Joint Regional Strategy

Bureau for African Affairs
Bureau for Africa

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1. Executive Statement and Mission Statement

In cooperation with African partners, we strive to prevent instability and the spread of extremism, strengthen democratic governance, and promote prosperity and country self-reliance toward a more peaceful and mutually beneficial future for the people of sub-Saharan Africa and the United States.

The State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy for Africa (JRS or Strategy) charts a course for development and diplomacy to mutually reinforce and complement one another in advancing joint efforts. The JRS also articulates a key framework through which defense, development, and diplomatic efforts can advance shared objectives in an integrated approach to national security. It provides policy guidance to all U.S. government agencies and enumerates the core objectives, operational model, and modern architecture needed to implement the policy.

The Africa JRS follows the framework of the National Security Strategy (NSS) and State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) and articulates four strategic U.S. government goals for engagement in the region: 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. It 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 as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. This strategy lays out how the United States intends to use diplomatic and development resources to partner with Africans across these goals, making it possible to respond to economic shocks and promote growth; expand U.S.-Africa trade and investment; ; prevent instability and the spread of violent extremism; advance democracy; combat preventable diseases and save lives; create productive opportunities for Africa's youth; and engage countries in Africa to realize a more self-reliant future. It also seeks to factor in the Defense Department's National Defense Strategy, as well as its operational engagement and programs, as they affect our ability to achieve these strategic interests, especially Goal 2 (Advance Mutual Peace and Security Interests). In particular, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2017 explicitly requires State and DoD to coordinate more fully on security cooperation activities.

We will employ a variety of mutually reinforcing tools to implement the strategy, including policy dialogue; bilateral and regional diplomacy; economic statecraft; public diplomacy; and development assistance. The Administration's Prosper Africa initiative will bring a whole-of-government focus to expanding U.S.-Africa trade and investment. We recognize the importance and cross cutting nature of several issues that are critical to Africa's future, including youth and gender equality. Young people represent the next generation of African leaders and stand to gain or lose based on the continent's social, political, and economic trajectory. Our strategy incorporates engagement with Africa's youth across all of our goals and objectives, and also through programs like the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) and University Partnerships. The activities anticipated under this strategy are complex and rely on

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close collaboration with host country counterparts in the government, the private sector, civil society and with citizens in the communities in which we are engaged. While effort is made to ensure that there is consensus on State Department and USAID activities in the region, political will is necessary for the success of our engagement and is subject to changes over the duration of the strategy implementation period. There are risks with respect to issues of conflict, natural disasters, and related humanitarian emergencies that can potentially impact the implementation of this strategy. We will employ strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation tools to identify adjustments and course correction to achieve the JRS objectives.

We will monitor progress toward achieving the Bureaus' goals and objectives primarily through existing processes at the Bureau and country level, including the annual Performance Plan and Report, Bureau leadership-level discussions leading to the development of the annual BRR, approval of the yearly Operational Plans, and regular strategic and portfolio reviews. State and USAID both have evaluation policies, with regular performance and impact evaluations across our country programs to track the results of our work. Country teams will review their Integrated Country Strategies (ICSs) to update key components as needed, and USAID missions will conduct mid-course stocktaking on their Country Development Cooperation Strategies (CDCSs). In addition to maximizing these existing processes to review progress, regular dialogue between State and USAID Bureau leadership, including at monthly meetings, provides a forum for identifying additional opportunities for collaboration and progress on strategic goals. State and USAID will also monitor progress through collaboration with the interagency, such as through regular interaction with the Department of Defense.

Our strategy aims to reduce gender inequalities across all areas of engagement. This includes access to, control over, and benefit from resources, wealth, opportunity, and services through programs such as the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative. We will look to reduce gender-based violence and mitigate its harmful effects; and enhance the role of women in all aspects of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Our engagement will also look to increase the capacity of women and girls to advocate for and fully realize their fundamental rights and freedoms, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making in their households, communities, and societies.

Our assistance and policy priorities span the breadth of states in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and their varying stages of development, democratization, and stability. We will continue to play a major role in supporting those countries recovering from serious conflict and those facing major political strife or crises, as well as those that have the opportunity for new, more positive, chapters in their history. We will continue to provide significant support to states that play a critical role in anchoring regional security and advancing economic growth and integration. The trajectories of these groups of countries will play a major role in determining the prospects for either conflict or stability and development in their respective regions and on the continent as a whole. We will continue to take a regional and bilateral approach to our development programming and will support the African Union (AU) and the continent's

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regional economic communities (RECs) and African Continental Free Trade Area to encourage regional integration. Our Strategy is centered on four overarching and complementary policy goals as follows:

Increase Mutually Beneficial Economic Growth, Trade, and Investment

Although Africa is one of the world's least developed and most economically vulnerable continents, a number of African countries experienced significant economic growth in the last two decades. We will work with African partners to achieve a sustained economic recovery from the shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our objective remains broad economic growth to reduce poverty and hunger, create jobs, and provide resources and human capital for the expansion of markets and social services, particularly in the health and education sectors. We will support policies and programs to implement legal, regulatory, and institutional reforms to foster conducive business environments for the private sector and to deepen economic integration across Africa, which helps to level the playing field for U.S. businesses. Prosper Africa will actively support expanded private sector engagement to expand two-way trade and investment, boost economic diversification and sustainable growth, and create broader markets for U.S. goods and services. We will place emphasis on promoting women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship, ensuring that women are equally benefiting from and contributing to economic development efforts across Africa.

