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INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXAMINATION (IEE) REQUEST FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION (RCE)

PROJECT/ACTIVITY DATA:

Activity Name: The Arangkada Philippines Dos Project (TAPP II)

Country/region: Philippines

Start Date: 12/5/2016

End Date: 1/30/2019

Life of Project Amount (\$): 300,000

IEE Prepared by: Emil Francis (“Jay”) B. de Quiros

Date: 11/23/2016

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION RECOMMENDED: (Place X where applicable)

Categorical Exclusion: Negative Determination with Conditions:
Positive Determination: Deferral:

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this document, in accordance with Title 22, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 216 (22CFR216), is to provide a preliminary review of the reasonably foreseeable effects on the environment, as well as recommended Threshold Decisions, for the activities detailed below. This document provides a brief statement of the factual basis for Threshold Decisions as to whether an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement is required for the activities managed under the scope of this document.

The activities under review are recommended for categorical exclusion.

Background and Description of Activities

The activity intends to build on the USAID-American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Inc. (AmCham) Global Development Alliance (GDA) Cooperative Agreement entitled “The Arangkada Philippines Project,” (TAPP) that was completed on September 30, 2016. It will continue to primarily undertake advocacy work on business and economic reforms with the new administration that will support increased foreign and domestic direct investments, more rapid, sustained, and inclusive growth, reduced unemployment and underemployment, and enhance overall competitiveness, including further modernizing infrastructure and minimizing bureaucracy and maximizing governance.

AmCham, in partnership with foreign (Joint Foreign Chambers) and domestic business groups will undertake the following activities:

- Organization of conferences and forums for surfacing recommendations as well as providing a platform for advocating identified reforms;
- Formulation of policy briefs and notes on priority reform sectors;

- Issuance of letters and conduct of meetings with senior officials from all government branches combined with public statements;
- Participation in National Competitiveness Council committees aimed at repealing antiquated laws and policies; and
- Interaction with print and broadcast media to improve mileage of advocacies.

The project expects to contribute toward the achievement of the following results:

- Increased total foreign direct investment (FDI) by mid-2018, exceeding \$7 billion.
- Reduced unemployment to at most 5.5% and underemployment to at most 19%.
- GDP growth rates exceeding 7% per year, beginning 2018
- Increased Infrastructure Expenditure to 8% of GDP
- Enhanced competitiveness as reflected in major global ratings

Activities financed under TAPP II include technical assistance, advocacy, data collection, communication, and workshops. No funding will be provided for construction activities or other actions that may have direct impact on the environment.

Recommended Threshold Decisions

- Justification for Categorical Exclusion Request

The activities described justify Categorical Exclusions, pursuant to 22CFR216.2(c)(1) and (2), for which an Initial Environmental Examination, or an Environmental Assessment are not required because the actions do not have an effect on the natural or physical environment.

Specifically, as currently planned, these activities fall into the following classes of action:

- Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.)
- Analyses, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings
- Document and information transfers
- Studies, projects or programs intended to develop the capability of recipient countries to engage in development planning.

Revisions and Limitations

If during implementation, project activities are considered outside of those described in this document, an amendment shall be submitted. Pursuant to 22CFR216.3 (a)(9), if new activities are added and/or information becomes available which indicates that activities to be funded by the project might be “major” and the project’s effect “significant,” this determination will be reviewed and revised by the Contract/Agreement Officer’s Representative of the project, and submitted to the Mission Environmental Officer and Bureau Environmental Officer for approval and, if appropriate, an environmental assessment will be prepared.

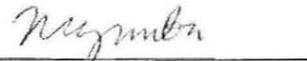
APPROVAL OF REQUEST FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

Office Chief,
Clearance


Jeffrey Lehrer

11/25/2016
Date

Mission Environmental Officer
Clearance


Marian Cruz Navata

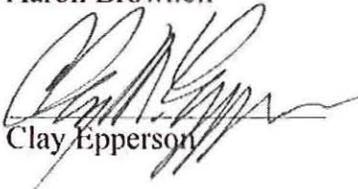
11-28-2016
Date

Regional Environmental Advisor
Clearance

*cleared by email
with minor edits*
Aaron Brownell

11/28/2016
Date

Deputy Mission Director
Clearance


Clay Epperson

11/29/16
Date

APPROVAL:

Mission Director


Susan K. Brems, PhD

11/29/16
Date

CONCURRENCE:

Bureau Environmental Officer


William Gibson

November 30, 2016
Date