



USAID
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ADS Chapter 402

Elevating and Institutionalizing the Expertise of Foreign Service Nationals

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This is a new chapter.

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ADS 402 – Elevating and Institutionalizing Expertise of Foreign Service Nationals

402.1 OVERVIEW

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

This chapter describes the Agency’s internal guidance, policy directives, and required procedures to institutionalize and strengthen Foreign Service National (FSN) Empowerment throughout the Agency. All USAID Operating Units (OUs), including overseas Missions and Bureaus and Independent Offices (B/IOs), have a role in the implementation of this chapter. The FSN Advocacy Council (AC) and FSN Committees in Missions serve as key resources in the implementation of this chapter. This chapter recognizes the varying attributes that contribute to the unique environments of each Mission. As a result, the chapter contains guidance that is intended to enable Missions to customize management approaches to FSN empowerment efforts under the overall Agency plan.

In this chapter, direct hire FSNs and Cooperating Country National Personal Services Contractors (CCNPSCs) are referred to collectively as “FSNs.” This chapter complements and references other ADS chapters on local expertise and the local workforce, including those that specifically address administrative and contractual topics in [ADS 309, Personal Services Contracts with Individuals](#), [ADS 495, Foreign Service National Direct-Hire Personnel Administration](#), and [ADS 530, Emergency Planning Overseas](#).

All the activities listed in this chapter, and all activities undertaken pursuant to any provision in this chapter, must comply with all applicable laws including ethics, employment, and procurement laws and regulations. Resident Legal Officers (RLOs) in Missions and the General Counsel (GC) in USAID/Washington (USAID/W) should be consulted with questions.

402.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

a. The **Office of the Administrator (AID/A)**:

- Promotes the Agency’s commitment to FSN Empowerment by prioritizing reform efforts, including changes to the Agency’s policies, programs, and operations;
- Approves the Agency-wide FSN Empowerment Implementation Plan (EIP) that formally recognizes FSN Empowerment initiatives; and
- Oversees the Agency’s FSN Empowerment Coordinator and Deputy FSN Empowerment Coordinator positions.

b. The **FSN Empowerment Coordinator and Deputy FSN Empowerment Coordinator**:

- Develops the Agency's FSN EIP in coordination with the FSN AC and other key stakeholders (e.g., Regional Bureaus; the Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Office of Overseas Human Capital Initiatives [HCTM/OHCI]; and the Bureau for Management, Office of Management Services, Overseas Management Division [M/MS/OMD]), manages the implementation of the FSN EIP, and evaluates the performance of FSN EIP efforts for continuous improvement;
- Convenes the Executive FSN Empowerment Council (EFEC) to determine the direction of the Agency's FSN Empowerment efforts, oversees the implementation of those efforts, and identifies solutions to implementation issues;
- Provides guidance for Mission Action Plans (MAPs), reviews MAPs, and provides MAP-related feedback and support, as needed; and
- Coordinates with appropriate staff from HCTM, M Bureau, FSN AC, and Bureau FSN Leads to ensure FSN Empowerment-related efforts are aligned across lines of work.

c. The **Executive FSN Empowerment Council (EFEC)** is chaired by the Deputy Administrator for Management and Resources (DA-MR) and the Agency Counselor. EFEC members include the FSN AC Chairs, the Chief Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Officer, HCTM's Assistant to the Administrator (AtA/HCTM), and the M Bureau's Assistant Administrator (AA/M). The EFEC:

- Ensures the FSN AC is engaged in the development and implementation of FSN Empowerment activities to ensure FSN perspectives are reflected;
- Provides guidance and resources for the development and implementation of the FSN EIP; and
- Guides the FSN Empowerment Coordinator, Deputy FSN Empowerment Coordinator, and stakeholders on the implementation of the FSN EIP across the Agency.

d. The **Office of Human Capital Talent Management, Office of Overseas Human Capital Initiatives (HCTM/OHCI)**:

- Collaborates with M/MS/OMD in managing and updating USAID policy on strengthening FSN Empowerment;
- Develops the FSN EIP in coordination with the FSN Advocacy Council and other key stakeholders (e.g., FSN Empowerment Coordinator and Deputy, Regional Bureaus, and the M Bureau);

- Recommends and formulates USAID personnel policy regarding FSN direct hire employees and provides support to field Missions on FSN direct hire policy and operational issues;
- Serves as the Liaison Agent for the FSN AC with Agency leadership and USAID/W and Mission stakeholders;
- Liaises with the Department of State (State) on issues affecting locally employed (LE) staff, including the Local Compensation Plan and benefits; and
- Manages the FSN Fellowship Program.

