

Functional Series 500 – Management Services
ADS 501 – The Automated Directives System (ADS)

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ADS 501 – The Automated Directives System (ADS)

501.1 OVERVIEW

Effective Date – 07/01/2004

Every U.S. Government agency is required to have a directives program. The ADS (Automated Directives System) is USAID's directives program.

This chapter and its mandatory references cover the following:

- Structure and contents of the ADS,
- Offices responsible for ADS chapters,
- Guidelines for writing ADS material,
- Guidelines for clearing ADS material and resolving disagreements in the clearance process,
- Processes for issuing new ADS material, and
- Processes for revising, and issuing revised, ADS material.

*Throughout this chapter there are hyperlinks to other ADS chapters and mandatory (external and internal) references, which provide further information on many of the topics covered here. Internal mandatory references carry the same weight as ADS chapters.

The following new internal references are written specifically for their audience:

- ***Users:** The [ADS Users Guide](#) explains the ADS from a user's perspective.
- ***Authors and clearing officials:** [The ADS Process](#) covers how to write ADS material and get it cleared and issued; the [ADS Style and Format Guide](#) contains writing style and format tips.

(See [The ADS Process, Part I, Sections A and B.2](#) for information about creating an Overview section for your chapter.)

501.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date – 07/01/2004

The following offices have primary responsibilities for specific policy directives and required procedures within this chapter.

- a. **The Bureau for Management, Office of Administrative Services (M/AS)** approves all ADS guidance and administers the USAID directives program.
- b. **The Bureau for Management, Office of Administrative Services, Information and Records Division (M/AS/IRD)**

- (1) Manages, implements, and maintains the ADS in accordance with this chapter and its references; and
- (2) Oversees the distribution of all Agency directives (including the ADS CD, ADS material on the Internet and intranet, and Notices).

c. **Author offices, authors, management officials, and clearing officials** have responsibilities relating to specific material as described in this chapter and its associated mandatory references.

*d. **Employees** are responsible for knowing and complying with the policy directives and required procedures identified in the ADS.

(See [The ADS Process, Part I, Sections A and B.2](#) for information about creating a Primary Responsibilities section for your chapter.)

501.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

(See [The ADS Process, Part I, Sections A and B.2](#) for information about creating a Policy Directives and Required Procedures section for your chapter.)

501.3.1 About the ADS

Effective Date – 07/01/2004

The ADS is USAID's directives program, which is intended to help Agency employees understand their responsibilities and achieve the Agency's development goals, consistent with applicable rules, sound policy principles, and management practices. The ADS provides the framework for drafting, clearing, and issuing Agency-wide internal regulations (**policy directives**) and required operating procedures. The ADS also includes **optional material within chapters and additional help documents** intended to help readers interpret and apply those policy directives and required procedures.

*The ADS contains USAID's internal regulations as well as links to relevant Federal statutes, Executive Orders (**EOs**), and externally created regulations, which are usually incorporated into ADS chapters as external mandatory references. The ADS therefore encompasses the totality of USAID's regulatory body. Additionally, it includes suggested but not mandatory procedures and links to examples of best practices.

All Agency-level internally created policy directives and required procedures must be codified in the ADS. Agency-created policy directives and required procedures that apply to the public are codified in the Code of Federal Regulations (**CFR**).

Agency employees must adhere to the policy directives and required procedures identified in this chapter and the rest of the ADS.

501.3.1.1 **Mandatory and Non-Mandatory Guidance in the ADS**

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

Throughout the ADS (in chapters and references) you will find both mandatory and non-mandatory guidance.

The **mandatory** guidance contained in the ADS encompasses two broad categories:

- a. Policy directives, which comprise clear and concise rules and regulations that the Agency has identified as necessary for the proper conduct of its business; and
- b. Required procedures, which identify more detailed courses of action that must be followed.

Every employee is held accountable for complying with mandatory guidance, unless an exception is made in accordance with established procedures.

