

## Note to USAID Staff, Consultants & Partners Regarding the: Africa Bureau ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FORM & INSTRUCTIONS

### Appropriate use

1. The Environmental Review Form (ERF) can only be used when and as specifically authorized by the IEE or EA governing the project or program in question. For IEEs, this authorization is made in the form of a negative determination with conditions. *Authorized use of the ERF is limited to the specific class of activities enumerated in the determination.*
2. The BEO will not clear an IEE or EA that authorizes use of the ERF unless ALL of the following are true:
  - a. **the general nature or potential scope of the activities for which the ERF will be used are known** at the time the IEE is written (e.g. small infrastructure rehabilitation, training and outreach for a specified purpose, etc.).
  - b. **these activities will be executed under a grant or subproject component of a parent project/program.** The ERF cannot be used in lieu of a request for categorical exclusion, IEE or IEE amendment when new activities/components are to be added to existing projects, programs or sector portfolios.
  - c. of their general nature, **foreseeable adverse environmental impacts are small or easily controllable with BASIC MITIGATION TECHNIQUES that can BE SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTED BY FIELD STAFF.**
  - d. of their general nature, the **activities are NOT large-scale.**

There is no formal AFR standard for “small-scale activities.” Over time, AFR has developed some “rules of thumb” for activities that are BOTH small-scale AND pose very low risks of significant adverse impacts. These are used in the ERF itself: e.g. construction involving less than 10,000 sq ft total disturbed area and less than \$200,000 total cost; road rehabilitation of less than 10km total length without change to alignment or right-of-way. Activities moderately larger than these “rules of thumb” are also small-scale, but are treated by the ERF as being of moderate/unknown risk, thus requiring an environmental review report.

What does “moderately larger” mean? What about activities for which there is no “rule of thumb” built into the ERF? Absolute physical scale and funding level, physical scale relative to the surrounding built environment, population affected, and number of locations affected are among the factors relevant to determining whether a class of activities is “small scale.” The IEE must provide enough information for the BEO to assess whether the activities proposed for subproject review will be indeed be small scale within their implementation context.

### Adaptation of the form

1. Text in **UNDERLINE & BLUE HIGHLIGHT** MUST be customized to the particular project/mission.
2. **Yellow** highlighted text must be reviewed and then modified, deleted or retained, as appropriate.
3. Both the form AND instructions should be generally reviewed and modified to reflect the specific project/program and implementation context.
4. The adapted form and instructions must be appended to the Initial Environmental Examination for the overall project.
5. For NRM-oriented programs (especially those involving CBNRM, ecotourism, enterprises exploiting non-timber forest products, etc.) consider adaptation and use of the Supplemental Environmental Review Form for NRM sector activities.

### Questions and Guidance

General guidance on subproject review is available on the MEO Resource Center at [www.encapafrika.org/meoEntry.htm](http://www.encapafrika.org/meoEntry.htm). For specific questions, contact the Mission Environmental Officer or Regional Environmental Advisor. Good-practice examples of completed forms, environmental review reports and environmental management plans are available from USAID/AFR’s ENCAP project: [encapinfo@cadmusgroup.com](mailto:encapinfo@cadmusgroup.com); [www.encapafrika.org](http://www.encapafrika.org).

### Revision history:

Major update on 24 June 2010 to clarify appropriate use, revise Env Review Report structure, and update clearance requirements. Formatting and presentation revised 17 Jan 2005. Revised April 13, 2004, to include biosafety considerations and better reflect the Supplemental Environmental Review Form for NRM sector activities.

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