



**Board for International Food & Agricultural Development (BIFAD)
Public Meeting on “BIFAD and New University Partnerships”
Meeting Minutes**

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National Press Club
Holeman Lounge
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Washington, District of Columbia**

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**Board for International Food and Agricultural Development
U.S. Agency for International Development, Ronald Reagan Building, Room 7.8-061, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW,
Washington, DC 20523-2110**

BIFAD Public Meeting on “BIFAD and New University Partnerships” Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present:

Brady Deaton, Catherine Bertini, William DeLauder, Gebisa Ejeta, Elsa Murano, Marty McVey

Welcome and Opening Remarks (Brady Deaton, BIFAD Chair & Chancellor, University of Missouri)

Brady Deaton welcomed everyone to the spring 2012 meeting of the BIFAD and introduced the members of the Board. Following introductions, Brady Deaton outlined the agenda for the day and informed attendees that they would have several opportunities to provide public comment.

Chairman Deaton led the Board through an overview of what BIFAD has been working on over the past months:

- The Human and Institutional Capacity Development working group, chaired by Gebisa Ejeta, is currently reviewing the Feed the Future Capacity Development Framework drafted by USAID.
- In 2011, BIFAD submitted a report regarding tertiary agricultural education in post-earthquake Haiti. BIFAD will be considering follow-up to the report, and Elsa Murano expressed her desire to organize an agency visit to Haiti in the near future.
- The Minority Serving Institution (MSI) working group, chaired by Bill DeLauder, submitted a report with recommendations to the USAID Administrator about MSI engagement with USAID. USAID is currently working to implement some of the recommendations.
- BIFAD has been working on a program to reestablish the Award for Scientific Excellence in a Collaborative Research Support Program (CRSP). There will be an award for researchers and an award for students. The Board voted unanimously to approve the resolution establishing the awards and approved the proposed timeline of implementation.

Chairman Deaton also went over with the Board a series of new items for consideration:

- BIFAD has been charged by Administrator Shah to conduct a review of CRSP program as a whole, in order to find areas for alignment with Feed the Future and to increase efficiency. An independent study team, led by Robert Jones from the University of Minnesota, has been established to carry out this task. The team expects to submit its final report to BIFAD in June. BIFAD then will present the report to Administrator Shah.
- BIFAD is working on identifying new initiatives and focus areas for Board engagement. Current suggestions revolve around the intersections between agriculture, health and nutrition. In particular, Dr. Murano suggested looking at post-harvest, an area that has occasionally been overlooked in the past. Dr. Deaton pointed out the importance of the interdisciplinary potential of universities in these areas. Dr. DeLauder said that the Board should not neglect its continued role in human and institutional capacity development.

· Chairman Deaton reminded the audience of BIFAD's continued openness to input and comments from the public under Title XII, which can be submitted to BIFAD's Executive Director, Susan Owens.

USAID Feed the Future Update (Paul Weisenfeld, Assistant to the Administrator, Director of the Bureau for Food Security, USAID, and Julie Howard, PhD, Chief Scientist, Bureau for Food Security, USAID)

Paul Weisenfeld presented to the Board a general update of the Feed the Future initiative and its recent progress. Feed the Future, launched in 2009 at the G8 Summit in L'Aquila, Italy, is the President's global hunger and food security initiative. In the wake of a spike in world food prices, many organizations came to realize that aid efforts would be more efficacious if focused on developing agricultural education and capacity. The President initially pledged \$3.5 billion to Feed the Future for the first three years, and the program is on target to meet this goal by the end of fiscal year 2012. For 2013, Feed the Future is anticipating a budget of \$1.2 billion, which is an increase about 3% over the 2012 annual budget. In a constrained budget environment, this shows a remarkable commitment from the Administration and highlights the importance of Feed the Future's work.

Feed the Future has focused a large part of its effort on strategic planning, following the 2009 Rome Principles. The first principle emphasized the creation and implementation of country-owned plans. One example is the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP), which focuses on enabling countries to use their own resources to foster reliable agricultural production. So far strategies have been implemented in 24 countries in four regional programs: East Africa, West Africa, Central America, and Asia.

The United States was one of the founding partners of the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), a resource fund managed by the World Bank, which so far allocated \$481 million to 12 countries. USAID has also been working on fostering public-private partnerships to facilitate donor interaction and the ability to confront agricultural issues at the commercial level. A recent example of such a partnership is that between the World Cocoa Foundation and the Sustainable Trade Initiative.

USAID has been working to improve its evaluation and monitoring process across the board, focusing on two high-level indicators when assessing programs and making decisions on funding: reducing poverty and reducing malnutrition.

