



**Board for International Food & Agricultural Development (BIFAD)
Public Meeting
Meeting Minutes**

**March 15, 2013
Reynolds Journalism Institute
University of Missouri
Columbia, Missouri**

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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 (Chair), Catherine Bertini, Waded Cruzado, Gebisa Ejeta, Harold Martin, Sr., Marty McVey

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

Brady Deaton welcomed everyone to the 165th meeting of the BIFAD and introduced two new members of the Board, Dr. Waded Cruzado and Dr. Harold Martin, Sr. Chairman Deaton and Dr. Mark Varner led the Board and attendees in thanking and congratulating Dr. Bill DeLauder and Dr. Elsa Murano, outgoing members of BIFAD, for their outstanding service on the Board. Following Board introductions, Chairman Deaton outlined the agenda for the meeting and introduced Dr. Gebisa Ejeta to update the Board on BIFAD’s recent work.

Dr. Ejeta, chairman of the Human and Institutional Capacity Development (HICD) working group, updated the Board on the recent work of his subcommittee. Dr. Ejeta highlighted the importance of expanding human resources capacity and increasing the funding of the Feed the Future program. Dr. Ejeta discussed some of the hurdles facing expanding HICD in developing countries. Despite agreement among aid practitioners on the purported high cost of US-based academic training, no comprehensive cost-benefit analysis to substantiate this claim is available. Anecdotal evidence suggests that alternative models are not any cheaper and are in fact less effective than US-based training. Secondly, foreign students’ access to US is viewed as market-based and a growing inability to pay is resulting in an imbalance versus emerging market economies. Because the US is the leading global source of training, limited access for students of developing countries to US training inhibits these countries’ abilities to acquire and advance transformative agricultural innovations. Access to long-term US training based on gender continues to be recognized as an issue and progress is being made. In order to address these issues, Dr. Ejeta recommended conducting a meta-analysis on where USAID stands on commitments to HICD, making assessment of target needs in developing countries, and using the results to recommend programs to USAID that would help meet these needs.

BIFAD Member Reports on Outreach Visits

Chairman Deaton introduced the next panel, which will discussed member visits overseas to fulfill BIFAD’s charge to engage USAID missions and host country partners.

Ms. Bertini recently traveled to Arusha, Tanzania to attend the second African Green Revolution Forum, organized by the Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). AGRA is an African-run organization, chaired by former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, whose purpose is to help support African farming. The primary topics of the conference were: rethinking public-private partnerships, revolutionizing agriculture finance, making markets work, and building the foundations for rapid growth

in agricultural productivity. Major speakers included Kofi Annan; Melinda Gates, of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; Jakaya Kikwete, the president of Tanzania; and Ms. Eleni Gabre-Madhin, the founder of Ethiopia's first commodity exchange, among others.

Dr. DeLauder next presented a summary of his outreach trip to Cambodia in October, 2012, to view ongoing work there related to integrated pest management (IPM). About 70 percent of Cambodia's 14.7 million people work in agriculture, the majority of which is located near the country's lakes and waterways. Dr. DeLauder toured Cambodia's sections of the Southeast Asia IPM CRSP, which also includes the Philippines and Indonesia, and participated in the IPM's planning meeting in Phnom Penh as well as related field visits. Dr. DeLauder also met with USAID's Cambodia HARVEST program, which stands for Helping Address Rural Vulnerabilities and Economic Stability. As an example of the program's work to increase productivity, USAID is facilitating the distribution and use of the trichoderma fungi to prevent plant disease. The trichoderma is sold cheaply to farmers and can also be produced by farmers in-country as a way to supplement their income. Dr. DeLauder lauded the programs their teams for their work, but emphasized that they need more resources to sustain their progress.

Mr. McVey discussed his travels in South Asia and his observations on public-private partnerships. For example, the India IPM has partnered with Biocontrol Research Laboratory and the Energy Resources Institute. Mr. McVey attended a biocontrol workshop at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University hosted by the IPM CRSP on trichoderma. The workshop was attended by scientists and students from developing countries around the world, who will then return home with new knowledge that they can spread to their communities. Mr. McVey also visited organic farms and observed IPM techniques being practiced in Nepal.

Panel Discussion on Development of New USAID Innovation Labs, Establishment of Research Priorities in Integrated Pest Management, and Sustainable Intensification (Julie Howard, PhD, Chief Scientist, Bureau for Food Security, USAID; Saharah Moon Chapotin, PhD, Team Leader for Agricultural Research, Bureau of Food Security, USAID; Dale Bottrell, PhD, Professor Emeritus of Entomology, University of Maryland; and Sylvie Brouder, PhD, Professor of Agronomy, Purdue University)

Dr. Howard presented an overview USAID's Feed the Future program and its ongoing work in agricultural research. Following the food crises of 2007/2008, food security and agricultural development have recently regained their rightful place as key issues in international health and global security after decades of disinvestment by the international community. Feed the Future was launched in 2009 by President Obama at the G8 Summit in L'Aquila, Italy. The program is the US's global hunger and food security strategy, an attempt recognize that the world's food security problems cannot be solved by food aid alone. The aid community must increase the abilities of countries themselves to improve their agricultural productivity in an environmentally sustainable way, recognizing the critical role of women in agricultural production, and emphasizing the vital importance of nutrition. At the 2009 G8 Summit, President Obama pledged that the US would spend \$3.5 billion on the program over three years. The US was also able to raise an additional \$18.5 billion in commitments from other donors. The US held the presidency at the most recent G8 summit, and President Obama and USAID Administrator Raj Shah focused on increasing private investment in agricultural research and development.

Recently, USAID has been working on identifying the key aspects of a new Feed the Future agricultural research strategy. The overarching goal of the strategy is sustainable intensification. The strategy has three overarching themes: advancing the productivity frontier, transforming key production systems, and improving nutrition and food safety. In order to focus its resources, USAID is looking at geographic areas where hunger and poverty dramatically overlap: the Indo-Gangetic Plain in South Asia, the Sudano-Sahelian systems of West Africa, and the maize and mixed cropping regions of East and Southern Africa. In addition, Administrator Shah, through BIFAD, is emphasizing the goal of re-invigorating the relationship between USAID and the US academic network. In order to facilitate this renewal, USAID has formed the Feed the Future Food Security Innovation Center which will help focus and coordinate partnerships between the government and the university community.

Dr. Chapotin briefly discussed the Food Security Innovation Center's seven program areas: climate-resilient cereals; legume productivity; advanced approaches to combat pests and diseases in animals and plants; safe and nutritious foods; sustainable intensification; policy and markets research and support; and human and institutional capacity development. Innovation Labs in sustainable agriculture and natural resources management and integrated pest management will soon be reaching the end of their tenure. USAID will be looking to develop new Innovation Labs in these areas using the new Feed the Future research strategy as an inspiration. The Cereal Systems Initiative of South Asia and Africa Rising are two examples of programs focused on the Food Security Innovation Center's program areas.

Dr. Bottrell focused his speech on integrated pest management. IPM focuses on preventative methods, practices that the farmer implements at planting time, using disease- and insect-resistant varieties, crop rotation, etc. The goal is to rely on renewable natural resources whenever possible. IPM uses a farmer-first strategy so that the local farmer can learn the techniques and become self-sufficient. Dr. Bottrell presented a case history of an IPM focused on eradicating the brown planthopper that emerged in Asian rice fields in the 1970s, the successes and failures of that IPM, and what lessons were learned in order to strengthen future IPMs.

Dr. Brouder discussed the difficulties surrounding implementing sustainable intensification and accurately measuring its impact on local agriculture in developing countries. In its present state, the science and data are not comprehensive enough to untangle the compounded biophysical factors affecting crop yield. Advantages can be hypothesized, attributes through which those advantages can be realized can be identified, and a hypothetical mechanism can be identified, but much more focus needs to be given towards the conditions without which these goals cannot be implemented. Is enough known about these mechanisms to be able to predict where there will be greater or less loss following the implementation of a practice? USAID has a tremendous opportunity to raise the level of the quality of science to meet multiple objectives and increase the use of meta-analyses.

Chairman Deaton thanked the panel for their presentations and opened the floor for Board questions and discussion. Dr. Cruzado asked the panelists what specific advice the panelists had for BIFAD to address some of the connectivity and implementation problems that were addressed in the presentations. Dr. Bottrell mentioned the lack of

regulations on marketing pesticides in developing countries, which ultimately is a responsibility of the local governments themselves and is a major problem for sustaining progress. Dr. Howard emphasized the importance of working directly with government leadership in the target countries at the highest level possible. Dr. Brouder said it was crucial that the international development maintain and utilize the growing scientific literature base in an appropriate and effective manner.

Panel on Agriculture Research from the Perspective of a Land Grant University: The University of Missouri (Willi Meyers, PhD, Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute [FAPRI]; Robert Sharp, PhD, Director, Interdisciplinary Plant Group; Marc Linit, PhD, Associate Dean, College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources [CAFNR], Jill Findeis, PhD, Director, Division of Applied Sciences)

Chairman Deaton introduced the moderator of the next panel, Dr. Handy Williamson, the University of Missouri's Vice Provost for International Programs.

