THE ADS

A Guide to USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS)

Policy Notices (Interim Updates)

Agency-created policy directives and required procedures

Sample documents and how-to guidelines

ADS

Governing external laws, Executive Orders, and regulations

Optional, helpful information and examples of best practices

USAID external regulations in the CFR
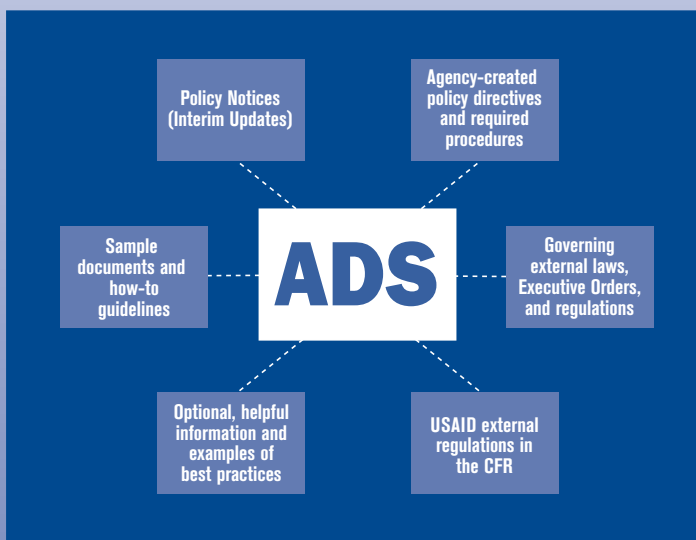
The diagram above demonstrates what the ADS encompasses

What you'll find inside...

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
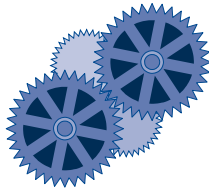
What Is the ADS?

Every government agency is required to have a directives program. The ADS is USAID's **Automated Directives System**. The system provides the structure for managing USAID's internal regulations. Internal regulations include policy directives and required procedures.

The ADS =

USAID's policy directives and required procedures

+

The system for organizing the information

vide you with the tools to find and understand the information contained in the ADS. When you know how the information is written and organized, you'll be able to find everything you're looking for in the ADS.
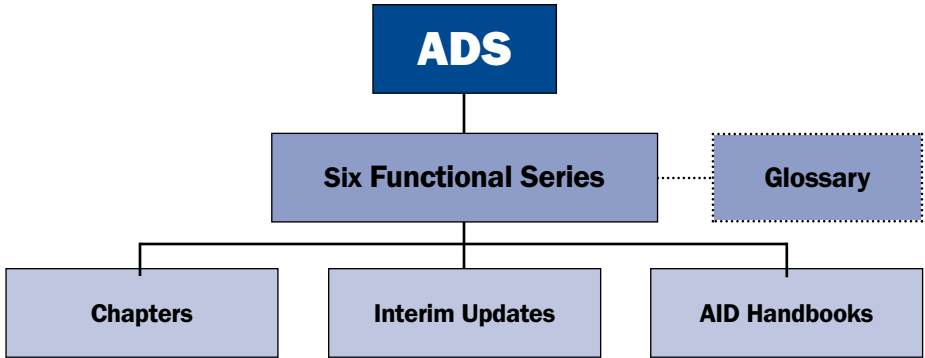
The ADS is for everyone. When you need to find information on-

✔ **Security**...for example...classified and unclassified information; your security responsibilities; building security...

✔ **Travel**...to and from assignments; TDY; to conferences...

✔ **Personnel**...telecommuting; leave; promotions; awards...

✔ **Programming**...annual reports; strategic plans...

✔ **Procurement**...grants; cooperative agreements; PASAs...

✔ **Records**...disposition schedules; government forms...

– the ADS is where you look!

Structure of the ADS

The broad internal structure of the ADS is delineated in this chart:

```
                        ADS
                         |
        Six Functional Series .......... Glossary
                         |
     ┌───────────────────┼───────────────────┐
  Chapters        Interim Updates      AID Handbooks
```

