



Linking Democracy And Development

An Idea For The Times

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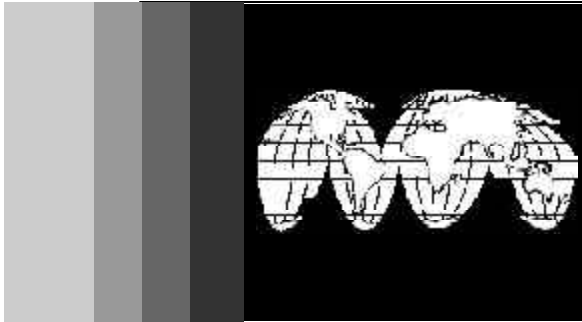
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**USAID Program and Operations
Assessment Report No. 29**

Linking Democracy and Development

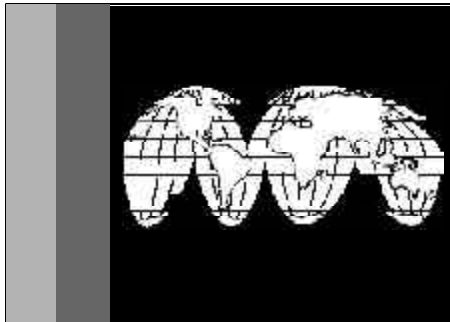
An Idea for the Times

by

Hal Lippman

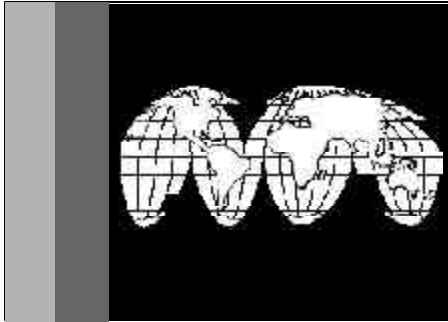
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Preface

THIS SYNTHESIS caps a study of linkages between democracy and governance (DG) and USAID's other strategic goals. USAID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE), its Global Bureau Center for Democracy and Governance, and its Africa Bureau Office of Sustainable Development conducted the study. Given the emerging nature of DG cross-sectoral linkages, and USAID's limited experience with this trend, the study was exploratory as a matter of necessity and design.

This report summarizes interviews at USAID/Washington and field studies conducted in the late 1990s at USAID missions in the Dominican Republic, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, the Philippines, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. These missions were selected because they were among the few at the time in which cross-sectoral activities had been under way long enough to have produced results sufficient for analysis. The report assesses USAID's experience with cross-sectoral linkages, detailing the study's overall findings, conclusions, and lessons learned.

Many contributed to the study and report. First and foremost are Pat Isman-Fn'Piere of the Center for Democracy and Governance and Dana Ott, Bob Groelsema, and Don Muncy of the Office of Sustainable Development. Reflective of the study's unique collaborative arrangement, these four shaped and guided the effort from start to finish. Next are Richard Blue and Joan Goodin of Management Systems International. Richard Blue conducted the "Washington Views and Issues" study segment, played an important part in the Madagascar and Philippines field studies, and helped draft this report. Joan Goodin played a critical role, moving the study from concept paper to implementation, serving on the Dominican Republic pilot study team, and coordinating essential contract support services.

In CDIE, several individuals played major roles. In her capacity as chief of CDIE's Program and Operations Assessment (POA) division, Susan Merrill worked diligently to get the study launched and oversaw the Dominican Republic, Guinea, and Madagascar field studies. Jean

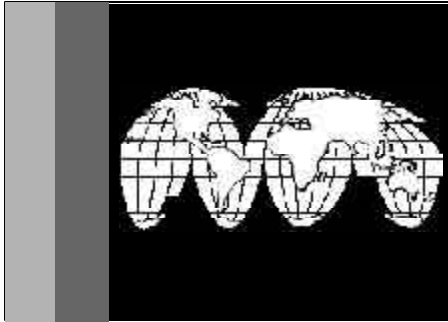
DuRette, who succeeded Susan Merrill as POA chief, oversaw the Philippines field study and guided the assessment through to this report. Joe Lieberson, POA's deputy chief, provided logistical support in managing the contract with Management Systems International and throughout the study offered thoughtful ideas and procedural advice that aided significantly in its outcome.

Last, but by no means least, thanks go to the USAID/Washington officials who participated in the "Views and Issues" segment and to the mission staff and partners in Antananarivo, Madagascar; Bamako, Mali; Conakry, Guinea; Harare,

Zimbabwe; Lusaka, Zambia; Manila, Philippines; and Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. They all gave generously of their time and energy in support of the field studies. In addition, Agency headquarters and field personnel played a vital role in reviewing and commenting on the initial draft of this report. The draft was circulated to some 85 prospective reviewers, about half of whom provided valuable feedback and critical insight that has been incorporated in the final product.

—HAL LIPPMAN

Center for Development
Information and Evaluation



Summary

IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA, a variety of factors, some internal to USAID, some external, have prompted the emergence of linkages between democracy and governance (DG) programs and those of the Agency's other strategic goals. Downsizing, conducive host-country situations, shifts in thinking about development, and creative leaders and staff all have spurred the incorporation of democratic principles into Agency activities. In some missions, accountability, participation, responsiveness, and transparency are now an integral part of environmental, economic growth, health, and education activities. And missions have found they are achieving positive results and bolstered governance, creating synergy that promotes USAID's overall mission.

A Look at An Emerging Trend

In an effort to examine this trend, the Center for Development Information and Evaluation joined with the Global Bureau Center for Democracy and Governance and the Africa Bureau Office of Sustainable Development to study how and why

the linkages are occurring, what impact they are having on USAID programs, and what obstacles are hindering their development and use. The study addressed a number of questions:

- Can cross-sectoral linkages enhance development?
- Can DG approaches enhance results in other sectors and help USAID achieve its overall mission of sustainable development?
- Do cross-sectoral linkages occur more readily and with greater success in certain sectors?
- Should USAID promote collaboration between DG and other sectors?
- Is the Agency hindering such collaboration?

Seeking answers, study teams reviewed documents and interviewed senior staff at USAID/Washington and examined mission programs in the Dominican Republic, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, the Philippines, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Factors Prompting Linkages

In the missions studied, a mix of factors prompted collaboration between DG and other sectors. In Guinea, the Philippines, and Madagascar, senior mission managers decided to pursue such collaboration after budget cuts and downsizing compelled them to consider doing things differently. Such difficult circumstances, the Guinea director explained, gave him an opportunity to take risks and be creative. “When things are going well,” he noted, “you don’t innovate.”

Mission staff and partners were also primary factors in spurring cross-sectoral links. In Zambia and Zimbabwe, mission staff saw the potential benefits of incorporating DG principles in natural resources management projects and took the initiative to put their ideas into practice. In Guinea the primary change agent was a grantee field representative who envisioned blending the mission’s economic growth assistance with efforts to increase democratization and improve governance at the local level.

Another factor was the host-country context. Countries in the process of decentralizing – such as Guinea, Mali, the Philippines, and Zambia – have offered rich opportunities for collaboration. In the Philippines, for example, the government’s landmark Local Government Code made it possible for the mission to link DG principles and approaches with its economic growth, environment, and health activities. In a different vein, Zimbabwe’s

political and economic deterioration in 1997–98 prompted the mission to link DG principles with its economic growth and health programs. The mission believed that improving Zimbabweans’ access to “greater and more equitable benefits” of development would avert crises and help put the country back on track.

Finally, a shift in thinking within USAID has spurred DG linkages with other sectors. A growing number of Agency professionals are acting on the strategic assumption that democratization is an intrinsic feature of sustainable development. In an interview, the Madagascar mission director underscored this point, asserting, “Without democratic development, sustainability of Agency goals cannot be achieved.” In short, USAID staff have increasingly equated democratic development with good development, and this has served as both a rationale and point of departure for cross-sectoral collaboration.

Carrying Out Linked Activities

While cross-sectoral linkages are a still-evolving trend, study teams did uncover some patterns in what the missions did and how they did it. For example, missions established the institutional framework for cross-sectoral work through structural arrangements, such as strategic planning documents, strategic objectives, and organization plans. In six of the seven missions studied, previous and current country strategic plans supported cross-

sectoral programming. USAID/Philippines' 1995 strategic plan, for instance, notes that the country's decentralization effort made local governments natural partners in all of the mission's strategic objectives. The mission's March 1999 plan went even further, characterizing DG as the strategy's "integrating force."

In their work across sectors, mission staff have used a variety of formal and informal operational procedures. USAID/Mali used joint cooperative agreements funded through its youth, economic growth, and DG strategic objectives. In USAID/Philippines, DG and environment staff jointly funded workshops on coastal resources management. Staff in the missions studied also emphasized the value of joint site visits, retreats, and including collaboration in annual work objectives. In addition, they reported that by far most cross-sectoral interaction takes place in meetings and informal contacts. USAID/Guinea's early cross-sectoral work featured regularly scheduled meetings of an extended DG team. In Mali and Zambia, informal contacts (such as brief hallway conversations and e-mail) were the most common vehicle.

Ultimately, though, it was key individuals who brought together the structural and operational factors to establish collaboration. In all the missions studied, such individuals made cross-sectoral activities possible and, over time, supported the development of a culture of synergy. In USAID/Madagascar, for example, a succession of mission directors

placed a high value on coordination and made management flexibility a constant. This helped inculcate a common vision and commitment among staff, which in turn moved cross-sectoral linkages from being a new approach to becoming a feature of the way the mission does business.

Linkages Enhance Development

When development projects are infused with democratic principles and approaches, the study found, a cycle of benefits accrues. The projects not only achieve better results but also can change the way communities go about solving problems. In some cases, this promoted democratic governance, which further enhanced development. Study teams found that projects in forestland use, rural economic development, health services delivery, and parents' involvement in their children's education achieved significant and, at times, remarkable results.

For example, USAID/Guinea blended rural economic development with efforts to promote democratic governance and ended up with a project that not only generated close to 230 profitable activities at the project's midpoint but also improved officials' performance and increased citizen participation. The project provided training for local officials and members of rural economic associations in democratic governance. As a result, the associations started running their groups more democratically and holding government offi-

cially accountable. One group brought about a reorganization of tax collection that increased local revenues. Another group withheld tax payments when officials failed to follow through on their promises. At the same time, local authorities became more open to citizen participation and more transparent in handling public finances.

In the Philippines, one municipality was struggling with the effects of deforestation. USAID helped local authorities develop a forest land-use plan, supported by a 90-member committee representing all segments of the community. The democratic processes used to develop the plan helped ensure its success. As inhabitants became stakeholders in the plan, for example, they began to report illegal logging. But the project's accomplishments transcended the environmental benefits. For instance, a municipal planning official, who had at first been skeptical of the committee, said the extra effort it required created mutual trust that made her work easier and more effective. Likewise, a community leader said he now views the municipal government more positively and interacts with local authorities in ways he and members of his tribe never had before.

Impediments to Linkages

A variety of obstacles have impeded DG linkages. Most notably, the Agency's strategic framework and results reporting and review procedures create barriers be-

tween sectors by reinforcing independent treatment of strategic objectives. Because reporting requirements and the review process have no way of readily accounting for activities that cover more than one sector, the Agency is not getting the credit it should for accomplishments achieved through DG linkages. Guinea is an example. Efforts there to strengthen economic development groups and local governance made significant contributions to community infrastructure in the mission's health and education sectors. But these results went unreported because they did not originate under the health and education strategic objectives. Similarly, in Zimbabwe, a mission attempt to make DG a more explicit part of its environment strategic objective went awry when USAID/Washington reviewers said the information provided was unacceptable because it was not based on straightforward natural resources management measures.

