**Meeting with the M&E Practitioners of Title II Projects in Bangladesh**

**and Food for Peace, USAID, Bangladesh**

**November 2011**

[Note: For your convenience, I have combined the notes from the two meetings]

**M&E Practitioners attended the meeting on 11/28/2011:**

Abdul Wadud – M&E Coordinator, SHOUHARDO II, CARE

John Mayer – COP, Nobo Jibon, Save the Children (attended part of the meeting)

Kamrul Ahsan – M&E Director, Proshar, ACDI/VOCA

Nazmul Kalam – MIS Manager, Nobo Jibon, Save the Children

Tawfique Aziz – M&E Manager, Nobo Jibon, Save the Children

**FFP Staff attended the meeting on 11/30/2011:**

Abdullah Al Mamun – Project Management Specialist, FFP, USAID

Marunga Manda, Senior M&E Advisor, Programme Office, USAID (attended part of the meeting).

Shahnaz Zakaria -- Food Aid Advisor, FFP, USAID

Tofayel Alam – Project Management Specialist, FFP, USAID

Thank you all for arranging the meetings in such a short notice. It was a great opportunity for me to meet you, share ideas and discuss the role and strategy of TOPS in improving effectiveness of M&E in title II projects.

**TOPS Capacity Strengthening Strategies:**

Arif explained the role and strategies of TOPS in improving the effectiveness of M&E.

1. Training: TOPS provides M&E training to the practitioners working for title II projects and other food security projects. This year TOPS will be organizing three regional/ country level M&E trainings. The first one will be in Burkina Faso for the M&E practitioners working in Francophone West African countries. The second training will be organized in Ethiopia for the East African countries and the venue of the third training is yet to be decided.
2. Micro grants (maximum limit $20,000): TOPS has created micro-grants to facilitate capacity strengthening activities to be undertaken by PVOs (RFP attached). PVOs (including local PVOs) can apply for the grant to organize trainings, workshops, cross visits and other capacity strengthening activities.
3. Small grants (maximum limit $100,000): TOPS is in the process of creating a small grant to facilitate program innovations, developing methodologies, or field testing tools and methods. The RFP will be available soon.
4. M&E task force: The M&E Task Force has been identifying and reviewing tools to endorse them so the practitioners can easily access effective quality tools. The task force members have developed the core competencies for M&E staff and a self-assessment tool. Currently half of the task force members are based in the field.
5. Regional Knowledge Sharing Technical Meetings: TOPS organizes regional knowledge sharing events to share promising practices and to develop a regional network of practitioners. In a recent knowledge sharing event held in Mozambique, a number of organizations presented interesting M&E tools and approaches that are being implemented in the field.

The M&E practitioners and the Food for Peace staff members attended the meeting appreciated FFPs effort to support TOPS program.

**Status of M&E Capacity Self-assessment**

The M&E capacity self-assessment is in progress. The M&E practitioners of all three title II projects in Bangladesh have completed the capacity self-assessment forms and forwarded to TOPS. [Thanks!].

It was suggested not to ask for name and other identifiers in the form so the responses remain anonymous. This would improve the quality of assessments. Respondents would provide more honest assessment if they are convinced that their information will not be used for any other purposes than training needs assessment.

**Training Needs in Bangladesh**

Qualitative Data Analysis is identified as one of the common capacity gaps by the M&E practitioners in Bangladesh. The M&E practitioners from the three title II projects clearly understand the added value of qualitative information and requested TOPS to organize training on qualitative data analysis. To identify additional training needs, they will arrange a meeting soon and forward a prioritized list to TOPS.

The AOTR of the three Title II projects and her team also agreed that training on qualitative data analysis is a prioritized need. In addition, FFP team requested TOPS to provide training on Data Quality Assessment. Since the midterm review of the three projects is approaching, Shahnaz Zakaria asked to combine sessions on midterm review including developing scope of work, facilitating the review process, and how best the projects can use the information and recommendations from the midterm review. The FFP team has pointed out the need for such a training before the midterm review of the three projects starts in July or August.