

**Testimony of U.S. Agency for International Development  
Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for Africa, Diana  
Putman before the House Foreign Affairs Committee  
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Global Human  
Rights**

**December 1, 2021**

**“FY 2022 Budget and U.S. - Africa Relations”**

Good morning Chairwoman Bass, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 President’s budget request for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Africa. I am pleased to be with you today and look forward to sharing how investments in sub-Saharan Africa will further United States interests and values – including security, global health, climate change, freedom and democracy, and shared prosperity.

For the past sixty years, USAID investments have helped countries across Africa deliver extraordinary progress. They’ve lifted 700 million people from extreme poverty since 1990; dramatically reduced deaths from HIV and malaria; stopped Ebola in its tracks and built capacities through the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA); and helped the continent increase primary school enrollment at a rate greater than any region in the world. Looking into the future, the continent’s population of more than one billion is expected to double by 2050, and 60 percent of Africans are below the age of 25 - the opportunity for partnership, growth, and prosperity is truly immense.

Africa is also a priority for the Biden-Harris Administration. The FY 2022 budget request of \$6.97 billion for foreign assistance funding accounts fully or partially implemented by USAID commits the United States to be proactive in the face of numerous challenges and opportunities facing sub-Saharan Africa and U.S. interests in the region, including those resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The request allocates resources based on the overarching policy laid out in the State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy for Africa. It aligns with the U.S. Interim National Security Strategic Guidance and the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan. The request supports the following goals: 1) Increase Mutually Beneficial Economic Growth, Trade and Investment; 2) Advance Mutual Peace and Security Interests; 3) Strengthen Democracy, Human Rights, and Good Governance; and 4) Promote Inclusive Country-led Development.

#### *Increase Mutually Beneficial Economic Growth, Trade and Investment*

Over the next twenty years, the size of Africa's workforce will surpass those of India and China. In the next three years—by 2025—it is projected that household consumption in Africa will reach \$2.1 trillion dollars, with African business spending reaching \$3.5 trillion dollars. To meet this growing demand, the United States will continue to expand private sector investment in Africa with commitments to build even stronger, more resilient partnerships rooted in our deepening trade ties.

The FY 2022 request of \$80 million for Prosper Africa allows the United States to bring together the full range of U.S. government resources to connect U.S. and African businesses with new buyers, suppliers, and investment opportunities. Prosper Africa will enhance America's prosperity and security, and fuel economic growth and job creation while helping partner countries in Africa expand their economic prospects, improve the business enabling environment,

open up new markets, spur business creation, and foster competitiveness. The initiative builds on and complements the success and lessons of existing trade and investment programs implemented by USAID regional missions.

The FY 2022 request will enable Power Africa to remain a driver of sub-Saharan Africa's transition to cleaner, renewable energy sources through innovation, financing, commercialization, and deployment of clean energy technologies and infrastructure. Power Africa will deliver against critical Administration mandates to address energy poverty, lower greenhouse gases, bolster human development, and catalyze inclusive, sustainable economic growth. We will reach these goals through private sector-led energy development, including U.S. private sector innovation, experience, and capital. Power Africa will continue to support critical enabling environment reforms to bolster transparency, increase competition, and enhance host country partners' technical capacity.

#### *Advance Mutual Peace and Security Interests*

USAID investments serve U.S. national security interests. Our support for peace, prosperity, and stability programs across sub-Saharan Africa helps reduce threats to Americans at home and abroad. The FY 2022 request will advance strategic partnerships and support democratic developments that enhance political, social, and economic gains. We will promote stability in countries facing or recovering from conflict, such as Somalia and Nigeria.

We will also continue our investments in the Trans Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership, which builds the long-term capacity in West African countries to contain and marginalize terrorist organizations and facilitation networks; disrupts efforts to recruit, train, and provision terrorists and violent extremists; counters efforts to establish safe havens for terrorist organizations; and disrupts foreign fighter networks that may attempt to operate outside the region.

### *Strengthen Democracy, Human Rights, and Good Governance*

In a number of countries across sub-Saharan Africa, and indeed the world, we have seen increasing democratic backsliding and rising authoritarianism. Freedom House has documented a 15-year global decline in democracy and in the last five years alone, nine more countries slipped into a state of autocracy. We have seen authoritarians use the COVID-19 pandemic as an excuse to further curb individual freedoms and tighten their grip on power. Meanwhile, democratic governance—the best mechanism to identify peaceful solutions to political problems—is under assault. In Ethiopia, the political situation boiled over last year into armed conflict; and one year later, this crisis has escalated, resulting in devastating short and long term development and humanitarian consequences. USAID continues to provide humanitarian assistance and support vital human rights work, as we also push for a peaceful solution and an end to the violence.

