FISCAL YEAR 2016
CONFERENCE REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW OF CONFERENCE EXPENSES

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum M-12-12, *Promoting Efficient Spending to Support Agency Operations,* directs agencies to report conference expenses for the previous fiscal year on their public websites beginning January 31, 2013. This report provides a summary of expenses incurred by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for conferences held during fiscal year 2016, along with more detailed information on conferences where the net expenses associated with the event exceeded $100,000.

USAID has implemented comprehensive policies and other controls to mitigate the risk of inappropriate spending on conferences. The Agency's corporate conference approval and tracking system captures requests for conference approvals and facilitates senior management review and approval of conference expenditures. A chapter on conference planning and attendance is included in the Automated Directives System (ADS Chapter 580 Conference Planning and Attendance), which is available to the public and USAID staff worldwide. The conference policy documents the review process for conference expenses, including the following approval requirements:

- The Deputy Administrator must approve estimated expenditures that are greater than $100,000 up to 500,000 for both internal and external conferences;
- The Assistant Administrator for Management (AA/M) approves expenditures for internal and external conferences with estimated costs of $100,000 or less; and
- The Administrator must approve expenditures and provide a waiver for estimated expenditures over $500,000.

The Agency's review of conference expenditures ensures compliance with Agency and federal policies. Conferences must support the achievement of the Agency's core development or management objectives and/or provide critical training relevant to the work of Agency employees.

USAID incurred conference expenses of $8.6 million during fiscal year 2016. Forty-two of these conferences were directly sponsored by USAID with a total estimated cost of $8.4 million. A total of 2,811 USAID employees participated in these events, along with 3,278 outside participants. Additionally, 382 USAID employees attended 71 conferences not directly supported by USAID during the reporting period at a total estimated cost of $1.1 million. The average cost per participant for all conferences was $1,330.

USAID sponsored 30 conferences with expenses in excess of $100,000, 21 of which were technical events that supported the implementation of development programs. Per Memorandum M-12-12, additional information is provided below on these conferences. M-12-12 also requires that agencies publish a waiver signed by the agency head to incur expenses

exceeding $500,000 on a single conference. USAID sponsored one conference that exceeded this threshold during Fiscal Year 2016.

USAID-SPONSORED CONFERENCES WITH EXPENSES EXCEEDING $100,000*
Fiscal Year 2016

Title	Event Start	Event End	Location	Total USAID Participants	Outside Participants	Event Cost	Description
Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance. Office of the Director Operations Division (DCHA/OFDA) 2015 Annual Global Meeting	10/5/2015	10/7/2015	Arlington, Virginia	169	31	$175,898	The purpose of the meeting was to review program strategies and activities essential to ensuring that OFDA's role as the lead agency to respond to disasters and humanitarian assistance worldwide was being effectively met. This meeting brought together field and Washington, D.C. staff to discuss the streamlining of humanitarian aid; to develop strategies for future responses; and, to analyze best practices in the delivery of aid.
Power Africa Budget Working Group Meeting	10/13/2015	10/15/2015	Pretoria, South Africa	67	28	$180,829	The purpose of the meeting was to enhance knowledge sharing and understanding of program approaches and activities across countries and regions; train new staff on operations in developing environments; review monitoring and evaluation techniques; host practical workshops; serve as an advisory board to help strengthen activities to further progress toward the achievement of Power Africa objectives; and, provide a forum for Missions to provide feedback to Power Africa leadership and build cohesion across Power Africa field and Washington staff.
Global Maternal Newborn Health Conference	10/18/2015	10/21/2015	Mexico City, Mexico	27	973	$143,703	The Secretariat of Health of Mexico, together with convening partners, hosted the first-ever Global Maternal Newborn Health Conference in Mexico City. This landmark conference discussed strategies for reaching every mother and newborn with high-quality health care. It offered the first opportunity for the global maternal and newborn health communities to strategize on how to meet the new post-2015 health goals translating commitments into concrete action.
Resident Legal Officers (RLO) Conference	10/19/2015	10/22/2015	Crystal City, Virginia	110	0	$272,040	The purpose of the conference was to provide an opportunity for USAID attorneys to discuss relevant legal issues affecting the Agency, as well as, to share lessons learned and best practices.
Local Solutions Europe and Eurasia (E&E) Experience Summit	10/26/2015	10/28/2015	Belgrade, Serbia	60	0	$137,492	The purpose of the event was to exchange experiences from a diverse group of Mission-based practitioners and Washington-based champions on implementing the critical USAID Forward priority of Local Solutions. The peer-to-peer learning experience deepened the field's understanding and ownership, generated ideas for field participants; and, articulated actionable recommendations to improve policy and guidance.
National Forum on the State of the Ugandan Child	10/27/2015	10/28/2015	Kampala, Uganda	38	956	$315,915	The primary goal of the forum was to develop a shared vision among the Ugandan leaders, government, the Ugandan people and international partners based on the hard evidence from local and national research, statistical data, and field work about how to improve the well-being and future of Uganda's children. The event culminated in the Government of Uganda's adoption of the National Action Plan for Child Well-Being which aligns targets under the Sustainable Development Goals with the context of the Ugandan child and supports the objectives of the USG Action Plan for Children in Adversity (APCA). Uganda is an APCA priority country.

