

Strategic Plan
Fiscal Years 2027-2030

Message from the Deputy Director

The United States is entering a new era of strategic competition in which infrastructure, technology leadership, and secure supply chains are central to national security and economic prosperity. As the U.S. government's first mover on critical infrastructure development in emerging markets, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency plays a unique role in advancing these priorities around the world.

This Strategic Plan outlines how USTDA will advance the shared strategic priorities of the United States and our overseas partners while creating opportunities to deploy trusted U.S. solutions abroad. Over the next four years, the Agency will achieve these goals by focusing on industries that are vital to our national and economic interests, including critical minerals, digital infrastructure, energy systems, and transportation.

Through these efforts, USTDA will showcase American leadership and technological innovation while demonstrating the effectiveness of its pioneering America First foreign assistance strategy.

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Mission

The U.S. Trade and Development Agency is the U.S. government's first mover on critical infrastructure development in emerging markets, advancing the shared strategic priorities of the United States and our overseas partners while creating opportunities to deploy trusted U.S. solutions.

USTDA funds the upfront technical work, including feasibility studies, technical assistance and pilot projects, that accelerates the development of infrastructure projects, helping them attract the financing they need for implementation and procurement of U.S. goods and services. USTDA also hosts activities that promote infrastructure partnerships with the United States.

In carrying out its mission, the Agency places particular emphasis on industries with strategic value to the United States and our overseas partners, including critical minerals, digital infrastructure, energy and transportation.

Strategic Context

The United States faces intensifying strategic competition in which control over critical infrastructure, technology standards, and supply chains directly affects national security and economic strength. Strategic sectors – including critical minerals, digital infrastructure, energy systems, and transportation networks – have become primary arenas of geopolitical rivalry. State-backed competitors are using subsidized financing and opaque contracting practices to lock in long-term influence over infrastructure ecosystems in emerging markets, shaping technical standards, supply chains, and market access in ways that disadvantage the United States.

Infrastructure influence is determined at the earliest stages of project development, when feasibility assessments, technical specifications, and procurement frameworks are defined. As the U.S. government's lead agency for overseas project preparation, USTDA intervenes at this decisive point to promote transparent, market-oriented, and high-standard infrastructure development. By helping partner countries design bankable projects aligned with trusted technologies and open-market principles, USTDA strengthens U.S. strategic positioning while reducing opportunities for adversarial influence.

USTDA Comparative Advantage

USTDA fulfills a unique function within the federal government by shaping strategic infrastructure projects before financing decisions are made and before competitors can define project standards. USTDA ensures that projects are structured from inception to reflect high standards, trusted technologies, and procurement frameworks compatible with U.S. industry.

Through targeted, limited grant funding for feasibility studies, technical assistance, and pilot projects, USTDA leverages modest taxpayer resources to influence far larger capital flows. This early-stage intervention increases the likelihood that projects attract private investment, utilize U.S. goods and services, strengthen secure supply chains, and advance long-term U.S. economic and national security interests. By operating upstream of major financing decisions, USTDA delivers outsized strategic and commercial returns relative to its appropriations.

Goal 1: Strengthen U.S. National Security

Objective 1.1: Advance the development of priority overseas infrastructure projects that have a direct impact on U.S. national security

As a leading tool of American statecraft, USTDA will advance U.S. national security by leading U.S. government efforts to develop strategic infrastructure projects in priority countries, with particular emphasis on the critical minerals, digital infrastructure, energy and transportation industries. These industries align with the priorities of America's partner counties, as they are foundational to their trade competitiveness and economic growth.

As the U.S. government's first mover on critical infrastructure development overseas, the Agency will provide grant funding for project preparation activities, including feasibility studies, technical assistance and pilot projects, that accelerate the development of infrastructure projects, helping them attract the financing they need for implementation and procurement of U.S. goods and services. USTDA will also host partnership-building activities, including reverse trade missions and industry events that promote U.S. engagement in and exports to strategic infrastructure priorities in key emerging markets.

