to ensure that investments are made along a continuum and are sequenced properly.
- This fundamental lack of clarity is also reflected in the use of different terminologies across different agencies. The Department of Defense, for example, defines all assistance, whether for relief or development, as “humanitarian.” USAID, in contrast, distinguishes between humanitarian aid provided to address short-term emergency needs, and development aid invested in pursuit of long-term goals.
- The analysis driving new development capabilities, programs, and resources has emerged largely from U.S. experience in Iraq and Afghanistan and the “war on terror,” and without consideration of other, future trends and challenges that the United States will face.

- While the national security dimensions of development and the role of the Pentagon have been elevated, the vital economic dimensions and roles of the departments of Treasury, Commerce, and other economic agencies have declined.
- U.S. investments in the full spectrum of development activities—from humanitarian response to stabilization and development—are increasingly bilateral rather than multilateral in scope, meaning that we are neither leveraging our assistance effectively nor adequately ensuring that we capture efficiencies.

As a result, the U.S. approach to development suffers from duplication and inefficiencies and is more ad hoc than strategic. This hinders our nation's ability to successfully invest in development that is critical to reinforcing national security, the economy, and U.S. diplomatic relationships.

What is needed is a National Strategy for Global Development that codifies our development goals, clearly defines our strategic objectives, outlines the coordination needed to avoid duplicative or counterproductive outcomes, and directs resources to desired outcomes. The NSGD provides a framework for successful foreign assistance policy and programs across the U.S. government.

The implementation of the NSGD calls for a number of structural improvements. These include the appointment of a single individual by the executive branch in consultation with Congress who would be responsible for leading all development activities conducted by USAID, MCC, and PEPFAR. There is a need to both expand the size of the cadre of development professionals while at the same time ensuring that development officers in the field have greater flexibility in designing their programs and spending their funds in the field.

The National Security Council should create an Interagency Policy Committee, chaired by a deputy national security advisor for international economics, or his designee, that will be aware of all U.S. government departments and agencies engaging in development activities. It is imperative that civilian personnel with development expertise inform the planning and implementation of assistance projects in nonpermissive environments. Finally, the United States must coordinate with international partners and leverage new relationships to foster sustainable development.

Strategic guidance

The president's National Security Strategy frames the strategic interests of the United States. The National Strategy for Global Development must therefore largely be guided by the NSS so that its goals and objectives are aligned with U.S. national interests as articulated in the NSS.

The existing NSS recognizes that the United States must commit to making the “world not just safer, but better.”³ This, according to the NSS, entails championing aspirations for human dignity and expanding development through open societies and infrastructure for democracy. It means reinforcing alliances and reinvigorating partnerships to defeat global terrorism, prevent attacks, and defuse regional conflicts. The NSS notes that the United States must herald in an era marked by economic growth through free markets and trade. It must avail the opportunities and face up to the challenges posed by globalization. Finally, the United States must reform its national security institutions to meet the needs of the 21st century.⁴ The priorities gleaned from the National Security Strategy should continue to govern the U.S. government's approach to development.⁵

Types of assistance

Broadly speaking, it is possible to distinguish between two types of assistance: military and civilian.

- Military assistance includes money, equipment, personnel, and training transferred from one government to another for the purpose of improving the capacity of the armed forces of the recipient government.
- Civilian assistance consists of monetary, technical, and personnel resources transferred from one government to another, from one government to nongovernmental agencies, or from one government directly to the citizens of another government for the purpose of improving governance or the socioeconomic conditions of a civilian population.

Civilian assistance has three further subcategories—fundamental, instrumental, and diplomatic assistance.

- Fundamental assistance seeks to improve the lives of individuals and promote good governance as an end in and of itself. While there may be collateral political or strategic benefits that arise from improved stability and prosperity associated with successful fundamental assistance, such outcomes are not the primary purpose of the activity. Rather, fundamental assistance programs can be judged as successful to the extent that they are objectively improving the lives of people and strengthening the positive governance capacity of their states. An example of fundamental assistance may be U.S. AIDS relief assistance to Botswana.
- Instrumental assistance works to improve the lives of individuals, usually in the near term, as a means of achieving a particular political, military, or diplomatic objective. By definition, instrumental assistance can only be successful if it actually improves the lives of the intended beneficiaries or, at the very least, does not harm them. But the ultimate success of these types of programs is measured by the extent to which improved socioeconomic or humanitarian outcomes advance the strategic objectives they were intended to affect. For instance, a project to dig a well in an Afghan village to garner local support for U.S. troops is an example of fundamental assistance.