Another impediment is that cross-sectoral linkages are not part of the Agency's culture. Employees are judged by the results they achieve in their specific sectors, so there is little incentive to pursue cross-sectoral activities. Even if employees decide to try, they will find little guidance and no clear constituency for such efforts. As one senior manager put it, linkages are "just not in the lore of the Agency."

Reduced staff and budgets have also been a hindrance. At least initially, collaboration can be labor intensive. But staff cuts mean missions already have too few

people to handle existing work. And with continuing budget cuts the order of the day, missions are compelled to do less. Therefore, cross-sectoral activities get limited attention when it comes to designing and executing projects. Funding, often restricted by congressional directives and earmarks, is more readily available for health and the environment than for DG. Requirements attached to the funding, moreover, give staff little or no flexibility in designing programs involving more than one sector, even if that promised improved results for both.

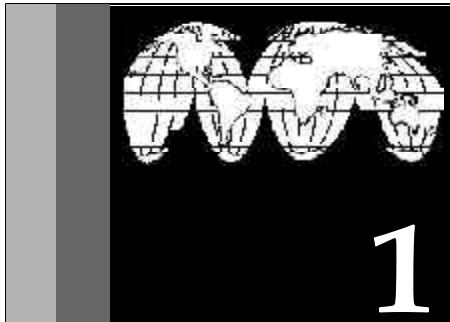
Conclusions and Lessons Learned

This Synthesis finds that DG linkages with other sectors can enhance democratic development and achievement of sectoral objectives. Such linkages are also valuable because they support the Agency's sustainable development mission, capturing DG's unique ability to serve as both a means and an end. However, the Agency's operating environment and institutional culture are barriers to the very collaboration on which such activities depend. While the experience of the missions studied demonstrates these obstacles can be overcome, for DG linkages to achieve their full potential, Agency attitudes and behavior—and the institutional constructs intertwined with them—will have to change.

The Synthesis concludes that DG linkages need to become part of the Agency's

institutional culture and operating environment. One way to accomplish this could be to encourage strategic objective team leaders to consider the potential relevance of DG linkages in any activity in their areas of responsibility. Simultaneously, the Agency needs to work on reducing barriers by creating incentives for collaboration. Two possibilities in this regard are incorporating cross-sectoral linkages into strategic plans and making collaboration part of employees' annual work objectives. Most urgent, the Synthesis states, is a revision of reporting and review procedures to ensure that USAID captures and gets credit for its cross-sectoral accomplishments. A step in that direction would be to include narrative text in annual mission reports spelling out cross-sectoral results.

In addition, leadership commitment to cross-sectoral activities and staff initiative to carry them out are critical. To the extent that the Agency can promote such attitudes and behavior, either by having knowledgeable mission directors share experiences or by encouraging staff to think more broadly about their work, cross-sectoral linkages will increase. Finally, the Synthesis notes that missions have the tools, such as cooperative funding agreements and joint site visits, to facilitate DG linkages. Providing missions with information and ideas on how to develop and execute such activities is one positive step already being pursued by the Africa Bureau's Office of Sustainable Development and the Global Bureau's Center for Democracy and Governance.



Introduction: An Emerging Idea

ONE OF USAID's more thought-provoking recent trends is the application of democracy and governance principles and approaches to other development sectors. Such linkages are part of the Agency's directed and expanded post-Cold War commitment to democratic development, first described in the Directorate for Policy's 1991 paper, *Democracy and Governance*. The paper fleshes out USAID's landmark Democracy Initiative, one of four launched in 1990 to shape the Agency's program for the new decade. In a section titled "Integrating Democracy into the USAID Program," the paper asserts, "There are important ways in which USAID can encourage the establishment of democratic practices . . . and lawful governance across all sectors" (USAID 1991, 10).

In the 1994 *Strategies for Sustainable Development* and its companion *Guidelines for Strategic Plans*, USAID linked promotion of DG even more explicitly to the achievement of its overall mission. *Strategies* states:

*See also the Democracy Center's *Strategic Plan, 1997-2002*.

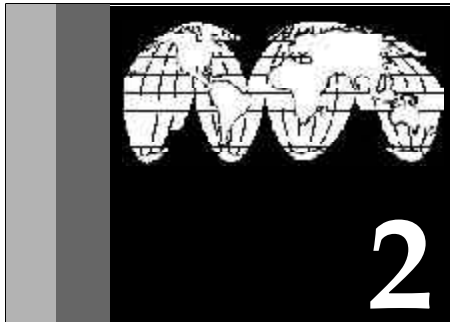
Democratization is an essential part of sustainable development because it facilitates the protection of human rights, informed participation, and public sector accountability. USAID's success in the other core areas of sustainable development is inextricably related to democratization and good governance. [USAID 1994, 18]

Similarly, *Guidelines* points out that USAID's experience in promoting democracy underscores the need for "integrating democratic approaches in other sectors and other sectoral concerns in democracy" (USAID 1995, 49).*

During the 1990s, DG came to be viewed as both an end in itself and—in anticipation of cross-sectoral linkages—a means to an end in the Agency's other goal areas (for example, economic growth, education, environment, and health). As *Strategies* puts it: "USAID's strategic objective is the transition to and consolidation of democratic regimes throughout the world—as an end in itself and because it is a critical element in promoting sustainable development" (USAID 1994, 18).

But USAID's operations and institutional culture are neither conducive to nor supportive of collaboration across sectors, despite the commitment to cross-sectoral linkages suggested in Agency policy statements. For example, as *Strategies for Sustainable Development* was issued, USAID began reengineering a shift from directing inputs to managing for results. Because staff became responsible for results, they turned their attention almost exclusively

to activities in their own goal areas, paying scant attention to what was happening in other areas – a phenomenon known as stovepiping. Also, the addition of DG as a strategic objective coincided with a post-Cold War decline in political support and funding for USAID. For much of the 1990s, therefore, Agency staff characteristically engaged in intense competition for increasingly scarce resources.



About the Study

SEVERAL FACTORS prompted the study. Initially, the CDIE Impact Evaluation “Democratic Local Governance in Ukraine” (Lippman and Blair 1997, 13, 15) found that USAID/Ukraine was ignoring – or at least failing to recognize – natural ties between DG and economic growth that could enhance results for both sectors. The mission’s failure to take advantage of such

cross-sectoral links was emblematic of the Agency’s stovepiped operations and outlook. These missed opportunities suggested that programs were not achieving their full potential.

Around the same time, Global Bureau’s Center for Democracy and Governance and Africa Bureau’s Office of Sustainable Development were starting to address the idea of cross-sectoral linkages and DG. The Democracy Center cosponsored the groundbreaking Conference on Economic Growth and Democratic Governance* and launched a study of sectoral policy reform and DG.† In mid-1997, the Office of Sustainable Development became the first USAID unit to establish a strategic objective on DG cross-sectoral linkages: “strengthen cross-sectoral synergies between democracy and governance and Africa Bureau programs in key areas.”‡

Building on these activities, CDIE joined with the Democracy Center and the Office of Sustainable Development in early 1998 to write a concept paper for the study. The Office of Sustainable Development’s

*Cosponsored with the Global Bureau’s Center for Economic Growth, the two-day October 1997 conference brought together 130 participants from missions, USAID/Washington, partner organizations, and academic institutions. Discussions highlighted the interdependence of economic growth and DG and the formidable obstacles to their integration.

†The study, *Democratic Governance and Sectoral Policy Reform: Linkages, Complementarities, and Synergies*, finds “multiple and complementary connections” between DG and sectoral policy reform. In practice, the study observes, “much of the ‘action’ of democratic governance happens in a sectoral context” and, conversely, “the efficiency and effectiveness of sectoral reforms are enhanced by incorporating explicit attention to democratic governance” (Brinkerhoff 1998, 22).

‡Key areas are defined as mission or regional program objectives other than DG that present opportunities for new or improved interventions involving participation and local governance. The new strategic objective is based on the premise that integrating DG principles into other Agency goal areas will achieve more efficient, and sustainable, results, while promoting development of democratic institutions and behavior.

plan to do a parallel study* on ways to integrate DG into other sectors' activities facilitated the process. The concept paper, "Scope of Work for Study of Democracy and Governance and Cross-Sectoral Linkages," was approved in May 1998.

Objective

The study examined the relationship evolving between DG and other USAID goals. Specifically, it looked at why and how the Agency was linking DG principles and approaches to other sectors in pursuing its objectives.† It looked at whether and how DG principles and approaches promote accomplishments in different sectors and, conversely, how activities in other sectors help achieve DG results. Finally, it assessed obstacles to cross-sectoral linkages and, where possible, efforts to overcome them.

The objective was to shed light on DG linkages as an emerging development approach with significant strategic and operational implications for the Agency. The study was meant to inform practitioners inside and outside USAID about what cross-sectoral linkages are, why and how

they are being used, and their impact on Agency programming. Study findings and lessons learned are primarily for USAID managers and staff working to improve Agency performance and results.

Research Questions

The study considered several questions. First, it looked at cross-sectoral activities to see if they were beneficial to development. Second, it examined whether the application of DG principles can help other sectors reach their goals and help USAID achieve its overall sustainable development mission. A corollary question here was whether certain sectors link more readily and successfully with democracy and governance. Third, the study considered whether USAID's operating environment supports DG cross-sectoral efforts. Finally, it examined whether the Agency should expand collaboration between DG and other sectors.

Methodology

Developed from the concept paper that CDIE, the Democracy Center, and the Office of Sustainable Development drafted, the study approach incorporates multicountry case studies with data from direct observation, key informant interviews, group discussions, and document reviews. The four primary tasks were 1) selecting missions to be studied, 2) organizing and conducting in-country fieldwork, 3) summarizing the case studies, and 4) examining USAID/Washington's role.‡

*Robert Groelsema, Don Muncy, and Dana Ott. 2000. *Synthesis of Democracy and Governance Cross-Sectoral Case Studies*. Washington: USAID/Africa Bureau Office of Sustainable Development.

†By design, the study looked at cross-sectoral linkages solely from the DG point of view, even though linkages are applicable to any sector.

‡For details on these and other aspects of the methodology, see the appendix.

The study team selected the seven missions primarily on the basis of Agency results reports, other documents, and staff contacts, which suggested they had enough experience with cross-sectoral linkages to have produced a record of concrete, examinable results.* CDIE teams conducted fieldwork in four of the countries: the Dominican Republic, Guinea, Madagascar, and the Philippines. Office of Sustainable Development teams did the fieldwork in Mali, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Using the same procedures, teams of three or four carried out the studies between June 1998 and October 1999. They spent about two weeks in-country, splitting their time between the capitals and other activity sites. After completing the work in each country, the teams drafted case study summaries.†

The initial study, in the Dominican Republic, revealed that USAID/Washington attitudes and directives often discouraged cross-sectoral collaboration. CDIE

*Even so, in the case of the Dominican Republic pilot study, the sources consulted were misleading. When the team arrived, it discovered the mission was in the earliest stages of developing its cross-sectoral approach.

†Although not published as Agency reports, the summaries are available through USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse. See the bibliography for titles and publication numbers.

‡The original concept paper had only a broad working definition of cross-sectoral linkages: "joint actions that serve the objectives of more than one sector."

