

2009



In 2009, policymakers, development organizations and experts, and private-sector entities came together to create unprecedented momentum for elevating development as a core pillar of U.S. foreign policy and making U.S. foreign assistance more effective and accountable through reform. The Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN), a diverse coalition advocating for these goals, helped drive much of this progress after the 2008 launch of "New Day, New Way," a roadmap for foreign assistance reform. Below is a timeline marking the key milestones reached on this issue over the last year-and-a-half.

OBAMA MAKES AMBITIOUS PLEDGES ON DEVELOPMENT (SEPTEMBER 2008)

Then-candidate Sen. Barack Obama pledges to double U.S. foreign assistance investments, "modernize our foreign assistance policies, tools, and operations," and "elevate, streamline and empower a 21st Century US Development Agency" to ensure that "development is established and endures as a key pillar of U.S. foreign policy."



BERMAN CALLS AID REFORM A TOP PRIORITY (DECEMBER 1, 2008)

House Foreign Affairs Committee (HFAC) Chairman Howard Berman (D-CA) calls foreign assistance reform his top priority for the 111th Congress and launches a process to rewrite the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act.

CLINTON BECOMES SECRETARY OF STATE (JANUARY 13, 2009)

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, a longtime champion of development, says in her successful confirmation hearing: "Investing in... development is not marginal to our foreign policy but essential. In order to protect and defend the United States of America, to advance our interests, and to further our values, (diplomacy, development and defense must work) in concert."

LEW NAMED DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCES (JANUARY 22, 2009)

Jack Lew, former budget director under President Clinton, is named to this long-vacant position, where he will coordinate foreign assistance budgets and operations at the State Department and USAID.



BERMAN, KIRK INTRODUCE INITIAL AID REFORM BILL (APRIL 28, 2009)

HFAC Chairman Berman and Rep. Mark Kirk (R-IL) introduce the "Initiating Foreign Assistance Reform Act of 2009" (H.R. 2139), which would require the President to create a National Strategy for Global Development and strengthen foreign assistance accountability and transparency. The bill garners 125 bipartisan co-sponsors.

OBAMA ANNOUNCES GLOBAL HEALTH INITIATIVE (MAY 5, 2009)

President Obama launches a \$63 billion Global Health Initiative to drive a more strategic and "integrated approach to fighting diseases, improving health, and strengthening health systems."



KERRY DELIVERS MAJOR SPEECH ON DEVELOPMENT (MAY 21, 2009)

Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC) Chairman John Kerry (D-MA) urges foreign assistance reform in a Brookings Institution speech, saying: "Passing a foreign aid reform bill will also be crucial to revitalizing our development agencies (and reestablishing) policy, intellectual and strategic capacity in our foreign aid programs. We need (to) push the envelope on ending global poverty."



DIPLOMACY AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW LAUNCHED (JULY 10, 2009)

Secretary of State Clinton announces the first-ever Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) to guide and coordinate policy development and resource allocation at the State Department and USAID, with findings expected in 2010. "This will help make our diplomacy and development work more agile, responsive, and complimentary. This is what we mean when we talk about smart power."

OBAMA HIGHLIGHTS DEVELOPMENT IN ACCRA (JULY 11, 2009)

In his first trip to sub-Saharan Africa, President Obama again highlights the importance of U.S. support for development in poor countries, saying "I've pledged substantial increases in our foreign assistance (and its purpose) must be creating the conditions where it's no longer needed."

BIPARTISAN SENATORS INTRODUCE INITIAL AID REFORM BILL TO STRENGTHEN USAID (JULY 28, 2009)

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry (D-MA) and Ranking Member Dick Lugar (R-IN), along with Senators Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Bob Corker (R-TN), introduce the Foreign Assistance Revitalization and Accountability Act of 2009 (S. 1524) to revitalize USAID and strengthen foreign assistance accountability and transparency. The bill garners 22 bipartisan co-sponsors. Said Lugar: "The U.S. has increased development funding and elevated its priority. Yet USAID has been allowed to atrophy. Our bill seeks to better evaluate programs, improve coordination among agencies and enhance staff development and training."



OBAMA LAUNCHES PRESIDENTIAL STUDY DIRECTIVE ON DEVELOPMENT (AUGUST 31, 2009)

President Obama signs a Presidential Study Directive authorizing National Security Advisor James Jones and National Economic Council Director Lawrence Summers to lead a first-ever cross-government review of development policy, with results expected in early 2010.

STATE DEPARTMENT UNVEILS GLOBAL HUNGER AND FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVE (SEPTEMBER 28, 2009)

The Obama Administration launches its Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative, which seeks to promote locally-led agricultural development through new investments and better coordination of U.S. government programs.



S. 1524 PASSES OUT OF SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE (NOVEMBER 17, 2009)

The SFRC overwhelmingly approves S. 1524, sending the bill on to the Senate floor. Said SFRC Chairman Kerry, "This legislation demonstrates Congress's commitment to strengthening the capacity, accountability and effectiveness of our foreign aid programs."

CONGRESS BOOSTS RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT (DECEMBER 13, 2009)

Congress approves the FY 2010 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, which provides vital resources to rebuild the capacity of the State Department and USAID, including the hiring of 300 additional Foreign Service Officers at USAID. The bill adds \$720 million in development assistance from FY09 for agricultural development, climate change, micro-credit, democracy and governance, and education.

DR. RAJIV SHAH CONFIRMED AS USAID ADMINISTRATOR (DECEMBER 25, 2009)

After being nominated by President Obama, Dr. Rajiv Shah, formerly Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics and Chief Scientist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is confirmed as Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Said Shah in his confirmation hearing, "Not since the founding of USAID in 1961 and the passage of the Foreign Assistance Act have we had such an opportunity to fundamentally re-imagine our nation's development strategy and strengthen the organization that leads it."