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LAC-IEE-05-05

ENVIRONMENTAL THRESHOLD DECISION

Country: Haiti

Activity Title: Economic Recovery Program in Rural Areas of Gonaives

Activity Number: _____

Duration: 12 months (through March 2006)

Amount: \$900,000

IEE Prepared by: Danielle Typinski, Acting MEO
USAID/Haiti

Date Prepared: February 12, 2005

Recommended Threshold Decision: Negative Determination with Conditions

Bureau Threshold Decision: Negative Determination with Conditions

Comments:

This Threshold Decision covers the Economic Recovery Program in Rural Areas of Gonaives activity in Haiti through March 2006. A **Negative Determination with Conditions** is issued for the activity, including objectives 1, 2 and 3.. Conditions include:

1. Screen microenterprise projects for potential environmental impacts and apply mitigation measures from LAC Environmental Guidelines, Chapter 4, Table 4.2 Environmental

Impact and Mitigation for Category II Microenterprises, for the indicated sectors as necessary (see attached).

2. Apply USAID LAC Environmental Guidelines on irrigation from Chapter 8 Section C on Small-Scale Drainage and Irrigation Systems , especially Table 8.3 Monitoring and Mitigation Issues for Small-Scale Irrigation Activities.
3. Limit extraction of surface water to 20% of channel flow, and not use cross-channel dams.
4. Delimit catchment the area for the water source of the irrigation system, and prepare a community-based watershed management plan for the catchment area.
5. Objective 3, Animal Husbandry:
 - a. Educate users on proper livestock management and practices that will prevent water pollution and human safety hazards.
 - b. Establish suitable grazing and soil management, practices that favor pasture growth; grow fodder for harvest; use stables where appropriate.
 - c. Properly dispose of medical waste (such as needles) from veterinary drugs.
6. The Regional Environmental Advisor and/or the MEO will assist and review monitoring of environmental compliance practices within the first six months of this activity.
7. Pesticides, including “natural” pesticides such as rotenone, neem or pyrethrin, will not be procured or used in relation to this project or its loans unless a supplemental Initial Environmental Examination is approved for their use according to USAID Environmental Procedures [216.3. (b) Pesticide Procedures analysis conducted]

CTOs are responsible for making sure environmental conditions are met. It is the responsibility of the SO Team to ensure that activity related SOAGs, MAARDs and contracting documents contain specific instructions reflecting this Threshold Decision, including the provision of (and any necessary training in the use of) the indicated LAC Environmental Guidelines for activities that have a Negative Determination with Conditions.

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

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Attachment: IEE

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Microenterprise).doc

INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXAMINATION

Project Location:

Haiti

Project Title:

Economic Recovery Program in Rural Areas of
Gonaives

Funding:

US \$900,000

Life of Activity:

12 months

IEE Prepared by:

Danielle Typinski, Acting MEO

USAID/Haiti

Recommended Threshold

Negative Determination With Conditions

Decision:

CONCURRENCE:

Pam Callen, Acting Mission Director
USAID/Haiti

CLEARANCE:

Michael Donald, Regional Environmental Advisor
Central America Region

Victor Bullen, Bureau Environment Officer
Latin America and Caribbean

Background

Haiti is one of the Caribbean's most disaster-prone countries. In the first nine months of 2004, Haiti suffered two disastrous floods. In May it is estimated that nearly 3,000 people lost their lives in flash floods along the Dominican border at Mapou and Fonds Verrettes. The disastrous floods of mid-September 2004 caused by Tropical Storm Jeanne resulted in over 2,000 deaths and affected an estimated 300,000 people through loss of homes, schools, health facilities, roads, crops, and livelihoods. Although loss of life and property damage was most visible in the city of Gonaives, the surrounding areas of Ennery, Port-de-Paix and Anse Rouge were also affected.

USAID/Haiti seeks to follow up on the U.S. Government's initial emergency support effort for affected areas with extended reconstruction and recovery efforts. The majority of efforts will be implemented under the Mission's \$34.08 million Tropical Storm Recovery Program (TSRP). The Mission will also provide an additional \$2.050 million of assistance for complementary flood response activities in rural areas of Gonaives that are not being targeted under the TSRP. Activities will address restoration of household assets, infrastructure repair, and short-term jobs creation. The three partners to implement this additional assistance are the Interamerican Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) (\$650,000), Fonkoze (\$500,000), and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) (\$900,000). This Initial Environmental Examination addresses the activities to be implemented by CRS.

Program Description

The purpose of the CRS activity is to support household asset restoration support and increased agricultural productivity over a 12-month period to the flood-affected families among the poorest populations within the rural areas of Gonaives, Port-de-Paix, and Cap Haitien. CRS proposes to work with existing farmers associations and women's groups in the targeted areas. The specific objectives of the activity include the following:

Objective 1—Provision of Micro Business Loans

CRS will provide grants in the amount of 2,500 gourdes to 1,500 women micro-entrepreneurs. Funds will be used to recapitalize women's groups participating in previous microfinance activities. These grants will increase client income and assets in three Caritas regions targeting female traders.

