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## HANDBOOK 23

### CHAPTER 11

#### REGIONAL CONFERENCES

##### 11A. General

1. Regional conferences are held periodically to give USAID mission personnel with the same or related functions the opportunity to learn about new trends in USAID policy, program and management emphasis and methodology, and to help articulate and resolve problems common to the USAID missions in the area. Since conferences are costly and time consuming, they should be designed to provide maximum results for all participants.

2. The term "regional conferences" for the purpose of this Chapter includes:

- a. Conferences in which all the USAID missions of one of the three major geographic regions participate.
- b. Small conferences of some of the USAID missions within a region.
- c. Conferences including representatives from more than one of the major regions.

3. Regional conferences include the conferences for:

- a. mission directors
- b. project and program officers
- c. financial management officers
- d. executive officers
- e. contract officers
- f. commodity management officers
- g. training officers
- h. information resources management officers
- i. investigators and auditors

j. interfunctional, general or specific

k. private enterprise officers

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#### 11B. Initiating Regional Conferences

1. Because of the time and expense involved in holding a regional conference, these factors and criteria should be considered before proposing a regional conference:

a. The proposed conference agenda must contain subjects of sufficient importance and urgency to justify the expense and diversion of key staff time involved.

b. Availability of funds to finance a conference. Local currency use defrays local costs at the site of the conference and should be used wherever possible.

c. Conferences of any one type in any regional area are scheduled about every 18 months. However, it is logical to hold conferences annually when cyclical program changes or budget plans are principal topics.

d. The length of conferences are normally 5 days or less.

e. AID/W offices and regional bureaus are expected to use prudence in determining the number of representatives from their jurisdictions to attend overseas conferences.

f. When possible, AID/W representatives are to plan their attendance at a conference to substitute for, or in connection with, country-to-country visits.

g. In those instances where AID/W conference representatives have worldwide responsibilities, efforts should be made to hold AFR and ANE regional conferences successively in order to reduce travel costs and the time spent by AID/W representatives.

h. The hosting USAID mission, whenever possible, should appoint a Control Officer or key person to run the conference and serve as a principal point of contact.

2. A proposal to hold a regional conference may be initiated by any AID bureau, office, staff or USAID mission. Proposed conferences which affect their own region are to be approved by the responsible Assistant Administrators of regional geographic bureaus. Proposed conferences initiated by two or more geographic

bureaus are to be approved by the Assistant Administrators of the affected regions. AID/W offices and central bureaus are to submit their proposals through their Office Directors or Assistant Administrators to the appropriate regional geographical Assistant Administrators for approval. USAID missions forward their proposals for conferences within their region to the appropriate regional Assistant Administrator for approval and coordination with the organizational component having primary interest and then to other appropriate components of the AID/W organization. Proposed conferences that are anticipated to exceed \$1,000 in total operating expense (OE) funds (for guidance on determining conference costs see 11B.2.b. below) must be approved by the Deputy Administrator, AID. This is applicable to both AID/W and overseas missions. Proposals are in action memorandum form and shall contain the following:

- a. Purpose, reasons for, and the expected results of the conference.
- b. Total OE funds required for immediate costs of the conference along with an assurance that funds are available. The conference cost calculation is to include conference facilities, travel and per diem expenses to be incurred by all AID direct-hire attendees; salaries are excluded from the cost calculation. The costs should be broken down in two categories: (1) expenses that are applicable only to the sponsoring USAID, bureau or office, and (2) expenses of other Agency participants/ entities. The sum of both categories represent the estimated total OE cost. Requests for an additional allotment by USAID missions are to be accompanied by a full explanation.
- c. Date such type of conference was last held.
- d. Time, place, and duration of conference (if more than five days give justification).

Primary consideration for the selection of the conference site is given to those countries where the U.S. holds local currency in excess of its foreseeable needs. Such currency shall be used to the maximum extent possible to pay the travel, transportation, per diem and related costs of all participants.

- e. Which USAID missions and AID/W representatives are invited to participate in the conference.
- f. Whether AID/W representatives are scheduled to visit USAID missions enroute.
- g. Security situation at the conference location.

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11C. Responsibility of AID-Sponsoring Component

## 1. Responsibility of AID-Sponsoring Component

### a. Notification

After approval for the conference has been granted, the organizational component sponsoring the conference notifies:

(1) The host USAID mission of all pertinent information including the dates, names of AID/W participants, security clearance of participants, logistical and other support requirements, and special instructions. The host USAID mission is to be given adequate advance notification. Such notification should ordinarily be at least one month in advance.

(2) All USAID missions involved, by cable, of the conference and proposed agenda. USAID missions are requested to designate the number and names of attendees and suggest modifications or additions to the agenda.

### b. Availability of Funds

The sponsoring organizational component assures that funds are available to cover the expenses of the conference (see 11B.2b.). Procurement requests for conferences and meeting facilities which exceed \$1,000 in operating expense funds must be approved by the Deputy Administrator prior to forwarding to the contracting officer. A copy of the conference proposal action memorandum containing the Deputy Administrator's approval is sufficient certification and may be attached to the procurement request.

### c. Preparation of Conference Agenda

The sponsoring component develops the conference agenda based on the purpose of the conference and the suggestions from interested field and headquarters components. The final agenda is dispatched two weeks prior to the conference. The sponsoring component is also responsible for appropriate consultations with the participation of conference representatives from other concerned AID/W components. Washington representatives of the Department of State, USIA, and where appropriate, other U.S. Government agencies may be invited to participate in the conference.

