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Livelihood & Food Security
Technical Assistance

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BACKGROUND

The **L**ivelihood and **F**ood Security **T**echnical Assistance (LIFT) project is designed to work in close collaboration with US Government (USG) agencies, implementing partners, and other key players to integrate sustainable, market-driven livelihoods strengthening into food and nutritional security interventions. LIFT aims to heighten the impact of work done through USAID, PEPFAR, Feed the Future, USDA, CDC, and the Peace Corps, as well as local governments, civil society, and the private sector. LIFT's ultimate goal is to support the food security of vulnerable households by improving their livelihoods and economic circumstances.

The USAID Global Health Bureau's Office of HIV/AIDS (OHA) established the LIFT project as an Associate Award under the FIELD-Support Leader with Associates (LWA) Cooperative Agreement, managed by FHI 360. LIFT is a five-year project (2009-2014) that draws together leading organizations with expertise in the areas of economic strengthening and food security. Under LIFT, FHI 360 partners with Care International (CARE) and Save the Children US (SAVE) as well as a robust group of resource organizations, to provide high-impact technical assistance to USG country teams and their implementing partners, and to offer leadership and strategic learning to the field of livelihood strengthening and food security as a whole. LIFT works in partnership with FANTA-2 (Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance project), and is in the process of establishing relationships with other key USG projects and initiatives around food security.

LIFT will improve vulnerable households' ability to access food through market-led sustainable livelihoods strengthening interventions, thereby leveraging the investments that the US Government, local governments, multilateral agencies, bilateral donors, civil society organizations and the private sector have made toward increasing food security.

ACTIVITIES

1. Global

1.1. M&E Technical Assistance

LIFT provided technical input into MEASURE's qualitative OVC impact indicators for their OVC program evaluation tool.

1.2. Technical Assistance Tools & Resources

1.2.2 Global Fund Toolkit

LIFT provided technical input into the food security narrative of the Global Fund toolkit that will be used by country teams preparing Global Fund proposals.

1.3. Knowledge Generation & Sharing Technical Assistance

1.3.1 Economic Strengthening and Skills Building for OVC

On August 11th and September 27th, LIFT consultant Margie Brand delivered the first and second in a series of three workshop presentations on economic strengthening (ES) skills-building for OVC, for the Interagency OVC Task Force. The first workshop introduced the general concepts of ES in the context of OVC programming. The second workshop built on the first workshop by introducing several case studies and providing participants the opportunity to critically evaluate the challenges involved in planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the challenges of ES activities for OVC.

1.4. Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration

1.4.1 WFP

On August 2nd, LIFT participated in a conference call with Nils Grede of WFP and USAID to discuss collaborative opportunities between LIFT and WFP. WFP is interested in including wrap-around services within its core set of interventions, and requested input from LIFT on a draft concept document to explore a model of linking patients in the health system to livelihood activities. During the meeting, countries of mutual interest were discussed. LIFT will continue to explore potential areas of collaboration into the next quarter.

2. Country-specific

2.1. Ethiopia

- LIFT finalized its assessment report titled *Assessment of USAID/PEPFARs Economic Strengthening Programs in Ethiopia*, and is awaiting approval from USAID/Ethiopia to publish it on the LIFT webpage located on the KDID website.
- On August 16, LIFT hosted an Economic Strengthening Dissemination Workshop, on behalf of USAID/Ethiopia, to share the lessons learned and recommendations from the report titled *Assessment of USAID/PEPFARs Economic Strengthening Programs in Ethiopia*, conducted in Ethiopia in August and September 2010. A total of thirty participants attended the workshop. Representation included USAID/Ethiopia, WFP, UNICEF, Save the Children, Pact, ChildFund, ACDI/VOCA, DAI, Addis Ababa University, and World Learning.
- Save the Children conducted fieldwork in Ethiopia for the referral research discussion paper requested by the Care and Support Technical Working Group. The draft report was circulated for comments and should be finalized in the next quarter.

2.3. Nigeria

- In July, Ben Rinehart and Gareth Evans traveled to Abuja, Nigeria to host a two-day training for 35 PEPFAR implementing partners in Nigeria. The participatory training provided: an overview of the LIFT livelihoods and vulnerability conceptual framework; a review of different types of provisioning, protection, and promotion activities; and introduction to the standards of practice in implementing these activities. During the training, there was a special focus on economic protection activities.
- The team met with specific partners selected by USAID as potential recipients of more customized technical assistance. These partners included MSH and Africare (implementing the CUBS project); Hope Worldwide; Network on Ethics/Human Rights, Law, HIV/AIDS prevention and Care (NELA); and Save the Children UK. For the CUBS project, the team evaluated proposed program options for income-generating activities, recommended consideration of savings group promotion, and provided a quick cost-benefit analysis in terms of financial resource requirements and overall beneficiary targets. For Save the Children UK, LIFT discussed and later provided input into the design of an assessment tool for measuring OVC well-being as it is impacted by household participation in village savings and loan groups. With NELA, LIFT provided comments into their recently concluded economic strengthening activities.
- LIFT created a tools and resources package including appropriate existing tools, and made these available to training participants through an online portal.
- LIFT requested additional clarity from USAID on criteria for selecting partners to receive technical assistance in the future.

