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# 1. MESSAGE FROM THE CIO

A resilient, modern, secure IT infrastructure is critical for USAID to execute its global, impact-driven mission advancing the economic, political, social, and environmental well-being of the world's most vulnerable people. The USAID CIO vision is a future where we have accelerated how USAID accomplishes its development and humanitarian assistance mission through innovative technological solutions and trusted partnerships. My role is to ensure that the Office of the CIO always keeps that vision and our purpose in sight.

The foundation of this strategy is built upon five focus areas including governance, modernization, cybersecurity, customer experience, and supporting our workforce. This Information Technology Strategic Plan (ITSP) is a five-year plan that supports our vision and the Agency's mission through five objectives ensuring optimal use of IT resources through innovative and agile solutions:

1. **Stakeholder Centric IT** - Accelerate delivery of mission outcomes and enhance stakeholder value by the power of trust and deep partnership with M/CIO's stakeholders.
2. **Worldwide Operational Readiness** - Ensure the highest levels of operational readiness by deploying resilient, scalable IT solutions that are rapidly deployable anywhere in the world.
3. **Pragmatic Governance** - Balance mandatory compliance with timely and transparent decision making.

4. **Worldwide Talent Pool** - Develop a talent management model that retains and develops skilled resources worldwide. Enable and empower team members to deliver desired outcomes.
5. **Insights-Driven Outcomes** - Leverage data and insights to enhance and support delivery of USAID's desired outcomes.

The following pages outline how we plan to realize these objectives, illuminating the path we envision for the future. Looking ahead, USAID is working to test and investigate how rapidly emerging and evolving technologies, particularly in the realm of AI, may be leveraged to advance the Agency's mission, spanning both programmatic and operational applications, and promising new opportunities for us to achieve our objectives.

Meanwhile, my door is always open, and I welcome your ideas and suggestions as we navigate the important intersections of technology and international development.

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Jason Gray". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the signature is a thin white horizontal line.

**JASON GRAY**  
USAID CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER



## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) leads the U.S. government's international development and disaster assistance. It seeks to save lives, reduce poverty, strengthen democracy, and promote a path to recipient self-reliance and resilience across the world. It delivers its development programs in collaboration with other U.S. government agencies, Congress, multilateral and bilateral organizations, private companies, academic institutions, faith-based groups, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

USAID operates across a complex and varied physical and geopolitical landscape, which demands that the Bureau for Management, Office of the Chief Information Officer (M/CIO) develop and deliver highly adaptive and reliable information technology (IT) services. IT is central to achieving USAID's mission.

M/CIO's vision is to accelerate USAID's mission that includes humanitarian assistance and development. It seeks to achieve this vision through partnership and creating impact. Over the next five years, its strategy is to increasingly focus on partnering with colleagues to develop stakeholder-led, IT-enabled solutions through innovative technologies that create positive customer experiences. Success depends on building upon a deep understanding of stakeholder needs, focusing on delivering outcomes, and enabling organization agility and adaptiveness.

Data and insights are the backbone of USAID's mission. Expanding its capacity is a vital goal of the FY 2022-2026 Department of State and USAID Joint Strategic Plan. USAID's Bureaus, Independent Offices, and Missions (B/IO/Ms) rely on data and insights to improve program outcomes, support organizational learning, and maintain accountability. Modern capabilities, such as data science, predictive analytics, and artificial intelligence/machine learning (AI/ML), are poised to equip USAID's development program teams with unprecedented capabilities. Strong data management is also the key enabler for collaboration with the entire ecosystem of intergovernmental and nongovernmental

“The Department of State and USAID must elevate the use of data as an integral tool of American diplomacy, development, and humanitarian efforts: the world demands it, leaders require it, and the workforce expects it.”

— Strategic Objective 4.2, FY 2022-2026 Joint Strategic Plan,  
U.S. Department of State and USAID

