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MICROENTERPRISE RESULTS REPORTING

FY 2011 ANNUAL WORKPLAN

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MICROENTERPRISE RESULTS REPORTING

FY 2011 ANNUAL WORKPLAN

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Sponsoring USAID Office: USAID/EGAT/PR/MD

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Contractor: DAI/Nathan Group (DNG), implemented by DAI

Subcontractor: QED Group, LLC

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

The current Microenterprise Results Reporting (MRR) contract is a 32 month activity, starting on Sept 27, 2010 and ending on May 26, 2013. MRR is contracted to the DAI/Nathan Group joint venture (DNG) through Task Order number AID-OOA-TO-10-00050 under the Global Business, Trade and Investment II (GBTI II) IQC, (EEM-I-00-07-0009-00). With full approval from Nathan Associates and the DAI/Nathan Group, DAI is performing as lead contractor on MRR. QED Group, LLC is subcontractor to DAI.

DAI is providing one key personnel position - the Project Team Leader/Microenterprise Operations Specialist, Alexis Curtis. QED is providing the second key personnel position - Information Systems Specialist, Ruth Speyer. USAID COTR for MRR is Maria Stephens, CO Martina Wills, supported by USAID Acquisitions Specialist David Lavine.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE AND APPROACH BY TASK

In 2000, the US Congress signed the Microenterprise for Self-Reliance and Anti-Corruption Act – establishing microenterprise development as an integral part of US foreign assistance strategy. Through the Microenterprise Results Reporting (MRR) system and project, USAID collects and analyzes funding data on its global investments and outreach in microenterprise, and is able to respond to Congress's requirements in this regard. Not only does MRR produce USAID's annual Microenterprise Results Report to Congress, but it responds to inquiries about USAID's microenterprise investments – conducting various kinds of data analysis and reporting. The project maintains the MRR website, an integrated web-based database to collect and process accurate, timely information from missions and partners on funding, institutional data, results, and other requirements (www.mrreporting.org).

The MRR project has four main tasks: a) Tracking of Estimated and Actual Obligations; b) Microfinance, Enterprise Development and Enabling Environment Institution Tracking; c) USAID Microenterprise Results Reporting; d) Microenterprise Results Reporting Website. As MRR is based around the USAID fiscal year, it is possible to assume (for workplanning purposes) that each year of MRR will involve the same tasks, and will operate on the same timeline, (Annex A). Activities associated with each of the four tasks are listed below.

TASK A - TRACKING OF ESTIMATED AND ACTUAL OBLIGATIONS

The first phase of MRR's annual Fiscal Year data collection is to track USAID obligations. From early November 2010 – January 2011, the team will facilitate this process – reaching out to USAID Missions and Offices who may have obligated funding towards microenterprise programming during FY 2010. To do so, and to complete Task A, the team will conduct the following specific activities:

- Help draft and distribute the yearly data collection instructions to the field missions and Washington offices and answer questions from the Missions and Washington Offices. MRR's current contact list includes 93 relevant Missions and Offices – to be verified with USAID in November 2010.
- Manage the process of gathering Mission data, using the MRR website to the maximum extent possible.
- Check data for completeness, adherence to basic definitions and internal consistency, identify gaps and problems in data, and attempt to fill or rectify them; and contact relevant USAID/W and mission personnel by phone, fax, email, or in person to obtain additional information to fill gaps and correct errors.
- Ensure that data are disaggregated by gender.
- Thoroughly check and cross-check the data to ensure that the obligations reported fit the definition of microenterprise specified in reporting guidelines, and that a given unit's reporting is plausible and consistent from year to year.
- Focus efforts on obtaining complete and accurate "actual-year" data for the fiscal year most recently completed, and ensuring that the budget estimates for the following year are reasonable. In addition, ensure that the actual-year funding is tied to specific institutions, activities, or holding projects, thus allowing compilation of a complete list of microenterprise-related institutions receiving funding from USAID in that year.
- Collect budget estimates for future year(s) from field missions and Washington offices as required for the USAID budget process.
- Maintain a historical data series on USAID microenterprise funding (dollar obligations and local currency expenditures), incorporating existing information and adding to it with each year's results.
- Work with USAID/W offices to capture the microenterprise assistance provided within their portfolios.