Across the continent, and indeed the world, data continues to show a demand for democracy and elections as well as adherence to the rule of law. In countries like Sudan, where a fragile path toward democracy was gravely threatened by recent actions by the military, USAID is committed to continuing our longstanding strengthening of civil society and the reforms needed to get back on a path to democracy. We also remain committed to helping the people of Mali as the country prepares for a return to democratic elections after the 2020 coup d'état. Other African countries like Malawi and Zambia have demonstrated that the will of the people will prevail when the institutions of democracy have the space to work. Our assistance will advance United States and international efforts to help restore peace and stability, democratic progress, and rule of law.

### *Promote Inclusive Country-led Development*

Finally, this budget request places inclusive, country-led development at its center. As African countries continue to battle the COVID-19 pandemic, USAID will continue to provide robust funding that strengthens local health systems and health security. The President's FY 2022 request for Africa allocates approximately \$3.85 billion for PEPFAR, and \$1.61 billion for other health programs including malaria, tuberculosis, and maternal and child health.

The United States will continue to play a leading role in the worldwide response to the COVID-19 pandemic, while we simultaneously build back better global health and health security against future threats. At the beginning of November 2021, USAID had deployed nearly \$1.6 billion to 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa to fight the pandemic and mitigate its social and economic impacts. In close coordination with the African Union, the United States government, in partnership with COVAX, has provided COVID-19 vaccines to 43 sub-Saharan African countries and will continue to share vaccine doses as supply becomes available. With USAID assistance, partner countries are better prepared and have strengthened their vaccination programs to ensure COVID-19 shots get into the arms of those who need them—including establishing additional vaccination sites, training health workers to administer vaccines, identifying priority at-risk populations, countering vaccine misinformation, and more. USAID has obligated over \$104 million for vaccine readiness and distribution activities in 46 African countries.

Unfortunately, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, education systems across Africa have been devastated, and many schools were closed. The education request (including basic education and higher education) of \$269.6 million in 20 countries and one regional operating unit will enable investments in primary and secondary education, through our collaboration with African governments, to

connect youth to jobs and create a skilled workforce that will drive local markets and attract U.S. businesses.

The FY 2022 request also includes \$111 million to help African nations combat the growing threat posed by climate change. Seventeen of the 20 most climate vulnerable countries are in sub-Saharan Africa. This investment advances USAID's ambitious plans to assist more than half a billion people in developing countries to adapt to and manage the impacts of climate change through locally-led development, support partner countries to prevent 6 billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions (in perspective the U.S. greenhouse gas emissions were 6.6 billion tons in 2019), and conserve 100 million hectares of critical landscapes that act as carbon sinks, such as those found in the world's second largest rainforest in the Congo Basin. To strengthen food systems, promote inclusive, agriculture-led growth, improve agricultural productivity, and increase the economic resilience of rural communities that are vulnerable to humanitarian crises, the FY 2022 budget request includes \$482.4 million for food security in 19 countries.

### *Conclusion*

USAID is uniquely placed to address the world's toughest problems, catalyze our partners, and strengthen our global standing. We should not seek to replicate transactional approaches to development others have taken in Africa, but instead play to our comparative advantages, illustrating our long-standing investments and focusing on country requests in high potential sectors. Our field-based, longer-term, country-driven approach reinforces our partners' autonomy and shows that "democracy delivers," and delivers better for long-term economic and development gains.

Lastly, none of what we do would be possible without a strong, diverse, equitable, and inclusive USAID workforce. The Agency's new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy will help us create a workplace that lives up to our ideals. The Strategy outlines concrete steps USAID will take to ensure we are creating a workforce that better reflects America, including the expansion of initiatives to create paid internship and fellowship opportunities as well as strategic outreach efforts to Minority Serving Institutions.

The Biden-Harris Administration has prioritized Africa and revitalization of partnerships and alliances based on dialogue, respect, and shared values. We will continue to work with our partners toward our shared goals.

Thank you, Chairwoman Bass, Ranking Member Smith, and Members of the Subcommittee. I look forward to responding to your questions.