ENVIRONMENTAL THRESHOLD DECISION

Activity Location: Nicaragua

Activity Title: Activities under Development Objective 1 (Citizen’s Ability to Engage in Democratic Governance Increased), Intermediate Result 1.3 (Dissemination of Independent Information Increased), or DIII


Life-of-Activity Funding: $6,434,421

Life-of-Activity: FY 2013 - FY 2019

IEE prepared by: James Kovar, DG, USAID/Nicaragua
Jessica Morrison, DG, USAID/Nicaragua

Reference ETDs: LAC-IEE-14-24

Recommended Threshold Decision: Categorical Exclusion
Negative Determination with Conditions

Bureau Threshold Decision: Categorical Exclusion
Negative Determination with Conditions

Comments:

This Environmental Threshold Decision amends LAC-IEE-14-24 to extend the activity through FY 2019, beyond the period of the current CDCS (2013-2017). It includes a new five year activity under IR 1.3 entitled “Voices For All” that will begin in FY 2015. All activities and funding levels otherwise remain the same for this amendment.
A **Categorical Exclusion** is issued to Development Objective 1, Citizen’s Ability to Engage in Democratic Governance Increased:

- Intermediate Result 1.3 Dissemination of Independent Information Increased, for
  - Sub-IR 1.3.1, Independent Information Presence Strengthened, and
  - Sub-IR 1.3.2, Research and Policy Analysis Enhanced,

- *except for any sub grant components or for small-scale construction activities (such as transmission facilities).*

A **Negative Determination with Conditions** is issued to DO1, Intermediate Result 1.3 Dissemination for any sub grant components or for small-scale construction activities (such as transmission facilities) under Sub-IR 1.3.1 and Sub-IR 1.3.2. Conditions include:


- Upon identification of site-specific actions, the implementing partner shall develop an Environmental Mitigation Plan and Report (EMPR) with formats provided by the AOR/COR and as per guidance of the Mission Environmental Officer (MEO), which outlines possible on-site environmental issues, describes specific actions being taken to mitigate these impacts, and presents the monitoring methods that will be used to determine the effectiveness of the mitigation measures. This Environmental Mitigation Plan will be submitted to the COR/AOR for their approval as well the approval of the MEO prior to implementation.

- In addition, the implementing partner must comply with host country environmental regulations and obtain all required permits from the appropriate host country officials. Regular reporting by the implementing partner to the AOR/COR will include a section on environmental compliance.

- The COR/AOR is responsible for making sure environmental conditions outlined in this IEE/ETD are met (ADS 204.3.4). This includes ensuring that the appropriate environmental guidelines are followed, that the mitigation measures are funded and implemented, and that adequate environmental compliance monitoring and evaluation protocols are in place.

- Implementing partners of activities under this program will have qualified environmental staff to oversee implementation of environmental compliance, and report on environmental compliance as part of their annual progress reporting, and the Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR) and/or Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR) will monitor the contractor’s compliance randomly as part of regular project monitoring.

**Amendments**
Amendments to Initial Environmental Examinations (IEEs) shall be submitted for LAC Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO) approval for any activities not specifically covered in the IEE, which include:

- Funding level increase beyond ETD amount,
- Time period extension beyond ETD dates (even for no cost extension), or
- A change in the scope of work, such as the use of pesticides or activities subject to Foreign Assistance Act sections 118 and 119 (e.g. procurement of logging equipment), among others.

Amendments to IEEs may require the need to conduct an Environmental Assessment (EA), and its approval by the LAC BEO could require an annual evaluation for environmental compliance.

Victor H. Bullen
Bureau Environmental Officer
Bureau for Latin America & the Caribbean

Date: 1-12-2015

Copy to: Arthur Brown, USAID/Nicaragua, Mission Director
James Kovar, DG
Kenneth Maclean, DG
Mappy Cortez, MEO
Gabriel Grau, PO

Copy to: Joe Torres, Regional Environmental Advisor, USAID/El Salvador

Copy to: Eric Kite, Dora Plavetic, Deidra Winston, LAC/OLA
Vanessa Reilly, LAC/RSD

Copy to: IEE File

Attachments:

- Initial Environmental Examination Amendment

File: P:\LAC.RSD.PUB\RSDPUB\ENV\Reg216\IEE\IEE15\LAC-IEE-15-12 ETD NI - DO1 IR 1.3 Dissemination of Independent Information Increased, amend LAC-IEE-14-24).docx
Initial Environmental Examination (IEE)
Amendment #1 to LAC-IEE-14-24

