BIODIVERSITY INTEGRATION REFERENCE SHEET

DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS & GOVERNANCE

Integrating Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG), and Biodiversity Programming

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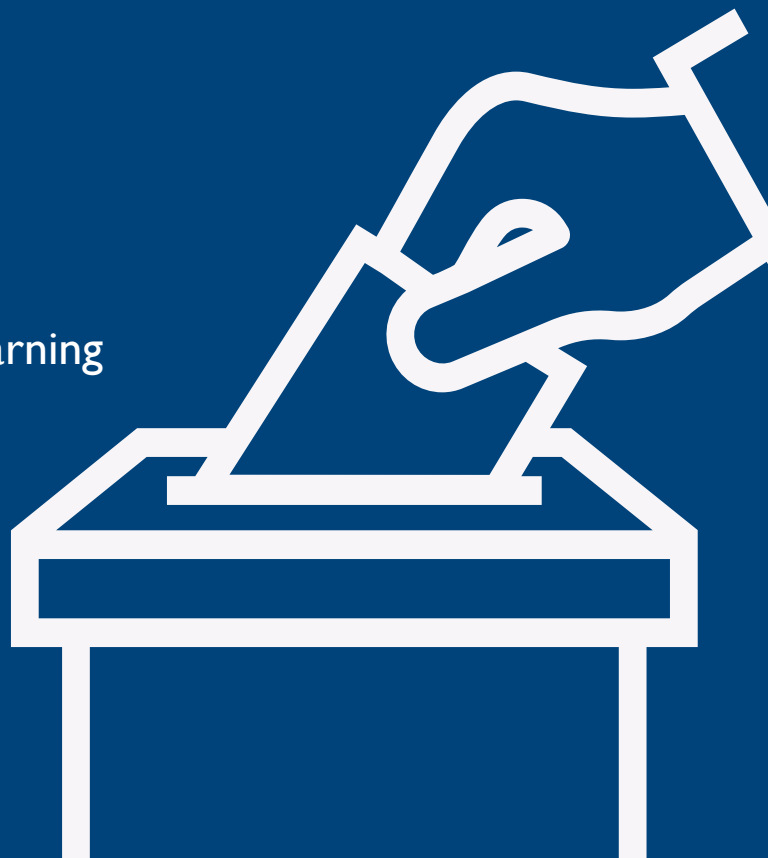
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INTEGRATING DRG AND BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMMING

ABOUT THIS SERIES

This reference sheet is one of a series of five whose purpose is to facilitate coordination and integration of biodiversity conservation with other key sectors at USAID by using a common format to present the interests of these sectors and opportunities for integration through collaboration, co-funding or single sector funds. These sheets are intended to be used throughout the program cycle by environment and non-environment officers alike. For the full series of sheets, please see the back cover of this reference sheet.

HOW TO USE THIS SHEET

The DRG reference sheet introduces users to the DRG sector at USAID and provides ideas for integration between biodiversity and DRG programming. It starts by providing a brief introduction to DRG programming at USAID, some common challenges and approaches, and examples of programming resources and monitoring and evaluation tools for the sector. It then provides some examples of opportunities for integration between DRG and biodiversity. The sheet closes with key documents and terms for the DRG sector.

WHAT IS BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMMING?

The overall vision for biodiversity conservation programming at USAID is to conserve biodiversity for sustainable, resilient development. This is accomplished through two goals as articulated in the USAID Biodiversity Policy: (1) conserve biodiversity in priority places and thus help safeguard the diversity of natural ecosystems on Earth such as tropical forests, coral reefs and savannas, and the species they support; and (2) integrate biodiversity as an essential element of human development, considering both its benefits for and dependencies upon other program areas. More information on USAID's biodiversity programming is available from the Biodiversity Integration Reference Sheet.

