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Food Aid Quality Review Quarterly Technical Report No. 1

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It was prepared by Tufts University.

I. Starting up the Activity

The contract was signed April 4, 2009, allowing for immediate travel by the project director (P. Webb) to the Kansas City food aid conference. The activity was announced in plenary leading to considerable enthusiasm from many industry and PVO participants. There was also presentation and discussion of the goals of the FAQR and core issues at two non-plenary sessions:

The first was a breakfast meeting of invited guests, mainly from industry, who were introduced to the project director as well as to several members of the writing team and of the expert review panels. That gathering served to outline the goals of the review and ways in which interested stakeholders could become involved.

The second was a planned panel session of the food aid conference focused on issues relevant to quality of food aid. Chaired by Ross Kreamer, ADA of the Office of Capacity Building and Development, Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA, the panel also included Sandra Wood, ADA of the Farm Service Agency, USDA and Bertrand Salvignol of WFP. Webb's presentation is posted at (http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/ifac09_pat_webb_090408.pdf) and will also be on the FAQR website established for the review (foodaidquality.org)

A short meeting was also held in Kansas City with Jeff Borns, Director of FFP, to discuss expectations and timeline.

Since activating the project, Tufts set up the accounting, sub-contracting and reporting lines necessary to meet its contractual obligations.

- ☛ As anticipated in the contract, regular (at least weekly) interaction has been established with Judy Canahuati (the COTR) via email and/or phone calls.
- ☛ The two project directors (Webb and B. Rogers) met with Lance Butler III (contracting officer), on June 3rd, to discuss specifics of the contract and expectations of process.
- ☛ The two project directors also met with other key professionals at Food-for-Peace offices that same day, including J. Dworken and A-M del Castillo. That discussion focused on critical inter-agency issues that need to be taken into account in the process of deriving recommendations from the review.
- ☛ The project director (Webb) met with Dale Skoric (FFP), Bud Philbrook (D/US for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services), and other mission-based team in Rome on June 11 (M. Brennan Seng and E. Petrovski). Webb gave a briefing on the scope and approach of the activity, key issues being discussed with other bilateral donor delegations that week. Considerable interest was expressed in the review's outcomes.

2. The Consultative Process

Activating the review has required outreach to a wider range of known and potential stakeholders, to a) let them know about the work, b) invite their active and substantive participation in the process, and c) develop a network of experts whose input on key

issues can be relied upon. Such outreach has been pursued on two main fronts: first, a series of meetings held to announce and promote the review, and second, setting up a web-mediated discussion forum that will allow for ongoing, transparent interaction with all interested stakeholders.

2.1 Meetings. The Tufts team has been very active during the first quarter in promoting awareness of the review and inviting participation. Meetings at which dedicated side-events were organized or at which participating team members talked about the activity included the following:

- ☛ *International Food Aid Conference*, Kansas City, April 6-8. Dedicated side meeting hosted primarily for industry stakeholders as well as those expert advisory panel members present.
- ☛ *Experimental Biology*, New Orleans, April 19-24. Dedicated side meeting held for research scientist stakeholders.
- ☛ *Creating Shared Value** symposium, hosted by Nestle and the UN Partnership Office, United Nations Plaza, NYC, April 27/28. The project director was able to use this meeting to interact with many companies and UN stakeholders interested in nutrition and in food quality issues.
- ☛ *Second International Micronutrient Forum*, Beijing, May 12-15. Dedicated side meeting mainly for researchers, food technologists and UN agency stakeholders. Also participated in the side-event that established a formal Technical Advisory Group for an international Home Fortificant Powders group. The project director is a member of that TAG.
- ☛ *GAIN-Business Alliance Global Forum**, Amsterdam, May 27. Meeting attended by member of author team who made participants aware of the FAQ review and held numerous related small meetings.
- ☛ *Future of Food and Nutrition**, National Press Club meeting, Washington, D.C. June 1-2. Discussions held by project director with USAID and USDA staff, as well as staffers from capitol hill (on the side of a meeting discussing future directions on food and nutrition policy for US government).
- ☛ *WFP Executive Board (Annual Session)*, Rome, June 11-12. Meetings with bilateral donor delegations from Australia, Germany and the EC.
- ☛ *WFP Technical Advisory Group*, annual meeting, Rome, June 16. Dedicated agenda item held during TAG discussions. Presented the review activity, discussed key concerns and issues from their side, invited formal TAG input as well as participation of TAG scientists in their individual capacity—both were willingly granted.
- ☛ *WFP food aid quality team*, Rome, June 15. Presented outline of the review to 12 WFP staff from various parts of the organization, including procurement, programming, nutrition and the executive director's office. Considerable interest expressed as well as commitment to offer as much support as required.
- ☛ *USDA Instant Corn Soya Blend**, Washington, D.C., June 15. Member of author team attended discussion on ICSB and reported back to group on key issues to be taken into account.

- ☛ *US Food Aid Consultative Group, Washington, D.C. June 17. Presentation made by co-director to the FAC group as well as discussion with key policy makers interested in the review and food aid quality process issues.*

* denotes meetings for which participation was not charged to the FAQ budget.

As a result of such meetings, several hundred contacts have so far been established with companies, academics and donor governments. Further work is required to reach out to operational organizations (field based experts), experts dealing with transportation/shipping, and additional food technology specialists.

2.2 Web-Mediated Outreach. The intent is to have a dedicated website that will serve three main purposes:

- provide a Discussion Board where all stakeholders can interact on multiple topics with the author teams, with outside experts, and with each other during the course of the review;
- provide a 'library' function where non-confidential documents can be housed for access by all stakeholders interested in relevant material as it relates to discussions on the Board. Registered users will be able to upload relevant documents for sharing as well as download those they find on the site;
- enable author teams to interact during the review and the writing of technical reports in a password-protected environment.

At the end of June the site is under review by the author teams prior to going 'live'. A dedicated domain name has been secured, the site itself has been tailored to the needs of the review, and sample documents and questions have been uploaded. Once the site is ready, stakeholders already identified will be sent a message inviting them to register and participate and new stakeholders will be added as the process moves forward. For example, the FAQ review was announced in the regular bulletin of the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN), with an invitation to interested parties to get in contact with us so that they can be involved. Numerous emails have subsequently been received as a result and they will be included.

3. Research for the Technical Papers

The author teams and expert advisers were advised of project initiation in early April. A first meeting of authors in Boston took place on May 1, 2009. That meeting focused on a) sharing background information on the project as a whole, b) bringing everyone up to speed on expectations, timeline and deliverables, and c) determining the scope of individual tasks.

- ☛ It was understood that the work needs to focus on not just commodity composition issues (although those are key), but topics relating to quality of process through the value chain (strategy for quality assurance), approaches to periodic, systematic product review/new commodity development, and to the

- ways in which processed foods are used to achieve nutrition outcomes in Title II programming.
- ☛ A second author's meeting is planned for mid-July, at which a revised timeline and more precise deliverable milestones will be established, as well as greater determination of areas of author responsibility.
 - ☛ A library of relevant documents is being established, contact is being made with various researchers globally who have experience in such areas of focus, and desk reviews have been initiated to ensure appropriate topic coverage.

4. Plans for the coming quarter (July through September)

- ☛ Plan a next round of meetings in the Fall of 2009 for which 'early thoughts' (of the authors) and 'discussion of controversial topics' can be the main focus of attention.
- ☛ Launch the website and spending time moderating the early exchanges/dialogue on the Discussion Board to ensure its utility to the review and correct any potential problems.
- ☛ Develop annotated outlines of the final deliverables (technical reports), and make progress in priority research areas.