



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Center for Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (DRG Center)

2021 DRG CONFERENCE

June 21-July 1, 2021



Virtual Conference

Cover Photo Credits:

1. 2019 Nobel Peace Prize Nominee from Somalia helps lead the Elman Peace and Human Rights Center in Mogadishu and works to reintegrate child soldiers and advance the role of youth in building peace and security on the continent. | Sebastian Lindstrom
 2. A Nigerian Citizen casts his vote during the 2019 Presidential Elections in Nigeria. | Toluwanimi Onibokun
-



Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to the 2021 DRG Virtual Conference!

What a whirlwind it has been since the last DRG Conference in 2019. The cause of democracy continues to meet serious challenges. For the first time in decades, the number of autocratizing countries in the world exceeds the number of democratizing countries. According to the 2021 V-Dem Report “Autocratization Turns Viral,” 68 percent of the world’s population now lives under an authoritarian government. In the past year, authoritarians have used the COVID-19 pandemic as a further opportunity to curb individual freedoms and tighten their grip on power. The pandemic has also tested the ability of many democracies to foster public confidence in their governmental institutions.

Amidst these challenges and much uncertainty, we have continued to promote the democratic model even while our own resilience was challenged. We have *protected the integrity of elections and governance institutions* despite COVID lockdowns that disrupted electoral processes and pandemic-related resource flows that increased the risk of corruption. We have worked to *protect civic space and access to balanced information* in the face of authoritarian power dynamics and disinformation. We have *defended human rights and improved the rule of law* as marginalized groups around the world demand to have their voices heard.

Within this context, we come together around this year’s Conference theme:

DRG: Renewed, Resilient, and Resolute.

Given **renewed** recognition of DRG’s importance and our commitment to it, we are excited to strengthen our collective action as we engage with you over the next two weeks to discuss important global trends and cutting-edge DRG topics. We’re eager to also present evolving thinking from USAID colleagues and other DRG experts on how to build more inclusive and resilient democracies.

We wish to ensure the DRG assistance community remains **resilient**. Since our last conference, we have continued to work in extremely challenging DRG environments even as COVID-19 affected our programs, our families, and our communities. As we continue to face challenges, this conference offers you the chance to get to know and share experiences with your colleagues. We encourage you to take advantage of virtual networking opportunities to support your own resilience, as well as strengthen our DRG community’s resilience.

And together, we’ll emphasize how the democratic model endures and the DRG assistance community remains **resolute**. No matter how tight a dictator’s grip on power may seem, we know democracy’s proven benefits, including sustainable economic growth and reduced risk of violent conflict. We also see citizens rising up in unprecedented numbers to demand that governments respond to their needs.

After such a challenging year, we are confident the knowledge, perspectives, and wisdom exchanged here will be well worth it. We will have succeeded if we leave energized for the year ahead -- *renewed in our dedication to democratic governance, resilient in the face of challenges and shocks, and resolute in our efforts.*

Again, we bid you a warm welcome,

Sincerely,

John B Walsh

Johnny Walsh
Deputy Assistant Administrator

Don Chisholm

Don Chisholm
DRG Center Deputy Director

Rosarie Tucci

Ro Tucci
DRG Center Director

David Black

David Black
DRG Center Deputy Director

DAY ONE AGENDA

MONDAY, JUNE 21

8:00AM - 8:15AM

WELCOME

Danielle Reiff, USAID DRG Center
Kacy Mixon, USAID DRG Center
Alpha Luyoyo, USAID/Guinea & Sierra Leone

8:15AM - 8:30AM

OPENING REMARKS

Johnny Walsh, USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator

8:30AM - 9:30AM

KEYNOTE REMARKS

Samantha Power, USAID Administrator

9:30AM - 10:00AM

BREAK

10:00AM - 10:55AM

CONCURRENT TECHNICAL SESSIONS

Countering Disinformation: What Do We Know AND What Works?

Joshua Machleder, USAID DRG Center
Keti Bakradze, USAID/Georgia
Mikheil Benidze, Zinc Network
Anders Mantius, USAID/Indonesia
Dr. Tim Weninger, Notre Dame University

A session about using data, evidence, and research in disinformation programming.

Mainstreaming Anti-Corruption Approaches

Jennifer Lewis, USAID DRG Center
Matt Henneberger, USAID/Global Health
Caitlin Hurley, USAID/Education
Maria Rivera, USAID/Honduras
Agathe Tshimpanga, USAID/DRC
Elizabeth Hart, World Wildlife Fund

The next frontier: mainstreaming anti-corruption approaches across USAID programming.