e. The Office of Human Capital Talent Management, Center for Professional Development (HCTM/CPD):

- Manages the FSN Leadership and Performance Coaching (LPC) Program to enable FSNs to obtain guidance from their peers to enhance performance, boost confidence, foster professional growth, and strengthen leadership skills; and
- Coordinates with Regional Bureaus in their support of the MAPs as it relates to professional development opportunities.

f. The Office of Human Capital Talent Management, Foreign Service Center (HCTM/FSC) issues communications to B/IOs across the Agency on their responsibility to include at least one FSN as an interview panel member when interviewing for Foreign Service Officer (FSO) positions, where practicable as articulated in [ADS 436.2](#).

g. The Bureau for Management, Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA) develops, issues, and maintains the Agency's acquisition regulations, policies, procedures, and standards, which govern PSCs, in accordance with established Agency delegations and requirements.

h. The Bureau for Management, Office of Management Services, Overseas Management Division (M/MS/OMD):

- Collaborates with HCTM/OHCI in managing and updating USAID policy on strengthening FSN Empowerment;
- Develops the FSN EIP in coordination with the FSN AC and other key stakeholders (e.g., FSN Empowerment Coordinator and Deputy, Regional Bureaus, and HCTM/OHCI);
- Supports the implementation of FSN initiatives and fosters leadership opportunities for FSNs; and

- Organizes technical training for Executive Officer (EXO) staff, which includes providing field assistance and advice to Mission EXOs in discharging their personnel management responsibilities and advising field Missions of training and other professional development opportunities for staff.

i. Regional Bureaus:

- Support the development of the FSN EIP in coordination with their FSN AC representatives and other key stakeholders (e.g., FSN AC, FSN Empowerment Coordinator and Deputy, HCTM/OHCI, and M/MS/OMD);
- Oversee the implementation of applicable MAPs to ensure MAPs are implemented effectively and efficiently and provide support to Missions, as needed;
- Designates an FSN Empowerment Lead to work closely with Bureau leadership to strengthen FSN Empowerment;
- Creates an environment and opportunities for Missions to enable FSN Fellowships and Exchanges, and shares best practices and solutions across the region and Washington, D.C.; and
- Engages with the FSN AC to share best practices and identify and respond to emerging FSN Empowerment needs, challenges, and opportunities across the region.

j. Pillar and Central Bureaus:

- Create and offer FSN professional development opportunities to foster strategic leadership and program and project management skills for FSNs within their areas of expertise;
- Engage FSNs to promote information sharing and learning; and
- Promote FSN recognition (e.g., awards, accolades).

k. Mission Directors (MDs) or Country Representatives:

- Ensure a collaborative, FSN-led process to create and update the MAP that aligns with the FSN EIP and supports the implementation of the MAP across the Mission;
- Reinforce FSN Empowerment efforts by requiring the Mission Leadership Team to incorporate specific actions and goals in team work objectives and plans, as well as including FSN Committee representatives or other FSN staff at senior staff meetings, when appropriate;

- Engage with the FSN Committee and encourage USAID representation at the LE Staff Association at post, when applicable; and
- Promote a culture of inclusive decision-making and open communication for all staff and provide FSNs with career development and growth opportunities.

I. Overseas Executive Officers (EXOs):

- Work with Mission leadership and the FSN Committee to implement the Mission's MAP and to monitor progress on FSN Empowerment initiatives; and
- Advance FSN Empowerment through operational and process improvements that include considerations of impact on FSN staff.

m. Supervisors in the Missions:

- Oversee the day-to-day implementation of FSN Empowerment-related work, including providing leadership opportunities;
- Act inclusively in decision-making; and
- Support all Mission staff, regardless of hiring mechanism to create and sustain an inclusive environment for all Mission staff.

n. The **Agency Workforce** represents the Agency's [values](#) and [DEIA principles](#) to support the Agency's FSN Empowerment efforts by understanding the interests and needs of local staff, as well as identifying and/or supporting leadership, professional development, and growth opportunities.

