1/27/2016

<u>VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL</u>

Subject: Request for Applications - Small Grants under Farmer-to-Farmer Special Program
            Support Project, Cooperative Agreement No. AIDOAA-13-00053

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed please find the Request for Applications (RFA) to implement a Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) Small Grant Project.

Each Small Grant will be issued as a Fixed Amount Award (FAA) by the Farmer-to-Farmer Special Program Support Project (SPSP) with the Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA) and will be limited to a maximum of $150,000 per grant over a period of no more than one year.

All funding is contingent upon the availability of funds. VEGA expects to award up to six (6) grants under this RFA, but reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. At least one small grant will be awarded to an MSO or MSI as a set-aside, provided a competitive application is received. VEGA also reserves the right to make additional award(s) under this RFA at a later date if funding becomes available and applications warrant.

Grant funds awarded under this RFA are intended for fielding and supporting volunteers only. Please feel free to share this announcement with other parties. Any questions concerning this RFA should be addressed via email to the VEGA Competition Manager at: **F2F@vegaalliance.org**

Absolutely no telephone calls will be accepted regarding this RFA.

Concept Papers, Technical Proposals and Grant Budgets should be submitted by e-mail as separate attachments, addressed to:
    Competition Manager
    Email Address: **F2F@vegaalliance.org**

Thank you for your consideration of this USAID initiative.

        Sincerely,

        Laura Alexander and Leia D'Amboise
        Competition Managers

Enclosure: Request for Applications

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Farmer-to-Farmer Special Program Support Project Small Grants Program

A USAID program established by
USAID Bureau for Food Security
Farmer-to-Farmer Program

Grant program Administered by:

Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA)
734 15th Street NW
11th Floor
Washington D.C., 20011
Email: F2F@vegaalliance.org

RFA No. 2016-1

Table of Contents:

I.   Funding Opportunity Description

1.   *Definitions, Roles and Acronyms*

Applicant or Eligible Applicant – U.S.-based organizations, educational facilities, training institutions, university researchers, research institutions, non-governmental organizations, independent for-profit firms, or contracting firms are eligible for small grants under this RFA. Current core (prime) implementers of the F2F program and VEGA F2F Program Development Projects (PDPs) are not eligible under this RFA. Current implementers of the VEGA F2F small grants are eligible for grants under this RFA. Implementing organizations that are sub-recipients to current core implementers are eligible for small grants and under this RFA. Implementing organizations that were small grantees or Program Development Project (PDP) implementers during the FY09-FY13 phase of the F2F program are eligible for small grants or PDPs under this RFA.

Automated Directive System (ADS) – The ADS details USAID policies, procedures, and regulations, which apply to all USAID funded assistance agreements and contracts. These documents are referenced in this RFA and apply where specified. They may be found on USAID's website: www.usaid.gov. USAID often issues policy changes or interim guidance pending ADS updating by means of Acquisition & Assistance Policy Directives (AAPDs). Where these documents pertain to assistance and subcontracting, via grants, they apply as well.

Leverage – Significant resource mobilization from sources other than USAID. In the case of public-private alliances, USAID seeks the mobilization of resources of other actors on a 1:1 or greater basis. Resources may include funds, in-kind contributions, and intellectual property. (ADS Chapters 200-203) For purposes of calculating the value of leveraged resources, volunteer time is valued at $470 per day.

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) – The U.S. Congress, through OMB Budget, controls all policies and procedures for grant-making by any of the U. S. Government agencies, including USAID. OMB Circulars are referenced in this manual and they apply wherever specified, specifically those found on USAID's web site, http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/omb.html. Legislation for USAID grants is online: http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_03/22cfr226_03.html.

Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) – The PEC will be convened by VEGA with membership consisting of three independent technical specialists and development experts. The PEC will review and evaluate applications using the Selection Criteria described in the RFA. Applications are chosen for further negotiations based on technical and cost considerations and on how well the described activities can be expected to achieve the results desired by USAID foreign assistance programs, as described on pages 4-6 of this RFA.

Recipient (VEGA) – The U.S.-based non-government organization which holds a cooperative agreement from the USAID Bureau for Food Security to support international agricultural volunteer programs and is responsible for managing subawards under F2F SPSP.

Request for Applications (RFA) – The document used by USAID for advertising competitive assistance programs. It is also the mechanism for satisfying the requirements for public notice of these programs. An RFA is issued when USAID intends to support a specific type of activity or methodology in support of strategic objectives. The RFA contains eligibility and qualification requirements, a general description of the program and range of activities, evaluation criteria, and other relevant information.

Sub-recipient – An organization awarded a F2F Special Program Support Project (SPSP) grant by VEGA.

Volunteer – An individual who provides technical assistance under a volunteer program, receiving no direct salary from the assignment.

2. *Application and Submission Information*

Date of Issuance: January 27, 2016

Questions on RFA due: 6 PM EST February 2, 2016

Due Date for Concept Papers: 6 PM EST February 18, 2016

Concept Papers Selected for Advancement to Full Application Phase: March 3, 2016

Due Date for Full Applications: 6 PM EST April 14, 2016

Note: Questions and applications must be sent via e-mail to F2F@vegaalliance.org

Note: Application documents sent by Fax will NOT be accepted. All technical questions must be submitted in writing via e-mail by the specified due date and will NOT be accepted by telephone or fax at any time.

VEGA, with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking applications from parties interested in a Farmer-to-Farmer Special Program Support Project (SPSP) Small Grant.

Competition under this RFA will be conducted in two phases:
- Phase I: Concept Paper
- Phase II: Full Application

Each applicant shall initially provide VEGA with a Concept Paper. **Only one Concept Paper per organization will be accepted.** Each Concept Paper shall be competitively evaluated against the pre-determined evaluation criteria. Applicants with the most technically qualified Concept Papers will be invited to submit Full Applications under this RFA. VEGA reserves the option to request that applicants who are not invited to submit Full Applications extend the period of validity of their Concept Papers and/or Full Applications by up to one year to facilitate consideration for later awards. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in a timely manner and provided written feedback.

VEGA expects to award up to six (6) small grants under this RFA, depending on the availability of funds and applications received. At least one small grant will be awarded as a set-aside to an MSO or MSI, provided a competitive application is received. Grants will be awarded only to qualified and responsible applicants that have the skills, institutional mandate, and experience necessary to implement the program within the terms set forth in this RFA. The value of each F2F small grant projects will be a maximum of $150,000 for the life of the grant award. Projects may be up to one year in duration, but shorter periods of performance are acceptable. Depending on the availability of funds from USAID, grant recipients will be eligible to apply for subsequent grants following successful completion of their projects.

Small grants will be made as Fixed Amount Awards (FAAs) using the USAID ADS 303.3.25 procedures. It is USAID's policy not to award profit under grants. However, all reasonable, allocable, and allowable direct expenses, which are related to Grant agreement activities and are in accordance with applicable U.S. Government cost standards (provided during negotiations with successful candidates), may be considered as a basis for determining the Fixed Amount for milestone completion under the agreement.

VEGA reserves the right not to make any awards under this RFA or to request to applicants to make an additional award(s) under this RFA at a later date up to one year after the closing date for applications, if funding becomes available and applications warrant. Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of VEGA or USAID, nor does it commit either entity to pay for costs incurred in the submission of an application. VEGA reserves the right to reject any and all applications, or to award a

grant without further discussion or negotiations if it is considered to be in the best interests of VEGA and USAID.

3. *Introduction*

The Farmer-to-Farmer Program was first authorized by the U.S. Congress in 1985 to provide for the transfer of knowledge and expertise from U.S. agricultural producers and businesses on a voluntary basis to middle-income countries and emerging democracies. The U.S. Congress authorizes the F2F program through the Farm Bill, designating it the "John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter F2F Program" in honor of one of the pilots killed September 11, 2001 and of former Congressman Bereuter, who initially sponsored the program. For more information on the worldwide Farmer-to-Farmer program, please see www. farmer-to-farmer.org.

Program evaluations have consistently found that the F2F programs provide high quality technical assistance services from volunteers. Over the years, the F2F Program has evolved, placing increased emphasis on economic impact and obtaining measurable results by concentrating volunteer assignments in specific geographical areas, commodity programs, and service sectors. New programs go beyond simply placing individual volunteers and focus rather on development of specific market chains for which overall impact can be evaluated. Programs build institutions and transfer technology and management expertise to link farmers with markets that exploit comparative advantages in production, processing, and marketing. Volunteers typically work with medium and small agro-enterprises, cooperatives, individual producers, technical agencies, universities, and financial institutions.

4. *Background*

As part of the current phase of the F2F Program, VEGA was awarded a Farmer-to-Farmer Special Program Support Project (F2F SPSP) to contribute to meeting overall F2F Program objectives. This SPSP involves awarding grants to qualified U.S.-based organizations to implement small scale F2F projects using voluntary U.S. technical assistance for agricultural development programs in developing countries and emerging democracies. This RFA is to solicit applications from organizations interested in participating in the implementation of a F2F Small Grant Project.

The F2F Program development objectives are shaped by a complex hierarchy of initiatives framing strategies, goals, and objectives for U.S. foreign assistance programs. Applicants are encouraged but not required to consult with USAID country missions and any F2F core and PDP implementers that are present in the countries that applicants are proposing to work in. It is helpful for applicants to demonstrate familiarity with USAID's goals and strategies for the country or countries that applicants are proposing to work in.

a) Feed the Future Initiative: is the U.S. government's global hunger and food security initiative. Each target FtF country develops a Multi-Year Strategy, which outlines coordinated, whole-of-government approaches to address food security that align in support of partner country priorities. Each of the 19 FtF focus countries has developed a multi-year strategy. More information is available at feedthefuture.gov.

b) US Foreign Assistance Framework (FAF). The FAF establishes an overarching goal "to help build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that respond to the needs of their people, reduce widespread poverty and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system." Five FAF Program Areas contribute to this goal: Peace and Stability; Governing justly and democratically; Investing in People; Economic Growth; and Humanitarian Assistance. F2F programs fall under the Economic Growth Objective in Program Area 4.5, "*Agriculture*", under Program Element 4.5.2 "*Agricultural Sector Productivity.*" This Program Element has seven Sub-Elements:

- 4.5.2.1 Research and Technology Dissemination;
- 4.5.2.2 Land and Water Management;
- 4.5.2.3 Rural and Agricultural Finance;
- 4.5.2.4 Agribusiness and Producer Organizations
- 4.5.2.5 Markets and Trade Capacity;
- 4.5.2.6 Emerging Agricultural Threats; and
- 4.5.2.7 Agricultural Livelihood Services and Safety Nets.

c) USAID Agricultural Strategy. In 2004, USAID identified agricultural development as a strategic priority for the Agency and prepared an Agricultural Strategy "Linking Producers to Markets." (See: http://www.ourfutureplanet.org/newsletters/resources/USAID%20Agriculture%20Strategy.pdf). This strategy clarifies two major issues. First, it explicitly expands the definition of agriculture to include, not just staple foods, such as grains, but also fish, animals, forestry products, and horticulture. Second, it recognizes the entire value chain for agricultural products, from agricultural research, through production, processing, marketing, to consumption. This is particularly important in moving away from production for production sake to responding to market signals of quality, quantity, timeliness, and price.

d) The U.S. Farm Bill. The U.S. Farm Bill authorizes the F2F Program to assist developing countries, middle-income countries, and emerging markets in increasing farm production and farmer incomes. The Farm Bill mandates that F2F:
- Assist in the achievement of increased food production and distribution, and improved effectiveness of the farming and marketing operations of agricultural producers.
- Assist in the improvement of agricultural and agribusiness operations, including improving animal care and health, field crop cultivation, fruit and vegetable growing, livestock operations, food processing and packaging, farm credit, marketing, inputs, and agricultural extension; and
- Strengthen cooperatives and other agricultural groups.

5. *Farmer-to Farmer Approach*

F2F Volunteers share their knowledge to increase productivity, improve trade and competitiveness; and develop market opportunities. Programs are very diverse but in general they should increase farmer income and enterprise profitability; increase institutional capacities; improve financial services; or improve natural and environmental resource management.

The F2F program approach emphasizes projects that offer the greatest potential for expanded economic impact on small and medium scale producers. It is an effective, low cost program that blends two goals: providing people-to-people level exchanges and enhancing sustainable economic and social development. The success of the F2F program depends on two key steps: first, identifying and structuring good volunteer overseas assignments, and second, identifying the right volunteers to respond to the needs of the hosts/customers/clients.

F2F programs are managed by *implementing organizations,* such as U.S. organizations that receive grants from VEGA. An implementing organization may work through a local "*partner*" in the target country, i.e. an institution, project or program through which the implementing organization works to plan and implement activities with *host organizations*. The *host organizations* are the local beneficiary institutions or individuals receiving assistance from one or more F2F volunteers. Management costs of host organizations may be included under the budget for this award, but are not required. *Program beneficiaries* are rural people, who may be (or be affiliated with) hosts, receive goods and services from them, or market agricultural products to them.

The Small Grants awarded under this RFA are designed to support the overall F2F approach by cultivating new partners, testing innovative placement ideas, and reaching countries that are not receiving volunteers through core F2F programs.

6. Small Grants Program Description

The objectives of the F2F Small Grant projects are *to test innovative approaches to use U.S. based volunteers overseas in the food and agriculture sector, to draw from non-traditional sources of U.S. volunteers and to allow new U.S. based organizations that are not currently implementing core or PDP F2F cooperative agreements to participate in the FY2014-FY2018 F2F Program.* Knowledge generated from these small projects should benefit the overall F2F Program.

Examples of possible program innovations include, but are not limited to:

- **New implementer:** an organization that is not currently implementing a core F2F program
- **New type of host organizations:** host organizations that do not typically receive volunteers or those that represent underserved populations;
- **New development objective:** volunteer assignments that are in line with the F2F approach but target development objectives that are not typically addressed with volunteers;
- **New use of volunteers:** creating non-traditional volunteer postings, such as longer-term placements or sending volunteers in teams;
- **New sources of volunteers**: recruiting from a specific community or technical specialty not previously tapped for F2F.

Because the Small Grant Program is designed to encourage and test innovation, Small Grants Projects have flexibility to incorporate new approaches and implementation strategies. However, projects should work within the F2F approach, focusing on agricultural activities that improve food security and economic development though safe, impactful and enjoyable volunteer assignments. In particular, Applicants should be sensitive to the following aspects that are common to most F2F activities:

1. **Demand-driven** – volunteers work with hosts to assist them in activities that the hosts have identified and desired, rather than implementing a program motivated or conceived by the F2F implementing organization.

2. **Focused on technical assistance or advisory services** – there should be little or no expenses for equipment, training or operational costs. (Note: Limited allowance can be made for volunteers to cover demonstration or other materials and costs.)

3. **Align with other USG strategies or programs in the target country** – Evidence of alignment with USAID or other USG development activities in a country will be supportive of Concept Papers and Full Applications. For Full Applications, evidence of USAID or other USG program endorsement is desirable. USAID mission concurrence is required for award of the Small Grant.

Proposed projects must be in F2F eligible countries, as listed in Annex C. Please refer to eligibility criteria in Section III for additional information. Grants may explore opportunities for leveraging funding of volunteer programs through volunteer co-financing or other innovative ways of programming volunteers.

7. Selection Criteria
Competition under this RFA will be conducted in two phases:
- Phase I: Concept Paper
- Phase II: Full Application

Each applicant shall initially provide VEGA with a Concept Paper. **Only one Concept Paper per organization will be accepted.** Each Concept Paper shall be competitively evaluated against the pre-determined evaluation criteria outlined below. Applicants with the most technically qualified Concept Papers will be invited to submit Full Applications under this RFA.

All Concept Papers and Full Applications must meet eligibility criteria (See Section III) and the requirements outlined below. Submissions that do not meet the evaluation criteria or requirements will not be evaluated.

Required Contents of Concept Papers

The first phase of the application process is a Concept Paper. Each Applicant may submit only one Concept Paper, and the document should include, in summary form, the same information as will be required in the Full Applications. Applicants should adhere to the formatting and content requirements below in preparing Concept Papers. To meet the minimum required eligibility criteria for this competition, Concept Papers must demonstrate conformity with these criteria as well as the eligibility criteria set forth in Section III of this RFA. Concept Papers that do not meet the minimum criteria will not be evaluated.

General Concept Paper Requirements:

1. All information shall be presented in the English language.

2. Documents shall be single spaced with an 11 point font (Arial or Times New Roman preferred) and one inch margins. (There are two exceptions to the aforementioned instruction: 1) budgets may be in Excel in a slightly smaller font (10 point) with smaller margins, and 2) tables may use smaller fonts and margins, however, must be easily readable).

3. Submissions must be made via e-mail to F2F@vegaalliance.org. Concept Papers should take the form of a single Microsoft Word or PDF file that includes the Cover Page, Concept Paper text, Budget Outline and all annexes all in one document. Please also submit the Budget Outline separately as a Microsoft Excel file.

Required Contents of Concept Papers:
All concept papers shall include a Cover Page, a Concept Paper (four pages maximum) and a Budget Outline.

1. Cover Page (1 page):
- Organization Name
- Organization Business Status (non-profit, for profit, PVO etc)
- Contact Name (authorized negotiator)
- Contact Email address
- Contact telephone and fax number
- Complete business mailing address

2. Concept Paper (4 pages maximum):
Concept Papers must follow the outline and include the information below.

1. Objective(s) and Description of Problem
   What sector and/or beneficiary population is being targeted for assistance? Why is this sector or population being targeted? What will be the outcome at the end of the grant period? Please provide a brief description of at least one proposed host organization.

2. <u>Proposed Activities</u>
   What will the proposed F2F program do? What kind of volunteer assistance will the proposed F2F program provide? How many volunteer assignments will be fielded, for how long, and to where? How will volunteer technical assistance create positive impacts, and how will those impacts be measured?

3. <u>Sources and Management of U.S. Volunteers</u>
   Briefly describe the organization's capacity to field safe, impactful, and enjoyable volunteer assignments. Where will the volunteers come from? How will the volunteers be recruited, placed and supported? How will host organizations be selected? How will volunteers be supported while they are in the field? What precautions will be taken to ensure volunteers' physical safety?

4. <u>Staffing</u>
   Who will lead the proposed program? What is his or her professional background? No resumes are required, but one-page resumes for key personnel may be included as an annex.

3. Budget Outline (1 page maximum):
How will the proposed program's costs be allocated? What basis will you use to calculate indirect costs? Please use the format below. The total proposed USAID contribution may not exceed $150,000.

Costs	Amount in USD	Notes
Direct Costs		
Personnel		
Fringe Benefits		
Travel		
Equipment		
Supplies		
Contractual		
Total Direct Costs		
Overhead		**Include both Overhead amount and Overhead rate**
Indirect Costs		**Include both Indirect Cost amount and Indirect Cost rate. If the Applicant does not have a NICRA with a US Federal agency, a rate of 10% may be used for indirect costs.**
Total USAID Contribution		**=SUM of Total Direct Costs, Overhead, Indirect Costs**
Leverage		**Include a short description of the source of any leverage**
Total Project Budget		**=SUM of Total USAID Contribution, Leverage**

Concept Paper Evaluation Criteria

Concept Papers will be evaluated in accordance with the Technical Evaluation Criteria set forth below. If the Proposal Evaluation Committee recommends that an applicant's Concept Paper advance to the Full Application phase, then VEGA will request a Full Application and Budget from the applicant.

Applicants should note that the technical evaluation criteria serve to A) identify the significant issues which applicants should address in their Concept Papers; and B) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated. To facilitate the review of applications, applicants should organize their Concept Papers in the same order as the evaluation criteria. Advancement to the Full Application phase will be recommended based on the ranking of Concept Papers according to the technical evaluation

criteria and the quality of the response to those criteria. The following evaluation factors will be used to evaluate all Concept Papers. The PEC will evaluate concept notes on a best value basis, with technical merit more important than cost, utilizing the following factors:

1. **10 points – Objective(s) and Description of Problem**

    Successful Concept Papers will include a convincing argument that short term volunteer assignments are an effective method to address the development challenge that the proposed program is intended to help solve. Successful Concept Papers will include evidence of local demand for the proposed volunteer technical assistance.

2. **30 points – Proposed Activities**

    Successful Concept Papers will include a clear and convincing model for how volunteer technical assistance will lead to positive impact for the targeted host organizations. This includes clearly identifying expected results and how these will be achieved. In general, F2F host organizations should be groups of smallholder farmers or small agribusinesses that do not have access to technical assistance or investment from other sources. However, applicants may propose working with other host organizations, such as trade or business associations, local government offices, cooperatives, or public or private service providers. Applicants should describe how they will recruit and support host organizations, as well as how they will generate and approve volunteer Scopes of Work. Evaluators will consider whether the proposed activities are feasible and appropriate for F2F, looking for a balance of innovation and practicality. Concept papers with a set of proposed activities that are new to F2F, but that also appear to be feasible and appropriate to F2F will receive higher scores in the category of Proposed Activities than proposed activities that are similar to previous F2F activities.

3. **30 points – Sources and Management of U.S. Volunteers**

    Successful concept papers will include evidence that the applicant has the capacity to field safe, impactful and enjoyable volunteer assignments. Applicants should describe their capacity to provide in-country support to volunteers while they are in the field. Applicants should describe how they plan to insure volunteers, handle safety and security, and provide translation services when necessary. Recruiting volunteers who have never volunteered with F2F, especially female and minority volunteers, as well as volunteers who are practicing farmers, is a high priority for F2F. A concrete, feasible plan for recruiting volunteers with these characteristics will receive higher scores in the category of Sources and Management of U.S. Volunteers.

4. **20 points – Staffing**

    Successful concept papers will include evidence that the applicant's proposed leaders have the capacity to field safe, impactful and enjoyable volunteer assignments. For applicants with previous experience implementing VEGA F2F small grants, evaluators will take the applicant's track record of success or failure in program implementation as described in VEGA program reporting into account.

5. **10 points – Budget Outline**

    Successful Concept Papers will include evidence that the applicant has the capacity to manage grant funds. Successful Concept Papers will propose allowable, allocable and reasonable costs for program implementation. VEGA recognizes that program management trips undertaken by paid program staff might be necessary, but please note that VEGA small grants are not intended to fund more than one program management trip over the life of the grant.

Required Contents of Full Applications

Applicants with the most technically qualified Concept Papers will be invited to submit Full Applications. The Full Application should build on information provided in the Concept Paper, addressing any questions raised by the PEC and providing more details about the proposed project. Full Applications should be prepared according to the requirements listed below.

General Full Application Requirements

1. All information shall be presented in the English language.

2. Full Applications should be single spaced with an 11 point font (Arial or Times New Roman preferred) and one inch margins. (There are two exceptions to the aforementioned instruction: 1) budgets may be in Excel in a slightly smaller font (10 point) with smaller margins, and 2) tables may use smaller fonts and margins, however, must be easily readable).

3. Full Applications shall be submitted via email to F2F@vegaalliance.org. Full applications should take the form of a single Microsoft Word or PDF file that includes the following elements in addition to the Full Application text:
    - Cover Page;
    - Grant Budget(Please also submit the budget separately as a Microsoft Excel document);
    - resumes for key personnel;
    - three (3) past performance references (template in Annex E); and
    - required representations and certifications as outlined in the Full Application Outline below.

Full Application Outline

1. **Cover Page (1 page):**
    - Organization Name
    - Organization Business Status (non-profit, for profit, PVO etc.)
    - DUNS Number
    - Tax Identification Number (TIN)
    - Contact Name (authorized negotiator)
    - Contact Email address
    - Contact telephone and fax number
    - Complete business mailing address
    - Active Sam.gov Registry (Y/N)

2. **Full Application (10 pages maximum)**

Full Applications must include the following information in the following outline.

1. Objective(s) and Description of Problem
   What will be the outcomes at the end of the grant period? What is being targeted for assistance? Why is this sector being targeted?

    - General description of the problem (possibly use market chain analysis);
    - Analysis of market demand for the proposed sector;
    - Key problems/constraints to be addressed and why;
    - Opportunities for impact on increasing incomes for value chain actors, small and medium scale farmers; and
    - Evidence of local demand for volunteer technical assistance; and

- Evidence of alignment with USAID or other USG development activities (USAID Mission concurrence is required).

2. Proposed Activities
What will the F2F program do and how will volunteers be used to address the problem?
- Logical framework linking activities to positive impact on local host organizations as a result of volunteer technical assistance.
- Key partners (if any) and their roles
- Target hosts: number and type of expected hosts; host names; criteria for identifying them
- Numbers and types of volunteer assignments planned
- Sources of U.S. volunteers
- How do the volunteers represent a sector in which U.S. volunteers have a competitive advantage?
- How will female volunteers, minority volunteers, and those who have not volunteered with the F2F program before be integrated into the proposed F2F program?
- How will the volunteers be recruited, placed, and supported?
- Target beneficiaries
- How will beneficiaries be impacted and what are the expected benefits?

3. Organizational Capacity and Volunteer Management
- What support services will be provided to volunteers on assignment, and how will these services be managed?
- How will safety and security of volunteers be ensured?
- How will volunteer recruitment me handled, and what is the Applicant's capacity to recruit volunteers who have never volunteered with F2F, female and minority volunteers, and volunteers who are practicing farmers?
- How will the Applicant comply with the terms and conditions of the award (technical, cost controls, reporting, and administrative requirements);

3. **Budget**

The Budget shall be submitted both as part of the combined Application file and as a separate file. It shall be in US dollars showing cost line items, amount requested from USAID, and amount contributed by the applicant(s). The ceiling cost for USAID's contribution is $150,000.

The budget should be firm fixed price with progress payments based on milestone achievement. Milestone payments are a requirement. Recommended budget line items include: labor, volunteer allowances, travel and transportation, goods and materials, leverage and/or cost share.

Budgets must include a timeline for Milestone Payments, using the milestone template below. Consider linking Milestone Payments to completion of proposed targets for the four (4) core Farmer-to-Farmer indicators:

> # Volunteers fielded
> # Host institutions assisted
> # Persons trained
> # Farm families directly benefited

Applicants are permitted to have completion of their work plan be their first milestone. Applicants are required to have completion of their final report be part of their final milestone. The final milestone must also be linked to a payment of at least $10,000.

Milestone template:

Milestone #	Milestone Description	Date Expected to be Completed (MM/YYYY)	Amount of Payment	Method of Verification for Milestone
EXAMPLE	2 volunteers fielded, 2 host institutions assisted, 100 farmer families benefited	08/2016	$25,000	Copies of plan tickets, copy of register for farmers who attended workshops, letter from institutions who participated/collaborated in workshop

Please note: F2F SPSP grantees will be required by 49 U.S.C. 40118, commonly referred to as the "Fly America Act," to purchase U.S. flag air carrier service for all air travel funded by the U.S. Government, except as provided in CFR §§301-10.136 and 301-10.137. Detailed information about the Fly America requirement can be found here.

Exclusions – Because of the short duration of the grant, USAID will not fund capital expenditures such as durable goods and other large equipment purchases which have a shelf life more than one year and/or an acquisition cost exceeding $5,000.

4. **Key Personnel**

Please provide resumes for at least one but no more than three key personnel, as named in the technical application. This should include the director/manager/coordinator positions in the U.S. and target countries, or others as needed. Please limit resumes to a maximum of two (2) pages each. Resumes should include a summary paragraph, employment history, and education applicable to the role and skills needed for the position for which the person is being proposed. Successful grantees must inform VEGA of any change in key personnel that takes place during the project implementation.

5. **Past performance**

Provide three (3) recent past performance references, using the template in Annex E. References should be for similar or related programs implemented during the ten years before the application. Reference information must include the project location; award numbers if available; a brief description of work performed; and points of contact with current email addresses and telephone numbers.

Past performance references older than ten years will not be evaluated. Past performance references should include current contact information for technical and contract officers and specify if the applicant worked as a prime or subcontractor on the implementation of program.

6. **Representations and certifications**

Representations and certifications applicable to this RFA are located online at **http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf** in a document entitled: Certifications, Assurances and Other Representations of the Recipient and Solicitation Standard Provisions. A copy of that document signed as appropriate must be included with the application for a grant. It includes the Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing. Note that some of the certifications have a dollar threshold before being applicable, such as the Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking; others apply only if certain types of funding apply.

Full Application Evaluation Criteria

Full Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria. The table below shows the points associated with each scoring item. Applicants should organize Full Applications according to the

following criteria. *All Full Applications must meet the minimum eligibility criteria outlined in Section III in order to be considered for funding.*

Appraisal Category	Maximum Points (100 total)
Objective and Description of Problem	10
Proposed Activities	30
Organizational Capacity and Volunteer Management	30
Staffing	10
Past Performance	10
Budget	10
Total Possible Points	**100 points**

Objective and Description of Problem (10 points): The degree to which the Full Application includes a compelling problem statement and proposes objectives that comprehensively address the specified problem through short term volunteer technical assistance. Full applications should demonstrate a convincing ability to achieve significant economic and social development for small and medium scale farmers. Full Applications should demonstrate substantial local demand for volunteer technical assistance, complementarity with other USG activities, and USAID Mission concurrence.

Proposed Activities (30 points): The degree to which the full application presents a convincing model for how volunteer technical assistance will lead to positive impact for targeted host organizations. This includes clearly identifying expected results and how these will be achieved. Applicants should describe how they will recruit and support host organizations, as well as how they will generate and approve volunteer Scopes of Work. In general, F2F host organizations should be groups of smallholder farmers or small agribusinesses that do not have access to technical assistance or investment from other sources. However, applicants may propose working with other host organizations, such as trade or business associations, local government offices, cooperatives, or public or private service providers. Evaluators will consider whether the proposed activities are feasible given the resources available and appropriate for F2F, looking for a balance of innovation and practicality. Concept papers with a set of proposed activities that are new to F2F, but that also appear to be feasible and appropriate to F2F will receive higher scores in the category of Proposed Activities than proposed activities that are similar to previous F2F activities.

Organizational capacity and volunteer management (30 points): The degree to which the full application demonstrates the Applicant's experience and capacity to implement a safe, effective, and enjoyable volunteer program, including: recruiting and fielding skilled volunteers internationally; providing in-country support to volunteers while they are in the field; insuring volunteers, handling safety and security, and providing translation services when necessary; monitoring impact and progress; submitting timely and accurate programmatic and financial reporting; and proposing and adhering to a realistic implementation timeline. It is desirable for Full Applications to demonstrate that the organization is capable of recruiting volunteers who have never volunteered with F2F, especially female and minority volunteers, as well as volunteers who are practicing farmers.

Staffing (10 points): The degree to which the Full Application demonstrates that the organization's proposed program director and country staff have appropriate levels of expertise and relevant work experience in areas identified in this RFA. Full applications must include resumes of proposed key personnel and other important managerial and technical personnel. Proposed key personnel must demonstrate that they have networks of potential volunteers, are capable of meeting the program's reporting requirements, can lead field staff remotely and manage the proposed program in a transparent and ethical manner.

Past Performance (10 points): The degree to which recent past performance references demonstrate:
- Efficient and effective achievement in technical development work;
- For applicants with previous experience implementing the F2F program, efficient and effective achievement of F2F program goals;
- Ability to comply with terms and conditions of the award (technical, cost controls and administrative);
- Capacity for problem solving;
- Experience working with volunteers (if applicable); and
- Quality of business ethics, such as quality of business relationships, integrity, and fair dealings, for implemented international programs.

Grant Budget (10 points): Demonstrated evidence of reasonable and allowable costs attached to milestones, milestones that represent organization's selected indicators, and the proposed leveraged resources.

II. Award Information

1. Planned Award
VEGA expects to make up to six (6) awards as a result of this request for applications. Awards will be made as Fixed Amount Awards (FAA). Award amount will not exceed $150,000 per award.

2. Anticipated start date
VEGA anticipates making grant awards as a result of this RFA on or about May 13, 2016. The closing date for award of grants under this request for applications shall be May 12, 2017.

3. Period of Performance

Grants will be awarded to fund programs implemented over no more than 12 months. Grant funded activities must be completed within this time period.

III. Eligibility Information

The USAID Farmer to Farmer program encourages applications from new partners to increase the diversity, innovation and effectiveness of program implementation.

1. Eligible entities
U.S. based entities eligible to receive grant awards under this RFA include: non-profits, for profit firms, cooperatives, colleges and universities. Core implementers of the F2F program and current F2F PDP holders are not eligible for small grants under this RFA. Implementing organizations that are sub-awardees to current core implementers are eligible for small grants under this RFA. Implementing organizations that were small grantees or PDP implementers during the FY09-FY13 phase of the F2F program are eligible for small grants under this RFA. Current implementers of the VEGA F2F small grants are eligible for grants under this RFA. U.S.-based entities may work with non-U.S.-based partners to implement F2F small grants. All proposed partnerships must be clearly identified in the grant application.

2. Minority Serving Institutions and Minority Serving Organizations

Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) and Minority Serving Organizations (MSOs) are strongly encouraged to apply. Per USAID's ADS Glossary, MSIs are Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions and Tribal Colleges and Universities.[1] MSOs are defined as organizations that are controlled by a board of directors or similar governing body with a membership of more than 50 percent Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, or other economically disadvantaged minorities. Applicants should include a brief text in their Concept Papers that justifies their organization's status as an MSI or MSO.

One small grant will be awarded as a set-aside to an MSO or MSI, provided a competitive application is received.

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[1] http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/glossary.pdf

3. *Minimum Eligibility criteria*

Minimum required eligibility criteria for Concept Papers and Full Applications in this competition include:

1. Addressing at least one of the seven Foreign Assistance Framework Agricultural Sector Productivity Program Sub Elements listed in Section I.
2. Being based on use of U.S. volunteers for work overseas.
3. Organizations cannot be currently implementing a F2F PDP or core program.
4. Organizations must have demonstrated experience with project implementation and demonstrated capacity to recruit and field volunteers internationally;
5. Being from a U.S. organization.

Applications that do not fit the minimum criteria will not be evaluated.

Please Note: In keeping with this grant program's stated goal of bringing new and innovative ideas to the F2F Program, applicants are discouraged from proposing programs that are similar to ongoing country and sector programs (also listed in Annex C). Depending on the nature of the individual application, some volunteer assignments might be allowed in these countries.

IV. Application Review Information

VEGA will review all Concept Papers and Full Applications and submit those that are compliant with the RFA requirements to a three person Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC). The PEC will review compliant applications and recommend "responsible" organizations for an award. A responsibility determination means the applicant possesses, or has the ability to obtain, the management competence necessary to plan and carry out the activities proposed in its application submitted in response to this RFA. The PEC will assess each successful application to ensure that it practices mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets acquired as a result of the grant funding. Consideration shall be given to such matters as integrity, record of past performance, financial and technical resources, or accessibility to other necessary resources.

1. *Selection Process*

A Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) will be constituted by VEGA, composed of personnel with technical expertise in agriculture, food security and volunteer based technical assistance. Committee members will be independent professionals. Each compliant Concept Paper and Full Application will be evaluated in accordance with the technical evaluation criteria set forth above, with a report of selection recommendations made by the designated PEC. VEGA will confirm and obtain USAID approval of the award recommendations.

The grant Budget will be evaluated, at the conclusion of the full technical application review, for cost realism and reasonableness, in accordance with the U.S. Government's applicable cost principles. Negotiations may be conducted with all applicants whose application, after discussion by the PEC, has a reasonable chance of being selected for award. VEGA reserves the right to negotiate programmatic, cost, and other elements of proposals before making final funding decisions.

Awards will be made to responsible applicants whose applications meet the stated goals of this program and offer the best value -technical, cost and other factors considered.

