

**USAID AFRICA BUREAU  
DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE PROJECT:  
THREE-YEAR FINAL REPORT**

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## ACRONYMS

ABIC	Africa Bureau Information Center
AFR	Africa Bureau
ARD	Associates in Rural Development, Inc.
CPSP	Country Program Strategy Paper
D/G	democracy/governance
DFA	Development Fund for Africa
FODEP	Foundation for Democratic Process
FSN	foreign-service national
FY	fiscal year
GENESYS	Gender in Economic and Social Systems
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
MSI	Management Systems International
NGO	nongovernmental organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
ONI	Office of Operations and New Initiatives
ONI/DG	Office of Operations and New Initiatives/Democracy and Governance Division
PID	project identification document
PP	project paper
REDSO	Regional Economic Development Services Office
SD	Office of Sustainable Development
SPA	Special Program of Assistance
USG	U.S. government
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USIA	U.S. Information Agency

## PREFACE

This final report was prepared by Associates in Rural Development, Inc. (ARD), to satisfy U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) reporting requirements in relation to the Africa Bureau Democracy and Governance Project's core and requirements contracts, AFR-0542-C-00-1108-00 and AFR-0542-Q-1109-00, respectively. The report covers activities carried out during the original contract period of 19 September 1991 to 19 September 1994. It should be noted that the contract has been extended by USAID to cover the period between 19 September 1994 and 30 April 1996. It is expected that there will be an ancillary final report completed at the end of the extension detailing activities completed during this time frame.

## **I. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT**

### **A. General Background**

On 19 September 1991, after a competitive bidding process, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) entered into 2 complementary contracts with Associates in Rural Development, Inc. (ARD). The core contract was for technical services to assist the agency's Africa Bureau (AFR) to develop a democracy and governance (D/G) strategic framework and program. Under this contract, ARD provided a core team of advisors and support personnel to offer a range of services to USAID/Washington through the Office of Operations and New Initiatives (ONI), which was later folded into the Office of Sustainable Development (SD) in AFR, as well as USAID missions and governments in Africa. Under the requirements contract, ARD organized and closely supervised short-term D/G technical assistance to USAID missions in Africa to help with sector assessments and project designs. Because the 2 contracts were so closely integrated, the core team was able to provide conceptual guidance and preparation for field teams and assure that their reports not only supported mission objectives, but also built a body of knowledge to refine USAID's D/G strategy and practice in Africa. ARD implemented these activities in collaboration with a designated subcontractor, Management Systems International (MSI).

AFR specified that the contractor would assist the bureau to refine and apply guidelines articulated in its 1990 democracy background paper. Specifically, it indicated that the program should be African-led, focused on long-term sustainable development, mission-generated, integrated into overall mission portfolios, and stress the substance, rather than form, of D/G reform processes.

During the initial 3 years of the contract, the core team consisted of a Senior Governance Advisor (Robert Charlick), a Project Manager (John Rigby, replaced by William Nagle in January 1994 and Steven Dinkin in June 1994), and an Administrative Assistant (Haoua Traore, replaced in June 1993 by Dana Reilly as Assistant Project Manager). Under the core and requirements contracts, approximately 90 consultants were invited to participate in various field teams, sector studies, and Washington-based programs conducted for USAID/AFR. Over one-third of these were Africans, reflecting the project's responsiveness to the mandate to involve Africans extensively and promote the inclusion of African perspectives. Responding as well to USAID's commitment to diversity, over 25 percent of the project's consultants were African-Americans.

### **B. Project Goals and Expected Results**

AFR has been increasing its capacity to deal with the broad field of D/G in development. The purpose of this project was to mobilize a center of technical excellence for services to meet 4 critical bureau objectives:

- to aid AFR in enriching and refining its policy and program guidance on this subject;
- to provide timely and appropriate technical services to assess individual country realities regarding D/G, design comprehensive and selective strategies, programs, and projects for bilateral cooperation, and evaluate USAID activities undertaken in this field;
- to facilitate and encourage dialogue and networking between and among actors interested or engaged in African public affairs and governance issues, such as Africa-oriented scholars and foundations, U.S. government (USG) policy-makers--USAID, Department of State, U.S. Information Agency (USIA), and Department of Justice--and other donors, through meetings with advisory panels, workshops, and seminars, based largely in Washington, DC; and
- to assist AFR, through these workshops, meetings, and seminars as well as the work of project field teams, to further inter-donor policy and program coordination on D/G matters.

Numerous results were expected of the project, including:

- a workable, widely agreed-on concept of governance within the context of the Development Fund for Africa (DFA);
- incorporation of the concept of "democratic governance" into USAID policy, program, and process decisions;
- greater understanding of the whole process of democratization and improved governance in individual African countries as well as throughout the continent;
- a widely agreed-on policy approach to accelerating and deepening D/G reform, affecting AFR and, where appropriate, USAID-wide policy;
- based on comparative analysis and experience, the formulation and testing of methods for strategizing about D/G support and prioritizing recommended USAID programmatic support;
- acceleration and deepening of the D/G perspective among USAID field-mission personnel in Africa, its incorporation into Washington policy development, and assistance to missions to formulate more strategic and refined approaches for supporting improved D/G; and

- enhanced dialogue and networking among those interested or engaged in African public affairs and governance issues, such as Africa-oriented scholars and foundations, USG (USAID and Department of State) policy-makers, and donors.