402.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

402.3.1 Defining FSN Empowerment

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

FSN Empowerment recognizes and elevates the leadership and expertise of FSNs at all levels and encompasses USAID's comprehensive set of values, best practices, standards, norms, and policies dedicated to cultivating a respectful, safe, accountable, diverse, equitable, inclusive, accessible, enabling environment that nurtures and leverages the talents and amplifies the voices of FSNs, individually and collectively, Agency-wide. This is achieved through the provision of essential tools, resources, and opportunities, fostering leadership pathways, and strategically positioning USAID to attract, advance, and retain invaluable local talent. This multifaceted approach underscores USAID's sustained commitment to a workforce that reflects and champions the diversity of the communities it serves.

By leveraging extensive expertise gained from diverse experiences, local knowledge, and relationships, an empowered FSN workforce plays a pivotal role in retaining, disseminating, and expanding knowledge, institutionalizing initiatives, and advancing USAID’s global development objectives.

USAID encourages its FSNs to take ownership of their career development by seeking professional development opportunities in line with their career goals, in consultation with their supervisors, as appropriate. FSN Empowerment relies on FSNs stepping up, engaging actively, and helping to define the opportunities and challenges they face. FSN Empowerment supports the implementation of the [Agency’s DEIA Strategic Plan](#) and the [Local Capacity Strengthening Policy](#), and is consistent with the [Agency’s core values](#) and the vision of the [FSN AC](#) (see [ADS 495](#) for more information on the FSN AC).

402.3.2 Principles of FSN Empowerment

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

Aligned with the [Agency’s DEIA Strategic Plan](#), the following FSN Empowerment principles seek “to elevate and include the voices of the USAID workforce, recognizing and valuing the unique contributions of all stakeholders.”

1. Ensure everyone is responsible.

- The responsibility of institutionalizing FSN Empowerment rests on the shoulders of every employee, regardless of hiring mechanism. This holistic commitment ensures that FSNs are recognized and actively encouraged to play a central role in shaping the Agency's - and their countries' - present and future within the United States government’s (USG) foreign aid policy framework and objectives.
- USAID's journey toward a more inclusive and empowered future is not just a mandate; it is a collective ethos, fostering an environment where the Agency's diverse workforce can truly flourish and contribute to the Agency’s goals and objectives.

2. Enable tailored approaches.

- USAID acknowledges the distinctiveness of every Mission, team, and person, and recognizes that each FSN brings a unique set of strengths, shared values, and accomplishments that can be leveraged for the Agency’s direct benefit and towards positive progress.
- This underscores the need to understand specific context and requirements, work collaboratively towards our shared values, and adapt as new situations emerge.

3. Cultivate a learning culture.

- FSN Empowerment goes beyond plans and commitments, requiring a deeper shift in our organizational culture. It means fostering a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment in which all staff learn from each other, staying open to rethinking and testing assumptions, and offering constructive and empathetic support to others—from local colleagues to local stakeholders.
- It calls for a leadership that actively seeks diverse opinions and perspectives and promotes collaborative mindsets in co-creating and executing strategies and solutions.

4. Cultivate trust and collaboration.

- FSN Empowerment includes involving FSNs in early stages of institutional policy and strategy design and ensuring FSN participation in decision-making at all levels in accordance with USG foreign aid objectives and applicable regulations and laws. It entails building the capacity and courage to meet local colleagues where they are, aligning engagement and support with FSN ideas, interests, and growth aspirations to enhance the Agency's foreign aid mission.
- Everyone in the Agency workforce treats each other as equal partners on a shared journey, empowering the collective and not just individuals, as we work toward the Agency's common goal. This collaborative approach, coupled with a foundation of trust, is imperative for unlocking the potential of FSNs and our Agency, propelling genuine lasting progress.

See section **402.3.5** for more details on applying the FSN Empowerment principles.

402.3.3 The FSN Empowerment Implementation Plan (EIP)

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

The Agency's FSN EIP sets actionable commitments over a two-year period to advance the Agency's FSN Empowerment goals and principles, as described in this chapter. AID/A distributes the FSN EIP to staff via an Administrator's Notice and posts the FSN EIP on its intranet site.

402.3.3.1 Developing the FSN EIP

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

The development of a new FSN EIP coincides with the start of a new FSN AC term. The FSN AC serves a two-year term, where the new FSN AC convenes biennially in January with the following objectives:

- Communicating cross-cutting FSN views, ideas, and concerns to promote a better understanding of, and engagement in, USAID operations and programmatic policy;
- Soliciting feedback and input from FSN Committees at Missions, ensuring that overseas perspectives are considered and meaningfully integrated in formulating and advancing FSN and Agency goals.