Activity Location: Nicaragua

Activity Title: Activities under Development Objective 1 (Citizen’s Ability to Engage in Democratic Governance Increased), Intermediate Result 1.3 (Dissemination of Independent Information Increased), or DIII


Life-of-Activity Funding: $6,434,421

Life-of-Activity: FY 2013 to FY 2017
FY 2013 to FY 2019

Reference Threshold Decision: Programmatic Initial Environmental Examination (PIEE) for Office of Innovation and Development Alliances (IDEA) Local Sustainability Division (LS) Development Grants Program (DGP), FY 2014 to FY 2019; and LAC-IEE-10-73, LAC-IEE-14-24

IEE Prepared by: Jessica Morrison, Office of Democracy and Governance, USAID/Nicaragua

Amendment #1 Prepared by: James Kovar, Office of Democracy and Governance, USAID/Nicaragua

Date Prepared: October 3, 2014

Recommended Threshold Decision: Categorical Exclusion (X)
Negative Determination ( )
Positive Determination ( )
Deferral ( )

Concurrence: ________________________ Date: ______________________
Arthur W. Brown
USAID/Nicaragua Mission Director
1. Background and activity/program description

This Initial Environmental Evaluation (IEE) covers activities envisioned under the new media project, “Dissemination of Independent Information Increased” (DIII). The DIII project supports Intermediate Result (IR) 1.3 of the first Development Objective (DO), “Citizen’s Ability to Engage in Democratic Governance Increased,” of USAID/Nicaragua Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) for the period 2013-2017. Activities under the new media project, DIII, will focus on two sub-IRs, “Independent Media Presence Strengthened” (Sub-IR 1.3.1.) and “Research and Policy Analysis Enhanced” (Sub-IR 1.3.2).

1.1 Purpose and Scope of IEE

The purpose of this IEE is to examine the anticipated environmental impact of all activities proposed under USAID/Nicaragua’s third IR, “Dissemination of Independent Information Increased.” This IEE amendment will also be extended to cover the period FY 2013 through FY 2019, beyond the period of the current CDCS (2013-2017), because it includes a new five year activity under IR 1.3 entitled “Voices For All” that will begin in FY 2015. All activities and funding levels otherwise remain the same for this amendment. This IEE will also absorb two activities under IR1.3: one formerly covered by a separate IEE, the Foundation for Economic and Social Development (FUNIDES) research and policy analysis activity (covered by IEE LAC-IEE-10-73). Also a new Development Grants Program (DGP) activity, to be implemented by the Fundación Violeta Barrios de Chamorro (FVBC) (covered by the Programmatic Initial Environmental Examination (PIEE) for Office of Innovation and Development Alliances (IDEA) Local Sustainability Division (LS) Development Grants Program (DGP), FY 2014 to FY 2019).

1.2 Background

The goal of USAID/Nicaragua’s new media project is to increase the dissemination of independent information in Nicaragua by fostering activities that safeguard the survival of key independent media outlets. The DIII project will build upon USAID/Nicaragua’s recent experience with two media activities, the FHI360 media program and the International Republican Institute’s syndicated radio talk show, Café con Voz, to support the development of market-driven content, creating understanding and awareness of the largest problems facing Nicaraguan society and empowering citizens to advocate for change. The DIII project will carry out activities at two levels: ‘internal’ activities, which will improve the quality and quantity of independent information and enhance administration, delivery systems and technology adoption; and ‘external’ activities, which will foster alliances, strengthen research and policy analysis, and protect the legal and regulatory environment for independent media.

1.3 Description of Activities

Activities envisioned under this program consist primarily of grants that will support the development of programming and content, capacity-building, support for alliances, and research and policy analysis.

Illustrative activities under each sub-Intermediate Result include:
Sub-IR 1.3.1: Independent Information Presence Strengthened

- Grants to encourage the design and adoption of new and innovative technologies that facilitate citizen journalism and public dialogue and to support the purchase of equipment, possible small-scale installation, and maintenance
- Grants to integrate into media and social marketing activities themes and topics on gender equality and gender-based violence (GBV)
- Grants for pre and post-production support and to pilot new financial models and new streams of advertising revenue
- Emergency grants to adjust to evolving political, economic and social conditions
- Grants to assist traditional and new media outlets to more easily find, recruit and attract talented media journalists, producers, cameramen, etc.
- Small grants to foster investigative journalism reports, programs, films and studies and to support community-based press and school newspapers.
- The above grants may have a subgrants component.
- Assistance and advisory support through web-based and in-person learning and training activities on topics such as: administration and sustainability, networking, investigative journalism, information security, market research, grassroots organizing, technology and techniques for scaling
- Training program for women journalists on investigative journalism, women issues, business development, empowerment, gender equality, GBV, digital journalism and other relevant women’s issues.
- Alliances between Nicaraguan and international media associations and organizations to share best practices and obtain support to better connect national voices with international outlets
- Alliances aimed at strengthening key voices and media associations to produce a common media agenda and broadcasting the alliances’ key issues through grassroots civic campaigns and documentaries that inspire collective action.
- Alliances with universities to foster better media career opportunities for graduating students with an emphasis on supporting professional development opportunities for women journalists and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) groups
- Alliances between civil society organizations (CSOs) and media outlets in which CSOs share with media their technical expertise on key thematic issues and media outlets in turn become better reporters of issues of national relevance
- Alliances between private sector and media outlets to better engage them in defending the dissemination of non-partisan information while supporting outlets increase their chances of sustainability