Two types of assistance

- Military assistance
- Civilian assistance
 - Fundamental
 - Instrumental
 - Diplomatic

- Diplomatic assistance provides monetary, technical, or personnel resources directly to another government for the purpose of achieving a political objective. Unlike instrumental assistance, however, aiding the civilian population is neither the means nor the ends of the activity. Rather, the mere provision of the assistance to the government is the means of influence, and its success is measured by the extent to which the provision of the aid encourages another government to take a particular action. An example of diplomatic assistance would be the Economic Support Funds provided by the State Department to a country such as Ukraine.

Whether it is helping countries recover from earthquakes or trying to address the underlying socioeconomic factors that contribute to insurgencies, the ability to address basic human needs can be a powerful strategic tool toward sustainable security for the United States.

Objectives of a National Strategy for Global Development

The National Strategy for Global Development has three strategic objectives: national security or ensuring the safety of the United States; human security, or the well-being and safety of people; and collective security, or the shared interests of the global community.

National security

It is by now widely accepted that poverty, underdevelopment, and fragile states serve as fertile grounds for pollution, disease, lawlessness, and violent conflict, as well as international crime and terrorism. As such, there remains little doubt that harnessing economic development as a tool in pursuit of national security objectives is imperative.

The effective promotion of U.S. national security rests on using three tools—defense, diplomacy, and development. Defense and diplomacy also contribute to the goal of development.

The tools that fall under the mantle of “defense” can help promote global development, whether by providing logistical support in the wake of disasters, supporting peacekeeping and other stability operations during the transition from war to peace, or training foreign militaries to professional standards.

Diplomacy is also vital, as it enables us to engage other governments, to foster the political conditions that can spur development, to leverage our actions and assistance, and to coordinate our efforts with those of the broader international community.

Yet the most potent means available to the United States for the promotion of capable and healthy states is embodied in the third “D”—development. Under the rubric of development, the United States has multiple tools. These include: the support that we provide to governments and civil society; the resources we contribute to international organizations; trade policy; debt relief; and private-sector investment insurance, to name but a few. Systemic improvements in economies and political systems take time. These tools allow us to make the long-term investments that are critical to cultivating sustainable development. They also help the United States maintain the support of key allies and foster new relationships that assist in achieving national security objectives.

Strategic objectives of a NSGD

What the NSGD hopes to achieve

- National security
- Human security
- Collective security

Human security

The United States must employ a people-centered approach to development. When working men and women can earn a decent living they can contribute to their societies and foster long-term stability. When families and individuals have access to decent and affordable health care, they can contain the spread of deadly diseases that know no borders. When citizens engage their governments meaningfully, peacefully, and equally, they can help ensure better decision making by their leaders. When communities can rebuild in the wake of warfare or natural disasters, they lay the foundation for stronger societies and enduring peace.

Such an approach of ensuring “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want”⁶ helps individuals lay the foundation for greater shared prosperity and overcome societal instability. Rising living standards in the developing world help create new markets for American products and services, reinforcing a virtuous circle of shared prosperity. Societal stability in developing countries reinforces U.S. security.

The U.N. Millennium Development Goals⁷ provide a blueprint for the needs that must be met to mitigate human vulnerability and foster security in its place. These goals set a series of targets to be achieved by 2015.

Millennium Development Goals

- End poverty and hunger: Halve the share of those suffering from hunger and earning less than \$1 a day. Achieve decent work for all, including full and productive employment.
- Universal education: Make sure that males and females alike are able to obtain a full course of primary schooling.
- Gender equality: Remove gender disparity in education.
- Child health: Work to reduce the under-five child mortality rate by two-thirds.
- Maternal health: Decrease the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters and attain access to reproductive health for all.
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases: Halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS. By 2010, attain universal access for HIV/AIDS treatment. Halt and reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.
- Environmental sustainability: Country policies and programs should integrate the principles of sustainable development. The loss of environmental resources must be reversed. Achieve a decrease in rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010. The share of people without sustainable access to clean drinking water and basic sanitation must be cut in half by 2015. Improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.
- Global partnership: The particular needs of least developed, landlocked and small island developing countries should be addressed. Cultivate an open, rules-based, predictable financial and trading system that is nondiscriminatory. Deal with the debt in developing countries. Work with the private sector to increase access to the benefits of new technology, especially information communications technology. Work with pharmaceutical companies to increase access to necessary, affordable medications for developing countries.