Africa's development requires a predictable, secure, and sustainable energy supply; however, most sub-Saharan African countries experience significant levels of energy poverty. In partnership with African countries, the private sector, and other key donors and stakeholders, we will look to foster the development and delivery of reliable, uninterrupted energy to advance economic development across the region through Power Africa and other initiatives

Advance Mutual Peace and Security Interests

Working with African leaders, civil society, and the international community, we will advance mutual peace and security interests to reduce threats to U.S. interests, to amplify U.S. influence, and to create the conditions to increase mutually beneficial economic growth, trade, and investment. We will support policies to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict and deal with the humanitarian consequences thereof, and to assist in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. We will engage with regional and international actors to address root causes of conflict, and end the illegal trade in arms, minerals, wildlife, wildlife products, timber, and other resources that, among other significant factors, sustain armed groups, fuel human rights abuses, and displacement in the region. We will promote maritime security and policies that develop Africa's blue economy. We will work to curtail the concerning levels of narcotics and human trafficking in Africa, as well as the illegal exploitation of maritime and other resources, and limit their negative spillover effects. Supporting African solutions to African problems remains a priority. We will also continue to support reforms and accountability

mechanisms to address human rights abuses in the security sector. We will elevate and accelerate women's leadership in peacebuilding and mediation, conflict prevention, and conflict response, while also addressing the protection of women and girls from conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence consistent with the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017.

Strengthen Democracy, Human Rights, and Good Governance

This goal remains a critical policy and assistance priority for State and USAID in sub-Saharan Africa. We will address democratic deficiencies that perpetuate societal grievances and contribute to transnational threats by helping states and communities foster legitimate, inclusive political systems that reduce fragility and mitigate risks of violent conflict and instability. The African continent has made important gains in democracy and institution building; however, these gains are fragile and must be supported over time.   Elections are widely accepted as the norm in the region, but there is an increasing frequency of constitutional adjustments and electoral events that contribute to democratic backsliding rather than consolidation. In many countries, corruption is endemic, and state institutions remain weak. Strong, accountable, and democratic institutions, sustained by a deep commitment to the rule of law, generate greater state legitimacy, prosperity and stability, and meet with greater success in mitigating conflict and ensuring security than their less-democratic counterparts. We will promote enabling environments for vibrant civil society and media to enhance political space to promote transparency and civic discourse. We continue to elevate the substantive participation of women in democratic processes and institutions. All of these efforts are necessary for sustainable progress in all other goals and objectives under the JRS.

Promote Inclusive Country-led Development

State fragility, poor economic governance, institutional weaknesses, unsustainable management of natural resources, and poverty place Africa at a disadvantage in dealing with global problems such as pandemics, recurrent natural disasters, price shocks, and food shortages. The U.S. government's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future (FTF), remains our primary tool for addressing chronic hunger and undernutrition in Africa. FTF seeks to catalyze agriculture-led growth by improving nutritional status through efforts to enhance agricultural productivity, increasing economic resilience in vulnerable communities, expanding domestic market linkages and value addition, and expanding access to markets and trade for smallholder farmers, especially women. The continent is also vulnerable to natural resource degradation and the effects of climate change, which can negatively affect food and nutrition security, access to markets, and the continent's long-term agricultural and economic potential. We will lead U.S. government efforts to ensure that African countries are building capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change, as well as conserve biodiversity, while continuing to grow their economies and optimize the use of natural resources and human capital in a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable manner.

Addressing disease and improving public health not only reduce mortality and improve the quality of life, but are also essential to peace and security, economic growth, and development. With this in mind, we will continue to prioritize preventing maternal and child deaths, controlling the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and working with our partners to combat infectious disease and advance the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) including response to COVID-19 and other emerging pandemic threats. Programming will remain centered on leveraging local and multilateral partnerships, including the private sector; strengthening health systems to provide essential services; preventing, detecting, and responding to infectious disease outbreaks; and promoting innovation and research.

Finally, we will advance gender-equitable access to education, especially in crisis and conflict affected environments, and improve the quality of basic education, vocational training, and higher education to enhance the capacity of African youth to contribute to their economies and societies. Through the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) and University Partnerships, we will empower Africa's next generation of leaders by providing opportunities for academic coursework, leadership training, and networking, as well as support U.S. business by introducing influential young Africans to U.S. business practices and leaders.

2. Bureau Strategic Framework

Bureau Goal 1: Increase Mutually Beneficial Economic Growth, Trade, and Investment

- **Bureau Objective 1.1:** Improve Economic Governance and Regional Integration for Trade and Investment
- **Bureau Objective 1.2:** Encourage Trade and Investment between the United States and Africa
- **Bureau Objective 1.3:** Expand African Capacity to Participate Effectively in Global Markets

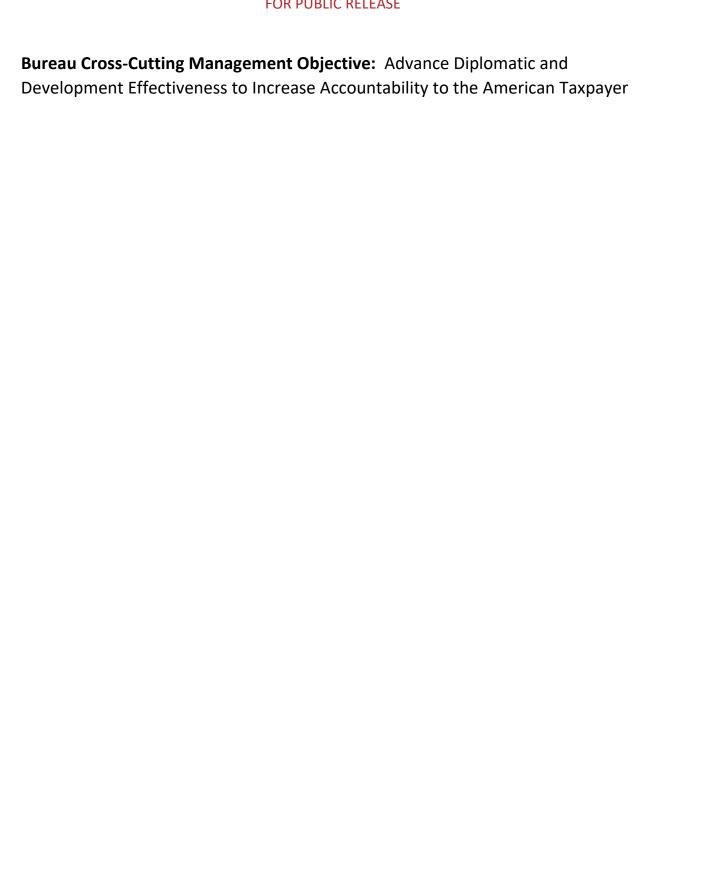**Bureau Goal 2:** Advance Mutual Peace and Security Interests