### d. Attendance by the Administrator

f. The Administrator or the Deputy Administrator plans to attend the conference, the agenda and other messages concerning the conference are cleared by the Executive Secretary (ES) before transmittal to the field. In many cases, an ES officer may be assigned to assist the sponsoring AID/W organizational component and the host USAID mission in coordinating the preparation of

briefing materials and in making other necessary arrangements for the Administrator's or Deputy Administrator's participation.

e. Security

Initial planning for the safeguarding of conference classified information and materials is the responsibility of the sponsoring organizational component, and in the discharge of this responsibility, the sponsor:

(1) Confers with the Director, Office of Security, AID/W (IG/SEC), concerning security measures.

(2) Remains cognizant of security needs and gives full cooperation to the office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security (DS/DSS), Department of State, who has prime responsibility for security arrangements at the conference site, and the Assistant Inspector General for Security, AIG/SEC, who provides liaison with DS/DSS.

2. Responsibility of Host USAID Mission

a. Conference Control Officer

The Mission Director appoints a Conference Control Officer who is responsible for all conference arrangements.

b. Conference Site

The conference site is determined promptly, bearing in mind security precautions and the fact that a round table arrangement is preferable to an auditorium. (See 11D.2. below).

c. Accommodations for Conference Participants

The host USAID mission arranges for accommodations as requested by AID/W and field conference participants.

d. Entertainment

The host USAID mission may be requested to undertake initial arrangements for special functions in those cases when the Administrator attends.

e. Security

If security arrangements are required, the host USAID mission will:

(1) Cooperate with the Department of State security representative at the conference site.

(2) Maintain close contact with the Security Officer and consult with him/her regarding the selection of the conference site, the clearance of those participating in the conference and all other security administrative arrangements.

(3) Arrange for storage cabinets in order that all classified and administratively controlled materials may be stored in accordance with security regulations.

#### f. Secretarial, Space, Photocopy, and Computer Support Arrangements

The host USAID mission, when the need exists, arranges for secretarial assistance, office space for the conference delegates, photocopy and computer equipment.

#### g. USAID Reception Center

The host USAID mission, when the need exists, establishes a reception center to assist the conference participants. Services and information provided may include:

- (1) A list of conference participants, their arrival plans, and hotel accommodations.
- (2) Information concerning the administrative arrangements made for the conference, such as location of meetings, facilities and services provided, etc.
- (3) Advice on health precautions, doctors, dentists, tipping, transportation, restaurants, etc.
- (4) A map of the city indicating principal landmarks, together with a brief description of places of interest.
- (5) The names, addresses, and phone numbers of key USAID mission, embassy, USIS, and other U.S. Government agency officials.
- (6) Commissary cards.
- (7) Accommodations for local currency exchange to cover initial incidental expenses upon arrival. (The host USAID mission is responsible for developing adequate procedures for control and repayment of local currency.)
- (8) Assisting in travel arrangements.

(9) Setting up a message center for receiving and forwarding mail, telegrams and other messages.

### 3. Responsibility of Participating USAID Missions and Offices

- a. Make suggestions to the sponsoring organizational component on agenda content.
- b. Provide conference participants with agenda.
- c. Provide the host USAID mission with the names of conference representatives attending and their security clearances.
- d. Provide funds for travel incurred by their conference representatives.

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### 11D. Security

In preparing for the conference, security arrangements, if determined necessary by IG/SEC, are to include, but are not necessarily limited to:

#### 1. Appointment of Conference Security Officers

- a. STATE/DS/DSS appoints a Conference Security Officer to be present at the conference.
- b. The AIG/SEC, AID/W, may appoint an officer to represent the sponsoring organizational component at the conference.

#### 2. Conference Site

The Conference Security Officer is consulted on the selection of the conference site in order to determine if adequate security safeguards can be implemented. Areas which cannot be controlled, such as hotels, are not acceptable for classified discussion.

#### 3. Security Clearance

All persons participating in discussions of U.S. classified or administratively controlled material must be certified as cleared to the Conference Security Officer prior to issuance of a pass granting access to meetings. AID/W and the

USAID missions are to notify the host USAID mission of the security clearances held by their respective delegates.

#### 4. Financial Support

Agreements are to be made with DS for the sponsoring component to furnish necessary funds to meet expenditures to effect security measures. This includes funds for the travel and per diem of SY officers and Marine guards if required to establish security procedures.

#### 5. Security Briefings

All persons participating in the conference are given an appropriate security briefing by the Conference Security Officer at the site of the conference.

#### 6. Functional Security Control of Restricted Areas

A restricted area is to be established by the Conference Security Officer to insure the protection of all classified documents and functions connected with the conference. He will also have responsibility for the issuance of passes to the restricted area.

#### 7. Technical Security

Arrangements are made at the site for counter measures to forestall visual and/or audio penetration.

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### 11E. AID/W Conferences

1. When there is need for extensive consultations between AID/W and the field, conferences may be held in AID/W if approved by the Deputy Administrator. In such cases, the sponsoring organizational component notifies IG/SEC. Thereafter, a determination will be made as to what security factors must be considered.

2. Government-owned or leased facilities shall be used whenever possible for AID/W conferences. When it is determined that no suitable U.S. Government facilities are available in the desired locale for the date(s) and/or time(s) needed, requests (on form AID 5-7) may be submitted to FA/AS/PP/AP for approval to hold conferences in privately-owned facilities. The procedure for requesting the use of privately-owned facilities is provided in more detail in AID HB 20, Chapter 8, section 8D. Procurement requests for conference facilities which exceed



\$1,000 in OE funds must be approved by the Deputy Administrator prior to forwarding to FA/AS/PP/AP.

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11F. Conference Report

The sponsoring organization designates an officer who is responsible for preparing a report of the conference. The report is sent in duplicate to the Deputy Administrator, through the Office of the Executive Secretary, as soon as possible, but not later than one month after the conference is completed. Copies are also to be sent to participating USAID missions, AID/W participating offices and other interested AID/W offices.