

**Testimony by U.S. Agency for International Development
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U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights**

“USAID and U.S. Africa Command”

July 26, 2011

Good afternoon Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Payne, and members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for inviting me to speak with you today about how USAID works with the U.S. African Command (USAFRICOM) to achieve common U.S. foreign policy goals. I would also like to thank the witnesses from the Department of State and from the Department of Defense for their work and collaboration on this issue.

Interagency Cooperation Toward Shared U.S. Goals

Africa faces some of the most serious security challenges in the world. In a 2010 assessment of 162 countries, the University of Maryland found that no region in the world has greater potential for conflict than Africa. Of the 25 countries rated to have the highest risk of instability, only three are outside sub-Saharan Africa. Heightened instability in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Guinea-Bissau, and Mauritania has pushed these countries into the top tier of those at risk. Furthermore, states with a mix of poor human security, unstable or inequitable political institutions, and limited or poorly managed resources are likely to contribute to a “bad neighborhood” of similarly vulnerable states. Many African countries require outside assistance to resolve major internal conflicts in their region and to absorb the inflow of refugees and displaced persons resulting from conflict. For many Africans in places such as Somalia, eastern DRC, Nigeria's Niger Delta region, and Darfur and the Three Areas of Sudan, conflict continues to be a daily reality.

Today’s world is more interconnected and complex than ever. Instability, poverty, and disease quickly travel across oceans and borders. Problems abroad all too quickly become problems at home, while a peaceful, healthy, and prosperous Africa benefits us all.

USAID is proud to play the lead development role in promoting democracy and good governance, investing in the well-being of Africa’s people, spurring economic growth on the continent, and delivering humanitarian assistance. We work in partnership with African countries to improve their economic prospects, strengthen their ability to govern, and provide brighter futures for their citizens. USAID also has a long and successful history of working in tandem with the Departments of State and Defense to advance peace and security in Africa. We do this because it’s the right thing to do, and because development is a core pillar of our national security. Security is essential for long-term development to take place, and development is critical if security is to be sustained.

Our collaboration with the Department of State and the Department of Defense is fully operationalized at USAFRICOM. We support the interagency as we all work together toward the same goal while retaining our own distinct purposes, approaches, and strengths.

The National Security Strategy published by the White House just over a year ago states that “our long-term security will come not from our ability to instill fear in other people, but through our capacity to speak to their hopes.” The strategy goes on to note that “sustained economic progress requires faster, sustainable and more inclusive development” in areas such as food security and global health—two of USAID’s top priorities in Africa.

Implementing one of the Department of Defense’s core missions—building partner capacity to provide for their own defense—USAFRICOM helps African states transform their militaries into operationally capable and professional institutions that are subordinate to civilian authority, respect human rights, adhere to the rule of law, and are viewed by their citizens as servants and protectors of the people. USAID is a prime beneficiary of this effort as security greatly enhances the prospect for sustainable development across the continent. For its part, USAID seeks to develop African legislative and civil societies so as to strengthen their roles in monitoring and oversight of armed and public security forces. The State Department ensures that our Ambassadors coordinate USAFRICOM’s activities, which increases our ability to meet foreign policy priorities, maintain complementary programs and activities among all U.S. Government actors, and maximize overall effectiveness.

Security Supports Development, and Development Supports Security

USAID greatly values the work of USAFRICOM as the link between security and development is clear throughout Africa. War, terrorism, and violence threaten current progress and impede potential gains in health, education, democracy, and economic growth. But with improved security, African nations can begin to experience sound economic growth, better living conditions, and improved governance following years of devastating armed conflict.

For example, the Department of Defense, the then U.S. European Command, and African peacekeepers had a prominent role in helping to stabilize Liberia following years of civil war. As a result, USAID has been able to work with the Government of Liberia to develop a long-term, sustainable health program that will provide an essential package of basic health services to the Liberian people. We provided technical assistance to develop a national health policy and plan, supported a Demographic and Health Survey to understand population needs and track future progress, and helped to develop National Health Accounts to monitor trends in health spending. This type of work would not be possible amidst war and strife.

The military’s logistical capabilities can be invaluable assets in providing humanitarian assistance during emergencies. Likewise, USAID’s unique skills in addressing a range of essential civilian needs during times of both peace and war substantially and strategically benefit the foreign policy of the United States. Thus, USAID’s coordination with the military’s civic assistance programs can lead to important synergies of effort, resources, and expertise that support the interests of the United States and the beneficiaries of our work.

