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COMPLEX CRISES FUND: GUINEA MID-CYCLE PORTFOLIO REVIEW



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ACCRONYMS

AOR	Agreement Officer Representative
CCF	Complex Crises Fund
CD	Country Director
CDCS	Country Development and Cooperation Strategy
CMM	Conflict Management and Mitigation
CoP	Chief of Party
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCHA	Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
ECHO	European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection
ETU	Ebola Treatment Unit
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GHP	Global Health Program
GoG	Government of Guinea
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
M/E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MP	Member of the National Assembly of Guinea
MPR	Mid-Cycle Portfolio Review
NDI	National Democratic Institute
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
ONM	Office of the National Mediator
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PPL	Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning
PPM	Office of Program, Policy, and Management
RCE	Request for Categorical Exclusion
SFRC	Search for Common Ground
ToC	Theory of Change
ToT	Training of Trainers
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID/AFR	USAID Bureau for Africa
USG	U.S. Government
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Health

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Guinea had become a relatively stable country following its first democratic presidential election in 2010 resulting in the selection of President Alpha Conde. Despite these developments, inter-tribal conflict and the lack of fully-developed, durable, trusted vertical and horizontal inter-communal and governmental linkages have led to spasms of instability. This was particularly evident in the Guinea Forestière where violence erupted in July 2013 leading to reported death of hundreds of civilians and security forces. To better understand the root causes of this conflict, USAID/Guinea funded a conflict analysis that illuminated key contextual dynamics and recommended interventions leading to local reconciliation and conflict prevention. To address the recommendations of the aforementioned conflict analysis, USAID Guinea successfully proposed a \$1.75 Million, 18-Month intervention to the CCF Secretariat to intensify and explicitly execute “Inside-Out Peace Building” activities directly aimed at addressing common complex identities and building social cohesion. The resulting program, entitled “Rebuilding together: Community Driven Reconciliation and Enhanced Communication in Guinea Forestière” and implemented by Search for Common Ground (SFCG), seeks to build upon the lessons learned from a previous USAID/CMM unity-building initiative to forge a common identity, sensitize the population to tolerance, reconciliation, and conflict resolution, and create platforms for peace-building.

In February 2015, the CCF Secretariat, in close coordination with USAID/Guinea and SFCG, conducted a Mid-cycle Portfolio (MPR) review of the activity. This MPR sought to analyze the program in the context of the operational environment, while taking into consideration issues that may shape the future direction of these initiatives. The team, comprised of two Washington-based USAID officers, reviewed relevant documents and met SFCG headquarter staff prior to conducting an intensive field visit. In all, 52 interviews and observations of program activities were conducted with a broad range of stakeholders in Washington, Conakry, and Guinea Forestière. The review, looking at central strategic, programmatic, and compliance priorities of the DCHA Bureau, found a program largely well-designed to support the originally proposed Theory of Change (ToC). Key findings include, but are not limited to:

- Well-crafted and understood ToC with assumptions universally understood and accepted by all stakeholders.
- Activities supported clearly address the ToC with constructive/limited thematic shifts and additions adopted in response to specific changes on the ground – herein the Ebola Epidemic.
- Productive relationships with all levels of stakeholders, including the Government of Guinea (GOG), have provided operational space for engagement

and a more permissive environment to address stressors on social cohesion such as the Ebola Epidemic. Opportunities do exist, however, for greater coordination of conflict mitigation interventions in the region.

- Program activities were largely on track despite operational challenges and setbacks resulting from the intervening variable of Ebola and a better cultural and contextual understanding of community relationships.
- SFCG has been proactive in working to create gender balance in key activities, to address issues of masculinity that affect social cohesion and conflict dynamics, and to promote women's role in building social cohesion in the target communities.
- Despite categorical exclusion in the Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), this initiative is conducting small-scale "Economics-for-Peace" activities that may require revisiting the IEE and considering revisions.
- A clear need for SFCG, with support from USAID/Guinea to address shortcomings in the Monitoring and Evaluation operations to include a revised PMP and greater capacity-building.

Despite the emergence of environmental challenges, specifically the Ebola epidemic, operations are generally on track with productive results and impacts emerging. This report includes more specific details providing key observations, lessons learned, and recommendations for various levels of stakeholders as the initiative continues.

PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

As part of USAID objectives regarding monitoring, evaluation, and learning, CCF country portfolios are subject to a Mid-Cycle Portfolio Review (MPR) of activities. Designed by DCHA/PPM, the review aims to analyze programs in the context of the operational environment while taking into consideration issues that may shape the future direction of these initiatives. Experience has demonstrated that a continuous analysis of the country's conditions better informs programming at three distinct but interconnected levels: (1) overall goal; (2) program objectives; and (3) activities funded.

To this end, USAID conducted an MPR of its CCF portfolio in The Republic of Guinea in February 2015. The review appraised current activities while considering emerging issues, constraints, program assumptions, and other relevant events to foster creativity and encourage flexibility to re-direct activities in exigent circumstances. The activity also provided strategic guidance as it considers course corrections during the no-cost extension period of activities. This was completed in accordance with a Statement of Work (Annex 1) developed in partnership with respective bureau, regional mission, and implementing partner inputs.

The principle process methodology was a “snap-shot” peer review process that fostered a direct and constructive dialogue on the status of recent achievements, future challenges, and longer-term direction of CCF-funded activities. These reviews were intended to provide the partners and program administrators with a third-party analysis by a team experienced in complex crisis environments to analyze and evaluate the CCF-funded project at the program and strategic levels mid-way through the lifecycle of the project. This process provided the implementing partner and country team with a timely perspective, feedback, and strategic recommendations for consideration to make any possible course adjustments to the project prior to the project’s end. The review also gave the CCF Secretariat the information necessary for making informed decisions regarding future resources, and allows the CCF Secretariat to be an effective advocate for the program to a variety of internal and external audiences including the U.S. Congress and public.

While in Washington, the team reviewed documents and interviewed appropriate stakeholders, including implementing partner staff, in-country staff, USG counterparts, and others involved with or aware of the CCF funded program (see Annex 2). In the field the team interviewed Government of Guinea (GoG) officials, implementing partners, grantees, and beneficiaries and reviewed field-based activities with key stakeholders with specific emphasis on normative evaluation questions outlined later in this statement of work (Annex 1). This iterative process resulted in this final document and presentation of findings, conclusions, and recommendations.¹

POLITICAL BACKGROUND AND COUNTRY CONTEXT

Guinea has become a relatively stable country following its first democratic presidential election in 2010 resulting in the selection of President Alpha Conde. However, the country has been shaken by dramatic shockwaves originating from its Forest Region – the far southeast of the country commonly referred to as “Guinée Forestière” and center of the highly unstable, conflict-ridden area bordering Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, which threatens broader national stability. Approximately 900 km away from the capital, Conakry, the Forest Region has suffered the consequences of a convoluted series of neighboring civil wars over the past 20 years and has naturally played host to thousands of returnees, many of whom have lived out for generations. Since then, recurrent inter-communal conflicts around cultural intolerance, economic control and land ownership, friction between two main population groups, the Kpèlè and the Konianké, and recently the Ebola outbreak have undermined social cohesion, peace and sustainable development in the region. This occurs despite the tremendous potential for

¹ IAW USAID Evaluation Policy – January 2011 and ADS 203.

economic growth related to the agriculture sector and extractive industry. Poverty has reached its worst at a rate of 66%, almost 10% greater than the national average. Violence reached a tragic peak in July 2013, officially claiming the lives of 217 victims, even estimated at more than 1,000 people by unofficial sources, with a number of families still looking for missing relatives.