In the ADS, the Agency seeks (1) to keep mandatory guidance to a minimum, preserving operational flexibility to the extent consistent with law and regulation, sound policy principles, and management practices; and (2) to be clear about which guidance is mandatory and which is non-mandatory so that expectations are clear. (See [ADS 200.3.2.4](#) for a description of how this fits into the Agency's core value of Empowerment and Accountability.)

Non-mandatory guidance is intended to help employees carry out their duties. While strongly encouraged to review and consider such guidance, employees are not required to follow it and cannot be disciplined for not adhering to it.

501.3.1.2 **What Kind of Documents Make Up the ADS?**

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

The ADS includes the following:

- a. **Six Functional Series.** Part of the ADS consists of chapters grouped according to the Agency's functions. These groups of chapters are called the functional series. A list of the functional series follows:

- Series 100: Agency Organization and Legal Affairs
- Series 200: Programming Policy
- Series 300: Acquisition and Assistance
- Series 400: Personnel
- Series 500: Management Services
- Series 600: Budget and Finance

Each functional series contains the following:

(1) ADS Chapters. Each ADS chapter includes policy directives and required procedures as well as explanatory information on specific topics. The ADS chapter structure contains six sections: Overview, Primary Responsibilities, Policy Directives and Required Procedures, Mandatory References, Additional Help, and Definitions. (See [The ADS Process, Part I, Section B.2](#) for more details on these sections.)

(2) Interim Updates. Temporary, mandatory policy or procedure that is issued through the Agency Notice distribution system includes Policy Notices, Policy cables, and Administrator Memorandums. After issuance it is converted to the Interim Update (IU) format and becomes part of the ADS until it is either canceled or incorporated into ADS material. IUs carry the same weight as an ADS chapter or mandatory reference.

Since IUs are temporary, with rare exception, within one year of issuance the author should either convert or incorporate the policy into the applicable ADS chapter or reference or have it expire on a specified date. (See [The ADS Process, Part III, Section 6](#))

Each year management officials must certify that their office's IUs are still valid (see [501.3.6](#), Annual ADS Certification).

b. Old AID Handbooks. The ADS also includes old AID Handbook chapters that are still valid. For a list of the Handbook chapters that are still valid and the ADS chapters that superseded those that are no longer valid, see the ADS CD and click on the Handbook category button or visit the USAID Handbook web page at <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/handbooks/>.

501.3.1.3 What Is Not in the ADS?

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

The ADS does not contain the following:

- Bureau/Office-specific policies and procedures (unless they affect those outside that office).
- Non-Policy Notices (that is, Information, Training, and Personnel Notices; schedules and acting appointments; non-Policy cables; and other issuances that do not address new and continuing Agency policy or procedural matters).
- Annual Agency guidance, such as the Bureau Program and Budget Submission (BPBS) and Annual Report Guidance, which is issued to guide the Agency's annual programmatic and budgetary decisions.

501.3.2 Writing ADS Material Effective Date – 01/29/2002

As stated in [Executive Order 12866](#), each agency must “draft its regulations to be simple and easy to understand, with the goal of minimizing the potential for uncertainty and litigation arising from such uncertainty.”

501.3.2.1 Who Writes ADS Material? Effective Date – 01/29/2002

Management officials must designate qualified authors in their Bureau/Office to develop ADS material. A qualified author is a subject matter expert (SME) or someone with good writing skills who can interview the SME and write in plain language. M/AS/IRD assists with identifying Agency offices responsible for developing ADS material.

Authors must develop their ADS material in accordance with this chapter and its mandatory references and update material, as necessary, to reflect changes in law, regulations, or policy. Before issuing ADS material, the primary author must obtain the required clearances. For a quick look at the drafting and clearing process, see the [Timeline: Four-Step Process and Issuing ADS Material](#).

Authors must follow the policy directives and required procedures specified in [The ADS Process, Part I, ADS Authors Manual](#) and the [ADS Style and Format Guide](#) when writing ADS material.

