



# Africa: U.S. Foreign Assistance Issues

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## Summary

U.S. aid to Africa reached a peak in 1985, when global competition with the Soviet Union was at a high point. After the Cold War ended, security assistance levels for Africa began to decline. In 1995, at the outset of the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress, substantial reductions in aid to Africa had been anticipated, as many questioned the importance of Africa to U.S. national security interests in the post-Cold War era. As the debate went forward, however, congressional reports and bills emphasized U.S. humanitarian, economic, and other interests in Africa. Aid levels did fall, but gradually began to increase again in FY1997. U.S. assistance to Africa is reaching new highs due to a significant increase in health care sectors under the Global Health and Child Survival (GHCS) program. U.S. aid to Africa nearly quadrupled from \$1.2 billion in FY2006 to \$4.7 billion in FY2007. Moreover, the United States is the leading donor of humanitarian assistance to Africa. In FY2009, the United States provided an estimated \$1 billion in humanitarian aid to Sudan.

U.S. assistance reaches Africa through a variety of channels, including USAID-administered Development Assistance (DA) and GHCS programs, food aid programs, and refugee assistance. As of October 2009, the Peace Corps had an estimated 2,600 volunteers and trainers in 24 African countries. The U.S. African Development Foundation (ADF) makes small grants to cooperatives, youth groups, and self-help organizations and operates in 20 countries. The Obama Administration has requested \$30 million for ADF for FY2010. U.S. security assistance, though still far below levels seen in the 1980s, has increased in recent years, primarily because of U.S. support for African peacekeeping and counter-terrorism initiatives. The World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) is the principal multilateral channel for U.S. aid, but the United States also contributes to the African Development Bank and Fund and to United Nations activities in Africa.

Total U.S. foreign assistance to Africa for FY2009 is estimated at \$6.6 billion. More than half of the FY2009 funding went to health-related programs. The Obama Administration has requested more than \$6.7 billion for FY2010. The 2010 budget request shows an increase in funds for Development Assistance, as well as for Economic Support Fund (ESF) and Foreign Military Financing (FMF). This report will be updated as the situation warrants.

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## **U.S. Aid to Africa: An Overview**

In recent years, U.S. assistance to Africa saw a major increase, especially in health-related programs. Aid to Africa quadrupled from \$1.1 billion in FY2006 to nearly \$6.6 billion in FY2009. The United States provides assistance to 47 African countries and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has 23 missions in Africa. In FY2009, the United States provided more than \$1 billion in humanitarian assistance to Africa. Africa is also a major recipient of the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) funding, with 15 African countries currently participating in the program.

The United States has identified a number of strategic objectives that shape U.S. aid to Africa. These priorities are to enhance strategic partnership; consolidate democratic transitions; bolster fragile states; strengthen regional and sub-regional organizations; enhance regional security capacity; strengthen African counter-terrorism cooperation and capacity; stimulate Africa's economic development and growth; implement presidential initiatives; and focus on humanitarian and development assistance programs.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, a number of new presidential initiatives were launched over the past several years.

The Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative aims to strengthen African governments' capacity to effectively deal with gender-based violence and provide support to the victims. The Africa Education Initiative (AEI) is a \$600 million multi-year initiative to help increase access to quality basic education in 39 countries. Under the AEI initiative, more than 15 million textbooks have been provided, and the Initiative aims to provide 550,000 scholarships to African girls in primary and secondary levels.

Another major initiative, launched in 2002, is the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP). More than 40 governments, non-governmental organizations, and international groups participate in the program. The CBFP initiative is funded through the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CAPRE). In FY2008, CAPRE funding was \$15 million and in FY2009 it is estimated at \$17.5 million. The \$200 million five-year African Global Competitiveness Initiative promotes "export competitiveness" in Africa. The Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA), launched in 2002, aims to cut hunger in half by 2015.