§DG is both an approach and a result. A DG *approach* means using democracy and governance principles in the design and implementation of activities to promote development. DG *results* are outcomes that embody democratic principles, such as accountability, transparency, and responsiveness.

then decided to examine this headquarters role as part of the overall study. This segment and the resultant summary report (Blue 1999) addresses several questions:

- Is there a clear Agency policy on linkages between DG and other sectors?
- Do existing procedures ensure policy compliance?
- Are there factors embedded in Agency performance measurement, reporting, budget, and personnel systems that reinforce or hinder cross-sectoral efforts?

Study Terms

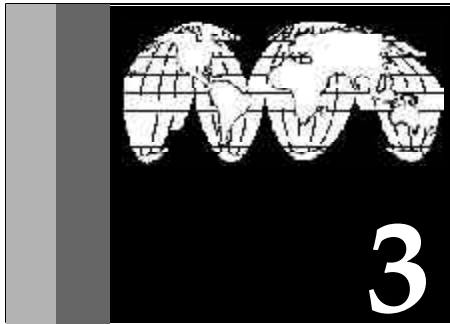
When the study began, there were no generally accepted definitions for the principle terms – “cross-sectoral linkages” and “synergy.”‡ In the field, the teams found wide variations in how the terms were used, and confusion in the way staff applied them in their work. The definitions that follow are thus products of the research. They evolved as teams did the fieldwork, digested their observations, and set down their findings.

Cross-sectoral linkages: elements in program design and implementation that connect activities intended to achieve two or more USAID goals. In this report, cross-sectoral linkages are elements that promote democratic approaches and results in USAID's DG[§] goal area and one or more other goal areas.

Synergy: the net effect of successful cross-sectoral linkages. It occurs when distinct organizational units (primarily strategic objective teams), working together, achieve greater results than they could independently. Synergy is the added benefit or extra accomplishment that comes about through collaboration, making the total greater than the sum of the individual parts. In effect, $1 + 1 = 3$.

An example from the case studies illustrates the terms: The health and DG strategic objective teams in a mission decide to work together on health services delivery. The teams use participatory training, an approach developed in a mission-supported DG project, to bring together community representatives and local authori-

ties to plan, organize, and carry out the activity. By using this approach, the mission promotes greater participation among intended beneficiaries, resulting in more people gaining access to the health service than otherwise would have been the case. The DG training improves service delivery because the increased interaction it generates in the community helps local authorities better design and carry out the activity. Added value also comes from those participants who were empowered enough by the experience to get involved in other issues, such as a waste disposal initiative or efforts to improve their children's schools. Synergy arises because the activity creates a healthier, more involved citizenry and more effective and responsive local authorities.



Why Linkages Are Happening

THE COUNTRY STUDIES reveal the following factors: changing Agency requirements, creative leadership and management support, staff and partners who took initiative, conducive enabling environments, and shifts in thinking among development practitioners. Typically, a combination of these factors brought about cross-sectoral efforts.

Downsizing Prompts Innovation

In most missions studied, Agency downsizing and reduced budgets played major roles in decisions to develop cross-sectoral activities. In Madagascar, for example, the mission was downgraded in late 1996. Staff were cut 40 percent, and the five-year budget (based on original projections) was further reduced. The mission had to move quickly from four strategic objectives to two.

In USAID/Philippines, steps to downsize or close the mission slashed the budget from hundreds of millions of dollars in the early 1990s to \$30 million by the end of the decade. When the budget

was high, mission staff said they gave little thought to cross-sectoral cooperation, since they had enough resources to do their work. But as budgets declined, competition for funds made cross-sectoral cooperation more attractive, if not necessary.

Directors Take Lead

In all seven missions studied, senior managers—the director in six missions and the ranking program officer in the other—supported collaboration between DG and other sectors. In Madagascar, which had the longest and most sophisticated record of intersectoral cooperation, the director at the time of the study was the third in a string of top managers to promote collaboration. In Zimbabwe, mission staff said the director allowed them to push the envelope, establishing links between programs.

In Guinea, the new mission director took risks that helped move cross-sectoral linkages from vague language in planning documents to reality. Presidential and legislative elections in 1993 and 1995, respectively, had been flawed; because of this

and other problems with the government, U.S. assistance had been curtailed. At the same time, USAID/Washington was considering further cuts and even closing the mission. The director concluded that the situation gave him an opportunity to link DG activities with economic growth and environment activities. Because “risk taking is discouraged in USAID,” he explained, “innovation comes when difficulties are present. When things are going well, you don’t innovate” (Charlick and Lippman 1999, 9).

Staff and Partners Show Initiative

Mission staff and partners also spurred DG linkages with other sectors. In Zambia and Zimbabwe, key staffers saw the benefits of incorporating DG principles in natural resources management projects and took the initiative to put their ideas into effect. Although cross-sectoral linkages had not yet been recognized as valuable in their own right, early efforts in these missions set the stage for the incorporation of linkages in subsequent strategic planning and programming.

In the Philippines, DG and environment contractors said collaboration was a given because their activities routinely brought them together. For example, their local representatives in Sarangani Province attended meetings hosted by local authorities and nongovernmental organizations. Simply being in the same place at the same time exposed them to opportu-

nities for mutually beneficial activities. These contractors also said that because few people have the skills and experience to be their local representatives, they routinely ran across one another at project sites.

In Guinea, the principal change agent was a grantee field representative whose primary responsibility was to work with rural enterprise associations. He saw the potential of linking the mission’s economic assistance to these associations with efforts to improve local government. By building this link, he shaped and strengthened the mission’s cross-sectoral approach.

Host-Country Context Conducive

In the case studies, government decentralization programs emerged as the area most conducive for DG to link with other sectors. In Guinea, Mali, and Zambia, for example, decentralization programs served, in varying degrees, as vehicles for cross-sectoral activities. But USAID/Philippines had the most prominent and successful experience.

The Philippine government’s landmark Local Government Code provided fertile ground for cross-sectoral activities. The code’s decentralization thrust had strong ties to the mission’s program areas—democracy, economic growth, environment, and health. “As a result of decentralization,” the mission’s strategy stated, “local government units are now

natural partners for USAID activities across all four strategic objectives” (USAID/Philippines 1995, 9). The links between mission programs and decentralization provided an uninterrupted stream of opportunities for cross-sectoral efforts. In several provinces, for example, the mission linked some environment and health activities with DG programs once the decentralization-inspired devolution of functions and responsibilities to local authorities had taken place.

Interestingly, the case studies showed that different types of host-country situations can facilitate cross-sectoral linkages in mission programming. In Zimbabwe, for example, the mission developed its strategic plan in response to the country’s political and economic deterioration in 1997–98. The plan reflected the mission’s view that “supporting Zimbabweans’ access to greater and more equitable benefits from their nation’s . . . development” would help avert potential crises and enable the country’s political and economic transition to get back on track. The new mission program was “synergistic in its approach,” with linkages between DG and the economic growth and health strategic objectives (Ott, Muncy, and Gonzalez 2000, 8).

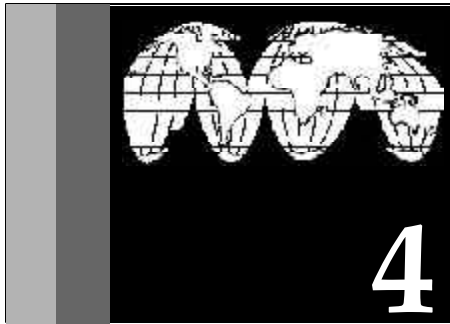
USAID Experiences Paradigm Shift

Finally, a shift in thinking within USAID spurred DG linkages with other sectors.

A growing number of Agency professionals have begun to act on the strategic assumption that democratization is an intrinsic part of sustainable development. In an interview, the Madagascar mission director underscored this point: “Without democratic development, sustainability of Agency goals cannot be achieved.”

Other interviews revealed a surprising degree of agreement among sector team leaders, contractors, and others on the tenets of this shift. USAID staff have determined that beneficiaries have the right to participate in selection, design, and execution of development activities; they should be stakeholders rather than passive recipients. This meant that host-country government officials then had to work with their people on development issues and activities. From such efforts, the officials learned that accountability, transparency, and responsiveness are not mere slogans, but standards by which constituents will judge their performance. This in turn is an incentive for them to behave in accordance with these basic democratic principles.

In sum, development experts were beginning to equate *democratic* development with *good* development and were reaching consensus that DG principles and practices should be incorporated into all sectors. This served as both a rationale and point of departure for cross-sectoral collaboration, fueling the integration of democratic development into missions’ strategic planning and programming.



How Linkages Are Coming Into Being

GIVEN THEIR NEWNESS, democracy and governance linkages with other sectors in the missions studied developed on a case-by-case basis. No formulas or blueprints existed describing what had been done. Nor had any missions completely planned, implemented, and reported results on a full-fledged cross-sectoral activity, using joint or common indicators and intermediate results. By and large, what missions had been doing was to blend existing programs as opportunities surfaced.

Yet some patterns did emerge that describe missions' experience with cross-sectoral linkages. For example, missions used three categories of approaches—structural, operational, and individual—in their cross-sectoral efforts. Structural approaches are formal organizational arrangements and relationships. Operational approaches include procedures and mechanisms, such as joint site visits and common funding. Individual approaches originate in management style and professional outlook.

Structural Approaches

From major changes to small-scale adjustments in the mission's organization and operations, structural approaches establish the institutional framework for cross-sectoral activities. In the missions studied, structural approaches appeared in strategic planning documents, strategic objectives, and organizational arrangements.

Strategic Planning Documents

Strategic planning documents, particularly country strategic plans, provided the context for establishing and pursuing cross-sectoral linkages. In six of the seven case studies, past and current mission strategic plans supported cross-sectoral programming or synergy.

USAID/Philippines' 1995 strategy envisioned that DG-supported "coalitions of indigenous tribal groups and poor fisherfolk, as well as increased local gov-

ernment environmental planning capacity, [would] directly benefit USAID's coastal, forest, and pollution abatement activities" (USAID/Philippines 1995, 55). The strategy also assumed that increased local government capacity in service delivery would boost mission efforts in health. This commitment to cross-sectoral activities was expanded and intensified in a March 1999 revision to the strategy, which called for greater collaboration among teams and "program integration and synergy" (USAID/Philippines 1999, 9, 21). The revision contained more than a dozen actions involving DG and other sectors. "More than any other strategic objective, [DG is] the force integrating the . . . strategy," it said. Six months later, however, further budget cuts forced the mission to formulate an addendum dropping the DG objective and integrating its staff and program elements into the surviving objectives. The addendum went further than the revision, making DG "approaches and results . . . long-term, fully integrated mechanisms to achieve sustainability in all strategic objective results" (USAID/Philippines 1999, 3).*

USAID/Mali's *Strategic Plan: 1996–2002* was conceived during a period of major change in the Agency. USAID had embarked on reengineering, and the mission had been designated one of 10 Country Experimental Labs. This status gave it a head start on reengineering and an opportunity

*At the time of the study, the addendum was in the initial stages of implementation; thus its impact could not be assessed.

to be creative. The resulting experimentation stressed program integration, which led the mission to develop "interrelated strategic objectives, making strategic objective teams interdependent in achieving planned results" (USAID/Mali 1995, 4). The end product was a strategic plan that committed the mission to continually seek out mutually reinforcing activities between and among sectors.

Strategic Objectives

Three types of linked strategic objectives surfaced in the case studies. First, some missions incorporated DG principles and approaches in other sectors' programming, with or without forethought on the cross-sectoral implications. A good example was USAID/Zimbabwe's environment strategic objective and its support of the Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources (or CAMP-FIRE), a government program aimed at devolving responsibility for wildlife resources management to local communities. In the strategic objective, DG overtones were evident in an intermediate result, which specified that "sound community decision-making processes [be] established" in mission-supported activities. In effect, within its basic natural resources management thrust, the strategic objective implicitly encouraged the development of local democratic institutions and behavior.

