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Hearing Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Examining U.S. and Global Commitments to Combatting Human Trafficking
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Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; thank you for your leadership on combating human trafficking and the opportunity to be here today to discuss USAID's work on addressing human trafficking through the 4 Ps of protection, prevention, prosecution, and partnerships, our revised Counter-Trafficking in Persons (C-TIP) Policy, and our C-TIP Code of Conduct.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that human trafficking and forced labor are responsible for an estimated \$150 billion in illicit profits per year. In 2022, the ILO estimated that 27.6 million people were in forced labor. With an issue of this magnitude, partnership, coordination, and empowerment of trafficking survivors are essential to addressing the root causes and long-term effects of human trafficking.

Since 2001, USAID has provided over \$370 million in assistance in 88 countries, and currently supports C-TIP efforts in 35 countries. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, we obligated \$32.5 million for C-TIP activities globally and continue to integrate C-TIP strategies into other development programs. Our C-TIP work addresses root causes such as conflict, corruption, poverty, gender-based violence and gender inequality, socioeconomic and structural inequalities, racism, natural disasters, lack of educational and job opportunities, and shortfalls in basic social services. Through crucial investments to address these issues, USAID's C-TIP efforts also advance USG national security interests by preventing or mitigating

conflict and displacement and strengthening the capacity of national and local institutions that promote stability. USAID's effectiveness rests on a strong in-country presence, allowing us to design and monitor well-run interventions informed by local context.

4Ps of Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, and Partnerships

USAID supports stand-alone C-TIP projects as well as integrating C-TIP interventions into our wider development portfolio using the 4Ps framework.

Prevention

USAID has worked to prevent trafficking by raising awareness in at-risk sectors and communities, strengthening government institutions and nongovernmental actors, promoting behavior change, and addressing cultural and social norms related to TIP in source, transit, and destination countries.

In Bangladesh, for example, USAID's Fight Slavery and Trafficking in Persons (FSTIP) project is reducing vulnerability to TIP by enhancing public awareness of human trafficking and its dangers. USAID supported the Government of Bangladesh to finalize and launch a Comprehensive Survivor Service Guideline that outlines a comprehensive step-by-step process for service providers supporting trafficking survivors. USAID has already trained 35 government officials and nine NGO members on the comprehensive survivor service guidelines.

Protection

To protect TIP survivors, USAID's approach is survivor-centered and trauma-informed as we integrate mental health and psychosocial support into programming. USAID-funded activities provide services for physical and emotional healing, legal assistance, safe and secure accommodations, and access to workforce development opportunities. For example, in Bosnia and

Herzegovina, USAID is supporting nine local organizations to provide legal and practical protections for survivors and strengthen the capacity of government institutions and non-governmental organization-managed shelter providers to protect victims. As a result of our direct support to victims, the Prosecutor's Office confirmed an indictment against one person for human trafficking. USAID's support was recognized by the Prosecutor's Office for the specialized services of legal advice and representation of the minor victim in the Court, continuous communication, developing a trustful relationship, and supporting the minor victim.

Prosecution

USAID supports efforts to develop effective anti-trafficking laws with significant penalties for traffickers and protections for trafficking victims, as well as providing victim-centered training and technical assistance for law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and judges. USAID also works to improve victims' access to legal and justice-related services.

USAID supports both bilateral and regional efforts to improve the identification and referral of trafficked persons to social services. For example, USAID is supporting a regional response in Barbados, St. Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, and Trinidad and Tobago to improve the screening and identification of victims and the prosecution of TIP cases. The project is in the start-up phase, but the Police Special Victims Unit Director in Barbados has already indicated that USAID's support through specialized and advanced training to the team led to an increase in police screening of TIP cases.

Partnerships

Countering TIP requires effective coordination across a broad range of stakeholders. Therefore, USAID works closely with local, national, regional, and global networks, as well as representatives of civil society, government, the

private sector, labor unions, media, and faith-based organizations to expand the range of services and address root causes.

In Senegal, USAID is mobilizing local government, religious actors, and community-based organizations for a coordinated approach to prevent and reduce forced child begging in urban areas. These locally-led initiatives then serve as models to fuel advocacy at the national level and mobilize key stakeholders for a reform of the koranic school system.

Revised C-TIP Policy

In December 2021, USAID revised its C-TIP policy to align with the U.S. Government's revised National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and its related priorities to elevate gender revised and racial equity and end forced labor in global supply chains. Through updated programming objectives to guide C-TIP activity design, the Policy promotes:

- Integrating survivor-centered approaches into programs and policies that empower the individuals and communities we serve;
- Partnering with host country governments, civil society, and the private sector to counter human trafficking;
- Enhancing coordination within USAID and with other U.S. government agencies;
- Drawing on the best available evidence to inform our programming; and
- Providing clear roles and responsibilities for staff across USAID to implement effective C-TIP programming.

USAID takes an inclusive approach to engage marginalized populations and vulnerable communities as partners and leaders. We are committed to a survivor-centered approach that empowers people with effective psychosocial services, delivers legal assistance that meets their needs, provides safe and secure accommodations, and offers access to meaningful work.

USAID's revised C-TIP policy emphasizes rigorous research methodology to better understand what is working and what is not, and to continually learn lessons and adapt to changing threats such as the rise in online sexual exploitation of children.

USAID continues to provide technical support and guidance to USAID Missions to implement the revised C-TIP Policy, including through our **C-TIP Field Guide**, which we revised in January 2023. The Field Guide helps Mission staff to design, implement, monitor, and evaluate C-TIP investments based on the 4Ps approach at every stage of the program cycle, from country strategic planning to activity design to evaluation. The Guide provides recommendations for integrating C-TIP activities into larger development programs, designing stand-alone activities, using a survivor-centered approach, and developing more comprehensive identification and referral protocols to assist victims.

C-TIP Code of Conduct

Through the implementation of our Code of Conduct, USAID seeks to be a leader among donor organizations in preventing trafficking. As a baseline, the Code explicitly prohibits USAID personnel from in any way engaging in, facilitating, or supporting trafficking in persons, procuring commercial sexual acts, or using forced labor during duty or non-duty hours. Employees must report suspected violations of federal trafficking laws by USAID contractors or assistance recipients to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), and relevant contract or agreement officers. The Code also obligates employees to report suspected violations of the Code by other employees. Training on the Code is mandatory for all USAID personnel.

Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch, thank you for calling this hearing on combating human trafficking. USAID shares the belief that no single entity, whether it be a government, a civil society organization, a private sector actor, or other stakeholder, can effectively combat a crime as complex as

trafficking alone. We are grateful for the opportunity to share our experience in combating trafficking with the Committee.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.