

## B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHOD

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed same. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

Approximately 4,000 non-profit applicants will be surveyed. All questions are yes and no, yes responses are asked to provide details. Anticipated response rate is 20% or 800. There is no previous collection of this type of data.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:

- Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection. None
- Estimation procedure. None
- Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification. The survey is designed so that all of the respondents data will be useful. There is not a degree of accuracy required.
- Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures. None.
- Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden. Respondents will only need to report information on a onetime basis.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield “reliable” data that can be generalized to the universe.

In order to minimize time required to complete the survey, questions were limited to two pages. In addition, the survey should not require information that is not readily available to the survey recipients.

A postage-paid envelope will be included with the survey to minimize the resources required for response. A cover letter discussing the survey and its purpose will also be included with the survey. This letter will provide a timeframe for response (two weeks) and will also provide the email address and phone number for Rhonda Brown, Rural Development Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Coordinator, in case the respondents have questions about the survey. A copy of this letter is included with this submission.

After the two-week timeframe for response, USDA Rural Development will send a postcard to the survey recipients both thanking those who responded and reminding those who have not to please do so. After another two-week period, the survey will be re-sent to those survey recipients who have not responded. This is expected to increase the response rate approximately 10-15%.

USDA Rural Development will post a preliminary notification of the survey and anticipated mailing date on its Faith-Based and Community Initiatives webpage. In addition, the USDA

Faith-Based and Community Initiative departmental office will send out an e-mail announcement as preliminary notification of the survey to its list-serve of approximately 7,000 organizations. While some organizations on this list-serve will not receive the survey, it will serve as another form of notification. A copy of this list-serve announcement/website notification is included with this submission. Also, so that rural communities are aware of the survey, the Agency will send notices to its state and field offices to publicize the survey during meetings.

There is a particular issue that demonstrates the limitation of this survey with respect to non-response bias. The total survey population includes all non-profit organizations who applied for funding in the defined time period, including those whose applications were rejected. A previous denial of funding may motivate an organization to respond and try to share its concerns. However, a denial may also deter the organization from further contact with USDA Rural Development. In order to ameliorate this weakness, the cover letter is to help survey recipients understand the utility in completing the survey. For example, it states that this survey will assist USDA Rural Development in improving its services in the future.

In addition, as stated in Part B, item 1, interpretation of results will be limited to internal agency purposes. USDA Rural Development expects to learn more about the understanding of faith-based and community organizations with respect to the Equal Treatment Rule. This will be limited to Rural Development, and not extrapolated to another agency within USDA or the Federal government. Thus, while issues of non-response bias could exist in this survey, a cautious use of the resulting analysis will help to mitigate the impact.

The survey is designed to capture the level of satisfaction non-profit customers have with Rural Development regarding their treatment under the Equal Treatment Rule and Rural Development Staff compliance with the Equal Treatment Rule. The data captured will serve as a benchmark for future surveys and improvements in equal treatment and outreach to faith-based and community organizations. Statistical accuracy will be determined to aid in the sample design for future surveys.

4. Describe any test of procedure or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

Testing of the survey was accomplished on September 26, 2006, at the White House Office Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Conference in Denver, Colorado. A volunteer group of faith-based and community based organizations completed the survey and provide comments.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the designing and the name of the Agency contractor(s), grantee(s) or other persons who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the Agency.

USDA contact person is Max Finberg, Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Initiative, Office of the Secretary, (202) 720-2032.  
Rural Development contact person is Rhonda Brown, Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Coordinator, (202) 692-0298

Statistical Review was provided by: Contact- Ginny McBride (202) 720-5778, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA, on August 30, 2006.