

# The Journey to Self-Reliance

## TRANSFORMATION AT USAID

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### WHAT IS SELF-RELIANCE?

To end the need for foreign assistance, we must focus on building self-reliance -- defined as the ability of a country, including the government, civil society, and the private sector, to plan, finance, and implement solutions to solve its own development challenges. This approach must be the cornerstone for how we orient USAID country partnerships.

### THEORY OF CHANGE

Self-reliance is driven by two closely-related elements: commitment and capacity.



**Commitment:** How well a country's laws, policies, actions, and informal governance mechanisms -- such as cultures and norms -- support progress towards self-reliance.

**Capacity:** How far the country has come in its journey across the dimensions of political, social, and economic development, including the ability to work across these sectors.

For USAID this means that, as a country's commitment and capacity to plan, finance and implement solutions to solve its own development challenges strengthens, our partnership should also evolve -- ensuring that the programs we implement are best-supporting a country's journey to self-reliance.

### SELF-RELIANCE METRICS

The first step in better-supporting countries along their respective journeys to self-reliance is being able to understand where in the journey they are in the first place. This is the goal of the self-reliance metrics effort.

#### HOW WILL WE USE THE SELF-RELIANCE METRICS?

**To plot the overall Journey.** By plotting the development spectrum of the world's countries, we are able to put a stake in the ground of understanding what it means to reorient around the concept of self-reliance.

**To inform strategic decisions.** While they will not be the only tool, the metrics will be an important part of where we anchor our country strategies going forward.

**For use in development dialogue.** The metrics allow us to see not only where a country is in its overall journey to self-reliance, but also its relative strengths and weaknesses.

**To signal when we might consider examination for strategic transitions.** When the metrics indicate a country has achieved an advanced level of self-reliance, this will signal that we might want to examine the country for a possible conversation about strategic transition -- that is, to an evolved relationship that preserves investments, targets new challenges, and prevents backsliding.

***“AT USAID, WE WANT TO BUILD THE CAPACITY OF OUR PARTNERS TO HELP THEM ON THEIR JOURNEY TO SELF-RELIANCE.” - Administrator Mark Green***

## **THE METRICS**

USAID has identified an initial set of third-party, publicly-available, high-level metrics which we feel best-capture the concepts of “commitment” and “capacity,” and therefore, self-reliance:

### **COMMITMENT METRICS**

#### **Open and Accountable Governance:**

- Liberal Democracy Index, Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Institute
- Open Government Pillar, Rule of Law Index, World Justice Project

#### **Inclusive Development**

- Economic Gender gap component, Global Gender Gap Report, World Economic Forum (WEF)
- Social group equality in respect for civil liberties, V-Dem Institute

#### **Economic Policy**

- Business environment component, Legatum Prosperity Index, Legatum Institute
- Trade freedom component, Index of Economic Freedom, Heritage Foundation
- Biodiversity and habitat protections subcomponent, Environmental Performance Index, Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy and the Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN), Columbia University

### **CAPACITY METRICS**

#### **Government Capacity**

- Government effectiveness, Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), World Bank
- Efficiency of the Tax Administration, Institutional Profiles Database (IPD), Centre d'Etudes Prospectives et d'Informations Internationales (CEPII) and the Government of France
- Safety and security component, Legatum Prosperity Index, Legatum Institute

#### **Civil Society Capacity**

- Diagonal Accountability Index, V-Dem Institute

#### **Citizen Capacity**

- Headcount ratio, % of population living on less than \$5 per day (PPP), Povcalnet, World Bank
- Percentage of students attaining a minimum proficiency in reading at the end of primary school, EdStats, World Bank
- Child Health Indicator, CIESIN, Columbia University

#### **Capacity of the Economy**

- Per Capita GDP Purchasing Power Parity, World Development Indicators, World Bank
- Export concentration index (or the Herfindahl-Hirschmann index), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- ICT Use sub component of the technological readiness component, Global Competitiveness Index, WEF