ADS Chapter 200

Development Policy

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Table of Contents

200.1 OVERVIEW 3

200.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBLITIES 4

200.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES 6

200.3.1 Principles 7

200.3.2 U.S. Government-wide Development Policies and International Development Commitments 8
200.3.2.1 International Development Commitments 9
200.3.2.2 United States Government-wide Development Policies 9

200.3.3 USAID Development Policy 10
200.3.3.1 Mission Statement 11
200.3.3.2 Agency-wide Policy Framework 11
200.3.3.3 Policy, Strategy, and Vision Papers 12

200.3.4 Policy Registry 13

200.3.5 Good Practice Documents 13

200.3.6 Process for Creating New Development Policy 13
200.3.6.1 Phase 1: Determination and Authorization for Policy Development 14
200.3.6.2 Phase 2: The Drafting Process 15
200.3.6.3 Phase 3: Final Clearance Process, Production and Roll Out 17

200.3.7 Implementing Development Policy 17

200.3.8 Assessing Development Policy 18

200.3.9 Revising and Retiring Development Policy 18

200.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES 19

200.4.1 External Mandatory References 19

200.4.2 Internal Mandatory References 19

200.5 ADDITIONAL HELP 20

200.6 DEFINITIONS 20

200.1 OVERVIEW

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This chapter describes the process of creating USAID development policy and articulates the development policy universe that affects all of the Agency's programs and actions. "Development policy" is defined as guidance covering the purpose, content, and substance of USAID programs. Given the complex, multidimensional environment that influences all development work, this chapter does not rank individual policies. Policy priorities are influenced by numerous factors and may change over time. Operating Units and Missions remain best positioned to determine the applicability of policies and the prioritization in a given context.

This chapter:

- Defines the types of development policy documents that are generated by the Agency;
- Sets forth principles of inclusivity, sustainability, coherence, and a strong evidence-base for all USAID development policy documents;
- Describes and provides references for the process of developing, writing, and clearing a USAID development policy document;
- Provides guidance on how policy implementation assessments must be planned and designed;
- Provides guidance on when and how development policy documents must be revised and/or retired; and
- Describes practices and principles for shaping and engaging in policy processes for U.S. government-wide development policies and international development commitments.

This chapter does not provide process guidance for development of USG-wide strategies or bilateral arrangements for foreign assistance in a particular country or region, and also does not provide process guidance for donor coordination efforts regarding a particular country or region.

The guidance contained in this chapter applies only to development policy and not to USAID operational policy. The guidance in this chapter applies to both Washington and field-based Operating Units. **ADS Chapter 201, Program Cycle Operational Policy** provides guidance on how USAID operationalizes development policy through the Program Cycle to achieve and sustain development results in a given country or region.

The term "policies" is used broadly throughout this chapter to refer to a variety of documents, but also approaches and theories that underpin international development.

The term “development policy document” is used more specifically to refer to the textual documents themselves.

200.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBLITIES

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a. The **Administrator** formulates and executes U.S. foreign assistance policies and programs subject to the foreign policy guidance of the President, the Secretary of State, and the National Security Council. The Administrator leads Agency policymaking and ensures coherence with U.S. foreign assistance and foreign policy objectives.

b. The **Chief Operating Officer** provides overall organization management to improve agency performance and achieve the mission and goals of the Agency through the use of strategic and performance planning.

c. The **Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL)** provides internal and external leadership on USAID’s development mission by shaping Agency and United States Government (USG) development policy and promoting good practice.

d. The **Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning, Office of Policy (PPL/P)**

- Leads the Agency in a collaborative process of coordinating, articulating, and producing development policy in order to guide programming decisions;
- Informs external audiences about Agency direction;
- Inserts development perspectives in foreign and national security policy formulation; and
- Represents USAID within the development community.

e. The **Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning, Office of Strategic and Program Planning (PPL/SPP)** establishes and oversees the implementation of policies and procedures for USAID Missions and, when relevant, Washington Operating Units, to design, implement, assess, and adjust country strategies, projects, and activities based on the best available information to achieve and sustain results. PPL/SPP builds Agency capacity in strategic planning, project and activity design, and implementation through the provision of targeted training, tools, and technical assistance and the facilitation of peer-to-peer learning, in coordination with the Office of Human Capital and Talent Management (HCTM) and other Agency stakeholders.

