ADS Chapter 578

Information Quality Guidelines

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ADS 578 – Information Quality Guidelines
POC for ADS 578: Brandon Pustejovsky, (202) 916-2495, bpustejovsky@usaid.gov

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ADS 578 – Information Quality Guidelines

578.1 OVERVIEW
Effective Date: 03/06/2019

This chapter adopts the **OMB Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by Federal Agencies** (referred to in this ADS chapter as the OMB Guidelines). This chapter contains the USAID-specific policy directives and required procedures to implement the OMB Guidelines and applies to the majority of USAID-developed and USAID-funded information that is disseminated to the public across all media- printed, electronic, or in other form. The OMB Guidelines implement **Section 515 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2001 (Pub. L. 106-554)**.

578.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES
Effective Date: 12/31/2020

a. The **Bureau for Management, Office of Management Policy, Budget and Performance, Performance Division (M/MPBP/PERF)** is responsible for this ADS chapter and overall policy guidance on information quality guidelines. A senior member of the Bureau for Management, Office of Management Policy, Budget and Performance, Performance Division (M/MPBP/PERF) will serve as the Team Leader for Information Quality and is responsible for managing the administrative correction and reporting systems required by the OMB Guidelines and for compiling the annual Information Quality and Peer Review reports for submission to OMB.

b. Agreement Officer's Representatives/Contracting Officer's Representatives (AORs/CORs) in the Operating Unit of Origin are responsible for conducting pre-dissemination reviews to ensure information quality of any publicly-disseminated communication product that is a deliverable in a contract or agreement. In the event that the deliverable or work product is Influential Scientific Information (ISI) or Highly Influential Scientific Assessment (HISA), then the AOR/COR ensures that a peer review was completed by the awardee. They are also responsible for responding to requests for correction on the aforementioned communication product that are received from the general public. The Operating Unit of Origin is the OU that funded and approved its publication.

c. The **Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA)** is responsible for posting all review requests for correction and any corrective actions taken on the **Information Quality page** on the Agency's public internet site.

d. The **Chief Information Officer (CIO), or his/her delegate**, is responsible for receiving and responding to information correction appeals received from the public.

e. The **Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation (DDI)** is responsible for providing guidance on peer review standards for Influential Scientific Information and Highly Influential Scientific Assessments and research products.

f. Team Lead for Information Quality is a senior member of the Bureau for Management, Office of Management Policy, Budget and Performance, Performance Division (M/MPBP/PERF). This person is responsible for managing the correction and reporting systems required by the OMB Guidelines and for compiling the annual Information Quality and Peer Review reports for submission to OMB. They also coordinate with LPA to ensure requests for correction and associated corrective actions taken are posted on the Information Quality page on the Agency's public internet site.

g. Technical Office Director is the Director of a Technical Office in USAID/Washington or overseas. He/she is the supervisor of all staff that report to that Technical Office and serves as a senior advisor in his/her technical area of expertise. The Technical Office Director, in consultation with activity AORs/CORs, Program Office and Front Office (in the case of Missions), make determinations as to which research products generated or funded by their Office will be designated as influential scientific information or a highly influential scientific assessment. In the event of research developed by the Technical Office that is designated ISI or HISA, then the Technical Office Director ensures that the datasets and subsequent analysis have been peer reviewed.

h. USAID Research Council Members, on an annual basis, identify requests for information correction by their B/IO, and the corrective actions taken for the Agency's annual Information Quality Report that is submitted to OMB. They are also responsible for identifying the research that qualified as influential scientific information or highly influential scientific assessments for inclusion on the annual Peer Review report submitted to OMB.

578.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

Effective Date: 08/09/2019

The OMB Guidelines:

- Apply to the sharing of, and access to, information disseminated by federal agencies; and
- Require that each federal agency:
    - **a.** Issue pre-dissemination review guidelines ensuring and maximizing the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of information (including statistical information) disseminated by the agency;
    - **b.** Establish correction procedures, allowing affected persons to seek and obtain correction of information maintained and disseminated by the agency that does not comply with the OMB Guidelines; and
    - **c.** Report annually to OMB:
        - **1)** The number and nature of complaints received by the agency regarding the accuracy of information disseminated by the agency and

how such complaints were handled by the agency; and

2) A summary peer review report that includes:

- The number of peer reviews conducted for influential scientific information (ISI) and highly influential scientific assessments (HISA);
- The number of times alternative procedures were invoked;
- The number of times waivers or deferrals were invoked;
- The decision to appoint a reviewer pursuant to any exception to the applicable independence or conflict of interest standards in the **OMB Information Quality for Peer Review Bulletin**;
- The number of peer review panels that were conducted in public and the number that allowed public comments;
- The number of public comments provided on the agency's peer review plans; and
- The number of peer reviewers that the agency used that were recommended by professional societies.

The OMB Guidelines apply to a wide variety of government information dissemination activities that may range in importance and scope. They apply to all types of media -- printed, electronic, or other form. The OMB Guidelines require agencies to meet basic information quality standards. The more important the information, for example, "influential scientific or statistical information," the higher the quality standards to which it should be held. These guidelines also apply to instances when an agency makes information originally collected or developed by other Federal agencies available to the public in a cross-agency dissemination. In those instances, each agency is responsible for the quality of the information they contribute, and that responsibility should be clearly communicated to the public.

The OMB Guidelines recognize, however, that information quality comes at a cost. Accordingly, agencies should weigh the costs and the benefits of higher information quality in the development of information, and the level of quality to which the information disseminated will be held. Such costs include agency processing effort, respondent burden, maintenance of needed privacy, and assurance of suitable confidentiality (see **OMB Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by Federal Agencies, Final Guidelines**).

578.3.1 Pre-Dissemination Review

Effective Date: 03/06/2019

USAID has adopted the OMB Guidelines' basic standards of quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity for information covered by this ADS chapter. Information quality -- which includes objectivity, utility, and integrity -- is integral to every step of the development of information (see **578.6** for definitions of the terms used in this chapter) and must be considered prior to public dissemination of Agency information.

Please note that the following reviews satisfy the pre-dissemination review requirement set forth in **OMB's Information Quality Guidelines** and those set forth in this ADS chapter:

1) Peer reviews of USAID evaluations and associated data as cited in **ADS 201, Program Cycle Operational Policy**;

2) Peer reviews of USAID research as cited in **USAID Scientific Research Policy**;

3) Peer reviews that occur as part of the publication process for peer-reviewed scientific journals;

4) Quality reviews that occur during the review and acceptance of acquisition and assistance award deliverables; and

5) Quality reviews that occur as part of the Development Data Library submission process.

578.3.2 Chapter Applicability by Information Category

Effective Date: 03/06/2019

This ADS chapter primarily focuses on the public dissemination of substantive information (e.g., evaluation reports, fact sheets, studies, and summaries) by USAID, rather than on information prepared for the management and operations of USAID that is not intended primarily for public dissemination.

Information is "disseminated" by USAID if all three of the following requirements are met:

- USAID staff, or USAID award recipients produced the information for public dissemination;
- The information is released to the public either directly by USAID (e.g., publications in the Development Experience Clearinghouse) or by another organization under USAID sponsorship (e.g., **Predict Program/UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine**); and
- The information represents USAID's official position or will be used in making Agency business decisions (e.g., policy documents published on USAID.gov, data generated by USAID-funded assessments or survey/evaluation results that may be used in programming decisions).

Information is under USAID "sponsorship" when the information is distributed on USAID's behalf, as when USAID specifically directs the dissemination or retains the right under the provisions of the applicable contract, grant, or cooperative agreement to approve whether and how to disseminate the information.

The fact that USAID retains ownership or other intellectual property rights because USAID financed the information or it bears the USAID seal or logo or other indication of USAID financial support is not an indication that it represents USAID's official position (i.e., where USAID adopts, endorses or uses the information to formulate or support Agency guidance, regulation or decision).

This ADS chapter applies to covered information disseminated by USAID after October 1, 2002, which was the date that the OMB’s Information Quality Guidelines went into effect.

As illustrated in **ADS 578maa, Categories of USAID Information**, USAID has divided its information into six categories with quality standards for each category (see categories in subsections **578.3.4.1** - **578.3.4.6** below). These categories are: planning and management information; Agency reports and announcements; policy, legislative, and regulatory information and enforcement standards; research and statistical information; general reference information; influential scientific information and highly influential scientific assessments. If a particular type of information is not specifically mentioned, the originating office must determine the most appropriate category and accompanying standard. As a general rule, the process to ensure quality begins at the inception of product development.

578.3.2.1 Planning and Management Information

Effective Date: 03/06/2019

Program policy and strategy planning documents, program reviews (e.g., program evaluations) and development activity analyses are included in this category.

Information covered in this category must be prepared in accordance with the standards in:

- **ADS 201, Program Cycle Operational Policy**
- **ADS 201sae, USAID Recommended Data Quality Assessment (DQA) Checklist**
- **ADS 501, The Automated Directives System (ADS)**
- **ADS 540, USAID Development Experience Information**
- **ADS 579, USAID Development Data**

578.3.2.2 Agency Reports and Announcements

Effective Date: 03/06/2019

Program and development activity performance, results and evaluation reports, press releases, and acquisition and assistance opportunities are included in this category.

Information covered in this category must be prepared in accordance with the standards in:

- **Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR)**
- **2 CFR 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards**
- **ADS 200, Development Policy**
- **ADS 201, Program Cycle Operational Policy**
- **ADS 201sae, USAID Recommended Data Quality Assessment (DQA) Checklist**
- **ADS 302, USAID Direct Contracting**
- **ADS 303, Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-Governmental Organizations**
- **ADS 501, The Automated Directives System (ADS)**
- **ADS 540, USAID Development Experience Information**
- **ADS 557, Public Information**
- **ADS 579, USAID Development Data**
- **USAID Evaluation Policy**

578.3.2.3 Policy, Legislative, and Regulatory Standards, and Enforcement Information

Effective Date: 03/06/2019

Information covered in this category must be prepared in accordance with the standards in **ADS 501**; **ADS 556, Congressional Reports**; **ADS 557**; and other applicable guidance.

578.3.2.4 Research and Statistical Information

Effective Date: 08/09/2019

Scientific, statistical original or supporting data must be developed using sound statistical and research methods and is a requirement under **USAID Scientific Research Policy**. If the results have been subject to formal, independent, external peer review, the information will generally be considered of acceptable objectivity and quality (see **578.3.1**). Further peer review guidance can be found in the **USAID Scientific Research Policy**.

For datasets that are published in the Agency's **Development Data Library (DDL)**, the Agency's repository for open datasets, the originating OU must provide the public with sufficient documentation about each dataset released to allow data users to determine the fitness of the data for the purpose for which third parties may consider using it. Dataset documentation requirements are contained in **ADS Chapter 579, USAID Development Data**.

The Agency strives to provide wide access to development datasets while reducing the risk of disclosure of personally identifiable information (PII), including instances when the Agency considers secondary analysis of data including PII. **ADS Chapter 579, USAID Development Data** provides for tiered access to USAID development data. The Bureau for Management, Office of the Chief Information Officer (M/CIO) is responsible for providing guidance related to access to research and statistical information.

Influential Scientific, Financial, or Statistical Information and Highly Influential Scientific Assessments

Information is considered influential when it is a principal basis for a decision by an Agency decision-maker that significantly impacts policy or strategies at the Agency, region, or country levels or has cross-Agency program implications – that is, if the same decision would be difficult to reach in that information's absence or if the decision would lose its fundamental scientific, financial, or statistical underpinnings absent of the information.

a. Principles for Determining Whether Information Is "Influential Scientific Information"

The originating office is responsible for determining whether information is influential. For Influential Scientific Information (ISI) created by USAID, the Technical Office Director is responsible for designating that information as ISI. For USAID-funded research, the Technical Office Director, in consultation with the AOR/COR, Program Office, and Mission Front Office (in the case of Missions) will make the ISI designation.

Influential scientific information (ISI) includes factual inputs, data, models, analyses, technical information or scientific assessments that USAID can reasonably determine will have, or does have, 1) an annual effect on the global economy of $100 million or more, and 2) a material effect on a sector of the economy, productivity, competition, jobs, the environment, public health or safety, or domestic, international governments or communities or policies or private sector decisions (e.g., where to invest research and development resources).

Scientific information has a "material effect" if it:

1) Establishes a significant precedent, model, or methodology;

2) Addresses significant controversial issues;

3) Focuses on significant emerging issues;

4) Has significant cross-Agency/interagency implications;

5) Involves a significant investment of Agency resources; and

6) Considers an innovative approach for a previously defined problem, process, or methodology.

ISI could result from a single research project funded or performed by USAID, or from monitoring and evaluation (M&E) data collected during a USAID-funded or -performed project or activity.

If the annual effect on the global economy for USAID-funded research is determined to be $100 million or more after the acquisition and assistance award completion, then responsibility for ISI determination will reside with the Technical Office Director.

b. Principles for Determining Whether Information is a Highly Influential Scientific Assessment (HISA)

The originating office is responsible for determining whether information is a highly influential scientific assessment. The “influential” and “highly influential” designations are intended to be applied to information very sparingly. It is not expected that USAID will have many instances of "influential" data or “highly influential” assessments.

In its **Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review**, OMB defines a scientific assessment as an evaluation of a body of scientific or technical knowledge, which typically synthesizes multiple factual inputs, data, models, assumptions, and/or applies best professional judgement to bridge uncertainties in the available information. These assessments could include, but are not limited to, state-of-science reports; technology assessments; weight-of-evidence analyses; meta-analyses; and health, safety, or ecological risk assessments. Such assessments often draw upon knowledge from multiple disciplines.

A highly influential scientific assessment is a scientific assessment (as defined above) created or sponsored by USAID that: 1) has the potential global impact of more than $500 million in any year, and 2) is novel, controversial, or precedent-setting or is of significant interagency or international interest.

Economic impact to the global economy for both HISA and influential scientific information (see **578.3.2.4, letter b**) could be calculated as output impact, value added impact, labor income impact or some combination of the three. It is within the purview of the originating office to determine what it sees as novel, controversial or precedent-setting based on the technical expertise of staff.

The originating office is responsible for determining whether information is a highly influential assessment. For HISA created by USAID, the originating office’s relevant Technical Office Director, in consultation with the award AOR/COR, is responsible for designating the scientific assessment as a HISA. For USAID-funded research, the AOR/COR will make the HISA designation. If the annual effect on the global economy for

USAID-funded research is determined to be $500 million or more after acquisition and assistance award completion, then responsibility for HISA determination will reside with the Technical Office Director.

Information that is determined to be Influential or Highly Influential Scientific Information must be peer-reviewed to determine the fitness of the information for making Agency decisions. Information determined to be ISI or HISA must be peer reviewed per **OMB's Peer Review Bulletin**. The Agency's standards for peer review are articulated in the **USAID Scientific Research Policy**. If peer reviewed ISI or HISA changes significantly (*e.g.,* as a result of the peer reviewer comments, additional agency analysis or further consideration), then a second peer review must be conducted.

c. ISI and HISA Data Access

USAID prioritizes increased access to data and models used to generate ISI and HISA. **ADS Chapter 579, USAID Development Data** governs the Agency's data release framework, as well as data curation and access. It includes guidance on the designation of datasets as influential information and how to prioritize the review, release, and access of those assets.

d. Reproducibility of Results

In addition to pre-dissemination review standards (see **578.3.1**), the OMB Guidelines have reproducibility requirements for "influential scientific, financial, or statistical information" (see **OMB Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by Federal Agencies, Final Guidelines**). The OMB Guidelines distinguish between "original and supporting data" and "analytic results." Originating offices must ensure that submissions of original and supporting data and related results to USAID include necessary and sufficient information and documentation to reproduce, replicate, or otherwise validate results, per the **USAID Scientific Research Policy**. Published ISI or HISA must be communicated transparently by including a clear explication of underlying assumptions; accurate contextualization of uncertainties; and a description of the probabilities associated with both optimistic and pessimistic projections, including best-case and worst-case scenarios.

If using non-government sources to create ISI or HISA, such as using data found in databases maintained by the Data Services Team in M/CIO, then the author must communicate to the public sufficient information on the characteristics of the data and analysis, including its scope (*e.g.,* temporal or demographic), generation protocols, and any other information necessary to allow the public to reproduce the agencies' conclusions.

d. ISI or HISA Determinations Post Publication

If an Operating Unit publishes scientific information or a scientific assessment and at a later date determines that the information or assessment in question is ISI or HISA, then the OU must work with the relevant IT system and/or data owners to remove the information from

USAID maintained- or sponsored-public IT system and/or data owners and complete a peer review prior to republishing it on USAID or USAID-funded sites.

578.3.2.5 General Reference Information
Effective Date: 03/06/2019

General reference materials developed by or on behalf of the Agency must conform to the highest standards of practice. These standards may include, but are not limited to:

- Understanding the needs of the audience;
- Identifying the medium used to communicate messages (e.g., radio, print, TV);
- Drafting concepts (e.g., poster, brochure, public service announcement); and
- Field testing concepts, revising, and producing final products.

To the extent practicable, the technical content of the materials must be drawn from existing standards of practice developed within particular sectors (e.g., business, health, governance).

578.3.3 Information Not Covered
Effective Date: 03/06/2019

This ADS chapter does not apply to:

- Information that is classified;
- Information dissemination limited to correspondence with individuals or persons, archival records, public filings, subpoenas or adjudicative processes;
- Information shared by USAID staff or implementing partners that does not represent the views of the Agency or influence Agency decisions; and
- Information disseminated by individual researchers where the content and the presentation of said content is at the researcher's discretion and not a requirement of a USAID award.

If distribution of information is not covered by this ADS chapter but is later presented as information representing USAID's official position (i.e., where USAID adopts, endorses or uses the information to formulate or support Agency guidance, regulation or decision), then the guidance of this chapter will then apply. USAID assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of information not covered by this ADS chapter.

578.3.4 Data Collection Systems
Effective Date: 08/09/2019

Agency B/IOs must be consulted during the design or improvement of data collection systems regarding their potential downstream uses when there is personally identifiable information. Information collection requirements are referenced in the Privacy Act Statement Template included in **ADS 508mag, Privacy Act Section (e)(3) Statement or Notice (PA Statement)**.

578.3.5 Correction Procedures

Effective Date: 03/06/2019

a. Affected Persons

An affected person (including a group, organization, or corporation as defined by the **Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995**) may request the timely correction of information disseminated by USAID covered by these information quality guidelines. The term "affected person" means anyone who may use, benefit from, or be harmed by the disseminated information.

b. Information Covered

The correction process applies to covered information disseminated by USAID after October 1, 2002 (regardless of when the Agency first disseminated the information). It also applies to any information product disseminated prior to October 1, 2002 that USAID continues to use in its decision-making or that USAID and the public rely on as official USAID data. Requests for corrections are limited to corrections of information and do not include interpretations of information.

Sometimes USAID disseminates studies, analyses, and other information products before they are final. USAID will consider correction requests for such preliminary products when USAID determines that:

1) An early response by the USAID Team Leader for Information Quality would not delay issuance of the final product, and

2) The requester has shown that actual harm is reasonably likely to occur if USAID does not resolve the complaint before issuing the final product.

c. Submitting a Request for Correction

The USAID Team Leader for Information Quality must respond to requests by an affected person who believes that information covered by these guidelines is not accurate, clear, complete, or unbiased; he or she may submit a written request for correction to the USAID Team Leader for Information Quality.

USAID must make the public aware of the following submission procedures:

Requests must be made in writing. Both the envelope and the request must be clearly marked “Information Correction Request” and be addressed to:

Team Leader for Information Quality
Office of Management Policy, Budget and Performance, Performance Division
(M/MPBP/PERF)
U.S. Agency for International Development
Room 6.08.095, Ronald Reagan Building
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20523

Affected persons may also email their requests to **infoquality@usaid.gov**.

The request must:

- Explain how the person is affected by the information;
- Contain contact information, including mailing address, fax, email, telephone number, and any organizational affiliation;
- Clearly indicate the specific information believed to be in error, including the name of the document containing the information, the source (e.g., USAID Web page), the date of issuance, and a detailed description of the information to be corrected;
- State specific reasons why the information does not comply with the OMB Guidelines and any suggestions on how it should be corrected; and
- Include any supporting documentation that the requestor wants considered as part of the correction process.

The requester has the burden of demonstrating that he or she is an "affected person" and that a correction is necessary.

The Team Leader for Information Quality must forward the request to the relevant Technical Office Director in the originating office. If it is determined that a request does not reasonably describe the disseminated information source or the information the requester asserted to be incorrect, the Team Leader for Information Quality or designee must either advise the requester of what additional information is needed to identify the particular information or otherwise state why the request is insufficient.

d. Responding to a Request

The originating office through the AOR/COR must respond to the Team Leader for Information Quality within 45 calendar days of receipt of the request. The Team Leader for Information Quality must respond to the requester within 60 calendar days of receipt of the request. If the request requires more than 60 calendar days to resolve, the Team Leader for Information Quality must inform the requester that more time is required and indicate the reason why and give an estimated decision date. Such reasons may include, but are not limited to, a need to review many records identified in a single request, or a need to consult with other USAID offices or other federal agencies having a substantial interest in the request. Acknowledgment of receipt of a request may contain a request for additional information needed to make a determination.

The 60-day response period described above begins on the day the request is received. For an improperly addressed request, the 60-day response period begins on either the day the request is received or the day it would have been received had the request been addressed properly – whichever comes later.

USAID will correct information and disseminate such corrected information only to the degree and in the manner that is appropriate for the nature and timeliness of the information involved. For example, a mass mailing and a press release might be used to correct a widely disseminated error of wide public interest or importance, whereas informal communication by letter, email, or fax might be used for a less widely disseminated error. USAID will take corrective action within a reasonable time after USAID has made a determination that correction is appropriate. Review for correction of information that may change over time (e.g., real-time environmental monitoring data) is based on the information available at the time of dissemination. Information that is based on the "best available evidence" is an example of a potentially moving target.

The correction process is designed to address the genuine and valid needs of USAID and its constituents without disrupting Agency operations. If a request is "frivolous", USAID may deny the request without further review for correction. Frivolous requests include those made in bad faith or without justification, or deemed inconsequential, unduly burdensome, unnecessary, or duplicative (e.g., USAID has responded to an earlier similar request).

USAID must respond to the requester by letter, email, or fax. The response must explain the findings of USAID's review and any actions that USAID will take in response. USAID must share draft responses to requests for correction and any subsequent appeals with OMB prior to release to the requestor for assessment of compliance with government-wide guidelines governing requests for correction.

e. Appealing a Decision

If the affected person requesting a correction does not agree with USAID's decision (including the corrective action, if any), the person may appeal to the CIO or designee in writing. The appeal must be clearly marked "CIO Information Correction Appeal" and be addressed to:

Chief Information Officer
U.S. Agency for International Development
Room 6.09-030, Ronald Reagan Building
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20523

The written appeal must be submitted to the CIO within 60 calendar days of the date of the letter stating USAID's decision.

The CIO must notify the appellant whether his or her appeal was granted or denied and what corrective action, if any, the Agency will take. The CIO response to the appeal must be made within 60 calendar days of receiving the written appeal. The 60-day response time may be extended for up to 30 more calendar days if necessary or appropriate.

The 60-day response period begins on the day the appeal is received. If the request requires more than 60 calendar days to resolve, the CIO must inform the appellant that more time is required and indicate the reason why and an estimated decision date. For an improperly addressed appeal, the response period begins on either the day the request is received or the day it would have been received had the request been addressed properly – whichever comes later.

578.3.6 Information Quality Web Page

Effective Date: 03/06/2019

The Team Leader for Information Quality must maintain an information quality site on USAID's public Web site (see **https://www.usaid.gov/open/information-quality-guidelines**). The purpose of the information quality site is to meaningfully inform the public about the Agency's information quality practices and procedures. The information quality site must include, at a minimum, access to the Agency's information quality guidelines and an easy-to-understand explanation of the Agency's procedures regarding requests for correction (which will include an explanation of how a person may file a request and, subsequently, an administrative appeal of the Agency's response to the request). The Team Leader for Information Quality must also include a summary of information quality correction requests and descriptions of the associated corrections that the Agency made as a result of the correction procedures, in addition to a peer review agenda of forthcoming influential scientific information or highly influential scientific assessments in accordance with OMB's **Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review**.

578.3.7 Reporting Procedures

Effective Date: 03/06/2019

The Team Leader for Information Quality must submit to OMB an annual fiscal-year report providing quantitative and qualitative information on the number and nature of correction requests received by USAID and how USAID responded to them. The Team Leader must also submit an annual report on Agency ISI or HISA that underwent peer review or is in the process of undergoing peer review during the previous fiscal year. Both reports must be submitted by the Team Leader for Information Quality to OMB by the end of the second quarter every fiscal year.

578.3.7.1 Annual Information Quality Reporting Procedures

Effective Date: 03/06/2019

B/IO representatives on the USAID Research Council must submit information quality data annually to the Team Leader for Information Quality by the end of the first quarter each calendar year. The submission must document all information correction requests received and associated corrective actions that occurred from January 1 – December 31 of the prior calendar year. This form must be submitted electronically using the template found in **ADS 578mac, Information Quality Report Template** and available online. USAID Research Council members should coordinate with Technical Office Directors and AORs/CORs, as appropriate; to collect correction requests and resolution for publicly posted information resulting from USAID-funded programs/projects.

578.3.7.2 Annual Peer Review Reporting Procedures

Effective Date: 03/06/2019

By December 31 of each fiscal year, USAID Research Council members must report on ISI or HISA that was released for peer review during the previous fiscal year (October - September). USAID Research Council members must complete the form included in **ADS 578mab, USAID Peer Review Report Submission Form** for ISI or HISAs that will undergo peer review and submit the form electronically to the Team Leader for Information Quality.

578.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

578.4.1 External Mandatory References

Effective Date: 08/09/2019

a. **Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR)**

b. **2 CFR 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards**

c. **Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-130**

d. **Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review (issued December 16, 2004)**

e. **OMB Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by Federal Agencies, Final Guidelines (Issued February 22, 2002)**

f. **OMB Memorandum M-19-15, Improving Implementation of the Information Quality Act**

g. **Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13)**

h. **Section 515 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2001 (Pub. L. 106-554)**

578.4.2 Internal Mandatory References
Effective Date: 03/06/2019

a. **ADS 200, Development Policy**

b. **ADS 201, Program Cycle Operational Policy**

c. **ADS 201sae, USAID Recommended Data Quality Assessment (DQA) Checklist**

d. **ADS 302, USAID Direct Contracting**

e. **ADS 303, Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-Governmental Organizations**

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

g. **ADS 540, USAID Development Experience Information**

h. **ADS 556, Congressional Reports**

i. **ADS 557, Public Information**

j. **ADS 578maa, Categories of USAID Information**

k. **ADS 578mab, USAID Peer Review Report Submission Form**

l. **ADS 578mac, Information Quality Report Template**

m. **ADS 579, USAID Development Data**

n. **USAID Information Quality Guidelines Web Site**

o. **USAID Scientific Research Policy**

578.5 ADDITIONAL HELP
Effective Date: 03/06/2019

a. **ADS 578saa, Determining When Peer Review Requirements are Triggered for “Influential Scientific Information” and “Highly Influential Scientific Assessments”**

578.6 DEFINITIONS
Effective Date: 08/09/2019

See the **ADS Glossary** for all ADS terms and definitions.

affected person
Anyone who may use, benefits from, or is harmed by the disseminated information. (**Chapter 578**)

capable of being substantially reproduced
Independent reanalysis of the original or supporting data using the same methods would generate similar analytical results, subject to an acceptable degree of imprecision. (**Chapter 578**)

dissemination
Agency initiated or sponsored distribution of information to the public (see **5 CFR 1320.3(d) definition of "Conduct or Sponsor" and OMB Circular A-130**). Dissemination does not include distribution limited to government employees or agency contractors or grantees; intra- or inter-agency use or sharing of government information; and responses to requests for agency records under the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act, the Federal Advisory Committee Act, or other similar law. This definition also does not include distribution limited to correspondence with individuals or persons, archival records, public filings, subpoenas, adjudicative processes, or press releases, fact sheets, press conferences, or similar communications in any medium that announce or support the announcement or give public notice of information USAID has disseminated elsewhere. (**Chapter 578**)

government information
Information created, collected, processed, disseminated, or disposed of by or for the Federal Government. (**Chapter 578**)

highly influential scientific assessment
A meta-analyses created or sponsored by USAID that has the potential global impact of more than $500 million in any year, and is novel, controversial, or precedent-setting or is of significant interagency or international interest. (**Chapter 578**)

influential scientific information
Information the agency can reasonably determine will have a clear and substantial impact on important public polices or important private sector decisions. It includes factual inputs, data, models, analyses, technical information or scientific assessments that USAID can reasonably determine will have, or does have, an annual effect on the global economy of $100 million or more, and affects in a material way a sector of the economy, productivity, competition, jobs, the environment, public health or safety, or domestic, international governments or communities or policies or private sector decisions (e.g., where to invest research and development resources). Scientific information has a “material effect” if it:

1) Establishes a significant precedent, model, or methodology;

2) Addresses significant controversial issues;

3) Focuses on significant emerging issues;

4) Has significant cross-Agency/interagency implications;

5) Involves a significant investment of Agency resources;

6) Considers an innovative approach for a previously defined problem/process/methodology; and

7) ISI results from a single research project that could be implemented by a headquarters B/IO or from monitoring or evaluation data collected during a USAID-funded project or activity. (**Chapter 578**)

information
Any communication or representation of knowledge such as facts or data, in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual forms. This definition includes information that an agency disseminates from a Web page, but does not include the provision of hyperlinks to information that others disseminate. This definition does not include opinions, where the agency's presentation makes it clear that what is being offered is someone's opinion rather than fact or the agency's views. (**Chapter 578**)

information dissemination product
Any book, paper, map, machine-readable material, audiovisual production, or other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristic, an agency disseminates to the public. This definition includes any electronic document or Web page. (**Chapter 578**)

integrity
The safeguarding of information, programs and interfaces from unauthorized modification or destruction. (**Chapter 545, 578**)

objectivity
Involves two distinct elements; presentation and substance.

1) "Objectivity" includes whether disseminated information is being presented in an accurate, clear, complete, and unbiased manner. This involves whether the information is presented within a proper context. Sometimes, in disseminating certain types of information to the public, other information must also be disseminated in order to ensure an accurate, clear, complete, and unbiased presentation. Also, the agency needs to identify the sources of the disseminated information (to the extent possible, consistent with confidentiality protections) and, in a scientific or statistical context, the supporting data and models, so that the public can assess for itself whether there may be some reason to question the objectivity of the sources. Where appropriate, supporting data should have full, accurate, transparent documentation, and error sources affecting data quality should be identified and disclosed to users.

2) In addition, "objectivity" involves a focus on ensuring accurate, reliable, and unbiased information. In a scientific or statistical context, the original or supporting data must be generated, and the analytical results must be developed, using sound statistical and research methods.

a. If the results have been subject to formal, independent, external peer review, the information can generally be considered of acceptable objectivity.

b. In those situations involving influential scientific or statistical information, the results must be capable of being substantially reproduced if the original or supporting data are independently analyzed using the same models. Reproducibility does not mean that the original or supporting data have to be capable of being replicated through new experiments, samples, or tests.

c. Making the data and models publicly available will assist in determining whether analytical results are capable of being substantially reproduced. However, these guidelines do not alter the otherwise applicable standards and procedures for determining when and how information is disclosed. Thus, the objectivity standard does not override other compelling interests, such as privacy, trade secret, and other confidentiality protections. (**Chapter 578**)

peer review agenda
A key deliverable in an agency's peer review planning process for research that will produce influential scientific information or be a highly influential assessment. This listing of all ISI and HISA that will be peer reviewed is a Web-accessible listing of forthcoming influential scientific disseminations (i.e., an agenda) and is updated by the agency at least annually. (**Chapter 578**)

quality
An encompassing term comprising utility, objectivity, and integrity. Therefore, the OMB Guidelines sometimes refer to these four statutory terms, collectively, as "quality." (**Chapter 578**)

scientific assessment
Evaluation of a body of scientific or technical knowledge, which typically synthesizes multiple factual inputs, data, models, assumptions, and/or applies best professional judgement to bridge uncertainties in the available information. (**Chapter 578**)

utility
Refers to the usefulness of the information to its intended users, including the public. In assessing the usefulness of information that the agency disseminates to the public, the agency needs to consider the uses of the information not only from the perspective of the agency but also from the perspective of the public. As a result, when reproducibility and transparency of information are relevant for assessing the information's usefulness

from the public's perspective, the agency must take care to ensure that reproducibility and transparency have been addressed in its review of the information. (**Chapter 578**)

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