



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Model Letters and Procedures for Designating the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) for Cooperative Agreements and Grants

A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 303

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A. AOR Responsibility and Authority

USAID Agreement Officer's Representatives (AORs) perform a variety of duties, including working as part of a team with the Agreement Officer (AO) to ensure that USAID exercises prudent management over its assistance funds. The AOR monitors the recipient's progress towards achieving the objectives of the Program Description in the subject award and verifies that the recipient's activities being funded by USAID under the referenced award conform to the terms and conditions of that award. In order to be authorized to manage an assistance award on behalf of the AO, the AOR must have:

- (1) A current certification in the [Federal Acquisition Institute Training Application System \(FAITAS\)](#),
- (2) Completed the mandatory training,
- (3) Received an AOR designation letter from the AO delegating authority to perform cooperative agreement or grant administration duties.

Other Agency regulations, including ADS chapters outside the [300 Series](#), may hold AORs accountable for duties and responsibilities that do not flow from the AO. Such responsibilities are not included in these letters. AORs should direct any questions they have about these additional responsibilities to the author office of that chapter or regulation or to the author office's representative in the operating unit (for example, an AOR in a Mission should direct questions about the AOR's financial management duties in [ADS 600 Series](#) chapters to the Mission Controller).

The AOR must thoroughly review the designation letter to ensure that he or she understands the responsibilities and limitations of the AOR designation. Section III of the Designation letter outlines the limitations of the delegation of authority to the AOR. Exceeding the authorities designated in the letter may result in an unauthorized commitment, which can lead to serious disputes and legal actions that unnecessarily tie up Agency personnel and resources. Unauthorized commitments may result in a violation of the [Anti-Deficiency Act, 31 U.S. C. Sections 1341-1351](#), which provides for criminal penalties for any Government employee who willfully and knowingly violates it.

B. Standards of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest

As USAID employees, AORs are subject to the ethical standards that apply to all Federal employees by virtue of the terms of their employment. Being an AOR does not impose a higher standard for an individual's conduct, but it may provide more occasions for improper behavior and increases the scrutiny that others may direct to an individual's behavior. The AOR is responsible for protecting the U.S. Government's interests, while supporting its reputation for fair and equal dealings with all partners, including grant recipients. Therefore, if any direct or indirect financial interests place the AOR in a position where there may be a conflict between his or her private interests and the United States public interest, it must be immediately reported to the appropriate parties. The

AOR must avoid the appearance of such conflict in order to preserve public confidence in the U.S. Government employee's conduct of business.

C. Certification Program

Any individual designated by letter from an Agreement Officer to be a AOR must be certified in the Federal Acquisition Institute Training Application System (FAITAS) and have completed both the FAC-COR training and the Agency certification requirements. Additionally, the AOR must maintain the certification by completing 40 hours of continuous learning points (CLPs) every two years from the original certification. Specific certification requirements are found in [ADS 458.3.4.2\(c\)](#) and in [ADS 303.3.15](#).

For further information about FAITAS certification and FAC-COR certification and training requirements send an email to **FAC-CORInquirymailbox@usaid.gov**.

D. Designation of the AOR

Prior to designating an AOR, the AO is responsible for verifying that the AOR

- Is certified in FAITAS,
- Has completed the required training, and
- Is FAC-COR certified in accordance with agency policy.

The proposed AOR must provide the AO with a current printout of the FAITAS confirmation screen as proof of certification in FAITAS. If it has been two years since the AOR's initial FAC-COR certification, the AOR must also provide the AO with proof of 40 hours of continuous learning for every two years after the initial AOR certification.

The Bureau for Management, Office of Acquisition and Assistance, Professional Development and Training Division (M/OAA/PDT) will generate a quarterly report of expired AOR certifications, which will be posted on the M/OAA/PDT Web site at: <https://pages.usaid.gov/node/1551>. In addition to receiving the certification documentation from the AOR, the AO must check the most recent report to ensure that the AOR's certification has not expired.

AOR designations must be entered in the Global Acquisition and Assistance System (GLAAS). AOs must ensure that AOR designations are kept current and accurate in GLAAS. The AO must identify the AOR under the Main/General Information Screen of the award in GLAAS. Because the AOR is included in the award document, if the designated AOR is replaced, the AO must issue a unilateral modification to the contract to change the AOR. GLAAS requires that the AO identify an AOR for all awards.