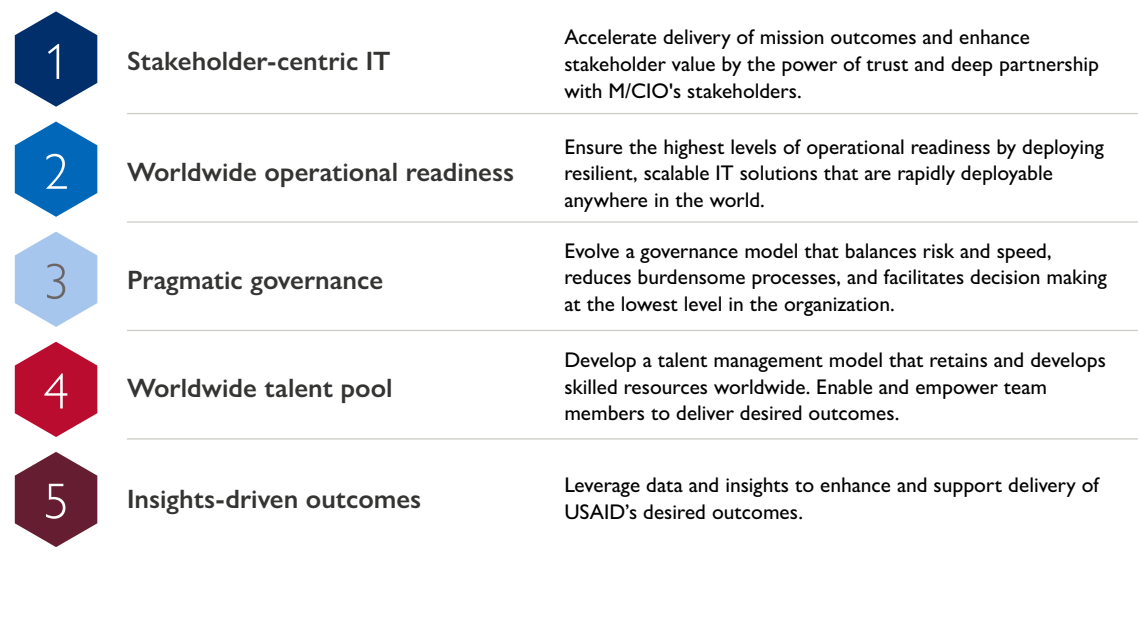
partners. Building on its data management foundation, M/CIO looks to strengthen its capabilities in these areas to foster a data culture, invest in data literacy, support the Federal Data Strategy, establish adherence to the data lifecycle, and support the Agency’s need to make insight-driven decisions.

Meeting the Agency's increasing demand for technology-led innovation requires the IT organization to be agile. Through strengthened governance processes and procedures, M/CIO will improve organizational agility to deliver and maintain secure technology solutions rapidly. Timely investment in platforms like cloud computing has positioned the Agency to adapt to unexpected challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic. M/CIO’s future investments will directly support the Agency’s strategic objectives, such as enabling high-value, mission-critical collaborative work.

M/CIO has sharpened its focus on building and retaining its worldwide capacity of required skills and human capital, while prioritizing employee experience and maintaining a talent pipeline to support the Agency’s current and future technological needs. To achieve this, M/CIO will develop a new dynamic talent strategy that continually adjusts to emerging demands and need for capacity, partnering with best-in-class vendors to support the Agency.

The five-year IT Strategic Plan realizes the above vision and strategy through the following five objectives:

FIGURE 1: THE IT STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



M/CIO will attain the five objectives by delivering key results described in this Strategic Plan's detailed sections. It will continue to learn from the experiences of its key stakeholders and adapt while responding to changes faced by the Agency, ensuring the Strategic Plan will evolve in sync with M/CIO and its stakeholders.

## THE MISSION AND OBJECTIVE OF USAID

The IT Strategic Plan is rooted in USAID's mission and objective as described below.

### MISSION

On behalf of the American people, we promote and demonstrate democratic values abroad and advance a free, peaceful, and prosperous world. In support of America's foreign policy, the U.S. Agency for International Development leads the U.S. government's international development and disaster assistance through partnerships and investments that save lives, reduce poverty, strengthen democratic governance, and help people emerge from humanitarian crises and progress beyond assistance.

### OBJECTIVE

Our objective is to support partners to become self-reliant and capable of leading their own development journeys. We make progress toward this by reducing the reach of conflict, preventing the spread of pandemic disease, and counteracting the drivers of violence, instability, transnational crime, and other security threats. We promote American prosperity through investments that expand markets for U.S. exports; create a level playing field for U.S. businesses; and support more stable, resilient, and democratic societies. We stand with people when disaster strikes or crisis emerges as the world leader in humanitarian assistance.

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## M/CIO'S VISION

### VISION

**M/CIO's vision is** *“a future where M/CIO accelerates how USAID accomplishes its development and humanitarian assistance mission through innovative technological solutions and trusted partnerships.”*

M/CIO's core values are:

### IMPACT DRIVEN

We are focused on facilitating mission outcomes across USAID and supporting stakeholders with the objective of making a measurable positive impact.

### PARTNERSHIP

We engage collaboratively with all stakeholders to ensure we are aligned to USAID mission priorities and that our IT capabilities are integrated into the USAID strategy.

