



BIFAD Public Meeting (Virtual)

A Public Consultation on BIFAD's Plans to Propose a Subcommittee on Minority Serving Institution Engagement and Leadership in USAID's Agricultural, Food Security, and Nutrition Policies and Programming

Meeting Minutes

June 28, 2023, 1:30–3:30 PM EDT

Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD) Members in Attendance:

Laurence B. Alexander, BIFAD Chair and Chancellor of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
Pamela K. Anderson, Director General Emerita, International Potato Center
Marie Boyd, Associate Professor, University of South Carolina School of Law
Rattan Lal, Distinguished Professor of Soil Science, The Ohio State University
Saweda Liverpool-Tasie, Michigan State University (MSU) Research Foundation Professor, Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics, MSU
Henri G. Moore, Vice President/Head of Responsible Business, Haleon
Kathy Spahn, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Helen Keller International (Absent)

Speakers and Panelists:

Clinton White, Counselor, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
Dina Esposito, Assistant to the Administrator, Feed the Future Deputy Coordinator for Development, and Agency Global Food Crisis Coordinator, Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, USAID
Marybeth Gasman, Samuel D. Proctor Endowed Chair & Distinguished Professor; Executive Director of the Rutgers Center for Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), Rutgers University
Monte Randall, President, The College of the Muscogee Nation (CMN)
Venu (Kal) Kalavacharla, Deputy Director, Institute of Youth, Family, and Community (IYFC), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)
Levon T. Esters, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School, The Pennsylvania State University
Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval, President, California State University, Fresno
Keia Jones, Ph.D. Candidate and Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS) Region 1 Graduate Student Vice President, The Pennsylvania State University
Ar'Tee Franklin, Senior Advisor, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA), Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, USAID

Part One: Framing Remarks

Welcome and Framing Remarks

Laurence Alexander, Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD) Chair and Chancellor of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

Dr. Laurence Alexander, Chair of the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD), and Chancellor of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, welcomed participants and expressed delight at the excellent turnout for the meeting. He invited audience members to introduce themselves in the meeting chat.

Dr. Alexander emphasized his decade-long tenure in a leadership role at a prestigious 1890 land-grant institution, one of 19 historically black universities established under the Second Morrill Act of 1890. He highlighted the personal significance of the meeting topic to both his position at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and his long-standing involvement in issues concerning Minority Serving Institution (MSI) engagement.

Dr. Alexander invited BIFAD members to introduce themselves: Henri Moore, Vice President/Head of Responsible Business, Haleon; Pamela Anderson, Director General Emerita, International Potato Center; Marie Boyd, Associate Professor, University of South Carolina School of Law; Rattan Lal, Distinguished Professor of Soil Science, The Ohio State University; Saweda Liverpool-Tasie, Michigan State University (MSU) Research Foundation Professor, Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics, MSU. Dr. Alexander conveyed regrets from BIFAD member Kathy Spahn, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Helen Keller International, who was absent.

Dr. Alexander explained BIFAD's direct advisory role to the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), working to ensure that USAID brings the assets of United States (U.S.) universities to bear on development challenges in agriculture and food security and supports U.S. university representation in programming. In a meeting with BIFAD last year to discuss her priorities and what advice would be most useful, USAID Administrator Samantha Power said that the Agency was positioned to make progress on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility and welcomed BIFAD's input on MSI engagement, particularly concerning contributions to research and the future international development workforce.

Responding to this request and the Agency's priority to promote and sustain inclusive and equitable engagement of diverse voices to support the U.S. Government's Global Food Security Strategy,¹ Dr. Alexander said the BIFAD plans to propose the establishment of a high-visibility standing subcommittee on MSI engagement and leadership in USAID's agriculture, food security, and nutrition policies and programming next year. Dr. Alexander said that the public meeting was an opportunity to share these plans and hear from the community of stakeholders.

Dr. Alexander informed participants that the meeting was being recorded and that the recording, along with all questions and comments, would be shared publicly following the meeting. He mentioned that draft subcommittee Terms of Reference (TOR), including preliminary objectives and a membership plan, were available for review on the USAID website,² and the link was shared by Tetra Tech Program

¹ United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (2022). *U.S. Government Global Food Security Strategy: Fiscal Year 2022-2026*. https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/Global-Food-Security-Strategy-FY22-26_508C.pdf

² U.S. Agency For International Development. (2023). Proposed MSI Subcommittee | Board for International Food and Agricultural Development. <https://www.usaid.gov/bifad/proposed-msi-subcommittee>

Associate Rachel Helbig in the chat. Dr. Alexander encouraged participants to provide comments and feedback on the TOR over the next two weeks, with the public comment period closing on July 12, 2023. Dr. Alexander stated that, in the coming months, BIFAD would work to finalize the TOR and identify subcommittee candidates based on the membership plan. Once the TOR are approved by the USAID Administrator, BIFAD expects to launch the subcommittee and appoint members in the fall to support work plan development and begin sharing its priority efforts early next year.

Dr. Alexander expressed his excitement to hear from the thought leaders on the agenda—particularly to their reflections on how the Board could build upon its experience and established processes to tackle the important work ahead efficiently, effectively, and collaboratively.

Dr. Alexander then introduced Clinton White, USAID Counselor, and Dina Esposito, Assistant to the Administrator, Feed the Future Deputy Coordinator for Development, and Agency Global Food Crisis Coordinator for USAID’s Bureau for Resilience and Food Security.

USAID’s Commitment to Strengthening Engagements with the U.S. Minority Serving Institutions

Clinton White, Counselor, USAID

Dina Esposito, Assistant to the Administrator, Feed the Future Deputy Coordinator for Development, and Agency Global Food Crisis Coordinator, Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, USAID

Counselor White thanked Dr. Alexander and BIFAD for convening a public meeting on efforts to deepen engagement with MSIs and welcomed MSI partners joining the meeting. He appreciated the knowledge and expertise that BIFAD represents and said that USAID looks to BIFAD to convene thought leaders from U.S. universities and other groups to guide USAID’s strategy in building a more food-secure world.

Counselor White stressed that there has never been a more important time to turn to global experts in agriculture and nutrition as food systems face unprecedented shocks. He explained that an estimated 205 million people are in dire need of food assistance, and approximately 768 million people are facing chronic hunger globally, underscoring the importance of drawing on BIFAD’s latest evidence to inform USAID’s programs and strategies, particularly the U.S. Government’s Global Food Security Strategy, which guides the Whole of Government Feed the Future initiative.

Counselor White acknowledged that USAID’s work can only reach its full potential when tapping into the full diversity of the United States. University partners help tackle the most pressing global challenges and are on the forefront of developing game-changing solutions for a better future. Today’s meeting is a vital step forward to take action in strengthening USAID’s engagement of MSIs in the development agenda.

Counselor White provided a recent example of how USAID is working to address food security and strengthen economic development in Nepal through a \$5 million agriculture higher education activity. The USAID award to Tuskegee University, in collaboration with a Nepali partner, Sathguru, aims to enhance the capacity of the Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU) and increase the number of workforce-ready students by strengthening the university’s research and teaching methodologies. The partnership will enable AFU to leverage Tuskegee’s experience to strengthen academic research and extension capacity and to develop the entrepreneurial spirit of AFU students to contribute to the agricultural transformation of Nepal. The award also has a women’s empowerment component around agriculture. The partnership shows how USAID is at the forefront of working with MSI partners on food security and economic growth.

Counselor White said that, through USAID’s MSI Partnership Initiative, partnerships between MSIs and USAID bureaus, offices, and missions allow students, faculty, and researchers to collaborate to develop

new and better ways to help tackle today’s pressing global challenges. USAID has many partnerships with MSIs, including six memoranda of understanding (MOUs) through the MSI Partnership Initiative. He highlighted a few of these partnerships through the Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, including an MOU with Delaware State University. As part of the MOU, in April 2023, Counselor White participated in a Global Resilience Day co-hosted by USAID and Delaware State University to promote awareness of and action toward building resilience in the face of global challenges such as climate change and food insecurity. Delaware State University also celebrated its first class of graduates of the USAID-funded Thomas Wyatt Turner Fellowship Program, named in honor of the first Black American to earn a doctorate degree from Cornell University. The fellowship program is part of the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Crop Improvement’s MSI Fellowship Associate Award, with additional support from Cornell University. The fellowship supports students at Delaware State University and at other 1890 MSIs to earn advanced degrees to become the next generation of leaders in inclusive and sustainable agricultural development.

Counselor White said that Texas State University, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University, and the University of Puerto Rico received awards under USAID’s Long-term Assistance and Services for Research Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine, or LASER PULSE, a program that delivers research-driven solutions for USAID’s partner countries.

Additionally, through partnership incubator awards, USAID has provided tailored technical assistance to MSIs in various areas, including coaching on how to successfully compete for and implement USAID awards in the areas of financial management, strategic planning, communications, business development, and monitoring, evaluation, and learning. Four MSIs—the University of Texas at San Antonio, Florida International University, the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and Langston University—have been awarded these grants.

Counselor White introduced USAID’s MSI Coordinator, Dana Alzouma, who would provide answers to questions about how to work with USAID, and she shared the link <http://workwithusaid.org/> in the chat.

While USAID currently lacks the Congressional set-asides for MSIs that other federal agencies have, it can restrict eligibility to MSIs when there is a programmatic rationale for doing so to help expand and diversify the Agency’s partner base. USAID’s recently released Acquisition and Assistance Strategy³ included language emphasizing this.

Counselor White said that the meeting was an opportunity for USAID to be self-reflective and to hear from the community about what the Agency is doing right and what it can do better to be more inclusive. Counselor White introduced the next speaker, Ms. Esposito, who has been instrumental in changing the way the Agency does business and leading the Agency on food security.

Ms. Esposito reinforced that this is an acute moment in global food security, where poverty, food security, and nutrition trends are moving in the wrong direction and reversing decades of progress in the fight against global hunger. She is pleased to be leading USAID’s Bureau for Resilience and Food Security and serving as the Deputy Coordinator for Feed the Future, which is the U.S. Government’s global flagship hunger and food security initiative. USAID Administrator Samantha Power is designated by the President of the United States to serve as the overall coordinator of Feed the Future, and the Bureau for Resilience and Food Security leads this work. The primary focus of Feed the Future is to work

³ United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (2023). *Acquisition and Assistance Strategy*. <https://www.usaid.gov/policy/acquisition-and-assistance-strategy>

hand in hand with partner countries to develop their agricultural sectors and break the vicious cycle of poverty and hunger. During the first decade of Feed the Future, extreme poverty, hunger, and child stunting all declined by 20 to 25 percent in areas where the initiative worked, while children's diets and women's empowerment both improved. Esposito said that many of Feed the Future's long-term investments designed to boost agricultural productivity are proving critical right now, from improved seeds that allow farmers to grow more climate-resilient and pest-resistant crops, to private sector partnerships that create new markets and demand for those improved seeds and the resulting harvests. The size and scale of the current food crisis and continuing shocks, however, point to the urgent need and opportunity to accelerate changes that can transform food systems.

Ms. Esposito stressed the importance of working differently by including historically marginalized groups, fostering innovative ideas and perspectives, conducting evidence-based research, and establishing strategic partnerships to expand reach and impact.

Ms. Esposito highlighted that the United States higher education community was a great resource and that MSIs were uniquely well positioned to partner with USAID.

Over the past nine months, the Bureau for Resilience and Food Security has engaged over 5,000 students and alumni and 1,000 university faculty and staff from more than 109 colleges and universities, including at MSIs and with underrepresented groups through its partnership with Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS), a national network that supports the professional advancement of underrepresented groups in agriculture, natural resources, and related sciences. Ms. Esposito discussed research partnerships with MSIs through the flagship Feed the Future Innovation Labs. These labs draw upon the expertise of top U.S. universities and developing country research institutions to address agricultural and food security challenges. Currently, there are 20 Innovation Labs led by 13 land-grant universities. The Innovation Labs in turn partner with 71 other U.S. colleges and universities, 24 of which are MSIs—including nine Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and 11 Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). Ms. Esposito highlighted the Food Safety Innovation Lab, led jointly by Purdue University and Cornell University, which has created a model for how to better engage and support MSIs in the process of applying for sub-awards, ensuring that the design and outreach consider barriers to success that many MSIs face and reduce administrative burden.

Ms. Esposito emphasized the significant expertise of MSIs in the agricultural sector and applied research, particularly in areas related to natural resource management and extension that are readily transferable to developing country contexts. She commended MSI faculty and students for their extensive experience working with Indigenous and underrepresented communities across the United States with ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity and their familiarity with the challenges and needs of small farmers and producers. She noted that these are also critical skills in fostering strong collaborations in partner countries.

Ms. Esposito expressed enthusiasm for BIFAD's proposal to establish a subcommittee focused on MSI engagement and leadership. Ms. Esposito looked forward to the key lessons and learning that would emerge from this collaboration and expressed a commitment to continued partnership with BIFAD and the expansion of partnerships with MSIs to advance global agricultural, food security, and nutrition agendas.

Dr. Alexander thanked Counselor White and Ms. Esposito for their reflections on USAID's work to strengthen relationships with MSIs and commitment to broadening and deepening those investments.

Part Two: The Objectives of the BIFAD Subcommittee on MSI Engagement

Launching a BIFAD Subcommittee on MSI Engagement

Henri Moore, BIFAD Member and Vice President and Head of Responsible Business, Haleon

Dr. Laurence Alexander introduced Ms. Henri Moore, who shared the draft objectives and membership plans for the proposed subcommittee. Ms. Moore expressed pleasure in sharing BIFAD's vision to accelerate MSI engagement and leadership in USAID's agricultural, food security, and nutrition policies and programming. She said BIFAD's work builds on previous BIFAD recommendations from 2010 informed by an ad hoc BIFAD MSI Working Group led by the late Dr. William B. DeLauder, former BIFAD member and President Emeritus of Delaware State University.

As BIFAD considered next steps to build on the foundation of the 2010 work, they considered that a permanent, standing committee offered several advantages over an ad hoc, fixed-term modality to address MSI engagement, given that past efforts have demonstrated the need for consistent tracking of progress over time. Rather than committing to a fixed work plan for the duration of its efforts, a standing subcommittee can reassess the best use of its attention and resources at regular intervals, with input from the community of MSI stakeholders to advance its long-term goals.

The proposed subcommittee has four overarching objectives, as outlined in the draft TOR:

1. **Inform recommendations to strengthen partnerships with MSIs as thought leaders and implementing partners in global agriculture-led growth, resilience, food security, and nutrition.** The subcommittee's work will inform recommendations to strengthen partnerships among MSIs, USAID, and other USAID implementing partners in collaborative efforts to advance the U.S. Government's Global Food Security Strategy. The subcommittee will support an Agency goal to promote and sustain the inclusive and equitable engagement of MSIs in Agency policy and programming relevant to the strategy. Recommendations clearly will identify opportunities to address specific gaps within USAID capacity, policies, and programs that may hinder MSI engagement.
2. **Create a platform for dialogue.** The subcommittee will serve as a dedicated, resourced platform for direct dialogue with MSIs. The subcommittee may also recommend methods to track progress and processes by which USAID could be accountable for use of those methods.
3. **Strengthen BIFAD's own collaboration with MSIs.** The subcommittee will advise the Board on approaches to elevate the strengths and perspectives of MSIs within its work, positioning MSIs as recognized thought leaders as BIFAD amplifies the expertise of the U.S. academic community to inform recommendations to USAID.
4. **Identify opportunities for USAID to engage with higher-education communities, particularly MSIs and underrepresented groups, to develop a diverse pipeline of professionals in global food security, nutrition, and agricultural development.** The subcommittee will formulate recommendations to inform USAID's strategic engagement with MSIs to deepen institutional focus on, access to, and preparation for relevant international development career pathways.

Ms. Moore noted that the draft TOR also include considerations for subcommittee composition, with 7 to 11 formal members and a balance of organizational, technical, administrative, and leadership expertise. BIFAD also expected to prioritize recruiting members with experience working across diverse populations, from diverse geographies, and across diverse career stages.

Ms. Moore outlined that BIFAD hoped to gather insights at this meeting from expert panelists and the public to inform the draft TOR, including the objectives and considerations for subcommittee composition. She encouraged participants to provide feedback on these aspects in the chat.

Ms. Moore introduced the first panel of experts to discuss opportunities and challenges of federal government partnerships with MSIs: Dr. Marybeth Gasman, Distinguished Professor and Executive Director of the Rutgers Center for MSIs, Rutgers University Graduate School of Education; Dr. Monte Randall, President, The College of the Muscogee Nation (CMN); and Dr. Venu (Kal) Kalavacharla Deputy Director, Institute of Youth, Family, and Community (IYFC), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

Panel Discussion 1: Embracing the Diversity of MSIs in Federal Government Partnerships

Moderated by: Henri Moore, BIFAD Member and Vice President and Head of Responsible Business, Haleon

Marybeth Gasman, Distinguished Professor and Executive Director of the Rutgers Center for MSIs, Rutgers University Graduate School of Education

Monte Randall, President, CMN

Venu (Kal) Kalavacharla, Deputy Director, IYFC, USDA NIFA

Henri Moore invited Dr. Gasman to share insights on the strengths and assets of MSIs that make them well suited for federal government partnership. Dr. Gasman highlighted several key strengths of MSIs that contribute to their suitability for collaboration with the federal government:

- MSIs have a rich diversity of students across many areas, including race, ethnicity, religions, language, and socioeconomic level, which provides a rich pool of talents and perspectives to draw upon;
- MSIs offer culturally relevant curricula rooted in diverse communities, essential to USAID's work;
- MSIs demonstrate a strong service orientation, especially to their local and regional communities, important to what USAID does; and
- Many MSIs have a land-grant mission, making them ideal partners for USAID given their obligation to the region and the community.

Henri Moore asked Dr. Gasman to comment on the structural barriers to partnership, on both the MSI and the federal government sides. Dr. Gasman pointed out that many MSIs lack a built-out sponsored programs office, making it difficult to manage federal contracts and federal engagement. More support in that area is beneficial. Many MSIs and institutions in general face the challenge of excessive paperwork required by the federal government. This is connected to the first barrier of not having built-out offices for sponsored programs, which means that this paperwork can be cumbersome. Turning to Dr. Randall, Ms. Moore observed that CMN is a small institution with an enrollment of about 200 students and 70 faculty. Despite its small size, CMN has effectively secured federal funding from such agencies as the USDA, National Science Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, and Department of Health and Human Services. She asked Dr. Randall to draw from that varied experience and share reflections on models that have worked particularly well for his institution and why. Dr. Randall attributed CMN's success to a mission emphasizing native culture, values, language, and self-determination. CMN's successful approach to securing grants and establishing partnerships with federal agencies revolves around commitment to this heritage. Dr. Randall noted that CMN has developed a cultural curriculum that is integrated into the educational framework for student learning assessments and CMN's implementation of that identity-focused mission strengthens the Muscogee Nation. Success is recognizing the legacy of Muscogee identity as a people. Ms. Moore asked if greater flexibility of the awards could better meet CMN's needs. Dr. Randall said that greater flexibility in federal awards, particularly through cultural assessments and evaluations, would benefit tribal colleges like CMN in receiving more awards or finalizing the awards that they do have.

Ms. Moore noted that NIFA's IYFC supports MSI student and faculty training and MSI institutional capacity strengthening to conduct applied research and related community development programming. Turning to Dr. Kalavacharla, she asked about NIFA's approaches to accomplish goals around MSI engagement in research and developing future professionals. Dr. Kalavacharla mentioned his career in the land-grant system and in MSIs, in which he spent many years conducting research and extension, mentoring, and teaching. He currently leads IYFC for NIFA, USDA's extramural funding agency, working with all MSIs related to food, agriculture, natural resources, and human science, including the 1890 land-grant institutions, 1994 Tribal Colleges and Universities, HSIs, Alaska Native Hawaiian institutions, and insular area institutions. Dr. Kalavacharla said NIFA has taken a thoughtful course for engaging with MSIs. NIFA regularly conducts strategic outreach to MSIs through quarterly leadership meetings, monthly meetings with land-grant directors, outreach to professional organizations, and training programs for MSIs to be successful in implementing NIFA programs. As other speakers noted, MSIs have a wealth of information on many issues affecting the nation as well as internationally, and NIFA is working to develop that further. Dr. Kalavacharla highlighted the importance of consulting with MSI stakeholders. Organizing calls with MSI leadership can address specific needs of these institutions and common administrative requirements (e.g., to strengthen financial management) and can help USDA and NIFA identify challenges and opportunities in underserved communities. These consultations have received favorable reviews from attendees. Because the program administrators at NIFA have worked at MSIs, they understand the struggles of small institutions and MSIs. Dr. Kalavacharla reiterated an earlier point about MSIs' lack of resources in offices of sponsored research, offices of sponsored programs, and restricted funds accounting. At NIFA, Dr. Kalavacharla recently restarted a mock panel initiative for competitive programs and implemented these at the First Americans Land Grant Consortium (FALCON) and the 1890 Association of Research Directors and Extension Administrators' meeting. NIFA posted the script on USDA's website. NIFA also conducted workshops in collaboration with MSI offices of grants and financial management on compliance with federal rules and regulations. Dr. Kalavacharla acknowledged that these workshops were especially beneficial for small institutions and MSIs. Ms. Moore mentioned Dr. Gasman's leadership role over the last decade with the Rutgers University Center for MSIs, which partners with 10 federal agencies and directly with MSIs and their leadership. She asked Dr. Gasman how she would characterize productive federal partnership models and what differentiates them from partnerships that are not productive.

Dr. Gasman emphasized the importance of regular communication, either through Zoom or in-person meetings, occurring monthly or more frequently, to ensure equitable partnerships in which both partners learn from each other and mutually benefit. She said that does not always happen in partnerships with MSIs. Dr. Gasman highlighted the need for clear and straightforward MOUs defining the partnership and adequate funding to support partnerships. She expressed concerns about deep inequities in some partnerships where MSIs are named but receive no funding. Ms. Moore asked what the subcommittee could do to address situations where expectations between partners are misaligned. Dr. Gasman alluded to the challenge of excessive paperwork mentioned earlier, which can be off-putting for MSIs when setting up partnerships. MSIs tend to have limited staff doing multiple jobs with few resources. The paperwork might mean that the partnership will not happen right away or will take more time to initiate. Dr. Gasman also said that MSIs and the federal government speak different languages from one another. She suggested using clear language and cutting through jargon to foster effective communication. MSIs are about action and making a difference in the communities where they serve, so federal agencies would benefit from listening to the needs of MSIs in that vein. In a partnership, having an attitude of being there to learn and to listen to MSIs is important. MSIs can be the teacher.

Ms. Moore asked Dr. Kalavacharla about one of the Terms of Reference's proposed objectives to create a platform for direct dialogue across MSIs and with USAID. She asked how USDA had developed and

supported the community and interconnected network of partner MSIs and what lessons were learned from this experience. Dr. Kalavacharla gave several examples of NIFA's support to the community of MSIs. He highlighted NIFA's role in supporting food, agricultural, natural resources management, and human sciences workforce development, offering fellowships and training opportunities to prepare students, teachers, faculty, and researchers for careers in the STEM-agriculture pipeline. These programs support development of future professionals, research and extension, and experiences for undergraduates. Dr. Kalavacharla mentioned the recent announcement of USDA's \$262 million NextGen food and agriculture professionals program, in which MSIs are playing a leading role. NIFA has also prioritized intentional listening sessions about proposed programs and requests for applications (RFAs) to foster collaboration of MSIs with one another and between MSIs and 1862 land-grant partners. NIFA is experimenting with a unified mailbox system, in which all messages from MSIs are reviewed and addressed collectively by NIFA teams on both the program side (grants and proposals review) and the operations side (financial and grants management). Additionally, NIFA recruits panelists from MSIs to evaluate competitive grant programs, ensuring their representation in decision-making processes.

Ms. Moore asked Dr. Randall to reflect on future international opportunities and share insights on what would make a federal partnership attractive for an institution like CMN with no history of USAID collaboration. Dr. Randall mentioned that all three land-grant institutions in Oklahoma—Langston University, Oklahoma State University, and CMN—submitted a grant proposal together to conduct work in the Caribbean region. Although the proposal was not funded, Dr. Randall emphasized that Indigenous populations have much to offer international partnerships. He highlighted ongoing research to cultivate—in Oklahoma, where the Muscogee now live following their removal from their ancestral home—a southeastern U.S. fruit traditionally and culturally important to the Muscogee. He said that Indigenous knowledge has much to offer through leadership, language, traditional practices, and customs in agriculture, and a good reason for CMN and other tribal colleges to look at international research and study is for Indigenous populations to work together and share best practices. Ms. Moore invited Dr. Randall to discuss the proposed subcommittee's objective on developing a diverse pipeline of future professionals in international food security, agriculture, and nutrition, for example, relating to the role of students in CMN's natural resources program. Dr. Randall mentioned the importance of technically oriented training and research opportunities for students and faculty. He also highlighted, given CMN's small staff size, the importance of training in grants management and proposal development. Ms. Moore thanked the panelists for sharing their expertise and experience and acknowledged their contribution to refining and operationalizing the proposed subcommittee objectives.

BIFAD Question and Answer (Q&A) Session and Discussion with Panelists and Speakers
Moderated by Henri Moore, BIFAD Member and Vice President and Head of Responsible Business, Haleon

Ms. Moore opened the floor to the BIFAD members for their questions and comments. Dr. Saweda Liverpool-Tasie posed a question to Dr. Gasman, commending her points on successful federal partnership models and the importance of both partners learning and listening for a successful relationship. Dr. Liverpool-Tasie sought Dr. Gasman's thoughts on how federal agencies, particularly USAID, could more explicitly incorporate the appetite to learn from MSI partners and put that learning into practice. Dr. Gasman expressed her appreciation for the question and highlighted the importance of bringing both partners together for discussions before the partnership begins to align their understanding and goals. Dr. Gasman emphasized the need for equal participation and knowledge sharing, suggesting that both partners should lead sessions to ensure that the knowledge flow is not one sided. For those in the federal government, it is important to talk to the people involved to convey the

importance of being open to learning and to have explicit conversations and explicit time for honest conversations.

Professor Boyd asked the panelists to share experiences or examples of federal program approaches that did not work as well but which could serve as valuable lessons for USAID. Dr. Kalavacharla shared that when NIFA moved its operations from Washington, DC to Kansas City in 2018, the loss of staff resulted in programming delays. NIFA has since rebuilt its capacity and is fully operational. Dr. Kalavacharla expressed the need for additional time to provide a more thoughtful response to Professor Boyd's question, indicating a willingness to follow up separately. In response to Dr. Liverpool-Tasie's question, he said that USDA does a lot of public consultation to make sure it is listening and learning from MSI partners.

Ms. Moore thanked Dr. Kalavacharla, Dr. Gasman, and Dr. Randall for their time, valuable insights, and contributions to the proposed subcommittees TOR.

Part Three: MSI Technical Expertise and Subcommittee Membership Plan

Framing Remarks and Evidence

Levon T. Esters, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School, The Pennsylvania State University

Dr. Laurence Alexander introduced Dr. Levon T. Esters, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School at The Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Esters provided an overview of a 2020 consultancy report, co-authored with Victoria Parker, a doctoral student at Purdue University, on the state of collaboration between MSIs and the U.S. university-led agricultural and food security research programs, the Feed the Future Innovation Labs, over the past decade.⁴ The Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture at Texas A&M University commissioned the report on behalf of the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Small Scale Irrigation and submitted to USAID's Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. Dr. Esters and Ms. Parker are now conducting a follow-on study to the original 2020 report. To set the tone for his presentation, Dr. Esters shared a quote from a survey of Innovation Lab directors: "[a]n 1890 [Land-Grant Institution] being a prime on a Feed the Future Innovation Lab would be a great asset to the portfolios of Feed the Future Innovation Labs."

Dr. Esters outlined the problem statement, methodology, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

Dr. Esters highlighted the unique expertise and characteristics that MSIs bring to the table, including their preparation for collaborative opportunities and a variety of strengths that would enhance Innovation Lab projects:

- Extensive experience working with populations who reflect ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity;
- Cultural sensitivity to the conditions in developing countries that can be used to foster strong collaborations with individuals and institutions;
- Well-established networks of international relationships with various types of individuals (e.g., faculty, staff, students);

⁴ Esters, L. T. & Parker, V. A. (2020). *A Consultancy Report Commission by the Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture at Texas A & M University on behalf of the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Small Scale Irrigation and submitted to the USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security.* <https://ag.purdue.edu/food-safety-innovation-lab/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/USAID-MSI-Report-2020.pdf>

- Considerable agriculture-related technical expertise among faculty and students;
- Familiarity with the constraints experienced by low-income, dispersed, and rural communities in the U.S. and the experience and capacity to work effectively with similar types of populations in developing countries; and
- Enthusiasm for creating new partnerships across different MSIs and between MSIs and other types of universities.

Dr. Esters said that, despite MSI strengths and faculty expertise in addressing global agriculture and food security grand challenges, not much progress has been made at USAID in increasing collaboration between Innovation Labs and MSIs.

The study methodology included surveys and phone interviews with Innovation Lab directors, USAID program managers, and USAID program administrators before and after a collaborative work session. The pre-work session survey was administered via Qualtrics to 18 USAID Innovation Lab Directors, one USAID Innovation Lab Program Manager, and one USAID Program Administrator. It included eleven questions pertaining to demographics, knowledge of MSIs, collaboration with MSIs, and interest in attending the work session. In addition, pre-work session phone interviews were conducted with six Innovation Lab Directors to gain a better understanding of their level of engagement and collaboration with MSIs.

Following the work session, a post survey instrument was administered via Qualtrics to 59 Innovation Lab personnel, including questions on the work session's usefulness, knowledge gained by attendance, session critiques, and MSI collaboration. A post-workshop survey instrument was administered to 40 USAID staff work session participants with questions on the work session's usefulness, knowledge of MSIs, collaboration with MSIs, and work session critiques.

Dr. Esters shared findings that work session participants:

1. Had very little knowledge about the various types of MSIs;
2. Indicated low levels of networking and collaboration with MSIs;
3. Expressed interest in collaborating with MSIs but were unaware of how to approach engaging in collaborative relationships;
4. Found the work session very useful and informative;
5. Indicated collaboration with MSIs would enhance the impact and expand the reach of their Innovation Lab projects;
6. Indicated future Innovation Lab and USAID annual meetings should include work sessions focusing on increasing collaboration with MSIs; and
7. Indicated USAID should explore strategies that would help ensure MSI collaboration.

Based on these findings, Dr. Esters presented of the following recommendations:

1. BIFAD should establish a permanent subcommittee that focuses on MSI collaboration;
2. The USAID/MSI Task Force that BIFAD recommended and approved in 2011⁵ should be reestablished and fully supported;
3. USAID, in partnership with BIFAD, should commission a white paper or study that addresses the topic of MSI collaboration;

⁵ Board for International Food and Agricultural Development. (2011). *Report of the Working Group on Minority Serving Institutions: Expanding the Role of Minority-Serving Institutions in the Work of USAID*. <https://www.usaid.gov/bifad/document/working-group-minority-serving-institutions-expanding-role-minority-serving-institutions-work-usaid>

4. USAID should create an ongoing program/session as part of the Innovation Lab USAID annual meeting that focuses on MSI collaboration;
5. USAID, in partnership with BIFAD, the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU), and the USDA NIFA, should organize a convening on MSI collaboration;
6. USAID should host workshops for MSIs that focus on how to develop competitive applications for USAID funding and a workshop for Innovation Lab personnel that focuses on evaluating proposals fairly and equitably;
7. USAID should conduct a follow-up study with Innovation Labs every 3 to 5 years to evaluate progress made on the development and maintenance of MSI partnership efforts; and
8. USAID should conduct a follow-up study with MSI partner institutions every 3 to 5 years to learn their perspectives on the progress made on the development and maintenance of partnerships.

Panel Discussion 2: MSI Expertise in Agriculture, Food Security, and Nutrition

Moderated by: Levon T. Esters, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School, The Pennsylvania State University

Dr. Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval, President of California State University, Fresno

Keia Jones, Ph.D. Candidate and MANRRS Region 1 Graduate Student Vice President, The Pennsylvania State University

Dr. Esters introduced two expert panelists to share thoughts on MSI technical expertise and capacity relevant to USAID’s food security and nutrition programming. The purpose of the panel was to inform the proposed subcommittee’s membership plan to ensure representation of diverse technical viewpoints. He introduced Dr. Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval, President of California State University at Fresno (Fresno State), which includes the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, supporting nearly 2,000 undergraduate and graduate students and an array of agricultural research centers, and Ms. Keia Jones, a Ph.D. Candidate in Rural Sociology and International Agricultural Development at The Pennsylvania State University, the MANRRS Region 1 Graduate Student Vice President, and, as an undergraduate, a USDA 1890s scholar at Virginia State University, an HBCU.

Noting Fresno State’s location in California’s Central Valley, the breadbasket and produce basket of the country, Dr. Esters asked Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval to describe the diversity of agricultural expertise that Fresno State supports and how it addresses the priorities of the community. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval said that the city of Fresno is the ninth most diverse city in the United States and the fifth-largest city in all of California, and currently, the San Joaquin Valley is the most productive agricultural region in the world. He mentioned that the Central Valley produces over 40 percent of the fresh fruits and vegetables consumed in the United States. In this context, Fresno State has a robust curriculum in agriculture, and its main focus is to advance the power of food production and processing. The university’s Jordan College of Agriculture is in the lead, but almost every department on the Fresno State campus works in agriculture at some level. Scientists from three colleges—agriculture, engineering, and science—collaborate in a state-of-the-art facility, the Jordan Agricultural Research Center, to solve agricultural, food, and natural resource challenges.

Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval shared two examples of Fresno State’s work to solve difficult challenges in agriculture, food, and natural resources. The first example focused on the increasing water scarcity and higher water-source salinity (high salt content in water) in the Central Valley of California due to climate change. Because of this challenge, farmers must either dig deeper wells for agricultural use or use poorer-quality, high-salinity water, which has adverse effects on crops. Fresno State’s agricultural engineering and sciences team developed precision separation technology to remove phytotoxic constituents and nutrients from poor-quality water sources. This technology enables farmers to use

local water and nutrient sources for fertigation and irrigation, reducing agricultural dependence on fertilizers and imported water while safeguarding food security. A second example highlighted Fresno State's work across the "farm to fork" continuum to address topics relevant to food supply chain challenges, including production of food on the farm, food storage, food processing, transfer logistics, and consumption. Food supply chain challenges—experienced during the pandemic by communities across the country, including California's Central Valley—represent an important food security issue at the community and national levels. As part of a \$420 million USDA effort to address food supply chain issues through 12 regional food business centers, Fresno State's College of Agriculture—along with collaborators across California, Nevada, Arizona, and Utah—serves in a leadership role for the Southwest USDA Regional Food Business Center. The regional center is part of a collaborative led by the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources to tackle the difficult issue of building a resilient food system in the United States, an issue that has global impacts. Fresno State was attractive as a partner for this effort because of its diverse expertise, including faculty from the agricultural business, industrial technology, food science, and nutrition departments, the Craig School of Business, and the Water, Energy, and Technology (WET) Center. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval shared that the faculty and students at Fresno State are in constant communication with local producers and industry processors on a variety of topics, including pest management, maximizing water, and developing new productive crop hybrids. The university has a strong contingency of faculty with close relationships with industry partners.

Dr. Esters expressed his appreciation for the comprehensive insights and posed a follow-up question for Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval regarding the skills required to effectively translate research and technological developments into practice at scale. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval emphasized that Fresno State's agricultural research is not theoretical but highly applied and speaks to the bottom line. He said that research is aimed at collectively and assertively creating a positive change, rather than just "sitting on a shelf." Hence, professors are involved in agricultural research that must be robust enough to make a difference to the bottom line. Likewise, students are immersed in a setting that demands a broader understanding of how their work and research will translate to, and positively impact, the real world and farmers in the region. He mentioned collaborations with local producers and industry partners to implement research findings at scale. For example, Bee Sweet Citrus, one of the largest citrus independent packers and shippers of citrus in the nation, partnered with the university to set up a citrus packing line in the Department of Industrial Technology. He emphasized that Fresno State is the only university in the United States with a citrus packing line. Faculty in the Department of Industrial Technology are working with Bee Sweet on packing line process and quality control. Similarly, the faculty in the Food Science and Nutrition Department have worked with Wawona Frozen Foods to help the company identify ways to reduce water use in its processing plants. Water is a critical fundamental element in the region. Wawona Frozen Foods reports very happily that their work has resulted in savings of millions of gallons of water.

Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval highlighted the university's 1,000-acre farm, where students learn from agricultural practices that are done at scale and that are immediately translatable to industry practices. For example, the university planted 25 acres in sweet corn this past season, has a 6,000-case winery, and manages a 300-head dairy operation. Students put theory into practice and gain valuable hands-on experience. This provides scalability within the industry once the students graduate. Dr. Esters thanked Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval for sharing the impressive examples.

Dr. Esters then directed a question to Ms. Jones, who has experience in both domestic and international agricultural research applications—two research communities of practice that do not always overlap. Dr. Esters asked Ms. Jones what was most important for students and faculty in agricultural sciences to understand about international applications of their work.

Ms. Jones hoped that both students and faculty could understand that all research, whether domestic or international, has policy implications. She also noted that international researchers may be tackling similar problems as their domestic counterparts, and, while all applications are context dependent, international solutions may offer valuable insights for domestic issues. Ms. Jones encouraged students and faculty to consider solutions from international contexts for domestic problems and vice versa. She emphasized that it is important for faculty and students to consider the breadth of international applicability for research. She also stressed the importance of being familiar with policy development, research application, and extension. She emphasized that students and faculty should also have experience with policy development, research application, and extension and should reflect on these processes to better understand how their research can inform policy development.

Dr. Esters asked Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval to reflect on the strengths and aspects of the work conducted by agriculture faculty, staff, and students at Fresno State—both individually and collectively—that translate particularly well in resource-constrained developing-country settings. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval explained that one strength of faculty and staff is an awareness that agriculture is an ecosystem in which everyone—whether on or off the farm—needs to participate. The city of Fresno is the ninth most diverse city in the country, and Fresno State—both an HSI and an Asian American Pacific Island Serving Institution (AANAPISI)—reflects the diversity of the region, with an 85 percent non-white student body population. The university is at the forefront of educating leaders who navigate multiple levels of cultural mastery.

Given the importance of agriculture as an enterprise in the Central Valley region of Fresno, Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval emphasized that the needs of small- and medium-scale farmers, minority and underserved groups, and farmworkers are front and center at Fresno State. The pandemic elevated food security challenges in a concrete way because the small-scale and individual farmers were more nimble than large-scale farmers in addressing food supply chain issues. Consequently, many faculty and staff are actively working directly with these groups and seeking grants to support their efforts to work with under-resourced groups. He provided examples such as the Dairy Pacific Coast Coalition, a university-led initiative funded by the USDA that supports small, ethnically diverse dairy processors. He also highlighted that faculty in the Lyle's Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship help minority farmers develop business plans, and faculty in the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences Technology provide technical assistance to resource-constrained producers. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval emphasized that agriculture is an ecosystem that comes together beautifully with Fresno State's diverse students, faculty, and industry partners in the region.

Dr. Esters asked Ms. Jones, drawing on her experiences as a student leader at three diverse higher-education institutions and in MANRRS to suggest the types of perspectives or backgrounds that would add value to the deliberations of a standing MSI subcommittee focused on USAID agricultural, food security, and nutrition policy programming. Reflecting on her experience as a third-year Ph.D. student and as an early-career professional with experience at several institutions, Ms. Jones said that individuals with a commitment to international research and service would add value to the subcommittee. She recommended that the subcommittee engage with early-career professionals within both university and private industry settings. When establishing the subcommittee, BIFAD may wish to engage doctoral students and young graduates seeking opportunities within industry and extension applications, early-career professionals midway through their post-doctoral roles, and/or early career professionals in industry, consulting, or entrepreneurship. Ms. Jones shared that early career professionals within the university setting bring unique perspectives, are willing to share their knowledge and expertise with younger generations, and are eager to research challenging domestic and international issues. Early-career professionals involved in entrepreneurship, consulting, and industry

also bring unique perspectives, are often innovative, push beyond traditional boundaries, and seek less-conventional solutions to the challenges facing agriculture and nutrition. Ms. Jones also recommended that BIFAD and USAID consider commitment to service and involvement in organizations like MANRRS or local organizations in identifying subcommittee members. Service experiences shape perspectives on important industry and community issues and demonstrate individuals' commitment to meet industry needs and the industry and mentor students. Each subcommittee member should have something to share that is valuable for the students, faculty, and staff at MSIs as well as students of underrepresented backgrounds at non-MSIs. Lastly, she highlighted the importance of recognizing early-career professionals as the future and considering their unconventional perspectives to understand emergent challenges.

Dr. Esters acknowledged Ms. Jones' response, appreciating her perspective on considering early-career perspectives in the decision-making process. He asked Ms. Jones to advise on how the subcommittee should frame or focus its analysis of USAID engagement with early-career individuals. Ms. Jones stressed that strengths of early-career professionals that should be considered when selecting subcommittee members include openness to new ways of thinking about issues, unconventional perspective into emerging problems, and first-hand knowledge of the interests of younger generations. Dr. Esters asked Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval about specific challenges faced by faculty and staff in applying their knowledge and expertise internationally. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval noted his agreement with Ms. Jones' points that the voices of early-career professionals bring diverse, creative ideas that are critical to all enterprises. He also acknowledged the large number of international participants online, particularly those from African countries, and offered greetings to them.

Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval said that challenges for faculty and staff in international applications fall into three broad areas.

First, international grants and contracts, including funding from both governmental and non-governmental sources, typically require extensive reporting, which is burdensome and overwhelming, and administrative procedures based on international protocols that differ from those of more traditional U.S. funding sources. Staff tend to be hesitant and unfamiliar with international policies and procedures necessary for implementation of awards. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval suggested that improved expertise in how to navigate these protocols, clearer guidance from USDA and other granting agencies on implementation and reporting requirements, and reassurance of ongoing support throughout the funding cycle would be beneficial.

Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval highlighted a second challenge that, despite state-of-the-art science and technical expertise in the agricultural sector and the Central Valley role in producing 40 percent of the fresh fruits and vegetables for the entire nation, Fresno State is often overlooked by key government agencies because, within the ecosystem of California, other universities take up more attention on the national and international spectrum. He said that, nationwide, very few know of the intrinsic value that the Central Valley brings to the food security and dietary diversity of the United States. "We grow food that brings you joy. We grow the colors that stand out on the plate that are both nutritious and attractive," said Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval. After commodities leave the farm gate and are shipped overseas or nationwide, the brand of California overtakes the importance of the Central Valley, and the Central Valley is forgotten or lost in the huge, bigger brand of California or within the California ecosystem. Recent events in Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic have demonstrated the vulnerability of the global food supply and have brought the value of the Central Valley to the center stage domestically and internationally. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval recommended that government and private sector partners do a better job at reaching out to diverse institutions, like the institutions represented in this public meeting,

rather than limiting collaboration to a smaller set of established partners. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval advocated for boots-on-the-ground partners who have the advantage of understanding the opportunity landscape, and for partners whose applied research has an immediate impact on the food supply.

Finally, Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval noted that a large percentage of Fresno State students come from underrepresented and low-income backgrounds (i.e., 85 percent of students are non-white), and many do not participate in study abroad opportunities at a large scale. Students are often focused on the region and do not have an overarching perspective on how their expertise will directly impact the national and global food supply. To address this, Fresno State has strengthened its international presence. The creation of the Global Agriculture and Food Security Initiative (GAFSI)⁶ consolidates all international activity within the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology to better leverage strengths, identify trends, and address deficiencies or challenges. Examples of GAFSI include strong collaborations with the University of the Azores and Punjab Agricultural University in India. In both examples, student and faculty exchanges have strengthened students' understanding of the global food supply and have attracted top-talent faculty interested in international collaboration. Additionally, through an MOU with the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command in December 2022, Fresno State is providing training to soldiers via the Agricultural Development for Armed Forces Pre-Deployment Training (ADAPT) program⁷ on the topics of agriculture and food security in support of the Army's mission to secure national security in at-risk regions. The ADAPT training is typically three days of lectures and a field practicum covering basic agricultural systems of the regions where troops will deploy. The program also teaches assessment and intervention techniques to address threats to local food security. Support to increase food security of global partners will elevate the standing of the United States in significant ways. Currently, the ADAPT training is focused on the Asia-Pacific region.

Dr. Esters asked Ms. Jones to share relevant approaches from her experience supporting the nominations process for USDA's advisory committee, the National Agriculture Research, Extension, Education, and Economics (NAREEE) Advisory Board.⁸ Ms. Jones highlighted the importance of a strong commitment to inclusivity of MSIs, private companies, and government officials in the nominations process. She also suggested that current BIFAD members should take responsibility for fielding nominations, given their extensive networks and understanding of the qualities required to serve and the gaps in expertise or perspectives that need to be filled. Early in the process of establishing the new subcommittee, BIFAD members should identify the qualities, interests, and background needed.

Ms. Jones also proposed the development of a reflexivity statement that reflects the qualities, interests, and backgrounds of the subcommittee members and identifies gaps in representation. She suggested an exercise similar to a game she experienced at a recent MANRRS meeting called, "Me, Too" to understand shared characteristics and perspectives that are not represented. Ms. Jones emphasized considering those perspectives when fielding nominations to ensure a more diverse and inclusive subcommittee. She emphasized that there is adequate time now for BIFAD to consider a reflexive exercise and nominate individuals for the strongest possible subcommittee.

Dr. Esters thanked Ms. Jones and Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval for their contributions.

⁶ California State University, Fresno. (n.d.). *The Jordan College of Agricultural Science and Technology*. <https://jcast.fresnostate.edu/gafsi/index.html>

⁷ California State University, Fresno. (2020). *ADAPT and USACAPOC to Recruit & Train New Civil Affairs Specialists in Agriculture*. <https://jcast.fresnostate.edu/documents/pdf/2020-21/08-20-20%20Facebook%20ADAPT%20story.pdf>

⁸ United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board. (n.d.). *Homepage*. <https://nareeeab.ree.usda.gov/>

BIFAD Q&A and Discussion with Panelists and Speakers

Moderated by Levon T. Esters, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School, The Pennsylvania State University

Dr. Esters opened the floor for BIFAD members to pose questions. Dr. Esters informed the attendees that the public comment period would follow the Q&A session and encouraged the audience to post their questions or comments in the Q&A function.

Dr. Pamela Anderson thanked Dr. Esters and the panelists for a wonderful session. She posed a question to Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval, building upon his point that the faculty and staff at Fresno State University often feel overlooked despite the institution's intellectual and technical capacity. Dr. Anderson highlighted that Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval had identified a primary goal of the subcommittee and noted that the challenges of international development require all the intellectual and technical capacity available. She relayed that BIFAD has had difficulties identifying technical expertise at MSIs around certain topic areas for BIFAD public meetings and commissioned studies and sought guidance from Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval on how to leverage the hidden marketplace of expertise. What should be done to fix this? Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval emphasized the importance of considering where food is being produced and the types of institutions within that ecosystem. In the case of Fresno State, food is produced in the Fresno region, and the institution has an 85 percent non-white population of students and graduates across all disciplines. He highlighted the unique strengths of Fresno State, including its proximity to food production, diverse student population, and strong connection to the surrounding farms. Although Fresno State might not have the reputation of other California institutions, it has boots-on-the-ground expertise and students representing the future of food security with an incredible work ethic and a powerful connection to the farm. He advised focusing on institutions that are both close to where food is being produced and that bring added layers or value, including diversity and local expertise.

Dr. Rattan Lal expressed gratitude for the presentations. Referring to Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval's statement that the Central Valley produces 40 percent of all fresh fruits, vegetables, and horticultural commodities in the United States, Dr. Lal noted that produce is strongly affected by climate change, including water scarcity and water salinity. Dr. Lal said that in the United States and globally, 30 percent of food and as much as 50 percent of fresh produce are wasted. Dr. Lal asked for suggestions on reducing food waste and addressing the needs of diverse farmers—including reducing waste and improving productivity and soil quality—when preparing the forthcoming U.S. farm bill. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval emphasized the need to recognize food as a national and international security issue. He noted that the United States has not done this yet; people take for granted that fruits and vegetables will be inexpensive and available year-round. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval articulated the need to bring attention to, value, and empower the food-growing areas like the Central Valley to advance their enterprises.

Regarding food waste, Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval highlighted that there is a "ticking time bomb" from when food is harvested to when it is packed, processed, and shipped. It is important to shorten the time for packaging, securing, and climate controlling harvests to "stop the clock" and minimize waste. He encouraged a shift away from consumers' expectation of perfect produce in the United States, which is detrimental and has led to unnecessary waste. Additionally, Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval called for increased funding from granting agencies for research in water management and salinity to enhance productivity. He said agencies should direct funding to institutions with boots-on-the-ground, concrete research for large-scale impact.

Ms. Jones recommended support to innovations and entrepreneurship centered on combating food waste, noting several emerging companies that are closing supply chain gaps to reduce waste.

Dr. Alexander thanked Dr. Esters and the panelists for their contributions on leveraging MSI technical expertise and representing that expertise on the proposed subcommittee and introduced the public comment period.

Part Four: Public Comment Period: Deliberation on the Objectives and Membership Plan of the Proposed BIFAD Subcommittee

Public Comment Period

Ar'Tee Franklin, Senior Advisor, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA), Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, USAID

Mr. Ar'Tee Franklin, Senior Advisor, DEIA in USAID's Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, welcomed the participants and encouraged them to provide feedback, ask questions, or make comments related to the proposed objectives or membership of the subcommittee. Mr. Franklin noted that comments shared in the Q&A window would be included with attribution as part of the public record and would inform subcommittee development. Mr. Franklin asked participants to share the draft subcommittee TOR (the link to the TOR was provided in the chat) with their networks to ensure stakeholder interests were reflected as the document was revised in the coming months. Mr. Franklin noted that public comments on the TOR would be accepted until July 12, 2023.

Dr. Matthew Blair from Tennessee State University asked if USAID had any notice of funding opportunities (NOFOs) or requests for proposals (RFPs) exclusively for MSIs as lead institutions similar to USDA's NextGen program. Mr. Franklin addressed the question, noting that USAID currently lacked congressional set-asides for MSIs that other federal agencies have. USAID can restrict eligibility to MSIs when there is a programmatic rationale for doing so to help expand and diversify the Agency's partner base, and USAID's Acquisitions and Assistance Strategy is being revamped to include language emphasizing expansion of that partner base. He further highlighted ways to enable MSIs to successfully compete for awards. The website [workwithUSAID.org](https://www.workwithusaid.org) helps new potential partners prepare to work with USAID and helps them gauge what USAID seeks in a partner.

Ms. Dana Alzouma, MSI Coordinator at USAID, confirmed that she was not aware of any NOFOs specific to MSI engagement at this time. She suggested that potential partners visit the "Work with USAID" website⁹ and sign up for USAID's Business Forecast to receive regular updates on upcoming funding opportunities for which they would like to apply.¹⁰ She noted that the Agency's Higher Education for Leadership, Innovation, and Exchange (HELIX) Annual Program Statement (APS) was recently expanded with a new modality allowing U.S. higher education institutions to be counted toward the requirement for prime implementers to ensure that half of their sub-partners are new and underutilized organizations, expanding eligibility beyond higher-education institutions outside the United States. Since HELIX APS was expanded, Ms. Alzouma noted, Tuskegee University has already been awarded two sub-awards. Addenda offering new partnership opportunities are posted under the HELIX APS mechanism on a rolling basis, and the mechanism was recently extended to 2025. To learn more about HELIX APS and similar opportunities, Ms. Alzouma recommended that potential partners visit the Business Forecast

⁹ Kaizen. (n.d.). *Working with USAID*. www.workwithusaid.org

¹⁰ Sign up for the USAID Business Forecast here: https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USAIDHQ/subscriber/new?topic_id=USAIDHQ_497

website,¹¹ [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov),¹² and the HELIX website.¹³ Through the Partnership Incubator, launched this year and mentioned earlier by Counselor White, USAID has awarded four awards to MSIs to receive specific assistance—tailored to each university and its goals—on how to work with USAID.¹⁴ She encouraged participants to monitor upcoming opportunities through the incubator awards, as the Agency hopes, depending on funding and an extension of the mechanism, to offer four to six additional awards. Ms. Alzouma also mentioned the RFA specific to MSI partners through the LASER PULSE program referred to earlier by Counselor White. That RFA is now closed, but she encouraged participants to visit the LASER PULSE website¹⁵ and sign up for communications about future RFAs. Ms. Alzouma said she continually encourages USAID staff to use mechanisms available to restrict eligibility to MSIs with hopes of improving them and offering more opportunities.

Mr. Franklin asked Ms. Alzouma, Dr. Gasman, and Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval to respond to a question from Dr. Nancy Correa-Matos, from the University of Puerto Rico, on how smaller universities like the University of Puerto Rico, an HSI, can improve their ability to compete with larger universities for funding. Mr. Franklin noted other similar questions by participants.

Ms. Alzouma recommended that smaller universities take detailed training modules available on the “Work with USAID” website and reach out to the MSI program office at USAID with any questions. She also mentioned a speaker series where Agency staff can visit with a university, either virtually or in person, to talk with students and faculty about the Agency’s work, focusing on the University’s preferred technical fields. The speaker series helps to build a relationship with USAID, as the university learns more about how the Agency works, and the Agency learns more about the university. She noted that USAID is interested in building relationships, expanding partnerships, and working with universities in Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and Alaska. Ms. Alzouma encouraged MSIs to consider engaging with USAID as sub-partners to larger implementing partners with a successful history of leading USAID programs. This is how smaller institutions often “get their foot in the door” and learn how the Agency works.

Dr. Gasman suggested that USAID may want to consider stratifying funding opportunities and resources by institution size, a potentially advantageous approach many organizations are implementing. She also suggested pairing organizations new to this type of work with a partner that can serve as a guide and source of technical expertise. Dr. Gasman recommended that organizations working with MSIs or financially under-resourced institutions consider how their partners are experiencing processes. A design thinking approach—thinking about how a participant, consumer, or customer will experience a process—is especially relevant when working with smaller institutions that do not have the bandwidth to apply for opportunities.

Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval said smaller universities should build teams of professionals with the necessary competencies to navigate complex grant application protocols. Agencies should improve how they

¹¹ U.S. Agency for International Development. (n.d.) *Business Forecast*. <https://www.usaid.gov/business-forecast>

¹² U.S. Government. (n.d.) *Federal Funding Opportunities*. www.grants.gov

¹³ EducationLinks. (2020). *USAID Releases New Higher Education for Leadership, Innovation, and Exchange (HELIX) Annual Program Statement (APS)*. <https://www.edu-links.org/announcements/usaid-seeking-concept-notes-helix-aps#:~:text=USAID%27s%20Office%20of%20Education%2C%20in%20partnership%20with%20Mission,relevant%20forms%20of%20capacity%20development%20and%20change%20management>

¹⁴ Kaizen. (n.d.). *About USAID’s Partnerships Incubator*. <https://www.workwithusaid.org/about-us/partnership-incubator>

¹⁵ The Long-term Assistance and Services for Research (LASER) Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine (PULSE) program hosts a global network of researchers at higher education institutions and development practitioners from government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. This dynamic network collaborates on research-based solutions to critical development challenges in USAID partner countries. For more information, visit: <https://www.usaid.gov/innovation-technology-research/research/long-term-assistance-and-services-research-laser>

leverage the untapped talent and potential in smaller institutions, for example, providing training and workshops to navigate a grant application process that is often perceived as a “closed circle” or “closed society” to underrepresented schools. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval suggested that these efforts should yield a much more robust number of diverse institutions providing insights on the future of food security.

Mr. Franklin thanked the participants and the panelists. He encouraged the audience to share the draft TOR¹⁶ with their networks and to submit feedback by Wednesday, July 12, 2023.

Part Five: Synthesis and Reflection

Synthesis, Reflection, and Meeting Adjournment

Laurence Alexander, BIFAD Chair and Chancellor of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

Dr. Laurence Alexander highlighted the resonant themes raised by the speakers. In the first panel, Dr. Gasman emphasized the distinguishing richness of MSI culture, from their curriculum to their service orientation within local and regional communities. She shared experience with the barriers that impede federal partnerships and characteristics of the most successful ones, including regular communication, equity in learning flows between MSIs and agencies, clarity in defining a partnership, cutting through jargon, and providing adequate resources to support a partnership’s constituent components.

Dr. Kalavacharla shared NIFA’s experience with targeted and sustained outreach to MSIs that eliminated the gap in funding success rates between MSIs and non-MSIs over just a few years. Dr. Kalavacharla also pointed to other levels of collaborative opportunities, including encouraging MSI faculty to participate in the panel process and in mock-panel presentations at meetings and symposia.

Dr. Randall focused on the importance of Muscogee cultural values in driving successful and mutually beneficial partnerships. Dr. Randall articulated that a more explicit consideration of cultural assessments in proposal evaluations would better highlight the unique qualifications of Tribal Colleges in partnering with Indigenous communities around the world for productive collaborations that strengthen both U.S. and partner country communities and their relationships with government agencies.

Dr. Levon T. Esters shared an overview of MSIs’ role in the Feed the Future Innovation Labs and identified the need for more significant and rapid progress. Dr. Esters emphasized more intentional capacity-building efforts for MSIs to develop more competitive funding proposals.

In the second panel, Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval discussed Fresno State University’s deep technical expertise and its intersectional, community-focused approach to agricultural work, drawing in faculty from engineering, science, mathematics, and business to tackle complex agricultural challenges from salinity to supply chains and to generate scalable solutions. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval highlighted the capacity of MSIs to work effectively with diverse and resource-constrained partners, both domestically and internationally. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval spoke candidly about the structural barriers that impede federal partnerships, including burdensome reporting requirements and less familiarity with international implementation protocols. Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval also shared solutions that MSIs have put in place to leverage successful experiences for institutional learning. These solutions, which draw upon the

¹⁶ Board for International Food and Agricultural Development. (2023). *Draft Terms of Reference: Proposed BIFAD Subcommittee on Minority Serving Institution Engagement and Leadership in USAID’s Agricultural, Food Security, and Nutrition Policies and Programming*. [.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/BIFAD-MSI-Engagement-Subcommittee-DRAFT.pdf#:~:text=Responding to the Agency’s priority to promote and, and Nutrition Policies and Programming %28Subcommittee%29 this year.](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/BIFAD-MSI-Engagement-Subcommittee-DRAFT.pdf#:~:text=Responding%20to%20the%20Agency’s%20priority%20to%20promote%20and%20and%20Nutrition%20Policies%20and%20Programming%20Subcommittee%29%20this%20year.)

experiences of MSIs, were underscored as pivotal for institutional learning and for enhancing the efficiency of future collaborations.

Ms. Jones discussed the perspective of early-career researchers. She shared that policy-focused students in the agricultural space do not always easily see the connections between domestic and international systems and the lessons that can be learned, in both directions, across these research communities. Ms. Jones also emphasized MSI commitment to service and recommended that a service orientation be an explicit consideration for subcommittee membership. She also recommended a balance between hard and social science perspectives, and the complementary value of industry perspectives. A particularly resonant point is that there will inevitably be some important perspectives missing from a small subcommittee, and BIFAD should formally recognize unrepresented viewpoints and work to incorporate them through subsequent work.

Dr. Alexander acknowledged the importance of incorporating underrepresented viewpoints and perspectives and encouraged the audience to continue their active engagement by providing written comments and relevant materials via the feedback form on the USAID website or via email to BIFAD for consideration over the next two weeks, extending the opportunity for their input to shape future discussions.

Dr. Alexander informed participants that a recording of the meeting, along with meeting minutes, would be posted on the USAID website.

Dr. Alexander thanked the moderators, Ms. Henri Moore, Dr. Levon Esters, and Mr. Ar'Tee Franklin, and the speakers and panelists, including Counselor Clinton White, Ms. Dina Esposito, Dr. Marybeth Gasman, Dr. Monte Randall, Dr. Venu (Kal) Kalavacharla, Dr. Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval, and Ms. Keia Jones. He thanked the BIFAD Support Team, including Reid Hamel, Rachel Helbig, Carmen Benson, Tommy Crocker, and Alice Mukunzi, and BIFAD's Executive Director, Clara Cohen, at USAID, for their contributions.

Dr. Alexander encouraged participants to complete a post-meeting survey and thanked them for their involvement. He adjourned the meeting.

Certification of Minutes

We hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are an accurate and complete summary of the matters discussed and conclusions reached at the meeting held on June 28, 2023.

Laurence Alexander, BIFAD Chair and Chancellor, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

Clara K. Cohen, Executive Director, BIFAD, Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, USAID

September 25, 2023

ANNEX 1: BRIEFER

BIFAD Public Meeting

Recommended Pre-Reads for BIFAD Members:

Public Consultation on BIFAD's Plans to Propose a Subcommittee on Minority Serving Institution Engagement and Leadership in USAID's Agricultural, Food Security, and Nutrition Policies and Programming

June 28, 2023, 1:30 PM–3:30 PM EDT

Prepared by: Alice Mukunzi and Rachel Helbig (BIFAD Support Team at Tetra Tech)

Reports and Articles Related to USAID Agricultural Programming

Esters, L. T. and Parker, V. A. (2020). *A Consultancy Report Commission by the Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture at Texas A & M University on behalf of the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Small Scale Irrigation and submitted to the USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security.* <https://ag.purdue.edu/food-safety-innovation-lab/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/USAID-MSI-Report-2020.pdf>

Despite Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) having the characteristics and faculty with the expertise to contribute to addressing global grand challenges tied to agriculture and food security, there still has not been much progress made at USAID in increasing collaboration between Feed the Future Innovation Labs (ILs) and MSIs. The ILs are multiyear collaborative agricultural research programs led by 13 U.S. universities that partner with over 50 U.S. colleges and universities and developing country research and higher educational institutions in 30 countries. Currently, there are 21 ILs, all of which work to research and develop effective technologies and innovations to address the most urgent global challenges in agriculture and food security. This report is the result of a short-term consultancy project focused on how to increase collaboration between ILs and MSIs. As part of the consultancy agreement, the authors were asked to carry out four major tasks as part of the scope of work: 1) conduct an anonymous survey in advance of the work session to identify current knowledge, practices, and concerns by the ILs; 2) develop an agenda for work session in collaboration with the USAID and IL points of contact (POCs); 3) facilitate a 90-minute virtual session; and 4) provide a written report that summarizes the session discussion, conclusions, and recommended next steps. This report summarizes results from the work session we organized but, most importantly, provides recommendations that should lead to the USAID enacting steps such that collaboration with MSIs is implemented by ILs and institutionalized within the IL program. Data collection methods were primarily quantitative in nature; however, a qualitative component in the form of a few open-ended questions and phone interviews was also used. The findings from our report indicate that MSIs of all types have several strengths that would enhance IL projects, and more should be done on the part of USAID to ensure that collaborations with these institutions are taken seriously and pursued equitably.

Tyson, P. and Haile, S. (2021). *Current landscape of engagement between USAID and Historically Black Colleges and Universities.* Report Research Technical Assistance Center: Washington, DC. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00X9H4.pdf

This report provides an analysis of the current landscape of USAID’s engagement with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Although HBCUs represent only three percent of all four-year nonprofit colleges and universities, they enroll 10 percent of all Black students nationwide and award 26 percent of all Black bachelor’s degrees and 32 percent of all Black bachelor’s degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields in the United States. HBCUs also employ 96 percent of Black faculty as professors. These percentages suggest that, by increasing partnerships with HBCUs, USAID has the opportunity to engage underrepresented students in their hiring pipelines and underrepresented faculty in development and research projects.

Researchers examined the barriers that limit USAID funding to HBCUs and explored internationalization efforts HBCUs have undertaken to enhance their eligibility for USAID funding. Thus, the primary aim of this study is not only to strengthen the partnership between USAID and HBCUs but also to assess the international and transnational partnerships HBCUs have established with governmental and non-governmental entities around the world.

The Bronfenbrenner Ecological Systems Theory framework was used by the Research Technical Assistance Center to analyze data collected during the desk review, interviews, and survey analyses. This framework analyzes barriers that exist across micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro-systems. Of 101 HBCUs, 58 participated in this study via surveys, interviews, or both. Additionally, 12 informational interviews were conducted by the researchers with USAID staff. Through this multilayered analysis, researchers uncovered that both HBCUs and USAID have barriers relating to engagement. HBCU barriers include capacity (fiscal/structural), international experience, knowledge of USAID programs, and networks, whereas USAID barriers include outreach to HBCUs, a low number of applicants, and knowledge of HBCUs.

The 1890 Universities Center of Excellence for Global Food Security and Defense. (2022). *Global Food Security and Defense Quarterly*. University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

https://issuu.com/umes.edu/docs/cegfspd_newsletter_-_spring_2022_digital

Since its creation in 2020, the Center of Excellence for Global Food Security and Defense (CEGFSD) has forged concerted efforts to address food security and defense challenges encountered in four target subregional clusters including West/Central Africa, East/Southern Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America. In addition to supplying the United States with a globally educated workforce, CEGFSD’s initiatives address critical needs in the area of global food security and defense, including: 1) strengthening agricultural development in developing countries; 2) engaging international researchers in addressing new and emerging animal and plant pests and diseases; 3) engaging in agricultural disaster recovery; and 4) continuing activities carried out by the Center of Excellence for International Engagement and Development (CEIED).

The Center relies heavily on its international and domestic partners to achieve its goals. CEGFSD’s partners include the 19 1890 land-grant universities, the 1890 Universities Foundation, and many international public and private sector partners. The CEGFSD is one of six centers of excellence at 1890 universities identified in the U.S. Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018. The center is supported with funds from USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), is hosted by the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES), and brings together all 19 1890 Land-Grant Institutions.

Holbert, B. (2022). *3 minority-serving agricultural programs for students to know about*. AgDaily.

<https://www.agdaily.com/insights/minority-serving-agriculture-institutions-programs/>

For students looking for agricultural programs prioritizing excellence and representation, three MSIs stand out in providing equitable opportunities. These institutions have demonstrated their commitment to this intersection:

1. North Carolina State, School of Agriculture and Life Sciences
2. Cornell University, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
3. University of California, Davis, Department of Viticulture and Enology

These institutions serve as beacons of excellence in agricultural education as they actively work to provide equitable opportunities for students from underrepresented communities. By prioritizing diversity, these MSIs create a more inclusive and vibrant agricultural landscape where students can thrive and contribute to the advancement of the industry.

Outley, C. W. (2008). *Perceptions of agriculture and natural resource careers among minority students in a national organization*. Pacific Southwest Research Station.

https://www.fs.usda.gov/psw/publications/documents/psw_gtr210/psw_gtr210_139.pdf

The purpose of the study was to identify factors that influence the career choice behaviors among students who were members of MANRRS National Society. A secondary purpose was to identify perceptions and attitudes among students that chose careers in agriculture and natural resources. The MANRRS students in the study indicated their mothers and persons employed in the field as the individuals who most influenced their choice of a career. Students' personal concern for the environment was an additional factor that influenced their choice of a career. The perceptions and attitudes reported by MANRRS students who chose a career in agriculture and natural resources focused on several themes including career opportunities, positive educational experiences, and internship/job experiences with agencies and organizations. It is hoped that the experiences presented here by current agriculture and natural resources students will aid governmental agencies, private corporations, and nonprofit organizations in increasing the number of ethnic minority professionals in the field of agriculture and natural resources.

General MSI Studies and Reports

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2019). *Minority Serving Institutions: America's underutilized resource for strengthening the STEM workforce*. National Academies Press.
<https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/25257/minority-serving-institutions-americas-underutilized-resource-for-strengthening-the-stem>

There are over 20 million young people of color in the U.S. whose representation in STEM education pathways and in the STEM workforce is still far below their numbers in the general population. Their participation could help reestablish the United States' preeminence in STEM innovation and productivity, while also increasing the number of well-educated STEM workers.

There are nearly 700 MSIs that provide pathways to STEM educational success and workforce readiness for millions of students of color—and do so in a mission-driven and intentional manner. They vary substantially in their origins, missions, student demographics, and levels of institutional selectivity, but in general, their service to the nation provides a gateway to higher education and the workforce, particularly for underrepresented students of color and those from low-income and first-generation college backgrounds. The challenge for the nation is how to capitalize on the unique strengths and attributes of these institutions and equip them with the resources, exceptional faculty talent, and vital

infrastructure needed to educate and train an increasingly critical portion of current and future generations of scientists, engineers, and health professionals.

This report examines the nation's MSIs and identifies promising programs and effective strategies that have the highest potential return on investment for the nation by increasing the quantity and quality of MSI STEM graduates. This study also provides critical information and perspective about the importance of MSIs to other stakeholders in the nation's system of higher education and the organizations that support them.

Espinosa, L. L., Kelchen R., and Taylor, M. (2018). *Minority Serving Institutions as Engines of Upward Mobility*. Center for Policy Research and Strategy, American Council on Education.

<https://www.acenet.edu/Research-Insights/Pages/Diversity-Inclusion/Minority-Serving-Institutions.aspx>

MSIs play an integral role in the education of students from low-income families and communities of color where educational attainment is disproportionately low and income mobility can be stagnant. With a commitment to serve the nation and their surrounding communities, MSIs are engines of upward mobility for millions of students and play this role even while the majority of MSIs are at a financial resource disadvantage when compared to non-MSIs.

This brief uses Equality of Opportunity Project data to examine the upward income mobility of students who attended MSIs compared to students who did not. Overall, we found that MSIs propel their students from the bottom to the top of the income distribution at higher rates than non-MSIs do. These findings shed important light on the value of MSIs as a viable path up the economic ladder for millions of students and reinforce the value proposition of higher education as a path to greater prosperity for individuals, families, and whole communities.

Williams, K. L. and Davis, B.L. (2019) *Public and private investments and divestments in Historically Black Colleges and Universities*. American Council on Education. <https://www.acenet.edu/Research-Insights/Pages/Diversity-Inclusion/Minority-Serving-Institutions.aspx>

HBCUs play a pivotal role in American society. Federally designated as any college or university established prior to 1964 with the principal mission of educating Black Americans, these institutions represent about three percent of two- and four-year public and private nonprofit institutions that participate in federal student financial aid programs, but award 17 percent of all bachelor's degrees earned by Black students. Furthermore, HBCUs have awarded approximately a quarter (24 percent) of bachelor's degrees earned by Black students in STEM since the early 2000s.

This issue brief summarizes the federal, state, and local funding sources of HBCUs and non-HBCUs—in addition to private institutional investments—to illustrate continuing disparities in how colleges and universities secure resources.

First National Development Institute. (2015). *Telling Our Giving Stories: Native Philanthropy and Community Development*. First Nations. <https://www.firstnations.org/publications/telling-our-giving-stories-native-philanthropy-and-community-development/>

Across the U.S., there are 63 active, Native American-led grantmaking programs that are making major contributions to the social and economic well-being of their local communities, regions, and the nation. These efforts are aimed at improving education, health, economic development, and cultural preservation. A recently published report tells some of the stories behind these Native-driven philanthropic endeavors that show the substantial and lasting impact of tribal philanthropy.

A highlight of the report is a case study of Oregon’s community-based Native foundations, which shows that by working collectively and collaboratively, tribal giving programs can multiply their outcomes beyond their individual grantmaking contributions and leverage their investments into greater influence, resources, and impact. For example, since 2001, these tribal foundations have given more than \$100 million in grants, positively impacting the local community, state, and beyond.

USAID Resources

USAID. (2022). *EO 13985 USAID Agency Equity Action Plan*. USAID.

<https://www.usaid.gov/document/eo-13985-usaid-agency-equity-action-plan>

USAID’s equity assessment submitted in August 2021 outlined findings and 61 preliminary recommendations that USAID could use, if approved, to advance a values-based approach, update rules and regulations, expand its partner base, and become more consultative to achieve the President’s goals regarding racial and ethnic equity in a foreign assistance context. The USAID Agency Equity Team (AET) prioritized the following recommendations for inclusion in the Action Plan: 1) continued development of the work with USAID platform; 2) enhanced implementation of USAID’s nondiscrimination for beneficiaries policy, development and implementation of an Independent Accountability Mechanism, and advancement of Title VI protections at USAID; 3) lowered internal and external barriers for USAID awards, to include reduction of acquisition and assistance administrative burdens that negatively affect partner capacity; 4) designation of an inclusive development (ID) advisor at each mission and procurement of inclusive development support mechanisms managed through the Agency’s ID Hub, and 5) implementation of a consistent approach to incorporate racial and ethnic equity and diversity into policy, planning, and learning.

Together, these actions help reframe the ways in which USAID partners democratize the development process by integrating equity into Agency policies, strategies, and practices; enhance the ability of potential non-traditional partners to pursue USAID opportunities; prevent discrimination in Agency programs; and strengthen the Agency’s capacity to advance inclusive development in our overseas programming. Further, to ensure the Agency adheres to these plans, the five actions that comprise this Equity Action Plan will also serve as the basis by which USAID measures its success in a new proposed external diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) Agency Priority Goal (APG) that will be included in the fiscal year (FY) 2022–2026 State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan.

USAID (2022). *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility*. USAID. <https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/diversity-equity-inclusion>

The Agency’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategy commits the USAID to improve diversity, enhancing inclusion and equity and strengthening accountability throughout the Agency. To enhance diversity, Agency leadership will address internal systems that may hinder inclusive efforts, develop policies and programs, and implement outreach strategies to attract diverse talent. To promote inclusion and equity, leaders will encourage staff participation in DEI initiatives, engage with diverse groups, provide training on diversity and inclusion, and create a respectful and safe work environment and culture. The strategy also focuses on accountability by applying DEI principles, requiring leaders to support DEI, promoting accountability through performance management, and utilizing workforce data and transparency. The strategy was developed through a comprehensive process involving data

collection, stakeholder interviews, and consultations and ensures continued progress, concrete actions, and accountability for achieving the goals.

USAID. (2023). *Racial and Ethnic Equity Initiative*. USAID.

https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-05/IE_Fact-Sheet_Racial-and-Ethnic-Equity-Initiative_2023.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

USAID's new Racial and Ethnic Equity Initiative, coordinated through the ID Hub, will build on USAID's long-standing efforts to ensure development programming is fully inclusive of historically marginalized racial, ethnic, and Indigenous communities, including people of African descent, and further incorporates equity into USAID operations, programming, and learning. The e-learning courses include:

- [Inclusive Development](#)
- ["Do No Harm"](#)
- [Inclusive Practices in USAID's Workplace](#)

Development, Democracy, and Innovation (DDI)/ID Hub. (2022). *Safety/Security-Sensitive and Trauma-Informed Stakeholder Consultations with Members of Marginalized Groups*. USAID.

https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2022-12/Marginalized_Groups_PDF.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

USAID defines marginalized groups as people who are typically denied access to legal protection or social and economic participation and programs, whether in practice or in principle, for historical, cultural, political, and/or other contextual reasons. To be effective, USAID's efforts should follow the lead of marginalized groups who understand the risks, opportunities, and priorities associated with this work. As such, an important step in developing programming that aims to prioritize the inclusion of marginalized groups starts with consulting stakeholders that represent marginalized groups to ensure that their strategies and needs are incorporated into project design. When conducting stakeholder consultations with members of marginalized groups, it is important to take an approach that is appropriate, secure, and safe.

USAID. (2023). *Post-Award Management Cheat Sheet. Partnership Incubator*. USAID.

This resource is available upon request. It contains more information about the different programs and partnerships that USAID is involved in, highlighting the organization's efforts to engage various stakeholders and diversify its activities.

You can learn more about how to partner with USAID at workwithusaid.gov.

USAID Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)

USAID. (2021). *USAID Signs First MOU Under the Minority-Serving Institutions Partnership Initiative with Delaware State University to Promote Diversity, Equity, Inclusion in Food and Water Security*.

Office of Press Relations, USAID. <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/oct-18-2021-usaid-signs-first-mou-under-minority-serving-institutions-partnership-initiative-delaware-state-university-promote-diversity-equity-inclusion-food-and-water-security>

Administrator Samantha Power and Delaware State University President Tony Allen signed an MOU to promote DEI in the international development workforce and shape the research and technology agenda. The two institutions committed to working together in the research of agriculture-led economic growth, resilience, nutrition, and water security.

The MOU, which is the first of its kind, outlines additional USAID commitments, including sharing information about paid internship opportunities for all students and graduates and advising Delaware State University faculty on curriculum and research topics in the areas of agriculture; nutrition; resilience; climate adaptation; water security, sanitation, and hygiene; and food-systems policy.

USAID. (2022). *USAID Signs Historic MOU under the Minority-Serving Institutions Partnership Initiative with Tuskegee University.* Office of Press Relations, USAID. <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/jan-31-2022-usaid-signs-historic-mou-under-minority-serving-institutions-partnership-initiative-tuskegee-university>

Administrator Samantha Power and Tuskegee University President Charlotte Morris signed an MOU to promote DEI in the international development workforce. USAID and Tuskegee University committed to working together to shape research, technology, resilience, and nutrition and water security across the development space. The MOU is part of USAID's commitment to develop a stronger workforce that is diverse, inclusive, and equitable.

USAID. (2022). *USAID Signs Partnership with Morehouse College as Part of Agency's Commitment to Strengthen Career Pipelines for Students of Color.* Office of Press Relations, USAID. <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/nov-1-2022-usaid-signs-partnership-morehouse-college-agency-commitment-strengthen-career-students-color>

Administrator Samantha Power signed an MOU between USAID and Morehouse College's Andrew Young Center for Global Leadership. This five-year agreement, under USAID's MSI Partnership Initiative, benefits both institutions by opening more career options, mentorship, and training pathways for university students to pursue the USAID Foreign Service and careers in international development. It also provides USAID with an avenue for research collaboration regarding international social justice movements and DEIA learning and recruitment.

USAID. (2022). *Administrator Samantha Power Signs Memorandum of Understanding with Florida International University.* Office of Press Relations, USAID. <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/mar-22-2022-administrator-samantha-power-signs-memorandum-understanding-florida-international-university>

This partnership is the most recent action under USAID's MSI Partnership Initiative and marks the first MOU the agency has signed with a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) of higher education. This MOU builds on USAID and Florida International University's long-time collaboration on international development initiatives, such as disaster risk resilience.

USAID. (2022). *USAID Signs Memorandum of Understanding with Alcorn State University.* Office of Press Relations, USAID. <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/apr-11-2022-usaid-signs-mou-with-alcorn-state-university>

USAID and Alcorn State University signed an MOU to facilitate increased collaboration and promote a shared pursuit of more inclusive and sustainable social and economic development, with a particular focus on research in the areas of agriculture, climate change, and science and technology. Through this partnership, USAID will invite Alcorn State University students to explore careers in public service through internships, fellowships, and other career opportunities.

USAID. (2022). *USAID Signs Historic MOU under the Minority-Serving Institutions Partnership Initiative with Tuskegee University.* Office of Press Relations, USAID. <https://www.usaid.gov/news->

[information/press-releases/jan-31-2022-usaid-signs-historic-mou-under-minority-serving-institutions-partnership-initiative-tuskegee-university](https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/jan-31-2022-usaid-signs-historic-mou-under-minority-serving-institutions-partnership-initiative-tuskegee-university)

Administrator Samantha Power and Tuskegee University President Charlotte Morris signed an MOU to promote DEI in the international development workforce. USAID and Tuskegee University committed to working together to shape research, technology, resilience, and nutrition and water security across the development space.

USAID. (2023). *USAID Launches Partnership with Fayetteville State University*. Office of Press Relations, USAID. <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/apr-18-2023-usaid-launches-partnership-fayetteville-state-university>

USAID announced a new partnership with Fayetteville State University (FSU). Together, USAID and FSU will pilot a new acquisition career workforce program, for which USAID will make an initial investment of \$1 million, to provide students with internships, professional development, and certification opportunities and position them for careers with the Agency and the federal government.

USAID. (2023). *New Partnerships Initiative*. USAID. https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/NPI_External_Fact_Sheet.pdf

The New Partnerships Initiative (NPI) helps the Agency reach its partnering potential by improving collaboration with new, nontraditional, and local actors while enhancing local leadership, capacity, and accountability. NPI recognizes the role that USAID’s traditional partners, including U.S.-based implementing partners, play in engaging new, nontraditional, and local partners. We know that development work is strengthened when established implementers partner responsibly and equitably with local organizations to ensure local priorities are centered, empower local sub-awardees in decision-making, operate responsively and transparently to feedback from local communities, and strengthen capacity for local organizations to thrive. Six key principles guide how NPI approaches partnerships:

- Promote local leadership;
- Improve equity and inclusivity within partner relationships;
- Demonstrate accountability to constituents;
- Seek innovative approaches;
- Lower barriers to partnerships, and
- Identify new and nontraditional sources of funding.

White House Resources

The White House. (2021). *Executive Order 13985—on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*. Briefing Room. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/executive-order-advancing-racial-equity-and-support-for-underserved-communities-through-the-federal-government/>

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered:

Equal opportunity is the bedrock of American democracy, and our diversity is one of our country’s greatest strengths. But for too many, the American Dream remains out of reach. Entrenched disparities in our laws and public policies, and in our public and private institutions, have often denied that equal opportunity to individuals and communities. Our country faces converging economic, health,

and climate crises that have exposed and exacerbated inequities, while a historic movement for justice has highlighted the unbearable human costs of systemic racism. Our Nation deserves an ambitious whole-of-government equity agenda that matches the scale of the opportunities and challenges that we face.

It is therefore the policy of my Administration that the Federal Government should pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. Affirmatively advancing equity, civil rights, racial justice, and equal opportunity is the responsibility of the whole of our Government. Because advancing equity requires a systematic approach to embedding fairness in decision-making processes, executive departments and agencies (agencies) must recognize and work to redress inequities in their policies and programs that serve as barriers to equal opportunity.

By advancing equity across the Federal Government, we can create opportunities for the improvement of communities that have been historically underserved, which benefits everyone. For example, an analysis shows that closing racial gaps in wages, housing credit, lending opportunities, and access to higher education would amount to an additional \$5 trillion in gross domestic product in the American economy over the next 5 years. The Federal Government's goal in advancing equity is to provide everyone with the opportunity to reach their full potential. Consistent with these aims, each agency must assess whether, and to what extent, its programs and policies perpetuate systemic barriers to opportunities and benefits for people of color and other underserved groups. Such assessments will better equip agencies to develop policies and programs that deliver resources and benefits equitably to all.

The role of the White House Domestic Policy Council (DPC) is to coordinate the formulation and implementation of my Administration's domestic policy objectives. Consistent with this role, the DPC will coordinate efforts to embed equity principles, policies, and approaches across the Federal Government. This will include efforts to remove systemic barriers to and provide equal access to opportunities and benefits, identify communities the Federal Government has underserved, and develop policies designed to advance equity for those communities. The DPC-led interagency process will ensure that these efforts are made in coordination with the directors of the National Security Council and the National Economic Council.

The White House. (2021). *Executive Order 14049—White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Native Americans and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities*. Federal Register. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/10/14/2021-22588/white-house-initiative-on-advancing-educational-equity-excellence-and-economic-opportunity-for>

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

It is the policy of my Administration to advance equity, excellence, and justice in our Nation's education system and to further Tribal self-governance, including by supporting activities that expand educational opportunities and improve educational outcomes for all Native American students. My Administration will help expand opportunities for Native American students to learn their Native languages, histories, and cultural practices; promote indigenous learning through the use of traditional ecological knowledge; and enhance access to complete and competitive educations that prepare Native American students for college, careers, and productive and satisfying lives. This includes supporting educational opportunities

for students attending TCUs, given the unique advantages those institutions provide. My Administration is further committed to ensuring all Native American students have the ability to pursue careers that provide economic security for themselves and their families, including Native American women, who currently, on average, earn just 60 cents to every dollar earned by White men. To these ends, my Administration will collaborate with Tribal Nations to collect better data on educational attainment gaps faced by Native American students to help deepen understanding of these gaps, including barriers to workforce participation, and inform solutions.

The Initiative shall consult and collaborate with Tribal Nations; Alaska Native Entities; TCUs; and State, Tribal, and local educational departments and agencies to advance educational equity, excellence, and economic opportunity for Native Americans.

The White House. (2021). *Executive Order 14041—White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity through Historically Black Colleges and Universities*. Briefing Room. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/09/03/executive-order-on-white-house-initiative-on-advancing-educational-equity-excellence-and-economic-opportunity-through-historically-black-colleges-and-universities/>

In order to advance equity in economic and educational opportunities for all Americans, including Black Americans, strengthen the capacity of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to provide the highest-quality education, increase opportunities for these institutions to participate in and benefit from Federal programs, and ensure that HBCUs can continue to be engines of opportunity, it is hereby ordered as follows:

HBCUs have a proud history and legacy of achievement. In the face of discrimination against Black Americans by many institutions of higher education, HBCUs created pathways to opportunity and educational excellence for Black students throughout our Nation. That legacy continues. Today, more than 100 HBCUs, located in 19 States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, serve nearly 300,000 students annually. HBCUs vary in size and academic focus and serve a range of diverse students and communities in urban, rural, and suburban settings.

HBCUs play a vital role in providing educational opportunities, scholarly growth, and a sense of community for students. HBCU graduates are barrier-breaking public servants, scientists, artists, lawyers, engineers, educators, business owners, and leaders. For generations, HBCUs have been advancing intergenerational economic mobility for Black families and communities, developing vital academic research, and making our country more prosperous and equitable. HBCUs are proven means of advancement for people of all ethnic, racial, and economic backgrounds, especially Black Americans. HBCUs produce nearly 20 percent of all Black college graduates and 25 percent of Black graduates who earn degrees in the disciplines of science, technology, engineering, and math.

HBCUs' successes have come despite many systemic barriers to accessing resources and opportunities. For example, compared to other higher education institutions, on average HBCUs educate a greater percentage of lower-income, Pell-grant eligible students, while receiving less revenue from tuition and possessing much smaller endowments. Disparities in resources and opportunities for HBCUs and their students remain, and the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted continuing and new challenges. These challenges include addressing the need for enhanced physical and digital infrastructure in HBCU communities and ensuring equitable funding for HBCUs as compared to other institutions of higher education. The Federal Government must promote a variety of modern solutions for HBCUs, recognizing that HBCUs are not a monolith, and that the opportunities and challenges relevant to HBCUs are as

diverse as the institutions themselves and the communities they serve. It is the policy of my Administration to advance educational equity, excellence, and economic opportunity in partnership with HBCUs, and to ensure that these vital institutions of higher learning have the resources and support to continue to thrive for generations to come.

The Federal Interagency Working Group. (2023). *FY2023 Annual Plan to Increase Support and Opportunities for HBCUs*. White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity through Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

<https://sites.ed.gov/whhbcu/files/2023/07/2023-Annual-Plans-to-Increase-Support-and-Opportunities-for-HBCUs-508-Compliant.pdf>

The White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity Through Historically Black Colleges and Universities' (Initiative) mission is to strengthen the capacity of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to provide the highest-quality education, increase opportunities for these institutions to participate in and benefit from Federal programs, and ensure that HBCUs can continue to be engines of opportunity. The Initiative is dedicated to a government-wide policymaking effort to eliminate barriers HBCUs face in providing the best education to a growing number of students.

This report was prepared by the Initiative for submission to the Secretary of Education, the Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity through Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Initiative), the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the U.S. Senate, the Committee on Education and Labor of the U.S. House of Representatives, and the President's Board of Advisors on HBCUs (as established in section 3 of Executive Order 14041).

ANNEX 2: ZOOM CHAT TRANSCRIPT

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

Welcome! Please feel free to introduce yourself in the chat.

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

Today's meeting is being recorded, and all comments and Q/A will be posted publicly following the event.

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

Please note that closed captioning is available in ZOOM.

From Nancy Correa-Matos to Everyone:

Dr. Nancy Correa-Matos – University of Puerto Rico

From Tariq Javaid to Everyone:

Dr. Tariq Javaid, Scientific Officer, Pakistan

From Noor Seddiq to Everyone:

Hello - Noor Seddiq, Howard University

From Laura Norton to Everyone:

Hello – I'm with USAID's Office of Civil Rights' External Civil Rights Division.

From Haley Oliver to Everyone:

Haley Oliver, USAID Feed the Future Food Safety Innovation Lab Director, Purdue University

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

Learn more about the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD) here:
<https://www.usaid.gov/bifad/board-members>

From Teklehaimanot Haileselassie Teklu to Everyone:

Dr. Teklehaimanot Haileselassie, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

From Tommy Crocker to Everyone:

Hi, my name is Tommy Crocker, the BIFAD Support Contract Operations Manager. Great to see everyone today!

From Lynne Ausman to Everyone:

Lynne Ausman, Tufts University

From Fridah Mubichi-Kut to Everyone:

Fridah Mubichi-Kut, Cornell University

From Carmen Benson to Everyone:

Greetings! Carmen Benson, from the BIFAD Support Team at Tetra Tech. It's great to see such a strong turnout for today's discussion.

From Gina Rico Mendez to Everyone:

Gina Rico Mendez – Mississippi State University/Fish Innovation Lab

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

Hello everyone, and welcome! I'm Clara Cohen, Executive Director of BIFAD in USAID's Bureau for Resilience and Food Security

From Aditya Khanal to Everyone:

Hi, Aditya Khanal, Associate Professor, from Tennessee State University

From Nicole Lefore to Everyone:

Nicole Lefore, Daugherty Water for Food Institute at University of Nebraska

From Pierre-Andre Jacinthe to Everyone:

Pierre-Andre Jacinthe, USAID Center for Resilience and Food Security, and Professor at Indiana University, Indianapolis

From Jan Middendorf to Everyone:

Hello everyone! Jan Middendorf, Kansas State University, Feed the Future Innovation Lab on Sustainable Innovation

From Mary Beggs to Everyone:

Good day everyone. Mary Beggs, Sector Director of Ag and Economic Growth at Tetra Tech. Looking forward to the conversation.

From Ar'Tee Franklin to Everyone:

Hello All. Ar' Tee Franklin-RFS Senior Advisor DEIA Moderator for Public comments

From Saboor Rahmany to Everyone:

Abdul Saboor Rahmany – Texas Water Resource Institute

From Brou Kouakou to Everyone:

From Fort Valley State University, Brou Kouakou, Associate Dean for Research

From Emmanuella Delva to Everyone:

Hi everyone! Emmanuella Delva, USAID's Innovation, Technology and Research Hub (Research Division)

From Saskia Hendrickx to Everyone:

Hello Everyone! Saskia Hendrickx, Associate Director, Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Livestock Systems.

From Mohammad Arif to Everyone:

Hi, Mohammad Arif, Associate Professor, University of Hawaii

From Nkole Mwamba to Everyone:

Thanks so much for this important session. Global Ambassador Nkole Mwamba, US Diplomacy Councils Member, Executive Director Savannah Zambia. [Contact information removed].

From Biniam Iyob to Everyone:

Biniam Iyob, USAID, Office of Policy, Analysis and Engagement

From Mary Knorg Ana Castillo to Everyone:

hallo, I'm Mary Knorg Ana R. Castillo from Castillo-Kim farm in the Philippines

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

Learn more about the U.S. Government Global Food Security Strategy, 2022–2026:
<https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/agriculture-and-food-security/us-government-global-food-security-strategy>

From James Obuya to Everyone:

James Obuya, Research Assistant Professor, Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Baton Rouge, LA

From Bethany Econopouly to Everyone:

Bethany Econopouly, International Applied Genomics Lead, Buckler Lab, Institute for Genomic Diversity, Cornell University

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

Please see this link for more information on the US Government Global Food Security Strategy:
<https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/agriculture-and-food-security/us-government-global-food-security-strategy>

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

View or download the Proposed MSI Subcommittee's Terms of Reference (TOR) here:
<https://www.usaid.gov/bifad/proposed-msi-subcommittee>. You will find a link to provide feedback on the same page.

From Matthew Blair to Everyone:

Matthew Blair, TSU Professor, Nashville TN

From Allison Young to Everyone:

Hello, Allison Young, Associate Extension Administrator, Kentucky State University.

From Manoj Shukla to Everyone:

Hello All- Manoj Shukla, Professor and Director ACES Global program, NMSU

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

Please see this link for the draft subcommittee Terms of Reference:

<https://www.usaid.gov/bifad/proposed-msi-subcommittee>

From Jannette Bartlett to Everyone:

Hello everyone, Jannette Bartlett, Research Associate Professor, Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, Alabama

From Carol Chan to Everyone:

Hello, everyone! It's good to see you, BIFAD members, Clara, and BIFAD Support Team! This is your old friend, Carol Chan, Senior Program Development Officer at WaterAid America. Happy to see this public meeting on MSIs. Congratulations!

From Robert Onyeneke to Everyone:

Dr Robert Onyeneke, Reader and Climate Change Specialist, Department of Agriculture, Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike, Nigeria.

From Elizabeth Marino Costello to Everyone:

Elizabeth Marino Costello, Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab at Tufts University

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

Please see this link for more information on the US Government Global Food Security Strategy:

<https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/agriculture-and-food-security/us-government-global-food-security-strategy>

From Love Lundy to Everyone:

Go Tuskegee!!!

From Stephen Mailu to Everyone:

Stephen Mailu, Senior Research Scientist, Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization, Dairy Research Institute, Socioeconomics & Policy Development Unit

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

Please see this link for more information on the MSI Partnerships Program:

<https://www.usaid.gov/partnership-opportunities/universities/minority-serving-institutions>

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

Please see this link for more information on the Thomas Wyatt Turner Fellowship Program:

<https://ilci.cornell.edu/turner-fellowship/>

From Adelia Bovell-Benjamin to Everyone:

Greetings to everyone from Adelia Bovell-Benjamin, Tuskegee University, Alabama

From Levon Esters to Everyone:

Greetings everyone & welcome!

From Love Lundy to Everyone:

Go A&M bulldogs! That and the Tuskegee partnership will be very powerful!

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

Please see this link for more information on the USAID Partnerships Incubator:

<https://www.workwithusaid.org/about-us/partnership-incubator>

From Edward Asiedu to Everyone:

Greetings from Ghana. Edward Asiedu, Development Economist based at the University of Ghana, Legon.

From Stanley Okenwa to Everyone:

Greetings everyone from Okenwa Stanley. CEO/Founder, A Little Drop that Counts (ALDC), a non-governmental organization in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria.

From Dana Alzouma to Everyone:

Hello Everyone! I am happy to join this meeting and help answer any of your questions.

From Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval to Everyone:

Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval, President, Fresno State. Very glad to be here!

From James Hafer to Everyone:

Greetings from Montana! James Hafer, ANRS Professor/ Program Chair–Chief Dull Knife College, Lame Deer, MT.

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

Please see this link for more information on MANRRS: <https://www.manrrs.org/>

From Tariq Javaid to Everyone:

Nice to See Professionals from Different Universities

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

Please see the following link for more information on the Feed the Future Innovation Labs:

<https://www.feedthefuture.gov/feed-the-future-innovation-labs/>

From James Oehmke to Everyone:

I like the comment on including the marginalized. Food insecure people are marginalized in political, economic, and food processes. MSIs and IL universities have relevant research on how to address this issue.

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

Today's agenda and speaker bios are available here:

<https://www.usaid.gov/bifad/document/bifad-public-meeting-agenda-Wednesday-june-28-2023>

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

We hope you will join the discussion by sharing your ideas and resources in the chat and send questions to panelists using the Q/A window.

From Michael Ogunbiyi to Everyone:

Greetings from Nigeria, I am Michael Ogunbiyi an Agribusiness consultant. A pleasure to be here.

From Benjamin Wullobayi Dekongmen to Everyone:

Greetings from Ghana, PhD candidate, University of Energy and Natural Resources, Sunyani.

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

Please see this link for the draft subcommittee Terms of Reference:
<https://www.usaid.gov/bifad/proposed-msi-subcommittee>

From Semeni Ngozi to Everyone:

Greetings from Michigan State University, Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics, Post-doctoral fellow.

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

We hope you will join the discussion by sharing your ideas and resources in the chat and send questions to panelists using the Q/A window.

From Olubukola Oyediji to Everyone:

Hello, I'm Oyediji Olubukola Tolulope from Nigeria

From Kafayat Fakoya to Everyone:

Greetings, I am Kafayat Fakoya, Associate Professor, Department of Fisheries, Lagos State University, Nigeria

From Rob Bertram to Everyone:

Welcome Oyediji and Kafayat! Rob Bertram, Chief Scientist Resilience and Food Security

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

Today's agenda and speaker bios are available here:
<https://www.usaid.gov/bifad/document/bifad-public-meeting-agenda-Wednesday-june-28-2023>

From Benjamin Wullobayi Dekongmen to Everyone:

I am Benjamin Wullobayi Dekongmen, a PhD candidate and Assistant Lecturer at University of Energy and Natural Resources, Ghana and Ho Technical University, Ghana respectively.

From Tebug Thomas Tumasang to Everyone:

Greetings from the University of Dschang Cameroon

From Harriett Paul to Everyone:

Hello Everyone, Harriett Paul, Director, Center for International Agricultural Trade Development Research and Training, Florida A&M University

From Ogalo Vincent to Everyone:

Hi everyone, Vincent Ogalo, a social worker from Building Community initiative for Development and Self-reliance (BIDS Foundation) a community-based organization in Soroti district in Eastern Uganda

From Andrew Kirabira to Everyone:

Greetings from Andrew Kirabira in Kampala, Uganda—East Africa. My connection is a bit unstable though. Cheers1

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

We hope you will join the discussion by sharing your ideas and resources in the chat and send questions to panelists using the Q/A window.

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

View or download the Proposed MSI Subcommittee's Terms of Reference (TOR) here: <https://www.usaid.gov/bifad/proposed-msi-subcommittee>. You will find a link to provide feedback on the same page.

From Stanley Okenwa to Everyone:

Well said, RH. Seen and noted.

From Ogalo Vincent to Everyone:

great

From Love Lundy to Everyone:

Indeed

From Laura Norton to Everyone:

Excellent points, Prof. Gasman.

From Marybeth Gasman to Everyone:

Thank you @Laura

From Marybeth Gasman to Everyone:

Love seeing so many great people on this

webinar. From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

Please see this link for more information on the Next Gen announcement: <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2023/06/21/biden-harris-administration-announces-inaugural-learning-leading>

From Dana Alzouma to Everyone:

Analysis on barriers HBCUs have in working with USAID: Current Landscape of Engagement Between USAID and Historically Black Colleges and Universities
https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00X9H4.pdf

From Adrian Quijada to Everyone:

We didn't get the NEXTGEN grant in Tier 1 (no need of university partnership) and the criticism was not partnering with a mainstream university. We found that not fair, sorry.

From Laura Norton to Everyone:

+1 Dana

From Marybeth Gasman to Everyone:

Our Center (<https://cmsi.gse.rutgers.edu>) has lots of free publications and programs.

From Marybeth Gasman to Everyone:

Great report on partnerships with HBCUs:
https://proctor.gse.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/MSIreportFeb21_R4.pdf

From Adrian Quijada to Everyone:

President Monte Randall is making an excellent point shared by many other TCUs.

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

Participants, we would like to hear from you. The public comment period is coming up at 3:00, so please add any questions you may have in the Q&A box.

From Dana Alzouma to Everyone:

Training courses on working with USAID: <https://www.workwithusaid.org/resource-library?search=how+to+work+with+usaid>

From Matthew Blair to Everyone:

USDA staff is very responsive on emails and phone calls. That is a point Dr. Kal could have made for how to successfully involve MSI partners.

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

We hope you will join the discussion by sharing your ideas and resources in the chat and send questions to panelists using the Q/A window.

From Dana Alzouma to Everyone:

We were happy to have Fresno host us for a watch party for our first-ever AAPI Conference. Thank you, Fresno!

From Marybeth Gasman to Everyone:

Fresno State is the best!!

From Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval to Everyone:

Very glad to be here, Thank you Professor Gasman!!

From Harriett Paul to Everyone:

Excellent points Ms. Jones!!

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

Do you have any comments on the proposed Subcommittee and its draft Terms of Reference?
Please share them here.

From Stanley Okenwa to Everyone:

Thanks so much, Saul. We are glad to be part of this discussion.

From Erin McGuire to Everyone:

Agreed!

From Marybeth Gasman to Everyone:

I love that!!! Food that brings us joy and all the colors!!!

From Haley Oliver to Everyone:

I believe there is also a responsibility from later career faculty (such as myself) to make room for early career researchers and that we value their international engagement as a path to promotion and tenure.

From Adrian Quijada to Everyone:

More trust and grant support to TCUs' networks without the prerequisite of partnering with a mainstream university.

From Harriett Paul to Everyone:

Saúl, I am very impressed with the work taking place at your institution, and particularly the engagement piece. I would welcome an opportunity to collaborate on international ag development and study abroad programs.

From Levon Esters to Everyone:

@Harriett, impressive indeed!

From Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval to Everyone:

I'm more than glad to collaborate, Harriett, and all: [Contact information removed]

From Harriett Paul to Everyone:

Excellent discussion! Thank you.

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

We hope you will join the discussion by sharing your ideas and resources in the chat and send questions to panelists using the Q/A window. As a reminder, all questions and comments will be

posted in the public record and available to inform BIFAD's work.

From James Ash to Everyone:

I have not seen a proposed approach for the governance of the committee, but I would suggest that a BIFAD member be required as Chair and that the terms of members be on staggered 3-year terms.

From Erin McGuire to Everyone:

Great points.

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

Do you have any comments on the proposed Subcommittee and its draft Terms of Reference? Please share them here.

From Dana Alzouma to Everyone:

Please keep an eye on our MSI page as we will soon be posting a link to sign up for our MSI listserv if you are not already a member: <https://www.usaid.gov/partnership-opportunities/universities/minority-serving-institutions>

From James Ash to Everyone:

Saul's point on aesthetics and "perfection" is spot on, we seem to more tolerant when it comes to things labeled "organic."

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

We hope you will join the discussion by sharing your ideas and resources in the chat and send questions to panelists using the Q/A window. As a reminder, all questions and comments will be posted in the public record and available to inform BIFAD's work.

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

NOFO = notice of funding opportunity

From Dana Alzouma to Everyone:

workwithusaid.org

From Keia Jones to Everyone:

Thank you all for having me! MANRRS is establishing international partnerships! Please reach me at [Contact Information Removed] for more information on getting involved. My university email is [Contact Information Removed] for any other questions of further discussion!

From Levon Esters to Everyone:

@Clara, a great panel indeed!

From Dana Alzouma to Everyone:

<https://laserpulse.org/>

From Harriett Paul to Everyone:

Very true!

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

Speakers will try to respond to as many questions as possible today. Written public comments to inform the proposed Subcommittee's Terms of Reference are welcomed until July 12, 2023. To submit comments, please use the web form at:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfi903QVidhrHDXPmd3Xe_IFRiXGGelgaPiARyqjcu3XFYTQ/viewform or email BIFAD Executive Director, Dr. Clara Cohen at: [Contact Information Removed] (Subject: Comment on the proposed BIFAD Subcommittee on MSI Engagement)

From Harriett Paul to Everyone:

Can you please provide the link for the USAID business site?

From Dana Alzouma to Everyone:

MSI Coordinator msi@usaid.gov

From Dana Alzouma to Everyone:

<https://www.usaid.gov/business-forecast>

From Harriett Paul to Everyone:

Thank you!

From Dana Alzouma to Everyone:

<https://www.usaid.gov/partner-with-us/get-grant-or-contract/trainings-how-work-usaid>

From Dana Alzouma to Everyone:

Please register for workwithusaid.org

From Kafayat Fakoya to Everyone:

Very insightful webinar. Thank you to the speakers and organizers.

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

To submit comments, please use the web form at:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfi903QVidhrHDXPmd3Xe_IFRiXGGelgaPiARyqjcu3XFYTQ/viewform or email BIFAD Executive Director, Dr. Clara Cohen at: ccohen@usaid.gov (Subject: Comment on the proposed BIFAD Subcommittee on MSI Engagement)

From Dana Alzouma to Everyone:

New Partnerships Initiative Opportunities <https://www.usaid.gov/npj>

From Reid Hamel to Everyone:

Thank you for your points on governance, Jim. BIFAD is considering 2–3-year terms for subcommittee members and consulting FACA guidelines to determine whether or not the subcommittee can be co-Chaired by a BIFAD member.

From Reid Hamel to Everyone:

Thank you all for many more questions and comments than we were able to highlight today. We have noted all of them and will consider this input as we refine the Subcommittee's Terms of Reference in the coming months.

From Erlich Honest Zausomue to Everyone:

Good evening please! Will the recording be shared with the participants please?

From Levon Esters to Everyone:

Thank you for an inspiring and much-needed convening. I look forward to the next steps in this process.

From Lynne Ausman to Everyone:

I also would appreciate of copy of the chat. There were a number of excellent URLs and points shared.

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

Thanks, @Erlich! Yes, we will post the recording and meeting minutes on BIFAD's website after the meeting. We'll let participants know when it is there: <https://www.usaid.gov/bifad>

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

For more information about upcoming BIFAD public meetings, please monitor <https://www.usaid.gov/bifad>.

From Clara Cohen to Everyone:

@Lynne the chat transcript will also be available in the meeting minutes, which will be posted on <https://www.usaid.gov/bifad/Ddocuments> in a few weeks.

From Noor Seddiq to Everyone:

Thank you.

From Dana Alzouma to Everyone:

I am very excited for this subcommittee to materialize!

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

Please take the time to complete the BIFAD Event Participant Feedback Survey here: https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=uuQPpMer_kiHkrQ4iZNkAOPBZTxYdINPpaKX-AEjzyBUOEFYQVpEMVBVMEQ2OENGUjhVUUILRktVSyQIQCN0PWcu

From Rachel Helbig to Everyone:

Thank you for participating in today's meeting. The meeting recording and minutes will be posted publicly and shared with participants by email after the meeting.

From Harriett Paul to Everyone:

Thank you for this excellent discussion. I will submit comments via the website. This is a great

re-start of the MSI engagement discussion through BIFAD!

From Rob Bertram to Everyone:

Great panels, discussions, and great summary Dr. Alexander!! Thank you all!

ANNEX 3: ZOOM QUESTION AND ANSWER TRANSCRIPT

1. **Adrian Quijada:** This is more a petition, kindly to open another NEXTGEN only for TCUs, we can't compete with mainstream universities and when we partner with them they charge huge amounts of overhead and operational costs so TCUs only get the leftovers.
2. **Matthew Blair:** Does USAID have any NOFO / RFP that are exclusively for MSI as lead institutions similar to the NextGEn program mentioned by USDA representatives. I will leave this question for reply in webinar report as I have to leave before Q&A session answers are given. Thank you
3. **Nancy Correa-Matos:** Small universities (Univ. of Puerto Rico) for example that are HSI have problems competing with larger universities to get funding. How can this be improved?
4. **Andrew Kirabira:** To President Monte: Is there a way how we could improve on the literature about Indigenous Knowledge so that it is not looked at as a thing of the past in the museum but as a branch of technology that is worth incorporating. This will largely bring the minds of the different Agro Ecologies on board and we move together in achieving our goals, Thank you
5. **Mary Beggs:** Thank you for the excellent conversation. A question for Dr. Jiménez-Sandoval: What advice do you have for current USAID implementing partners on how to learn more about MSIs that have been less directly engaged with USAID in the past, and pursue potential partnerships?
6. **Stephen Mailu:** Keia/Esters/Jimenez: Just how many of these MSIs have been able to network successfully with other researchers outside of US so far? My guess... very few. And what are the particular/key steps others (say representatives of agricultural research systems) in the global south need to take in order to strengthen such collaborations? Do they need to initiate this through the various innovation labs?
7. **Nicole Lefore:** Discussions are often focused on the capacity and resource constraints of MSIs. What are the challenges on the USAID side that have prevented effectiveness partnerships with MSIs?
8. **James Oehmke:** in addition to creating a platform for dialogue, will the committee strengthen USAID's ability to hear the MSI voices, so Dr. Esters can come back in three years and report on great progress?
9. **Noor Seddiq:** Comment: US MSIs are well-equipped to provide academic, research and administrative capacities of higher education institutions around the world. Agriculture, food security and nutrition programs implementation can only be successful when the strengths of US public land grant MSI and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are used, and they are directly engaged with local Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). MSIs have all systems in place to partner with USAID but they need to invest in expanding organizational structure and building internal capabilities to manage international development program and then USAID to engage more US HEIs/MSIs to directly partner with HEIs around the world to tackle food security and climate challenges. Thank you,
10. **Stephen Mailu:** On the TORs: At the risk of sounding naive. Would the membership in this subcommittee be expanded to include other non-US based institutions/platforms in the

agricultural space? I have in mind regional platforms such as FARA/ASARECA and the like. Or would doing so go against USAID "rules"?

11. **Rebecca Lochmann:** Agree that some US MSIs have a strong track record in working with international partners on collaborative research in specific areas (e.g., aquaculture). However, we have major limitations in research infrastructure to support complex projects with multiple international partners. In particular, grants management and ORSP support on campus has to be robust to enable the HBCU to be the lead institution on USAID projects. Matching funds have also been a major barrier to collaborations between HBCUs and other partners, but this barrier has been lifted in some cases. That is an important step in equalizing opportunities for limited resource institutions to engage in international collaborations.
12. **Adrian Quijada:** Just to let you know, all 1994 TCUs we are meeting at the First Americans Land-Grant Consortium (FALCON) in October 13–15, 2023. [Contact information removed]. Excellent opportunity for feedback from Tribal Colleges.

ANNEX 4: PARTICIPANT LIST

Number of Attendees: 131

#	First Name	Last Name	Organization
BIFAD Members (Virtual)			
1	Laurence	Alexander	BIFAD; University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
2	Pamela	Anderson	BIFAD; International Potato Center
3	Marie	Boyd	BIFAD; University of South Carolina School of Law
4	Rattan	Lal	BIFAD; The Ohio State University
5	Saweda	Liverpool-Tasie	BIFAD; Michigan State University
6	Henri	Moore	BIFAD; Haleon
Speakers and Panelists (Virtual)			
7	Dina	Esposito	USAID
8	Levon	Esters	The Pennsylvania State University
9	Ar'Tee	Franklin	USAID
10	Marybeth	Gasman	Rutgers University Graduate School of Education
11	Saúl	Jiménez-Sandoval	California State University, Fresno
12	Keia	Jones	The Pennsylvania State University
13	Venu (Kal)	Kalvacharla	USDA NIFA
14	Monte	Randall	The College of Muscogee Nation
15	Clinton	White	USAID
Attendees (Virtual)			
16	Mohammed	Abakar	CEEAC
17	Rebecca	Adler Miserendino	Lewis Burke Associates
18	Aderonke	ALAMU	Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria
19	Liz	Alexander	FSIL
20	Marikis	Alvarez	Delaware State University
21	Mohammad	Arif	University of Hawaii
22	James	Ash	BIFAD

#	First Name	Last Name	Organization
23	Edward	Asiedu	University of Ghana Business School and Chair of Development Economics, University of Passau, Germany
24	Lynne	Ausman	Tufts University
25	Jannette	Bartlett	Tuskegee University
26	Henry David	Bayoh	Trocaire Sierra Leone
27	Mary	Beggs	Tetra Tech
28	Elena	Beisel	USAID
29	Rob	Bertram	USAID
30	Adele	Birkenes	USAID
31	Matthew	Blair	Tennessee State University
32	Conrad	Bonsi	Tuskegee University
33	Adelia	Bovell-Benjamin	Tuskegee University
34	Pomai	Burkart	Kaua'i Community College
35	Monica	Cambrel	USAID
36	Mary Knorg Ana	Castillo	Castillo-Kim farm
37	Carol	Chan	WaterAid America
38	Nancy	Correa-Matos	University of Puerto Rico
39	Elizabeth	DeFrest	USAID
40	Benjamin Wullobayi	Dekongmen	Ho Technical University/University of Energy and Natural Resources
41	Emmanuella	Delva	USAID
42	David	DeYoung	Michigan State University
43	Ramesh	Dhakal	Virginia State University
44	Bethany	Econopouly	Cornell University
45	Jessica	Epple-Farmer	Lincoln University
46	Kafayat	Fakoya	Lagos State University
47	Kate	Fehlenberg	FHI 360
48	Emily	Fendley	USAID

#	First Name	Last Name	Organization
49	Demi	Gary	Abt Associates
50	Quintin	Gray	1890 Universities Foundation
51	James	Hafer	Chief Dull Knife College
52	Lailah	Hall	FAMU
53	Julie	Hancock	Purdue University
54	Christi	Hang	USAID
55	Katrena	Hanks	1890 Universities Foundation
56	Karleah	Harris	University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
57	Rachel	Helbig	Tetra Tech
58	Saskia	Hendrickx	University of Florida
59	Kimberly	Holmes	No Response
60	Getachew	Hussen	SNV Netherlands Development Organization
61	Beau	Ingle	The Ohio State University
62	Biniam	Iyob	USAID
63	Pierre-Andre	Jacinthe	USAID
64	Tariq	Javaid	Potato Research Institute, Sahiwal
65	Devon	Jenkins	Cornell University
66	Melissa	Johnson	Southern University and A&M College
67	Tyrell	Kahan	USAID
68	Moses	Kairo	University of Maryland Eastern Shore
69	Aditya	Khanal	Tennessee State University
70	Andrew	Kirabira	Uganda Martyrs University
71	Brou	Kouakou	Fort Valley State University
72	Stephen	Kresovich	Cornell University
73	Stephanie	Landers Silva	Abt Associates
74	Lisa	Lauxman	BHA/USAID
75	Nicole	Lefore	University of Nebraska
76	Rebecca	Lochmann	University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

#	First Name	Last Name	Organization
77	Love	Lundy	Mercy Corps
78	Stephen	Mailu	KALRO
79	Meredith	Mallory	Tetra Tech
80	Elizabeth	Marino Costello	Tufts University
81	Leisha	Martinez-Colon	University of Puerto Rico at Ponce
82	Melissa	McAdams	USAID
83	Jacqueline	McComb	Southern University and A&M College
84	Erin	McGuire	UC Davis
85	Antonio	McLaren	1890 Universities Foundation
86	Elvia	Melendez-Ackerman	University of Puerto Rico at Rio Piedras
87	Mike	Michener	USAID
88	Jan	Middendorf	Sustainable Intensification Innovation Lab (SIIL) at Kansas State University
89	Salma	Mountassir	Tetra Tech ARD
90	Fridah	Mubichi-Kut	Cornell
91	Rangaswamy	Muniappan	Virginia Tech
92	Geoffrey	Musyoki	Oikocredit international
93	Nkole	Mwamba	Savañnah Zambia
94	Devotha	Mwazembe	Tuskegee University
95	Amanda	Nataro	USAID/DDI/ITR/R
96	Semeni	Ngozi	University of Dar es Salaam
97	Moffatt	Ngugi	USAID
98	Obadiah	Njue	University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
99	Laura	Norton	USAID
100	James	Obuya	Southern University Ag Center
101	James	Oehmke	No Response
102	Michael	Ogunbiyi	SM SUNRISE GLOBAL VISIONS (SSGV)
103	Stanley	Okenwa	A Little Drop that Counts

#	First Name	Last Name	Organization
104	Shaleen	Old Coyote	Little Big Horn College
105	Haley	Oliver	Purdue University
106	Farhana	Omara	Ministry of public health
107	Robert	Onyeneke	Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike, Nigeria
108	Rimnoma	Ouedraogo	Penn State
109	Olubukola	Oyediji	Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria
110	Victoria	Parker	Purdue University
111	Harriett	Paul	Florida A&M University
112	Adrian	Quijada	Tohono O'odham Community College
113	Saboor	Rahmany	Texas Water Resources Institute
114	Kathryn	Reider	World Vision US
115	James	Rhoads	University of Georgia
116	Gina	Rico Mendez	Mississippi State University
117	Gloria	Rojas	University of Puerto Rico in Ponce
118	Saturn	Rouge	Southern University and A&M College; College of Ag
119	H.C.	Russell	CARET
120	Oumarou	Samna	No Response
121	Ashish	Saxena	USAID
122	John	Scicchitano	Pangea Global Ventures
123	Noor	Seddiq	Howard University
124	Manoj	Shukla	NMSU
125	Ulanda	Simpson	No Response
126	Hari	Singh	Fort Valley State University
127	Amit	Smotrich	USAID/RFS
128	Suzanne	Stluka	USDA NIFA
129	Allen	Stripling	UGA/Peanut Innovation Lab
130	Oyinkan	Tasie	MSU

#	First Name	Last Name	Organization
131	Teklehaimanot Haileselassie	Teklu	Addis Ababa University
132	Yohana	Tesfamariam Tekeste	Tetra Tech
133	Sakeitha	Thomas	Tetra Tech
134	Tebug	Thomas Tumasang	University of Dschang, Cameroon
135	Jennifer	Tikka	USAID
136	Kayla	Tolbert	No Response
137	Lauren	Trondsen	Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Safety
138	Crystal	Vance	Southern University
139	Ogalo	Vincent	BIDS Foundation
140	Brent	Wells	USAID
141	Janel	Yamamoto	GoFarm Hawaii
142	Osei-Agyeman	Yeboah	North Carolina A&T State University
143	Allison	Young	Kentucky State University
144	Ayah Talal	Zaidalkilani	University of Petra
145	Erlich Honest	Zausomue	JUN Investment Cc
146	Laura	Zseleczy	Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Fish, Mississippi State University
BIFAD Secretariat and Support Staff			
147	Carmen	Benson	Tetra Tech, BIFAD Support Team
148	Clara	Cohen	USAID, Bureau for Resilience and Food Security
149	Tommy	Crocker	Tetra Tech, BIFAD Support Team
150	Reid	Hamel	Tetra Tech, BIFAD Support Team
151	Rachel	Helbig	Tetra Tech, BIFAD Support Team
152	Alice	Mukunzi	Tetra Tech, BIFAD Support Team

ANNEX 5: PUBLIC COMMENT AND MATERIALS PROVIDED TO THE BOARD

No.	First Name	Last Name	Organization	Date
1	Jean	Public	Not applicable (N/A)	June 8, 2023
<p>Submitted Email:</p> <p>“re june 28 2023 meeting - i cannot attend but have opinions for the record</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. do not strengthen usaid,which is already too big. we need toconcentrate on making america and the american people strong. concentrate on doin right by america and stop looking out for the world. 2. no direct dialogue. we are to have open and transparent govt, of the peopleby the people for the people and that means americans. stop this out of control overreaching. worry about america which has endless problems of its own. 3. do not strengthen collaboration with msis. nobody in america even knows what the heck msis is. this is not a decent thing for the american people since they have no understanding of this entire proposal of msis. 4. usaid shows proclivity to ge foods, genetically experimented on foods that are not labelled so that they are sneaky, and unnatural food,its farm animals are sickly. we need to improve ag in america. stop spendin our tax dollars on other countries and get american food decent and healthy again. usda is doin a lousy job of feedin gamerica healthy food. pigs have diarrhea. hens are dying, abused and get no health care or ever a little bit of sun.pigs cant even move around.the indecency of the american food system is completely unhealthy. focus on america. we are sick of the lousy job that usda is doing.” 				
2	N/A	N/A	N/A	June 11, 2023
<p>Submitted Email:</p> <p>“i donot support any part of this proposal. i think we must leave it as it is. i find nothing in this proposal that is necessary or proper for this agency. it is a waste of american tax dollars in full. this comment is for teh publiic record please receipt. [Contact Information Removed] agency gets a grade of f minus or zero for its work t his year. we dont need more of what this agnecy does. it is not helpful to america”</p>				
3	Andrew	Kirabira	Uganda Martyrs University	June 27, 2023
<p>Submitted Email:</p> <p>“Kindly find attached a power point presentation which I wish the meeting tomorrow to consider the points therein.</p> <p>Attached as well is my CV.</p> <p>I would be very glad if I could be availed with an oppportunity to elaborate the points therein at an opportune time.</p> <p>Thank you very much for your kindness in this matter.”</p>				

No.	First Name	Last Name	Organization	Date
<p>Attached References (not posted publicly):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint • Resume 				
4	Matthew	Blair	Tennessee State University	July 7, 2023
<p>Submitted Google Form Response:</p> <p>If we divide USAID activities with MSI universities into five year increments, I would be interested to know when decreases or increases occurred to see which models of engagement have best worked for true partnership. I will note that the era of CRSP projects seemed to be more open to MSI engagement than the era of Innovation Labs. The 90s better than the 2000s and certainly better than 2020s. Management of projects has become much more concentrated and less distributed. Perhaps the PWI universities involved in ILs have become more entrenched rather than open during recent times and their share of project funds has increased. Perhaps it is the project complexity as defined by USAID or the system of quick start short projects and long term projects which favor the well connected over the less well connected research programs. I also see that the competitive programs have been implemented haphazardly and unlike programs in USDA or NSF there are no reviewer comments, open calls for reviewers or chances for re-submissions. Overall MSIs have been encouraged to apply as junior partners but the cost to benefit ratio of doing so has been high as proposals have a low chance of being accepted and no re-submission system operates. Collaborators have been selected from MSI but often without adequate funding or involvement, bordering on tokenism rather than true representation. The composition of the advisory boards for the ILs is also problematic as very few have voices for MSIs from MSIs. The same circle of PWI university faculty seem to be on multiple advisory boards at once, if not the same people, the same "usual lead" universities are represented. All of this reduces the effectiveness of the USAID programs because there is no diversity of approaches to development programs. Better use of the full range of experiences in international development would be advised for USAID programs (faculty who are international from FtF countries, have international experience in those countries or have been Peace Corps volunteers or something similar should be on research projects and advisory boards). MSIs tend to represent these groups better or at least would be complementary, if University name recognition and large Management Entities (equaling large sponsored programs offices with high overheads) were not such a principal criteria for Project selection!</p>				
5	Okenwa	Stanley Nwojo	A Little Drop that Counts	July 7, 2023
<p>Submitted Google Form Response:</p> <p>As the MSIs emerged as a response to a history of inequality and lack of minority access to majority institutions. The term "Minority Institutions" (MIs) is defined accordingly in the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) as an institution of higher education whose enrollment of a single minority or a combination of minorities exceeds 50 percent of the total enrollment additional funding to these post-secondary schools to provide expanded and improved student educational opportunities.</p>				

No.	First Name	Last Name	Organization	Date
<p>A mutually responsive and supportive partnership between USAID and the U.S. higher education community is vital to achieve broad global development objectives and MSIs are uniquely well-positioned to partner with USAID for better and effective results.</p>				
6	Gary	Alex	National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy (NCFAP)	July 10, 2023
<p>Submitted Google Form Response:</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft TOR for the BIFAD MSI Engagement Sub-Committee. USAID has an extensive history of engagement with MSIs, with some outstanding program results, but also with an extensive history of frustrations on both sides of this partnership.</p> <p>The 2010 Working Group had a purpose of making “recommendations to increase MSI participation in USAID initiatives.” It was clear what the goal was and whether it was to improve international development assistance impacts or to assist the MSIs. This may be the reason the initiative seemed to flounder. A BIFAD presentation a few (perhaps coming from this group) was depressingly devoid of insights and analysis supportive of new ideas in this area. The current initiative must be a more serious effort in this regard.</p> <p>Comments as follow:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is little indication of what – if any – resources the MSI Sub-Committee will have to work with. Presumably this would be limited, especially as far as USAID funding may go. Is there a possibility of accessing funds from another source? A foundation? Other sources? Some limited funding would be extremely useful for the subcommittee to gather information and formulate recommendations. 2. There is – obviously – a conflict of interest inherent in this effort. MSI representative will want to access USAID resources (“get the money”). That is fully understandable and fine. But, there must be other guardrails to increase the chances of getting unbiased analyses and viable recommendations that can benefit USAID programs and developing countries. The following comments may help with that. 3. The Subcommittee’s four objectives are a mixed bag. Objective One calling for “thought-leadership” is a heavy lift. This requires extensive capacity and experience in development work. The World Bank and USAID – both engaged full-time in development – struggle with this. Major US universities, NGOs, and consulting firms can aspire to this, but with difficulty. Don’t have high hopes here, Objectives Two and Three for Dialog and Collaboration are do-able. Objective Four is fairly verbose but seems to focus on increasing human capacity in MSIs for international development work. This is a little strange in light of USAID’s stated objective of localization and funding and building capacity of in-country institutions. (It is do-able and maybe most appropriately through funding for MSI staff and students to spend multi-year assignments on developing programs overseas.) 4. Membership on the Subcommittee will be crucial. The TOR calls for members from diverse institutions and disciplines. It is sorely lacking by not calling for experience and expertise in agriculture and rural development (development generally). Without this, the Subcommittee may not 				

No.	First Name	Last Name	Organization	Date
<p>understand what they are trying to get into. This would be a disservice to all. This needs to be addressed.</p> <p>5. The TOR calls for the Subcommittee to address “agriculture, food security, and nutrition”. This is fine, but there must be recognition that these – while overlapping – are different fields. Agriculture has extensive natural resource linkages, economic linkages that are not all food-related, and rural development and social linkages. Food security is quite broad encompassing health, water and sanitation, food safety, safety net, and other issues. Nutrition may be influenced by all of the above but involves determining and promoting optimal human intake of required nutrients. [Noted: I have done a serious disservice in these rough descriptions!] The point is that to address this range of issue the Subcommittee members must have expertise in each of them. A specialist in one may be of little use in the others.</p> <p>6. Finally, and importantly, the Subcommittee’s must be based on actual MSI capacity, not aspirational interest, in engagement in international development. To engage an institution in international work for which it lacks capacity is likely to damage the reputations of the institution, the individuals involved, USAID, and BIFAD, and most critically constrain developmental impacts of programs involved. The Subcommittee should document at a minimum for each MSI the numbers of faculty and staff, numbers of students, and other resources at the institution for each of Agriculture, Food Security, and Nutrition. Knowing what really exists is an essential base for recommendations for engagement and any further capacity building. Almost certainly, many of the 700 institutions have no agricultural programs and some legacy programs have withered to a few staff. Nutrition expertise is likely to be much more widely available. Food security expertise needs to be defined by the Subcommittee and documented accordingly.</p> <p>Best of luck.</p>				
7	James	Mawanda	Foundation for Climate Health Solutions	July 11, 2023
<p>Submitted Google Form Response:</p> <p>In the wake of the increasing impacts on public health due to climate change, the need to engage the communities, remarkably amplifying awareness, is now. How can BIFAD's Subcommittee on Minority Serving Institution (MSI) Engagement and Leadership and USAID's Agricultural, Food Security, and Nutrition Programming address this new development sustainably and resiliently?</p>				
8	Nick	Blumenthal	International Leadership Foundation	July 13, 2023
<p>Submitted Google Form Response:</p> <p>I am a minority university student within the United States engaged in national and international food system advocacy, and I appreciate mentioned efforts to recruit and ensure minority representation. As referenced in the Proposal, youth perspectives are integral to understanding the modern hunger and malnutrition challenges that face younger generations. Recognizing the diversity supplied by youth perspectives, how will youth leaders with relevant experience within this sector be recruited? Will nominations for minority youth expert candidates be considered if supported by an organization?</p>				

No.	First Name	Last Name	Organization	Date
9	Michael	Ogunbiyi	SM Sunrise Global Visions (SSGV)	July 15, 2023

Submitted Google Form Response:

From my perspective, I urge the BIFAD to keep strengthening its strategy on the development challenges in Agriculture and food security to establish a regional subcommittee basis that will support tackling the challenges that face in the sector of agriculture and food security. This establishment should encourage the participation of indigenous people affected by climate change and include youth and women in the practices of agriculture to combat food insecurity and climate disasters. The development should enable the subcommittee to continuously engage in collaboration in MSI to facilitate institutional programming in agriculture, food security, nutrition policies, and favorable policies that will effectively mobilize the interest of people in the regions in participating. Thereby providing tools, resources, and fellowship programs to meaningful develop the leadership skills of the people.