



Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa

Research-Based Advocacy for African Agricultural Development

Partnership Summary Notes
(NB: NOT TO BE TREATED AS A TRANSCRIPT)

US Food Assistance Programs:
Assessing Progress and Challenges Related to Local and Regional Purchase, Food
Quality, Host Country Capacity, and Moving to a Comprehensive Approach

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Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

INTRODUCTION

Steve McDonald, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

We have seen a growing commitment to using agricultural development to drive growth and reduce poverty; embrace community/country-led approaches; build local capacity across government, community and farmer organizations; coordinate donors and stakeholder investments through country-led plans; improve productivity and market access for smallholders, especially women; catalyze private sector investments, finance, and trade through legal and regulatory reforms; utilize science and technology to increase productivity; maintain crucial natural resources; improve nutrition, specifically among women and children; and adopt a whole of US government (USG) approach to increase accountability.

Today we seek to assess where these efforts stand through the perspectives of a variety of actors.

Peter McPherson, APLU President and PCHPA Board Chair

In Washington, it's easier today than in past years to fall into battles where debate is limited to what the facts are. Clashes have occurred without parties understanding the debate. We all got together a few years back to think about Food for Peace (FFP) and increase clarity on issues of local purchase and monetization—not just talking about policy, but what the facts were. The Partnership felt it could be a forum to discuss these issues.

The March 2006 meeting brought together the government, private sector, and NGOs for a discussion. The conclusion was that a “statement of the facts” was needed. Subsequently, a major project was launched at the Partnership; Emmy Simmons, Mary Chambliss, Julie Howard, and others produced documents that narrowed the questions significantly, though not without sparking some disagreement.

Subsequent discussions around the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust, procurement practices, etc. provided real contributions to the 2008 Farm Bill. Not all efforts were successful, but they clearly represent a step forward. The implementation of these changes hasn't been cut and dry, as these problems are hard to categorize as right or wrong. Now, two years later, we are looking at where we are in the implementation process.

H.E. Amelia Sumbana, Ambassador of Mozambique to the US

Thank you to hosts and attendees – it is an honor to be here among friends of Africa.

Food assistance plays a major role in Africa, particularly Mozambique, as a humanitarian response to natural and manmade disasters. It was critical during Mozambique's recent crises, feeding displaced populations during the civil war and drought victims in 1980s. Aid has been vital in maintaining the food supply. Additionally, Food for Work and monetization programs helped reconstruct the country after the conflict, funding the construction of schools, hospitals, etc.

Today, Mozambique is less dependent on food aid thanks to successes in food production resulting from the Food Production Action Plan (2008-2011) and Agricultural Marketing Strategy, which addressed R&D, infrastructure support, and commercial farming. Sustainable food production is a medium-term goal; the USG and NGOs are both important players in this. USG programs go beyond food aid to address local production capacity, trade, and market access facilitation. Mozambique is also honored to be a pilot country under Feed the Future (FTF), a much-needed program.

Local and regional procurement (LRP) is crucial in that it supports local agriculture and contributes to regional integration. The World Food Program (WFP) has been long-time partner using LRP and creating markets and opportunities for farmers. Food assistance is a necessity but must be demand-driven and adapted to beneficiary needs. It must serve as a humanitarian response to crisis while building capacity through R&D, infrastructure, and market integration.

The USG special session on agriculture and food security at this year's AGOA forum provides an opportunity for African leaders to engage US counterparts on these issues. Africa is ready to be part of productive development in world.

PANEL #1: IMPLEMENTING LOCAL/REGIONAL PURCHASE & PURCHASE FOR PROGRESS PROGRAMS

Emmy Simmons, PCHPA Board of Directors

The 2008 Farm Bill discussion highlighted a potential role for the US in local and regional purchase (or LRP). In 2009, the world community invested just under \$1 billion in LRP, 70% of it in developing countries. Many European donors and Canada are now providing food aid in the form of cash, facilitating the purchase of commodities both internationally and in the countries and regions where they are being distributed. Some of this cash (or vouchers purchased with the cash) are being provided directly to recipients, who then assume responsibility for securing food in their own local markets. The scale of this shift toward local and regional procurement is very significant. Those organizations purchasing food aid can be significant players in local and regional markets.

The World Food Program (WFP) has been the leader in LRP for the last decade, although the US is still considering it a new tool in its food aid toolkit. The pilot program authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill is just moving into implementation this year under USDA management. Supplemental budget actions taken in 2008 and 2009 have given USAID additional funding under the International Disaster Assistance (IDA) account for local and regional purchase programs.

WFP continues to refine its use of LRP and is now in the third year of its Purchase for Progress program (P4P), which, by organizing procurement in certain ways, hopes to better link smallholders to productive markets and serve as an incentive to increased agricultural productivity. The US has started using the LRP tool in more expanded way than the Farm Bill predicted. While the Bill authorized a \$60 million pilot program to test the LRP approach, budget supplementals have been granted to USAID through the 2008-2010 appropriations to further fund LRP.

Today we will update our information on what is happening with LRP in Africa, identify challenges encountered and progress made, and look closely at monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of LRP programs.