Title	Event Start	Event End	Location	Total USAID Participants	Outside Participants	Event Cost	Description
2015 Global Education Summit	11/2/2015	11/4/2015	Silver Spring, Maryland	120	305	$485,115	The purpose of the summit was to bring together USAID's education officers, partners, and implementers to reflect upon the successes and lessons learned over the life of the current education strategy, and to set a strong course for the next phase of USAID's strategic engagement in education. The Summit ensured that USAID is focused on delivering its Education Strategy's three goals, and that all education officers, implementers, and public and private sector partners are able to share information, learn, and focus on common sector priorities.
2015 Global Health State of the Art (SOTA) Technical Conference for the Africa Region	11/2/2015	11/6/2015	Lilongwe, Malawi	205	45	$687,726	USAID's practice of providing a forum for learning and sharing has assured its role as a leader in the arena of global health. The need for health officers serving in Missions in Africa to receive technical training and strategic policy updates has never been more acute. Much of the success of the health sector in USAID is attributed to the continuous technical, management and leadership training and close communication among health staff and with other Agency officers. The purpose of the training was to focus on skill-building in rapidly emerging areas of importance for USAID that do not fall within the background of a typical health officer. Training in the latest programmatic and scientific evidence pertinent to the Agency's three topline health goals: EPCMD, an AIDS Free Generation (AFG), and the GHSA (including Ebola). Health officers were equipped with skills to successfully represent USAID in the broad stakeholder environment of global health, and to successfully negotiate USAID's interests in mutual health goals across multiple stakeholders. Critical areas include health financing for sustainable gains, and measurement and accountability related to health. Staff received Agency policy, strategy and resource updates to ensure compliance.
Second Economist Regional Workshop	11/9/2015	11/13/2015	Pretoria, South Africa	40	12	$146,408	The purpose of the workshop was to bring together USAID economists to discuss broad subjects including macro- and micro- economics, thematic and region specific challenges and issues, the roles of economists in the Agency, and inform and educate USAID economists on Inclusive Growth Diagnostics, Impact Evaluation, Jobs and Economic Growth, and Extreme Poverty.
Private Sector Engagement Forum	11/17/2015	11/19/2015	Washington, DC	70	75	$172,074	The purpose of the event was to offer knowledge and tools to uphold USAID's commitment to partnering for development, expand our partner base and maximize the value of the private sector. Topics included partnership models; understanding a private sector perspective; procurement; and, measuring impact.
2015 Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) OTI Worldwide Management Meeting	11/18/2015	11/20/2015	Arlington, Virginia	123	30	$210,930	The meeting was a critical opportunity to bring together staff working in complex and high-threat environments including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Ukraine, Nigeria, Libya, and Burma for cross-program learning and staff care opportunities. The meeting was part of OTI's focus on improved transition and conflict programming through direct sharing of critical information, lessons learned, and incorporating best practices and recommendations.

