Guidance on Writing and Reviewing Development Policy

A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 200

Guidance on Policy Writing and Review[1]

I. Introduction

The Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning, Office of Policy (PPL/P) provides overall guidance on policy formulation, development, and review, and works to ensure policy coherence across USAID. PPL/P promotes a corporate standard for coherence, quality, technical rigor, and impact of Agency policies. To realize these standards in all Agency policies, this guidance document lays out a policy development and review process. This document is intended to:

- Define the types of substantive policy documents that are generated by the Agency;

- Provide clear guidance on how to decide whether there should be a policy on a particular issue and how to write a Request Memo to PPL to initiate the process of writing a new policy;

- Describe the process for writing, consultation, and clearance of policy documents;

- Provide guidance on how policy implementation assessments should be planned and designed and how to write an Intent to Assess Memo to PPL; and

- Provide guidance on when and how policies should be revised.

II. Policy Document Types: Definitions and Structure

USAID publishes three different types of policy documents: vision papers, policies, and strategies.[2] The terms "policy document" or "policy" are used throughout this guidance to refer, interchangeably, to any of these three document types. This guidance document applies to policies that cover substantive development and humanitarian issues, which require review and clearance by PPL.[3] It does not provide guidance on operational policies that impact the Agency's core systems relating to accounting and management, acquisition and assistance, and information management, which are overseen by the Bureau for Management (M).

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[1] This guidance supersedes the "PPL Guidance on Policy and Strategy Development outside the Policy Task Team Process," published in April, 2012.
[2] The Agency will limit publications to these three document types for clarity and consistency. The term "Framework" is reserved for an Agency-wide Policy Framework document (i.e., *USAID Policy Framework 2010-2015*). For further details see ADS 200.3.2.2.
[3] Note also, this policy guidance does not refer to policy documents that are written as part of an interagency process.

Not all policy documents will be 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 Program Cycle or other planning processes.

The different types of policy documents have different purposes, which should be reflected in their respective structures:

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

    - The structure of a policy must include analytical foundations, programming principles, explicit links to examples of programmatic work, and roles and responsibilities or guidance on implementation.

- **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 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. (The process for developing Country Development Cooperation Strategies is covered in ADS 201.)

    - The structure of a strategy must include either a Results Framework or Development Objectives and Intermediate Results. It also must include either roles and responsibilities or guidance on implementation.[4]

- **Vision Papers:** A vision paper is an aspirational statement orienting the Agency regarding an issue of high significance. Vision papers constitute a public

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[4] Both policies and strategies set expectations for programming priorities and approaches; however strategies are inherently about achieving specific goals or objectives, and therefore, have a more direct impact on resource allocation. Policies will focus less on the objectives, targets, or outcomes and more on broad priorities and approaches.

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 or absolute target that we aim to contribute to (e.g., ending extreme poverty; ending child marriage; full inclusion of LGBT persons).

- The structure of a vision paper should include explicit goal statements and principles to guide the Agency in a particular issue area and should be based on an analytic foundation. It also may include guidance for follow-on steps.

Policy documents will not exceed 30 pages and will be written in plain language aimed at non-technical experts. Policy documents will always contain a Message from the Administrator, Executive Summary, and a Context section or Statement of the Problem. In addition, all policy documents should be grounded in and work to further the accomplishment of the Agency mission statement.

III. New Policy: Determination, Authorization, Drafting, and Clearance Process

The policy development process consists of three phases. The first phase is determination of need and authorization for a new policy. When development of a new policy is authorized, the second phase—policy drafting—begins. Mandatory steps and best practices for the drafting process are outlined within this document. The third and final phase of policy development is the clearance process. Early and consistent consultation with PPL should take place throughout the three phases of policy development.

Phase 1: Determination and Authorization for Policy Development

Step 1.1: Identify Needs and Goals. For a new or revised policy document to be warranted, it must fulfill a clear and specific need. The policy document must therefore codify a new way of thinking or body of evidence not captured in current policy documents and be sufficiently broad or important to warrant an Agency-wide public stance. Either an existing 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 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 policy demonstrated by one or both of the following:

- The issue has generated critical demand for guidance within the Agency such that a new 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 that necessitates a corporate position.

- The Agency has received requests from external actors for a new policy to be published. 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 NGOs or implementing partners.

In many cases, the unit requesting a new policy may be able to address their needs through channels other than a new policy document. Alternative options include issue-specific technical guidance or toolkits, white-papers articulating the state of knowledge on a topic that does not warrant an Agency policy, or background papers that apply evidence and analysis to issues, but do not constitute policy. Consultation with PPL/P before drafting the Request Memo (discussed below) can help with identification of these alternative options. In addition, consultation with PPL/P can help determine the appropriate time to request, draft, and publish a new policy, considering additional factors such as other policy publication processes, administration or leadership changes, etc.

Step 1.2: Submit a Request Memo. 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 policy must obtain PPL approval by submitting a Request Memo. A policy process initiated within PPL itself must also comply with this requirement. Before beginning the process of drafting the Request Memo, the teams should engage with PPL/P to discuss the need for this policy and address any potential questions.

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 policy. The policy's goal or goals will serve as guiding principles during the drafting and implementation process, and will also form the basis of required policy implementation assessments. The Request Memo must:

- Demonstrate the need for the policy;

- State the goal(s) of the policy;

- State the date when the forthcoming Terms of Reference (TOR), providing an overview of the drafting and publication process and timeline, will be available (further details below); and

- Come from the AA-level of the relevant Operating Unit(s).

Additionally, the Request Memo should consider and address the following items, which must be included in the final version of a new policy:

- Demonstrate coherence with existing USAID policies.[5] To achieve this, the policies should be logically consistent with each other, support common

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[5] For a current list of policies, see https://www.usaid.gov/results-and-data/planning/policy

underlying principles, and contribute to achieving the Agency's mission statement.

- Demonstrate coherence, alignment, and responsiveness to Agency and U.S. Government priorities and policies (e.g., QDDR and National Security Strategy), and international frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

- Strategies must also set specific targets and define indicators that will be used to assess progress toward them, leveraging existing data collection efforts, and if appropriate, making use of standard Foreign Assistance Indicators. Strategies must also include a sunset or end date for the strategy or targets.

The Request Memo should be no more than three pages and should be sent to the AA/PPL, through PPL/P. PPL will respond to the Request Memo within two weeks of receipt with an approval, denial, or a request for additional information. If PPL issues a denial, an explanation will be given and potential alternatives presented. If PPL issues a request for additional information, the submitters will have the option of resubmitting.

PPL/P Point of Contact: If the Request Memo is approved, a PPL/P point of contact (POC) will be assigned. The PPL/P POC will be responsible for offering guidance during the policy drafting process, which will include ensuring coherence with other agency policies; keeping PPL and Agency leadership informed throughout the process; developing and maintaining consistency and quality across each policy document; offering guidance on required clearances and, where appropriate, offering specific technical input to the product.

Phase 2: The Drafting Process
This section outlines the process of developing a policy document. The mandatory requirements for the drafting process are summarized below. After that, a more detailed, chronological outline of the drafting process is provided, with suggestions on how best to meet the mandatory requirements as well as best practices for a successful process.

Summary of Mandatory Requirements: The following mandatory requirements must be considered and met (if relevant) during the drafting and clearance process.

- 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.

- Products that contain new resource requirements must be discussed with and cleared by the Office of the Budget and Resource Management (BRM) and PPL. Discussion should be done in advance of the final clearance process, as well as ahead of any Agency-wide and public consultation.

- The policy document must comply with relevant External and Internal Mandatory References (i.e. relevant Federal statutes, Executive Orders, and other external regulations) found in ADS 200.[6] For detailed instructions on how to comply with Executive Order 13677 on Climate-Resilient International Development, see the attached Annex: Climate Change Requirements in New Agency Policies.

- One internal Agency-wide consultation and one external public consultation period must be completed.

- Final clearances must be obtained from all relevant Bureaus and Independent Offices (B/IOs), determined in conjunction with PPL. Before publication, the final document must be cleared by, at a minimum, PPL, the Office of Budget and Resource Management, the Management Bureau, the Office of General Counsel, and LPA's design editor.

- The operating unit or cross-unit team that will take a leadership role in implementation should be designated, and this designation communicated to PPL.

- Immediately after publication, the Working Group must submit an "Intent to Assess Implementation" memo (further details in the next section).

Outlined below are the steps in the policy-writing process. Each step below must be completed, although the processes described within each step includes some best practices rather than required actions.

Step 2.1: Launch process and assemble a Working Group Many policy processes have been launched through a kick-off meeting that gathers the internal USAID stakeholders to advise them that a policy process is starting, outlines the first steps of the process, and solicits any feedback and concerns. It is important to include the leadership of the Operating Unit that will lead the process at this meeting. Additionally, it may be beneficial to invite stakeholders from other B/IOs to start building a broad interest base. An Agency Notice may also be useful in launching the process.

A Working Group should be assembled either prior to the launch or shortly thereafter and is responsible for providing substantive input and overseeing the development of the policy document as well as related research. It should therefore include appropriate technical experts from both the pillar and regional Bureaus and Independent Offices. The Working Group should draw on the expertise within the Agency and pull from the broad range of development professionals across Operating Units. In the past, policy processes have benefited from including Mission staff in the Working Group and from

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[6] See [ADS 200.4 for External and Internal Mandatory References](#)

reaching out to relevant stakeholders in NGOs, think tanks, etc., which could also be a valuable resource. [7]

Depending on the size of the Working Group and scope of the policy, a smaller Drafting Team of writers may be drawn from the Working Group to draft the new policy and take the lead on the clearance process.

The PPL/P POC should be in the Working Group to stay abreast of the process and provide input. The individual may also be on the Drafting Team.

Step 2.2: Develop Terms of Reference. After the approval of the Request Memo, the Working Group will draft Terms of Reference (TOR) to guide the policy development process. The TOR provides a logistical overview for the policy drafting, consultation, publication, and implementation process.

The TOR should be made available to the PPL/P POC in approximately two weeks after the approval of the Request Memo. The TOR is a "living document" and can be updated throughout the drafting process. The TOR should address context, deliverables, the drafting team structure, a notional timeline, a roll-out plan, and anticipated implementation efforts.[8] The below sections are required within the TORs but additional sections may be added as a proposing B/IO sees fit.

- **Purpose:** This section should provide a short description of the proposed policy document and its goals, and may be adapted from the Request Memo.

- **Deliverables:** Major deliverables should be listed and may include: (1) the policy document produced at the end of the drafting process, (2) any internal or external roll-out events, (3) any internal trainings, such as webinars, or (4) internal documents such as a one-pager providing an overview of the new policy, "How-To" or Technical notes, background papers, and handbooks.

- **Working Group and Drafting Team:** The team makeup and plan for drafting the new policy should be outlined here (see above for more details on this process).

- **Timeline:** Include an estimated timeline for the drafting and publication of the new policy. The timeline should include benchmarks such as internal and public comment periods; a timeline for the clearance process; estimated dates for publication and launch event(s); and a rough timeline for implementation and assessments of the policy.

- **Notional Roll-Out Plan:** The TOR must present initial thoughts regarding roll-out and socialization of the policy (e.g., webinars, events, media, etc.). Depending on

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[7] Please consult with the Office of General Counsel before engaging external actors.
[8] TORs are required at the beginning stages of policy development. It is recommended that TORs, especially the timeline and methods for consultation, be updated as the process begins to take shape.

the goals of the policy, roll-out plans may focus on internal Agency engagement or may include external engagement efforts. Former policy drafting teams have found a one-page document summarizing the new policy to be useful, especially when speaking to an internal audience.

- **Anticipated Implementation Efforts:** The TOR must consider the implementation of the forthcoming policy, which is the most important step in actually effecting change. Therefore, the TOR should suggest a direction for implementation to achieve the goals of the policy. While particular interventions and methods for implementation may not yet be known, the TOR can address potential implementation efforts and the structures that will support such efforts. Specifically, the TOR should clearly state which Operating Unit (B/IO, cross-Bureau team, etc.) will be responsible for implementing the policy.

Step 2.3: 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. Questions to consider when conducting background research include: What is the empirical basis for the principles and approaches outlined in this policy? What data gaps or questions still exist and what implications may these have on the implementation of the policy? What is the development impact of the proposed approach? How will the policy support the overarching Agency mission and core objectives?

Step 2.4: Draft Policy. Using the results of the background research, the Working Group will reach an understanding of the framework or organizational structure for the new policy, which will clearly articulate the goals and ideas for potential requirements and changes to operations or programming. Following a clear framework, the Drafting Team will generate a first draft of the new policy. The team should ensure that the policy is well-written using clear, concise language and is digestible to a broad audience. The text should be carefully edited to ensure correct grammar and appropriate style conventions.[9]

Step 2.5: 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 are required. Input can be obtained by posting the document on a public forum for written comments or by facilitating meetings with stakeholders. [10] Three consultation steps in the policy drafting process are as follows:

(1) Feedback to inform the Drafting Process: The drafting process should include methods to socialize draft versions of the policy across the Agency to strengthen

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[9] See the Executive Secretariat Style Guide for general guidelines on grammar, formatting, and other issues. https://pages.usaid.gov/A/ES/resources

[10] Past drafting teams have used USAID's policy page to post documents for comment. https://www.usaid.gov/results-and-data/planning/policy

the final product and create buy-in and ownership during the development process. Policies that substantially change Agency practice must engage with relevant B/IOs throughout the drafting and well in advance of the clearance process.[11] It is a best practice to reach out to key Missions throughout the drafting process; in some situations it is ideal to have Mission representation on the Working Group or Drafting Team.

(2) **Mandatory Agency-wide Consultation:** A draft of the policy should be shared with USAID staff and an effort should be made to engage Missions to ensure they have opportunity for input. The method for engagement and comment solicitation is left to the Working Group. Before sharing a draft with the Agency, the policy should be cleared by PPL/P, and any other relevant B/IOs and stakeholders identified in consultation with PPL/P.

(3) **Mandatory External Comment Period:** In keeping with the Agency efforts to be transparent, after the Agency-wide consultation is completed and revisions are made, a draft must also be made available for **public comment** in an effort to engage key stakeholders, implementing partner organizations, other parts of the U.S. Government, and so on. Engagement with the Office of General Counsel is required before sharing the document for public comment. PPL/P clearance is also required before posting for public comment as are any other appropriate clearances.

Phase 3: Final Clearance Process, Production and Roll Out. When ready for final approval and release, the policy will receive final clearance at the AA level for relevant B/IOs which, at a minimum, should include the B/IOs originating the policy, PPL, the Office of Budget and Resource Management, the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, the Bureau for Management, and the Office of the General Counsel. Other B/IOs should be informed of the forthcoming policy and given the option of clearing, if desired. In the past, this has been done through convening an informational meeting and providing an opportunity for questions, comments, and input. With 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.[12] The drafting team or working group must send a pdf version of the final publication to the PPL

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[11] For example, policies that might result in changes in the ADS must consult with the Bureau for Management and policies that impact resource allocation must collaborate with BRM.

[12] Operating Units may elect to utilize their own resources or USAID Print Shop resources for design support.

Communications team for inclusion on the policy page of the *usaid.gov* Web site and to PPL/P for inclusion in the Policy Registry database (see ADS 200.3.4 for further details).

IV. Implementation Assessment Process

During the policy development phase, an Operating Unit should be identified as having lead responsibility for implementation of the development policy. In general, PPL will not take on this role. The Operating Unit or team (B/IOs or cross-Bureau team) is responsible for policy implementation, will monitor progress, and work closely with Regional Bureaus and Missions to flag implementation gaps or misalignments. Details regarding implementation, including roles and responsibilities are outlined in the How-To Note on Policy and Strategy Implementation.[13] In addition, the "Program Cycle How-To and Technical Notes: Overview and Production Process" provides guidelines to PPL staff—the authors of How-To and Technical Notes—for production of operational guidance that is common after policy production.

Implementation of each policy published after this guidance on Policy Writing and Review is issued must be assessed periodically, approximately every five years. It is strongly recommended that policies written prior to this guidance conduct implementation assessments as well. 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. The memo will serve as a guide in future policy implementation assessments. The Intent to Assess Implementation memo should lay out specific goals that the policy aims to achieve (which may simply be a restatement of the goals in the original Request Memo). The implementation assessment will focus on whether the policy has made progress in achieving its goals. The memo must include:

- **Summary Implementation Plan.** Write a very brief (one to two paragraph) description of the intended implementation plan, specifically stating which Operating Unit is responsible for the assessment.

- **Assessment Schedule.** The first assessment is required to be within the first five years following publication. Thereafter, assessments should take place approximately every five years.

What the assessment will measure. The goal of the assessment is to ascertain what significant changes the policy document and follow-on work associated with the document have made in Agency function and programming. The assessment should seek to measure successes and roadblocks to implementation of the policy, in the context of the ultimate development outcomes.

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[13] The How-To Note on Policy and Strategy implementation is internally available here: https://programnet.usaid.gov/system/files/library/Policy_and_Strategy_Implementation_How-To_Note_Clearance_Draft_FINAL_Cleared_copyedit.pdf

- **Methods for assessment.** Methods may include a content analysis of country strategies, program documents, or other relevant documents to see if and how they changed after the implementation of the policy and surveys, and/or interviews of relevant staff, implementing partners, etc. who may be responsible for implementation or may be affected by the policy. The assessment will also ideally involve case studies at relevant Missions to understand implementation on the ground. The assessment process should consider, when possible, the extent to which the policy has led to:

  - Targets and benchmarks being met for the relevant indicators if applicable (Strategies only).

  - New Agency guidance related to the policy (ex: Agency Notices on the topic, additions to the ADS, Agency Trainings, etc.).

  - Changes in country-specific strategies and program planning documents, such as Country Development Cooperation Strategies and Project Appraisal Documents.

  - Changes in content of solicitations.

  - Changes in funding related to policy goals.

  - Changes in Operating Unit processes or approaches based on the policy.

  - Results related to the policy as articulated in the PPRs or captured by data including standard indicators.

This requirement recognizes the importance of keeping USAID policies current and at the forefront of development thinking. Periodic assessments will also contribute to organizational learning. By documenting successes and challenges related to policy implementation, best practices can be shared across sectors and lessons can be learned for drafting future policies.

V. Policy Revision Process

It is appropriate to periodically review the effectiveness and technical content of a 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 ADS 200.3.2.

Each document should be considered for revision every 10 years, at a minimum. After review, the policy document can be: 1) revised in full, 2) extended with light or no revisions, or 3) retired altogether. Each scenario is described in more detail below:

- **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, a Request Memo must be written by implementation owner of the policy to PPL to ask for a revision process to begin. This memo will include all of 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 10 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 policy is no longer relevant, PPL should 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 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.

Annex: Climate Change Requirements in New Agency Policies

This Annex to PPL/P's Guidance on Policy Writing and Review provides detailed instructions on how to ensure the implementation of Executive Order 13677 on Climate-Resilient International Development. This Executive Order requires USAID to assess Agency policies and programs for climate-related risks and to address those risks as appropriate.

For all Agency policy documents (Policies, Strategies and Visions) that are being newly drafted or revised, the working group must consider whether the effects of climate change have the potential to impact the policy or its implementation. Agency policies and strategies are an important first step in considering the cross-cutting effects of climate variability and change, which can undermine development progress and increase risk and insecurity. Climate change impacts that relate to USAID programming include changes to average and extreme temperatures, rainfall patterns, soil moisture, streamflow, glacial melt, sea level, distribution of plant and animal species including disease vectors, and the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events e.g. storms, droughts, heatwaves, and floods.

For example, changes in temperature and precipitation can shift the geographic range and incidence of vector-borne diseases. Increases in temperature and changes in precipitation patterns can significantly affect crop yields from rainfed agriculture, with subsequent impacts on food security and livelihoods. Sea level rise and storm surge can harm vital coastal ecosystems, infrastructure, and settlements. The impacts of climate change can also compound pre-existing and overlapping social, political, and economic stresses. At the same time, the challenges presented by climate change offer important opportunities and incentives to take actions that contribute to development.

Examples of potentially affected policies include:

- Policies that relate to natural resources that could be impacted by climate change (e.g., biodiversity resources, water resources).

- Policies that relate to sectors that could be impacted by climate change. This includes agriculture, health, water, disasters, human security and conflict, and fisheries.

- Policies that relate to infrastructure that could be impacted by climate change. Examples include housing, health facilities, water or septage systems, and other buildings that could be impacted by increased frequency and intensity of flooding, storms, or sea level rise.

Policies should also consider whether opportunities exist to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including through the use of clean energy, improvements in energy efficiency, and improved land-use management. Low emissions development provides

an opportunity for developing countries to reach their social and economic development goals while reducing the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that cause climate change.

While the responsibility for assessing and addressing climate change risks lies with all USAID Operating Units, the Global Climate Change (GCC) Office and climate change experts in various B/IOs are available to provide support. To help determine whether or not climate change is an important consideration for a policy, the policy drafting team must contact the GCC Office in E3 (climatechange@usaid.gov) early in the drafting process. A climate change point of contact (POC) will be identified to work with policy drafters to determine whether or not climate change is an important consideration for the policy and, if it is, help ensure that climate change is adequately addressed.

When potential climate change impacts or climate change mitigation opportunities are identified related to an Agency policy that is in the process of being drafted or revised, further research should be conducted to better understand sector specific issues. The climate change POC will provide guidance on the best way to achieve this. Approaches may include consulting climate change experts in the Agency or reviewing the relevant literature. In situations where significant climate change impacts or climate change mitigation opportunities are expected, a climate expert from E3 or another B/IO should be included in the working group. In some cases, E3/GCC may be added to the clearance list for the policy.

If relatively minor effects are identified, they should be briefly summarized in the relevant section of the policy document. In cases where significant climate change impacts are expected or there are significant opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, climate change considerations must be integrated throughout the policy document and guidance provided on how USAID work in that sector will address climate change.

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