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# DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND GOVERNANCE

## DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND GOVERNANCE POLICY

The democracy, human rights, and governance (DRG) landscape has changed dramatically over the past 10 years, and USAID must adapt its programmatic approach to meet new challenges. The DRG Policy articulates the pivots and principles underlying USAID’s updated approach, establishes a shared vision of democracy’s essential role in achieving development objectives in all sectors, and affirms the critical role of other sectors to democratic progress.

**GOAL:** To optimize USAID’s efforts to invigorate democracy, enhance human rights and justice, and bolster governance at all levels that advances the public interest and supports the delivery of inclusive, sustainable development.

*We will work to strengthen democracy around the world because democratic governance consistently outperforms authoritarianism in protecting human dignity, leads to more prosperous and resilient societies, creates stronger and more reliable economic and security partners for the United States, and encourages a peaceful world order. – U.S. National Security Strategy, October 2022*

## PIVOTS:

- **PIVOT 1: Harness all of USAID’s influence and development programs to pursue democratic progress.**
  - *USAID will embrace a whole-of-Agency approach to democratic renewal, leveraging all its resources, capabilities, and partnerships to drive meaningful change.*
- **PIVOT 2: Intensify the focus on norms and values that build social cohesion and cultivate democratic political culture and processes.**
  - *USAID will expand its efforts abroad to support democratic values, social capital, civil political discourse, information integrity, and norms that are the linchpin of a just, resilient, and inclusive society.*
- **PIVOT 3: Advance digital democracy by supporting rights-respecting approaches to data and technology.**
  - *USAID will promote inclusive, rights-respecting approaches to the development, deployment, use, and governance of digital technologies and data to foster vibrant democracies and counter the rise of “digital repression.”*
- **PIVOT 4: Elevate anti-corruption as critical to democracy and development, with a focus on transnational corruption, grand corruption, and kleptocracy.**
  - *USAID will confront the realities of contemporary corruption through new resources, approaches, and partnerships, with a renewed commitment to anti-corruption-informed programming and practice across all sectors.*

## PRINCIPLES:

- Advance social inclusion and gender equality by seeking transformational change in systems and structures.
- Advance locally led development and adaptive approaches.
- Respond with agility and creativity to crises undermining democracy and opportunities to advance democracy.
- Mainstream prevention and protection for frontline democratic actors.

## REQUIREMENT:

To fulfill Pivot 1 of this policy, the DRG Bureau must develop and test a “democracy review” process to examine how USAID might adapt or change its overall programming to support democratic development.

The methodology will be developed by USAID’s DRG Bureau, in collaboration and consultation with the Bureau for Planning, Learning, and Resource Management, along with other Pillar and Regional Bureaus, and will be piloted in one country per region within one year of the release of this policy.

For further information, please contact Andrew Colburn in the DRG Bureau’s Policy, Learning, and Integration Office at [acolburn@usaid.gov](mailto:acolburn@usaid.gov).