Sub-IR 1.3.2: Research and Policy Analysis Enhanced
• Research activities to monitor media regulations and policies that threaten the survival of independent media.

• Integration of gender analysis into research and policy documents produced, in order to grow body of data and research on this U.S. Government (USG) priority.

• Policy analyses to better examine local and global trends or new developments on freedom of the press.

• Learning events and knowledge products to share best practices and insights from DIII-sponsored sub-grants. These learning events can provide guidance for other media innovators to replicate successful media programming.

1.4 Locations Affected

The project will be implemented nationwide and will support key media voices (including female media voices) and outlets both in the Pacific and Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua including the Autonomous Region of the Northern Atlantic (RAAN) and Autonomous Region of the Southern Atlantic (RAAS). Women, youth, girls, LGBT groups, Afro-descendants and indigenous will be key targets under the DIII project. To ensure a demonstrably high impact in light of limited funding, USAID/Nicaragua will concentrate project activities primarily in the following locations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Population size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Esteli</td>
<td>220,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jinotega</td>
<td>417,372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Carazo</td>
<td>186,898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Chontales</td>
<td>182,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Leon &amp; Chinandega</td>
<td>404,471 and 423,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Managua &amp; Masaya</td>
<td>1,448,271 and 348,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Matagalpa</td>
<td>542,419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>RAAN</td>
<td>453,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>RAAN</td>
<td>369,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Rivas</td>
<td>174,589</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** 5,171,672

*Source: INIDE, June 2012*

The above-mentioned departments cover 86 percent of the Nicaraguan territory and are based on where top performing FHI360 media partners are located and where the DIII project is most likely to generate high impact through continued USAID support. Additionally, the target locations include cities with high populations and organized civic organizations and media capable of broadcasting programs developed through the DIII project. The main beneficiaries of the program will be youth and young adult populations between 9 to 35 years of age in order to create the demand for non-partisan information from an early age.

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1 This information is based on a June 2012 report elaborated by INIDE. The full report may be found online: http://www.inide.gob.ni/estadisticas/Cifras%20municipales%20a%C3%B1o%202012%20INIDE.pdf
1.5 National [or applicable] Environmental Policies, Procedures or Regulations

Nicaragua’s Environmental and Natural Resources General Law No. 217, approved on March 27, 1996, establishes regulations for natural resources use and environmental conservation, protection, and restoration. The system to assess environmental impacts of activities and projects comes under Decree No. 45 – 1994, “Regulation on Permit and Environmental Impact Assessment.” The regulation establishes the procedures to obtain the Environmental Permit, which is a mandatory administrative document for those projects or activities that need to have an approved Environmental Impact Study. Environmental Permits are required before the new construction, rehabilitation, or expansion of a project. The approval of the Environmental Impact Study is a prerequisite to obtaining the Environmental Permit.

2. Evaluation of Environmental Impact Potential

As indicated previously, activities envisioned under this program are primarily sub-grants that support the development of programming and content, capacity-building, support for alliances, and research and policy analysis. The provision of sub-grants for the purchase and/or installation of equipment—which may include radio transmission equipment, such as antennae—may involve small-scale construction and potentially have environmental impacts, which would have to be identified and addressed as per section 3.2 below. All sub-grant actions will be screened for potential environmental impacts using Table 1 of the Guidelines for Implementing Partners on the USAID LAC Environmental Mitigation Plan (EMPR) (Appendix A).

3. Recommended Threshold Decisions and Mitigation actions

3.1 Recommended Threshold Decisions and Conditions

USAID/ Nicaragua recommends a Categorical Exclusion for the majority of sub-grants, capacity-building, support for alliances, and research and policy analysis to be carried out under Sub-IR 1.3.1: Independent Information Presence Strengthened and Sub-IR 1.3.2: Research and Policy Analysis Enhanced because they will not have a negative impact on the environment, in accordance with 22 CFR 216 (c) (2) (i) (iii) and (v).

