

Developing a Strong Community of Practice for USAID Environmental Compliance Practitioners.

This workshop is one of the few opportunities for the USAID environmental compliance practitioners in the Africa Bureau to share knowledge and hash out issues they face in the implementation of the Agency's environmental procedures. The other occasions for the BEO, MEOs and Mission staff to discuss environmental compliance issues include TDYs to Missions from the BEO or environmental compliance consultants and email exchanges, typically between an individual MEO and the BEO or technical support staff. Given that the "community of practice" (CoP) constituted by USAID environmental compliance practitioners in Africa face many of the same issues on a regular basis, this community could profit from:

- more frequent opportunities for discussion of environmental compliance issues;
- a "multilateral" communication forum that allow MEOs to exchange experience with their fellow MEOs;
- a means to capture knowledge generated by everyday exchanges and troubleshooting, such as when IEEs are prepared.
- A more systematic approach to assessing and building long-term Mission capacity in environmentally sound design and management of the Mission program and portfolio.

The Africa Bureau wishes to develop tools and procedures to strengthen the region's environmental compliance community of practice. These should be simple and developed in consultation with the community members. This module will offer the opportunity for discussion about how this CoP should best be strengthened; what tools and procedures would be the most useful, and what are the most appropriate goals to shoot for. We want to establish a plan for strengthening the environmental compliance community, including next steps and a timeframe.