ADS Chapter 505

Forms Management Program

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Functional Series 500 – Management Services
ADS 505 – Forms Management Program
POC for ADS 505: Sylvia Joyner, (202) 712-5007, SJoyner@usaid.gov

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ADS 505 – Forms Management Program

505.1 OVERVIEW

Effective Date: 08/06/2002

The goals of the Forms Management Program are

- To develop, generate, and use forms;
- To increase the usefulness of forms as administrative tools by standardizing and simplifying them, and applying acceptable forms design standards;
- To achieve savings in all areas of Agency operations by periodically reviewing information requirements, eliminating nonessential or duplicate forms, consolidating similar or related forms and procedures, and strongly encouraging the use of electronic forms obtainable from the Internet and intranet to reduce Agency printing costs;
- To minimize the time required to prepare, use, and file forms;
- To provide assistance and technical advice to managers and staff; and
- To ensure that all forms fulfill data collection, transmission, and summarization requirements.

505.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date: 12/16/2002

a. The **Chief Information Officer (CIO)** is responsible for oversight of the USAID Forms Management program. This includes review, approval, and adjudication of associated policies, procedures, and performance.

b. The **Bureau for Management, Office of Management Services, Information and Records Division (M/MS/IRD)** is responsible for the administration of USAID's Forms Management Program. This includes managing forms alternatives analysis, design, testing, approval, posting, and use.

c. The **Bureau for Management, Office of Information Resources Management (M/IRM)** is responsible for developing electronic forms and converting official USAID forms to electronic format. M/IRM is also responsible for posting official forms to the USAID intranet.

d. The **Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA)** is responsible for ensuring that forms are accessible in accordance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. LPA is also responsible for posting official forms on the USAID Internet.

e. Requiring office heads are responsible for ensuring that their forms comply with applicable statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures. They are also responsible for certifying their forms as part of the yearly ADS certification.

f. The originator of each official USAID form is responsible for ensuring that forms that will contain Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) data when filled in are properly marked as such and contain the following statement at the top and bottom of each page: This form is considered Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) when filled in. Anyone completing a USAID form is responsible for checking to see if the form is marked with the SBU statement above.

505.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

505.3.1 General Policy for AID Forms

Effective Date: 12/16/2002

The scope of the Forms Program covers USAID-owned forms. It does not cover forms that are used within a single office and do not solicit information outside that office.

All AID forms must have corresponding citations in the Agency's Directives Program, the Automated Directives System (ADS). Forms must not contain policy or procedure that is not covered by the applicable ADS chapter.

The Agency standard format for AID public-use forms is Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). All public-use forms must be converted to PDF format. Exceptions must be approved by M/MS/IRD.

While at the present time non-public-use AID forms are not in PDF format, M/IRM, in coordination with M/MS/IRD, has started to convert some of the non-public-use forms to PDF, and will continue in a systematic way to convert the rest, as time and resources permit. M/IRM intends to deploy within one year a tool that will allow users to fill in PDF forms online and save them to disk.

AID forms must not be posted to the web without going through the approval process outlined in this chapter. Non-AID forms must not be posted on the USAID web site. Instead, a link to the authoritative source for non-AID forms will be included.

Forms must be written in plain language. Each form must serve its intended purpose, and forms must be consolidated to serve several purposes where possible. M/MS/IRD periodically reviews forms for need, effectiveness, and economy.

505.3.2 Forms Management Program Procedures

Effective Date: 12/16/2002

The Forms Management Program consists of the following required procedures:

- Identification of Need

- Analysis of Requirements/Alternatives
- Design
- Testing
- Posting
- Review and Certification
- Cancellation

505.3.2.1 Identification of Need
Effective Date: 12/16/2002

Based on changes in or a review of existing statutes, regulations, policies, procedures, or forms, requiring offices must identify whether a form is needed, or whether there is a need to change the way information is collected via forms. Requiring offices must contact M/MS/IRD for support in coordinating a solution.

505.3.2.2 Analysis of Requirements/Alternatives
Effective Date: 12/16/2002

Requiring offices must review their needs with M/MS/IRD to determine whether

a. The information needed is already available elsewhere;

b. Their needs are best met by the use of forms;

c. Any existing government-wide or Agency-specific forms address their needs (see the **USAID Forms Catalog** for a complete list of USAID forms);

d. Information will be collected from 10 or more members of the public; and

e. Forms need to be created, modified, converted to the Agency standard electronic format, or canceled.

If the information proposed for collection via a form is found to already exist elsewhere, requiring offices must pursue those sources.

If it is found that other vehicles for obtaining the information required are preferable to a form, requiring offices must pursue those options.