When we work with the military, maintaining the essential humanitarian and development character of USAID is vital. USAID coordination with the Department of Defense should not be perceived as contributing to specific military objectives, but, rather, as contributing to broad foreign policy goals. We work to ensure that USAID’s and USAFRICOM’s programs are

coordinated to use our resources effectively and avoid duplication of effort. We look forward to continuing this successful partnership to promote the security and health of our nation, our allies, and our friends throughout the world, and especially in Africa.

The Value of Development Expertise

USAID's development expertise and accumulated wisdom offer an enormous benefit to the command as it performs its mission of supporting the efforts of the U.S. Government to assist local populations and deter extremism on the continent. USAFRICOM has recognized, welcomed, and praised USAID's collective skill set and our ability to contribute to the long-term sustainability of their projects.

USAID has been working in Africa since the Agency was first established by President Kennedy 50 years ago. With our extensive experience in the region, our talented staff members are our most important asset. Many of our staff have advanced degrees focused on Africa, have spent large portions of their careers living and working in Africa, speak languages used on the continent, and have been involved in shaping U.S. policy in Africa. Similarly, our locally-hired staff have extensive training as well as detailed knowledge of the local issues and a steadfast dedication to working to improve their own countries. A combination of formal training and first-hand experience gives our staff a thorough understanding of both the challenges and also the opportunities for development.

Development experts are adept at considering broad, long-term perspectives and understanding how to align smaller, short-term gains with those larger objectives. They also know how to select priorities and sites for development, as well as how to measure if progress is being made and how much. Development plays a critical role in security sector reform, which involves not only building the capacity of partner nations' militaries, but also improving governance, civil and criminal authority, public safety, and disaster response capacity. This interagency cooperation was codified in 2010 when USAID, the Department of State, and the Department of Defense developed an interagency security sector assessment framework that emphasizes the importance of a whole-of-government approach to building security capacity. Even for traditional joint military activities such as contingency planning, the civilian agencies—which are experienced in identifying unintended second- and third-order consequences of proposed courses of action—can provide valuable real-world expertise that improves the likelihood of success when plans are executed.

A History of Collaboration

USAID has a history of collaboration with the U.S. Geographic Combatant Commands that provided support to Africa before USUSAFRICOM was established. We have collaborated on peacetime civil assistance projects as well as disaster assistance and preparedness. A typical example of collaboration is how USAID's missions in Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya have worked on educational projects with Combined Joint Task Force for the Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA). In these projects, the military built or refurbished schools while USAID furnished books and supported teacher training.

USAID has been deeply involved with USAFRICOM since its inception. USAID staff have worked side-by-side with the Implementation Planning Team, the Transition Team, and then

USAFRICOM staff to establish the command. To strengthen coordination with USAFRICOM and ensure that Department of Defense activities in Africa support U.S. development priorities, USAID has assigned and continues to assign bright, talented officers to USAFRICOM, who bring with them a wealth of field experience.

Staffing Structures That Promote Alignment

USAFRICOM and USAID have a positive, collaborative relationship. USAID regularly engages with USAFRICOM through a system of senior liaison officers, ongoing participation in a variety of strategic visioning and planning processes, and through regular briefings on particular countries and programs. This engagement has included an unprecedented level of USAID participation in the development of USAFRICOM's current Theater Campaign Plan, which will direct USAFRICOM's peacetime activities across the continent.

USAID has assigned a senior development officer to the Pentagon and to each of its geographic commands, including USAFRICOM. In Stuttgart, a USAID Senior Foreign Service officer serves as the Senior Development Advisor (SDA) to the Commander. The SDA works on a daily basis with the senior leadership and participates actively in the command's planning and operations activities. The SDA endeavors to ensure that USAID missions in Africa are fully aware of and coordinating with current and proposed USAFRICOM activities that may impact development programs.

A second USAID officer heads USAFRICOM's Health and Humanitarian Assistance Branch in the Strategy, Plans and Programs Division. This Chief is the only USAID officer in any Combatant Command that directly supervises military personnel and oversees military programs—for example, the Department of Defense's Excess Property program, which provides non-lethal property such as office supplies for disaster and development assistance purposes.

An officer from USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) serves in USAFRICOM's Operations and Logistics Division. This advisor received the Command's "Interagency Member of the Year" award for 2009, this first year the Command established its awards system. This honor is particularly significant as USAFRICOM was created with an increased role for the interagency community.

