
Bridging the Divide: How Can USAID and DoD Integrate Security and Development More Effectively in Africa?

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Effective collaboration between the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Department of Defense (DoD) is a critical element of the U.S. government's approach to security, governance, and development in Africa. USAID assistance and DoD security cooperation in Africa currently reflect a minimal level of interagency coordination at both regional and country levels. A more integrated approach in Africa to U.S. security and development objectives will support African economic growth and poverty reduction; accelerate African progress in reaching its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); reduce the number and

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intensity of conflicts; and block the growth of violent extremism among vulnerable populations, such as disenfranchised and unemployed youth in fast-growing mega-urban centers.¹ Such progress clearly serves U.S. national interests and security objectives in Africa.

This article explores four principal questions: (1) what is the potential for USAID and DoD collaboration in Africa; (2) what are the challenges facing DoD/USAID coordination; (3) what are the risks some see in a closer USAID and DoD relationship; and (4) what can be done now to improve cooperation between USAID and DoD in Africa.

THE POTENTIAL FOR USAID AND DOD COLLABORATION IN THE FIELD

The 2010 U.S. National Security Strategy, the 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), and the World Bank's 2011 World Development Report (WDR), *Conflict, Security, and Development*, emphasize the interdependence between security and development.² To quote former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, "You can't have development without security, and you can't have security without development."³

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Development assistance organizations like USAID cannot operate effectively without a minimal level of security. Successful security and justice sector reform (SJSR), in which both USAID and DoD play major roles, is necessary to transform local institutions in fragile or conflict-prone states over the long-term. This reform process "provides citizen security, justice, and jobs" and thus deters or mitigates violence.⁴ U.S. agencies, like DoD, pursuing U.S. national security objectives cannot

achieve their objectives without a foundation of broad-based development, which provides long-term stability.

The current policy discussion emphasizes employing all elements of national power to address conflict and crisis situations.⁵ Although U.S. forces are not currently deployed in a combat role on the African continent, the United States faces challenges and opportunities in Africa that require the full range of its civilian and military capabilities.⁶ Half of the forty-seven fragile states identified by the Development Assistance Committee's (DAC) Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's

International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) lie in Africa.⁷ Current conflicts in Mali, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan, which have resulted in tens of thousands of internally displaced people illustrates some of the challenges fragile states face.

Pursuing U.S. diplomatic, development, and security objectives in Africa, including more effective crisis prevention, requires cooperation with international partners, host governments, the private sector, and civil society.⁸ The QDDR makes a number of recommendations to enable civilian agencies like USAID and the State Department to lead conflict response and prevention efforts, including more integrated security and justice sector reform.⁹ Further, the policy guidelines of the recently approved U.S. Security Sector Assistance Policy make clear that U.S. security assistance should complement overall U.S. foreign assistance objectives; enhance interagency collaboration; promote economic development; and undergo rigorous monitoring and evaluation.¹⁰

What Would Effective DoD/USAID Collaboration Look Like?

Effective USAID and DoD collaboration in Africa would have multiple characteristics. The first characteristic, a prerequisite, would involve mutual understanding of what each agency brings to the table in financial resources, capabilities, and field assets. Second would come knowledge of what each agency is doing regionally and in each country where both USAID and DoD are present. Experienced field staff in multi-year assignments would be able to build long term relationships. Third, and based on this broader understanding, USAID and DoD would plan together at both regional and country levels so that long term strategies and individual projects are complementary. Fourth, joint coordination of program implementation would follow collaborative program design. Fifth, the more that monitoring and evaluation of program results were undertaken jointly, the more easily both agencies could improve designs of DoD security cooperation and USAID development assistance programs to exploit each agency's comparative advantages. For example, under State Department coordination, USAID's Regional Mission in East and Central Africa (based in Nairobi) could lead the development of a medium-term (3-5 years) regional conflict prevention and mitigation strategy focused on current and future conflicts, involving State, DoD, and USAID staff and representatives from African regional institutions and other aid donors. Based on that strategy, DoD's regional African Command (AFRICOM) could host a week-long workshop of USAID, State, and DoD staff from the field and Washington to

define regional and country-level priorities and responsibilities for moving forward. The resulting U.S. government and multilateral efforts would seek to achieve U.S. government security, development, and diplomatic objectives.

What Opportunities Do USAID and DoD Offer Each Other for Effective Collaboration?

DoD. The potential for fruitful collaboration between USAID and DoD is substantial. The principal contribution that DoD and AFRICOM can make to USAID's foreign assistance efforts lies in the security sector through a range of security cooperation programs. These programs are aimed at building professional militaries that are accountable to civilian governments, respect international human rights standards, are regarded by local populations as protectors, and contribute to regional peacekeeping missions.¹¹ USAID and its NGO partners cannot make much of a difference in people's lives without accountable governance, which includes militaries that local populations respect rather than fear. Building more professional and accountable militaries is an important aspect of comprehensive security and justice sector reform, which integrates the capabilities of "the military, the police, the justice system, and other governance and oversight mechanisms," including legislatures and civil society.¹²

DoD carries out a range of security cooperation programs through AFRICOM and its more than 1000 headquarters staff based in Stuttgart, Germany, service component military personnel stationed in Europe, and additional DoD staff assigned to embassies in Africa. The principal long term DoD staff in-country include Defense Attaché Offices (DAOs) and Offices of Security Cooperation (OSCs). However, AFRICOM does not yet have long-term OSC staff posted in all twenty-three African countries with fully-staffed USAID missions. In the absence of an OSC, the DAO is responsible for security cooperation, but because of his/her other duties, usually limits those activities to a few high priority programs. These usually consist of foreign military sales of U.S. military weapons systems and training of local military contacts at DoD training facilities.

