

Session 18.

State-of-Compliance Stocktaking & Feedback on AFR's draft Best Practice Standard

(1:00)

Objectives

Take stock of the extent to which overall findings of Environmental Procedures Best Practice Reviews among AFR missions do —or does not—reflect the operating reality on our own missions and teams.

Gain an understanding of and offer feedback on AFR's revised draft of its Environmental Procedures Best Practices Standard, to support its finalization.

Format

0:20 Briefing (background, findings of BPRs to date) and quick straw-poll stock-taking

0:40 Small groups: review of and feedback on AFR's draft updated
Environmental Compliance Best Practices Standard

Background

This workshop has addressed LOP environmental compliance requirements, and how the responsibilities for fulfilling these requirements are allocated among IPs, C/AORs and MEOs (among others).

Experience shows that for compliance to be achieved in practice, it is not enough that individual USAID and IP staff understand their roles and responsibilities and master key skills; internal mission/team and project processes must be in place that support (and require) the exercise of these responsibilities.

AFR's Environmental Compliance Best Practice Standard & BPRs. This is the concept and experience behind AFR's Environmental Compliance Best Practices Standard, which captures both the requirements of the procedures and these key supporting capacities, processes, and practices. Environmental Procedures Best Practices Reviews (BPRs) in AFR missions are conducted against this standard. BPRs are a thorough review of mission environmental compliance status, policies, procedures, and capacities.

BPRs are voluntary and undertaken at a time chosen by the mission; however, as part of its response to the OIG's global environmental compliance audit, AFR Bureau has committed that all AFR missions will undertake a BPR at least every 5 years.

BPRs support missions/ Conducted via a mix of desk review, interviews and field visits, BPRs result in an action plan to correct gaps and weaknesses against the *Standard* --- and thus to improve environmental and social soundness in program and project design and implementation.

BPRs support the BEO. USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) 204.2e assigns Bureau Environmental Officers (BEOs) the responsibility of "overseeing the effective implementation of 22 CFR 216 throughout all Operating Units. in their Bureau through timely decision making and adherence to consistent and strong environmental principles that lead to environmentally sound development and wise use of taxpayer money and that protect their Operating Units and the Agency from legal challenge."

In addition to serving mission needs, BPRs are intended to provide key information to the BEO to implement this responsibility. Taken together, BPRs identify compliance strengths and gaps across the USAID Missions and Programs in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole. The information provided by BPRs is intended to inform the

BEO and Regional Environmental Advisors (REAs) in targeting environmental compliance technical assistance, guidance, and training efforts.

With BPRs just entering their second cycle (26 have been performed since 2007, with 2 missions having repeated to date) AFR:is:

- Taking stock of the findings of BPRs to date, including how the overall state of compliance has and has not changed since 2010, following the first 9 BPRs.
- Updating the Best Practice Standard to reflect lessons learned and ADS and programming changes.

Note: while developed by Africa Bureau, there is nothing about the Best Practice Standard that is region-specific.

Summary/Instructions.

In this session, following a briefing of the overall findings of BPRs to date and how they have changed over the past 5 years, we will take stock of the extent to which these findings do—or does not—reflect the operating reality on our own missions and teams.

REAs will then facilitate small group sessions that will closely review the draft revised standard and provide feedback to support its finalization. This may also include identifying needed guidance or support resources.

Key Resources

Memorandum: Synthesis of Findings from Environmental Procedures Best Practice Reviews (BPRs) to Date. 18 Feb 2015.

DRAFT REVISED AFR Environmental Compliance Best Practice Standard. Version 11 Feb 2015.