Title	Event Start	Event End	Location	Total USAID Participants	Outside Participants	Event Cost	Description
Foreign Service National (FSN) Worldwide Workshop 2015	11/30/2015	12/3/2015	Arlington, Virginia	100	0	$414,580	The purpose of the workshop was to empower a cadre of FSNs to promote the welfare of the FSN workforce worldwide, increasing their capacity to implement locally sustainable solutions across all USAID development sectors. The objective was to explore headquarter and FSN partnership in implementing USAID Initiatives; draft recommendations based on best practices addressing FSN common challenges regarding local compensation plans (LCP), FSN/FSO relationships, talent management, and FSN empowerment; improve FSN leadership and communication skills; and, promote cross-regional collegial learning between FSNs and Missions.
U.S.-Pakistan Clean Energy Business Opportunities Conference	12/1/2015	12/2/2015	Washington, DC	20	180	$168,626	The purpose of the meeting is to provide the Government of Pakistan (GOP) with the opportunity to highlight the major strides they have accomplished in attracting private sector investment into clean and renewable energy development in Pakistan, and explain their plans to attract further investment; and, provide a forum for grid- and off-grid U.S. and international clean/renewable energy companies and investors to learn about the legal, policy, and regulatory framework in Pakistan, and to convey to the GOP what will be necessary for the GOP to attract, finance, and deliver clean and renewable energy projects to Pakistan.
Food for Peace Global Meeting	12/7/2015	12/11/2015	Arlington, Virginia	120	10	$309,916	The purpose of the global meeting was to share critical information, lessons learned, and best practice aimed at strengthening the effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of Food for Peace (FFP) food assistance interventions. The meeting also provided training in the monitoring and evaluation of USAID's cash and voucher activities, strengthening field staff's ability to assess compliance and reinforce FFP accountability for these resources.
Annual Infrastructure Workshop	12/14/2015	12/18/2015	Washington, DC	60	20	$134,820	As demonstrated in USAID's 2013 construction assessment, infrastructure is a fundamental element of development that cuts across every sector in which we work. Our often capital intensive investments in infrastructure can net high returns for diverse development objectives in health, education, governance and economic growth. To fully realize the benefits of infrastructure activities in our development programming we must successfully address long-term operations and maintenance of infrastructure and utilization of works in an uncertain future development context and environment.

Title	Event Start	Event End	Location	Total USAID Participants	Outside Participants	Event Cost	Description
Health Manager's Workshop for Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and Eurasia, Middle East, and the Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs Health Officers	12/14/2015	12/18/2015	Bangkok, Thailand	70	7	$255,486	The workshop provided Mission health office, Global Health, and Regional Bureau thought leaders the opportunity to enhance knowledge of middle-income programming approaches across countries and regions; undertake strategic planning on positioning USAID as a leader in the Global Health Security Agenda, PEPFAR, and other interagency health efforts; provide Washington updates around Agency priorities, Bureau priorities, Administration priorities, and related messaging to the Hill; gain an understanding of the needs and positions of Washington constituents such as Congress and think tanks from a strategic communications perspective; identify ways Washington can provide stronger support and improved technical assistance to health managers in the field; and, examine USAID's role in the larger context of foreign assistance.
Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Global Learning & Evidence Exchange (GLEE) - GHANA	1/19/2016	1/21/2016	Accra, Ghana	42	49	$270,396	The purpose of the exchange was to bring USAID Bureau and Mission staff together with experts and other field practitioners to lay the foundational elements that make up a multi-sectoral nutrition program for future guidance.
USAID and Global Fund Supply Chain and Procurement Meeting	2/8/2016	2/12/2016	Washington, DC	40	25	$186,874	The meeting was a joint workshop hosted by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and USAID, two of the largest procurers of antiretroviral medicines (ARV), HIV rapid test kits, insecticide-treated bed nets, artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT), and other humanitarian-provided life-saving medicines.
President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) All-Staff Retreat	2/22/2016	2/25/2016	Lusaka, Zambia	85	20	$287,198	The meeting brought together field-based and headquarter-based staff from both USAID and the Center for Disease Control to learn about critical technical and policy updates, thus helping to ensure the Agency advances its leadership in malaria control and sustains and further accelerates progress achieved to date. Technical discussion areas included strategic implementation of indoor residual spraying in the context of insecticide resistance, durability of and distribution channels for insecticide-treated bed nets, malaria case management best practices and new approaches, behavior change communication efforts, and effective monitoring and evaluation practices.
State of the Art (SOTA) in Environment and Climate Change Training Workshop	2/22/2016	2/26/2016	Washington, DC	150	0	$420,345	The purpose of this training was to provide USAID staff with more technical and state-of-the-art information. New presidential initiatives, executive orders, Agency policies and international commitments in the environment and climate change sectors all require greater alignment between Washington and field-based operating units.