USTDA's America First foreign assistance strategy will help increase our country's access to critical minerals and rare earth elements, secure America's global artificial intelligence (AI) leadership, unleash U.S. energy dominance through the export of American advanced nuclear reactor technology and liquefied natural gas (LNG), and secure transportation linkages.

Critical Minerals

USTDA will help increase America's access to critical minerals that are essential to maintaining U.S. technological superiority in the defense and commercial sectors. The Agency will help reduce China's stranglehold on critical supply chains by developing infrastructure and building global partnerships that channel raw and processed critical minerals to the United States.

- Performance Target: In each fiscal year from 2027 through 2030, the Agency will strive to allocate approximately 30% of its programming budget to critical minerals activities.

Digital Infrastructure

USTDA will advance American technology leadership through activities that facilitate the export of U.S. AI and the underlying digital infrastructure that enables its proliferation. The Agency will aim to reduce global reliance on rival countries' AI solutions and ensure the integrity and security of AI services by facilitating the deployment of trusted U.S. technologies to its foundational infrastructure.

- Performance Target: In each fiscal year from 2027 through 2030, the Agency will strive to allocate approximately 25% of its programming budget to digital infrastructure activities.

Energy

USTDA will support America's energy dominance, with particular focus on developing overseas projects that create U.S. export opportunities in critical industries including advanced nuclear power and liquefied natural gas.

USTDA will help reinvigorate America's nuclear industrial base by partnering across the U.S. government and with U.S. industry to counter state-sponsored, subsidized competition from China and Russia and expand America's global leadership in the deployment of next-generation nuclear reactor technology.

The export of natural gas is a vital component of America's energy dominance goal. Through its U.S. Global Gas Initiative, USTDA will support the development of overseas gas infrastructure that facilitates the export and utilization of U.S. LNG.

- Performance Target: In each fiscal year from 2027 through 2030, the Agency will strive to allocate approximately 30% of its programming budget to energy sector activities.

Transportation

USTDA will fund activities to ensure the safety and security of global transportation networks that link to the United States, strengthen U.S. supply chains for critical minerals, and strengthen U.S. technological superiority through the overseas deployment of emerging technologies such as civil unmanned aircraft systems that will reshape the future of aviation and transform industries including logistics and emergency response.

- Performance Target: In each fiscal year from 2027 through 2030, the Agency will strive to allocate approximately 15% of its programming budget to transportation activities.

USTDA will partner across the U.S. government to identify U.S. national security priorities across these four industries. This process will include close coordination with foreign policy agencies (Departments of State and War), technical agencies (Departments of Energy and Transportation), international finance agencies (U.S. International Development Finance Corporation and U.S. Export-Import Bank), and international trade agencies (Department of Commerce and Small Business Administration).

USTDA will also partner with like-minded global partners such as Japan and Australia, with whom the Agency has Memorandums of Cooperation that have led to enhanced cooperation on infrastructure development in the Indo-Pacific to counter China's influence in the region.

Goal 2: Lead Flagship Infrastructure Projects

Objective 2.1: Develop and support the bankability of a critical mass of highly strategic infrastructure projects that showcase American leadership and technological superiority

Project preparation is the starting point for the United States to demonstrate its leadership of critical infrastructure projects overseas. At the frontlines of these efforts, USTDA's work is essential to helping these projects attract the financing they need for implementation and procurement of high-quality U.S. goods and services. USTDA's support for a critical mass of highly strategic infrastructure projects will help strengthen U.S. global economic leadership.

Project preparation is also the starting point for mobilizing capital. Of note, emerging market infrastructure projects often struggle to attract capital because they are perceived as high-risk and lack the rigorous planning that lenders and investors require. By addressing early-stage technical, financial, regulatory, and informational uncertainties, USTDA's work helps to de-risk projects so that investors can step in with confidence to finance implementation and create opportunities for the procurement of U.S. goods and services.