2.4. Namibia

- In August, LIFT initiated discussions with USAID/Namibia about follow-on work to the LIFT in-country assessment and report, which was prepared between November 2009 and March 2010. Dr. Ochi Ibe of USAID/Namibia continued to be LIFT's primary point of contact at the mission. Dr. Ibe has shown interest in having LIFT return to Namibia and disseminate the results and recommendations from the report and begin researching the potential implementation of a NACS referral system and /or network in select locations.
- LIFT is currently planning to host a national dissemination workshop on November 29th and 30th in Windhoek, Namibia, to share, review, and validate the results and recommendations from its report with PEPFAR and USAID/Namibia implementing partners. In addition, USAID/Namibia would like LIFT to provide support and technical assistance on the development of a nationwide NACS referral system. Discussions on how LIFT will support NACS in Namibia will continue into the next quarter.

2.8. Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

- In July, Jill Thompson (LIFT Consultant), Sybil Chidiac (CARE/Tanzania), and Willy Rumanya (CARE/DRC) participated in a joint LIFT/FANTA-2 assessment trip to meet with government, international and local organizations, and community members to review past and current experience with nutrition, food security, and economic strengthening activities targeting HIV-affected populations in the DRC. The information collected during this trip was used to develop a report which lists technical assistance options the USAID/DRC mission could use to strengthen its food security, nutrition, and HIV activities. The mission has expressed interest in utilizing the FIELD-Support mechanism to initiate a LIFT-like technical assistance project focused solely on the DRC. FHI 360 will continue discussions with the mission into the next quarter and attempt to finalize plans for a new FIELD-Support award.

2.9. Rwanda

LIFT began discussions with USAID/Rwanda this quarter. It became clear as talks progressed that present circumstances within the mission would delay any TA from LIFT for the foreseeable future. LIFT will continue to check-in with the mission periodically to assess the situation and gauge the mission's interest in engaging lift as a TA provider.

3. Operational

3.1. Staffing

Project Director Margie Brand left the project team at the end of the last quarter (June 30). LIFT welcomed Barbara Monahan to the team as interim Project Director and Mandy Swann as the Program Officer, while FHI360 develops a revised LIFT staffing structure.

3.2. Deliverables

LIFT prepared and submitted the following deliverables to USAID during the quarter:

- Quarterly Accruals Report

SUCCESSSES

- LIFT held a small Strategic Planning Meeting on August 31, to discuss the history of the project, current direction, and future plans. Attendees included: Tim Quick and Amy Heap from USAID/Washington; Lisa Parrot and Gareth Evans of Save the Children; Late Lawson of CARE (by phone); Wendy Hammond, Serigne Diene and Simon Sadler of FANTA-2; Silvia Alayon from MEASURE Evaluation as well as several FHI 360 staff including Rick Bossi, Frank Beadle de Palomo, Paul Bundick, Ben Rinehart, Barbara Monahan, Parsa Sanjana, Clint Curtis, and Margie Brand as a consultant.

CHALLENGES

- During the quarter, the LIFT team continued discussions on the role of CARE and Save the Children in the LIFT program. As soon as the next phase of LIFT becomes more clear, FHI 360 plans to reengage both partners to clarify their roles and contributions within the project.
- LIFT had envisioned a key stakeholder strategic planning session during this quarter, but delayed this meeting until the scope of work and budget for the next phase of LIFT is clarified. LIFT plans to hold this critical planning meeting in 2012.

KEY LEARNING

- The LIFT team developed a detailed work plan and clarified existing staff roles during this period. LIFT plans to develop a revised staffing structure in the next reporting period to meet the evolving needs and focus of the program.

PLANS FOR THE NEXT QUARTER

1. Global

- LIFT plans to meet with staff from the MEASURE project to review the history between LIFT and MEASURE, and discuss opportunities for future collaboration, globally and in Nigeria.
- In light of the new plus up funding and focus on NACS, LIFT will be revisiting our original scope of work and developing a revised work plan and budget.

2. Country-specific

- Next Quarter, LIFT Plans to finalize its assessment reports for Namibia, Ethiopia, and Swaziland, and publish them on LIFT's webpage located on the KDID website.
- LFT will finalize the Ethiopia referral research following feedback from USAID (OHA and the TWG).
- LIFT will present the Ethiopia referral research at the SEEP Conference in Arlington, VA, on October 31.
- LIFT will develop a work plan for Nigeria-specific activities with USAID Nigeria.
- LIFT will plan and facilitate a conference in Namibia on the assessment recommendations and on livelihoods, health and nutrition more broadly.
- LIFT will support USAID/DRC is developing a FIELD award as a follow-up to the assessment.