

Site Visits

Objectives

- Partners and field staff will have a clear understanding of how and why to conduct site visits
- Partners will conduct more productive and comprehensive site visits
- Partners will better schedule the number of site visits to a project based on its needs and performance status
- More site visits will be properly documented with site visit reports
- Grantees will receive better service and value from the Partner site visits

Who Should Attend

All Partner Staff, All Field Office Staff

Course Content

1. Why do we do site visits?

Site Visits are a key implementation tool. They provide the opportunity for the Partner/ADF to:

- see firsthand the progress of the project
- facilitate progress on grant activities that involve technical assistance providers
- spend time with project participants to more fully understand challenges and opportunities
- work with the Grantee to come up with solutions and concrete plans
- provide support with completing ADF requirements
- give hands on support with setting up and maintaining financial records or assess Grantee's financial capacity
- verify use of assets purchased with grant funds
- appreciate Grantee accomplishments with the project

2. When should Partner staff visit a grantee?

A. Regular Visit

- New grants:
 - (1) Project Development visits
 - (2) Grant Signing
 - (3) Initial Training
 - (4) First DR Received
 - (5) First QR Due
 - (6) Quarterly or biannual visits

- Older grants:

- (1) Annual Visits
- (2) Pre Closeout Visit
- (3) Closeout Visit

B. Problems Arise

- Project activities delayed
- Change in Grantee management or key staff positions
- Lack of progress on grant objectives for more than two quarters
- Market changes or other indications that the business plan needs revision
- Suspicion of fraud, waste, or misuse of grant funds
- Grantee asks for help

C. ADFW Requests

- Grant Audit
- Data collection: API, Evaluation
- Field Visits from ADFW staff

D. Important Events

- Meetings with community or government groups
- Ribbon cutting events

3. When should Field Office staff visit a grantee?

A. Regular Visit

- New grants:
 - (1) Initial visit to review applicants
 - (2) Grant Signing
- All grants:
 - (1) Annual Visits

Site Visits

- B. Problems Arise
 - Project is at risk of failing
 - Suspicion of fraud, waste, or misuse of grant funds
 - Grantee asks for help
- C. ADFW Requests
 - Grant Audit
 - Data collection: API, Evaluation
 - Field Visits from ADFW staff
- D. Important Events
 - Meetings with community or government groups
 - Ribbon cutting events

4. How should I prepare for a visit?

- A. Review project documents and recent activity
 - Did the last quarterly report raise any issues?
 - Are they keeping up with Appendix A activities and objectives?
 - Did they recently receive a DR or purchase new equipment?
- B. Draft an Agenda
 - Set concrete objectives for the visit
 - Confirm that the objectives respond to the current needs of the grant as identified in step A
 - Decide how much time you need for the visit given the objectives you've set
 - Determine what background information or resources you'll need to complete the objectives (e.g. Do you need to confer with the financial officer? Do you need to bring an example of a budget shift? Etc.)
- C. Schedule the visit with the Grantee and let them know the following:
 - Why you're coming and what you hope to accomplish
 - What they can do to prepare for the visit (finish a DR request, make an important decision, etc)

- Who you'd like to meet with (is it important that the finance officer be there? Just the manager? A board member?)
- What access to their facility you will need (Do you need to see the finance records? Recent equipment purchases? Safety in the factory?)
- Ask if there is anything they would like to add to the agenda

5. How do I visit everyone and still stay in budget?

- A. Plan ahead
 - Site visits should be planned annually to complement the Partner budget request. Plans should be updated during monthly or quarterly planning sessions. However, plans are never perfect so be prepared to visit a grantee on shorter notice as issues arise.
 - Have a grant monitoring plan that includes more regular phone calls, emails, or meetings where the Grantee comes into the office to offset the need for more regular site visits. These other interactions should be documented just like site visits so you have a complete record of monitoring activities and progress or changes to the grant plans.
- B. Send the right staff
 - Each trip should include only the staff required to get the job done. Consider how staff can coordinate or help one another so that the number of travelers to a given project can be reduced.
 - See if the Partner Staff /Field Office Staff also need to visit a grantee and schedule a joint trip.
- C. Think about location
 - Can you reach several grantees on a single trip?