### CREATIVITY

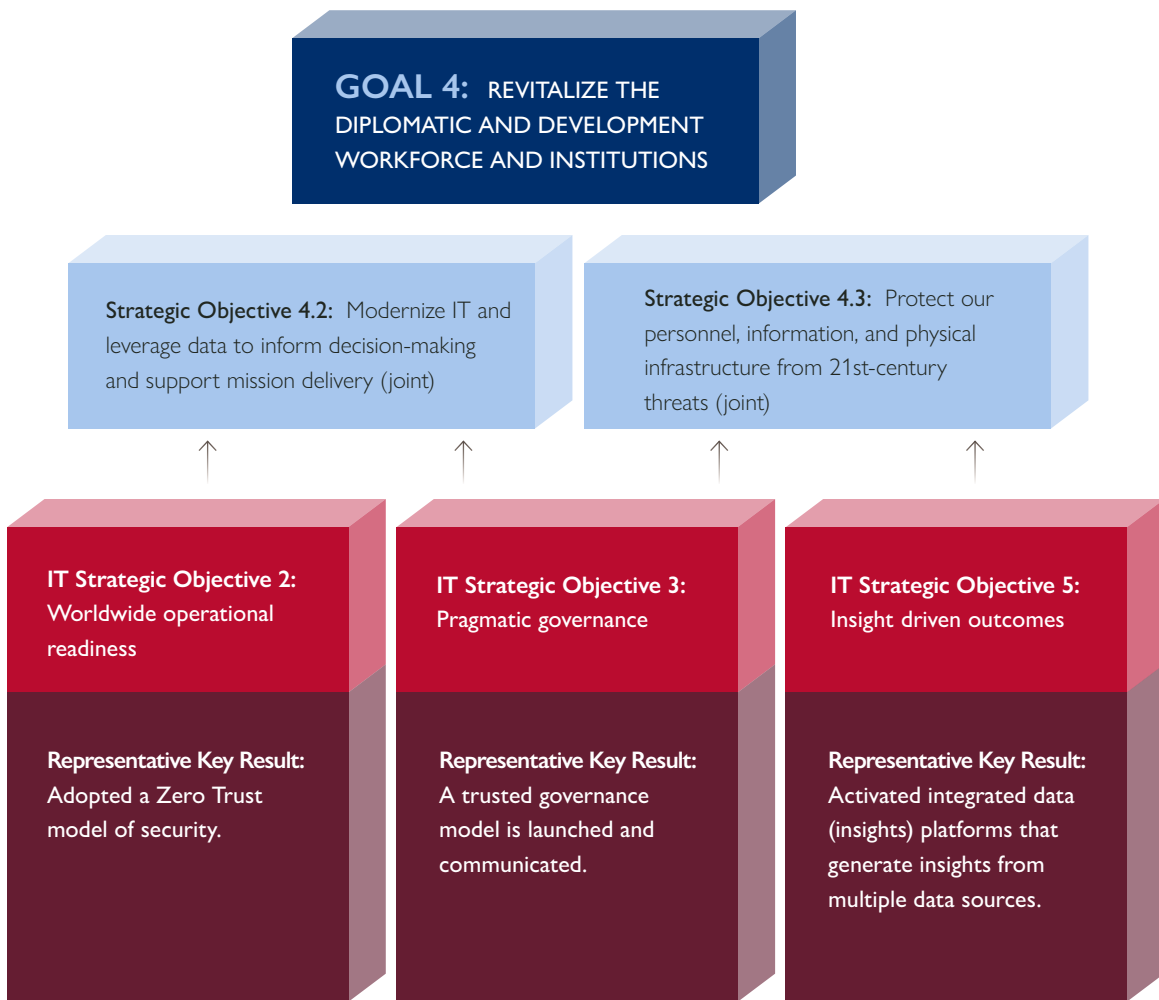
We continuously innovate with leading-edge technologies and practices to expand the scope of the possible and extend the impact of the USAID mission.



## ALIGNMENT WITH THE STATE-USAID JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN

Modernizing IT and leveraging data to inform decision-making and support mission delivery is a joint strategic objective in the FY 2022-2026 Department of State and USAID Joint Strategic Plan. This USAID IT Strategic Plan aligns with and fully supports that Agency-level objective, while the combination of guiding principles, objectives, and key results in this plan positions M/CIO to fulfill its role as the leader of IT modernization and data leveraging. The figure below represents how a representative set of IT strategic objectives and key results supports the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan.