In response to an increase in violence in the region— with specific focus on growing inter-tribal conflict experienced in July 2013 resulting in hundreds of known deaths— USAID partner Search for Common Ground (SFCG) conducted a rapid conflict analysis in September 2013. The investigation found that the conflict involves all social strata of the region, is driven by perceived economic deprivation based on identity, and is tied to the lack of a credible mechanism for dialogue between communities to prevent atrocities and promote reconciliation.²

DESCRIPTION OF CCF-FUNDED INITIATIVE

To address the recommendations of the aforementioned conflict analysis, USAID Guinea proposed a \$1.75 Million, 18-Month intervention to intensify and explicitly execute “Inside-Out Peace Building” activities directly aimed at addressing common complex identities. Building upon SFCG’s experience while implementing the nationally-focused DCHA CMM-funded “On est Ensemble! – Supporting Reconciliation and National Unity in Guinea” (Phase 1), USAID geographically and thematically modified the activity into a new phase of implementation (Phase 2) – “Rebuilding Together: Community-driven Reconciliation and Enhanced Communication in Guinea Forestière” – by supporting three additional objectives (two CCF, one GHP) specifically designed to respond to the growing crises in the Forest Region. Focused on bringing contentious parties into dialogue under the theme of prosperity and peace, the expectation is that belligerent groups determine specific cross-cutting themes to identify common values. Although peace and security will remain the top priority of the project, it will also focus on themes that impact the short and long-term development needs of the communities.

Phase 1 wrap-up of originally funded CMM objectives:

1. To support the Office of the National Mediator (ONM) in its efforts to foster national reconciliation and collaborative conflict resolution.
2. To increase the knowledge of youth and women-led networks in conflict management techniques, human rights and their civic responsibilities.

² “Conflict Analysis Report: Guinée Forestière.” Search for Common Ground, Guinea. September 2013. <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/situation-analysis-guinee-forestiere.pdf>

3. To promote public attitudes favoring tolerance, reconciliation, and non-violent conflict resolution.

Phase 2 implementation of new CCF/GHP objectives:

4. Forge a common identity to facilitate constructive conflict management and prevent atrocities in N'Zerekore and the surrounding areas. (CCF)
5. Use peacebuilding dialogue to promote community solidarity centered on potential economic gains related to the extractive industry and other economic opportunities in N'Zerekore. (CCF)
6. Contribute to national unity by using media to promote an inclusive and participatory dialog on health issues. (GHP)

FINDINGS

Strategic Level Analysis

Question 1. To what extent have CCF programs supported initial assumptions and theory of change as identified in the original funding request?

The initiative ToC as outlined by USAID/Guinea in their original funding proposal:

If key actors and/or enough individuals on all sides of the conflict discover shared values and multifaceted complex identities, including constructive in-group self-esteem, then inclusive broader "value identities" that unite groups will form and multiple aspects of identity that provide cross-cutting ties will become salient, providing a basis for constructive conflict engagement together and reducing intergroup conflict.

Finding: This analysis found that the ToC was consistently understood, articulated, and adopted by each level of stakeholder from senior government officials, implementing partners, and sub-grantees, to community level beneficiaries. There were no discernable gaps in understanding the strategic and operational purpose of the intervention and how activities logically supported a mutual outcome of reducing community conflict. Using significant dialog and analysis with a broad range of potential stakeholders, the Mission clearly and effectively designed a ToC and program which garnered universal acceptance. To support this internalization, SFCG has done a commendable job of information dissemination, training, relationship building, and sensitizing partners and beneficiaries in this area as evinced during interviews. A senior elder or sage of the K'pele tribe: "If we can support the forging of a common identity while providing tools for dialog, conflicts can be mitigated, peace built, and the community more resistant to disagreement." A sub-grantee noted that

“if communication skills and a platform to strengthen top-to-bottom and inter-community relationships are built, this social cohesion will lead to peace and stability.”

Finding: Stakeholders recognized the value of SFCG interventions as supporting the ToC and desired outcomes of the initiative.

Representative of a broad array of partners and beneficiaries, “the program’s activities are building common identify and community solidarity via radio programming, community dialog interventions, mediation training, inter-community entrepreneurial training, etc. which will lead to greater social cohesion and stability in the Forestière.”

USAID is engaging our community at one of its most difficult times. With inter-tribal conflict and mistrust of government scaring off organizations willing to address this dynamic, you have come to help!”

-- Multilevel Peace Consultation Platform Member

Although early and anecdotal, there were testimonials during beneficiary interviews which illuminated positive early impacts of the inventions on building community cohesion. In Lola, one CSO leader indicated that as a result of SFCG restitution training, “I was able to use the techniques learned to resolve a long-standing dispute between (ethnically-aligned) moto-taxi companies and conduct a solidarity event. Now the companies have developed communication protocols and operate peacefully without conflict.” In a dispute over land use, a Lola-based local CSO was able to settle a dispute with a land-lord allowing the organization to operate. SFCG was also credited by another beneficiary in “providing the skills necessary to sensitize a reluctant-community to the Ebola virus and preventative measures – an activity not able to be achieved by the government or health officials due to deep mistrust.” With more funding, the Mission would seek to replicate these outcomes outside of Guinea Forestière.

There were some interesting developments regarding the underlying assumptions of the program. Specifically, several stakeholders noted that “development cannot occur without stability.” This was a common theme and broadly accepted. From this broad assumption, however, there were three underlying assumptions of the SFCG approach which repeated themselves throughout the MPR – the role of economic opportunities in creating stability, the use of local CSOs as the prime mechanism to deliver programming, and the effects of the Ebola epidemic:

- It was commonly asserted that short-term social cohesion and peacebuilding activities alone will not bring stability, but must be accompanied by longer-term economic opportunities. Simultaneously,

most recognized that without addressing the underlying identity and social cohesion issues and the construct of community linkages, no amount of economic opportunities will resolve conflict. To paraphrase a community beneficiary, “linkages are more important than jobs in the short term.” Question to consider: to what extent does this notion or approach gain traction within the overall Ebola response?

- Several stakeholders questioned the use of local CSOs as the sole delivery mechanism for many of the program activities. SFCG, in their program design, assumed that the most effective way to deliver community-based interventions was through local CSOs. To this end, 30 CSOs were selected in the targeted geographical treatment areas. During interviews, key stakeholders suggested that informal tribal structures and leaders may be better suited to implement activities versus CSOs. “Peacebuilding is not the realm of the NGOs, but the purview of traditional structures,” noted one community elder. “Elders are the most powerful and influential in the community and serve as the best platform for solving problems.”³
- Ebola epidemic: Given the hypersensitivity in the US, the team was predisposed to believe the virus would be THE topic of discussion when meeting with partners and beneficiaries. This did not come to fruition. During consultations with non-Ebola related stakeholders, the topic had to be overtly raised by the review team. Typical responses characterized Ebola as a threat to social cohesion and “yet another issue the community must deal with” but did not specifically identify Ebola as a source of conflict in and of itself. “Ebola threatens the social fabric, but so do many other issues.”

Other assumptions in the conflict analysis and CCF funding application were also evinced through documentation of extensive interviews with stakeholders including:

- The need to enable constructive youth and women’s engagement as a critical link to successful community cohesion through implementing multi-ethnic projects to build peace through common interests.
- A firm mistrust of local populations toward the state apparatus.

*“Ebola was created by the President and white people to rid the Forestière of its people and steal our abundant mining resources”
--Common myth*

³ This elder did acknowledge the value of NGOs, however, observing that they provide important services to community members without discrimination. His larger point wasn’t about the exclusion of NGOs in the project, but the inclusion of elders; he wanted to remind the team that the elders of Dorota were comprised of [men] with diverse skills from experience in business, NGOs, academia, and government.

- Clear manipulation of rural communities confirming the need for a decentralized intervention, pervasive use of rumors.
- Ethnic and religious divisions exacerbated and manufactured for political and economic gain (elections, land tenure, etc.).

Question 2. Describe how political and contextual changes since the launch of the CCF-funded programs resulted in any changes in overall strategy, approach (Theory of Change or ToC) or activities.

After technical delays, the program activities under Phase 2 were initiated by SFCG in September 2014. Despite the emergence of programmatic threats during early project implementation, specifically from Ebola, it was the finding of this review and opinion widely held by stakeholders that the intervention ToC remains relevant and unchanged.

Context change – Ebola Epidemic:

- The Ebola epidemic was perceived as a significant intervening operational variable but not a factor requiring alteration of the program’s basic logic. To the contrary, the Ebola crisis was widely viewed as an additional, temporary shock to the community providing “short-term challenges” which hold the region back from reaching its potential in mining, timber, agriculture, and hydropower. Ebola is an “interruption to the momentum of peace-building and social cohesion” but not a fundamental source of instability in and of itself. “Ebola will pass. We need to stay focused on the longer-term, more persistent sources of conflict including land rights, economic opportunities” noted one prominent official. “Ebola is an aberration.” Especially telling was that at a USAID-funded public forum⁴ with MPs on the budget for the region, only 1 of 13 questions even touched on Ebola, but many questions centered on questions of accountability and a desire to ‘see’ real results from decentralization process.
- No planned intervention was conceptually changed nor structural alterations made as a result of Ebola. Alternatively, SFCG incorporated Ebola sensitization themes in training and communication objectives, though the activities remained essentially unchanged. Ebola did provide several operational challenges which will be outlined in the next section.
- Ebola has negatively impacted Guinea Forestière highlighted by a substantial decline in cross-border trade, diminished collection of tax revenues to provide public services, and elevated stigmatization and marginalization of ethnic groups. To illustrate this point, one mayor noted that his city collected only \$4

⁴ Public forum funded through the USAID “Support for Elections and Legislative Processes Cooperative Agreement implemented by the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

Million Guinean Francs in moto-taxi fees in 2014, down from \$74 Million in 2013. Moto-taxis are viewed by many as a primary mechanism spreading Ebola and predominately driven by Konianké. Another mayor complained that the current local marketplace represents only a “mere fraction” of the jurisdiction’s pre-Ebola transaction rate due to closed borders.

Other strategic observations:

- At present the communities are subject to significant political manipulation from outside the region. Womey incident underscores the complicated intersection of social/ethnic identity, lack of relationship/trust with government (two-way); and outside political manipulation in fueling violence and instability in the Forest region--in this case, Ebola was the catalyst/trigger, but similar patterns were observed around events of 2013. This underscores the critical nature of this intervention.
- The practice and principles of accountable, democratic governance do not appear ingrained in anyone's ways of operating at this stage, but there is definitely a desire on citizens' part for greater accountability and at least some genuine interest on the part of local authorities (formal and traditional) to have government be more effective in helping solve problems. One local GoG official stated, “it is government’s job to help people solve problems and to be an effective [fair] middleman when there are disputes between groups. “This may get muddied the higher up the hierarchy you go, but there appears to be space to address this gap at community level.
- CCF’s model of flexible, adaptive programming proved useful in this case in the face of a significant, unforeseen crisis in the region. When Ebola struck, the Mission was able to pivot its planned CCF intervention to focus on addressing the most pressing needs shifting away from support of IFES and direct elections-support at the national level to a more impactful, community-driven response. For SFCG, the CCF funding allowed effective incorporation of Ebola sensitization messaging through existing platforms to include radio shows, ToT workshops, and restitution sessions. One community reported that participants in the SFCG program had been involved in helping to address Ebola resistance in a nearby village by negotiating access for health care workers using newly obtained skills via SFCG.

“The project is unique in that it involves all stakeholders party to the existing and emerging conflict”
- GoG Official

Question 3. How do CCF-funded programs provide synergy with initiatives undertaken by other donors and the Government of Guinea?

- SFCG field team has done a superb job quickly developing critical relationships with key community officials enabling more effective implementation of field-based program activities. These relationships have also assisted SFCG sensitize communities to urgent peace-building requirements and creating vertical linkages between local authorities and key local actors. The only deficient linkage seems to be between the regional and national levels – an area partially being addressed by SFCG in its work with the ONM in Conakry under CMM Objective 1. Perhaps a relevant discussion is whether or not that linkage is important and is it necessary for national actors to engage in local peace building? Should it be a priority for this program? During our interview at the US Embassy, the importance of this link was called into question.
- At the Conakry level due to the lack of comprehensive donor or implementer coordination mechanisms, OFDA instructed partners to begin substantive dialog through regular engagements. Led by OFDA partners Plan International and Catholic Relief Services, several meetings have been held. As of this report, we understand that SFCG, despite being invited, has not attended the event. This could not be confirmed with SFCG and will be followed up upon by the Mission.
- At the field level, there are no formal mechanisms for programmatic coordination beyond the GoG-led Ebola Coordination Unit where all local organizations meet daily to discuss interventions. That said, it was a fitting venue to informally network among relief and development agencies.
- In N’Zerekore, there are two organizations which engage in peacebuilding and social cohesion activities – SFCG and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) – in response to the same triggering event, the July 2013 uprising. Each conducted conflict assessments resulting in similar findings and activities underway in the Forestière. During our interviews in the field, it was evident that coordination between the programs was nascent and did not involve substantive coordination of beneficiaries, geographical scope, or themes. The Mission indicated it would follow-up on this situation.
- Both SFCG and UNICEF are engaging in community radio activities. In Yomou for example, SFCG is attempting to establish community radio where UNICEF is also making plans to do the same. Local authorities were reluctant to allow SFCG to operate for fear of losing the more powerful UNICEF station and possibly allowing for an independent voice during elections. Had SFCG and UNICEF coordinated their efforts prior to deployment of resources, duplication could have been avoided.
- Several stakeholders from influential GoG and tribal sources expressed support for moving forward with implementation of the “Pact on Non-Aggression” negotiated by representatives of the GoG to create more stability in the

Forestière. Although we were unable to see the final document, this is a potential entry point for SFCG to further solidify its relationship with the government and traditional leaders as a partner in peace and worth promoting in existing outreach and radio programming.

- The convening power of the United States Embassy has demonstrated itself as a powerful tool in bringing belligerent parties together for the common cause of peace. Several stakeholders highlighted this point and appreciated the efforts of the US Ambassador to mediate and engage in the Forestière. “The United States represents a credible, independent force for good in our region” noted one tribal elder.

“SFCG has added a new dimension to peacebuilding in the Forestière. Their activities are providing real results and concrete impacts in conflict affected communities.”
- UN Official

Program Level Analysis

Question 4. From conception to initiation, describe program implementation including any institutional successes and challenges.

SFCG has established itself as neutral to the conflict dynamic giving it a clear operational advantage in pulling belligerent parties together to achieve programmatic objectives. Initiating with CMM funds on a national scale for Phase 1, SFCG scoped peace-building activities to neighboring communities honing techniques prior to focusing these efforts in the Forestière with CCF resources. This field experience, combined with the convening power of SFCG aided by USAID and active US Ambassador, has been a real asset in bridging several community fissures. This has garnered some early results for CCF. As previously mentioned, SFCG training and subsequent interventions led by beneficiary organizations has quelled several long-standing disputes.

From a technical perspective, several unanticipated environmental challenges impact the ability of SFCG to deliver on program objectives in a timely manner:

- **Radio messaging:** In places where the community radio was functioning, beneficiaries were quick to identify SFCG radio programs and describe associated peace and reconciliation messages. However, beneficiaries indicated a lack of government support and/or coordination with UNICEF in Yomou to operate local radio. Persistent issues with fuel and maintenance keeps community radio in N’Zerekore and Macenta off the air. Weather-related events took down the tower in Gueckedou. To address these challenges, SFCG has been

providing radio receivers which can play messages stored on memory-chips for those targeted communities not able to receive radio signal.