In addition to entering the AOR in GLAAS, the AO must issue the AOR a Standardized Designation letter, outlining the responsibilities and authorities of the AOR. Depending on

the type of assistance award, the AO should use one of the following letters:

- For a Cooperative Agreement: AOR Designation Letter – Cooperative Agreement (see Appendix A)
- For a Grant: AOR Designation – Grant Administration (see Appendix B)

The AO must sign the front page of the letter and transmit it to the AOR. Once the AOR has signed the letter, the AO must countersign the acknowledgement page. By signing the designation letter, the AOR certifies that he/she is certified and has met all the FAC-COR and Agency requirements including the 40 hours of continuous learning, and the AO confirms that the AOR has been certified and meets the eligibility requirements.

E. Naming an Alternate AOR

The AO must not designate multiple AORs for any particular award, except for an alternate AOR who would perform the designated AOR functions only during the absence of the primary AOR. Section III, of the letter, Subsection B. Re-delegation, includes a space for naming the alternate AOR. When designating an alternate AOR, the AO must insert the name of the individual in the blank space in the second paragraph of this subsection. The alternate AOR is subject to the same FAITAS certification, training, and continuous learning requirements as the primary AOR.

When the requiring office nominates the primary candidate for the AOR designation, it must also provide the name of an alternate. The preference is for the alternate to be from the requiring office, because the individual is more likely to be familiar with the award and can therefore step in as AOR. However, if the requiring/technical office cannot provide an alternate, then the AOR's immediate supervisor may need to serve as alternate. If the requiring office nominates an individual not from the requiring office and not the AOR's immediate supervisor to be the alternate AOR, the nomination must include a justification supporting this nomination, including an explanation of the nominated alternate's involvement in overseeing the contractor's performance.

AOs must also remind AORs and their alternates that the alternate may ONLY perform AOR duties or responsibilities if the AOR is absent. Ideally, the alternate will only perform AOR duties when the AOR is absent for an extended period of time. The alternate AOR may not countermand an AOR's decision on a matter pertaining to his or her duties as a AOR. In addition, the primary AOR is not responsible or accountable for the actions of the alternate AOR—the alternate AOR is responsible and accountable.

Neither the AOR nor the alternate may further delegate this authority. If neither the AOR nor the alternate is available to perform their duties, the AOR must direct the award recipient to the AO for guidance.

F. Approvals for Designating an Uncertified AOR and Revocation of AOR Designation

1. Designation of Uncertified AOR

In exceptional circumstances, the AO may designate an uncertified AOR in accordance with the exceptions in [ADS 303.3.15.a](#). All documentation must be provided in writing and must be maintained in the award file.

AOs must revoke the AOR designation letter if the AOR does not certify in FAITAS and does not complete the required training and certification requirements within the period authorized by the exception.

2. Revocation of AOR Designation

Once initially certified in FAITAS, if the AOR has not completed the required 40 hours of continuous learning every two years, FAITAS will automatically notify the AOR of the expiry of the FAC-COR certification 90 days prior to the expiration. At that time, the AOR must complete the required training to be eligible to continue to maintain the FAC-COR certification and the specific AOR designation. If the FAC-COR certification expires, the AOR will be classified as an uncertified AOR and will no longer have the authority to perform the functions of an AOR.

If at any time during the period of an award the AOR's certification expires, the AOR is responsible for informing the AO and for working with the Operating Unit to nominate a replacement AOR. The AO must immediately revoke the AOR's designation, unless the AO has received the MDs/DAAs approval for a one-time, six month extension or the M/OAA Director's approval for a further six month extension.

If the AOR continues to perform AOR functions after expiry of the AOR's certification, even if the AO has not formally revoked the AOR's designation letter, it may result in unauthorized commitments as the AOR will be acting without authority.

Additionally, if the AOR fails to perform his or her duties and responsibilities or if the AOR exceeds his or her authority as specified in the designation letter, the AO may exercise this revocation authority. A specific example of a circumstance that might warrant revocation of an AOR designation would be an AOR's failure to adequately monitor the available funding on an award.

Revocation of the AOR delegation must be done in writing and must be communicated to the AOR, the recipient, the paying office, the alternate AOR, and other relevant parties who were on the initial distribution list of the AOR designation letter. Additionally, a unilateral modification must be executed in GLAAS to update and replace the AOR designation.