- **Bureau Objective 2.1:** Disrupt State-Sponsored and Regional Terrorist Groups in Sub-Saharan Africa in Order to Limit their Ability to Attack U.S. Interests both Inside and Outside Africa
- **Bureau Objective 2.2:** Counter Transnational Crime and Other Threats Affecting Mutual Interests
- **Bureau Objective 2.3:** Reduce Instability and Internal Violence that Threaten U.S. Interests in Africa

Bureau Goal 3: Strengthen Democracy, Human Rights, and Good Governance

- **Bureau Objective 3.1:** Promote Accountable, Transparent, and Responsive Governance
- **Bureau Objective 3.2:** Promote and Protect Fundamental Rights and Liberties
- **Bureau Objective 3.3:** Support Democratic Processes and Promote Strong Democratic Norms

Bureau Goal 4: Support Democratic Processes and Promote Strong Democratic Norms

- **Bureau Objective 4.1:** Transform African Health Systems to Accelerate Reductions in Mortality
- **Bureau Objective 4.2:** Support Equitable Access to Education for All Learners and Training for Africa's Next Generation
- **Bureau Objective 4.3:** Sustainably Reduce Hunger, Malnutrition, and Poverty in sub-Saharan Africa
- **Bureau Objective 4.4:** Strengthen Country Capacity to Adapt to Environmental and Demographic Changes with Increased Resilience

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Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective: Advance Diplomatic and Development Effectiveness to Increase Accountability to the American Taxpayer

3. Bureau Goals and Objectives

Bureau Goal 1: Increase Mutually Beneficial Economic Growth, Trade, and Investment

Bureau Goal 1 Description: By adopting new trading relationships with Africa, countering unfair trade practices, and facilitating new market opportunities through the Administration's Prosper Africa initiative, the United States seeks to spur economic growth and expand U.S.-Africa trade and investment. Broad-based, inclusive economic growth in Africa reduces poverty and hunger, creates jobs in the United States and in Africa, provides resources to expand health and education services, and creates new opportunities for U.S. businesses to positively contribute to and benefit from African economic growth. To achieve this, we will promote the implementation of legal, regulatory, and institutional reforms and agreements to promote more conducive enabling environments for business and achieve deeper economic integration across Africa, which helps to level the playing field for U.S. businesses. This includes promotion of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which if fully implemented will benefit U.S. businesses by lowering barriers to trade and investment across the continent, and laying the groundwork for greater competitiveness, trade diversification, and economic growth. The Administration's Prosper Africa initiative brings a new whole-of-government focus to expand two-way trade and investment, expand U.S. private sector engagement in Africa, and create broader and more diverse markets for U.S. goods and services. Infrastructure – including the availability of reliable, uninterrupted, and affordable energy – is an essential input needed to increase the competitiveness of African products in international markets. Through Power Africa, the United States now partners with over 140 private sector partners and 17 multilateral and donor partners to work with African governments to increase investment in and access to reliable, affordable power. These efforts, combined with FTF activities to improve agricultural productivity, domestic market linkages, and women's empowerment in agriculture, food security, and nutrition, are critical components of our efforts to accelerate broad-based economic growth and reduce poverty in Africa. Through the objectives described below, this goal links to Pillar 2 of the National Security Strategy in terms of promoting free, fair, and reciprocal economic relationships, and to all three strategic objectives of Goal 2: Renew America's Competitive Advantage for Sustained Economic Growth and Job Creation under the State- USAID Joint Strategic Plan: FY 2018 to FY 2022.

Bureau Objective 1.1: Improve Economic Governance and Regional Integration for Trade and Investment

- **Bureau Objective 1.1 Justification and Linkages:** Strengthened economic governance and regional integration create larger markets that are more attractive to U.S. companies; improve economies of scale; reduce transaction costs for local, regional, and global trade; and make large-scale infrastructure projects more attractive to investors. Strong public financial management helps increase transparency and effectiveness in government operations and is essential for countries to achieve self-reliance. We will engage with RECs, national governments, the AU, other multilateral entities, and international financial institutions to promote regional integration and reduce barriers to trade and investment flows across the continent. We will also encourage and provide opportunities for sub-Saharan Africa's increasingly influential private sector, as well as the U.S. private sector, to engage governments and encourage such governments to adopt necessary reforms. We will leverage the full range of U.S. Government investments and utilize USAID's private investment platform to catalyze private capital for investments with potential for expanding markets for U.S. companies and for development impact.

- **Bureau Objective 1.1 Risk Considerations:** Our embassies will remain at the forefront of this effort, working on a daily basis with our African partners to encourage further reform and improve economic governance, with particular emphasis on those countries that are now benefitting or will soon benefit from additional income from extractive resources. Recognizing that the private sector is a powerful voice for improved investment climates and good governance, we will continue to encourage the private sector at the national and sub-national/local levels to push for reform, including by working closely with U.S. Chambers of Commerce and other private sector groups in sub-Saharan Africa. These efforts and expected achievement of the overall objective factors in the risk of inadequate political will or consensus across countries in the region. As such, partner countries may adopt protectionist trade policies, fail to fully proceed with needed governance reforms, or align themselves with actors and practices at odds with the principles of economic transparency and regional integration. The impact of these risks is mitigated by our engagement broadly across the region so that progress with some countries can proceed even if stalled in other countries.

Bureau Objective 1.2: Encourage Trade and Investment between the United States and Africa

- **Bureau Objective 1.2 Justification and Linkages:** The relationships between the United States and African countries should not be defined as donor-recipient relationships but rather as relationships based on mutually beneficial engagement. Most African countries have fast-growing youth populations, burgeoning middle classes with appetites for high-quality American goods, and increasing regional integration that creates ever-larger markets. Many U.S. businesses, particularly those in the energy, medical, agricultural, and service sectors, are highly competitive in Africa. We will continue to work through the interagency to participate in the Commerce Department-led President's Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa (PAC-DBIA) to facilitate increased trade and investment between the United States and Africa. We will expand direct communication between our embassies and U.S. companies, increase domestic business outreach activities, provide platforms for African leaders to showcase their opportunities for private sector investments, and provide opportunities for U.S. companies to showcase their products and services. In addition, we will continue to promote trade with and investment in Africa by co-sponsoring trade missions, business conferences, and other events and programs with private sector organizations. By engaging directly with American firms, interagency embassy teams will develop targeted advocacy with African governments on prioritized business environment impediments whose reforms can most spur investment and job creation. We will also engage with members of the sub-Saharan African diaspora in the United States, who are demonstrating increased levels of interest in investing in their countries of origin.

