

## **Minutes of 146<sup>th</sup> BIFAD Meeting February 2, 2006**

The Board for International Food and Agriculture Development (BIFAD), under Chair M. Peter McPherson, held its one hundred and forty-sixth meeting from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at NASULGC located at 1307 New York Ave NW, Washington DC in the Ground Level Meeting Room.

The following is the agenda for this meeting:

- 8:30 a.m. Welcoming and Opening Remarks-M. Peter McPherson, Chairman
- 8:35 a.m. SPARE Report on the January 19th Meeting Regarding the CRSP Portfolio-  
SPARE Members
- 10:45 a.m. Break
- 11:00 a.m. Suggested Topics for a BIFAD-Sponsored Analytical Paper-Sharon Quisenberry,  
BIFAD Member
- 11:30 a.m. Status of the Senior Agricultural and Natural Resources Management Science  
Advisor Position-David Sammons, USAID
- 11:45 p.m. Agency Strategic Framework for Africa-USAID, Bureau for Africa
- 12:15 p.m. The Priorities for the Bureau of Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade  
(EGAT)-Jacqueline E. Schafer, AA/EGAT
- 12:45 p.m. Other Items of General Interest and Summary-Peter McPherson
- 1:00 p.m. Adjournment

BIFAD Members present:

Peter McPherson (chair), William DeLauder, Sharron Quisenberry, Tony Laos, Mike Deegan

Introductions: Peter McPherson, proposal to modify agenda to discuss how to maintain records/track government spending on agriculture. Accepted.

## **SPARE Report on the January 19th Meeting Regarding the CRSP Portfolio- SPARE Members**

### ***John Thomas-PowerPoint presentation to BIFAD on USAID recommendations for CRSP Portfolio.***

*John Thomas' notes are in italics*

*I've been asked to present USAID's recommendations made to SPARE on January 19 regarding the new portfolio and competition of Management Entities (MEs)*

#### *Key Points:*

- *BIFAD asked USAID to undertake this review of the entire CRSP portfolio. We have tried our best to respond to this important and difficult tasking.*
- *Our goal is to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the CRSP program to respond to USAID development priorities, and Title XII objectives.*
- *We appreciate the comments from the university community, NGOs, international organizations, other donors, USAID field missions, and other USG agencies over the past 9 months.*
- *We have incorporated comments from the two Web posting of the proposed portfolio in October and December, the two public comment sessions at the BIFAD meeting of October 12 and the meeting convened by BIFAD at NASULGC on December 16, as well as the recent SPARE open meeting on January 19.*
- *Following each comment period, we have made significant changes. The current proposal is greatly improved from where we started.*
- *Again, thank you for your comments.*

*I would also like to thank my colleagues at USAID in the EGAT Agriculture and NRM Offices for their contributions to this process.*

*This is the first major review of the overall CRSP portfolio in over 20 years, and we have learned many valuable lessons for the next time around.*

John Thomas is also member of SPARE. The first part of this presentation is to review AID recommendations to SPARE, and then subsequently, the SPARE recommendations to BIFAD. For this presentation, John Thomas is a representative of USAID. Sandra Russo will follow with SPARE recommendations to BIFAD.

*I would like to present the proposed composition of the new CRSP portfolio, recommendations for the Competition of CRSP MEs – many of which have been shaped by the recent experience of competing the SANREM and IPM CRSPs in 2004 – , Core Components, and Focal Points.*

*Regarding the recommended revised portfolio:*

*Our recommendations have incorporated feedback from the public– the vast majority of which have come from researchers, universities, and organizations involved with the CRSP program.*

*We have also consulted with BIFAD and its sub-committee SPARE throughout the process.*

BIFAD asked SPARE to undertake this review. We wanted to maximize the effectiveness of the CRSP program. We appreciate the comments from the university community. We have received comments in multiple venues over the past nine months....e.g. web postings twice, open discussions in Des Moines...and then lastly the meeting on January 19<sup>th</sup>.....and we have made significant changes, which has resulted in improvements...

*As a result of these discussions, we have proposed the following portfolio – the years indicated are when they will be competed or be evaluated.*

*Sorghum/Millet & Other Grains – not to include major grains such as maize and rice*

*Peanut*

*Aquaculture and Fisheries – differences of opinion on appropriate balance between the two – USAID is still working on how to reconcile*

*Assets and Market Access – some very positive feedback on including social science (particularly economics) and looking at how to link smallholder producers to markets and provide access to land ownership, finance and other assets they need to improve their livelihoods.*

*Dry Grain Pulses – will focus on topics under the current Bean/Cowpea CRSP*

*Horticulture – a new CRSP that responds to the Global Horticulture Assessment and particular interests by missions to help diversify incomes in rural areas, through the production and marketing of high value crops*

*Livestock and Poultry*

*With respect to SANREM and IPM, we will assess their performance and relevance after four years – as we do with all CRSPs prior to a decision to renew the CRSPs for an additional 5 years.*

*For SANREM, we need to re-assess our proposal for a Soils, Water & Ecosystems Services CRSP after four years to see if the research needs envisioned under this proposed CRSP are being covered by SANREM;*

*With respect to IPM, we will assess how this topic is covered by the commodity CRSPs (including Livestock and Aquaculture) and if a separate IPM CRSP is still the best approach.*

*Depending on the outcomes – we may recommend a 5-year renewal, for either or both. What are Core Program components? – These are activities and results which all CRSPs are expected to work on.*

*We are including them in the program because they will bring:  
Consistency with USAID's strategic direction; and a coherent approach across the portfolio  
emphasizing the strengths of the universities.*

#### *Five recommended Core Components*

*Systems Approach to ensure that targeted CRSP research does not occur in isolation from the  
social, political, market and environmental influences that affect the adoption of practices and  
technologies.*