G. AO Tailoring of the Letters

AOs must use the standardized letter essentially as written; however, some of the specific

guidance provided below clearly allows AOs to use discretion in tailoring these letters as long as they do not affect the substance of the standardized letter. For example, AOs may include special instructions to account for unusual characteristics of the award. The AO may limit or expand the AOR's (and/or the Alternate's) responsibilities depending on the level of training or experience of the individual receiving the designation (see Section I. Subsection F and I. Subsection E of Appendices A and B, Cooperative Agreement Designation Letter and the Grant Designation Letter, respectively, for a list of responsibilities/functions that may be delegated to the AOR at the discretion of the AO). Finally, the AO may edit the letter to reflect the AO's own experience, judgment, and preference—again, within the scope of the standardized letters. The examples listed in this paragraph are not all-inclusive, nor are AOs expected to make changes to the letter if they have no reason to do so. The AO must not change Section III, Limitations, in any of the letters.

H. Specific Guidance on Sections of the Letter

The following guidance addresses Section I, Subsection C - Substantial Involvement, of Appendix A, the cooperative agreement designation letter. Please consider the following when preparing a letter and tailor the letter only if needed and only as authorized in the specific guidance below.

When stating the Agency's substantial involvement (see [303.3.11](#)) in the performance of the cooperative agreement, the AO may choose to include in this section those substantial involvement approvals the AO is re-delegating to the AOR. However, the AO must then formally amend the CA to make any changes to the AOR's authority. The AO may instead choose to list in the AOR designation letter those substantial involvement approval responsibilities the AO re-delegates to the AOR. In this case, the AO will only revise the letter to make any changes to the AOR's authority. For either option, the AO may also specify any approvals the AO retains, such as the authority to consent to sub-agreement provisions.

I. Distribution of the Designation Letter

AOs must provide copies of the AOR-acknowledged and AO countersigned designation letter to the:

- Recipient
- Paying office,
- AOR
- AOR's supervisor,
- Named alternate AOR (if applicable), and
- Alternate AOR's supervisor (if applicable).

Providing courtesy copies to any party other than those mentioned above is at the discretion of the AO.

**Appendix A Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) Designation
Cooperative Agreement Administration**

TO: [Individual Nominated by the Requesting Office]

FROM: Agreement Officer (AO)

SUBJECT: Cooperative Agreement Administration Authorities

DATE:

REF: Cooperative Agreement Number

You have been nominated to be the designated representative to provide technical and administrative oversight of the above referenced assistance award. In this letter, I formally accept this nomination and designate you the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) for the award. As the AOR, you must work as part of a team with me (or my successor AO) to ensure that USAID exercises prudent management over its assistance funds. This letter and the relevant sections of Automated Directives System (ADS) [Chapter 303, Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-Governmental Organizations](#), state the specific duties, authorities, and limitations that accompany this designation. Your familiarity with [ADS 303, 2 CFR 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#), USAID's implementing regulation **2 CFR 700 USAID Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards**, and Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directives (AAPDs) issued periodically that affect your duties as AOR is critical to carrying out your responsibilities successfully. You should maintain frequent liaison and direct communications with the recipient, but you must understand that the nature of the relationship is that of supporting their public purpose and not for obtaining the recipient's technical assistance or services for USAID.

As an AOR, you may be held personally liable for unauthorized acts. In order to perform these functions you must be AOR Certified and have met the FAC-COR and Agency training requirements, including the 40 hours of continuous learning requirements to maintain your AOR certification. Failure to obtain AOR certification or maintain your certification will result in the expiry of your certification and the loss of your authority to function as an AOR. If your AOR certification expires you must immediately notify the AO and contact the FAC Acquisition Career Manager in the Professional Development and Training Division or send an email to **FAC-CORInquirymailbox@usaid.gov** for consultation on next steps to regain your certification. The AO will revoke your AOR delegation or with appropriate approvals may provide you written authority to continue your AOR functions for a limited time until you can receive your recertification. Failure to inform the AO of the expiry of your certification and continuing to perform the functions/duties of an AOR will result in you acting without authority and potentially making unauthorized commitments. You will be held accountable and required to accept responsibility for the unauthorized commitment and you must assist the AO in processing

all documentation required to formalize the commitment. Properly discharging your duties and responsibilities as an AOR minimizes your risk of facing disciplinary action. The areas in which you must be particularly cautious involve contracting authority and financial management because your improper actions could indicate gross negligence.

- In Cooperative Agreement (CA) Administration, this involves exceeding your authority as an AOR and taking actions that are beyond your authority as delegated in this letter. If you have any questions in this area, contact the AO for advice BEFORE you take any action.
- In Financial Management, your risk increases when you act in a manner that is other than what would be expected of a reasonable individual. At a minimum, a reasonable individual would be expected to
 - Take reasonable steps to assure that the recipient has submitted all required program and financial reports;
 - Make logical decisions from the information they have available (even if it isn't complete); and
 - Document and provide justification for the action. (The documentation need not be formal or extensive, but it should be easily understood by an auditor or other third party individual reviewing it.)