See [ADS 495](#) for more information on the FSN AC.

Within three to four months after the new FSN AC is formed (i.e., April or May), the FSN AC, FSN Empowerment Coordinator and Deputy, HCTM/OHCI, M/MS/OMD, and Regional Bureaus must work jointly to draft and finalize the FSN EIP. The FSN EIP should reflect no more than 12 actions that the Mission determines to be in the best interest of the FSNs, Agency, and USG.

To finalize the FSN EIP, the EFEC, AID/A, and Regional Bureau AAs must review and approve the FSN EIP. Until the new FSN EIP is developed, the current version of the FSN EIP remains in effect.

402.3.3.2 Implementing the FSN EIP

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

As an accompaniment to the FSN EIP, the FSN Empowerment Coordinator, or their designee, should develop at least one performance indicator for each EIP commitment to measure the accomplishment of the commitment and help the Agency track global progress. The FSN Empowerment Coordinator, or their designee, should oversee the collection of data for these indicators from the Bureaus in USAID/W and, where needed, directly from Missions, and consolidate a report at the midpoint and endpoint of the EIP.

Working jointly with the FSN AC, Regional Bureaus, HCTM/OHCI, M/MS/OMD, and the FSN Empowerment Coordinator should also lead a midcourse stock taking at least once during the life of the FSN EIP to inform any changes to its implementation based on any lessons learned. If this stocktaking results in substantive changes to the FSN EIP approach, the FSN Empowerment Coordinator should develop an information memorandum describing those changes and provide it to the EFEC for review.

402.3.4 The Mission Action Plan (MAP)

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

No later than three months after the release of a new FSN EIP, MDs, in coordination with appropriate stakeholders, must develop and submit a MAP outlining planned steps to make progress towards the FSN EIP commitments, and any other planned actions to meet the Mission's context-specific needs on FSN Empowerment. MAPs are intended to serve as the foundation of FSN Empowerment work worldwide. MAPs align with the FSN EIP to ensure a coordinated effort to achieve Agency-wide commitments, while also allowing for Mission-specific needs and context to be considered. The FSN

Empowerment Coordinator updates and distributes the MAP template when the new FSN EIP is released. Missions must use the [MAP template](#) when developing the MAP (see section **402.3.5** to inform the MAP).

402.3.4.1 Developing the MAP

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

When developing the MAP, Mission management must ensure an inclusive process to develop the MAP, with broad input from FSNs and United States direct hires (USDHs) across the Mission. The principle behind the MAP is to ensure that implementation of FSN Empowerment is providing the space for individual staff members, teams, and Missions to prioritize their needs while still working collectively towards several shared Agency-wide goals.

Elevating local knowledge is central to the MAP's development and entails creating clear opportunities for FSNs to share their knowledge, and for all colleagues to genuinely listen to FSN knowledge, ideas, needs, and challenges as part of a respectful and inclusive environment for all employees. This allows solutions to be co-developed with a focus on advancing mutually beneficial goals. Mission management and appropriate stakeholders must establish clear plans for FSN participation in the MAP development process, where appropriate. Involving FSNs in early stages ensures that the Agency's priorities are better aligned with the needs and perspectives of the local context.

Mission leadership should be consulted on the proposed process, have opportunities to engage throughout, and approve the final MAP. MDs must submit their MAPs to the FSN Empowerment Coordinator and their Regional Bureau FSN Empowerment Lead.

402.3.4.2 Implementing the MAP

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

No later than four months after the release of a new EIP, each Regional Bureau's FSN Empowerment Lead must review and analyze the MAPs submitted across their geographic region, identify core needs and gaps in resources or support, and articulate how the Bureau will support Missions in achieving MAP results, monitoring progress, and holding Mission leadership accountable. In carrying out these activities, the Regional Bureau FSN Empowerment Leads work in close coordination with Bureau leadership, and in consultation with key Mission stakeholders like the FSN Committees in Missions.

FSN Committees (also known as Mission Councils, LE Staff Associations/Councils or FSN Representatives) serve as a forum at the Mission for coordinating and raising FSN workplace issues of general concern to management. FSN committees are established and governed by FSNs, and may provide perspectives on the progress or issues with implementing the FSN EIP or MAP (see [ADS 495](#) for more information on FSN Committees).

