

***Workshop Summary
Greening Democracy & Governing the Environment:
Managing for Cross-Sectoral Results***

I. BACKGROUND

To highlight the synergies between environmental (ENV) and democracy-governance (DG) issues, the Biodiversity Support Program (BSP) initiated this workshop and several other efforts over the past year.¹ With project close-out approaching in 2001, BSP staff decided to undertake a series of activities to highlight their own results related to ENV-DG synergies and to raise the profile of these connections among USAID staff and partners:

- ◆ In 1999, BSP commissioned expert interviews, a communication strategy, an analytical report and a presentation at the USAID DG partners meeting;
- ◆ In 2000, BSP work on ENV-DG linkages has included a presentation of Indonesia work at the World Bank, an NGO workshop and collaboration with G/ENV, G/DG and the Implementing Policy Change Project on this half-day workshop, "Greening Democracy and Governing the Environment: Managing for Cross-Sectoral Results."

II. OBJECTIVES AND FORMAT (SEE ATTACHED AGENDA)

The three objectives of the workshop were:

- ◆ Increasing awareness of the diverse opportunities to create ENV-DG synergies, regardless of the activity scale and scope or level of management.
- ◆ Demonstrating how attention to ENV-DG synergies has led to better results for both ENV and DG sectors.
- ◆ Providing an opportunity for dialogue about how to operationalize ENV-DG cross-sectoral programming.

We structured the workshop to provide a conceptual framework, a sampler of lessons learned from USAID ENV- and DG- funded activities, an overview of USAID cross-sectoral experiences, insights from a political scientist directing environmental grant-making at the MacArthur Foundation and the perspectives of G/ENV and G/DG senior managers. The activities discussed by the speakers included the DG issues of civil society, rule of law/human rights and local governance as they linked to natural resource management/biodiversity conservation, urban environmental management or industrial pollution issues.² Over lunch, small groups met to discuss specific opportunities for synergies, ideas for how to motivate others and overcome institutional constraints and other topics of interest.

¹ BSP is a project supported by USAID's Global Environment Center and field missions. It has been implemented over the last 12 years by a three-member consortium that includes the World Wildlife Fund, World Resources Institute and The Nature Conservancy.

² The strongest available examples of USAID-funded work linking ENV-DG came from civil society, rule of law/human rights and local governance. The exclusion of ENV tie-ins related to elections/political parties reflects the time constraints of the workshop and in no way indicates the significance of these linkages.

III. KEY CONCEPTS

- ◆ What do we mean by “democratic” governance? “Democratic” governance refers to governance that includes high levels of transparency and accountability, citizen participation and devolution of meaningful authority to local bodies, policy pluralism, equitable delivery of public services and respect for human rights and rule of law (after Brinkerhoff and Veit, 1997).
- ◆ The Particularist Strain of U.S. Diplomacy and Foreign Assistance. Some speakers suggested that by working on development activities funded by the United States Government, we serve a unique foreign policy mandate and a personal responsibility as citizens to promote democratic governance worldwide.
- ◆ Paradigm Shifts at USAID. USAID units are increasingly adopting DG approaches in sectoral projects and trying to account for DG-related results. It is increasingly recognized that most development problems have a stronger political than technical component and require political engagement to resolve.
- ◆ The Big Picture – Changes in the DG, Economic and ENV Context. The condition and governance of the ENV is closely tied to globalization, privatization, decentralization and internal civil unrest. The official economic and political functions of the nation-state are decreasing. Democratic reforms are shedding more light on government-sponsored “organized crime,” particularly the illegal use of natural resources for economic and political gains by elites. Corruption has thrived in this sector because natural resources are often in remote and border locations, which are characterized by poverty, high cultural diversity, economic and political migration, disputes and a strong military presence.

DG systemic impacts on the ENV Sector. Although not always given full consideration by DG reformers, systemic DG reforms or issues affect ENV sectoral development efforts. For example, systemic decentralization reforms have shifted control over environmental management to local or semi-autonomous public authorities, typically governments. Local governments often do not have the technical capacity or financial resources to manage the environment. In addition, many local governments do not represent the interests of all of their citizens. While decentralization has the *potential* to return control over resources to communities, it can lead to local corruption and human rights abuses without DG technical assistance related to good governance (i.e., local accountability, representativeness, transparency). Also, conflicts often have a strong environmental component and DG activities need to consider the impacts of resettlement and other diplomatic measures on biodiversity (e.g., Central America).

