

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Slaughter, Anne-Marie <SlaughterA@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 13, 2010 9:23 PM
To: H
Cc: Abedin, Huma; Mills, Cheryl D
Subject: getting recognition for procurement reform

Given your recognition of the importance of procurement reform, I thought you might like to see that USAID is getting credit for making changes already. This is both the right thing to do and getting good press where it counts. AM



Dear Friends and Colleagues:

What if we told you a little-known bureaucratic process called "Implementation and Procurement Reform," IPR for short, was one of the biggest victories for poor people in years? It means more aid can go directly through a country's own systems, making them stronger. It also means that more aid will be administered by local organizations who know best what their own communities need.

Through IPR, USAID is putting President Obama's recent global development policy into action. The agency has set clear targets to increase use of local country systems and organizations, which means that US assistance will help citizens and their governments build their own capacity, instead of setting up a parallel system as they've done in recent years. They've set clear and ambitious targets for themselves that are laser-focused on results, and dedicated to fighting global poverty not just in the short term, but for good.



Photo: Local organizations distribute assistance after performing a needs assessment in Bihar, India.

Ian Bray / OXFAM GB

This reform will likely be criticized by some who think that putting more money in the hands of local actors will expose USAID's programs to more risk. But this is precisely the point; only by supporting local change agents—both inside and outside developing country governments—can we actually strengthen the hands of people in poor countries who are working to change their own societies for the better. That means managing risk wisely, rather than trying to avoid it altogether. And in our field research, 36 of the 39 activists we interviewed said they want USAID to support their governments directly, because it would make it easier for them to hold their governments accountable and prevent corruption.

What does all this mean? It means better aid, aid that strengthens the capacity of reformers in poor countries. And for the millions of people across the world who have been demanding these reforms, USAID has shown it is actively listening.

Sincerely,

The Aid Effectiveness Team

p.s. If you want to hear more directly from USAID on this important policy change, RSVP today to aideffectiveness@savechildren.org to attend "Country Ownership: Risks & Results" this Thursday, October 14th at 2pm, room 2255 of the Rayburn House Office Building.

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