The second type merged existing DG and technical sector strategic objectives into a single special program objective.

USAID missions in Guinea and Madagascar did this when they were downgraded to “limited-program mission” status.* The Madagascar special program objective simply placed DG and economic growth programming under one umbrella. Over time, however, these activities began to overlap, leading to their deliberate incorporation into each other’s programming. USAID/Guinea’s special program objective came out of a mission decision to increase DG linkages gradually, as part of a broader effort to focus its programming on the grass roots. It combined DG and economic growth elements to help rural enterprise associations become sustainable, member-owned, and democratically operated businesses.

The third type was a stand-alone DG strategic objective with implicit or explicit linkages to other sectors. The best example was USAID/Philippines’ DG strategic objective, “broadened participation in the formulation and implementation of public policies.” A recent mission results review characterized this objective as the “integrating force” in its strategy (USAID/Philippines 2001, 80). For instance, its intermediate result on effective local government was linked with successful activities in the mission’s environment, health, and economic growth strategic objectives.

*According to Agency guidelines in effect at the time, limited-program missions could have only two strategic objectives. But some missions, after they had been downsized, convinced USAID/Washington that some activities were so important that a means had to be found to keep them alive. The mechanism through which this was accomplished was the special program objective.

Organizational Arrangements

Organizational arrangements refer to the internal structures missions set up to develop and implement cross-sectoral programming. In the reengineered USAID, these are the core teams responsible for managing and achieving results under the mission’s strategic objectives. Core teams in the case study missions worked cross-sectorally in one of two ways: with little or no change in their structures, or with significant structural adjustments.

Most core teams worked cross-sectorally with no change in structure. A good example was USAID/Zambia’s joint DG-economic growth alternative dispute resolution activity. Economic growth staff got involved when one of their team members was invited to sit in on DG team meetings because of her institutional memory and knowledge of Zambia. When a question arose on funding the initial alternative dispute resolution seminars, this woman proposed linking them to an economic growth activity by including commercial arbitration on the agenda and using economic growth money to pay for them. The team agreed, and the seminars took place in September 1998.

By contrast, in the Mali and Guinea missions, cross-sectoral activity was a function of deliberate structural changes. In Guinea, the mission infused DG activities into its programs through the New Partnership Initiative – an Agency effort to promote partnerships between government, civil society, and the private sector.

A New Partnership Initiative core team was established, composed of strategic objective team leaders and representatives of their respective partners. The core team was later superseded by a DG team, which included representatives of the mission program office and each strategic objective team.

In Mali, the mission made a conscious decision not to establish a DG team with cross-membership. Instead, it used ideas from its experience as a Country Experimental Lab to draw up a new organizational chart. It then rebid all technical positions and staffed the new DG team with personnel from other mission offices. As a result, the mission hired only one person from outside and, in a departure from customary practice, selected a foreign service national as team leader. This arrangement played a pivotal role in the team's cross-sectoral outlook and approach. For example, collaboration increased significantly almost as a matter of course, since the new DG team's members brought technical knowledge of their original sectors, as well as a network of former colleagues throughout the mission.

Operational Approaches

Operational approaches are the formal and informal ways mission staff establish and carry out cross-sectoral activi-

*See the Mali case study (Miller and El Sawi 1999) for a more complete discussion of the cooperative agreements' genesis, funding arrangements, and mission efforts to manage them.

ties. In the case studies, staff in two or more missions used at least one of the following: creative program ideas; common funding; joint site visits; inclusion of cross-sectoral efforts in work objectives; meetings and informal contacts; and retreats.

Creative Program Ideas

Some missions came up with new program ideas to help staff work across sectors and promote collaborative thinking. USAID/Mali, for example, fostered joint cooperative agreements and geographic concentration of activities. The mission established collaboration between its DG, youth, and economic growth strategic objectives primarily through joint cooperative agreements.*The mission did this in an effort to consolidate grants and partners, while introducing multisectoral programming. At the time of the study, the mission had four joint cooperative agreements, which together received more than a third of its obligated annual budget.

All the cooperative agreements included DG indicators and intermediate results, and all received funding through the DG, youth, and economic growth strategic objectives. An application for funding submitted by a partner responsible for youth activities acknowledged these requirements, stating that capacity-building would include "training and technical assistance in democratic self-governance . . . and civic action skills and civic education" (Miller and El Sawi 1999, 19).

USAID/Mali also decided to concentrate its programming on 175 of the country's nearly 700 communes. These communes fall roughly in the triangle formed by the major cities Bamako, Mopti, and Sikasso. The DG team chose this area because it contains population centers with the greatest development potential, and mission partners had a track record of accomplishment there.

The mission anticipated that although locating activities of its three strategic objectives in this triangle would not necessarily put them in the same communes, such proximity would at least increase the chances for overlap. It would also facilitate joint site visits by staff of different strategic objective teams. According to the director, geographic concentration underscored DG's central role by providing a framework for all activities and serving as a constant reminder of the mission's overall goal of promoting democratic decentralization.

Common Funding

At the time of the study, funding arrangements for cross-sectoral programming had not yet crystalized. In some missions, funding appears to have been

joint in the fullest sense: both DG and another sector contributed funds to an activity on which they were working. In others, the arrangements were complementary: each sector provided funding for distinct components of a common activity.

In USAID/Philippines the DG and environment sectors funded workshops to educate and engage local officials, non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives, and community members in coastal resources management. This activity, the Coastal Resources Leadership Challenge, included more than 300 participants from 29 coastal municipalities and six provinces. In the case of USAID/Mali's joint cooperative agreements, all three sectors – DG, economic growth, and youth – provided funding for each activity. For instance, in the cooperative agreement to improve community management of productive resources, the economic growth, DG, and youth contributions were \$3.9 million, \$2.5 million, and \$1.3 million, respectively.

USAID/Zambia set up complementary funding for a grant under its integrated health strategic objective. The grant had two components, each independently conceived and developed. One was financed by the health strategic objective, the other by DG. Although a member of the health team managed the grant, this individual dealt only with contractual issues; the DG team addressed substantive issues relating to the DG component.*

*While not developed collaboratively, activities such as this one have clear cross-sectoral implications. The integrated health component addresses DG issues – for example, by promoting development of civil society organizations. The DG component facilitates health-sector results by promoting advocacy and making democracy more relevant to basic needs.

Joint Site Visits

Mission staff in every country studied underscored the value of joint site visits in cross-sectoral collaboration. In USAID/Mali, for example, DG staff organized field visits with members of the other strategic objective teams. Mission staff said they found these visits highly useful for cross-fertilizing ideas and identifying opportunities for collaboration.

Staff in other missions, such as Guinea and Zimbabwe, described similar experiences but said that time and other limitations made joint visits hard to arrange and less frequent than they would prefer. Indeed, in the case of the Dominican Republic, mission policy strongly discouraged joint visits, viewing them as time unnecessarily spent away from primary responsibilities.*

Work Objectives

Several missions reinforced cross-sectoral collaboration by including it in team members' formal work objectives. In USAID/Mali, for example, a work objective of one DG team member and at least one other person in the mission included references to efforts to "reinforce synergies." In USAID/Zimbabwe, the scope of work for a personal services contractor on the natural resources team required him to spend one third of his time on a proposed DG

*This issue was raised during CDIE's debriefing with mission staff. After some discussion the acting director said the policy would be changed to encourage such visits.

special program objective. In USAID/Guinea, the health team leader asked to have DG items written into her work objectives.

Meetings and Informal Contacts

Most cross-sectoral collaboration took place in meetings and informal contacts. In USAID/Guinea, regularly scheduled meetings of the DG team became a feature of the mission's cross-sectoral efforts almost as soon as the DG strategic objective was approved. At the time of CDIE's fieldwork, the newly established team had been meeting about twice monthly over the previous four months. With input from representatives of the mission's other strategic objective teams and the program office, staff used these meetings to coordinate and plan activities and review the status of activities under way.

After the new mission strategy was approved, Mali DG team members organized meetings with members of the other strategic objective teams to discuss planning and implementation actions. This led to a decision to hold monthly joint sessions, which were subsequently replaced by meetings on an as-needed basis. Staff also pointed out that DG team members sometimes attend other sectors' meetings, such as "mini results reviews," annual planning sessions, and reviews of unsolicited proposals.

Because informal contacts were far more numerous, they often appeared to

play more of a role than formal meetings. They occurred in the countless opportunities – from brief hallway conversations to e-mail – of everyday mission operations. In USAID/Philippines, for example, a foreign service national working in the health area said she learned about a potentially valuable DG activity through informal contacts with her DG colleagues. Mission staff in Zambia and Mali reported similar experiences, commenting that informal contacts are valuable because people simply lack time to attend one another’s formal meetings regularly.

Retreats

At least twice, missions used retreats to work out initial approaches to and operational details of cross-sectoral collaboration. A team-building retreat in late 1998 played a central role in accelerating the development of USAID/Madagascar’s synergistic activities. USAID/Mali held two retreats three weeks apart to iron out the practical aspects of the mission’s new cooperative agreements, such as funding arrangements and administrative committees.

Individual Approaches

In the case studies, key individuals were the most important ingredient in cross-sectoral work. Ultimately, it was such individuals who brought the structural and operational factors together to create the context for collaboration. Their efforts brought about change, made it

easier for cross-sectoral activities to take place, and over time supported the development of a culture of synergy.

Management Attitudes and Actions

In all seven country studies, senior managers (the mission director in six missions and the head of the program office in the other) played pivotal roles in introducing and sustaining cross-sectoral efforts. The Mali case study, for example, states:

The director, deputy director, and program officer . . . are strong and consistent advocates of a synergistic approach. In interviews, both supporters and skeptics of the policy confirmed that the director is a central force, encouraging staff to think and act as a unified mission. In addition to planning for synergy in strategic documents and promoting joint activities, the director encourages the staff to fight against . . . stovepiping . . . on a daily basis. [Miller and El Sawi 1999, 15]

Similarly, the Zimbabwe case study notes:

During the team’s visit . . . the director was described as being “very supportive” of . . . exploring synergies during the country-strategic-plan process, and acting as a “change agent” in favor of strengthening the links between the various mission portfolios. Most staff . . . felt that her support, and the support of mission management generally . . . , had allowed them to explore the possibilities for link-

ages in much greater depth than they would have done otherwise. [Ott, Muncy, and Gonzalez 2000, 11]

The case studies also revealed that directors and other senior staff who blended top-down and bottom-up management principles created a culture conducive to cross-sectoral programming. The hallmarks of this evolving culture were openness, inclusiveness, multidisciplinary outlooks, and innovation. The best illustration was USAID/Madagascar, where a succession of directors in the 1990s placed a high value on coordination and made management flexibility a constant.

This management approach helped inculcate a common vision and professional commitment among staff. In turn, that helped move cross-sectoral linkages from inception to implementation to becoming a feature of the way the mission does business. As the case study states:

[F]aced with being downsized and having to operate with significantly reduced resources, USAID/Madagascar has been forced to be creative, entrepreneurial, and opportunistic. Combined with a highly atypical pattern of consistent leadership, this has produced a uniquely collaborative and flexible mission approach conducive to and supportive of cross-sectoral linkages. Over time, this approach has become ingrained in the mission's culture, helping staff get out of the box of stovepiped thinking, overcome the negative effects of their downsized status, and avoid being trapped by bureaucratic

rigidities and operational obstacles. [Lippman and Blue 1999, 16]

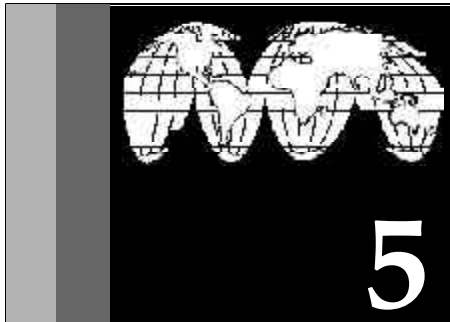
Outlook and Initiative Of Staff, Contractors, And Partners

Mission staff, contractors, and host-country partners also played critical roles in establishing cross-sectoral linkages and putting them into action. As the Zimbabwe case study states:

Some staff . . . felt that the success or failure of linkages and synergies is often personnel based. [They said] neither the staff nor the institutional structure will enhance linkages unless the people in place are interested and committed to be interdisciplinary. At the present, [they] felt . . . there was an environment in the mission and a staff complement that would promote synergy. [Ott, Muncy, and Gonzalez 2000, 17]

In USAID/Philippines, this sense of vision and initiative was also evident. The aforementioned health-sector foreign service national seized the opportunity to attend a mission DG workshop. She attended, she explained, because she realized success in her sector depended on understanding local government operations. Having participated and seen its relevance, she persuaded initially reluctant contractors and national government officials to attend a later version of the workshop. Similarly, the chief of party responsible for a significant mission environment activity said she has worked collaboratively with the DG team from the

start of the project simply because DG is intrinsic to what she hopes to achieve. From her perspective, she added, DG is in everything USAID does and should be included in any sectoral activity as a matter of course.



Linkages Boost Performance

IN THE MISSIONS STUDIED, cross-sectorally linked activities produced significant and, at times, remarkable accomplishments. They facilitated and enhanced USAID's economic growth, education, environment, and health efforts while increasing democratization and improving governance. This chapter gives examples of the kinds of results that can be achieved by linking democracy and governance with other sectors.

Linkages With Environment . . .

Environment was the sector most frequently linked with DG and, on balance, with the best results.* DG-environment activities yielded significant results in

*Why this was the case is uncertain. But a plausible explanation is that the Agency's long-term emphasis on community-based natural resources management has helped make environment programming the most fertile ground for collaboration with DG.

†Launched in 1995, project GOLD was designed to demonstrate that decentralized governance can help local communities accelerate development and improve government performance. Project sites were in nine provinces and two highly urban cities. At the time of the study, GOLD was in its final phase, scheduled for completion in December 2000 with expansion of project activities to 30 of the Philippines' 77 provinces.

Guinea, Madagascar, the Philippines, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The Philippines and Zimbabwe missions' experiences are illustrative.

The Philippines

The environment was a natural setting for cross-sectoral linkages because it combined the mission's local governance and natural resources management programs with the government's commitment to decentralization and concern about the environment. DG-environment linkages evolved most successfully in the interaction between activities of the Governance and Local Democracy (GOLD) project[†] and those addressing local management of coastal, forest, and other natural resources.

Using and Preserving the Forest

In Maitum, a municipality in Sarangani Province, project GOLD staff used its "technology of participation"[‡] to help the

[‡]A state-of-the-art facilitation methodology that enables diverse groups (such as political leaders, NGO members, businesspeople, professionals, and citizens) to share basic assumptions, define common ground, identify approaches to problem solving, and move toward concrete action.

mayor with his community's environmental planning. One priority was to develop a forest land-use plan, since surveys showed 60 percent of the municipality's forest resources had been lost and flashfloods and other consequences of deforestation were increasing. A 90-member committee developed the plan in a participatory, consultative, and transparent manner. Members represented all segments of the community, including barangay captains,* tribal leaders, academics, businesspeople, government officials, NGOs, farmers, fisherfolk, and religious groups.

The plan benefited the municipality in several ways. For one, local officials said they apprehended more illegal loggers after the plan went into effect. The reason, they explained, was that inhabitants of upland areas were now reporting illegal logging because they were stakeholders in preserving the forest. Previously they had not seen it as a matter of concern. Another benefit was that the plan—and the participatory process that spawned it—prompted new attitudes and expectations among local government officials and their constituents. A municipal planning official, at first skeptical of the land-use committee's role, said the extra effort it entailed created mutual trust that helped make her work easier and more effective. Likewise, a barangay captain said he perceived his municipal govern-

ment in a much more positive light and had begun to interact with local authorities in ways he and members of his tribe had never done before.

Managing Coastal Resources

Collaborative DG-environment efforts helped move coastal resource issues, such as depleted fish populations and degraded coral reefs and mangroves, to the forefront of national and local political agendas. A model of this is the Coastal Resources Leadership Challenge, mentioned in chapter 4. GOLD and coastal resources management project staff developed and conducted workshops to engage and educate local officials, NGO representatives, and community members on this then little-known area of environmental activity. According to participants, the workshops resulted in more effective coastal law enforcement, better planning and monitoring information, and improved laws and policies.

In addition, the workshops identified major gaps in participants' knowledge of coastal resources management. The mission consequently wrote a legal and jurisdictional guidebook, which was launched on a national scale at the 1997 convention of the League of Municipalities (a leading project GOLD client). Local officials and other users considered it "very helpful," according to a survey conducted after distribution. As a result, it was being revised and updated for an additional printing as the case study fieldwork was being completed.

*Barangay captains are elected representatives of the smallest unit of government in the Philippines.

The GOLD and coastal resources management projects also co-sponsored and participated in the landmark 1999 National Conference of Coastal Municipalities, a forum for local governments to formulate an advocacy program and promote coastal resources management nationally. The conference was a major event: 700 of the country's 832 coastal mayors and key government figures, including then-president Joseph Estrada and five cabinet secretaries, attended. Conference workshops developed resolutions and recommendations that were presented to the president and appropriate legislative committees. In response, President Estrada mandated creation of an interagency task force to develop a national and coastal marine policy and instructed relevant cabinet departments to review the workshop proposals and develop ways to implement them.

Protecting Watersheds

Better relationships between local governments and their constituents, partly attributable to cross-sectoral efforts, helped reduce watershed problems the national government had failed to address adequately. For example, Nueva Vizcaya Province faced degradation of upland areas that form the watershed for a major river system necessary for irrigation and hydroelectric power. Much of the decline was attributed to upland tribal groups, whose agricultural practices were held responsible for denuding forests and preventing replanted trees from taking root.

The governor and other officials met with upland community members, using project GOLD participation and facilitation techniques. Upon hearing what the community members had to say, the governor realized their behavior could not be changed by exhortation since their agricultural practices were a matter of survival. He decided to take a different approach. He learned that under the Local Government Code he could issue certificates of leasehold to the tribal groups to secure their rights to the land and, with some restrictions, make them owners of the trees they planted. The leasehold was granted. Almost immediately the uplanders changed from transients trying to survive from crop to crop into stakeholders of the land. As a result, their harmful agricultural practices all but disappeared. Further, the governor's creative efforts were so successful the national Department of Environment and Natural Resources entered into an agreement to have the provincial government manage more than 35,000 hectares of land in the watershed.

Promoting Sustainability

DG-environment activities also changed the way local government officials do their jobs and interact with constituents. A striking illustration of this surfaced in Bohol Province's capital, Tagbilaran, in a government display outside a project GOLD-sponsored meeting. The display depicted Bohol local governments' recent efforts to balance their island's development requirements with

the need to protect the environment and included four large posters: “Metamorphosis – Bohol Environment in Progress,” “Bohol LGU [Local Government Unit] Governance – A Web of Proactive Synergy,” “Making Decisions to Create a Balanced Bohol,” and “Environmental Initiatives.” The catch phrases capture both the evolving relationship between environmental activities and development and the more interactive way local authorities are carrying them out. For example, the decision-making poster had four information packets in sequence: “the beginnings, the turning point, laying the groundwork, [and] forging synergy and partnerships.” Together these described how local governments were working with their constituents “to create a[n environmentally] balanced Bohol.”

The metamorphosis poster depicted these changes, using a butterfly’s life cycle to characterize them. Each stage – caterpillar, chrysalis, and adult – was represented by an oversize figure, labeled with milestones and accomplishments. The initial notation alongside the caterpillar – “1995 GOLD Project Planning Meeting” – testified to the provincial government’s application of the participatory principles acquired from the USAID-supported training. Other notations beside the caterpillar (such as “Technical Working Group – Environment Formation” and “Municipal

Environmental Planning Workshop”) underscored the effect of project GOLD principles on the local authorities.

Zimbabwe

USAID/Zimbabwe’s support of the government’s CAMPFIRE program exemplified how activities that were not designed collaboratively could have far-reaching cross-sectoral impact. Since 1989, through its Natural Resources Management project, the mission supported CAMPFIRE by strengthening the management and use of natural resources in rural communities. Although DG was not an explicit objective,* project activities had inherent DG implications because CAMPFIRE’s objectives included decentralizing decision-making to participating communities.

These efforts accomplished a good deal. By the end of 1998, the project was active in roughly half the country’s 57 rural districts, containing nearly 10 percent of the population. In many of these districts, communities developed bylaws requiring sustainable natural resources management. Communities used a participatory process to create the bylaws and enforced compliance through traditional leaders, supported by democratically elected CAMPFIRE committees.

Communities also decided how they would spend the money they made through CAMPFIRE activities. In one ward in the Tsholotsho district, the community decided to buy an electric pump for a new

*Before developing its March 1999 country strategic plan, USAID/Zimbabwe never had a full-fledged DG program. A DG special objective was included as part of the mission’s April 1997 closeout strategy, but it was superseded by the 1999 strategic plan.

waterhole. With fresh water readily available, local women would no longer have to walk several miles for water. One community in the Bulilimamangwe district decided to use its revenues to build and maintain a school. Another community in the district set up a general store that brings in income and serves as a gathering place.

By addressing an issue relevant to peoples' lives (in this instance, coexisting with wildlife), such mission-supported activities provided incentives for conservation and opportunities for income generation while also promoting democratic development. This improved the lives of Zimbabweans from rural villages often overlooked in programs that promote democratic participation. In addition, CAMPFIRE's success "encourage[d] other sectors in Zimbabwe to experiment with devolutionary partnerships as well as other countries to consider decentralizing rights to a variety of common property goods" (Brinkerhoff 1998, 20).

... With Economic Growth

DG-economic growth activities with substantive results were found in the Philippines, Guinea, and Madagascar missions. The experiences of the latter two are illustrative.*

*The missions in Mali, Zambia, and Zimbabwe also had DG-economic growth activities, but they were too new to have produced results sufficient for the study's purposes.

†Hereafter referred to as associations.

Guinea

USAID/Guinea's combined DG-economic growth activity, the Strengthening Civil Society project, blended rural economic development with efforts to increase democratization and improve local governance. Since the project began in April 1996, it has helped rural enterprise associations[†] become viable, income-generating concerns, while providing members with training in democratic principles and behavior. The project has also trained elected local government officials in democratic conduct and good governance.

