Data Quality Exercise

Please read the following scenario. Upon finishing the scenario, use the Data Quality Assessment Checklist to identify potential problems with data quality using 5 data quality standards.

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A USAID Mission received an annual report from one of its implementing partners. In that report, the IP had reported data on “number of farmer beneficiaries reached as a result of USG assistance.” USAID found that number too high and decided to conduct a data quality assessment on that indicator. In that process, USAID discovered the following:

• The IP had included several indirect beneficiaries even though the indicator definition in the PIRS stressed that only direct beneficiaries would be counted.

• After visiting a few project sites, USAID staff discovered that the tool that was being used to collect data on “number of beneficiaries reached” was not standardized across sites. Some sites used the standardized tool that the IP had designed but some other sites used their own tool which was too cumbersome and confusing to lead farmers who had to collect the data. As a result, USAID found several errors in that data.

• USAID further learned that the lead farmers who had the responsibility to collect data in their community had been told that their monthly allowance depended on how many beneficiaries reached they would report. This perverse incentive led them to report a higher number of beneficiaries reached even they actually reached, according to their records.

• The reported data was not disaggregated by sex and geographic location (site/district) even though the performance indicator reference sheet clearly specified that data had to be disaggregated by sex and geographic location. For this reason, USAID could not make a decision on how to reallocate resources in order to reach disadvantaged women living in the remote rural districts.

• USAID had received the IP’s report two months after it was due. USAID was going to use data from this report in the portfolio review which had been planned in October but the report was received in late November.