COVER SHEET
REQUEST FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

PROGRAM/ACTIVITY DATA:

Program/Activity Number:

Country/Region: Guinea/West Africa

Program/Activity Title: Cultural Cohesion for Peace and Prosperity in Guinea

Funding Begin: May 1, 2016 Funding End: May 31, 2019 LOP Amount: $1,125,300

IEE Prepared By: Maladho S. Balde, Education and DG Advisor

Current Date: April 7, 2016

IEE Expiration Date: May 31, 2019

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION RECOMMENDED:
Categorical Exclusion: ___X____ Negative Determination: 
Positive Determination: ______ Deferral: ______

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND THRESHOLD DETERMINATIONS

The purpose of this RCE in accordance with 22CFR216 is to review all activities to be implemented under the Catholic Relief Services (Supporting Cultural Cohesion for Peace and Prosperity in Guinea). These activities by their nature, scope and scale are not likely to result in any significant adverse impacts on the environment. As a result, no Initial Environmental Examination or an Environment Assessment is required for these sets of activities. However, these activities should be re-visited and validated at least annually during the life of the project.

Activities under the Catholic Relief Services (Cultural Cohesion for Peace and Prosperity in Guinea) by their nature, scale and scope are not expected to pose any significant adverse impacts on the environment and are thus recommended for **Categorical Exclusion** per the following citations:

- 22CFR216.2(c)(1)(i) for actions that have no effect on the environment
- 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i), for activities involving education, training, technical assistance or training programs
- 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(iii), for activities involving analyses, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings
- 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(v), for activities involving document and information transfers
- 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(xiv), for studies, projects or programs intended to develop the capability of recipient countries and organizations to engage in development planning.

As required by ADS 204.3.4, the Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR) must actively monitor and evaluate whether environmental consequences unforeseen by this Request for Categorical Exclusion arise during project implementation and modify or end activities as appropriate. Further, if additional activities not covered by this Request for Categorical
Exclusion are added to the project, an amended environmental examination will be prepared and approved prior to implementation of activities. The AOR and the project management team will also ensure that provisions of the IEE concerning mitigation measures and the conditions specified herein along with the requirements to monitor be incorporated in all Contracts, Cooperative Agreements, Grants, and Sub-grants.

**A Categorical Exclusion** is recommended for additional activities providing technical assistance, training, information transfer, and institutional development per CFR 216.2(c) (2) (i) and (v) under the following activity areas:

- To support citizens strengthen social cohesion within and across ethnic groups with the main objective to have Opinion leaders effectively engaged in promoting tolerance, reconciliation and peaceful coexistence.
- To promote women’s voice contribute to political reconciliation.
- To mobilize youth leaders collaborate to promote peaceful elections.
- To support locally elected and appointed authorities to collaborate with civil society to address conflict triggers.
- To strengthen and lead local Officials and civil society co-manage conflict.
- To increase the knowledge, skills and confidence of media networks in conflict management techniques, human rights and their civic responsibilities.

**MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION:**

In addition to the specific conditions enumerated above, the negative determinations recommended in this IEE are contingent upon full implementation of the following general monitoring and implementation requirements:

- As required by ADS 204 .5.4, the AOR and the Implementing Partners responsible for these activities will "actively monitor and evaluate whether the environmental features designed for the activity resulting from the 22 CFR 216 process are being implemented effectively and whether there are new or unforeseen consequences arising during implementation that were not identified and reviewed in accordance with 22 CFR 216." In addition, the AOR will monitor the correct implementation of the mitigation measures proposed in the summary table.

- As part of its initial Work Plan, and all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the Implementing Partner, in collaboration with the USAID AOR and Regional Environmental Advisor or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned activities under the project to determine if they are within the scope of this IEE or other approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.

- If USAID or the Implementing Partner plans any new activities or substantial modifications to existing activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, an amendment shall be prepared to this IEE for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

- Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation shall be halted until an amendment to the approved
examination shall be halted until an amendment is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

- Nothing in this IEE substitutes for or supersedes implementing partners’ and sub-awardees’ responsibility for compliance with host country applicable environmental laws and regulations. The Implementing Partners and sub-awardees must comply with host country laws and regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. However, in case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

APPROVAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION RECOMMENDED:

CLEARANCE:
Mission Director: [Signature] Date: 4/17/16
Michelle Godette

CONCURRENCE:
Africa Bureau
Environmental Officer: [Signature] Date: 4/29/2016
Brian Hirsch

Approved: [X] Disapproved: 

Filename: Cultural Cohesion For Peace Prosperity CRS RCE Initial 082115.doc
(USAID/AFR BEO)

ADDITIONAL CLEARANCES:

USAID/Guinea MEO: [Signature] Date: 4/7/2016
William Bradley

Activity Manager: [Signature] Date: 4/7/2016
Maladho S. Baldé

Acting GDO Director/Guinea: [Signature] Date: 4/7/2016
Thomas Cornell

Regional Environmental Advisor: [Signature] Date: 4/18/2016
Henry Aryeetey
REQUEST FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

PROGRAM/ACTIVITY DATA:

Program/Activity Number:  
Country/Region: Guinea/West Africa  
Program/Activity Title: Cultural Cohesion for Peace and Prosperity in Guinea

1. BACKGROUND AND ACTIVITY/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.1 Purpose and Scope of this Environmental Documentation

The purpose of this RCE in accordance with 22 CFR 216 is to review all activities to be implemented for Cultural Cohesion for Peace and Prosperity in Guinea. These activities by their nature, scope and scale will not result in any significant adverse impacts on the environment. As a result, the Environmental Examination is for Categorical Exclusion for these sets of activities. However, the activities should be re-visited and validated at least annually during the life of the project.

1.2 Summary Background

In recent Guinea, the advent of civilian rule has created a singular moment in the country. The local populations hope that the coming years will bring major positive changes in their living and working conditions. However, few know that sensitive issues, such as national dialogue, reconciliation, security building, and cultural Cohesion for Peace and Prosperity in Guinea need to be addressed and reinforce in the face of political, ethnic and religious tensions that arise, persist and loom large. A culture of tolerance, collaboration, mutual understanding for peace and prosperity is crucially necessary in current Guinea to better address and solve common problems and promote lasting stability in the country. In current Guinean history, Conakry and N’zerekore regions remain the epicenters to lead this peace and prosperity-building process. While they can lead the process as they are the most important centers for both political and economic opportunities, they face considerable challenges and obstacles. They are the most populated and the most turbulent cities in Guinea. Both cities have experienced the most social, political, cultural, human rights and health crises the country has ever known. There are in cities, many local and international individual and institution actors. Most of the national institutions, such as the civil society organizations, lack the capacity and platform to launch the sort of broad social dialogue required at the national as well as the local levels. Women and youth are seen as vocal and appropriate voices to drive the process. Yet, like the CSOs they too lack the full capacity, confidence and platforms to leverage their connections and engage huge and lasting collaborative efforts to lead the process and attain tangible and sustainable results.

The situation is compounded by the devastating effects of the ongoing Ebola outbreak, which has contributed to an escalation in ethnic tensions, fostered mistrust in the government and political processes, and amplified feelings of systemic marginalization, particularly among the nation's youth and women. The risk of electoral violence in Guinea is significant; compared to previous elections, there are few mechanisms currently in place to address them. To address these challenges and fill a necessary void in the anti-violence dialogue, CRS
proposes vigorous programs to fill the gap. These Project Program activities are directly contributing to the Foreign Assistance objectives: Governing Justly and Democratically, and Investing in People. Specifically they are contributing to improving dialogue, reconciliation and peace building process both at the local and national levels, at the decentralized and deconcentrated levels.

2. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL POTENTIAL IMPACT

There are no possible environmental negative impacts of the project. The reasons are the following:

- No Generation of medical and other physical/solid wastes during service delivery;
- No use of chemical products, storage and possible disposal of pharmaceuticals and nutritional supplements;
- No Construction or rehabilitation of facilities and incinerators;
- No mining activities.

3. Project Main Goals and Objectives

- To strengthen horizontal social cohesion within and across ethnic groups;
- To strengthen vertically the social contract between state and society that communities in Conakry and Kankan region develop a culture of peace and experience great prosperity, peace and development;
- To increase the knowledge, skills, confidence of youth, women and media networks in conflict management techniques, human rights and their civic responsibilities in Conakry and Kankan region;
- To promote public attitudes favoring tolerance, acceptation and consensus building among ethnic, political and religious entities.

4. COUNTRY ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE INFORMATION

4.1. Locations Affected

This activity is regional focus and it will target Conakry and Kankan Region and their related main stakeholders (Women, Youth, elected and appointed officials, civil societies, elders, and political actors) with representatives across the two areas.

4.2. National Environmental Policy and Procedures

All activities that have a bearing on the environment are guided by an umbrella National Act on Environment (Code sur la Protection et la mise en valeur de l’Environnement N°045/PRG/SGG/87 of 28 May 1987). The law defines the principle of protection of the soil, continental and marine waters, air, fauna and flora, and human establishments. It also regulates the management of waste, chemical substances, noise and smells, and defines installations and establishments for the protection of the environment. It envisages that wastes must be appropriately treated to eliminate or to reduce their damaging effects on human health, natural resources, fauna and flora, or the quality of the environment in general.
However, to effectively address some of the sector-specific issues, the government has formulated and allowed for other applicable regulations to be followed. For example, the issue of biomedical wastes is further guided by the National Biomedical Waste Management Strategy under the National Directorate of Public Hygiene and Sanitation, which was created in 2008.