- Prepare tables, both detailed and summary, according to the formats used previously in the MRR, amending the formats as necessary and adding tables as requested by USAID. Annotate the tables with explanatory information as needed.

TASK B - MICROFINANCE, ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT INSTITUTION TRACKING

The second phase of MRR data collection includes microfinance, enterprise development, and enabling environment institution outreach and tracking. The team will manage this “partner-level” data collection between February and May 2011, (specific timing detail provided in Annex A). For work under Task B, the MRR team will use the partner institutions identified by USAID Missions. The MRR team will also incorporate partner-data related to USAID’s Poverty Assessment Tool (PAT) implementation as well as Development Credit Authority (DCA) utilization. Specific steps under Task B are:

- Obtain information from the list of microfinance and enterprise development institutions on a range of key program parameters and standard performance measures. The precise list of variables will be identified each year with the relevant staff members of the MD office. (The MRR team and COTR determined that the FY 2009 questionnaires will not be modified for the FY 2010 data collection cycle.) The team will ensure availability of questionnaire and other data collection tools in Spanish, French or other languages as the need may arise, and will ensure that the data requested conform to USAID's microenterprise policy statement.
- Manage the process of gathering partner data using the MRR website to the maximum extent possible. The data may be gathered from USAID Missions, PVO and contractor headquarters, or the local NGO(s) and firms as appropriate to the specific circumstances.
- Identify gaps and inconsistencies in the data, and follow up with Missions and/or partner institutions by phone, fax or e-mail to obtain a complete and accurate data set.
- Produce tables and other graphics with explanatory notes to demonstrate the status of USAID support for key microenterprise development variables as identified by the Contracting Officer’s Technical Representative (COTR).

TASK C - USAID MICROENTERPRISE RESULTS REPORTING PUBLICATIONS

Each year, USAID submits a report to Congress on the Agency's microenterprise activities and results from the previous Fiscal Year. After completing data collection under Task B in May 2011, the MRR team will produce the MRR Annual Report to Congress for submission to USAID, which USAID will then review, approve and submit to Congress. The team will conduct the following specific steps contributing to the production of the MRR Annual Report and other microenterprise results publications and analyses as needed:

- In collaboration with MD staff and COTR, the team will produce a report that summarizes the funding, institutional and other data collected for the year within the context of the USAID vision of microenterprise development and the operative agency policy. Creative visual representation of data will be maximized and boxed narratives or vignettes and photographs will be used as appropriate. The report will be produced to the specifications set for Agency publications electronically and, as needed, in a quantity to be established each year, but most likely to run to no more than 500 print copies.
- If applicable, the team will assist in packaging, addressing, and mailing the report to Congress and others as designated by the COTR. This included maintaining a mailing list of current contacts within microenterprise support organizations, donors, as well as Congress.
- Collect from the field missions descriptive data on their microenterprise programs including the issues and successes in their host country and combine into one document (available on the USAID web site) which can be utilized by Mission and Washington staff as a reference, as a basis for briefing papers, and for comparison of programs.
- Assist the MD office with information from the MRR database for responses to inquiries from Congress and others as the need may arise.
- Collect and archive success stories and photos of successful operations suitable for publication and public education.

