

## **FIELD Day Briefing**

**FIELD Day was held in Arlington, Virginia on November 3, 2009**

### **Monitoring Nutritional and Health Outcomes of Food Security, Economic Strengthening, and Livelihood Programs**

This session examined food security in the context of economic development and livelihoods, looking at the Winrock International program and their programming outcomes. The speakers (Margie Brand, EcoVentures International/AED, Megan Deitchler, USAID/FANTA II, Carol O'Laughlin, Winrock International) discussed how to determine the questions to ask, how to set programming and how to conduct evaluation, and measuring of impact. Discussion included adaptation of tools from other fields of practice to evaluate programs and the session invited audience member to describe their involvement in food security, in monitoring and evaluation and in economic livelihood programs.

The session examined integrated livelihood/health programs and how these can lead to improved health and income results. Evaluation is conducted at the project level, and depends on the donor's needs and objectives, mostly in terms of income and productivity. For the health and nutrition program, donors have looked at different outcomes such as calorie intake. Combining health with livelihoods produces significant gains overall, such as an increase in total income and income from agriculture. Margie Brand noted that development practitioners still lack integrated tools to be used as economic strengthening/development practitioners.

Megan Deitchler, from USAID's FANTA II program, implemented by AED, noted the lack indicators to measure household food security. FANTA II works on an experience-based scale, using cross-cultural indicator. These indicators are valid and appropriate in multiple geographic settings, and results can be compared across multiple settings. For example, stunting and wasting can be compared across different regions. A cross-cultural indicator is important for 1. Decision making: facilitating prioritization for intervention in geographic regions, 2. Monitoring and evaluation: enables multi-regional and cross-country evaluation of program, and 3. Policy advocacy: increased attention to food insecurity with availability of comparable data for resource-poor areas. In closing, Megan highlighted that the importance of ensuring that programs directly address food security, and when thinking about programs, making sure to focus on children during their development (0-24 months of age). Megan noted that women's nutrition is also important to consider as breast-milk is extremely important for children's development. Because food security is complex capturing a view of the overall household experience has a whole host of variants in which culture plays a huge role and coping mechanisms among households will vary greatly.