The Regional Bureau FSN Empowerment Leads must communicate their priorities to the FSN Empowerment Coordinator, who checks in regularly with Regional Bureau FSN leads on progress, ensures the EFEC has visibility, and supports cross-Bureau collaboration and learning, as appropriate.

Missions may update their MAPs at any time, as these are intended to be living documents. At a minimum, Missions should review progress-to-date and any needed adaptations at least once during the life of their MAPs. MDs should share any substantive changes in their MAPs with Regional Bureau FSN Empowerment Leads to inform their support efforts.

402.3.5 The FSN Empowerment Toolbox Effective Date: 05/30/2024

When developing the FSN EIP, MAP, or other FSN Empowerment activities, there are three major pillars to inform those activities: Elevating Local Knowledge, Promoting Decision-making and Leadership, and Advancing Professional and Career Development.

402.3.5.1 Elevating Local Knowledge Effective Date: 05/30/2024

Through their talents, technical expertise, and unique understanding of the local context, FSNs contribute to the Agency's abilities to transform institutions, communities, and individuals in host countries. USAID strives to provide the necessary tools, resources, and pathways to value and learn from FSN expertise at all grade levels and to uplift the talents and voices of local employees throughout the Agency.

A. Accountability for Empowering FSNs

USAID is committed to maintaining a robust framework of accountability to ensure the effective implementation of the FSN Empowerment Commitments as set out in the FSN EIP and operationalized through the MAP. This framework is designed to track and assess progress, measure outcomes, and uphold the principles outlined in this policy. Accountability for empowering FSNs is a shared responsibility. The workforce must create and maintain an environment where FSNs fully contribute to USAID's humanitarian and development mission. Through commitment, transparent monitoring, and continuous improvement, USAID upholds its obligations to foster FSN Empowerment across the Agency.

- 1. Organizational Commitment:** USAID reaffirms its commitment to empowering FSNs throughout its operations. This commitment is embedded in USAID's core values and reflects USAID's dedication to fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce. Every two years, the Agency sets forth specific, actionable commitments for advancing FSN Empowerment in the Agency-wide FSN EIP.

2. **Clear Roles and Responsibilities:** All USAID OUs, including overseas Missions and B/IOs, should establish clear roles and responsibilities for the implementation of FSN Empowerment initiatives.
 3. **Supervisory Support:** Supervisors, regardless of their hiring mechanism, in overseas Missions must actively support FSNs in their teams. They must recognize and value FSN contributions and provide an inclusive and respectful work environment that promotes collaboration and equal opportunities for all staff. This includes recognizing FSN contributions in their usual duties and to broader Mission processes and teams.
 4. **Performance Evaluation and Recognition:** Supervisors must conduct performance evaluations impartially, considering the unique roles and responsibilities of each staff member, regardless of hiring mechanism. Supervisors are responsible for providing constructive feedback to their staff consistent with USAID's standard procedures for performance evaluation and supervision as stated in [ADS 495](#) and applicable Mission policies for CCNPSC staff.
 5. **Review and Feedback Mechanisms:** Mission management should conduct regular reviews of FSN Empowerment initiatives to assess progress and identify areas for improvement and should engage with the FSN Committee at Missions on these reviews, as appropriate. They should establish Mission-wide feedback mechanisms, including surveys and forums for open dialogue, to solicit input from FSNs regarding their experiences and suggestions for enhancement. This exercise can inform the development of the MAP or can be used as an opportunity to conduct a stocktaking during the MAP's implementation and adapt as needed.
 6. **Performance Monitoring:** Once a new FSN EIP has been published, the FSN Empowerment Coordinator, or their designee, should develop at least one performance indicator for measuring the accomplishment of each commitment, which must be approved by the EFEC. The FSN Empowerment Coordinator, or their designee, should oversee the collection of data for these indicators from USAID/W Bureaus and (where needed) directly from Missions and consolidate a report at the midpoint and endpoint of the FSN EIP. Mission management should use the midpoint report to inform Mission-level reviews and any Agency-level midcourse stocktaking throughout implementation.
- B. FSN Global and Regional Conferences:** See [ADS 495](#) for guidance on FSN conferences.

C. FSN Recognition Day

In 2018, USAID established the Global FSN Recognition Day to celebrate Agency FSNs worldwide. While empowerment, respect, and recognition are acts that should be demonstrated every day consistent with the Agency core values, the Agency workforce everywhere should take this day to remember and honor FSN colleagues who are no longer with us, and to celebrate those who further advance USAID's mission each day. At overseas Missions, USAID celebrates Global FSN Recognition Day with the Department of State.