In Washington, USAID hosts a uniformed military liaison officer from USAFRICOM in its Office of Military Affairs, in the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA). In addition, a development officer in our Africa Bureau conducts civil-military coordination full-time with USAFRICOM and other Defense Department organizations active on the African continent. Those two officers are responsible for articulating USAFRICOM and Defense Department policies and objectives to USAID (and vice versa) to ensure coherent whole of government programming related to national security affairs. They also serve as the initial point of entry that constantly assess and integrate planned collaborative efforts among defense and development activities in Africa.

Additionally, senior staff from USAID's Africa Bureau regularly interact with their counterparts in both USAFRICOM and in the office of the Deputy Assistant Secretaries of Defense for Africa, for Policy, and others as needed. For example, in the fall of 2010, Deputy Assistant

Administrator for the Africa Bureau Raja Jandhyala participated in an interagency forum to discuss mutually beneficial ways to optimize Defense Department resources to support security and development. We also actively engage in dialogue to develop coherent strategies in response to National Security or Presidential Directives on topics such as the Lord's Resistance Army, Somalia, and Sudan.

To ensure synchronization and improve communication at all levels, CJTF-HOA has in recent years assigned liaison officers at USAID missions in east Africa and invites USAID to advise and coordinate on civil affairs projects throughout the region. Recent discussions with Department of Defense officials have encouraged further interaction between senior staff at USAID missions and USAFRICOM and to increase USAID's Senior Development Advisor's attendance at visits and events.

From Ideas to Action: Examples of Our Work

The most direct evidence of civilian-military cooperation in Africa has been in counterterrorism including joint assessments, country level planning, and support to complementary program activities. Civil-military cooperation has also succeeded in planning whole-of-government responses in the event of a pandemic disease outbreak.

Selecting Sustainable Projects in Djibouti

In Djibouti, the U.S. Embassy, USAID Mission, and U.S. Military have collaborated to design a new framework that aligns CJTF-HOA projects with the local development needs identified by the Government of Djibouti. Previously, CJTF-HOA proposed projects and if USAID and the Embassy concurred, coordination with the government followed. Under that system, whether the projects aligned with local needs and priorities was sometimes a matter of chance. Under the new framework, USAID works with the Government of Djibouti to develop a list of needed projects, while CJTF-HOA, taking into account their own objectives and resources, can choose to contribute to any such project if it has the endorsement of the Ambassador.

USAID had been working for years to expand essential health services to all rural areas in Djibouti. From 2004 to 2008, USAID refurbished or built 23 of the 27 rural health clinics in the country, and the Government of Djibouti increased the budget share dedicated to health from 4 percent to 15 percent while also increasing the number of trained nurses, midwives, and technicians. The Guistir Clinic near the Somali border was selected by CJTF-HOA as the first large-scale project under the new framework coordinated by USAID to provide health care access to over 400 families. CJTF-HOA constructed the clinic in the remote border area, and our assistance helped to equip and staff the clinic. This cooperation encouraged efficient use of U.S. funds and is a prime example of inclusive work that simultaneously contributes to CJTF-HOA's military objectives and USAID's development objectives. Similar projects are slated to be completed in the future. In the words of CJTF-HOA's Deputy, General William Glasgow, "Civil military programming in Djibouti is a model of success and the U.S. military is honored to work with our [U.S. Government] colleagues in the U.S. Embassy and USAID and with the Ministry of Health to help foster a healthier society in Djibouti. We are proud of our efforts." USAID's leadership in this area was also recognized by the Government of Djibouti; the Prime Minister of Djibouti, Dileita Mohamed Dileita, awarded the USAID Djibouti Representative, Stephanie

Funk, the Officer of the National Order earlier this year in recognition of her contribution to health sector development.

We encourage replication of the process that led to the success of the Guistir clinic, where the partner nation proposes projects, USAID coordinates, and CJTF-HOA selects projects and locations endorsed by the Ambassador that would meet their objectives.

Preventing and Responding to Sexual and Gender Based Violence in the DRC

In 2009, USAFRICOM was asked to identify ways to support U.S. efforts in the DRC to prevent sexual and gender-based violence and support survivors. With its specialization in military-to-military interventions, USAFRICOM was positioned to help address the issue because the Congolese Army, local militias, and even U.N. peacekeepers had all been implicated as perpetrators of this violence. The challenge was to develop effective projects with existing resources and skill sets.