- ◆ ENV impacts upon the DG System. Documentation is accumulating for how ENV sectoral reforms have influenced democratic governance. Focusing on ENV issues or working with ENV organizations has had spillover benefits in other sectors or has served as a model for systemic DG reforms. Some examples

mentioned during the workshop included the development of strong and accountable civil society networks and organizations, the reform of policy making through links between communities and policy NGOs, improved citizen faith in judicial reforms from seeing success with ENV cases, the adoption of a public hearing process by national and local governments after positive ENV experiences, improved access to government information after experimenting with access to ENV information and broadening of indigenous peoples' rights to justice after gaining access to land. The impacts of ENV activities on the DG system can also be negative when local environmental governance systems are ignored by project managers (e.g., decreasing community access to decisions about resource management).

- ◆ ENV activism as the leading edge of democratization. Since they are fairly abstract concepts to most people, civil society, rule of law and governance need to be "about" something. ENV issues have been an unusually effective "wedge" issue for DG reforms and have helped citizens overcome disillusionment with new democracies (i.e., Latin America. ENV crises have great mobilization potential for DG reforms. Daily ENV issues seem to mobilize citizens and politicians because they find them accessible and they involve human health, livelihoods, power, money and corruption. ENV activism has sometimes thrive in repressive regimes where activities fall "below the radar" of government scrutiny or are permitted to take place with incipient forms of civil society such as ENV QUANGOs/GONGOs (quasi-NGOs/government NGOs).
- ◆ Weak Winners and Strong Losers and Other DG-ENV Synergy Blockers (after Brinkerhoff). ENV governance involves definite political and economic power differentials among stakeholders and elite control of profits. The relatively weak and unorganized stand to benefit from a policy change but well-organized elites have the power to oppose change because they are the ones to lose access to resources (weak winners, strong losers). Because of these power differentials, it is also important not to overly romanticize the potential of civil society organizations and DG reforms such as decentralization. Civil societies reflect the same divisions, conflicts and competing interests of their societies and vary by culture and history. Decentralization and devolution efforts will make things worse for the disenfranchised and for ENV conditions, without attention to qualitative dimensions such as transparency, accountability and representativeness.
- ◆ Not Why but How. Many of the speakers stressed that the links between ENV and DG in the "real world" are deep and pervasive and obvious to our host country partners. Therefore, we are faced with the managerial task of determining "how" to support these synergies rather than "why" we should link ENV and DG in our field activities.

IV. USAID MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE WITH ENV-DG SYNERGIES

- ◆ Sectoral and Systemic Reforms. To date, there has been no systematic effort to collect, analyze and report on the sectoral and systemic results of USAID ENV-DG activities. ENV policies and programs, and DG projects working with ENV groups, have generated and promoted social capital by building citizen experience with DG. These activities have influenced the behavior of individuals or groups, created awareness of rules and responsibilities and promoted the characteristics of democracy such as participation, decision-making and transparency. Some ENV projects are grappling with how to deal with or generate systemic DG reforms but others are not yet thinking about how they might be able to support ENV partners who incorporate these broader objectives into their work (e.g., NGO registration, judicial reform, etc.).
- ◆ Civil society programs funded by ENV or DG sources, have functioned at a variety of scales. Activities range from a specific advocacy activity supported by a few hundred dollars to more substantial programmatic support, with funds and technical assistance for three to five years. With the latter approach, the aim is to identify leadership and successful and accountable organizations with similar ENV aims related to advocacy for local rights and improved environmental governance. While it should be an advantage for ENV-related civil society activities to be able to fit under ENV or DG objectives, they have often been disowned by both ENV and DG teams during times of budget cuts.
- ◆ Rule of Law/Human Rights activities, funded by ENV or DG sources, have focused on approaches that advance the ENV-related rights of citizens and organizations and improve the ENV enforcement capacity of the judiciary. Rights-related work has focused upon specific ENV-related rights (e.g., rights to information, participation in Environmental Impact Assessments, justice, life, a healthy environment, livelihood). In many cases, it was also necessary to research or advocate reforms to the national rule of law superstructure, build civil society capacity and reform local environmental governance. Rule of law programs have involved desktop (ELI) and collaborative research (WRI, CIEL), institutional twinning (WRI), professional mentoring (CIEL and WRI), development of *pro bono* ENV law centers and clinics (ABA/CEELI) and institutional development to improve prosecution of ENV crimes (Dominican Republic, Honduras).
- ◆ Local governance activities have involved collaboration by ENV and DG projects, mission strategic objective teams in ENV and DG, and local government and civil society organizations in host countries. In the Philippines, progressive, decentralized provincial governments demanded technical assistance from USAID to help them to improve their environmental governance and relations with civil society. As a result, three projects coordinated their technical assistance related to local government, coastal resource management and industrial environment projects. Similar collaboration occurred in Haiti and Mexico – the impetus in Haiti came from the contractors and from the mission in Mexico. At a regional level, a Central American project, originally funded by DG and then managed by the