OU leadership in USAID/W and Missions, and staff from all hiring mechanisms, should participate in FSN Recognition Day and continuously seek opportunities to recognize FSNs for their service and recommit to advancing FSN interests and priorities creatively and thoughtfully.

402.3.5.2 Promoting Decision-Making and Leadership

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

MDs must support opportunities for FSN leadership consistent with [ADS 103.3.1.1](#) and the scope of the CCNPSC's terms of contract. Mission management may delegate any authority, duty, or responsibility to FSNs, except as restricted by [ADS 103.3.1.1\(b\)](#), and for all CCNPSCs, the [AIDAR Appendix J](#). This includes delegated authorities to:

- Supervise non-USDHs, including other FSNs or PSCs;
- Participate in personnel selection matters (USDH and non-USDH), but not make final decision(s) on personnel selections;
- Represent the Mission and communicate approved planning, management, and implementation decisions;
- Serve as the Deputy Office Director or Acting Deputy Office Director; and
- Serve as the Acting Office Director.

Consistent with the scope of the CCNPSC's terms of contract, MDs and FSOs should cultivate inclusive decision-making and leadership opportunities that align with the indicated interests and demonstrated capacities of FSNs. [ADS 402saa, Leadership Ideas for FSNs in Everyday Scenarios](#) is a compilation of established and emerging leadership practices, relevant in various everyday scenarios and aligned with the Agency's mission and objectives, irrespective of rank or role.

A. Enhanced Role of Senior Advisor FSN Position in Front Office

The Agency established the FSN Senior Advisor position to serve in Missions. MDs, in coordination with their Mission leadership teams and with support from HCTM, as appropriate, may determine structure, tenure, scope, and grade of the position depending on the needs and context of the Mission and within the parameters of the Local Compensation Plan.

This position does not replace or obscure the roles and responsibilities of existing FSN Senior Technical and Management Advisors in Missions. The FSN Senior Advisor may serve as an advisor to Mission management on a wide range of strategic, programmatic, or operational topics, depending on the needs of the Mission. This may include country context, strategic planning, strategic partnerships, staff development necessary for growth in the Mission program, continuity of operations, resource allocation, program development, implementation, and evaluation. The Senior Advisor:

- Acts as a liaison for USAID at meetings with representatives from the host-government, private sector, media, academia, think tank, civil society, and other key stakeholders.
- Provides insight into host-country and regional opportunities, and immediate and long-term development responses to humanitarian and/or other crises in-country and/or the region, consistent with relevant legal, regulatory, and Agency policy requirements (e.g., communications that reflect a final policy). (Note: a USDH must clear a planning or budget decision on behalf of the Agency.)
- Advises and mentors staff throughout the Mission to assure a high-performing team and achieve major development results in a stimulating and often challenging and evolving environment.

B. FSN Deputy Office Directors

The Agency encourages overseas Missions to create leadership opportunities for senior or experienced FSNs and to enable teams to better benefit from their leadership by establishing FSN Deputy Office Director positions, where appropriate and consistent with Mission needs and resources. Missions may determine which staffing structure best supports the Mission's needs for advancing USAID's global development objectives. Specifically, Missions can determine if the Deputy Office Director position is held solely by an FSN, an FSO, or occupied by an FSN and an FSO as two separate Deputy Office Director positions. FSN Deputy Office Director and FSO Deputy Office Director positions are intended to complement one another. FSN Deputies must not supervise USDHs.

C. FSN Committees at Missions

The FSN Committee at a Mission can serve as a vital link between FSNs and Mission management, working with others across the Mission to collectively foster inclusive communication and coordination. This Committee can play an integral role in enhancing the engagement and well-being of FSNs at the Mission. It offers advice and perspectives of local staff on Mission- and Agency-level strategies and policy

priorities. Mission FSN Committees have their own Statement of Work or Charter identifying how they elect members and roles and responsibilities of the committee.

Missions, particularly the Front Office, the Leadership Team, and EXO, must engage with FSN Committee leadership, working together collaboratively in pursuit of shared FSN empowerment interests.