## II. OVERVIEW OF CORE ACTIVITIES

### A. Policy Development

At the request of the D/G Division of ONI (ONI/DG), the core team prepared a *Working Concept Paper on Governance* which was used to stimulate discussions with AFR, USAID missions and Regional Economic Development Services Offices (REDSOs) in Africa, other U.S. government agencies, and members of the scholarly community. These discussions helped focus USAID's governance policy and strategy, linking improvements in governance to democratic practice and resulting positive changes in the policy environment for broad-based, sustainable economic development. A revised version of this paper, *The Concept of Governance and Its Implications for USAID's Development Assistance Program in Africa*, was issued as an AFR Policy Paper in July 1992. It identifies 5 dimensions of D/G and suggests concrete ways that each can be furthered through USAID-funded projects and activities.

In 1993, the core team contributed significantly to the development of an AFR strategy paper for the promotion of D/G. This eventually resulted in an August 1993 draft titled *A Blueprint for Sustainable Development through Democratic Governance*, which was reviewed by AFR in the fall of 1993. The project's Senior Governance Advisor, Dr. Charlick, wrote a series of appendices to this report that developed its key argument and provided the structure for several new centrally funded projects. While this paper was overtaken by USAID's strategy development process, the influence of a number of its key ideas is now apparent in agency-wide thinking. During 1993, Dr. Charlick was invited to participate in the development of USAID's democracy strategy paper, and he contributed several drafts to that process which eventually resulted in the paper *Building Democracy: USAID's Strategy*.

### B. Policy Implementation

#### 1. Indicators and Impact Measurement

Through the end of September 1994, a major activity of the core team centered on assisting AFR and its field missions to identify D/G impact indicators. Early in 1992, this activity centered on working with AFR's Measurement Committee to develop D/G criteria to be employed in USAID's efforts to identify "focus countries" where assistance resources would be concentrated. By mid-1992, the core team had conducted extensive consultations with other bilateral and multilateral donors on the measurement and evaluation of performance and change in this area, and convened a meeting of an advisory panel of measurement experts for AFR in Washington. Working closely with ONI/DG staff, the core team helped develop a list of indicators drawn primarily from concepts spelled out in its "Concept of Governance" papers. Based largely on this work, AFR's Ad Hoc Committee on Measurement

recommended adopting a number of these indicators in its contribution to the bureau's annual budget-allocation exercise. Also in 1992, the project assisted with the collection and interpretation of preliminary data.

During 1993, the process was further refined with the introduction of "country profiles" prepared by the Africa Bureau Information Center (ABIC). Dr. Charlick participated fully in the review of these and other documents, and contributed technical support to ONI's scoring of D/G performance for a number of African countries in the "focus-country exercise." These scores, together with performance indicators for economic policy reform, largely determined the level of development assistance to those countries for the next fiscal year.

In addition, the core team contributed to AFR's thinking about operational indicators at the strategic level by conducting a workshop which assembled experts in this area from across USAID and its support contractors. In the past year, the project also assisted with the development of project-level indicators through the work of its field teams, who designed D/G projects in several African countries and assisted other missions in their thinking about D/G.

## **2. Timely Approaches to Assisting Civil Society and Governance Reform**

Core project staff worked closely with a distinguished team of experts to conceptualize and develop strategies--substantive and administrative--to meet the needs of USAID to respond more quickly and appropriately to rapidly changing political environments in Africa. This work resulted in 2 papers that contributed to AFR's and USAID's approach in these areas:

- *An Assessment of USAID's Capacity for Rapid Response in Support of African Civil Society, and*
- *An Assessment of USAID's Capacity for Rapid Response in Support of Improved Governance in Africa.*

## **3. Economic Development and Political Liberalization**

A major activity of the team in 1993 involved developing and conducting a workshop for USAID/AFR on "Economic Reform in Africa's New Era of Political Liberalization." This workshop hosted donor members from the Special Program of Assistance (SPA) to Africa and furthered thinking on how the issues of economic development and political liberalization are connected and affect policy implementation. The workshop contributed to creation of a new subcommittee of the SPA group to continue exploring this topic. The project's report on this workshop has been widely distributed by USAID throughout donor countries and Africa.

### **C. Improved Governance Practices**

During the second half of 1992, ONI identified the problem of corruption as a major governance concern influencing the process of economic development in Africa. As a result, the core team organized 2 meetings of its D/G advisory panel on administrative corruption. These meetings examined relevant theories and specific experiences in limiting administrative corruption in the context of democratization and resulted in a publication titled "Limiting Administrative Corruption in the Democratizing States of Africa," edited by Dr. Charlick. It appeared as a special issue of the journal *Corruption and Reform* (VII, 3, 1992-93) and has been widely disseminated throughout USAID and the international development community by AFR. An additional governance activity involved a preliminary effort by the law and justice advisory panel to define the goals of a justice system in newly democratizing states and examine specific practices and structures.

### **D. Strengthening Civil Society**

During 1993, the core team planned a series of workshops to assist AFR in refining its concept of civil society and thinking concretely about how to assist civil-society development with the objective of improving D/G. In June 1993, the project commissioned Dr. John Holm to prepare a paper synthesizing much of the best scholarly thinking about civil society in Africa and pose key questions to be addressed in developing an effective approach.

