International Development professionals work in providing overseas development assistance, capital, training and technical expertise to governments or may also work at the grassroots level with community-based NGOs. Graduates working in this field may provide technical, analytical or managerial support; monitor, manage, and evaluate programs; conduct trainings for partnering governments or agencies, and more. The work can be in health and nutrition, democracy and governance, agriculture and national resource management, water and sanitation, economic growth, education and/or infrastructure development. Entry points into the field vary widely and are dependent on the graduate’s skills, background and experience. Generally, if a candidate has limited overseas field experience, the first position would be in an office in his/her home country. As the graduate develops knowledge of the organization and sector, more travel and overseas assignments become possible.

**WHAT IS INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT?**

**KEY SKILLS NEED**

- Passionate about creating change and helping others
- Field experience in a developing country
- International mindset demonstrated by travel, studying or living abroad
- Fluency in two or more languages
- Technical depth or focus in a specific sector (for example, health, education, natural resource management)
- Quantitative and qualitative analytical skills and knowledge in program evaluation
- Project management skills
- Grant writing and fundraising strategies
- Event planning and organizing skills
- Ability to communicate, negotiate, and network
- Resourcefulness and flexibility

**BILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Bilateral Organizations are government bodies that focus on development in foreign countries. Government positions are usually restricted to a country’s citizens. Looking for a government position in your home country is a great place to start.

- **US Agency for International Development** (USAID)—USAID is the lead US government agency that works to end extreme global poverty and enable resilient, democratic societies to realize their potential.
- **US Department of State**—The department’s mission is to shape and sustain a peaceful, prosperous, just, and democratic world and foster conditions for stability and progress for the benefit of the American people and people everywhere.
- **US Foreign Service**—The mission of a U.S. diplomat in the Foreign Service is to promote peace, support prosperity, and protect American citizens while advancing the interests of the U.S. abroad.
  - Foreign Service Junior Officer Program
- **US Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)**—Created by the US Congress in January 2004, the MCC is an innovative and independent US foreign aid agency that is helping lead the fight against global poverty by changing the conversation on how best to deliver smart US foreign assistance by focusing on good policies, country ownership and results.
- **US Department of the Treasury, Office of International Affairs**—The office protects and supports US economic prosperity by strengthening the external environment for US growth, preventing and mitigating global financial instability and managing key global challenges.
• Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance—This US office advances democracy, human rights and governance in support of political freedom overseas. Additionally, the Center contributes to social and economic progress and overall sustainable development by integrating democracy, human rights and governance goals across all sectors.

• Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI)—This US office provides support of US foreign policy objectives by helping local partners advance peace and democracy. OTI provides fast, flexible, short-term assistance targeted at key political transition and stabilization needs. There are opportunities to work on short-term contracts that might give recent grads international experience.

• Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)—This US office is responsible for leading and coordinating the US Government’s response to disasters overseas. There are opportunities to work on short-term contracts that might give recent grads international experience.

• Office of the US Trade Representative—American trade policy works toward opening markets throughout the world to create new opportunities and higher living standards for families, farmers, manufacturers, workers, consumers, and businesses.

• Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC)—OPIC mobilizes private capital to help solve critical development challenges and in doing so, advances US foreign policy. The agency works with the US private sector to help business gain footholds in emerging markets, catalyzing revenues, jobs and growth opportunities.

• UK Department for International Development (DFID)—This department leads the UK’s work to end extreme poverty by creating jobs, unlocking the potential of girls and women and helping to save lives when humanitarian emergencies hit.

• Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (AusAid)—Australia’s aid program focuses on promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, and enhancing stability specifically in the Indo-Pacific region.

MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS

Multilateral Organizations are formed between three or more nations to work on issues that relate to all of the countries in the organization.

Desired Skills: Multilateral Organizations seek individuals with very strong quantitative skills, excellent analytical abilities, demonstrated ability to work well in cross-cultural teams, on the ground experience in developing countries, and fluency in two or more languages. The language skills most often sought besides English, are French, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Russian, and Mandarin.

