

Trip Report: A. Fredrick Hartman

Ethiopia HIV/AIDS Care and Support Project
April 5-23, 2010

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**Technical Support to the HIV/AIDS Care and Support Program (HCSP)/Ethiopia
Trip Report
A. Frederick Hartman MD MPH
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¹**Background:** The HIV/AIDS Care and Support Program (HCSP) is a three-year PEPFAR/USAID funded program implemented by Management Sciences for Health (MSH) as the prime contractor. The program supports the Government of Ethiopia's (GOE) nationwide expansion of HIV/AIDS services by supporting 550 health centers to provide comprehensive HIV/AIDS services, of which 350 provide ART. The health centers are in the City of Addis Ababa and the four regions of Amhara; Tigray; the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNR); and Oromia. In October, 2009, USAID/Ethiopia requested that MSH home office support staff—Carla Goncalves, the Contracts Officer, and Dr. Fred Hartman, the Country Team Leader—attend meetings within the mission to review HCSP progress and receive feedback for mid-course corrections to finish the base 3 year contract period strongly and achieve EOP results.

At these meetings, USAID acknowledged that the HCSP was achieving targets, but expressed concern that a number of key areas were not being addressed. The mission HIV/AIDS team requested the MSH “vision” for addressing these concerns. Accordingly, we drafted an 8 point Action Plan for Technical Strengthening that addressed the key areas of concern and submitted this to USAID for review and comment. Subsequent visits by senior MSH staff, and myself, were accomplished to support implementation of this plan. This current visit was planned as a 6 month follow-up on these action plans, review progress and make recommendations to the HCSP team for further action. In addition, MSH had submitted to USAID a work plan and budget requested by USAID for an award of Option Years 4 and 5. USAID had reviewed our submission and presented MSH with a series of comments and questions that needed to be addressed. The timing of my visit also coincided with the final preparation of the Semi-Annual Progress Report the PEPFAR FY '10.

Objectives of the STTA:

1. Review progress on the HCSP Action Plan and technical strengthening activities and make recommendations for improvement.
2. Work with the HCSP team to respond to USAID's comments and questions on the work plan, implementation plan, STTA plan, and budget for option years 4 and 5.
3. Participate in team building and performance management improvement activities designed to improve how the team works together to achieve results.
4. Participate in the review, analysis and final preparation of the SAPR and PMP, PEPFAR FY '10.
5. Review performance quality improvement efforts and support expansion of the Fully Functional Service Delivery Point to all ART Health Centers by the end of this project year.

Activities:

1. Meet with Dr. Peter Gichangi and members of the HIV team to review progress on the HCSP technical improvement plan and receive feedback on performance. Overall, the feedback was very positive, that MSH has responded to USAID concerns, that we are making progress. Dr. Gichangi highlighted a number of technical areas that he wanted to see strengthened and focused on in our PYs 4 & 5 work plan.
2. Supported work teams to address the technical issues involved in responding to USAID comments on the work plan, implementation plan, STTA plan and financial issues in the budget submission to USAID for option years 4 and 5.
3. Participated in team meetings on the work plan, to develop detailed objectives and activities to support results achievement, and to maximally utilize the skill set and experience of the senior HCSP team members. Enthusiastic participation in these meetings by the team members helped strengthen the work plan for PYs 4 & 5, respond to USAID concerns, and they also served to further develop team building activities begun in earlier visits.
4. Reviewed results of our HCSP quality assurance efforts, including the PMP, M&E and the FFSDP to guide our activities to improve quality of services over the final two years, a major emphasis of that work plan.
5. Worked with HCSP senior management and the M & E staff to review and finalize the PMP and SAPR for PEPFAR FY '10 for timely submission to USAID.
6. Completed field visits to two health centers, one in Addis Ababa and one in Oromyia to review progress on quality improvements and the FFSDP.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

1. This trip was highly successful in receiving direct feedback on progress being made from USAID and highlighting areas for improvement in HCSP performance.
2. Await feedback from USAID on the MSH revised submission for the option years 4 & 5 and respond accordingly. I will continue support the process from the home office.
3. Continue the quality assurance activities already in place with an emphasis on continuous quality improvement using several tools, including the FFSDP. Expand this to all 350 ART HCs as the work plan indicates.
4. Continue team building and performance management improvement activities already initiated.
5. Incorporate comments by USAID on the SAPR into the next HCSP quarterly report, due July 15. That will be the time frame for my next technical support visit.