



Photo: USAID's Honduras Local Governance Activity, DAI

USAID ANNOUNCES NEW UPDATES AT THE 2024 SUMMIT FOR DEMOCRACY UNDER THE PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVE FOR DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL

At the [first Summit for Democracy](#) held in December 2021, President Biden announced the establishment of the Presidential Initiative for Democratic Renewal (PIDR), a landmark set of policy and foreign assistance initiatives that build upon the U.S. Government's significant, ongoing work to bolster democracy and defend human rights globally. USAID contributed 14 initiatives to the PIDR at the first Summit, and eight initiatives at the [Second Summit for Democracy](#) in March 2023. The PIDR comprises five lines of effort in response to significant challenges to democracy in the 21st Century. At the third Summit for Democracy in March 2024, USAID announced one new initiative to advance digital democracy along with updates on the significant progress that has been achieved under PIDR.

ADVANCING TECHNOLOGY FOR DEMOCRACY

- **Advancing Digital Democracy** works with governments, technologists, and civil society to build rights-respecting digital ecosystems; to date, USAID has allocated over \$9.8 million to eight countries.
 - **NEW ANNOUNCEMENT IN 2024:** On March 17, USAID will launch the **Advancing Digital Democracy (ADD) Academy**, building upon the ADD initiative announced at the first Summit for Democracy. In partnership with multinational technology companies, **ADD Academy** will offer essential skills

training in cybersecurity, data privacy, cloud computing, and responsible AI, among other topics. In the initial phase, ADD Academy intends to work with technology partners Cloudflare, Google, and Microsoft.

- Working with international partners, USAID and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) launched the **Donor Principles for Human Rights in the Digital Age** in October 2023, which advances a 'do no harm' approach to digital development that protects partners and the communities they serve. The Donor Principles have been endorsed by the 38 member governments of the Freedom Online Coalition (FOC).
- **Promoting Information Integrity and Resilience Initiative (ProInfo)** will strengthen information integrity and resilience globally through technical assistance and capacity building to local civil society, governments, and media outlets. USAID will coordinate with international donors to maximize investments that strengthen information integrity and resilience, especially with respect to marginalized communities.

SUPPORTING FREE AND INDEPENDENT MEDIA

- The **International Fund for Public Interest Media** committed nearly \$9 million in 32 grants across 16 countries to media outlets in urgent need of support, focusing on media outlets at imminent risk of shutting down due to financial or political conditions; outlets who have the capacity and innovation to generate revenue and strengthen their operations; as well as working with outlets to tackle market challenges, including experimenting with national funds and actions to ensure fair distribution between independent news outlets and “Big Tech” platforms. The U.S. Government’s initial seed funding has leveraged an additional \$32 million from fifteen governments, philanthropies, and corporate entities.
- The **Media Viability Accelerator**, built in partnership with Microsoft, deploys market analytics to support new business strategies and bolster the resilience of the independent media sector. The Media Viability Accelerator has secured interest from more than 1000 media outlets and continues to recruit partners globally.
- **Reporters Shield**, a global membership program that provides legal support to investigative journalists facing vexatious lawsuits, has signed up more than 30 media outlets and civil society organizations doing investigative reporting. Initially opened for applicants from North and South America, Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia in May 2023, membership for organizations from additional regions that include the Middle East, North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, will open by April 2024.

FIGHTING CORRUPTION

- The **Empowering Anti-Corruption Change Agents Program** – which supports civil society and media to engage in global collective action – launched the first regional Empowering the Truth Tellers Activity/Asia Investigative Reporting Network (ETT/AIR) in Southeast Asia. This and other ETT Activities support and connect regional media actors to share strategies and best practices in detecting and exposing corruption; enhance communication and strategic messaging around corruption; and facilitate joint investigations,

especially around transnational corruption. The ETT/Southern Africa Activity is expected to launch in 2024.

The **Countering Transnational Corruption Grand Challenge for Development**, which funds innovative and collaborative efforts to prevent corruption, supported 14 winning innovations under the Powering a Just Energy Transition Green Minerals Challenge and the Data for Integrity hackathon series. Concepts submitted under the Doing Business With Integrity activity, which also falls under the Grand Challenge, are currently being reviewed.

- The **Global Accountability Program (GAP)** launched the Strengthening National Architectures (SNA) to Combat Corruption Activity, which is building resilience to transnational corruption, grand corruption, and kleptocracy — including across high-risk sectors — by strengthening the systems and actors needed to close loopholes, detect dirty money, follow its movement across borders, and ultimately hold corrupt actors accountable. Activities launched since GAP/SNA was awarded in September 2023 include: (1) strengthening the resilience of political finance systems in the Europe and Eurasia region against malign strategic corruption; (2) strengthening anti-corruption institutions and systems in the health and extractives sectors in Zambia; (3) and deploying a global rapid, short-term mechanism to provide cutting-edge technical expertise to USAID Missions, bureaus and partners.
- At the second Summit for Democracy, the U.S. co-led multi-stakeholder **Financial Transparency and Integrity (FTI) Cohort** launched a Pledge and Call to Action to accelerate progress across three critical anti-corruption priorities: beneficial ownership transparency (BOT), public procurement, and addressing the enablers of corruption. In response, USAID launched its **FTI Accelerator** to catalyze and accelerate uptake of FTI priorities. Since March 2023, USAID has initiated three activities of up to \$36.25 million, subject to the availability of funds, under the FTI Accelerator, including efforts under the Global Accountability Program aimed at strengthening beneficial ownership transparency and disabling the enablers; actions under the Countering Corruption in the Extractives Sector Activity to enhance uptake of BOT in the critical minerals sector; and work under the Accelerating Open Government Reform and Action Against Corruption Activity to enhance uptake of FTI priorities across Open Government Partnership (OGP) National Action Plans. USAID has also signed Memorandums of Understanding with OGP and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) to solidify strategic partnerships at the global, regional, and country levels in addressing these issues.
- Under the **Anti-Corruption Response Fund**, USAID allocated \$6 million to five countries to respond to windows of opportunity or increased risk. Activities funded include: efforts to identify and prevent corruption in licensing and procurement related to natural resources, and enhance private sector integrity and anti-corruption engagement; exploring bold new accountability measures – including prosecutions – of transnational corruption in the pharmaceutical space; strengthening central bank and supreme audit institution functions to unlock the fight against corruption and civil society and media efforts to monitor; and enhancing implementation of conflict of interest laws.