These development objectives not only embody U.S. values but also those that are universally accepted. In September 2008 leaders from around the world renewed their commitment to achieve these Millennium Development Goals by 2015. The United States must use these U.N. goals as a guide for its development policy (see box on page 8).

Collective security

In an increasingly interconnected world, the United States must acknowledge that its fate is intertwined with that of others. This interconnectivity is characterized by cross-border flows of capital, labor, goods and services, but also by cross-border challenges such as climate change, nuclear proliferation, terrorism and economic instability. Sustaining the U.S. position as the most powerful and productive nation on earth requires America to remain dynamic in the face of a changing world order. It must therefore work in concert with other stakeholders and partners in crafting global responses to global challenges.

The state of flux that the globe is in calls for carefully balanced leadership that can rejuvenate international cooperation and that is based on a nuanced understanding of today's challenges rather than preserving yesterday's static order. In the coming years, the world must collectively harness the renewable sources of energy to combat a warming planet. It must also fight poverty, disease and desperation to afford all children the luxury of peaceful, healthy and prosperous futures. The United States must rise to these challenges in good faith knowing that "greatness is never a given. It must be earned."⁸

Challenges confronting development

Central to well-conceived and well-implemented development is an understanding of the economic, political and social challenges that threaten the success and sustainability of development.

Economic

Challenges confronting development

- Economic—A lack of decent work especially for youth
- Political—State fragility
- Social—Conflict

Globalization's characteristics include trade liberalization, an expansion of Foreign Direct Investment, massive cross-border flows of capital, goods, income, technology and information, and to a lesser extent, people. Increased integration has dramatically altered the global economic landscape introducing additional economic challenges that confront development such as capital flight, extreme vulnerability to price fluctuations, and wealth concentration, to name a few. These challenges are further compounded by the magnification and wide sharing of major shocks during times of crisis.

A lack of decent employment is another challenge at the heart of economic inequality and vulnerability that confronts sustainable economic development. Work is fundamental to people's lives. It serves as a means of income, family stability, personal growth and social responsibility. It is central to reducing poverty, and paves the way to achieving equitable, inclusive and sustainable development.

Unemployment and underemployment among youth are particularly problematic because idle youth are susceptible to recruitment into crime, violence and extremism. Youth's formative years are the stepping stones upon which they build their own futures. It is during this period that youth establish the foundation to become contributing members of society and the economy.

Every year, a large cohort of young men and women enter the labor market. Providing these young entrants with decent and sustainable employment is a challenge either because they lack the education and skills, or because the labor market does not have the capacity to absorb them— or both. In the absence of productive occupations, youth become disaffected and prone to delinquent behavior.

Political

State fragility is one of the gravest impediments confronting successful and sustainable development. State fragility broadly refers to the faltering legitimacy, authority and lack of capacity of a given State. It is the consequence of social unrest and discontent resulting from a confluence of factors ranging from poverty and inequality, crime and conflict, poor governance and corruption, and environmental factors. Unchecked, these conditions lead to faltering states that become the breeding grounds for civil and local wars, genocide, prolonged political violence, terrorism and other security threats that undermine U.S. foreign policy objectives.

Although meaningful development is contingent on a stable government and sound policies with effective and efficient implementation, fragile states lack the structures to make this possible. In a post 9/11 world, it has become increasingly clear that the United States' own security is closely equated to how certain strategic weak states are governed. National security therefore serves as a prime justification for addressing the problems of state weakness through development assistance and reinforcing weak states in-turn helps reinforce development.

Social

Protracted internal and international conflict disrupts development processes and imposes high costs on society. Everyday citizens bear the brunt of these costs as conflict disrupts economic activity, impedes capital formation, destroys infrastructure and private property, and induces widespread fear and insecurity among populations. At the same time, conflict also imposes costs on donors that are forced to respond to the humanitarian fallout often at the expense of longer-term investments. Finally, conflict prevents development workers from performing their job. As such, conflict undermines the development processes that may already be in place even as it stymies future investments in long-term development.

Strategic development

- Economic integration and growth
- Reducing vulnerability and poverty
- Effective governance and accountability
- Capacity building for sound institutions
- Addressing urgent humanitarian needs
- Protecting the environment
- Supporting USG instrumental initiatives in non-permissive environments
- Working with other partners and stakeholders

The strategy

Today, there is recognition that cultivating international development is in the moral, strategic and economic interest of the United States. Inherent in this perspective is the understanding that well-conceived development works. Well-conceived development, as the United States perceives it, is that which is guided by certain values—freedom, equality and justice, commensurate with the firm American belief in democracy. As Thomas Jefferson noted, “The interests of a nation, when well understood, will be found to coincide with their moral duties.”

