

Statement of Ramsey Day  
Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator  
Bureau for Africa  
United States Agency for International Development  
Before the  
House Foreign Affairs Committee  
on  
DECEMBER 12, 2018

Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, members of the Committee, I am grateful for the opportunity to testify before you today as the Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Africa at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). I would like to extend a special thank you to this Committee and your colleagues in Congress, whose long-time bipartisan commitment to the peoples of the African continent has provided the foundation for USAID programs and the springboard for their success. Whether meeting with you here in Washington or at USAID missions overseas, USAID staff always value the opportunity to discuss the Agency's work and demonstrate how our investments there are making a difference in people's lives.

Some Americans see only Africa's seemingly intractable problems, but I truly believe that Africa's future is bright. The investments and commitment of the American people to the people of Africa are paying off, and USAID has set its priorities to capitalize on the region's emerging opportunities. Under Administrator Green's leadership, USAID is focusing its resources, policy tools, and engagement in places where the conditions are right to establish and sustain progress.

U.S. assistance in Africa saves lives; spurs trade and investment; and advances peace and security.

Take the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) for example. This program is a powerful expression of the compassion and generosity of the American people. In 2016, a PEPFAR assessment showed the first evidence of the epidemic becoming controlled in three key African countries: Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. These same countries have also reduced new HIV infections by as much as 76 percent since the start of PEPFAR. With continued aggressive focus, analysis, and partner alignment, the U.S. Government is poised to help control the HIV epidemic in 10 African countries over the next four years. PEPFAR has provided 12.8 million men, women and children in sub-Saharan Africa with antiretroviral medicine, meaning they can now live long, healthy lives with HIV.

We are also seeing progress on The U.S. President's Malaria Initiative. In fact, this past January, during the 30th African Union Summit, Madagascar, The Gambia, Senegal and Zimbabwe were honored for reducing malaria cases by more than 20 percent from 2015 to 2016. PEPFAR and the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative together have significantly improved the health status of Africans, especially children. Under-five mortality rates in Africa dropped 50 percent between 2000 and 2015.

We work through PEPFAR and with all of our partners in the fight against these devastating diseases to empower communities and countries to gradually assume ownership of their own healthcare challenges. That means incentivizing reforms, strengthening in-country capacity. We are helping prepare a generation to claim their rightful leadership roles, propelling them on their journey to self-reliance.

USAID's generosity extends beyond development. The United States is also the world's leading humanitarian donor. USAID is providing humanitarian assistance across the continent, including in Nigeria, South Sudan, and Somalia, where conflict and instability are fueling food insecurity and displacement. USAID disaster response experts have been deployed to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to help respond to the current Ebola crisis there and we continue to support Ebola preparedness efforts in neighboring countries. And even as USAID mobilizes the best of American generosity to feed hungry people and provide lifesaving aid, we also work to prepare vulnerable populations against future shocks and equip countries with the tools they will need to feed themselves.

In a country like South Sudan, which has been embroiled in conflict for the past 5 years, I saw firsthand that USAID assistance is literally saving the lives of women, men, and children, providing clean water, basic health care, and emergency food to people across the country. I visited South Sudan this past May and was incredibly inspired by what USAID is doing to assist the people and uplift the country. From life-saving food and nutrition assistance for infants on the brink of starvation, to a youth center where young people learn computer skills and access the Internet, television and radio, to a traditional authorities court that helps resolve disputes and break cycles of violence, USAID is making an impact.

USAID also looks to the opportunities presented by trade and international investments – they are among the fastest ways for Africa to boost its economic growth, which is in the interest of the U.S. We advance enterprise-driven solutions to unlock the continent's growing markets. We work closely with the private sector to identify and resolve the binding constraints to investment. We believe that by leveling the playing field for free, fair, transparent investment, African nations can increasingly tap the trillions of dollars in private-sector resources needed to advance the continent's development and ultimately eliminate the need for unsustainable foreign-backed loans.

One area where we are using a market approach -- or private sector engagement -- is the power sector, an area where we greatly appreciate Chairman Royce's leadership with the enactment of the Electrify Africa Act. Nearly two out of three people in sub-Saharan Africa do not have access to electricity, which limits access to quality health care, education, and economic opportunities for more than 600 million people.

Power Africa, a whole-of-government effort with the Departments of Commerce, Energy, and others, but led by USAID, employs a partnership approach to engage U.S. Government agencies, international donors and finance institutions, host-country counterparts, and the private sector, to level the playing field and encourage investments in electricity infrastructure.

Power Africa, along with more than 160 public- and private-sector partners, about half of which are U.S. companies, seeks to add 30,000 megawatts and 60 million connections of electricity in sub-Saharan Africa by 2030. Partnering in this way has leveraged billions of dollars in additional financing critical for development of the sector.

To date, Power Africa has helped 119 projects, comprising over 9,500 megawatts, reach financial close. Power Africa has helped add 12.5 million new electrical connections, which means more than 57 million people have access to electricity who did not have access prior to the initiative's launch.

Additionally, through Power Africa's investment in Beyond the Grid, USAID is helping to accelerate off-grid electricity access, focusing on two strategic priorities – household solar and micro-grids – to add 25-30 million new connections by 2030, in support of achieving Power Africa's overall goal.

Another facet of our work seeks to enhance the ability of African businesses to supply the U.S. market.