On the basis of this report, a preparatory workshop was held in September 1993 to plan a major workshop focused on the organization of civil society and its impact on policy-making and implementation. The workshop on "Civil Society, Democracy, and Development in Africa" was held on 9 and 10 June 1994. During the course of the meeting, participants--including USAID practitioners, academics, and members of the development community--discussed a wide range of conceptual issues, potential actions by USAID and other development agencies, and obstacles to carrying out various actions. Among the issues discussed were:

- the utility of the distinction between the definitions of civil society and civic society, which is defined as more explicitly political;
- the importance of civil society at the national versus local, subnational levels; and
- how donors should make choices with regard to supporting civil or civic society in Africa.

Participants suggested that USAID and donor organizations should undertake various actions to foster and develop civil society in Africa. It was argued that a thorough analysis needs to be carried out at the country level to identify and, to the extent possible, prioritize civil-society status and needs. The results of needs identified in the assessment process should be

reviewed by donors, and development agencies should agree on respective roles based on their comparative advantages, policy frameworks, and program strategies. Although there was a divergence of opinion on numerous issues and topics, the majority of participants recognized the need to be engaged in helping support civil society in Africa.

### **E. Promoting Participation of Women in Democratic Development**

During 1993, the core team also focused on the issue of gender and democracy. The project held a series of preliminary meetings from April to August 1994 that were designed to culminate in a workshop in 1995. The workshop's general purpose will be to provide specific, practical assistance to USAID personnel, contractors, and consultants on more effective inclusion of gender considerations in the Global and Africa Bureaus' democracy and gender strategy, design, and program work.

### **F. Improving Assessment Methodology**

During 1993, at the request of ONI/DG, the project undertook a series of efforts to improve the design and implementation of country D/G assessments under the requirements contract. It established a panel to review its previous efforts and assist in structuring upcoming assessments to be conducted in Mali, Ghana, Tanzania, and Niger. As a result of this activity, the project developed an innovative methodology for combining political economy, state/ society, and institutional analyses in examining the dynamics of D/G and identifying obstacles and constraints to improved governance performance as well as opportunities for effective interventions. All assessments are currently subject to ongoing external review and supported by external expert technical assistance.

### **G. Facilitating Dialogue between Africans and USAID**

Under the terms of the contract, the core team was charged with assisting AFR to enhance its access to a wide range of "African voices" on issues of political change on the continent. This task was accomplished in a variety of ways, ranging from arranging meetings between groups and small delegations of Africans visiting Washington to attending international meetings and reporting back on African points of view. Several excellent examples of this activity include a meeting with a USIA delegation of African women lawyers in March 1992; a meeting between ONI/DG staff and the African nongovernmental organization (NGO) InterAction in May 1992; and a Clark Atlanta group workshop led by Professor Guy Martin at the Department of State in July 1993. The core staff has also maintained an extensive series of written and oral communications with African scholars, professionals, and political practitioners in the United States and abroad.

A second activity designed to facilitate this dialogue was initiated in 1993 with a preliminary study of how electronic communications via Internet could assist in linking democratic organizations in Africa with one another and the donor community. A report was delivered to USAID's AFR D/G advisors during a meeting in December 1993, indicating that low-cost applications of this technology may prove very valuable not only for enhancing communications, but strengthening civil-society networks as well.

#### **H. Improving Communications among USG Democracy Advisors**

At the request of ONI/DG, project staff organized and held 2 meetings of AFR's D/G advisors. These meetings brought together direct-hires and personal service contractors from field locations in Africa with AFR and USAID officials responsible for defining and implementing the agency's new emphasis on democracy. Among other results, the first meeting in July 1993 established the need for improved communications among the advisors and led to the testing of microcomputer and modem connections to Internet and USAID's E-mail system in 3 field locations in Africa. The second meeting in December 1993 focused on implications of USAID's reorganization and the enhanced emphasis on democracy in the administration's sustainable development strategy for the advisors' work in D/G.

#### **I. Coordination with Other USAID D/G Activities and Donors**

Under the terms of its contract, the core team was charged with a number of liaison tasks to help develop a coherent set of activities and policies in the area of D/G. Hence, the Senior Governance Advisor conducted periodic consultations--the first series began in early 1992--with such bilateral donors as the British, French, and German governments and such multilateral donors as the Global Coalition for Africa, European Community, World Bank, and Development Assistance Group of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Dr. Charlick also attended a number of high-level and scholarly meetings for AFR in order to inform ONI and other AFR personnel of the best current thinking in this area. Further, the core team maintained close communications with USAID's field D/G advisors and related contractor personnel, such as the ABIC and Checchi teams for legal services in the D/G area. To this end, project staff organized and hosted a 2-day planning meeting in May 1992 for ONI/DG and these actors at the Africa Governance Project office.

### III. SPECIFIC COUNTRY ASSIGNMENTS

The project was able to respond in 2 ways to requests from Africa for assistance with D/G issues. Core-team personnel, principally Dr. Charlick, were asked by USAID missions through the central office of ONI to provide short-term assistance with D/G strategy. Thus far, project staff have responded to such requests with field visits to Zambia, Tanzania, Niger, Mali, Ghana, and Madagascar. The Zambia activity supported the mission and country team in deciding on a strategy for promoting D/G linked to economic policy reform. It resulted in a "concept paper" and a proposal for a "needs assessment." The second assignment responded to a request from USAID/Tanzania for assistance with developing a short-term (2-year) strategy leading up to anticipated elections, the governance section of the mission's 5-year strategy statement, and governance aspects of a project in design, the Finance and Enterprise Development project. The visit to Niger resulted in a paper that helped the country team formulate its democracy strategy using current resources. Missions to Mali and Ghana in 1993 resulted in the crafting of scopes of work for full-scale D/G assessments. The mission to Madagascar was designed to support the conduct of the assessment team and occurred simultaneously with that team's fieldwork.

