

Democracy, Governance and Conflict



SHOUT THE SILENCE champions julius caesar, jennifer wanjiru and caroline debby who are giving voice to the concerns of the boy child who is equally vulnerable.

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Key Activities:

- Drive reforms through the support of key institutions and systems, especially in the areas of devolution, land, public participation, and women's empowerment;
- Help county governments provide quality services in a transparent and accountable manner;
- Work with civil society to create avenues for active engagement between governments and citizens;
- Enhance the political participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making;
- Support free, fair and peaceful elections.
- Address the drivers of conflict in hot spot areas to ensure a peaceful environment for development

Key Partners:

- Ministry of Devolution and Planning
- National Treasury
- Council of Governors
- Parliament (National Assembly and Senate)
- Commission for Implementation of the Constitution
- Devolution Sector Working Group
- County Assemblies Forum

From the inclusive reform process that birthed a new Constitution in 2010 – to a free and peaceful election in 2013 – Kenya has recently achieved many democratic milestones. Kenya has created 47 new county governments – effectively creating a new two-tier system. Devolution is a long and challenging process at the core of Kenya's constitutional reform agenda and USAID's strategy. If done right, it can put the country on a path toward more inclusive, transparent, and accountable governance.

PROGRAM AREAS

Devolution and Support to County Governments

USAID is helping make county governance systems more competent, transparent, accountable and inclusive in their operation and service delivery. The goal is to support institutions and structures that encourage counties to cooperate and advance their interests with the national government, and to build civil-society capacity to represent citizen interests and aspirations to county governments.

USAID's devolution support is anchored by its \$50 million Agile and Harmonized Assistance for Devolved Institutions (AHADI) activity. AHADI, which means "promise" in Kiswahili, is building the capacity of stakeholders at all levels – national, county, sub-county, and civil society –. Capacity building is Kenyan-led and demand-driven. It combines training, on-the-job mentoring, and experiential learning to advance the work of government and citizens. AHADI is integrating citizen participation into training, policy development, and research activities to provide a key link between citizens and government and is working with community organizations, as well as regional and national organizations, to help them seize opportunities for government participation. AHADI is also working to implement constitutional and statutory provisions for meaningful citizen participation.

In addition to the AHADI activity, USAID/Kenya is partnering with the U.N. Development Program (UNDP) and other donors through a basket fund to support devolution, ensuring that national and county governments and the constitutional commissions have the technical, financial and functional capacity to strengthen the legal and institutional framework for an effective transition to devolved governance. In FY 2015, USAID/Kenya will contribute to a World Bank trust fund to support devolution by strengthening fiscal management at the county level; enhancing human resources systems through formulation of guidelines, regulations, manuals and templates; and improving accountability by incorporating citizen consultation into the county's planning, budgeting and monitoring and evaluation cycle.

Empowering Civil Society

USAID activities develop the capacity of civil society to promote transparency and accountability and to work in partnership with government to enhance local service delivery and public participation in decision-making. USAID activities also work closely with civil society networks to ensure that civic space in Kenya remains open and vibrant, to develop organizations' internal management structures, and to support long-term financial independence and sustainability. USAID supports the URAIA Trust to work across the country on civic participation and to promote civil society's role in enhancing public participation. Through the Development Grants Program, USAID supports local organizations to develop citizen advocacy networks on issues that are critical at the local level, such as health, security, education, land rights, and corruption. County assemblies from Kisumu, Kwale, Siaya, and Uasin Gishu established the County Assembly Representative Network Against Corruption, a movement to integrate and advocate for good governance and anti-corruption initiatives at the county level. USAID-supported media reached 18 million Kenyans in FY 2014 and outlined the harmful impact of corruption on devolution, while at the same time increasing the awareness of and reporting on corruption cases. Collectively, these efforts strengthened II policy or legislative measures, and enhanced the oversight role that civil society continues to play in Kenya.

Women's Political and Civic Participation

USAID programs are supporting women's access to justice and the enforcement of land rights; increasing women's participation in local government and deepening their understanding of their responsibilities as elected officials; strengthening the voice of women in leadership positions so they can be effective advocates; and educating county officials on their constitutional responsibility to include women and help with to putting these requirements into practice. In FY 2014, USAID worked with 26 political parties to facilitate women's leadership and trained more than 23,000 women in leadership, budgeting (including gender-responsive budgeting) and governance. These women received training in negotiation, advocacy, research, political party organization, time management, public speaking, and media engagement.

Conflict Mitigation

In Kenya, many of the root causes of conflict, such as land tenure regimes, youth unemployment, lack of participatory governance, and ineffective delivery of social services remain flashpoints. To address the underlying causes of conflict and provide non-violent alternatives, USAID strengthens community cohesion and increases youth and women's participation in civic and economic life.

Kenya Tuna Uwezo, (Kiswahili for "We have the power!") reduces ethnic and politically-motivated conflict in the informal settlements of Nairobi by strengthening communities to counter violent extremism and withstand political manipulation that leads to violent conflict. Working with partners PeaceNet and Kituo Cha Sheria, the program engages residents, especially young people, to act as champions for peace and builds the capacity of community leaders and groups to work effectively with one another across ethnic lines. In FY 2014, USAID trained more than 500 local women peace activists, and eight women received long-term training in conflict mitigation and leadership.

USAID is expanding conflict mitigation and countering violent extremism activities to address the increasing insecurity and growing influence of Al-Shabaab. The Strengthening Community Resilience Against Violent Extremism (SCORE) activity provides subgrants and capacity building support to civil society groups in six coastal counties to enable them to address the drivers of conflict and violent extremism in their communities. In 2015, the Mission is developing a countering violent extremism strategy to bring new focus on this critical issue and to expand programming. .

New activities launched in 2015 include:

- Yetu Initiative, or "Our Initiative" in Kiswahili, brings together USAID with the Aga Khan Foundation. It helps Kenyan communities and civil society organizations (CSOs) tackle the country's most pressing challenges while building local ownership and sustainability for CSOs, enabling them to sustain their advocacy for the Kenyan people over the long-term.
- Shiriki, or "participate" in Kiswahili, works through CSOs to increase citizen participation in local government in four counties along Kenya's Coast, a region with a long experience of marginalization and underdevelopment. The activity will help selected community-based organizations become more transparent in their operations, widen their coverage and engage more productively with citizens and the government.
- Strengthening Community Resilience Against Extremism (SCORE) builds organizational capacity of nascent groups at the Kenyan Coast that have high legitimacy to work on conflict and countering violent extremism, but which need support to develop organizational management and financial independence.