

Discours USAID, 4^{ème} Assemblée Générale de l'Alliance Sahel, 10 juillet 2023, Nouakchott

- Greetings and good afternoon! USAID is delighted to join all of you here at the Sahel Alliance General Assembly, and welcomes the opportunity to express our support for a continued shared strategic focus on building resilience in this critical region.
- USAID invests more than 500 million dollars annually in development and humanitarian assistance in countries of the G5 Sahel. In particular, USAID investments are framed around building resilience, emphasizing the need to help households, communities, and systems improve their ability to respond to external shocks.
- And while the investment in resilience remains a priority, we also continue to respond to critical humanitarian needs across the region.
- Intensifying conflict in Burkina Faso has led to the displacement of an estimated 2 million internally displaced persons and nearly 4.9 million people in urgent need of life saving assistance.
- We encourage all members of the Sahel Alliance to increase funding for humanitarian assistance in this context, and G5 Sahel member states to leverage and respect humanitarian principles, including allowing access to those areas where the need is highest, often in territory not under state control. Humanitarian principles are not in conflict with security goals; in fact, they are compatible and reinforce a safe, peaceful, and prosperous country.
- We know that youth is the largest segment of the G5 countries population, and we know that we need to invest in youth, not only to prevent violent extremism, but to invest in the future workforce of the country and to reverse the alarming rate of illegal migration, as witnessed in Mauritania and across the region.
- As the Sahel Alliance now gathers to assess our opportunity to support the G5 Sahel Strategy, we are reminded once again of the importance that donor efforts support host-country owned strategies, and in this case, regionally-led development priorities.
- With this in mind, we welcome the release of the G5 Sahel Development Strategy and the Priority Investment Plan. As the G5 Sahel continues to refine and socialize those plans, we strongly encourage the G5 Sahel to maximize opportunities to consult as many stakeholders as possible in G5 countries, including governments, civil society, and other key actors.
- Further, USAID hopes that today's gathering can help advance our shared commitment to implement this vision, and ensure that the work of the Sahel Alliance is as supportive and responsive to a contextually nuanced, regionally-developed and led strategy as possible.