501.3.2.2 Executive Summary of the ADS Authors Manual Effective Date – 01/29/2002

Authors must communicate clearly to Agency employees using plain language. They must state what Agency employees need to know about the subject in order to do their jobs. When writing, authors must

- a. Know the extent of their authority.
- b. Promote the Agency's core values (see [ADS 200](#)).
- c. Think about the readers.
- d. Think about organization.
- e. Think about content.
- f. Know the requirements.
- g. Use plain language.
- h. Choose words carefully.

- i. Be concise and accurate.
- j. Select a user-friendly design.
- k. Use the ADS standard format.
- l. Comply with the accessibility requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- m. Get help when they need it.

See [The ADS Process, Part I](#), [ADS Style and Format Guide](#), and [EO 12861](#) for more information.

501.3.3 Required Clearance Process for ADS Material

Effective Date – 07/01/2004

*Authors must obtain ADS clearance for all new, substantively revised, or canceled material before issuance. Editorial changes do not require clearance.

- ADS material includes chapters, terms and definitions, USAID-created mandatory references, AID Forms, Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directives (AAPDs), Policy Notices, Policy cables, and AID Handbook changes.
- Authors must also obtain clearance for documents created by another office or by a contractor if they want these documents included in the ADS.
- Additional help documents do not require ADS clearance, but authors must send them to M/AS/IRD for review before issuance and complete AID Form 3-252, USAID Directives System – Issuance Request.

*During the ADS clearance process, authors may only accept official clearance from the authorized clearing official for a Bureau/Office (see [Clearance List for ADS Material](#)), unless the official delegates in writing a different individual to clear that document on their behalf.

See [501.3.3.2](#) for exceptions to the clearance process.

The following is an executive summary of the ADS clearance process. For detailed procedural information on the clearance process, authors and clearing officials must adhere to the mandatory reference, [The ADS Process, Part II](#).

501.3.3.1 Executive Summary of the Clearance Process

Effective Date – 07/01/2004

- a. Authors must e-mail their clearance request to the current list of clearing officials (for the current list, see mandatory reference, [Clearance List for ADS Material](#)).
- b. Those offices listed in the first section (“Always Required”) of the [Clearance List for ADS Material](#) must be given an opportunity to review, comment, and clear on all ADS material. Offices listed in the second section (“Sometimes Required”) of the same mandatory reference review and clear only material that relates to specific topics. Authors must review the second section and send their material to the appropriate offices.
- *c. Clearing officials have 10 business days to respond (15 days for a large volume of material). If a clearing official or designated back-up does not respond within the clearance deadline, their office forfeits its right to clear and comment on that material. Please see the mandatory reference, [The ADS Process, Part II, Section B](#) for more information.
- d. Clearing officials review ADS material for Agency compliance/conformity with policies and practices that have broad applicability to the entire Agency and provide comments and suggestions primarily to substantive issues rather than routine editing. Clearing officials have the following five options:
- Advise that they clear the material;
 - Advise that they cannot clear until their **substantive** comments are resolved (they must include their comments and clearly indicate that they are substantive);
 - *Advise that they clear the material and are including **non-substantive** comments or suggestions for the author’s consideration;
 - Advise that clearance by that office is not required; or
 - Request additional time.
- *e. Authors must incorporate substantive comments from clearing officials into their material, if appropriate (see paragraph h). Authors must contact the clearing official for written agreement if they do not wish to incorporate substantive comments. (For example, sometimes they may agree to wait to incorporate comments until the next revision of the document.)
- *f. While author offices and clearing officials must attempt to resolve substantive and jurisdictional issues raised in the clearance process, this is not always possible. Depending on the circumstances, involved offices must raise the issue to an appropriate level to reach resolution.
- g. M/AS/IRD will not proceed to publication without resolution on all clearance comments. Authors must include documentation (e-mail or memo) from all parties proving that final resolution has occurred. (See [The ADS Process, Part II, Section C](#))

h. Material that is substantively revised as a result of clearance comments must be re-circulated for ADS clearance, together with an explanation or notation of the changes, allowing clearing officials five business days to respond. Purely editorial revisions do not require another clearance.

