Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc. (ECDC)

MAA Innovations in Technical Assistance (MITA)

Background

In 2009, ECDC was awarded funding from the Office of Refugee Resettlement to provide innovative and intense technical assistance to selected Ethnic Community-Based Organizations (ECBOs)/Mutual Assistance Associations (MAAs) from around the country. The goal of this initiative is to provide intensive one-on-one Technical Assistance (TA) to ECBOs/MAAs, in order to enhance their capacity to serve more refugees and immigrants with comprehensive, quality services that are well-managed and well-resourced within a fiscal year. Through a national competitive process, selected organizations will receive customized TA assistance with values ranging from $5,000 to $10,000 and a TA package that can address up to five areas of capacity building with the following tools: site visits from national TA experts; a thorough assessment of the organization's assets, opportunities, and resource gaps; development of a TA plan of action; participation in the MITA network through conference calls and telephone TA support; and follow up evaluation and measurement assistance from ECDC, the lead organization. Request for Proposals (RFP) for the MITA program will be announced during summer and new grantees selected at the beginning of fall in time for every new fiscal year.

Definitions

For the purposes of this initiative, there will be five areas of concentration to build capacity at selected organizations. Each applicant organization will be asked to choose at least three areas in which they would like to build their capacity. The areas include:

Fund-raising and resource development – An organization's ability to raise and/or earn enough monies and develop adequate in-kind resources (goods, volunteer hours, equipment, etc.) in order to cover operating expenses as well as develop reserves that can help the organization to institutionalize its efforts in the long term.

Organizational leadership – Leadership that is provided by a Board of Directors as well as executive members of staff to set direction for the organization, and help achieve mission.

Strategic action planning – Planning that organizations undertake to be strategic in targeting and serving their markets, ensuring the best market reach possible, and providing the services that best meet those markets' needs. This term implies implementing such planning through action steps.

Management – Includes executive decision-making, and the development and implementation of systems (personnel, data, accounting, metrics, etc.) that contribute to the prudent operation of the organization, aid in decision-making, and result in optimum benefits to clients.

Accountability – A regular and reliable accounting is provided to clients, key stakeholders, and funders about the progress of the organization and its effective use of resources.