Working closely with the Embassy and USAID, USAFRICOM determined that many facilities supporting survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in the DRC—especially in the East where the abuses were the worst—were sub-standard. USAFRICOM's funds could be used to construct or renovate buildings where the government, the U.N., or local and international nongovernmental organizations delivered services. Upon consultation with the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, USAFRICOM and the country team allocated \$1 million annually for three years for facilities that support survivors. In addition, USAFRICOM oversaw training on preventing sexual and gender-based violence for the Congolese Army. The Command now is exploring how to expand this pilot program for more comprehensive training to the military, initially in the DRC and eventually elsewhere.

Better Understanding the Needs of the Emerging Nation of South Sudan

As part of our effort to prepare for potential humanitarian crises that could emerge in the lead-up to or during the course of the referendum in January, USAID collaborated with many different actors on an emergency contingency plan. That plan was activated when the recent Abyei crisis began, and it successfully utilized prepositioned humanitarian resources to respond to the needs of the thousands displaced by the conflict. South Sudan recently became the world's newest country, a landmark accomplishment for the South Sudanese people as well as the U.S. and international actors that have supported the peace process. USAFRICOM has utilized USAID's conflict analysis of southern Sudan to inform its planning efforts, and is assisting the interagency in determining the appropriate approach to supporting South Sudan's security sector reform and conflict mitigation activities.

Interagency Cooperation under the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership

The Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) was established in 2005 as a multi-year, interagency commitment to support partner efforts in the Sahel to constrain and ultimately eliminate the ability of terrorist organizations to exploit the region. TSCTP provides a broad interagency framework led by the Department of Defense, Department of State, and USAID to guide activities that seek to strengthen the capacities of Sahelian governments.

USAID supported youth empowerment, education, media, and good governance activities—the four areas where we see the greatest opportunity for local partnerships and progress. The first few years of the program demonstrated positive impact—as measured by surveys on attitudes toward extremism—in target communities through strengthening the resiliencies that help prevent extremism from taking root in the Sahel. The program provides tangible benefits to populations, particularly youth, at risk for recruitment by violent extremist organizations and communities in at-risk regions through youth employment and outreach programs, vocational skills training, and community development and media activities. The program also gathers beneficiaries from different communities, ethnic groups, and countries together through outreach events on topics related to religion and tolerance.

Challenges and Looking Ahead

While USAID and U.S. Africa Command have notable successes working together, challenges remain. USAFRICOM is still relatively new, and so too is its cooperation and collaboration with other U.S. Government actors. We differ from USAFRICOM in terms of our staffing sizes, financial resources available for development, and often our cultures, as reflected by our professional backgrounds, the way we speak, and the duration of assignments. An additional challenge is that much planning for USAID’s activities occurs “on the ground,” at our missions in each country with coordination and guidance coming from our headquarters; in contrast, military planning occurs regionally in a much more top-down fashion, flowing from Washington, D.C., directly to the regional Command in Stuttgart, Germany.

USAID is able to program a sizable amount of foreign assistance in Africa by leveraging a relatively small number of staff members, while USAFRICOM has a smaller budget and more staff available. Cooperation with the military is just one aspect of our staff’s responsibilities in addition to already heavy workloads. Nonetheless, the payoffs that result from a comprehensive whole-of-government approach are so important that the effort to coordinate is worthwhile.

Our Office of Military Affairs currently provides a series of general and specialized training focused on working with the military to the new classes of Foreign Service Officers. USAID’s Africa Bureau takes advantage of this opportunity and has requested a module designed specifically for our officers. The first workshop combined briefings, discussion with our Senior Development Advisors, and interactive exercises. It was a resounding success that we intend to replicate. Additional work is needed to train military personnel at all levels to better understand USAID, and to train USAID personnel, including locally hired staff, to better understand the military.

Gains made in civil-military coordination need to be institutionalized to prevent stagnation or backsliding. We are committed to understanding what works well and how we can amplify best practices. We are equally committed to identifying gaps, eliminating redundancy and improving our collaboration. The central point of our relationship is clear: security, stability, and peace are essential for the quality of human life, essential for economic growth and poverty reduction, and essential for development overall. We welcome the continued dialogue to ensure that solutions for short-term objectives are consistent with our shared long-term goals.