



Integrated Country Strategy

ETHIOPIA

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

The United States benefits from a strong and successful Ethiopia at peace with itself and its neighbors and able to project security and prosperity in the Horn of Africa and beyond.

Ethiopia is Africa's second most populous country and a longstanding U.S. partner, hosting a sizeable number of American citizen residents and visitors, publicly voicing support for many of the U.S. goals for regional stability, and representing an attractive market for U.S economic and commercial interests. A large Ethiopian diaspora in the United States and keen Congressional interest make Ethiopia a front-burner foreign policy issue. As Ethiopia emerges from the devastating northern conflict that began in November 2020, the United States faces the imperative of assisting its long-standing partner to consolidate early gains in peace, reconciliation, and prosperity, while turning the page to a more productive era in bilateral relations.

The November 2, 2022, Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (COHA) between the Government of Ethiopia (GOE) and Tigray Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF) presents new opportunities for both Ethiopia and the United States. Nevertheless, the U.S. government (USG) toolkit is severely constrained. Development assistance remains paused in the areas of security cooperation, some aspects of democracy and governance, economic growth, and associated support to the GOE. Policy interventions, such as suspension of African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) benefits, imposition of individual visa sanctions, and the prospect of Executive Order sanction designations, are the status quo. Although some like-minded partners would like to restart international financial institution (IFI) support for Ethiopia, the U.S. has legal restrictions against doing so under current circumstances. Conflicts elsewhere in Ethiopia, particularly Ethiopia's largest regional state of Oromia, show no sign of easing. Meanwhile, there are no easy fixes to the region's persistent challenges, from terrorism and fragile governance to recurrent epidemics and severe droughts exacerbated by a changing climate.

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Reflecting central tenets of the National Security Strategy (NSS), the U.S. Strategy towards Sub-Saharan Africa, the Global Health Security Agenda 2024, and the U.S. pledge to the WHO-backed COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access, the Mission's overarching goal for 2022-2025 is to restore and revitalize the longstanding partnership between the United States and Ethiopia in a way that serves both countries' interests. As the Embassy returned from Ordered Departure to full staffing levels in February 2022, we seized a window of opportunity to repair relations while improving cooperation across a range of priorities. These include assisting U.S. citizens and protecting borders, strengthening institutions underpinning regional stability, and building mutual prosperity and resilience. In order to restore the full economic assistance potential from the USG, the White House and U.S. Trade Representative have publicly declared a desire to witness additional concrete steps from the GOE. While there is tangible progress on negotiating an end to the conflict, enabling humanitarian access to conflict-affected areas of the north, and engaging in inclusive dialogue that addresses ethnic tensions, more is needed to hold perpetrators accountable for human rights abuses and violations. Absent sustained, good-faith efforts by the GOE, our partnership remains limited.

1) U.S. Citizens and Borders: Our first priority is to assist U.S. citizens and protect U.S. borders. Frequently declared states of emergency (SOEs) have resulted in the restricted movement and arbitrary arrest and detention of U.S. citizens, likely on the basis of ethnicity. The Mission faces perennial difficulties securing consular notification and access to our citizens detained in Ethiopia. Meanwhile, we had to curtail visa services due to increased demand for American Citizen Services (ACS) during the conflict. Coupled with the existing COVID-related backlog, the Mission has been unable to allocate sufficient resources to ensure optimal visa services that would durably strengthen U.S. border and homeland security and reunite families. The public outcry due to the 2022 fiscal year deadline for diversity visa lottery winners coming with many applicants not having had interviews was loud and sustained. The Mission will continue to prioritize ACS, regularize visa services, and seek to address broader security challenges by engaging the GOE on regional counterterrorism efforts.

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2) Peace, Security, and Democratic Institutions: Our second goal is to promote resilient peace, security, and democratic institutions in Ethiopia. To this end, the Mission continues to push for an inclusive national dialogue process that seeks to heal longstanding ethnic cleavages; the administration of free, fair, transparent, and nonviolent local elections and referenda; independent and competent national, regional, and local institutions; a transitional justice program to begin the process of national reconciliation and deter future human rights abuses; greater press freedoms and reduced hate speech and disinformation; and improved GOE willingness and capacity to work with its neighbors and regional organizations on issues affecting regional stability. As the GOE emerges from the northern Ethiopia conflict and resolves differences over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), we expect to resume assistance that rebuilds the GOE's capacity to respond to humanitarian crises while investing in the professionalization of the Ethiopian military and security forces and improving their human rights performance. Despite serious setbacks in these areas during the northern Ethiopia conflict, many Ethiopians are eager to resume reforms begun in 2018, with the United States as a key partner.

