

From USAID Deputy Administrator Paloma Adams-Allen, August 21, 2023

Dear Colleagues,

USAID's Foreign Service National (FSN) community brings years of experience, unrivaled expertise, and relationships that run deep within their countries—all cornerstones of this Agency's ability to deliver on its mission. In March 2023, we launched the [FSN Empowerment Implementation Plan](#), laying out twelve commitments that promise to deliver tangible results for the more than 4,700 locally employed staff overseas. It is a testament to our commitment to elevating the voices and contributions of our FSNs and better aligning our support of the FSN community with their significant contributions.

Today, I'm thrilled to announce that, as part of our FSN empowerment agenda, we're releasing a **new** Mandatory Reference to Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapter 530, **Emergency Planning Overseas**. The Mandatory Reference, [Standard Operating Procedures for Emergency and Crisis Management for Non-American Staff and Locally Contracted Personnel](#) ("the Playbook") describes the available actions that Mission can take to support FSNs in the event of a crisis or emergency situation.

Specifically, the Playbook outlines the financial, transportation, and mental health support, emergency communication protocols, work flexibilities, personal recovery and first aid training, and other ways to aid local colleagues before, during, and after a crisis. The Playbook was developed by a dedicated team in close coordination with the FSN Advocacy Council, and in consultation with the State Department. I want to recognize the leadership of the entire FSN Empowerment Team across the Front Office, General Counsel, Management Bureau, and Office of Human Capital and Talent Management - and particularly our FSN Fellows, Betty Mugo, Elizabeth Troolin, and Tidiane Wone - as well as Staff Care and the Office of Security for making this vision a reality and supporting our local colleagues in times of need.

We also continue to make strides on the other twelve commitments in our FSN empowerment agenda. For instance:

- We are hosting in-person FSN regional gatherings to discuss regional and Agency-wide development priorities, share best practices, and identify and elevate regional FSN issues. FSNs from each region are deeply engaged in the planning process. The first, for Latin America and Caribbean, kicks off today in El Salvador.
- As of this week, we have received nearly 85 percent of Mission Action Plans (MAPs) for advancing and institutionalizing our empowerment commitments in each specific Mission context.
- FSNs are leading agency-wide professional development and training, including on financial management and effective G2G partnerships.
- Two State Department-USAID Working Groups are reviewing and proposing ways of addressing local compensation challenges.
- The number of FSN Fellowships offered by bureaus has increased 65 percent in 2023, from 109 to 180, with more being announced daily.

I invite you to visit [the FSN Empowerment Intranet Page](#) to track our progress and volunteer to join the team.

Through your engagement, not only are we making USAID a stronger, more equitable employer, but a more effective and responsive partner to the communities we aim to serve.

Paloma Adams-Allen

Deputy Administrator for Management and Resources