



MFAN Applauds Congressional Action on Bipartisan Legislation to Advance Locally Led Development

March 20, 2024 (WASHINGTON) – The Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN) applauds congressional action this week on important bipartisan legislation to advance USAID’s work on Locally Led Development with local partners in-country. Yesterday, the *Locally Led Development and Humanitarian Response Act* ([H.R. 7710](#)) was introduced in the House by Reps. Sara Jacobs (D-CA) and Cory Mills (R-FL); the House Foreign Affairs

Committee approved the bill by voice vote today. Senators Chris Coons (D-DE) and Joni Ernst (R-IA) will soon be introducing the bill in the Senate.

“Locally led development is an issue our coalition has prioritized since our founding in 2008 because it goes to the heart of aid effectiveness -- helping ensure sustainable impact and boosting the return on investment,” said Tod Preston, MFAN’s Executive Director. “MFAN and its members have been working for many months on this legislation, and we’re excited about the prospects for the bill’s enactment thanks to the leadership of Congresswoman Jacobs and Congressman Mills and Senator Coons and Senator Ernst.”

“Placing communities in the lead is a must-do for effective and impactful development and humanitarian aid,” said MFAN Co-Chair Ritu Sharma, Vice President for U.S. Programs and Policy Advocacy at CARE USA. “This bill demonstrates that Congress supports locally led aid and that it’s an area of agreement across parties and branches of government, which is most welcome.”

The Locally Led Development and Humanitarian Response Act supports USAID efforts to achieve greater aid localization for development and humanitarian response through authorizing reforms to the Acquisition and Assistance (A&A) process and encouraging greater flexibility to involve local partners. It would enhance transparency by requiring annual reporting on progress being made to expand locally led development and on USAID recruitment and retention of contracting officers and agreement officers. More information on the bill is [here](#).

MFAN’s prioritization of improving aid effectiveness through Locally Led Development (also known as localization, country ownership, or the Journey to Self-Reliance) dates back to the coalition’s founding in 2008. Since that time, MFAN has drawn on the expertise of its members at all levels of the foreign aid cycle to identify and address obstacles to localization -- in both development and humanitarian assistance -- ranging from changes to federal rules and regulations to reforming agency policy, staffing, procurement practices, metrics, and reporting. MFAN’s thought leadership and programmatic insights have influenced localization efforts not only at USAID but also for the Presidents Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) – and have helped generate bipartisan momentum for these needed policy changes and reforms.

About MFAN

MFAN is a bipartisan reform coalition composed of international development and foreign policy practitioners, policy advocates, and experts from the U.S. and Global South. We promote more effective and accountable U.S. foreign assistance that advances American interests, delivering greater results for people in need and U.S. taxpayers. Centered around two guiding principles of accountability and locally led development, we advocate for programs that focus on long-term outcomes and impact, including new and innovative approaches and models for development.

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