Developing countries are home to roughly two-thirds of the Earth's biodiversity.
These countries play important roles as partners in safeguarding biodiversity around the world.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS AND INTEGRATION

Both biodiversity and DRG have funding requirements that guide USAID investments in these sectors. Biodiversity programming at USAID is guided by the USAID Biodiversity Code, which determines whether activities meet the legislative requirements for the use of biodiversity funds (see the Biodiversity Integration Reference Sheet for more information). Similarly, DRG programming at USAID is guided by the global democracy, human rights and governance Congressional budget directive, most of which is implemented by USAID. Opportunities for integration may be realized through collaboration, coordination, co-funding or single sector funds depending on the specific context (see "Opportunities for Integration," below).

WHAT IS DRG?

WHAT IS DRG?

DRG programming at USAID supports democratic advancement and stands with citizens, civil society and the private sector to hold their governments to be more responsive and accountable. Through this work, USAID supports those that seek to bolster the rights and democratic aspirations of their people and assists them along their journey to self-reliance, while recognizing that societies that empower women to participate fully in civic and economic life are more prosperous and peaceful.

DRG & DEVELOPMENT

Democratic governance and human rights are critical components of sustainable development and lasting peace. Countries that have ineffective government institutions, rampant corruption and weak rule of law have a 30 to 45 percent higher risk of civil war and higher risk of extreme criminal violence than other developing countries. To help change this narrative, USAID is integrating democracy programming throughout its core development work, focusing on strengthening and promoting human rights, accountable and transparent governance, and an independent and politically active civil society.

Efforts to promote human rights and build inclusive, participatory and accountable institutions associated with democratic systems are a key element in efforts to end extreme poverty.

DRG PROGRAMMING AT USAID

DRG programming at USAID is coordinated by USAID's Center of Excellence on DRG, whose mission is to advance democracy, human rights and governance, while contributing to socioeconomic progress and overall developmental resilience by integrating DRG across all sectors. This programming is guided by the USAID Strategy on DRG and driven principally by USAID missions, which formulate their programming in response to their local context. The strategy provides the Agency's overall goal for this programming and four objectives to achieve this goal.

USAID STRATEGY ON DRG

GOAL

Support the establishment and consolidation of inclusive and accountable democracies to advance freedom, dignity and development

OBJECTIVES

1. Promote **participatory, representative and inclusive** political processes and government institutions
2. Foster greater **accountability** of institutions and leaders to citizens and to the law
3. Protect and promote **universally recognized human rights,** political processes and government institutions
4. Improve development outcomes through the **integration of DRG** principles and practices across USAID's development portfolio

CHALLENGES

The 2016 DRG Strategic Assessment Framework is a key tool for applying the DRG strategy, and provides guidance for USAID practitioners as they think through the main challenges in a country and how to address them. This framework identifies five key elements of DRG and associated challenges. Though no country ever completely resolves these challenges, minimum thresholds in each must be reached to create the basis for democratic governance and respect for human rights.

KEY ELEMENTS OF DRG & CHALLENGES

Consensus

- Is there basic consensus on questions of national identity, historical narrative and fundamental rules of the game? Is the political contest played by those rules?

Inclusion

- Are parts of the population formally or informally excluded and disenfranchised from meaningful political, social or economic participation, influence or leadership?

Competition & Political Accountability

- Are free, fair and inclusive elections a regular feature of competition?
- Are there other mechanisms besides elections that ensure the government delivers on its promises and fulfills the public trust?
- Are there a competition of ideas, a free media and a vibrant civil society? In other words, does the state broadly provide for adequate political rights and civil liberties?
- Is a healthy set of checks and balances present between branches of government or between levels of government?

Rule of Law & Human Rights

- Are political, economic and social life bound by a rule of law?
- Does the government apply the law equitably to all citizens, including historically marginalized and oppressed groups and individuals, and hold itself accountable for adhering to the rule of law?
- Does the law incorporate fundamental human rights and civil liberties?
- Does the government enforce, protect and promote those rights?

Government Responsiveness & Effectiveness

- Do public institutions respond to public needs and provide socially acceptable services?
- Do those services reach all citizens equally, or do certain groups or populations face barriers to accessing services?
- Do mechanisms exist for all citizens to provide constructive feedback on government performance?
- Do robust internal mechanisms exist to hold government institutions accountable and guard against poor performance, fraud and waste, as well as violations of human rights?