TASK D - MICROENTERPRISE RESULTS REPORTING WEB SITE

The Microenterprise Results Reporting website was substantially rebuilt in recent years and is now a much more efficient and user-friendly system than its previous iteration. The team will manage the MRR website's maintenance as well as any

functional expansion as reporting and tracking needs may evolve. To this end, the team will:

- Maintain the website via a combination of in-house management and partnership with IT firm(s) as required. Any revisions in the site will be demonstrated to, and reviewed by, the COTR before changes are made to the systems or web site.
- Continue to refine the services for users who will access the web site; the information form and content desired by each category of user; and the information access and restrictions for each category of user.
- Suggest uses for the web site and database that will further the overall USAID policy objectives for microenterprise and microfinance, and ensure that there are appropriate links to other web sites. The MRR site will be linked with the MD office's principal website, and the microenterprise pages on usaid.gov, as directed by the COTR. Data and photos from the MRR website will be available for posting to these websites as appropriate.
- Complete analyses to address new requirements or any special needs for a specific user, such as USAID employees or Congress.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The MRR team is located at QED, with DAI employee Alexis Curtis having relocated to QED's offices to facilitate efficient communication and project management. With QED's proximity to USAID, this also greatly facilitates meeting with the COTR - whether at USAID or QED - since QED is in downtown Washington, DC. DAI will conduct regular meetings with the COTR; manage subcontractors, vendors, and consultants; efficiently manage project finances and prepare quarterly accruals reports; submit an annual workplan; maintain the operations manual for data collection, validation, analysis, and report writing - and will update it annually; deliver quarterly reports highlighting project progress, achievements, challenges, and risks; manage and oversee all system and database updates, improvements, and changes; and manage the hosting contract for the MRR server - conducting regular database and system backups.

With a smooth and collaborative transition from QED to DAI as MRR prime contractor, the team is implementing an efficient start-up with all activities on track. The MRR team will develop and submit all project deliverables in a timely manner - each of which is detailed in the following table:

CONTRACTUAL DELIVERABLES

MRR project deliverables	
1.	operations manual detailing the process for data collection, validation, analysis, and report writing within two months after award. The operations manual shall be updated annually;
2.	annual work plan within two months after award outlining major MRR activities and milestones. The work plan shall be updated at least annually or more frequently if needed;
3.	annually updated database and annotated tables on USAID funding of microenterprise development and support institutions for microfinance and business services;
4.	updated list of all institutions receiving USAID assistance for microenterprise development within six months after award;
5.	annually updated historical series on USAID microenterprise funding;
6.	annual report on the Agency's microenterprise activity, the contents of which will vary by year but generally will include: a narrative description of the USAID supported microenterprise activities, key results achieved by the Agency, a summary of the MRR data, and statistical annexes on key aspects of the programs (see section III.D above);
7.	updated MRR web site easily accessible on both the intranet and internet within six months after award;
8.	ten to twenty data reports/analyses per year for posting on any USAID website, as directed by the COTR; and
9.	quarterly reports highlighting the major achievements and challenges from the reporting period.

PROJECT TEAM

The MRR team has a broad mix of microenterprise development experience, MRR knowledge, project, database and website management experience, as well as data gathering, statistical analysis, and information technology expertise. The team is comprised of the professionals listed below:

Alexis Curtis - Team Leader/Microenterprise Operations Specialist. Ms. Curtis is responsible for daily management of MRR, including subcontractor relationships

and all project deliverables, and serves as the primary point of contact for USAID. She assures that MRR operates according to the timeline presented in Annex A, responds in a timely manner to USAID requests, and produces high quality outputs in a cost-effective manner.

Ruth Speyer - Information Systems Specialist. Ms. Speyer is responsible for MRR data collection, providing guidance and data support to Missions and partners through the MRR Help Desk, and performing data quality checks and analysis. She also works with the Team Leader in response to requests from USAID, Congress and other actors and contributes to the MRR annual report and annexes.

Gang Liu - Database Specialist. Mr. Liu has extensive knowledge of the MRR database and conducts as needed queries of the database using SQL. He generates all data reports for the project, ensures database security, and conducts regular data backups for the system. He assists in verifying data quality, performing time-series analyses, and slicing and dicing data for detailed comparisons.

Stephanie Parker - Information Systems Analyst. Ms. Parker will provide surge capacity to MRR during peak periods by assisting the Information Systems Specialist with data quality checks, analysis, communication with Missions and partners, as well as report formatting.

