

## Enhancing Cross-Sectoral Programming: A Dialogue between the Africa Bureau of USAID and PVO Partners

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### Summary Points

- **Vivian Lowery Derryck**, Assistant Administrator of USAID's Africa Bureau, articulated the goals of the meeting as follows:
  1. *What do we mean by "cross-sectoral programming"*
  2. *What approaches are successful?*
  3. *What are the obstacles to achieving synergistic results?*
  4. *What are some recommendations for collaboration?*
  
- Preliminary findings of a **study on cross-sectoral linkages** conducted jointly between AFR/SD/DG, PPC/CDIE and G/DG include:
  1. Cross-sectoral programming makes sense in some cases. The decentralization process in African countries, for example, is conducive to synergy.
  2. Support from local managers is critical to the success of synergistic activities.
  3. The local context (political, economic, etc.) is a key consideration for implementation of cross-sectoral programming.
  4. Extra effort must be made in order for linkages to be accommodated.
  5. Synergistic activities are labor-intensive.
  6. Reporting and evaluation of these activities are difficult.
  7. Reduced staff and diminished budgets are constraints to these activities.
  
- A critical part of encouraging synergies is having a common understanding of terms of reference:
  1. **Cross-sectoral synergies** occur in many different ways. There are *uncoordinated synergies*, which happen without the conscious efforts of mission staff; *collaborative synergies*; where there is consultation and information sharing between SOs within a mission that results in an activity that cuts across two or more SOs, and *integrated programming*, where there is an activity that is designed and funded jointly by two or more SOs in a mission. Synergies are successful when "the effects of two agents acting together are greater than the sum of the same two agents acting independently," or  $1 + 1 = 3$ .
  2. Discussion of definitions of **democracy & governance** included areas of focus such as include human rights, women's participation, conflict resolution, and support of the independent media. It was also noted that DG encompasses both *participation* and *systemic change*. Another participant felt that democracy is on the *process* side of the equation while governance is on the *administrative* side. Finally, participants argued that DG must focus on more locally relevant concepts, such as: social capital; social networks; civil society organizations; and,

community empowerment. This would offer more flexibility and more opportunities to link private and public organizations.

- Several **obstacles to cross-sectoral synergies** were identified by participants. First, donors and PVOs that "do not practice what they preach." There is a need for greater inclusiveness by donors and PVOs in *project design, monitoring, and management*. Second, there are challenges to assessing the impact of this work through traditional "indicators." Third, success at synergies requires additional effort and planning, which is often difficult for missions, even where missions have explicitly targeted them. Fourth, there is a need for resources and a structure that will facilitate synergy. Finally, USAID's own legislative context demands results reporting in a stovepiped fashion, which constrains our ability to practice synergistic programming.
- Many PVO partners face **USAID operational and management challenges** to their efforts to be in encouraging greater synergy. First, the structure for monitoring and reporting results is very constraining because it forces PVOs to funneling information in a particular manner suited to AID reporting requirements. Second, when development programs are locally-driven not everything "rolls up neatly" and the reporting system does not seem flexible enough to respond to this. Third, there needs to be greater collaboration among sectors and donors on resources since, in order for development to be sustainable, all levels (local, national, private, and civil society) must be involved.
- **Questions for further consideration:**
  1. Do cross-sectoral linkages in programming provide value-added in terms of sustainability and effectiveness?
  2. Is the USAID reporting structure amenable to such programming, and, if not, how must it change?
  3. Departing from the traditional rural development approach, is it true that the presence of "democracy" makes a difference in the ability of activities to reach across sectors and to find opportunities on the local level?
  4. Given the post cold-war political context and USAID's formal commitment in its strategic plan to build sustainable democracies, should DG be included in all Agency sectoral activities?
  5. Should PVOs make democratic governance an explicit part of their strategic objectives?