- **Bureau Objective 1.2 Risk Considerations:** This objective takes into account the risks presented by several factors such as market stability, sound macroeconomic policy and currency management, and rising incomes that may impact the extent of the anticipated increased production and consumption of goods and services.

Bureau Objective 1.3: Expand African Capacity to Participate Effectively in Global Markets

- **Bureau Objective 1.3 Justification and Linkages:** Improving Africa's capacity to produce export goods that are diverse, competitive, and meet global standards will allow African countries to access and benefit from global markets, which in turn is a critical driver for accelerating economic growth across the continent. We will work to continue expanding this trade capacity and increase access to the electricity vital to success. The extension of the duty-free benefits provided by the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) to 2025 provides certainty for African producers and U.S. buyers to access the U.S. market and creates a stable environment that encourages increased investment in sub-Saharan Africa. During the period from 2015-2020, USAID's Trade and Investment Hubs are expected to facilitate over $200 million in new investments and foster the creation of 37,000 African jobs. They promote the adoption and implementation of World Trade Organization agreements and regional trade protocols to reduce. We will continue to promote specific efforts in African countries to reduce the time and cost to trade in areas, including trade facilitation, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, and technical barriers to trade. We will also improve negotiation and implementation of bilateral Free Trade Agreements with African partners. While African women face significant challenges accessing resources, they provide the majority of labor input and are key to unlocking the continent's economic potential. The UN estimates that gender inequality costs sub-Saharan Africa $95 billion a year. Through the African Women's Entrepreneurship Program (AWEP), we will continue to provide professional networking, business development, financing, and trade capacity building opportunities for a network of women entrepreneurs and women's business associations across Africa. The Program seeks to promote business growth, increase trade both regionally and to U.S. markets through AGOA, create better business environments, and generally empower African women entrepreneurs to become voices of positive change in their communities. Achievement of this objective will depend on global market and price stability, fair and open markets, and the appropriate skills, technology, and financial capital needed to facilitate greater African access to and participation in global markets.

- **Bureau Objective 1.3 Risk Considerations:** This objective factors into account the risk of possible decreases in global, regional, or country-specific demand for goods and services during the JRS implementation period, as well as the potential adverse impact of sub-optimal business enabling environments on regional or individual economies.

Bureau Goal 2: Advance Mutual Peace and Security Interests

Bureau Goal 2 Description: Effective and professional African security forces that can protect their citizens, counter violent extremism, secure their borders, and join with neighbors to combat common threats will increase stability on the continent, and reduce threats to the U.S. homeland originating in Africa. The security problems confronting African countries are vast, to include a combination of social, economic, and ideological drivers amplified by a lack of citizen-responsive governance. In alignment with JSP Goal 1, "Protect America's Security at Home and Abroad", we will advance mutual peace and security interests in order to reduce threats to U.S. interests, and to amplify U.S. influence. The first objective is to prevent the spread of, and if necessary, counter, state-sponsored and regional terrorism where it threatens American interests and those of key friends and allies. The second objective is to counter transnational crime and other threats to American interests and influence. The third objective is to reduce instability and internal violence that threaten our interests in Africa. Recognizing that socio-economic factors, as well as poor governance and public perceptions of security forces, are key factors in the spread of violent extremism, broader US support to governance and economic opportunity aim to address underlying grievances that fuel insecurity. Still, the inability of security forces in some countries to protect citizens and preserve the rule of law creates space for terrorist organizations capable of providing security and rudimentary services to vulnerable communities to usurp the role of the government. Unfortunately, joining armed groups will continue to offer an attractive alternative for the foreseeable future, particularly for youth, as alternative paths to social and professional advancement are limited. Negative interactions with security forces have also galvanized youth radicalization. The United States cannot simply deliver specialized training to a subset of a partner country's armed forces or execute a program in a particular hot spot and expect to alter these trend lines dramatically. In this constrained environment, the United States should focus its efforts where marginal improvements in security force or government capability will produce disproportionate impact, and/or in areas where partner government or other donors' efforts will amplify the effects of our programming. Training on human rights and the rule of law will be woven throughout US security assistance engagements. Security sector assistance requires long-term engagement with governmental and nongovernmental partners to build the institutions required to fund, recruit, train, supply, sustain, and promote accountability for African armed forces. Persistent engagement promoting professionalization and institution building across all elements of the security sector is essential for Africans to take greater ownership over their own security. Security sector institution building and partner capacity development address security forces reform and training, which permit armed forces to defeat armed groups, control territory, and provide assistance to their communities in line with best civil-military operations practices. Improved security situations create the stability required to attract foreign investment and encourage domestic economic growth. Work in our other goal areas indirectly addresses the drivers that fuel instability and give rise to armed groups. Education for boys and girls, job creation, and increased trust in security forces synergistically reduce the proportion of youth who ultimately join armed groups. Furthermore, the role of women in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and conflict response at all levels of engagement is critical to our mutual peace and

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security interests. Partnering to implement the U.S. Women, Peace and Security Act of 2017 will be central to our approach across Africa. JRS Goal 2, Advance Mutual Peace and Security Interests, aligns with the National Security Strategy (NSS) Pillar 1, Protect the Homeland, the American People, and the American Way of Life, and JSP Goal 1, Protect America's Security at Home and Abroad. Working with African partners, State and USAID will counter terrorist and criminal threats, as well as violent conflict, reducing the instability that threatens U.S. and African interests.

