



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



# ENGAGE: INCREASE GOVERNMENT RESPONSIVENESS TO CITIZEN PRIORITIES

Rwanda has made remarkable progress in rebuilding institutions of government, maintaining security, and promoting reconciliation since the 1994 genocide. However, concerns about democracy and governance remain, including highly centralized political power, nonexistent political opposition, weak civil society, and limited media freedom.

USAID provides democracy and governance funding to increase the Government of Rwanda's responsiveness to citizen priorities.

## OVERVIEW OF USAID SUPPORT

USAID focuses on increasing access to justice for poor and marginalized populations, strengthening civil society to advocate on behalf of citizens, and contributing to emotional healing and social cohesion to overcome the trauma of the genocide and promote unity.

## RULE OF LAW

Many Rwandans cannot afford legal advice or representation in court, so USAID supports legal aid services for poor and marginalized communities. USAID also increases citizens' awareness of their rights and supports civil society to provide legal advice via a toll-free call center. To lessen the burden on the formal court system and speed up resolutions, USAID promotes alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, such as local *Abunzi* councils.

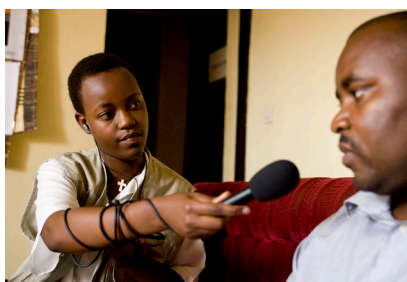
## CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING

Many civil society organizations in Rwanda have low capacity in project management and financial management, limiting their opportunities to receive donor funding. USAID supports training for CSOs to build the necessary skills for success and sustainability.



USAID promotes the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, such as local *Abunzi* councils, where solutions are achieved without resorting to the formal court system.

JOHN HALEY / USAID



Training journalists on investigative reporting skills.

FROM THE ARCHIVES OF USAID/RWANDA



Community meeting where participants deepen their knowledge of their rights.

JOHN HALEY / USAID

## RECONCILIATION AND SOCIAL COHESION

The legacy of the genocide impacts daily life for all Rwandans. Both victims and perpetrators hold deep-seated grievances which discourage reconciliation and healing, leaving communities on edge. USAID works to rebuild community ties by supporting psychosocial services and trauma counseling for Rwandans, helping ease the pain of the genocide and build community trust.

## IMPROVING PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Often, citizens' experience with government happens at the local level where most services are received. USAID supports civil society organizations to monitor the quality-of-service delivery and to advocate for citizen budget and policy priorities.

## MEDIA

USAID trains journalists on investigative reporting skills to keep citizens informed and hold government accountable. A recent media activity trained 70 journalists and supported more than 50 media outlets in the production of more than 1,600 articles.