The purchase and/or installation of equipment in Sub IR1.3.1 that may involve small-scale construction and potentially have environmental impacts, such as installation of an antennae—will be identified and dealt with as per the conditions described below. Sub-grant actions will be screened for environmental impacts using the EMPR. Accordingly, USAID/Nicaragua also recommends a Negative Determination with Conditions in accordance with 22 CFR 216.3 (a) (3), as well as Section 3.2 (Mitigation, Monitoring and Evaluation) and the Guidelines for Implementing Partners on the USAID LAC Environmental Mitigation Plan and Report (EMPR) (Appendix A) for potential purchase and installation of radio transmission equipment, including antennae, as well as for the sub-grant component.

3.2 Mitigation, Monitoring and Evaluation
Implementing partners of activities under this program will report on any environmental compliance of these measures as part of annual progress reporting, and the Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR) and/or Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR) will monitor the contractor’s compliance randomly as part of regular project monitoring.

For any intervention that would fall within the Negative Determination with Conditions, implementing partners shall follow USAID’s Environmental Guidelines for Small-Scale Construction Activities, available at [http://www.usaidgems.org/sectorGuidelines.htm](http://www.usaidgems.org/sectorGuidelines.htm). Upon identification of site-specific actions, the implementing partner shall develop an Environmental Mitigation Plan and Report (EMPR) with formats provided by the AOR/COR and as per guidance of the Mission Environmental Officer (MEO), which outlines possible on-site environmental issues, describes specific actions being taken to mitigate these impacts, and presents the monitoring methods that will be used to determine the effectiveness of the mitigation measures. This Environmental Mitigation Plan will be submitted to the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) or Contracting Officer Representative (COR) for approval by the MEO prior to implementation. In addition, the implementing partner must comply with host country environmental regulations and obtain all required permits from the appropriate host country officials. Regular reporting by the implementing partner to the AOR/COR will include a section on environmental compliance.

### 3.3 Additional Determinations

If any new construction or other actions not included above are subsequently proposed that have a potential negative impact on the environment, then an amendment to this IEE will be prepared.

### 3.4. USAID 22 CFR 216 Compliance Contracting Language

In accordance with USAID’s recognition that gender, anti-corruption, and environmental issues are important considerations in development, the Contractor shall include in their project proposal explanations on measures they intend to take to deal with these issues. During project implementation, the Contractor/Recipient shall take these issues into account and find ways to enhance gender balance, reduce corrupt practices, and protect the environment in areas related to their project. To ensure compliance with the USAID environmental regulation 22 CFR 216, the Implementing Partner (IP) is responsible for providing USAID with an Environmental Mitigation Plan and Report (EMPR), as outlined in the applicable document (Appendix A): “Guidelines for Implementing Partners on the USAID LAC Environmental Mitigation Plan & Report (EMPR)” for any action that is covered by a Negative Determination with Conditions Threshold. The Implementing Partner shall ensure that appropriate environmental guidelines are followed, that mitigation measures described in the pertinent Threshold Decision for each of these activities are funded and implemented, including any necessary training or capacity building, and adequate monitoring. The procurement and/or use of pesticides would require an amended IEE, pursuant to USAID’s Pesticide Procedures 22 CFR 216.3(b)(1)(i)(a-l). The Contractor/Recipient may be required to report results disaggregated by gender and measures taken to enhance the environment and reduce corrupt practices.
In addition, the ADS 204 Annex attached to this IEE will be followed to incorporate the appropriate Environmental Compliance language for all RFPs, Agreements, and Contracts.
CLEARANCE PAGE

Initial Environmental Examination (IEE)
Amendment #1 to LAC-IEE-14-24

Activity Location: Nicaragua

Activity Title: Activities under Development Objective 1 (Citizen’s Ability to Engage in Democratic Governance Increased), Intermediate Result 1.3 (Dissemination of Independent Information Increased), or DIII

Drafter: JKovar, DG

Clearances:
KMclean: DGO
MCortez: PO/MEO
GGrau: PO
JTorres: REA/E-CAM
ABrown: MD

Date: 10-3-2014
Date: 10-3-2014
Date: 10-15-2014
Date: 10-26-14
Date: 10-3-2014
Date: 10-8-2014

Date: 28-DEC-2014
APPENDIX A
GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS ON THE USAID LAC ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PLAN AND REPORT (EMPR)

October 28th, 2009

A. Background

All projects funded by USAID must conform to US environmental regulations (22 CFR 216) requiring evaluation to ensure that no adverse environmental impacts result from the projects, that cannot be mitigated. All USAID programs funded through USAID LAC Missions fall under an Environmental Threshold Decision (ETD) designated at the Strategic Objective level. The Environmental Mitigation Plan and Report (EMPR), so described by these guidelines, ensures programmatic compliance with 22 CFR 216 by meeting the conditions specified in the applicable ETDs authorized by the USAID Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO).

