

Biography

Ms. Veeraya “Kate” Somvongsiri is the acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for USAID’s Bureau of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA). She has 20 years of international development experience, specializing in democratic governance, human rights, political transitions, and post-conflict stabilization issues.

Ms. Somvongsiri joined USAID in 2002 focusing on rule of law and human rights issues in Asia and the Middle East. In that capacity, she helped establish USAID’s democracy and governance programs in Afghanistan and was detailed to the State Department’s Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization for its start-up. As a Foreign Service Officer, Ms. Somvongsiri has served overseas in Indonesia; Afghanistan; and Ukraine, where she earned a Distinguished Honor Award for her leadership during the Maidan Revolution.

Prior to joining USAID, Ms. Somvongsiri served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Nepal, volunteered with an NGO focused on Burmese migrant issues, and worked for the State Department’s Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.

Ms. Somvongsiri holds a Bachelor’s degree in Letters from the University of Oklahoma, and a Master’s degree in International Relations with a Concentration in Human Rights from Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs. She is a 2017 Distinguished Graduate of the National War College where she earned a Master’s degree in National Security Strategy.