Dr. Williamson opened the panel by listing a number of broad questions that the international development community must constantly consider in order to continue to improve efficacy and impact. Can policymakers be made to be more sensitive to the global long-term perspective? How can the global convergence of information and communication technology work for everyone? How can ethical market economies be encouraged to help reduce the gap between the rich and the poor? How can the threat of new and reemerging diseases and immune microorganisms be reduced? How can the change of the status of women help to improve the human condition? How can growing energy demands be met safely and efficiently? How can scientific and technological breakthroughs be accelerated to improve the human condition? How can ethical considerations become more routinely incorporated into global decision-making? Dr. Williamson then introduced the panel participants.

Dr. Meyers focused his presentation on his work as the Director of the CAFNR International Programs and the role of institutional engagement. Universities, lacking the influence and resources of nation-states, must constantly consider how the small player can make a difference. The University of Missouri attempts to do this by matching faculty with opportunities and assisting them in engagement, building partnerships one person at a time. CAFNR International Programs brings in about six or seven Borlaug Fellows per year for two month stints and matches them with faculty mentors. These experiences establish lasting professional and educational relationships and drive future collaboration. The University also organizes semester-long faculty exchange programs that also matches the visiting faculty with mentors. CAFNR also runs the Cochran Scientific Exchange Program, which is an intensive, two-week program focused on specific issues related to agronomy and related fields, and Templeton Foundation Projects in various home countries throughout the world.

Dr. Linit talked about CAFNR's faculty-initiated international engagement projects. These projects cover a myriad of approaches, such as research, training, and/or outreach/extension, among others. In 2012, 49 of CAFNR's 230 faculty members reported international activity, or approximately 20 percent. Thirty-three of the programs were in research, 18 were outreach, 9 were a combination of research and outreach, 10 were training programs, and 15 unspecified. Dr. Linit walked through some examples of faculty-led initiatives at Missouri: a program in China studying food safety and the

changing demands of a global economy; work with biodigesters in Mali and Senegal to create alternative sources of energy for cooking; and The International Center for Indigenous Phytotherapy Studies' (TICIPIS) partnerships in South Africa. Dr. Linit also pointed out that agricultural research in America represents four-thousandths of one percent of the United State's budget; the USDA's discretionary budget is six-thousandths of one percent. If the US is to maintain its leadership in developing new technologies and training future generations, we must be proactive to see that this funding grows.

Dr. Sharp discussed the work of the Interdisciplinary Plant Group (IPG), which was established over 30 years ago as part of an initiative at the University of Missouri to try to tackle problems in food security. As a result of this early investment, the University of Missouri is now ranked 14th in the world in the field of plant sciences. The IPG has 57 faculty members covering a large range of specialties and is recognized nationally and internationally as an interactive research and education community. As an example of a unique field of emphasis within the IPG, Dr. Sharp discussed the IPG's work in root biology and its relation to adaption to drought and pathogen interactions.

Dr. Findeis talked about the importance of breaking down the silos between various fields within science, as well as between the sciences and social sciences. The University of Missouri has been at the forefront of this mission. The Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute, Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership, Graduate Institute of Cooperative Leadership are just some of the centers at the University of Missouri that are collaborating on agronomical issues in an interdisciplinary manner. Dr. Findeis discussed a number of the projects underway at Missouri that cut across the science/social science divide in various CRSPs throughout the world. Dr. Findeis also highlighted the importance of utilizing rapidly developing communication technologies, building capacity, interdisciplinary research, and training the future generations of scientists.

Board Discussion

Dr. Williamson thanked the panel for their presentations and opened the floor for questions from BIFAD. Ms. Bertini asked the panelists to speak more about the role of gender in their projects and what kind of outreach is underway to attract female scientists and reach out to females in program countries. Dr. Findeis said household relationships are importance aspects of the social science studies that are taking place in East Africa. Universities have to remain active in recruiting and attracting women to the sciences. Dr. Meyers discussed an NSF-funded study on women in the sciences he took part in and the importance of mentoring in the University of Missouri's programs. Dr. Sharp said that in plant sciences, the graduate population and recent hires is 50/50 male/female. The Board discussed with the panel Missouri's focus on interdisciplinary work, which is codified as a university administration priority.

Public Comment

Chairman Deaton opened the meeting to public comment on the day's topics. Dr. Howard asked if Missouri has faculty promotion incentives tied to interdisciplinary work, and does the campus make specific awards open only to interdisciplinary teams. Dr. Meyers said efforts have been made within the university to ensure that there are no impediments to rewarding faculty specifically for interdisciplinary work. Chairman Deaton added that Missouri is creating endowed chairs specifically targeted towards the school's strategic

interdisciplinary targets, and is organizing billion dollar fund-raising campaigns to endow the chairs. Dr. Bill Folk brought up the importance of providing incentives and support to young faculty members, specifically those that are trying to participate in international research projects, which is currently professionally inhibitive. Dr. Doug Randall brought up USAID's critical role in being able to cross national boundaries, which is often difficult for domestic institutions.

Chairman Deaton thanked all the attendees for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 12:45 p.m.