Programs implemented by USAID LAC Mission implementing partners (IPs) include a range of discrete-activities under various awards that will likely have a risk for adverse environmental impact. Illustrative discrete activities include building refurbishment and medical waste management. This EMPR procedure will provide for both the screening for environmental risk, preparation of a mitigation plan and reporting on monitoring of these mitigation measures, which require that appropriate consideration is given to gender as a social impact factor in the development of a mitigation plan and subsequent measures.

The EMP initially categorizes projects into three types: No Risk, Medium Risk and High Risk. Those with No Risk can continue without further review. Those with High Risk must be reconsidered for the need of an Environmental Assessment. The EMPR deals with those projects at Medium Risk (see Figure 2).

All grantees/contractors will be required to fill out an Environmental Mitigation Plan per project type that includes:

1. The Environmental Screening Form,
2. The Identification of Mitigation Plan, and
3. The Environmental Monitoring and Tracking Table.

Program managers/CORs/AORs and Chiefs of Parties can work with the USAID Mission Environment Officer (MEO) to ensure impacts are sufficiently identified and mitigation actions are agreed upon, including clear guidance on the procedures for gender integration where fitting.
Figure 1: Timeline of Reporting Requirements for Environmental Mitigation

B. Timing of Reporting Requirements

Once a site-specific project has been identified, an initial EMP is submitted by the applicant or contractor to the COR/AOR. The EMP is reviewed and must be approved by the Mission Environmental Officer and/or Regional Environmental Advisor before commencing activities. For sub grants, the grantee is required to fill out the EMP and submit it for approval to the Chief of Party (COP). The COP then submits the EMP for review and final approval to the COR/AOR and MEO. Gender issues must be addressed in the Environmental Mitigation Plan in keeping with the Agency’s executive message on gender integration dated May 4, 2009.

A format for this initial EMP can be seen in Attachment 1; it includes:

1. An initial screening process using the “Environmental Screening Form” (Appendix 1, Table 1) to assure the project is at the Medium Risk Level followed by,

2. The identification of potential impacts and related mitigation measures using the “Identification of Mitigation Plan” (Appendix 1, Table 2) for each sub-activity.

3. The Environmental Monitoring and Tracking Table (Appendix 1 Table 3) that documents the necessary mitigation measures to be monitored, lists monitoring indicators, and includes who will conduct the monitoring when. Table 3 also includes a monitoring chart that documents who conducted the monitoring and the effectiveness of the mitigation measures.

At the end of each year of implementation, the EMP is resubmitted with the same information as provided initially, plus a component reflecting the status of implementation and effectiveness monitoring, of the identified mitigation measures using the “Environmental Monitoring and Tracking Table” (Appendix 1, Table 3). This table will be used for project environmental monitoring and will be submitted to the USAID Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR),
formerly known as CTO, COTR, or Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR) on an annual basis along with the initial EMP as well as a narrative providing details on the mitigation process. The report should not exceed ten pages (excluding annexes).

C. Initial Environmental Mitigation Report

1. Classification of Level of Risk

Components of a program or discrete activities under an award can have varying levels of risk for environmental damage and therefore require different courses of action (Figure 2). No-risk activities, classified under “i” below, do not require the EMP as they already should have been addressed under a “categorical exclusion” determination in the original SO-level IEE and Environmental Threshold Decision or subsequent amendments. High-risk activities (“ii”) will have significant environmental impacts that will require an Environmental Assessment (EA) contracted through the IP with MEO consultation to a professional environmental impact assessment organization with final approval by the LAC Bureau Environmental Officer. Such activities are not to be avoided if they meet a crucial need of the community (e.g., solid waste disposal facility, municipal-scale waste water treatment plant). Medium-risk activities (“iii”) will require the IP to screen environmental impacts and plan for mitigation of adverse environmental impacts. It is to these medium-risk activities that this EMP guidance primarily applies.