The Obama Administration has identified a number of areas of key interest in the FY2010 foreign aid request. These priorities include basic and higher education, clean energy, food security, global climate change, health care, trade capacity building, and counter-terrorism.

## **Background**

U.S. bilateral aid to Africa rose sharply in the early 1960s as most African countries achieved independence. This was also a time of intense Cold War competition with the Soviet Union. Aid reached another peak in 1985, when famine struck wide areas of sub-Saharan Africa. The peak may also have resulted in part from heightened Cold War competition, reflected in President Reagan's 1983 description of the Soviet Union as an "evil empire." Toward the end of the 1980s, as the Cold War ended, efforts to reduce the U.S. budget deficit began to intensify, contributing to

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<sup>1</sup> USAID: Africa [http://www.usaid.gov/location/sub-saharan\\_africa](http://www.usaid.gov/location/sub-saharan_africa).

an overall reduction in assistance to Africa. Moreover, policymakers placed increased emphasis on human rights and commitment to economic reform programs in making their decisions on aid allocations. Consequently, aid to some African countries that had been major Cold War aid recipients, such as Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo) and Liberia, was sharply reduced. Nonetheless, there was another spike in aid in 1992, when famine struck the Horn of Africa and the southern part of the continent. Aid then dropped again, with the reductions coming almost entirely in the security-oriented programs: military assistance and especially the Economic Support Fund (ESF).

In 1995, at the beginning of the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress, proposals to restructure and reduce the U.S. foreign assistance program raised questions about the future of U.S. aid to sub-Saharan Africa. Many questioned the strategic rationale for assisting Africa in the post-Cold War era, and asserted that 30 years of U.S. assistance had accomplished little—whether in terms of promoting economic growth and democratization, or achieving other objectives. The critics generally favored humanitarian assistance, but sought sharp cuts in other programs. As the aid debate proceeded, however, it became apparent that cuts for Africa would be less than initially anticipated. The view that the United States has important humanitarian, economic, and other objectives in Africa was vigorously asserted by supporters of the Africa aid program, and came to be reflected in report language on the major foreign assistance bills, as well as in the bills themselves. Aid did drop back to the FY1990 level in FY1996, but slow growth began again in FY1997 and continued to the present.

A major increase in aid took place in FY2003 because of large quantities of food aid provided to Ethiopia and southern Sudan, as well as a boost in spending through the Child Survival and Health Programs Fund in response to the African HIV/AIDS pandemic. The Global HIV/AIDS Initiative (GHAI), administered by the Department of State, was the principal component of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and began operations in FY2004. GHAI assistance included the provision of antiretroviral therapy, safe injections, safe blood supplies, and abstinence/faithfulness education. GHAI and Child Survival accounts were merged and is currently known as the Global Health and Child Survival program. In FY2009, funding for Global Health and Child Survival is \$4.1 billion (estimate), and the Obama Administration request for FY2010 is approximately \$4.3 billion.

## **U.S. Assistance Programs**

U.S. assistance is provided to Africa through a variety of channels. Bilateral or country-to-country aid, also known as direct assistance, is given through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or private and voluntary organizations (PVOs), contractors, and African government ministries and agencies. Multilateral aid, or indirect assistance, is given first to international financial institutions (IFIs) and United Nations agencies, which in turn channel it to Africa through their own programs.

## **DFA and Child Survival assistance**

Falling ESF levels threatened the overall scale of the sub-Saharan aid program after 1985, and this threat led to the creation of the Development Fund for Africa (DFA), which specifically earmarked a minimum level of the worldwide Development Assistance (DA) program for the region. Obligations for sub-Saharan Africa projects under the DFA reached \$846 million in FY1992, but dropped well below \$800 million in subsequent years despite efforts by some

Members to increase the DFA appropriation to \$1 billion or more. The DFA was last earmarked by Congress in the FY1995 appropriations legislation, when \$802 million was appropriated, and DA for Africa has since been provided through the worldwide Development Assistance (DA) account. In FY2009, Africa received an estimated \$848.7 million, and the Obama Administration has requested \$1.1 billion for FY2010 for Development Assistance.

