

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Board for International Food & Agriculture Development (BIFAD)

SUMMARY: 137th BIFAD

Meeting held on March 27, 2003
1307 New York Avenue, NW
Ground Level Meeting Room
Washington, D.C.

BOARD MEMBERS attending:

M. Peter McPherson, Chairman
Michael Deegan
William DeLauder

Opening Comments -- Mr. McPherson noted that scheduling conflicts and illnesses have limited attendance at this meeting; however there is no quorum rule for BIFAD meetings.

Agenda:

Presentation and discussion of Participation in International Agricultural Activities by
"1890" Institutions

introduction William DeLauder, President, Delaware State University
speakers Walter Hill, Dean & research Director, Tuskegee University
Winfrey Clark, Associate Dean, Virginia State University

Presentation of USAID's Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA)

introduction Tom Hobgood, Director, Office of Agriculture, USAID
speakers Jeff Hill, Africa Bureau, USAID

Training Initiative Update; BIFAD action on recommendation

Initiative Update Howard Gobstein, MSU
USAID response Emmy Simmons, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for
Economic Growth, Agriculture & Trade, USAID

Presentation of Progress to Increase Accessibility to Publications in Developing
Countries

speaker Bob Herdt, Rockefeller Foundation

Introduction of Ken Sherper and the BIFAD Initiative to Assess the USAID-University
relationship

Mr. McPherson proposed adding two items to the published agenda: consideration of a
resolution following up on last meeting's Rockefeller Foundation presentation on a

“humanitarian carve out,” and announcement of two BIFAD research awardees. The Board accepted the additions.

I. The first agenda item was a presentation by the “1890” Land Grant Institutions concerning capabilities and programs with respect to international agricultural development. BIFAD Member William DeLauder introduced the topic and the presenters.

See [Presentation by 1890 Schools](#) under 137th BIFAD in www.usaid.gov.

The origin and historical constraints (notably funding, and from that, size) of Second Land Grant institutions were described. They range in size from 2500 students up to about 12,000. There are 18 institutions, including Tuskegee, with about 100,000 students.

The “1980s” have developed a niche, particularly in research and extension, in small limited resource-disadvantaged farmers and families. Most institutions have graduate education at the masters level. Few of them have Ph.D. programs in the agriculture sciences. Collaboration among institutions is highly valued. Various components of the faculty and staff are organized inter-institutionally. There is a large contingent of international students from all of the countries of the world, literally, and a large international faculty with a great number of them coming from developing countries, particularly Africa.

There is a recently-completed survey of institutions, covering economic growth, global health, agriculture and trade, democracy, conflict and humanitarian assistance as tools for sustainable development; matched those areas to each institution’s strength; and clusters identified for strength areas. Agriculture research education and extension, including short-term training and Masters degree programs, were identified as general areas of institutional strength.

Clusters are: agriculture technology, technology development and transfer; food science, nutrition, health, and food safety; training and education; economic development; biotechnology; GIS information systems; and environmental science. Contact people are identified.

Information is available on each institution’s website: establishing a single, common database (possibly using NASULGC services) was discussed and strongly encouraged.

Emerging trends in building international experiences and study into curricula were noted and strongly encouraged to be made universal.

II. The second agenda item was a presentation of the Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA).

See [IEHA Presentation](#) for the narrative and discussion, and the powerpoint slides in [IEHA BIFAD 1.zip](#) and [IEHA BIFAD 2.zip](#), under 137th BIFAD in www.usaid.gov.

<coffee break>

III. The third agenda item was a training initiative report.

See [Training Initiative Report](#) under 137th BIFAD in www.usaid.gov.

An extensive discussion noted the evolution of the initiative, and the additional issues driving the evolution, e.g., geographical focus or inclusiveness, graduate student focus or the professoriate or the whole institution, budget and visa constraints.

BIFAD findings were: human resources are a key driver of change; the initiative is starting in Africa but is not limited to Africa; training needs and priorities will vary by time and place; BIFAD should be involved in planning the pilot activities; the training initiative document is approved in principle.

IV. The fourth agenda item was discussion and action of a BIFAD resolution concerning university management of intellectual property.

The discussion began by recounting the presentation at the 137th BIFAD about the humanitarian carveout of patents for agriculture technologies. USAID and BIFAD have no direct control over these issues, but BIFAD as a university entity in some important part wanted to hear how this stood. It developed after the last meeting that there a letter circulated among university presidents that is expected to be published in Science Magazine. It lays out essentially what Rockefeller and others were presenting at BIFAD, and Chairman McPherson proposed that BIFAD adopt a resolution of support for the letter and the call for coordinated university management of intellectual property.

Dr. DeLauder moved adoption, noting that it addresses the issue of humanitarian need to make technology available in certain countries, while protecting the rights of those who have developed the technology. Mr. Deegan seconded the motion: the motion carried.

Mr. McPherson suggested that BIFAD's endorsement become part of the signature of the letter. He also noted that communication of BIFAD meetings to USAID and the university and PVO communities is being facilitated by a website which is coming along.

V. The fifth agenda item was an announcement of BIFAD Awardees for Scientific Excellence.

Mr. McPherson announced that the previously-named BIFAD Chair's Award for Scientific Excellence will now be known as the BIFAD Award for Scientific Excellence. A committee of distinguished scientists in international agriculture was assembled to consider nominations. They were: Rodney Brown, USDA Deputy Undersecretary of USDA, former Dean at Utah State University; Lowell Harden, Purdue University (emeritus) and formerly with the Ford Foundation and CG centers; Pedro Sanchez, University of California Berkley, former Director General at ICRAF; Wally Falcon, Stanford University and a former BIFAD member; and Ron Cantrell, Director General at IRRI and formerly at Iowa State University.

The committee recently completed evaluations and recommended two winners of the 2003 competition: Douglas Maxwell, University of Wisconsin, with the Bean and Cowpea CRSP and Darren Rosenow at Texas A&M with INTSORMIL CRSP.

BIFAD accepted the recommendation and declared Drs. Maxwell and Rosenow winners of the 2003 BIFAD Award. Notification letters from the Chairman will follow this meeting, and presentations from the awardees will be invited at a future BIFAD meeting, perhaps in the autumn.

VI. The sixth agenda item was a presentation about the availability of scientific publications in developing countries.

See Rockefeller Presentation and RF.AGORA.ppt under 137th BIFAD in www.usaid.gov.

VII. The seventh agenda item was the announcement of an assessment of the USAID-University relationship.

BIFAD, in consultation with USAID, has retained Ken Sherper to perform a certain task. Ken, before retiring from USAID, was Counselor to the Agency which is the senior foreign service position within the agency; he was a mission director earlier and highly regarded throughout the Agency.

This relationship needs to be reviewed every few years; it has not been done in perhaps fifteen years. There is the question of bureaucratic hurdles, burdens between universities and AID; of issues such as differential matching requirements between universities and PVOs; there are also contracting mechanisms which may effectively exclude universities from competing for USAID assistance programs.

Ken's task is to figure out (1) what are the problems, but (2) specifically how you might go about fixing it. He will do a lot of listening to both sides. He will also work with the ALO staff and Earl Kellogg who is chair of that Board, making this a joint BIFAD/ALO effort.

Mr. Sherper noted that his task will depend upon discussions with many in the audience, among others, and he looks forward to frank discussions and fresh perspectives. He was encouraged to use studies done in the recent past by, e.g., the ALO and the CRSPs, and to solicit Congressional views as well.

Concluding comments

Mr. Deegan: Mr. Chairman, I think we had a great meeting today. Covered a lot in a very economic time. There are a few things that we have for follow up and I'll get with Tom and Emmy about a couple of those things that I'd like to cover with them. But thank you very much.

Dr. DeLauder: I agree. I thought it was an excellent meeting and we did get some things of substance done at this meeting.

Mr. McPherson: Well, thank you everybody. We are hereby adjourned.