The second mechanism for meeting requests for assistance was through the requirements contract with ONI/DG. Under its terms, ARD--in conjunction with its subcontractor, MSI--can provide technical assistance personnel for centrally funded D/G assessments and evaluations as well as mission buy-ins for designs at the project identification document (PID) and project paper (PP) stages. In 1993 and 1994, the Senior Governance Advisor participated in these assessments as part of the effort to improve their quality and comparability, and facilitate relations between the assessment and country teams. Teams contracted under buy-ins have also begun to conduct evaluations of USAID's D/G projects.

#### A. Strategy Development Studies

The project was asked by USAID/Washington and field missions to provide assistance with the development of medium- and long-term D/G studies by conducting studies to support the Country Program Strategy Paper (CPSP) process or an alternative strategic process.

#### B. Assessments

The project has conducted 10 D/G assessments in 9 countries:

- Zambia--May-June 1992,
- Burundi--June 1992,

- Mali--July-August 1992 and November 1993-April 1994,
- Ghana--November 1993-May 1994,
- Tanzania--February-March 1994,
- Madagascar--February-March 1994,
- Chad--December 1993-March 1994,
- Namibia--July 1994, and
- Niger--October 1994.

While each assessment was unique in its response to country and mission needs, the project has progressively evolved and refined a systematic, comparative framework that incorporates insights from institutional-analysis and state/society-analytic methodologies.

### 1. Zambia

The Zambia assessment grew out of Dr. Charlick's preliminary visit to Zambia in March 1991. On the basis of this visit, and in conjunction with USAID mission, USIA, and embassy personnel, he drafted a scope of work for an assessment. This scope was subsequently approved by the mission and forwarded to ONI/DG for action. Within 6 weeks, the project fielded a highly qualified 3-person team consisting of Dr. James Wunsch (team leader), Michael Bratton, and Peter Kareithi. The assessment focused primarily on how USAID could support governance in ways that would promote the legitimacy of the democratic regime and its ability to maintain and expand its commitment to economic policy reform.

Three key components were identified during the assessment:

- the need to improve public-sector governance in policy formulation and implementation,
- the need to strengthen key segments of civil society to act as a better demander of policy, and
- mechanisms for managing linkages between the two.

The resulting report, *Democracy and Governance in Zambia, An Assessment and Proposed Strategy*, not only identified crucial areas for action, it specifically identified strategic choices that USAID/Zambia could make in deciding on a course of action to support D/G and a series

of proposed project activities. The assessment had a significant impact on project development. (See Section C.1 below.)

## **2. Burundi**

Burundi was a case where a USAID mission decided to conduct a broad-based assessment of the political context for development in a highly dynamic situation, with an eye toward determining where it could best affect the development environment and no prior decision to undertake a major D/G commitment. The Burundi D/G assessment was initiated by the mission in the spring of 1992. ONI/DG responded affirmatively and instructed project staff to recruit a team (Lucie Colvin Phillips and Steven Tucker) under its requirements contract. The assessment was conducted in an unusually participatory manner, involving 4 Burundian consultants and extensive rapid-reconnaissance fieldwork. The study gathered important information that can be used in the future development of country democracy plans, mission strategy statements, and program-level decisions.

The assessment presented information on political culture and traditional rule relationships as well as their bearing on economic management. It went on to identify important elements in the Burundian political liberalization process, underway since 1987, and carefully examined both the 1992 constitution and the debate it occasioned. The assessment focused on the military and the courts as forces dealing with ethnic conflict and the protection of human rights, respectively. A major portion of the assessment was devoted to examining civil society, in terms of emerging political movements and the capacity for political action of such institutions as the church, unions, and media. It also concentrated on the relationship between state and nongovernmental actors in economic governance, and examined issues relating to the privatization of public enterprises, regulation, property rights, and corruption as elements in the potential growth of the private sector. The assessment concluded with the view that the process of liberalization underway in Burundi was real and was improving the context for economic development and private-sector investment and growth. It was cautious, however, about the sustainability of these reforms, as subsequent events have tragically proven.

## **3. Mali**

Mali has gone through revolutionary political change in the past 2 years and is attempting to consolidate its democratic development. To assist in this process, the USAID mission in Bamako requested 2 separate assessment activities. The first, conducted in September 1992, responded to the mission's wish to understand the dynamics of specific governmental and political institutions with an eye toward providing modest, short-term assistance to these institutions as quickly as possible. The institutions studied in this assessment were the judiciary, legislature, political parties, and decentralized administrative structures. Project staff were able to recruit a highly experienced assessment team (Richard Vengroff, Benoit

Ngom, Tessy Bakary, and Sheldon Gellar), who employed participatory methods to solicit the input of Malians at various levels.

After Mali underwent a number of significant political and economic crises in 1993 and 1994, USAID/Bamako requested additional support from ONI/DG in formulating a democracy strategy for its CPSP. Accordingly, project staff organized a team in November 1993 to conduct a broad assessment of unfolding political developments in Mali, especially as manifested in 2 very important and sensitive political issues: the financing of education and the processing and marketing of agricultural commodities. African members of the team--experts in local governance (Cheibane Coulibaly), public sector management (Mamadou Kante), and institutional analysis (Abdoulaye Niandou-Souley)--were joined by an American specialist in political interest group analysis and political economy (Barbara Lewis) and institutional analyst and former USAID mission director (Harlan Hobgood). By focusing on governmental and legal institutions as well as the processes linking civil society to public institutions, the team was able to identify key constraints to effective governance and opportunities for intervention to assist the consolidation of D/G in Mali. Preliminary versions of the report were used in inter-donor planning and led to discussions of assistance coordination to support the D/G consolidation in Mali. Moreover, based partly on the first and second assessments, the USAID mission began to design a democracy project, drafting a PID that focused on decentralization and civil-society development.

