

**Testimony of U.S. Agency for International Development
Acting Assistant Administrator for Africa, Cheryl L. Anderson
before the House Foreign Affairs Committee
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International
Organizations
October 11, 2017**

“Sub-Saharan Africa Budget Priorities FY 2018”

Good afternoon members of the subcommittee. Thank you for inviting me to speak with you today about United States investments in sub-Saharan Africa. It is an honor and pleasure to have the opportunity to discuss the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) programs on the continent.

United States assistance is having a transformative impact in sub-Saharan Africa. Between 2000 and 2015, the percentage of Africans living in extreme poverty has declined from 57 to 41 percent; under-5 mortality rates have declined from 154 per 1,000 births to 74 children per thousand in 2015; and African school primary enrollment rates have increased from 61 percent in 2000 to 79 percent in 2014.

These dramatic changes were the result of sustained efforts by African governments, with essential support from aid donors, foundations, and non-governmental organizations. Throughout USAID’s history, we have confronted some of the world’s greatest development challenges, and along with our partners, we have demonstrated that our work can and does have a measurable impact. Even so, every program should look forward to the day when it can end. So every USAID mission must continuously evaluate how each program dollar moves a country closer to that day.

These development efforts reap dividends not just for Africa but also for the United States. Disease and conflict know no borders. Undeveloped markets can limit the potential for global economic growth. As the United States supports the development of African businesses, it fuels the kind of job creation that gives rise to real economic growth and political stability. The result? Creation of growing markets with increased economic opportunities for American firms and American workers.

Administrator Green has stressed that the United States will not turn its back on those in need. The American people have demonstrated their overwhelming commitment to help those in crisis as seen through outpourings of donations after the hurricanes in the Caribbean, the earthquake in Mexico, and other recent disasters. Assistance is an American value – it’s part of our culture and who we are.

Where can we make a real difference? That question drives everything we do. USAID has become more selective in how we choose the countries and sectors where we will invest our resources.

The total fiscal year (FY) 2018 budget request for Africa is \$5.2 billion. Roughly \$3.7 billion or 70 percent of the request represent the top 10 country programs. In FY 2018, our resources are

allocated based on the four overarching policy priorities laid out in the President's Budget Blueprint. First, advance U.S. national security interests in Africa through programs that support partners in the fight against terrorism, advance peace and security, and promote good governance. Second, ensure programming asserts U.S. leadership and influence. Third, design programs that foster economic opportunities and spur mutually beneficial trade and investment arrangements for both the American people and our African partners. Lastly, we underscore all these efforts with a relentless focus on efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability to the American taxpayer. This funding is complemented by our humanitarian assistance provided through USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance and the Office of Food for Peace, which are responding to critical emergency needs across the continent.

Advance U.S. National Security Interests and Leadership in Africa

Many of the biggest external security threats the United States faces — including terrorism and pandemics — are incubated and thrive in weak, failing, and failed states. The FY18 budget request supports our continued effort to counter violent extremism and support conflict prevention and mitigation on the continent. These efforts are supported by policy and the program activities of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership and the Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism. Such programs build African partner capacity to deny terrorists safe havens and address underlying conditions that can contribute to the spread of violent extremism.

For example in Somalia, USAID activities support the country's transition from decades of state failure to a more stable, democratic ally in the volatile Horn of Africa region. USAID's programs challenge extremist ideology and disrupt tactics of Islamic State militants and al-Shabaab. Our programming also contributes to effective governance, credible political processes, transparency, and improvements in livelihoods that build community and government resilience. Since 2011, USAID investments have fostered stabilization in more than 40 percent of districts in south-central Somalia that were retaken from al-Shabaab, created 6,300 new jobs and provided education services for more than 21,000 secondary school students.