f. The **Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning, Office of Learning, Evaluation and Research (PPL/LER)** catalyzes USAID's transformation into an effective learning organization by strengthening the integration of monitoring, evaluation, and learning throughout the Program Cycle. PPL/LER builds the Agency’s

capacity in monitoring, evaluation, and learning by providing training and technical assistance, developing policy and guidance, and leading communities of practice. PPL/LER also provides a focal point for partnership on these topics, including implementing partners, domestic and international agencies and donors, non-governmental organizations, foundations, academic institutions, multilateral organizations, and local governments or organizations in the countries where USAID works.

g. The **Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning, Office of Donor Engagement (PPL/DE)** leads Agency efforts in mobilizing collective action that promotes USG foreign assistance priorities in the international arena. PPL/DE advocates and builds key relationships by strategically engaging in major multilateral, bilateral, and international efforts. PPL/DE works closely with USAID Missions, Bureaus, and other USG agencies to support the creation and implementation of international commitments and policies by aligning a diverse group of donors behind common development goals, and promoting joint action and burden sharing aimed at improving the delivery and effectiveness of U.S. foreign assistance and the promotion of transparency to U.S. taxpayers and program beneficiaries.

h. The **Performance Improvement Officer (PIO)** advises and assists Agency leadership to ensure the Agency achieves its mission and goals through strategic and performance planning.

i. The **Bureau for Management (M)** provides centralized management support services for the Agency and ensures that the Agency's core systems related to operational expense budgets, financial accounting and management, acquisition and assistance, and information management are adequately integrated and support programming processes. M serves to support sustainable capacity development in areas of its technical expertise. The AA/M represents the Agency before the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), other Federal agencies, Congress, and the public on matters pertaining to Agency management operations.

j. **Pillar Bureaus** serve as technical leaders for the Agency. Pillar Bureaus identify and disseminate good practices to USAID's Regional Bureaus and field Missions and manage central mechanisms that support the design, implementation, and evaluation of field programs as well as mechanisms that support the implementation of sector strategies and the achievement of sector goals. Pillar Bureaus may engage in both internal and external policy document development and implementation. For internal policy document development, Pillar Bureaus can provide support and advice for the research, writing, implementation, and evaluation of technical policies, strategies, and vision papers. They may initiate the request process for a new internal policy document and they can lead implementation of internal policy documents, helping field missions integrate policies into practice and providing guidance as needed. For external policy processes, Pillar Bureaus may again provide technical expertise and background papers to ground policy documents in evidence.

k. **Regional Bureaus** are the main link between Washington and field Missions. Regional Bureaus are responsible for leading policy and budget decisions, based on regional and country expertise and analyses. Regional Bureaus may take a leadership role in development policy document formulation including developing bilateral and/or regional policies directly, in coordination with their Missions. Regional Bureaus can also provide support and advice for the research, writing, implementation, and evaluation of the geographic context for technical policies, strategies, and vision papers. They also may serve as a dissemination and support function to the field, as the field integrates and implements development policy documents and principles into programs.

l. **Missions** (including bilateral and regional missions and country offices) are responsible for

- Using USAID and USG policy documents and international development policy to the fullest extent appropriate;
- Participating in the development, assessment, and review process for development policy documents, when relevant;
- Staying aware of general policy approaches to development and sector-specific work adopted by the USG and USAID and employing these approaches, as appropriate; and
- Shaping bilateral arrangements directly with their host countries.

m. The **Office of Budget and Resource Management (BRM)** reviews and clears development policy documents written and published by USAID when there are budgetary implications, direct or indirect. BRM clears on externally driven development policy documents when there are direct budgetary implications for the Agency.

n. The **Office of General Counsel (GC)** provides legal advice and support on matters related to policy development and implementation. GC reviews and clears development policy documents written and published by USAID.

200.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

Development policy manifests in “policy documents,” including USAID’s Policies, Strategies, and Vision papers. It also includes externally driven policy, where USAID may participate in drafting, editing, and shaping policies that extend beyond USAID and are often initiated by other actors, such as USG-wide development policies and those in support of international development agreements, frameworks, and commitments. Together, these internal USAID policies, externally driven policies, and international agreements comprise recommended practices and approaches for international development assistance broadly and in specific fields.

200.3.1 Principles
Effective Date: 09/07/2016

Development policies should be grounded in the following four principles:

- Evidence-based,
- Inclusive,
- Sustainable, and
- Coherent.