• United Nations—The UN System is composed of 6 principal organs: The General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat. Additionally there are 15 agencies and close to 100 specialized programs. Below are the programs most closely associated with development:
  • United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)—The agency works for a more equitable world by fighting for the rights of children to survive, thrive and fulfill their potential.
  • United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)—The office works in more than 170 countries and territories, helping to achieve the eradication of poverty, and the reduction of inequalities and exclusion.
  • United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)—The office is responsible for dealing with development issues, particularly international trade. They often produce innovative analyses that form the basis for recommendations to economic policymakers.
  • United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO) - Achieving food security for all is at the heart of FAO’s efforts. Their main goals are to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and the elimination of poverty.
  • United Nations International Labour Organization (ILO)—The mission of the ILO is to promote rights at work, encourage employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue on work-related issues.
- **UNAIDS**—Inter-agency project providing information and support services in the fight against acquired immune-deficiency syndrome.

- **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**—The agency works towards a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, and every young person’s potential is fulfilled.

- **World Food Programme (WFP)**—Food aid is one of the many instruments that can help to promote food security, which is defined as access at all times to the food needed for an active and healthy life for all people.

- **United Nations World Health Organization (WHO)**—The organization’s mission is to provide global leadership in public health.

Within the UN 80% to 90% of the staff is field-based, so largely they hire experienced professionals. However they are several programs that can assist a new professional in gaining the experience needed. The programs are:

- **UN Young Professionals Programme (YPP)**—A recruitment initiative that brings new talent to the UN through an annual entrance exam. Applicants must be under 32 years old, fluent in English or French, and a national of a participating UN country.

- **New and Emerging Talent Initiative (NETI)**—Sponsored by UNICEF, the NETI is an entry point for new professionals who want to work in a multicultural environment within the development and humanitarian arenas, while contributing to delivering results for children.

- **Junior Professional Officer (JPO) and Special Assistant to the Resident Coordinator (SARC) Programmes**—These programs are a great opportunity for young professionals worldwide to get a foothold in the UN system and gain hands-on experience in multilateral technical cooperation and international development.

- **UN Volunteers (UNV)**—The United Nations Volunteers programme contributes to peace and development through volunteerism.

- **UN Consultancies**—The United Nations system offers numerous opportunities for consultancies, short-term contracts for project-based work.

Additionally, graduates can look at opportunities through Multilateral Development Banks. Often, new grads will need to consider short-term contracts for project-based work or to begin their careers in one of their specific career programs geared toward young professionals.

- **The World Bank**—The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. Though not a bank in the ordinary sense, its mission is to reduce poverty and support development. The World Bank is composed of five organizations:
  - **The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)**—The institution provides a combination of financial resources, knowledge and technical services, and strategic advice to developing countries, including middle income and credit-worthy lower income countries.
  - **International Development Association (IDA)**—The Association provides interest-free loans and grants to governments of the poorest countries.
  - **The International Finance Corporation (IFC)**—This is the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector, helping developing countries achieve sustainable growth by financing investment, mobilizing capital in international financial markets, and providing advisory services to businesses and governments.
  - **The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)**—This agency promotes foreign direct investment into developing countries to support economic growth, reduce poverty, and improve people’s lives.
  - **The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)**—This organization provides international facilities for conciliation and arbitration of investment disputes.
The World Bank career programs for young professionals:

- **WBG Young Professionals Program**—This program is a unique opportunity for young talent who have both a passion for international development and leadership potential to grow in technical and managerial roles within the World Bank Group.

- **WBG Analyst Program**—A new opportunity for young people with a passion for international development to contribute to solving some of the world’s most pressing problems.

**International Monetary Fund (IMF)**—The organization representing 188 countries, works to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world.

- **Economist Program (EP)**—Entry level program for PhD’s into the IMF is the Economist Program. It is a 3 year program designed to enable participants to quickly gain operational experience and further develop macroeconomics expertise.

**Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**—The mission of OECD is to promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world.

- **OECD Young Professionals Programme**—Young professionals work with senior national policy makers. Applications are usually open in the fall the year before the program begins.