I. RESPONSIBILITIES

As AOR, you must read the entire cooperative agreement and thoroughly acquaint yourself with its purpose, terms, conditions, and the respective roles and responsibilities of the recipient, the Agreement Officer (AO), and the AOR in ensuring it accomplishes its purpose. You should also periodically review the cooperative agreement to maintain familiarity with its terms and conditions.

AOR responsibilities include:

- A. Monitoring. You are responsible for monitoring the recipient's progress in achieving the objectives of the Program Description in the subject award and for verifying that the recipient's activities being funded by USAID under the referenced award conform to the terms and conditions of that award. For example, U.S. organization recipients that expend \$750,000 or more in Federal funds during a fiscal year must obtain a single or program-specific audit conducted for that year in accordance with **2 CFR 200, Subpart F**. Non-U.S. organization recipients that expend more than \$300,000 or more in Federal funds during a fiscal year must also obtain an annual audit in accordance with [ADS 591, Financial Audits of USAID Contractors, Recipients, and Host Government](#), section **591.3.2.1**.
- B. Cooperative Agreement Revisions. You must make written recommendations to the AO when any changes to the Program Description, technical provisions, and/or any

other term or condition of the award are necessary, along with a justification for the proposed action.

- C. Substantial Involvement. You are responsible for any USAID substantial involvement, see [ADS 303.3.11](#), specifically delegated to the AOR in the schedule of the cooperative agreement in the section entitled "Substantial Involvement" or as delegated below:

[REFER TO THE AWARD TO LIST THE ELEMENTS OF SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT THE AOR WILL MONITOR]

- D. Financial Management. Although the responsibility for making payments and accounting for funds and balances rests in the Bureau for Management, Office of the Chief Financial Officer (M/CFO) or overseas Controller, you must administer financial management responsibilities by:

- Ensuring that all funding actions comply with USAID's forward funding guidelines in [ADS 602, Forward Funding of Program Funds](#).
- Reviewing the recipient's request for payments or financial reports and providing or denying your administrative approval if required by the policy and required procedures in [ADS Chapter 630, Payables Management](#).
- Monitoring the financial status of the award on a regular basis to ensure that the level of funding is the minimum necessary. If the funding exceeds forward funding guidelines without proper authorization, you must adjust the next incremental funding amount to achieve compliance with the forward funding guidelines.
- Developing accrued expenditures on a quarterly basis in accordance with, and instructions from M/CFO or the Mission controller. Please note that you must accomplish this task using information on hand and must not interpret this requirement as authority to request any additional financial reports from the recipient.
- Reviewing and documenting the review (for example, signing and dating a copy of the financial report) of financial status reports for U.S. organizations with letters of credit and periodic advance payments to monitor financial progress.
 - Contact the recipient for further explanation if questions arise regarding the appropriateness of expenditures, and
 - Contact the AO if not satisfied with the recipient's explanation.
- Notifying the AO if at any point it is apparent that the funds are no longer needed for the purpose for which they were obligated. Guidance on this process is found in [ADS 621, Obligations](#), and [Mandatory Reference 621maa, Deobligation](#)

Guidebook.

- Monitoring recipient compliance with the requirement for them to obtain any host country tax exemptions for which they are eligible.
 - Monitoring any cost sharing requirements.
 - Upon completion of the work under the award, reviewing any unliquidated obligation balance in the award and working with the AO to deobligate excess funds before beginning close-out actions.
- E. Security. You must coordinate with the Office of Security (SEC) or its designee to obtain necessary security clearances and appropriate identification for the recipient and designated personnel if the CA is classified in accordance with [ADS Chapter 567, Classified Contracts, Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contractor/Recipient Personnel Security](#). If this cooperative agreement is unclassified, but requires recipient employees to have building passes to enter either the USAID Headquarters building or a Mission or Embassy overseas, you must coordinate with your Bureau or Office Administrative Management Officer, Mission Executive Officer, or other individual responsible for requesting passes, see [ADS 567](#). You must also notify SEC whenever any recipient personnel no longer need a building pass.

When the agreement has ended, you must collect, from the contractor, any identification cards that have been issued to the contractor employees (including the Personal Identity Verification [PIV] card/Facility Access Card [FAC]) and remote authentication token. You must return the identification cards to the Office of Security (SEC) and the remote authentication token to the B/IO Administrative Management Staff (AMS).