If it is found that existing government-wide or Agency-specific forms address their needs, requiring offices must use such forms. All forms must use the authoritative source for that form, which is the originator of the form (not necessarily GSA). You can access the authoritative source for a form via the USAID Forms page (**http://transition.usaid.gov/policy/ads/aidforms.html**).

If it is found that a proposed form will gather information from 10 or more public individuals, then it is a public-use form and requiring offices must follow the policy

directives and required procedures laid out in **ADS 506, Reports Management**, prior to proceeding.

When it is found that a form must be canceled, requiring offices must proceed as described in Section **505.3.2.7**, Cancellation.

When it is found that a form must be created or modified, requiring offices must proceed to design, test, get approval for, and post forms as described in the following sections.

Unresolved disputes must be forwarded to the CIO for adjudication.

505.3.2.3 Design

Effective Date: 12/16/2002

Requiring offices must work with M/MS/IRD to translate their information needs into a form. To facilitate this, requiring offices must provide a completed form **AID 3-1, Forms Approval Request**, and supporting documentation to M/MS/IRD.

Requiring offices must submit all new and revised forms to M/MS/IRD for review and clearance. They must also submit to M/MS/IRD all requests for approval of public-use AID forms and all requests to cancel or supersede a USAID form via the form AID 3-1 or via e-mail. M/MS/IRD will return a copy of the AID 3-1 to the requiring office after necessary action is taken.

The required supporting documentation includes

- A draft copy of the proposed form;
- A copy of the ADS chapter or chapters covering the form. ADS chapters must list all related forms in either the Mandatory Reference section (xxx.4.3, Mandatory Forms) or the Additional Help section (xxx.5.1, Optional Forms). Include the form number, title, and revision date; and
- Any instructions governing the use of the form.

The following requirements apply to all AID forms:

a. Privacy statements: All USAID forms that solicit personal information must contain the pertinent statements required by the Privacy Act of 1974. (See the Mandatory Reference, **Privacy Act Information Required on USAID Forms**)

b. Accessibility: In accordance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, when electronic forms are designed to be completed on-line, the form must allow people using assistive technology to access the information, field elements, and functionality required for completion and submission of the form, including all

directions and cues. (Section 508 accessibility standards are described in **36 CFR 1194**, Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards.)

c. Standard software: All public-use forms created or modified after December 2002 must be in PDF format.

d. SBU statement: Forms that will contain SBU information when filled in must be marked as such and contain the required statement at the top and bottom of each page (see **505.2.f**).

e. Measurements: Measurements on Agency forms must be expressed in terms of metric units (or other units accepted for use in the metric system). When the metric system is not the predominant measurement system for a particular application, specifications and quantitative data may be expressed in both the metric and the traditional equivalent units so long as the metric units are listed first. As the use of metric units approaches general acceptance for the application, the use of the traditional units must be discontinued. (See Mandatory References, **ADS 323**, Metric Specifications, and **Federal Standard 376B, Preferred Metric Units for General Use by the Federal Government, January 27, 1993**)

In coordination with M/MS/IRD, M/IRM will provide the requiring office with the technical support necessary to create the proposed form in electronic format and convert it to PDF as time and resources permit.

505.3.2.4 Testing

Effective Date: 08/06/2002

Requiring offices must work with M/MS/IRD to test their proposed form.

In coordination with M/MS/IRD, M/IRM will provide the requiring office with the technical support necessary to test the proposed form.

505.3.2.5 Posting

Effective Date: 12/16/2002

Once the testing is complete and M/IRM has converted public-use forms to PDF, all forms are sent to LPA to verify Section 508 compliance and grant technical approval in accordance with USAID web policies (see **ADS 557**). M/MS/IRD in coordination with the owner of the form will determine where the form will be posted. LPA posts forms to the Internet at **http://www.usaid.gov/forms/**; M/IRM posts forms to the intranet at **http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/aidforms.html**; and M/MS/IRD publishes forms on the ADS CD with a link to the corresponding ADS chapter.

505.3.2.6 Review and Certification
Effective Date: 12/16/2002

Requiring offices must work with M/MS/IRD to ensure the ongoing performance of their forms in operation.

Requiring offices must review their forms as part of their regular ADS review process to determine if they are still valid and if any changes should be made. Changes must be submitted in conformance with the processes described above. The requiring office must issue a General Policy Notice to announce substantive revisions to forms.

Requiring office heads must include their forms as part of the yearly ADS certification. (See **ADS 501**, The Automated Directives System (ADS), for more information on ADS certification.)