In FY1996, Congress created a new account, the Child Survival and Disease Programs Fund, renamed the Child Survival and Health Programs Fund (CSH) in FY2002, which has channeled substantial amounts of aid to Africa. Annual USAID presentations to Congress on the budget request for aid to Africa have varied both with respect to using the term DFA and with respect to including CSH aid in an overall DA amount or in breaking out CSH assistance and DA separately. In recent years, the CSH has been replaced by Global Health and Child Survival (GHCS) account. In FY2009, funding for GHCS programs is estimated at \$4.1 billion, and the Obama Administration has requested \$4.3 billion for FY2010.

## **Humanitarian Aid**

Emergency food aid to Africa fluctuates in response to the continent's needs, and the amount provided by the end of a fiscal year often exceeds the initial request. The additional amount is taken from a food aid reserve fund. Emergency food aid is provided under Title II of the P.L. 480 program (named for P.L. 83-480, enacted in 1954), which is implemented by USAID in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture.<sup>2</sup>

The United States is the leading humanitarian donor in the world. In FY2009 alone, the United States provided an estimated \$1 billion to Sudan. In FY2008, the United States provided more than \$1.1 billion in humanitarian assistance to the Horn of Africa countries.

## **Peace Corps**

The Peace Corps has an estimated 2,600 volunteers and trainers serving in 24 sub-Saharan countries by late 2009, up from an estimated 1,900 in 2002.<sup>3</sup> Under the Peace Corps Act (P.L. 87-293), volunteers are to help the poorest people meet their basic needs, to promote a better understanding of the American people, and to promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

## **Security Assistance and Economic Support Funds**

U.S. security assistance for Africa, which had declined with the end of the Cold War, has expanded in recent years, primarily in response to widening conflict and political instability in Africa.<sup>4</sup> Economic Support Fund aid has been used to support a wide range of programs, including economic reform, a "safe skies" program to improve African air traffic safety, human

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<sup>2</sup> For further information on food assistance programs, see CRS Report RL33553, *Agricultural Export and Food Aid Programs*, by Charles E. Hanrahan.

<sup>3</sup> For further information, see CRS Report RS21168, *The Peace Corps: Current Issues*, by Curt Tarnoff.

<sup>4</sup> For more on U.S. security assistance to Africa, see CRS Report RL34003, *Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa*, by Lauren Ploch.

rights and democracy education, and other objectives. ESF aid is also helping strategic partners in the war on terrorism through cooperation on border control, freezing terrorist assets, implementation of the peace agreement in southern Sudan, and other activities. In addition, the Defense Department conducts AIDS prevention education programs, primarily with African militaries. In FY2009, Africa received \$514.9 million under the ESF program, and the Obama Administration has requested \$647.9 million for FY2010.

Through the regional Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) program, the United States supported the Africa Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI), which trained small units of African armies for possible peacekeeping duties, as well as for other regional peacekeeping initiatives. In FY2004, ACRI was succeeded by the Africa Contingency Operations Training Assistance (ACOTA), which trains trainers and implements programs tailored to individual country needs. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) to Africa resumed in FY1999. International Military Education and Training (IMET) programs in Africa promote professionalism and respect for democracy and human rights among foreign military officials, while enhancing capabilities for participation in peacekeeping operations. These programs typically run well under \$1 million per country. The United States also contributes to United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa and elsewhere through a program entitled Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA).

## **Regional Programs**

Both DA and ESF funds are used to support USAID's Africa Regional Programs, which are designed to confront challenges that span beyond the borders of individual African countries. These include regional programs in health, conflict prevention, democracy, education, and agriculture. According to USAID, "the primary goal of the Africa Regional program is to provide overall direction, guidance, intellectual leadership, and strengthened African regional capacity to address these challenges."<sup>5</sup> USAID has a number of regional programs in Africa, including Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), East Africa Regional, Southern Africa Regional, and West Africa Regional.