FIGURE 2: ALIGNMENT WITH THE STATE-USAID JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN



FY 2022-2026 STATE-USAID

IT STRATEGIC PLAN (2024-2028)

## 3. THE IT STRATEGIC PLAN

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

USAID works in challenging environments and remains steadfast in its mission. Coping with unpredictability is inherent in USAID's operational DNA, and success depends on embracing an agile mindset. IT plays a critical role in supporting the enterprise-wide need for agility. As data and access to insights remain the threads that connect USAID to its environments, the ability to deliver secure automation while remaining resilient is vital. Demand for agile IT investment governance is no longer a choice — it's essential.

The IT Strategic Plan aims to transform how IT drives value through partnership with its stakeholders. Pillars of this Strategic Plan that are captured in the strategic objective component include: creating a culture of data- and insights-based decision making; delivering agile, secure, and resilient IT platforms; building worldwide skills and capacity; establishing pragmatic governance; and driving high operational performance.

Figure 3: The IT Strategy Framework outlines the components of this Plan and their relationships. Five objectives grounded in eight guiding principles (explored in Figure 4) form the foundation, while key results for each objective represent the stated outcomes. Critical use cases that impact the goals of certain pillar Bureaus are woven into the key results to show and test how M/CIO effectively supports USAID's mission.



FIGURE 3: THE IT STRATEGY FRAMEWORK



1. **Stakeholders:** The strategy is built upon a deep understanding of the stakeholders’ expectations and experiences. USAID stakeholders played a key role in shaping this strategy.
2. **M/CIO Vision:** M/CIO's vision supports the Agency's mission and objectives.
3. **Guiding Principles:** The principles act as a decision aid for M/CIO's leadership team to keep informed strategic choices aligned with the Agency's mission.
4. **Strategic Objectives:** The objectives show the concrete plan to support the Agency’s objectives and M/CIO’s vision.
5. **Key Results:** The key results show how the objectives are specifically met. Each objective has multiple associated key results.

The Strategy is dynamic. While the objectives are expected to remain stable during the planning cycle, key results may be refined or adjusted as priorities change to enable M/CIO to achieve the objectives and deliver the most impactful value to stakeholders.

## 3.2 STAKEHOLDERS SHAPE THE STRATEGY

USAID Bureaus, Missions, Independent Offices, Federal government partners, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are the stakeholders of IT. Their experiences and expectations define what is valuable, and the strategy and operations of IT are designed to offer that value to the stakeholders.

This requires a relationship of shared accountability between IT and the stakeholders.

In formulating the Strategic Plan, M/CIO interviewed and surveyed a broad range of stakeholder organizations, including Mission Directors, Bureau Assistant Administrators, Executive Officers, and representatives from the Department of State. Selected stakeholder organizations were also asked to identify critical initiatives supported by technology, which provided clarity on what initiatives are most valuable for stakeholders and created a link between IT strategy and stakeholder value. Since identifying important stakeholder partnership opportunities is part of the ongoing planning process, this IT Strategy is expected to change over time.

### M/CIO STAKEHOLDERS INCLUDE:

- USAID Bureaus, Independent Offices, and Missions (B/IO/M)
- U.S. Department of State
- U.S. Congress
- Office of Management and Budget
- Multilateral and bilateral organizations

## 3.3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The IT Strategy is guided by a set of principles that form guardrails and support the decision-making process (see Figure 4: The Guiding Principles). The principles guide not only what M/CIO chooses to do, but also what it chooses not to do.

FIGURE 4: THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES



## 3.4 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND KEY RESULTS

Five objectives form the foundation of the Strategic Plan to meet the vision of what M/CIO will be known for by 2029. Achieving these objectives will enable M/CIO to deliver high-impact value through IT capabilities. Key results will show progress toward achieving the objectives.

### 3.4.1 OBJECTIVE 1: STAKEHOLDER-CENTRIC IT

Accelerate delivery of mission outcomes and stakeholder value by the power of trust and deep partnership with the IT stakeholders.

### 3.4.1.1 WHAT IT MEANS

- M/CIO will: (a) deliver mission outcomes by forging partnerships with IT stakeholders; (b) be the principal advisor to stakeholder leadership; and (c) enable IT-led solutions.
- M/CIO workforce members will follow best practices of customer-centricity with a focus on customer experience and human-centered design methodologies. M/CIO will be known for consistently creating value for stakeholders.
- By 2029, M/CIO staff will be regarded as the principal IT advisors. They will make optimal modern technology choices in business decisions. They will be seen as equal partners and have a seat at the table in B/IO/M strategic planning.

### 3.4.1.2 KEY RESULTS

- A stakeholder engagement model is made operational. The model is rooted in partnership to deliver joint mission outcomes together.
- A working model of a cocreated, prioritized portfolio of activities, a plan, and execution is established.
- The stakeholders have adopted the principles of shared accountability with M/CIO.
- A center of excellence model, including a team of subject matter experts in both IT and relevant Bureaus/Offices, is operationalized in partnership with the appropriate stakeholders, positioning M/CIO for strategic execution.