Title	Event Start	Event End	Location	Total USAID Participants	Outside Participants	Event Cost	Description
Transformational Finance Workshop	2/24/2016	2/26/2016	Bangkok, Thailand	50	20	$109,091	The purpose of this workshop was to focus on better understanding constraints to investments that have development goals, as well as educate external participants with what the donor community offers to mitigate risk and increase the probability of a successful investment through the use of partnerships and technical assistance. The workshop focused on investor concerns and needs in relation to development finance; core development finance instruments in the donor community; recent events, activities and novel tools from the private sector and donor community; and, how to include private sector partners and development finance in programmatic activities.
Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Global Learning & Evidence Exchange (GLEE) - Tanzania	3/8/2016	3/10/2016	Dar es Salaam, Tanzania	37	51	$247,426	The purpose of the exchange was to bring USAID Bureau and Mission staff from East and Southern Africa together with experts and other field practitioners working on agriculture, economic growth, nutrition, and health programs contributing to country-led nutrition improvement efforts, to lay out the foundational elements that make up a multi-sectoral nutrition program for future guidance.
Global Learning & Evidence Exchange on Climate Smart Agriculture (GLEE-CSA) - Zambia	3/13/2016	3/16/2016	Lusaka, Zambia	40	50	$160,639	The exchange focused on evidence to refine a CSA approach that supports the Feed the Future (FtF) goals of reducing poverty and improving nutrition on a population level. The exchange helped FtF advance understanding of new policy commitments and analytical tools that support the integration of CSA into agricultural and food security programs and activities.
Harnessing the Data Revolution for Resilience Forum	5/9/2016	5/12/2016	Bangkok, Thailand	30	65	$132,406	There is currently unprecedented access to digital data, as well as unprecedented digital connectivity. These trends enable new ways of utilizing digital data to better understand the real-time needs of communities in order to help them increase their collective and individual resilience. The forum focused on harnessing the power of digital data to transform the design, implementation and monitoring of international development programs to support resilience capacities at various scales. The event included topics such as real-time data, open data, big data, crowdsourcing of data, and innovative sensor technology for development.
Africa Regional Education Workshop	5/15/2016	5/20/2016	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	60	0	$169,443	The bi-annual education workshop provided technical training for USAID education staff including the exchange of lessons learned and best practices in all aspects of education design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.
South Africa Science, Technology, Innovation and Partnerships (STIP) Conference 2016	5/23/2016	5/27/2016	Pretoria, South Africa	120	0	$388,688	The conference emphasized operationalizing STIP strategically, programmatically, and organizationally within Missions; and, illustrated how STIP can serve the operational needs of an evolving USAID business model. To help overcome challenges related to STIP, professional exchanges among colleagues and the sharing of highlights of worldwide advances in applying STIP to the work of the Agency took place.

