

## Principles For Effective Official Development Assistance

### Key Points

- Poverty reduction must be a primary objective of ODA.
- Achieving the long-term objectives of global prosperity and freedom depends upon sustainable development as a long-term process, which should not be sidetracked for any short-term political agenda.
- Building local capacity promotes country ownership and leads to self-sufficiency.
- Harmonize priorities among donors, multi-lateral institutions and recipient governments to assure the best use of resources.

ODA, Official Development Assistance, should ensure that funding for the achievement of the long-term development objectives of the eradication of extreme poverty and the fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals are central. InterAction believes ODA should enhance cohesion in the implementation of countries' foreign assistance programs abroad while maintaining a mutually respectful partnership with those non-government organizations.

### Poverty reduction must be a primary objective of ODA.

There are both moral and strategic grounds for making the eradication of extreme poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals core elements of ODA portfolio. History has shown that countries not able to meet basic needs and provide opportunities for their people often have come to require greater, and more urgent, engagement in later years. A people-centered development approach requires both long-term investments in the social sector, such as health and education, as well as trade, debt, and foreign investment policies that promote job creation and sustained economic growth.

Progress toward democratic reforms by developing countries is important, and InterAction supports an emphasis on human rights, the rule of law, promotion of democratic practices, and gender equity. These should be an integral part of development practice and a key goal of development programs.

### Achieving the long-term objectives of global prosperity and freedom depends upon sustainable development as a long-term process, which should not be sidetracked for any short-term political agenda.

While foreign and security objectives will inevitably change to reflect new priorities in an evolving world, the achievement of long-term development goals requires a patient and steady approach. Balancing short-term political and economic calculations with the long-term nature of sustainable development approaches requires a proper mix of short- and long-term objectives. Given this interdependence, development assistance should be designed, managed and evaluated from the perspective of its long-term nature, not only its short-term political impact.

### **Building local capacity promotes country ownership and leads to self-sufficiency.**

For development assistance to work, it must be directed toward efforts that its beneficiaries identify, design, and value. Country ownership, through the participation of a strong civil society and effective and transparent public institutions, is vital to building programs and investments that are sustainable for generations to come. Truly effective assistance must hold all stakeholders - donors, civil society, and government - in the development process accountable for achieving the defined results that lead to measurable impact and sustainable changes in well-being.

### **Harmonize priorities among donors, multilateral institutions and recipient governments to assure the best use of resources.**

In order to achieve the greatest impact of ODA partnership, collaboration, and dialogue with other donors, both bilateral and multilateral, is critical. Such efforts allow development programs to build upon best practices and avoid wasteful duplication. Bilateral and multilateral efforts each have distinctive contributions and should be seen as complementary. Aid works best when donors work together, each using their comparative strengths to achieve agreed-upon goals to which both governments and citizens are committed.

#### **About InterAction**

InterAction is the largest alliance of U.S.-based international development and humanitarian NGOs. With more than 165 members operating in every developing country, InterAction works to overcome poverty, exclusion, and suffering by advancing social justice and basic dignity for all.