

# CAP FOOD FOR PEACE FOOD AID COMMODITY MANAGEMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM I AND II

**Project Overview:** Funded by USAID Food for Peace (FFP), the CAP FFP Food Aid Commodity Management (FACM) Technical Assistance Workshops Program (2010-2012; \$600,000) expands upon a pilot workshop conducted in 2009. The current program designs, implements and evaluates a series of five FACM workshops for FFP grantees and their partners, as well as a select group of FFP staff. The purpose of the workshops is to improve the capacity and skills of personnel working in food aid commodity management.

**Context:** The USAID FFP office oversees food aid programs implemented by both experienced and novice private voluntary organizations (PVOs). Changes in awardees and/or their staff are typically accompanied by a loss of institutional “memory” and knowledge about FFP rules and regulations, which can be compounded by the challenges of implementing food aid programs in difficult or conflict regions. These knowledge gaps and losses often result in incorrect understandings of and compliance with FFP processes and procedures.

The major program components are:

- **Creating customizable curricula and associated resource materials** based on identified knowledge gaps, which workshop participants can reuse and share with home-country staff, colleagues and other partners;
- **Selecting and collaborating** with FACM experts to develop presentations and complementary activities;
- **Increasing the capacity of implementers and FFP personnel** to effectively manage and report on their food aid programs;
- **Enhancing the ability** of food aid implementers to better reach their target beneficiaries.

From **December 2010 to September 2012**, CAP FFP:

- Developed commodity management curricula based on the identified needs of three different target audiences: field-based PVO staff; HQ-based PVO staff; and FFP personnel;
- Oversaw the development of presentations and accompanying activities for each workshop.
- Conducted five workshops:
  - *Dakar, Senegal. March 2011:* 30 participants from local grantee organizations;
  - *Washington, DC. May 2011:* 29 participants from PVO headquarters and FFP/Washington;
  - *Washington, DC. August 2011:* 25 participants from FFP staff. This workshop included a field trip to the Port of Baltimore to observe port operations.
  - *Chittagong, Bangladesh. October 2011:* 39 participants from three Bangladeshi prime awardee PVOs and several sub-awardees;
  - *Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. February 2012:* 30 participants from seven prime awardees.

CAP helps participants strengthen their abilities to effectively manage food aid programs in compliance with USAID rules and regulations, as well as enhance their understanding of general tenets of USAID/FFP commodity management.

The FACM workshops are designed to be both active and *interactive*. Therefore, participants must be willing to share their experiences and lessons learned with the group. Through the workshops, FFP awardees and officers will gain the tools to ensure food aid commodities successfully reach their targeted beneficiaries.

Most recently, the CAP FFP team was asked to coordinate and facilitate the 2012 FFP/Washington staff retreat. Fifty-two FFP officers from all divisions engaged in constructive discussion with the goal of improving the overall effectiveness, mission readiness, and quality of the FFP office. On a 4–point scale, participants rated CAP's facilitation 3.73.

## Selected Results:

Qualitative evaluation data shows the following:

- Senegal participant knowledge about the specifics of bulk commodities increased from 46% to 72%.
- Senegal participants' ability to correctly identify the preferred disposal method of unfit commodities increased from 36% to 68%.
- Washington, DC participant scores on knowledge tests increased by 13.6% points—from an average score of 73.6% up to 87.2%.
- Washington, DC participant understanding of the five goals of the Food for Peace Act increased 77%.
- Bangladesh workshop participants' scores for pre-/post-tests increased from average 66% correct to 84% correct.

“[The workshop] was a comprehensive overview of the commodity life cycle with good examples of case studies and the ramifications of non-compliance.”

— U.S. workshop participant

“It was great! I feel like I have a solid foundation in commodities management and the benefit of meeting colleagues with more experience.”

— Senegal workshop participant

“I thought the topics were interesting, engaging activities and I learned a lot about fumigation, audits, communication and field operations.”

— U.S. workshop participant

“[Attending the workshop] has been a truly great opportunity for our MYAP participants and indeed was a significant milestone in their learning curve.”

— USAID/FFP Grants Coordinator