Bureau Objective 2.1: Disrupt State-Sponsored and Regional Terrorist Groups in Sub-Saharan Africa in Order to Limit their Ability to Attack U.S. Interests both Inside and Outside Africa

- **Bureau Objective 2.1 Justification and Linkages:** Over the next three to five years, we intend to assist our partners to degrade terrorist groups like ISIS and al Qaida affiliates that operate throughout Africa, such that they pose a lessened threat to U.S. interests both inside and outside of Africa. The sub-objectives supporting this objective prioritize funding and programs to assist African partners to weaken and disrupt the groups whose current capacity most urgently and directly threatens U.S. interests. Recognizing that American-led efforts in this region are limited, this objective focuses its priority on assisting those partner countries with the greatest ability to absorb assistance and place that assistance in use against the designated threat groups in accordance with international humanitarian law and principles. To maximize the benefits of U.S. engagement to disrupt terrorist organizations and the spread of violent extremism in a constrained budget environment, the United States will use several criteria: (1) Extent of existing threat and risk to U.S. vital interests; (2) High risk of emerging threats to U.S. vital interests; (3) Ability to leverage and bolster partner country political will and capacity to address existing, emergent, and longer-term terrorism threats; and (4) Burden-sharing and coordination with international partners to maximize resources available for counterterrorism activities and closer alignment between vital national interests and resource commitments.

- **Bureau Objective 2.1 Risk Considerations:** There is risk that the United States might react to the most immediate terrorist threats to its interests rather than focus sufficient attention on addressing the core drivers of violent extremism. We need to exercise sufficient strategic patience to build the lasting capabilities and institutions required to decrease persistent vulnerabilities exploited by terrorists and other malign actors. We provide bilateral sustainment assistance to build the partners' capabilities to conduct counterterrorism operations through the Africa Regional Counterterrorism (ARCT) program, as well as sub-regional assistance through the Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism and the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership.

Bureau Objective 2.2: Counter Transnational Crime and Other Threats Affecting Mutual Interests

- **Bureau Objective 2.2 Justification and Linkages:** Whereas Objective 2.1 focuses on imminent threats to U.S. interests through terrorist groups, Objective 2.2 focuses on threats of a non-terrorist nature. In particular, we mitigate transnational threats of a criminal nature, and support American interests abroad by maintaining American influence in the security space, and access to strategic areas. This objective focuses on reducing the various types of illicit trafficking, whether in drugs, persons, arms, wildlife, or natural resources, that destabilize African countries and threaten U.S. security. We target these criminal networks for two reasons. First, the same routes and methods used to smuggle illicit items can be used to support transnational terrorist networks, and the funding this trade creates often supports armed groups that destabilize the countries in which they operate. Secondly, these criminal networks undermine opportunities available to both African and American entrepreneurs who have the potential to lift Africans from poverty through legal, market-driven approaches. Illicit activities create additional risks and costs for investment, and they limit African countries' growth potential. This objective's focus on maintaining strategic influence and engagement is based on the premise that America has benefited from decades of support and physical access from African countries, and that the United States cannot take the benefits of these relationships for granted, particularly in the face of increasing investment in the region by other countries. It is in the common interest of the United States and our African partners that we should base personnel abroad to support our African partners' fights against terrorism and crime, that we should harbor our ships in friendly ports to maintain freedom of navigation of the seas, and that we should overfly our partner airspaces and land at their airports. Access in the defense space encompasses the ease of coordinating with partners to counter regional threats, the availability of airports and seaports for defense logistical use, the willingness to join and adhere to U.S.-supported collective security measures, and the potential for American access to essential natural resources. When American forces can access African countries, we can help our partners, whether through delivering aid in the event of natural and pandemic disasters, or by providing expertise and advice.

- **Bureau Objective 2.2 Risk Considerations:** This objective takes into account the political risk in pursuing the dismantling of deeply ingrained trafficking networks in some countries, as this may jeopardize our counterterrorism efforts. With regard to access, the United States risks choosing key partners too hastily based more on expedient concerns than long-term mutual interests, which, over time, may result in less successful and sustainable partnerships. It also may provide space for our competitors to actively pursue more strategically important partners. The U.S. government has several programs to help address international crime and trafficking, in particular the West Africa Regional Security Initiative supported with International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) resources; and the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) program supported with Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related (NADR) programs resources. Chiefs of Mission are encouraged to initiate Status of Forces Agreements and Memoranda of Agreement with foreign partners in consultation with U.S. Africa Command to ensure continued access to land, air, sea, and infrastructure that advances U.S. interests.

Bureau Objective 2.3: Reduce Instability and Internal Violence that Threaten U.S. Interests in Africa

- **Bureau Objective 2.3 Justification and Linkages:** Objective 2.3 addresses armed conflict and instability that are not explicitly terrorism related, and do not gravely threaten U.S. interests. This objective assumes the partner countries involved have sufficiently secure and stable homelands, and they can focus more attention on institution-level capacity and development efforts to increase state effectiveness. This assumes they can provide opportunities for their people that prevent and limit violent extremism and other destabilizing activities. Recognizing the importance of collective security for maintaining stability in Africa, this objective also promotes African solutions for African problems.

- **Bureau Objective 2.3 Risk Considerations:** This objective accepts risks by prioritizing partner nations and making difficult trade-offs through the provision of less immediate support and limited security sector assistance in some countries embroiled in conflict in order to address problems in other countries that contain larger terrorist threats or more insidious and dangerous criminal networks. Taking this risk ensures that the greatest threats receive the most attention. The State Department accomplishes much of this work through various bilateral and regional programs. The G7++ Friends of Gulf of Guinea, which the United States co-chairs with Gabon in 2020, provides another opportunity to promote African solutions to African problems, specifically countering piracy and IUU (illegal, unreported, and unregulated) fishing in coastal waters.