Strategic development

- Economic integration and growth
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Economic integration and growth

The United States should foster shared progress by promoting the integration of countries into the global economy via mechanisms such as free trade and investment. The U.S. National Security Strategy explicitly notes that the United States must “promote the connection between trade and development. Trade policies can help developing countries strengthen property rights, competition, the rule of law, investment, the spread of knowledge, open societies, the efficient allocation of resources, and regional integration—all leading to growth, opportunity, and confidence in developing countries.”

It is important to ensure that economic integration and growth are inclusive and that the benefits are widely distributed. The aim of economic integration must be to raise living standards around the world rather than to maximize integration per se.

Reducing vulnerabilities and poverty

The United States must reduce vulnerabilities that hide under the guise of poverty. This entails understanding and then leading the charge to develop efficient and effective methodologies to tackle all facets of poverty; not just the economic dimensions, but also its political and social aspects.

Investing in people by securing their health, education and livelihoods from vulnerability is critical to this end. This calls for both long-term interventions, and short-term humanitarian assistance to ensure that at the very least people’s most basic needs are met.

Capacity building for sound institutions

The United States must work to build capacity for sound institutions in developing countries. America simply cannot by itself meet the many and complex development challenges that developing countries face. The United States should strongly support building capacity that would enable state governments and civil society to undertake ownership and responsibility for their own development.

It is increasingly clear that sustainable development is predicated on appropriate, strong and stable economic institutions to promote prosperity, to battle poverty, and to improve the provision of services toward broad-based increases in living standards. Building economic capacity in developing countries ensures that the benefits of integration are fairly distributed according to a notion of shared progress.

Effective governance and accountability

The United States should work to cultivate effective governance and accountability. The United States recognizes the centrality of effective and inclusive governance to prosperity, stability and security. All U.S. interventions must be firmly rooted in the understanding that effective governance and national ownership are vital for bringing U.S. development efforts to fruition.

As effective governance improves citizens' daily lives, it also helps reinforce the legitimacy and stability of the national government. Mechanisms for accountability must be instituted at all levels along the development continuum—from donor organizations to the country-level distribution agencies. In its planning and administration, the United States must account for regional differences and country-based specificities.

Addressing urgent humanitarian needs

The United States should help citizens around the world recover from the deprivations of natural disasters or warfare. This is an expression of core American values. The United States should continue to offer emergency assistance in food, shelter, health, protection and other humanitarian sectors. And it should work closely with governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-government organizations. Where appropriate, the United States should support multilateral humanitarian instruments to improve the capacity of the international community to respond to emergencies.

Finally, the United States should help developing countries to improve their own response capacity and disaster mitigation efforts as a means of strengthening their resilience against natural and manmade emergencies. The U.S. government must preserve the budgetary and personnel capacity to respond to crises at a moment's notice around the world.

Protecting the environment

The United States should work to protect the environment. Global climate change and environmental degradation threaten sustainable economic development, the health of current and future generations, and long-term security. Addressing global climate change requires a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions worldwide, reducing dependence on fossil fuels, and investment in clean energy—not only in developed countries but also in developing countries so they can grow their economies using clean energy.

Because some warming is already happening due to historical emissions we must concomitantly assist developing countries to adapt to the current impacts of climate change. Leaving these adaptation needs and climate-induced resource conflicts unaddressed will be a significant source of political instability and violence. The United States should work with developed and developing nations alike, international organizations and civil society to protect the natural environment, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to invest in a clean and healthier future.

Supporting U.S. government instrumental initiatives in nonpermissive environments

Thus, successful instrumental assistance performed during or after armed conflict can be a useful, or even essential, enabler for fundamental development activities. The U.S. government should develop and maintain the ability to deploy civilian humanitarian, development and governance experts into non-permissive environments to perform instrumental assistance activities. The ability to consolidate the gains achieved in military operations or to defeat a violent insurgency often depend on the extent to which civilian services and economic activity can be rapidly restored. Similarly, successful peacekeeping operations require addressing the underlying political and economic causes of conflict.