KEY ACTORS & INSTITUTIONS

The DRG Strategic Assessment Framework also identifies a broad range of key actors and institutions that can support or obstruct reforms. These drive political conditions and present both challenges and solutions.

- The Executive
- The Legislature
- The Judiciary and legal professionals
- National human rights institutions
- Security services (including the military, police and intelligence services)
- Local government
- Political parties
- Civil society
- Media
- Private sector business interests
- Key population groups
- Non-state armed actors
- International and global actors

APPROACHES

The Agency's Center of Excellence on DRG divides its work as described by the USAID User's Guide to DRG.

DRG Center Division	Area of Work
Civil Society and Media	Provide technical leadership and support on civil society, including youth, labor and media
Elections & Political Transitions	Provide technical leadership and support on elections and political transitions to USAID field missions and Washington bureaus, other U.S. Government entities and the broader DRG community
Empowerment & Inclusion	Reinforce the capacities of communities, local non-governmental organizations and governments to provide services and protection for vulnerable populations
Governance & Rule of Law	Support activities to improve the effectiveness, accountability, transparency and responsiveness of governance and rule of law institutions, systems and processes
Human Rights	Strengthen the Agency's expertise, technical knowledge and field support resources for the protection and promotion of universally recognized human rights
Global & Regional Policy	Support the development and implementation of evidence-based DRG policies, strategies and budgets at the global, regional and country level
Cross-Sectoral Programs	Provide assistance to missions and operating units in cross-sectoral integration by designing and implementing cross-sectoral programming, and identifying and documenting good practices

Participation, inclusion, transparency and accountability (PITA) The PITA principles promoted by the DRG Cross-Sectoral Programs office are a particularly important approach to DRG programming. PITA provides a framework for the integration of DRG principles and practices with other sectors, and helps identify programming that embeds and enhances these core principles.

* **Participation** - The establishment or strengthening of citizens' ability to influence government planning, policies, budgets, decisions and activities that affect their lives.

* **Inclusion** - Interventions that promote equity of opportunity and access to public goods and services for all citizens, especially for vulnerable populations and minority and marginalized groups.

* **Transparency** - An environment where governments and public officials disclose rules, plans, processes and actions in a form that is readily accessible to all.

* **Accountability** - The systems, procedures and mechanisms that ensure that public officials and institutions perform their stated duties and uphold their responsibilities while imposing constraints on their power and authority, and providing for redress when these duties and responsibilities are not met.

USAID provides multiple programming guides, assessments and resources for DRG programming, of which four are particularly relevant for integration with biodiversity: the USAID DRG Strategic Assessment Framework, Country Context Analysis, the Thinking and Working Politically approach and the Anticorruption Assessment. Together these tools provide globally relevant guidance for USAID DRG programming.

The USAID Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Strategic Assessment Framework provides a four-step process for conducting a political analysis of a country, developing a strategy to advance DRG and informing integrated development approaches. This process includes:

1. An analysis of the DRG challenges in a country, including a country context analysis (as described below)
2. An analysis of key actors and institutions
3. An analysis of USAID's operational and programming environment
4. Strategic and programmatic recommendations

Ultimately this process is intended to answer the questions: How and why is political power acquired, maintained, exercised and contested? And how can advocates for democracy, human rights and good governance achieve greater success confronting the challenges in their country with assistance from USAID?

Country Context Analysis Understanding the context for DRG programming is one of the first steps in the DRG Strategic Assessment Framework. A country's political system and trajectory helps determine what the core challenges, priorities and opportunities for programming are in a given country. The USAID DRG strategy identifies four country types (authoritarian regimes, hybrid regimes, developing democracies and liberal/consolidated democracies), of which three are the primary destinations of DRG funds.