## **African Development Foundation**

The African Development Foundation (ADF) has a unique mandate to make small grants directly to African cooperatives, youth groups, and other self-help organizations. These grants usually range from less than \$20,000 to a maximum of \$250,000, although appropriations language permits a waiver of the \$250,000 ceiling. In addition, the ADF supports grassroots development research by African scholars and promotes the dissemination of development information at the community level. The ADF is limited to 75 employees, according to the ADF Act (U.S. Code Title 22, Chapter 7, Section 290h). Its seven-member Board of Directors must include five private-sector representatives. ADF does not station U.S. employees in overseas posts, but instead works through local-hires and periodic field visits. For FY2006, the ADF received \$22.7 million in the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act (P.L. 109-102). In FY2008, ADF received \$29.7 million, and in FY2009 \$32.5 million. The Obama Administration has requested \$30 million for FY2010.

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<sup>5</sup> Congressional Budget Justification, FY2010.

The ADF is seen by some observers as an effective tool in reaching out to communities faster and more directly. The ADF programs targets for assistance the most marginalized and poor communities. Currently the ADF operates in 20 African countries. According to ADF, “the majority of the ADF portfolio is in income generating projects that have an additive value of Social benefits. Social benefits include skill training, nutritional and hygiene training, and basic vocational training.”<sup>6</sup>

## **The African Development Fund**

The African Development Fund (AfDF) is another major channel for indirect U.S. aid to Africa. The Fund, an affiliate of the Africa-based African Development Bank (AfDB), makes loans on highly concessional terms to the poorest African countries. The AfDB lends on roughly commercial terms to creditworthy African borrowers, and at the same time, it holds 50% of the voting power in the AfDF. The United States provided \$134.5 million in FY2008, and \$150 million (estimate) in FY2009. The Obama Administration has requested \$159.8 million for FY2010.

## **Refugee and Disaster Assistance**

The United States responds to African humanitarian crises in part with Title II food aid, discussed above, and in part through its refugee and disaster assistance programs. Most refugee assistance comes from the Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) account and goes to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and international organizations, as well as to private and voluntary organizations assisting African refugees. In addition, the Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) account, created in 1962 to respond to unexpected refugee situations, has been drawn upon for African emergencies several times in recent years. USAID’s Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) also plays a major role in responding to African crises. “Situation Reports” published by USAID’s Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance monitor the U.S. response to African humanitarian crises through food aid and other emergency assistance.<sup>7</sup>

## **Multilateral Assistance**

The United States also provides aid to Africa through international financial institutions (IFIs) and United Nations agencies. World Bank lending through its “soft loan” affiliate, the International Development Association (IDA), is the largest single source of development capital in Africa. IDA loans, which are considered a form of aid since they are virtually interest-free and carry extended repayment periods focus on strengthening public sector management, transportation, agriculture, and various social problems. IDA has been particularly active in assisting efforts by the recipient countries to carry out free-market economic reforms.

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<sup>6</sup> Interview with senior ADF official in June 2009.

<sup>7</sup> To find these reports, visit <http://www.usaid.gov/> and click on “Our Work” and “Humanitarian Assistance.”



## Millennium Challenge Account<sup>8</sup>

In a March 14, 2002 speech, President Bush announced the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), the goal of which was to increase foreign aid worldwide by \$5 billion per year over three years, starting in FY2004. The account would provide additional aid to countries whose governments promote good governance, invest in people through education and health care, and promote open markets. Although the promise of increased aid won praise from many observers, some worried that most countries in Africa will not be able to meet the Fund's eligibility criteria. As of late 2009, however, 16 African countries have signed Compact or Threshold Program agreements. Agreements have been reached with Madagascar (\$110 million), Cape Verde (\$110 million), Ghana (\$547 million), Mali (\$460.8 million), Benin (\$307 million), Mozambique (\$506.9 million), Lesotho (\$362.6 million), Burkina Faso (\$480.9 million), Kenya (\$12.7 million), Namibia (\$304.5 million), Rwanda (\$24.7 million), Sao Tome and Principe (\$8.6 million), Senegal (\$540 million), Tanzania (\$698 million), Uganda (10.4), and Zambia (\$22.7) for MCA programs. In FY2008, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) received \$1.5 billion and \$875 million in FY2009. The Obama Administration has requested \$1.4 billion for FY2010.