- Community gatherings: Early in program implementation, the Ebola crisis was cited as cause for delay in implementing several community activities and trainings. There was a reluctance to gather large groups for fear of transmission, though this obstacle seems to have subsided.
- Recruiting: Attracting staff to work for SFCG in N'Zerekore has been hampered by the lack of modern services in the community and fear of Ebola. These reasons were cited as the rationale for the office's attempts to recruit an M/E expert from outside the region. Local efforts to source an M/E expert have not borne fruit.

Finding. In terms of SFCG structure, resourcing, and management is very much centralized in Conakry, resting firmly with the Country Director. The Conakry team totals a reported 28 staffers including senior management, technical officers, and supporters (drivers, etc.) versus 5-6 in N'Zerekore. We also perceived that the preponderance of resources have been centered in Conakry, which could explain why we perpetually heard from N'Zerekore SFCG field officers that inadequate resources were available for ToT trainees to conduct more training in additional communities. Another is the perceived centralization of control over budget and program matters from SFCG Conakry. According to our interviews, the N'Zerekore field director has not seen a line item budget by activity and does not have independent/discretionary control over resources. The CD in Conakry said otherwise but the evidence seemed quite clear – all decisions are made by the CD from the capitol. Given that program activities in Conakry are limited and mostly N'Zerekore centered, it seems somewhat out of balance – though we were not able to see specifics on how resources were allocated. Should a field-based program effort be required to support such large overhead in the capitol? The Mission indicated it was aware of this potential disparity and would continue to work with the CD to improve the situation.

Finding. Typical SFCG community-based programming approaches problem-sets by constructing a bottom-up, demand-driven framework. For N'Zerekore, especially in light of the Ebola epidemic and pervasive mistrust of communities with the authorities, this approach had to be modified. SFCG began to include the authorities early where needed and sensitize both these authorities and Ebola-affected communities to allow for more productive prevention outreach.

Finding. Though not highlighted as a major point of contention, there was a sense among SFCG leadership that the relationship with AID should reflect a partnership in addressing conflict and social cohesion challenges and less of a “contractor for services” dialog. Although we believed the directives by USAID/Guinea to install an expatriate

director in the Forestière as constructive given the need to mitigate familial and tribal conflicts of interest, SFCG indicated some resentment toward AID and expressed that they did not feel fully trusted/respected as a partner.

Question 5. To what extent have program design and activities provided for gender equality? How are WPS objectives integrated in the program?

Despite challenges, SFCG has been proactive in working to create gender balance in key activities, to address issues of masculinity that affect social cohesion and conflict dynamics, and to promote women's role in building social cohesion in the target communities. The emergence of Ebola and survivors of Ebola as a new stakeholder group since the initial project design presents opportunities to use the project's training and community outreach activities to address stigmatization and other challenges confronting this vulnerable group.

Finding. SFCG described women's participation as fundamental to the ToC for the program, which came through more clearly in conversation with the country director and project staff than in the project proposal and initial quarterly reporting.

- Though SFCG does not have a formal gender policy, the Washington and field offices shared internal guidance on the organization's approach to Women, Peace, and Security; elements of this guidance are apparent in how the program staff describe both the program's ToC, the selection of partner/beneficiary organizations, and in the implementation of program activities.
- The country director described women's constructive engagement as a necessary condition for achieving social cohesion ("cannot have social cohesion if women are not involved"), noting their access to information about recent events and conflict dynamics in communities and considerable influence in families, which can be used either to mitigate or exacerbate tensions.

Male authorities the team met with in each prefecture echoed this sentiment, acknowledging without prompting that women are important stakeholders for building peace in communities and that they should be engaged in project activities.

- Services women provide without remuneration or support from the government such as trash collection and community-clean-up were cited as valuable contributions, as were women's small-scale income generating activities such as gardening, par-boiling of rice, and soap-making, which help keep poor male and female-headed households afloat in the face of high unemployment and the absence of a state-supported social safety net.
- However, while authorities were quick to highlight the need for donor support of women's associations, there was not a clear acknowledgment that the

government should/could play a role in supporting women's activities or providing similar services to the community through a reconsideration of budget priorities, for example.

- A USAID-supported budget forum with MPs observed by the team included commentary from local women about the disingenuous nature of politicians' courting of women's votes around elections, but failing to follow through on meaningful support for their rights and priorities; they also accused politicians of perpetuating harmful traditional practices such as Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) in order to mobilize votes by signaling to communities and perpetrators (including women) that they are safe from prosecution/crack-downs.

Sub-question 1: What does the gender integration approach involve? Describe how vulnerable populations and issues of social equality have been addressed? Lessons learned, best practices?

Field staff noted clear, consistent communication from the country director about the importance of gender integration in programming and, despite some challenges, the team has engaged proactively to support gender balance in program activities.

Notably, SFCG engagement includes thoughtful analysis of how to enhance both male and female participation in activities and work to secure the participation of males and females with clear leadership and other relevant skills ("we don't want to just fill chairs with women, but identify women who are capable leaders in their communities").

- For example, initially the peace consultation committee that functions as an advisory body to help SFCG vet partner organizations and monitor emergent conflict issues was slated to have 12 members. When initial nominees put forward by the authorities were all male, SFCG responded flexibly by expanding the size of the committee and issuing more explicit guidance about expectations for gender balance; in this way, gender balance was enhanced (committee now has 10 men and 10 women) without creating offense by revoking previous invitations.
- Another challenge the project has encountered is encouraging communication between male youth and male elders (both important stakeholders in the program); while young women and older women were more likely to engage in open dialogue, SFCG has in some cases found it necessary to work with male youth and male elders separately to build skills and confidence before following up with joint activities.
- In all focus groups/meetings the team had with project beneficiaries, males and females often organized themselves in separate groups, but both groups actively shared perspectives about the program and issues in their communities;

additionally, theater activities and restitution sessions observed by the team reflected efforts to have both males and females serve in leadership roles such as lead actors and training facilitators.

Finding/Challenge: SFCG office in N'Zerekore consists of all male staff and the chief of party was quick to note that they view this as a concern and have been working actively to recruit female staff. In addition to the impact of Ebola, which is making recruitment difficult overall, they stated that many qualified women are hesitant to take positions outside of Conakry. The team understands these challenges, which are compounded by the difficulty of needing to recruit staff who ideally have command of both French and one or more other languages prevalent in the Forestière Region.

Sub-question 2: Areas where gender inequality is of greatest concern, as well as successful examples of the promotion of gender equality and female empowerment?

While outside the direct scope of the CCF program, meetings with local human rights NGOs and OHCHR provided context about a wide-range of serious human rights issues affecting the well-being of women in the Forestière region and their ability to contribute fully to social, political, and economic development in their communities. These issues include but are not limited to: sexual violence, domestic violence, female genital mutilation/cutting, unregistered marriages, and issues related to women's land and property rights. Despite the fact that legal prohibitions and/or formal guarantees of equality exist for many of these issues in Guinea, in practice such legal frameworks are very poorly enforced and services for survivors of violence or those seeking legal assistance/redress are extremely limited (e.g. no shelters for GBV survivors in the administrative region). The nature of these issues, including their embedded-ness in local economies, cultural identity, and local and national politics, suggests the need for sensitive, tailored interventions conducted with/through/by local organizations with a nuanced understanding of the Forest region and the variation within and across its communities.