3) Sustainable Development and Mutual Prosperity: Our third goal is to promote sustainable development and prosperity through expanded and deepened partnership and mutual understanding. The United States and Ethiopia have shared global interests, including with respect to mitigating and responding to recurring natural disasters; reducing carbon emissions through increased use of green energy and climate-smart agriculture; strengthening resilience to health threats and pandemics; boosting human development for vulnerable citizens and communities; and investing in youth. With Africa's second largest market as well as nascent economic reforms and privatizations that remain a work in progress, Ethiopia offers an attractive and growing market for U.S. business with the potential for greater two-way trade and investment. With respect to the USG economic toolkit, the GOE has an enormous incentive to meet requirements enabling it to benefit from the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and Development Finance Corporation (DFC). Credible efforts by the GOE to avoid a pattern of gross human rights violations relating to the northern conflict will unlock IFI support with the backing of the United States.

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Underpinning these initiatives are deep and growing people-to-people connections with the potential to accelerate commercial activity and improve the image of “Brand America” in Ethiopia, while engendering mutual understanding. Despite the assistance pause, USAID has committed \$1.4 billion in emergency food aid across Ethiopia in 2022 to reduce the loss of human life due to unprecedented drought. Refugees from Somalia, Eritrea, and Sudan as well as internally displaced persons due to both natural and human-made issues pose humanitarian challenges in all regions of the country.

4) U.S. Mission Addis Ababa: Our fourth goal is to improve Mission Addis Ababa in a way that reinforces outstanding customer service, operational effectiveness, and recruitment and retention while integrating Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) principles throughout the Mission. The Mission’s ICASS customer satisfaction scores are already above the regional average, but the consistent growth of U.S. Direct Hire (USDH) and Locally Employed (LE) staff without commensurate growth in management support personnel puts this at risk. The Mission will reorganize target offices, such as the Facilities Management Office, and increase the engagement of LE staff to strengthen a diverse, equitable, and inclusive team and an accessible environment.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Assist U.S. citizens and protect U.S. borders.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Provide optimal and equitable consular services to U.S. citizens and strengthen U.S. border and homeland security. (CDCS SpO, IR3: Rule of law and democratic institutions strengthened.)

Mission Goal 2: Promote resilient peace, security, and democratic institutions.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Strengthen transparent, democratic institutions that promote good governance, rule of law, peace building, and human rights principles at all levels of government and society. (CDCS SpO: Citizen responsive government enhanced.)
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Rebuild Ethiopia's capacity to address internal and external humanitarian crises including current and emerging health threats. (CDCS DO 1: Disaster risk management strengthened. CDCS DO 2: Resilience of vulnerable populations to key shocks increased.)
- **Mission Objective 2.3:** Engage and support the professionalization and improved human rights performance of the Ethiopian military and security forces at all levels of government and in implementing the COHA. (CDCS SpO, IR3: Rule of law and democratic institutions strengthened.)

Mission Goal 3: Promote sustainable development, mutual prosperity, and health security through expanded and deepened partnerships.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Support shared global interests in sustainable economic, public health, and human development for vulnerable citizens and communities. (CDCS DO2, IR2.4: Barriers to social services reduced. CDCS DO3: Private sector-led economic growth promoted. CDCS DO 4: Sustained improvements in essential service delivery outcomes focused on women and girls.)
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Strengthen the U.S.-Ethiopian economic and commercial relationship by promoting market-oriented reforms and expanding two-way trade and investment. (CDCS DO3: Private sector-led economic growth promoted.)
- **Mission Objective 3.3:** Rebuild and expand people-to-people connections between Ethiopians and Americans. (CDCS DO3: Private sector-led economic growth promoted; CDCS SpO: Citizen responsive government enhanced.)