These efforts achieved consistently good and sometimes remarkable results. Project training helped association members operate more democratically, learn their rights and responsibilities, and interact more effectively with local government officials. To wit:

- Associations elected leaders from a broader spectrum of the community, including women. According to project statistics available at the time of the fieldwork, women made up 48 percent of the membership of participating associations, 38 percent of board members, and 34 percent of members of financial oversight committees.
- Newly acquired knowledge of their rights and responsibilities enabled association members to confront official policies, hold officials accountable, and get responses to their con-

cerns. For example, with their new understanding of communal councils' responsibilities, some association members instigated a reorganization in tax collection that increased local government revenues. There were also instances of association members holding local officials accountable by withholding tax payments when they failed to follow through on promises. In one such situation, the prefect responded by allowing people to use their payments to help construct a health center the government had not finished.

- Associations learned to work collaboratively with local authorities to resolve conflicts. With the assistance of a local official, for example, an association resolved a dispute with livestock owners whose animals had damaged their group's field. The association negotiated a commitment from the owners to build a fence to prevent future encroachments into the field.

The project also helped local authorities become more responsive, transparent, and effective in performing their duties:

- Some local authorities became more open to citizen participation in planning and more transparent in handling public finances. For example, after project training, officials of one local

authority visited each district in its area to consult with community members on development priorities. In another case, the president of a local authority responded to criticism of his handling of public finances by meeting with citizens to explain the sources of revenue and planned use of the funds, going through the budget line by line.

- After examining public markets and other taxable public functions in a project training activity, some local authorities reorganized their operations and changed management. The result: significantly increased income. In one case, market user fees increased by 66 percent and collection of its "head tax" rose 77 percent over the previous year.

In the economic growth area, at the project's midpoint (June 1998) more than 230 profitable activities had been completed,* and almost all of the 140 participating associations had new economic activities under way. Activities included farming, gardening, marketing and trading, and transformation of agricultural commodities into marketable products. Although the economic gains were often modest, it is unlikely they would have occurred without the project's training and organizational work. In some instances, the project's effect was manifest, as with the Dubreka commune Xaxili women's association, which successfully undertook small-scale agriculture activities it had never attempted before. In others, the in-

*The target for the end of the project is to complete 600 profitable economic activities.

fluence was less clear, although certainly present. For example, the Limaniya of Yonyah association in Dubreka succeeded in a rice dehulling activity it had previously attempted without success.

Madagascar

In formerly socialist Madagascar, the mission's Rary project used DG principles to improve relations between local authorities and citizen groups.* The project came to the fore when its participating cities—Mahajanga on the northwest coast and Fianarantsoa in the central highlands—announced precipitous increases in property taxes. In the country's long tradition of directive government, no explanation was given and nothing was done to convince the people that the increase was necessary. The result in both cities was a full-scale tax revolt.

Seizing the opportunity, project staff set to work with citizens and officials to turn the situation around. They persuaded

municipal leaders to explain the need for the tax increase. They helped citizen groups[†] articulate their complaints in an organized, reasoned manner. Finally, they worked with both sides—neither of which had experience with negotiated compromise—to bring them to the bargaining table.

As a result, Mahajanga's mayor held a first-ever town meeting on taxes, where he discussed the city's budget and explained the rationale for the increase. Likewise, for the first time Fianarantsoa city officials went into neighborhoods to talk with citizens about the tax increase and listened to considerable criticism from community representatives. In both city governments, a communications service was established to respond to citizen questions and concerns. In the end, tax payments in both cities increased significantly, after citizens understood that the extra revenues would cover services that would ultimately benefit them.

The tax issue and Rary's response helped forge linkages between DG and economic growth and, according to the mission, its other strategic objectives as well.[‡] The tax increase was linked to Madagascar's acceptance of the World Bank–International Monetary Fund structural adjustment agreement that mandated improvements in tax policy and collection. But it was one thing to agree to such reforms and quite another to achieve them. This is where the linkages with DG approaches and principles came into play. In effect, Rary project efforts to make local

*In the Malagasy language, *rary* means weaving. According to the mission's fiscal year 2000 Results Review and Resource Request, *rary* connotes the relationship between civil society and the state.

†In a country where private initiative is a new concept and class, ethnic, and clan divisions have a strong hold on patterns of association, the actual formation of such groups is a major achievement. In both cities, for example, umbrella coalitions brought together for the first time business, professional, and NGO leaders in a formal democratic organizational structure.

‡According to the "Country Strategic Plan Amendment" (18), "the treatment of this [tax] issue . . . yields results that support achievement of the other two strategic objectives, since active local participation and ownership of the change process are key features of our support for healthier families and biodiversity conservation."

government more accountable, transparent, and effective resulted in improved revenue collection and more responsive conduct on the part of municipal officials.

. . . With Health

Although fewer and less extensive than their environment and economic growth counterparts, DG-health activities also spawned positive results in the missions studied. Such activities improved the effectiveness and sustainability of health programming while strengthening civil society, increasing citizens' experience with democratic governance, and promoting new relationships between government agencies and civil society organizations. The best examples of these activities were in the Philippines and Zambia.

The Philippines

Project GOLD helped improve municipal and provincial health services. For instance, in March 1999, 15 Bohol officials — lawmakers, planning coordinators, health officers, a municipal engineer, and health volunteers — used project resources to go to another GOLD province, Negros Ori-

ental, to learn about its solid waste management efforts. After the tour, the lawmakers enacted local legislation that used project participatory principles to establish a waste management program in Bohol. Provincial health officials said the new program was tied to efforts to control respiratory diseases and diarrhea, targeted in the mission's Local Government Performance Program.*

They also said "the influence of GOLD helped improve health care service delivery" generally. Project-inspired changes in the structure and operations of the provincial government led to increased cooperation between offices, with corresponding public health benefits. For example, health office personnel began helping the provincial veterinarian — who has primary responsibility for rabies eradication — in vaccinating dogs.

The health sector in Nueva Vizcaya and Capiz has improved thanks to a USAID project that empowered people to participate in setting local priorities and motivated officials to become results oriented. As part of project GOLD's Quality Service Improvement Program, hospitals under local or regional control used participatory techniques to assess performance and improve services.† The administrator of the Nueva Vizcaya regional hospital explained that before he and his staff learned these techniques, their tendency was to sit back and complain, waiting for another project from Manila. But once they applied their new skills, hospital staff took responsibility for the quality of care and

*The Local Government Performance Program is a major USAID-supported and Philippines Department of Health-sponsored effort to help local governments with their devolved health care responsibilities.

†The Quality Service Improvement Program has been applied to hospitals and other local government health services. Its name was recently changed to the Public Service Excellence Program.

generated ideas for raising money and solving problems.

The Capiz governor, elected on a campaign platform that called for improving health services, used Quality Service Improvement Program resources to make good on his promises. In a recent state-of-the-province address, he said more funds had been allocated for Capiz's eight provincial hospitals and a center had been set up to provide surgical and dental services to the poor. The governor also cited improvements in the operations of Roxas Memorial, the province's regional hospital. The hospital's improved operations were later recognized by the Local Government Performance Program, which called it one of the top performing local government health institutions in the Philippines.

Zambia

DG principles and approaches were integrated into health sector activities in Zambia, where the mission was working on institutional capacity-building at the local level. One mission partner, Project Concern International, fostered partnerships between civil society and government to expand and improve HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation. It organized and trained district task forces, which

*A partner's program goal accentuates the cross-sectoral nature of these activities: "strengthen [parent associations in] responding to the priority needs and concerns of communities, and [as] building blocks for . . . decentralization . . . promoting the delivery [of services] and increasing civil society's participation in the primary education system" (Miller and El Sawi 1999, 19).

sought out resources and redirected those that were underutilized. For example, NGOs and churches provided outreach and venues for public events, while health ministry officials contributed technical expertise. As a result, government officials became facilitators and collaborators, civil society groups began to see government in a new light, and efforts to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS improved accordingly.

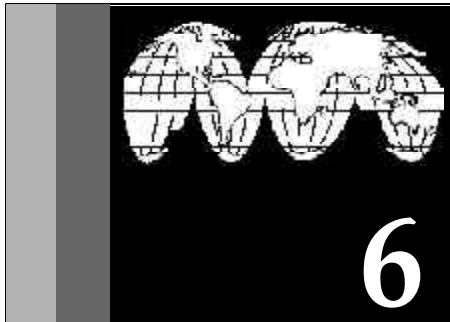
. . . With Education

DG-education activities were under way in Mali and Guinea at the time of the study, although they were in early stages of implementation. USAID/Mali was integrating DG activities into community-based education programming under a cooperative agreement.* Parent associations, for example, were given DG-supported civic education and advocacy training. According to mission staff, before this training the associations were not taking the lead in school management, expecting the government to provide the necessary resources and leadership. After the training, attitudes changed and parents came to understand they were responsible for their children's schools. This altered the relationship between associations and local authorities. One result was that some associations successfully claimed their schools' local revenue allotments – funds the schools were entitled to but sometimes did not receive.

In USAID/Guinea, DG-education activities also centered on parent associa-

tions. One partner contracted with national and local NGOs to train associations in planning, resource mobilization, and program execution. Another partner worked directly with the associations to build and manage local schools as part of a community development activity in 11 villages in the Kankan area. At the time of the field-

work, association members who underwent the training had begun to monitor local schools' quality of instruction and teachers' performance. In addition, there were early indications that the training was improving associations' internal governance and democratic organization.



Factors Thwarting Linkages

DESPITE SUPPORTIVE LANGUAGE in *Strategies for Sustainable Development* and other USAID documents – and despite the contributions of some managers, technical staff, and partners – Agency operations and outlooks often hinder cross-sectoral efforts. In the case studies and interviews with USAID/Washington staff, a variety of obstacles surfaced. They arose from the strategic objective framework, congressional directives, personnel issues, procurement arrangements, the institutional culture, results monitoring and reporting, and staff and budget resources.

Strategic Objective Framework

Mission staff and senior USAID/Washington managers commonly cited the Agency's strategic framework as a major deterrent to cross-sectoral activities. According to the framework, teams are responsible for developing strategic objectives, establishing criteria by which success can be measured, retaining organizations to carry out activities, and reporting annually on results achieved. The

teams and, in particular, their leaders are held accountable for achieving the projected results. Successes and failures have implications for individual careers, partners' prospects, and, presumably, the mission's future operations.

There was widespread agreement that the way the strategic framework has been implemented has led to the erection of bureaucratic barriers between teams, causing stovepiping inimical to collaboration and integration. The Mali case study notes:

Mission strategic and management organization by strategic objective creates an intense focusing of efforts on the achievement of a single objective, which reinforces a stovepiping mentality, and limits staff time available for collaboration. [Miller and El Sawi 1999, 17]

Staff in USAID/Zambia reported:

Missions develop their country strategic plans and . . . strategic objectives in a stovepiped manner. They identify synergies as an afterthought, if at all. [Ott, Salinas, and Miller 1999, 10]

Results Monitoring, Reporting, and Review

Judging by the frequency with which it was mentioned and the evidence respondents presented, results monitoring, reporting, and review was by far the most salient deterrent to cross-sectoral programming. Consensus views and concerns fell into three categories: performance measurement, reporting requirements, and the review process.

Performance Measurement Misses the Mark

Agency emphasis on quantitative measures as the most objective, reliable, and verifiable indicators of success has hindered cross-sectoral linkages, because quantification often fails to capture the most valuable outcomes of DG programming. From a performance measurement standpoint, DG activities resist “technification.”*

USAID/Madagascar staff said the Agency’s results measurement systems for technical sectors do not address democratic participation or governance. With-

*DG results relate more to institutions, processes, and values than to specific, countable outcomes. They tend to be qualitative, complex, and interactive, in contrast to other sectoral achievements, which are measured by easily quantified, simply stated, self-contained indicators. For DG results, it is also difficult to identify cause-and-effect relationships, because they are shaped by a multitude of direct and indirect forces and seldom show linear progress.

out some form of measurement, they added, it is impossible to assess whether activities in these sectors contribute to democratic governance and vice versa. Consequently, DG results were given limited attention in the design, implementation, and monitoring of technical tasks. USAID/Mali staff said the inability to measure the value of collaboration and compare it with management costs made it hard to justify future investments in cross-sectoral activities.

