

GDC Update

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In times of great needs, such as natural disasters, Americans have demonstrated -- time and time again -- their great generosity. Yet the great tragedy of chronic poverty, while less visible, is no less devastating. One billion people still live under \$1.25 a day. Every day around the world, an estimated 17,000 children die before the age of 5, of entirely preventable causes. This is several times the number of deaths in the Nepal earthquake; and it is the equivalent of one Haiti earthquake every 12 days.

These deaths can -- and should -- be prevented, as can many other distressing issues faced by the poor and marginalized in developing countries. But they don't admit to the kind of visible or one-time "fix" that many associated with natural disaster responses. You cannot helicopter people out of poverty. Solutions for addressing poverty and economic development mainly emerge from the engagement and commitment of many global development stakeholders, including -- critically -- developing countries themselves. And the American government has an important role to play and it is one that is squarely in the United States' strategic, security, and economic interest.

Multiple U.S. Administrations, working with development partners from both the public and private sectors, have made a lot of progress over many decades -- from the rehabilitation and recovery of Europe after the Second World War to the more recent examples of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, Feed the Future, and relief and humanitarian efforts in natural disasters and outbreaks of epidemics. Yet despite this (relatively under-appreciated) track record of success in the face of urgent needs, American leadership on development issues can be made even more effective; and, we believe, it can command considerable bi-partisan support on Capitol Hill.

Today we face a consequential moment in global development. It is a time of massive opportunities on account of transformational innovations in technology, health and finance; in evidence-based approaches; and through the entry of a broader set of players already contributing and those with the potential to enable and scale even more global development, including the private sector, philanthropists, universities and non-profit organizations, as well as some of the developing countries that increasingly have the capacity to mobilize considerable domestic resources. At the same time the world is grappling with concerns and risk about how to ensure that economic growth does not imperil sustainability, how to make the development process more inclusive, how create more access to economic opportunities, and how to address the particularly acute challenges of extremism, and of failed and fragile states.

The old model of "leaving" development to advanced economy governments and development institutions is no longer desirable; nor is it effective given that -- increasingly -- resources, innovations, and operational and financial capacity for development would be far multiplied by involving others beyond these traditional actors. This is especially true given current fiscal pressures on many advanced economy governments. We are also pressing against important multilateral deadlines and windows of opportunity that require the international community to come together to establish and pursue a new, post-2015 set of global development objectives.

These circumstances call for going well "beyond aid," using modern and more inclusive approaches that unleash transformational forces well beyond what governments themselves can ever hope to deliver. The President's Global Development Council, which we are honored to lead, was set up to work with the Administration to address such challenges and enhance the opportunities.

Established two years ago by the President, the Global Development Council is tasked with expanding the external perspective on the global development agenda pursued by the U.S. government. Like prior Councils -- such as the ones on jobs, trade and competitiveness -- it brings together individuals from outside the administration with diverse backgrounds and engages them on both strategic and operational issues in collaboration with U.S. Government Council members including Secretaries of State, Defense,

Treasury, and heads of the Millennium Challenge Corporation, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, United States Agency for International Development, and the United States Trade Representative. Through both self-directed work and that suggested by the Administration, our aim is to supplement and, as needed, challenge aspects of what is being pursued by government agencies involved in global development (such as the United States Agency for International Development, Millennium Challenge Corporation, the Departments of Defense and State, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, etc.).

In our [first report](#) as well as our most recent [second report](#), we have focused on such issues as enhancing the engagement of the private sector and new actors in development; promoting a wider array of possibilities in development financing; fostering innovation and expanding the use of evidence-based methodologies; and encouraging more collaborative resource mobilization, including through more leveragable public-private partnerships. Throughout all this, we have urged a focus on the challenges of the most marginalized, including women and youth.

Our recommendation involve both stepping up work that is already underway, including through improved agency coordination and better deployment of existing capabilities within the existing structure, as well as not being afraid to try new and experimental approaches. We point to areas where more needs to be done by all, including the U.S. government, non-governmental organizations, private companies, philanthropic initiatives, and think tanks. And we stress that the biggest responsibility of all falls on the developing countries, many of whom are now able to mobilize significantly larger domestic resources, both public and private.

The Global Development Council will continue its work in consultation with other stakeholders and participants in the important Global Development effort as we strongly believed that, working with its partners, and drawing on its capacity to innovate, the U.S. is in a unique position to play a highly-constructive role that meets global, regional and national objectives. Indeed, you need only look at the recent examples of Power Africa and the White House Africa Summit to observe the catalytic impact of America.

We look forward to engaging many at our second [public meeting](#) this month in which we will report on our latest set of recommendations, solicit reactions on our work, gain insights from experts, and obtain suggestions on our future work program.

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