

USADF OPEN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

For more than 35 years, the U.S. African Development Foundation (USADF) has been channeling development assistance that directly supports the self-help efforts of community-based organizations and entrepreneurs in sub-Saharan Africa. In carrying out this mission, USADF strives as well “to increase the bonds of friendship and understanding between the people of Africa and the United States.” ADF Act, 22 USC §290h-2(a)(1).

In line with the Open Government Directive, M10-06, and USADF’s guiding principle under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) of a presumption of openness in informing the public, USADF seeks to increase the types, quality and quantity of information readily available on its website, www.usadf.gov. Updates take place throughout the year on a regular basis.

USADF is committed to maintaining the highest level of transparency, participation and collaboration as the cornerstone of “Open Government”. As stated in this section of the website,

Transparency promotes accountability by providing the public with information about what the Government is doing;

Participation allows members of the public to contribute ideas and expertise so that their government can make policies with the benefit of information that is widely dispersed in society;

Collaboration improves the effectiveness of Government by encouraging partnerships and cooperation within the Federal Government, across levels of government, and between the Government and private institutions.

The myriad of information readily available to and accessible by the public on the website includes information on USADF’s policies, programs, Board of Directors and staff, projects funded, news releases, photographs, grant applications, links to relevant statutes and reports, and operational information on budgets and audits.

USADF’s website contains shortcuts to items of interest to the public. The website contains a link for contacting USADF: info@usadf.gov. The categories of information available are clearly indicated and accessible in headings that run across the top of the first page: “Home”, “Who We Are”, “Where We Work”, “Our Impact”, “Sectors”, “Work with Us”, and “Media”. The full text of USADF’s authorizing statute, the ADF Act, is found on the website: www.usadf.gov/adf-act/.

The “Impact” section summarizes the results of USADF’s initiatives and gives prominence to USADF’s Annual Congressional Budget Justification, with not only a summary, but the full text, readily accessible. The Open Government Statement is found here, under “Oversight”. This section also contains program and financial audits and all the agency’s FOIA reports required to be posted: annual reports, Chief FOIA Officer Reports, and quarterly reports. USADF’s No Fear Act data is updated on a quarterly basis on the website. USADF’s several policies and notices under the Equal Employment Opportunity, anti-discrimination, and whistleblower protection laws are on the website.

The “Media” section of the website provides easy access to all agency press releases and media coverage. It also has a Blog featuring stories on USADF projects and inviting feedback from the public.

USADF’s website has a contact form for the general public, easily accessible at the top of the website: “Sign up to receive the latest news and updates from the U.S. African Development Foundation!” The form is designed to provide the public access to the sources at USADF with the knowledge and information most relevant to what the requester is seeking.

“Where We Work” has comprehensive maps that show the location of USADF projects throughout sub-Saharan Africa and also provide details on each project and a link to the contact form.

The “Sectors” section describes USADF’s work in agriculture, off-grid energy, and youth-led enterprises.

In the section “Work with Us”, potential grantees can obtain ready access to grant applications and instructions, in both English and French, at: www.usadf.gov/apply/. That section also lists employment opportunities at USADF.

USADF uses social media platforms to make current program information readily available, including Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. The website includes an “Events” section to notify the public of important dates and events regarding USADF and foreign assistance to Africa in general. The number of people being reached through Twitter and Facebook with information about USADF’s program continues to grow each year. The website works effectively with various browsers, thus increasing the public’s accessibility to information on USADF. It is both desktop- and mobile-friendly. It is designed so search boxes can be easily added and information can be readily changed and updated.