Except for a few large personnel concentrations in Africa like the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) based in Djibouti, DoD staff numbers in individual countries are much smaller than USAID mission staff in U.S. embassy country teams. Few USAID staff in Washington or Africa are aware of the full range of DoD's security cooperation programs in their countries.

USAID. USAID contributes to U.S. national security objectives in its capacity to strengthen weak and fragile states by building accountable governance institutions over the long term and addressing major issues such as food security. Further, by improving delivery of improved health and education services and by helping accelerate inclusive economic growth that reduces poverty and human suffering, USAID can support stability and help prevent conflict. Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates made this point in 2010, saying, "Development is a lot cheaper than sending soldiers."¹³ USAID's field presence covers more than forty-three of the fifty-four countries in the AFRICOM area of operation, which includes North Africa. USAID implements its assistance programs through twenty-four bilateral missions and four regional USAID missions which support regional organizations like the African Union (AU) as well as cross-border trade, infrastructure, river basin programs, and conflict early warning systems. Three experienced USAID Officers, one with a General Officer/Flag rank, presently serve at AFRICOM Headquarters. Therefore, USAID's Africa Bureau and its field staff in both bilateral and regional USAID missions manage billions of dollars of assistance, much of which is aimed at strengthening institutions critical for citizen security, and therefore of direct relevance to DoD and U.S. government objectives of security and stability.

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Directly relevant to DoD security cooperation programs, USAID can quickly field assessment teams for strategic planning, to design programs to address all aspects of development, including conflict or crisis situations, to provide immediate assistance, or to evaluate assistance programs. USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and its Office of Transition Initiatives can mobilize teams in days to fund disaster relief or crisis mitigation efforts, in which DoD personnel are often involved.¹⁴ USAID's strategy to address violent extremism, insurgency, and similar issues in pre-conflict situations and the underlying analysis that led to this strategy show clearly how USAID development assistance can and cannot contribute directly or indirectly to U.S. government counterinsurgency and stabilization efforts that DoD is often implementing.¹⁵ In addition, USAID bilateral and regional missions possess strong planning, implementation, and evaluation capabilities across

all development sectors as well as in cross-cutting areas, such as youth, gender equality, climate change, and conflict and crisis response, management, and mitigation. Three USAID regional missions in Ghana, Kenya, and South Africa, and the Joint Sahel Programming Cell provide legal, procurement, and financial accountability backup to USAID sub-Saharan bilateral missions and support regional initiatives in collaboration with the African Union and other regional institutions. Finally, USAID representatives to the international donor and NGO communities, can provide clear channels for AFRICOM contacts with these organizations and networks, if used by AFRICOM.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FACING DoD/USAID COLLABORATION?

Given the potential, the level of effective cooperation between USAID and DoD at the regional level (through AFRICOM) and at country levels is surprisingly limited. Most effective DoD/USAID collaboration occurs in specific areas like disaster and pandemic preparedness and HIV/AIDS prevention. Outside of these specific areas, none of the characteristics of effective USAID/DoD collaboration discussed in the preceding section are present to any significant degree. The causes of this minimal cooperation are both general and specific. As former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates wrote, “in general, the United States’ interagency tool kit is still a hodgepodge of jury-rigged arrangements constrained by a dated and complex patchwork of authorities, persistent shortfalls in resources, and unwieldy processes.”¹⁶ Although the 2010 National Security Strategy emphasizes the “integration of skills and capabilities within our military and civilian institutions, so they complement each other and operate seamlessly,” multiple obstacles and perceived risks have impeded DoD/USAID collaboration in Africa.¹⁷

Although both DoD and USAID plan at multiple levels—global, regional, and country—little coordinated or joint planning takes place. Minimal mutual understanding of each other’s programs and operations exists, and differences in language, style, and culture complicate communication. Senior leaders in both agencies have failed to emphasize the necessity of expanded cooperation or to change agency incentive structures to reward such efforts or interagency assignments. In several African countries, no long term DoD security cooperation, staff exist to maintain effective working relationships with their USAID counterparts. The government has moved slower than glacially to shift its emphasis from crisis response to conflict prevention, in which USAID and State Department

have clear comparative advantages. Further, the continuing lack of experienced personnel in USAID and other civilian foreign affairs agencies since the end of the Cold War hampers expanded cooperation. Finally, perceived risks of closer DoD/USAID cooperation, such as apprehension by the NGO and wider development communities that DoD will take over a greater share of U.S. foreign assistance, limit efforts to work together in both strategic and more practical ways.

Common Issues Reported by Senior USAID Officers in the Field

Difficulties reported by USAID officers in the field refer primarily to DoD's ponderous bureaucracy and to challenges with community-level projects funded under DoD's Humanitarian Assistance Program (HAP). The huge difference in scale between DoD's \$100,000 to \$200,000 village projects versus USAID's national health or education programs totaling tens of millions of dollars raises questions about the usefulness of working with DoD community project teams.