Internally produced development policy documents must adhere to these principles and, to the extent possible, USAID should promote these principles in externally driven policy documents as well, such as international commitments and USG-wide policies.

Evidence-based: Evidence-based policies are grounded in research, analysis, and conclusions supported by evidence. Evidence-based policies accurately reflect the current state of knowledge in a particular field and current practices and approaches. It may also include structured thinking based on experiences and insights, as well as consultations with key stakeholders.

Inclusive: Development policies should be inclusive by ensuring practices and approaches are grounded in participation, non-discrimination, and accountability. All groups of people should be able to participate in development programs, share the benefits of such efforts, and participate in decision-making processes. In designing and administering USAID programs, pursuant to existing USAID policy, Bureaus/Missions and Operating Units must not discriminate against any beneficiary or potential beneficiary, such as, but not limited to, by withholding, adversely impacting, or denying equitable access to benefits or services on the basis of any non-merit factor. A non-merit factor includes race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity and pregnancy), national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, marital status, parental status, political affiliation, or veteran's status. Nothing in this requirement is intended to limit the ability of a program to target assistance to certain populations as defined in the project design (see **ADS 200mab, Promoting Nondiscrimination and Inclusive Development in USAID-funded Programs**).

Sustainable: Development policy should promote sustainability, which encompasses both the sustainable achievement of development results and the use of environmentally sustainable practices. Sustainability depends on effectively harnessing the contributions of many local actors to produce results that are valued by the citizens of partner countries. Focusing on the principle of sustainability will help avoid inadvertent harm to the people we are trying to help. Policies should consider how they will promote sustainability by supporting the following:

- Local ownership,
- The assessment of outcomes after programs have ended, and
- The strengthening of local systems to produce development results.

Coherent: Both internal policies and externally driven policies supported by the Agency in collaboration with other USG agencies/departments should demonstrate coherence, alignment, and responsiveness across the various policies, priorities, and agendas. Objectives of other development policy documents should not be contravened, and ideally should be supported or furthered, whenever new policy is developed or older policy is revised.

As an agency of the USG, USAID must adhere to the broader policies and priorities to which the USG commits. This means USG policies and international commitments are part of our wider policy context. As the lead agency for the USG on international development, USAID helps to shape USG development policy and the USG approach to international development agendas while pushing a coherent approach. The Agency also works to embed and operationalize the principles, approaches, and commitments made on the government-wide and international level in its own development policy documents. PPL will work with GC, when necessary, to facilitate the resolution of differences between USAID-defined policies and broader policy guidance of the USG and international community.

200.3.2 U.S. Government-wide Development Policies and International Development Commitments

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

USAID often participates in drafting, editing, and shaping policies that extend beyond USAID, which are often initiated by external actors and or events. For example, the Administration may issue policies on national security that have implications for USAID. USAID may also jointly draft development policy documents with other USG agencies or departments (e.g., the United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security) and may sometimes issue follow-up documents with Agency-specific action or implementation plans. Additionally, the USG, and by extension USAID, signs on to agreements or voluntarily endorses commitments that have the effect of policy that guides the U.S. to principles or action, such as the **United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, **Financing for Development**, or **Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation**, etc.

USAID aims to embed the same principles that ground our internally-developed policies into externally-driven policies. USAID's experience in programming and evaluation should ensure these policies are based in evidence, inclusive, sustainable, and coherent (see **200.3.1**). For externally-driven policies, USAID seeks to establish policies that represent our current best-thinking, practices, and internal policies. It should be

noted that USAID may not have final decision-making authority for externally-driven policies.

Since these are not solely USAID-initiated policies, they do not need to follow section **200.3.6** on determination and authorization for policy development. In general, PPL will engage in interagency coordination on development policies with broad relevance or on cross-cutting issues. Other Bureaus or Independent Offices (B/IOs) may take the lead for USAID in drafting USG policies and international development commitments that are more sector or region-specific. The lead B/IO, whether it be PPL or another B/IO, that covers a sector or region under discussion, will coordinate and track the process within USAID.

200.3.2.1 International Development Commitments

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

International development commitments refer to international accords, including agreements, conventions, charters, protocols, declarations, memoranda of understanding, and statements of intent to which USAID or the USG has committed globally. The extent to which the provisions of these accords are mandatory depends on the nature of the accord and can fall within a range from binding under U.S. law or international law, to voluntary. Even if the accord is not considered legally binding, there may still be significant repercussions for the U.S. if it fails to implement its commitments.