Title	Event Start	Event End	Location	Total USAID Participants	Outside Participants	Event Cost	Description
Advance Resilience Monitoring & Evaluation Training (ARMET)	6/13/2016	6/17/2016	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso	25	10	$143,787	The purpose of training was to ensure that resilience-focused monitoring and evaluation points of contact are prepared to effectively monitor and evaluate resilience-building efforts within their respective portfolios. Participants understood their role and how to efficiently operate within the planning, implementation, and evaluation cycle.
Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Global Learning & Evidence Exchange (MSN-GLEE) - Asia	6/21/2016	6/23/2016	Bangkok, Thailand	34	46	$191,031	The purpose of the exchange was to bring USAID Bureau and Mission staff together with experts and other field practitioners working on agriculture, economic growth, nutrition, and health programs contributing to country-led nutrition improvement efforts, to lay out the foundational elements that make up a multi-sectoral nutrition program for future guidance.
2016 Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (DRG) Exchange	6/27/2016	6/30/2016	Washington, DC	225	125	$372,506	The event brought together field and Washington-based staff with USAID partners for collaborative presentations, interactive discussions and vigorous debates about key DRG issues, programs and challenges facing the sector. The sessions included DRG global trends, thinking and working politically, DRG integration, and working in closing spaces.
USAID Delegation to the 71st United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)	9/13/2016	9/26/2016	New York City, New York	76	0	$377,886	The assembly represents one of the best opportunities during the year for the Agency to engage the international community, demonstrate Agency leadership on global challenges, and promote USG positions and USAID priorities with our development partners.

WAIVER SIGNED BY THE AGENCY HEAD TO INCUR EXPENSES EXCEEDING $500,000 ON A SINGLE CONFERENCE

September 10, 2015

INFORMATION MEMO FOR THE ACTING ADMINISTRATOR

FROM: SDAA/GH – Wade Warren /s/

SUBJECT: Relocation and date change for the 2015 Africa State of the Art (SOTA) Health
                Technical Training

On August 3, 2015, the U.S. Embassy in Tanzania issued a cable restricting USG travel
to Tanzania during the period of September 15 - November 7, 2015, due to the national elections.
In a follow-up dialogue with the USAID Acting Mission Director, we learned that the
Ambassador had rescinded his prior approval to conduct the Africa State of the Art Health
Technical Training in Dar es Salaam from October 5-9, 2015.

We have successfully identified an alternative venue in Lilongwe, Malawi, for November
2-6, 2015. There are no additional cost implications from the approved SOTA memo. The
original cost was $687,726. The revised cost is $603,706, a savings of $84,020.

Attachments:

   Tab 1 – Concurrence of Ambassador to Malawi
   Tab 2 – Agency Notice: Request to Restrict USG Travel to Tanzania
   Tab 3 – Revised Budget Table
   Tab 4 – Original Conference Approval Package *(dated July 2015)*
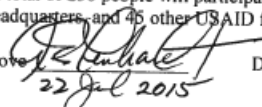
ACTION MEMO FOR THE ACTING ADMINISTRATOR

FROM: Bureau for Global Health - AA/ Ariel Pablos-Mendez /s/
        Africa Bureau – AA/ Tom Delaney /s/

SUBJECT: Waiver and Approval for the Africa State of the Art (SOTA) Health Technical Training

Recommendation

That you sign the waiver to incur costs in excess of $500,000 and approve the Africa State of the Art (SOTA) Health Technical Training to be held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from October 5-9, 2015. The proposed SOTA's total estimated direct cost is $687,726 in OE/Program funds for direct conference-related costs (including all travel and per diem costs for direct hire staff). An estimated total of 250 people will participate (205 USAID employees—190 from the field and 15 from headquarters, and 45 other USAID funded attendees).