In Madagascar, where 80 percent of the world's vanilla is sourced, USAID partnered with Baltimore-based McCormick and Company and the National Cooperative Business Association to counter the corruption degrading the quality of vanilla exports. The result is better wages for farmers in Madagascar and direct access to high-quality products for American businesses.

In addition, USAID's Trade and Investment Hubs in East, West, and Southern Africa help to transform African economies and deepen the U.S.-Africa trade and investment relationship. They work on the ground to reduce regional trade barriers, deepen regional economic integration and promote trade and investment under the African Growth and Opportunity Act, legislation that this committee championed. The Trade and Investment Hubs have directly leveraged \$1.3 billion in African exports under AGOA.

The Trade and Investment Hubs attract investment and leverage private-sector partnerships with businesses ranging from micro-enterprises to multinational corporations.

Since 2010, the Trade and Investment Hubs have created 46,000 African jobs. Many of these jobs are held by women who tend to invest job-related income into their families and communities. The Trade and Investment Hubs have also assisted 2,300 private enterprises and non-governmental organizations working on food security.

Across sub-Saharan Africa, growth in agriculture has been associated with reductions in extreme poverty. The Global Food Security Act continues to demonstrate the U.S.'s commitment to ending global poverty, hunger, and malnutrition. Thanks to your strong support, the Feed the Future initiative has made an incredible impact.

In countries like Ethiopia and Ghana, Feed the Future investments have improved agricultural productivity, boosted harvests, and connected farmers to markets. For example, in Ethiopia, poverty dropped by more than 12 percent in Feed the Future target regions between 2013 and 2015.

Our work in Feed the Future focus countries in Africa reduced child stunting by an average of 32 percent between 2012 and 2017 in the regions where we work. Stunting occurs when a child is subjected to chronic malnutrition early in their lives. By reducing stunting, children's growth is not limited by impaired brain development, lower IQ, weakened immune systems, and greater risk of serious diseases.

Feed the Future is helping governments in our partner countries create better policies and systems for food security and to ultimately help them move away from vulnerability to self-reliance. In Africa, Feed the Future partner countries have increased their domestic investments in agriculture by 25 percent, a rate four times that of African countries as a whole and representing an additional \$719 million per year.

And it's not just a handful of individual countries that are seeing the positive impact USG assistance brings. United States assistance has had a transformative impact across sub-Saharan Africa. Between 2000 and 2015, the percentage of Africans living in extreme poverty declined from 57 to 41 percent.

However, we cannot talk about a successful economic future for African countries without addressing peace and security. USAID works with our African partners to address the underlying factors that allow transnational organized crime, violent extremism, and internal conflict to flourish. Central to these efforts is citizen-responsive democratic governance. According to the latest survey of African citizens, democracy is the preferred form of government. A 2016 study by USAID shows that there has been an unprecedented wave of social and political protest across Africa, with citizens voicing their demands for services, accountability, and citizen-responsive democratic governance. While we have witnessed recent declines in political rights and civil liberties in some countries, the long term trend points to the fact that more than half of all Africans today live in functioning democracies that are demonstrably freer than the regimes that previously dominated the continent.

The United States helps advance democracy, human rights and good governance in Africa by promoting the rule of law, respect for fundamental freedoms, credible and legitimate election processes, a politically active civil society, and accountable and participatory governments. Working in partnership with African governments and civil society in countries as diverse as Kenya, Nigeria, and Ethiopia, our support strengthens governance institutions and protects the democratic gains that have been made across the continent. I believe that democracy, human rights, and governance underpins all other development programming, and this is a key priority for USAID.

USAID is also combating the threat of wildlife trafficking in countries across sub-Saharan Africa. Wildlife trafficking is a major threat to biodiversity. The value of wildlife and wildlife products, and the minimal risk of punishment for poaching or illicit trade, have attracted the involvement of transnational criminal organizations. Illicit wildlife is one of the largest black markets in the world, worth tens of billions of dollars.

Through more than 65 projects in 25 countries, USAID and its partners are making it more difficult for people to poach, move and sell wildlife products across borders. This helps secure our natural resources and fight the criminal networks that threaten security and the rule of law, and undermine development progress.

In southeast Angola, USAID funded comprehensive management plans for the newly created Luengue-Luiana and Mavina National Parks. The plans will bring jobs to the 12,000 people in the area, and improve the management of more than 6.8 million hectares of important habitat—an area larger than West Virginia.

Supporting and protecting these resources also protects local communities' ability to raise their own food, and make their own income – key elements of global prosperity and self-reliance.

Our focus is on helping countries on their journey to self-reliance. USAID's goal is ending the need for foreign assistance. As Administrator Green has said, it's our core belief that each country must lead its own development journey. We are focused on ending the need for foreign assistance not because we wish to retreat from our friends, but because we believe in them.

If a country is willing to take on the difficult journey to self-reliance, we want to walk alongside them on that journey. At USAID, we are looking towards the day when we transition to a new kind of relationship that moves beyond traditional assistance. An enduring relationship, in which countries move from recipients of aid to partners to fellow donors.

We tailor our programs, and the partnerships we forge, to address each country's unique journey to self-reliance, and to build their capacity to manage their own development.

Administrator Green has set a clear path forward for the Agency, and we are excited to advance his priorities. The dedicated staff in the Bureau for Africa gladly continues in USAID's tradition of supporting African partner countries on their development journey to progress beyond assistance.

On a personal note, I am honored to be here, deeply committed to USAID's goals and the integrated role that it plays with the Department of State and the Department of Defense in advancing U.S. policy and national security objectives.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome any questions.