505.3.2.7 Cancellation
Effective Date: 08/06/2002

When a review of operations indicates that a form is no longer needed, the requiring office must submit form AID 3-1 to M/MS/IRD. Include the effective cancellation date and any other pertinent information that affects the cancellation of the form. If M/MS/IRD determines that the form is no longer needed, the form number will not be used again unless the same form is reinstated. M/MS/IRD will take appropriate steps to remove the form from Warehouse stock, the intranet and Internet, and the USAID Forms Catalog. Neither Missions nor USAID/W may use canceled USAID or other U.S. Government agency forms.

505.3.3 Mission Forms
Effective Date: 05/01/1998

Missions that develop and use an internal forms numbering system must ensure that the numbers assigned are clearly distinguishable from the numbers used by USAID/W and other Missions. The Mission requiring the form must be clearly identified on each form. This is particularly important when the form provides information to another USAID Bureau/Office or Mission.

505.3.4 Electronic Generation of Standard and Optional Forms
Effective Date: 08/06/2002

Electronic generation of Standard and Optional forms is permitted, with the exception of the forms listed in the Mandatory Reference, **Listing Of Standard And Optional Forms Not To Be Electronically Generated Without Specific Approval By GSA**.

Electronically generated Standard and Optional forms must be an exact reproduction of the currently approved edition of the form. The wording and punctuation of all items, instructions, and identifying information must match exactly. Data elements must not be added or deleted. The sequence and format for each item on the form must be

reproduced exactly. Each item must print on the same page in approximately the same location. All blocks must remain approximately the same size and lines must remain approximately the same length.

505.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

505.4.1 External Mandatory References

a. **36 CFR 1194, Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards**

b. **Federal Standard 376B, Preferred Metric Units for General Use by the Federal Government, January 27, 1993**

c. **Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-13)**

505.4.2 Internal Mandatory References

a. **ADS 323, Metric Specifications**

b. **ADS 501,The Automated Directives System (ADS)**

c. **ADS 505maa, Listing Of Standard And Optional Forms Not To Be Electronically Generated Without Specific Approval By GSA**

d. **ADS 505mab, Privacy Act Information Required on USAID Forms**

e. **ADS 506, Reports Management**

f. **ADS 508, Privacy Act**

g. **ADS 557, Public Information**

h. **USAID Internet Forms page: transition.usaid.gov/forms**

i. **USAID intranet Forms page: http://transition.usaid.gov/policy/ads/aidforms.html**

505.4.3 Mandatory Forms

a. **AID 3-1, Forms Approval Request**

505.5 ADDITIONAL HELP

a. **USAID Forms Catalog**

**An asterisk and yellow highlight indicate that the adjacent material is new for this chapter or substantively revised.*

b. Send questions concerning the Forms Management Program to M/MS/IRD at the following address:

M/MS/IRD
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-2701
Attn: M/MS/IRD, Forms Management

505.5.1 Optional Forms

There are no optional forms for this chapter.

505.6 DEFINITIONS

Effective Date: 12/16/2002

The terms and definitions listed below have been included into the ADS Glossary. See the **ADS Glossary** for all ADS terms and definitions.

AID Form
A form initiated by the U.S. Agency for International Development. AID forms are approved by M/MS/IRD for official use and assigned an AID form number and revision date. (Chapter 505)

canceled forms
Forms that are canceled or superseded because they are no longer needed, the procedures have changed, or two or more forms have been combined. (Chapter 505)

Department of State Form
A form initiated by the U.S. Department of State and used by USAID. Usually carries a DS form number. (Chapter 505)

electronic form
A form generated by computer software and used as the basic tool for collecting and transmitting information. (Chapter 505)

form
A document (whether printed or electronic) with a fixed arrangement of captioned spaces designed for entering and extracting information. Categories of form include internal, interagency, public use, standard, and optional. Certain printed items without fill-in spaces (such as contract provisions, instruction sheets, notices, certificates, tags, labels, and posters) may be considered forms when it is advantageous to manage and control them as recurring instruments. (Chapter 505)

measurement sensitive data
Data whose meaning or application depends substantially on some measured quantity. (Chapter 505)

optional Form
A form developed by a Federal agency for use in two or more agencies and approved by the General Services Administration (GSA) for non-mandatory government-wide use. Carries an OF form number. (Chapter 505)

public-use form
A form that 10 or more members of the public fill out for USAID's use for information collections. Carries an OMB control symbol. (Chapter 505)

Standard Form
A form prescribed by a Federal agency, pursuant to its authority, and approved by the General Services Administration (GSA) for mandatory government-wide use. Carries an SF form number. (Chapter 505)

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