

Agencies and NGOs Definitions

Government agency: a permanent or semi-permanent organization of the U.S. government responsible for the oversight and administration of specific tasks; they can be part of one of the three branches of the national government or operate independently

Non-governmental organization: a group that functions independently of any government; working for such ends as humanitarian assistance, development, peacebuilding, democratization, and environmental advocacy

Agencies and NGOs That Deal With Foreign Policy

Examples of Government Agencies:

- National Security Agency (NSA)
- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Examples of Non-Governmental Organizations:

- American Red Cross
- The Carter Center
- Amnesty International

NGOs: Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:

- Success in small scale project; local relationships can be hard to replicate by big government
- Ability to experiment with methods free of bureaucratic control
- Have fewer restrictions on who they employ
- Often seen as more trustworthy than foreign governments

Disadvantages:

- Often do not have the resources and reach of governments, so can only handle smaller-scale projects
- Can have high administrative costs
- Not accountable to elected officials like government agencies
- Potential for lack of cooperation with governments or other NGOs