Working with other partners and stakeholders

The United States must work with other partners and stakeholders to achieve long-term sustainable development. To this end, the United States should adopt a nuanced approach to development assistance that entails instituting coherence across partners and stakeholders including governments, international institutions, civil society and the private sector. This is a necessary condition to ensure that U.S. dollars are put to their best possible use.

The United States should support governments, multilateral institutions, civil society and the private sector as a means of fostering synergies in development assistance. In a world characterized by numerous and shared challenges, the United States will leverage the com-

parative advantages of these partners and stakeholders to efficiently address short-term humanitarian needs and to foster long-term, sustainable development.

Successful sustainable development is predicated on a serious resource commitment on part of these partners and stakeholders and on harmonizing practices. These groups serve as critical partners that can work with the United States to help achieve desired development outcomes and in doing so they facilitate our own strategic national objectives. It is also essential that the United States work in concert with the host governments of developing countries, to promote their own capacity, and to foster national ownership.

The relative roles of U.S. agencies and necessary structural improvements

There is also a lack of coherence and coordination across the U.S. government's own agencies that left unchecked will impede the implementation of this strategy. A number of structural improvements are therefore necessary to ensure that the United States can effectively and efficiently do all that is articulated in the strategy. Among the necessary structural improvements are the following:

Mandate clear leadership for development in the executive branch and specific responsibilities for individual agencies

Achieving coherence among the fundamental development programs of the U.S. government must begin by consolidating the largest development bureaucracies. The current fragmentation of programs, budgets and policies amongst multiple agencies contributes to inefficiencies and incoherence in U.S. overseas development efforts.

Accordingly, Congress should authorize the appointment of a single individual responsible for leading all of the activities currently conducted by USAID, the MCC and PEPFAR. This Director for International Development would have cabinet rank and would be in charge of a strengthened, independent agency devoted primarily to fundamental development assistance programs, and would be invited to cabinet meetings and principals committee meetings addressing development issues.

Create a Development Interagency Policy Committee

Even with unified leadership for USAID, MCC and PEPFAR there must also be coordination amongst other U.S. government agencies that give fundamental, instrumental and diplomatic assistance. The departments of Defense, State, Treasury, Commerce and Justice, among others, all have programs that fall under this rubric. In addition, policy coordination at the highest levels of government should be established to ensure coherence amongst development-related programs.

Accordingly, the National Security Council should create a standing Interagency Policy Committee, or IPC, chaired by a Deputy National Security Advisor for International

Economics, or his designee. The IPC will have cognizance of all U.S. government departments and agencies that deliver Official Development Assistance as categorized by the Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation. The IPC should also coordinate those assistance programs with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative and the National Economic Council to ensure the government's foreign policies and overseas activities support the objectives outlined in the National Strategy for Global Development.

Give USAID development officers flexibility for development assistance

Within explicit legal parameters and in consultation with the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense personnel have wide latitude on the tactical level for the disbursal of humanitarian assistance and humanitarian and civic assistance. This discretion is even greater for the Commanders' Emergency Response Program, or CERP funds, in which tactical military commanders with no previous development experience in Afghanistan and Iraq can spend tens of thousands of dollars at their own discretion to assist the local civilian population in order to advance U.S. military objectives.

In contrast, USAID development officers and mission directors with years of practical development experience around the world are deeply constrained in their ability to disperse program funds by congressional earmarks and administrative restrictions. This leads to the perverse situation in which well meaning but inexperienced military officers often have much more leeway in the spending of development dollars than do highly trained and experienced civilian development officers. This undermines the ability of our civilian development agencies to be capable partners of their military counterparts and arguably undermines the effectiveness of development programs, especially in conflict areas.

Therefore, civilian development officers must have greater flexibility in designing their programs and spending their funds in the field if they are to be successful in achieving both fundamental and instrumental objectives. Their spending authority in the field should be comparable to that of their military counterparts, who have much greater ability to tailor their programs based on their assessment of conditions on the ground. The administration will work with Congress to reduce earmarks on development funds and find more efficient means of accountability.

Build U.S. government capacity by increasing the number of development personnel

At a time when the need for capable development officers in the field and in Washington has never been greater, the ranks of U.S. government development professionals is at a historic nadir. There are currently less than one-tenth the number of direct hire development professionals than there were at the height of the Vietnam War. Yet with America

engaged in two major wars that require major development interventions to be successful, as well as fragile states around the world which present major challenges to US interests, it is imperative that the U.S. government have the requisite number of civilian professionals in the appropriate assignments to provide essential development expertise.