Often, OSC civil affairs teams developing a community project rotate with little notice and fail to brief the incoming DoD team who takes over. One senior USAID officer described a ribbon-cutting ceremony for an intensive care unit (ICU) in a major city refurbished by DoD. Because the USAID health staff in-country had not been engaged in project planning, the ICU was completely empty with no medical equipment, supplies or personnel. It thus amounted to an embarrassing, unsustainable white elephant in a major urban hospital.¹⁸

Lack of Coordinated Programming

The fundamental problem that inhibits effective USAID/DoD coordination is lack of collaborative program planning, execution, monitoring, evaluation, and learning from experience. Since both USAID and DoD engage in planning and implementing programs at multiple levels, their lack of coordination is perplexing. AFRICOM develops a comprehensive regional theater campaign plan, a regional security cooperation plan and

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individual security cooperation plans at the country level. USAID's African Missions develop five-year regional or bilateral strategies and programs focused on a wide range of development sectors, such as private sector

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development, democracy and governance, climate change, health, and education. These strategies also target areas such as youth skills training and employment, conflict early warning, food security, and community resilience that are directly relevant to AFRICOM regional security plans and broader U.S. government foreign policy objectives. Moreover, DoD currently carries out little effective monitoring and evaluation of its full range of security cooperation

programs for which information is publicly available.¹⁹ With better coordination, USAID's experience and systems could enable AFRICOM to establish stronger evaluation systems that are also compatible with existing USAID monitoring efforts.

USAID's Senior Development Adviser and other staff assigned to AFRICOM are available to facilitate visits by USAID mission directors, but these rarely happen. On such visits, USAID mission directors could educate AFRICOM senior leaders regarding USAID strategies and programs and learn from AFRICOM planning and program staff. Few such visits are encouraged by senior USAID Africa Bureau leaders in Washington. Other lost opportunities include incorporation of briefings by USAID staff of AFRICOM senior leaders who visit countries with USAID missions. Neither USAID directors nor AFRICOM senior leaders take advantage of the full range of opportunities to initiate coordinated or joint planning.

The lack of coordinated and integrated planning carries over into existing interagency programs, such as the Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP), the Partnership for Regional Africa Counter-Terrorism, and the CJTF-HOA. In these counter-terrorism programs, U.S. interagency partners struggle to attain even the basic level of "visibility" or knowledge of the programs of the other members of the partnership. Although guidelines in the new U.S. security assistance policy urge greater interagency collaboration as well as more "rigorous analysis, assessments, and evaluations of impacts and results" of security cooperation, implementation of these guidelines may be long in coming.²⁰

In DoD's efforts to build professional militaries in Africa, no systematic planning approach is evident. No defense sector assessment tool or other form of systematic analysis exists that is required and widely used to assess the existing problems in an African military. No strategic planning method or tool, such as USAID's results framework, is used by DoD to conceptualize the outline of a strategy for resolving priority problems in a particular local military or for a long term capacity development effort of the defense sector in a particular country with clear objectives, outcomes, indicators of progress and targets for accomplishment. Therefore, how DoD designs individual programs or projects that are part of a larger capacity development effort aimed at professionalizing an African military remains a mystery. Clearly, DoD and AFRICOM could profit from USAID's capabilities and experience in this area.

Who's On First? Minimal Mutual Awareness and Understanding

In general, AFRICOM headquarters and field staff continue to have limited understanding of how USAID works and of the full range of capabilities possessed by USAID bilateral and regional missions in Africa. One senior USAID officer in Africa referred to the "total lack of understanding about what USAID does and how we work."²¹ This is mirrored by a lack of knowledge and appreciation within USAID of DoD's capabilities and resources. Without a clear grasp of what both DoD and USAID bring to the table, it is difficult for each party to identify the best ways to complement the other's efforts. No in-depth training course exists to inform either agency's staff on what their counterparts bring to the table. The one exception is a brief (one and one-half day) Joint Humanitarian Operations Course (JHOC) focused on interagency coordination in disaster response situations. USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) delivers JHOC courses annually to AFRICOM headquarters and component staffs as well as to all other regional DoD commands and components around the world. Such an approach could be expanded to include all of USAID and copied by DoD to educate USAID staff on the relevant DoD capabilities and resources.

Senior Leader Commitment in AFRICOM Needed for Expanded Collaboration

AFRICOM senior leadership has not established strong incentives for their midlevel headquarters and field staff to build collaborative relationships with USAID, engage in joint planning and evaluation, or to seriously investigate the capabilities of USAID regional and bilateral missions

to complement DoD's security cooperation programs. When AFRICOM's commander or either deputy travel, they do not include in their itineraries a substantial time to meet with USAID staff, visit relevant project sites, or participate in NGO or donor community roundtables hosted by the USAID country director.