- F. Other specific functions/authorities, as provided herein:

[The AO may include additional responsibilities/functions from the list below based on the AO's discretion and the AOR's experience and training. If no other responsibilities are delegated, then this subsection must be deleted.]

In addition to the functions/duties listed above, the AOR [and alternate AOR] is [are] designated the following additional functions/authorities:

- Approval of subawards, transfer or contracting out of any work under an award. Such recipient requests to the AOR must include the following:
 - (i) A clear description of the work to be performed,
 - (ii) The basis for selection of the subawardee, and

- (iii) A separate budget for each subaward.
- Approval of international travel. Travel approval is limited solely to awards administered under 22 CFR 226; international travel approval is not required for awards administered under 2 CFR 200.

II. ADMINISTRATION

- A. Communications. [ADS 303](#) contains the policy directives and required procedures for our joint administration of grants and cooperative agreements. Agreement officers are the mandatory control point of record for all official communication that would constitute an amendment to the award; therefore, please ensure that you provide me, within two business days after you transmit it to the recipient, a copy of any communications between you and the recipient that may lead to an amendment to the award or that may affect the recipient's rights or responsibilities under this cooperative agreement. You are responsible for reviewing all performance and financial reports for adequacy and responsiveness and for requesting that I take the necessary action when these reports are not submitted, are inadequate, or indicate a problem.
- B. AOR Files. As the AOR, you have an important responsibility for establishing and maintaining adequate AOR files. These files are your primary tools for carrying out your duties and responsibilities as the AOR for this cooperative agreement and must include all correspondence with the recipient and document all actions you take as AOR. These files will also help successor AORs to understand your actions as AOR and the reasons behind such actions, as well as to have adequate files for audit purposes.

You must ensure that the files contain the following:

- A copy of this AOR designation letter;
- A copy of the cooperative agreement and all of its amendments;
- A copy of all correspondence between the AOR and the recipient;
- The names of technical and administrative personnel assisting the AOR;
- A copy of records of AOR approvals, invoices, and other financial documents, initialed to demonstrate AOR review, as well as other administrative paperwork and correspondence;
- The basis for the AOR's accrual estimates, see [ADS 631, Accruals](#) and [ADS 631sab, Accrual Documentation](#);
- A copy of financial documentation to support their activities in the financial management area such as the SF-425 ([ADS 630, Payables Management](#));

- Budget pipeline analysis documentation; and
- Documentation of any other action taken by the AOR in accordance with this delegation of authority.

Until the Agency has an approved electronic filing system, original signature documents and any other documents in the AOR files that are part of the official award file must be maintained in hard copy. You must not use text messages for any official communications with the recipient.

III. LIMITATIONS

- A. Scope of Authority/Avoiding Unauthorized Commitments. Your authority does not include making any changes in the Program Description, the period of performance, the terms and conditions of the award, or the total estimated budget. I must caution you that actions you take or directions you give beyond the authorities provided in this memorandum or in [ADS 303](#) may create unauthorized commitments under the award. Any such unauthorized actions may lead to serious disputes and legal action that unnecessarily tie up Agency personnel and resources. You may be held personally liable for such actions and in the worst case, you may be subject to disciplinary action if it is determined that the unauthorized commitment is a violation of the Anti-Deficiency Act, [31 U.S.C. secs. 1341-1351](#), which provides for criminal penalties.
- B. Re-delegation. You may not re-delegate the authorities or responsibilities contained in this memorandum to any other person. When carrying out your AOR duties, you may ask others to assist you, but such assistance has limits. For example, you may ask others to conduct fact-finding, assist with monitoring, or make recommendations regarding actions you may take as AOR. However, anyone assisting you must not take any action that directly affects the recipient's rights or ability to carry out the program for which the grant was awarded. The ultimate responsibility for any actions taken, by you or others assisting you, remains with you.
- C. Designation of the Alternate AOR. In your absence, and only in your absence, **[insert name of alt. AOR]** is hereby authorized to act on your behalf. If this individual is not available to carry out your AOR responsibilities during your absence, notify the Agreement Officer (AO) as soon as possible to discuss alternatives. To ensure minimal disruptions, please notify the recipient and the AO as soon as possible when you will be unavailable to discharge your AOR responsibilities for a period of more than two weeks. If the alternate is not available in your absence, direct the recipient to receive any guidance from the AO.
- D. Duration of AOR Designation. This designation is effective for the life of the award referenced on the first page of this designation letter, unless the AO revokes it in writing; you resign from this position; you transfer to a new position in which you no

longer have technical cognizance for this activity; or your AOR certification expires. If you cannot fulfill your responsibilities as AOR for any reason (for example, transfer to another post or your certification expires), please notify the AO as soon as possible in order to ensure the timely designation of a successor.