Andy Reuter - Senior Technical Advisor. Since QED assumed the MRR contract in 2006, Mr. Reuter has provided corporate oversight of MRR project and worked closely with its project managers to ensure that QED delivered quality annual reports to USAID both on time and within budget. For example, last year he helped oversee the enhancement of the MRR technology platform, oversaw the efficient application of QED staff and resources, provided corporate-level quality assurance, and ensured the completion of all close down activities. He will continue to provide technical advice to the team, seeing to the continuity of MRR as it transitions into a new contract with a new prime contractor, DAI.

Robin Young - DAI Home Office/Project Team Lead. Ms. Young will provide technical and management oversight from a DAI Corporate perspective. She is the Technical Area Manager for Financial Services at DAI and is a microfinance expert.

Anna Langer - DAI Home Office/Administrative Backstop. Ms. Langer will provide operational support from the DAI home office. She will liaise with DAI's support offices (Finance, Contracts, Information Technology and Human Resources) to facilitate efficient project operations.

TBD DAI STTA

DAI will provide STTA in management of the MRR website. While DAI will contract a professional Information Technology/Web Programming firm for website

maintenance and programming, DAI has in-house IT professionals who are well positioned to oversee this process.

TBD QED STTA

QED will provide additional surge capacity STTA as needed in the areas of database management, data collection and verification and/or support for publication generation and promotional activities.

ANNEX A - PROJECT TIMELINE

MRR Tasks	Performance Period											
	FY 2011 (reporting on FY 2010)											
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep
Task A - Tracking of Estimated and Actual Obligations												
A.1 Update operations manual	●	●	●									
A.2 Update and maintain point-of-contact information for Missions and Operating Units	●	●	●									
A.3 Update and distribute instructions to Missions	●	●	●									
A.4 Provide help desk support to Missions		●	●	●	●							
A.5 Obtain and review estimated and actual obligation data		●	●	●	●							
A.6 Resolve data problems				●	●	●						
A.7 Promote Mission data collection in Connections and on microLINKS		●	●	●								
A.8 Finalize obligations data entry				●	●							
Task B - Microfinance, Enterprise Development, and Enabling Environment Institution Tracking												
B.1 Assign appropriate questionnaire (ED, MFI, Policy) to implementing partners				●	●	●						
B.1.1 Update contacts				●	●							
B.1.2 Assign questionnaires to partners				●	●	●						
B.1.3 Send instructions to institutions				●	●							
B.2 Provide help desk support to institutions				●	●	●	●					
B.3 Follow-up with institutions to improve response rates				●	●	●	●					
B.4 Ensure data accuracy through data cleaning & identify priority indicators for review				●	●	●	●	●				
B.5 Finalize obligation data entry				●	●	●	●	●				
Task C - USAID Microenterprise Results Reporting Publications												
C.1 Collect supporting information and prepare draft report								●	●	●		
C.2 Develop, produce, and disseminate the annual report								●	●	●	●	
C.3 Prepare statistical annexes								●	●	●	●	●
Task D - Microenterprise Results Reporting Web Site												
D.1 Maintain the MRR website and database	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
D.2 Refine MRR services	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
D.3 Develop new capabilities, as required	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
D.4 Address ad hoc inquiries for analysis	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
D.5 Other tasks as assigned	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Poverty Tools and DCA												
Work with IRIS to develop appropriate procedures for PAT data collection		●	●	●	●							
Work with IRIS to develop language for Missions on PAT	●	●	●	●	●							
Adapt questionnaires to include new PAT questions			●	●	●							
Determine which institutions will report on PAT and assign questionnaires			●	●	●							
Share PAT results data with IRIS								●	●	●		
Contact DCA to obtain information on guarantees							●	●				
Project Management												
Submit annual work plan	●	●										
Conduct regular meetings with Activity Manager	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Manage project finances, including budget management and invoicing	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Manage subcontractors, vendors, and consultants	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Prepare quarterly accrual reports			●	●		●	●		●	●		●
Develop quarterly progress reports				●	●		●	●		●	●	
Conduct regular database and system backups	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●