Country Type	Description
Authoritarian Regimes	Closed societies where autocrats and allied elites maintain firm control over a political process that limits meaningful participation of citizens and where there is little potential opportunity for a democratic opening in the near term
Hybrid Regimes	Range from repressive semi-authoritarian regimes to political systems with more civil and political freedoms but with no genuine foundation for democratic governance and institutions
Developing Democracies	Nascent democracies coming out of a political transition, slightly more established democracies at risk of backsliding or stagnation and better-performing democracies striving to consolidate their progress

Thinking and Working Politically Through Political Economy Analysis This guidance provides information on how USAID can think and work in ways that are more politically aware—an approach known as "thinking and working politically"—through the use of applied political economy analysis (PEA). PEA is a structured approach to examining power dynamics and economic and social forces that influence development. Through programming that seeks to more rigorously respond and adapt to these realities, USAID is working to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of its international development efforts.

Anticorruption Assessment Anticorruption assessments are based on a political economy analysis of corruption for a target country, and assess how corruption manifests itself in that country, the political-economic dynamics that facilitate corruption, institutional weaknesses and vulnerabilities, and opportunities for reform. This assessment approach leads practitioners from problem identification to possible programming responses. This process is described in the 2009 USAID Anticorruption Assessment Handbook.

MONITORING, EVALUATION & LEARNING

Progress toward DRG goals is monitored using more than 20 USAID standard indicators distributed between six areas of interest: rule of law, good governance, political competition and consensus-building, civil society, independent media and free flow of information, and human rights. In addition, missions can also indirectly attribute their contributions to DRG outcomes as a result of biodiversity programming using the PITA narrative.
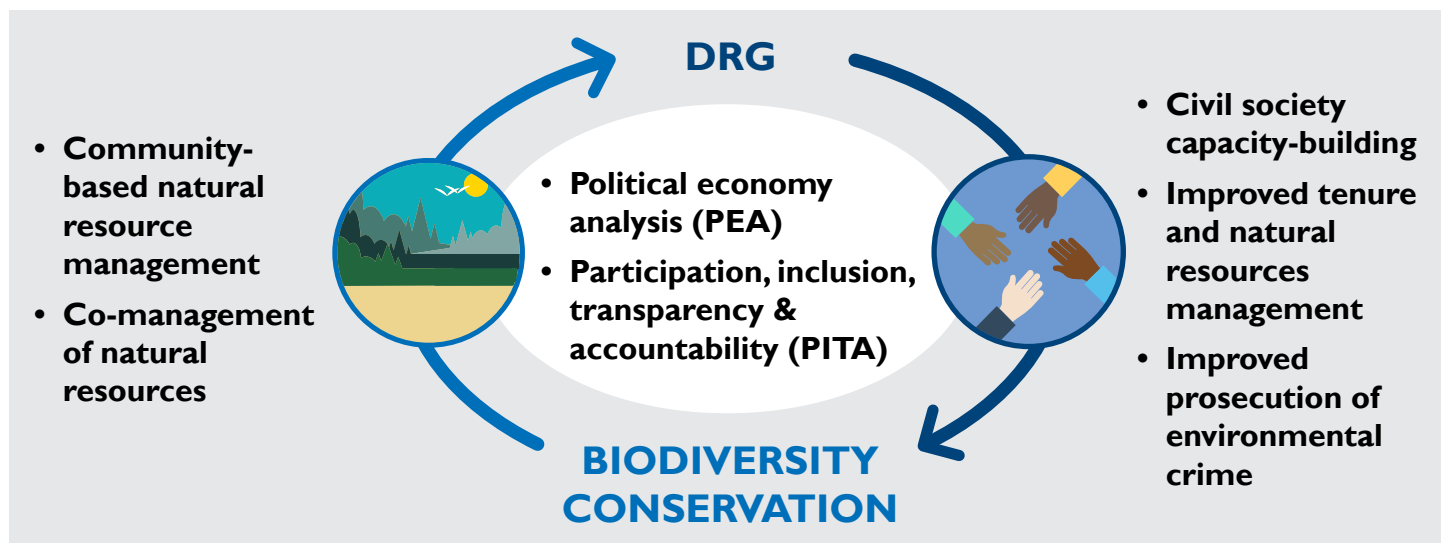
To support learning for DRG programming, the 2017 DRG Learning Agenda identifies five primary themes for learning in USAID DRG programming: participation and inclusion, transparency and accountability, human rights, DRG integration and theories of democractic change. For each of these themes, the agenda additionally identifies key learning questions.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTEGRATION WITH BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