**Table I. U.S. Bilateral Assistance to Africa**  
(\$ in thousands)

	<b>FY2008 Actual</b>	<b>FY2009 Estimate</b>	<b>FY2009 Supplemental</b>	<b>FY2009 Total</b>	<b>FY2010 Request</b>
Total	7,037,409	6,373,359	133,000	6,506,359	6,738,019
Development Assistance	678,352	874,793	38,000	912,793	1,155,910
Economic Support Fund	283,249	414,910	45,000	559,910	647,934
Foreign Military Financing	6,757	8,255		8,255	25,550
Global Health and Child Survival— State	3,295,550	3,254,706		3,254,706	3,255,415
Global Health and Child Survival— USAID	746,073	848,509		848,509	1,115,740
International Military Education and Training	13,779	13,795		13,795	16,020
Int. Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement	31,642	26,600		26,600	48,125
Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related Programs	27,512	31,498		31,498	47,225
Peacekeeping Operations	130,222	199,250	50,000	249,250	153,600
P.L. 480 (Food Aid)	1,823,273	601,043		601,043	272,500

**Source:** Congressional Budget Justification, FY2010.

<sup>8</sup> For further information, see CRS Report RL32427, *Millennium Challenge Corporation*, by Curt Tarnoff; and U.S. Government Accountability Office Report GAO-05-625T, *Millennium Challenge Corporation: Progress Made on Key Challenges in First Year of Operations* (April 27, 2005).

**Table 2. Leading U.S. Assistance Recipients in Africa**  
(\$ in millions)

Country	FY2010 Request	FY2009 Supp	FY2009 Estimate	FY2008 Actual
Uganda <sup>a</sup>	428.9	20	363.3	389.7
Kenya <sup>a</sup>	659.1	70.8	595.7	634.4
South Africa <sup>a</sup>	548.1		541.3	574.2
Nigeria <sup>a</sup>	560.6	25	519.2	496.4
Zambia <sup>a</sup>	351.7		308.5	293.5
Ethiopia <sup>a</sup>	546.3	72.2	503.4	659.1
Tanzania <sup>a</sup>	393.8		368.1	361
Sudan	433	127	333.4	666.3
Mozambique <sup>a</sup>	355.9		292.8	284.3
Liberia	227.7	10	189.9	161.1
Rwanda <sup>a</sup>	184.1	5	166	157.8
Namibia <sup>a</sup>	104.4		109.4	108
Botswana <sup>a</sup>	79.3		79.1	79.5
Mali	123	20	77	59.6
Dem. Rep. Congo	177	58.1	131.6	161
Ghana	143.4	25	90.3	80.8
Malawi	132.8		114.6	105.9
Senegal	98.1	23	70.9	57.8
Côte d'Ivoire <sup>a</sup>	105.8		101.2	100.8
Madagascar	89.4		71.8	57.6
Angola	68.9		45.8	42.2
Guinea	22.6		13.4	14.2
Benin	34.5		30.9	29
Zimbabwe	95.3	44.3	51.4	82.6
Djibouti	6.6		5.7	5.1
Sierra Leone	31.1		19.7	22.8
Burundi	47.3		35.2	21.1

**Source:** Congressional Budget Justification, FY2010.

a. Global AIDS Initiative “focus” country. Estimated allocations included.

