

Global Development Policy Work

Collaboration on Global Development Reform

Global Washington has brought together its members and other professionals in Washington State with expertise in global development to consider ways to improve U.S. development policy. These experts worked together to develop the Principles of Aid Effectiveness, which are ideals that we think U.S. foreign aid could and should meet. The Global Washington Principles for Aid Effectiveness are: (1) Transparency and Accountability; (2) Consolidation and Coordination; (3) Local Ownership; and (4) Targeting.

Global Washington wrote a white paper based on the four principles, “Making U.S. Foreign Assistance More Effective: Recommendations for Reform.” The white paper assesses how well U.S. foreign aid achieves the principles, and makes recommendations for U.S. foreign aid to adhere more closely to them. These recommendations include developing a national global development strategy, creating a single department to oversee global development policy, and clarifying the purpose and structure of foreign aid through a revamped Foreign Assistance Act.

Once the collaborative work on the white paper was complete, it became clear that there was need for further, more specific, discussions on foreign aid reform among the various practitioners and experts in Washington State. Through its statewide policy panel, Global Washington identified four sectors that are important to global development and have a strong presence in Washington State: aid, trade, public-private partnerships, and global education. Taken as a group, these sectors form a strong constituency for foreign aid policy reform from within Washington State. The policy panel formed working groups for each of these sectors, with the goal of making more specific recommendations.

Global Washington Recommendations

Global Washington sought input from a broad range of perspectives in making our recommendations. In some areas, particularly in trade and development, there is a lack of agreement on some of the basic issues. We can learn more from each other and strengthen our recommendations by continuing the dialogue. For this reason, we propose an ongoing dialogue on development issues. We see the policy work that we have done so far as a jumping off point for more discussion, rather than an endpoint. Our greatest asset is our diverse membership, and we wish to get better at engaging everyone in the discussion as we continue to work together.

The following list summarizes the recommendations of the four working groups. We look forward to releasing the entire recommendation papers and the white paper at a later date, when we can fully engage your participation.

Foreign Aid and Development Policy

1. Transform the structure of U.S. foreign assistance, by developing a national global development strategy overseen by a single department autonomous from Departments of State and Defense.
2. Increase the proportion of aid targeted to communities most in need, including people living in poverty, women, and rural residents.
3. Increase local ownership, by aligning bilateral aid contracts with recipient government priorities, and work with local staff and contractors whenever possible.
4. Improve transparency and accountability through flexible financing mechanisms, such as more flexibility in multi-year contracts, and fund disbursements tied to actual program outcomes.

Public-Private Partnerships

1. Improve transparency and coordination by establishing a central clearinghouse to publicize the many opportunities available to collaborate with the U.S. government. Also improve transparency on the process for partnering with the U.S. government, such as the time-frame for decision-making, level of U.S. government commitment to partnerships, and partner roles and responsibilities.
2. Strengthen local consultation in the determination of partnerships.
3. Structure partnerships differently according to the situation in different countries, for example, in high-risk environments the U.S. government may need to absorb more risk.
4. Develop and articulate a vision for public-private partnerships and their contribution to reducing poverty in a national development strategy, or other similar processes such as the Presidential Study Directive.

Trade and Development

1. Improve policy coherence between trade and development by considering development outcomes in U.S. trade policy.
2. Provide duty and quota free access to the U.S. market for the most poor and vulnerable countries. Couple this market access with capacity building to help countries export to the United States, and encourage developing country policies that support domestic industry.
3. Improve the coherence, coordination, and local ownership of trade capacity building by implementing a process for developing countries to document their needs and priorities for assistance.
4. Renew the U.S. commitment to the original development goals of the Doha Development Round of WTO negotiations.

Global Education

1. Improve coordination among the U.S. Departments of Education, State, Defense, and Homeland Security in designing and implementing programs to support global cultural understanding.
2. Continue efforts to ensure flexible visa access to enable students from abroad to study in the United States.
3. Increase funding for the National Security Education Program (NSEP) and other federal programs designed to increase teaching and learning of critical less-commonly taught languages in U.S. schools and postsecondary institutions.
4. Reduce the complexity of export control regulations to encourage research collaborations with foreign students in key scientific areas.
5. Support final passage and timely implementation of the Simon Act, which calls for a dramatic expansion in the number of U.S. students in higher education studying abroad.