

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Panama
Program Title:	Ruling Justly
Pillar:	Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
Strategic Objective:	525-021
Status:	New in FY 2004
Planned FY 2005 Obligation:	\$2,226,000 ESF
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$0
Proposed FY 2006 Obligation:	\$866,000 DA; \$2,000,000 ESF
Year of Initial Obligation:	2004
Estimated Year of Final Obligation:	2008

Summary: This objective is aimed at improving civil society advocacy for justice reforms and access to justice, strengthening government oversight by civil society, and improving government transparency and accountability. Grants, training, and technical assistance to civil society organizations (CSOs) will strengthen their social audit/government monitoring functions and catalyze Panamanian focus on issues such as press gag laws, overly broad legislative privileges, and immunities for government officials. Training and technical assistance programs for public institutions will help the Government of Panama (GOP) prevent, investigate, and prosecute corruption cases.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2005 Program: Improve Justice Sector/Legal Framework (\$700,000 ESF). USAID is building the capacity of CSOs to advance momentum for justice reforms and advocate for greater access to prompt, fair, and affordable ways to resolve disputes. USAID-funded training for the CSO coalition, Citizens' Alliance for Justice, will strengthen the advocacy and oversight skills of the coalition, build its fundraising capabilities to ensure its future financial sustainability, and facilitate incorporation of gender analysis into the coalition's program design, implementation, and monitoring. In addition, USAID will provide 10 grants to local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to foster community-level advocacy for justice reform and access to justice. Principal contractors and grantees are being selected through a competitive process.

Promote and Support Anticorruption Reforms (\$1,526,000 ESF). USAID will fund technical assistance and training to improve the effectiveness of key public sector entities to reduce corruption within the Government. For example, USAID will fund activities that will improve the capacity of the new National Anticorruption Council, the Controller General's Office and the Public Ministry to prevent, investigate and prosecute corruption cases. With USAID technical assistance, the Solicitor General's Office will develop an ethics code for the GOP, and train civil servants on the ethics code. In addition, USAID will fund 10 training workshops to strengthen civil society's ability to conduct social audits and monitor municipal government projects, and engage government entities and businesses on a national anticorruption strategy and action plan. USAID will also fund technical assistance to strengthen investigative reporting and increase public access to information. Principal contractors and grantees are being selected through a competitive process.

FY 2006 Program: Improve Justice Sector/Legal Framework (\$1,500,000 ESF). USAID plans to continue support for advocacy activities of the Citizens' Alliance for Justice to consolidate the base for justice reform. As political will unfolds, USAID may work more directly with justice sector institutions, such as the Judiciary, the Public Ministry, the Public Defenders' Institute, and the Solicitor General's Office to carry out selected reforms. USAID may provide technical assistance that fosters reliance on precedent to bring about stability and predictability in court decisions. Civil society activities that promote oversight of the judiciary may receive funding.

Promote and Support Anticorruption Reforms (\$500,000 ESF, \$866,000 DA). USAID plans to continue to work with CSOs and the media to strengthen their watchdog role, which will help the Panamanian administration stay the course in its anticorruption campaign promises. USAID may support activities with the Judiciary and the Ombudsman's Office that will improve their capacity to prevent and deal effectively with corruption cases. USAID may deepen government oversight activities by funding technical assistance and training for selected municipalities and local leaders to increase transparency, accountability, and access to justice. USAID may also fund demonstration activities that increase transparency and accountability in targeted government institutions.

Performance and Results: In FY 2004, USAID's activities under the bridge program contributed to a proactive civil society coalition that helped maintain momentum for justice sector reform, and increased participation by civil society in transparency and accountability advocacy activities. The capacity of journalists and civil society activists to investigate and report on corruption cases improved. In addition, a journalist-civil society alliance network was formed.

By program completion, civil society's ability to conduct social auditing will help reduce corruption by fostering transparency and accountability in key government entities. There will be greater public access to information. Investigative journalism and reporting on corruption will be more effective. CSOs working in partnership with municipalities to oversee community development activities will have strengthened democracy activities at the grassroots. Civil society advocacy for reform will have promoted selected justice and administrative reforms that will strengthen rule of law and increase public confidence in the integrity of the judiciary. Access to justice and to prompt, fair, and affordable avenues to resolve disputes will improve.

US Financing in Thousands of Dollars

Panama

525-021 Ruling Justly	DA	ESF
Through September 30, 2003		
Obligations	0	0
Expenditures	0	0
Unliquidated	0	0
Fiscal Year 2004		
Obligations	0	1,000
Expenditures	0	0
Through September 30, 2004		
Obligations	0	1,000
Expenditures	0	0
Unliquidated	0	1,000
Prior Year Unobligated Funds		
Obligations	0	0
Planned Fiscal Year 2005 NOA		
Obligations	0	2,226
Total Planned Fiscal Year 2005		
Obligations	0	2,226
Proposed Fiscal Year 2006 NOA		
Obligations	866	2,000
Future Obligations	0	12,908
Est. Total Cost	866	18,134