



DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE



This young mother casts her vote in the 2008 municipal elections. USAID democracy and governance programs work to ensure that elections are free, fair, and participatory.
Photo credit: USAID/Mozambique

OVERVIEW (2003-2009)

Since the end of the civil war, Mozambique has achieved peace and stability. However, corruption and the lack of transparency hamper the government's ability to address the needs of its 21 million citizens. For the past five years, USAID programs worked to increase transparency and accountability among local government bodies, and improve their capacity to deliver quality public services to all Mozambicans. Helping Mozambique overcome governance challenges is the highest priority of the U.S. foreign assistance strategy and USAID is committed to promoting democracy and good governance in Mozambique. Currently, democracy and governance activities are in the final stages of realignment under the new Country Assistance Strategy 2009-2014.

Strengthen Municipal Governance

From 2003 to 2009, the USAID democracy and governance program in Mozambique trained municipal government officials to improve their fiscal planning and management abilities and involved citizens in decision-making. As a result, municipalities were better equipped to operate more efficiently and transparently. They were also able to generate higher revenues to provide better services to their communities.

Increase Transparency, Reduce Corruption

Increasing government transparency and reducing corruption are priorities that cut across all USAID program activities in Mozambique. For the past five years, the USAID anti-corruption program focused on improving the criminal justice system at local and central levels. The program helped train prosecutors in the Attorney General's office to improve their case management and investigation skills in fighting corruption. USAID also implemented an electronic tracking and management health logistics program from central to provincial warehouses so that communications are improved, checks and balances are established, and prescription drugs are available where and when needed.

Promote Democratic Elections

As part of a larger effort to expand the range of ideas and information in Mozambique, USAID supported open forums and debates during elections, and contributed to multi-donor efforts to ensure that elections are free, fair, and participatory. USAID also supported local observation of the 2008 municipal elections and the 2009 national elections, in coordination with other international organizations.

Develop Emerging Leaders

USAID supported programs that help develop Mozambique's next generation of political, economic, and civil society leaders. They were given opportunities to share information and build their knowledge and skills through exchange programs, scholarships, and online training. USAID will also support programs and institutions where future leaders may be formed, such as student governments, private sector associations, and civil society organizations under the upcoming programs.

Impact

- From 2005 to 2006, USAID fiscal management training helped increase revenues of five municipalities by an average of nearly 30%.
- The USAID municipal governance program also funded rural construction projects, which helped build new schools and provided tens of thousands of residents in target municipalities with access to clean waters.