#### 4. Ghana

Ghana is a case where the USAID mission and country team had a very specific focus defining the mission's request for an assessment. Based on prior analysis, the country team had determined that the key constraint to consolidation of democracy in Ghana was improvement of the electoral process, particularly the electoral register. While the country team asked the project to concentrate its assessment on this activity, ONI staff encouraged a broadening of the scope of work to include the overall governance context. ONI maintained that the team would not be able to fully understand the electoral issue without comprehending the broader institutional implications. Thus, in conjunction with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), which provided a small team of electoral specialists under a separate contract, the project assembled a highly qualified team of analysts to examine the broader political and administrative context for Ghanaian electoral reform. The team included specialists in public-sector management (Tina West), political parties (Richard Sandbrook), interest groups and NGOs (Jon Kraus), and legal and constitutional reform issues (Shaheen Mozaffar). The team's work was complemented by separate reports from Ghanaians on local governance, political party organization, and judicial review. Phase I of the assessment recommended that USAID support the democratic transition by promoting "more information, more dialogue, stronger civil society and linkage institutions to carry out the dialogue and enforcement of the democratic rights laid out in the Constitution and the body of Ghanaian Law."

In March 1994, the project assisted the USAID mission with preparing a PID for electoral assistance by providing Jim Holtaway, a public-administration specialist. The second phase of the assessment in May 1994 focused on issues identified in the PID as needing further development. This analysis contributed substantially to the political and technical analysis in the PP, completed in the fall of 1994.

## **5. Madagascar**

During the summer of 1993, USAID/Madagascar asked the Regional Democracy Advisor in Nairobi (Joel Barkan) to recommend a strategic approach for its D/G support activities. This request led to a D/G assessment conducted by a project team in February and March 1994. The team consisted of an NGO specialist (Leslie Fox, team leader), a political economist (Maureen Covell), a Malagasy law professor and journalist (Jean Eric Rakotoarisoa), and a Malagasy public-administration specialist (Charles Rabenarivo).

The assessment found that the Malagasy people have made tremendous progress with hardly a backward step. Nonetheless, despite having successfully completed a first round of free, competitive elections, Madagascar still has a long way to go in establishing the institutions and operating procedures necessary to complete the transition to effective D/G. At a formal level, the Constitution of the Third Republic contains many ambiguities, notably in specifying the distribution of power between the president and prime minister. Significant work remains to be done to complete the establishment of the legislature, judiciary, and local governmental institutions, and institutionalize new governance behaviors. Civil-society actors, suffering from the effects of their earlier history, have little experience in working together to resolve policy issues across lines of kinship, ethnic groups, and regions. Building civic groups that have the capacity for broad membership and participation and can effectively play a role in political arenas will take time. The team's report concluded that USAID can support the transition process by enhancing civil-society capacity-building and selectively supporting a few promising state institutions through a strategic emphasis on governance in its existing project portfolio and possibly a new, modest D/G program. USAID/Madagascar is in the process of drafting a PP for a new project, called Participation and Poverty, that includes substantial assistance for civil-society involvement in the policy process.

## **6. Tanzania**

Following up on Dr. Charlick's preliminary assistance to USAID/Tanzania in May 1992, the project designed a study in conjunction with the country team to thoroughly assess D/G progress in Tanzania since then and identify opportunities to support further democratic reforms. The team included an institutional analyst (Tina West), a political economist (Michael Lofchie), and an NGO specialist (Aili Tripp), and was supported by Dr. Charlick of the project's core staff, the Regional Democracy Advisor (John Harbeson), and several Tanzanian consultants.

The Tanzanian assessment demonstrated the unevenness of the change process, particularly in the early phases of a transition. Tanzania has made significant progress in liberalizing its economy and political process, and accepting the principle of open, multiparty, political competition. It has been able to undertake these changes while generally maintaining a high level of political order and managing potential religious, regional, and ethnic conflicts exceptionally well. Nonetheless, it is still early on in the transition process, particularly in the areas of legal reform and development of public-sector accountability and responsiveness. Civil society, however, has been very dynamic with the expansion of associations in size and variety, the flourishing of an emboldened free press, revival of the cooperative movement, and emergence of self-help organizations in villages and development associations at the district level. Still, these associations confront limitations, especially to their effectiveness in civic life. Even the formal business community complains that while they have access to top leaders, they are not heard and much of their agenda remains unaddressed. Political parties have yet to emerge as important channels for popular demands. Only the media has shown significant progress in linking people to government.

The assessment concluded with the recommendation that USAID use its existing programs and a proposed new D/G project to help improve the legal/regulatory environment for D/G by strengthening civil-society associations and assisting their capacity for action, including civic action, and by enhancing the capacity of political parties and the media to link civil-society actors to governmental policy-making. USAID/Tanzania has used the assessment as the foundation of a design for a proposed \$2-million, 3-year D/G initiative, slated to start in fiscal year (FY) 1995.