Chapters =
- Policy directives and required procedures
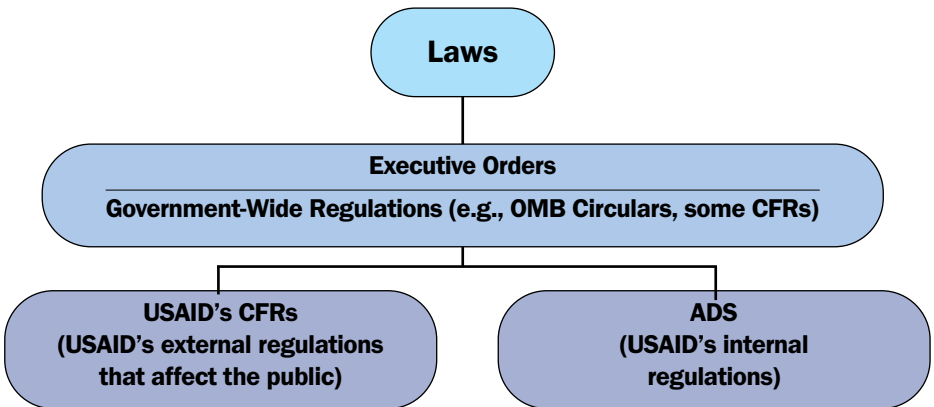- References

Interim Updates =
- Temporary policy directives and required procedures issued as Policy Notices

AID Handbooks =
- Policy directives and required procedures in the old Handbook format

Outlined below is a simplified illustration of how the ADS fits into the hierarchy of laws, regulations, and policy:

```
                       Laws
                         |
              Executive Orders
   Government-Wide Regulations (e.g., OMB Circulars, some CFRs)
                         |
     ┌───────────────────┴───────────────────┐
  USAID's CFRs                             ADS
  (USAID's external regulations      (USAID's internal
   that affect the public)             regulations)
```

The ADS encompasses the totality of USAID's regulatory body. It does not include low-level internal office procedures.

In the ADS you will find...

1. **Policy directives** and **required operating procedures**, which are intended to help you understand your responsibilities and achieve the Agency's goals. You are held accountable for knowing and complying with this mandatory guidance.

2. ADS chapters may convey **optional, suggested procedures** and examples of best practices to assist you in carrying out your duties. You are strongly encouraged to consider such guidance, but cannot be disciplined for not complying with it.

3. The ADS links to **governing external regulations**, relevant Federal statutes, and Executive Orders (EOs) to eliminate the need to write duplicative directives. These are incorporated into the ADS as External Mandatory References.

4. USAID regulations that affect the public are codified in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), which are also incorporated into the ADS as references.

5. **Sample documents** and **how-to guidelines** are included in the ADS as Additional Help items to further assist you in carrying out your duties.

6. **Policy Notices** also form part of the ADS. They are issued with the nightly Notices (sent via e-mail to all employees), converted to **Interim Updates (IUs)**, and posted to the ADS web site. Interim Updates provide temporary guidance, usually on a single subject, that will either be incorporated into an ADS chapter or expire on a specified date.

7. Some old **AID Handbook Chapters** are still valid and they too are part of the ADS.

You can find the ADS in two places:

1. The **ADS web site** (see page 8) and
2. The **ADS CD** (see page 11).

The Functional Series

The ADS is divided into **six Series** organized by function:

Series 100 -	**Agency Organization & Legal Affairs**
Series 200 -	**Programming Policy**
Series 300 -	**Acquisition & Assistance**
Series 400 -	**Personnel**
Series 500 -	**Management Services**
Series 600 -	**Budget & Finance**

The Chapters

Within each Series you will find **ADS chapters** and the Interim Updates associated with the Series. An ADS chapter usually addresses a single policy area.

Chapters are constructed in a simple, standardized format:

- **.1 Overview**
- **.2 Primary Responsibilities**
- **.3 Policy Directives and Required Procedures**
- **.4 Mandatory References**
- **.5 Additional Help**
- **.6 Definitions**

.1 Overview

Includes a brief statement of purpose, objective, or applicability.

.2 Primary Responsibilities

Brief, broad statements about the offices and officials with key responsibilities for acting on the policies and procedures in the chapter.

.3 Policy Directives and Required Procedures

Policy directives are clear, concise rules and regulations that USAID has identified as necessary for the proper conduct of its business. Required procedures identify more detailed courses of action that must be followed. Non-mandatory, helpful information may also be included in this section to clarify USAID policy and help you carry out your duties.

The distinction between mandatory and non-mandatory guidance is made through the use of plain language and standard directives terminology, as illustrated by the following table (adapted from the ADS Authors Guide).

In the ADS,

must	should
■ Mandatory. ■ Command, directive. ■ There *will* be adverse consequences for not complying.	■ Not mandatory. Not a requirement. ■ Recommended course of action. ■ There *may* be adverse consequences for not complying.

shall	will
■ Is not plain language. ADS writers are strongly encouraged not to use this term in the ADS! (See www.plainlanguage.gov)	■ Signifies future action. ■ Can be used to indicate mandatory action in the future. ■ The timeframe for the action should be specified, unless this is indicated by context.

may	may not
■ Not mandatory. Not a requirement. ■ When "may" is used to grant permission, ADS authors must list the choices/criteria they are presenting to the reader.	■ When used in a directive sense, this means "must not." ■ Caution – this term is open to misinterpretation! ADS authors must clearly signify their intent when they use this term.