501.3.3.2 Are There Exceptions to the ADS Clearance Process?

Effective Date – 07/01/2004

Yes. A list of the exceptions follows:

- **Administrator-issued policy;**
- Business Transformation Executive Committee (**BTEC**) policy decisions;
- **ADS 101**, Agency Programs and Functions;
- **ADS 103**, Delegations of Authority;
- ***AID Forms;**
- ***AAPDs** that do not issue new or revised Agency-wide policy or procedure (to the maximum extent practical, author offices should place Agency-wide policy and procedure in the body of the applicable ADS chapter and not in an AAPD or other reference);
- Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources (**M/HR**) ADS material;
- **USAID's CFRs** (AID Regs); and
- ***Foreign Affairs Manual and Foreign Affairs Handbook (FAM/FAH).**

The exceptions to the clearance process listed above are documented in the internal mandatory reference, [The ADS Process, Part II, Sections E and F](#). If the Director of an author office needs to deviate from the existing ADS clearance process, he or she must submit a memorandum requesting an exception to the Division Chief of M/AS/IRD for approval.

501.3.3.3 What Is M/AS/IRD's Role in the ADS Clearance Process?

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

The M/AS/IRD Division Chief, or delegate, must review and approve all cleared, final ADS material before issuance.

501.3.3.4 How Does an Author Respond to M/AS/IRD's Comments?

Effective Date – 07/01/2004

*M/AS/IRD Editors review ADS material for grammar, punctuation, ADS format, and plain language. If an edit inadvertently changes the intent of a sentence, M/AS/IRD is available to assist the author with creating a grammatically correct sentence that accurately reflects the policy and procedure. In all other situations, authors are responsible for incorporating M/AS/IRD's grammar, punctuation, format, and plain language edits. Finally, authors must give M/AS/IRD's other queries and comments the same consideration as any other clearing official in the clearance process.

501.3.3.5 Do Authors Have to Document Clearances?

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

Yes. The author must maintain documentation showing all responses and clearances received from clearing officials. These documents are sent as a package to M/AS/IRD. This package includes the AID Form 3-252, which the management official must sign. (See mandatory reference, [The ADS Process, Part II](#))

501.3.4 Issuing ADS Material

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

501.3.4.1 Submitting ADS Material to M/AS/IRD for Issuance

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

Once the author has received all required ADS clearances and resolved any differences with clearing officials, they must submit hardcopy and electronic versions of the ADS material and clearance documentation to M/AS/IRD, along with a completed AID Form 3-252, Issuance Request. Authors must follow the procedures detailed in the internal mandatory reference, [The ADS Process, Part III](#).

501.3.4.2 Exceptions to Issuance Procedures

Effective Date – 07/01/2004

There are six exceptions to the ADS issuance procedures:

- **ADS 101**, Agency Programs and Functions;
- **ADS 103**, Delegations of Authority;
- Some **AAPDs**;
- *ADS 501 reference titled, **ADS Chapters and Authors List**;
- *ADS 501 reference titled, **Clearance List for ADS Material**; and
- ADS 504 reference titled, **Authorized Senders for Agency Notices**.

These exceptions are documented in [The ADS Process, Part III, Section 8](#). If the Director of an author office needs to deviate from the existing ADS issuance process, he or she must submit a memorandum and completed AID Form 3-252 requesting an exception to the Division Chief of M/AS/IRD for approval.

501.3.4.3 What Happens After Authors Submit Material?

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

The following steps occur **after** the author submits the required documentation:

- a. M/AS/IRD reviews the final chapter or reference for ADS style, ADS format, punctuation, and grammar. M/AS/IRD sends the material back to the author with any corrections and final suggestions.

*An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

- b. The author makes the appropriate changes, if any, and sends the material back to M/AS/IRD for publication.
- c. M/AS/IRD prepares the final version for issuance.
- d. In order for the final version to be posted expeditiously to the web, ADS material must be issued as a Policy Notice. Therefore, the author is encouraged to issue a Policy Notice. If the author chooses not to, the material will not be issued until the next ADS CD is released, which may be three to six months later.