## **7. Chad**

In Chad, the USAID mission believed it was important to have a clear and complete analysis of political developments and their short-term implications in order to better support D/G in Chad over the near and medium term. To this end, in December 1993, USAID/Chad requested that the project provide a governance expert (William Miles), under its requirements contract, to work with a team of Chadian consultants in preparing a political assessment.

The assessment determined that the transition toward a democratic system of governance in Chad remained incomplete and unstable. The report concluded that USAID could play a critical role in strengthening sectors where democracy was struggling to take root. Further, it stated that vulnerable institutions--the performance of which is a prerequisite for good governance--could also be greatly aided by a series of low-cost, high-impact, long-lasting interventions by USAID/Chad. These interventions are of 3 types:

- top-down, focusing on key leadership cadres in civil associations and political parties;
- bottom-up, emphasizing majoritarian rural populations; and

- intermediate, affecting and linking both top and bottom levels of the democratizing populace.

## **8. Namibia**

The United States has been involved in democratization and governance activities in Namibia prior and subsequent to the country's first free elections in 1990. Most of this assistance, funded primarily through 116e, the Africa Regional Electoral Assistance Fund, and central funding sources, has been on an ad hoc basis. Realizing that the ad hoc nature of programming was limiting the mission's ability to mount a highly focused initiative which would identify and strengthen the key institutions critical to sustaining a responsive government and active civil society, USAID/Namibia decided to commit sufficient resources to develop an extensive bilateral democratization and governance program with the government of Namibia. To accomplish this objective, the mission required the assistance of a technical team with prior exposure to Namibia's unique history, cultural norms, and socioeconomic situation. This team was comprised of a senior D/G advisor (Joel Barkan), D/G consultant (Gretchen Bauer), and researcher/consultant (Carol Martin).

The Namibian assessment concluded that there is a serious institutional gap between central political authorities and the population they purport to govern, so much so that the state is virtually "suspended" over Namibian society. This problem is exacerbated by the team's second principal finding: a widespread lack of advocacy capacity on the part of Namibian citizens and local and regional leaders, as well as the leaders of major interest groups and NGOs, to articulate and lobby for their needs vis-à-vis the state. The Namibian political system is sufficiently open that most groups and associations have opportunities to assert their interests, but they are unable to take advantage of these opportunities. The assessment made recommendations clustered in 5 interrelated realms of activity--building advocacy capacity, facilitating decentralization, enhancing the transparency and accountability of parliament, strengthening the rule of law and human rights, and supporting the media. USAID/Namibia is currently planning a project with a strong emphasis on the parliament that is based partly on the assessment's findings.

## **9. Niger**

The USAID mission in Niger recently developed a new set of "strategic objectives" which, for the first time, included D/G as an explicit objective in its plans for the next 8 years. As a result, USAID decided to arrange for a technical assessment of the political situation and opportunities for future funding. The assessment team was comprised of 5 individuals: political scientist/institutional analyst (Sheldon Gellar), political scientist/public-administration specialist (Tina West), 2 political scientists (Dr. Charlick and Pearl Robinson), and political scientist/political economist (Leslie Fox).

As a result of its political analysis of the democratic transition in Niger, the team recommended modifying the mission's proposed strategic objective to concentrate on supporting the development of civic and self-governance capacity in non-state associations, particularly in the specific domains where USAID conducts sectoral activities (health, rural credit, environmental management, famine moderation). Following discussions with AFR in Washington, USAID/Niger eliminated its D/G strategic objective and opted to treat democracy promotion as a "target of opportunity." The mission has expressed interest in having a political expert return to Niger to update or add to the existing assessment report.

## **C. Design Activities**

### **1. Zambia**

The Zambia assessment described above served as the basis for a design activity, commencing in July 1992 with a PID. This document was reviewed in Washington and the mission given authority to design a project. The project was then asked to provide a design team for the PP and assembled an innovative team, combining resources from the mission buy-in (Michael Bratton, Jesse McCorry, and Peter Kareithi) with experts made available through the Implementing Policy Change Project (David Gordan and Tina West) and complemented by Jennifer Windsor from ONI/DG. The PP was completed by mid-September 1992 and involved extensive consultation with Zambian citizens and government agencies. The goal of this project is to enhance governmental accountability and responsiveness, thereby contributing directly to the mission's strategy of promoting broad-based economic growth.

The project's key components were strongly influenced by the prior assessment and include:

- improving the civil rights of Zambians by assisting in the revision of the constitution to enhance individual rights and legislative powers, and supporting a nationwide civic educational activity through the Foundation for Democratic Process (FODEP), a Zambian NGO;
- enhancing the independence and competence of Zambian journalists to report on economic-policy issues through studies, establishment of a media resource center, and support for the training of journalists and media managers;
- improving legislative capability and performance through studies, staff training and salary support, and support for lawmaking research; and
- facilitating policy formulation and implementation at the national level through the creation of a Policy Analysis and Management Unit in the Cabinet Office.

Prior to start-up, D/G project staff continued to be active in providing the mission with technical assistance to refine the design and begin initial implementation of specific aspects of the project.

## 2. Rwanda

Previously, the project undertook 2 design activities in Rwanda to support the mission's development of a Democratization and Governance Project. In March 1992, a team assisted USAID/Rwanda with preparing a PID, followed by a PP in July 1992. The PID team identified key barriers to D/G in Rwanda: 3 centuries of authoritarian rule controlled by self-perpetuating elites with minimal accountability, and the mass and elite political culture this history has produced. The focus was on the problem of accelerating and reinforcing "a process of social learning for self-governance that had begun during the recent period of economic and political liberalization." This, the team recommended, could be ameliorated by providing assistance to state institutions, principally to strengthen the legislative process, as well as local elected officials and civil society to enhance the capacity of citizens to make political demands. An additional form of proposed assistance, linking civil societal demands to state policy and providing citizens with the capacity to know and understand governmental decisions and performance, was provided in the form of support for the print media.