Environmental Analysis

Question 6. To what extent have steps been taken to meet mandatory 22 CFR 216 environmental compliance requirements (ADS 204) during project design and implementation?

- Programming implemented with CCF funding received a categorical exclusion per 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i), as activities primarily consist of training, technical assistance, and dialogue activities.
- SFCG field staff stated that they did not have an office policy on environmental compliance or issues, but that they were familiar with ADS 204 (had on file) and

had experience with UN environmental safeguards/requirements through implementation of a WASH project with UNICEF.

- In some cases, the SFCG program is providing limited technical assistance and materials to support small-scale income generation activities its community association partners are engaged in such as gardening and soap-making. SFCG and the mission should ensure that these activities are conducted with appropriate consideration for the protection of beneficiaries (e.g. gloves and eye protection for those making soap) and the mitigation of possible negative environmental impacts (e.g. palm oil processing) consistent with 22 CFR 216 and best practices.

Monitoring and Evaluation Analysis

Question 7. Describe current monitoring and evaluation systems in place for CCF-funded initiatives including their methodology, efficacy, challenges and coordination with implementing partners and its influence on program management.

SFCG uses traditional methods to conduct monitoring and evaluation (M/E) activities through regular site visits, data collection tools such as attendance sheets, pre- and post-training surveys, photos, anecdotal testimonials, etc. and a network of CSO beneficiaries. Data is collected and reported to USAID primarily through the use of a narrative quarterly report, program management plan (PMP) matrix, and the occasional “success story” provided by anecdotal field testimonials. SFCG manages these operations from Conakry with one dedicated M/E officer.

Some observations:

- In general, the SFCG M/E systems in place may not adequately represent an accurate picture of programmatic activities, their outcomes, and successes or lessons learned from the intervention. It was also not clearly understood how SFCG synthesizes data to inform where trainings will take place, who the appropriate actors are, and which interventions are most appropriate given the decentralized nature of the operational environment. Mission indicated they would continue to work with SFCG on these challenges.
- As of this report, the Conakry-based M/E specialist has only visited the field – the nexus of program implementation – once to conduct stakeholder mapping and has not provided systematic training to field officers on data collection and reporting. This clearly impacts the quality and consistency of quarterly reporting and subsequent PMP data collection. Alternatively, the SFCG CD for Guinea visits the field once a month, while field staff seldom visit the Conakry-based headquarters.

- Individuals from the 30 participating CSOs trained in dispute resolution and expected to further disseminate in their communities have not been trained in M/E operations, specifically data collection. This would make it difficult to gauge the efficacy of the ToT's in terms of populations served, geographic coverage, or overall impact.
- The SFCG PMP has some gaps which would hinder USAID from adequately assessing program performance. According to SFCG, this PMP template was provided to them by USAID and SFCG seemed to be operating under the assumption that they were expected to use it as received without adaptation.
 - The source of data provided for the PMP is not included in the matrix for any of the indicators.
 - Several indicators are not reported and are likely to remain so given the great cost and effort required to collect the data. These include “% of radio listeners per month”, “% TV Viewers who watched at least one hour of program”
 - Results for youth and women, critical in their importance to program success, are not clearly disaggregated.
 - Indicator targets should be reviewed regularly for their relevance and applicability as effective measures of performance.
- As reported by SFCG, USAID has not provided systematic M/E training to SFCG M/E officer or staff, but communicates with the partner when there are shortcomings or on an ad hoc basis when specific needs arise. The Mission agreed that there is a need to reinforce capacity of IPs, not only SFCG in M&E operations. The Mission is currently recruiting an M&E Specialist to address this gap.
- USAID/AFR Desk Officer for Guinea in Washington indicated that they are not receiving SFCG Quarterly reports on “Building Together,” impacting AFR Bureau’s ability to report results or represent the initiative to stakeholders inside and outside the regional bureau. The desk officer indicated that she is “unaware of the activities and efforts of SFCG’s initiative.”

“Guinea is a ‘failed state’ and cannot provide for the security and wellbeing of its people”
 - GoG Official

CONCLUSIONS

This review, looking at central strategic, programmatic, and compliance priorities of the DCHA Bureau, found a program largely well- designed to support the originally proposed Theory of Change (ToC). The underlying assumptions of the treatment

strategy appear broadly accepted by a wide range of stakeholders – specifically central role of youth and women as a critical link to building social cohesion, a deep mistrust of local populations toward the state apparatus, manipulation of rural communities through misinformation and rumors, and ethnic and religious divisions exacerbated and manufactured for political and economic gain. Ebola as an intervening variable was viewed as a stressor to the community weakening social cohesion but not in-and-of itself a root cause of conflict. Inter-communal conflicts over resource allocations and the lack of effective dialog platforms and mis-information were frequently cited as the root cause. As noted by tribal elders, linkages between the communities and the authorities were more critical than economic opportunities. “Even if everyone has a job, there will still be conflict unless the root causes of the conflicts are addressed.”

Activities, while delayed due to structural and conditional obstacles, were largely implemented on time and flexible to intervening variables in the operational environment. Compliance issues, specifically gender and environmental considerations, were addressed with specific recommendations for revisiting the IEE outlined in the recommendations section of this report. Much of the issues faced by SFCG are rooted in their structure and resource allocation. Evidence suggests that a Conakry-based and driven program leaves the field perhaps under-resourced and ill-equipped or empowered to adapt to changing environmental conditions. This is particularly true in monitoring and evaluation operations emphasizing the quality of reporting to USAID, the systematic collection of data, and how such data can quickly translate into operational adjustments.

One important item the team learned from this review: future programming must include the building of governance capabilities, specifically the relationships between authorities and their communities. If the GoG is to support community resilience to future shocks and provide a meaningful response, it must have their mutual trust. This was evinced by the recent Ebola epidemic and efforts by authorities and international assistance organizations and local partners to engage “resistant” communities.

LESSONS LEARNED & BEST PRACTICES

Best Practice: As part of its program design, SFCG established the Multilevel Peace Consultation Platform to act as an early-warning mechanism to identify, discuss, and respond to potential triggers of conflict in the operational environment. The platform (10 Male, 10 Female) is composed of representatives of local authorities, members of civil society, influential leaders (elders from different ethnic and geographic communities, religious authorities, and the security forces), representatives of local youth and women’s associations, mining companies, and other key economic actors in

the region. Meeting monthly, this committee has provided sage-like advice to the project considering new or emerging strategies to educate the public on Ebola, new potential tools for project implementation, etc. To date, the group has provided SFCCG critical tips for program implementation and a useful platform to address inter-community issues both on the vertical and horizontal axes.

Lesson Learned: Conducting and directing a region-specific program from the capitol of Conakry, or any capitol-city for that matter, can be an unnecessary draw on financial resources and management systems. It was observed by the review team that the heavy use of resources and control of programming in N'Zerekore from Conakry may negatively impact program consistency and efficacy. It also does not lend itself to building local capacity in terms of internal controls and partner/beneficiary capabilities. DCHA/PPM had a similar situation in Nepal where the mission effectively stipulated that the IP place the CoP and all program functions at a field location site, not the capitol.

Lesson Learned: Be proactive in asking for the nomination of female representatives for project activities. If there is an expectation of gender balance, ask for this explicitly and provide guidance or criteria that can help nominators identify and select appropriate male and female representatives. If initial expectations for gender balance are not met and this is fundamental to your theory of change, remain flexible to adapt program activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategic

For USAID Washington/Guinea: There is a need to build horizontal linkages between different social groups (e.g., Kpele and Konianké) and vertical linkages between people and local government to foster a sense of common identity, purpose and shared interests. Without this foundation, its hard to see how the next crisis can be weathered any more effectively than this one, whether it's health crisis, election-related issues, etc. SFCCG program is one angle to get at this, but by no means the only one. Thinking about how good governance and social cohesion can be integrated within sector programming like health, food security, economic strengthening that are linked to Ebola recovery could help on a few fronts: 1) focusing on meeting acute needs of population; and 2) building in some structures necessary for sustainability; 3) increasing public trust in and accountability of government. Per the CDCS, the Mission could do more to mandate multi-sectoral activities explicitly designed to address governance.

