APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY
2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: International Rescue Committee **Application ID:** 13ND147209

Program Name: AmeriCorps National Proposal FY13

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

Reviewers' Summary Comments:

(+) The applicant selected these populations and target communities due to a lack of long-term and intensive services for refugees suffering economic constraints and scarcity of services that if provided would encourage economic self-sufficiency and integration as productive members of their new communities.

(+) The applicant notes the existence of economic need and limited refugee services in all 13 cities across the Country. The applicant cites an additional indicator of economic need in five of the 13 cities.
(+) The applicant will provide long-term and intensive services to include in-depth case management and job development needs to enhance employability, and improve employment access to higher paying, permanent, and full-time jobs with benefits.

(+) The applicant clearly defines the roles and activities of the 26 AmeriCorps members in each of the planned interventions, and at which of the 13 sites they will be involved in those interventions, including a very exhaustive articulation of the role and responsibility of the single Member assigned to capacity-building responsibilities. The applicant selected the activities and roles of the AmeriCorps members in order to fill existing service gaps and to expand existing services. The applicant requests 26 full-time slot types, and more than adequately explains how 25 will enable and align with their program design to encourage participant self-sufficiency, and how the single Member will enable capacity building. The applicant provides illustrative examples from various sites of context specific activities, in which Members provide other economic empowerment service to local communities tailored to their specific needs.

(+) The applicant cites extensive experience that many of the interventions selected are evidence-based, but cites as well Office of Refugee Resettlement studies to support their experiences are evidence-informed.

(+) The applicant points to a knowledge gap of effective interventions, and has initiated an exhaustive system to monitor and evaluate the selected initiatives for their efficacy as well as develop a qualitative and quantitative body of data for formative and summative purposes to inform best practices. The system will be utilized to measure and report the program's impact on an annual basis.

(+) The applicant references three government reports which provide the basis for several of the proposed refugee-focused interventions.
(+) The application cites surveys and reports from sources to describe the need for its' evidenced-based intervention.
(-) The applicant does not present documented evidence demonstrating the severity of the problem within the thirteen identified sites. For instance, the applicant provides minimal data regarding four out of thirteen sites.

(-) The applicant does not provide quantitative evidence to support the rationale for selecting thirteen sites out of twenty-two. For instance, the applicant stated they selected the areas based on: economic empowerment, supervisory capacity, and Members having good experience; however, this does not demonstrate the need of the target population, but the overall infrastructure of field sites.

(-) The applicant presented limited documentation to describe the extent/severity of the need in the target communities, which would explain why certain cities within states were selected over others.

(-) The applicant provided limited evidence that the proposed interventions would have a measurable impact. The application included some discussion of previous program successes; however, a discussion relative to specific objectives and quantifiable data was not included.

(-) The applicant does not provide evidence that AmeriCorps member's service will be best suited in this program. For instance, the applicant does not state what the organization would accomplish with Members in terms of quantitative data at each field site.