



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## USAID/Food By Prescription



April-June., 2014

### Update

#### Semiannual Meeting Underlines Effecting Tasks Vital for Close Out

The Semiannual meeting of USAID/ Food by Prescription project conducted from April 30- May 2 2014) stressed accomplishing activities necessary to complete transition of technical support provided to health facilities to the government and to successfully close the project .

USAID/FBP Chief of Party Dr. Abdulaziz Ali opened the meeting by emphasizing that the meeting would be important episode to evaluate the performance of the program in the previous six months as the project enters the crucial stage of close out .

He said it would be important to implement the intensive plan for the remainder of few months of the project and to draw lessons from the challenges encountered during the last six months.

The meeting also served to facilitate experience sharing between regional teams, including strategies to provide supportive supervision in areas that needed additional attention. Teams also identified strategies to address operational problems in facilities. Dr. Abdulaziz encouraged all staff to continue to give their full effort as the project moves to close out.

The overall performance of the project ( from October 1, 2013 to March 31,2014) was presented against the plan . There has been an encouraging performance in the area of NACS , Economic Strengthening , Logistics, Monitoring and Evaluation and IEC /BCC.

The challenges highlighted during the six months were more or less common across all regions and included low commitment of health workers

for NACS, stock out and late delivery of starter stock for newly scaled up facilities, health professional turnover, low graduation rate and high defaulter rate and the process of facility transition consuming much time.

Formal close-out and review meetings will be held in each region by August and reaming facilities need to be handed over . Those facilities that are not yet mature will be handed over with an action plan for RHBs to ensure they meet all standards.

Full compliance with report timing in the remaining quarters, the status of health facilities and way forward for their total transition during the remaining period were among the issues given emphasis.

The meeting also noted the necessity for the preparation for terminal evaluation, conducting of through asset inventory, documentation of impacts and lesson learned as well as observance of the final timing for expenses.



USAID/FBP staff members at the Semiannual Meeting

## ES Opportunities Yielding Promising Result

Linkage to Economic Strengthening (ES) opportunities by USAID/ Food by Prescription project has been yielding encouraging result in preventing relapse of malnutrition.

During a National close out meeting conducted by USAID/Food by Prescription with seven ES Implementing Partners (IP), Chief of Party of USAID / Food by Prescription Dr. Abdulaziz Ali said counseling and support with therapeutic and supplementary food will only address the immediate problem.

He said it was found to be complementary with nutritional treatment to look into sustainable means with viable ES schemes to solve problems leading to malnutrition and thus the project contributed in improving the livelihood of PLHIV who recovered from malnutrition with the treatment of supplementary and therapeutic foods.

More than 8,000 people were benefited during the life of the project with opportunities of Income Generating Activity, Urban Gardening, Community Saving Group and Back to Work Initiative as well as referred to other partner organizations such as WFP.

The project shifted to Back to Work Initiative during the last two years as it proved more efficient in improving the livelihood of PLHIV who recovered from the status of malnutrition with Nutritional Assessment, Counseling and Support (NACS). As a result, a total of 1,325 clients were linked mainly to job opportunities in public and private firms.

The partners who implemented the back to work initiative are Hiwot Integrated Development Association, Network of Charitable Societies of HIV Positive Associations in Amhara, Network of Associations of HIV positive people in Dire Dawa, Network of South Region Association of HIV Positive People, Mums for Mums and Mekidm Ethiopia National Association.

IPs were acknowledged by USAID/FBP for the success of the initiative at conclusion of the meeting held on May 20, 2014.



*IPs were recognized for their contribution in linking beneficiaries to job opportunities*

## Awareness on Therapeutic Food Contributing to Step Up Legal Measures Against Those Misusing

Awareness raising initiatives have been conducted by USAID/FBP among legal enforcement bodies, health workers and communities at various levels to address the misuse of supplementary and therapeutic foods. These measures of FBP which includes coordination meetings, shop inspections with regulatory bodies and police as well as awareness activities with different media contributed for increased enforcement of legal measures against people misusing the lifesaving products.

A case in point is the persecution of a staff working in ART dispensary of Kolfe Health Center for smuggling 200 sachets of therapeutic food. The Kolfe Regular Bench Court in Addis Ababa City Administration sentenced the convict to one year and eight months imprisonment, according to the Medical Director of the health center.

Low level of awareness by the community and administrators toward misuse of the products were among the factors contributing to misuse of the lifesaving foods.

## Ma'edachin Radio Program Winds Up

*Ma'edachin*, a radio program on nutrition implemented in Cooperation with Fana Broadcasting Corporate which has been on air for 24 months completed its run in June, 2014.

Some 104 radio programs were produced in Amharic and aired for the duration of 10 minutes every week reaching an estimated 10 million listeners across the country through eight FM stations in major towns and through national transmission of the Fana broadcasting radio station.

*Ma'edachin* was incepted with the objective of bringing about behavioral change on PLHIV by highlighting the seven key messages related to nutrition so that PLHIV would improve their nutritional status with healthy feeding and improve ART adherence.

It was also aimed at promoting infant and young children feeding among pregnant and lactating women and to address misuse of RUTF and RUSF by raising awareness.

More than 500 listeners from various parts of the country called the radio stations to respond to questions asked on nutrition which also helped to gauge the listenership of the program. The program was on air from Sept 2011 until June 2014 in four rounds.



*Ma'edachin' radio program contributed in highlighting the seven key messages.*

## 46 Facilities Mature for Transition

Some 80 health facilities from all the seven regions underwent readiness assessment during the ended quarter. Facilities passing the assessment are ready for full transition of technical support being rendered by USAID/Food by Prescription to the government.

From the stated amount, 46 of them found to be mature for transition evaluated against 16 indicators while the balance couldn't as they are below the set margin of graduation rate as per the indicator.

Phased transition of health facilities was launched in year four of USAID/ Food by prescription project to make the handover to RHBs of the technical support being provided by FBP comprehensive and successful.

The assessment and the regular technical support and supervision of health facilities are serving as a means to identify the gaps in implementing NACS and action to fill gaps accordingly .

During this final year of the project, all the health facilities where NACS is implemented with the support of relevant regional health offices of governments are expected to fully take over the role of the integration of NACS into existing HIV/AIDS care and support system. As a result of four rounds of assessment made so far, 282 health facilities have been transitioned to the government .

### Few Minutes with Shewit Nigatu

*Limu Genet Hospital is one of the health facilities providing NACS service in Oromiya region. Shewit Nigatu, is a peer educator in the ART unit of the hospital after recovering from the status of malnutrition herself. She answers a few questions.*

#### **Tell us your age and family status;**

I am 36 years old, a single mother of a child.

#### **What was your situation before you regained your health status?**

Health did not come easily for me. When my late husband, the sole bread winner and the father of my only son died of HIV/AIDS eight years ago, my life became very difficult. I had to fend for myself and my son; I had to do various backbreaking jobs to put food on the table.

#### **How did you come to the hospital ?**

Overtime, I became weak and could not work anymore. My weight dropped quite dramatically and I lost all my strength and finally fell seriously ill. It was during this time that the health workers in my neighborhood found me and advised to go to the hospital and seek help. They arranged transportation and brought me to the hospital.

#### **What happened then?**

The nurses at the hospital immediately took me to the ART clinic where I received nutritional status check and counseling. I was diagnosed in the status of severe acute malnourishment and was put under a 6 month plumpy'nut regime.

#### **How far has the counseling helped you ?**

During frequent visits for counseling, I learned about practicing good hygiene to prevent illness and how to make sure that I am getting the most nutritious meals from what little food is available. I continued to gain weight and thrive with the help of the nurses and two other counselors at the hospital. I have less stress when I come to the hospital; I come to measure the progress of my weight here once a week. I like to see that I am gaining weight every time. It shows me that I am becoming healthier. That encourages me to keep up.

#### **How did you become a peer educator?**

After receiving the support from the health facility and graduating from the program, I applied to work as a peer educator in the ART Clinic. I was offered a place and was given training. The training I received was very practical in that I learned to identify when a child wasn't growing well and what to do about it as well as about vitamins and about micronutrient deficiencies.

#### **What is your current health status and what do you feel?**

I am now happy, healthy and strong. I have benefited so much from Food by Prescription Project .

#### **What satisfies you now ?**

I love to share my knowledge and advice with fellow beneficiaries to learn from me . As long as I live in this town, I will work in this hospital. I love to stop by every day. I love to come here to talk to the clients and other mothers. Coming to the hospital always makes me feel better.



*I like to see that I am gaining weight every time :Shewit*