Although USAID's Office of Civil-Military Cooperation (CMC), OFDA, and OTI have worked to expand coordination regarding disasters and complex emergencies, USAID senior leaders have not made DoD/USAID collaboration a high priority nor reoriented personnel incentives to encourage USAID staff to take initiative in this area. The USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa (AA/Africa) does not insist on inviting AFRICOM senior leaders to African Mission Director Conferences. AA/Africa does not instruct Washington senior staff or mission directors in Africa to look for ways to include AFRICOM staff, nor does AA/Africa request AFRICOM or CJTF-HOA to detail staff to each of the regional missions in Africa to search for opportunities for collaboration. Therefore, neither AFRICOM, nor USAID's Africa Bureau in Washington nor field staff, get a clear message from their main boss that they should put a priority on seeking innovations in joint planning, implementation, or evaluation with their opposite agency's colleagues.

"This Won't Get Me Promoted"

Weak incentives for interagency assignments have generally discouraged both DoD and USAID officers from pursuing assignments with each other, with State, in both regional and functional bureaus, or in the National Security Staff. This lack of strong incentives is also true for USAID senior development advisor (SDA) jobs, which are reportedly derided by USAID staff as "not real jobs" compared to USAID jobs in the field.²² No explicit guidance to USAID promotion panels exists to require interagency assignments, such as as SDAs to DoD regional commands, for promotion to senior ranks. Therefore experienced USAID foreign service officers (FSOs) are reluctant to bid on such positions for fear of losing ground in their careers. Similarly, DoD staff who accept assignments as heads of field OSCs are considered to have ruled themselves out for consideration for promotion to Flag rank (General or Admiral).

Lack of Long-term DoD Field Staff

Although progress has occurred over the last two years, several countries in Africa remain without DoD OSCs. While this expansion of OSC

offices represents progress and reduces by half the number of countries with USAID missions that lacked such long-term OSC staffs in 2010, five countries with USAID missions still remain without long-term OSC staff—Namibia, Zambia, Malawi, Benin, and Madagascar. The presence of long-term DoD staff in OSCs makes it possible for USAID and DoD staff to work on a continuing basis to link security and development cooperation more closely.²³ When country teams do not include long-term OSC staff, USAID missions cannot coordinate or plan effectively with DoD in-country.

Additionally, no DoD field staff are detailed to any USAID regional missions in Africa to develop a DoD understanding of the capabilities of such missions. Also, with the exception of USAID/Ethiopia, no DoD field staff have been detailed to bilateral USAID missions in fragile states where a coordinated security and justice sector reform program could experiment with an Embassy-led unified U.S. strategy, as the U.S. ambassador in the Philippines has done with Mindanao, to help prevent or mitigate conflict.²⁴

Insufficient Emphasis on Conflict Prevention versus Response

Given recent conflicts in Mali, the Central African Republic (CAR), and South Sudan, prevention of such crises versus responding after they have happened should command high priority for DoD, USAID, and State. Both DoD and USAID pay some attention to conflict prevention in their work at the country level and regional levels. At least two of the three USAID Africa Regional Missions work on conflict early warning and mitigation with regional African organizations like the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). One of AFRICOM's "Four Cornerstones" is "prevention of future conflicts."²⁵ In Washington, USAID's Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM) pioneered the development of a conflict assessment framework (CAF), which was further developed by the State Department for use as an interagency tool, and developed a series of nine toolkits addressing land, women, and youth with concrete options for addressing causes of conflict. Recent research suggests that assuring food security for vulnerable regions and populations, in which USAID enjoys strong capability, can play a major role in preventing violence.²⁶

Yet, other than the overcommitted National Security Staff (NSS) in the White House, no U.S. government department or agency possesses a clear leadership role for conflict and crisis prevention; has authority to act within the Executive Branch; or can commit the U.S. government in the

international community.²⁷ Notwithstanding the creation of a new Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) in the State Department, no coherent U.S. government strategy to prevent crises and conflicts yet exists.²⁸ Despite multiple references to conflict prevention in the 2010 National Security Strategy and the QDDR, most of the discussion on conflict in both these documents refers to response to post-conflict situations, not prevention of them.

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..... citizen security, address injustice, and create employment is key to breaking ... cycles of violence” which takes a generation.²⁹ Building such institutions requires the commitment of local governments, private sector and civil society combined with help from the international community. This means that in addition to clear interagency roles and responsibilities a coherent U.S. government conflict and crisis prevention strategy must also engage bilateral and multilateral partners. Until it has its own house in order, the U.S. government will lack credibility in the international community on multilateral prevention efforts.

Nobody's Home in USAID

Another fundamental obstacle for effective collaboration between USAID and DoD has been the weakness of USAID, as well as the State Department and other U.S. civilian foreign affairs agencies in staffing, programming, and management systems. From 1990 until 2008, USAID lost more than 40

percent of its staff, even though foreign aid budgets and the number of USAID missions were increasing, especially during the last Bush administration. As staffing declined, USAID's basic programming systems degraded

to a dangerous level, and in 2006, the agency lost its Washington-level budgeting and policy planning capability to the new Foreign Assistance Bureau (the F Bureau) in the State Department. Those functions were not re-established at USAID until 2011. Over the same two decade period, the State Department suffered similar but not as extreme staffing losses, and benefited from a substantial boost in hiring in the early years under Secretary of State Colin Powell.³⁰