The United States must reconstitute its cadre of full-time civilian development professionals. This administration should seek to triple the current number USAID Foreign Service officers by the end of 2012. In doing so, it should increase the ranks of experienced mid-grade officers, grow the number of sectoral technical experts (health, gender, and conflict experts), clarify career paths and professional opportunities, and improve the training of the professional corps of development officers.

Assign development officers as tactical development advisors with tactical Army and Marine Corps units at the brigade and battalion levels

It is no longer acceptable to ask our dedicated military professionals to improvise in the field when implementing development-related programs essential to their tactical success. Just as we provide them with the equipment and the training required to be victorious in battle, we must also provide them with development expertise at their fingertips so they can incorporate such tools into their operations.

As we send our military increasingly into complex situations where they must contend with the needs of the civilian population even as they engage in combat with the enemy, it can be expected that they will need this expertise available on a consistent basis. It is therefore imperative that civilian personnel with development expertise inform the planning and implementation of civilian assistance projects in non-permissive environments.

One of the best ways to ensure that coordination is to prepare civilian development professionals for deployment with the military and to give them regular assignments with U.S. land forces. As we expand the ranks of our professional development cadres we should create tactical development advisors, which would be midgrade development advisors assigned to every deployable brigade combat team in the U.S. Army and every expeditionary battalion in the U.S. Marine Corps. They will train with these units while in garrison and accompany them on their deployments to provide development expertise when needed.

Make a commitment to international assistance mechanisms

The best civilian assistance often occurs when it is coordinated with other international donors and development programs. Where possible and appropriate, the U.S. government should support pooled international funding mechanisms for development and humani-

tarian assistance in order to achieve better development outcomes and to leverage greater influence in development programs by international agencies.

As we do so this, we should be insistent on accountability and transparency for all of these funding mechanisms to ensure the appropriate use of American taxpayer dollars and to guarantee that these programs are achieving the desired outcomes.

Conclusion

The interconnectedness and the borderless challenges that characterize the globe—from terrorism and epidemics to climate change and migration—mean that the fate of the United States is inextricably linked to that of the rest of the world. In light of this, the United States has an enduring interest to help the world’s poor improve their lives while supporting the emergence of capable and responsible states in the developing world. As noted by the President’s National Security Strategy, “Including all of the world’s poor in an expanding circle of development—and opportunity—is a moral imperative and one of the top priorities of U.S. international policy.”

In addition to the moral imperative, improving living standards in developing countries creates new markets for American goods and services, it alleviates the pressure on the American consumer to be the major engine for global economic growth, and it reinforces U.S. national security. Guided largely by the National Security Strategy, the National Strategy for Global Development defines the United States strategic objectives and development priorities. To ensure that the NSGD is a living document that evolves to reflect global challenges as they arise, the NSGD must be reviewed at regular intervals.

The NSGD is motivated by the strategic objectives to achieve national security, while simultaneously contributing to human and collective security. The three are closely interconnected. In employing development toward the achievement of the latter objectives, the United States must overcome the economic, social and political challenges that are characteristic of the 21st century.

The U.S. strategy for sustainable, effective, and efficient development entails promoting economic integration and growth, reducing vulnerabilities and poverty, effective governance and accountability, building capacity for sound institutions, addressing urgent humanitarian needs, protecting the environment, supporting the U.S. government’s instrumental initiatives in non-permissive environments, and working with other partners and stakeholders.

Meeting the U.S. strategic objectives and development goals requires a comprehensive and synergistic approach to development. Development activities should be coordinated across U.S. government, and the United States should work in concert with partners and stakeholders to institute a people-centered approach to sustainable development that is also in service of U.S. national interests.

Endnotes

- 1 Sen. Richard Lugar (R-IN), Remarks at Senate confirmation hearing for Hillary R. Clinton for Secretary of State, January 13, 2009, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/13/us/politics/13text-clinton.html?pagewanted=all>.
- 2 Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Hearing on the nominations of James Steinberg and Jacob Lew for Deputy Secretary of State, January 22, 2009.
- 3 "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America," p.1, available at <http://merlin.ndu.edu/archivepdf/nss/strategies/nss.pdf>.
- 4 Ibid, p.1-2.
- 5 A more elaborate treatment of these will require a new National Security Strategy to be articulated by the Obama administration.
- 6 United Nations Development Program, "Human Development Report" (1994).
- 7 United Nations, "Millennium Development Goals," available at <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>.
- 8 President Barack Obama's Inaugural Address, January 20, 2009.

About the authors

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