



Integrating the USAID CDCS

Integrated Country Strategy



Managing for Results

USAID's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) is a planning process designed to produce development strategies that concentrate resource priorities and create greater targeted impacts through coordination with interagency partners. USAID Missions develop the CDCS under Chief of Mission authority and in close collaboration and coordination with the State Department and other inter-agency partners. The inter-agency Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) is designed to leverage the robust planning process that is used in formulating the CDCS. Both the ICS and CDCS use Objectives to articulate and organize priorities, with the CDCS Development Objectives designed to articulate the USAID Mission's development priorities. As outlined in the QDDR and subsequent planning policy cable, the CDCS is the development foundation of the ICS and its Development Objectives feed directly into annual budget requests

There have been questions from a few Posts about the level of flexibility they have in integrating USAID CDCS's with the ICS. As per earlier ICS guidance, countries with a Mission-approved CDCS are to include these Development Objectives as Mission Objectives in the ICS. As USAID is not the only part of the mission that may have development activities, posts have flexibility in how to capture development priorities of State and other non-USAID agencies in the ICS that may not be reflected in the CDCS. Where possible, posts should link those priorities to the CDCS by inserting additional sub-objectives within the CDCS-linked Mission Objective. Posts may also create a separate MO to cover non-USAID development priorities, linking these related MOs together at the ICS Mission Goal level to indicate integration and synergies (see ICS FAQs for an example).

If posts encounter significant challenges with this approach that prevent them from complying with other aspects of ICS guidance, they may request an exception to create a broader Mission Objective that incorporates the CDCS Development Objective as a sub-objective, alongside other sub-objectives from State and other agencies (see below for details). Missions should contact their State and USAID regional bureaus and ICS Support Team with concerns related to integrating the CDCS into the ICS to consult further on options and solutions. Posts wishing to request an exception must contact Washington at least four weeks prior to the ICS draft submission date. Posts may not, however, adjust the CDCS Development Objectives and Results Framework as part of the ICS process, and the language should remain intact and fully traceable within the ICS framework and as part of the MRR. This is required as the CDCS framework serves as the basis for annual budget formulation for USAID-implemented resources through the MRR and is critical to the performance accountability of the agency.

Post Procedure for Exception Request

No later than four weeks before the draft ICS submission due date, Post's ICS point of contact submits the request/justification to ICS@state.gov and cc's the USAID Mission's point of contact, which includes the following information:

- List of draft ICS Goals Mission Objectives and Goals developed thus far
- Draft Mission Objective and proposal for listing the CDCS DO as a sub-objective, including information on other sub-objectives within that broader Mission Objective
- Short explanation of why alternatives that keep the Development Objective as a Mission Objective were determined to not be viable options
- Statement that both the USAID Mission Director and Ambassador concur with the request.
- If the DO is used a sub objective in the ICS, the Mission must still report on the DO in the MRR, PPR, Op Plan and Congressional Budget Justification



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Below is a summary of how the CDCS relates to each section of the ICS:

ICS Section	CDCS Links
Country Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extensive context and analysis from the CDCS should inform the ICS Country Context dialogue• Select elements of Development Context, Challenges, and Opportunities section of the CDCS should be listed in the ICS Country Context
Mission Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mission Goals may be based on or taken directly from the Joint Regional Strategy Goals or Strategic Focus Areas, and/or the USAID CDCS Development Goal.• Mission Goals can be used to bridge the gap between related MOs (i.e. one from State and one from USAID).
Mission Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development Objectives cannot be altered but may be used to cover related non-USAID priorities where appropriate• New Mission Objectives can be created to cover any non-USAID development priorities
Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include the Intermediate Results as Sub-Objectives in the DO Action Plan• If some elements of the interagency response to the MO are not in the CDCS, then the Mission can incorporate those activities in the action plan along with the Intermediate Results or add a separate Sub-Objective(s) to cover them



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EXAMPLE MISSION OBJECTIVE FROM CDCS DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE

1.2 Mission Objective:

More Functional and Accountable Institutions and Actors that Meet Citizens' Needs

Justification: Effective government at all levels, coupled with an engaged citizenry and operating in an environment that respects the rule of law, will result in functional and accountable institutions and actors that meet citizens' needs. This Development Objective (DO) will support bottom up and top down efforts at the local and national level to improve Freedonia's democratic stability. In order for Freedonian society to become more participatory and inclusive, the work of government institutions at all levels needs to be more functional and accountable toward citizens' needs. Support to improve governance needs to link with support to an active civil society that demands improved governance and services. Without this two-pronged approach, the non-governmental sector would not be in a position to play a watchdog role to government. Without feedback from civil society and citizens, governments would not be fully democratic.

This DO covers two Sub-Objectives (Intermediate Results): improvements in the supply side of Freedonia governance by promoting more functional and accountable institutions and actors at all levels; and improvements on the demand side by increasing citizens' engagement in governance. Over the past decade, the USG has been the leading donor in local governance assistance which resulted in attracting large funding from other donors for joint projects. USAID/Freedonia will continue to rely on the World Bank as an intellectual ally on policy issues such as fiscal decentralization, municipal borrowing, and revenue allocation and seek out other donors to be financial partners for joint projects.

[Link to Full CDCS](#)

Include a link to the full CDCS at the end of the justification

Missions using a CDCS Development Objective as a Mission Objectives should include the development hypothesis from the CDCS as the justification. Insert only the **description of the development hypothesis**. The CDCS contains significant background, context, and description of each DO that isn't required in the ICS. However, that information can be used as a resource during the ICS process.

Depending on how the CDCS is structured, language on non-USG partners may also be inserted from the donor coordination section or aid effectiveness section.

As needed, substitute "sub-objective" for "intermediate result" so that the IR relationship is clear in the ICS context.



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EXAMPLE CONTINUED

Action Plan:

Include each Intermediate Result as a Sub-Objective

SUB-OBJECTIVE 1.1.1: More effective judicial, executive and legislative branches of government (CDCS)

KEY ACTIVITY	POC	DATE	INDICATORS/ MILESTONES
Legislative reforms: Provide technical assistance to ensure that reforms of key framework legislation, including but not limited to judicial and electoral legislation, take into account international best practices and are gender-sensitive.	USAID, with POL	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freedom House Nations in Transit (NIT) index # of new legislative and policy reforms initiated to strengthen governance at all levels (PPR) # of improved rules of procedures adopted at all levels (PPR)
Governance: Support civil society and media policy initiatives that promote legislative reforms including laws related to transparent media ownership, the privatization or shutdown of state-owned media and public broadcasting.	USAID, with PAS	On-going	
Transparent judicial processes: Provide technical assistance to the judicial institution reform process, which renders appointment and discipline systems more transparent and reduces opportunities for internal and external influence.	USAID, with POL, RLA	On-going	
Network local government associations: Support policy-enabling dialogue and improve the capacity of local governments to respond to community economic development needs.	USAID, with PAS	On-going	
Cooperation across levels of government: Support a policy enabling dialogue between the central government, local government, and business community for administrative and territorial reform in Freedonia.	USAID	On-going	

Incorporate Sub-IRs or approaches described in the DO narrative as activities

Insert Illustrative Indicators from the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning section of the CDCS or from the Mission Performance Management Plan developed subsequent to the CDCS. Do not include illustrative targets, just the indicators.

Activities led by non-USAID agencies that contribute to a development Mission Objective should be included under the IR Sub-Objective or under a separate Sub-Objective.