



USAID’s Program Cycle

Background

USAID is undertaking a remarkable set of reforms to implement the Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development (PPD-6) and the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), as embodied in USAID’s Policy Framework for 2011-2015 and USAID *Forward*. To make these reforms real and sustainable, the Agency must operationalize them through the core components of USAID’s Program Cycle: Agency-wide policies and strategies, strategic planning at the country and regional levels, project design and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. These components, representing the “discipline of development,” must be based on evidence, informed by continuous learning and adapting, inform the annual budget and resource management processes, and be focused on achieving results.



Components of the Program Cycle

Agency Policies and Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •USAID Missions should consider and, where relevant, incorporate Presidential Initiative strategies and Agency policies and strategies in the CDCS process
Country Development Cooperation Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The CDCS defines a strategic vision for USAID investments in a specific country or regional context, and provides the basis for project design and M&E.
Project Design and Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Projects are the primary means to implement the CDCS and will serve as the basis for future evaluations. They should generally be targeted at the Intermediate Result level (with Project Goals linking to DOs in the CDCS Results Framework).
Evaluation and Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Monitoring assesses progress toward achieving results (<i>whether</i> interventions are successful); Evaluation determines <i>why</i> (or <i>why not</i>) a program or project was successful and informs future strategies and designs
Learning and Adapting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Missions are encouraged to improve coordination and collaboration with development partners, test promising new approaches, build on what works, and eliminate what does not during the implementation of the Program Cycle.
Budget and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The integrated program cycle informs the integrated budget cycle, wherein DOs defined in the CDCS form the basis for annual resource requests.