**Asian Development Bank (ADB)**—By targeting investments wisely, the ADB in partnership with their developing member countries and other stakeholders, strive to alleviate poverty and help create a world in which everyone can share in the benefits of sustained and inclusive growth. ADB is headquartered in Manila, Philippines.

- **ADB’s Young Professionals Program (YPP)**—The program recruits highly qualified and motivated individuals and offers a range of opportunities to develop professional skills and understanding of ADB’s operations, policies and procedures.

**African Development Bank (AfDB)**—The overarching objective of the AfDB is to spur sustainable economic development and social progress in its regional member countries, thus contributing to poverty reduction. AfDB is located in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire.

- **AfDB Young Professionals Program**—The program aims to attract highly qualified and motivated professionals from its member countries, who are committed to African development, have demonstrated outstanding academic and professional achievement, as well as effective team work and leadership potential.

NOTE: If you are interested in any of these programs, realize that you may need to apply nearly a year in advance, so check out the websites and look at the timeline for their applications.

### NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOs)

NGOs may be funded by governments, foundations, businesses or private persons and provide services across many sectors from human rights, environmental or development work. NGOs may develop and support grassroots programs, be grant-making foundations allocating grants, or be a research institution and advocacy group pressing for change in policy at institutional, national, and international levels. New professionals with a MPA usually start in a position that provides support to a project or program in a headquarters office or as local staff in their home country and advance through increased responsibility and travel.

*Desired Skills*—Developing knowledge in a specific content area (education, health, food security, etc.) is important. Strong skills in program evaluation and quantitative and qualitative analysis are also in demand. Additionally, the ability to develop and manage projects and programs, to produce and administer a budget, work with donors in cross-cultural settings, and speak a foreign language are all attributes that are expected.

Below is a short list of a few NGO’s, but certainly there are many to choose from. Sites like [http://www.unodc.org/ngo/list.jsp](http://www.unodc.org/ngo/list.jsp) lists NGO’s and [www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org) lists job postings at NGO’s.

- **American Red Cross**—They provide compassionate care to those in need at home and around the world.
• **Amnesty International**—This organization investigates and exposes the facts, whenever and wherever abuses occur. They lobby governments and other powerful groups to make sure they keep their promises and respect for international law.

• **Anti-Slavery International**—Works at local, national and international levels to eliminate all forms of slavery around the world.

• **CARE International**—CARE is a leading humanitarian organization fighting global poverty.

• **EarthRights International**—ERI combines the power of law and the power of people in defense of human rights and the environment. They document human rights and environmental abuses in countries where few other organizations can safely operate, exposing and publicizing earth rights abuses through campaigns, reports and articles.

• **Heartland Alliance**—This is the leading anti-poverty organization in the Midwest and they help to improve the lives of people around the world who are homeless, living in poverty or seeking safety.

• **Human Rights Watch**—HRW defends the rights of people worldwide by investigating abuses, exposing facts, and pressuring those with power to respect rights and secure justice.

• **Mercy Corps**—When a natural disaster strikes, an economy collapses, or conflict erupts, Mercy Corps is there to respond immediately and meet urgent needs for food, water and shelter. They also stay beyond the emergency to partner with communities for their long-term recovery.

• **National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI)**—A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization working to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

• **Oxfam**—Oxfam believes that in a world rich in resources, poverty isn’t inevitable, but an injustice that can be overcome. To spread that change and make it last, political solutions are also needed to tackle the root causes of poverty and create societies where empowered individuals can thrive.

• **Plan International**—Plan aims to achieve lasting improvements in the quality of life of deprived children in developing countries.

• **Shared Hope International**—The organization strives to prevent the conditions that foster sex trafficking, restore victims of sex slavery, and bring justice to vulnerable women and children.

### Research Institutions

Research Institutions can be a stand-alone unit or linked to a university, foundation or center. Generally they focus on understanding the underlying challenges in development and identifying potential solutions. Their work shapes the policy discussion and sets best practice.