Typically, the Department of State leads negotiations on global international accords and policies; however, other departments and agencies may be designated to take the lead depending on the context. For example, the United States Trade Representative is the lead negotiator with the World Trade Organization. However, even when USAID is not the lead negotiator, if USAID has significant stakes, it actively engages in interagency strategic planning and discussions. On issues pertaining to development, USAID often plays a vital role in raising development perspectives and providing its policy and implementation expertise. On cross-cutting issues, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development or G20 Leaders' Statements, PPL frequently plays a coordinating role for USAID with significant support from other technical and Pillar Bureaus. While it may be appropriate for other B/IOs to lead when negotiations are more focused in a given country, sector, or area of expertise, PPL should be kept informed and will remain engaged, as appropriate. When appropriate, PPL/DE must be informed when such global negotiations involve other donors, both bilateral and multilateral.

200.3.2.2 United States Government-wide Development Policies

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

United States Government (USG) policies can cover a wide range of topics, including:

- Presidential directives, such as Executive Orders and Memoranda, Presidential Policy Directives or National Security Strategies;

- Administration-led issue specific policies, such as the White House International Policy for Cyberspace; or

- Joint-Department/Agency-USAID policies, such as the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review or the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan and other joint strategies as may be developed.

USAID seeks policy coherence with other USG departments, agencies, and actors in the countries where USAID operates. Missions should engage, as appropriate, to ensure this coherence.

As soon as USAID is engaged, PPL should be contacted to ensure awareness, coherence with other policies, and collaboration with all relevant B/IOs. PPL will appoint a point of contact (POC) to help coordinate and track the process. Drafters should consult with all relevant subject-matter B/IOs throughout the process to achieve coherence and take all Agency equities into consideration. Drafters should consult and follow to the extent possible the requirements for drafting listed in section **200.3.6.2.**

As with internally-developed policies, when USG policies are ready for final approval and release, the USG policy will be sent for clearance at the AA level for relevant B/IOs including:

- Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL);

- Office of Budget and Resource Management (BRM);

- Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA);

- Bureau for Management (M);

- Office of the General Counsel (GC); and

- Any B/IOs or senior coordinators with sectoral or geographic expertise.

Other B/IOs should be given the option of clearing. When clearance is secured, the policy must be sent with an Action Memo to the Executive Secretariat (ES) for the Administrator's signature.

200.3.3 USAID Development Policy

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

Internally-determined development policy documents include Agency mission and value statements, Agency-wide policy frameworks, and three specific types of policy documents: Policies, Strategies, and Vision papers. These documents are considered internal because they are initiated, drafted, and approved by USAID. They should

incorporate and reference the principles, approaches, and commitments made by the USG outlined in **200.3.2**.

200.3.3.1 Mission Statement
Effective Date: 09/07/2016

USAID development policy may be guided by a mission statement. A mission statement is defined as a formal written statement of the Agency's core purpose and overarching vision (for USAID's mission statement see: **https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/mission-vision-values**). A mission statement will serve as a filter and means for prioritization of our development assistance efforts and engagements. A mission statement must be short, serving as a means to quickly and clearly communicate the Agency's purpose. It will also reinforce higher-level USG policies and international development commitments and approaches to development efforts.

200.3.3.2 Agency-wide Policy Framework
Effective Date: 09/07/2016

The term "framework" is reserved for an Agency-wide policy framework document. Agency-wide policy frameworks are policy documents intended to guide decision-making throughout the Agency. They articulate the Agency's purpose and principles, which should be carried out consistently in programming and all Agency activities.

An Agency-wide policy framework may be drafted and issued only at the initiation of the Office of the Administrator, in consultation with PPL. A policy framework operates as a roadmap, providing details for the entire Agency in approaches to development, program implementation and prioritization. A policy framework should acknowledge other USG foreign policy priorities and international development policy and commitments made by the Agency, and help translate those policies in a manner applicable to USAID. Principles and guidance from a policy framework should be reflected in Agency policy and planning tools, including Country Development Cooperation Strategies (CDCS), annual budgets, and project design. They should serve broadly as the basis for dialogue about USAID's development priorities, when relevant.

