

Democracy Fellows and Grants Program
DRG Research and Innovation Grants APS: 2013
Attachment 1: USAID’s Technical Sponsors

1. DRG Center Technical Teams and Selected Knowledge Groups

The USAID Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance is a global resource for evidence-based research on what works best in expanding and deepening democracy. The Center is focused broadly on:

- **Supporting more legitimate, inclusive, and effective governments**, so that they are responsive to the needs of their people;
- **Helping countries transition to democracy and strengthen democratic institutions**, capitalizing on critical moments to expand freedom and opportunity; and
- **Promoting inclusive development**, so that women, minorities, and vulnerable populations benefit from growth, opportunity, and the expansion of rights.

USAID’s DRG Center works across the many sectoral and technical areas related to democracy, human rights, and governance. The DRG Center includes seven technical teams and several smaller, cross-team subgroups working on more specific knowledge areas. The DRG Center’s activities are supported by an eighth team, Strategic Planning, that manages the Center’s strategic planning, budget formulation and execution, and program implementation to support the Center’s evidence-based technical leadership to Missions and the wider development community. The seven technical teams are described briefly below, in alphabetical order, along with the subgroups that are relevant to this APS.

I. DRG Center Technical Teams

Civil Society and Media (CSM): The CSM Team focuses on issues relating to civil society, media, youth, and labor. Its programs seek to improve the legal enabling environment for civil society organizations (CSOs) and media; advance the technical skills of CSOs; raise the professionalism of journalism and improve production standards; strengthen the management and financial sustainability of independent media; promote labor rights and protections; increase the civic engagement of youth; ensure that those working in authoritarian environments use technology safely and securely; understand how best to foster community philanthropy; pilot “social innovation labs” to produce social goods; and promote better understanding the role of CSOs and traditional media in social movements.

Cross-Sectoral Programs (CSP): The CSP Team is responsible for integrating DRG across USAID’s socio-economic sectors, including: Health, Agriculture, Economic Growth, Global Climate Change, Conflict Mitigation, and Education. The team assumes that Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance not only are intrinsically important but also are essential to the achievement of all other USAID goals. CSP focuses on the relationships between and among governments, civil society institutions, the private sector, and individuals. Among its many concerns, CSP supports inclusive policymaking; accountable service delivery; enhanced transparency, including procurement transparency; and strengthened capacity of CSOs and host government institutions. It promotes the non-discriminatory, non-stigmatizing delivery of

humanitarian services to vulnerable groups and strengthens country systems to support democratic accountability.

Elections and Political Transitions (EPT): The EPT Team promotes non-violent political competition, political accountability, and consensus-building through the conduct of free and fair elections. EPT provides technical assistance to strengthen election administration and political finance. It supports election monitoring and observation, and promotes voter education and mobilization campaigns, with special emphasis on increasing the participation of women and marginalized groups. EPT also assists the strengthening of political parties, especially in the initial stages of democratic transitions.

Global and Regional Planning (GRP): The GRP Team supports the development and implementation of evidence-based DRG policies, strategies, and budgets at the global, regional, and country levels. GRP leads the DRG Center's efforts in supporting country-specific DRG assessments and strategies. The team works closely with all the other teams within the DRG Center, as well as with the regional bureaus, to ensure that their efforts are aligned and complement the broader DRG efforts within USAID.

Governance and Rule of Law (GROL): The GROL Team supports activities to improve the accountability, transparency, and responsiveness of governing institutions, systems, and processes. It also promotes legal and regulatory frameworks that improve order and security, legitimacy, checks and balances, and equal application and enforcement of the law. The GROL Team is concerned with the link between ROL and democratic governance, with particular attention to the empowerment of the poor. Governance assistance focuses on legislative strengthening, decentralization and local governance, anticorruption, security sector reform, policy reform, and public administration. USAID ROL assistance provides support for the democratic development of constitutions and laws; strengthening ROL institutions and processes in post-conflict environments; improved transparency in judicial decision-making and administration; and the development of ROL civil advocacy and awareness groups to provide bottom-up pressure for ROL reform.

Human Rights (HR): The HR Team provides field support and technical leadership on human rights issues to USAID senior staff, operating units, and other USG agencies. The team identifies and disseminates best practices in the protection and promotion of physical integrity (such as freedom from torture, arrest, and slavery) and other civil and political rights, and in the equal protection under the law [including protection for minorities and marginalized or vulnerable groups such as the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community]. The HR Team supports USAID Missions and DRG officers through training and technical support, including strategy and program design, assessments, and evaluations, and the provision of program funding and technical assistance. The team's areas of special focus include empowering women, countering trafficking in persons, and implementing the Presidential Study Directive on preventing mass atrocities and genocide. The team also works to ensure that respect for human rights' principles is integrated throughout USG development work.

Learning (L): The L Team coordinates the DRG's learning agenda by promoting rigorous theory-driven and data-based research on Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance. It is an Agency leader in impact and performance evaluations, survey research, and rigorous qualitative research. Its mandate includes a methodological component as USAID seeks to improve the quality of the research tools it uses. It also is responsible for nurturing relations with academics and other researchers working on DRG-related substantive and methodological problems.

II. Selected Knowledge Area Groups

Gender Working Group (GWG): The GWG leads the DRG Center’s engagement on gender equality and women’s empowerment. It works to promote and protect the human rights of women and girls, facilitate their equal and meaningful participation in civic and political life, and better identify and address gender differences and inequalities in all aspects of Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance. The GWG also works towards advancing the field of knowledge around these topics, and developing and disseminating best practices within USAID.

Transitional Justice (TJ): The TJ knowledge area group focuses on societies emerging from conflict and authoritarian rule, particularly those with histories of systematic human rights abuses and mass atrocities. It promotes accountability, truth and reconciliation, redress, and institutional reform, while acknowledging the needs of victims and of society as a whole. TJ strives to restore civic trust in public institutions, and bring about more peaceful, prosperous, and just societies.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI): The LGBTI group seeks to improve the knowledge base of USAID regarding the needs and concerns of LGBTI persons and communities with regard to political and economic development, political participation, governance, civil society, human rights, and ROL. This knowledge area group seeks to catalog and disseminate best practices for the effective inclusion of LGBTI communities in all aspects of government decision-making. It also ensures that US development policies and programs are inclusive, equitable, accountable, and sustainable.

2. Bureau for Africa; Office of Sustainable Development; Conflict, Peacebuilding, and Governance Division (CPG)

For the 2013 DRG Research and Innovation Grants APS, the DRG Center is partnering with USAID’s Bureau for Africa; Office of Sustainable Development; Conflict, Peacebuilding, and Governance Division (CPG). CPG provides technical advice and support related to Peace & Security and Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance issues to Africa Bureau leadership and to USAID missions and non-presence programs in the Africa region. To best guide the technical design, implementation, and evaluation of programming, CPG emphasizes a learning agenda based on experience and evidence that aims to improve the efficacy of projects in Africa. CPG invests in research activities to track trends in governance, civil society, and the media across a broad range of African countries, and generates and disseminates knowledge and best practices in areas such as African leadership, decentralization and local governance, civil society enabling environment, and transnational organized crime.