*Desired Skills:* Very strong qualitative and quantitative research skills as well as superior writing skills are necessary. A history of assisting with, authoring and/or publishing research papers is beneficial. Knowledge and experience in a specific policy area is generally needed. Additionally, experience with event planning and effective use of social media for advocacy may be desired. A doctorate is usually a prerequisite to advancement in a research institute.

• **Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL)**—The research center located in the Economics Department of MIT is a global network of researchers who use randomized evaluations to answer critical policy questions in the fight against poverty.

• **Bank Information Center (BIC)**—The Center partners with civil society in developing and transition countries to influence the World Bank and other international financial institutions to promote social and economic justice and ecological sustainability.

• **Center for Global Development (CGD)**—The Center works to reduce global poverty and inequality. Their scholars’ policy views are grounded in evidence-based research and analysis that is subject to peer review.

• **Global Development Network (GDN)**—The network is a public international organization that builds research capacity in development globally. Founded in 1999, GDN is headquartered in New Delhi, with an office in Washington DC.
• International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)—The Institute seeks sustainable solutions for ending hunger and poverty through research-based policy solutions.

• International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)—A policy and action research organization based out of the UK promoting sustainable development and linking local priorities to global challenges.

• International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)—Their mission is to promote human development and environmental sustainability through innovative research, communication and partnerships. Office are in Canada, China, Switzerland and the US.

• Migration Policy Institute (MPI)—The Institute provides analysis, development, and evaluation of migration and refugee policies at local, national, and international levels.

**INTERNATIONAL JOBS/INTERNSHIP BOARDS**

**Tips for Securing a Job or Internship:**

1) Meet application deadlines which are always firm; 2) Keep a electronic or printed version of the job description to use when preparing your materials and for the interview—often the description does not stay on the website for long; 3) Be concise and carefully convey your skills and experience that fit the position for which you are applying - if you have a significant understanding of the issues due to where you grew up, but your experience does not reflect that understanding, you will need to address it in the cover letter; 4) Networking is key, often the first position is as a consultant (short term project based position) and those are almost always obtained through networking; 5) Subscribe to Newsletters or listservs to major organizations like the World Bank or the Development Executives Group to keep apprised of opportunities; 6) Many development consulting firms and NGOs have a place for you to upload your profile, this is an important first step to developing a network; 7) Accepting an internship or short-term consultant position while you conduct a job search can build your network, your knowledge and skills, and hopefully set you up as an inside candidate.

**Associations:**

• Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID)—This organization works to achieve gender equality, sustainable development and women’s human rights worldwide.

• Society for International Development—Their mission is to advance equitable development by bringing diverse constituencies together to debate critical ideas, policies and practices that will shape our global future. They have a student membership ($35.00) available. Not a job board, but wonderful professional development and networking opportunities.

**Job Boards:**

• Bond for International Development—Based out of the UK, they are a membership body for NGOs working in international development.

• Development Executives Group—Devex is a portal for the development community that includes daily news, job postings, and an events calendar.

• Development Worker—This website is dedicated to giving advice on finding work opportunities and up-to-date background information on all aspects of international development.

• Directory of Development Organizations—This website is a resource guide by region to development organizations.

• European Affairs Jobsite—Specifically for EU organizations and job sites, this job board allows you to upload your resume.

• Globalcorps International Talent Acquisition—This website lists vacancies with and in support of USAID and other international development agencies.

• Global Recruitment Specialists—An Independent recruitment firm providing human resources for non-governmental organizations with international operations in developing countries.
• **International Jobs Center**—A comprehensive source of international careers for professionals, including international development jobs.

• **International Jobs**—This is a directory of jobs from international organizations, searchable by country, type of job and organization.

• **Overseas Jobs**—This is a job board that helps employers and job seekers connect.

• **Peace & Collaborative Development Network**—A professional networking site that works to foster dialogue and sharing of resources in international development, conflict resolution, gender mainstreaming, human rights, social entrepreneurship and related fields.

• **ReliefWeb**—A website that provides reliable disaster and crisis updates and analysis to humanitarians. There is a jobs section on the site.

**SOURCES:** Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Office of Career Advancement handout on International Development; University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy, Policy Area Guidebook; Government and nonprofit websites.