Bureau Goal 3: Strengthen Democracy, Human Rights, and Good Governance

Bureau Goal 3 Description: This goal remains a critical policy and assistance priority for State and USAID in sub-Saharan Africa. We will address democratic and governance deficiencies to help states and communities foster legitimate, inclusive political systems that reduce fragility and mitigate risks of violent conflict and instability. Addressing issues of political and social exclusion, human rights violations and abuses, and public service delivery will reduce the need for reactive and costly security responses to terrorist threats and conflicts, as well as serve as a bulwark against transnational organized crime and corruption. This work will also strengthen institutions and accountable governance to help ensure a more stable and enabling environment for economic growth and social resilience. We are pleased to see elections adopted as the norm in the region, but are troubled by the increasing frequency of electoral events that are contributing to democratic backsliding rather than consolidation. We will encourage the development of effective and independent justice sector institutions, strong legislatures, robust civil societies, and independent media and elections-related bodies, all of which are important to a healthy democracy. Our efforts to elevate the substantive participation of women in democratic processes and institutions will continue, and will include support for policies designed to increase the percentage of women holding elected and appointed offices at regional, national, and local levels. All of these efforts are necessary for sustainable progress in the other three strategic objectives. Strong, accountable, and democratic institutions, sustained by a deep commitment to the rule of law, generate greater prosperity and stability, and meet with greater success in mitigating conflict and ensuring security than their less-democratic counterparts. While the African continent has made important gains on democracy and institution building, those gains are fragile and must be supported over time to ensure consolidation and sustainability. U.S. government programming in the region spans a wide range of country situations, from autocracies to fragile and post-conflict states to consolidating democracies. Although elections have become a regular occurrence across the continent, there are still too many countries where elections are a charade, constitutions are manipulated to retain leaders in office, and where the transition to democracy is uneven and slow, with leaders who resist relinquishing power. In many countries, corruption is endemic, and state institutions and civil society remain weak. Recognizing the foundational importance of democracy, human rights, and governance (DRG) to sustainable development, this Strategy seeks to advance these principles in Africa by promoting the rule of law and access to justice, respect for human and civil rights, credible and legitimate elections, a politically active civil society, and accountable and citizen-centered democratic governance. Working in partnership with African governments, like-minded diplomatic partners, and civil society, our support aims to strengthen governance institutions, protect the democratic and development gains that have been made across the continent, and prevent democratic backsliding. We will continue to find creative and effective ways to build integrated, cross-sectoral programs that improve democracy and governance while achieving, for example, health or environment development results. Interagency coordination is critical to ensuring that our efforts are consistent and complementary across the U.S. government. Through our work with the multiple Policy Coordination Committees and working groups relevant to Africa, and

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with the support of the National Security Council, the Africa Bureaus at State and USAID lead the diplomatic and development initiatives to support this goal. Other significant interagency partners include the Departments of Justice and Labor, which are working on rule of law programs and labor-related human rights issues respectively, as well as the Department of Defense. We also coordinate our efforts with international financial institutions (IFIs), the UN, AU, RECs, civil society, and the private sector, where applicable. In addition, our Elections and Democracy Working Group will continue to provide a forum for consultation with non-governmental stakeholders regarding our efforts to advance and institutionalize democratic norms and processes on the continent. JRS Goal 3, Strengthen Democracy, Human Rights, and Good Governance, supports U.S. Government efforts under JSP Goal 3, Promote American Leadership through Balanced Engagement. In particular, our efforts under JRS Goal 3 also support our partners in building the capacity and commitment needed for countries to lead their own development efforts under JRS Goal 4 (Promote Inclusive Country-led Development) in line with country self-reliance.

Bureau Objective 3.1: Promote Accountable, Transparent, and Responsive Governance

- **Bureau Objective 3.1 Justification and Linkages:** The United States will continue efforts to support and empower key reformers and institutions of government at all levels to promote the rule of law and access to justice, strengthen checks on executive power, deliver public services, and incorporate citizen-responsive governance practices. At the core of our efforts is the promotion of democratic, transparent, effective, and accountable governments, with institutions that both empower citizens and respond to citizens' aspirations. A foundation of citizen-centered democratic governance is essential to building citizen confidence in a country's future. Transparency and accountability will also enhance potential investors' confidence in the advantages of engagement with African governments and businesses. We will continue to support anti-corruption activities to build investigative capacities, strengthen both anti-corruption and human rights commissions, and promote citizen awareness of individual rights and responsibilities. We will focus on developing open, sustainable media that provide a variety of viewpoints and the free flow of ideas and facts. We will also aim to address the growing phenomenon of exploitation of new information technologies corrupting the information landscape.

- **Bureau Objective 3.1 Risk Considerations:** This objective takes into account the risk that political reforms, especially those which increase transparency and accountability, and reduce corruption, may face significant opposition or backtracking over time. Efforts across government institutions and civil society will look to create reinforcing mechanisms for supporting reforms in a sustainable manner. These efforts to strengthen country governance are at the core of efforts to strengthen country self-reliance. Our programs also look to manage the risks presented by shrinking democratic space in many places across the region that make programs more challenging to implement, limited in scope, costly, dangerous, and/or illegal. In these circumstances, the Department and USAID use rigorous program reviews to evaluate the cost-benefit of our engagement, as well as the risks to the security of our staff and partners.

Bureau Objective 3.2: Promote and Protect Fundamental Rights and Liberties

- **Bureau Objective 3.2 Justification and Linkages:** We will promote fundamental freedoms by advancing human rights, civil society capacity, and independent media. Our policies will continue to be focused on protecting fundamental rights and freedoms, particularly of historically marginalized or persecuted populations. Our policies and programming will continue to strive to prevent and respond to gender-based violence across sectors. Our overarching objectives are to deepen popular understanding and commitment to equal rights and address human rights abuses. We support mechanisms to protect human rights, respond to abuses, and provide assistance to civil society organizations for human rights monitoring activities. We will strive to empower all Africans, with particular emphasis on engaging and empowering women and youth to constructively shape and participate in their social, political, and economic environments. Civil society continues to face challenges to its role in representing and advocating for citizens, particularly where the enabling environment is closing or closed; therefore, we will continue to promote and protect the role of civil society as an essential element of citizen-centered democratic governance. We will support the development of the institutional architecture to support victims, enhance access to justice, and promote voices that encourage local dialogue among Africans, respect the rule of law, foster civil society, and recognize the value of independent and responsible media.

- **Bureau Objective 3.2 Risk Considerations:** This objective takes into account risks of shrinking democratic space in a number of countries as well as risks created by remote and poorly governed spaces across the region. We evaluate both the programmatic as well as the security risks of ongoing engagement across the region. As needed, we will make adjustments to our approach and scope while utilizing all of the tools of assistance and diplomacy to advance efforts in the region.

