State Should Improve Accountability Over Funding, USAID Should Assess Whether It Is Effective

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is a federal agency that provides economic and humanitarian assistance around the world. In fiscal year 2018, USAID's budget was approximately \$27 billion. The agency's programs are intended to promote economic growth, improve health and education, and support democracy and human rights.

However, there have been concerns about the effectiveness of USAID's programs. A 2017 report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that USAID did not have a clear definition of success for its programs, and that it was difficult to measure the impact of its work. The GAO also found that USAID was not always transparent about its funding decisions, and that it did not have adequate oversight of its programs.



DEMOCRACY ASSISTANCE: State Should Improve Accountability Over Funding; USAID Should Assess Whether New Processes Have Improved Award Documentation (GAO - DOS)

★ ★ ★ ★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 8003 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 117 pages

Lending : Enabled

In response to these concerns, Congress has passed legislation that requires USAID to improve its accountability and transparency. The Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act of 2016 requires USAID to track and report on the results of its programs, and to make its funding decisions more transparent. The act also requires USAID to create a new inspector general position to oversee its programs.

USAID has taken steps to implement the requirements of the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act. The agency has developed a new performance measurement system, and it has begun to make its funding decisions more transparent. However, USAID still has more work to do to improve its accountability and transparency.

The State Department should continue to work with USAID to improve the agency's accountability and transparency. The State Department should also work with Congress to ensure that USAID has the resources it needs to carry out its mission effectively.

In addition to improving its accountability and transparency, USAID should also assess whether its programs are effective. The agency should conduct rigorous evaluations of its programs to determine whether they are achieving their intended goals. USAID should also use the results of these evaluations to improve its programs.

By improving its accountability, transparency, and effectiveness, USAID can better serve the American people and the people of the world.

Key Findings

- USAID does not have a clear definition of success for its programs, and it is difficult to measure the impact of its work.
- USAID is not always transparent about its funding decisions, and it does not have adequate oversight of its programs.
- Congress has passed legislation that requires USAID to improve its accountability and transparency.
- USAID has taken steps to implement the requirements of the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act, but it still has more work to do.
- The State Department should continue to work with USAID to improve the agency's accountability and transparency.
- USAID should also assess whether its programs are effective by conducting rigorous evaluations.

Recommendations

- USAID should develop a clear definition of success for its programs,
 and it should develop metrics to measure the impact of its work.
- USAID should make its funding decisions more transparent, and it should create a new inspector general position to oversee its programs.
- The State Department should continue to work with USAID to improve the agency's accountability and transparency.
- The State Department should also work with Congress to ensure that USAID has the resources it needs to carry out its mission effectively.

- USAID should conduct rigorous evaluations of its programs to determine whether they are achieving their intended goals.
- USAID should use the results of these evaluations to improve its programs.

USAID is a vital part of the U.S. foreign aid program. The agency provides economic and humanitarian assistance around the world, and its programs are intended to promote economic growth, improve health and education, and support democracy and human rights. However, there have been concerns about the effectiveness of USAID's programs. A 2017 report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that USAID did not have a clear definition of success for its programs, and that it was difficult to measure the impact of its work. The GAO also found that USAID was not always transparent about its funding decisions, and that it did not have adequate oversight of its programs.

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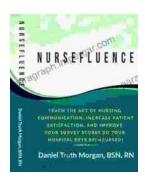
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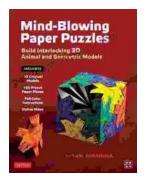
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