

ADMINISTRATOR

USAID/General Notice
A/AID
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Subject: Strengthening Evaluation at USAID

Evaluation is a key aspect of program management—not just for accountability, but also as a source of learning. USAID was one of the first development agencies to establish a central evaluation function. We have been widely recognized as an international leader in development evaluation and results-based management.

Let us focus again on our evaluation leadership in the development community. As an Agency, it is critical that we focus more on performance and accountability. That means emphasizing, budgeting for, and rewarding, effective program monitoring and evaluation. At the central level, this means rebuilding our capacity to conduct the kinds of robust and objective evaluations that are fundamental to effective, evidence, and results-based programming.

Over the past several months, we have taken a number of exciting steps to re-establish USAID as an evaluation leader, both within the Federal government and in the international development community. We have:

1. **Created a new Central Evaluation Unit within the Management Bureau.** The unit should be fully operational early in FY 2009, and will be the focal point for central evaluation studies, leadership, and support.
2. **Updated USAID's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (ADS 203)** to encompass the foreign assistance framework, and reaffirm the essential role of evaluation in managing for results. This revision will be issued soon.
3. **Re-energized USAID's Evaluation Activities** by:
 - strengthening **technical support** for the field and Washington through USAID's Integrated Managing for Results Contract;
 - developing a new set of Agency-wide **evaluation** indefinite quantity **contracts** that will be awarded this winter;
 - mobilizing new Agency and inter-agency working groups to develop new **standards and guidelines** for evaluating foreign assistance;
 - reinvigorating **USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse** as a key element in learning from experience; and
 - planning a new set of central **impact evaluation studies**.
4. **Re-established USAID's intellectual leadership** in evaluation by disseminating evaluation findings widely and engaging in international evaluation forums and institutions, such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Evaluation Network.

Evaluating our programs and projects is an inherent part of managing for results and learning from our experiences. Evaluation reports must be shared, analyzed, disseminated, and used. And when we learn that an activity or policy is flawed, we have an obligation to respond accordingly.

Foreign assistance depends on innovation. We will not always fully succeed, but we must always learn from our experiences and share our knowledge with others. This sharing of knowledge from good evaluation is at the heart of our vision of the Global Development Commons, and is central to our commitment on behalf of the American people and those we serve throughout the world.

I welcome your thoughts on what we can do to make our USAID intellectual leadership even stronger, and thank you for your cooperation.

Henrietta H. Fore

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