10:55AM - 11:00AM

Wrap-Up and Closing

11:00AM - 12:30PM

Virtual Gallery Opening for the DRG Photo Contest

DAY TWO AGENDA

TUESDAY, JUNE 22

8:30AM-8:40AM

WELCOME

Kacy Mixon, USAID DRG Center
Alpha Luyoyo, USAID/Guinea & Sierra Leone

8:40AM-9:00AM

KEYNOTE REMARKS

Johnny Walsh, USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator

9:00AM - 10:30AM

PLENARY: Elevating Democracy and Protecting Human Rights in an Era of Strategic Competition

Tom Bridle, USAID DRG Center
Nils Mueller, USAID DRG Center
Lorri Anne Meils, USAID DRG Center
Jelena Avramovic, USAID/Serbia
Dr. Protik Ali, NORC
Dr. Andrew Green, Development Professionals, Inc.
Rob Berschinski, National Security Council

According to the Interim National Security Strategy, democracies are “under siege.” How is this administration thinking about the Countering Authoritarianism problem set? How should we be thinking about this problem set from the Center and from the field? How should we recalibrate our interventions, and what are the gaps in our DRG toolkit?

10:30AM - 10:55AM

BREAK

11:00AM - 11:55AM

NETWORKING: Small Tables

Networking sessions provide the opportunity to engage (via camera, microphone, and/or chat) with fellow attendees in small groups regarding DRG topics.

12:00PM-12:55PM

BREAK

1:00PM - 1:55PM

CONCURRENT TECHNICAL SESSIONS

Supporting Elections and Political Processes in Closing Space

Michael McNulty, USAID DRG Center
Renne Traicova, USAID DRG Center
Joseph Taggart, USAID DRG Center
Sheryl Stumbras, USAID/Zambia
Pat Merloe, National Democratic Institute (NDI)

This session will address ways to promote electoral integrity (and broader democratic environment around elections) in closing spaces and semi-authoritarian contexts, and how to avoid potential pitfalls to ensure we're not inadvertently legitimizing bad elections.

Enhancing Your Activity Design Toolbox: New Resources for Busy People

Matthew Baker, USAID DRG Center
Christopher Grady, USAID DRG Center
Andrew Greer, USAID/Mali
Jesus Nunez, USAID/Honduras
Laura Adams, Freedom House

Check out three new DRG-specific resources to support your activity design and activity monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

DAY THREE AGENDA

THURSDAY, JUNE 24

9:00AM - 9:55AM

CONCURRENT TECHNICAL SESSIONS

From Protest to Policy: Social Movements and the Opportunity for Civil Society to Engage Youth In Politics

Neetha Tangirala, USAID DRG Center

Alpha Luyoyo, USAID/Guinea & Sierra Leone

Liliane Kamashy, USAID/DRC

Nadia Shah, USAID/Ukraine

Mike McCabe, USAID Inclusive Development Hub

Dr. Jennifer Earl, University of Arizona

Sabir Ali, Human Rights Activist/Pakistan

Explore why USAID should help civil society partners build bridges to social movements and how to channel youth participation in protest into long-term political engagement and leadership.

USAID's Response to COVID-Enabled Democratic Backsliding

Michael McNulty, USAID DRG Center

Daniel Sabet, USAID DRG Center

Rosa Colorado, USAID/EI Salvador

Dr. Erik Wibbels, Duke University/DevLab@Duke

Katerina Hadzi-Miceva Evans, European Center for Not-For-Profit Law (ECNL)

Fernanda Buriel, International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)

Lessons learned from adapting to COVID-19-enabled democratic backsliding.

10:00AM - 10:55AM

Networking: Small Tables

Networking sessions provide the opportunity to engage (via camera, microphone, and/or chat) with fellow attendees in small groups regarding DRG topics.

10:55AM - 11:00AM

Wrap-Up and Closing

DAY FOUR AGENDA

MONDAY, JUNE 28

8:00AM - 8:55AM

CONCURRENT TECHNICAL SESSIONS

Money Matters: Building Fiscal Resilience in Turbulent Times

Steve Rozner, USAID DRG Center
Nina Bowen, USAID/Zambia
Carrie Gruenloh, USAID/Africa Bureau
Mark Gallagher, DevTech Systems, Inc.

A conversation on how public finance approaches and interventions can help countries strengthen democratic governance, stability, and resilience.

New DRG Gender Tools: Women's Political Participation and Leadership (WPPL) Assessment and Media Gender Charter

Mousumi Sarkar, USAID DRG Center
Sashee de Mel, USAID/Sri Lanka
Zoe Grotophorst, NORC
Nikita Samaratunga, IREX

This session will highlight two gender tools - the Women's Participant and Political Leadership (WPPL) Assessment Framework and associated tools and the Media Gender Charter and the associated Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) survey - and promote the DRG Evidence and Learning Team's new initiative to co-fund the WPPL assessment with interested Missions.

