



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Ambassador Kneedler at a community dialogue meeting. Kayonza, Rwanda. February 2024. Photo by Ivana Lawrence for USAID Rwanda.

RWANDA

ENGAGE: DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

Rwanda has made remarkable progress in rebuilding institutions of government, maintaining security, and promoting reconciliation since the 1994 genocide. However, concerns about democracy and governance remain, including highly centralized political power, nonexistent political opposition, weak civil society, and limited media freedom.

USAID provides democracy and governance funding to increase the Government of Rwanda's responsiveness to citizen priorities.

OVERVIEW OF USAID SUPPORT

USAID focuses on increasing access to justice for poor and marginalized populations, strengthening civil society to advocate on behalf of citizens, and contributing to emotional healing and social cohesion to overcome the trauma of the genocide and promote unity.

RULE OF LAW

Many Rwandans cannot afford legal advice or representation in court, so USAID supports legal aid services for poor and marginalized communities. USAID also increases citizens' awareness of their rights and supports civil society to provide legal advice via a toll-free call center.

To lessen the burden on the formal court system and speed up resolutions, USAID promotes alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, such as local Abunzi councils.

PORTFOLIO VALUE: US \$10.6 million

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STRENGTHENING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Through local partners, USAID works on empowering and enabling citizens and civil society to engage in civic life and advocate for their needs. USAID works simultaneously with the Government of Rwanda to increase their responsiveness to citizen needs.

RECONCILIATION AND SOCIAL COHESION

The legacy of the genocide impacts daily life for all Rwandans. Both victims and perpetrators hold deep-seated grievances which discourage reconciliation and healing, leaving communities on edge. USAID works to rebuild community ties by supporting psychosocial services and trauma counseling for Rwandans, helping ease the pain of the genocide and build community trust.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

USAID has improved social cohesion by strengthening unity and resilience in Rwanda through healing of historical wounds and facilitation of open and inclusive dialogue on contemporary sensitive issues in all 30 districts. These efforts have enabled 500 perpetrators of the genocide to take bold steps to ask for forgiveness and reconcile with the survivors of their crimes.

USAID reached over 150,000 Rwandans engaging local leaders and citizens in dialogue that has helped improve citizen participation in local decision making.

At a time of enormous resource gaps in Rwanda's justice sector and rising case backlog, USAID reached 3 million Rwandans providing them with various legal services that have helped improve citizens' awareness of their rights and access to quality and timely justice.