



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



TRANSFORMING OUR PROGRAMS

REDEFINING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH PARTNER GOVERNMENTS

VISION

As partner governments (PGs) work to foster and sustain their country's Journey to Self-Reliance, it is critical they remain committed to and capable of delivering citizen-centered, accountable governance and enterprise-driven development. How USAID engages with each of its partner governments to encourage **commitment** and strengthen their **capacity** is therefore essential to reducing partner countries' need for U.S. foreign assistance.

REDEFINING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH PARTNER GOVERNMENTS

"Redefining our Relationship with Partner Governments" (RDR) asks us to rethink policies, program tools, and operational approaches. The Agency's self-reliance theory of change posits that partner country commitment and capacity to manage their own development are mutually reinforcing elements of overall self-reliance. In this way, Redefining our Development Relationships (RDR) is closely linked to all components of the Journey to Self-Reliance.

- **Commitment:** USAID must strengthen and incentivize government commitment, particularly policy, governance, and resources.
- **Capacity:** Missions must strengthen government systems and use government-owned development models, where appropriate, to put the country in the lead.

To fully embrace this vision, the Agency must take a critical look at how we engage with government counterparts and how we hold them--and ourselves--accountable for results. At the same time, we must consider how to alter our own systems, processes, and approaches to balance necessary due diligence with achieving true progress as development partners.

THE RDR WORKSTREAMS

The RDR effort is four interconnected workstreams aimed at improving how USAID engages with partner governments to advance their Journey to Self-Reliance:

1. **Incentivizing Government Commitment:** Ideally, our agreements should include a development plan with shared goals for the partnership, cost-sharing agreements for all projects and programs, and specific governance milestones agreed upon by both parties. As a country builds greater capacity and commitment to manage its own development, increasingly sophisticated and higher-expectation cost-sharing and governance reforms should also be built into our agreements with partner countries.
2. **Improving our Programmatic Tools for Strengthening Capacity and Incentivizing Commitment:** The Agency has a number of programmatic tools -- especially government-to-government (G2G) assistance -- that incentivize host country buy-in in countries that exhibit the capacity and commitment to effectively manage external development resources. These approaches have the added benefit of enhancing self-reliance when countries manage and integrate externally-funded program activities into national investment and operational budgets.
3. **Training and Agency Culture:** Sustained engagement with partner governments is time-intensive and depends on USAID staff to leverage their unique skills. USAID must provide the training and support for staff to increase engagement with governments to strengthen commitment and capacity.
4. **Leveraging Other Development Partners:** USAID can facilitate host country commitment by working with other donors to support governments to manage and finance their development journeys. This includes improving coordination to work towards common goals at the strategic and programmatic levels.