Reporting Requirements Reinforce Stovepiping

USAID/Washington and mission staff stressed that Agency reporting requirements, particularly the annual Results Review and Resource Requests, reinforce the independent treatment of strategic objectives. Results reviews are organized by sector, and USAID/Washington is quite critical when missions deviate from that approach.

In USAID/Zimbabwe’s case, an attempt to make DG a more explicit part of its environment strategic objective went awry when USAID/Washington said the information provided was too qualitative. Mission staff said they “got nailed” in large part because USAID/Washington thought the environment results reported were based on indicators that were not straightforward natural resources management measures. As a consequence, the mission had to amend the strategic objective to put more emphasis on physical indicators and

less on community development measures. USAID/Mali staff drafting a recent results review said they had difficulty developing a format to capture the cross-sectoral accomplishments of which the mission was so proud.

As significant as these examples are in their own right, collectively they are even more substantial because they indicate USAID is not capturing valuable results for which it should get credit. In USAID/Guinea, for example, rural enterprise associations made significant contributions to community infrastructure in the mission's health and education strategic objectives. Yet these went uncounted and, hence, unreported because they were not produced under those sectors' results packages. Likewise, a senior USAID/Washington manager said that in preparing testimony for Congress she could not say that programs in one sector (such as health) promote development of democratic values and behavior, because the Agency's database cannot provide that kind of information. Other respondents referred to USAID's information systems as useless for anything more than "straight line" (stovepiped) reporting.

*The review process at the time of the study was described as follows: First, sector staff reviewed mission submissions. Sector reviews were then discussed in a meeting of concerned parties. Finally, a summary reporting cable was drafted and sent to the mission. There were points toward the end of the process where questions could be raised about matters such as cross-sectoral linkages and synergy, but there was little evidence this was considered important or happened systematically.

Review Process Stresses Sectoral Viewpoint

As described by mission and USAID/Washington staff, the process for review of country strategies and results mirrors the Agency's sector-by-sector program approach.* USAID/Mali and Zambia staff said that when they submitted documents such as the results review, USAID/Washington provided comments from a sectoral perspective. Washington technical officers, they pointed out, typically did not attend sessions on other sectors' issues. This, they added, limited opportunities for cross-sectoral thinking and rendered less likely approval of activities that did not fit into sectoral molds or appeared too complicated from a sectoral standpoint. These chilling effects were apparent following a review of USAID/Zambia's strategic plan. The DG team was asked to increase its program's integration with other sectors but was told at the same time to use its funding only for activities that could be clearly identified as DG.

The Madagascar mission encountered persistent review difficulties with its combined DG-economic growth special objective. At its inception, the special objective was funded by DG money but retained economic growth goals. This prompted concern in USAID/Washington about attribution, as described in a fiscal year 1996 review document: "The review team had considerable difficulty scoring this Results Review and Resource Request, as this is really an economic growth strategic objec-

tive.” These difficulties resurfaced in the discussion regarding the mission’s fiscal 1999 results review, as described in a 6 August 1997 cable from USAID/Washington:

This strategic objective is a blend of both economic growth (EG) and DG activities. The mission had requested that [it] be reviewed and scored by the EG team since the results reported . . . are all EG-type results. The Africa Bureau Office of Development Policy determined, however, that since DG funding is being requested . . . the strategic objective would be reviewed and scored by the DG team. The mission believed that they were penalized by this determination. The DG working group leader agreed that collaboration between the DG and EG working groups was lacking. It was noted that the DG group leader would discuss this matter further with the EG group leader.

Unsupportive Agency Culture

Because cross-sectoral programming was relatively new and ill defined at the time of the study, there was no clear constituency working for it and little guidance to facilitate it. USAID/Zambia staff pointed out that many strategic objectives compete for management’s attention, and when directors present their strategic plans or results reviews in Washington few people, if any, are interested in synergy. They also said the Agency has few models missions could use for integrating DG principles and approaches into other sectors.

USAID/Washington staff held similar views. One senior manager observed that cross-sectoral linkages involving DG are “just not in the lore of the Agency” (Blue 1999, 5). Others went further, asserting that efforts to make linkages part of Agency culture had been ineffective, no matter how well publicized or supported by senior officials – including former administrator Brian Atwood. Another senior manager said flatly, “There is less and less evidence that USAID is doing cross-sectoral programming, in spite of all our initiatives” (Blue 1999, 5).

Mission and USAID/Washington staff also noted that USAID’s institutional culture offers few incentives for cross-sectoral linkages. Individually, most direct-hire professionals advance by successfully moving programs toward specified sectoral ends. This puts a premium on achieving what is expected for economic growth, environment, or health, not on using DG principles and approaches that might enhance sectoral results. At the operational level, there was little cause for managers to see a positive correlation between DG performance (linked or otherwise) and additional budget or personnel resources. USAID/Madagascar managers, for example, said they could demonstrate the positive impact of their integrated DG approach on the government’s economic reform program, but they did not believe this would increase their budget or change their limited mission status.

Staff and Budget Cuts

While declining budgets and staff have played a lead role in prompting cross-sectoral efforts, they have also at times hampered their achievement. Budget-inspired downsizing,* for example, has cut personnel Agency-wide, particularly those with field experience. All the case study missions were already burdened by having too few people to handle existing sectoral programming. In addition, some staff said cross-sectoral activities at least at the outset involve more effort than work in their sectors, since there are typically more meetings and, at times, special requirements, such as joint site visits. As a USAID/Guinea staff member said, “The mission’s downsized status made it next to impossible to find time to do the coordination required for cross-sector activities” (Charlick and Lippman 1999, 20).

Reduced budgets and staff have also forced missions to attend to fewer sectors, specifically addressing those for which funding was more readily available, such as health and environment. In USAID/Philippines, for example, the fiscal year 2000 strategic plan for the mission’s four-sector program (DG, economic growth, environment, and health) was predicated on a \$40 million budget. Of that amount, \$10 million was to be for economic growth

*Guinea downsized from 12 direct hires in 1996 to 6 in 1999. In a five-month period in fiscal 1997, Madagascar’s direct-hire complement was reduced from 13 to 8.

and DG programming. Not long after the plan’s approval, however, the budget was reduced to \$30 million, leaving just \$4 million for economic growth and DG. This cut was the driving force behind the mission’s decision to end its DG strategic objective and integrate it into the surviving economic growth, environment, and health objectives.

Congressional Requirements

Congressional directives and earmarks dampen cross-sectoral programming. One senior USAID/Washington manager characterized the Agency budget account as “97 percent directed by the U.S. Congress.” Another said USAID had a “dearth and a surplus at the same time,” referring to the large sums available for health, for example, and the comparatively small amounts available for DG (Blue 1999, 10). Others said health sector programs, with their well-developed technologies and appealing objectives, had a clear advantage over DG programs, with their more ambiguous methodologies and less concrete goals. To the extent that cross-sectoral programming meant money had to be taken from more visible and immediately satisfying health activities (such as reducing infant and child mortality), it was constrained by congressional preference for the latter.

Mission staff in Madagascar, Mali, and Zambia echoed the concerns expressed by their USAID/Washington colleagues. In

Madagascar, staff noted that earmarks and directives often hindered cross-sectoral efforts by limiting flexibility. In Mali, staff said earmarked funds were exclusively for one type of activity, reinforcing single-sector thinking and planning. Staff in Zambia also said they had to take into account the possibility that they could be accused of misusing funds if they interpreted earmarks too broadly. Staff there also said congressional directives reinforce tunnel vision; that is, the mission considers its budget with the idea that certain funds will be applied only to specific ends. This, they added, biases the mission's approach from the outset.

Staff Specialization And Turnover

Specialization and turnover can deter cross-sectoral efforts, mission staff said. Staff in USAID/Mali and USAID/Zambia pointed out that most of their colleagues had been trained in a single sector and many had spent their entire careers working solely in that sector. This made for an ingrained single-sector mentality, limiting the development of cross-sectoral activities.* Also, some USAID/Washington managers noted that reductions in program staff and elimination of project development officers have cut the number of USAID development generalists, who would likely be more comfortable with cross-sectoral approaches.

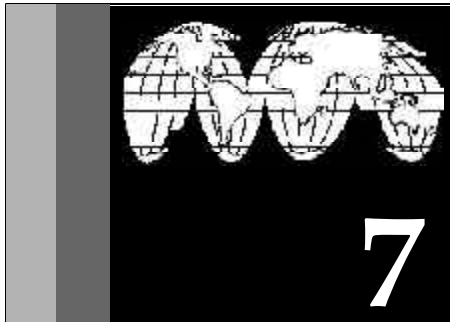
*Conversely, comparatively few have been trained in DG.

Staff turnover was also identified as a hindrance: cyclical rotation makes it difficult for staff to build relationships and master unfamiliar technical material. While the learning curve for new arrivals has always been steep, getting up to speed was said to be even more difficult if, on top of mastering sectoral issues, staff had to adapt to the demands of an integrated mission. USAID/Mali staff reported that in their experience it took new arrivals many months to become comfortable making decisions in their "synergized" mission. USAID/Zambia staff said collaboration suffered when key team members left for new posts or host-country nationals took jobs outside USAID.

Procurement Arrangements

Staff in several missions described difficulties in getting partners to include DG principles and approaches in a project once it was under way. One officer in charge of an environmental activity in USAID/Philippines urged a partner to work with another contractor carrying out a DG project. The partner refused, arguing that the performance standards in the grant agreement were too demanding to permit much deviation. USAID/Guinea staff described a similar experience: A partner resisted efforts to broaden the scope of work on the environment activity for which he was responsible. The partner, according to the staff, believed it would hurt his ability to fulfill the terms of the original grant agreement. USAID/Guinea staff also noted that barriers lay

not so much in the differences among procurement arrangements – contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements – as the degree to which the specifics made it difficult to pursue cross-sectoral collaboration.



Conclusion, Lessons Learned, Unresolved Issues

Conclusion

LINKAGES BETWEEN democracy and governance and other sectors are an idea whose time has come. In recent years, they have been occurring in USAID missions both by design and happenstance. DG linkages have been precipitated by a confluence of factors: reduced budgets and downsizing, committed management, conducive host-country situations, and a growing belief that DG is an essential component of sustainable development. Missions have developed and carried out linked activities through structural, operational, and individual means. Cross-sectoral linkages have become part of missions' strategic plans and operations, reflecting creative thinking and actions on the part of managers, staff, and partners.

The effects of cross-sectoral activities in the missions studied have been significant and, at times, remarkable. They have enhanced outcomes in economic growth, education, environment, and health programming, while contributing to democratization and good governance. As a result, citizens have learned how to be more

involved in development, exercise their rights, and hold officials accountable, while government authorities have become more effective, responsive, and transparent. On numerous occasions, synergy has been achieved: the sum of sectoral achievements and increased democratic governance has been greater than the results achievable independently.

But cross-sectoral efforts have also been impeded by a variety of factors, including stovepiped Agency operations, an unfavorable institutional culture, restrictive performance measurement and reporting requirements, and inadequate personnel and budget resources. Although the successes prove these obstacles can be overcome, the cost has been added time and effort for mission staff. These added costs need to be reduced if cross-sectoral programming is to reach its full potential.

