



Proposed USAID Bureau for Policy, Resources and Performance (PRP)

Through InterAction's annual *Choose to Invest* publication and subsequent education on authorizing efforts and appropriations, **InterAction continuously engages on how the United States funds foreign assistance**. As the agency worked to establish a new structure to effectively manage its budget and policy agenda, USAID consulted the NGO community at InterAction for support, advice, and critiques in its transformation process. As partners, implementers, and advocates for humanitarian and development assistance, **InterAction and our members understand that strategic planning, development policy and management of budget are intrinsically linked**. To continually enhance policy and improve planning, it is vital to understand the capacity of program budgets, and strategy should shape budgets. The proposed Bureau for Policy, Resources, and Performance (PRP) has the potential to institutionalize this desired integration of policy and budget planning at USAID.

Proposed Bureau Overview:

The proposed Bureau for Policy, Resources, and Performance (PRP) would integrate the duties of the current Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning; Office of Budget and Resource Management; and other related offices including parts of the Global Development Lab and the responsibility for the Operating Expense budget, which currently sits in the Management Bureau. Lead by an Assistant to the Administrator (AtA), the proposed bureau will house the budget, program, and learning agenda for missions, other bureaus, and the agency. The Bureau will work to create coherence between policy, resources, and strategies from the missions to the administrator. The PRP Bureau will operationalize the Journey to Self-Reliance approach through an integrative, learning agenda and house the metrics associated with this initiative. **The Bureau places policy, budget, learning, and Agency-wide program planning support into a single bureau**. The Bureau will consist of six offices: Bilateral and Multilateral Engagement; Development Policy; Budget; Learning, Evaluation, and Performance; Program Cycle, Policy, and Support; and Program and Management Operations. The employees of USAID working at State/ F will also report to the assistant administrator of the PRP Bureau.

Areas of Increased Effectiveness and Coordination:

- **Strategy-budget alignment.** As designed, the PRP Bureau is a major step in the right direction toward resolving mismatches that have existed between budget allocation decisions and field-based assessments and strategic planning. USAID's major initiatives have, in the past, driven the agency's operations and strategic planning, given their size and visibility. But they have also existed apart from the corporate strategic planning process designed to support principles of country ownership, impact and sustainability. By bringing the responsibilities for strategy and budgeting closer together, the PRP Bureau could help to better align country strategies and budget allocations so that the former shapes the latter rather than the other way around.
- **Speaking in unison.** The PRP Bureau will help orient missions, bureaus, and leadership in the same direction as well as set and manage certain metrics for the Agency. By fusing the power of senior

leadership and budgets with the insights of policy and learning, PRP can become USAID's powerhouse for policy leadership and program effectiveness. This also establishes a key budget and policy liaison with OMB and State Department.

- **Clear connections with other key donors.** As partners in the field, InterAction members view cooperation between donors as essential for effective and efficient programming. The Office of Bilateral and Multilateral Engagement will continue as a key office for planning and strategic coordination with other key donors that support humanitarian and development work.
- **Promoting effective and dynamic programs.** We are pleased to see USAID institutionalizing effective and efficient development strategies. In addition, we are excited to see the next stages of the Agency's maturing approach to learning through a greater focus on an agency-wide learning agenda with aggregated insights alongside continued efforts to improve the quantity and quality of evaluations at the field level.
- **Alignment of legislative and public messaging with policy and strategy.** The proposed coupling of the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs and the PRP Bureau under a new Associate Administrator will better allow the agency to consistently convey important information about how and why it does what it does.
- **Mission access to information.** As partners on the ground, we look forward to missions gaining more holistic, realistic knowledge of their programs in relation to USAID goals and strategies. Integrating the Office of Budget with the responsibilities that have been managed by PPL will better allow NGOs to understand, and augment, mission capacities.

Areas for Further Consultation or Continued Questions:

- **Build coherence and stitch together complementary areas of policy analysis.** The Office of Development Policy should continue serving as a central node to connect dots and build greater coherence across USAID policies. The Agency should also formalize communication channels between the PRP Bureau and offices in other bureaus that are engaged in specific areas of policy research.
- **Build pathways for engagement and reporting to Congress.** To ensure agency programs are effective and sufficient, USAID must consistently share lessons learned, successes, and failures with political leaders. This will require coordination with the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA).
- **Create more consistent channels for formal consultation with NGOs.** As NGOs often innovate to deliver assistance, we are eager to develop formal consultation channels for USAID's policies and learning agendas, rather than the semi-regular, ad-hoc basis approach currently utilized. We have appreciated the work done in this transformation process and know we can assist USAID as it carries out its development strategies and goals.
- **Bolster education and connections in missions.** Appreciating the impact that the new offices could have for crafting better programs, missions should apply all available, relevant PRP tools and work to better integrate perspectives across field-level offices as Country Development Cooperation Strategies (CDCS) are developed. These strategies should reflect evaluations and best practices in adaptive management learned through PRP training and consultation.