Figure 2: Schematic of required action based on the level of risk of a component or discrete activity under an award.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discrete Activity Classification</th>
<th>Low-Risk</th>
<th>Med-Risk</th>
<th>High-Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No EMP</td>
<td>EMP/EMR required</td>
<td>No funding w/o EA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

i. Discrete Activities that Do Not Require Mitigation Plans (No-Risk):

An illustrative list of no-risk discrete activities where no mitigation reporting is required includes:

- Education or training*, unless it implements or leads to implementation of actions that impacts the environment (such as construction of schools or use of pesticides),
- Community awareness initiatives,
- Controlled research/demonstration projects in a small area,
- Technical studies or assistance,
- Information transfers.
If there is a risk that the actual implementation of materials learned during training could adversely impact the environment (e.g., training on agricultural techniques), the training is expected to include as part of its curriculum, an analysis of environmental impacts and planning for mitigation.

ii. Discrete Activities that Cannot be Supported (High-Risk):

Under the environmental regulations of USAID, if there is a discrete activity which is considered critical to the needs of the community that may have a significant environmental impact, such activities will require an Environmental Assessment. In the case of pesticide use a Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan (PERSUAP) will need to be prepared by the partner and approved by the USAID Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO). Such activities include but are not limited to:

- Agricultural, livestock introduction or other activities that involve forest conversion,
- Resettlement of human populations,
- Large water management systems such as dams or impoundments,
- Drainage of wetlands,
- Introduction of exotic plants or animals,
- Permanent modification of the habitat supporting an endangered species,
- Industrial level plant production or processing (this does not include community or regional plant nurseries aimed at restoring areas after fires),
- Installation of aquaculture systems in sensitive lakes, marine waters (not land-based fish ponds),
- Procurement of timber harvesting equipment, including chainsaws,
- Use of pesticides (insecticides, herbicides, acaracides, fungicides),
- Large scale construction in un-degraded land,
- Large scale new construction involving permanent living quarters and/or sanitation facilities,
- Cutting of trees over 20 cm diameter breast height, especially tropical trees, except as needed to control disease or maintain forest health.
- Construction of new roads or upgrading/maintenance of extensive road, fire break or trail systems through un-degraded forest land or natural habitats.

iii. Discrete Activities that can be Supported if Mitigation Measures are Planned and Implemented (Medium-Risk):

Many discrete activities under an agreement will fall between the two extremes mentioned above and offer some adverse environmental impact that can be mitigated with proper planning. For these activities the Implementing Partner (IP) will be responsible for completing the EMP on an annual basis.

2. Sector-Specific Environmental Screening Form

The Environmental Screening Form contains information relevant to the potential environmental impact over the life of activity to natural resource and communities, local
planning permits, and environment and health. If items in the Environmental Screening Form (Appendix 1, Table 1) from Column “A” are checked then items for monitoring and mitigation are to be specified in the “Identification of Mitigation Plan” (Appendix 1, Table 2). The Mitigation Plan simply outlines the plan of action for mitigation of planned activities. The Mission Environmental Officer is to approve these forms, with special attention to those projects with identified impacts (i.e., projects with any check marks in Column A).


D. Annual Environmental Mitigation Report

On an annual basis each implementing partner will submit an “Environmental Mitigation Report” (EMR) using the attached EMPR Table 3 (Appendix1). The EMR contains information relevant to the potential environmental impact over the life of a discrete activity under an award and includes: A) a copy of the initial EMPR completed during the initial project planning (reference section B above); B) the prescribed mitigation measures using the “Identification of Mitigation Plan (Appendix 1, Table 2)”; and C) synthesized data on these mitigation measures collected throughout the year and tracked in the Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation Tracking Table (Appendix 1, Table 3). As it is often difficult to quantitatively measure progress of complex mitigation measures, it is necessary to include inserted digital photos (with relevant maps) to describe progress of mitigation activities.

USAID Mission requires that Implementing Partners clearly demonstrate competence in implementing discrete activities using best management practices which most often will provide the additional benefit of environmental protection. In addition, the mitigation activities should consider the critical importance of integrating gender considerations in all stages of planning, programming, implementation, and monitoring of USAID activities.

Sections of the EMPR include:

1. EMPR Coversheet
2. EMPR Narrative (to be filled out with project specific information)
3. Annexes:
   a. Environmental Screening Form (Table 1),
   b. Identification of Mitigation Plan (Table 2)
   c. Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation Tracking Table (Table 3).
4. Photos, Maps, Level of Effort

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS ON THE USAID LAC ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PLAN AND REPORT (EMPR)

Appendix 1:

I. Coversheet for ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PLAN (EMPR)

USAID MISSION SO # and Title: ________________________________

Title of IP Activity: __________________________________________

IP Name: __ ______________________________________________

Funding Period: FY_____ - FY_____

Resource Levels (US$): ______________________________

Report Prepared by: Name:__________________________ Date: __________

Date of Previous EMPR: ________________ (if any)

Status of Fulfilling Mitigation Measures and Monitoring:

_____ Initial EMPR describing mitigation plan is attached (Yes or No).

_____ Annual EMR describing status of mitigation measures is established and attached (Yes or No).

_____ Certain mitigation conditions could not be satisfied and remedial action has been provided within a revised EMP (Yes or No).

