



**FIELD VERIFICATION OF RESULTS, MONITORING OF ACTIVITIES AND
ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE OF USAID PROJECTS
CONTRACT AID-514-C-09-00001**

UNIVERSITY OF ANTIOQUIA
ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENTAL CORPORATION

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1. PRESENTATION

The established contract between the University of Antioquia and the United States Agency for International Development – USAID- from July 2009 to December 31st 2012, comprised as main objectives the monitoring of projects, the Environmental Compliance verification in records and the specialized field visits.

This report shows each of these activities, its own financial performance, the contributions made by the University of Antioquia and USAID, and it also comprises some recommendations for future monitoring.

2. CONTRACTUAL OBJECTIVES

- Undertake environmental monitoring to the USAID projects.
- Verify the environmental compliance of the projects that are presented to USAID in order to be executed.
- Monitor the specialized cases.

3. RESULTS FOR USAID

For USAID, the contract with the Universidad of Antioquia has been highly beneficial. Project monitoring and activity assessments contribute to perform a closer follow-up of activities' progress and help identify relevant management issues. Overall this helps to better manage USAID's Colombia portfolio and contributes to better tell our story. It allows identifying if project outcomes are achievable through individual activity reviews. It also allows asking directly the beneficiaries if they are satisfied with the services provided.

With the UdeA contract USAID Colombia has benefited from comprehensive field verifications to project sites at a low cost structure. The field verifications have contributed to monitor results and environmental compliance of projects that USAID personnel would not have been allowed to visit, due to RSO security restrictions and time constraints. The field visit reports have also served to identify relevant issues for project management.

In particular, visits to cacao projects resulted in a massive plan to plant over 7,000 hectares of cacao that were delayed due to weather problems. A visit to the Putumayo Road activity helped identify construction works that were pending as well as a serious budget shortage from the implementing partner side, which resulted in the decision of stopping the reimbursements until the issues are resolved. A visit to a sub-contractor, allowed identifying serious implementation issues, which led to the decision of ending the assistance to that particular institution.



Photograph 1. Beneficiaries of cacao, Tumaco



4. UDEA CONTRIBUTIONS

- The recognition and presence of UdeA all around the national territory.
- **The University of Antioquia is the USAID “eyes” in field;** UdeA goes to the places where USAID has security restrictions.
- The professionals in charge of general monitoring and specialized monitoring, are a skilled team in the topics required, therefore the contributions of the visit processes are significant.
- A monitoring model was settled according to the project to visit.
- Agile management by the UdeA in the visit programming (1 month).
- **The projects’ strengths and weaknesses were identified.**
- Attending the USAID requirements for meetings, telephone conversations and reports.
- **UdeA informed just what was observed during the monitoring, it’s impartial.**
- **UdeA won’t make decisions depending on the found situations.**
- The recommendations UdeA gave are always focus on the right development of the projects and on their improving.
- The process was efficiently carried out, thanks to that USAID put its trust in UdeA.

5. USAID CONTRIBUTIONS TO UdeA

- USAID labor knowledge.
- **Students’** graduation.
- Rural communities contact.
- technical knowledge (International Cooperation, Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan-PERSUAP-, - Buenas Prácticas Agrícolas-BPA- (Good Agriculture Practices))
- UdeA in national territory.



6. MONITORING RECOMMENDATIONS

- The monitoring time should be at least 15 days.
- The monitoring to the projects should be constant (beginning, during and end), in order to avoid cost overrun and losses.
- Where possible the entities or associations that are required to the projects development, should be part of each region where the project takes place to strengthen it internally. .
- The trainings done to the person benefited should have an approach to the technical aspects of the projects (from the sowing to the commercialization of the product), but also to the subsistence agriculture products.
- The benefited people need a permanent support in all the aspects involved with the project.
- With an adequate technical training plan and an environmental educational program, the sustainability and the quality of the crops are guaranteed, once the project is over (PERSUAP, BPA).
- The beneficiaries are committed and at the same time they are grateful for the support USAID gave to them through the project.
- Strengthen the topics and the time intensity for the training should increase.
- Accompaniment of the operators and executers during the monitoring is very important.

7. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The next chart shows the financial performance during the total time of the contract and the amount of US\$244.396.



Chart 1. Financial performance of the contract.

ITEM NUMBER	PESOS	DOLLARS
1. COORDINATION		
1.1 Project Coordinator	\$ 48.300.000	25.934
2. MONITORING OF PROJECTS		
2.1 Professionals (3)	\$ 37.400.000	19.917
2.2 Air Tickets	\$ 16.537.000	8.785
2.3 Per Diem	\$ 23.920.000	12.789
2.4 Land Transportation	\$ 31.200.000	16.729
3. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS		
3.1 Students (6)	\$ 22.200.000	11.789
4. SPECIALIZED VISITS		
4.1 Specialized Visits	\$ 162.568.921	87.847
5. EQUIPMENT		
5.1 Computer	\$ 4.000.000	2.034
5.2 Digital Photo Camera	\$ 900.000	458
6. MEETINGS BOGOTÁ USAID	\$ 8.906.000	4.747
7. TRANSLATIONS	\$ 0	0
8. GIS	\$ 2.180.000	1.157
9. OTHER COSTS	\$ 6.200.000	3.332
SUB-TOTAL	\$ 364.311.921	195.517
10. ADMINISTRATION	\$ 91.077.980	48.879
TOTAL	\$ 455.389.901	244.396

The Environmental Compliance verification in the records cost US\$11.789. The monitoring US\$ 58.220, this last amount includes the **professional's** payment, boarding and viaticum. That indicates that every monitoring cost US\$570.



Specialized field visits had a total cost of US\$87.847, it means that every visit had an average cost of US\$6.700.

8. ACHIEVEMENTS

8.1. ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION IN RECORDS

During the contract time 300 environmental records and about pesticides were revised. This labor of revising the records was done with undergraduate and postgraduate students. Further in July 2011, a 100 records revising was done, in a month, with two professionals in charge who have had a wide experience in this topic.

The records verification was a support for the structuration of the environmental module of the MONITOR system.

8.2. PROJECTS MONITORING

During the contract 102 monitoring were carried out, for 45 projects, in 67 municipalities and 11 departments of Colombia. These monitoring were done mainly by three professionals, they are:

Mauricio Camacho Pimiento, biologist.

Miguel Antonio Ruiz Ariza, specialist in environmental education.

Iván García Ospina, agricultural engineer.

Monitoring visits to projects were prepared in a period of no more than 15 days.

To gather information a visit format was designed to be fill by each beneficiary, in order to comply with the aspects settled in the environmental record and later to systematize the information easily. The visit format is in annexes.

8.3. ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING OF PROJECTS

During the contract 13 specialized field visits were done, they were undertaken by expert professionals in the specific topic to monitor, all this according to the USAID requirements. Hereunder there is a list of the visited projects:

- Putumayo, municipality of San Miguel, section of village El Limonal.
- Huila, municipality of La Plata
- Santander, CORTIPAZ
- Specialized field WWF
- SOUTH OF NARIÑO, municipality of Cumbal.
- REGIONAL CAUCA, municipality of Silvia, Indigenous Reservation of Pitayó.
- Tolima, NUCLEO QUEBRADON, municipality of Rioblanco.
- PUTUMAYO WAY, 3 visits.
- Antioquia, APROACA, municipality of Cáceres.
- TUMACO, Support to the diagnosis realization for a project formulation about transition of cacao technical assistance in municipality of Tumaco.
- Caquetá, Amazon Conservation Team (ACT) from the Landscapes Conservation Program.



Workshop in Nucleo Quebradon



Caquetá, Amazon Conservation Team



Meeting with indigenous -AWA, WWF

Workshop in Caceres, APROACA

Photograph 2. Some photos of environmental monitoring of projects

Generally, the technical and logistic visit preparation took around one month from the moment USAID requested through the reference terms.

UdeA delivered a report with all the USAID requirements and scopes, and also the comments and discoveries of every visit which were the tools used in the USAID decision making process about the continuity of the mentioned projects.

9. TRAINING

In order to know the environmental procedures of USAID and the technical team of the University of Antioquia in August 2009 a training to the technical team was done, Gabriel Escobar and Ángela Arévalo from USAID were in charge. In this meeting several topics were covered, such as:

- General information about USAID.
- USAID regulation in contracts for projects and in environmental compliance.
- Content of the environmental records and checking parameters.
- Integrated operation pesticides guide.
- Practical exercises with students to the verification of records.

- Management of the Sistema de Gestión Ambiental-SIGA- (Environmental Management System)
- Methodology for projects monitoring.



Photograph 3. USAID training to the University of Antioquia Team

10. UDEA-USAID VISITS

During the period of the contract execution 3 visits to projects were carried out, with the objective of training the UdeA team in the several topics about monitoring, likewise to show how the project work in the USAID system.

Sugarcane Project, municipality of San Roque- Antioquia

Once the UdeA team was received by the MIDAS team in the central park of San Roque and the visit reasons and scopes were settled, the trip to the outskirts of the town where the crop is, was taken. There, the meeting with some of the beneficiaries is held to talk about the direction of the Federation, its shaping, production and commercialization of products. Later a tour around the processing plant is done; at the end the team had an encounter with the beneficiaries to have a talk about the project goals, changes in the economic level, satisfaction, crop management, training and technical assistance.



Photograph 4. Sugarcane Project visit.

Avocado and blackberry cultivation Project, municipality of La Ceja-Antioquia

On the outskirts of the town, a visit to a beneficiary of program MIDAS is made, he sows blackberry and avocado. Once the team arrived to his house, they talked about his link with the project, the attitude change about the use of biologic control for the cultivation, project satisfaction, training, technical assistance and the relationship with neighbors, etc. Later, the avocado and blackberry crops were visited.



Photograph 5. Avocado and blackberry cultivation Project visit

Sisal cultivation Project: section of village Pantanillo, municipality of Girardota, Antioquia.

In the company of the Packing Company (Compañía de Empaques) personnel, a tour around the beneficiary's crop is done, they talked about all the projects aspects, such as beginning, crop, income, familiar and productive matters.

In the afternoon, the Packing Company plant was visited in order to watch the transformation process the sisal into sacks, the practical case of office information verification for monitors and the environmental measures the company follows.



Photograph 6. Sisal cultivation Project visit

Further, the idea with the visits was that students had the opportunity to be close to the monitoring dynamic and also to have a wider view of this kind of projects (all the university team) about topics such as management and use of pesticides, satisfaction state of the beneficiaries, good practices performance in crops and so on.

11. RELATED CONTRACTS

11.1 CREA - CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL -INC-

- There were visits to programs of Progress, Colombia Responds and Transition Plans (Progreso, Colombia Responde y Planes de Transición).
- Departments: South of Tolima and Meta
- Municipalities: La Macarena, San Juan de Arama, Mesetas, Uribe, Vista Hermosa, Puerto Rico, Planadas, Rioblanco, Ataco and Chaparral.
- Team: 5 professionals.
- Duration: 17 days in field.
- Cost: \$ 47´500.000 Colombian pesos.



Photograph 7. Infrastructure projects, South of Tolima



Photograph 8. Productive projects, Meta.

11.2 DEVTECH SYSTEM

- Object: the creation of a process battery, mitigation measures, good practices and training plans to conform the environmental management plans for each resource, as supplies to the MONITOR system creation.
- Duration: 2 months
- Team: 13 professionals
- Cost: \$ 59´375.000 Colombian pesos



12. ANNEX VISIT FORMAT



VISIT REPORT

I. INFORMATION ABOUT PROJECT AND ITS VISITS

Project code:

Project partner code:

Operator:

Name/Description of the project:

Location – Department:

Location – Municipality and section of the village:

Visit observations: (Please, include a summary of all the discoveries and recommendations about environmental aspects and the development of project implementation).