Since 2008, USAID has built its staffing levels and technical capabilities by hiring 850 new Foreign Service staff under the Development Leadership Initiative (DLI). Following the arrival of Administrator Rajiv Shah in early 2010, the agency embarked on a series of ambitious reforms known as USAID Forward, which included reviving basic programming systems and expanding training of staff in these systems, re-establishing budget and policy offices, and issuing an agency policy framework for 2011 to 2015. Nevertheless, rebuilding technical staff with program expertise will continue for several years, assuming adequate funding levels.. In addition, although USAID's human capital and program management capabilities are rapidly improving, its overall weakness over more than ten years has meant that its ability to engage robustly with DoD at all levels, play its appropriate role in the field, and protect its prerogatives has been weak. This weakness has compromised the achievement of U.S. security, foreign policy, and development objectives in Africa and other regions. Current budget pressures could again cripple USAID and the State Department and reverse current efforts to rebuild civilian capabilities, especially in USAID.³¹

These Folks Don't Talk or Act Like Me

In spite of some significant similarities, USAID and DoD also differ widely in language, style, and culture. For example, the term "humanitarian assistance" to USAID means short-term assistance to populations afflicted by natural disasters or other emergencies. For DoD, the same term means civic assistance projects, such as schools, health clinics, water, and sanitation projects, which for USAID are often part of longer-term development assistance programs in education and health.³²

Moreover, USAID focuses on growth through long-term capacity development in institutions and sustainable changes in socio-economic systems. DoD focuses on security threats, whose imperatives usually favor quick results. USAID field staff generally serve four years in a country, while DoD generally deploys its personnel in short-term teams for training or exercise activities. With few exceptions, DoD engagement at the country

level comprises short-term teams arriving to conduct military exercises, training, or community-level projects.

USAID missions maintain a large country footprint, the majority of which are foreign service nationals. Most USAID staff have substantial cross-cultural, area, and language expertise. The number of DoD staff in individual OSCs are quite small compared to total USAID mission staff. DoD lacks enough knowledgeable field staff with country expertise and cultural sensitivity. This increases USAID's burden of working with DoD on community projects and other security cooperation activities that relate to USAID assistance. Put simply, USAID's preferred operating style is to examine the problems to be addressed, then build agreement for the proposed solution among stakeholders in country. DoD's normal style is to respond immediately to a problem in some way, a style which could be described as "Don't just stand there; do something!" If not reviewed by experienced USAID staff, DoD's "action first" style can result in community, ethnic, or religious tensions and unsustainable projects.³³ Finally, USAID uses empirically-based strategic and program planning, including with in-country assessments and problem analyses. While DoD has many experienced planners, it employs top-down strategic planning derived from theater campaign and security cooperation plans. DoD's planning systems for humanitarian assistance and security cooperation are less robust than USAID's revamped planning systems in the areas of systematic assessment, strategic planning and project design, monitoring and evaluation, and learning.

None of these differences by themselves prevents expanded collaboration between USAID and DoD in Africa, but their cumulative effect is complicates cooperation. Successful collaboration requires that each party understand how the other works, its objectives, and its language. Disagreements on approaches to problems must surface early and be resolved transparently, even if issues have to be raised to higher-level decision-makers in both agencies. Such comprehension requires effort, training, and sufficient time working together.

CONCERNS AND RISKS OF USAID/DOD COLLABORATION

Concerns about greater collaboration between AFRICOM and USAID emanate from within and outside the U.S. government. They include concerns about the militarization of U.S. foreign assistance; uncoordinated security and justice sector reform efforts; the risk of DoD assuming more responsibility non-military foreign assistance; and the hazards for the United States if it fails to link security and development efforts in Africa effectively.

Apprehension from NGOs and the Development Community

NGOs and the development community fear that greater collaboration in Africa between DoD and USAID will mean that U.S. foreign assistance will be perceived as militarized, and that DoD community assistance projects will be uncoordinated with USAID, poorly designed, unsustainable, and exacerbate ethnic or regional tensions. NGOs also fear that aid workers operating in conflict-prone environments may be threatened if DoD HAP teams and NGO staff are operating in the same areas.

While these are serious concerns, those who raise these points often are not aware that U.S. economic assistance resources from USAID and other civilian assistance agencies allocated for Africa dwarf the level of AFRICOM funding for security cooperation programs of all kinds in Africa. AFRICOM's budget for all security cooperation programs in Africa, which comes from different appropriations accounts than economic assistance, totaled less than \$500 million for fiscal year (FY) 2010.³⁴ By comparison, total U.S. economic assistance committed to Africa in 2010 was \$6.9 billion and rose to \$7.2 billion in FY 2011. This means that fears by NGOs and the larger development community that DoD's security cooperation and related assistance budget for Africa will overwhelm civilian-managed economic assistance are exaggerated.

DoD funding for civic assistance programs, which tend to be hot buttons for critics of AFRICOM foreign assistance, totaled less than \$15 million in 2010. Compared to USAID budgets in health, education, and water, AFRICOM funding for community projects represents a tiny proportion of total U.S. economic assistance to Africa. Nevertheless, it is true that DoD civic assistance teams have had problems in the design, placement, and sustainability of community assistance projects in Africa.³⁵ In addition, DoD objectives for access and influence in particular geographic areas may conflict at times with USAID's impact and sustainability objectives. If activities in the same area work at cross purposes, this can complicate USAID relationships with host country partners.³⁶

Current DoD guidance for civic assistance programs directs AFRICOM and DoD field staff to consult with USAID in the early stages of programs to identify and design activities and to "seek concurrence from the USAID Mission Director prior to the Chief of Mission ... for approval."³⁷ USAID and Washington staff agree that coordination with DoD has improved on community assistance activities of all kinds.³⁸ Although as noted earlier, USAID officials have experienced problems in coordinating with DoD OSC staff and civil affairs teams on individual

projects, past experience demonstrates that this can be done successfully with some effort.

