

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR U.S. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

U.S. international assistance has long improved lives around the world. At the same time, it has proven to be a high-return investment for the United States—advancing American economic and strategic interests in some of the world’s most dynamic and competitive markets. By promoting stability and growth in key regions, international assistance helps open new markets to American businesses, strengthen supply chains, and create the conditions U.S. companies need to compete and lead. At a time of rising geopolitical competition, particularly with China, these tools are more essential than ever to securing American leadership and delivering results for the U.S. economy.

1. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE OPENS AND SHAPES GLOBAL MARKETS FOR U.S. COMPANIES

Emerging markets are expected to drive the majority of global economic growth in the coming decades—making them critical to the long-term success of U.S. companies competing in the global economy.

Today, **more than 50% of U.S. exports now go to the developing world**, with a global purchasing power of \$50 trillion. (USGLC)¹

International assistance helps lay the foundation for economic growth around the world by building infrastructure, expanding digital connectivity, and strengthening legal systems—creating the conditions that allow U.S. companies to enter and grow in emerging markets.

13 of America’s top 15 export markets were previously recipients of U.S. international assistance. (USGLC)²

These tools lower barriers to entry, reduce investment risk, and help ensure that American companies—not foreign competitors like China—are positioned to succeed in strategic regions.

Over the past 15 years, **Chinese development initiatives have exploded by 525%**, expanding their influence across the world to the most vulnerable regions. (USGLC)³

2. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROTECTS FAIR COMPETITION AND STRENGTHENS THE RULES-BASED ENVIRONMENT U.S. COMPANIES NEED TO COMPETE

International assistance supports legal and regulatory reforms that promote transparency, contract enforcement, and fair competition—key conditions for U.S. businesses to succeed around the world.

These efforts reduce risk, attract private investment, and help level the playing field in markets often dominated by state-backed or politically connected firms.

When the U.S. steps back, strategic competitors like China step in—shaping rules and institutions in ways that disadvantage American companies and tilt markets toward closed, state-led systems.

China recently forged nearly two dozen pacts with African nations in its bid to surpass the United States in space. Investments in satellites and infrastructure are helping China build greater alliances in the countries where U.S. international assistance programs are currently being cut. (Reuters, 2/11/25)⁴

¹<https://www.usglc.org/media/2025/02/U.S.-International-Assistance-A-Win-for-Americans-One-Pager.pdf>

²<https://www.usglc.org/media/2025/02/U.S.-International-Assistance-A-Win-for-Americans-One-Pager.pdf>

³<https://www.usglc.org/the-budget/constrained-funding-for-growing-challenges-threatens-americas-ability-to-protect-national-interests/#:~:text=Given%20China%20has%20increased%20its,from%20a%20position%20of%20strength>

⁴<https://www.reuters.com/investigations/china-builds-space-alliances-africa-trump-cuts-foreign-aid-2025-02-11/>



3. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE ENABLES U.S. COMPANIES TO INVEST AND SCALE THROUGH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

In high-risk and capital-constrained markets, international assistance plays a catalytic role—providing anchor funding, risk-sharing tools, and technical support that make complex projects investable.

U.S. companies benefit from coordinated U.S. government engagement—across development, finance, and diplomacy—as well as the on-the-ground support of embassies and consulates, which signal U.S. commitment, accelerate deals, and improve access to key decision-makers.

Assistance also supports local capacity development—through workforce training, supply chain partnerships, and institutional support—allowing American firms to operate efficiently and grow over time.

4. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE STRENGTHENS SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE AND SECURES ACCESS TO STRATEGIC RESOURCES

U.S. industries depend on global supply chains that begin in developing and frontier markets. These supply chains provide essential inputs such as critical minerals, agricultural commodities, medical ingredients, and electronic components that are foundational to U.S. production, innovation, and competitiveness.

International assistance helps build the physical and digital infrastructure, logistics networks, and energy systems that connect those markets to the U.S. economy.

These investments help reduce U.S. dependence on unreliable or adversarial suppliers and strengthen the ability of American companies to access essential inputs from trusted partners.

5. INTERNATIONAL FOOD ASSISTANCE BENEFITS U.S. PRODUCERS AND BUILDS MARKETS FOR AMERICAN FARMERS

Food assistance programs purchase millions of tons of American-grown commodities worth billions of dollars annually.

In 2020 alone, the **U.S. government purchased nearly \$2 billion in food aid from American farmers.** (The Washington Post, 2/6/25)⁵

These programs expand demand for U.S. food products and have historically opened key export markets.

Global food insecurity also fuels conflict and instability—creating conditions that adversaries like China exploit to expand influence, undermine U.S. partners, and gain leverage through control of agricultural supply chains and food assistance.

6. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE STRENGTHENS GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY AND SUPPORTS AMERICAN LEADERSHIP IN LIFE SCIENCES AND INNOVATION

International assistance helps build stronger health systems capable of detecting, managing, and containing disease outbreaks before they spread globally.

These efforts protect the movement of goods, services, and people—reducing the risk of disruptions that can threaten U.S. economic activity and global supply chains.

By supporting health infrastructure and system readiness, international assistance also creates demand for trusted American solutions—from vaccines and diagnostics to digital health tools and supply chain technologies—advancing global resilience through U.S. innovation.

⁵<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/02/06/trump-usaid-money-american-farms/>