The current Agency Policy Framework weaves together the current USG development policies and international commitments with Agency priorities in a manner that is meaningful and applicable internally. The following are the seven operational principles outlined in the current policy framework that guide Agency operations and programming:

(1) Promote gender equality and female empowerment;

(2) Apply science, technology, and innovation strategically;

(3) Apply selectivity and focus;

(4) Measure and evaluate impact;

(5) Build in sustainability from the start;

(6) Apply integrated approaches to development; and

(7) Leverage "solution-holders" and partners strategically.

The current Agency Policy Framework can be found here: **https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1870/usaid-policy-framework-2011-2015**.

200.3.3.3 Policy, Strategy, and Vision Papers

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

USAID publishes three different types of development policy documents: Policies, Strategies, and Vision papers. Not all policy documents are equally relevant for all contexts. When a policy mandates roles and responsibilities for specific Operating Units or identifies priority missions, those Operating Units are expected to align their procedures in accordance with the policy. In all other cases, Operating Units should consider the relevance of the policy for their context (based on host country needs and priorities, resources, results of analyses, activities of other donors, or other factors), and make appropriate determinations about whether and how to integrate the policy into the Program Cycle or other planning processes.

The policy documents are defined as follows:

- **Policies:** Agency development policies articulate the Agency's corporate position and set a specific priority direction for a sectoral or cross-cutting goal or issue consistent with USG and Administrator directives. These policies can seek to change the way the Agency programs in key areas but do *not* set specific time-bound targets. By stating a specific direction or approach, these policies help USAID organize as an Agency to maximize impact in a certain area.

- **Strategies:** Strategies focus on achieving specific programmatic targets in a sector or cross-cutting area. Strategies should include explicit targets to be achieved within a specific time period and, therefore, must be time-bound. Since strategies lay out targets, they have a more clearly delineated impact on Agency resources compared to policies and vision papers. The strategy development process is closely linked to budget and resource discussions. Strategies must have an Operating Unit that is specifically designated to ensure and monitor implementation. (The process for developing Country Development Cooperation Strategies is covered in **ADS 201**.)

- **Vision Papers:** A vision paper is an aspirational statement orienting the Agency regarding an issue of high significance. Vision papers constitute a public statement about the importance USAID places on a development issue and articulates the Agency's position or approach to the issue. A vision paper often

outlines an end state that USAID aims to contribute (e.g., ending extreme poverty; ending child marriage; full inclusion of LGBTI persons).

See **ADS 200maa, Guidance on Writing and Reviewing Development Policy** for more information on these development policy documents.

200.3.4 Policy Registry
Effective Date: 09/07/2016

To improve access to Agency policy documents and facilitate their use, PPL/P maintains both a public site for broad accessibility to all internally generated development policy documents and an internal.

PPL/P will add policy documents to the public page when they have received the Administrator's approval or have been updated or revised and will archive policy documents when they expire or are retired. The publically available version for all Agency policies, strategies, and vision papers can be accessed at: https://www.usaid.gov/results-and-data/planning/policy.

For additional help, an internal site with policies, strategies, vision papers, and also good practice documents, how-to-guides, and relevant externally-driven policy documents can be accessed at: **https://programnet.usaid.gov/module/agency-policy-strategies**.

200.3.5 Good Practice Documents
Effective Date: 09/07/2016

B/IOs produce various guides that promote good development practice but do not constitute policy. These include documents labeled as guidelines, how-to and technical notes, handbooks, toolkits, assessment frameworks, checklists, and templates, etc. B/IOs may establish their own procedures for developing and vetting good practice guides. These documents do not need to follow the procedures outlined in Section **200.3.6**; however, B/IOs should:

- Seek input from those units within the Agency that have expertise or will be affected by practice recommendations; and

- In certain cases, for example when there is an Agency Policy, Strategy, or Vision paper on a topic, seek PPL/P review of the draft guide to ensure policy coherence.

200.3.6 Process for Creating New Development Policy
Effective Date: 09/07/2016

To create new USAID development policies, the following three-phased process must be followed:

- Phase 1: Determining the need for and authorizing a new development policy;
- Phase 2: Drafting the policy; and
- Phase 3: Securing clearance for the policy.

Note: These requirements do not apply to externally driven development policies.

