

# Session 5.

## Practicing Core EIA Skills: Virtual Field Visit

### Objectives

Undertake a virtual field visit exercise to build and apply the core EIA skills briefed in Session 4.

### Format:

0:30 briefing/virtual site visit (photo presentation)

1:00 “back at the office” working groups & brief report-out

### Summary

The previous session presented the basic theory of baseline characterization, impact evaluation, mitigation, and monitoring. This part of the session practices these skills in a “virtual field visit.” By using sector guidance from the *Small-Scale Guidelines* as a key resource, the session also builds familiarity with the *Guidelines*.

### Instructions

In this session, we undertake virtual field visits to practice the core EIA skills of baseline identification, identifying impacts of concern, and mitigation design.

We will visit activities (facilities) that have been in operation for some time. USAID-fund rehabilitation and expansion activities are planned in each case. Each activity presents certain environmental concerns as matters now stand—and, if nothing is done, these concerns (impacts) will grow if the activity is expanded.

In these visits, we play the roles of a mission sector team or an IP that will undertake the rehabilitation/expansion. We undertake the visits to improve our understanding of the implementation context and to allow us to better understand the environmental issues and mitigations that may be needed.

The project scenarios are described in the briefs on the following pages.

**1. Before You Go** Read the briefing relevant to your group. Utilizing the expertise in your group, identify the *potential impacts* of this type of activity.

**2. On Your Virtual Field Visit:**

- Note the aspects of the *baseline situation*
- Look for evidence that the *potential impacts* you have identified are *actual*—and if yes, how significant they may be.
- Look for evidence of the environmental management measures that may be in place, and their effectiveness
- Gather as much information from your “field” visit as possible to help evaluate impacts and design mitigation measures

**3. Back In The Classroom** As a group, review key potential impacts of the activities. Use the *Small Scale Guidelines* excerpt as a reference. Discuss primary mitigation/management approaches. Discuss the effects

of context on both the significance of impacts and appropriate mitigation approaches. Facilitators will serve as resources throughout the process.

Please be prepared to report out the results of your discussions.

*Note that this session is intended to practice basic observation, impact identification and mitigation design skills—not to practice development of Reg. 216 environmental documentation. Thus (for those who already know these terms), working group outputs are **not** expected to be in the form of an IEE outline or phrased in terms of “recommended determinations.”*