Finally, the evidence affirms the central premise of this Synthesis: DG linkages with other sectors can enhance development. They do indeed promote positive outcomes for democratic governance and sectoral objectives and, in so doing,

achieve added results. The evidence further suggests that the Agency needs to promote cross-sectoral collaboration, making it an intrinsic part of USAID's institutional culture and operating environment.

Lessons Learned

1. DG linkages can enhance development. They promote DG and sectoral objectives, creating added results. DG linkages have spawned self-reinforcing attitudes and behavior through which citizens and government have worked together – often for the first time – on economic growth, education, the environment, and health. The interaction has produced substantive development results and increased democratization.

DG linkages need to become intrinsic to the way USAID does its work. One way to accomplish this could be to encourage managers – most typically, strategic-objective team leaders – to consider the potential relevance of DG linkages in any activity in their areas of responsibility. Another way might be for staff to consider options for promoting DG linkages in the course of sector assessments, strategy reviews, and designing programs. Efforts to produce such changes could be spearheaded by the three operating units involved in the study – Africa Bureau's Office of Sustainable Development, Global Bureau's Center for Democracy and Governance, and Policy Bureau's Center for Development Information and Evaluation.

2. Obstacles can be overcome. The Agency's operating environment and institutional culture are neither conducive to nor supportive of DG linkages with other sectors. The Agency's strategic framework and results management systems create barriers between sectors, generating competition rather than collaboration. Likewise, the Agency's institutional culture provides few, if any, incentives for cross-sectoral collaboration.

USAID needs to make its culture and operations more conducive and supportive by creating incentives for DG linkages and revising procedures that discourage collaboration. These efforts should build on mission experience. Collaboration could be part of employees' annual work objectives. DG linkages could be incorporated in country strategic plans. Retreats could be held on cross-sectoral concepts and thinking. And team leaders could be encouraged to meet regularly to coordinate activities and look for opportunities for synergy.

3. Documentation procedures are failing to capture accomplishments. USAID requirements for performance measurement, results reporting, and review are impeding DG linkages and causing the Agency to lose the benefit of accomplishments for which it should get credit. Missions have found it exceedingly difficult to develop joint indicators and intermediate results for cross-sectoral activities. Moreover, since reporting and review procedures are largely restricted to the sec-

tors in which results occur, missions have found it hard to communicate about and get recognition for cross-sectoral achievements.

Therefore, either as part of an effort to improve the overall environment for DG linkages or as a separate undertaking to ensure that cross-sectoral accomplishments can be fully captured, attribution, reporting, and review procedures need to be revised. One way to accomplish this could be for the Agency's annual guidance on reporting to stipulate that results of such activities be incorporated in the narrative under each strategic objective. Another possibility is that USAID/Washington review procedures be changed to encourage joint consideration of results by concerned DG staff and those of other sectors.

4. Opportunities are present, tools are available. A variety of approaches and techniques were used to develop DG linkages in the seven missions studied. The most productive context for cross-sectoral activities was government decentralization programs at the local level. In four missions, natural links between their programs and decentralization-inspired increases in local government powers and responsibilities provided a continuous stream of opportunities for cross-sectoral efforts. Missions were also using different mechanisms to facilitate DG linkages. For example, one mission emphasized cooperative funding arrangements and joint

site visits, while another used joint site visits along with weekly senior staff meetings and retreats.

USAID operating units need to be aware of the different contexts and tools available to help them with their cross-sectoral efforts. The Office of Sustainable Development and the Center for Democracy and Governance are developing tool kits of information and ideas on how to develop and carry out cross-sectoral activities. Efforts to increase awareness and understanding of DG linkages should build on these initiatives.

5. Leadership is essential. In the case studies, imaginative and committed leadership was clearly the most important factor in the development of DG linkages. In six of the seven missions, the directors were the key change agents, and their imprint was on every significant aspect of their staffs' efforts to collaborate. Without this support, it is unlikely cross-sectoral activities would have occurred, let alone succeeded.

The Agency needs to use these and other mission directors with similar experiences to increase awareness and understanding of the potential role for DG linkages. For example, a knowledgeable past or current director could address the annual mission directors' conference in Washington. Or a module on DG linkages could be developed and presented at that conference and other venues.

6. Individuals make a difference. The outlook and behavior of mission staff and partners can spark successful cross-sectoral efforts. Some key individuals working in the environment area, for example, intuitively understood that DG elements and principles would help them accomplish their sectoral objectives. Others found that discussing activities' synergistic implications at a retreat helped them overcome some difficulties in translating cross-sectoral collaboration into action.

USAID needs to identify ways to help Agency personnel think outside their sectoral boxes. The Center for Democracy and Governance and the Office of Sustainable Development could share the lead role in such efforts.

Unresolved Issues

A number of issues surfaced that were either beyond the scope of the study or could not be addressed, given the time and resources available. Nonetheless, because they are of value, four such issues are outlined here for further consideration.

Complementarity Between The National and Local Levels

The primary emphasis of the study was on local activities, though there were a few national activities – such as the Philippines Conference of Coastal Municipalities. While this emphasis reflected what

was happening in the field at the time, there is a complementary relationship between cross-sectoral efforts at the local and national levels. Indeed, the USAID/Guinea case study concluded that local-level cross-sectoral efforts may be at risk if the environment for decentralized government and civil society does not improve. Creating such an enabling environment, the case study noted, necessarily involves action at the national level.

The implication is that successful local cross-sectoral activities will not be sustainable without complementary national democratic reform. This in turn prompts a question about balancing national and local cross-sectoral efforts when, if the experience in the overall study is a guide, the latter appears to be easier to bring about. While cross-sectoral activities can play a greater role than they have in promoting democratic reform nationally, the case studies do not provide sufficient examples of how to accomplish this.

Costs Versus Benefits

Another central issue is determining the costs and benefits of cross-sectoral efforts. USAID/Madagascar's comments on the draft Working Paper summary of that case study emphasize that while the mission had worked hard at "capturing synergies," there was a basic issue of cost and efficiency in pursuing them. Synergies, the mission asserted, have to "at least yield positive returns to investments" – and do perhaps even more than that.

If synergies are “touted and promoted no matter what their cost,” the mission commentary continues, “this could lead to a lot of spinning wheels.” Staff in several other missions reported that, at least at the outset, cross-sectoral linkages were labor intensive – raising the cost-benefits question. These sources, however, conceded that they knew of no way to determine whether benefits exceeded costs. The ability to do so awaits more complete, experience-based information on cross-sectoral activities.

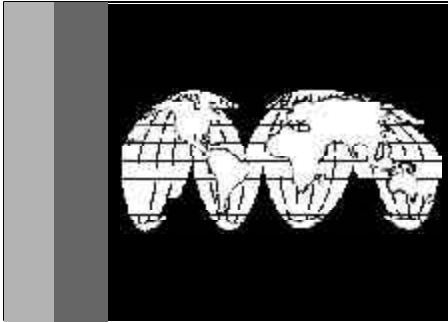
Strategic Objective Approaches

The missions in both Madagascar and Mali decided after considerable discussion that a freestanding DG strategic objective would enhance the potential of cross-sectoral activities, even if strengthened democratic values and behaviors were integrated into other sectors’ strategic approaches. USAID/Philippines

decided exactly the opposite in October 1999, when it folded its DG objective into the mission’s surviving strategic objectives. At the time of the study it was too early to assess the implications of these contrasting views, since USAID/Philippines had only just embarked on its new approach. How this question is resolved will likely have a major impact on the continued development of cross-sectoral efforts.

Environment: A Most Receptive Sector

In the missions studied, DG-environment activities were the most numerous and, in general, the most successful. But there is no way of knowing whether a wider survey of mission activity would confirm this. DG linkages could be equally numerous and successful in other sectors in a given mission. A more complete answer to this question must await a more comprehensive record of mission experience with cross-sectoral programming.



Appendix

Countries Studied

THE MISSIONS SELECTED

- Had strategic plans, annual performance reporting documents, and information from knowledgeable personnel showing democracy and governance linkages in one or more sectors with a track record of concrete results
- Represented all four Agency regional bureaus: Africa, Asia and the Near East, Europe and Eurasia, and Latin America and the Caribbean
- Were different sizes, operating in countries at more and less advanced stages of development

The initial study design called for eight field studies – two per region. But an extensive review of mission reporting

*Bulgaria and El Salvador were selected, but case studies were not undertaken.

documents showed that while a sizable number contained some reference to cross-sectoral activities, few of these had gone on long enough to have generated results sufficient for the study's purposes. Management impediments during the study also limited the number of case studies and geographic representation.*

In-Country Fieldwork

Fieldwork included four elements: an interview protocol, team concept, work in the capital, and onsite observation.

Interview Protocol

A protocol guided interviews with mission staff, partners, and beneficiaries. While each was fine-tuned to accommodate individual countries and missions, all addressed the same four issues:

- The reasons for the establishment of linkages between DG and other sectors and the manner in which they were put into effect

- The role of the host-country context in the development and impact of linkages between DG and other sectors
- The effects of linkages between DG and other sectors
- The factors that hinder or promote linkages between DG and other sectors

Team Concept

Teams included a mix of expertise (such as anthropologist, economist, environmental specialist, and political scientist) to ensure knowledge of USAID democracy programs and the areas examined. Staff of the Democracy Center and the Office of Sustainable Development served on one or more teams. In some instances, team members wore more than one hat. For example, the environmental specialist, anthropologist, and political scientist on the Guinea team were also general authorities on that country or West Africa. Teams consisted of three or four members. In most circumstances, local consultants supported the team on substantive matters, logistical arrangements, and, where needed, interpretation.

Work in the Capitals

In capital cities, teams interviewed mission staff (managers, direct hires, and

foreign service nationals), contractors, NGO representatives, and government officials. The purpose of the interviews was to flesh out examples of cross-sectoral activities involving DG and other sectors, with emphasis on those a team intended to visit. The team also asked USAID staff about relevant Agency policies and procedures and about the mission's corporate culture (such as organizational values and management practices). Lastly, teams queried staff and partners about the relationship between cross-sectoral activities and host-country political, economic, and cultural considerations.

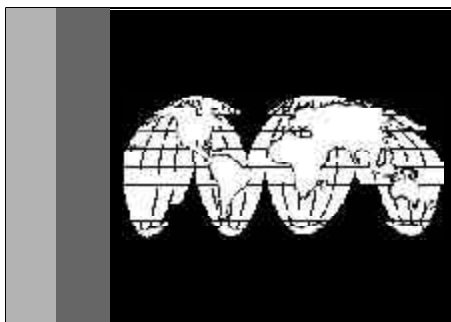
Onsite Observation

Outside the capital, the team went to considerable lengths to observe cross-sectoral activities firsthand and to interview contractors, NGO activists, elected officials, and beneficiaries about their impact. Team members often made spontaneous arrangements to sit in on exercises such as planning meetings and training sessions. These unvarnished examples of real-world cross-sectoral linkages provided team members with invaluable insights. Moreover, by talking with key informants onsite and observing the style and substance of interactions between ordinary people and local authorities, teams gained insight into precisely how USAID activities in economic growth, education, environment, and health promoted democratic governance.

Working Paper Summaries

Teams wrote Working Paper summaries after completing fieldwork in each country, to serve as building blocks for the

final Synthesis. Given staff, budget, and time limitations, it was decided at the outset that the summaries would not be published.



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