IV. TRAINING

USAID has a COR/AOR Certification Program with formal classroom courses that complies with USAID internal policy and FAC-COR requirements. [ADS Chapter 458](#) establishes the Agency's policy and required procedures for AOR certification. Also, you are required to complete at least 40 hours of Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) every two years in order to maintain your certification. Failure to complete the required continuous learning requirements and maintain your certification will result in an expiry of your AOR certification and loss of authority to perform AOR functions.

V. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

As an employee of the Federal Government, you must respect and adhere to the principles of ethical conduct set forth in Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 2635—Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, [5 CFR 2635](#). You must notify the AO immediately of any suspected fraud, bribery, conflict of interest, or improper conduct on the part of the recipient or any member of its staff.

As an AOR, you are responsible for protecting the U.S. Government's interests, while supporting its reputation for fair and equal dealings with all its partners, including cooperative agreement (CA) recipients. Therefore, if you have any direct or indirect financial interests in violation of [18 U.S.C. 208](#) and/or [5 CFR 2635.401](#) and [5 CFR 2635.501](#) that may place you in a position where there is a conflict between your private interests and the public interest of the United States, you must immediately inform your supervisor, the AO, and the Assistant General Counsel for Ethics Administration (GC/EA) of this conflict so that appropriate action may be taken. For more information on the GC/EA, see <http://auslnxapvweb01.usaid.gov/A/GC/EA/index.html>. Note this information is only available on the USAID intranet. As AOR, you must avoid the appearance of such conflict in order to preserve public confidence in the U.S. Government (USG) employee's conduct of business. Furthermore, you must be aware of the post-employment restrictions on former USG employees, including Personal Service Contractors (PSCs), found in [18 U.S.C. 207](#) to detect possible violations.

Appendix B Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) Designation

Grant Administration

TO: [Individual Nominated by the Requesting Office]

FROM: , Agreement Officer (AO)

SUBJECT: Grant Administration Authorities

DATE:

REF: Grant Number with

You have been nominated to be the designated representative to provide technical and administrative oversight of the above referenced assistance award. In this letter, I formally accept this nomination and designate you the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) for the award. As the AOR, you must work as part of a team with me (or my successor AO) to ensure that USAID exercises prudent management over its assistance funds. This letter and the relevant sections of Automated Directives System (ADS) [Chapter 303, Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-Governmental Organizations](#), state the specific duties, authorities, and limitations that accompany this designation. Your familiarity with [ADS 303, 2 CFR 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#), USAID's implementing regulation **2 CFR 700 USAID Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards**, and Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directives (AAPDs) issued periodically that affect your duties as AOR is critical to carrying out your responsibilities successfully. You should maintain frequent liaison and direct communications with the recipient, but you must understand that the nature of the relationship is that of supporting their public purpose and not for obtaining the recipient's technical assistance or services for USAID.

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- In Financial Management, your risk increases when you act in a manner that is other than what would be expected of a reasonable individual. At a minimum, a reasonable individual would be expected to
 - Take reasonable steps to assure that the recipient has submitted all required program and financial reports;
 - Make logical decisions from the information they have available (even if it isn't complete); and
 - Document and provide justification for the action. (The documentation need not be formal or extensive, but it should be easily understood by an auditor or other third party individual reviewing it.)

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- Developing accrued expenditures on a quarterly basis in accordance with, and instructions from M/CFO or the Mission controller. Please note that you must accomplish this task using information on hand and must not interpret this requirement as authority to request any additional financial reports from the recipient.
- Reviewing and documenting the review (for example, signing and dating a copy of the financial report) of financial status reports for U.S. organizations with letters of credit and periodic advance payments to monitor financial progress.
 - Contact the recipient for further explanation if questions arise regarding the appropriateness of expenditures, and
 - Contact the AO if not satisfied with the recipient's explanation.
- Notifying the AO if at any point it is apparent that the funds are no longer needed for the purpose for which they were obligated. Guidance on this process is found in [ADS 621, Obligations](#), and [Mandatory Reference 621maa, Deobligation Guidebook](#).
- Monitoring recipient compliance with the requirement for them to obtain any host country tax exemptions for which they are eligible.
- Monitoring any cost sharing requirements.
- Upon completion of the work under the award, reviewing any unliquidated obligation balance in the award and working with the AO to deobligate excess

funds before beginning close-out actions.