Management Objective 1: Improve customer service, operational effectiveness, and staff recruitment/retention of the Mission while integrating Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) principles throughout the Mission.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1 | Assist U.S. citizens and protect U.S. borders.

Description | Ethiopia is a popular destination for U.S. citizen residents, diaspora travelers, and tourists. Assisting U.S. citizens includes providing timely, relevant, accessible, and actionable information to the U.S. citizen community in Ethiopia regarding security, personal, and environmental threats. Ethiopians seek to travel to the United States for a variety of reasons; the Mission aims to support the vibrant social, cultural, educational, economic, and governmental exchange that results from travel, and which is critical to strengthening the U.S.-Ethiopia bilateral relationship. Protecting U.S. borders ensures that all travel to the United States is legal and not detrimental to U.S. national security. The Mission will be vigilant in identifying and deterring fraud and illegal activity among consular clients, and in rebuilding relationships with Ethiopian authorities to strengthen aviation security, borders, anti-trafficking, and counter terrorism.

Objective 1.1 | Provide optimal and equitable consular services to U.S. citizens and strengthen U.S. border and homeland security.

- **Justification |** Mission Ethiopia supports a community of an estimated 35,000 U.S. citizen residents and some 250,000 U.S. citizen visitors annually. Ensuring the welfare of U.S. citizens abroad is a core responsibility for the Department and its overseas missions. Due to its history, culture, natural beauty, and the large diaspora community in the United States, Ethiopia is a popular destination for Ethiopian-American retirees and businesspeople, diaspora travelers, and U.S. tourists. Located in the Rift Valley, Ethiopia is prone to earthquakes and other natural disasters, in particular flooding and droughts. The Consular Section will ensure all U.S. citizens have the best access to emergency preparedness and security information through the Mission's engagement with the expatriate community and local officials, and communication via traditional outreach and social media platforms to reach the widest possible audience. The Mission will also seek to safeguard U.S. citizens in Ethiopia by working with the Government of Ethiopia to improve its consular access and notification protocols. As the demand for American Citizen Services (ACS) grows, the Consular Section will review its workloads, resources, and operations to ensure maximum efficiency and consistency of services are provided equitably to U.S. citizens. Under normal conditions, Mission Ethiopia processes approximately 2,000 passports, 700 Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, 2,000 DNA tests, 10,000 immigrant visas, and 35,000 nonimmigrant visas annually. Through continuous training of consular staff, a focus on detecting and preventing fraud, and adherence to national security priorities, the Consular Section will ensure optimal services to U.S. citizens and promote ease of legitimate travel to the United States, the protection of U.S. borders, and the prevention of illegal immigration. Working with the Regional Security Office and the Department of Homeland Security, the Mission will train and collaborate with Ethiopian authorities to strengthen aviation security, border controls, anti-trafficking, and counter terrorism.

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- **Linkages** | This goal links with the Biden Administration's NSS priority to protect the security of the American people and the 2018-2022 State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) to protect America's security at home and abroad. It also links to the USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) because more professional and better trained Ethiopian customs and border officials contribute to rule of law. The approach likewise reflects DEIA values as articulated in Mission Ethiopia's DEIA Vision Statement. Finally, it supports the Africa Bureau Joint Regional Strategy (AF JRS) Objective 1.2, which relates to improving the capacity and will of security forces, including with respect to border security.
- **Risks** | U.S. citizens have less access to consular services and to information on their safety and security in Ethiopia. Ethiopians seek to travel to the United States for a variety of reasons, but public perception of overly strict border controls and difficulties obtaining visas could deter legitimate travelers and increase visa fraud. Weak borders could impact U.S. national security.

Mission Goal 2 | Promote resilient peace, security, and democratic institutions.