2. Policies and Procedures

Awards will be administered in accordance with USAID ADS 303 policies and procedures. Awards to U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with 22 CFR Part 226, the applicable OMB Circulars, other applicable USAID Policies and Procedures, and (as required) USAID Standard Provisions. To find these regulations and policies see the web sites below. If applicants are not able to access these documents via the web, they can request copies from VEGA.

22 CFR 226 – http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_03/22cfr226_03.html

OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a110

OMB Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations (06/26/2007) – http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/a133/a133_revised_2007.pdf

3. Grant Mechanism

Grants will be awarded according to the criteria and procedures outlined in this RFA. VEGA will utilize the Fixed Amount Award Format, i.e., a grant procedure set forth in USAID ADS 303.3.25 and paid on a firm fixed price, **milestone-reimbursement basis**.

Milestones, with indicators for accomplishment, are negotiated based on grant Budgets, and established during the grant application and agreement negotiations stage. Grantees should propose payments against milestones in their Full Applications. *VEGA will not advance funds*.

V. Award and Administration Information

1. Post-award process

Prior to award, VEGA will request additional clarification and certifications in line with USAID rules and regulations. Successful applicants will be awarded a Fixed Amount Award (FAA) and will be expected to submit a detailed implementation work plan within no more than 30 days from date of grant signing.

2. Reporting requirements

VEGA seeks to reduce reporting and bureaucratic processes to the minimum and to retain flexibility in the operation of the small grants. However, oversight, learning and sound management require regular reporting and monitoring of performance and impacts. The following reporting will be required of all successful applicants:

Implementation work plan – This report will be due within 30 days after signing the FAA. The work plan must describe the name of the host organization(s), volunteer assignments, number of days the volunteer will invest in country, timeline, and expected outcomes.

Volunteer Scopes of Work – The scope of work for each volunteer assignment must be sent to VEGA for review and concurrence before any volunteers travel overseas. Please see the attached Annex F for the format in which the grantee must submit information regarding the SOW prior to the assignment.

Monthly Reports – These reports must be submitted on the fifth business day of each month reporting on the previous month. Monthly reports should include a brief update on Small Grant Project activities and volunteer assignments, as well as any problems encountered and solutions to these problems. VEGA will provide grantees with a simple template for monthly reports, which will be the required format.

M&E Reporting – The Farmer-to-Farmer standard indicators, as outlined in Annex D must be submitted semiannually — on or before October 5 and April 5 — and with the Final Report, which is due 30 days after the end date of the award.

PERSUAP Reports – The grantee shall submit any volunteer SOWs which fall under the Pesticides Evaluation Report and Safe User Action Plan (PERSUAP) requirements to the local Mission point of contact, with VEGA and USAID/Washington copied on the email. Additionally, the grantee must complete the PERSUAP tables found in Annex B on or before October 5 and April 5 and in the Final Report. Please see Annex B for more information on PERUSAP requirements.

Volunteer Background Check — Per GAO 2015 recommendations, the small grantee is required to conduct a reference check on each volunteer. Each background check must include, at a minimum:

- Confirming that the volunteer does not engage in transactions with, or provide resources or support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism, including those individuals or entities that appear on the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List maintained by the U.S. Treasury or the United Nations Security designation list. All potential volunteers are screened against these and other watch lists and this provision is included in all sub-agreements, including sub-awards and contracts issued under the F2F award.

- Two reference checks on all potential first time F2F volunteers in addition to other required screening and carries out reference checks on all repeat F2F volunteers with regard to prior F2F assignments, and additional external references if no F2F assignments have been completed within the past 24 months.

- Immediately informing the USAID AOR of any negative F2F volunteer performance or behavior and providing information on such performance or behavior experiences to other F2F implementing organizations when contacted for reference checks on potential volunteers.

Milestone Reports – These reports must be submitted when requesting payment from VEGA. Required contents include:

1. Brief work plan status update
2. Milestone description
3. Verification evidence that the milestone was reached
4. Activities by country
5. Public outreach
6. Activities to achieve the next milestone and anticipated completion date
7. Milestone Report Annexes:
   a. Indicator tables (1, 2, and 4 as specified in Annex D)
   b. Volunteer scope(s) of work (for the period)
   c. Volunteer report(s) after the field assignment (for the period)

Final Report – This report will be due 30 days after the closing date of project. The report will contain all important findings and/or results from the project and final budget reconciliation figures. A report template will be provided by VEGA and will include:

1. Descriptive title, author(s) name and contact information, award number, date of publication;
2. Summary of activities and comparison to work plan
3. Lesson learned and recommendations
4. Success story
5. Final indicator tables (1, 2, and 4 as specified in Annex D)
6. Final budget reconciliation

Annexes

Annex A: Functions and Activities Typically Required in a Farmer-to-Farmer Volunteer Program

a) Sector analysis and planning: The Applicant shall ensure adequate analysis and planning to guide implementation of the F2F program.

b) Selecting partners: The Applicant shall identify any key partners with which it intends to work to accomplish objectives of the proposed F2F Program. Applicants are not required, or necessarily encouraged, to work with or through partners. Still, partners with in-country capabilities may assist the Applicant in the development and implementation of the country F2F program and project strategies and plans. Such partners can be public or private agencies and can include trade associations, NGOs, commercial firms, projects, government departments and programs (e.g., Peace Corps) or educational institutions. Partners are commonly involved in providing goods and/or services to agricultural producers or agribusinesses. The clients of such partners are often the public and private sector organizations that are potential hosts for volunteers. Roles of partners vary, but commonly include serving as: a) local representative for the F2F program implementer; b) retailer of volunteer services; c) link to clients (hosts); or d) technical backstop.

In some cases, volunteers may work with partners to strengthen the partner's own capacity to provide goods and services to their clients (in which case the partner is also the "host" organization). Generally, good partners will help to see that the specific knowledge or skills that volunteers bring to a host organization are spread more widely to benefit the sector.

c) Selecting hosts: The Applicant shall establish systems necessary to identify appropriate hosts with which it will work to implement the proposed F2F Program. The hosts are organizations or individuals that request volunteer services and work directly with the volunteers. Host organizations commonly include private businesses, community groups, trade or business associations, local government offices, cooperatives, or public or private service providers (inputs, credit, information, marketing, processing, storage, etc.). Hosts may be the ultimate beneficiaries (typically small farmers) that the proposed F2F Program is designed to assist, but may also be intermediaries (service providers, agribusinesses, etc) whose improved operations benefit the target populations.

The ability of host organizations to absorb, utilize, and disseminate information provided by volunteers is a critical consideration in determining the impact of a volunteer's assignment. Host organizations should be involved early on in developing the F2F program strategies and plans. They should also, where possible, contribute to the costs of fielding volunteers and facilitate an assessment of the impact of the volunteer's efforts. The impacts of a volunteer program are primarily a function of what host organizations do as a result of the information and training provided by volunteers.

d) Development of assignments: The Applicant shall establish systems to develop scopes of work (SOW) that describe services required by host organizations and identify the skills and experience volunteers will need for the assignment. SOWs may also include background on the sub-sector and host project. The SOW identifies the results anticipated from the assignment. The SOW may also identify complementary inputs expected to be forthcoming from the host and other partners.

SOWs translate program and project plans into specified tasks for volunteers. Ideally, there should be a high degree of participation by host organizations in the preparation of SOWs. The SOWs document the understandings reached among the parties involved, namely the host organization, any partners,

and the proposed F2F program implementer. The clearer the SOW can be in terms of specifying who, what, where, when, why, and how, the easier it will be to recruit for the volunteer assignment, guide the volunteer once on the job, and finally assess the success of the volunteer assignment. The process of approving a SOW also clarifies the roles of the proposed implementing agency, the volunteer(s), any partners, and the hosts in making the assignment a success. Ideally, individual volunteers work with farmers and target beneficiaries to develop personal relationships and mutual understanding. Often effective assignments require volunteers to work with agribusinesses, financial institutions, or government institutions that benefit the target group. In such assignments it is desirable for volunteers to have some exposure and interaction with farmers and other beneficiaries at the field level.

e) Volunteer recruitment: The Applicant shall establish systems for identifying and recruiting volunteers to provide services as per defined SOWs. The success of any given assignment is largely a function of the quality of the volunteer. Building institutional capacity or influencing overall sub-sector development typically requires the aggregate efforts of a series of effective volunteers working in tandem with local partners and other development programs. The Applicant may require an extensive database of potential volunteers and/or develop linkages with farm, professional, cooperative, agribusinesses, university, and trade groups to assist in identifying and recruiting volunteers. F2F Program experience has indicated that many Americans are interested in serving as volunteers and – with a well-developed recruitment system – recruitment is generally not a problem, except for very specialized technical assignments.

The Applicant's F2F Program shall support services of U.S. volunteers (U.S. citizens and permanent residents); non-U.S. volunteers shall not be used, unless prior approval is obtained from the USAID AOR for any unique situation requiring such use of non-U.S. volunteers.

f) Volunteer orientation: The Applicant shall establish systems for appropriate volunteer orientation, including information about travel, health and security issues, other logistics and support, the country, and the organizations and individuals with whom the volunteer will work, as well as the specific tasks of the assignment. The orientation process begins as part of volunteer recruitment and extends through the initial days of their arrival in the host country. The more informed volunteers are about what they are getting themselves into, the better equipped they will be to make their assignment successful both for the host as well as for themselves.

g) Volunteer logistics and support: The Applicant shall establish systems to ensure that volunteers are provided with adequate logistical and technical support to provide efficient and effective services to hosts. The logistics and support services greatly impact the effectiveness of volunteers. Logistical support includes transport, housing, translators, secretarial assistance, compensation arrangements, and other services. Technical support includes information, links to local technology programs, teaching aids, and equipment. Volunteers that are appropriately supported will have more time to focus on their assignments and will develop a better understanding of the host's operating environment and constraints. Technical support can help volunteers adapt their technical knowledge and skills to local conditions and develop appropriate linkages to local technical support institutions. Such support is particularly important given the relatively short duration of many volunteer assignments. The Applicant shall provide adequate medical and evacuation insurance, vaccination and health briefings, in-country security and other support to ensure safety and wellbeing of volunteers.

F2F SPSP grantees will be required by 49 U.S.C. 40118, commonly referred to as the "Fly America Act," to use U.S. flag air carrier service for all air travel funded by the U.S. Government, except as provided in CFR §§301-10.136 and 301-10.137. Detailed information about this Fly America requirement can be found here:

http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/103191?utm_source=OGP&utm_medium=print-radio&utm_term=openskies&utm_campaign=shortcuts

h) Complementary support to hosts: The Applicant shall consider needs and make appropriate arrangements, as far as is possible, to ensure that complementary services (e.g., financial services, equipment and infrastructure, input supply, marketing, and processing arrangements, etc.) are available to enable hosts to make use of volunteers' recommendations. Complementary support services represent the range of resources available to enable host organizations to operate effectively, including such things as financial services (especially), equipment and infrastructure, input supply, database services (e.g. marketing and pricing information), marketing, and processing arrangements. These services are generally not within the scope of an individual volunteer assignment, but volunteers' recommendations often implicitly or explicitly require a host to draw on such resources to implement recommendations. Thus, while a volunteer may complete his/her assignment satisfactorily without such services, their availability varies according to the environment in which the host operates and they are often critical determinants of the level of impact from a volunteer assignment. F2F programs with limited budgets are not likely to be able to provide complementary support to hosts, but may be able to facilitate access to such services from other programs.

i) Project staffing: The Applicant shall assign adequate staff and staff support resources for efficient and effective implementation of the volunteer program, including the planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the F2F program.

j) Volunteer outreach activities: The Applicant shall establish systems to encourage and maximize the amount and impact of outreach activities carried out by returned volunteers. Outreach encompasses the full set of activities designed to inform both the general public and particular interested parties of the character and accomplishments of the F2F program. Outreach has three principle benefits: 1) educating the public on global development issues and market opportunities; 2) building public support for international development efforts; and 3) recruiting new volunteers.

Annex B: Other Critical Implementation Requirements

The Applicant shall plan and implement the proposed F2F Program with attention to planned and unplanned results and impacts, including especially as may relate to USAID policy issues of importance to the F2F programs. Implementation issues requiring special attention by the Applicant include those discussed below.

a) Gender: The Applicant shall provide systematic consideration of gender issues and impacts in the F2F program and shall seek to promote gender equity.

b) Environment: The Applicant shall ensure systematic consideration of the implications of the proposed F2F Program activities on environmental and natural resources and should seek to mitigate any adverse impacts. USAID environmental guidelines for applicants implementing F2F programs will be provided. The Applicant shall exercise special care in any activities involving pesticides or genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

In the case of agriculture, development may be completely dependent on natural resources and potentially deplete them or degrade environmental resources. A healthy environment and the sustainable use of natural resources are essential to long-term economic growth. All U.S. government financed programs, including the F2F program, are obligated to comply with U.S. environmental regulations stipulating that the environment is to be safeguarded from adverse consequences in the implementation of all program activities. USAID's environmental guidelines require programs that it funds to:

- Ensure that the environmental consequences of USAID-financed activities are identified and considered by USAID and the host country prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted;
- Assist developing countries to strengthen their capabilities to appreciate and effectively evaluate the potential environmental effects of proposed development strategies and projects, and to select, implement, and manage effective environmental programs;
- Identify impacts resulting from USAID's actions upon the environment, including those aspects of the biosphere which are the common and cultural heritage of all mankind; and
- Define environmental limiting factors that constrain development and identify and carry out activities that assist in restoring the renewable resource base on which sustained development depends.

The Initial Environmental Evaluation (IEE) completed by USAID for the F2F Program made a Recommended Threshold Determination of a Negative Determination with Conditions. The majority of F2F Program activities qualify for Categorical Exclusion under 22CFR216.2(c):

- per 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i) for activities limited to education, technical assistance or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.)
- per 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(iii) for activities limited to the performance of analyses, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings.
- per 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(v) for activities limited to document and information transfers.
- per 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(xiv) for activities limited to studies, projects or programs intended to develop the capability of proposed countries to engage in development planning, except to the extent designed to result in activities directly affecting the environment

However, even though the F2F program will be essentially training and advisory activities with no direct effect on the environment, the subject of the training or advice may involve use of pesticides. While there will be no procurement or physical use of pesticides, the training in how to decide when to use them and how to use them safely can be seen as constituting a "use." This requires that some environmental safeguards be put in place on any involvement with pesticide use. The same holds true for any involvement with genetically modified organisms (GMOs), which are politically sensitive in some countries and which present some environmental dangers.

The Applicant shall ensure that no pesticides are provided, used, or sold under the program. Any pesticide-related training shall be in an IPM context and emphasize training on safe use of pesticides. Training and recommendations for use shall be in an IPM context where pesticide use is the last resort. The focus of the training shall be on IPM and the environmentally responsible and safe use of pesticides when they are needed. The Applicant shall ensure this caveat is included as a standard element in briefing materials provided to all volunteers prior to their traveling.

No genetically modified organisms shall be provided, used or sold. Only the benefits and disadvantages of GMOs shall be discussed during any training. If research, provision, use or recommendation for use of a GMO is subsequently planned, it shall first be submitted to USAID for clearance by the USAID bio-safety committee and subsequently the information flowing from the USAID bio-safety committee shall be used as the basis for an amendment to this IEE to make a final determination whether such GMO may be researched, provided, used, or recommended for use. This IEE amendment must be approved in writing by the EGAT Bureau Environmental Officer prior to a final decision or expenditure of funds to research, provide, use or recommend the use of a GMO.

Given the sensitivity of both the use of pesticides and the use of GMOs, the Applicant shall ensure that the following specific conditions are applied in its proposed F2F Program:

- The syllabus for each training event shall be reviewed and approved by the Mission environmental officer and/or the USAID AOR.
- A representative from USAID (preferably the Mission) should attend the training sessions to the extent possible.
- If any specific pesticides are to be used, procured or recommended for use, the USAID Pesticide Procedures (§216.3(b) must be followed. An amended IEE shall be prepared prior to the training and must include a separate section evaluating the risks and benefits of the proposed use. The 12 factors outlined in Section 216.3(b) shall be analyzed in that evaluation. This evaluation is known as a Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safe Use Action Plan (PERSUAP).
- If the training includes recommendation for use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), a Biosafety Analysis shall be required and an amendment to this IEE shall be prepared. The extent of such an analysis will depend on the type of activity proposed and the current status of acceptance of the GMO.
- If the activity will have a significant adverse effect on the environment, based on the analysis in an amended IEE, a full Environmental Assessment shall be required.
- The Applicant shall familiarize all staff with the summary "*F2F Program Environmental and Natural Resources Management Guidelines for Implementing Partners*" (Annex E) and with F2F guidelines for volunteers.

The Applicant shall ensure that volunteers consider the potential environmental consequences of their work and promote active environmental stewardship. All local laws regarding pesticide or GMO regulation shall be respected. Any variation to these principles must be preceded by USAID approval of an amended IEE. If, during implementation, activities are considered other than those described above as

the basis for the categorical exclusions, the Applicant shall inform the USAID AOR and request approval for an amended IEE before proceeding with such activities.

The training of applicators, vendors, decision makers, and farmers will improve IPM decision making and reduce pesticide misuse, thus benefiting the agricultural areas. The eventual effect on the environment is expected to be highly beneficial as trained host institutions and individuals are likely to make better decisions regarding pest management technologies and, when pesticides are used, they will be used in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.

c) Restricted sub-sectors and activities: The Applicant shall not support F2F Program activities that are restricted by USG policies and restrictions. USAID policies and regulations restrict support for certain activities involving: tobacco production and processing; African oil palm production or processing; degradation or conversion of tropical forests; agricultural products in surplus on world markets; assistance to activities or projects of Communist countries; assistance to military, police or prisons; luxury goods; alcoholic beverage production or marketing; export of U.S. jobs, relocation of U.S. businesses or restrictions on internationally recognized workers' rights; or production of agricultural products that compete with U.S. products in international markets. Activities involving support for any host projects that might involve support to such sub-sectors, products, or activities shall be discussed with USAID before initiating or making any commitments to work with hosts on such activities. The Applicant shall obtain prior approval from the USAID through the Contractor in Annual Work Plans or activity-specific approval prior to undertaking work on any activities involving these products and sub-sectors.

USAID will not support the growth of tobacco as a cash crop, nor will it support agribusiness activities contributing to tobacco production, promotion, and use. In countries in which tobacco is a major cash crop and an important source of income for low-income farmers, USAID may work with local agricultural interests to identify crops that are economic alternatives to tobacco and may support the introduction or expansion of these alternative crops.

d) Programmatic Pesticide Evaluation Report-Safe Use Action Plan (PERSUAP) Compliance:
The Programmatic Pesticide Evaluation Report-Safe Use Action Plan (PERSUAP) provides F2F volunteers with a list of active ingredients that they may use and recommend (including recommending the active ingredient, providing advice on procurement, storage, mixing, application, and disposal, and conducting training using these active ingredients as examples). Refer to the Programmatic PERUSAP document (http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00K2BJ.pdf) for a complete explanation of PERUSAP and compliance requirements.

The following guidance and standard language should be used in all program reports. *Each F2F Semi-Annual and Annual report should include a PERSUAP annex, noting compliance with the F2F PERSUAP guidelines.* This annex should include:

PERSUAP Implementation Experience – F2F Assignments: Over the period covered by this report, the project has had the following experience in implementing the F2F PERSUAP:

Assignments with Pesticides: The following Type 1 or 2 (or relevant Type 4) volunteer SOW were completed during the reporting period. (none or list as below)

1. Volunteer XXX for Assignment XXX:
   a. One sentence general description of activities with pesticides
   b. Key findings and recommendations on limitations/successes of F2F PERSUAP

      c.   Recommendations to F2F for additional support needed to improve pest and pesticide management practices

  2.   Volunteer XXX for Assignment XXX:

      a.   (etc.)

Assignments with SOWs in IPM and pesticide safer use: The following volunteer SOWs in IPM and pesticide safer use were undertaken for the F2F regional program, country program, or country project area as a whole. These differ from the individual assignments addressing pesticide use with specific hosts, which should be included in the table below. These will be relatively limited. (none or list as below)

  1.   Volunteer XXX for Assignment XXX:

      a.   One sentence general description of activities with pesticides

      b.   Key findings and recommendations on limitations/successes of F2F PERSUAP

      c.   Recommendations to F2F for additional support needed to improve pest and pesticide management practices

  2.   Volunteer XXX for Assignment XXX:

      a.   (etc.)

Needs for a PERSUAP amendment: The following needs for a PERSUAP amendment to add pesticides were identified during the reporting period. (Indicate none or list)

F2F PERSUAP Assignment Data Table[1]:

Assignment (Trip) Number	Volunteer Name	Country	Country F2F Project	PERSUAP Assignment Type	Work Directly with USAID Mission or Mission-funded Project (Type 4) – Check for Yes	Training Syllabus Sent to F2F AOR/ Mission Environmental Officer (Type 1) – Check for Yes	Training Attended by USAID (Type 1) – Check for Yes
Counts:							

Certifications of assignment and office compliance with PERSUAP guidelines:

A. PERSUAP Compliance – F2F Assignments

[Implementing partner] certifies that all volunteers have received the F2F Environmental Brochure. For all PERSUAP Type 1, 2 and relevant Type 4 SOWs, [implementing partner] further certifies the following have been provided to and developed by the relevant volunteers:

	Type 1 SOWs[2]	Type 2 SOWs[2]

Provided to Volunteer	☐ F2F PERSUAP with Attachments A - H ☐ SUAP briefing with F2F field staff ☐ Implementing Partner F2F PERSUAP Questionnaire ☐ List of any IPM practices and any tools, forms, protocols, plans from previous volunteers ☐ Host country list of approved pesticides ☐ Approved pesticide list from any other applicable PERSUAPs	☐ F2F PERSUAP with Attachments B, C, F, H ☐ SUAP briefing with F2F field staff ☐ Implementing Partner F2F PERSUAP Questionnaire ☐ List of IPM practices from previous volunteers
Developed/ Provided by Volunteer	☐ Syllabus for training event ☐ Material Safety Data Sheets (filed in field office) ☐ Any pesticides that the F2F program should be able to recommend/use which are included on an approved list ☐ Limitations/successes of F2F PERSUAP ☐ Recommendations for additional support on pesticide management practices ☐ Recommendations/feedback on local IPM practices ☐ Highly Toxic Pesticides (Attachment E)/poor pesticide practices witnessed ☐ Tools, forms, protocols, plans for implementation of pesticide-related recommendations	☐ Limitations/successes of F2F PERSUAP ☐ Recommendations for additional support on pesticide management practices ☐ Recommendations/feedback on local IPM practices

B. PERSUAP Compliance – F2F Offices

[Implementing partner] certifies that all F2F staff have reviewed the F2F Environmental Brochure for staff the fiscal year and that the following have been updated and kept on file:

	Home Office	**Field Office**
Documents Updated and on File	☐ F2F Environmental Brochure for staff ☐ PERSUAP with Attachments A-I ☐ Any USAID Mission- or sector-wide PERSUAP(s) for relevant country/sector	☐ F2F Environmental Brochure for staff ☐ PERSUAP with Attachments A-I ☐ USAID Mission- or sector-wide PERSUAP(s) for relevant country/sector ☐ Host country list of approved pesticides[3] ☐ Implementing partner F2F PERSUAP Questionnaire, with any volunteer additions ☐ Material Safety Data Sheets for relevant pesticides[4] ☐ Tools, forms, protocols, plans developed by volunteers

[1]Required only for PERSUAP Type 1 & 2 SOWs, and for Type 4 SOWs that follow Type 1 & 2 requirements

[2]If governed by F2F PERSUAP, Type 4 SOWs should follow requirements for Type 1, 2, or 3 SOWs, as most relevant

[3]Or, letter from host country government stating that there is no list of government-approved pesticides and noting any specific measures that should be taken when F2F volunteers recommend pesticides

[4]It is recommended that these documents be translated into local languages for distribution to relevant hosts and partners. Please note if they have been translated (in whole or in part), and if not, why.

- The syllabus for each training event that includes pesticide use will be submitted to the Mission Environmental Officer and the USAID F2F AOR/COR for review and comment. The AOR/COR shall consult with the BEO or relevant REA, as needed, in situations where there is no Mission Environmental Officer.

- A representative from USAID (preferably the Mission) should attend the training sessions to the extent possible.

- All Implementing Partners (IPs) will be provided with and will familiarize themselves with the environmental brochures developed for the Farmer-to-Farmer Program. The "John Ogonowski Farmer-To-Farmer Program Environmental and Natural Resource Management Issues" provides program managers with needed information on environmental policies, issues, and regulations relevant to the F2F Program. The "Environmental Guidelines for Farmer-to-Farmer Volunteers" summarizes key environmental issues and regulations as guidance to volunteers to consider all potential environmental implications of their work (attached to the F2F IEE).

Annex C: Eligible F2F Countries and Existing F2F Programs

Eligible Countries by Region

F2F Focus Region	Feed the Future Core Countries	Feed the Future Aligned Countries	Other Countries
Caribbean & African Regions:			
Caribbean Basin:	Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras	Dominican Republic	Belize, Costa Rica, Dominica, El Salvador, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines
East Africa:	Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda	Southern Sudan	Congo, Comoros, Djibouti, Seychelles, Sudan
Southern Africa:	Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia	Zimbabwe	Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland
West Africa:	Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Liberia	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria	Guinea, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Togo

Non- Caribbean/African Regions:			
Asia:	Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal	East Timor, Indonesia, Timor-Leste	Afghanistan, Burma, India, Mongolia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Vietnam
Middle East & North Africa:		Egypt, Lebanon, West Bank and Gaza, Yemen	Jordan, Morocco
Europe, Caucasus & Central Asia	Tajikistan	Georgia, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Serbia, Ukraine	Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
Latin America:			Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru

Existing F2F Programs

Country	Implementer	Program Type
Angola	CNFA	Core country program
Armenia	ACDI/VOCA	Core country program
Bangladesh	Winrock International	Core country program
Bangladesh	Tennessee State University	VEGA SPSP small grant
Burma	Winrock International	Core country program

Colombia	Purdue University	VEGA SPSP PDP
Democratic Republic of Congo	ACDI/VOCA	Core country program
Dominican Republic	Partners of the Americas	Core country program
Egypt	Land O'Lakes	Core country program
Ethiopia	Catholic Relief Services	Core country program
Ethiopia	Veterinarians Without Borders	VEGA SPSP PDP
Georgia	ACDI/VOCA	Core country program
Ghana	ACDI/VOCA	Core country program
Guatemala	Partners of the Americas	Core country program
Guinea	Winrock International	Core country program
Haiti	Partners of the Americas	Core country program
Haiti	Florida A&M University	VEGA SPSP small grant
Jamaica	Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and Americas	VEGA SPSP PDP
Kenya	Catholic Relief Services	Core country program
Kyrgyzstan	ACDI/VOCA	Core country program
Lebanon	Land O'Lakes	Core country program
Liberia	ACDI/VOCA	Core country program
Malawi	CNFA	Core country program
Mali	Browse and Grass Growers	VEGA SPSP small grant
Mozambique	CNFA	Core country program
Nepal	Winrock International	Core country program
Nicaragua	Partners of the Americas	Core country program
Nigeria	Winrock International	Core country program
Senegal	ACDI/VOCA	Core country program
Senegal	Winrock International	Core country program
Tajikistan	ACDI/VOCA	Core country program
Tanzania	Catholic Relief Services	Core country program
Uganda	Catholic Relief Services	Core country program
Uganda	Veterinarians Without Borders	VEGA SPSP PDP
Zambia	NCBA CLUSA	VEGA SPSP small grant

Annex D: Required Indicators

Standard Farmer-to-Farmer indicators are reported in four tables. Small grant recipients are <u>only required to report on indicators highlighted in yellow.</u>

Table 1

Farmer-to-Farmer Program Standard Indicator Reporting Tables
Table 1: Volunteer and Assignment Data

Assignment (Trip) Number	Name	Sex	State of Residence	Occupation Category	Race/Ethnicity	Prior F2F Service	Number of Scopes of Work	Type of Volunteer Assistance	Type of Commodity Chain	Country	Country F2F Project	Scope of Work Start Date	Scope of Work End Date	Number of Volunteer Days	Value of Volunteer Time Leveraged on Assignment (U.S.$)	Estimated Value of Host Contribution (U.S.$)	Number of Persons Trained Male	Female	Total	Number of Persons Directly Assisted Male	Female	Total	Number of Volunteer Recommendations Made Economic	Organizational	Environmental	Financial	Total	Host(s)
Fiscal Year	**2014**																											
U-F-1	Erin Baize	F	AZ	N	W/N	N	1	T	A	Faminestan	Aquaculture	9/24/2013	10/9/2013	17	$7,990	$657	62	38	100	70	51	121	3	2	1	0	6	Watershed Conservancy (WC)
U-F-2a	Gary Alex	M	IL	G	W/N	Y	3	T	T	Faminestan	AET	10/12/2013	10/23/2013	12	$5,640	$400	15	32	47	211	228	439	6	0	0	0	6	Faminestan Farmers Federation
U-F-2b	Gary Alex									Faminestan	Rural Finance	10/24/2013	10/31/2013	8	$3,760	$65	3	1	4	3	1	4	2	1	0	0	3	Yousaree Financial Services
U-F-2c	Gary Alex									Faminestan	Legumes	11/1/2013	11/8/2013	8	$3,760	$200	27	15	42	116	87	203	1	4	0	0	5	National Producers Korporation (N-P-K)
U-F-3	Erin Baize	F	AZ	N	W/N	N	1	T	T	Faminestan	Horticulture	12/1/2013	12/20/2013	20	$9,400	$0	0	0	0	54	31	85	2	0	2	0	4	Faminestan Farmers Federation
	Counts:	3	3	3	3	3	5	3	3	5	5			Totals: 65	$30,550	$1,322	107	86	193	454	398	852	14	7	3	-	24	5

Table 2

Farmer-to-Farmer Program Standard Indicator Reporting Tables
Table 2: Host Data (Baseline)

Host	Country	Country F2F Project	Date of Baseline Assessment	Host Gender	Institution Type	Potential Beneficiaries Members/Owners	Employees	Clients & Suppliers	Family Members	Total	Economic Indicators Area of Potential Production Influence (ha)	Annual Gross Sales (Revenue) (US$)	Annual Net Income (US$)	Environmental Indicator Area Potentially under Improved Environmental/ Natural Resource Management (ha)	Financial Services Indicators Annual Value of Rural/ Agricultural Lending (US$)	Number of Rural/ Agricultural Loans Issued Annually	Organizational Indicator ODI Rating
Fiscal Year																	
Watershed Conservancy (WC)	Faminestan	Aquaculture	9/24/2013	F	N	1	74	3	385	463	6,000	500	3,033	6,000	-	-	2.3
Yousaree Financial Services	Faminestan	Rural Finance	9/30/2013	G	R	1	6	150	780	937	-	-	600	-	10,000	10	1.7
Count:	2	2	Total:			2	80	153	1,165	1,400	6,000	$ 500	$ 3,633	6,000	$ 10,000	10	2.0

Table 3

Small grant recipients are not required to submit any indicators from Table 3

Table 4

Farmer-to-Farmer Program Standard Indicator Reporting Tables						
Table 4: Outreach and Leverage						
Implementing Partner Name	Fiscal Year	Number of Press Releases	Number of Media Events	Number of Group Presentations	Total Number of Outreach Activities	Value of Resources Leveraged by Grantee and Volunteers in the U.S. (U.S.$)
USAID/Faminestan	FY15	284	68	493	845	$ 387,098
USAID/Faminestan	FY14	237	99	29	365	$ 245,050
Total To-Date (Date):		521	167	522	1,210	$ 632,148

Annex E: Past Performance Review Template

Past Performance References

	Reference 1	Reference 2	Reference 3
Contract Name			
Reference Number			
Client/Location			
Contract Value (USD)			
Contract Type			
Prime or Subcontractor			
Term of Performance			
Contact (Name, Title, Address, Phone)			
Description			

Annex F: VEGA Farmer-to-Farmer Illustrative Volunteer SOW

Summary Table: Volunteer Assignment SOW

Host/Partner: *X*

Beneficiary Organization: X	**Location of Project:** X
Primary Contact Person: X	**Date Project Started:** X
Telephone/Fax:	**Type of Assignment:** X
Email:	**Dates of Assignment:** X
Brief background on beneficiary organization: *This may include: history, industry, challenges faced, crop/product/services, members or employees, etc.*	**Objectives of the Assignment:** *Please provide detailed objectives of volunteer trip.*
Tasks to be carried out: X *Please describe tasks proposed to achieve objectives of volunteer trip.*	
Expected number of persons to be trained (m/f): X	**Required expertise of Volunteer:** X

Annex G: Branding & Marking

It is a Federal statutory and regulatory requirement that all overseas programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funds under an assistance award or sub-award must be appropriately marked with the USAID identity. See Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, 22CFR 226.91.

Under **22 CFR 226.91**, USAID requires the submission of a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan by the "*apparently successful applicant*." The apparently successful applicant's proposed Marking Plan may include a request for approval of one or more exceptions to the marking requirements in **22 CFR 226.91.** The AO evaluates the apparently successful applicant's Branding Strategy and Marking Plan (including any requests for exceptions) for approval, consistent with the provisions "Branding Strategy," "Marking Plan," and "Marking of USAID-funded Assistance Awards" contained in **AAPD 05-11, 22 CFR 226.91**, and **ADS 320**.

Please note that in contrast to "exceptions" to marking requirements, waivers to these requirements based on circumstances in the host country must be approved by the cognizant Mission Director or other USAID principal officer [see **22 CFR 226.91(j)**]. Please contact OAA/Policy, General Counsel/Acquisition & Assistance, or USAID's Senior Advisor on Brand Management if you have any questions about the applicability of either **AAPD 05-11** or **22 CFR 226.91**.

Apparently successful grant applicants will be asked to submit a branding and marking plan prior to award.

The branding strategy should describe: how the USAID, Farmer-to-Farmer, and VEGA logos and visual identity will be positioned in communication and advertising; how the project is named; how it is promoted and communicated; and identifies all donors and explains how they will be acknowledged. The Marking Plan should detail the public communications, commodities, and program materials intended to visibly bear the USAID Identity. For additional assistance on writing Branding Strategies and Marking Plans, please review ADS 303.3.6.3.f, available online at http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/.

Annex H: Environmental Guidelines for Farmer-to-Farmer Volunteers

"We have not inherited this earth from our parents; we are borrowing it from our children."
~Anonymous

Why do we need Environmental Guidelines?

A healthy environment and sustainable use of natural resources are essential to long-term economic growth. As with all USAID financed programs, the Farmer-to-Farmer Program is required to comply with USAID environmental regulations found in **Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 216**[2], specifying that the environment is to be safeguarded from adverse consequences in the implementation of all program activities. If not planned and implemented wisely, even the best intentioned assistance programs can have very real adverse impacts on real people's lives including not only their personal health but also the sustainability of the natural resources on which their present and future livelihood depends. Within this framework, it is USAID's policy to:

➢ Ensure that the environmental consequences of USAID financed activities are identified and considered by USAID and the host country prior to a final decision to proceed, and that appropriate environmental safeguards are planned, adopted, implemented, and monitored;

➢ Assist developing countries to strengthen their capabilities to appreciate and effectively evaluate the potential environmental effects of proposed development strategies and projects, and to select, implement and manage effective environmental programs that mitigate potential adverse effects;

➢ Identify and mitigate impacts resulting from USAID actions upon the environment, including those aspects of the biosphere which are common and cultural heritage of all mankind; and

➢ Define environmental limiting factors that constrain development and identify and carry out activities that assist in restoring the renewable resource base on which sustained development depends.

Regardless of the type of their assignment, volunteers are expected to study the environmental impact assessment documents that were developed for their programs by USAID, their home organization, and the host government. The purpose is to enable volunteers to be able to consider the potential environmental consequences of their work and to promote active environmental stewardship. Volunteers have a tremendous opportunity to disseminate a uniform and consistent message to promote environmentally sound practices throughout the agricultural communities in which they work.

Disclaimer: The purpose of these guidelines is not to provide the volunteer with technical standards and procedures for food production, processing, storage, etc. The guidelines are to serve as a benchmark for the volunteer in reflecting on how his/her recommendations, advice, and efforts can serve to instill environmental stewardship and promote environmentally sound solutions.

Volunteer Responsibility & Good Practices:

Promoting Ecologically Sound Solutions
While the environmental impact assessment and other project design documents provide an important framework, volunteers are encouraged to think of ways in which, through their individual assignments, they can promote sustainable solutions to agricultural production, processing, and distribution issues while maintaining an ecological equilibrium in those communities.

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[2] Also known as **22 CFR 216**, Agency Environmental Procedures, Environmental Policy,
http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/compliance/22cfr216

To identify solutions to certain environmental problems, a series of questions need to be asked and answered.

- *What is the source of the environmental problem?*
- *What is the magnitude and impact of the problem?*
- *What measures will help avoid or reduce the problem?*
- *How to implement these measures?*

Volunteers are encouraged to consider environmental impacts and issues that indirectly relate to the agricultural sub-sector, as well as long-term and cumulative impacts on the local, regional, and global environments. As they consider their ideas for new kinds of interventions, volunteers must discuss them with their home organization's managers, their USAID manager, and host country counterparts to ensure that they have considered all potential impacts and that there will be a good chance for achieving the hoped for results.

Will my recommendations and efforts promote….
- soil and water conservation?
- protection of water, soil, air, and food from contamination? pollution prevention?
- ecologically sound management and disposal of wastes?
- integrated pest management (particularly alternatives to chemical inputs—the last resort)?
- the importance of occupational health and safety both on the farm and in the industry?
  → better bathroom facilities with soap for employees?
- awareness of environmental health risks?
- reform of government policies and regulations to better manage and protect natural resources?
- reform of government policies and regulations to better protect farmers and other agricultural industry workers from environmental hazards?
- procedures for measuring, assessing, monitoring and mitigating the environmental impact of unsound practices currently in use?
- the emergence of an indigenous agricultural research capacity committed to developing processes and environment-friendly technologies?
- enabling agricultural exports by ensuring no inappropriate pesticides were used in production

Adverse Environmental Conditions and Protecting Your Health & Safety:

When we send volunteers on their assignments, we want to ensure that all volunteers are aware of severe environmental pollution problems and health risks that exist in certain areas. These hazards can be localized or regional. They can arise both from existing contamination and from the lack of adequate information, education, and regulatory controls.

Volunteers must exercise caution when actively participating in any of the agricultural production, processing, or distribution practices. Volunteers should be conscious of the general lack of enforceable environmental protection regulations and the prevalence of antiquated and defective equipment and machinery. Due to the lack of financial resources for maintenance and upkeep of equipment, training, and the provision of proper storage facilities, volunteers should use discretion when visiting farms and observing practices that involve machinery and facilities such as these.

With regard to pesticides, USAID's Environmental Compliance Procedures[3] state that "all proposed projects involving assistance for the procurement or use, or both, of pesticides shall be subject to the procedures prescribed…" These procedures are jointly completed by USAID, the host government and partner organizations. Depending on the details of an activity, you may encounter such reviews with titles of Initial Environmental Examination, Environmental Assessment, or Pesticide Evaluation Review – Safe Use Action Plan (PERSUAP). These reviews are prepared prior to implementation of an activity in order

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[3] 216.3(b)(1) of 22 CFR 216

to identify and understand potential environmental repercussions of proposed activities and to ensure mitigative actions are incorporated into the activities. The term 'pesticide' refers to any chemical or biological substance that is used to kill or repel pests. It is the generic term that includes insecticides (insect killers), herbicides (weed killers), rodenticides (rodent killers), fungicides (fungus killers), etc. Volunteers must understand and appreciate that all pesticides are poisons and many also can cause cancer, birth defects and other long term illnesses or even death. Some pesticides are more dangerous than others and the environmental impact assessment that is conducted on an activity selects the safest ones possible while creating requirements for expert training in their application and handling. The analysis evaluates the economic, social and environmental risks and benefits of the planned pesticide use, prescribes a limited list of pesticides that may be permitted to be purchased and/or used (even if they are purchased with non-activity funds) in an activity while establishing safety protocols and ensuring local health clinics have trained staff and antidotes to identify and treat pesticide poisonings. Volunteers may encounter situations where pesticides are being used that have not been approved for procurement or use in the activity. In such cases the volunteer should immediately report the situation to their program manager and to the local USAID manager to jointly develop a solution to the problem.

In all cases, volunteers need to:

- Take care of their own health first and if necessary, do not participate in that activity;
- Note possible negative effects on the environment;
- If a volunteer comes across inappropriate or misapplication of an approved pesticide and the volunteer is trained in pesticide use and safety, open the discussion up to alternative practices based on the findings of the approved environmental impact assessment that is in place for the activity; then report on the situation to their program manager and the USAID manager;
- If a volunteer is asked to recommend a pesticide and the volunteer is fully trained in pesticide application and safety and has studied the approved environmental impact assessment documents for the activity, the volunteer should recommend the appropriate approved pesticide from the assessment along with the approved training of the people who will use the pesticide. If the volunteer is not fully trained in pesticide application and safety, the volunteer should refer the request to their program manager and USAID manager with a request that a pesticide expert to visit their site to provide the appropriate recommendation and training.

Volunteers should consider bringing with them: First aid kit, copies of passport, personal health card (shots, allergies, etc.), emergency phone numbers, contact names, allowable medications, cell phone, and technical support material.

Key Recommendations:

It is highly recommended that volunteers compile a general environmental evaluation for their individual assignments to gauge any potential negative (or positive) impacts. Discussion should concentrate on environmental degradation, health and safety risks to the environment and humans, and recommendations for monitoring the project after assignments have been completed. This brief assessment should be included in the volunteers' final report. The following are helpful tools in this assessment process; USAID Environmental Compliance Procedures; and review of baseline information, if provided. If not provided, conduct a basic baseline survey to support your interventions.

Information sources on environmental health and safety:

- Hughes, J. Donald, *The Face of the Earth: Environment and World History*, 2000.
- Marrs, Timothy C., Ballantyne, Bryan, *Pesticide Toxicology and International Regulation*, 2004.
- Pavlinek, Peter*, Environmental Transitions: Transformation and Ecological Defense in Central and Eastern Europe*, 2000.
- Younes, Maged, et al, *International Food Safety Handbook: Science, International Regulation, and Control*, 1999.
- State Dept., International Travel Information: http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html.
- CDC, Travelers' Health (by destination): http://www.cdc.gov/travel/.

- Regulating Pesticides, International Issues: http://www.epa.gov/oppfead1/international/#I3
- The International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS): http://www.who.int/ipcs/en/.

Annex I: John Ogonowski Farmer-to-Farmer Program Guidelines for Implementing Partners: Environmental and Natural Resource Management Issues

Environmental and natural resource considerations feature in the policies of most developing countries and in the objectives of funding agencies. Economic activities impact on these resources and—as in the case of agriculture—may be completely dependent on and potentially deplete them.

Why are environmental and natural resource considerations important?

A healthy environment and the sustainable use of natural resources are essential to long-term economic growth. All U.S. government financed programs, including the Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) program, are obligated to comply with U.S. environmental regulations stipulating that the environment is to be safeguarded from adverse consequences in the implementation of all program activities. Volunteers are expected to consider the potential environmental consequences of their work and to promote active environmental stewardship. F2F implementing partners shall take responsibility for transferring to the volunteers all relevant information from the environmental impact assessment documents that were developed for their programs by USAID, with their participation and the participation of the host institutions. Volunteers are encouraged to work with their USAID manager to ascertain that all requirements and safeguard measures recommended in the environmental impact assessment documents for each project/activity are followed. USAID's environmental guidelines require programs that it funds to:

- Ensure that the environmental consequences of USAID-financed activities are identified and considered by USAID and the host country prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are planned, adopted, implemented and monitored;
- Assist developing countries to strengthen their capabilities to appreciate and effectively evaluate the potential environmental effects of proposed development strategies and projects, and to select, implement, and manage effective environmental programs that mitigate potential adverse effects;
- Identify and mitigate impacts resulting from USAID's actions upon the environment, including those aspects of the biosphere which are the common and cultural heritage of all mankind; and
- Define environmental limiting factors that constrain development and identify and carry out activities that assist in restoring the renewable resource base on which sustained development depends.

Major environmental issues in volunteer programs

Relative priority for environmental activities: To what extent should implementing agencies be required to incorporate environmental and natural resource considerations into economic growth oriented volunteer projects and assignments? Increasing attention to environmental issues might lessen economic impacts on hosts and subsectors. However, environmental and natural resource conservation is often critical to long-term sustainability of most industries. Thus, many projects and assignments naturally address these issues, although generally as a secondary objective. Natural resource management and environmental protection considerations can be appropriate as explicit criteria for selection of subsectors, partners, and hosts, and will definitely yield positive results. Furthermore, sustainable conservation practices generally must meet criteria of producing positive economic benefits if they are to be adopted by hosts.

Monitoring environmental and NRM impacts: Implementing agencies must be able to identify how volunteer assignments benefit the environment and sustainable natural resource management and must be able to quantify project impacts on the environment. This necessitates more attention to environmental impacts in the design of subsector and host projects. However, these impacts are quite variable, particularly with regards to water and air pollution, soil and water conservation, biodiversity, and food safety. Many of these impacts are a challenge to measure and to aggregate for reporting (as can be done in dollar terms for economic growth impacts). These challenges plus the long-term nature of many environmental and NRM impacts require thoughtful planning and reporting that can benefit from professional advice.

Current practices for environmental considerations in volunteer programs

Up until now, environmental protection and natural resource considerations have not been a major focus in the F2F Program, though many F2F implementing agencies have been effective and creative in serving environment and natural resource management goals, while targeting economic development as their main program objectives. Economic growth strategies and consumer markets are now requiring safer and better quality products, thus raising the importance of environmental considerations.

USAID Environmental Compliance Procedures: Implementing agencies must adhere to USAID's Environmental Compliance Procedures, Title 22, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 216 (22 CFR 216[4]). Specific procedures for every new and/or amended program or project are set forth in this guidance. If there are no reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts, the planned work may appropriately be classified as a **Categorical Exclusion**. Most programs and projects, however, require an Initial Environmental Examination (IEE). The IEE must provide enough information that a determination can be made of the reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts associated with the proposed program or project and what, if any, conditions or modifications are needed to eliminate or mitigate the potential impacts.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

Categorical Exclusion. A formal Agency decision on specific classes of actions, which do not have potential for environmental impacts and for which an Initial Environmental Examination and Environmental Assessment are not required. A written justification for the Categorical Exclusion is required.

Initial Environmental Examination. An Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) is the first review of the reasonably foreseeable effects of a proposed action on the environment. Its function is to provide a brief statement of the factual basis for a Threshold Decision as to whether an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement will be required.

Threshold Decision (or Determination). A formal Agency decision reached in the IEE that determines whether or not a proposed Agency action is a major action significantly affecting the environment.

Negative Threshold Decision. Is made by the USAID Bureau Environmental Officer for an IEE in cases where potential environmental issues can be fully addressed at the IEE stage. Negative Determinations often have mandatory "Conditions" associated with them to ensure identified environmental issues are fully addressed.

Positive Threshold Decision. Is made by the USAID Bureau Environmental Officer in cases where a proposed action may potentially have a significant effect on the environment and an Environmental Assessment is required to address such issues before proceeding.

Environmental Assessment. A detailed study of the reasonably foreseeable significant effects, both beneficial and adverse, of a proposed action on the environment of a foreign country or countries. Prior to beginning an Environmental Assessment (EA), a Scoping Exercise must first be completed to focus the EA on the key issues. Scoping Exercises and the subsequent EAs include public participation to learn of and address potentially affected people's concerns, generate public ownership and promote democracy and civil society.

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[4] http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2151/reg216.pdf

An Initial Environmental Examination produces an environmental **Threshold Decision** (also referred to as the **Determination**). A Threshold Decision is approved by a USAID Environmental Officer. If it is determined that proposed work may have a significant effect on the environment, but the Agency and F2F partner organization have designed mitigating measures for the action to avoid significant effect on the environment, a **Negative Threshold Decision** will be issued. If a **Positive Threshold Decision** results from the IEE findings, then an **Environmental Assessment** must be prepared.

There is a separate subset of procedures that apply to pesticides that are either procured or used under a USAID supported activity. Under 216.2(e), "the Categorical Exclusions are not applicable to assistance for the procurement or use of pesticides." Section 216.3(b)(1) states that "all proposed projects involving assistance for the procurement, use, or both, of pesticides, shall be subject to the procedures prescribed" above, beginning with an Initial Environmental Examination. There is no Categorical Exclusion provision for this class of activities. Pesticide Evaluation Reports and Safe Use Action Plans (PERSUAPs) are prepared for USAID funded projects to address the requirements stipulated in 216.3 (b)(1), and volunteers must follow the guidelines given in the PERSUAP when using pesticides.

Additionally, any consideration to conduct research, provide, use, or recommend for use genetically modified organisms (GMO) in any activity must first be submitted to USAID for clearance by the USAID bio-safety committee. The information flowing from the USAID bio-safety committee shall be used as the basis for separate IEE to make a final determination whether such GMO may be researched, provided, used, or recommended for use.

Each year the F2F implementing partner's Annual Workplan must include a statement that identifies planned work that they classify as fitting the Categorical Exclusion under USAID Regulation 216 Section 216.2(c)(2)(i) relating to "education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.)." The workplan must also identify other planned work that would require the preparation of a separate IEE and more substantial review as described above.

For more information, please refer to the Environmental Compliance Procedures, 22 CFR 216, http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2151/reg216.pdf

The Role of the Implementers in Environmental Determinations

What Do Implementing Partners Need to Know? Implementing agencies should be familiar with Title 22 of the Federal Code of Regulations Section 216 (22 CFR 216), Environmental Compliance Procedures. As discussed above, implementing partners must identify in their Annual Workplan the planned work that they classify as fitting the Categorical Exclusion as well as any planned work that requires more substantial review and the preparation of a separate IEE. Implementing partners are not directly responsible for preparing a separate IEE and undertaking the environmental review necessary to prepare it but are responsible for alerting USAID about any volunteer assignment for which such review would be necessary. Where an IEE must be prepared, implementing partners are encouraged to participate in the development of the environmental review because the partner will be directly responsible for ensuring that the projects and activities comply with the final Threshold Decision and any Conditions that may be identified.

What Should Implementing Partners Do? Implementing partners should include with their volunteer briefing materials a copy of the Volunteer Environmental Guidelines brochure (discussed below). Implementing partners should also be able to respond to any concerns that volunteers have regarding environmental compliance. Implementing agencies are encouraged to use their best judgment when issues arise and to consult with USAID if further assistance is needed.

Volunteer Environmental Guidelines: A non-technical environmental guidelines brochure has been developed for the F2F program. The environmental guidelines are set out in a six-column folded brochure that focuses on protecting the health and safety of volunteers and on encouraging volunteers to think about how their recommendations, advice, and efforts might affect the environment. All implementers need to provide volunteers with a copy of the F2F environmental guidelines and provide more detailed advice and support on necessary environmental precautions if a particular region or activity warrants it.

Volunteer assignments: Some implementers specifically incorporate natural resource management and environmental themes into volunteer assignments, while others do not. Many assignments do have noteworthy secondary environmental benefits (see box below). Projects focused on recycling and composting, water management, environmental and health-sensitive disposal of pesticides, integrated pest management, organic agriculture, and forest management may be undertaken for economic growth objectives, but in practice contribute to environmentally responsible and sustainable practices. The F2F subsector projects promoting horticultural exports into the demanding markets of Western Europe and North America require that volunteers assist hosts in complying with trade standards and environmental regulations of the country or region receiving these exports that are "environmentally friendly".

EXAMPLES OF "ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY" VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS

Honduras sugar cane production: F2F volunteers in Honduras worked with small sugar cane producers in the Taulabe area of Siguatepeque who make *rapadura*, a hard brown sugar that is sold in the local market. *Rapadura* producers traditionally boil the juice from sugar cane in primitive pans using wood, sugar cane waste, and old tires as fuel. The burning of tires causes environmental pollution and health hazards to those who tend the fires. Contaminants from this process also get into the *rapadura* and are passed on to the consumer. The project has helped producers improve processing and reduce contaminants using techniques similar to those used by Vermont Maple sugar makers. Simple flue pan technology that was introduced to reduce fuel consumption, reduce boiling time, and improve quality also eliminates the need to use tires as fuel and improves the quality of the brown sugar in an environmentally sustainable way.

Haiti F2F projects: Organizations working in the Cap Haitian region have adopted technologies that help conserve soil and water. These include the use of compost to increase soil fertility and water retention and contour planting to avoid erosion and increase water retention in the dry season. This has been a focus of the F2F program in this region due to Haiti's severe environmental problems.

Organic agriculture: Organic agriculture is a huge industry in the U.S. and Europe, growing at 22 -25% a year and worth about $15 billion in the U.S. alone. This presents a significant financial opportunity for African farmers to export or sell to the fledgling but growing organic market within Africa. Farming organically reduces input costs for African farmers and impacts positively on soil erosion, soil health, desertification, plant health, farmer health and welfare, and consumer nutrition.

Partners of Americas (POA) reports that sustainability at all levels – economic, social, cultural, and environmental – is considered in all of its projects, and that environmental sustainability is particularly relevant in its F2F Program. POA found "substantial impact regarding host adoption of environmentally oriented practices, particularly in the adoption of practices to improve natural resource management." Throughout the life of its program, POA volunteers have worked to increase knowledge about – and help farmers and ranchers adopt – practices that are economically viable and environmentally sound.

Land O'Lakes' (LOL) experience with F2F programs has shown that it is important that there be an economic incentive for producers to adopt environmentally friendly practices, as the short-term demands of daily life make it difficult for them to devote resources to long-term objectives, such as environmental protection and natural resource management. At the same time, experience has shown that when these long-term goals are connected to economic benefits in the short- or medium-term, producers readily adopt new practices.

Role of field staff: Field staffs are key to a volunteer program's positive impacts on the environment and should always be on the lookout for negative impacts, avoiding work with hosts that have a poor environmental record or little interest in changing their practices. We recommend that a senior staff member with environmental expertise review subsector and host project plans and volunteer scopes of work to advise on how environmental considerations can be appropriately incorporated.

Checklists for volunteers: The following checklist of questions can help volunteers incorporate environmental considerations into their work.
Will the volunteers' recommendations and efforts promote:

1. soil and water conservation?
2. protection of water, soil, air, and food from contamination?
3. ecologically sound management and disposal of wastes?
4. integrated pest management?
5. only USAID approved pesticides being purchased and/or used in a safe and appropriate manner?
6. the importance of occupational health and safety both on the farm and in industry? For example, better bathroom facilities with soap for employees?
7. alternatives to chemical inputs when feasible?
8. awareness of environmental health risks?
9. income generating activities that can be used to finance the costs of pro-environment technologies and practices?
10. reform of government policies and regulations to better manage and protect natural resources?
11. reform of government policies and regulations that better protect farmers and other agricultural industry workers from environmental hazards?
12. procedures for measuring, assessing, monitoring, and mitigating the environmental impact of unsound practices currently in use?
13. the emergence of an indigenous agricultural research capacity committed to developing environmentally sustainable practices, processes, and environment friendly technologies?
14. the concept of pollution prevention?
15. increased agricultural exports by ensuring no inappropriate pesticides were used in production?

Protecting a volunteer's health: Implementing agencies need to be especially concerned with protecting volunteers' own health while they are working abroad. Severe environmental pollution problems and health risks may be local or regional in magnitude. These conditions exist or can arise due to a lack of training, poor regulations, poor enforcement, and a lack of financial resources. Volunteers should be alert for antiquated and defective equipment and machinery and improperly stored or mislabeled containers of pesticides and chemicals. In some locations, particularly in the former Soviet Union, radioactive materials and heavy metals have contaminated soil, air, and water. General guidelines for all volunteers during their assignments are to:

- Be familiar with major pollution issues in the region/locale you are visiting;
- Avoid demonstrating the operation of machinery and equipment that you are unfamiliar with or for purposes for which its use is not intended;
- Avoid exposing yourself to chemicals and pesticides that are unlabeled or not in proper containers. Ensure all pesticides are neatly organized and stored in a dry, locked, controlled room away from any living space. Do not let pesticide containers be reused for any purpose.; and
- Make health and safety issues a part of the information and advice you leave behind. For example, do not let farmers mix pesticides by stirring with their bare hands. Be sure anyone exposed to pesticides wash themselves and their clothes immediately, and can get to trained medical help if necessary. By

raising these issues, you can help to educate your hosts on the importance of a safe working environment and dangers that should not be passed on to others.

Key recommendations

Those designing assignments for volunteers can enhance positive impacts on the environment by:

- Reviewing available documentation related to environmental conditions and the extent to which natural resource depletion limits economic growth. Many countries have environmental plans or national plans that provide basic information on the subject.
- Targeting work on subsectors with an environmental and natural resource management focus, where possible. Soil erosion, biodiversity conservation, air and water pollution, forest management, water use, and other environmental technologies are all areas in which the U.S. possesses significant experience and many potential volunteers.
- Ranking the short list of candidate subsector projects, as part of the subsector selection process, on the basis of the severity of environmental issues involved and the potential for volunteers to contribute significantly to mitigating actual and potential adverse environmental consequences of subsector expansion.
- Identify potential partners and hosts that understand the connections between sustainable productivity and sustainable use of natural resources. Host organizations that may be polluters should at a minimum have a willingness to explore alternative approaches.
- Include questions relating specifically to environmental and natural resource management issues as a routine part of the preparation of project plans with partners and host organizations, even where these do not feature in the proposed set of volunteer assignments.
- Tap the large pool of potential U.S. volunteers in the environmental and natural resource management areas.
- Incorporate environmental and natural resource management considerations into volunteer orientation and reporting, even when these are not the primary focus of the assignment.
- It is highly recommended that volunteers compile a general environmental evaluation for their individual assignments to gauge any potential negative (or positive) environmental impacts. Discussion should concentrate on environmental degradation, health and safety risks to the environment and humans, and recommendations for monitoring the project after assignments have been completed. This brief assessment should be included in the volunteers' final report.
- Make all volunteers aware of conditions in the host countries and communities that might affect their personal health.

Information sources on environmental health and safety

USAID's general launching point for information relating to environmental assessments and guidelines are at:

- http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/compliance/regulations-procedures
- USAID's list of key contacts (Environmental Officers) in Bureaus and Missions at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/compliance/environmental-compliance-officers
- USAID's Environmental Training Course Materials, including Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 216 that governs the U.S. government's environmental impact abroad. The site also contains various forms and templates relating to Initial Environmental Examinations. http://www.encapafrica.org/EPTM.htm
- Feshbach, Murray and Friendly, Alfred, Jr. *Ecocide in the USSR: Health and Nature Under Siege.* 1992. Basic Books, New York, N.Y.
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- State Dept., International Travel Information: http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html.
- CDC, Travelers' Health (by destination): http://www.cdc.gov/travel/.
- Regulating Pesticides, International Issues: http://www.epa.gov/oppfead1/international/#I3
- The International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS): http://www.who.int/ipcs/en/.
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