- D. Security. You must coordinate with the Office of Security (SEC) or its designee to obtain necessary security clearances and appropriate identification for the recipient and designated personnel if the CA is classified in accordance with [ADS Chapter 567, Classified Contracts, Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contractor/Recipient Personnel Security](#). If this grant is unclassified, but requires recipient employees to have building passes to enter either the USAID Headquarters building or a Mission or Embassy overseas, you must coordinate with your Bureau or Office Administrative Management Officer, Mission Executive Officer, or other individual responsible for requesting passes, see [ADS 567](#). You must also notify SEC whenever any recipient personnel no longer need a building pass.

When the agreement has ended, you must collect from the recipient any identification cards that have been issued to the recipient employees (including the Personal Identity Verification [PIV] card/Facility Access Card [FAC]) and remote authentication token. You must return the identification cards to the Office of Security (SEC) and the remote authentication token to the B/IO Administrative Management Staff (AMS).

- E. Other specific functions/authorities, as provided herein:

[The AO may include additional responsibilities/functions from the list below based on the AO's discretion and the AOR's experience and training. If no other responsibilities are delegated, then this subsection must be deleted.]

In addition to the functions/duties listed above, the AOR [and alternate AOR] is [are] designated the following additional functions/authorities:

- Approval of the subawards, transfer or contracting out of any work under an award. Such recipient requests to the AOR must include the following:
 - (i) A clear description of the work to be performed,
 - (ii) The basis for selection of the subawardee, and
 - (iii) A separate budget for each subaward.

II. ADMINISTRATION

- A. Communications. [ADS 303](#) contains the policy directives and required procedures for our joint administration of grants and cooperative agreements. Agreement officers are the mandatory control point of record for all official communication that would constitute an amendment to the award; therefore, please ensure that you provide me, within two business days after you transmit it to the recipient, a copy of any communications between you and the recipient that may lead to an amendment to the

award or that may affect the recipient's rights or responsibilities under this grant. You are responsible for reviewing all performance and financial reports for adequacy and responsiveness and for requesting that I take the necessary action when these reports are not submitted, are inadequate, or indicate a problem.

- B. AOR Files. As the AOR, you have an important responsibility for establishing and maintaining adequate AOR files. These files are your primary tools for carrying out your duties and responsibilities as the AOR for grant and must include all correspondence with the recipient and document all actions you take as AOR. These files will also help successor AORs to understand your actions as AOR and the reasons behind such actions, as well as to have adequate files for audit purposes.

You must ensure that the files contain the following:

- A copy of this AOR designation letter;
- A copy of the grant and all of its amendments;
- A copy of all correspondence between the AOR and the recipient;
- The names of technical and administrative personnel assisting the AOR;
- A copy of records of AOR approvals, invoices, and other financial documents, initialed to demonstrate AOR review, as well as other administrative paperwork and correspondence;
- The basis for the AOR's accrual estimates, see [ADS 631, Accruals](#) and [ADS 631sab, Accrual Documentation](#);
- A copy of financial documentation to support their activities in the financial management area such as the SF-425 ([ADS 630, Payables Management](#));
- Budget pipeline analysis documentation; and
- Documentation of any other action taken by the AOR in accordance with this delegation of authority.

Until such time as the Agency has an approved electronic filing system, original signature documents and any other documents in the AOR files that are part of the official award file must be maintained in hard copy. You must not use text messages for any official communications with the recipient.

III. LIMITATIONS

- A. Scope of Authority/Avoiding Unauthorized Commitments. Your authority does not include making any changes in the Program Description, the period of performance,

the terms and conditions of the award, or the total estimated budget. I must caution you that actions you take or directions you give beyond the authorities provided in this memorandum or in [ADS 303](#) may create unauthorized commitments under the award. Any such unauthorized actions may lead to serious disputes and legal action that unnecessarily tie up Agency personnel and resources. You may be held personally liable for such actions and in the worst case, you may be subject to disciplinary action if it is determined that the unauthorized commitment is a violation of the Anti-Deficiency Act, [31 U.S.C. secs. 1341-1351](#), which provides for criminal penalties.

