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## DRG LEARNING, EVALUATION, AND RESEARCH (DRG-LER) ACTIVITY

NORC FY 2014, FIRST QUARTER REPORT  
OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2013

**Contract No. GS-10F-0033M/AID-OAA-M-13-00013**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

USAID's Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (DRG) Center has contracted with NORC at the University of Chicago to implement the DRG Learning, Evaluation, and Research (DRG-LER) Activity. DRG-LER will provide services to advance learning activities in the DRG foreign assistance sector and provide critical data on the impact of DRG activities in the field to assist with decision making. The DRG-LER contract will support the design and implementation of rigorous evaluations, analyses, and other research within USAID's contracting and program rules and procedures. It will also allow for more substantial involvement and collaboration between the DRG Center staff and academics thus resulting in better learning opportunities and internal USAID staff capacity building.

The objectives of the DRG-LER contract are to: (1) provide U.S. Government and other stakeholders with timely, solid evidence on impact and costs, as needed, for decision making about DRG foreign assistance intervention expansion and scale up or elimination/scale back; and (2) contribute to the knowledge base of what works and does not work in the DRG sector. In addition to impact evaluations, the contract includes performance evaluations, survey research, and qualitative case study research; knowledge dissemination and training; and ancillary studies. Implementation will occur in selected countries, with no specific regional focus, including in complex and multi-country environments as dictated by the evaluation agenda defined by USAID/DCHA/DRG.

NORC's first quarterly report for USAID's DRG-LER Project describes project achievements during between October 1 – December 31, 2013. The document is divided into three sections: Update on all Evaluations, Research and Study Tasks; Major Accomplishments and Challenges of Past Quarter; and Issues that Need to be Resolved.

### **1. UPDATE ON ALL EVALUATIONS, RESEARCH, AND STUDY TASKS**

NORC initiated the implementation of the DRG-LER Project on October 1, 2013. No evaluations, research, and study tasks were underway this first quarter.

### **2. MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES OF PAST QUARTER**

#### **Tasking N001, Basic Management Functions of Task Order**

The purpose of this tasking is to cover basic management-related functions such as attending general meetings with and reporting to USAID, preparing quarterly reports, annual reports, accruals, and annual work plans; developing proposals for tasking activities; recruiting that falls outside of an approved activity; invoicing and financial management related to the overall DRG-LER Task Order; submitting small business subcontracting reports, and other work related to the smooth operation of the task order.

This quarter, conducted the following activities under Tasking N001:

- Participated in kick off meeting with USAID DRG-LER team (October 15, 2013);
- Organized and participated in kick off meeting with NORC's consortium partners (October 31, 2013):
  - International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc. (IBTCI);
  - Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA);

- Management Systems International, Inc. (MSI);
- University of Pittsburg; and
- Training Resources Group (TRG).
- Set up administrative and financial systems for the project;
- Developed and negotiated subcontracts with partner institutions;
- Established branding/marketing requirements for the project;
- Prepared and submitted to USAID COR financial accruals for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter; and
- Received from USAID COR the following Tasking requests [status of each is provided below]:
  - Tasking N002, Performance Evaluation of USAID/Paraguay Democracy and Governance Project. NORC prepared and submitted a Concept Note for the USAID mission in Paraguay to consider. This involved recruiting candidates to provide substantive input to carry out the evaluation, discussing the terms of reference with the USAID/Paraguay Mission to narrow focus of evaluation given financial constraints. NORC is awaiting the implementing partner's first year action plan and clarified evaluation criteria and research questions from USAID/Paraguay to better tailor the Concept Note.
  - Tasking N003, Performance Evaluation USAID's Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF) projects in Moldova and Burundi (implemented by International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Burundi and Partnership for Every Child (P4EC). NORC received the Statement of Work for this tasking right before the Christmas holidays. NORC team met with COR and DCOF team on January 2, 2014 to discuss the project and priorities for the evaluation. As part of the development of the Concept Note, the NORC consortium is in the process of recruiting team members for Moldova and Burundi evaluations, and commenting and preparing recommendations in response to additional input DCOF provided subsequent to the January 2, 2014 meeting.
  - Tasking N004, Impact Evaluation Design of USAID/Guatemala's Citizen Security Project. NORC and a limited number of consortium staff signed non-disclosure agreements (NDA) prior to receiving tasking documents related to this assignment. NORC recruited for, budgeted, and prepared a Concept Note for this tasking which will be submitted mid-January 2014.

NORC will begin implementing evaluation taskings described above once approved.

### **3. MAJOR ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE RESOLVED**

Beginning in February 2014, NORC will participate in regular monthly meetings with the DRG-LER. Items on the immediate agenda include:

- Discussions on current and upcoming taskings; and
- Working out solutions to better engage NORC consortium partner University of Pittsburg given restrictions as a University.