JUL 2 2 2015   Approve _____   Disapprove _____
                       22 Jul 2015

Background

The Bureaus for Africa and Global Health seek approval to hold the bi-annual Africa Health State-of-the-Art (SOTA) training in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from October 5-9, 2015. The need for health officers serving in Missions in Africa to receive technical training and strategic policy updates has never been more critical. Over the last decade, the massive influx of resources for global health issues has revolutionized the operating environment in which USAID health teams engage. As USAID accelerates efforts to meet Presidential goals for addressing the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, to manage the expanding Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) throughout the continent, and to continue our important work to end preventable maternal and child deaths and foster an AIDS-Free Generation, it is essential that Agency health sector staff understand the latest technical and programmatic evidence on interventions that maximize the potential for impact. In order to effectively contribute to the Agency-wide goal of ending extreme poverty, USAID Health Officers require skills and knowledge of a large body of technical evidence in a variety of new areas, as well as a mastery of diplomacy and management of relationships with a diverse set of stakeholders. With health representing 70 percent or more of many USAID Mission budgets in Africa, health officers are increasingly responsible for contributing to the success of the USG's diplomatic and development engagement. While this environment presents exciting opportunities for health officers, the concurrent pressures are enormous and increased signs of stress and burnout have been noted.

The SOTA remains the Agency's best opportunity to ensure that USAID's Health Officers sharpen their skills to support the achievement of Agency goals in Africa. Every two

years, technical experts and Health Officers of all levels are brought together to update their technical understanding, learn the basis of the latest strategic and programmatic shifts, and receive updates on policy and operating procedures to deliver on top-line Agency health goals.

The proposed 2015 Africa SOTA training will focus on skills-building in rapidly emerging areas of importance for USAID that do not fall within the background of a typical health officer. Just two years ago, the Ebola response, the GHSA, and innovative health financing were low on the radar of importance for inclusion within the SOTA training. Today, these are critical components for USAID's continuing technical relevancy. Even in areas where USAID has a strong foundation of skills, such as in Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths (EPCMD), PEPFAR, and other infectious diseases, global investments in international health mean that innovations, technical updates, and policy issues are constantly evolving. This SOTA opportunity will help to bring the field up-to-date on the latest evidence-based program approaches and the Agency's strategic and management priorities, while also supporting key objectives of the recently released Quarterly Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) by fostering an environment for cross-Mission learning of best practices and experiences.

Specific SOTA objectives will focus on increased key program effectiveness and efficiency, assuring responsible use of Agency resources:
1. Train health staff in the latest programmatic and scientific evidence pertinent to the Agency's three topline health goals: EPCMD, an AIDS Free Generation (AFG), and the GHSA (including Ebola).
2. Equip health officers with skills to successfully represent USAID in the broad stakeholder environment of global health, and to successfully negotiate USAID's interests in mutual health goals across multiple stakeholders. The critical technical areas necessary to align EPCMD and GHSA programming within broader stakeholder (such as multi- and bi-lateral donors and host governments) engagement -include familiarity with health financing for sustainable gains, and increased skills in measurement and accountability related to health.
3. Provide Agency policy, strategy and resource updates to health staff to ensure compliance with Agency policies and guidance.
4. Assure continued lines of communication between Agency leadership and health officers and teams in the field. Meetings with each of the in-country teams fulfills two critical needs: a) enables headquarters leadership to better understand the management issues and constraints individual teams face as well as, b) reinforce consistent messaging with bi- and multilateral counterparts at both the headquarters and field levels.

SOTAs are regularly recurring training events listed in the Agency's Learning Management System (LMS). Africa Bureau, in collaboration with the GH Bureau, has sponsored successful bi-annual SOTA training for health staff in the field for the past three decades. This practice of providing a forum for learning and sharing has assured USAID's role as a leader in the arena of global health. Much of the success of the health sector in USAID is attributed to the continuous technical, management and leadership training and close communication among health staff and with other Agency officers. With the rapidity of change in this technical sector, training every two years is necessary to remain on the cutting edge of health programming. Additionally, the success of previous SOTA trainings attests to the continued strong mission interest and field

2

demand for such trainings. We have already received many expressions of interest about the 2015 Africa SOTA from field staff, including specific requests for technical sessions.