For USAID Washington/Guinea: In the future, USAID should consider only signing agreements which place the “center of gravity” for management of programming squarely in the region treated. As noted in above under “best practices”, working in the community served allows the intervention more flexibility and capability to manage issues and resources to greater efficacy.

For USAID/Washington: When planning MPRs, there were a few observations which could strengthen future efforts. First, USAID/Washington should ensure that Missions understand the critical need for the MPR and clearly receive “buy-in” at the onset of the award. Planning should start immediately and an agreed-upon time frame providing the most optimal “decision-point” for a meaningful review. These were two key factors leading to the success of the MPR for Guinea – especially the field portion. USAID/Washington should also stress and stipulate that personnel and resources should be considered obligatory by OUs for this activity when making the award.

For SFCG: Given the lack of a formal, government-led mechanism at the national level to coordinate the activities of relief organizations, SFCG should participate in the Plan International/CRS led contact group in Conakry. We understood at report time that SFCG had been invited but has yet to attend this OFDA partner inspired coordination.

For SFCG: Given the broad acceptance of the “Pact” between tribal groups organized by an initiative of President Conde, perhaps SFCG should consider promoting its existence and employment through radio programming and community consultations. This could be a great opportunity to solidify SFCG’s partnership and demonstrate a commitment to building stronger vertical relationships.

For SFCG and USAID/Guinea: In N’Zerekore, there are two organizations which engage in peacebuilding and social cohesion activities – SFCG and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). SFCG should pro-actively reach out to DRC in N’Zerekore (their only office in Guinea) to share thematic and geographical content to ensure maximum impact on the community and avoid duplication. Simply sharing work-plans, communities served and partners engaged would be a great start. USAID/Guinea should reach out and engage DRC at the regional level (Office in Abidjan, no office Conakry, only in N’Zerekore) and their primary donors for social cohesion programming -- herein the European Union’s ECHO, and EU Stability Fund. It should also be stressed that DRC is in the final stages of preparing another conflict analysis for the region which should be available in the coming months. We would urge SFCG and USAID to obtain a copy of their 2013 analysis and the new product.

Program

For SFCG and USAID/Guinea: There is a need for greater programmatic coordination with UNICEF regarding the placement of community radio stations. Although challenging across the region, the station in Yomou was particularly problematic for SFCG given the local authorities reluctance to “scare off” UNICEF’s investment in the community by establishing a SFCG station. Why can’t SFCG’s radio operate there as well? USAID/Guinea should consider using its convening authority to consult UNICEF and the GoG in Yomou to ensure that messaging is delivered via SFCG community radio. We understood that the Mission, with limited success, has been trying to improve coordination efforts related to the Ebola response – in particular around social mobilization efforts.

For SFCG: Participants in the consultative committee, training, and other activities are not paid to participate in project activities, though some limited resources are provided to participants to conduct their required restitution sessions; this issue was raised by several persons, including the committee’s chairman, and could be problematic for securing the participation of women and other vulnerable groups in the longer-term. It may be important to monitor whether participation declines over time and whether any such declines are related to barriers such as transport, childcare, or other demands on beneficiaries’ time. While the value of civic participation and working to build peace and stability for a better future for their communities is understandably the primary ‘reward’ for participants, the project may need to help offset certain ‘costs’ of participating to ensure equitable participation over time (e.g., transport subsidies, coordinating community childcare arrangements, scheduling events at times that don’t conflict with other key responsibilities).

For SFCG: The Multilevel Peace Consultation Platform indicated that in order to conduct effective outreach activities in support of the program, SFCG should consider providing minimal resources to support these efforts. This could come in the form of a modest per Diem or transportation to local sites.

For SFCG: It would be beneficial to provide “certificates of completion” to those attending trainings. During consultations, this topic was raised on several occasions. Given that this is a post-Soviet-style socialist regime where certificates, stamps and other confirmations of capability are necessary, this is one small recognition that could be easily undertaken.

Women, Peace and Security

For USAID Guinea: Consider SFCG program linkages with CEPPS and potential future governance and rule of law/human rights programming that may offer an opportunity:

- 1) to increase women’s influence in the construction and funding of budget priorities,

especially at the local level and 2) address serious human rights issues affecting women's and girls' ability to thrive (e.g. violence against women and girls, unregistered marriages, land rights).

For SFCG: Ebola survivors are an important constituency facing stigmatization and exclusion in the communities upon return from Ebola Treatment Units (ETUs). Given SFCG's integration of Ebola themes in programming, primarily focused on prevention and steps for treatment, it would be a natural evolution of this messaging to include integration of Ebola survivors back into the social structures. Given these survivors are part of the social fabric and healthy, messaging could sensitize the community to these facts.

For SFCG: SFCG has been operating in the Forestière region since 2006 and could perhaps draw on its alumni network of trainees in the area to boost recruitment of female project staff, or consult with local women's organizations to identify additional candidate pools that may have been overlooked. SFCG may also want to ask former candidates or employees whether there are any significant issues such as safety concerns, concerns about housing, etc. that could be addressed/mitigated by the organization.

Environmental Compliances

For USAID/Guinea: Need to revisit and update the project IEE. The current IEE uses a "Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE)" which assumed no environmental impact. Given small scale soap-making and other activities under Objective 5 – Economics for Peace, the IEE needs to be updated.

For USAID/Guinea: A training for IPs on USAID Environmental Policy and adaptation into programming could be a useful capacity building measure. SFCG did not have an environmental officer or understanding of necessary steps to mitigate impacts in programming.

Monitoring and Evaluation

For USAID/Guinea: Given gaps in understanding of USAID's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and field capacities observed during the MPR, it would be useful for USAID/Guinea to consider strengthening the M/E operations of its implementing partners. PPL has several specialists available to provide training which can be very useful for Mission data collection operations. The addition of an M/E officer, which the Mission is currently recruiting, will be a great step forward to raise awareness and capacity in this area.

For USAID/Guinea: To better represent the program to internal and external stakeholders of USAID/AF, quarterly reports of the “Building Together” initiative should be regularly distributed to this key regional bureau’s desk officer and other stakeholders as appropriate. Reports could also be useful to the Ebola Secretariat to raise visibility of the governance and social cohesion issues to this important body.

For SFCG: The Monitoring and Evaluation systems in place could be strengthened by considering the following interventions:

- The M/E Officer in Conakry has only visited the N’Zerekore office once, it would be beneficial for a regular regime of frequent field visits to conduct field training for staff and beneficiaries, synchronize and verify data collections systems at all levels of intervention, and improve the quality and impact of program reporting.
- Prioritize the hiring of a trained M/E specialist for the N’Zerekore field office dedicated to improving data collection, focused on independently monitoring field activities, and able to provide beneficiary training.
- Revise and reformat the PMP by eliminating or re-characterizing indicators which cannot be reasonably tracked or data collected. The source of the data for each indicator should also be included and disaggregating more clearly for gender and youth where appropriate.

Annex 1: MPR Scope of Work

I. Purpose and Overview

All Complex Crises Fund (CCF) supported initiatives are required to perform a Mid-Cycle Portfolio Review (MPR), in which a team assembled by the CCF Secretariat considers program performance within the context of the dynamic operational environment while taking into consideration issues that may shape the future direction of these initiatives. The Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance Office of Program, Policy, and Management (DCHA/PPM) will conduct an MPR for its CCF-funded activities for Guinea in February 2015. The purpose of the MPR is three fold:

- 1) Examine current activities as related to the initial proposed Theory of Change (ToC) at the strategic and programmatic levels considering emerging issues, constraints, assumptions, and other relevant events to foster creativity and encourage flexibility to re-direct activities
- 2) Support USAID Forward⁵ institutional learning objectives by affording the CCF Secretariat immediate access to best practices and lessons learned which might then be immediately applied across the broader CCF global portfolio and agency; and,
- 3) Strengthen the position of the CCF Secretariat to represent, advocate and support the fund's initiatives to a broader audience of internal and external stakeholders.

This SOW outlines some initial research questions addressing strategic and program levels, environmental compliance, and monitoring and evaluation operations. Also included is a notional, flexible timetable for the process.

II. Contextual Background

Guinea has become a relatively stable country following its first democratic presidential election in 2010. However, it has been shaken by the shockwaves originating from its Forest Region – the far southeast of the country and center of the highly unstable, conflict-ridden area bordering Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, which threatens broader national stability. At about 900 km away from the capital, Conakry, the Forest Region has suffered the consequences of a convoluted series of neighboring civil wars over the past 20 years and has naturally played host to thousands of returnees, many of whom have lived out for generations. Since then, recurrent inter-communal conflicts around cultural intolerance, economic control and land ownership, friction between two main population groups, the Kpèlè and the Konianké, and recently the Ebola outbreak have undermined social cohesion, peace and sustainable development in the region. This occurs despite the tremendous potential for economic growth related to the agriculture sector and extractive industry. Poverty has reached its worst at a rate of 66%, almost 10% greater than the national average. Violence reached a tragic peak in July 2013, officially claiming the lives of 217 victims, even estimated at more than 1,000 people by unofficial sources, with number of families still looking for missing relatives.

In December 2013, USAID Guinea proposed a \$1.75 Million intervention to intensify and explicitly execute “Inside-Out Peace Building” activities directly aimed at addressing common complex identities following recommendations of a USAID-supported rapid conflict assessment. The initiative focuses on bringing contentious parties into dialogue under the theme of prosperity and peace. The expectation is that belligerent groups determine specific cross-cutting themes to identify common values. Although peace and security will remain the top priority of the project, it will also focus on themes that impact the short and long-term development needs of the communities.

ToC: If key actors and/or enough individuals on all sides of the conflict discover shared values and multifaceted complex identities, including constructive in-group self-esteem, then inclusive broader "value identities" that unite groups will form and multiple aspects of identity that provide cross-cutting ties will become salient, providing a basis for constructive conflict engagement together and reducing intergroup conflict.

Two overall objectives support the ToC:

- 1) Objective 1: Forge a common identity to facilitate constructive conflict engagement and prevent atrocities.

⁵ <http://www.usaid.gov/evaluation>

- 2) Objective 2: Use Peacebuilding dialogue to promote community solidarity centered on potential economic gains related to the extractive industry and other economic opportunities.

III. Methodology

The principle process methodology is a “snap-shot” peer review process that fosters a direct and constructive dialogue on the status of recent achievements, future challenges, and longer-term direction of CCF-funded activities. These Mid-Cycle Portfolio Reviews (MPR) intend to provide the Mission with a third-party analysis by a team experienced in complex crisis environments through analysis of CCF-funded activities at the program and strategic levels approximately mid-way through the lifecycle of the project. This process typically provides the country team with a timely perspective, feedback, and strategic recommendations for consideration to make any possible course adjustments to the project prior to the project’s end. The review also gives the CCF Secretariat the information necessary for making informed decisions regarding future resources, and allows the CCF Secretariat to be an effective advocate for the program to a variety of audiences.

While in Washington, the team will review documents shared and interview relevant stakeholders, including implementing partner staff, in-country staff, USG counterparts, and others involved with or aware of the CCF funded program. In the field and where feasible, the team will interview relevant government officials, other donor staff, implementing partners, grantees and beneficiaries and review field-based activities with key stakeholders with specific emphasis on normative evaluation questions outlined later in this statement of work. This iterative process will result in a final document and presentation of findings, conclusions, and recommendations.⁶

IV. Questions

The mid-term review will address the following key questions with the understanding that other issues may arise prompting a series of different questions that will better serve the fluid country context.

a. Strategic Analysis

1. To what extent have CCF programs supported initial assumptions and theory of change as identified in the original funding request?
2. Describe how political and contextual changes since the launch of the CCF-funded programs resulted in any changes in overall Theory of Change (ToC) or activities.

Illustrative Sub Questions:

- a. Describe the implications of emerging issues and their impact on program strategy, approach, and implementation with a view toward specific initiative timelines. (Ebola outbreak and Government intervention via Gendarmes)
- b. Are the program’s assumptions and objectives still valid given changes in the operating environment or do they need to be re-evaluated?
3. How do CCF-funded programs provide synergy with initiative undertaken by other donors and the Guinean Government?

b. Program Analysis

1. From conception to initiation, describe program implementation including any institutional successes and challenges.

Illustrative Sub Questions:

- b. Provide stakeholder and beneficiary views on the implementation.
- c. Describe any lessons learned and/or best practices identified since program start-up with regard to initial analysis, assumptions, and program design (target areas, actors, and issues)?
- d. What human, financial, and time resources are required (and why) in order to maximize program performance in the remaining months?
- e. Given security concerns and lack of direct interaction with at the field level.

c. Gender Analysis

1. To what extent have program design and activities provided for gender equity?

Illustrative Sub Questions:

- a. How is the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) implemented in the program? Identify lessons learned and/or best practices if any.
- b. What does the gender mainstreaming approach involve?

⁶ IAW USAID Evaluation Policy – January 2011 and ADS 203

- c. Identify the areas where gender inequality is of greatest concern as well as successful examples of gender equality and female empowerment.
- d. **Environmental Analysis**
 - 1. To what extent have steps been taken to meet mandatory 22 CFR 216 environmental compliance requirements (ADS 204) during project design and implementation?
- e. **M&E Analysis**
 - 1. Describe current monitoring and evaluation systems in place for the CCF-funded initiative including their methodology, efficacy, challenges and coordination with implementing partners/sub-grantees and its influence on program management.
 - Illustrative Sub Questions:
 - a. To what extent does USAID possess institutional capacity to monitor and evaluate activities?
 - b. Illuminate USAID/Guinea, IP, and sub-grantee documentation of program efficacy.
 - c. Describe mechanisms for learning and feedback from both internal USG and external sources (IPs) and how these lessons are incorporated into future programming.

V. Deliverables

The team's principal deliverable will be a written report, approximately ten to fifteen pages in length, identifying and analyzing key accomplishments, challenges, constraints and opportunities the program is contending along with findings and recommendations to help guide future activity. Prior to field mission conclusion, the team will meet with the USAID/Guinea to review the intended content of the written report. Upon return to USAID/Washington, the team will orally brief the DCHA/AA, the CCF Monitoring and Review Committee, the Africa Bureau/AA and interested staff on relevant actions, findings and recommendations.

VI. Team Composition

Lead/Facilitator: Mr. Michael Haines – DCHA/PPM
 Member: Ms. Amber Ussery – DCHA/PPM

VII. Anticipated Report Outline

- a. Executive Summary
- b. Purpose, Scope, and Methodology
- c. Political Background and Country Context
- d. Brief Description of CCF-funded Programs
- e. Findings
- f. Conclusions, Lessons Learned & Best Practices
- g. Recommendations
- h. Annexes

VIII. Schedule: Guinea MPR 2014

30 January 2015:	SOW Finalized
9-13 February 2015:	Desk Review, Interviews in DC
14-27 February 2015:	In-brief & consultations with USAID/Guinea, Implementing Partners, Sub-grantees, and beneficiaries (where appropriate)
2-13 March 2015:	Drafting of Final Report
16-20 March 2015:	Submit draft of Final Report to USAID/Guinea for review/comment
23-27 March 2015:	Submit final report to DCHA/PPM for review
30-31 March 2015:	Final team debriefs USAID/Washington, posting final report to the DOC

IV. Scheduling and Logistics

Team accommodation, transportation, and appropriate partner engagements will be coordinated by team facilitator and respective field and Washington-based operating units.

Complex Crises Fund: Guinea					
Program Performance Review					
Meeting List					
	Date	Location	Organization	Positions	Comment
1	2/5/2015	Washington, DC	SFCG	Senior Africa Program Officer, Guinea Desk Officer	Context briefing, SOW
2	2/10/2015	Washington, DC	USAID/Ebola Task Force	Ebola TF Director	Context Briefing, Overview
3	2/12/2015	Washington, DC	USAID/AF	Guinea Desk Officer	Context Briefing, Overview
4	2/16/2015	N'Zerekore	SFCG Field Office	CoP, Field Program Team	SOW, Context briefing
5	2/16/2015	N'Zerekore	SFCG Consultative Committee	SFCG CoP, Consultative Committee Members	SOW, Context briefing
6	2/17/2015	N'Zerekore	N'Zerekore Prefecture Ebola Coordination Team	N'Zerekore Ebola Coordination Team, CDC, Prefet	Partner Context Briefing
7	2/17/2015	N'Zerekore	N'Zerekore Prefet	SFCG CoP, N'Zerekore Prefet	Partner Context Briefing
8	2/17/2015	N'Zerekore	Guinea Forestière Governor	SFCG, Guinea Forestière Governor	Partner Context Briefing
9	2/17/2015	N'Zerekore	N'Zerekore City Mayor	SFCG, N'Zerekore Mayor	Partner Context Briefing
10	2/17/2015	N'Zerekore	N'Zerekore Prefecture Library	SFCG, Library Director and Staff	Community Context Briefing
11	2/17/2015	N'Zerekore	Rights for All NGO	SFCG, Rights for All NGO Office Staff	Community Context Briefing
12	2/17/2015	N'Zerekore	UN Joint Program	SFCG, UN Joint Program Coordinator	Partner Context Briefing
13	2/17/2015	N'Zerekore	UN Commission for Human Rights	SFCG, Director	Partner Context Briefing
14	2/17/2015	N'Zerekore	Danish Refugee Council	SFCG, Program Director, M/E Officer	Partner Context Briefing
15	2/18/2015	N'Zerekore	Kpele Community Leaders	SFCG, Kpele elders, Prefet	Beneficiary Context Briefing
16	2/18/2015	N'Zerekore	Konianké Community Leaders	SFCG, Konianké Community Leaders	Beneficiary Context Briefing
17	2/18/2015	N'Zerekore	Dorota Project Beneficiaries	SFCG, Dorota Project Beneficiaries	Beneficiary Context Briefing
18	2/18/2015	N'Zerekore	Nyen Project Beneficiaries	SFCG, Nyen Project Beneficiaries	Beneficiary Context Briefing

19	2/18/2015	N'Zerekore	FM Liberte	SFCG, FM Liberte	Partner Context Briefing
20	2/19/2015	Macenta	Macenta Government	SFCG, Macenta Prefet, Macenta City Mayor	Partner Context Briefing
21	2/19/2015	Macenta	Macenta Project Beneficiaries	SFCG, Macenta Project Beneficiaries	Partner Context Briefing
22	2/19/2015	Macenta	Mecenta Rural Radio	SFCG, Macenta Rural Radio	Partner Context Briefing
23	2/19/2015	Gueckedou	Gueckedou Government	SFCG, Gueckedou Prefet, Gueckedou City Mayor	Partner Context Briefing
24	2/19/2015	Gueckedou	Gueckedou Beneficiaries	SFCG, Gueckedou Beneficiaries	Beneficiary Context Briefing
25	2/20/2015	Gueckedou	Gueckedou Ebola Treatment Center	SFCG, MSF Gueckedou ETU Field Coordinator	Partner Context Briefing
26	2/20/2015	Koule	Koule Government	SFCG, Koule Sous Prefet, Koule Mayor	Partner Context Briefing
27	2/20/2015	Koule	Koule Beneficiaries	SFCG, Koule Beneficiaries (Women's Association)	Beneficiary Context Briefing
28	2/21/2015	Yomou	Yomou Government	SFCG, Yomou Prefet, Sous Prefet, Yomou City Mayor	Partner Context Briefing
29	2/21/2015	Yomou	Yomou Beneficiaries	SFCG, Yomou Beneficiaries	Beneficiary Context Briefing, Restitution training activity observation
30	2/21/2015	Yomou	Yomou Community Radio	SFCG, Yomou Radio Team	Beneficiary Context Briefing
31	2/21/2015	Ouenzou	Ouenzou Beneficiaries	SFCG, Ouenzou Beneficiaries	Beneficiary Context Briefing, Lunch and community gathering
32	2/21/2015	N'Zerekore	N'Zerekore Members of Parliament, Government	SFCG, NDI, N'Zerekore Government, Members of Parliament	Partner Context Briefing
33	2/22/2015	N'Zerekore	Rights for All NGO	SFCG, Rights for All NGO Office Staff	Partner Context Briefing
34	2/22/2015	N'Zerekore	Women and Child Protection NGO	SFCG, Women and Child Protection NGO	Partner Context Briefing
35	2/22/2015	N'Zerekore	N'Zerekore Beneficiaries	SFCG, N'Zerekore Beneficiaries	Beneficiary Context Briefing, Observation of Soap Production Training
36	2/22/2015	N'Zerekore	N'Zerekore Beneficiaries	SFCG, N'Zerekore Beneficiaries	Beneficiary Context Briefing, Observation of Street Theater Training
37	2/23/2014	Lola	Lola Government	SFCG, Lola Prefet, Secretary General, Lola City Mayor	Partner Context Briefing
38	2/23/2015	Lola	Lola Beneficiaries	SFCG, Lola Beneficiaries	Beneficiary Context Briefing

39	2/23/2015	N'Zerekore	Hope Medical Center	SFCG, Hope Medical Center Leadership and Staff	Context Briefing
40	2/24/2015	N'Zerekore	N'Zerekore Government	Sous Prefet	Outbriefing
41	2/24/2015	N'Zerekore	N'Zerekore Government	Governor	Outbriefing
42	2/24/2015	N'Zerekore	Ebola Survivors Association, PRIDE Guinea	Ebola Survivors	Context Briefing
43	2/24/2015	N'Zerekore	SFCG Field Office	SFCG CoP, Staff	Outbriefing
44	2/25/2015	Conakry	Ministry of Youth	SFCG, Secretary General, Leadership Team	Partner Context Briefing
45	2/25/2015	Conakry	Office of the Mediator	SFCG, Secretary General, Leadership Team	Partner Context Briefing
46	2/25/2015	Conakry	SFCG Country Team	SFCG Country Director, M/E Director	Partner Context Briefing
47	2/26/2015	Conakry	Conakry Beneficiaries	Conakry Beneficiaries	Beneficiary Context Briefing
48	2/26/2015	Conakry	SFCG Country Team	SFCG Country Director	Outbrief
49	2/26/2015	Conakry	Disaster Assistance Response Team	DART Members	Context Briefing, Outbrief
50	2/27/2015	Conakry	USAID/Guinea	Mission Director	Outbrief
51	2/27/2015	Conakry	US Embassy Guinea	Ambassador	Outbrief
52	2/28/2015	Conakry	Internews	Country Director	Context Briefing