200.3.6.1 Phase 1: Determination and Authorization for Policy Development

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

Step 1: Identify Needs and Goals

For a new or revised development policy document to be warranted, it must fulfill a clear and specific need. The policy document must codify a new way of thinking or body of evidence not captured in current development policy documents. It must be sufficiently comprehensive or important to warrant an Agency-wide public stance. If an existing development policy document has reached an expiration date or become out-of-date, or a new issue or conceptual understanding of an issue has emerged, then a new development policy document may be warranted. Agency policies ensure that USAID is aligned with current development approaches and their intersection with other relevant bodies of thought. There should be a clear demand for the new development policy demonstrated by one or both of the following:

- The issue has generated critical demand for guidance within the Agency such that a new development policy is warranted. This may be the result of a specific request from Agency leadership, a critical mass of stakeholders within the Agency itself, or the cross-cutting nature of the issue necessitates a corporate position.
- The Agency has received requests from external actors for a new development policy. External actors may include the White House, Congress, or the Government Accountability Office. Additionally, the Agency may be further influenced by external requests from relevant stakeholders, such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) or implementing partners. Alternatively, the relevant lead B/IO may determine that USG-wide policy or international commitments require the creation of Agency-specific development policy.

Step 2: Submit a Request Memo to PPL

All B/IOs or cross-bureau teams proposing to initiate a new policy development process or to initiate the process of a significant revision to an existing development policy must obtain PPL approval by submitting a Request Memo to AA/PPL. A policy process initiated within PPL itself must also comply with this requirement. The Request Memo clearly articulates one or several goals, defined as a desired result or end-state, which will address the need for the new development policy. The policy's goals will serve as

guiding principles during the drafting and implementation process, and will also form the basis of required policy implementation assessments. Further details on writing a successful request memo can be found in **ADS 200maa, Guidance on Writing and Reviewing Development Policy**.

The Request Memo must:

- Demonstrate the need for the development policy;
- State the goal(s) of the development policy;
- State the date when the forthcoming Terms of Reference (TOR) will be available, providing a logistical overview of the drafting and publication process and timeline;
- Come from the AA-level of the relevant Operating Unit(s); and
- If a cross-office implementation team is proposed, the Memo must describe the specific offices and/or positions involved, and delineate the specific responsibilities for each office/position.

PPL will respond to the Request Memo within two weeks of receipt with an approval, denial, or a request for additional information. If the Request Memo is approved, a PPL/P POC will be assigned to offer guidance during the policy drafting and clearance processes, ensuring policy coherence, and keeping PPL and Agency leadership informed throughout the process.

200.3.6.2 Phase 2: The Drafting Process

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

This section outlines the process of drafting a development policy document, which begins once the Request Memo has been officially approved.

The following mandatory requirements must be considered and met by the drafting team or working group (if relevant) during the drafting and clearance process:

- As determined by PPL, development policies that mandate additional reporting requirements will be required to undergo review processes established by the joint State/USAID Streamlining Governance Committee and will not be considered final until those reporting requirements are approved by that committee.
- Development policies that contain new resource requirements must be discussed with and cleared by BRM and PPL prior to final clearance.

- The policy document must comply with relevant External and Internal Mandatory References (including relevant Federal statutes and Executive Orders) found in **ADS 201**.

  One internal Agency-wide consultation and one external public consultation period must be completed. Before sharing a draft with the Agency, the policy should be cleared by PPL/P and any other relevant B/IO and stakeholders identified in consultation with PPL/P. B/IOs must consult with GC on planned external publication consultation in order to clarify applicable legal requirements.
- The drafting team or working group must obtain final clearances from all relevant B/IOs, determined in conjunction with PPL. Before publication, the final document must be cleared by, at a minimum, PPL, BRM, M, GC, and LPA.

- The Operating Unit that will take a leadership role in implementation should be designated, and this designation must be communicated to PPL.

For further details on each step, including practices that have been successful in the past, and a detailed outline of the Terms of Reference (TOR) format, see **ADS 200maa, Guidance on Writing and Reviewing Development Policy**.

Launch Process and Assemble a Working Group

This process may be initiated through a kick-off meeting that gathers the internal USAID stakeholders and includes the leadership of the relevant B/IO. A smaller Drafting Team may also be assembled to take the lead on drafting and clearance. The PPL/P POC will be included in the Working Group.

A. Develop Terms of Reference (TOR): The Working Group will draft the TOR and make it available to the PPL/P POC approximately two weeks after the approval of the Request Memo. The TOR can be updated throughout the drafting process.

B. Establish the Evidence Base: Sufficient background research or synthesis of existing research must be completed to ensure the document accurately reflects the current state of knowledge in the field and current practices and knowledge in the Agency.

