



LAC-IEE-04-07

ENVIRONMENTAL THRESHOLD DECISION

Project Location:	LAC Regional
Project Title:	Health Advancement Project
Project Number:	598-024
Funding:	\$21.5 Million
Life of Project:	3 Years
IEE Prepared by:	Kelly Saldana, LAC/RSD-PHN
Recommended Threshold Decision:	Categorical exclusion/Negative determination with conditions
Bureau Threshold Decision:	Concur with Recommendation

Comments:

Activities described in the attached IEE, under numbers 1 and 3, and most activities described under number 2, when weighed against the criteria of Section 216.2(c)(1)(i) and 216.2(c)(2)(i), (iii) and (v) of AID's Environmental Procedures, are considered to qualify for a categorical exclusion.

Some activities related to number 2 reflect an area of potential environmental impact. Since these activities focus on training health and laboratory professionals, the training has the opportunity to influence their handling of medical waste. This would include handling blood, micro-organisms which cause infectious diseases such as cholera and pneumonia, etc. A condition of providing assistance would be that training will include proper procedures for handling of medical waste as outlined by the World Health Organization. All laboratories which will be assisted through this initiative function under the guidance of the World Health Organization's bio-safety measures. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the organization which will implement this activity, regularly monitors compliance with these bio-

safety measures and provides training as necessary. Therefore, a negative determination with conditions is appropriate.

If, during the life of this SO, any additional activities are planned which are not listed above, a separate environmental evaluation will be conducted prior to implementation.

A **Categorical Exclusion** is issued for activities such as training, public information, operational research, monitoring, education and counseling will have no direct effect on the environment, thus fall under the class of actions eligible for a categorical exclusion.

A **Negative Determination with conditions** is issued for activities involving the handling and disposal of medical and sanitary waste in this project. All Best Management Practices, Mitigative measures, and guidelines recommended by WHO must be strictly implemented.

The PAHO will conduct spot checks to ensure that proper waste plans are in place to ensure that all activities are implemented in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner in full accordance with all WHO policies and regulations. Reports of these spot checks will be provided to the USAID/RSD-PHN.

These conditions will be part of the agreements reached with PAHO for USAID funding.

_____ Date _____
George R. Thompson, P.E.
Acting Bureau Environmental Officer
Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean

- Copy to : Cecily Mango, Director, LAC/RSD
- Copy to : Beth Hogan, Deputy Director, LAC/RSD
- Copy to : Ruth Fischer, LAC/RSD/PHN
- Copy to : Peg Marshall, LAC/RSD/PHN
- Copy to : Kelly Saldana, LAC/RSD/PHN
- Copy to : IEE File

Attached: IEE

INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

Project Location:	LAC Regional
Project Title:	Health Advancement Project
Project Number:	598-024
Funding:	\$21.5 Million
Life of Project:	3 Years
Prepared by:	Kelly Saldana, LAC/RSD-PHN

- A. Activity Description: The purpose of this \$21.5 million three-year activity of the LAC Regional Health Advancement SO is to advance Population, Health and Nutrition (PHN) priorities and programs in the LAC region. This objective will be accomplished by 1) Increasing the evidence base for PHN priorities, 2) ensuring that this evidence base is appropriately communicated to policy makers so that it can be put to use in the development of policies and programs, 3) that the policy process is broadened to be more inclusive of civil society groups and other actors in the health system. These results will be achieved through technical assistance for:
1. *Health Information Systems (HIS) and Surveillance*
These activities will focus on strengthening existing data collection, organization, and analysis efforts in LAC. These activities will also work through demonstration projects, regional comparisons, and training to ensure that the appropriate data are collected by health systems and that the data that are collected are put to use and effectively communicated to policy-makers. Possible activities include support for infectious and vaccine-preventable disease surveillance systems, training for government analysts on communicating effectively with policy-makers, effective use of data from contraceptive security assessments or drug management assessments, and appropriate targeting of HIV/AIDS policies and programs. Dissemination avenues might include Web sites, classification and archiving of experiential literature, networks of decision-makers, conferences, training courses, dissemination of documents and articles, case studies, blended learning, distance learning, participation in professional meetings, exchanges between Missions, and other means.
 2. *Human Resource Capacity*
These activities will ensure that health systems are able to deliver equitable quality services at all levels of care and will work to ensure the sustainability of the health sector in LAC. These activities might include strengthening local capacity to deal with infectious diseases. Additionally, activities might support the development of personnel to provide safe motherhood and neonatal care to populations excluded because of language or cultural barriers, geographic barriers, financial barriers, etc. Other activities might include support for strengthening the steering role of the health ministry, management capabilities throughout all levels of the health system, and the sustainability of human resource capacity by partnering with institutions and professional societies in the region.
 3. *Civil Society and Social Participation*
Through these activities, USAID will provide technical assistance, leadership, and facilitation to host-country governments, community organizations, academic institutions, and other non-state collaborators to promote the involvement of civil society in the formation of health policy and program implementation. Activities will focus on ensuring that health status information is available to citizens through the media and community-based organizations. Additionally, community groups will be encouraged to adopt methods to advocate for better health services. Target groups for education and capacity-building activities would include members of the media, communities residing in traditionally marginalized areas, and NGOs. Topics of focus may include participation in surveillance programs and utilization of data; adoption of best practices for care and support for people

living with HIV/AIDS; decreasing stigma against people living with HIV/AIDS; increasing access to health services; and health sector reform.

- B. Discussion: Activities described under numbers 1 and 3, and most activities described under number 2 above, when weighed against the criteria of Section 216.2(c)(1)(i) and 216.2(c)(2)(i), (iii) and (v) of AID's Environmental Procedures, are considered to qualify for a categorical exclusion.

Some activities related to number 2 reflect an area of potential environmental impact. Since these activities focus on training health and laboratory professionals, the training has the opportunity to influence their handling of medical waste. This would include handling blood, micro-organisms which cause infectious diseases such as cholera and pneumonia, etc. A condition of providing assistance would be that training will include proper procedures for handling of medical waste as outlined by the World Health Organization. All laboratories which will be assisted through this initiative function under the guidance of the World Health Organization's bio-safety measures. The Pan American Health Organization, the organization which will implement this activity, regularly monitors compliance with these bio-safety measures and provides training as necessary. Therefore, a negative determination with the condition above is requested.

This statement is submitted for the Bureau Environmental Officer's review in accordance with Section 216.2(3). If, during the life of this SO, any additional activities are planned which are not listed above, a separate environmental evaluation will be conducted prior to implementation.

- C. Recommendation: Based on the above, it is recommended that a Categorical Exclusion and a Negative Determination with Conditions be approved by the Bureau Environmental Officer.

Cecily Mango, Director LAC/RSD

_____ Date