M/AS/IRD e-mails the author a copy of the final version for their records. M/AS/IRD checks the entire 3-252 package for required clearances, and retains all master copies of documentation submitted by authors.

Please see [The ADS Process, Part III](#) for complete details, and [Timeline: Four-Step Process and Issuing ADS Material](#).

501.3.4.4 **Effective Dates, Revision Date, New Issuance Date, and Origination Date**

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

- a. **Effective Dates** are the dates when specific sections within an ADS chapter *become effective*. The author provides these dates to M/AS/IRD on the AID Form 3-252. M/AS/IRD will insert the new Effective Date under each section or subsection header of a chapter that was substantively revised (that is, marked with an asterisk). See [The ADS Process, Part I, Section A.4](#) for a discussion of asterisks.

Additionally, each internal mandatory reference has an Effective Date. This date will appear at the top of the first page of the document.

- b. The **Revision date** appears in the upper right corner of each page in a revised ADS chapter and at the top of the first page in a revised internal mandatory reference or additional help document. This is the date that M/AS/IRD *finalized the document for distribution*. This date is **not** an effective date for policy directives or required procedures in the document.

- *c. The **New Chapter/New Reference date** indicates the date a **new** chapter or internally created reference is finalized for issuance.

- d. The **origination date** is the date that the requesting official signed the AID Form 3-252 for the original chapter or reference. M/AS/IRD began to track origination dates in January 2002 for the release of ADS CD 26 in April 2002.

*An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

501.3.5 Maintaining ADS Material

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

ADS authors must regularly review ADS material (chapters and references – internal and external) and modify it to ensure that it is up-to-date and consistent with law and regulation, sound policy, and management practices. This includes determining when material is no longer relevant or necessary and can be eliminated. See [The ADS Process, Part I, Section A.3](#) for suggestions.

501.3.6 Annual ADS Certification

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

M/AS/IRD conducts an annual review of ADS material by sending a request for certification e-mail to the appropriate management officials. ADS material includes chapters and all references (forms, internal and external documents, mandatory and optional), Interim Updates, and any AID Handbook chapters that are still valid.

In March of each year, each author office management official or their designee must conduct a review of all of the ADS material for which they are responsible. Then, they must notify M/AS/IRD as to whether or not their office's ADS policies and procedures are still current and effective and provide a timeline outlining revision plans for all material that is not current. The head of an ADS author office must also ensure that a designated person is fulfilling the role of author, even after the ADS chapter in question is published.

501.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

(See [The ADS Process, Part I, Section A and B.2](#) for information about creating a Mandatory References section for your chapter.)

501.4.1 External Mandatory References

- a. [36 CFR 1222.44, Directives documenting agency programs, policies, and procedures](#) (This is an authority for the chapter.)
- b. [36 CFR 1194, Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards](#)
- c. [Executive Order 12861, Elimination of One-Half of Executive Branch Internal Regulations](#)
- d. [Executive Order 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review](#)
- e. [Guidance on Implementing Plain Language, July 29, 1998](#)
- f. Official plain language web site, <http://www.plainlanguage.gov/>

- g. [Presidential Memorandum on Plain Language, June 1, 1998](#)
- h. [44 U.S.C. 3101, Records management by agency heads, general duties](#)
(This is an authority for the chapter.)

501.4.2 Internal Mandatory References

- a. [ADS 102, Agency Organization](#)
- b. [ADS 200, Introduction to Managing for Results](#)
- c. [ADS 504, Agency Notices](#)
- d. [ADS 505, Forms Management Program](#)
- e. [ADS 549, Telecommunications Management](#)
- *f. [ADS Chapters and Authors List](#)
- *g. [ADS Style and Format Guide](#)
- *h. [Clearance List for ADS Material](#)
- *i. [The ADS Process](#)
- *j. [USAID-Federal Regulations for Web Accessibility](#)

501.4.3 Mandatory Forms

- *a. [AID Form 3-252, USAID Directives System - Issuance Request](#)

501.5 ADDITIONAL HELP

(See [The ADS Process, Part I, Section B.2](#) for information about creating an Additional Help section for your chapter.)