In Nigeria, when democracy faced a critical test during the 2015 presidential elections, USAID played a vital role in ensuring credible and peaceful elections. This resulted in the country's first peaceful democratic transfer of power from one party to another. At the same time, in northeast Nigeria, West Africa ISIS and Boko Haram continue to drive displacement, violence, and instability. Regional disparities in economic development between the northeast and rest of the country were a major factor in the group's rise. USAID programs are designed to respond to, and contain, this threat. By providing development and humanitarian assistance, USAID supports the credibility and stability of the Nigerian state, and reduces individual's vulnerability to extremist recruitment. USAID has created more than 1,200 non-formal learning centers in the Northeast that allowed nearly 88,000 children affected by the crisis to access basic literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills. Our development assistance combats fragility and supports stronger and more effective governance so that these problems do not grow worse and threaten the United States and its allies.

U.S. Leadership and Influence

For more than 55 years, USAID programs have saved and improved lives around the world, advanced American values, increased global stability, and driven economic growth in emerging markets. Global pandemics and the spread of diseases, such as tuberculosis, the H5N1 strain of avian influenza, and the 2014-2016 Ebola epidemic in West Africa have shown us that American health — and therefore our national security — are vulnerable. USAID's health programming helps prevent or stop outbreaks at the country level by strengthening African health systems and preventing these diseases from becoming epidemics that spread across borders.

Of the FY 2018 request for Africa, approximately eighty percent is allocated to global health programs. These programs support control of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, prevent child and maternal deaths, and combat infectious disease threats — they are hallmarks of U.S. leadership in the world. The United States, through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) has led the response to HIV and AIDS for more than 20 years. However, responding to global challenges is a shared responsibility that cannot be met by one nation alone. The United States will continue to challenge the global community to devote resources and political capital to building healthier, stronger, and more self-sufficient nations in the developing world.

Fostering Economic Opportunities for the American People

Although Africa is the world's least developed continent, the region has experienced rapid economic growth and significant poverty reduction, with a number of African countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Tanzania, and Senegal) now among the top 11 fastest-growing economies in the world. The changing economic landscape, including a burgeoning middle class and greater regional integration, will create vast markets for American goods and valuable investment opportunities for American businesses.

Increasingly, foreign direct investment is driving growth in Africa, and U.S. assistance is being outpaced by private investment. Through Power Africa, a U.S. Government initiative, the private sector has invested \$14 billion in 57 projects at a relatively minimal cost to the U.S. taxpayer. Partnerships have allowed other programs to grow beyond U.S. Government resources. For example, USAID has garnered more than \$80 million in cash and in-kind donations from the private sector for youth learning centers in Africa. Partners include non-profit and for profit organizations: MasterCard Foundation, Microsoft, Dow Chemical, Procter & Gamble, General Electric, and Kenya Commercial Bank. This is a model for how the interagency can maximize the impact of our resources by aligning and leveraging partners from the public and private sector alike.

Through the USAID Regional Trade and Investment Hubs in Ghana, Kenya, and South Africa, we reduce barriers to trade and investment, and foster linkages between U.S. and African firms. In close cooperation with African countries, USAID facilitates trade and also reduces its time and cost. We have prioritized programs that promote entrepreneurship, help build capacity in local institutions to support free markets, fight corruption, and unlock opportunities to formalize the huge informal economy. Our investments also help to empower women and youth to advance economically, ensuring inclusive economic growth.

Focus on Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Accountability to the American Taxpayer

We intend to uphold the Administration’s commitment to ensure effectiveness and accountability to the U.S. taxpayer. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation help to ensure the effectiveness of USAID’s programs.

In 2011, USAID released a new Evaluation Policy renewing its commitment to effective program management, results, accountability, and evidence for decision-making. We report transparently on evaluation findings and share the evaluation reports online. That being said, not everything we do always turns out the way we planned – so we will continue to manage our risks well, learn from experience, and correct course when necessary.

The United States has a continued commitment to a partnership with African governments, partners, and other donors grounded in mutual responsibility and respect. USAID has a very real role in safeguarding the United States’ national security and economic opportunities. As we continue to work with our partners toward our shared goals over the coming months, I look forward to a continued conversation on USAID work in Africa.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee. I look forward to responding to your questions.