During the process of establishing the new monitoring framework, USAID was confronted repeatedly, by NGOs and others, about the importance of women in agriculture in developing countries, where women make up 43% of the agricultural workforce. Indeed, in some African countries the percentage exceeds 50%. In order to address this fact, while working on the monitoring framework, USAID just last month created the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index. The index looks at a number of areas related to women's empowerment, such as how they spend their time, how much control over resources they have, what role they have in decision-making, etc., in comparison to men to create a quantifiable index that can be used to measure women's current level of empowerment and to track progress over time. No similar index exists in the international development community. Ultimately, USAID hopes the index will be used by NGOs and donors to create a wealth of data on women's empowerment.

Now in its third year, it is now possible to start measuring the results of Feed the Future's work in developing nations. Ghana has been one of the central areas of USAID's efforts in Africa, particularly in the area of connecting local farmers to national and international markets. Premium Foods, the largest Ghanaian grain purchaser, has entered into an agreement with USAID to buy grains from local farmers groups. The partnership has led to contracts with thousands of Ghanaian farmers, and the goal is to expand that into the tens of thousands in the coming years. Feed the Future will also be using Ghana to implement its impact analyses in order to measure the on-the-ground benefits that are being evinced, particularly in regard to health and nutrition.

Ethiopia has also been an important country, especially in regard to the issue of land tenure. Tenure security is vital to increasing developmental capacity; if people can trust that the land they work belongs to them, they are more likely to put the required investment of resources and effort into the land. The Ethiopian government has been reluctant to issue land titles in the past, but USAID has been working with Ethiopian officials to change this attitude. Thanks to this work, Ethiopia has begun to issue land certifications to its farmers. While the certifications are not full ownership, they do offer a level of security to farmers. As a result, investment immediately began to go up and productivity has tripled in the past year. Much of this increase can be attributed to a jump in the leasing of farmland, a practice that owners often were hesitant to engage in for fear that their land would be stolen if they lacked paperwork identifying them as the owner of the land.

Tanzania has been at the forefront of the Grow Africa project, a partnership between the African Union and the World Economic Forum, which aims to stimulate public-private partnerships in developing countries. President Kikwete has led this effort, highlighting the importance of strong national leadership.

In Bangladesh, Feed the Future and USAID have been focusing more on technology to overcome endemic food security problems. In particular, USAID and the government of Bangladesh have been working to apply deep urea placement technology to Bangladeshi farmland. In the past year, hectares treated have gone from 94,000 to over 300,000.

USAID and Feed the Future have also been addressing the recent drought crisis in the Horn of Africa on a strategic level, working on merging short-term and long-term development plans, facilitating progress in water management, and fostering disaster preparedness plans.

Mr. Weisenfeld pointed out that the United States holds the presidency of the upcoming G8 summit, and he anticipates that food security in Africa and elsewhere will again take up a central role, an ideal occasion to highlight USAID's progress as well as how much work is still needed to be done to combat global poverty and malnutrition.

Marty McVey asked how the Agency expects to deal with disasters and whether a disaster would force existing programs to restart. Mr. Weisenfeld said the Agency builds disaster preparedness into its programs by assessing each country for its various risk levels and preparing accordingly so that damage can be mitigated should a disaster strike.

Chairman Deaton asked about communal and regional variations in gender roles and how the Agency accounts for that in light of the Women's Empowerment Index. Mr. Weisenfeld acknowledged that cultural norms can vary even from village to village, as work done at MIT's Poverty Action Lab has shown, and that the Agency is hoping that its impact analyses can help identify those regional differences so that they can be accounted for down the line.

Chairman Deaton next introduced Dr. Julie Howard who presented on the Bureau for Food Security's Capacity Building Framework.

Capacity development is vital to both the USAID and the Feed the Future initiative in order to foster sustainability and to make sure that the successes Mr. Weisenfeld discussed are solidified and continued.

Human and institutional capacity development is important not only at the beginning of the aid process, when there is little or no capacity, but also later in the process as local industry begins to grow and further, more complex capacity development is needed to handle the growth. As local capacity increases, developing countries become more and more attract to outside investors. This is a positive development, but investors are still wary of investing in places where the human, educational capacity might not match its institutional capacity, and vice versa.

USAID has a history of investing human and institutional capacity development (HICD) since the 1950s and has seen huge successes in countries like Brazil and India. Investments in agricultural HICD began to decline in the 1990s and 2000s as the international aid community began to focus on primary education. The last few years, however, have seen a renewal of emphasis on agricultural HICD, thanks in part to USAID's 2008 agency-wide policy on HICD.

So far a significant amount of effort has gone into strengthening professional capacities in developing countries. USAID has been partnering with various African organizations, for example, to help support and improve African agricultural and technical universities. Wherever possible, USAID is trying to take advantage of computer and broadband internet access to reach diffuse areas and enable distance learning.

USAID and Feed the Future have been striving to follow the country-led strategy mentioned earlier in the meeting, and also to align themselves with other donors to improve efficacy and minimize duplicative and/or conflicting projects. To make this possible, USAID plans to filter proposed investments from its individual missions through its Washington office. The Washington office will then work together with the missions on implementation.

Dr. Howard listed several awards and grants that are intended to improve capacity development in research:

- African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD)
- Targeted USDA Borlaug Fellows
- Borlaug Higher Education for Agricultural Research and Development (BHEARD)
- Borlaug Leadership Enhancement in Agriculture Program (LEAP)

· US Borlaug Fellowship in Global Food Security

For capacity development in post-secondary education, USAID is working to strengthen agricultural, technical and vocation universities through the Modernizing Agriculture and Education Training Systems (MAES), and, through the TEAM Africa program in partnership with the World Bank, to improve tertiary agricultural education in Africa. USAID is also supporting a number of programs designed to foster entrepreneurship in developing nations and funding projects to modernize their statistical databases and data collection procedures.

Over the coming months, BIFAD's HICD working group will provide feedback and input to the proposed framework. BIFAD, Feed the Future, and the Bureau for Food Security will then hold an informal stakeholder meeting in June to solicit input from across the development community, with the goal of finalizing the HICD framework by July 2012.

BIFAD Member Reports on Outreach Visits

Chairman Deaton introduced the next panel, which will discuss member visits overseas to fulfill BIFAD's charge to engage USAID missions and host country partners. The visits were either Feed the Future inception workshops or Collaborative Research Support Program (CRSP) meetings.

Chairman Deaton gave the first presentation on his trip to Tanzania. USAID has a long history of working in Tanzania; USAID recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of its partnership with the Sokoine University of Agriculture. Chairman Deaton and Dr. Howard, among others, joined USAID as they hosted an inception workshop. The Tanzanian Minister of Agriculture was in attendance, as well as members of local CRSPs and NGOs. The workshops provided a great opportunity to interact with the Tanzanian educational field, local farmers' associations, and to bring all these groups together to work on identifying funding gaps, target areas, and other areas that need improvement.

Dr. Murano then presented information about her trip to Ethiopia for an inception workshop. The workshop was hosted by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). The discussion was largely focused on Ethiopia's main agricultural industries: grain, livestock, and coffee. The workshop followed much the same pattern as the Tanzania workshop; local organizations, universities, NGOs, and government representatives came together with USAID to discuss how to improve field and production efficiency through sustainable intensification. One of the main goals that came out of the discussion was to work on ways on integrating and aligning the myriad programs that already exist in Ethiopia in order to improve efficiency and efficacy. Dr. Murano also met with the U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia, who emphasized the importance of communication between the missions in the field and the embassy.

Marty McVey traveled to India, Nepal, and Bangladesh as part of the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) CRSP. In India, they met with the Trade and Intellectual Property Department to review the socioeconomic research on impact assessment and gender equality. The CRSP meeting itself was attended by over 700 farmers and was covered by all major Indian radio and print media outlets.

In Nepal, the team met with USAID mission director, David Atteberry. They met with farmers who are using biofertilizers and biopesticides in the production of cauliflower and other vegetables. Throughout the trip, the issue of gender equality and the role of women were at the forefront.

In Bangladesh, the IPM/CRSP attended a meeting at the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) and discussed their research and education efforts. The team made a number of field visits and observed pumpkin fields where pheromone traps are used to control the melon fly. They also met with women involved in the production and application of trichodermic compost. The team also met with Dan Mozena, the U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh, and attended a pest management training workshop in Dhaka.

Update on USAID's Feed the Future Research Programs (Rob Bertram, Bureau of Food Security Office Director, USAID)

Chairman Deaton introduced Rob Bertram, who presented the Board with an update on USAID and Feed the Future's current research programs.

Mr. Bertram began by giving a quick overview of USAID's current activities, much of which is focused on sustainable intensification by creating climate resilience, reducing risks, and increased efficiency in use of resources.

On this topic, Mr. Bertram presented the Africa Research in Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation, or Africa RISING, program. The goal of the program is to provide pathways out of hunger and poverty for small holder families, particularly women and children, through intensified farming systems that sufficiently improve food, nutrition and income security and conserve or enhance the natural resource base.

As part of the implementation of Africa RISING, USAID is initiating a total of sixteen 'Quick Start' projects in the Ethiopian Highlands, Eastern and Southern Africa, as well as other programs in West Africa. Mr. Bertram discussed some examples in each of the regions, such as the "Regionalizing Fertilizer Rate" program in Ethiopia, the "Value Chain Analysis of Grain Legumes" project in East and Southern Africa, and the "Increased Nutritional and Economic Levels of Women & Children" in West Africa.

