



August 22, 2019

*The Administrator*

Mark Keenum, Ph.D.  
Chairman  
Board for International Food and Agricultural Development  
President  
Mississippi State University  
75 B.S. Hood Road  
Mississippi State, MS 39762

Dear President Keenum:

Many thanks to you and the full Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD) for the thoughtful and rigorous synthesis of key findings, conclusions, and recommendations that arose from the public meetings of BIFAD during 2018. As always, I value your contributions and deep engagement with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Together, we have the opportunity to make transformational changes that will lead to a more food-secure and prosperous future.

USAID agrees with your synthesis and recommendations; our Bureau for Food Security is taking action on many of them already. I look forward to discussing and exploring these ideas further. In the meantime, the attached summary details how we have addressed some of your suggestions in each of the thematic areas covered at the public meetings.

Once again, thank you very much for your dedication and service to USAID and our Nation. I know we both are committed to a resilient, food-secure future for all people. I look forward to our upcoming discussions and continuing to work with you on these important issues.

Sincerely,

Mark Green

**Summary of Responses by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to the Recommendations of the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD): Building an Evidence Base on Rural Youth Employment and Livelihoods 174<sup>th</sup> Public Meeting of BIFAD, May 8, 2018; Washington, D.C.**

Recommendation 1: **Generic economic constraints that face youth.** Over the past year, USAID has developed an Agency Employment Framework that highlights the evidence on various interventions, responses, and policies that address constraints (both specific to youth/gender and generic) for improved employment opportunities, both on- and off-farm, and urban and rural. Recently, our field Mission in Guatemala conducted an analysis to determine the constraints young people face when attempting to enter markets or participate in agriculture.

Recommendation 2: **Identification of cognitive and experiential deficits that hinder the transition to independence for youth.** USAID's significant investment in research on socio-emotional and soft skills will determine which key skills most affect positive outcomes, as well as the best programmatic practices to foster these skills. When combined, this research has helped our Missions improve the quality of skills programming to support the transition to independence.

Recommendation 3: **Demand-driven strategies of employment:** USAID's new Employment Framework carefully considers both demand- and supply-side strategies for labor-development and job-creation. USAID's programming in workforce-development puts a special focus on demand-driven job-training models, as well as policies for creating jobs.

Recommendation 4: **Impact of gender and marriage.** The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GENDEV) and YouthPower programs, particularly, have examined the impacts of gender and marriage on opportunities for economic development for poor women. For example, in the Sahel, new models for building resilience within this population are emerging.

Recommendations 5-6: **Rural/urban considerations and differential access to land/education, as well as age differences.** USAID programming such as our work on co-operatives has focused on the differential needs and responses for young workers. Our work on land titling and access to education apply a lens to look at needs in differential programming.

Recommendation 7: **Data-collection and analytical approaches.** The Bureau for Food Security (BFS) has a Youth Learning Agenda, and some of the data collected are now age-disaggregated. YouthPower Learning supports the *Global Food-Security Strategy* (GFSS) with its *Project Design Guide for Youth-Inclusive Agriculture and Food Systems* (Volumes I & II), which bridges the objectives of the GFSS and builds on the Agency's Policy on Youth Inclusion. Moreover, the Agency has a Positive Youth Development (PYD) measurement toolkit that has 51 indicators and measurement sheets for integrating PYD into programming across USAID.