Several sites in Africa were explored (e.g., Cape Town, Accra, Dar es Salaam, Johannesburg, Rabat). Dar es Salaam was chosen because of availability of appropriate venues to accommodate 250 participants, as well as the lower hotel and venue costs. Cost comparisons of several venues are included in Tab 2. The Hyatt Regency in Dar es Salaam was selected as the most cost-effective venue. Approval for this SOTA is needed as soon as possible to secure agreements with the venue and local providers, accommodate advance planning time for field missions, and secure travel authorizations within these quoted rates.

In accordance with ADS Chapter 580, we certify that the proposed conference costs are comprehensive and represent the greatest cost advantage to the U.S. Government. Alternatives to a conference were considered, including videoconferencing, but were deemed impractical due to the large number of operating units represented and time differences, the individual and group activities required for effective learning, and the common technological constraints in the Africa region (e.g. limited internet bandwidth at many missions). Details regarding this event have been entered in the eConference Tracking and Approval System (eCTAS).

Resource Implications

We anticipate that SOTA participants will include Foreign Service Officers, Foreign Service Nationals and other health staff supported by various mechanisms (Personal Services Contracts, Participating Agency Service Agreements, Global Health Fellows, etc.) from each of the 33 African missions. An estimated **total of 250 people** will participate. While this number of participants is high, and raises the total dollar amount above the $500,000 threshold for approval, it is important to recognize that this only represents training for 29 percent of the approximately 725 health staff in Africa. The proposed SOTA's **total estimated direct cost** is **$687,726** in OE/Program funds for direct conference-related costs (including all travel and per diem costs for direct hire staff). Additionally, $272,200 in OE funds is estimated for direct hire (FSO, CS, FSN, PSC) salaries, which will be the responsibility of the individual offices. While the total cost of this event is substantial, the **per-person cost of $2,751**, of which approximately 40 percent is airfare costs, is extremely cost effective and considerably lower than some previously approved meetings/conferences.

OMB Circular M-12-12 prohibits expenses in excess of $500,000 on a single conference. The Agency head may provide a waiver from this policy where exceptional circumstances exist whereby spending in excess of the threshold is the most cost-effective option to achieve a compelling purpose. We recognize the challenge of proposing such a large event, and have examined the alternatives of conducting two smaller trainings within Africa sub-regions, or substantially reducing the overall number of participants. Neither of these options is optimal for achieving our objectives. Splitting the training becomes considerably more expensive overall when considering the need for duplicate facilitation and venue expenses, as well as the costs of traveling speakers from Washington out to the field twice. If a SOTA for 125 people was held in East Africa (Dar es Salaam) and a second SOTA was held in West Africa (Accra) for 125 people each, total cost of both trainings would be over $820,000 which is nearly $140,000 more than the

3

current proposed SOTA for all 250 participants. Additionally, a geographic split would mean that valuable lessons learned from our Ebola experiences in West Africa would not be shared with the rest of the continent.

Reducing the total number of participants would significantly diminish the impact of the training for a variety of reasons. First, we would need to reduce the total number of participants to fewer than 150 people to go below the $500,000 waiver level, and second, the commensurate per person cost would increase substantially. It should be noted the current proposed venue has offered special discounted rates based on the proposed number of participants and will increase their costs for fewer participants. Additionally, there are certain fixed costs that are not calculated on a per person basis (e.g. facilitation).

More significantly, however, limiting the conference to 150 participants would not meet the needs of the field, or objectives of the training given the amount of health sector staff in the Africa Region. Even at 215 field participants we only reach 29 percent of the approximately 725 health staff in the missions. If we are to adequately equip our health teams with the skills to successfully represent and negotiate USAID's interests we must train our Foreign Service National health staff and groom the maturation of junior Foreign Service Health Officers by providing opportunities for exposure to senior agency officials and to other missions.

Attachments:

     Tab 1 – Estimated Budget
     Tab 2 – Cost Detail and Cost Comparison of Three Potential Sites
     Tab 3 – Attendance List (USAID Employees)
     Tab 4 – Mission Director's Clearance
     Tab 5 – Additional Background Information

4