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# SMALL GRANTS **BIG IMPACT II**

An Overview of the  
TOPS Small Grants Program

2015-2017



Published July 2017

## DISCLAIMER

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## CREDITS

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# Contents

Introduction .....	4
What is the TOPS Small Grants Program?.....	5
TOPS Small Grants Facts & Figures (2010-2017) .....	6
Countries Reached by the TOPS Small Grants Program .....	7
Program Improvement Awards .....	8
Micro Grants. ....	13



# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT SMALL GRANTS BIG IMPACT II

Since the TOPS Small Grants Program began in late 2010, TOPS has awarded just over 4 million dollars via 71 grants to 32 different organizations involved in food security and nutrition activities. The TOPS Small Grants Program has offered organizations a unique opportunity to test innovative and creative ideas and share lessons learned from these experiences. This booklet highlights the 29 small grants awarded between 2016 and 2017. It serves as a continuation of the *Small Grants, Big Impact* booklet published in 2015, which provided an overview of the 42 small grants funded and carried out during the first five years of The TOPS Program.



The TOPS Program bases the descriptions of the small grants in this booklet on text collected from grantee-submitted reports and outputs, with a review from TOPS technical staff and the grantee organizations themselves. All resources mentioned in this booklet are available by clicking on the “TOPS Small Grant Funded” tab under the “Resources” heading on [www.FSNnetwork.org](http://www.FSNnetwork.org). Please note that several of the activities were still ongoing at the time of publication.

We hope you enjoy!

## ABOUT THE TOPS PROGRAM

The Technical and Operational Performance Support (TOPS) Program is the USAID Office of Food for Peace-funded learning mechanism that generates, captures, disseminates, and applies the highest quality information, knowledge, and promising practices in development food assistance programming to ensure that more communities and households benefit from the U.S. Government’s investment in fighting global hunger. Through technical capacity strengthening, engagement with the Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) Network, knowledge sharing events, stakeholder consultations, and a small grants program, The TOPS Program empowers food security implementers and the donor community to build stronger programs with lasting benefits for millions of the world’s most vulnerable people.

The TOPS Program draws on the expertise of its consortium members, led by Save the Children: CORE Group (Knowledge Management), Food for the Hungry (Social and Behavioral Change), Mercy Corps (Agriculture and Natural Resource Management), and TANGO International (Monitoring and Evaluation). Save the Children brings its experience and expertise in Commodity Management, Gender, and Nutrition and Food Technology, as well as the management of this seven-year (2010–2017) \$30 million award.

## SPECIAL THANKS

The success of the TOPS Small Grants Program would not have been possible without the support of USAID’s Office of Food for Peace and their willingness to encourage exploration of new, untested ideas in search of improved programming. We would like to express our gratitude to all of the organizations and individuals that sought and received funding through the program and to the grantees for all of their hard work, creativity, and enthusiasm in carrying out their activities and reporting on the results. Finally, we would like to express our deep appreciation to all TOPS staff who contributed to the TOPS Small Grants Program, especially Laura Zillmer, Small Grants Management Coordinator, who went above and beyond in her work managing and coordinating the small grants as well as producing this booklet.

# WHAT IS THE TOPS SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM?

Within the food security community, resource constraints often discourage exploring and testing creative ideas that could improve programs and result in reducing global hunger. While medium and large grants can be effective, they are not plentiful, often have time-consuming design, submission, and approval processes, and are typically restrictive in how the recipient may use the funds. For organizations and staff who have a bright new idea, the lack of even small amounts of easily available unrestricted funds makes it difficult to perform a quick study, design or test a tool, or conduct a learning event.



The TOPS Small Grants Program overcame these obstacles by providing a streamlined and accelerated application, approval, and reporting process. This simplified program enabled food security organizations to pursue creative ideas, take risks, and share vital knowledge and skills. Through the small grants, TOPS invested in nontraditional initiatives to advance knowledge and learning in food security and nutrition programming. Importantly, this final round of small grants included activities to share lessons learned with the community at large.