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Bureau Objective 3.3: Support Democratic Processes and Promote Strong Democratic Norms

- **Bureau Objective 3.3 Justification and Linkages:** We will continue our focus on strengthening institutions at all levels in order to ensure democratic norms and processes take hold. By working with governments and civil society, we will build support for and institutionalize democratic norms within all three branches of government, with particular emphasis on the judicial and legislative institutions that exercise checks on executive power. Our democracy-strengthening efforts will continue to focus on enabling and supporting credible electoral processes that are participatory, representative, and inclusive. This Strategy will support capacity building for key actors and civil society, training for national elections commissions, promotion of minority representation in government, and voter education and election observation programs. We will also encourage policies to increase women's, youths' and marginalized groups' political participation as voters, civil society members and leaders, and office holders at all levels of government. In relatively well performing states, we will advocate for and support continued consolidation of democratic institutions. We believe these countries can be influential, including via the RECs, in efforts to expand and strengthen democratization in neighboring states, thereby improving the democratic profile of the African continent. Finally, we will increasingly integrate technological innovations into our activities to enable democratic progress by leveraging mobile technologies, social networks, and youth engagement.

- **Bureau Objective 3.3 Risk Considerations:** This objective takes into account the inherently political risk of strengthening transparency, oversight and accountability that comes with the strengthening of democratic norms and processes. Our activities engage evenly with all political actors factoring in the risk that more participatory processes may be seen by some as a threat.

Bureau Goal 4: Promote Inclusive Country-led Development

Bureau Goal 4 Description: Under this goal, we will look to strengthen the capacity and commitment of African countries to build stronger health systems and reduce mortality; improve access to education and training for all Africans; sustainably reduce hunger, malnutrition, and poverty; and strengthen country capacity to address demographic and environmental changes with increased resilience. Sustainable capacity in these areas is critical, along with improved economic growth and governance, to help countries in the region accelerate their way along their journey towards self-reliance. State fragility, institutional weaknesses, poor economic governance, unsustainable management of natural resources, and poverty all challenge a country's self-reliance. Our efforts under this goal contribute to U.S government-wide efforts under the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan, "Strategic Objective 2.2: Promote healthy, educated and productive populations in partner countries to drive inclusive and sustainable development, open new markets, and support U.S. prosperity and security objectives." We recognize addressing disease and improving public health not only reduces mortality and improves the quality of life but also promotes peace and security, economic growth, and development. With this in mind, we will continue implementation of PEPFAR, the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), and FTF, with a focus on ending preventable maternal and child deaths, controlling the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and combating infectious disease to include working with our partners to advance the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA). Programming will remain centered on women, girls, and gender equality; leveraging local and multilateral partnerships, including the private sector; strengthening health systems to provide essential services and prevent, detect, and respond to future infectious disease outbreaks; and promoting innovation and research. We will also work to advance gender-equitable access to education, especially in crisis and conflict environments, as well as improve the quality of basic education, vocational training, and higher education to enhance the capacity of African youth to contribute to their economies and societies. Through YALI programming, we will empower Africa's next generation of leaders by providing opportunities for academic coursework, leadership training, and networking. The U.S. government's global hunger and food security initiative Feed the Future (FTF) will remain our primary development tool for addressing chronic hunger and undernutrition in Africa. FTF seeks to catalyze agriculture-led growth and improve nutritional status through efforts to enhance agricultural productivity, increase economic resilience in vulnerable communities, and expand access to markets and trade for smallholder farmers, especially women. The region is also vulnerable to natural resource degradation and the effects of climate change, which can negatively influence food and nutrition security, access to markets, and the continent's long-term agricultural and economic potential. We will lead U.S. government efforts to ensure African countries can adapt to the impacts of climate variability, as well as conserve biodiversity, while continuing to grow their economies and optimize the use of natural resources and human capital in a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable manner. Our efforts under this goal will have a particular eye on the confluence of rapid population growth and increased urbanization, which are, and will continue to create, significant challenges for African governments, communities, environments,

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and people. Climate variability will have a disproportionate impact on Africa, as much of the population relies on natural resources for their livelihoods.

Bureau Objective 4.1: Transform African Health Systems to Accelerate Reductions in Mortality

- **Bureau Objective 4.1 Justification and Linkages:** The U.S. government works to transform African health systems through new and enhanced partnerships with other donors, civil society, faith-based and non-governmental organizations, the academic community, and the private sector. Through these partnerships, the United States supports country-led efforts based on national strategies, fosters new tools and innovations, and implements cost-effective interventions that are sustainable and scalable. The hallmarks of U.S. leadership in global health include PEPFAR, PMI, and FTF. Agencies and offices throughout the U.S. government share three goals: to prevent child and maternal deaths, combat infectious disease threats, and to control the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

- **Bureau Objective 4.1 Risk Considerations:** In order to meet these shared goals, we work with partner countries to build stronger, integrated, and more self-reliant systems that enable them to improve the health of their citizens. The U.S. government's commitment to the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) launched in 2014 brings the United States and international partners together to protect populations from epidemics and threats they pose to human life, the global economy, and our national security. USAID's expertise in disaster response also contributes to establishment of emergency operations centers, critical to real-time outbreak response. Our PEPFAR programs strive to make strategic, scientifically sound investments to rapidly scale-up core HIV prevention, treatment, and care interventions, and maximize impact. We work with partners to effectively mobilize, coordinate, and efficiently utilize resources to expand high-impact strategies, saving more lives sooner. We support efforts to reduce maternal and child mortality by implementing cost-effective and evidence-based interventions to address otherwise-preventable deaths, train health personnel on management of pregnancy complications, improve recognition of danger signs and the importance of care-seeking, and promote the appropriate use of community health workers to support a wide range of child health interventions and improved care for small and sick newborns. Across all of our efforts, achievement of the overall objective will depend upon sufficient political will and resource mobilization among partner countries, human capacity building at national and subnational levels, and our ability to prevent and detect emerging health risks. Additionally, risk created by socio-economic factors such as urbanization, transient populations, and the increasing youth bulge must also be addressed to ensure improved health outcomes.