9:00AM-9:30AM

BREAK

9:30AM-10:25AM

CONCURRENT TECHNICAL SESSIONS

Democracy Delivers: The Benefits of Democracy

Christopher Grady, USAID DRG Center
Luz Marina Garcia, USAID/Nicaragua
Carl Henrik Knutsen, Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)/University of Oslo
Valeriya Mechkova, V-Dem Institute

Come hear how and why democracy improves development outcomes.

Changing Paths, Not Goals: Building Adaptive Management in Practice

Mark Goldenbaum, USAID DRG Center
Nichole Graber, USAID DRG Center
Laura Calderon, USAID/Colombia
Mason Ingram, PACT/Somalia

The session will spotlight practical tools and award features for building "adaptive management" into activity designs and ongoing programs to respond to changing conditions like COVID-19, as well as share new ADS revisions and policy guidance to help make the case to skeptics.

10:25AM - 10:30AM

Wrap-Up and Closing

DAY FIVE AGENDA

TUESDAY, JUNE 29
USAID ONLY

9:00AM - 10:00AM

CONCURRENT TECHNICAL SESSIONS (USAID ONLY)

FSN Listening Session: Inclusion, Leadership, and Empowerment

Ajit Joshi, USAID DRG Center
Thokozile Chisala, USAID/Malawi
Angelina Hermon, USAID/Sri Lanka and Maldives
Felesia Muyia, USAID/Kenya and East Africa
Gerry Porta, USAID/Philippines
Sydney Watae, Solidarity Center/South Africa

In this session, we will be renewed by listening to stories of leadership from DRG FSNs who, despite challenges, have demonstrated resilience by charting a course for a more resolute global DRG cadre.

Reframing Rule of Law Assistance: Systems, Services, and Society

Golnoosh Hakimdavar, USAID DRG Center
Andrew Solomon, USAID DRG Center
Lissette Dumit, USAID/Dominican Republic
Miranda Joliceur, USAID/DRC

Do you have a rule of law problem in the country where you live and work? Join USAID experts in shifting the paradigm to understand and solve rule of law promotion problems and challenges.

Democracy for All: Designing Inclusive Programming

Janice Lam, USAID DRG Center
Neetha Tangirala, USAID DRG Center
Ria Orca, USAID/Philippines
Elizabeth Troolin, USAID/Colombia

This session will facilitate a discussion among USAID staff to identify strategies for advancing inclusion as part of USAID's work with partners and communities, and provide participants with a brief overview of the Administration's priorities and recent policies and processes.

10:00AM-10:30AM

BREAK

10:30AM-12:00PM

PLENARY (USAID ONLY): DRG Center in DDI: What's New and What's Not?

David Black USAID DRG Center
Sharon Carter, USAID DRG Center
Carrie Mitchell, USAID DRG Center
Tara Thwing, USAID DRG Center
Ro Tucci, USAID DRG Center

When the DRG Center officially became part of the new DDI Bureau in November 2020, it also underwent a degree of reorganization. This session aims to orient field officers to key changes and new resources in the Center and to refresh their knowledge about the technical expertise, financial resources and implementing mechanisms available from the DRG Center to support their work in the field. It will ensure officers know how to access the Center's resources and gather information about their information needs. The session will also highlight other parts of the DDI Bureau that often serve DRG officers in the field (i.e., ID Hub, GenDev, LFT Hub).

12:00PM - 1:00PM

BREAK

1:00PM - 1:55PM

Networking (USAID ONLY): DRG Cadre Conversation

1:55PM - 2:00PM

Wrap-Up and Closing

DAY SIX AGENDA

THURSDAY, JULY 1

8:30AM - 9:25AM

TECHNICAL SESSION

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in the Workplace: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead

Ajit Joshi, USAID DRG Center

Erin Brown, USAID Bureau for Management

Clifton Kenon, USAID/Office of Civil Rights and Diversity

Shiro Gnanaselvam, Social Impact

Swathi Massar, Mercy Corps

After a short presentation of the key messages from the recent BRIDGE survey, this participatory session will explore meaningful integration of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the workplace.

9:30AM - 11:00AM

PLENARY

Senior DRG Remarks: Don Chisholm and Ro Tucci, USAID DRG Center

Closing Remarks: Secretary Madeleine Albright, Former U.S Secretary of State
Stephen Hadley, Rice, Hadley, Gates & Manuel LLC

Announcement of Photo Contest Winners: Ro Tucci, USAID DRG Center and Dr. Daniel Twining, IRI



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

This Task Order is funded through the USAID Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation (DDI),
Center for Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance