

## **Trip Report: Heather Rafey**

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Ethiopia HIV/AIDS Care and Support Project  
September 24 – October 5, 2007

This report was made possible through support provided by the US Agency for International Development, under the terms of Contract No. 663-C-00-07-00408-00. The opinions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the US Agency for International Development.

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Trip Report for Heather Rafey's TDY to Addis under the HSCP project from September 24, 2007 through October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007

The purpose of my TDY was to work with Jean Kutabare on the pre design of the performance based contracting piece of the HCSP project, train the staff in the local contracts unit and meet with the USAID Contract Officer.

### **PBF pre design**

Jean arrived about a week before me to get started on the inputs/outputs of the pre design of the PBF program. At a meeting with USAID before I arrived, he was told that we should not engage the MOH during our visit. Instead, USAID wanted a pre design document with talking points to review prior to discussions with the MOH. USAID expressed to Jean the need for a national program but that is not part of our current SOW.

We had discussions about the PBF conference scheduled for December and have all agreed that the focus should be more on using this as an opportunity to gain buy in from stakeholders.

We had discussions with Bannet regarding the need for a technical person from the team to work with the contracts unit to form the PBF working group. It was my understanding that this would be taken on with Hailu and the Regional Health Advisors.

Jean was in the process of getting information on costing and Zelalem and Aklilu will be working to provide that information to him. I did go with Aklilu to visit a Health Center in Addis and we used a questionnaire provide dby Jean to get information on costs related to equipment and operations. Aklilu was going to have to go back for the government salary structure for health center workers.

We had discussions about the point of entry for the PBF's as to if we had the capacity to enter into subcontracts with all HC's or if we could enter into subcontracts with the regions only. More information is needed regarding the financial and technical capabilities of the health centers. It was discussed that the MOH may have an issue with PBF paying for salaries of government employees. This will also need further discussion.

A predesign document was completed for comment by Jean and others including myself need to present back comments on the document before it can move forward.

Zelalem and Aklilu were planning to go out to the health centers in the southern region within the next few weeks to learn more about PBF's that have been done there with another CA.

### **Staff training**

During my TDY, I worked directly with Aklilu, SC Finance Officer and Zelalem, MSH Contracts Manager. I conducted training for them on filing contracts, host-employee

certifications, negotiating consultant rates, consultant agreements, solicitation terms and conditions for RFP's, Memorandum of Understandings, FAR, CA vs, grants vs. contracts, A110, A122 and a contract reading.

In addition to providing training through presentations, I had them both shadow me at different meetings including one with HST, a subcontractor and the USAID Contracts office. This seemed to give them some additional hands on training. We also discussed the benefits of attending the APVOFM course in Kenya in November. I explained that the course focused more on CA and grants but that the Contract assistant from Rwanda was planning to attend and there would be value to them meeting and learning about the cost principles. They both have been working in this area for sometime and have a good grasp on USAID and the rules and regulations already. Aklilu has been a finance manager with SC for over 13 years. Zelalem also comes from an organization with USAID work.

### **Meeting with USAID CO**

Zelalem and I met with Cynthia Swartzer, Contract Officer and Henuk Amenu, Contract Specialist. I had hoped she would meet with me twice during my trip but she declined and was willing to meet with us for 1.5 hours the day before the end of my TDY. I sent an agenda for our meeting prior to arriving at the USAID office.

We discussed the following pending approvals:

- 1) pre sub approval #18 – she had not had a chance to review completely but asked us to make minor changes to the presub letter which was done and resubmitted on 10/12/07
- 2) notification of change in key personnel #19 – this does not need a response from USAID but she stated concern that we already lost one of our key positions
- 3) Intrahealth initial salary approval #20 – she asked that MSH sign the bottom of all biodatas from subcontractors which we are in the process of confirming that the subcontractor verified the salaries and signing and resubmitting to her. I have never had a CO ask for this before which I stated to her but she would not budge on this point.

We also discussed that she was not willing to delegate travel approval to the CTO at this point and that she would not be open to removing the initial salary approval requirement due to the current conditions with CA's competing for staff within the country.

I invited her to the PBF conference in December. She stated that we should send her an invitation and she would consider it. I explained and we discussed the approvals required to do performance based contracting with the public sector. I will be sending her examples of the approvals that we wrote for Rwanda so that she can see what most likely will be coming down the road.

We need to submit a branding plan as soon as possible.

We discussed a possible disconnect with the technical discussions regarding additional targets. She agreed that an education for all regarding the differences between the responsibilities of the CTO vs. Co would be beneficial for all partners and staff.