Mr. Bertram next discussed the Cereal System Initiative South Asia (CSISA), whose research is headed by Dr. Saharah Moon Chapotin. Also focused on intensification and climate resilience, CSISA is working to improve production in regions that are dealing with major land, soil, water, and labor constraints.

Mr. Bertram also talked about USAID's work on integrating nutrition into agricultural research design. One area of recent development has been in climate-resilient cereals, working to increase drought and heat tolerance in wheat and grains. Work is also being done in irrigation technology and education, hoping to combat the critical problems in water resource efficiency.

Catherine Bertini asked how Canada's recent decision to cut funding to Feed the Future and related projects would effect the program's effectiveness and funding pool going forward. Mr. Weisenfeld responded by acknowledging that the current global economic

situation has created constraints for everyone and expressed his hope that the issue could be resolved at the upcoming G8 Summit. Mr. Weisenfeld also said that there have been hints coming from the European Union that suggests it might be willing to shift funding into food security.

Dr. Murano asked where post-harvest fit into USAID and Feed the Future's current research. Dr. John Bowman replied that post-harvest is critical to the value chain process, and USAID is looking at ways to improve infrastructure and storage and streamlining how crops get to market in order to help minimize post-harvest losses.

Public Comment

Dr. Adrian Ares for more information on which regions CSISA will be focusing on. Dr. Chapotin said that the initial missions in India and Bangladesh have been successful and that CSISA will soon be looking at expanding into Nepal, in conjunction with a nutrition CRSP already operating there.

Update on the Higher Education Learning Network (Dr. Ticora Jones, Policy Advisor, USAID Policy, Planning, and Learning)

After recessing for lunch, Chairman Deaton reconvened the meeting and introduced the next speaker, Dr. Ticora Jones, who heads up USAID's Higher Education Learning Network (HELN).

Dr. Jones presented the objectives of the HELN: to create new relationships with academia to leverage the resources, intellectual power and energy of universities to address key global development problems. In order to facilitate this, USAID has issued an RFA with the goal of issuing five to seven grant awards to academic researchers and institutions working on interdisciplinary projects related to global development. The awards will range from \$1-\$2 million to \$4-\$5 million over five years. USAID has received over 400 initial concept notes and has started the process of select a group of 40 to ask back to continue the application process. Final applications will be due July 17, with the grants to be awarded in September.

Dr. Murano asked about the make-up of the application review team. Dr. Jones said that the group is very mixed demographically, with young reviewers and more experienced reviewers, and members from the Agency and from academia and private institutions.

Public Comment

Larry Beach asked whether the review team will be providing any feedback to the concept notes they have received. Dr. Jones said that they are hoping to provide comments and suggestions, despite the large number of applications

Susan Owens asked whether these awards will be handed out annually or if this is a one-time program. Dr. Jones said that decision has not been made yet, but that it is possible depending on the success of the first batch of awards and availability of funds. Ms. Owens also asked whether the awardees will work together and consult each other as a network; Dr. Jones replied in the affirmative.

Dr. Tim Williams asked whether the awardees will have access to the wealth of USAID's historical data. Dr. Jones said that that is something that can be considered, although the clearance process might be potential obstacle.

Board Discussion

Chairman Deaton opened the floor to the Board to discuss any issues of interest that arose during the day. Catherine Bertini said that the Board seemed to be in consensus regarding the nexus between agriculture, health and nutrition, and asked whether the Board could make a move towards identifying its next steps. Mr. Bertram pointed out that USAID will be sponsoring a workshop at next year's AAAS meeting in Boston and suggested that BIFAD could co-sponsor the workshop. The Board was amenable to that idea, and Dr. DeLauder also suggested that BIFAD could design the agenda for BIFAD's next meeting to get stakeholders ready for the potential AAAS symposium in 2013.

Ms. Bertini brought up the issue of Congressional engagement. Chairman Deaton agreed that meeting with members of Congress is important for furthering aid development. Ms. Owens will work with BIFAD members to help establish a strategy for future meetings on the Hill.

Dr. DeLauder brought up how past meetings with mission directors had suggested that many aid workers have been focusing on short-term success rather than long-term achievements, and asked whether any improvements have been made recently. Mr. Bertram said that much of that attitude can be associated with the decrease in funding over the past couple decades that Dr. Howard pointed out earlier. As funding levels begin to rebound, aid workers should be able to focus more on long-term projects that often demand more investment.

Chairman Deaton thanked the Board, presenters, USAID staff, and the audience for a great meeting and closed the meeting at 2:46 p.m.