The following section provides examples of the two-way relationship between biodiversity conservation and DRG. These opportunities may be realized through collaboration, coordination, co-funding or single sector funds depending on the specific context

Opportunities for DRG and Biodiversity Integration The drivers of biodiversity loss are often DRG challenges, such as weak institutional arrangements, insecure access to and use rights for natural resources, and lack of participation and transparency in decision-making. Examples of programming interventions include improved marine biodiversity conservation through community participation in co-management; increased prosecution of environmental crime through investments in judicial systems; or enhanced integrity of forested landscapes through investments in indigenous land tenure systems. Furthermore, biodiversity programming often yields substantial and unmeasured co-benefits for DRG programming and can serve as a "wedge" to promote DRG outcomes. This includes reductions in environmental crime or improved natural resource management and corresponding improvements in PITA indicators. The opportunities for integration between these sectors are substantial, and following are some key scenarios illustrating the integration of DRG and biodiversity programming at USAID.

Legend: Opportunities for biodiversity and DRG programing to benefit each other are presented on the left and right, and key tools for integration are presented in the center.

COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Kenya's Northern Rangelands Trust is using a community conservancy approach to help communities reinvigorate traditional management systems and rehabilitate degraded areas across Kenya's northern rangelands. By 2019, the project had supported 39 community conservancies over an area of 42,000 square kilometers, including 71,000 people benefiting from conservancy-funded development projects since 2015 and 1,012 people permanently employed. The benefits for nature have been substantial, including a 77-38 percent drop in the proportion of illegally killed elephants in community conservancies since 2012.

CO-MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

In Namibia, the Living in a Finite Environment project registered 52 community-based conservancies that sustainably manage more than 12.23 million hectares of land resources, representing 14.7 percent of Namibia's surface area. These conservancies have contributed to recovery of wildlife populations across the country and improved natural resource bases. The conservancy process emphasized the involvement and participation of all community members and has empowered women to influence decision-making. Women comprise more than 50 percent of conservancy members and 37 percent of conservancy committee members. These outcomes then positioned the project to contribute to developing legislation that devolves rights over wildlife and tourism to local communities and gives them the right to form a management body.

CIVIL SOCIETY CAPACITY BUILDING & ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHENING

In Nepal, the Hariyo Ban project enhanced the capacity and improved the internal governance of community forest user groups, which are held accountable to the members they represent. Women are equally likely as men to participate in user group activities, and the majority of committees report having 33 percent or more women on the committee. By practicing good governance and accountability, these user groups exemplify governance and democratic practices and help hold government agencies accountable, and have already had positive impacts on recent elections.

IMPROVED TENURE & NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The Enhancing Customary Justice Systems in the Mau Forest project in Kenya built the capacity of the customary justice system to support and enforce women's land rights, particularly among traditional elders. In a *katiba* (constitution), elders committed to ensuring gender equity in all community-level committees, including community forestry associations and water resource users' associations. During the project period, 14 female elders were elected, representing the first time women have been elected as elders within the Maasai and Kalenjin communities.

PROSECUTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME

In Guatemala, the Security and Justice Sector Reform Project improved investigation and prosecution of and partnerships on environmental crimes, including coordination between security forces, environmental security and justice institutions and civil society, ensuring overall rule of law. The program strengthened local justice operators' capacity to address environmental crime and contributed to the creation of a specialized judicial system and environmental courts. As a result, the number of environmental crime sentences tripled to 55 sentences in 2016, the largest number of decisions on environmental crime over the past eight years.