In one case in a remote Sahelian town, DoD teams worked with USAID and the State Department on a joint community project. DoD provided a substantial quantity of vegetable seeds, and USAID provided farmer training along with a new water pump. The U.S. ambassador visited the town with USAID and DoD several times to support the townspeople who had initiated the project.³⁹ A second case involving interagency collaboration on an East African project aimed at easing cross border pastoralist tensions. The U.S. ambassador and USAID were set on limiting AFRICOM's civil affairs teams to security issues, which required a high level of labor-intensive oversight. The USAID mission's new country five year strategy includes a specific objective for whole of government work to bring peace and security to the same regions with AFRICOM's civil affairs teams focused on security issues.⁴⁰

These two examples suggest that many concerns with AFRICOM community assistance projects can be dealt with by robust engagement by USAID with DoD. In the two cases cited above, senior USAID and State Department officers exerted such pressure with positive results.

Risk of Uncoordinated USAID and DoD Assistance Efforts in Fragile States

If budget reduction pressures intensify over the next few years, the political will of the executive branch and Congress to continue to rebuild USAID and other civilian foreign affairs agencies over the long term may ebb. If the U.S. government cannot stay the course to rebuild these institutions, Congress and the executive branch may again ask DoD to take responsibility for a larger share of U.S. foreign assistance. If asked, DoD will accept. However, the costs will be great. Having DoD take on a greater responsibility in development and other economic assistance will dilute DoD's focus on security challenges. Greater DoD involvement in economic assistance will send a message to the international community that U.S. foreign assistance is becoming militarized. DoD lacks the capability, skills, and modes of operation to plan and implement long term development assistance and, especially, to develop sustainable institutional capacity outside of the defense sector.⁴¹ As former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates freely admitted in a public roundtable with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah, development is "not our (DoD's) core competency."⁴²

WHAT TO DO NOW TO IMPROVE DOD/USAID COLLABORATION

Although some aspects of the DoD/USAID working relationship require high level policy changes, important actions can be taken now at the level of AFRICOM and USAID's Africa Bureau to advance effective collaboration. Senior leaders in AFRICOM and USAID's Africa Bureau should work together to improve coordination in areas of complementarity. State, DoD, and USAID should initiate a joint effort to assess and use lessons from assistance to fragile states, such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Chad, Zimbabwe, Mali, DRC-Congo, especially those involving conflict. In planning, DoD and USAID together with State, should involve each other in each agency's strategic and project planning and carry out joint monitoring and evaluation in areas of mutual interest. To improve coordination on community projects, USAID should employ "robust engagement" to make sure DoD community projects are consistent with larger USAID programs. AFRICOM and USAID's Africa Bureau, including USAID missions in Africa should expand their efforts to increase their mutual awareness and understanding of what each agency brings to the table. To encourage staff from both agencies to link up creatively, DoD and USAID should strengthen organizational and personnel incentives for interagency collaboration versus bureaucratic competition. Finally, so that USAID missions have long-term DoD staff to work with, DoD should expand the number of OSCs to the remaining countries with USAID missions but which lack OSCs and detail AFRICOM headquarters staff to each of the three USAID regional missions and the Sahel Joint Planning Cell to educate AFRICOM headquarters and field staff on how USAID regional capabilities can contribute to DoD objectives and vice versa.

Senior Leaders Must Lead and Persist

Under the coordination of the State Department, USAID's AA for Africa and the AFRICOM Commander should launch a joint initiative for improved collaboration at AFRICOM headquarters, USAID missions, and in country teams. The first step would be a joint decision message to their respective AFRICOM and USAID senior staff. That joint directive would state that the AFRICOM Commander and the USAID AA/AFR expect to see immediate, continuing progress in expanding DoD/USAID collaboration in Africa in coordinated programming and in increased mutual awareness and understanding. The joint message would announce a set of actions to improve incentives for expanded partnership and personnel

incentives to bolster this effort. The AFRICOM commander would assign his two deputies and other senior leaders to supervise progress, emphasize the importance of this initiative to DoD field staff, and report at each senior staff meeting on their plans and progress. USAID's AA/AFR would act similarly with regard to senior staff in Washington and with African missions. Both AFRICOM's commander and USAID's AA/AFR would persist over time in pressing forward this priority.

Learn from Experience

Many cases exist of fragile states in which USAID and DoD have both provided substantial assistance over long periods. These countries include Mali, Ivory Coast, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Chad, Nigeria, Liberia, and others. To inform future coordination, joint USAID, DoD, and State assessment teams should analyze cases and identify lessons, especially in the interrelated areas of security, governance, and justice sector reform and as well as in combatting violent extremism and insurgency. USAID development assistance has a major role to play in all these areas.⁴³

In areas of successful DoD/USAID collaboration, such as disaster assistance, pandemic planning, preparedness, and response, and HIV prevention and supportive care, especially in fragile states, USAID, DoD, and the State Department should jointly evaluate results by country, synthesize best practices, and advance collaboration accordingly.