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Bureau Objective 4.2: Support Equitable Access to Education for All Learners and Training for Africa's Next Generation

- **Bureau Objective 4.2 Justification and Linkages:** The Department of State and USAID will support foreign governments, international organizations, and private sector partners to increase access to quality education as a smart development strategy to promote inclusive, country-led development in sub-Saharan Africa. To reinforce the educational foundation of growing societies in our partner countries, we will fund programs to ensure crisis-affected children and youth are accessing quality education that is safe, relevant, and promotes social cohesion. We will also fund programs to ensure children are reading and gaining basic skills that are foundational to future learning and success; young people are learning the skills they need to lead productive lives, gain employment, and positively contribute to society; and higher education institutions are supporting development progress across sectors. We will remain champions of girls' education and target the underlying causes of gender gaps in education attainment, including child, early, and forced marriage, and gender-based violence in schools. Through YALI programming, we will empower Africa's next generation of leaders by providing opportunities for academic coursework, leadership training, and networking.

- **Bureau Objective 4.2 Risk Considerations:** This objective takes into account several potential risks, including sufficient political will and effective domestic resource mobilization, the ability to recruit and retain essential staff at all levels, public norms that value education and completion, and the quality and relevance of education and training provided.

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Bureau Objective 4.3: Sustainably Reduce Hunger, Malnutrition, and Poverty in sub-Saharan Africa

- **Bureau Objective 4.3 Justification and Linkages:** Evidence consistently shows that agricultural growth is highly effective in reducing poverty, especially in Africa, where the majority of the rural poor depend on agriculture either directly or indirectly for their livelihoods. With the enactment of the U.S. Global Food Security Act (GFSA), the U.S. Government developed the Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS) in 2016, implemented through FTF. Through FTF, the United States partners with targeted African countries to generate broad-based economic growth and improved food security and nutrition. FTF advances global stability and prosperity by improving the most basic of human conditions – the need that families and individuals have for a reliable source of quality food and sufficient resources to purchase it. FTF addresses the root causes of poverty and hunger, helping people and countries end reliance on foreign aid. By catalyzing responsible private-sector investment and promoting higher levels of public investment and assistance for agriculture and food security, FTF efforts connect farmers to markets, support innovative agricultural approaches to confront food security and nutrition challenges, and help communities become more resilient and better able to respond to shocks and stresses. Through FTF, we are helping to break the cycle of hunger and poverty in emerging economies. We will continue to promote a comprehensive and gender-equitable approach to food and nutrition security and the closely related issue of water security. We will use a climate-smart approach to ensure smallholder farmers, especially women farmers, can adapt and thrive despite variations in rainfall, higher temperatures, and more saline soils. This not only helps farmers increase their productivity, but also helps communities increase their resilience and better withstand and bounce back from crises when they do happen. Since FTF was launched in 2010, our investments in food and nutrition security have reduced poverty and child stunting – the best surrogate indicator for nutritional status – and helped vulnerable populations become more resilient to food crises.

- **Bureau Objective 4.3 Risk Considerations:** Risks to achieving the overall objective may include such factors as climate-related hazards (e.g., drought, flooding, seasonal pests); the quality of market links and market access; gender inequalities; and policies and practices that affect the investment of labor and capital in agricultural development and farming cycles year to year.

Bureau Objective 4.4: Strengthen Country Capacity to Adapt to Environmental and Demographic Changes with Increased Resilience

- **Bureau Objective 4.4 Justification and Linkages:** Successful management of natural resources in sub-Saharan Africa is hampered by many factors, among them poor governance, limited capacity for regulation and enforcement, and inequitable access to land and resources. Poverty, closely related to water and food insecurity and often complicated by instability and conflict, increases pressure on limited resources and encourages short-term utilization without consideration of the long-term implications of the disappearance of those resources.

- **Bureau Objective 4.4 Risk Considerations:** Threats to natural resources are resulting in species loss, habitat loss and fragmentation, and disruption of ecosystem services (i.e., the many and varied benefits that humans freely gain from the natural environment and from properly-functioning ecosystems). Changes in climate and weather patterns pose additional risks to sustainable economic development and human well-being, disproportionately affecting poor and marginalized populations, especially women and girls, and stressing governance systems. As an increasing number of people move to cities to escape rural poverty, urban governments struggle to provide critical services to burgeoning populations in urban and peri-urban areas, increasing risks of instability and civic unrest. Improving resilience to environmental and demographic changes is critical to ensuring better development outcomes, such as enhancing sustainable livelihoods, building strong local communities, improving health and nutrition outcomes, promoting gender equality, and increasing government transparency and accountability. Rapid population growth, increasing urbanization, and other demographic and social trends are putting pressure on scarce natural resources that provide goods and services and help mitigate risks to human health and economic growth. By helping African countries build resilience to environmental and demographic changes, we will contribute to a more stable and prosperous future for Africa and the United States.

4. Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective

Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 1: Advance Diplomatic and Development Effectiveness to Increase Accountability to the American Taxpayer.

- **Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 1 Justification and Linkages:** The federal government can and should operate more effectively, efficiently, and securely. The Bureau consistently seeks to maximize taxpayers' return on investment and improve operational efficiency, including by addressing the management objectives cited in the JSP. As such, the Administration has set goals in areas that are critical to improving the federal government's effectiveness, efficiency, cybersecurity, and accountability. This includes taking an evidence-based approach to improving programs and services; reducing the burden of compliance activities; delivering high-performing program results and services to citizens and businesses through effective and efficient mission support services; and holding agencies accountable for improving performance. In support of these aims, this objective guides the management of our people, programs, information, and capital assets. It requires pursuing efficiencies at all levels, streamlining our organization without undermining effectiveness; using data-driven analysis for decisions; making risk-based investments in safety and security; diversifying and reorienting the foreign assistance portfolio toward innovation and sustainability; and developing a more flexible, highly skilled U.S. government workforce in Africa including U.S. Direct Hires, contractors, and Locally Employed Staff. Mission execution is currently supported by multiple operational platforms with opportunities for greater leveraging of shared services. Harmonizing mission support functions for Department of State and other agencies will leverage economies of scale, improve process visibility, enhance technology integration, and improve the quality and the speed with which the missions deliver support services.