The subsequent PP design team fielded by the project represented a creative synthesis of resources, combining an expert on public administration (Harlan Hobgood), NGO specialist (Leslie Fox), media expert (Louise Bourgault), scholar with an in-depth understanding of local governance (Alison Des Forges), and gender/soundness analyst (Deirdre LaPin), contracted through the Gender in Economic and Social Systems (GENESYS) Project. Following the guidance of the PID, the project team produced a flexible, multifaceted design, capable of being adjusted to Rwanda's complex political environment, where a single activity might well have to be curtailed or delayed.

The project components involved strengthening Rwandan civil society through:

- selective support to a new umbrella "civic organization;"
- local governance and local participation training assistance to the Ministry of Interior and Community Development and possibly a new nongovernmental association of local government officials;
- support for the national legislative process through equipment and training for deputies and National Assembly staff; and
- support of independent media and improved journalism through technical assistance and equipment for a newly created Rwandan Press Center.

As a result of the political upheaval and mass genocide in Rwanda, this project is no longer operational.

## IV. LESSONS LEARNED

For AFR, programming in "democratization," initiated only 4 years ago, was an adventure in uncharted waters. It has entailed a very steep learning curve. Listed below are the critical issues, products of the learning curve, and some tentative conclusions which project staff have been able to draw from the first 3 years of experience supporting USAID, particularly AFR, in promoting D/G in Africa.

### A. Broad Policy Lessons

1. The project has helped illuminate a number of governance constraints which have operated not only to discourage foreign investment, but distort growth in ways that limit the benefits of growth to broad segments of national populations. Without doubt, corruption and overcentralization of decision-making discretion has proved to be a key constraint of sustained growth in Africa. By focusing on elements of D/G which provide mechanisms and incentives to limit overcentralization or encourage public accountability and transparency, the project has contributed to an empirical understanding of sustainable development in Africa and concrete support that can encourage better governance behaviors in the context of democratizing states. This emphasis provides clear linkages between understanding the role of competitive elections, designing technical management and accounting systems for governments at various levels, and meaningful decentralization.
2. The effectiveness and extent of USAID's D/G activities in Africa has suffered from an ambiguous legislative mandate. At least until mid-1993, there was a lack of clarity and agreement within AFR, among the agency's various bureaus, and between USAID and other actors (e.g., the Department of State) regarding what was lawful and unlawful activity under DFA language and how, as a consequence, AFR should conceive of D/G activities in terms of its overall mission. As a result, considerable confusion existed among policy-makers and program/project personnel as to what types of D/G support activities could be financed using DFA funds and even whether USAID missions should undertake "democracy" activities as part of their strategic portfolios.
3. Activities have also been limited by the long-standing competition within USAID over policy program development between field missions and the Washington regional and functional bureaus. This has meant that the demand for project expertise depended more on local conditions and missions' bureaucratic and programmatic concerns than shared field and Washington-based priorities for assistance in an area considered both difficult and important to the overall USAID program.

4. Differences in the perspectives and perceived competencies of USAID and the Department of State (particularly between missions and embassies) has also proved to be a significant, though not necessarily insurmountable, barrier to the development and implementation of coherent D/G support activities in Africa. For this project, it has meant that deeper, longer-term issues of democratic transition and consolidation and the integration of concepts of governance support, which could help build citizen networks and self-governance capabilities, have often been stressed less strongly than *de jure* rules changes, with the adoption of new constitutions and conduct of founding competitive elections. A great deal of the energy of embassies and missions was concentrated on these short-range activities during the project's first 3 years. As of the end of phase I, too little attention was being given to those elements of civic society--intermediate, non-state, governance/advocacy structures--that are most critical to the achievement of sustainable improvements in democracy.
5. Despite the fact that, beginning in mid-1993, the new administration attempted to clarify the role of democracy support within the overall foreign-assistance program and more broadly among various actors in the federal government (notably, the Department of State, USAID, and USIA), central guidance has been insufficient at the operational level to assure consistent, effective programming. This is due mainly to confusion and conflict over the legislative mandate, central versus decentralized policy development, the specialized roles and competencies of bureaucratic actors, and aversion to the risks associated with undertaking programs for which impact measures are less concrete and less likely to be observed in short (3- to 5-year) time frames.
6. Due to some of the above factors, the project and AFR were less effective in using the learning processes undertaken to promote internal African democratic processes than they might have been. A good example involves the manner in which USAID missions conceived of the process of undertaking and utilizing "democracy assessments" (see below). These assessments could have been designed to foster significant local participation from conception to review and analysis, and as catalysts for public discussions in Africa that might have been difficult for host-country nationals to initiate. However, mission and embassy concerns over short- and medium-term objectives, political sensitivity with sitting regimes, and other issues sometimes operated to limit the participation of host-country nationals in the conduct of assessments and, in most cases, public diffusion of these assessments.
7. It is now increasingly obvious that virtually all of Africa's new democracies must be considered at risk, primarily because the prevailing environment across the continent is one of economic crisis and they are not finding that the regime change has yielded much of an investment or growth bonus, at least in the short run. This fact has led project staff to 3 conclusions:

- While it is possible, democratic consolidation will require a long period of time and considerable change at many levels in Africa--there is little value in being involved in the process only for the short term.
- Macropolitical rule changes and greater public accountability at the national level are important contributing factors to improved political and economic governance in Africa, but are insufficient to create the conditions for sustainable growth.
- USAID and other donors must strategically target D/G resources on societies where they have reason to believe that other important dimensions of change, which can reinforce and deepen competitive, plural politics, can also effectively be supported. In Africa, these dimensions must include a growing public climate of intolerance of gross human-rights abuses and a concretely expressed willingness to free local governmental authorities and non-state actors, including private-sector enterprise, from undue central control and constraint.