Coordinate Programming

DoD's and USAID's assistance programs both start with planning, and each agency undertakes strategic and project planning at several levels. In both its regional and country security cooperation plans AFRICOM should engage USAID regional and bilateral mission staff more broadly in conferences and as part of the teams that develop such plans. USAID regional and bilateral missions should invite AFRICOM headquarters and field staff to participate in the development of their five-year regional and Country Development Cooperation Plans (RDCSs and CDCSs)—and in their regional and bilateral project designs, which bring their strategies to life. The State Department new strategic planning processes, which include a multi-year integrated cooperation strategy (ICS) for each country team and a security and justice strategy, could support more collaborative planning between DoD and USAID

Yet planning is only one step in programming and must be followed by

program execution, monitoring, evaluation, and learning from experience. Broadened DoD/USAID partnerships in these other programming steps are essential as well because these steps constitute a cycle in which feedback from one step affects other steps. Joint program monitoring and evaluation encourages greater awareness and understanding of each other's relative strengths and weaknesses and contributes better approaches for new activities.

EMPLOY ROBUST ENGAGEMENT

As a tool in effective coordination, USAID mission management and staff should employ robust engagement in coordinating activities with DoD—with the OSC staff assigned to their countries, with the short-term civil-affairs teams who design and implement community activities, or with both. Robust engagement means that the USAID mission director and her/his staff and the U.S. ambassador oversee DoD activities closely from planning to execution; raise issues; and object, if necessary, to DoD plans and actions on the ground that do not meet basic standards of interagency coordination or of sustainability. Such assertive action is expected and generally welcomed in DoD's bureaucratic culture, both by DoD field staff and especially by senior AFRICOM staff. If the USAID mission director does not succeed in obtaining needed adjustments to a DoD project, s/he should raise the issue to the ambassador. If such interventions do not work, then the USAID director and the ambassador should raise their issues to their superiors in Washington.

Expand Mutual Awareness and Understanding

Once senior leaders like the commander of AFRICOM and USAID's AA/AFR clearly direct their staffs to work more closely together, many other actions can follow. Although each of USAID's four regional missions in Africa work intensively on conflict early warning, food security, and trafficking in persons, few AFRICOM senior leaders take the time, during visits to countries housing such regional staffs to obtain a sense of their capabilities in areas like conflict early warning or governance and resources. Similarly, few USAID regional mission directors add to their travel to or from the United States a two-day visit to AFRICOM headquarters to (1) brief AFRICOM senior staff on his/her regional programs and relation to AFRICOM's security cooperation efforts and (2) learn how her/his mission could work more cooperatively with DoD staff in his/her region.

When the AFRICOM commander or other senior staff visit a country with a USAID mission, his schedule should always include a USAID

briefing on its programs relevant to security issues, a site visit to a relevant USAID-funded program, and a roundtable discussion, arranged by the USAID director, with representatives of the NGO or donor communities. When USAID bilateral mission directors are traveling through Europe to or from their posts, they should schedule a two-day stopover in Stuttgart to brief AFRICOM planning and program staff on their current USAID country development strategy and programs and receive similar briefings on AFRICOM assistance and other events coming up in their country. Currently, these simple types of coordination occur because senior management of both DoD and USAID do not make clear such collaborative efforts are a high priority.

Other necessary actions to improve mutual understanding more systematically include introductory training, both online and in person, for each other on their agency's resources, capabilities, and field assets. The existing USAID Joint Humanitarian Operations Course (JHOC) should be expanded to cover all that USAID does and offered annually to AFRICOM headquarters and service component staff as well as to AFRICOM's field staff. AFRICOM should do the same to educate USAID staff on relevant DoD capabilities and resources. AFRICOM and USAID's Africa Bureau should invite each other more frequently and in greater numbers to participate in conferences and exercises, and include in the agendas of such meetings ample time to explore improved coordination.

Strengthen Personnel and Career Incentives

Joint efforts to coordinate program planning and implementation, learning from experience, improve mutual understanding, and other actions by large numbers of DoD and USAID staff will not take place unless organizational and career incentives support such actions. Most people in organizations behave most of the time in ways that support their career interests. Although public advocacy by USAID and DoD leaders for broader collaboration is a necessary step, USAID and DoD staff, including active duty military personnel with a more clearly defined top-down chain of command, will look beyond statements by leaders directing them to collaborate with each more actively for strong evidence that promotions, onward assignments, awards and increased pay will follow such statements by their superiors. To strengthen incentives for coordination, AFRICOM and USAID leaders should also highlight the importance of interagency assignments and insist that employee work objectives and personnel evaluations demonstrate achievements in broader DoD/USAID and other

interagency collaboration. For example, USAID could revise promotion precepts that determine staff promotion rankings and require successful interagency experience for consideration for senior management positions.

Deploy Staff to Create Field Partnerships

Even with the actions mentioned above, USAID and DoD cannot build collaborative relationships if they don't have partners over time. AFRICOM should immediately request additional resources for establishing OSCs in the five African countries that have USAID missions but still lack OSCs and sufficient long-term DoD security cooperation staff to work closely over time with their USAID colleagues. For all USAID missions with AFRICOM OSCs, including regional missions, USAID directors should place a high priority on finding creative opportunities for partnerships and joint programming with DoD staff, such as joint strategic planning, program design and evaluation. These could include taking DoD staff on USAID field trips and project site visits, or rotating USAID staff in the OSC office and OSC staff through USAID mission offices.

To strengthen incentives for coordination, AFRICOM and USAID leaders should also highlight the importance of interagency assignments and insist that employee work objectives and personnel evaluations demonstrate achievements in broader DoD/USAID and other interagency collaboration.

In South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, and Senegal, where USAID has regional missions and, in Senegal, the Joint Sahel Planning Cell, AFRICOM should detail for at least six months one mid-level AFRICOM staff officer to each of the four regional USAID offices learn as much as possible regarding regional USAID programs and capabilities that is relevant to AFRICOM programs. Those AFRICOM detailees would then return to AFRICOM and be expected share their experience and recommendations to AFRICOM senior leaders for advancing collaboration with USAID.

LOOKING AHEAD: CONFRONTING UNDERLYING ISSUES

Much can be done by AFRICOM and USAID's Africa Bureau to deepen coordination under existing authorities. While significant, these

actions are limited. Their extent depends on the continuing commitment of the AFRICOM Commander and the USAID AA/AFR, whose periods of service rarely last beyond three years. Nevertheless, a vigorous joint effort could establish a model for their successors to emulate and blaze the trail for other DoD regional commands and USAID regional Bureaus. However, improving results on both development and security objectives in Africa over the longer term can occur only if (1) U.S. conflict and crisis prevention efforts in Africa improve in effectiveness and (2) rebuilding of U.S. civilian foreign affairs agencies, especially USAID, continues.

Enhancing U.S. Conflict Prevention Capabilities

Formulating a cohesive U.S. government conflict and crisis prevention strategy supported by an interagency framework with clear authority, roles, and responsibilities is a prerequisite for effective conflict prevention in Africa over the long term. Prevention allows sustainable development efforts to continue and “is a lot cheaper than sending soldiers,” to quote former Defense Secretary Robert Gates.⁴⁴ Focusing on prevention in Africa is crucial because Africa’s high number of fragile states, and exposure to droughts makes the continent more vulnerable to conflict.

Preceding fundamental changes at the Washington level, more effective U.S. government crisis prevention in Africa can occur through improved coordination between AFRICOM and USAID under the coordination of the State Department. Beginning with a few priority countries, AFRICOM, USAID, and State should develop integrated plans to (1) identify and address causes of conflict, (2) combat violent extremism and insurgency; (3) strengthen accountable governance; and (4) accelerate comprehensive security and justice sector reform. For this effort, USAID would draw on its Africa Bureau and its specialized Washington staff in the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance or DCHA; State, its Africa Bureau and its new Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations; and AFRICOM, its relevant headquarters and field staff.

The European Union’s (EU) interest in cooperation on security and development in Africa under the US-EU Development Dialogue, early engagement with the EU and with like-minded EU member states should contribute to the choice of priority countries in Africa and lead to a robust multilateral dimension in the U.S. government conflict prevention strategy.⁴⁵ In the field, these USAID/AFRICOM efforts should be undertaken in coordination with the U.S. ambassador and embassy staff.

For the U.S. government as a whole, the president should designate

a lead federal agency for conflict prevention, provide necessary authority, and request sufficient resources for the new responsibility.

Rebuilding and Maintaining Civilian Foreign Affairs Agencies

Ultimately, USAID success in building a collaborative relationship with AFRICOM and DoD field staff in Africa requires sufficient experienced USAID staff in the field of appropriate rank so that AFRICOM views USAID as a credible partner on the ground. It also requires that the AFRICOM commander take his relationship with USAID seriously and move forward in building a closer relationship with USAID field missions, using the USAID senior development advisor on his staff. For DoD, a more productive DoD/USAID relationship requires an expanding number of DoD field staff who have area expertise and cultural sensitivity in working with partner governments and communities. DoD field staff with such expertise will have higher credibility with USAID mission staff.

In this period of emphasis on budget cuts, the ongoing process of rebuilding civilian foreign affairs institutions is threatened. The political struggle over budget levels will be fought in Washington, but DoD, USAID, and the State Department must all strive to protect civilian agency budgets for Africa. Without continuing, long term rebuilding of civilian agencies, the United States cannot succeed in advancing its security, development, and diplomatic objectives in Africa.⁴⁶

Effective collaboration between USAID and AFRICOM is a fundamental cardinal building block for a successful U.S. security and development strategy in Africa. Through a more integrated approach, the United States can demonstrate more effective conflict prevention and response in Africa and other regions, which will yield great benefits. Reduced conflict will enable

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Through a more integrated approach, the United States can demonstrate more effective conflict prevention and response in Africa and other regions, which will yield great benefits. Reduced conflict will enable African leaders and institutions to reap the benefits of Africa's impending demographic transition, accelerate inclusive growth and poverty reduction, strengthen accountable justice and governance, and block violent extremism among vulnerable populations.

African leaders and institutions to reap the benefits of Africa's impending demographic transition, accelerate inclusive growth and poverty reduction, strengthen accountable justice and governance, and block violent extremism among vulnerable populations.⁴⁷ While improving the lives of millions in Africa, these developments will also serve fundamental U.S. interests.^f

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