Site Visits

- Can you time visits to distant Grantees better with the project schedule to cover more in a single visit?
- If there are multiple officers assigned to projects in the same region determine if it will be more expensive to send a car out on two separate trips or to pay for two people to travel together even if they will visit projects that aren't theirs.

6. Techniques for the Visit

A. An Approach to Problem Solving

(1) Define the Problem

- (a) Make sure you're addressing the root problem and not just symptoms

(2) Analyze the Problem

- (a) What are the underlying causes?
- (b) What factors impact the problem?
- (c) Who can make those changes?

(3) Develop Options

- (a) Be creative and come up with as many ideas as possible
- (b) Ask for outside assistance or advice when needed

(4) Select the Best Solution

- (a) For each potential solution consider the possible outcomes, the resources available, and the time to implement

(5) Implement

- (a) Construct a step by step plan of what needs to be done to implement the solution, identify a timeline and assign the person responsible for each step
- (b) Follow the plan and reassess after a short time to confirm

that the solution is working. If not, start over at step 1.

7. Site Visit Reports (SVR)

A. What to include in a site visit report

- Who was there: Report Author, Other Travelers, and Project participants
- Trip Dates
- Grant Name and Grant Number
- Trip Objectives/Reason for the visit
- Visit content/Issues, Concerns, Problems Resolved or Addressed
- Visit Results, Planned Next Steps, and Recommendations
- Pictures of purchased assets or group gatherings

B. The Grantee Monitoring Report is a standard report that can be used.

C. Submit SVRs as attachments to the monthly Partner Financial and Activity Report. (Or in the case of a Field Office staff site visit, with the monthly Field Office report.)

D. Be concise and submit reports timely before the details are forgotten.

8. What is Unique About CPC Monitoring Visits?

A. The Country Program Coordinator will independently assess the work of the Partner to ensure the technical and management support services provided to the grantee are timely, appropriate, and effective.

- Is the Partner carrying out the site visits necessary to sufficiently support the grantee?
- Is the Partner adequately ensuring the grantee has needed technical support?
- Is the Partner ensuring the grantee information and reporting systems deliver accurate information?
- Does the grantee have any special problems or conflicts of interest working with the Partner?

Site Visits

- B. The frequency and timing of monitoring visits will depend on the experience of the partner, stage of implementation, nature of the project portfolio, and problems or challenges facing the grantees.
 - C. The CPC is also responsible for assessing whether the information reported by the grantees is accurate. Similar to Partner visits, the CPC should examine and discuss with grantees the status of their project, financial data, data collection systems, and internal monitoring and evaluation processes.
 - D. The CPC Site Visit Report should include an assessment of the project as well as the service provided by the Partner.
- 9. Advice from the Experts**
- Give the Grantee plenty of warning for intended site visits so that they can be prepared and so they feel their time is being respected. This also means letting them know if plans change and you will be late, have to reschedule, or cancel.
 - Grantees will often show their appreciation for your visit with gifts. Be mindful of the ADF ethics guidance and do not accept anything valued above \$20 at one time or \$50 overall. Let them know you are grateful, but be honest that ADF policy prohibits you from accepting.
 - Be gracious and respectful, but use the time wisely to get to the bottom of difficult issues.
 - Focus on solutions! Identifying a problem and understanding why it's happening is only the first step. Work collaboratively with the Grantee to come up with concrete options, decide on solutions, and before you leave get a plan and timeline in place for resolution.
 - Save time by doing your pre-planning on the SVR so that you don't have to go back and fill that in later.

REQUIRED GRANT SITE VISITS				
	Grant Design	1 st Grant Year	Mid-Term Grant	Final Grant Year
Partner	As Needed	Quarterly	Annually	Once (Pre-Closeout)
CPC	Once (Preliminary Site Visit)	Twice a Year	Annually (by CPC, RPD, or PA)	Once (Closeout)
**Note: These are the minimum site visits required, the actual number of site visits should be based on the project needs.				

Handouts

- Grantee Monitoring Report Form
- Sample Site Visit Report