*We changed from "Ecosystem Health" to Social, Economic & Environmental Sustainability to  
make this component more comprehensive and consistent with USAID's Agriculture Strategy*

*Capacity Building & Institutional Strengthening to enhance the skills and expertise among host-  
country scientists, faculty, and research institutions.*

*Outreach, Dissemination & Adoption of research results: Insuring research results are delivered  
to a beneficiary community*

*Intellectual Leadership – I would like to describe Intellectual Leadership in more detail in the  
next slide.*

*We recognize that Intellectual Leadership as presented in the Web posting was seen as  
overwhelming and directive.*

*But this was not the intent.*

*The intent was to optimize some of the great efforts that we've seen in providing leadership  
across CRSPs and involving researchers from other organizations to address key problems.*

*The intent was to capture and formalize some of the things that are already occurring . . . as a  
way of operationalizing the best practices already used by CRSPs*

*Intellectual leadership is done differently in different CRSPs – but we wanted to frame a process*

*The changes we have made to the proposal for intellectual leadership are in response to  
comments received.*

*Intellectual Leadership is envisioned at three levels (refer to slide)*

*There was general agreement on including Focal Areas in the CRPS program as a way to bring  
out development impact, and to operationalize our goal for Intellectual Leadership.*

*We changed the name from "Focal Points" to Focal Areas given their relevance to USAID's  
strategic direction*

*USAID has stepped back from a more directive process for linking CRSP research to development impact. Originally, we proposed that USAID will identify Focal Areas and assign a CRSP to take intellectual leadership, for that Focal area.*

*We recognize that this needs to be an iterative process between the CRSP researchers, the MEs, and USAID, and that CRSPs are in the best position to identify focal areas for which they can take intellectual leadership.*

*Here, listed are broad areas under which the CRSPs will identify and develop sub-themes where they can take leadership on key learnings from CRSP and other relevant research*

*The long-term research will drive the identification of Focal Area sub-themes – Focal Area sub-themes will be identified based on long-term research activities.*

*The Focal Areas are defined broadly to be in sync with USAID strategic directions, but we will leave it to the CRSP MEs to identify the sub-themes where they can have development impact.*

*Just to highlight again the main points of Focal Areas and the role of the “Intellectual Leader”:*

*The CRSPs will identify research and development outcomes based on the Focal Area sub-themes.*

*This is where BIFAD has called on the CRSPs (for each CRSP) to be responsible for 3-5 development outcomes – outcomes related to measurable scientific research, training and capacity building.*

*During the bidding process, the MEs will indicate their vision of where the CRSP will go, and how to achieve development outcomes. There would be, at that time, a notional indication of development outcomes, which would be refined during the first year or two of implementation as the overall research program is better known, and the relationships between the ME and sub-awardees is built.*

*The objective is to meet specific research and training goals where individual CRSPs can be evaluated.*

*This would offer the best potential for growing the program.*

*Next I would like to present our recommendations to SPARE on Competition and Management of the new portfolio.*

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*Four important questions to answer emerged from the discussion.*

- 1. The number of CRSPs to be competed in FY06.*

2. *Extension of current CRSPs set to expire in 2006 so that critical research can continue and a smooth transition to a new ME if there is a change in MEs, is insured.*
3. *The appropriate level of USAID substantial involvement in future agreements.*
4. *The appropriate composition of the Technical Evaluation Committees that will evaluate the proposals.*

*Given that four agreements end in FY06, we evaluated whether it was realistic to compete all four; and if not, what impact it would have on FY07 competitions.*

*In the end, we felt that it was feasible and important to stay on schedule. Delaying competitions until FY07 would not resolve our workload issues because two additional MEs will come up for competition next year*

*Extensions into 2007 would not provide sufficient time for significant additional research in the expiring CRSPs.*

*Thus, our recommendation is to move forward with these four competitions in FY06.*

*Competition will be open to all universities, including universities currently managing on-going CRSPs.*

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*As mentioned in the previous slide, four agreements will end in FY06 (Peanut, Sorghum/Millet, Aquaculture, and BASIS).*

*We want to ensure an overlap and smooth transition in the event that MEs change hands.*

*Both BIFAD and USAID are committed to avoiding gaps in critical CRSP research under expiring CRSPs.*

*We also see a need for synthesis of learnings and research findings – whether or not the ME changes hands*

*In the event that ME changes, there needs to be a smooth transfer of data and documents to ensure that we don't lose key information. Sufficient time must be provided for this transfer.*

*Given different end dates and CRSP needs, extensions will need to be determined on a case by case basis.*

*Therefore, USAID, through OAA, would issue letters to each ending CRSP requesting a proposal for the transition period identifying:*

- *Critical research to be maintained*

- *The process for synthesizing lessons learned from research*
- *Tasks required to provide a smooth transfer of documents and data to a new ME*

*The MEs would need to determine this period and justify how long an extension is needed, but, this period should be no longer than six months from the date of the new agreement.*

*A complicating factor that we need to consider is the funding available for extensions – how we allocate among ending CRSPs needing extensions, and the start-up of new CRSPs. We need to minimize the costs associated with the overlap of CRSPs as no additional funding is available to the overall CRSP program to cover the costs of extensions,*

Recommendation is for open competition. All universities are eligible to compete. Want to ensure that there is overlap in the event that the ME changes hands. Need to avoid gaps and encourage synthesis. Needs to be a smooth transfer of data and documents. Extensions would need to be determined on a case by case basis.

*For Substantial Involvement, USAID looked at CTO past experience in existing grants and cooperative agreements.*

*We felt that getting the substantial involvement right was a great opportunity to clarify roles and identify ways to maximize interactions between CTOs and MEs.*

*This is not an attempt to control the CRSPs, but rather to clarify CTO roles and to improve communication and opportunities to learn what CRSPs are doing. In so doing, we hope that CTOs can be more engaged in promoting the CRSP program and discussing objectives and results within USAID.*

*One objective is to involve CTO assistance in linking with mission staff, and to keep the ME up to date on Agency direction that may assist the ME in defining and furthering its goals.*

*CTO involvement will help CRSPs to understand the areas of importance, to facilitate contact, and better enable universities to participate in USAID programming directions and partnering on outreach to missions and the Agency in general.*

*The limited involvement of USAID is, in part, meant to leave the decisions of what constitutes the best research to the scientific community. Our intention is for CRSP MEs to exercise technical leadership in their respective subject areas.*

*In most recent competitions, we intended to have external experts on the review panel, but due to timing and other factors, this did not happen.*

*Logistics of coordinating timing and availability of external reviewers complicate their inclusion.*

*Significant time commitment (2 weeks in the initial reviews, but an additional week if clarifications or best and finals are needed)*

*Need for flexibility as schedules can shift.*

*Need to avoid conflict of interest.*

We intend to have a committee of at least four members to score proposals. The external technical expert could come from university community, or from other donors. We would like this model to apply to the CRSP evaluation, as well...not just USAID review of proposal. There are logistical factors to consider...timing, availability of a well qualified individual.

## **Sandra Russo-SPARE Recommendations**

*Sandra is a SPARE member and stood in for Winfrey Clarke, the SPARE Chair, who had another engagement.*

The following is the key text of the slides presented in the PowerPoint by SPARE member Sandra Russo to BIFAD on February 2, 2006.

### SPARE Recommendations on the New CRSP Portfolio, Competition and Management

The SPARE open meeting was held January 19, 2006. Approximately twenty were in attendance from U.S. University community, USAID and the private sector. USAID gave their recommendations. There was discussion of USAID recommendations. A closed session followed to discuss these recommendations and comments received during the open session and to finalize the recommendations to BIFAD.

To repeat what John presented, this is the schedule for competition, and 5-year evaluation:

- Sorghum Millet and Other Grains: Compete 2006
- Peanut: Compete 2006
- Assets and Market Access: Compete 2006
- Dry Grain Pulses: Compete 2007
- Horticulture: Compete 2007
- Livestock and Poultry: Compete 2008
- SANREM: Evaluate: 2008 [soil, water & ecosystems]
- IPM: Evaluate: 2008 [Sorghum, Millet, Peanut, Dry Grain Pulses, Horticulture]

These issues were raised:

What is going to happen to SANREM and the IPM CRSPs at the end of their five year agreement?

Does Bean/Cowpea need to be rebid since it is only in its first five year period of a new grant agreement and significant changes have been made to the program and the ME?



**From the issues raised, SPARE recommends:**

- The SANREM and IPM CRSPs be evaluated during their fourth year like all other CRSPs. Evaluation under SPARE oversight according to approved CRSP Guidelines.
- Bean/cowpea CRSP – compete. Agency policy.
- All CRSPs will be evaluated in this manner, i.e., in the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> year, prior to a decision to renew for an additional 5 years.
- OAA is requiring that the Bean/Cowpea CRSP be competed as more than 10 years have passed without any competition.

**Core Program Components:**

**SPARE supports the recommendation that each CRSP research program include:**

- A systems approach
- Social, economic and environmental sustainability
- Capacity building and institutional strengthening
- Outreach, dissemination and adoption
- Intellectual leadership

**SPARE supports the proposal for focal areas on:**

- Improving nutrition and health
- Maximizing water and soil quality and productivity
- Broadening market access
- Mitigation post harvest constraints
- Enhancing productivity and livelihoods in marginal areas
- Advancing integrated pest management practices
- Increasing incomes
- Improving food quality, processing, and food safety

**AID will assume responsibility to get these 4 CRSPs competed in this fiscal year:**

1. Peanut
2. Sorghum, Millet & Other Grains
3. Aquaculture and Fisheries
4. Assets and Market Access

There should be limited extension to CRSPs ending in 2006

**USAID to request that current MEs provide a proposal for the transition period identifying:**

- Critical research to be maintained
- Process for synthesizing lessons learned from research
- Tasks required to provide smooth transfer of documents and data to new ME
- Extensions to overlap up to six months following the award of the new CRSP ME.

SPARE Concur in the plan for limited extensions. SPARE notes that the close out dates of three CRSPs (Aquaculture, Sorghum/Millet, and Peanuts) is earlier than the anticipated award dates for the new CRSPs. The larger the limited extension award, the less money available to launch the new ME and its research program.

SPARE supports the proposed process with one addition: the Agency include “training” as a critical component along with research.

SPARE notes that any funds obligated to the limited extension will be taken from the new CRSP budget for FY 2006.

Realities of AID resources demand this approach. Note SPARE recommends that training be included as a core component of all CRSPs.

**SPARE Recommends:**

1. Proposal on limited substantial involvement with one addition – annual in bullet one
2. Approval of annual implementation plans
3. Approval of key personnel (CRSP Director)
4. Agency and ME joint participation:
  - Collaborative involvement in selection of advisory committee members and USAID participation as members of committees
  - USAID participation with voice and vote, but no veto in selection of sub-award recipients
  - Concurrence on the monitoring and evaluation plan

**SPARE Concur in the plan for limited extensions**

**SPARE Recommends:**

- Proposal on Technical Evaluation Committee (for RFA review)
- USAID will strive to have committees of four or more members
- At least one of the members will be an external technical expert
- USAID will look to the U.S. University community, other U.S. agencies, the private sector, and donor organizations for relevant external experts

## **Additional Recommendations:**

### **CRSP Guidelines:**

- BIFAD approved draft to be cross referenced (done)
- Agency and U.S. university community represented by the CRSP Council needs to update and revalidate Guidelines for alignment with current policy (White Paper) and lessons learned from SANREM and IPM RFA and CRSP portfolio review (ongoing)
- SPARE and BIFAD need to review (next month, by conference call)
- Agency needs to approve Guideline (next month)

SPARE wants to put a definite timeline on the approval of the Guidelines by the Administrator as soon as possible.

### **SPARE also Recommends:**

CRSP Guidelines update to include:

1. To ensure a living document, constantly under review, future amendments to the Guidelines:
  - May be proposed by either the Agency of the U.S. University community
  - Will be reviewed by SPARE with recommendation to BIFAD for approval
2. Title XII Legislation
  - BIFAD will commission a paper
  - BIFAD hold a special meeting on Title XII implementation issues.

Many comments have come in from CRSPs on this topic. We recommend to BIFAD that it commission a paper by an objective outsider who can look at the legislation and tell us what actually is in the legislation.

## ***Open discussion period***

Regarding SPARE meetings, closed meetings should be used sparingly.

New MEs will enter into the review process around the 4<sup>th</sup> year. There is some assumption that a new ME will have another 5 years, and then the expectation that a full bid process will occur after 10 years, with no presumption against the current ME winning the ME again. To reiterate, there is some assumption that the ME will continue after the first 5 years pending a satisfactory review and concurrence by USAID that the subject matter of the CRSP is of continuing importance to the Agency, but no assumption for continuation after 10 years.

For SANREM, they may take on new role (Soil, Water and Ecosystem Services) in fourth year of the new CRSP, and can continue to do their work under the new CRSP rubric.

For IPM—in the fourth year there would be a review of more general questions of integrating pest management to cut across other commodities. Want to be sure that this is clear with parties involved.

Most of us will not have our positions in 4 years, and John Thomas and colleagues are doing a good job in trying to get all this worked out. Need to memorialize the good faith of the group in writing.

On the 4 new MEs that are to be competed this year...I have been uneasy with the idea of AID trying to do all of this in one year. It is too heavy a load, but this is a judgment by Agency management that they can do four RFAs in one year. Next year we have two more. Thus a delay this year puts off the problem until next year, and is not a solution. AID wants to do it this way. When the RFA is put together for each competition, it is important that there be a draft RFA that is broadly circulated in the community and that it be a real draft. This should be an opportunity for real input and real engagement of university and other communities, which is consistent with Title XII.

Regarding the engagement of AID with CRSP operation...there has been extensive discussion with John Thomas and with several of the CRSPs directors about what role AID would have with subcontracting decisions. AID would have a voice but no veto, and cannot control who would be selected as sub-award partners. It is important that AID not become intrusive into the operations of CRSPs. That is not the intention of John Thomas and his colleagues. Ultimately the CRSPs need to be managed by the ME and USAID needs to avoid micromanaging the CRSPs.

Major reform effort brings everyone closer together and makes this a functional system. Outcomes need to be expected within those five years. CRSPs are essentially applied research...not basic research...not intellectual exercise...but applied research...if you think about it that way...applied research dollars, it should provide for very specific outcomes. One part is training/building institutional capacity. You don't want to hold the ME bidder to exact outcome, but after it is awarded a CA and they begin to work out subcontract...they would have to identify a very small number of specific outcomes. Not that much different than a lab in a major company. There should be some process to modify and adjust, and there needs to be an agreement on some process that results in specific outcomes. And that agreement will have an impact on what happens when the ME is rebid.

The question for which there is no agreement is how does AID handle this process? It takes special skills of a highly technical nature ....we don't have agreement on how to do this? We do agree on the principle but not how to do it. One option is to add a chief agricultural scientist, who is more than just an advisor to EGAT (as BIFAD has proposed). Another option is to have an impartial panel with technical capacity to judge if outcomes have been met.

Two last comments:

1. To jump back onto the bid process...the strength of an external technical person or the bid review team will be an important part of the process. That person needs to be fully engaged.

2. Question of Title XII review. I was on first BIFAD board in 1977...where we grappled with Title XII legislation...I believe that it is important for BIFAD and SPARE to commission a truly disinterested party to go back to the statute, talk with people and produce a paper we can discuss in a BIFAD meeting.

I believe there is heat with regards to this issue that could be dissipated with a review of what the statute says.

*John Yohe*-limit of substantial involvement...I would like clarification on the role of the advisory committee. Is the advisory committee different than that of an external evaluation committee?

*John Thomas*—AID has always been involved...I don't see any difference. The reference to an Advisory Committee is the "External Evaluation Panel." USAID CTO has a voice and a vote on the CRSP board.

*Lena Heron-USAID/EGAT and CTO BASIS CRSP* ---that sentence was open and vague because the CRSPs are managed differently and use the advisory bodies differently...the idea is not that CTOs would be controlling, but would participate. Generally CRSPs try to get CTOs involved...and it has varied how they have participated...some actually go and attend when the external evaluation committee makes field visits.

*Peter McPherson*—when we discussed CRSP guidelines...we did not want CRSP structure to dictate some sort of uniform way of doing this (governance and oversight). We don't want to regiment this.

*Tag Demment-Global Livestock CRSP*---we had a long discussion about what substantial involvement is and we agreed on the role of USAID in the appointment of a director and on advisory panel. We did not agree on yearly work plans. All our operations revolved around those workplans....do you want to give veto power to one person? In general most CTOs work well in concert with the CRSP program director...but this proposal does give them a tremendous amount of power over the annual workplans. Another point is on the ME competition...we agreed that we wanted to separate the ME competition from the programmatic development. We wanted a vision, but not a set of specific operations...we want to compete the Management aspect but not the management and programmatic elements. I am troubled with the "systems approach." Some problems need a systems approach...if you are trying to solve a problem, you look at what it needs to get solved...which approach you should use. At a broader organizational level, it might be okay, but at a smaller level it might be inappropriate to go with a systems approach. One individual will not have the technical ability to review an RFA with a systems approach. You need to have more than 4 on the panel. I don't know the size of an NSF panel, but maybe 10 or more...you need to get more. Lastly, with regards to the Livestock and Poultry CRSP...we have spent a huge effort in name recognition of the Global Livestock CRSP...we have name recognition and I question adding the poultry...let's not just change it...the name is very important. Please consider not changing it, just because of Avian Flu.

*John Thomas*—with regards to a systems approach...I want to make sure that we have a mutual understanding...The idea is to make sure that the research coming out of a CRSP program can be

adopted and used. A systems approach will show how the research is couched, in broader environmental, social, and economic terms.

*Tag Demment*—*Asking Peter McPherson*—your program with Harvest Plus...how much money are you investing...in studying eating habits? It is a case by case basis. We don't put resources into studying cultural context. You have to make a case by case judgment. ...but saying that you have to do it...is the problem. Science is not solved by a systems approach. You want us to be a mile wide and an inch deep.

*Peter McPherson*—it is a fair point. Things get developed before you figure out how to get people to eat them. The real question is how much of a requirement will be considering the cultural context.

*Tag Demment*—I have less problems with the stipulation that it needs to be cultural and economically sustainable...then we have a biotech product that will be accepted....you know that it will be accepted.

*Peter McPherson*—The point is that the systems idea cannot overwhelm if we are going to make an investment on the technology...but we can't be oblivious to the systems issue.

*John Thomas*—there needs to be a measurable impact on research...when the CRSPs identify what their outcomes will be, the systems perspective needs to be considered

*Tag Demment*—why don't we have it in there that we have to solve problems. Rather, what we do should be based on the need to solve development-related problems. To a scientist...the systems approach is a method, not a goal.

*Peter McPherson*—the point is well taken....my view is that CRSP need to be held accountable for solving problems, less than half a dozen key issues over a five year period....You can't lose that focus with whole range of economic and social issues.

*John Thomas*—on other points ...Regarding competing the ME only...that we should look at the management aspects only....the ME has a responsibility to create a vision for research and has to line up the expertise to address these problems.

*Tag Demment*—There should be ME competition about management and vision and who comes is a question of the open competition

*John Thomas*—we don't identify the research at this stage.

*Tag Demment*—the last RFP did do this.

*Peter McPherson*—it is so easy to slip back into the idea that the bid process is technical....we agree that it is management capability and vision. This needs to be very clear and might need some wordsmithing in the RFA. This is a key point that we to this right. It will open up the competition.

*Chris Kosnik*—From the NRM (natural resources management) office...I am the CTO of the SANREM CRSP. In the SANREM CRSP...we put out to the public a draft of the RFA for comment. It adds a month to the process. There is a process. Open to all universities.

*Peter McPherson*—it is out there and you listen to feedback.

*John Thomas*—Regarding approval of workplans---it is a two way benefit---there is an opportunity for the MEs to make sure that the workplan is congruent with aid priorities, and for the CRSP CTO to understand what is going in the ME. The review process satisfies mutual objectives.

*Tag Demment*--You are giving power to one individual...most of the time it is not difficult...but it could be. Also, it is not in spirit of partnership. Once you agree on a five year plan, yearly you execute what you already agreed on. We have agreed upon workplans and budgets and objectives, and every year we see if what was promised was delivered. There is a misperception of how much monitoring is going on. If a sub-award has not progressed, they need to explain why they have not progressed. There is a process, and it is not fair to describe it as a process that doesn't happen. What could improve is the communication between offices to where the CRSPs report and the CRSP director.

*Lena Heron*— BASIS CTO—you are underscoring why we need to have the review...we have already talked about the Cooperative Agreement and how it is managed. And with regards to further refining the development impacts...we need to be involved to see if the agreement is progressing. I have never heard of real abuse of an implementation plan. The CTO doesn't typically abuse this...there is a need to refine the development impacts...we need to have continual involvement. Some CRSPs may not already have the processes in place, so we need to formalize the review process. We need to know that these mechanisms are in place. It is oversight. The CTOs and Agency are not looking for power...but rather a checkpoint to know that those processes are in place.

*Peter McPherson*—part of the job is to identify who is going to do what. It is easier for CRSP director on science issues to have the scientist on the other side of the fence.

*John Thomas*—we need to talk more about the science advisor.

*Peter McPherson*---the annual review is there because periodically there will be adjustments and projects can't be locked into forever.

*Ray Miller*— I have been involved over the years with all the CRSPs. You are missing some points. There is a difference between the time and effort that CTOs spend with their CRSPs. Another problem...no funds for CTOs to be involved as they and the CRSP would like them to be. The other thing is that we have heard many times of over-administering...to give them final veto power is upsetting the processes that the CRSPs have put into place. It is wrong to have one person have the veto power. Need to work hard at having uniformity in CTOs...

*Tim Williams—Peanut CRSP*---this has been debated during development of guidelines. From my perspective outside I think we need to remember that this is a partnership, and tied to those CRSPs is a lot of state money. AID is overstepping the boundary...why do we need this extra thing? I am disappointed...because what I see indicates that the people who are making changes and being asked to consider changes have got a small appreciation of what is happening. Much of this is already happening...and we are going through change for the sake of going through change. Very little of what is proposed is new. I believe that the Peanut CRSP....focuses on 4 things....we regularly deliver on those things. I am gratified by our results. But then we got told that we need to change...but we are already doing this, which indicates to me that people aren't reading our reports.

*Peter McPherson*....I know that you are delivering...but it is fair to say that this doesn't apply across the CRSP system. Are you more comfortable....having 5 or less key research things that get done in a five year period...they would be agreed upon in the bid process. It is reasonable that AID would agree to those 4 or 5 things.

*Tim Williams*--Historically that mechanism is already in place...The ME went through a planning process, and then called for bids, and put together a process for a new 5 year plan. Then it went to SPARE and BIFAD usually says "yes"...times that SPARE sent programs back and said go and redesign this. How can we have a different system that replaces what isn't broken.

*Peter McPherson*-I believe that to achieve a more uniform process...if there was an expectation to have a few uniform things that they need to get done over a five year period. I don't think it has been uniformly communicated to Congress. CRSP needs more money, and when something isn't communicated well, there is also some substance to the problem. We need to have this review process in place for both communication and substance purposes. What is the mechanism for periodic reviews and the key things to be reviewed and after the five year period on those key issues? As you describe it...you should be able to do that quite easily

*Tim Williams*-The solution is to have the reviews, and have USAID respond (as outlined in CRSP guidelines). The mechanism is to present to the SPARE committee. Provisions and mechanisms...USAID needs to have the capability to make those decisions.

*Peter McPherson*--how do AID, SPARE, and BIFAD ensure that we are sticking to a few key outcomes...I think we could argue for more money and in a better position to defend ourselves if we had a clear mechanism to do this. Maybe the mechanism is not the CTO. I do trust that the CRSP will know more than anyone else.

*John Thomas*—we need to come to agreement of what the objectives are. Improve understanding of what CRSPs are doing, what AID is doing with respect to development priorities, make sure that what any particular CRSP is doing is in line with overall portfolio, and to make sure that progress is being made. And we have proposed the review of implementation plans as the mechanism to do this. This is standard for other Cooperative Agreements.



*Peter McPherson*--if it is clear of what we are expecting across the board from CRSPs....the CRSP process will adjust. If there is an expectation of a few key outcomes....if we can agree on what we are after

*Deborah Rubin—Cultural Practice*---With regards to the CRSP evaluation process, there has been some muddling of the description of the process. There are three different processes. Number one- is identifying the new CRSP topic or CRSP entity....in the current BIFAD approved guidelines, that process is outlined and the review process is spelled out. How many outcomes are necessary?...it would be in the RFA and at the end the proposal committee would have to make that determination. The second is at the five year point. At the five year point there is an opportunity to review by SPARE if the progress is adequate, and if it meets the Agency's development interests, and if the topic is still relevant. And then number 3...no change in the topics, but later there may be change in the research activities...There is room in new RFA for new expectations. If the review committees do not choose...if the RFA is not written correctly...the problem lies there, not on the shoulders of the CRSP. At each of the 3 points, there will be different expectations and processes

*Peter McPherson*—The purpose is that we need to better communicate, and we need some process for agreeing on the key outcomes and to review progress...

*John Thomas*---and also to make sure that the direction of the CRSP is still relevant to the development needs and the overall CRSP portfolio

*Tim Williams*-we in the University of Georgia...have had experience of CTOs that have been disruptive...

*Peter McPherson*—we agree on problem—John Thomas and we will talk about that.

*Tim Williams*---when the BIFAD met in Iowa, one of the issues was the breadth of topics covered in the USAID proposal for a new CRSP portfolio, and the recommendation was to narrow it down....but I would join Tag in pointing out that a Livestock and Poultry is too big. The same goes for Fisheries and Aquaculture...because if we don't do that we will spread the resources too thin. This umbrella is an attempt to cover with one instrument multiple goals....but if you have multiple goals you need multiple instruments....we need to have a different mechanism. We should not try to achieve all USAID goals through the CRSP mechanism...we need another mechanism to realize some goals.

*John Thomas*—at BIFAD meeting in Des Moines...we had proposed some other CRSPs. We stepped away from that...we kept primary research...we made it clear that there is core funding for primary research. We encourage missions to buy in and many CRSPs have been very successful. There is still a lot of feedback...we are trying to reconcile how to work on these.

*Peter McPherson*--we need to keep a focus. The broadening of titles suggests a dilution of focus. Can we have a mechanism that has a small number of key research objectives?

*Tag Demment*—USAID is not interested in poultry...they are interested in zoonotic diseases. Poultry does not need more research. The Livestock CRSP does not do poultry or pigs. I am more concerned that we have a recognizable name...we don't want to change. I'll work on poultry, but let us call ourselves the Global Livestock CRSP.

*Tim Williams*—Another issue with the Bean and Cowpea CRSP. I have learned enough about procurement at USAID...to the extent that the outcomes that were proposed should take precedence. The decision should be whether to continue with that or go with disruption of program. Bean and cowpea should not be rebid unless they are messing up.

*Peter McPherson*—when I talk about not rebidding...I think that we are past the issue that these long CRSPs aren't rebid. They need to be rebid. We have a wonderful program in the Bean and Cowpea CRSP and it is underappreciated, but the scientific community has to expect that they will be reviewed at five years, and rebid at 10. I appreciate that there is a range of views....and know that it is not popular but this is something that we are past.

*Tim Williams*--What about the mechanisms to make that determination? Title XII requires that BIFAD determine if there is interest in competing the ME. Is there an established interest?

*Peter McPherson*—a lot of people have a lot of interest in beans. I don't think there will be any problem. We can't sustain the idea that after 25 years that the ME doesn't have to be rebid. I know that this is not a popular decision.

*Deborah Rubin*—the position is that it is coming up to the five year point in this particular cycle. In the process, as it is outlined in the CRSP Guidelines, what must be determined now for the Bean and Cowpea CRSP is whether the topic is of continued relevance. If not, then there is a rebid...but if it is, if progress is adequate, then they go on. This is the five year point. Rebidding at the five year point can occur, but only after several other things have occurred.

*Theo Dillaha*e—Virginia Tech and SANREM CRSP. It is confusing whether MEs are being competed at the five year or ten year period. (Quotes from that BIFAD Minutes.) I want to see some resolutions...it seems as if everything coming out of this committee is 10 years. I hope that BIFAD will resolve this...so that is something on the record. I want this to be clear.

*Peter McPherson*---for new ME there would be a review sometime in the 4<sup>th</sup> year, early 5<sup>th</sup>. There is *some* assumption that it will be renewed...it relies on the importance of delivering on a few key outcomes during that first five years. After 10 years there is an *expectation* that it goes through the full bid process. No assumption that the same ME would get the same ME, but no presumption. Is that okay wording?... “Yes” from BIFAD

*Theo Dillaha*e—I want to know what is the sense of BIFAD. I needs to be expressed in terms of resolution so it is on the record and you have voted.

*Peter McPherson*--I would think that after this meeting, it would be appropriate to draft our views to circulate among our colleagues. I don't know that BIFAD has the authority...I will circulate a copy of my views to my colleagues for their comment and I will get them to you.

*Theo Dillahae*—I want decisions so I can get on with my job

*Lena Heron*—one more point...on the 5, 10 year issue. I agree with Deborah that this idea that there is a process that at the 5 year mark, we can make a decision if we continue for another 5 years...That there is *some* assumption...The piece that I want to add is that we need to look at process that we have gone through. And that we want to go through on a periodic basis...it adds an element to the review of any particular CRSP. It doesn't reflect on whether you are doing a good job...it also speaks to broader issue of the entire portfolio. We need to have a mechanism to look at the overall portfolio.

*Peter McPherson*—unless there is augmented scientific capability...AID won't have the ability to do this.

*Lena Heron*— We did not have the advisor in place, so we did the best we did. We did it through open consultations. It had results...we made some decisions about the portfolio that will result in some shifts. We did not want to do all the changes in one year...it will go over a five year period. I hear what you are saying about the science advisor...but my concern is that it will be difficult for one person to have the range of expertise you want.

*Peter McPherson*—It is the classical problem...but this person would need to at least know where they could go to find the expertise, and know when do you pull in expertise. That is where the senior scientist comes in. I have been worried about this for awhile.

*Tim Williams*—Regarding the limited extension that is being proposed. Overlap...research that continues is decided by competitive process. We are not in a position to respond to this proposal that won't disrupt the search and that will synchronize with USAID funding cycle.

*John Thomas*—The CRSPs that are ending on a 10-year cycle...should be a natural closedown of activities at 10 year point. What is critical is what happens after the grant. The activities should be winding down.

*Tim Williams*--the research that should continue. The manpower and resources that have been gained in that lose momentum. What is being proposed, will be disruptive.

*Peter McPherson*—yes, it will be disruptive, and then we have to work out those questions

*Tag Dement*--the committee that was established to consider the rebid process....The RFA would go out a year ahead of time the ME is awarded...at 6 months ahead of grant termination so that when grant ended there would be whole new suite of projects.. There should be expectation that project would end. We show what we have achieved over last 10 years. We need to schedule this in such a way to have the overlap of the ME. Don't want a disconnect. SANREM is just getting their projects up and running, and then they only have 2.5 years to do something....need to set a timeline about how long an RFA takes to be competed, and so there is a smooth transition

*Don Plucknet---Interim Director IPM CRSP...* There is some assumption of continuation...we have the same problems on the timing. It means that they will be reviewed at 2.5 years....We don't worry about reviews, because the work speaks for itself. Some of the projects, however, will be quite young. Some assumption of continuation...a lot of deliverables, and measurable impact over a ten year period. Much less so after 2.5 years

*Peter McPherson---*There are two primary issues...Number one is what has CRSP done ...they might not have done much at all. What has been happening in that CRSP over that period of time. Number 2, is there a need for the IPM CRSP to handle issues that commodity CRSP could not handle. Not a need to have as many specific outcomes in place after 1<sup>st</sup> five years.

*Peter McPherson --*will put together something to share comments. AID will see it. Comments will try to cover points that Peter and colleagues feel strongly about will be lengthy because there are a number of nuances.

Issues for the Fast track –

- naming of a couple CRSPs
- CTO role and planning goals to be achieved...what is the CTO role annually

There are also phasing and implementation questions.

There is also the continuing issue of the scientific capacity of AID. Indeed I believe that there is a need to begin description for two positions –

- Dave Sammons position as university-AID liaison
- Chief Scientist-find chief scientists who is on sabbatical who has managed large program, as well as other criteria. University might be able to pay for part (sabbatical salary). We need names and BIFAD needs to drive the process.

Peter believes stretch of agency on contracts, there is a chance for uniformly stronger CRSPs and need more money for more CRSPs and better funding for CRSPS. It should not come out of current agency agriculture budget, as there is already a squeeze on the budget.

Getting bigger and bigger famine issue in Africa.

**Resolution** –That we accept SPARE's report, and that the BIFAD Chair will draft and provide to AID and the community his understanding (best understanding) of the BIFAD board's view on the set of issues based on the discussion of today which all augment the SPARE report.

Resolution Adopted by BIFAD Board

## **Suggested Topics for a BIFAD-Sponsored Analytical Paper-Sharon Quisenberry, BIFAD Member**

*Sharron Quisenberry*-Currently looking at a range of potential issues for analytical policy papers. Want to do a White Paper on meeting the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Recommend a paper that analyzes the relationship between AID and the university. Another was on how to improve rural development.

The following is from draft paper written by Sharron Quisenberry that was not handed out or presented in the meeting due to lack of time. It is included in these minutes for the record.

Regarding a BIFAD-commissioned analytical paper, the small working group recommended that the paper be focused on the following questions:

- With a possible drift toward permanent food aid dependency of impoverished nations, what are the implications of U.S. development assistance policy? Related questions concern the implications of emphasizing emergency relief over sustainable development.
- With the challenges implicit in rural development, what is the relationship of current and future development strategies and emerging stakeholder relationships for improving outcomes that improve the human condition and reduce food aid dependency?
- What are the alternative relationship scenarios between USAID and the U.S. university community and how can they maximize the impact of U.S. expertise on policy and rural development? As a corollary, what are the desirable roles, comparative advantages and complementarities of the different development sectors in overall development strategy?

*Peter McPherson*-Paper Number 2: the concept is that BIFAD should deal with current issues. We also should grapple with some key issues. We will follow up on the Title XII paper...there is a whole range of things to investigate further.

*Sharron Quisenberry*-Paper No. 3: This paper would be on US funding of agriculture development. It is important to commission a paper funded and authored by an external source...to get at the true impacts. This paper would build on the paper produced by others and funded by the Rockefeller Foundation.

Regarding the third paper: Agreed upon by BIFAD, with Peter and DeLauder recusing themselves because of their association with the Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa.

## **Agency Strategic Framework for Africa-USAID, Bureau for Africa, Tom Hobgood**

*Tom Hobgood*-We are supporting the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program(CAADP). Discussion in ECOWAS to develop 9-10 compacts. We are busy supporting

the process. It is an opportunity and a chance to support African leaders in agriculture. African Leaders have pledged to commit 10 percent of their GDP to agriculture issues.

With respect to cotton, we are moving forward with a cotton development program. We identify interventions and priorities...we are talking about 9. Some can be implemented, others cannot. Sharing of best practices...we are working with the West Africa Regional Program (WARP) to implement this. We have 5 million dollars in ESF money. We will be seeking more resources for this program.

There has been some confusion about our cotton policies. We wanted to have consultation with leaders to discuss what we will be implementing. The Bumper Amendment will provide guidance as to what activities we can engage in as USAID employees.

*Tim Williams*-How are you implementing Title XII?

*Tom Hobgood*-in strategy development or in implementation? This has been an ongoing process, so am not sure what the next step is. We would like to see more CRSP involvement. We would encourage and welcome more university participation.

**The Priorities for the Bureau of Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade (EGAT)-  
Jacqueline E. Schafer, AA/EGAT**

*Jackee Schafer*—

- 1) ***The EGAT budget for FY 06 and 07- EGAT***, as well as the rest of USAID faces serious resource constraints. Currently we are in the final throes of the operating year budget setting process of FY06 (OYB), and presumably the FY07 budget will be released to Congress. Congress wants \$1.5 billion, which is an increase over what the President wanted. The president's request for the development assistance account was \$1,103,230,000 for FY '06. And the EGAT budget request was for 150.6 million, which is down from \$156.785 million, which was the operating year budget for FY '05. The budget for the agriculture office went from \$33.3 million to \$30.136 with transfers -- well, \$28 million let's say. And all we can fund are our staff, our CRSPs, our BIFAD and a little bit.
- 2) ***The effect of earmarks and directives and special countries-*** specific countries that we have to have special efforts in are Afghanistan, Sudan, Pakistan, Haiti. Regarding the DA account, then you take out the basic education earmark of \$365 million, the biodiversity earmark at \$165.5, educational institutions in China, elections and political processes...this is money over and above what we budgeted for ourselves. These are all things that the Congress has directed us to do. So you take those key countries and you take those earmarks and directives out and you've got 60 percent of our DA budget right there that is accounted for. There are also contingencies: fragile states, the Pakistan earthquake, famine early warning (FEWS). I'm not going to go into each one of them, but by the time you take out those management contingencies, you're down to 69 -- you've accounted for 69 percent of the budget. That means about 31 percent of the budget is not spoken for. And this doesn't count CRSP money or CG money. All of that will come out of the Agency's remaining \$467 million. What we would've funded in the

Agriculture portfolio, if we did not have this cut, would've been to fully fund up to the planned level for the Partnership for Food Industry Development, Food Security III program, support for the mission horticulture sector development, which would be a new activity based on the horticulture assessment that's been done, the Borlaug Women in Science Program and others. There's some research done with -- with Israeli and other researchers around the world, the RAISE Plus task order, and the POVnet donor platform. None of these things can we afford to fund because we have in effect a 15 percent cut due to these -- due to these earmarks and directives.

- 3) ***Our options to survive in this environment-*** One way to deal with it is to work cross-sectorally, so that what we're doing in one sector really reinforces what we're doing in another sector. Sustainable tourism, for example, is economic growth and livelihoods and job creation. But this ties into conserving natural resources and biodiversity in an intelligent and integrated way. That's just one example. Another example -- I'll give one that's more relevant here. We have a program in the natural resources management field called AgCom. It's a cost share demonstration project we got in 2005 to apply best environmental communications practice to scale up development impact in agriculture and to train host countries' stakeholders and partners in communication methodology. We're working with one of the international centers in Kenya. And the upshot of all of this is a partnership with Conversation International, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and the Food and Agricultural Organization to develop distance learning, and the actual activity is going to be increasing significantly the number of farmers planting dairy fodder trees in Kenya to complement a livestock dairy development program and the habitat associated with it. And this is a way I hope that we can link the programs that the Natural Resources Management staff do with the programs do with the programs that the agriculture office does. So we're going to have to figure out ways of using the resources that we have in various offices in the most mutually reinforcing way possible. I think we are going to break down stovepipes, as they say, in the future. I think we're going to be cleaning out pipelines, where we give money -- we obligate money, but the money hasn't been expended down.