## 3.4.2 OBJECTIVE 2: WORLDWIDE OPERATIONAL READINESS

Support the Agency in maintaining the highest levels of operational readiness by deploying resilient, scalable IT solutions that are rapidly deployable anywhere in the world.

### 3.4.2.1 WHAT IT MEANS

- M/CIO will invest in capabilities that provide comprehensive, scalable IT solutions. These will be secure and rapidly deployable, often in unfamiliar — sometimes even hostile — territories around the world.
- M/CIO will continuously modernize resiliency practices to ensure uninterrupted delivery of services at times of crisis. They will keep employees productive and safe and reduce the impact on critical business functions, while also allowing USAID to pivot quickly.

### 3.4.2.2 KEY RESULTS

- A Zero Trust model of cybersecurity is adopted.
- A resilience best practice model is operationalized. A plan to close the resiliency gaps is also put in place and specific projects from the plan are launched.
- An operating model for rapidly deploying adaptive technology infrastructure worldwide is operationalized.

## 3.4.3 OBJECTIVE 3: PRAGMATIC GOVERNANCE

Evolving a governance model that balances risk and speed, reduces burdensome processes, and facilitates decision making at the appropriate level in the USAID organization.

### 3.4.3.1 WHAT IT MEANS

- M/CIO will retool its governance model resulting in faster decision making and allowing decisions to be made by those closest to the issue. It will also follow relevant rules and policies.
- M/CIO will have greater transparency in portfolio decision making through clear criteria and processes that can be shared with stakeholders.
- M/CIO will maintain compliance with regulatory requirements.

### 3.4.3.2 KEY RESULTS

- A trusted governance model is launched and communicated.
- A prioritization framework to fast-track critical needs is in place.
- An outcomes-based model is leveraged, focusing on the result and the value as the basis for decisions.

## 3.4.4 OBJECTIVE 4: WORLDWIDE TALENT POOL

Develop a new talent management model that retains and develops top talent worldwide. Enable and empower workforce members to deliver desired outcomes.

### 3.4.4.1 WHAT IT MEANS

- M/CIO will nurture the best and brightest workforce. This will allow M/CIO to deliver modern technology-based solutions.
- M/CIO will continue demonstrating its commitment to developing Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs), who are critical to achieving the Agency's goals at the Missions.

### 3.4.4.2 KEY RESULTS

- A Talent Needs Assessment and gap analysis are funded and completed, and a talent acquisition and retention model are established. Preliminary employee experience needs are also determined, along with the ability to forecast capabilities to align requirements based on the portfolio of work.
- A new model for engaging FSNs is established, which acknowledges FSNs' goals, aspirations, and contributions to M/CIO. It aligns with M/CIO's overarching work, skills, and competency plan.
- A plan is created to ensure training and upskill capabilities are resourced, funded, and launched to empower employees, especially FSNs.
- An effective pipeline of prospective talent is established, and multiple talent sourcing strategies are activated, including: partnerships with local



universities, interagency mobility, and internships.

- A plan that shows clear career paths for M/CIO staff and FSNs is developed using frameworks such as the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education (NICE) Framework, including multiple horizontal and vertical opportunities and skill requirements to provide clarity.
- A method for the continuous reinforcement of organizational culture is established, ensuring the values of supportive management, trust, transparency, and accountability.

### 3.4.5 OBJECTIVE 5: INSIGHTS-DRIVEN OUTCOMES

Leverage data and insights to enhance and support delivery of USAID's desired outcomes.

#### 3.4.5.1 WHAT IT MEANS

- M/CIO will embed valuable insights into decision making and cultivate a data-driven culture.
- M/CIO will invest in governance processes to streamline the Agency's ability to use data to its fullest potential.
- M/CIO will equip USAID staff to use data science and advanced analytics to develop new insights and inform critical decisions.
- M/CIO will embed valuable data analytics capacities in the technologies it adopts in order to bolster decision making and a data-driven culture

#### 3.4.5.2 KEY RESULTS

- An integrated data (insights) platform that generates insights from multiple data sources is activated using advanced analytics capabilities and predictive modeling. It spans management and governance.
- A data literacy program that drives organizational awareness in using insights is established.

- The center of excellence for insights innovation is expanded, including the application of artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI/ML) as well as scaling automation.
- A requirement for real-time insights to be embedded in relevant systems of work to enable USAID colleagues to facilitate more effective decision making.





**USAID**

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE