



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): Improving Nutrition Through Private-Sector Engagement Across Food Systems 178<sup>th</sup> BIFAD Public Meeting, October 16, 2018; Des Moines, Iowa**

Recommendations 1-2: **Develop an investment strategy and learning agenda around private-sector engagement for nutrition.** USAID drafted an evidence report on private-sector engagement to improve nutrition outcomes through the food system. This evidence report serves as the foundation for the development of a private-sector strategy for nutrition, which is currently underway. We are holding internal Agency workshops to inform the strategy's development to operationalize our private-sector approach for nutrition. Furthermore, the strategy will include a robust learning agenda and appropriate indicators to measure success.

Recommendation 3: **De-risk investments for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).** USAID is leveraging our partner project, the Investment Support Program, in collaboration with the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, to analyze the market-landscape opportunities in Sub-Saharan Africa for SMEs to improve the quality of diets and address undernutrition. This work will inform our approach to addressing the business assistance needs of SMEs and creating potential finance mechanisms to de-risk market entry.

Recommendation 4: **Facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues.** USAID has brought together private companies with donors and civil society to identify the barriers and challenges to improving the quality of data and food safety by using a food-systems approach. We plan to leverage our partnerships to convene additional, multi-stakeholder dialogues both at the global level, and within Feed the Future target countries, to identify opportunities where USAID can facilitate greater private-sector engagement for nutritious, safe foods.

Recommendation 5: **Increase consumer demand for more nutritious, safe foods.** USAID is working with its partners to develop tools to identify market factors that influence the food environment and, subsequently, consumer choice in different contexts. Once validated, Missions will have access to help them identify market-based approaches to improve the affordability and desirability of nutritious, safe foods. We are also assessing proven and promising social and behavior-change approaches that can scale up to increase consumer demand for nutritious, safe foods.