Project Design and Implementation Process

An Additional Help Document for ADS Chapter 201

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1. OVERVIEW

A "project" refers to a group of activities that are designed and managed in a coordinated way to advance result(s) set forth in a Regional or Country Development Cooperation Strategy (hereinafter referred to as "CDCS") and ultimately foster lasting gains along a country's or region's development journey. Through a project approach, Missions can create synergies among complementary activities that generate higher-level results than can be achieved through the sum of their individual performances. In addition, Missions can more strategically leverage the wide range of partnering approaches or mechanisms at the Agency's disposal to strengthen local actors and systems.

As described in **ADS 201.3.2.14**, projects are optional. However, where used, Missions should follow the guidance herein. The guidance in this reference is specifically aimed at minimizing internal bureaucracy while maximizing value to ensure staff have the time they need to design, implement, and monitor activities based on evidence and continuous learning to achieve intended results.

For identified projects, Missions should undertake an initial design process to define project boundaries, a high-level theory of change, and an adaptable plan for implementation. This process results in a short Project Development Document (PDD) (maximum of 10-15 pages, and ideally less) that summarizes key decisions made during this process (see **PDD Template**). During implementation, Missions should update or revalidate the PDD at least once a year—*e.g.,* in connection with an annual portfolio review—to ensure that it remains a useful frame-of-reference.

Concurrent with, or subsequent to, the project design process, Missions also should design and implement "component activities" in support of project-level result(s). Missions must approve such activities through Activity Approval Memoranda (AAMs) that briefly document how they support the larger project (or for standalone activities, how and why they connect directly to the CDCS) (see **ADS 201.3.4, Activity Design and Implementation** and **ADS 201mai, Activity Approval Memorandum (AAM) Template** for additional guidance).

Achieving project-level success ultimately requires more than a design; it requires a management approach based on collaboration, coordination, and engagement, both internally within the team and externally with implementing partners and local actors who are critical to project success. Missions should therefore establish an organizational structure and culture, and associated roles and responsibilities, from the outset of project formation to set it up for success (see **Section 11** of this Help Document for further guidance on project implementation).

2. PRINCIPLES THAT GOVERN PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

The guidance herein blends discretion and flexibility with accountability and structure to support Missions in designing and implementing projects that are integrated and innovative, take balanced risks, and adapt to circumstances on the ground to achieve results set forth in their CDCS. To achieve this vision, Missions should emphasize the following:

1) <u>Results over Specific Actions or Tactics</u>. Missions should focus project designs on defining key results, and a high-level theory of change for achieving them, over specific actions or tactics along the way. Project designs should serve as a framework for guiding decision-making, not a fixed blueprint to be summarily executed.

2) <u>Meaningful Collaboration, Coordination, and Engagement over Perfunctory Processes or Documentation</u>. Missions should prioritize meaningful collaboration, coordination, and engagement over processes or documentation that do not add value. Project designs should serve as management tools that help facilitate these interactions, not static documents that are quickly filed away.

3) <u>Right-Sized, Just-in-Time Analysis over Extraneous or Ill-Timed Analytics</u>. Missions should use their professional judgment to identify an analytic agenda that provides efficient, focused, just-in-time evidence to inform decision-making at every stage. Evidence should be purposeful and applicable, not extraneous or ill-timed such that it becomes rapidly obsolete.

4) <u>Project and Activity Design Processes that Are Iterative and Adaptive over Linear and Sequential</u>. Missions should encourage an iterative and adaptive interplay between project and activity design in which each process continually informs the other. Project and activity design processes should be overlapping and iterative, not a linear waterfall that takes place in perfect sequence.

5) <u>Locally-Led Solutions over Direct Service Delivery by U.S. or International Partners</u>. Missions should advance partnership models and development practices that build the capacity and commitment of local actors (particularly those that have been historically underutilized) to lead their own change. Project design and implementation should champion models that support systemic change, not models that deliver short-term results at the expense of long-term sustainable development.

3. APPLICABILITY OF PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

a. Overseas Operating Units

The guidance herein on project design and implementation is geared to all USAID overseas Operating Units (OUs, also hereinafter referred to as "Missions"), including overseas OUs that are exempt from developing a CDCS per **ADS 201.3.2.4**. In the absence of a CDCS, overseas OUs that opt to develop projects should use multi-year strategic frameworks, sector strategies, or other relevant planning documents to ensure that they contribute to higher-order results.

In addition, the project guidance herein is broadly directed to the portfolio of activities that Missions manage and fund. This includes Field Support activities in which Missions work closely with Contracting/Agreement Officers' Representatives (CORs/AORs) in Washington to ensure their successful implementation.

b. Washington OUs

The project guidance herein is not directed to Washington OUs. This is because programmatic activities that are funded and managed by Washington OUs are often implemented in diverse countries or regions. They also often contribute to objectives that are global in nature (*e.g.,* generating new evidence in a particular technical area). Washington OUs should still conduct strategic and/or multi-activity planning to ensure that field activities under their purview contribute to higher-order objectives. Some Washington OUs may opt to customize this guidance, as appropriate, to ensure such contribution.

4. ROLES IN PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Project design and implementation is a core interdisciplinary function that requires skills and expertise that span organizational and functional boundaries. Missions should therefore promote efficient and constructive interactions between key offices and functions to ensure alignment and consistency among the technical, legal, financial, and managerial facets of each project.

Roles and responsibilities of key Mission offices include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Mission Program Office. The Program Office oversees the project design process and provides guidance on Mission-specific procedures in the relevant Mission Order; acts as the steward for implementation of the CDCS and PMP to which projects contribute; promotes and shares good programming practices and lessons learned; organizes and oversees Mission-wide portfolio reviews;

manages the budget planning process to ensure the availability of funds for projects and associated activities; and provides objective, Mission-level review of project progress.

- Mission Technical Offices. Technical Offices typically play a leadership role in the project design process (under the oversight of the Program Office), which often includes conducting and/or reviewing analyses, engaging stakeholders, developing the theory of change, and drafting and updating the PDD, among other examples. Technical Offices also typically assume project management responsibilities, which include designing and implementing activities in support of project-level result(s); coordinating efforts in monitoring, evaluation, collaboration, learning, and adapting (CLA); and adapting implementation as needed.

- Mission Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA). OAA serves as a business advisor on how the design team can achieve intended project results with the Agency's broad range of acquisition and assistance (A&A) tools. OAA also works with the team during project implementation to provide guidance on how to make necessary adjustments to ensure that project-based A&A activities are working in the most synergistic manner in support of project-level result(s), all in accordance with the limitations of their delegated authorities and with applicable statutes, regulations, and policies.

- Mission Office of Financial Management (OFM). OFM oversees all financial management matters related to project implementation; and provides guidance, where applicable, on how to build the financial management capacity of local partners in support of project-level outcomes.

- Mission Executive Office (EXO). EXO is often responsible for the procurement of small activities under the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (*e.g.,* analyses, assessments, and other short-term support to inform the project design process); oversees USAID staffing needs that support project design and implementation; and maintains Mission Orders or Mission Notices to supplement the project design policies and procedures in this Help Document.

- Washington OUs. Washington OUs provide guidance to Missions on Agency policies and priorities; support Missions with technical expertise consistent with the **Agency Approach to Field Services (AAFS)**; ensure the implementation of Agency-wide sector strategies and initiatives; and provide technical assistance, as requested, to Missions in support of the functions outlined in this section, including for the analysis and collection of evidence needed to design and implement projects.

In addition, the following functions in the Mission are critical:

- Mission Resident Legal Officer (RLO). The RLO provides legal counsel and advice on a broad range of matters related to the design and implementation of projects and associated activities and connects Missions back to the Office of the USAID General Counsel (GC) in Washington as needed.

- Mission Environmental Officer (MEO). The MEO assists and advises project teams on any environmental considerations that should be incorporated into project design and implementation. The MEO also advises teams on the mandatory environmental assessment that is generally conducted during the design of each supporting activity. Although not required, in some cases, the MEO may collaborate with the team to conduct the mandatory environmental assessment at the project level rather than the activity level (see **ADS 201.3.4.4** and **ADS 204, Environmental Procedures** for additional guidance).

- Climate Integration Lead (CIL). The CIL assists and advises project teams on incorporating any climate risk considerations into project design and implementation. The CIL also advises teams on the mandatory climate risk assessment, if applicable, that is generally conducted during the design of each supporting activity. Although not required, in some cases, the CIL may collaborate with the team to conduct the mandatory climate risk assessment at the project level rather than the activity level (see **ADS 201.3.4.4** and **ADS 201mal, Climate Risk Management for USAID Projects and Activities** for additional guidance).

- Mission Gender Advisor/Point of Contact (POC). The Mission Gender Advisor/POC assists and advises project teams on conducting or reviewing the mandatory project-level gender analysis; ensures that project-level performance indicators are, as appropriate, sex-disaggregated and/or gender-sensitive; and advises on any course corrections during implementation that could further close gender gaps. The Gender Advisor also assists and advises teams in conducting, commissioning, or reviewing project-level gender analyses to inform project designs (see **Section 6** in this document, **ADS 201.3.4.45** and **ADS 205, Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle** for additional guidance).

- Other Cross-Cutting Advisors and POCs in the Mission. Cross-cutting advisors take an active role in conducting, facilitating, and/or reviewing analyses, where applicable, during the design process related to their respective areas of responsibility; advise on partnership models or development practices that can address issues in their areas; and provide guidance and follow-up on respective issues during project implementation. PSE and NPI POCs also have the added responsibility of ensuring that their Missions set, meet, and maintain the annual engagement targets through the design and implementation of projects and other processes related to USAID's **Program Cycle**, while facilitating connections between expertise in Washington and design teams as needed.

5. PHASE ONE: PLANNING A PROJECT DESIGN PROCESS

Before initiating a particular project design process, Missions should do the following:

- Appoint a project design team to develop the design (see **Section a** below); and

- Identify scope and process parameters to guide the design process; (see **Section b** below).

a. Appointing a Project Design Team to Develop the Design

Missions should appoint a project design team, including a project design team leader, at the inception of the project design process. This team should consist of a cross-functional group from across the Mission to ensure alignment and consistency among the technical, managerial, and budgetary facets of the project. Some Missions may opt to establish a small core team complemented by an extended team that can augment the core team's efforts, as necessary.

Missions may also consider including outside stakeholders on the core or extended team, such as identified individuals from the interagency or USAID/Washington. They may also include identified local actors/stakeholders for the purpose of promoting local ownership. Missions should consult their OAA and GC/RLO contacts for guidance on mitigating potential conflicts of interest, where applicable.

b. Identifying Scope and Process Parameters for the Design Process

Missions should establish parameters to guide the design process. In identifying these parameters, Missions should consider the following:

- Preliminary Purpose of the Project. Missions should define the project's preliminary purpose, or the highest-order result to be achieved by the project, while recognizing that this purpose may be refined during the design process. This purpose should support a result or set of results in the Mission's CDCS Results Framework. It should also be defined at a level of ambition that is attainable given the Mission's capacity, resources, and influence.

- Primary Emphasis of the Initial Project Design Process. Missions should consider the primary emphasis of the initial project design process. For some projects, Missions may opt for a more rigorous, upfront design process. For other projects, especially where there are high levels of uncertainty, Missions may opt for a more iterative design and implementation process. In these cases, Missions may place particular emphasis on identifying high-level results to be achieved, learning priorities, key risks to be managed, and/or a plan to systematically adapt implementation.

- Plan for Analysis. Missions should consider what sources of evidence they will need to review or collect during the design process. In making this determination, Missions should use professional judgment regarding the type and depth of any new analysis depending on the context and nature of the project. Missions also should leverage relevant evidence gathered during the CDCS process, as well as other relevant evidence from completed evaluations, monitoring data, or other studies, whether commissioned by USAID or other entities. Missions may also opt to defer certain analyses to a later juncture.

- Plan for Engagement. Missions also should consider how they will ensure inclusive, meaningful engagement with local actors—*i.e.,* individuals or organizations in the public sector, private sector, or civil society—in support of project results. Ideally, Missions should conduct engagement processes during the initial design. In some cases, Missions may opt to defer engagement to a later juncture (*e.g.,* if it is determined that such engagement would be more meaningful during associated activity design processes).

- Consideration of the Three Mandatory Analyses. Missions should consider their approaches for conducting the three mandatory analyses: 1) gender; 2) environment; and 3) climate risk, as applicable:

  ○ Gender: Per **P.L. 115-428**, Missions must ensure that gender analyses shape CDCSs, projects and activities. To implement this mandate, Missions must conduct, commission, or review a project-level gender analysis and incorporate findings into the project's design as appropriate. This project-level analysis may also satisfy the requirement for activity-level analysis as long as it yields findings that are useful for directly informing subject activity designs. Missions may use a third-party gender analysis (*e.g.,* from another donor or multilateral organization) or an analysis they previously conducted to satisfy this requirement where available and appropriate (see **ADS 201.3.4.4** for additional summary guidance, as well as **ADS 205, Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle**).