Mission FSN Committees are encouraged to convene regularly with their FSN Advocacy representatives and other Mission FSN Committees in their region to elevate issues, concerns, and ideas. Mission FSN Committee Chairs are encouraged to communicate regularly with FSN AC representatives and serve as a conduit for disseminating information to FSNs at their Mission as well as sharing their perspectives. Mission FSN Committees are also encouraged to maintain a relationship with and collaborate closely with the interagency FSN Committee to ensure that USAID FSN interests and initiatives are being considered as part of the broader FSN conversation. Mission leadership should support and encourage these efforts.

402.3.5.3 Advancing Professional and Career Development

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

Professional development is a continuous process that helps individuals acquire new skills, knowledge, and attributes to improve their career, achieve personal goals, and expand their knowledge. It can be full-time or intermittent, and can take place in-person, virtually or self-directed, in the United States (for CCNPSCs, subject to any limitations of the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) section 636(a)(3)), a third country, or in-country. A well-informed and empowered workforce is crucial for sustainable growth and positive change. It involves intentional support, investment, and structured activities to maintain competence.

USAID's [Local Capacity Strengthening Policy](#) states that, "sustainable development depends on local actors leading efforts to improve their communities and working inclusively and collectively to see those efforts through." USAID's success, stability, and sustainability overseas depend in large part on local staff's ability and capacity to lead operations and programming in their countries. USAID Missions and appropriate stakeholders should actively promote FSN empowerment and support FSN professional development and growth within the organization.

Mission leadership, in coordination with the CCNPSC Requesting Office and Contracting Officer (CO, including warranted EXOs), are strongly encouraged to use ladder positions, when appropriate, to obtain necessary CCNPSC services not otherwise available at a given full performance level. In turn, this helps promote career development paths for FSNs. Missions can utilize the Agency-wide ladder positions from HCTM/OHCI or create individual Mission and position specific ladder positions. Note: HCTM/OHCI continues to develop additional position description specific ladder positions to support Missions. The CCNPSC class justification and approval (J&A) is a tool for COs to facilitate the movement of CCNPSC incumbents into new ladder position

contract awards in support of the use of such positions. Missions are encouraged to offer career planning and guidance to FSN staff, particularly staff encumbering FSN 10 and below roles.

Missions are strongly encouraged to develop a Mission Order on training and professional development setting policies and procedures for managing the Mission training program. The Mission Order should reflect the needs of all staff, including FSNs. When developing the Mission Order, Missions should consult FSNs at all levels (along with all Mission employees) about FSN professional development goals and needs. Missions are also strongly encouraged to use coaching and mentoring as an intentional part of professional development for FSNs at all levels. This includes tapping into the [Agency-wide mentoring program](#), the Contracting Officer's Representative/Agreement Officer's Representative (COR/AOR) Mentoring program, and the [FSN Leadership and Performance Coaching](#) program, as well as developing Mission-specific coaching and mentoring programs, as needed.

Annually, B/IO leadership in USAID/W are encouraged to host FSN Fellows in the formal FSN Fellowship Program (per [ADS 495maa](#)). Mission management should encourage FSN staff to participate broadly in this program (per [ADS 309](#), all CCNPSC position descriptions may include participation in this program) (see [ADS 495](#) for more info on the FSN Fellowship Program).

Temporary duty (TDY) is also encouraged. For example, Missions are encouraged to leverage resources from within the region or globally to address immediate human resource needs or fulfill learning objectives through short-to-medium term TDYs, when appropriate and subject to the scope of a CCNPSC's terms of contract. This approach promotes the exchange of knowledge and ideas, while also enhancing institutional capabilities by tapping into the diverse global FSN talent pool.

402.3.5.4 Compensation and Benefits

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

USAID is an integral part of Embassy communities overseas and is committed to providing competitive remuneration packages to LE staff. Appropriate USAID/W OUs (e.g., AID/A, HCTM, M Bureau) liaise with many levels and many counterparts at State, including the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) Executive Board and working group, on issues affecting local employees, including compensation and benefits in the local compensation plan.

Mission stakeholders must engage with their State counterparts on a regular basis when responding to the annual Local Compensation Questionnaire (LCQ), revising the LE Staff Handbook, planning for compensation surveys/reviews, clearing on adjustments to the Local Compensation Plan (LCP), and participating in Technical Evaluation Committees for Embassy-wide local staff benefits, such as supplemental health and life insurance. The Embassy Management Section spearheads most of these actions; however, Mission management should proactively engage Embassy interagency colleagues to be part of the discussions and Technical Evaluation

Committees. To assist HCTM/OHCI with tracking LCP issues, all EXOs must submit a copy of the annual LCQ to HCTM/OHCI.