The documents listed below contain optional information for you to consider. The author is citing these documents because they would like you to know more about the subject matter or provide helpful, non-mandatory guidance.

- *a. [ADS Users Guide](#)
- *b. [Sample Interim Update \(IU\)](#)
- *c. [Timeline: Four-Step Process and Issuing ADS Material](#)

501.5.1 Optional Forms**501.6 DEFINITIONS**

Effective Date – 07/01/2004

(See [The ADS Process, Part I, Section B.2 and B.3](#) for information about creating a Definitions section for your chapter.)

The terms and definitions listed below have been incorporated into the ADS Glossary. See the [ADS Glossary](#) for all ADS terms and definitions.

***additional help**

An additional help document provides non-mandatory guidance intended to clarify Agency policy and its application contained in the ADS. For example, these may include "how-to" guidelines and non-mandatory reference material created internally or externally. These documents may repeat policy, but do not contain new policy. Additional help documents are optional reading. (Chapter 501)

***author**

A qualified ADS author is a subject matter expert (SME) or someone with good writing skills who can interview the SME and write ADS material in plain language. (Chapter 501)

authority

An authority is the legally binding instrument that authorizes or constrains the policy and procedures issued as USAID direction. These instruments include laws, regulations, Executive Orders, court decisions, and rulings by Federal authorities. "Authority" refers to the legal ability or power to give commands, enforce compliance, or make decisions. (Chapter 501)

Automated Directives System (ADS)

The ADS is a standardized system comprising (1) USAID internal regulations, including policy directives and required procedures; (2) external regulations applicable to USAID; and (3) non-mandatory guidance to help employees interpret and properly apply internal and external mandatory guidance. (Chapter 501)

Automated Directives System Compact Disk (ADS CD)

The name of the compact disk (CD) containing the Automated Directives System (ADS). The ADS CD is one method of distributing USAID directives. (Chapter 501)

clearing official

A clearing official is a designated person in a specific Bureau/Office obligated to review and clear ADS material. (Chapter 501)

conforming amendment

Policy that does not require ADS clearance because it alters ADS material in one of the following four ways:

*An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

- Includes new or revised external regulations (this means precisely that change specified in the external regulation; this does not include the creation of new or revised USAID procedures to implement the regulation);
- Complies with policy already contained in other ADS chapters or internal mandatory references;
- Incorporates written policy issued by the Administrator; or
- Amends or adds one office's procedures that do not have a substantial impact on any other Agency office. Authors must send M/AS/IRD an e-mail explaining how the change does not substantively impact another office. (Chapter 501)

directives management program

The directives management program provides Agency personnel with the means to document and convey Agency policy directives and required procedures to users through written instructions. (Chapter 501)

editorial changes

Editorial changes are simple clarifications that **do not** alter the substantive meaning of the ADS material. Editorial changes include punctuation changes, grammar corrections, reordering existing material and adding headers for ease of use, updates to office symbols, address and name changes, and hyperlink additions. (Chapter 501)

effective date

The date that specific policy directives or required procedures within an ADS chapter or internally created reference become effective. Effective dates only change when substantive modifications are made within the document. (Chapter 501)

functional series

Automated Directives System (ADS) chapters and Interim Updates are grouped according to the Agency's functions. These groups of chapters are called functional series. (Chapter 501)

guidance

Guidance is a general term that includes policy directives, rules, regulations, advice, and other information relevant to the conduct of USAID business. The critical distinction is between mandatory and non-mandatory guidance, as defined below. A particular document may contain both mandatory and non-mandatory guidance.

a. mandatory guidance

Guidance specifying *required* actions and behavior on the part of Agency employees and operating units, signified by phrases like "must," "must not," "is required," or the equivalent. Employees are held accountable for adherence to mandatory guidance, and must comply with it unless an exception is made in

accordance with established procedures. Policy directives – mandatory guidance contained in documents prepared according to ADS procedures – are clearly identified as mandatory. A document written before the initiation of the ADS may also contain mandatory guidance that remains in force, in which case it is classified as an internal mandatory reference.