POLITICAL ECONOMY ANALYSIS

A rapid field-level PEA in Madagascar highlighted conservation of marine biodiversity as an environmental and food security priority. The PEA identified *dina,* or customary law, as an opportunity to build stronger local resource governance and management regimes to address overfishing and illegal, unreported or unregulated fishing. The PEA recommended that USAID focus on methods to monitor and support the internal dynamics of locally managed marine area networks to enhance their effectiveness, including the use of dina to support these marine networks.

PARTICIPATION, INCLUSION, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The four principles of participation, inclusion, transparency and accountability, as promoted by the DRG Cross-Sectoral Programs office (see above) provide an excellent framework for understanding how DRG approaches might support biodiversity programming and gauging the success of that integration. By promoting these four principles as key elements of conservation programming, biodiversity programs have the opportunity to yield immediate benefits in local and national governance systems.

KEY DOCUMENTS

This guide references a variety of documents that support programming and integration at USAID ranging from Agency policy to how-to guidance. These documents are listed below:

- USAID Strategy on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance
- Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Strategic Assessment Framework
- Thinking and Working Politically Through Applied Political Economy Analysis: A Guide for Practitioners
- User's Guide to Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Programming
- DRG Learning Agenda
- USAID Anti-Corruption Assessment Handbook
- USAID Biodiversity Policy
- USAID Biodiversity and Development Handbook

Additional resources are available from:
USAID Democracy, Human Rights and Governance: https://www.usaid.gov/democracy
USAID Biodiversity Conservation Gateway: https://rmportal.net/biodiversityconservation-gateway

- **Accountability** refers to the systems, procedures and mechanisms that ensure that public officials and institutions perform their stated duties and uphold their responsibilities to the public while imposing restraints on their power and authority, and providing for redress or sanction when these duties and responsibilities are not met.

- **Biodiversity** or biological diversity refers to genetic diversity within a species, species diversity within ecosystems and the diversity of ecosystems on the Earth.

- **Civil society organizations** include formal non-government organizations, as well as formal and informal membership associations (including labor unions, business and professional associations, farmers' organizations and cooperatives, and women's groups) that articulate and represent the interests of their members, engage in analysis and advocacy, and conduct oversight of government actions and policies.

- **Co-management** is a partnership arrangement in which the community of local resource users, government, other stakeholders and external agents share the responsibility and authority for decision making over the management of natural resources.

- **Corruption** is defined as "the abuse of entrusted power for private gain." While virtually no forms of government, including consolidated democracies, are immune from corruption, non-democracies appear particularly prone to endemic corruption. Widespread corruption is often a symptom of deeper, structural governance problems that limit opportunities for accountability.

- **Democracy** refers to a civilian political system in which the legislative and chief executive offices are filled through regular, competitive elections with universal suffrage. Democracy is characterized by civil liberties, including the rights to speech, association, and universal suffrage, as well as the rule of law and respect for pluralism and minority rights. Democracy means "rule by the people" wherein the authority of the state is rooted in the explicit consent of its citizens.

- **Governance** refers to the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It involves the process and capacity to formulate, implement and enforce public policies, and deliver services.

- **Human rights** include the right to be free from violations of physical integrity (such as torture, slavery and illegal detention); the collective rights of all citizens to enjoy political rights and civil liberties; and equality of opportunity and non-discriminatory access to public goods and services.

- **Political economy** is the relations among political and economic actors in a society, their interests, resources, and strategies for maximizing gains.

- **Rule of law** is a principle of governance by which all members and institutions of a society (including the state itself) are accountable to the law—in particular, laws that adhere to international norms of human rights, that are openly made by democratically elected representatives, that are fairly and equally enforced by the executive and that are independently adjudicated by the courts.

- **Transparency** describes an environment where governments and public officials engage in the clear disclosure of rules, plans, processes and actions in a form that is readily accessible to all. Transparency promotes accountability by providing the public with information about what the government is doing.

OTHER REFERENCE SHEETS IN THIS SERIES

Biodiversity

Food Security

Health

Water and Sanitation

For more information on the topics discussed here, or to discuss opportunities for integration with USAID biodiversity programming, please contact:

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