- Through the **Integrity for Development Campaign**, USAID seeks to increase donor resources for anti-corruption, especially in environments where the international community is making major development investments, such as in climate finance. Since March 2023, USAID has successfully brought on initial ‘anchor partners’ and increased investments in anti-corruption. USAID will leverage the third Summit to inspire new funding commitments.

BOLSTERING DEMOCRATIC REFORMERS

- Under the **Partnerships for Democracy Development (PDD)**, USAID allocated \$53 million to nine countries – Armenia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Malawi, Nepal, North Macedonia, Paraguay, Timor Leste, and Zambia – to accelerate their democratic development and demonstrate that democracy delivers. PDD supported progress in areas such as anti-corruption, municipal governance, decentralization, and citizen services as well as sectors that intersect with DRG such as health, economic growth, and private sector development.
- Under the **Advancing Women’s and Girls’ Civic and Political Leadership** initiative, USAID allocated \$9.8 million to nine focus countries in 2023 - Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Côte d’Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Kyrgyz Republic, and Yemen - to build and sustain a diverse pipeline of women and girl leaders and create an enabling environment for their safe and meaningful participation in politics and public life. USAID began country level work with women’s political participation and leadership assessments and will be launching new or expanded programming in each country by mid-2024. In addition, USAID established the Network for Gender-Inclusive Democracy, a platform to coordinate and share knowledge on women’s political empowerment at the country and multilateral levels. In parallel, USAID launched the three-year, \$6 million Transform activity, which seeks to prevent Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence that targets women in politics and public life, including through local pilot initiatives in Georgia, Guatemala, and Kenya.
- As part of USAID’s efforts under PIDR to **Mitigate, Prevent and Respond to Risks Affecting USAID Implementing Partners and Program Participants (formerly known as Duty of Care)**, USAID conducted a review to identify gaps and risks in programming and will develop tools to address these risks. To **Strengthen Social Safeguards**, USAID launched a Social, Economic and Environmental Accountability Mechanism for program participants and other affected parties to directly submit complaints and issues to the Agency for review and remedy.
- **Powered by the People (PxP)**, which seeks to foster the agency, resiliency, and efficacy of citizen-led movements around the world is now fully operational, with resources spanning core funding, training, legal support, digital security, rapid response, and other forms of support. PxP supports formal and informal civic actors engaged in grassroots organizing, social movements, and other forms of nonviolent collective action advancing human rights, social justice, democracy, and inclusive development. Foundation partner Humanity United announced a multi-donor fund, the Collective Action Assistance Fund, that will leverage and multiply the impact of PxP.

- To bolster global commitment to activism and social movements, USAID worked with the Civic Space Democracy Cohort to workshop and refine **International Principles for Supporting Peaceful Collective Action**. By partnering with other donors as well as philanthropic foundations and civil society partners, USAID is improving interagency and U.S. government coordination and expertise related to nonviolent collective action.
- USAID is vigorously **Advancing People-Centered Justice** – the idea that justice institutions must meet the day-to-day justice needs of the people they serve – through the implementation of its Rule of Law Policy and the Rule of Law IDEAS Lab. To pilot people-centered justice activities with local, new, and underutilized partners, USAID provided supplemental funding to its Missions in Nigeria and Indonesia. USAID is also supporting the Justice Action Coalition Secretariat to strengthen its workstreams devoted to furthering Data and Evidence; Strategy, Programming and Innovation; Communications, Narratives and Connection to the Sustainable Development Goals; and Justice Financing.
- Through the **Multilateral Partnership for Organizing, Worker Empowerment, and Rights**, USAID, the Department of Labor, the Department of State, and other governments, trade unions, and philanthropic organizations collaborated to support workers and worker organizations and call for actions to address violence and harassment against labor leaders across the globe.

DEFENDING FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

- The **Global Network for Securing Electoral Integrity (GNSEI)** is rallying leading members of the international electoral integrity community to advance norms that address emerging and long-term threats to democratic elections. USAID is working with other GNSEI members to develop resources which will promote safeguarding the independence of election management bodies and genuine, inclusive electoral reform processes.
- The **Defending Democratic Elections Fund** is helping countries proactively address deeply rooted threats to elections and political processes. USAID has deployed \$15.9 million in FY22 funds to support programming in 17 countries to tackle issues like campaign finance reform, build political parties' internal democracy, and reduce barriers to political participation for women.
- USAID will enhance its support for democratic elections globally by outlining principles for **Electoral Assistance for the 21st Century**. These will guide USAID's electoral assistance and adhere to U.S. government values, drawing from global electoral assistance principles and best practices. USAID has synthesized relevant principles, lessons and practices, and developed an outline for the draft principles document. Peer review groups (inclusive of USAID, the interagency, and the broader DRG community) have been formed to provide input.