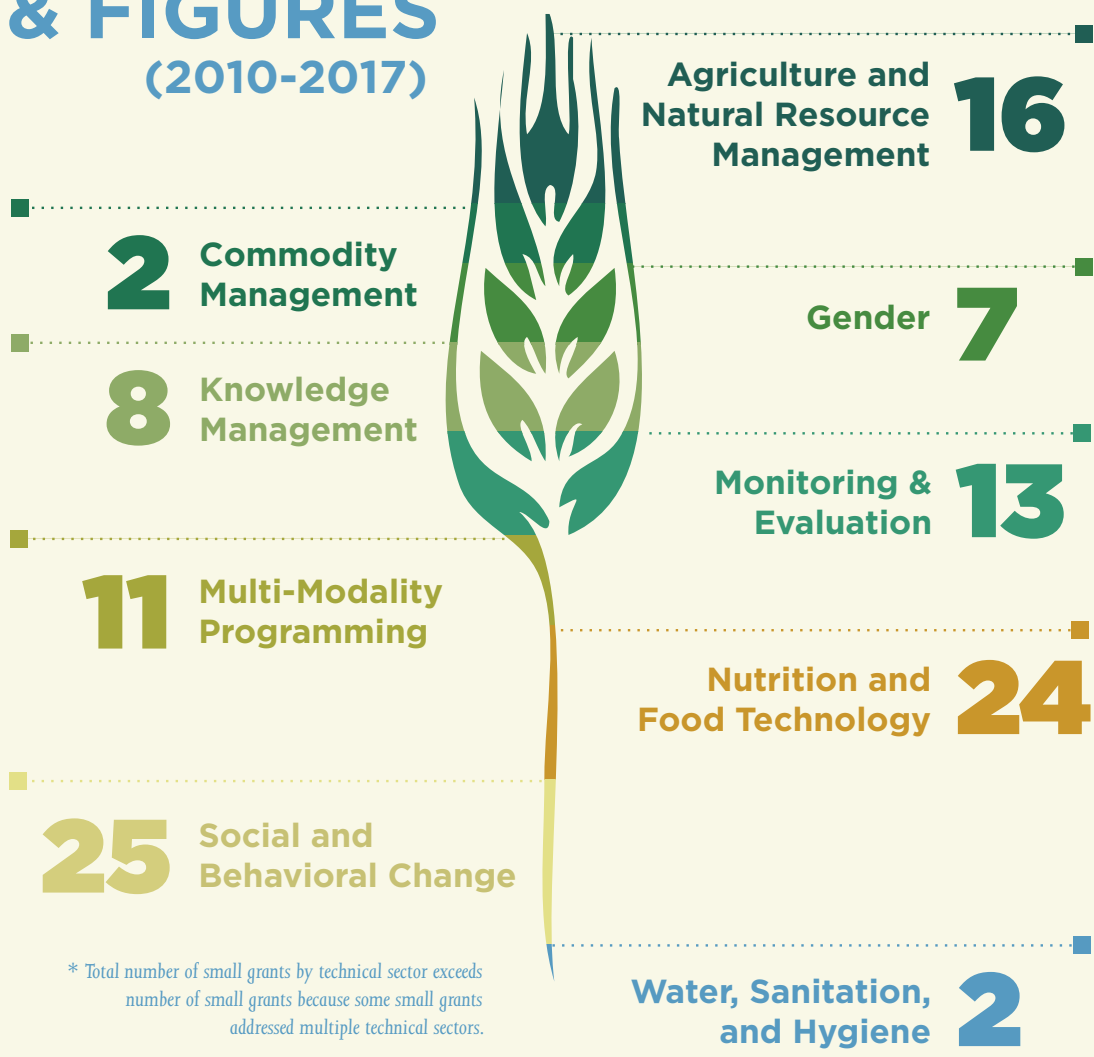
From the beginning in 2010, the TOPS Small Grants Program awarded Micro Grants and Program Improvement Awards (PIAs) between \$50,000 and \$100,000 to fund a wide variety of activities. Broadly speaking, Micro Grants focused on proposals to develop tools or conduct topic-specific learning events and PIAs supported initiatives to design and implement new technical content, pilot practices, and collect evidence to strengthen and improve the quality of food security programs.

From identifying constraints to employing the best infant and child feeding practices in Syrian refugee camps to designing an interactive rural radio program to improve household food production in Mali, the TOPS Small Grants Program has reached countries across the globe. The program has gathered lessons and generated tools in agriculture and natural resource management; commodity management; gender; knowledge management; monitoring and evaluation; multi-modality programming; nutrition and food technology; social and behavioral change; and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). In each of these technical areas, the TOPS Small Grants Program emphasized activities that produced evidence-based results and recommendations to support others in the food security community in carrying out innovative or promising new practices, strengthening existing practices, and improving technical capacity.

# TOPS SMALL GRANTS FACTS & FIGURES

(2010-2017)

## Number of Small Grants per Technical Sector\*



\* Total number of small grants by technical sector exceeds number of small grants because some small grants addressed multiple technical sectors.

**7**  
Years

**38**  
Countries

**165**  
Applications Received

**71**  
Small Grants Awarded  
50 Micro Grants  
21 Program Improvement Awards

**32**  
Organizations Funded

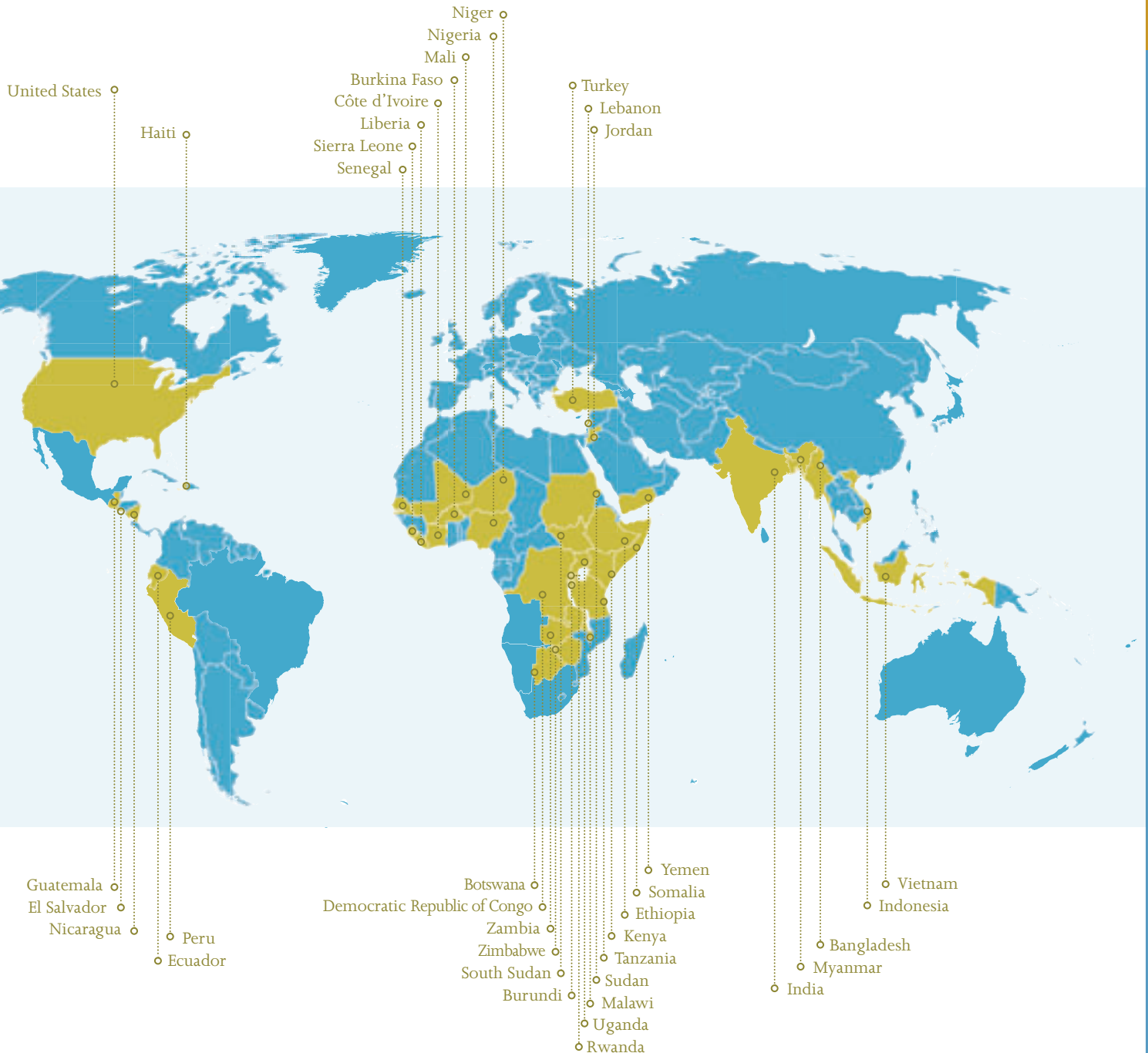
**4 MILLION\***  
USD Disbursed

\* Amount is an approximation as final financial reports were still pending at the time of publication.



# COUNTRIES REACHED BY THE TOPS SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

(2010–2017)



# PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AWARDS

## Theory of Change Adaptive Learning and Validation Program



**Grantee:** ACDI/VOCA

**Location:** Global

**Dates:** June 2016 to June 2017

**Main Outputs:** Event, Tool

**Technical Area:** Monitoring and Evaluation

Theory of Change is a concept to support program planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation by identifying how planned activities will lead to the desired change. Due in part to the absence of guidelines, few programs have been fully able to use a Theory of Change to prove how activities contributed to the observed outcomes. This award sought to fill that gap by working collaboratively to compile guidance for better design, application, and analysis of the Theory of Change framework.

In partnership with USAID and other organizations, ACDI/VOCA developed a guidance document on using Theory of Change for collaboration, learning, and adaptation. The organization also hosted a conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to share methodologies and best practices for using a Theory of Change. Following the conference, ACDI/VOCA hosted a four-day workshop during which participants heard from technical experts on monitoring, evaluation, and learning techniques. Using conference learnings and input from monitoring and evaluation specialists, this award culminated in the refinement of the guidance document, which describes methods for executing Theory of Change learning and verification in a variety of project contexts and scenarios.



Photo Credit: Jennifer Himmelstein, ACDI/VOCA



**Grantee:** Action Against Hunger / Action Contre la Faim (ACF)

**Dates:** June 2016 to June 2017

**Location:** Burkina Faso

**Main Output:** Research

**Technical Area:** Nutrition

The MAM'Out Project is a scientifically designed research project testing the effect of multiannual and seasonal unconditional cash transfers on the prevention of acute malnutrition, a topic that humanitarian agencies have seldom studied. ACF and partners have been collecting data on this topic since 2013. This award allowed them to thoroughly analyze the data and disseminate results. They presented findings at three workshops in Burkina Faso and one in Senegal, in addition to the annual Research for Nutrition Conference in Paris and the World Health Organization's Global Health Cluster meeting in Geneva.



Photo Credit: Jacques Bouda, Action Contre la Faim

Through distributed policy briefs, ACF seeks to influence national policymakers and stakeholders involved in the prevention of acute malnutrition.

Three scientific articles on the qualitative and quantitative results of the projects were published in spring 2017 in *BMC Public Health* and *The Journal of Nutrition*.

**Grantee:** AgriTechTalk International CIC

**Location:** Uganda

**Dates:** June 2016 to June 2017

**Main Outputs:** Tool, Training

**Technical Areas:** Agriculture and Natural Resource Management, Social and Behavioral Change

Decades of administrative neglect in the Karamoja region of northeast Uganda has severely hampered agriculture development beyond subsistence farming. Building on its work from a previous TOPS small grant, AgriTechTalk developed an online series of farm numeracy lessons for men and women in rural communities that features farm visits from a fictional extension agent named Uno How. The modules, provided in English and Karamojong, cover practical topics including measuring the field, estimating the required quantities of inputs, calculating the amount of crop in storage, assessing buyers' terms of trade, and practicing effective bookkeeping. Collaborating with Mercy Corps, AgriTechTalk organized a cascading system of training whereby graduates from Uno How Senior Numeracy Clubs trained volunteer members of farm families in Junior Clubs at the village level using hard copies of the manual. Results have shown a significant improvement in numeracy skills and decision-making among those trained.



Photo Credit: AgriTechTalk International CIC

## Moderate Acute Malnutrition Out (MAM'Out) Project



## Increasing Numeracy in Rural Communities in Karamoja



## Learning for Gender Integration Plus



**Grantee:** Lutheran World Relief (LWR)

**Locations:** India, Nicaragua, Uganda

**Dates:** June 2016 to May 2017

**Main Outputs:** Event, Research

**Technical Areas:** Gender, Monitoring and Evaluation

In 2012, LWR launched the Learning for Gender Integration (LGI) initiative, a program focused on addressing gender inequality in the context of food security. LGI piloted three gender-integrated food security programs in India, Nicaragua, and Uganda, concluding in 2016. Under this award, LWR worked with Cultural Practices, LLC to design and lead a participatory evaluation of the programs in each of the three countries using a combination of two qualitative methodologies. Applying the first methodology, known as PhotoVoice, LWR trained and equipped project participants with cameras and asked them to photograph people and situations in their lives that demonstrate how gender roles had changed. For the second methodology, known as Most Significant Change, project staff from partner organizations chose stories that reflected notable changes that had taken place in the roles of women and men in the communities. Findings of these evaluations included evidence of a more equal distribution of labor between women and men and an improved willingness to include women in household decision-making.



Photo Credit: Ismael Kirevu, Uganda PhotoVoice participant

## Whole Systems Resilience Design Framework



**Grantee:** Mercy Corps

**Location:** Uganda

**Dates:** June 2016 to June 2017

**Main Output:** Tool

**Technical Area:** Monitoring and Evaluation

Mercy Corps applies a resilience design approach to smallholder farming systems. This approach looks at the environmental shocks and stressors a community faces and integrates methods to lessen vulnerability. Through this award, Mercy Corps developed a monitoring and evaluation tool for both farmers and development agencies to measure the impact of the resilience design approach. Mercy Corps tested and collected feedback



Photo Credit: Elin DUBY, Mercy Corps

on the tool in both Uganda and Niger during training sessions that involved theory, fieldwork, and action planning. Since its creation, the tool has proven influential in allowing farmers and practitioners to more clearly articulate the impact of the resilience design approach and undertake higher impact activities to improve smallholder resilience and food security.

**Grantee:** Farm Radio International

**Location:** Mali

**Dates:** August 2016 to June 2017

**Main Output:** Tool

**Technical Areas:** Agriculture and Natural Resource Management, Social and Behavioral Change

Farm Radio International uses radio and other communication channels to share knowledge among small-scale farmers and their communities. Noting the lack of appropriate information and communication opportunities concerning food and nutrition security in the Mopti region of Mali, Farm Radio International developed a gender-responsive interactive rural radio program in partnership with the national radio station. In each episode, the radio program poses new questions and topics to facilitate dialogue about specific challenges communities are facing related to food aid programming. Listeners are able to call in or send questions via mobile phone through Farm Radio International's free platform, Uliza. To increase participation in the radio program, Farm Radio International organized ten community listener groups throughout Mopti, each provided with radio sets and mobile phones.



Photo Credit: Amadou Tangara, Farm Radio International

News of this project made its way to the Malian Minister of Agriculture. During his trip to the region, the Minister made an impromptu visit to the radio station and participated in the live radio program. While on air, the Minister praised the broadcast for its alignment with national policies and its success in reaching an audience beyond what traditional extension workers may have the means to cover.

**Grantee:** World Vision

**Location:** Zimbabwe

**Dates:** August 2016 to June 2017

**Main Output:** Research

**Technical Area:** Monitoring and Evaluation

With support from World Vision, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) researched how communities in Zimbabwe can strengthen their resistance to climate-induced challenges. IFPRI compared four shock-response interventions used by World Vision – Enhancing Nutrition, Stepping Up Resilience and Enterprise (ENSURE); Productive Asset Creation; Lean Season Assistance; and a cash transfer program – to learn about the extent to which each of these methods have built resilience to climate-related



Photo Credit: World Vision Zimbabwe

crises, like recurrent droughts. Results of the study include evidence that World Vision interventions had a significant impact on building resilience through improved crop management practices, including the adoption of crop varieties and fertilizer application. Beneficiaries of the Lean Season Assistance and the cash transfer program reported improved relationships within communities, a social outcome that is essential for building resilience.

## Innovation for Food Security Program Implementation

FARM RADIO INTERNATIONAL RADIO RURALES INTERNATIONALES

## Evaluation of Resilience Approaches

World Vision®



Developing  
Guidelines to  
Improve Management  
of Agriculture  
Demonstration Sites

World Vision®



Photo Credit: World Vision

**Grantee:** World Vision

**Locations:** Bangladesh, Niger, Zimbabwe

**Dates:** August 2016 to May 2017

**Main Outputs:** Research, Tool

**Technical Area:** Agriculture and Natural Resource Management

Demonstration sites are an important element of any agriculture extension program. While well-managed demonstrations play a crucial role in enabling farmers to learn and adopt innovative farming practices, poorly managed demonstration sites can dissuade farmers from taking up new tools and techniques. Despite their widespread use, limited evidence exists on how to optimize the effectiveness of demonstration sites. In this context, World Vision made use of this award to study demonstration sites in Bangladesh, Niger, and Zimbabwe. In each country, World Vision collected data through focus group discussions and key informant interviews. Using the data collected and validated during stakeholder workshops in each of these three countries, World Vision produced a set of operational and technical guidelines to improve effective management of demonstration sites.

The study began with the belief that a strong demonstration site is one that presents well and clearly shows the difference between a promoted practice and existing farming methods. As the study progressed, however, World Vision learned that an equally important goal of demonstration sites is encouraging farmers to experiment and learn by doing. In this sense, what matters is not so much what a demonstration site looks like, but how much learning farmers can gain from a given site.

Forest Garden  
Training Center



**Grantee:** Trees for the Future

**Location:** Global

**Dates:** October 2016 to May 2017

**Main Outputs:** Tool, Training

**Technical Area:** Agriculture and Natural Resource Management

Through this award, Trees for the Future created the Forest Garden Training Center, a web-based platform that certifies trainers to implement a new methodology known as the Forest Garden Approach. The approach guides smallholder farmers through protecting, diversifying, and optimizing their agricultural production of trees. The platform also includes a comprehensive technical manual that covers the latest innovations in smallholder agroforestry. Participants of the online certification program earn a professional Forest Garden Trainer Certification, ensuring they have met a level of excellence in agroforestry knowledge and facilitation skills. As a one-stop shop for best technical practices, training materials, and key facilitation skills, this platform is the first of its kind.

*“With the Forest Garden Training Center in place, Trees for the Future is excited to help more organizations use the Forest Garden Approach to meet food security, climate-smart agriculture, and economic resilience goals.”*

—Ashleigh Burgess, Partnerships and Strategic Outreach, Trees for the Future



Photo Credit: John Leary, Trees for the Future

# MICRO GRANTS

**Grantee:** Mercy Corps

**Locations:** Rwanda, Senegal

**Dates:** January to September 2016

**Main Outputs:** Event, Tool

**Technical Area:** Multi-modality

As mobile cash transfers become more common, there is an increasing need for improved understanding between Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) and implementing agencies. To this end, Mercy Corps convened workshops in Rwanda and Senegal attended by representatives of humanitarian organizations, donors, and private sector companies working with mobile money. The workshops identified challenges in mobile money deployment as well as incentives for continued collaboration. With insight from the workshops, Mercy Corps produced a Mobile Money Assessment and Contracting Guide to help humanitarian organizations evaluate potential service providers and design strong agreements for successful program implementation. Mercy Corps also produced a document for the private sector audience outlining what to expect when working with humanitarian organizations.



Photo Credit: Lily Frey, Mercy Corps

*“We were able to demystify business practices and incentives of MNOs and humanitarians for the other party [...] the discussions we started in both events, and continued through the follow-up resources, remind both parties that there are willing partners on the other side.”* –Lily Frey, Electronic Cash Transfer Officer, Mercy Corps

Development of  
Mobile Money Tools





**Developing and Disseminating Essential Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Actions Tool**



**Grantee:** FHI 360  
**Location:** Global  
**Dates:** April 2016 to June 2017  
**Main Output:** Tool  
**Technical Areas:** Nutrition, WASH

With this award, FHI 360 elaborated on a set of Essential WASH Actions that provides guidance on how to improve behaviors related to water, sanitation, and hygiene. The guidance supplements the existing framework known as the Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) and Essential Hygiene Actions (EHA) Framework, a package of specific nutrition and hygiene actions proven to achieve public health impact when put into place.



Photo Credit: Kimber Haddix McKay, Adara Group

While the existing ENA/EHA Framework identified a number of practices essential to good hygiene, the Essential WASH Actions expands upon this list with additional practices and resources. Resulting from a process of continuous stakeholder feedback from Food for Peace partners and building upon work done through WASHplus, the final tool includes training guides and reference materials for practitioners and communities to improve behaviors for each nutrition-sensitive WASH action linked with improved child growth and development.

**Multiple Modalities for Food and Nutrition Security Programming**



**Grantees:** Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP)  
**Location:** Global  
**Dates:** July 2016 to June 2017  
**Main Output:** Research  
**Technical Area:** Multi-modality

When should organizations respond to a food security crisis with so-called multi-modality programs – in other words, a combination of several assistance methods – and how can these programs best be carried out? While the range of options available in response to food security crises has grown significantly, existing guidance has tended to focus only on a single method of assistance. In response to requests for additional guidance, CRS and CaLP researched processes for identifying conditions

under which multi-modality programs are appropriate and feasible and the best practices for their implementation. The research revealed that frequently, more than one response is appropriate, and combining responses often helps mitigate concerns and perceived risks. The guide compiling the findings is available in English, Arabic, French, and Spanish.



Photo Credit: Oscar Leiva, Silverlight for Catholic Relief Services

**Grantee:** CORE Group

**Location:** Global

**Dates:** October 2016 to May 2017

**Main Output:** Tool

**Technical Area:** Nutrition

While it may be impossible to anticipate an epidemic, preparation can save a multitude of lives when disaster strikes. With this award, CORE Group has developed a module to enhance preparedness for and improve the response of communities in countries at risk of a cholera epidemic. Four lesson plans with accompanying flipcharts and illustrations comprise this module, which is delivered through community health workers. The lessons target mothers and caregivers of children under age five, a group that is at particular risk of death if infected. The module shares information about symptoms and risks; what families can do to prevent infection; how, when, and where to seek care; and what actions to take in the aftermath of an outbreak.



Photo Credit: Adugna Kebede, World Vision

**Grantee:** Grandmother Project - Change Through Culture

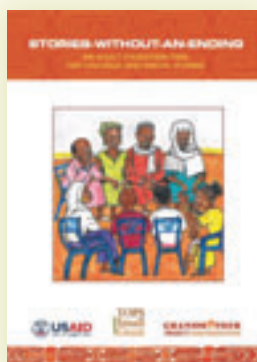
**Location:** Global

**Dates:** April 2016 to February 2017

**Main Output:** Tool

**Technical Areas:** Nutrition, Social and Behavioral Change

The Grandmother Project produced a guide on the development and use of Stories-Without-an-Ending, an approach for actively engaging community groups in discussions about issues that are important to them and local development programs. The guide, whose primary audience is organizations managing community-based programs, introduces key concepts necessary for consideration in promoting community-wide social change. The guide also lays out a step-by-step process for development and use of open-ended stories to facilitate group dialogue and consensus building around social norms and practices. The Stories-Without-an-Ending methodology is primarily intended for use with younger community groups and community elders, who often play a leading role in either maintaining or changing social norms in many non-Western societies. The methodology has proven successful particularly for programs promoting optimal health and nutrition behaviors, for example, pregnant women's diets or exclusive breastfeeding.



*“The Stories-Without-an-Ending [methodology] can’t be compared with other methods. In these stories, you aren’t told ‘do this’ and ‘don’t do that.’ Each person is challenged to examine his or her own conscience to decide what is the best thing to do.”*

—Dina Balde, Grandmother Leader

## Emergency Toolkit for Food Security and Nutrition Protection: Cholera Disease Preparedness Care Group Module



## Stories-Without-an-Ending: An Adult Education Tool for Dialogue and Social Change



Developing Francophone Master Trainers in the Essential Nutrition and Hygiene Actions Framework for Health and Community Workers



**Grantees:** Helen Keller International (HKI), CORE Group

**Location:** Côte d'Ivoire

**Dates:** August 2016 to March 2017

**Main Output:** Training

**Technical Area:** Nutrition

This five-day training of trainers, targeted at French speakers, shared approaches health workers and community agents can use when counseling mothers and caregivers to adopt practices known to improve nutrition and health for infants and young children. Held in Côte d'Ivoire, the training familiarized participants with the training guides and reference materials for the Essential Nutrition Actions and Essential Hygiene Actions Framework, a set of interventions proven to improve health and nutrition outcomes. The training also included role-playing and interaction with actual mothers to practice the techniques of negotiation for behavior change. By segmenting the process into listening and problem solving, participants discovered that techniques are most effective when counselors evaluate challenges specific to the household before making recommendations. Subsequently, trainers will replicate the trainings within their own organizations.

*“Participants [of the training] invariably rave about the techniques for counseling mothers and their significant others to try out small, doable ‘improved practices’ most appropriate to their particular situation and for helping them overcome barriers to success.” –Jennifer Nielsen, Senior Nutrition Advisor, HKI*



Photo Credit: Issakha Diop, Helen Keller International



Photo Credit: Issakha Diop, Helen Keller International



**Grantee:** HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation

**Locations:** Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Madagascar

**Dates:** August 2016 to May 2017

**Main Outputs:** Tool, Training

**Technical Areas:** Social and Behavioral Change, WASH

Photo Credit: Bruno Métral,  
HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation



Despite attaining access to sources of safe water, communities continue to face risks of illness and malnutrition through poor hygiene practices. Understanding that existing approaches to behavior change related to water, sanitation, and hygiene are not always easily applicable for field staff, HELVETAS revisited the behavior change model known as the RANAS (Risks, Attitudes, Norms, Abilities, and Self-regulation) approach to improve its usability. The RANAS method, which is similar to the Barrier Analysis approach, has

been extensively tested and is accompanied by a catalog of behavior change techniques that practitioners can use to develop program interventions based on the results of their RANAS study.

Working with the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology, HELVETAS developed a practical manual in English and French on carrying out the approach. HELVETAS also organized workshops at the Rural Water Supply Network Forum in Côte d'Ivoire and for Food for Peace partners in Niger to foster knowledge of the RANAS approach and other strategies for behavior change. Finally, HELVETAS piloted an online training module in Madagascar, the results of which will refine future training tools.

**Grantee:** Helen Keller International (HKI)

**Location:** Vietnam

**Dates:** August 2016 to April 2017

**Main Output:** Training

**Technical Area:** Social and Behavioral Change

How can programs be best designed to achieve behavior change, and what are the barriers to adopting recommended behaviors? Seeking to improve food security programming for organizations throughout Southeast Asia, HKI organized the region's first ever training on designing programs for behavior change and conducting Barrier Analyses in Hanoi, Vietnam. During the seven-day training, participants learned about planning for and evaluating effective



Photo Credit: Pham Kim Ngoc, Helen Keller International

behavior change strategies. Trainees also gained the skills to implement a Barrier Analysis, including developing questionnaires, conducting interviews, and analyzing data. On the final day of the workshop, participants developed action plans to implement Barrier Analysis studies in their own contexts.

## Behavior Change Approach in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Projects



## Designing for Behavior Change and Barrier Analysis Workshop



## Barrier Analyses of Infant and Young Child Feeding and Maternal Nutrition Behaviors Among Syrian Refugees



**Grantee:** International Medical Corps (IMC)

**Locations:** Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey

**Dates:** April to September 2016

**Main Outputs:** Research, Training

**Technical Areas:** Nutrition, Social and Behavioral Change

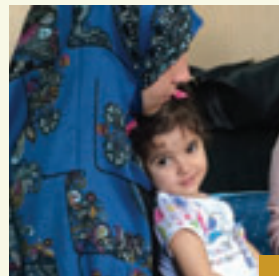
Through three small grants, IMC researched barriers Syrian refugees face to practicing preferred infant and young child feeding and maternal nutrition practices in the Middle East. Based on these findings, IMC convened workshops to provide partners with recommendations for program design and implementation.

*Azraq Refugee Camp, Jordan* – In search of protection from the deteriorating security situation in Syria, many Syrians have migrated to Azraq Camp, situated on the Jordan-Syria border. In response to the crisis, IMC and partners are on the ground providing crucial health and nutrition services. With this award, IMC carried out a two-day training with partner organizations on how to conduct a Barrier Analysis. Participants then used these skills to identify why mothers in the camp may or may not practice exclusive breastfeeding, complementary feeding with iron-rich foods, and recommended antenatal care during the first trimester. Based on these findings, IMC drafted possible recommendations and circulated to training participants who suggested relevant activities based on their knowledge of what is practical and culturally appropriate in Azraq Camp.



Photo Credit: Shiromi Perera, International Medical Corps

Photo Credit: Shiromi Perera, International Medical Corps



*Lebanon* – Lebanon is home to the largest number of Syrian refugees per capita. In an effort to close the gap in unmet primary healthcare needs, IMC has been working to promote important maternal and child health and nutrition behaviors among displaced Syrians in Lebanon. As in Jordan, IMC carried out a Barrier Analysis training and assessment to improve understanding of the obstacles mothers face in practicing exclusive breastfeeding, providing minimum dietary diversity, and seeking early antenatal care for their infants and young

children. IMC produced a final report providing recommendations for programs, some of which include preparing talking points for healthcare workers, creating peer support groups for mothers, and promoting understanding of breastfeeding benefits among men.

*Urban Turkey* – With some Syrian girls as young as 13 years old entering into forced marriages in Turkey, concerns about maternal nutrition practices are particularly acute. As such, IMC undertook a Barrier Analysis to identify factors preventing adolescent mothers from adopting preferred antenatal and infant feeding practices. A two-day Barrier Analysis training with partner organizations was held in both Istanbul and Gaziantep before participants were guided to conduct the analysis itself. Following data collection, IMC interpreted the results and made recommendations for organizations' consideration when designing programs.



Photo Credit: Shiromi Perera, International Medical Corps



**Grantee:** International Medical Corps (IMC)

**Location:** Jordan

**Dates:** April to September 2016

**Main Outputs:** Research, Training

**Technical Area:** Nutrition

Photo Credit: Esther Busquet, International Medical Corps



Built for refugees of the Syrian civil war, Azraq Camp hosts thousands of refugees who rely on food vouchers for their diet. The purpose of a cost-of-the-diet assessment is to estimate the lowest cost to supply the quantity and combination of local foods required to meet a family's minimum energy and nutrition requirements. Following a training familiarizing participants with the cost-of-the-diet assessment, field staff from ten organizations carried out a cost-of-the-diet assessment through a market survey, individual interviews, and focus group discussions. The assessment found that while a nutritious diet is available for a typical family of five,

a diet reflecting local habits is not affordable and a nutritious diet not available for families of a different composition.

IMC has since drafted a policy brief with recommendations for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Program to ensure the system can meet Azraq Camp refugees' nutritional needs. The brief recommends such actions as increasing the value of food vouchers, improving opportunities for paid positions in the camp, and supporting micro-gardening.

**Grantee:** Land O'Lakes International Development

**Location:** Global

**Dates:** May 2016 to June 2017

**Main Output:** Events

**Technical Area:** Agriculture and Natural Resource Management

Animal source foods provide a variety of nutrients that are particularly important for children and difficult to obtain from a predominantly cereal-based diet. With this understanding, Land O'Lakes International Development hosted a yearlong learning series to identify, discuss, and disseminate best approaches to designing and implementing nutrition-sensitive livestock programs. Through two webinars and two in-person events that reached over 500



Photo Credit: International Livestock Research Institute

attendees, this series covered topics including the importance of animal source foods in diets, food safety, technical considerations when implementing livestock projects, and measuring the nutritional impact of such programs.

## Cost-of-the-Diet Analysis in Azraq Refugee Camp, Jordan



## Livestock-Household Nutrition Learning Series



Instruction Video  
of the Partnership  
Defined Quality  
(PDQ) Methodology



**Grantee:** Medical Teams International  
**Location:** Liberia  
**Dates:** August 2016 to February 2017  
**Main Output:** Tool  
**Technical Area:** Social and Behavioral Change



Photo Credit: Beth Outterson, Medical Teams International

Partnership Defined Quality (PDQ) is a methodology that engages community members with service providers to address barriers to health services. The process involves meeting with community members and service providers to agree upon constraints and then developing and executing action plans to resolve the identified issues. Having successfully integrated PDQ into prior programs, Medical Teams International created a 30-minute instructional video on how to execute the PDQ process. Shot in Grand Cape Mount County, Liberia, the video demonstrates the four phases of PDQ implementation in action, with brief interviews from staff and community members. To complement the video, Medical Teams International developed a set of questions to guide a discussion after viewing.

Since the project's end, community-based Quality Improvement Teams in Grand Cape Mount County have rallied to carry out their action plans to improve health services. With local resources and support from county and district leaders, teams in several communities have generated resources to purchase cement for the construction of staff quarters, which also serve as maternal waiting homes, near the health facilities.