There is also a comprehensive set of policies in Guinea, which cover many important areas of environmental management. However, these environmental policies and procedures are outdated. The revision of the environmental codes is in progress. For the purposes of protection and development of forests, the national forest policy is established by the Government with the leadership of the Ministry of Forests.

5. POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND RECOMMENDED DETERMINATIONS

Activities under the Catholic Relief Services (Cultural Cohesion for Peace and Prosperity in Guinea) by their nature, scale and scope are not expected to pose any significant adverse impacts on the environment and are thus recommended for Categorical Exclusion per the following citations:

a. 22CFR216.2(c)(1)(i) for actions that have no effect on the environment;
b. 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i), for activities involving education, training, technical assistance or training programs;
c. 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(iii), for activities involving analyses, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings;
d. 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(v), for activities involving document and information transfers;
(e) 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(xiv), for studies, projects or programs intended to develop the capability of recipient countries and organizations to engage in development planning.

As required by ADS204.3.4, the USAID/Guinea team Catholic Relief Services (Cultural Cohesion for Peace and Prosperity in Guinea) managing this activity will actively monitor and evaluate whether environmental consequences unforeseen by this Request for Categorical Exclusion arise during project implementation and modify or end activities as appropriate. Further, if additional activities not covered by this Request for Categorical Exclusion are added to the project, an amended environmental examination will be prepared and approved prior to implementation of activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Type</th>
<th>Possible Adverse Environmental Impacts</th>
<th>Recommended Threshold Determinations and Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To support citizens strengthen social cohesion within and across ethnic groups with the main objective to have opinion leaders effectively engaged in promoting tolerance, reconciliation and peaceful coexistence</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Categorical Exclusion pursuant to 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i) for education, technical assistance or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment or 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(v) for document and information transfers</td>
</tr>
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<td>To promote women’s voice contribute to political reconciliation</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Categorical Exclusion pursuant to 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i) for education, technical assistance or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment or 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(v) for document and information transfers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Categorical Exclusion pursuant to 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i) for education, technical assistance or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment or 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(v) for document and information transfers</td>
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<td>To mobilize youth leaders collaborate to promote peaceful elections</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Categorical Exclusion pursuant to 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i) for education, technical assistance or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment or 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(v) for document and information transfers</td>
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<td>To support locally elected and appointed authorities to collaborate with civil society to address conflict triggers.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Categorical Exclusion pursuant to 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i) for education, technical assistance or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment or 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(v) for document and information transfers</td>
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<td>To strengthen and lead local officials and civil society co-manage conflict</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>To increase the knowledge, skills and confidence of media networks in conflict management techniques, human rights and their civic responsibilities</td>
<td>None</td>
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</table>

CRS field Representatives, who is aware of the Regulation 216, and environmental impact mitigation, monitoring and reporting with USAID Guinea, will train the remaining staff and all stakeholders in determining what potential impacts should be of concern, and how to mitigate and monitor these activities.

After the training, CRS Guinea Staff, sub-grantees and concerned stakeholders will
monitor field activity implementation through an environment lens. CRS Guinea Representatives, an environmental specialist, the monitoring and evaluation coordinator, the program manager, the program coordinators and field agents and Sub-grantees participants will all be implicated in all stages of monitoring and mitigation. But, the monitoring and evaluation coordinators will be responsible mitigation actions implementation, correction, and reporting. Reporting forms (program, coordinator and field levels) will be developed to report the mitigation measures.

CRS Guinea will incorporate appropriate mitigation and monitoring procedures by:

a. Utilizing the Environmental Guidelines for Small-Scale activities in Africa to assist CRS staff and other stakeholders such as beneficiaries in determining what potential impacts should be of concern for different activities in various settings. Thereafter, CRS field Representatives in conjunction with the program manager will determine which impacts to mitigate and monitor for each activity and the progress ion will be as follows: The field agents will be responsible of mitigation actions and coordinators will be responsible to assess if the action is working or not and make a decisions to improve when actions are not suitable. The monitoring and evaluation coordinator is responsible for reporting issues encountered to the program manager who assists the monitoring and evaluation coordinator. The program manager will report on a quarterly basis monitoring actions to CRS Representatives who in turn will verify the accuracy of the report by verifying actions in the field, before reporting to the AOR (quarterly basis) a global report that includes environmental mitigation actions report;

b. Abiding by appropriate policies, procedures, and regulations contained in the national Environment Action plan of Guinea, "lettre de politique agricole 2", and the "Plan d’Action Forestier Tropical";

c. Including environment issues as a part of the project planning process; and

d. Including environmental indicators, and monitoring effects as a part of overall Monitoring and Evaluation Systems.