

September Monthly Progress Report

African Strategies for Health

October 15, 2012

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African Strategies for Health
Management Sciences for Health
784 Memorial Drive
Cambridge, MA 02139
Telephone: (617) 250-9500
www.msh.org

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African Strategies for Health (ASH)

Monthly Progress Report: September, 2012

1. Notable Achievements

- Interviews held in Ethiopia to select one organization to support the USAID HSS network
- ASH Team visited WHO/AFRO and worked together to start developing a joint work plan

2. Technical Updates

a. Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health

ASH drafted the MNCH portion of the ASH Year Two work plan for submission to USAID. Project staff prepared for and met with the WHO/AFRO Reproductive Health and Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (MNCAH) cluster in Brazzaville: During this first, introductory meeting, ASH and AFRO identified several areas in which they will collaborate and the potential roles for ASH and AFRO. There was agreement to continue communications to more specifically define time lines and next steps.

ASH also revised the African Union's (AU) 2012 MNCH Status Report: A revised draft of the report was sent to AusAID and the AU by USAID in preparation for their September 24 meeting with ASH in Addis Ababa. During that meeting, the AU expressed interest in further revisions to the report in preparation for sending it to Member States and other partners as an informational document. ASH will revise the report based on comments from AusAID and the AU and resubmit it in early October.

b. Infectious Diseases

i. IDSR

The focus during September was on the Brazzaville meeting with WHO AFRO. In preparation for the meeting, a draft agenda was prepared and shared with IDSR partners including CDC, USAID's Africa Bureau and WHO/ AFRO. During the Brazzaville visit, ASH participated extensively in the IDSR work planning sessions. The outcome was the development of a joint work plan incorporating WHO/ AFRO, CDC and ASH activities.

ii. TB

The focus during September was on the Brazzaville meeting with WHO. Discussions were held with Daniel Kibuga, Medical Officer for TB and led to the development of a joint work plan for ASH and WHO with a focus on pediatric TB. A teleconference took place in Brazzaville that included representatives from USAID's Global Bureau, the Africa Bureau, WHO/ AFRO and ASH (the content of the discussion is available as a separate set of minutes). A second teleconference took place between USAID's Global Bureau, CDC and ASH (the content of the discussion is available as a separate set of minutes).

c. Health Systems Strengthening

During the month of September, ASH worked to continue gathering data for the mapping of management training. There was continued work on the literature review, as well as completion of the last several interviews. In addition, the HSS team began data collection for the mHealth compendium. A total of twenty-three organizations were identified and are in the process of being profiled for the compendium. In addition, ASH traveled to Ethiopia and interviewed three organizations in order to identify one which will be best placed to support the USAID HSS Network. Lastly, ASH attended the HHA meeting in Zimbabwe on behalf of USAID/AFR.

d. Monitoring and Evaluation

ASH worked on the development of the HIS study protocol. ASH met with USAID strategic team member Roy Miller to discuss next steps. It was agreed that the next step in moving forward the study would be to find an African partner through whom the work could be carried out. WHO AFRO was proposed as a potential partner, and ASH agreed to explore it as an area of collaboration during the upcoming joint workplanning meeting in Brazzaville. However, during the meeting, it became evident that HMIS strengthening activities are not a priority for WHO AFRO under their USAID grant. The ASH team will meet again in October to discuss a partnering strategy for this activity.

e. Cross Cutting

i. Harmonizing for Health in Africa (HHA)

On behalf of USAID, Godfrey attended the HHA Steering Committee Meeting held in Harare September 11 – 12. The purpose of the meeting was among other things to: (a) finalize the HHA Action plan for the implementation of the Tunis Declaration of the Ministers of Finance and Ministers of Health during their meeting in July; and (b) agree on the agenda, working documents, and logistics of the HHA technical and the 7th RDs meeting. USAID was one of two bilateral development partners attending the Steering Committee meeting. Dr. Bokar Toure, Director HHS Cluster WHO/AFRO and Mr. Fabrice Sergent, Principal Health Analyst at African Development Bank were unanimously elected as Chair and co-Chair for Day 1, respectively. For Day 2, the Chairpersons were Dr Touré and Dr Sikipa, representing ASH/USAID.

During his stay in Zimbabwe, Dr. Sikipa met Mr. Peter Halpert, the USAID Health, Population and Nutrition Officer and Dr. Panganayi Dhliwayo, CDC/Zimbabwe Deputy Director for Science. He briefed them on the ASH project and the HHA. He also met with the Minister of Health to discuss actions that had been taken following the Tunis meeting.

3. Management and Administration

A. Finance

The books for September, 2012 have not yet been closed. It is expected that the information will be available sometime after October 15, 2012. Therefore, for the purpose of this report expenses for September, 2012 is based on estimates.

| | | |
|--|---|--------------------|
| 1) Total Obligation | = | \$2,657,479 |
| 2) Expenses | | |
| Total expenditure and accruals as of August 31, 2012 | = | \$2,172,540 |
| Estimated expenses for September, 2012 | = | <u>\$ 200,000</u> |
| Total estimated expenses as of September, 2012 | = | <u>\$2,372,540</u> |
| Pipeline (1-2) | = | \$ 284,939 |

B. Project M&E

ASH developed a second draft of the project PMP. The final version is being updated based on the year two work plan and will be submitted to USAID in October.

C. Project Communication and Dissemination

During the ASH technical team visit to WHO AFRO in Brazzaville, Congo during September 14-22, the ASH Communications and Advocacy Specialist met with the WHO AFRO communications team, the IDSR team, and the TB technical advisor. She assisted in preparing the final meeting report.

ASH also completed interviews and prepared a zero draft of the report on Advocacy with Parliamentarians and Other Elected Leaders for internal review.

During this month, USAID informed ASH that there is a moratorium on all new partner websites, and that further information will be given at a later date on whether this will be lifted or not. Thus website planning activities were on hold this month, although alternative plans to have a page on the MSH website were explored.

ASH created a standardized project technical report template. This template conforms to USAID graphics guidance on technical reports prepared under USAID contracts.

Feedback was received on one suggested edit of the Advocacy, Communications, and Dissemination Strategy; this edit was made and the strategy is now considered final.

D. Partnership Collaboration

- a. ASH worked on developing a second draft of the ASH partnering strategy.
- b. Milton D’Silva, ASH Finance & Administration Director, visited Kinshasa School of Public Health (KSPH), DRC, to orient the KSPH staff on the compliance and reporting requirements of the grant signed between MSH and KSPH for supporting scholarship program of PhD and MPH students.
- c. A modification to Khulisa subcontract was issued to authorize hiring of Lungi Okoko as the new M&E Specialist for ASH. This modification also obligated funding for year two to Khulisa.

E. Other Updates

Staffing

- a. *M&E Specialist*: USAID approved hiring of Lungi Okoko as the new M&E Specialist for ASH. Accordingly, Khulisa offered the position to Lungi Okoko. It is expected that the M&E Specialist will start on November 1, 2012.
- b. *Project Officer (PO)*: MSH is screened and interviewed three candidates for this position. The position was offered to Sarah Konopka who is expected to start on October 15, 2012.

F. COR Meetings

One COR meeting took place on September 7, 2012

G. Potential Issues or Areas Needing USAID Support

ASH has requested USAID/AFR assistance in order to coordinate with USAID/West Africa and USAID/East Africa to finalize the year two work plan.

4. Key Activities Planned for Next Month

- a. Finalize the ASH PMP
- b. Submit to USAID/AFR the draft ASH partnership strategy
- c. Finalize report on Advocacy with Parliamentarians and Other Elected Leaders
- d. Continue to work with WHO/AFRO, USAID/AFR, and CDC to get inputs for a first draft of the IDSR ACD strategy for internal review; work with WHO AFRO to seek internal permission to create a soft logo and branding strategy for IDSR (ongoing)
- e. Draft the advocacy, communications, and dissemination strategy to increase use of local consultants in Africa by USAID/AFR in the area of health systems strengthening.
- f. Apply for permission to have a project website through the USAID Web approval board
- g. Finalize and submit the ASH Partnering Strategy
- h. Participate in planning activities for the USAID mHealth and family planning/RH conference in Tanzania (November 2012), including completion of the mHealth compendium, and help mission prepare for presentation during the meeting
- i. Debrief Global Bureau ID stakeholders on the Brazzaville visit
- j. Incorporate discussions from Brazzaville visit into the final version of the ASH work plan
- k. Finalize strategic team reviews