Regional Urban Development Office, supported a federation of national municipal associations and helped them exchange experiences on local government-civil society cooperation on wastewater and solid waste management issues.

**V. *MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:
ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES***

- ◆ Hal Lippman (CDIE) suggested a tripartite categorization of the key management issues for cross-sectoral synergies. There are *structural, procedural and individual* issues to consider. While it is clear that individual leadership or good relationships have been very important, we need to focus greater attention on how we can support ENV-DG synergies by structural and procedural means.

- ◆ Structural issues involve systematic changes related to USAID management systems:

For mission directors and embassy ENV and political officers, ENV-DG linkages can be promoted via orientation and in-service training at the Foreign Service Institute and by changes in their employee performance criteria.

The Contracts Office can support long-term program grants for civil society organizations, demand-driven technical assistance contracts, mechanisms which foster collaboration by partner organizations, and contract and scopes of work requirements for ENV-DG collaboration and consultation.

With regard to performance monitoring, staff need help in working out ENV-DG related indicators, particularly ones for DG-related ENV work. Results attribution issues need to be clarified when ENV and DG projects collaborate. To improve early buy-in by Washington staff of cross-sectoral reporting, missions must engage Washington staff in dialogue on these issues.

Standardized tools, such as the DG Assessment Framework or frameworks for assessing ENV policies, could be modified to include routine cross-sectoral input.

- ◆ Procedural issues entail ordinary practices that can be adopted to promote ENV-DG synergies (e.g., joint visits, meetings, informal contacts, activity siting) and adapted to fit cultural contexts. These joint activities are often quite inexpensive and can help ENV and DG professionals to develop a common language.

Routine and frequent contact seems to foster ENV-DG linkages. Washington, field staff and TDY'ers would benefit from routine consultation, particularly for new projects and programmatic initiatives. When possible, it helps to co-locate ENV and DG activities in some of the same areas and to encourage joint visits, meetings and briefings, as well as co-funding of research and specific activities.

Partner choice is critical. The key is to look for partners who are accountable to, and representative of a larger constituency and to remove barriers to their success. ENV projects may be more successful with partners with a broader

social agenda than just ENV issues; DG projects may find that the leading NGOs in the civil sector are often groups with an ENV agenda.

- ◆ Individual issues can be addressed via training, personnel reward structures and use of peer pressure and competition to create cultures of cross-sectoral innovation in regional bureaus and missions.
- ◆ Opportunities. Workshop participants raised five types of opportunities for ENV-DG dialogue and cooperation and suggested the idea of maintaining a calendar to support future collaboration:

Monthly Issues Forums. During the workshop and consultations held prior to the workshop, it became clear that there were many issues of mutual interest to ENV and DG staff and partners (e.g., why is ENV a leading edge for democratization, natural resource corruption, energy, local government, etc.). Therefore, it would be advisable to continue the ENV-DG dialogue through a series of issue forums, held once a month and timed to coincide with the regular DG Tuesday Group meeting (10:30-12:30). The Biodiversity Support Program plans to support this series in the fall of 2000 and the first quarter of 2001.

Mission Planning. Participants mentioned mission-related opportunities in USAID/Nepal, USAID/Guatemala and USAID/Columbia. A team is now in Nepal looking at ENV-DG linkages for the new country strategy. Guatemala is reviewing its ENV policies this summer/fall. Colombia, rich in biodiversity, has no ENV strategic objectives but there could be some possibilities for ENV-related work under its civil society and rule of law strategic objectives.

Washington Planning. Two G/ENV offices are updating their strategies: Environment and Energy Technologies (July-August) and Urban Programs (Fall 2000). The GreenCOM Environmental Education and Communication IQC is currently being re-bid. A new civil society IQC is currently being bid upon.

Meetings. Two meetings will be held this fall: the November African Biodiversity Consultative Group (contacts: Nancy Bell, AWF, Peter Veit, WRI) and the DG Partners meeting in late November-early December (contact: Rachael Wilcox, AED). A cross-sectoral session on ENV-DG linkages is being proposed for the latter. An ENV Officers' meeting is planned for next summer.

Greening Democracy and Governing the Environment: Managing for Cross-Sectoral Results

WORKSHOP AGENDA
July 18, 2000

8:15 Coffee, Tea and Continental Breakfast

8:30 Welcome

John Griffin, USAID/G/ENV, CTO, Biodiversity Support Program

Pat Isman-Fn'Piere, USAID/G/DG, CTO, Implementing Policy Change Project

Nancy Diamond, Biodiversity Support Program Consultant

8:45 Overview of ENV-DG Synergies

Derick Brinkerhoff, Implementing Policy Change II Project

Greening Democracy and Governing the Environment: Where are the Synergies?

8:55 PANEL A: PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES I - CIVIL SOCIETY & ENVIRONMENT

Moderator:

Loren Schulze, USAID/EE/EEU/ENR

Panelists:

Janis Alcorn, Biodiversity Support Program

Meeting Sectoral and Systemic Objectives with Environmental Advocacy NGOs in Transitional Democracies

Eliza Klose, Initiative for Social Action and Renewal in Eurasia

Supporting Grassroots Environmentalists Builds Civil Society from the Ground Up: Case Studies from the former Soviet Union.

9:15 Discussion

9:45 PANEL B: Project Opportunities II - Environment and Rule of Law/Human Rights

Moderator:

Aleksandra Braginski, USAID/G/DG

Panelists:

Brian Rohan, ABA/Central and Eastern Europe Law Initiative
Environmental Law and Advocacy in the NIS

Carl Bruch, Environmental Law Institute
Linking Environment and Democracy & Governance through National Constitutions

Peter Veit, World Resources Institute, Institutions and Governance Program
New Opportunities to Strengthen Environmental Advocacy in Africa

Owen Lynch, Center for International Environmental Law
The Human Rights and Environmental Nexus: Insights Gained from Promoting Public Interest Law and Community-Based Property Rights in Indonesia and Beyond

10:25 Discussion

10:35 BREAK (coffee, tea, snacks) with informal discussion

10:50 Discussion

11:00 A Foundation Perspective on Cross-Sectoral Synergies

Dan Martin, Area Director, Ecosystems Conservation and Policy, MacArthur Foundation, Program on Global Security and Sustainability

Adventures of a Political Scientist Disguised as a Conservationist: A MacArthur Foundation Experience

11:20 Discussion

11:30 PANEL C: Mission Based Collaboration - Local Governance & Environment

Moderator:

Margaret Sarles, USAID/LAC/RSD-DHR

Panelists:

Mike Calavan, USAID/Indonesia
Greening Democracy and Governing the Environment in Bohol, The Philippines

Ron Carlson, USAID/G/ENV/UP
Consolidation of Democracy Through Environmental and Participatory Regional Initiatives in Central America

11:50 Discussion

12:20 Cross Sectoral Study Findings: USAID-Related Barriers and Opportunities

Hal Lippman, PPC/CDIE/POA

Cross-sectoral Linkages Between DG and Env

Programming: Perspectives From a Current Study by the Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE)

12:30 Discussion

12:40 Future Possibilities and Synergies

William Sugrue, Director of Environment and Natural Resources Office, Global Center for the Environment

Jim Vermillion, Deputy Director of Center for Democracy and Governance

12:50 Plenary Closing and Small Group Instructions

Judy Oglethorpe, BSP Executive Director

Nancy Diamond, BSP Consultant and Workshop Organizer

12:55 LUNCH with SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Small Groups:

Subjects	Location
People energized to talk about specific opportunities for synergies	5 th floor conf. room
People with ideas or interested in overcoming institutional constraints & motivating others for cross-sectoral collaboration	6 th floor boardroom
Other small self-organized groups	6 th floor auditorium couches

2:00 End of Workshop