**Table 3. Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities in Africa**  
(\$ in millions)

Operation	FY2008 (Actual)	FY2009 (Estimate)	FY2010 (Request)
War Crimes Tribunal - Rwanda (UNICTR)	17.6	14	20.9
Chad/CAR (MINURCAT)		39.4	205.7
Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC)	270.7	210.0	381.0
U.N. Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)	154.2	123.4	135.4
Sudan (UNAMID)	550.4	414.0	512.0
Sudan (UNMIS)	293.5	208.9	257.3
U.N. Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)	83.0	81.0	128.5

**Source:** Congressional Budget Justification, FY2010.

## Sudan: U.S. Humanitarian Funding

The United States continues to provide significant humanitarian assistance to Darfur and to Darfuree refugees in Chad. The United States has provided more than \$5 billion in humanitarian and development assistance to Sudan since 2004. As of September 30, 2009, the United States had provided \$936.9 million in humanitarian assistance to Sudan and eastern Chad for FY2009.<sup>9</sup>

**Table 4. U.S. Bilateral Assistance to Sudan**  
(\$ in thousands)

	FY2008 Actual	FY2009 Estimate	FY2010 Request
Total	906,396	460,451	433,000
Development Assistance	127,721	25,550	
Economic Support Fund	145,876	253,550	296,034
Global Health and Child Survival (State)	3,245	6,327	7,036
Global Health & Child Survival (USAID)	17,488	23,185	29,730
International Military Education and Training	349	400	300
Int. Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement	23,578	15,400	24,000
Non-proliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining and Related Programs	4,400	4,000	3,900
Peacekeeping Operations	70,822	38,000	42,000
P.L. 480	512,917	94,039	30,000

**Source:** State Department FY2010 International Affairs Budget Request. U.S. bilateral assistance to Sudan is primarily going to South Sudan. For more on Sudan, see CRS Report RL33574, *Sudan: The Crisis in Darfur and Status of the North-South Peace Agreement*, by Ted Dagne.

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/humanitarian\\_assistance/disaster\\_assistance/countries/sudan/template/fs\\_sr/sudan\\_ce\\_sr02\\_12-20-2007.pdf](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/countries/sudan/template/fs_sr/sudan_ce_sr02_12-20-2007.pdf).

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## Appendix. Selected Africa Assistance Acronyms

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<b>ACOTA</b>	<b>Africa Contingency Operations Training Assistance, successor to ACRI</b>
ACRI	Africa Crisis Response Initiative, which trained military units for peacekeeping.
ADF	African Development Foundation, U.S.-funded public corporation.
AfDB	African Development Bank, an Africa-based IFI.
AfDF	African Development Fund, affiliate of the African Development Bank.
ATRIP	Africa Trade and Investment Program, a USAID initiative.
CIPA	Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities
CSH	Child Survival and Health Programs Fund.
DA	Development Assistance.
DFA	Development Fund for Africa, part of DA, not earmarked in recent years.
ERMA	Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance, administered by State Department.
ESF	Economic Support Fund, a State Department program for promoting U.S. interests.
FMF	Foreign Military Financing, funds equipment purchases.
GHAJ	State Department's Global AIDS Initiative, part of PEPFAR.
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, The World Bank.
IDA	International Development Association, concessional loan affiliate of IBRD.
IFIs	International financial institutions.
IGAD	Inter-governmental Authority on Development, a Djibouti-based organization of Horn of Africa states.
IMET	International Military Education and Training, a form of military assistance.
MRA	Migration and Refugee Assistance, a State Department program.
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development, an African initiative.
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations.
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, an organization of developed countries.
ODA	Official Development Assistance, the OECD's concept of DA.
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, a part of USAID.
PCVs	Peace Corps Volunteers
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, a Bush Administration initiative.
PKO	Peacekeeping Operations account authorized by Part II, Chapter 6 of the Foreign Assistance Act.
PVOs	Private and voluntary organizations
SAEDF	Southern Africa Enterprise Development Fund, a USAID program.
SMMEs	Small, medium, and micro-enterprises.
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, headquartered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

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