C. Draft Policy: The Working Group will agree on a framework or organizational structure for the new development policy that clearly articulates the goals of the policy and any potential changes to operations or programming that implementing the policy will entail. Once the framework is agreed upon, the Working Group, or a smaller Drafting Team, will draft the policy.

D. Consultations: At the end of the drafting process, preceding final clearances, one Agency-wide consultation and one opportunity for external public comment on the draft policy document is required. Input can be obtained by posting the document on a public forum for written comments or by facilitating meetings with stakeholders.

200.3.6.3 Phase 3: Final Clearance Process, Production and Roll Out
Effective Date: 09/07/2016

When ready for final approval and release, the development policy will receive final clearance at the AA level from relevant B/IOs which, at a minimum, should include the B/IO(s)originating the policy, PPL, BRM, LPA, M, and GC. Other B/IOs should be informed of the forthcoming policy and given the option of clearing, if desired.

When clearance is received, the policy must be sent with an Action Memo to the Executive Secretariat for the Administrator's signature. The action memo must be drafted with two lines of approval – one for the final document and one for the "Message from the Administrator." The Operating Unit leading the drafting efforts will assemble the final cleared version of the policy and the high-quality graphics and photos. The cleared version with graphics should comply with the official, branded policy document template developed by LPA. The final document must be assembled in the official, branded policy document template and cleared by LPA's design editor before it is published. The drafting team or working group must send a pdf version of the final publication to the PPL Communications team for inclusion on the **policy page of the USAID Web site** and to PPL/P for inclusion in the Policy Registry database.

200.3.7 Implementing Development Policy
Effective Date: 09/07/2016

During the policy development phase, an Operating Unit should be identified as having lead responsibility for implementation of the development policy. Operating Units can facilitate implementation by raising awareness of the development policy; assessing and communicating information on resource implications for implementation, identifying countries, regions, or targets of particular priority; and identifying, analyzing, and promoting good practice through guides and training. They should also monitor the progress of implementation and work with regional Bureaus and Missions to identify gaps and challenges.

Operating Units are responsible for maintaining awareness of Agency policies and strategies and taking each into account throughout the Program Cycle, as outlined in **ADS 201**, and in any programming that occurs outside of the Program Cycle. Relevant policies and strategies will be used by Agency staff at all levels to inform program design and monitoring and evaluation, as appropriate. In addition, those who design, manage, and authorize Washington-based projects or activities must take into account relevant USAID policies and strategies and applicable USG and international development commitments.

Only in limited circumstances, as when the implementation of a policy document establishes or modifies Agency operations, will it be necessary to issue a separate ADS chapter. Under no circumstances will a new ADS chapter be created on a development policy topic for which a policy document has not been produced in advance according to the procedure specified in **200.3.7**.

Further details regarding implementation, including roles and responsibilities, are outlined in the **How-To Note on Policy and Strategy Implementation**.

200.3.8 Assessing Development Policy

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

USAID Policies, Strategies, and Vision papers must be assessed periodically, approximately every five years, in order to keep USAID at the forefront of development thinking and contribute to organizational learning. PPL or the implementing B/IO should conduct this assessment. At the conclusion of the drafting process and immediately following publication, the leadership of the Working Group is required to submit an "Intent to Assess Implementation" memo to PPL. This memo should lay out specific goals that the policy aims to achieve. The implementation assessment will focus on whether the policy has made progress in achieving its goals. For further details on this, including suggestions of specific methods to be used in policy assessments, see **How-To Note on Policy and Strategy Implementation**.

The memo must include:

- A brief summary of the implementation plan, stating which Operating Unit is responsible for the assessment;
- A schedule of forthcoming assessments with the first required to take place within five years following publication;
- A plan for measuring the extent to which the policy has led to significant changes in Agency function and programming; and
- The methods that will be used to assess the changes generated by the policy, which may include surveys, document analysis, interviews, and case studies.

200.3.9 Revising and Retiring Development Policy

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

It is appropriate to periodically review the effectiveness and technical content of a development policy to determine whether a revision is warranted. Strategies are required to be time-bound and explicitly state an expiration date, and other types of policies may elect to be time-bound as well. In this case, the decision whether or not to revise will occur when the specified time window ends. However, even policy documents with no clear end date or that have not officially expired should be periodically considered for revision, because they may reflect an outdated understanding of the current development landscape or an outdated technical approach. Generally, a policy revision will follow either an implementation assessment, particularly if findings suggest a revision is warranted, or a review of the technical content (performed at least every 10 years). The implementation or issue owner of the

policy will conduct the periodic review. PPL will take responsibility for coordinating the review if there are multiple issue owners. If there is not a clear issue owner, then PPL will conduct this review. This decision may also be reached without an official implementation assessment. These requirements do not apply to externally driven development policies as discussed in **200.3.2**.