USAID MDs, Deputy MDs, EXOs play a key role in ensuring proper USAID representation by actively engaging in discussions on topics important to USAID and those that affect our FSN community.

402.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

402.4.1 External Mandatory References

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

- a. [3 FAM 7150, LE Staff Employee-Management Relations](#)
- b. [Federal Acquisition Regulation \(FAR\) and Personal Services Contracts](#)

402.4.2 Internal Mandatory References

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

- a. [ADS 309, Personal Services Contracts with Individuals](#)
- b. [ADS 436, Foreign Service Assignments Process and Tours of Duty](#)
- c. [ADS 495, Foreign Service National Direct-Hire Personnel Administration](#)
- d. [ADS 522, Performance of Temporary Duty Travel in the U.S. and Abroad](#)
- e. [ADS 530, Emergency Planning Overseas](#)
- f. [Agency's DEIA Strategic Plan](#)
- g. [AIDAR, Appendix J to Chapter 7, Direct USAID Contracts With a Cooperating Country National and With a Third Country National for Personal Services Abroad](#)
- h. [Local Capacity Strengthening Policy](#)
- i. [Mission Action Plan Template and Guidance](#) (available on the USAID intranet)

402.5 ADDITIONAL HELP

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

- a. [ADS 402saa, Leadership Ideas for FSNs in Everyday Scenarios](#)
- b. [FSN Empowerment Definition Factsheet](#)
- c. [FSN Empowerment Implementation Plan \(2023\)](#)

402.6 DEFINITIONS

Effective Date: 05/30/2024

See the [ADS Glossary](#) for all ADS terms and definitions.

Cooperating Country National (CCN)

See [AIDAR Appendix J, section 1](#) for the definition of a CCNPSC. A Foreign Service National (FSN), as defined in 3 FAM 7000, is not a CCNPSC. (**Chapter 309**)

Foreign Service National Advocacy Council (FSN AC)

A voluntary group that the Agency established in February 2014 to reflect the Agency's commitment to diversity and inclusion, and as an outcome of the 2013 Worldwide FSN Conference. The FSN AC is composed of FSN Direct-Hires and CCNs elected by their peers and serves to provide regular, formalized access for FSNs to Agency leadership to discuss worldwide, cross-cutting FSN issues. The Council is co-chaired by either a Washington-based Senior Foreign Service Officer (i.e., Counselor to the Agency) or a senior HCTM staff member. The Council is coordinated by the HCTM/OHCI/FSN Unit and has a designated Washington-based Officer who acts as the primary liaison for the AC, its members, and the Agency leadership. (**Chapter 402**)

Foreign Service National (FSN) Committee

A Mission-level voluntary group that may also be known as Mission Councils, LE Staff Associations/Councils, or FSN Representatives. This group represents FSNs and CCNs and may serve as a forum at the Mission for coordinating and raising FSN workplace issues of general concern to management. FSN committees are established and governed by FSNs and often serve as a liaison with the FSN community, Mission Leadership, Embassy Management and Front Office, FSN AC, and HCTM/OHCI/FSN Unit, and in any instances where FSN perspectives are requested or needed. FSN Committee members primarily represent USAID FSNs and CCNs. (**Chapter 402**)

Foreign Service National Direct-Hire

A non-U.S. citizen employee hired by a USAID Mission abroad, whether full- or part-time, intermittent or temporary, who is paid under the local compensation plan (LCP), and who was appointed under the authority of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended. (**Chapter 402** and [495](#))

Local Compensation Plan (LCP)

Each Post's official system of FSN pay, consisting of the local salary schedule, which includes salary rates, statements and authorizing benefits payments, premium pay rates, and other pertinent aspects of the FSN employee compensation (See [3 FAM 7250](#) for additional info). (**Chapter 402** and [495](#))

Mission

The USAID Mission or Office in a cooperative country. Mission and Office attributes vary due to differences in portfolios (e.g., amount of funds managed, programming

activities, countries) and regional responsibilities (e.g., regional capacity development and learning, technical support services). (**Chapter 402**)

Mission Leadership

The Mission Director, Deputy Mission Director, and Office Directors are referred to as Mission leadership. (**Chapter 402**)

Mission Management

The Mission's Front Office and one or more of the Mission's management offices (i.e., Program, Financial Management, Acquisition and Assistance, and/or EXO) are referred to as Mission management. (**Chapter 402**)

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