Description | The lethal conflict between the Government of Ethiopia and armed factions in Ethiopia's north has made the pursuit of peace and stability a more challenging but even more critical U.S. policy goal for Ethiopia. Instability in Ethiopia is not confined to the north but is a more widespread phenomenon that manifests across the country, including in its largest regional state, Oromia. Continued transition to a stable multi-party democracy where good governance, the rule of law, and human rights are respected and form the core of Ethiopian democracy is a long-term U.S. foreign policy objective and a focus of our diplomatic engagement and foreign assistance. A more democratic, transparent, and rights-respecting Ethiopia is also a stronger more like-minded partner for the United States on shared regional and global priorities. It is in the interest of the United States to bolster and enhance Ethiopia's ability to respond quickly and efficiently to both internal and external humanitarian crises to ensure peace and stability in Ethiopia and throughout the volatile Horn of Africa region. This is particularly relevant as armed conflicts continue throughout the country, and along with the catastrophic drought, have dramatically increased the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs). The ongoing conflict has also further diverted already insufficient domestic resources away from social services. It will be challenging to rebuild the bilateral relationship with Ethiopian defense and security forces in the aftermath of allegations of gross violations of human rights against Ethiopian military and law enforcement personnel at every level. Yet given the important role that Ethiopia has played in promoting peace in Africa in previous years as the largest contributor of UN peacekeeping forces worldwide, the Mission will focus on professional military education, human rights training, evidence-based prosecutions to reinforce restraint and commitment to the rule of law on the part of the defense and security forces, and support for COHA implementation and stabilization of conflict-affected areas.

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Objective 2.1 | Strengthen transparent, democratic institutions that promote good governance, rule of law, peace building, and human rights principles at all levels of government and society.

- **Justification** | An Ethiopia that shares U.S. values is a better partner for the United States as we present an alternative to predatory, transactional engagement of competitors such as the PRC and Russia. The conflict in northern Ethiopia has directly undermined the country's democratic, governance, human rights, and economic gains that it made over the previous three years. The U.S. Mission continues to promote American democratic and gender equitable values and to stress that conflict, insecurity, poor governance structures, weak institutions, and the lack of an open political system and a vibrant civil society contribute to Ethiopia's instability. Partnership to improve accountability in governance, strengthen institutions, and support transparent, independent, and inclusive national dialogue and transitional justice processes is essential for Ethiopia to thrive.
- **Linkages** | These priorities and goals tie directly to the Biden Administration's Strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa, which calls for increased international cooperation as democracies across the globe are increasingly under siege. They are in line with the NSS priority to foster openness and open societies and deliver democratic and security dividends. They also tie into the Africa Joint Regional Strategy that calls for strengthened democracies and increasingly participatory and competitive elections as well as respect for the promotion of human rights and the rule of law. This further supports CDCS Special Objective that a citizen responsive governance is enhanced.
- **Risks** | An Ethiopia that is unable to resolve its internal conflicts, is riven by perpetual insecurity, and whose economy is continually teetering on the verge of collapse would have calamitous repercussions not only for Ethiopia itself but in an already fragile and volatile Horn of Africa region.

Objective 2.2 | Rebuild Ethiopia's capacity to address internal and external humanitarian crises, emerging health threats, and the effects of climate change.

- **Justification |** Responding quickly and efficiently to both internal and external humanitarian crises is necessary to ensure peace and stability in Ethiopia and throughout the volatile Horn of Africa. Refugees flow into Ethiopia from Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, and South Sudan, straining public resources and creating tensions in the border zones. Within its own borders, severe droughts and conflict contributed to increased food insecurity and vulnerability, high malnutrition, and high levels of internal displacement. Nearly 30 million Ethiopians required humanitarian assistance in 2022. Climate change is increasing frequency and severity of drought, leaving less time for recovery. Additionally, Ethiopia experiences a diverse set of public health threats, hazards, and events, including multiple occurrences of disease outbreaks, such as SARS-CoV-2, cholera, measles, severe acute malnutrition, dengue fever, chikungunya, scabies, drought-related public health issues, flooding, and displacement due to conflicts and other public health events. While Ethiopia has played a leading role in responding to regional crises, the conflict in the north has damaged its capacity and resources for large-scale response, both domestically and regionally. In 2021 and 2022, USAID delivered more than \$1 billion in humanitarian assistance. The capacity of the federal and local systems to effectively prepare for and manage shocks is inadequate and puts development gains at risk. It is in the interest of the United States that Ethiopia maintains its open-door policy to refugees and IDPs, particularly by reducing the fiscal burden through measures to increase refugee self-reliance. Creating better linkages between humanitarian relief and development assistance is critical to boosting the economic capacity of refugees, IDPs, and their host communities. These strong linkages are required both at the national and regional levels of government and will allow the country to lead its own refugee response. Our support to Ethiopia in building more resilient communities and mechanisms for responding to shocks and ensure capacity within public health systems also mitigates the risk of internal instability, buttressing Ethiopia's long-term viability as a strategic partner.

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- **Linkages** | Mission Objective 2.2 dovetails with numerous USG priorities.

With regards to the Strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa, these activities will directly support Africa as it combats the threats posed by climate change by enhancing resilience in vulnerable communities. It aligns with the NSS guidance to join the international community to tackle the climate crisis and other shared challenges, the 2024 Global Health Security Agenda, the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES) strategy, the 2005 WHO International Health Regulations, and the U.S. commitment to the WHO-backed COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access pledge. It aligns with National Defense Strategy (NDS) Goal 2 and African Central Command (AFRICOM) Goal 2. These activities will empower the realization of USAID's CDCS, especially with regards to Objectives 1 and 2 to strengthen disaster risk management and improve the resilience of vulnerable populations. It corresponds with JRS and Global Food Security Strategy objectives to reducing hunger, malnutrition, and poverty by strengthening equitable and accessible resilience capacities.

- **Risks** | An Ethiopia that is still struggling to resolve its internal conflicts, unable to ensure the health of the population, riven by perpetual insecurity, and whose economy is continually teetering on the verge of collapse would have calamitous repercussions not only for Ethiopia but for the fragile and volatile Horn of Africa region.

Objective 2.3 | Engage and support the professionalization and improved human rights performance of the Ethiopian military and security forces at all levels of government and in implementing the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

- **Justification** | Ethiopia's large and relatively professional defense force has been a willing and capable partner in promoting international peacekeeping and defense of Ethiopia against external threats. Ethiopia in recent years has been the largest contributor of UN peacekeeping forces worldwide, contributing more than 8,000 troops in Somalia, Sudan, and South Sudan. It will be particularly challenging to rebuild the bilateral relationship with Ethiopian defense and security forces in the aftermath of the allegations of gross violations of human rights against Ethiopian military and law enforcement personnel at every level—federal, regional, and local. Before more robust capacity-building efforts can resume, the Mission should focus on reinforcing professional values to reduce the risk that Ethiopian soldiers and police officers will perpetrate similar abuses in the future. Focusing on professional military education, human rights training, and evidence-based prosecutions will reinforce restraint and commitment to the rule of law on the part of defense and security forces. The COHA has offered the USG an opportunity to access and influence the Ethiopian military and security forces for the betterment of Ethiopia's most vulnerable, and the Mission will continue to support the COHA and stabilization in the conflict areas to ensure sustainable peace.
- **Linkages** | This Mission Objective directly supports multiple objectives of the JRS to enhance shared American and African values grounded in dignity and human rights to prevent, respond to, and investigate alleged incidents by security sector actors, improve the capacity of security forces, and strengthen regional organizations and government institutions. It addresses INL's functional bureau strategy to strengthen the foundations of criminal justice systems to address shared threats, promote human rights, and provide fair and equal justice to all citizens. Additionally, it contributes to two objectives within Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL)'s functional bureau strategy to advance respect for human rights and labor rights through bilateral and multilateral diplomatic engagement

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and foreign assistance and to promote accountability by ensuring U.S. security assistance, foreign aid and economic policies are consistent with human rights and democratic principles. It supports the JSP Strategic Objective to combat corruption and the U.S. Strategy on Countering Corruption. It furthers the Political Military (PM)'s functional bureau strategy objective to build security, including peacekeeping, capacity of partner and ally nations, to ensure their effectiveness, long-term sustainability, and professionalism. It supports the NSS priority to reinvigorate and modernize our alliances and partnerships around the world and the OES functional bureau strategy's goal to promote conservation and combat nature crimes.

