



## GOVERNING JUSTLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY

### OVERVIEW

#### PROFILE

Date of Independence: 1963  
Population: 39 million (2009)  
Languages: English and Swahili, as well as over 40 others from the Bantu, Nilotic, and Cushitic linguistic groups  
GDP per capita: \$1,782 (2010)  
*Source: U.S. State Department and IMF*

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### BACKGROUND

Kenya boasts the largest, most diversified economy in east Africa, and its location as a transport hub amplifies its importance for the entire continent. However, decades of inequitable and often corrupt governance have dampened economic progress and exacerbated ethnic divisions. Apart from a political elite and a small middle class, most citizens remain subsistence farmers and urban populations have difficulty accessing formal employment.

The 2007 post-election violence was a turning point for Kenya. Kenyans voiced their demand for change by overwhelmingly adopting a new Constitution in August 2010. This Constitution aims to tackle major reforms—land, elections, police—that remain great sources of discontent. To prevent upheaval or violence, as was experienced after the December 2007 election, the top priority remains implementation of the new Constitution and the ambitious reform agenda it outlines, through engagement with the government, parliament, civil society, media, private sector, and youth.



### PROGRAMS

Moving forward on substantial reforms has been difficult, although passage of the new Constitution has opened a window of opportunity. High public expectations combined with the slow pace of implementation—and ongoing revelations of corruption involving public officials—has increased skepticism among average Kenyans about the willingness and capacity of the coalition government. As the leading bilateral donor in Kenya, the United States must continue its efforts to support ongoing reforms, build the capacity of civil society organizations and media to serve as effective watchdogs and advocates, strengthen the capacity of Parliament to carry out its legislative responsibilities, develop more internally democratic political parties that can play a constructive role in the reform process, and empower civil society and youth to exert peaceful pressure for reforms.

### GOOD GOVERNANCE

Kenya's 2008 political crisis highlighted the underlying governance issues facing the country. Rampant corruption, the absence of effective checks and balances, and ineffective service delivery undermine the government's legitimacy. The lack of good governance can erode public trust in elected officials and democracy as a form of government. USAID aims to promote a greater balance of power among the institutions of governance while also increasing their transparency and accountability.

USAID works to increase public awareness of corruption issues, improve access to information, and monitor the Government of Kenya's performance. Programs are designed specifically to strengthen the



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capacity of government while increasing the advocacy capacity of civil society organizations to demand accountability.

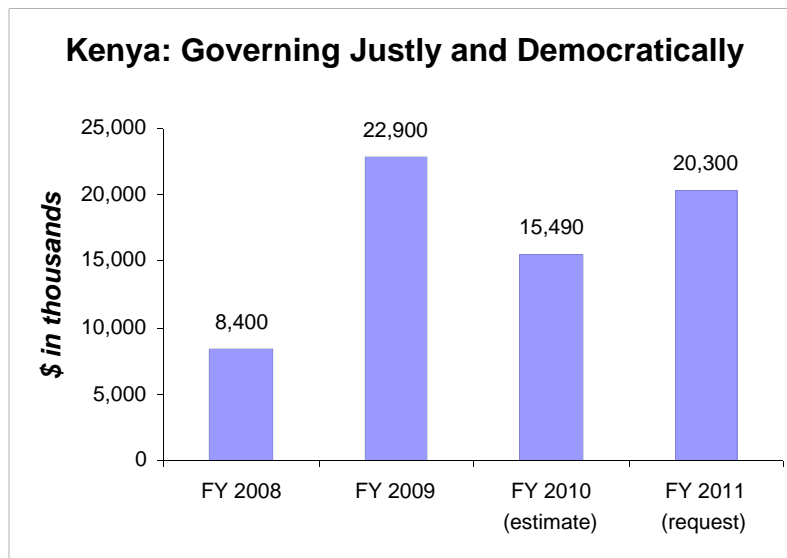
## POLITICAL COMPETITION AND CONSENSUS BUILDING

USAID supports policies and programs that promote impartial electoral processes where all citizens have a right to participate and vote without constraint. Successes include the introduction of cutting edge technology in the transmission of election results and the use of digital mapping to provide accurate election data for the government, parties, and stakeholders. In an effort to strengthen the positive role political parties can play in Kenya, USAID supports workshops within and among political parties to facilitate dialogue on electoral reforms between parties and the Interim Independent Electoral Commission. Once parties reach consensus, it is presented to the national electoral body and translated into practice. USAID also helps to strengthen the capacity of domestic election-monitoring organizations. The 2010 constitutional referendum, for example, USAID support helped field 10,000 domestic observers and resulted in the successful completion of the country's first ever parallel vote tabulation.

## CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society's reach and voice must be expanded if grassroots opinions are to be articulated and incorporated into the national arena. USAID supports civil society organizations that advocate constitutional, electoral, legal, judicial, and police reform. The ability of civil society to work effectively in coalitions has been a challenge, particularly with the existence of ethnic violence in the country. In response, USAID works to form stronger, broader citizen networks, advancing individual organizational capacity, and efforts to demonstrate the value of strong and unified faith-based, youth, and women's' civil society networks.

## FUNDING



On behalf of the American people, the U.S. government has provided humanitarian assistance and economic development to those in need around the world since the Marshall Plan.