USTDA will increase the likelihood of mobilizing capital for the projects it supports by building partnerships with investment banks, international financial institutions, U.S. government institutions, and other sources of investment capital. On a project-by-project basis, the Agency will align its activities to address the specific lending requirements of the potential lender(s). The Agency will also work with partner countries, U.S. industry, and financial institutions to promote infrastructure projects that are transparent and aligned with international best practices.

USTDA will emphasize capital mobilization across its project preparation and partnership-building activities because it is foundational to facilitating U.S. exports, U.S. jobs, and the self-reliance of our partner countries.

- Performance Target: In each fiscal year from 2027 through 2030, the Agency will strive to support approximately 40 project preparation activities to help infrastructure projects attract the financing they need for implementation and procurement of U.S. goods and services.

Objective 2.2: Create opportunities to deploy trusted, cutting-edge U.S. solutions to overseas infrastructure priorities

USTDA's America First foreign assistance strategy will champion American ingenuity and leadership of global infrastructure development. U.S. industry will continue to carry out all USTDA-funded project preparation activities, strengthening American competitiveness by defining the technical requirements and financing options that are needed to develop high-quality infrastructure in strategic overseas markets.

USTDA will build on its three-decades of project preparation expertise to facilitate the deployment of trusted, cutting-edge American technology to projects that are in the shared national interest of the United States and its overseas partners. The Agency will help the United States counter the malign influence of its economic adversaries in strategic markets around the world and mitigate the proliferation of untrusted foreign technology that undermines America's security and influence.

USTDA will also host activities that promote infrastructure partnerships with the United States. These activities link U.S. industry to export opportunities that advance shared strategic infrastructure priorities in partner countries as well as build partnerships that promote trusted U.S. technology and financing solutions for emerging market infrastructure priorities.

In achieving this objective, the Agency will utilize unique overseas infrastructure development tools that no other U.S. government agency has. These include pilot projects, which demonstrate the effectiveness of innovative American technology in emerging markets, and transaction incentives, which support U.S. firms facing subsidized, state-sponsored foreign competition in strategic global infrastructure deals. USTDA is truly unique in its ability to leverage assistance for commercial diplomacy.

- Performance Target: In each fiscal year from 2027 through 2030, the Agency will strive to support at least $136 in U.S. exports, on average, for every appropriated dollar programmed.

Goal 3: Foster Opportunities for U.S. Small Business

Objective 3.1: Exceed U.S. government requirements for the award of federal procurements to U.S. small business

In the course of implementing its program, USTDA has relied upon the expertise, innovation and agility of American small businesses. The Agency's remarkable success in supporting U.S. foreign policy priorities has roots in the capabilities of these critical partners. Direct contract awards under the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) provide a critical avenue for U.S. small businesses to support USTDA's mission and for the Agency to strengthen their bottom line.

USTDA will maintain its reliance on small businesses, as defined by the SBA, to provide technical expertise and recommendations that inform the Agency's decision-making. USTDA draws extensively on the expertise of carefully evaluated consulting and engineering firms to provide independent technical and financial analysis during the critical early stages of a project's definition. These direct contracting opportunities position small businesses to succeed by showcasing their technical expertise in the global marketplace.

USTDA's objective is to exceed the requirement for U.S. government agencies to award 23% of procurements to U.S. small businesses. The Agency is committed to exceeding this benchmark by maintaining its ambitious outreach efforts to U.S. small businesses.

- Performance Target: In each fiscal year from 2027 through 2030, the Agency will strive to award at least 23% of the total value of all prime contract FAR procurements to U.S. small businesses.

Goal 4: Strengthen Program Effectiveness

Objective 4.1: Continuously monitor program performance to ensure the effective stewardship of taxpayer resources

The Agency will prioritize evidence-informed decision-making to maximize the impact of its infrastructure development activities.

- Performance Target: In each fiscal year from 2027 through 2030, the Agency will evaluate 100% of all completed USTDA-funded activities on an ongoing basis to ensure accountability for every activity and that new activities are developed to maximize potential impact.