Each document should be considered for revision every 10 years at a minimum. After review, the policy document may undergo one of the following:

- Full Revision: It may be necessary to significantly revise a policy document because it has expired, an assessment has indicated the need for revision, or simply because the document is now outdated. In this case, the implementation owner of the policy must write the Request Memo asking for a revision process to begin. This memo must include the same sections as the Request Memo for a new policy, but may be less detailed, as needed, depending on the extent of the revisions.

- Extend with No/Light Revisions: This applies when a time-bound policy document has expired or ten years has passed since the release of the policy, yet the policy remains relevant. In this case, the Operating Unit will present a narrative recommendation to extend the policy through an Intent to Extend Memo. This brief, one to two page memo should explain why this policy should be extended with minimal revisions, summarize any revisions, and must be submitted to the Director of the Office of Policy in PPL.

- Retire: If the implementation owner of the policy decides that a policy is no longer relevant, PPL must be informed of the decision to retire the policy through a memo that includes the rationale for retiring the policy. PPL may also initiate a process of retiring an out-of-date development policy, after consulting with relevant Agency stakeholders. PPL and the policy owners will work together to remove the policy from public and internal Web sites and references.

200.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

200.4.1 External Mandatory References

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

There are no external mandatory references for this chapter.

200.4.2 Internal Mandatory References

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

a. **ADS 200maa, Guidance on Writing and Reviewing Development Policy**

b. **ADS 200mab, Promoting Nondiscrimination and Inclusive Development in USAID-Funded Programs**

c. **Department of State – USAID Joint Strategic Plan FY 2014 – FY 2017**

d. **How-To Note on Policy and Strategy Implementation**

e. **Policy Registry Page (public)**

f. **USAID Policy Framework**

200.5 ADDITIONAL HELP

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

a. **Policy Registry Page (internal)**

200.6 DEFINITIONS

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

externally driven policy
External policy documents are often initiated by external actors. USAID may participate in drafting, editing, and shaping policies that extend beyond USAID and are often initiated by external actors, such U.S. government-wide development policies and those in support of international development agreements, frameworks, and commitments. (**Chapter 200**)

internal policy documents
Documents drafted and approved solely by USAID. Refers to when USAID has control of the writing and approval process. (**Chapter 200**)

mission statement
A written formal statement of the Agency's core purpose and overarching vision. (**Chapter 200**)

operation policy
USAID's program procedures, rules, and regulations affecting the management of USAID internal systems, including budget, financial management, personnel, procurement, and program operations. (**Chapter 200**)

policies
Agency development policies articulate the Agency's corporate position and set a specific direction for a sectoral or cross-cutting goal or issue consistent with USG and Administrator directives. These policies can seek to change the way the Agency programs in key areas but do *not* set specific time-bound targets. By stating a specific direction or approach, these policies help USAID organize as an Agency to maximize impact in a certain area. (**Chapter 200**)

policy documents
Refers to internally determined policies, strategies, and vision papers and externally driven policies involving other agencies/departments in the U.S. Government, multilateral organizations, and international bodies. (**Chapter 200**)

Policy Framework
A Policy Framework is done at the Agency-level and is a roadmap that provides details for the entire Agency in an approach to development, program implementation, and prioritization. (**Chapter 200**)

strategies
USAID Strategies have programmatic targets in a sector or cross-cutting area. Strategies should include explicit targets to be achieved within a specific time period, and must therefore be time-bound. Because Strategies lay out targets, they have a more clearly delineated impact on Agency resources compared to Policies and Vision papers. Therefore, the strategy development process is closely linked to budget and resource discussions. Strategies must have an Operating Unit that is specifically designated to ensure implementation. (**Chapter 200**)

Vision Papers
Aspirational statements orienting the Agency regarding an issue of high significance. Vision papers constitute a public statement about the importance USAID places on a development issue, and articulate our position or approach to the issue. A Vision paper often outlines an end state to which USAID aims to contribute (e.g., ending extreme poverty; ending child marriage; full inclusion of LGBTI persons). (**Chapter 200**)

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