Objective 2—Rehabilitation of Irrigation System and Improvement of Agricultural Input Banks

Objective 2 will focus on the recapitalization of 2,500 small-scale farmers in five farmers associations through improved access to agricultural input banks and irrigation water supplies. The installation of agricultural input banks in the targeted associations will provide vegetable

seeds, tools, garden equipment, and organic pest control to member farmers. This component will offer training in composting and grafting techniques through a network of community leaders. Access to irrigation water will be improved for 2,500 families on 625 hectares through the rehabilitation of an irrigation system.

Objective 3—Animal Husbandry

CRS will distribute 2,500 pigs, 7,500 chickens, animal feed and veterinary drugs to association farmers. A stock of 2,500 piglets aged three-four months of the Gascon-Chinois-Creole breed will be purchased from local suppliers in Port-au-Prince, Jacmel, Paillant and Salagnac. In addition, CRS will provide farmers with a revolving fund of 4.125 million gourdes for feed and veterinary drugs. To ensure the success of the animal husbandry activities, CRS will work to strengthen the management and technical capacities of the beneficiaries.

Environmental Impact and Mitigation Measures

Objective 1 has the potential to negatively impact the environment if hazardous or toxic products such as pesticides were purchased with microloans provided under the program. However, purchase of such materials will not be permitted under this program, so the potential for negative impacts under Objective 1 will be minimal. Objectives 2 and 3 have greater potential to negatively impact the environment. Irrigation system rehabilitation could lead to disruptions in the hydrological cycle, an inefficient use of scarce water resources, soil quality impacts, and the potential to increase the salinity of surrounding land surfaces. Animal husbandry activities could introduce exotic species that are not compatible with native wildlife and degrade habitat. Uncontrolled manure can be a water pollutant and a health hazard for both humans and other animals.

Under Objective 2 of the activity, CRS shall carry out the following mitigation measures:

- Carry out an analysis of available surface water supplies;
- Improve user's understanding of stream and wetland ecology;
- Improve training of farmers and users group on water conservation;
- Define crop water requirements and ensure the project addresses them; and
- Ensure that construction is limited to the footprint of the original irrigation system.

CRS shall also conduct an environmental review of the irrigation infrastructure component to be implemented under this activity by using the attached "Environmental Review Checklist for Irrigation Infrastructure" as guidance. The environmental review will be furnished to the Mission Environmental Officer or a designate for approval prior to beginning rehabilitation work to the system.

Under Objective 3 of the activity, CRS shall carry out the following mitigation measures:

- Avoid the purchase of exotic species.
- Educate users on proper livestock management and practices that will prevent water

pollution and human safety hazards.

Below are other mitigation measures that are to be applied to the appropriate activities:

- 1) CRS shall ensure that the appropriate safety tools, equipment, and training are made available to all community members participating in irrigation rehabilitation activities.
- 2) CRS shall ensure that relevant environmental mitigation and monitoring measures established in this Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) be routinely incorporated into all activities. All mitigation measures in the table shall be tracked for implementation and effectiveness.
- 3) All local community members engaged in CRS activities will be instructed in the mitigation measures. Community organizations will be supplied with a copy of the mitigation measures for relevant activities outlined in this IEE in Creole.
- 4) All solid wastes generated at the rehabilitation construction site will be disposed of in an environmentally-friendly manner.
- 5) The CTO and MEO will conduct spot checks to ensure that the primary partners implement the measures set forth under this IEE (as the security situation permits).
- 6) The following language will be included in the contract or agreement developed under this program:

“The Grantees and/or Contractors agree that all activities funded under this Agreement will comply with all environmental requirements applicable to USAID-financed activities, including those set forth in Title 22 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations Part 216.”

It is not expected at this time that the agricultural productivity activities under the CRS activity will involve the purchase, handling, or application of pesticides. However, if activities that involve agro-chemicals are subsequently added, a supplemental IEE will be submitted to the LAC Bureau upon the final design of those activities.

The mitigation measures specified above should alleviate any significant environmental concerns associated with the proposed CRS activity. It is therefore concluded that this activity can be implemented in an environmentally-sound and sustainable manner in full accordance with all relevant USAID and U.S. Government environmental policies and regulations.

Monitoring and Reporting

The Food Security and Humanitarian Assistance (FSHA) office will manage this activity. The CTO will be responsible for monitoring and verifying the implementation of mitigation measures throughout the life of the activity, ensuring compliance with categorical exclusion

and negative determination threshold decisions recommended for all components of the activity. The MEO will assist with the monitoring of environmental compliance practices when requested.

CRS will be responsible for compiling a report on environmental compliance at six and twelve months from the initiation of the activity. The MEO is responsible for reviewing and approving these compliance reports.

Recommendations for Threshold Decision

A Negative Determination with Conditions is recommended for Objectives 1, 2, and 3 which involve the repair of irrigation and water/sanitation systems. Significant adverse environmental impacts are not foreseeable from the implementation of these activities *if the mitigation measures outlined in this IEE are used*. CRS is responsible for preparing an environmental review for the irrigation rehabilit