  ○ Environment: Per **22 CFR 216**, Missions should identify, assess, avoid, and mitigate, as appropriate, the potential environmental impacts of all USAID-funded activities, unless otherwise exempted. In most cases, Missions should conduct these mandatory environmental reviews during activity design when Missions typically have more information about the specific approaches or interventions they will use. Alternatively, Missions may opt to conduct this review at the project level as long as there is sufficient information upon which to conduct it (see **ADS 201.3.4.4** for

additional summary guidance, as well as **ADS 204, Environmental Procedures**).

- ○ Climate Risk: Per **Executive Order 13677**, Missions must 1) assess climate-related risks for all investments (unless otherwise exempted in **ADS 201mal**); and 2) if applicable, incorporate risk management measures into activity design and implementation. Missions must implement this requirement through a mandatory climate risk screening during the development of their R/CDCS (see **ADS 201.3.2.11** and **ADS 201mat, Climate Change in USAID Country/Regional Strategies**), and, if applicable, a more-rigorous climate risk assessment for sectors or areas identified in the R/CDCS as moderate or high risk during project or activity design. If Missions opt to conduct the second review during project design, they should have sufficient information about the specific approaches or interventions they will use to inform the review (see **ADS 201.3.4.4** for additional summary guidance, as well as **ADS 201mal, Climate Risk Management for USAID Projects and Activities**).

- • Activities Scheduled for Concurrent Design (if applicable): Missions should consider any activities they intend to design concurrently during the project design process. This is encouraged, where feasible, to minimize lead times. However, this approach also requires that teams plan for an iterative interplay between project and activity design to ensure that both processes inform each other.

Missions should document key parameters to ensure that teams have a common understanding of decisions made and what they need to do. The process of documenting parameters should be efficient and streamlined. For example, design teams could meet with identified senior staff and record decisions in the form of minutes that they subsequently distribute to attendees and other stakeholders.

6. PHASE TWO: UNDERTAKING A PROJECT DESIGN PROCESS

During the project design process, design teams should define the project's boundaries, an initial theory of change, and an adaptable plan for implementation, all with a view to advancing identified result(s) in their CDCS. This process results in a short document called the Project Development Document (PDD), which provides a concise summary of key decisions made during the process (see **Section 8** below on the PDD).

Design teams should develop their initial theories of change based on evidence. This includes evidence gathered or reviewed while developing the CDCS, as well as any inputs from local actors/stakeholders and other sources of evidence gathered or reviewed during the project design process. The process of examining evidence to develop the theory of change should be a collaborative endeavor to draw out different viewpoints and facilitate consensus on the best approach. This requires both time and

open, honest reflection from across the design team, as well as input from any stakeholders on the expanded team.

The degree of specificity with which design teams define the theory of change at this juncture in the overall design and implementation process depends on the nature of the development problem. For the simplest development problems where the solution is clear, teams may define the theory of change with a higher degree of specificity. For more complex problems where the context is changing or the solution is less clear, teams may opt to convey an exploratory scenario taken as a starting point, an initial approach based on what is currently known, or they may focus on identifying high-level results to be achieved. In these cases, teams should place emphasis on identifying learning priorities; risk management approaches; and monitoring, evaluation, and CLA plans to support adaptive management.

The precise steps that teams undertake during this process will vary broadly depending on the high-level parameters that were identified before the design process began (see **Section 6** above on identifying these parameters). For general tips on conducting a project design process, see **How-To Note: Tips for Conducting a Project Design Process**.

7. THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENT (PDD)

Based on the project design process, project teams should develop an initial PDD that summarizes key decisions that were made (see **PDD Template**).

The PDD is a short document (maximum 10-15 pages, and ideally less) aimed at promoting clarity, conciseness, and precision. Project teams should use the process of developing the PDD to promote shared buy-in and ownership. After developing the document, teams should use the PDD as a frame of reference to guide decision-making, facilitate learning and adapting, and show stakeholders what the project is about at a glance.

The PDD does not stand alone. Other documents complement it, including, but not limited to, the various sources of evidence and reviews that informed the design; the Mission-wide PMP; and various management tools to facilitate implementation, among other examples.

The PDD Template includes four major parts:

- Part 1: Project Overview (no more than one-and-a-half pages): This section serves as a cover page for the overall PDD. It includes the project's highest-order purpose; a brief abstract; the name of the Project Manager and Technical Office(s) that will be involved in managing the project; a description of how the project supports the CDCS; and a statement of project boundaries—or limits and exclusions—that circumscribe what is inside and outside its scope of action.

- Part 2: Project Description (no more than six pages): This section describes the team's understanding of the overall development problem and the context in which it is situated. It also provides an initial theory of change and/or logic model that outline(s) the major approaches the team plans to implement, along with the team's thinking regarding how and why such approaches will advance the project's purpose. In addition, this section cites key learning priorities that stem from the most important gaps in knowledge identified by the team, as well as key risks and associated mitigation approaches where applicable.

- Part 3: Project Management (no more than four pages): This section describes the team's overall project management approach, including key roles on the team, plans to ensure the synergistic design and/or management of component activities; plans to collaborate, learn, and adapt to most effectively achieve intended results; and a description of how the team will update the PMP and report other insights that could inform broader implementation of the CDCS.

- Part 4: Component Activities (as many pages as needed; however, each activity description should be no more than three sentences): This section provides brief descriptions of existing and planned activities, along with their status; their (estimated) start and end dates; and their Total Estimated Cost/Total Estimated Amount (which for planned activities, is notional). It also provides space for Missions to identify any special planning considerations for activity design or implementation. Missions may adapt this section to meet their needs or eliminate it entirely and link to an alternative custom tracker.

Mission Directors (or their designees) should approve initial PDDs through a brief action memorandum (see the **PDD Approval Memorandum Template**). By approving the PDD, the Mission Director (or his or her designee) provides authorization for the project's overall concept, while recognizing that some details within the PDD may evolve over time based on new learning or changing circumstances. Approval does not confer binding authorization for any planned activities described therein, nor does it authorize the use or obligation of funds.

As described in **ADS 201.3.4**, Missions must approve activities through AAMs. Missions may approve one design or multiple, complementary designs through this memorandum. The AAM should briefly document how the activity supports the larger project (or for standalone activities, how and why it links directly to the CDCS) (see **ADS 201mai, Activity Approval Memorandum (AAM)** for additional guidance).

8. PROJECT-LEVEL MONITORING; EVALUATION; AND COLLABORATING, LEARNING, AND ADAPTING

Design teams should document project-level approaches to monitoring, evaluation, and CLA in the PDD, as described in the **PDD Template**. In addition, design teams should

consider whether to add or update project-level approaches to monitoring, evaluation, or CLA in the Mission-wide PMP in view of the following parameters:

- If a project design process identifies new or revised Intermediate Result (IR)-level performance indicators, design teams must update the PMP by adding them to the Mission's indicator-tracking system;

- If the process identifies any new planned evaluations, teams should add them to the Mission's Evaluation Registry; and

- Design Teams may also make other updates to the PMP as needed to contribute to broader learning or accountability within the Mission's portfolio.

To facilitate coherent decision-making across USAID's Program Cycle, Missions should ensure that the processes of developing the PMP and associated PDDs (and/or standalone activities, where applicable—see **ADS 201.3.2.14**) are not discrete or isolated. These processes reflect highly interrelated decisions, and each should inform the other.

For guidance on monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) requirements in the PMP, see **ADS 201.3.2.15**.

9. LIBRARY OF PROJECT DESIGNS ON PROGRAMNET

Missions (and other OUs) are encouraged to post copies of initial PDDs on ProgramNet. ProgramNet houses a library of PDDs to provide USAID staff with a mechanism to share and benefit from examples across the Agency. By posting PDDs on ProgramNet, Missions help contribute to learning across the Agency.

To avoid actual, potential or the reasonable appearance of ("perceived") organizational conflicts of interest, Missions should remove activity-specific data (Section 4 in the template) when they post PDDs to ProgramNet. Missions should also mark this section with a statement that reads, "This section has been redacted to avoid actual, potential, or perceived organizational conflicts of interest."

10. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Achieving project success project requires much more than a design; it requires an implementation approach based on collaboration, coordination, and engagement, both internally within the team and externally with implementing partners and local actors who are critical to project success. Guidance with respect to the project implementation team, and its roles and responsibilities, are as follows:

a. Project Implementation Team

After the PDD is approved, Missions should establish a project implementation team (hereinafter referred to as the "Project Team"). This team should consist of a cross-functional group from across the Mission to ensure alignment and consistency among the technical, managerial, and financial facets of the project. Some Missions may opt to establish a small core team complemented by an extended team to augment the core team's efforts as needed.

Missions should also designate a Project Manager or other responsible person to provide overall guidance and direction at the project level. The Project Manager may be an Office Director, Team Leader, or Contracting/Agreement Officer's Representative (COR/AOR), among other options. Because this is a function in the Mission, rather than a formal position in the Mission's staffing pattern, the designated Project Manager may or may not have formal supervisory authorities over technical staff.

Per **ADS 201.3.2.13**, Missions also have the option to establish Development Objective (DO) teams in addition to Project Teams to manage the connections between interrelated projects under a DO in their CDCS.

b. Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the Project Manager and associated team include, but are not limited to, the following:

1) Oversight:

- Ensuring that component activities are designed and implemented in a complementary and synergistic manner (*e.g.,* through joint work planning); and

- Working collaboratively across the Mission (including, if applicable, with other Project Teams) to ensure that the project is contributing to CDCS objectives.

2) Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Assessing progress toward the project's purpose to detect changes in the operating context;

- Ensuring that associated agreement or award-level MEL plans are consistent with, and meet the data collection needs of, the project, as defined in the PMP;

- Planning and implementing any evaluations of the project, or of component activities within the project; and

- Updating the PMP to reflect changes or updates to project-level indicators, evaluations, and learning priorities.

3) Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting:

- Facilitating collaborative learning, both internally in the Mission and among implementing partners, through periodic meetings with partners, peer assists, site visits, learning networks, and/or topical communities of practice, among other means;

- Working with Agency experts to learn about new development practices and research so that work on the project incorporates the best available approaches;

- Using a diverse mix of approaches to engage local actors that are contributing to project outcomes, not just for their knowledge and experience, but also to increase their capacity and commitment in support of sustainable development efforts;

- Conducting targeted analyses and filling gaps in knowledge as needed for improved decision-making;

- Using project- and activity-level MEL data to inform course corrections as needed during project implementation (*e.g.,* through technical direction, modifications to agreements, or changes to work plans); and

- Organizing periodic project reviews, in addition to the Mission-wide portfolio review, to reflect on project progress and create prompts for decision-making to ensure success.

4) Updating the PDD:

- Updating the PDD at designated junctures, at least annually, to reflect lessons learned and changed circumstances, among other updates; see **Section 13** of this Help Document below.

5) Filing System:

- Maintaining a project filing system that includes the PDD (both the initial PDD and sequentially-updated PDDs thereafter); sources of evidence that underpin the design; documents related to activity design and management, which CORs/AORs must upload into the Agency Secure Image Storage and Tracking System (**ASIST**); MEL and CLA documents; and other management or work flow tools that support implementation.

11. THE LIFE OF A PROJECT

Unless determined otherwise, the life of a project will generally coincide with the combined life of its component activities.

When Missions develop a new CDCS, they should assess how their existing portfolio of projects aligns against the new Results Framework (RF). In some cases, Missions may opt to realign existing projects, or incorporate existing projects (or activities thereunder) into new ones, to ensure support for their new CDCS RF. For additional guidance, see **ADS 201.3.2.11** on the Index of Existing and Planned Projects annexed to the CDCS in which Missions make preliminary decisions during the CDCS process regarding the disposition of existing projects.

12. UPDATING THE PDD

Project Teams should holistically revalidate and/or update their PDD at designated annual junctures throughout implementation to ensure it remains a relevant and useful frame of reference for the project. Missions are encouraged to mandate PDD updates in connection with an annual portfolio review; however, Missions may identify other junctures as long as PDDs are updated/revalidated at least once a year.

Missions should ensure that their process for updating PDDs is streamlined and efficient. For example, in lieu of a formal clearance process, Missions could mandate that their Program Offices circulate updated PDDs in advance of their annual portfolio review and record any decisions that require additional changes in the minutes for the review. Project Teams would then make the requisite changes and save the updated PDD in the project file.

To create a historical record of PDDs over time, Missions should maintain a project filing system that includes the initial PDD and updated PDDs thereafter. Each version should display the date that it was finalized in the file name and in the upper right-hand corner of the PDD.

13. PROJECT CLOSEOUT

At the end of a project, Project Teams should draft a brief close out note, which should do the following:

1) Summarize progress toward achievement of the project purpose and end-of-project targets for key performance indicators. Where the deviation between target result(s) and actual result(s) is significant, the document should explain the Project Team's best understanding, based on existing materials and sources, of why this differential occurred; and

2) Summarize key lessons learned that should be applied to subsequent CDCSs and/or project designs, and provide a bibliography of evaluations, analyses, end-of-activity reports, and other documents that capture key learnings.

Project Teams must post documents described in **ADS 540.3.2.1** on the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC), the Agency's largest online resource of USAID-funded technical and programmatic materials. In addition, teams should save key project documents in an internal filing system where their successors can easily find them on an ongoing basis in the future.

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