b. non-mandatory guidance

Guidance intended to assist employees in carrying out their duties, but does not specify required actions and behavior. Employees are strongly encouraged to review and consider such guidance. (Chapter 501)

hyperlink

A hyperlink is specially marked underlined and blue-colored text that you click on to move from one place in a document to another file, another location in the same document, or a web page. (Chapter 501)

Interim Updates (IUs)

An Interim Update is temporary, mandatory guidance that was issued as a Policy Notice, Policy cable, or Administrator Memorandum. This guidance is codified in the ADS as an Interim Update. IUs are either (1) incorporated into the appropriate Automated Directives System (ADS) chapter or reference or (2) expire on a specified date. Policy Notices are cleared through the ADS clearance process and distributed Agency-wide via the Agency Notice system. After a Policy Notice is released, it is converted to an IU. IUs are posted to the ADS web site and ADS CD. (Chapter 501 and 504)

***management official**

For the purposes of ADS Chapter 501, a management official is a Supervisor, Division Chief, Director, AA, or someone delegated by the Division Chief, Director, or AA to sign the USAID Directives Issuance Request Form (AID 3-252) and who has oversight authority for the ADS material. (Chapter 501)

mandatory references

Mandatory references comprise relevant U.S. Government regulations created and published outside USAID, as well as documents containing mandatory guidance that have been created within USAID. These references are cited and hyperlinked in ADS chapters.

a. External Mandatory Reference

External mandatory references are relevant Federal statutes, Executive Orders, and other externally published regulations. They may also contain USAID-specific regulations.

b. Internal Mandatory Reference

An internal mandatory reference is a document created and published within the Agency that contains mandatory guidance (often accompanied by additional,

non-mandatory guidance), but which does not have to be created in ADS chapter format. Adherence to all mandatory guidance contained in internal mandatory references is required by those to whom the reference is applicable. (Chapter 501)

origination date

The origination date is the date that the requesting official signed the AID Form 3-252 for the original Automated Directives System (ADS) chapter or reference. This is not necessarily the first effective date for the chapter or reference. (Chapter 501)

Overview

The Overview is the first section of an Automated Directives System (ADS) chapter. It introduces the chapter and may include a brief purpose, overview, objective, and applicability. (Chapter 501)

plain language

As defined by the Plain Language Action and Information Network (PLAIN), plain language is writing that your reader can understand the first time he or she reads it. It doesn't mean writing for a certain grade level – it means organizing and writing for your reader. Writing in plain language saves time and money for writers and readers. Writing in plain language includes using common, everyday words, short sentences, active voice, and, when appropriate, addressing the reader directly by using the pronoun "you." (Chapter 501)

policy

USAID policy includes both mandatory guidance (policy directives and internal mandatory references) as well as broader official statements of Agency goals, guiding principles, and views on development challenges and best practices in addressing those challenges. (Chapter 501)

policy directive

A clear and concise statement of mandatory guidance that the Agency has adopted to guide the conduct of its business. Contained in documents prepared according to ADS procedures. (Chapter 501)

Primary Responsibilities

The Primary Responsibilities section of an Automated Directives System (ADS) chapter is a list of the offices/officials (titles, not names) with the key responsibilities for acting upon the policy directives and required procedures in the chapter. This section does not include (1) all Bureaus/Offices that are affected by the chapter, (2) position descriptions, or (3) policies and procedures. (Chapter 501)

***required procedures**

Required procedures are detailed courses of action that the Agency must follow to comply with policy directives (both external and internal). (Chapter 501)

revision date

The date that Automated Directives System (ADS) chapters, internal mandatory references, or additional help documents are finalized for distribution. This is not an effective date. The date appears in the upper right corner of each page in an ADS chapter. A revision date will appear at the top of the first page in an internal mandatory reference or additional help document. (Chapter 501)

***substantive changes**

Substantive changes alter the meaning or intent of the policy directive or required procedure. If you change what people are required to do or how they are required to do it, you are making a substantive change. (Chapter 501)

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