

## USAID Knowledge Management Inventory

Since 1997, DCHA's Office of Democracy and Governance (then the Global Bureau's Center for Democracy and Governance) has emphasized training and cadre development, web development and promotion, and publication quality control and distribution as three important ways of providing vital services to USAID's democracy and governance community. At that time, the DG Office developed a communications strategy to allow it to identify its target audiences, set communications goals and priorities, and obtain feedback from a wide array of audiences. This strategy was endorsed by the DG Office's senior leadership, and it was used as a framework for managing the collective office's knowledge.

It is important to note that the three components of this strategy are managed by three individuals for whom it is their full-time jobs. That is, each is specialized in a particular technical area and is not spread out over a variety of sectors and with competing priorities. In addition, targets toward the broader goals outlined in the communications strategy are reviewed on a quarterly basis. They were also reassessed in a mid-strategy review in the summer of 2001.

Also since 1997, the DG Office has been holding (and improving) its annual training workshop and partners conference. These two concurrent, but distinct, events provide focused training to USAID DG staff and promote a forum for exchanging ideas and approaches with our primary implementing partners. The training workshop's format has been redesigned almost every year to meet varying needs based on pre-workshop needs assessments. It has also sought to manage workload burdens for the DG Office's technical divisions. Beginning last year, this meant that two divisions (plus the strategic planning division) focused on training at the workshop, while two divisions focused on the partners conference agenda. This year, these two sets of groups rotated so that those working on the partners conference last year are this year working on the training workshop. Heretofore, these events have co-existed in a December timeslot. In 2002, however, the DG Office expanded its training to a week-long June event, which provided introductory-level training for some 50 DG personnel. This has allowed the DG Office to begin focusing on two levels of DG officers, those new to the sector and those with considerable experience. As a result, the three-day December training workshop will now be targeted to experienced officers.

This year, the partners conference is two-day event that implementing partners will play as active a role in as DG Office staff. The partners are invited to submit proposals for panels to the office's review committees, who then work with the partners to construct panel and plenary sessions. This ensures that there is adequate input from the partner community, strengthens DG relations across the Agency, and promotes a shared learning environment.

The DG Office has also devoted significant energies to promoting other communities of practice year-round. The primary forum for this is our periodic Tuesday Group meeting. This two-four times monthly meeting draws together DG staff within the Agency to address and discuss a topic of current interest. This ranges from publication of an article from a source outside of the Agency, to reports on a project-closeout, to presentations of best practices in a region or sector area. The idea here is to promote open and honest debate on DG issues affecting the Agency.

In 2002, the office added a limited number of Democracy Exchanges. These were essentially Tuesday Group fora that were opened to the larger partner community. The goal here was to encourage greater involvement with our implementing partners.

One way that we have sought to extend our training opportunities to those either unable to make the annual events or those who are in need of training between events is our DG University. This distance learning module series was developed to bring DG officers up to speed on pressing issues. The first

installment in the series was a module on anti-corruption; a second on media is in the planning stages. The series is available as a CD-ROM and on all of the DG Office-managed websites.

The DG Office also maintains an exclusive mailing list to share important notices, announcements of coming events and publications, and other information of collective concern.

To facilitate knowledge sharing and to provide institutional memory, the DG Office has also developed and launched three web presences, which it continues to manage. The first of these sites is our intranet site ([inside.usaid.gov/G/DG](http://inside.usaid.gov/G/DG)) which provides a host of informative references to its visitors. The site is composed of a scopes of work library, extensive information on DG Office mechanisms, staff directory, details on training opportunities, electronic availability of all of our publications, etc. It is also in the process of launching the On-line Resource Room to bring research to the DG officer's desktop.

Our second, or external site ([www.usaid.gov/democracy](http://www.usaid.gov/democracy)), is actually the democracy and governance presence for the whole Agency. We manage it in order to share a basic amount of information with the public. It hosts on it the widest array of publicly available information.

The third site, the extranet site ([www.usaid.net/democracy](http://www.usaid.net/democracy)), was launched just under a year ago. The site is meant as the bridge between the internet and intranet sites in order to provide some inclusion to our implementing partners. It encourages a wider of community of practice and provides a forum for both sides to share information on DG programs. Part of the impetus behind the site was the failure of our bulletin board some time back. The software provided by the Agency was not stable and did not allow users to provide attachments. After a short life, DG Crossroads was scrapped in favor of launching a larger extranet.

The DG Office also manages series of publications in order to better document and share its technical guidance and findings. The initial series, our Technical Publication Series, was launched in 1998. The series includes publications intended principally for USAID personnel; however, all persons interested in the sector may benefit from the series. Authors of individual publications may be USAID officials and/or other individuals from the public and private sector. The Office of Democracy and Governance reserves the right to review and edit all publications for content and format and all are subject to a broad USAID review process. The series is intended in part to indicate best practices, lessons learned, and guidelines for practitioner consideration. The series also includes publications that are intended to stimulate debate and discussion.

The second series is our Occasional Papers Series, which was launched in 2000. The series includes publications intended principally for USAID personnel; however, all persons interested in the topic may benefit from the series. The Occasional Papers Series is designed to bring together DCHA/DG-produced or –funded publications in a coherent series that upholds the high standards and quality established by the DG Office's Technical Publication Series. Authors of individual publications may be USAID officials and/or other individuals from the public and private sector. The Office of Democracy and Governance reserves the right to review and edit all publications for content and format and all are subject to a broad USAID review process.

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