- **Risks |** An extended lapse in USG support to Ethiopia's peacekeeping operations in the Horn of Africa, or a failure to ensure persistent enabler support to those peacekeeping forces, will reduce their operational effectiveness and increase the threat that violent extremism could spread from Somalia to Ethiopia. On the other hand, failing to propose solutions to ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law among defense and security forces will most likely result in continued allegations of human rights abuses; these risks should be mitigated by carefully sequencing security force assistance so as not to move on to capacity-building programs before the requisite professional education and training courses have been dispensed.

Mission Goal 3 | Promote sustainable development for a healthy and productive population and mutual prosperity through expanded and deepened partnerships and understanding.

Description | This goal focuses on sustainable development, prosperity, and health security through expanded and deepened partnership and mutual understanding. Ethiopia is the second-largest market in Africa by population and has shared interests across several policy areas, making it a potentially stronger partner for the United States on regional and global priorities. The country has the potential to be an economic powerhouse in the region; however, systemic poverty, foreign exchange shortages, the COVID pandemic, natural disasters, recurring and newly emerging diseases, and the conflict have prevented Ethiopia from unleashing its economic potential as a market or as a significant exporter of goods and services. Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine has exacerbated Ethiopia's already dire economic situation, while predatory Chinese economic and commercial practices threaten the country's longer term economic autonomy. The United States and Ethiopia can work together to advance the goal of strengthened economic ties by pursuing shared global interests: acting to prevent, mitigate, and respond to recurring natural disasters, adapting to the effects of climate change, reducing carbon emissions through improved landscape management and use of green energy, strengthening resilience to health threats and pandemics, boosting human development for vulnerable citizens and communities, and investing in youth. Improving upon these shared goals will help U.S. businesses tap into Africa's second largest market, especially if the GOE continues to build on its nascent economic reforms and privatization plans. With respect to the USG economic toolkit, the GOE has an enormous incentive to meet requirements enabling it to resume benefitting from the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and Development Finance Corporation (DFC), as well as USAID, U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), CDC, and other programming. Moreover, stronger people-to-people connections have the potential to accelerate commercial activity and improve the image of "brand America" in Ethiopia, while promoting the mutual understanding needed to improve public opinion of the United States, including from the diaspora.

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Objective 3.1 | Support shared global interests in sustainable economic and human development for vulnerable citizens and communities.

- **Justification |** More than 80 percent of Ethiopia's estimated almost over 123 million¹ people live in rural areas, subsisting primarily on rain-fed agriculture and cultivating an average land holding size of less than one hectare. While the population remains predominantly rural, the rate of urbanization is increasing, requiring strengthened linkages between rural and urban areas. Ethiopia is highly vulnerable to food insecurity caused by a combination of factors, including droughts, low agricultural productivity, high population growth, post-harvest loss, and other systemic challenges. The economic impact of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine has highlighted Ethiopia's vulnerabilities. Poverty and insecurity are further exacerbated by climate change-induced droughts and floods as well as widespread degradation of the natural environment, including soil and water. Ethiopia also has one of the lowest per capita electricity consumption rates in the world, which further limits opportunities and undermines resilience to natural and economic shocks. If climate-smart agricultural performance is improved, associated jobs are created, resilience to shocks is strengthened, and populations have better access to water, health, and basic education services, then rural incomes and food security will increase. USG programs and policy efforts aim to improve food security, support broad-based, inclusive economic growth, increase educational attainment, empower women to increase household food security and income, increase energy supplies, build resilience to recurrent shocks, strengthen disaster risk management, promote sustainable agriculture, protect natural resources, and save lives and protect the livelihoods of vulnerable populations. Furthermore, the United States and Ethiopia share global climate action goals including emissions reduction, scaled-up adaptation efforts, and enhanced flows of appropriate finance.

¹ Source: World Bank, <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/population-estimates-and-projections>
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- **Linkages |** This Mission Objective supports the draft JSP strategic objectives to strengthen global health security and climate change leadership and resilience, strengthen inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and to support equity and inclusion as well as the CDCS goals to reduce barriers to social services, promote private sector-led economic growth, and sustain improvements in essential service delivery outcomes focused on women and girls. It supports the NDS Strategic Priority to improve economic security. Additionally, the Biden-Harris administration has prioritized the COVID-19 pandemic and bolstering health systems worldwide by improving preparation, prevention, detection, and response to both the current COVID-19 pandemic, and better prepare for the next global health threats. These are covered by the NSS, the Global Health Security Agenda 2024, OES functional bureau strategy, the World Health Organization's (WHO) 2005 International Health Regulations, the U.S. commitment to the WHO-backed COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access program, and through interagency programming under the Power Africa and Prosper Africa initiatives. It supports several AF JRS objectives including advancing health systems, climate action, and youth engagement.
- **Risks |** Not achieving this objective could exacerbate Ethiopia's tenuous economic growth and reform trajectory, ceding U.S. economic influence in Ethiopia to the PRC, negatively impact the long-term economic relationship, and threaten progress against health, water, agriculture, energy, and climate change objectives.

Objective 3.2 | Strengthen the U.S.-Ethiopian economic and commercial relationship by promoting market-oriented reforms in Ethiopia and expanding two-way trade and investment.

- **Justification |** The United States and Ethiopia have long enjoyed a strong economic and commercial relationship, which benefits both countries' prosperity. Two-way trade has expanded from less than \$200 million in 2000 to around \$1.0-1.5 billion by 2021. In 2020, Ethiopia was the United States' 75th largest export destination, and the United States was Ethiopia's 2nd biggest export market. With a rapidly increasing population, Ethiopia offers a growing and attractive market for U.S. companies. Since 2018, the Ethiopian government has aggressively pursued ambitious pro-market economic reforms, with the United States Ethiopia's economic partner of choice. Recently, however, the bilateral economic relationship and the Ethiopian economy have suffered a series of damaging setbacks. The COVID-19 pandemic, the conflict in northern Ethiopia, historic drought as part of a worsening drought pattern, and decreased support from international donors have slowed economic growth from 9.0 percent in 2019 to 6.3 percent in 2021. A U.S. government assistance freeze in response to conflict-related concerns has halted important economic cooperation from USAID, the Development Finance Corporation (DFC), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and other U.S. agencies, significantly dampening the impact of major USG interagency initiatives such as Power Africa and Prosper Africa. In 2021, human rights concerns led to the removal of Ethiopia's eligibility for trade benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Competitors, such as the PRC, have sought to gain advantage at U.S. expense, including opportunities lost in the areas of green development. The United States has made it clear to Ethiopia how actions on their part can restore both economic assistance and AGOA eligibility. Should those actions be undertaken, the U.S. Government can play a critical role in helping Ethiopia benefit once again from the U.S. economic toolkit, expanding two-way trade and investment, ensuring Ethiopia succeeds on its ambitious market liberalization reform path, and restoring our mutually beneficial economic and commercial partnership.

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- **Linkages** | This supports the strategic objectives under the draft JSP working towards economic governance and inclusive and sustainable economic growth as well as the CDCS goals to promote private sector-led economic growth. This is in line with the NSS priority to expand economic prosperity and opportunity and with the AF JRS objectives to encourage the improvement of business enabling environments; expand African capacity to participate in global markets; and improve economic governance.
- **Risks** | Not achieving this objective could exacerbate Ethiopia's tenuous economic growth and reform trajectory, ceding U.S. economic influence in Ethiopia to the PRC, negatively influence the long-term economic and commercial relationship, and threaten U.S. exports and jobs dependent on the Ethiopian market.

Objective 3.3 | Rebuild and expand people-to-people connections between Ethiopians and Americans.

- **Justification** | Decades of strong American assistance to Ethiopian economic, public health and educational institutions helped forge extremely close bonds between the United States and Ethiopia through the late 1960s, but geopolitical shifts eroded many of these gains during the reign of the Derg. The coming to power of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), coupled with the end of the Cold War changed the geopolitics in the Horn of Africa, enabling the U.S. to rebuild its relations and continue its assistance programs in different sectors across Ethiopia. Although the advent of PM Abiy's Prosperity Party offered the prospect of even stronger U.S.-Ethiopian relations, policy differences over the GERD and the conflict in Tigray, Afar, and Amhara Regions have greatly harmed Ethiopian public perceptions of the United States, which reached historic lows in the fall of 2021. While America's overall appeal in Ethiopia remains strong, supported in part by the largest Ethiopian diaspora in the world, the gap in relations has opened the door for other foreign influences, notably China and Russia.

In a media environment closely controlled by the GOE, the tone of public messaging can change overnight. Achieving and consolidating longer-term gains in public opinion, however, will require re-establishing connections to universities, schools, and other public institutions that have become frayed, empowering our active alumni community to engage on issues of mutual concern, and engaging new audiences, including among the influential Ethiopian-American diaspora.

- **Linkages** | This objective aligns with the JSP goal to increase partnerships with the private sector and civil society organizations to mobilize support and resources and shape foreign public opinion. It aligns with CDCS by promoting private sector-led economic growth and enhancing citizen-responsive government. This supports the draft JSP strategic objective to build support for American values and the NSS priorities to expand economic prosperity and opportunity; and reinvigorate and modernize our alliances and partnerships

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around the world. It also supports goal three under the AF JRS to strengthen democracy and uphold universal values.

- **Risks |** Following the historic low point in Ethiopian public opinion of the United States, the USG must tread carefully to avoid missteps, or risk blowback from Ethiopian audiences that generally respect American culture but have become extremely skeptical of U.S. policy objectives in Ethiopia.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1 | Improve customer service, operational effectiveness, and staff recruitment/retention of the Mission, while integrating Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) principles throughout the Mission.

- **Justification** | The Management Section continues to achieve ICASS Customer Satisfaction Survey scores that are above the regional average. However, consistent growth of U.S. and Locally Employed (LE) Staff without commensurate growth in Management support personnel has affected operational effectiveness. Rather than increasing support staff, Post seeks to realign and reorganize targeted offices first.

The Facilities Management Office (FAC) will see a significant change to its workload once 65 employees relocate from single family homes to a new apartment complex. Maintenance and utility services at the building are the responsibility of the landlord and will relieve FAC from water and generator fuel deliveries, routine maintenance work orders, and driving to 65 homes scattered across Addis Ababa. A review of the workload is necessary to determine how best to reorganize the office to address the changing requirements and better protect U.S. Government owned and leased facilities.

The increase in U.S. and local staff over the years has contributed to a rise in the workload of the Human Resources staff. Smooth operation of the office is essential to recruitment and retention of employees, obtaining diplomatic accreditations, offering training, managing benefits, and fostering a diverse, equitable, and included team. A thorough review of HR tasks, realignment of duties, and giving more authority and responsibility to LE staff will result in improved performance without hiring additional staff.

The Foreign Service National (FSN) Forum is the elected body representing LE staff from all agencies at Post. The LE staff perform a vital role at the Embassy and are an overwhelming majority of the Embassy's workforce. They require a means to regularly meet with and advise the Management Officer and the DCM on matters that are important to them. Enhancing dialogue with the LE staff will build a more productive partnership, rebuild relationships between American and local staff, and improve morale, and support diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workforce.

In a country with weak diversity, equity, inclusiveness and accessibility laws, the Embassy has an opportunity to be an example of these values and influence the Ethiopian environment. First steps in fostering a DEIA environment are to establish the baseline and determine where improvements are necessary. Facilities Management will coordinate an accessibility survey to identify barriers within the workplace and develop a correction plan. The DEIA Council will draft, publish, and analyze a climate survey to focus activity on priorities highlighted by American and local staff. Attention to DEIA will also make us a stronger employer with the ability to recruit and retain the best talent.

- **Linkages** | The Mission Management Objective supports E.O. 14035, E.O. 13583, E.O. 13985, E.O. 13988, E.O. 14020, and taking care of people components of the JCS and National Strategy documents. It links to the draft JSP Strategic Objective 4.1: Workforce; Strategic Objective; 4.3: Personnel, Information, and Infrastructure. It supports NSS Priority: expand economic prosperity and opportunity and the AF JRS Management Objective on Management Objective on revitalizing the diplomatic and development workforce and infrastructure. Finally, it incorporates best practices from the Secretary's Office of Diversity and Inclusion.
- **Risks** | The risk of not achieving this objective is degraded USG-owned and leased facilities; a workforce weakened by lack of diversity, lack of attention to training and morale issues; and the loss of institutional memory provided by a consistent and loyal LE staff corps.