Advances and achievements:

Aspects to improve and recommendations:

Technician in charge of accompaniment:

Visit date:

Visit responsible /Charge – Entity:

Visited beneficiaries:

BENEFICIARY 1

Name:

Identity document:

Georeferencing:

Observations:



BENEFICIARY 2

Name:

Identity document:

Georeferencing:

Observations:

BENEFICIARY 3

Name:

Identity document:

Georeferencing:

Observations:

II. ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING.

I. Is the project under an environmental categorical exclusion?

Yes

No

If your answer is yes, pass to section III. Results verification.

II. Environmental management plan and mitigation measures. (Write the main observations/discoveries and recommendations)

A) Mitigation Measure:

Field observation:

B) Mitigation Measure:

Field observation:

C) Mitigation Measure:

Field observation:

D) Mitigation Measure:

Field observation:

III. Use of pesticide verification (application (spraying), warehousing, arrangement of spares/residues and empty containers)

IV. Environmental training plan.

III. RESULTS VERIFICATION



- I. According to the observed things during the visit and the conversations with the beneficiaries, Can you affirm that the beneficiaries are satisfied with the project? Why?
- II. Please, include other discoveries and recommendations related with the project development. Please, include advances and main achievements, the aspects to improve and recommendations should be included, too.
- III. According to the observed things during the visit, Are there any illicit crops cultivation in the attended land? On the road? If the answer is affirmative, please quantify/estimate.
- IV. Did you receive the project monitoring plans and reported advances, before the visit?
 Yes
 No
 Why?
- V. Complete the following information with the reported advances during the visit

ACTIVITY 1
Indicator:
Goal:
Reported advance:

ACTIVITY 2
Indicator:
Goal:
Reported advance:

ACTIVITY 3
Indicator:
Goal:
Reported advance:

BENEFICIARIES SURVEY ABOUT PRODUCTIVE-FORESTRY PROJECTS

SURVEY TO VISITED BENEFICIARIES

Beneficiary's name 1:
CC:
Farm's name:
Municipality/Department:



I. Is the project undertaken in the estimated time? Are the activities undertaken in the time they were planned?

Yes
No
Why?

II. Overall, how do you describe the project?

Good
Not too bad
Bad
Why?

III. What were the main difficulties met in the project?

IV. What suggestions does the project have to improve?

IV. Do you think that the life conditions have change with the project?

Yes
No
Why?

What aspects?

(Ask for the changes directly related with the project)

Income

Increased
Same
Decreased

Technical knowledge

Improved
Same
Worsened

Confidence with neighbors

Strengthened
Same
Weakened

Security

Improved
Same



Worsened

Another aspect?

VI. What kind of technical assistance (of the project) is received?

VII. How often does the technician visit you (in a month)?

VIII. How do you describe the technical assistance (of the project)?

Good

Not too bad

Bad

Why?

IX. What kind of training (of the project) do you receive?

X. How many training sessions (of the project) have you attended?

XI. How do you describe the training (of the project)?

Good

Not too bad

Bad

Why?

Do you remember anything you learnt?

XII. What kind of goods have you received with the project?

Manure

Seeds

Processing machines

Protective equipment

XIII. Have you started the product selling due to the project?

Yes since when? (In months) → Go to question XIV

No → Go to question XV

XIV. Have the product selling improved since the project started?

Yes

No

Why?



XV. Is it possible that without assistance/help/support from the project, the cultivation continues?

Yes

No

**XVI. What do you think is the main factor to support the cultivation the Project attended?
(choose just one)**

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

TRAINING

SUPPLIES

XVII. Is your productive project related with other activities in the region? (For example, productive chain, other entities programs, Social Action (Acción Social) programs)

XVIII. Do you receive assistance/help/support from a producers association or another kind of association or do you receive it directly from the project executer (MIDAS/ADAM)?

PHOTOGRAPH REGISTER