Training of Trainers  
in Gender and  
Facilitation Skills



**Grantee:** CARE USA  
**Location:** Bangladesh  
**Dates:** November 2016 to May 2017  
**Main Output:** Training  
**Technical Area:** Gender

Gender equality is an important prerequisite for optimal nutrition and food security. Despite this reality, implementing staff may hold gender biases themselves or lack the skills necessary to manage a fully gender-integrated program. In this context, CARE USA collaborated with CARE Bangladesh, Helen Keller International, and World Vision Bangladesh to design and execute a two-part training in Gazipur, Bangladesh for key program staff from Food for Peace programs. The first part of the training, held in December 2016, focused on understanding key gender concepts, planning for personal behavior change, and practicing strong facilitation skills. The follow-up training, held in May 2017, focused on the application of tools that promote dialogue about gender issues, coupled with mentorship and feedback. Outcomes of the workshop included increased awareness of gender norms, improved understanding of linkages between gender equality and food security, and enhanced confidence to deliver gender dialogue trainings.



Photo Credit: CARE

**Grantee:** Mercy Corps

**Location:** Liberia

**Dates:** April 2016 to February 2017

**Main Output:** Research

**Technical Area:** Agriculture and Natural Resource Management

With rural youth making up much of the global population, adolescents are key to the future of food security. Adolescent youth face a number of barriers, however, to participating fully in agriculture, ranging from poor access to financial services to the stigma associated with engaging in agriculture as a career. To better understand the relationship between youth and agricultural development, Mercy Corps held focus group discussions and conducted interviews with youth and community elders in Bong County, Liberia.

Upon concluding the study, Mercy Corps produced a document outlining important findings and recommendations for program implementers. In general, Mercy Corps found that youth's perceptions around agriculture are diverse, but many feel proud of the contribution that agricultural work provides.



Photo Credit: Rose Hemmer-Vitti, Mercy Corps

*“Farmers are the ones who provide food for the world. There is a local belief that all farmers will go to heaven.” –Tokpaipolu, Focus Group Discussion participant*

**Grantee:** Project Concern International (PCI)

**Location:** Malawi

**Dates:** April 2016 to June 2017

**Main Outputs:** Research, Training

**Technical Area:** Social and Behavioral Change

In Machinga and Balaka districts of Malawi, PCI has organized Care Groups comprised of mothers and trained mother volunteers who meet regularly to discuss nutrition- and health-related practices. Interested in understanding the contributions of fathers' involvement in health and nutrition promotion, PCI used this award to study the benefits of Fathers Groups on reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health. PCI staff trained groups of fathers in various aspects of health and nutrition and facilitated discussions between Care Groups and Fathers Groups on how the groups could support one another in promoting behavior change at the household and community level.



Photo Credit: Mary Pat Kieffer, Project Concern International

To measure the outcomes of fathers' involvement, PCI conducted surveys examining knowledge, attitudes, and practices of Care Group and Father Group members, as well as of other women in the districts. Findings suggest that engaging men in health and nutrition behavior change promotes gender equitable attitudes and improves reproductive health and nutrition practices at the household level.

## Youth and Agriculture Research



## Fathers' Involvement in Promoting Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health



Integrated Pest  
Management and  
Fumigation Safety  
Training



**Grantee:** Project Concern International (PCI)  
**Location:** Global  
**Dates:** June 2016 to May 2017  
**Main Output:** Training  
**Technical Area:** Commodity Management

The Warehouse Staff Safety Guide, created by PCI and funded through a previous TOPS small grant, produced clear guidance for the first time on keeping warehouse staff safe. Building from this success, PCI coordinated a training in collaboration with Kansas State University to educate program staff on how to mitigate food-aid commodity losses and practice safe use of pesticides. Over three days, participants learned skills



Photo Credit: Christina Gagliardi, Project Concern International

including insect identification, proper sanitation procedures, pesticide safety practices, and use of protective equipment. The training also served to familiarize participants with the Programmatic Environmental Assessment, a document intended to help ensure compliance with USAID’s environmental regulations. The workshop was attended by over 40 participants from 13 different countries, who will replicate the training with field staff worldwide.

*“One thing that was really enjoyable about this course was to be able to learn the science- and evidence-based research and then focus on how to incorporate what we were learning into the realities of our fieldwork.”* –Workshop participant, ADRA International

Dataset Policy  
Compliance Guide



**Grantee:** Project Concern International (PCI)  
**Dates:** April 2016 to June 2017  
**Location:** Global  
**Main Outputs:** Event, Tool  
**Technical Area:** Monitoring and Evaluation



USAID promotes the accessibility of information by collecting data from USAID-funded initiatives in a central repository known as the Development Data Library. However, organizations have many questions about how to comply with the USAID mandate to collect and submit data. With this award, PCI developed the *Open Data Policy Compliance Guide* to help organizations make their data suitable for use by USAID, partners, and the public. The guide compiles best practices for data management, starting with the development of a strong data management plan. The resource also includes systematic guidance to help organizations avoid compliance pitfalls

from the time a proposal to USAID is first developed through the final submission of datasets to the Development Data Library. In addition, PCI hosted an event in Washington, DC to introduce the guide to practitioners and offer advice on how organizations can implement the guidance and adopt best practices.



**Grantee:** Save the Children

**Location:** Global

**Dates:** March 2016 to June 2017

**Main Output:** Tool

**Technical Area:** Nutrition

In 2012, Save the Children launched the original Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) Toolkit, a collection of resources for rapid start-up of nutrition programs in emergency contexts. Since then, research on optimal management of acute malnutrition has resulted in new guidelines and protocols, requiring revisions to the toolkit. Through this award, Save the Children collaborated with nutrition professionals from various organizations to update the content of the toolkit and enhance its applicability to both emergency and long-term development programming. The final product – available in both English and French – is a comprehensive and user-friendly compilation of tools that allows health and nutrition program staff to effectively design, execute, and manage CMAM programs in their health facilities and communities.



Photo Credit: Juozas Cernius, Save the Children

## Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) Toolkit Revision







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