USAID Mission Clearance of EMPR:

Contracting Officer’s Technical Representative:__________ Date: __________

Mission Environmental Officer: ________________ Date: __________

(______)

Regional Environmental Advisor: ________________ Date: __________

(______)
II. Environmental Mitigation Plan & Report Narrative

1. Background, Rationale and Outputs/Results Expected:

   Summarize and cross-reference proposal if this review is contained therein.

2. Activity Description:

   Succinctly describe location, site details, surroundings (include a map, even a sketch map). Provide both quantitative and qualitative information about actions needed during construction, how intervention will operate and any ancillary development activities that are required to build or operate the primary activity (e.g., road to a facility, need to quarry or excavate borrow material, need to lay utility pipes to connect with energy, water source or disposal point or any other activity needed to accomplish the primary one but in a different location). If various alternatives have been considered and rejected because the proposed activity is considered more environmentally sound, explain these. Describe how gender considerations have been incorporated into the activity. How will gender relations affect the achievements of activity results? How will the activity results affect the relative status of men and women?

3. Environmental Baseline:

   Describe affected environment, including essential baseline information available for all affected locations and sites, both primary and ancillary activities. Describe how the activity will involve men and women who directly affect the environment. Methodologies for data collection and analysis for gender-sensitive implementation and monitoring of activities are encouraged.

4. Evaluation of Environmental Impact Potential of Activities (Table 2):

   As a component of the Identification of Mitigation Plan (Appendix 1, Table 2), describe impacts that could occur before implementation starts, during implementation, as well as any problems that might arise with restoring or reusing the site, if the facility or activity were completed or ceased to exist. Explain direct, indirect, induced and cumulative effects on various components of the environment (e.g., air, water, geology, soils, vegetation, wildlife, aquatic resources, historic, archaeological or other cultural resources, people and their communities, land use, traffic, waste disposal, water supply,
energy, etc.). Indicate positive impacts and how the natural resources base will be sustainably improved.

For example, any activity that increases human presence in an area, even temporarily, will increase noise, waste, and the potential for hunting, timbering, etc.

Evaluating the environmental impact potential of activities must include gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data when the activities or their anticipated results involve or affect women and men differently; and if so, this difference should be an important factor in managing for sustainable activity impact.

5. Environmental Mitigation Actions (Tables 2 & 3):

For the Initial EMP: List the mitigation measures in the “Identification of Mitigation Plan” (Table 2) and describe monitoring of these mitigation measures in the “Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation Tracking Table” (Table 3).

For the EMR: Describe status of complying with the conditions. Examples of the types of questions an IP should answer to describe "status" follow.

1) What mitigation measures have been put in place? How is the success of mitigation measures being determined? If they are not working, why not? What adjustments need to be made?

2) What is being monitored, how frequently and where, and what action is being taken (as needed) based on the results of the monitoring? In some situations, an IP will need to note that the monitoring program is still being developed with intent to satisfy the conditions. Alternatively, it could happen that the conditions cannot be achieved because of various impediments.