.4 Mandatory References

There are two lists of references in this section of the chapter

(1) **External Mandatory References** – governing external statutes, Executive Orders, regulations, and authorities.

(2) **Internal Mandatory References** – mandatory guidance created by the Agency.

To access the documents in these lists, click on the blue bold underlined hyperlink.

.5 Additional Help

Documents containing optional, helpful guidance. To access the documents in this list, click on the blue bold underlined hyperlink.

.6 Definitions

Alphabetical list of unique terms applicable to the chapter and their definitions. Each chapter's terms are included in the ADS Glossary, which contains all the defined terms for the ADS and an indication of which chapter they apply to.

Note: Some chapters are still in the old format, which is different from that described above. In the old format, policy was separated from "essential procedure" (indicated by the "E" subheader). The old format contains seven different sections, as opposed to the now standard six.

TIP: The Table of Contents in a chapter links directly to each section of the text in the chapter. On the web, click on the **blue bold underlined link** in the Table of Contents to go straight to the information you're looking for. On the ADS CD, click on the bookmarked Table of Contents to the left of the screen (see p. 12).

Writing ADS Policy

If you are responsible for writing or clearing Agency policy, you need to pay special attention to one particular chapter – **ADS 501**. This is the chapter that governs the ADS. It contains detailed information on the following:

- **Writing ADS material**

- **The format and structure of ADS material**

- **The ADS clearance process**

- **Keeping the ADS current**

- **The annual ADS certification**

ADS 501 also contains a handy reference tool for authors – **The ADS Authors Guide to Style and Format**. It outlines the stylistic ground rules for writing ADS material (based on the GPO Style Manual) and shows you how to format a chapter, with visual aids and tips.

The **ADS** Web Site

The ADS web site is an online portal to the most current ADS information and news. Updated on a real-time basis, it is reachable via the Internet or intranet.

Internet: From the USAID home page (www.usaid.gov), click on **Policy**.

Intranet: From the intranet home page (inside.usaid.gov), click on **ADS** under Tools.

The ADS web site houses the most recent versions of ADS chapters and internally created references, Interim Updates*, and links to external references.

*[Note: *At this time, Series 500 Interim Updates are only available to USAID intranet users.]*

> **Tip:** *To view PDF files on the web or the CD you must have the most recent version of Adobe Acrobat Reader, available free from Adobe at*
>
> **http://www.adobe.com**
>
> *Be sure to check the box for "search Adobe PDF files" to obtain the full Search icon!*

From the ADS home page you can click on any of the six **Series** buttons:

Series 100: Agency Organization and Legal Affairs

Series 200: Programming Policy

Series 300: Acquisition and Assistance

Series 400: Personnel

Series 500: Management Services

Series 600: Budget and Finance

USAID Handbook Series

ADS Glossary

Links on the Series Page

We are in the process of grouping **Chapters** on the Series page by subject area.

> *For example, in Series 600 the chapters are grouped into two subject areas:*
>
> Budget (ADS 601 - 610) and
> Financial Management (ADS 620 - 637)

Clicking on the **Budget** link will take you to a list of the Budget chapters. From here you may elect to view any chapter in Word or PDF format.

Throughout each chapter there are hyperlinks, indicated in **blue bold underline**. Click on these links and you will be transported to the designated document. To get back to the chapter, click the back arrow on your browser.

When viewing a chapter in PDF format, you have two ways to navigate around: (1) Click on the blue bold underlined hyperlinks or (2) click on the bookmarks to the left of the screen if you want to go directly to a certain section within the chapter.

Each **Series** page also contains links to

- – An **Overview**, which links to the following information:
  What is new or has been updated for this Series; an update on which, if any, Handbook chapters have been superseded; and the List of ADS Chapters and Authors for the Series.

- – **References**, an alphabetical list of all the reference titles for that Series, along with an indication of whether they are Mandatory References (MR) or Additional Help (AH). Wherever possible, references are available to view in Word and PDF format.

- – **Interim Updates**, a list of the Interim Updates (converted Policy Notices) pertaining to that Series.

- – The **What's New in the ADS** page.

- – The **AID Handbook Status** report.

- – The **ADS Glossary**.

Links on the ADS Home page

The ADS home page was recently redesigned to include links to the following key areas:

- **About the ADS:** Links to a description of the ADS.

- **Who To Contact:** Who to contact for specific types of queries.

- **What's New in the ADS:** Links to the "What's New in the ADS" summary page. This page is updated as new material is posted to the web. Archived previous months' summary charts are also catalogued here. This page also highlights new ADS-related material and developments.

- **The ADS Times:** Links to each month's issue of The ADS Times newsletter. The ADS Times is issued as an Information Notice to all employees every month. Only available on the intranet.

- **ADS Glossary:** The entire glossary of ADS terms.

- **Handbook Status:** A detailed status list of the AID Handbooks.

- **External Reference Links:** Links to external resources that are referenced in the ADS. These links will take you to the specific resource index page of the agency responsible for the resource.

> *For example, the FAM [State Department Foreign Affairs Manual] link takes you to the official web site of the U.S. Department of State.*

Searching the ADS

The ADS Home Page also links to a **Search** function that allows you to search either the entire USAID external web site or the ADS web site only. You may also select a specific Series to search by clicking on "**Advanced Search**." The "Help" link at the end of this page leads to a search guide with tips and examples.

The **ADS CD**

The **ADS CD** is updated and issued quarterly. A minimum of two copies are sent to all the Missions. In USAID/W, a copy is loaded to the CD tower.

Instructions to access the CD

USAID/W:
1. Click on Windows Start button
2. Click on Net Apps
3. Click on CD Net
4. Click on ADS CD
5. Click on Run

Missions:
Contact your Systems Administrator

CD Table of Contents

From the **ADS CD Table of Contents** you have direct access to each Series, Interim Updates, the AID Handbooks, the Resource Library (ADS references), and the ADS Glossary:

July 2003 (Content current as of 4/14/2003)

ADS CD 31

What's New? | ABC | ☎ | ?

Choose a category:

- Series 100: Agency Organization & Legal Affairs
- Series 200: Programming Policy
- Series 300: Acquisition & Assistance
- Series 400: Personnel
- Series 500: Management Services
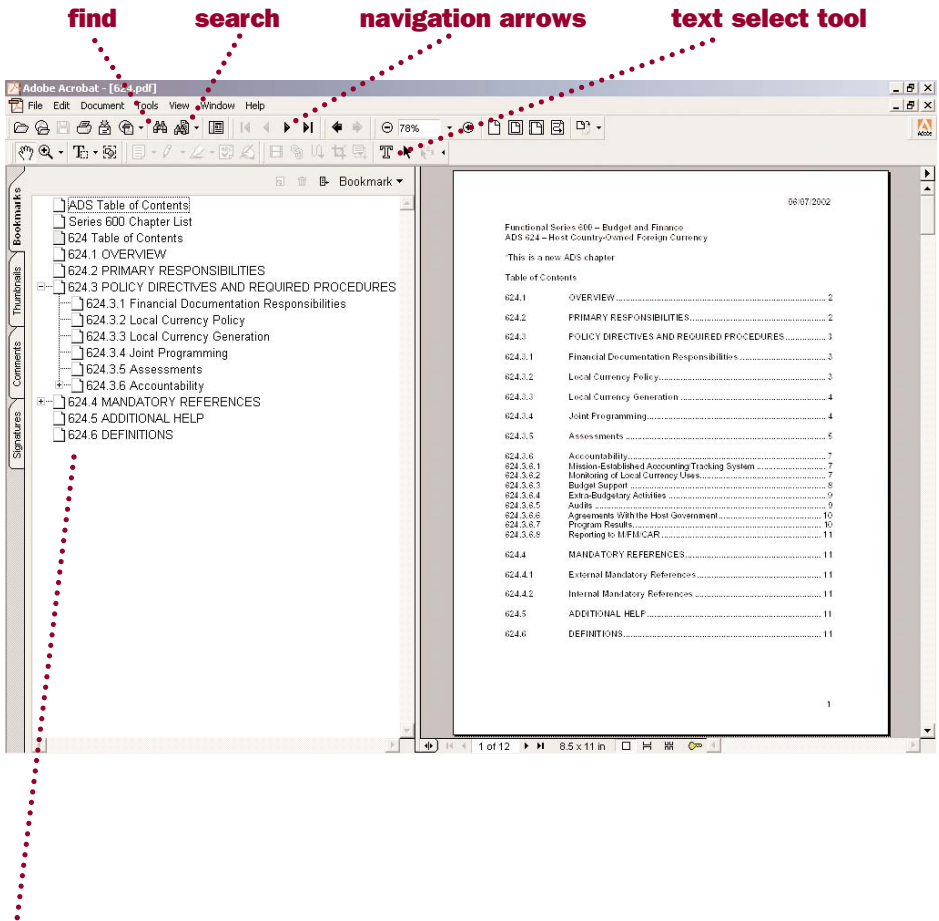- Series 600: Budget & Finance
- **Interim Updates (Policy Notices)**
- **USAID Handbook Series**
- **Resource Library**

Viewing a chapter on the CD

An open chapter on your screen looks like this:

find   search   navigation arrows   text select tool

Bookmarks: Function as a linked table of contents to the open document.

Click on + sign to expand that section to show its subsections.

Use this to get closer to subsections you're looking for.

Reminder: Always use the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader, as older versions may not be able to read newer PDF files. If you get an error message when trying to open a PDF file, check your Adobe Reader first! The Reader is a free download from Adobe at **www.adobe.com**.

CD Tips

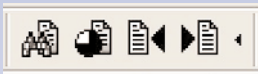➤ To **search the CD**, use these icons at the top of the page:

"Find" (binoculars icon) searches the open document only.

· **"Search"** (binoculars in front of sheet of paper icon) searches the whole CD.

[Note: If you don't see the Search icon, download the most recent Adobe Reader and check the box "search Adobe PDF files"!]

➤ You can **expand the Search icon** to look like this:

Click on this button to reveal a list of all the documents found to contain the word(s) you're searching for.

Click on this button to go to the previous occurrence of the word(s) you're searching for. The word(s) will be highlighted in the document.

Click on this button to go to the next occurrence of the word(s) you're searching for.

➤ To **copy and paste** from the CD, use this icon:

Use the **Text Select tool** to highlight material, then click on "Edit, Copy" or right-click your mouse and select "Copy." Selections from PDF documents can be pasted into Word or other applications. To highlight more than one page at a time in PDF documents, first check "View, Continuous."

➤ To **navigate around the CD**, use the arrow icons:

In order of appearance, these buttons take you to

1. **first page** of open document
2. **previous page** of open document
3. **next page** of open document
4. **last page** of open document
5. **previous view** (whichever page you last viewed)
6. **next view**

➤ To **find documents that are referenced in the ADS**, you can look in three places:

1. For references that relate to a single Series, click on the Series button and select **Series XXX References**.

2. Click on the **Resource Library** to find references that are associated with more than one Series or are large documents, for example, the FAM, the FAR, and the AIDAR.

3. Access individual references by clicking on the blue bold underlined links within a chapter.

References have bookmark links back to the associated ADS chapter and to the CD Table of Contents. Some long references also have bookmarks to parts or sections within the same document.

➤ The strip of buttons at top right of the CD Table of Contents screen connect to

"What's New in the ADS?" summary of new and revised material for each CD

Direct link to the **ADS Glossary**

USAID telephone directory

CD Help Guide (Use this guide to learn more about searching the CD)

What's New in the ADS

How do you find out what's new in the ADS and keep up with changes? There are two ways:

1. Check out the What's New page on the ADS web site (see p. 10). This page is updated on a real-time basis as new information is posted to the ADS web site. Each month's chart lists the chapters, references, and IUs that were updated and released that month, along with a brief description of what is new or revised.

If you use the ADS CD, click on the What's New button (see p. 14). This chart contains all the updates for that CD.

2. Monitor your nightly Notices for Policy Notices. Know that Policy Notices are converted to IUs and posted to the web. If you are looking for a Policy Notice that has not yet been converted, search the Notice database on the USAID intranet.

Web vs CD

Is there a difference?

Yes. Although the ADS web site and the ADS CD are identical in content, there is one difference. The web is updated real time, while the CD is updated quarterly, in January, April, July, and October. Therefore, the CD must be used in conjunction with any Policy Notices that are issued after the CD release.

The ADS CD is mostly used by Missions that lack reliable Internet access, and also by those who find the CD easier to search than the web. The CD uses the PDF Find and Search functions, while the web uses the Infoseek search engine.

PDF Files

Both the ADS web site and the ADS CD present material in PDF (Portable Document Format). PDF is a worldwide standard application that produces a picture of the original document, preserving the exact look and content of the original, complete with fonts and graphics.

ADS Contacts

If you would like additional information or have a question about the ADS, please contact us.

For ADS content, web site, and CD technical questions:
E-mail *the ADS Mailbox:*
ads@usaid.gov

Sponsored by
Bureau for Management,
Office of Administrative Services,
Information and Records Division (M/AS/IRD)

Contact
Cynthia Staples, M/AS/IRD, (202) 712-0798

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