



FACT SHEET: Proposal for a New US Department for Global Development

A new Cabinet-level Department for Global Development would bring together the numerous US government agencies and departments now working to reduce poverty throughout the world. It would have a streamlined organizational structure with empowered, high-level leadership.

Current Global Development Structure in the US

Development assistance is currently spread across 20 federal agencies, each with its own agenda. Not surprisingly, this fragmentation severely undermines effective coordination. In addition, the overall system lacks leadership with sufficient authority to ensure that programs meet high standards of cost-effectiveness, demand accountability for results, or leverage greater internal or global cooperation.

Mission of the Proposed US Department for Global Development

A new Department for Global Development would elevate development to the same level of importance as diplomacy and defense, and ensure that development aid is prioritized at the highest levels of government. The proposed department would combine the budgets of various government agencies and create a centralized authority for allocating resources and ensuring effective monitoring and evaluation. It would strengthen the President's ability to negotiate with Congress for the resources and policies needed to fulfill US commitments to reduce global poverty, which would in turn help leverage increased development funding from Europe, Japan, and other key donors and support effective international institutions. Moreover, an independent Department for Global Development would help ensure that poverty reduction efforts are not overshadowed by short-term national security concerns.

Support for a New Development Strategy

Many major non-partisan groups support the establishment of a new Department for Global Development, including the Center for Global Development and the Center for US Global Engagement. The 9-11 Commission and other experts have also recognized the urgency of addressing the root causes of global instability, including extreme poverty. In addition, the US must engage as a full partner in addressing poverty in order to remain true to our ideals, repair relationships with our allies, and improve the perception of the United States worldwide.

Additional Information

[1] Help Commission Minority Report, page 163, http://helpcommission.gov/portals/0/Beyond%20Assistance_HELP_Commission_Report.pdf

[2] Modernizing Foreign Assistance for the 21st Century: An Agenda for the Next US President, Center for Global Development, <http://www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/15561/>

[3] US Foreign Assistance: Reinventing Aid for the 21st Century, The Brookings Institution, http://www.brookings.edu/testimony/2008/0123_foreign_assistance_reform_brainard.aspx

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