6. GENDER

Integrating gender considerations into all stages of planning, programming, and implementation of development assistance is not only a priority for USAID, but also an essential part of effective and sustainable development. The Automated Directive System (ADS) 201 sets out specific requirements to help ensure that appropriate consideration is given to gender as a factor in development planning at the Assistance Objective and the Intermediate Results level of Assistance Objectives all the way down to the activity level. This programming policy includes clear guidance on the procedures for gender integration where determined to be appropriate. In this regard, gender issues must be addressed in procurement documents and evaluation criteria. Gender equality is a USG-wide priority, and USAID has and will continue to take a lead role in that effort. For example, USAID/Environmental Protection Program monitors how men and women will be involved in the process of improving country-specific environmental impact assessment procedures. The Program is documenting gender participation in all of its activities. Whenever possible, gender based differences in roles, attitudes and concerns should also be documented.
III-A. Environmental Screening Form (Table 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Activity:</th>
<th>Type of Activity:</th>
<th>Grantee:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A</th>
<th>Column B</th>
<th>Col C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>If answered yes to Col. A. is it a--?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High Risk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IMPACT ON NATURAL RESOURCES & COMMUNITIES**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Will the project involve construction(^1) of any type of structure (building, check dam, walls, etc)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Will the project involve the construction(^2) or repair of roads or trails?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Will the project involve the use, involve plans to use or training in the use of any chemical compounds such as pesticides(^3) (including neem), herbicides, paint, varnish, lead-based products, etc?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Involve the construction of repair of irrigation systems?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Involve the construction or repair of fish ponds?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Involve the disposal of used engine oil?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Will the project involve implementation of timber management(^4) or extraction of forest products?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Are there any potentially sensitive terrestrial or aquatic areas near the project site, including protected areas?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Does the activity impact upon wildlife, forest resources, or wetlands?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Will the activities proposed generate airborne gases, liquids, or solids (i.e. discharge pollutants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Will the waste generated during or after the project impact on neighboring surface or ground water?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Will the activity result in clearing of forest cover?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Will the activity contribute to erosion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Is the activity incompatible with existing land use in the vicinity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Will the activity contribute to displace housing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Will the activity affect unique geologic or physical features?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Will the activity contribute to change in the amount of surface water in any body?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Will the activity deal with mangroves and coral reefs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Will the activity expose people or property to flooding?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will the activity contribute substantial reduction in the amount of ground water otherwise available for public water supplies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will the activity create objectionable odors?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will the activity violate air standard?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENVIRONMENT &amp; HEALTH</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will the project activities create conditions encouraging an increase of waterborne diseases or populations of disease carrying vectors or other health or safety hazards?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For road rehabilitation as well as water and sanitation grants, has a maintenance plan been submitted?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will the activity generate hazards or barriers for pedestrians, motorists or persons with disabilities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will the activity increase existing noise levels?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will the project involve the disposal of syringes, gauzes, gloves and other biohazard medical waste?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the activity incompatible with existing land use?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOCAL PLANNING PERMITS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the activity e.g. infrastructure improvements, require local planning permission(s)? N/A N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the activity meet the national building code (e.g. infrastructure improvements)? N/A N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENDER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do men and women benefit disproportionately or are involved unequally in the project’s activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there factors that prevent women’s participation in the project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RECOMMENDED ACTION (Check Appropriate Action):</strong> (Check)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>The project has no potential for substantial adverse environmental effects. No further environmental review is required (Categorical Exclusion). No EMP required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>The project has potential for minimal to medium adverse environmental effects, but mitigable environmental effects. Measures to mitigate environmental effects will be incorporated (Negative Determination with Conditions). EMP Required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>The project has potentially substantial or significant adverse environmental effects, but requires more analysis to form a conclusion. An Environmental Assessment will be prepared (Positive Determination). No EMP required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>The project has potentially substantial adverse environmental effects, and revisions to the project design or location or the development of new alternatives is required (Deferral).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e)</td>
<td>The project has substantial and unmitigable adverse environmental effects. Mitigation is insufficient to eliminate these effects and alternatives are not feasible. The project is not</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Construction projects need to be reviewed for scale, planned use, building code needs and maintenance. Some small construction projects, such as building an entrance sign to a park, may require simple mitigations whereas larger buildings will require more extensive review and monitoring.

2 New construction of roads and trails will require a full environmental assessment of the planned construction, i.e. a Positive Determination.

3 The planned involvement of pesticides will trigger the need to develop a Supplemental Initial Environmental Examination that meets USAID pesticide procedures (Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan or “PERSUAP”) for the project.

4 Any activities the involve harvesting trees or converting forests will require a full environmental assessment of the activity (i.e. Positive Determination).

5 A positive response to gender questions require follow up only when there are other positive responses on questions 1 – 30, and an EMP is developed.
III-B. Identification of Mitigation Plan (Table 2)

Enter the Question/Row # of the potential negative impacts with check marks in Column A (Table 1) and complete table below for mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate the issue. In the Sub-Activity or Component Column, list the main actions to be implemented. Under each action, list the tasks (Steps) that are needed to implement this action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Sub-activity or component</th>
<th>Description of Impact</th>
<th>Mitigation Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Component 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Step 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Component 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Step 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* provide overview of measures used from the USAID LAC Environmental Guidelines or other pertinent guidelines, details on exact monitoring plan are illustrated in Table 3, Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation Tracking Table.
III-C. Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation Tracking Table (Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Description of Mitigation Measure</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>Monitoring Methods</th>
<th>Estimated Cost</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dates Monitored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Type of Project:  
Project Name:  
Implementing Organization:  
Location Name:  
Project Size:  
Nearby Communities:  
Senior Project Manager:  
Date:  
Monitoring Period: