

12 REASONS FOR FOREIGN AID REFORM

** and how the Global Partnerships Act of 2012 addresses them*

12. Because when you do small things right, big things happen.

* Section 11305 creates a Working Capital Fund, which would make it easier for USAID to administer small grants directly. Section 11502 authorizes small local procurements.

11. Because we ought to find out what works and stop doing what doesn't.

* Rigorous impact evaluations of foreign assistance are extremely rare. Section 9201 requires monitoring and evaluation of all foreign assistance.

10. Because if you don't know what you're trying to achieve, how will you know if it worked?

* Strategies are in place for only a handful of countries and sectors. Sections 1017, 1018 and 1019 require global, country-based, and sector strategies for development. Section 3103 requires action plans for human rights and democracy.

9. Because we don't need two agencies doing the same thing in the same place at the same time.

* A new GAO report found 28 USAID and 28 DOD-funded activities in Afghanistan that were potentially duplicative. Section 1020 creates an Interagency Policy Committee on Global Development to coordinate operations. Section 3302 creates a committee to coordinate rule of law assistance.

8. Because if James Bond can adapt to the post-Cold War era, so can foreign aid.

* Section 12201 repeals the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, section 620(f) of which contains limitations on assistance to countries "controlled by the international Communist conspiracy".

7. Because the best time to stop a conflict is before it starts.

* Section 2021 requires conflict risk assessments and conflict mitigation strategies. Section 2015 creates a Complex Crisis, Stabilization, and Prevention Fund, with 25% reserved for conflict prevention.

6. Because partners are better than dependents.

* Section 1015 requires that aid build local capacity and use country procurement systems to the maximum extent feasible. Section 1018 requires consultation with the partner country on strategies.

5. Because most of the money going into the developing world comes from the private sector.

* Section 1016 creates an Innovation Fund to support public-private partnerships. Section 7002 requires joint analysis with the private sector on constraints to growth.

4. Because there ought to be some correlation between what the needs are and where the aid goes.

*Section 1015 establishes evidence-based criteria for use in deciding aid levels to each country.

3. Because no one really knows how much of the aid that's been approved has actually been spent.

* Section 9301 requires that obligation and expenditure information be published on the Internet.

2. Because the system didn't get this way by accident, and it won't get better by itself.

* Legislation builds consensus and creates Congressional buy-in for proposed reforms.

1. Is there anyone who thinks that foreign aid is just fine the way it is?