## **B. Operational Lessons**

1. Missions need a wide range of technical support on a variety of country- and program-level issues related to D/G. Having a single mechanism that can provide such assistance through the recruitment and preparation of consultants has proven very useful. Under this project, ARD was able to develop a group of highly qualified consultants to undertake similar assignments in a number of countries as well as a roster of specialized consultants to address such specific issues as the media, nongovernmental associations, and parliamentary structures.
2. It has also proven very valuable to have had this project develop and apply a broad-gauge political assessment methodology, using a rigorous comparative approach and testing it in a variety of political environments in the project's second and third years. Not only has this approach been helpful in identifying specific D/G opportunities and constraints and making recommendations to USAID missions for priority actions and strategic perspectives, it has begun to develop the basis for a truly comparative analysis, leading to a more empirically based theory of political change and democratization in Africa.
3. Support for project design, however, has been much more limited during this period, generally reflecting the limitations of using traditional bilateral project modes to respond fully to critical political/governance opportunities and problems in a timely or flexible manner. In places where the project had the opportunity to provide design assistance (i.e., Zambia, Rwanda, Ghana and, in 1995, Tanzania), issues of timely, effective project management and start-up have plagued each effort. In addition, these projects (usually initiated by missions with considerable embassy input) have not always drawn on a "macro" or broad-gauge understanding of the governance issues, at

times focusing resources in ways that were more finely tuned to the particular stage of political development or country-specific institutional conditions.

4. Washington-based workshops on specific aspects of D/G have proven most useful when they have been linked to a specific, clearly felt programmatic or policy need within USAID. This was most notably the case for the workshop on economic liberalization and democratization conducted in the context of USAID's proposal for a new commission of the SPA group. Workshops addressing important governance issues that were not linked to existing or clearly perceived programmatic initiatives within USAID, even when they were in response to the interest of particular agency officials or offices, had less impact. While these were interesting and generally well attended and received, there was little internalized incentive to follow up, disseminate workshop reports broadly, and incorporate workshop reflections in policies or programs in any obvious way. Also, the dissemination of workshop results to the field (to mission-level personnel who might have had a direct or related interest) was inadequately supported by USAID/Washington. As a result, these workshops consisted largely of educating "Washington," rather than influencing USAID at the operational level.
5. Continuity in consultant personnel and full-time core-staff support and guidance is very important in the success of USAID's D/G activities. AFR's D/G work was based on a learning model--concepts and best-practices had to be developed over time in an iterative process. Without the core of full-time support from project staff and a group of consultants who could apply lessons from their experience in one country to work in the next, this would have been very difficult, if not impossible. Changes in technical officers at USAID in combination with their workload, which all but precluded their devoting much attention to long-term substantial issues or conceptual development, made it all the more important to have a core of senior advisory services available. Core support to D/G must come from people who have broad expertise in political development and democratization, if these activities are to provide useful learning experiences with increasing probabilities of success. Although technical management is critical to the success of any complex activity, without significant subject-area competence and experience, it will produce limited results. Based on the first 3 years of this project, it would appear that the only alternative to having a substantively strong core staff for a project would be to recruit and train equivalent full-time direct-hire personnel within USAID and relieve them of enough technical management so they can make use of their specialized knowledge and experience.

### **C. Recommendations**

In discussing these lessons, project staff have raised a number of problems encountered in their experience with supporting D/G in AFR which, if unresolved, will continue to limit the

effectiveness of USAID's D/G activities. In conclusion, several modest suggestions with regard to addressing these problems are offered below.

1. Broad-gauged assessments should continue to be conducted where missions believe there is a significant prospect for contributing to democratic consolidation through a better understanding of issues and targeting assistance as well as use of the assessment process to support an important host-country national dialogue (including rural people, if possible) on improving governance.
2. To reduce the political risks associated with such assessments, they should be characterized as products of an independent assessment team, not as studies endorsed by USAID. As such, the mission and country team should interact forcefully with the assessment team, but should not attempt to constrain its conclusions in terms of analysis or programmatic recommendations. The mission should endeavor to correct what it believes to be errors in the analysis and then release reports with the broadest possible dissemination, engaging host-national and other donors, as well as its own diverse personnel, in serious discussions of the work. The outcome of this process would be significantly more useful to the mission than either the views of the assessment team or the mission, including its foreign-service nationals (FSNs), alone. It should be noted that this recommended approach makes it problematic for USAID (for example, the Global Bureau's Democracy Center) to conduct assessments with its own personnel.
3. Workshops and formal information-sharing meetings can still be useful devices, given the fact that many issues are still highly debatable and argumentation and evidence need to be publicly exposed for better policy and programs to result. However, workshops will produce much greater results when they address significant "felt needs," including bureaucratic needs, within USAID and the foreign-policy community. Under these conditions, follow-up and dissemination is much more likely to occur.

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