- B. Re-delegation. You may not re-delegate the authorities or responsibilities contained in this memorandum to any other person. When carrying out your AOR duties, you may ask others to assist you, but such assistance has limits. For example, you may ask others to conduct fact-finding, assist with monitoring, or make recommendations regarding actions you may take as AOR. However, anyone assisting you must not take any action that directly affects the recipient's rights or ability to carry out the program for which the grant was awarded. The ultimate responsibility for any actions taken, by you or others assisting you, remains with you.
- C. Designation of the Alternate AOR. In your absence, and only in your absence, **[insert name of alt. AOR]** is hereby authorized to act on your behalf. If this individual is not available to carry out your AOR responsibilities during your absence, notify the Agreement Officer (AO) as soon as possible to discuss alternatives. To ensure minimal disruptions, please notify the recipient and the AO as soon as possible when you will be unavailable to discharge your AOR responsibilities for a period of more than two weeks. If the alternate is not available in your absence, direct the recipient to receive any guidance from the AO.
- D. Duration of AOR Designation. This designation is effective for the life of the award referenced on the first page of this designation letter, unless the AO revokes it in writing; you resign from this position; you transfer to a new position in which you no longer have technical cognizance for this activity; or your AOR certification expires. If you cannot fulfill your responsibilities as AOR for any reason (for example, transfer to another post or your certification expires), please notify the AO as soon as possible in order to ensure the timely designation of a successor.

IV. TRAINING

USAID has a COR/AOR Certification Program with formal classroom courses that complies with USAID internal policy and FAC-COR requirements. [ADS Chapter 458](#) establishes the Agency's policy and required procedures for AOR certification. You are also required to complete at least 40 hours of Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) every two years in order to maintain your certification. Failure to complete the required continuous learning requirements and maintain your certification will result in an expiry of your AOR certification and loss of authority to perform AOR functions.

V. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

As an employee of the Federal Government, you must respect and adhere to the principles of ethical conduct set forth in Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 2635—Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, [5 CFR 2635](#). You must notify the AO immediately of any suspected fraud, bribery, conflict of interest, or improper conduct on the part of the recipient or any member of its staff.

As an AOR, you are responsible for protecting the U.S. Government's interests, while supporting its reputation for fair and equal dealings with all its partners, including grant recipients. Therefore, if you have any direct or indirect financial interests in violation of [18 U.S.C. 208](#) and/or [5 CFR 2635.401](#) and [5 CFR 2635.501](#) that may place you in a position where there is a conflict between your private interests and the public interest of the United States, you must immediately inform your supervisor, the AO, and the Assistant General Counsel for Ethics Administration (GC/EA) of this conflict so that appropriate action may be taken. For more information on the GC/EA, see <http://auslnxapvweb01.usaid.gov/A/GC/EA/index.html>. Note this information is only available on the USAID intranet. As AOR, you must avoid the appearance of such conflict in order to preserve public confidence in the U.S. Government (USG) employee's conduct of business. Furthermore, you must be aware of the post-employment restrictions on former USG employees, including Personal Service Contractors (PSCs), found in [18 U.S.C. 207](#) to detect possible violations.

**Alternate Agreement Officer's Representative's (AOR's) Designation –
Grant Administration**

TO: [insert name of alt. AOR]

REF: Award Number [Insert #] with [Insert Recipient name]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Your signature below confirms that you

- (1) Accept this appointment,
- (2) Agree to comply with all duties, responsibilities, and limitations outlined in this letter, particularly those pertaining to conflicts of interest, by agreeing to conduct business dealings to avoid conflicts of interest and in a completely impartial manner,
- (3) Understand that you are only authorized to perform these duties in the absence of the COR
- (4) Are certified in FAITAS and have completed the COR/AOR certification program, which includes:
 - Acquisition and Assistance (A&A) Management for COR/AORs course (A&A 104) and its predecessor course;
 - Programming Foreign Assistance;
 - Web-based Phoenix Accruals on-line course;
 - Web-based COR/AOR on-line course;
 - 40 hours of continuous learning points, as required, and
- (5) Meet all the eligibility requirements in ADS 303.3.15.

I HEREBY ACCEPT THIS APPOINTMENT AND ACKNOWLEDGE MY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS ALTERNATE AOR:

ALT. AGREEMENT OFFICER'S
REPRESENTATIVE

DATE

After signing, return this original memorandum (and retain a copy) to me within _____ days. I will acknowledge your acceptance of this designation by signing below and send a copy to you and the others indicated below.

AGREEMENT OFFICER

DATE

cc:

[insert name of AOR], AOR

[], Paying office or Mission Controller

[], AOR's/Alt. AOR supervisor

[], Recipient

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