



# Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

## Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in Central America: DRL Programming Efforts

The Biden-Harris Administration has galvanized efforts to address the root causes of migration from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Through the release of the [U.S. Strategy for Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in Central America in 2021](#), the United States committed to identifying, prioritizing, and coordinating actions to improve security, governance, human rights, and economic conditions in the region.

The Strategy is organized into five pillars:

- **Pillar I:** Addressing economic insecurity and inequality;
- **Pillar II:** Combating corruption, strengthening democratic governance, and advancing the rule of law;
- **Pillar III:** Promoting respect for human rights, labor rights, and free press;
- **Pillar IV:** Countering and preventing violence, extortion, and other crimes perpetrated by criminal gangs, trafficking networks, and other organized criminal organizations; and
- **Pillar V:** Combating sexual, gender-based, and domestic violence.

For more than 20 years, the Office of Global Programs in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL/GP) has supported targeted foreign assistance to empower civil society in the region to promote and defend democracy globally, including to counter authoritarianism, promote human rights, fight corruption, strengthen labor rights, and meaningfully address diversity, equity, and inclusion as a core element of good governance.

Through thematic expertise and robust partnerships with local civil society organizations, DRL/GP contributes to the advancement of the Root Causes Strategy by harnessing support from its wide range of global, regional, and country-specific programs and utilizing lessons learned from previous programmatic efforts to strengthen effectiveness. DRL/GP coordinates with others in the Department of State and across the U.S. Government to ensure its programs align under the comprehensive goals of the Root Causes Strategy. Below are DRL/GP contributions to the Strategy:

### Pillar I: Addressing economic insecurity and inequality

- **Championing Economic Inclusion.** DRL/GP furthers locally led efforts to dismantle economic structures in which workers are devalued and excluded from economic and social equality and instead **advance the economic inclusion, security, and leadership** of women, girls, and members of marginalized communities. For example, the State Department has provided \$1 million through the Gender Equity and Equality Action (GEEA) Fund to expand efforts to **promote the rights of domestic workers** and their transition to the formal workforce in Guatemala.

### Pillar II: Combating corruption, strengthening democratic governance, and advancing the rule of law

- **Curbing Transnational Corruption.** DRL/GP programs foster media collaboration to investigate corrosive flows of capital across borders while utilizing cutting-edge skills and technology to **reveal grand corruption** among public officials and undemocratic practices that decrease the quality of governance in the region. Efforts also empower civil society to **provide social oversight and accountability** for corrupt practices.

### Pillar III: Promoting respect for human rights, labor rights, and free press

- **Upholding Human Rights.** DRL/GP **empowers human rights defenders** in their efforts to promote rule of law, freedom of expression, and other vital fundamental freedoms, including by building the capacity of local human rights defenders to monitor, document, and **report on human rights violations**.
- **Enhancing Respect for Labor Rights.** DRL/GP programs promote internationally recognized labor rights and **empower workers** in support of democracy promotion and inclusive economic growth, including by **combating anti-union labor violence** and protecting the rights of marginalized and vulnerable workers.
- **Supporting Free and Independent Media.** A key priority, DRL/GP supports free and independent media and protects journalists as part of its significant, ongoing work to bolster democracy and defend human rights globally. Programs **empower independent media outlets and journalists** to build out their own skills and develop high-impact, in-depth news reports covering governance and human rights topics.
- **Strengthening Representative Societies.** DRL/GP programs **strengthen inclusive societies** as a necessary pillar of strong democracies by **supporting the rights of LGBTQI+ people** in four cross-cutting areas: social inclusion, freedom from violence, access to justice, and empowered and inclusive LGBTQI+ movements and organizations.

### Pillar V: Combating sexual, gender-based, and domestic violence

- **Advancing Gender Equity and Equality.** DRL/GP programs empower civil society to advance gender equity and equality by **promoting women's leadership** in political, civic, and economic life; **advancing women's roles** in peace, security, and transitional processes; and **supporting protection** of all women, including activists, journalists, and peacebuilders. Efforts also **provide emergency assistance** to survivors of extreme gender-based violence (GBV).

## IMPACT: HONDURAS

DRL/GP supports **Voices Against Violence: The GBV Global Initiative (VAV)**, a public-private partnership providing **emergency assistance** to survivors of extreme forms of GBV and **technical support** for civil society and government actors working to address GBV. To date, it has supported more than **3,500 survivors** globally with direct financial assistance to meet their most urgent needs. In Honduras, the VAV took a **holistic approach** to addressing GBV, including **emergency assistance, stakeholder convenings, and small grants**. Impacts include:

**1.1 M+**

viewers of a **TV show** supported by VAV teaching women **how to file a police report after surviving** some form of **GBV**

**340+**

**journalism students** learned to **apply a gender lens** to their communication strategies, resulting in **several campaigns to address GBV**, reaching 1,700+ students and nearly 500,000 viewers

**175+**

**justice system actors**, including judges, prosecutors, and police, attending trainings to **improve their response to and protection of GBV survivors** in Honduras

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