Allan Jury, Director, World Food Programme US Relations Office

LRP is an integral part of the WFP's work. In 2009, 2.6 million metric tons of food—more than 50% of total WFP food distributed—were purchased by WFP; 80% of that came from developing countries and would generally meet the definition of local/regional purchase. The largest region was Asia (especially Pakistan and India). The second largest region was Africa (especially South Africa and Uganda) with food purchases valued at \$228 million. LRP in dollar terms peaked in 2008 but was down in 2009, primarily because of lower prices following the food price spike.

The goal of LRP has been reducing the cost and speed of delivery for emergency programs. The last two years have seen movement toward other tools, such as P4P (targeting smallholder farmers) and cash and voucher usage. P4P is a five-year program (2008-2013) that has broad donor support; the Gates Foundation is the largest donor. The difference in P4P is its explicit focus on smallholder purchase and LRP's income benefit aspects. Its goal is to purchase from 5,000 smallholders – to date, P4P has purchased 50,000 tons from 17 countries and 100 farmer organizations. Over 25,000 people have been trained. The US has become a key player in LRP, providing \$180 million to WFP over the past two years. Most is from the USAID program, and some from USDA pilot. Also for the first time, cash programs not related to LRP are coming through; Cash for Work has been a large effort in Haiti. We are likely to see other cash and vouchers programs appear.

LRP impacts in terms of reduced costs and improved timeliness of delivery have been measured, but P4P's efforts at linking smallholder farmers are at a much earlier stage. The links are clear, but we're still trying out this approach. Anecdotal evidence is there; some countries have seen dramatic success (doubling farmer income, engaging more women). We're trying out innovative tools to enable farmers to engage, such as in Uganda, where farmers get a receipt for food which they can use as collateral to access credit and other resources to invest for next season. It's clear it's going to take a lot of work to effectively measure the program's development impact—that's a complex equation that goes beyond cost and efficiency measures.

There needs to be synergy between donors' tools so this isn't a competition between in-kind food vs. cash/vouchers/LRP, but a decision about what's most appropriate. In Niger today, we started with US in-kind aid when we had time for longer delivery times; as needs become clearer and time to act is shorter, we are moving to LRP and cash options. As the US now can provide both in-kind and cash food assistance, this gives WFP a degree of flexibility we didn't have in the past.

Challenges include the inherent difficulty in dealing with smallholders and the most vulnerable populations. Market reliability is toughest—pricing issues, quality standards. But there are quality issues with in-kind shipment also. Furthermore, the P4P experiment has found that the input and support side for farmers doesn't always keep up with what we can do on marketing side; it's a challenge to get input and especially *credit* systems in place that allow farmers to take advantage of market opportunities.

With general LRP, price monitoring is undertaken in partnership with others such as FEWSNET. We must be able to adjust purchases if it appears prices are affected. P4P poses significant M&E challenges. The Gates Foundation writes it into projects – WFP does baseline studies looking at farmers groups' income and productivity, but there must be follow-up studies. The challenge is also finding control groups. We need to be looking at P4P farmers and non-P4P farmers to see the differences in incomes and outcomes.

John Brooks, Office of Food for Peace, USAID

The Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP) under FFP is new. The FFP office has been involved in LRP programs before, but this initiative is managed by FFP, and expands LRP involvement to include cash transfers and food voucher capacity. These components allow greater engagement with PVOs. The program started in April of this year, and the response has been unexpectedly huge. Nearly 50 concept papers were put forward proposing interventions globally, half from PVOs and half from WFP. Applications are under review; after the initial call for proposals, 20-25 selected applicants asked to submit more detailed proposals.

There are four criteria for proposals. First, the situation must meet the definition of emergency, defined as a specific shock leading to food insecurity; either a natural disaster or population-displacing disaster. These proposals complement existing emergency programs. The first award was granted to Mercy Corps Niger, with the whole grant making process – from Concept Paper through signed award – being completed in 37 days.

Second, there must be adequate justification for using funds under the EFSP rather than Title II. Specifically, one of the following conditions must be met: 1) Title II food aid cannot arrive in a sufficiently timely manner or prepositioned stocks are unable to address emergency needs; 2) local/regional procurement, cash or food voucher programs, due to market conditions, are more appropriate than Title II; or 3) in certain cases, significantly more beneficiaries can be served through the use of local/regional procurement, cash and/or vouchers.

Third, the situation must be justified within the USG food aid response to date. This takes into consideration a combination of Title II and anticipated EFSP funds in response to overall needs in a particular country.

Fourth, does the situation represent a current high-priority emergency food security need. This requires FFP to consider a number of factors, including the availability of funds under the EFSP and the time remaining in the fiscal year.

Ultimately, the EFSP seeks to complement, not supplant, Title II.

Title II prepositioned commodities play a key role as well in determining the appropriateness of using EFSP funds. FFP currently maintains two commodity prepositioned warehouses: one in the U.S. and the other in the Horn of Africa nation of Djibouti. Both warehouses allow FFP to significantly cut down on the procurement and transit time associated with traditional Title II allocations. Depending on the country, FFP can move Title II commodities from these warehouses into a particular arena quickly to have the necessary impact rather than using LRP funds.

The objective is to save lives, whether we use Title II or EFSP. It's just a question of which tool is more timely, appropriate and efficient.

We continue to keep an open line of communication between USDA and FFP and our team is preparing to conduct monitoring and evaluation field missions in the coming months. We also gain insight on local markets from FEWSNET.

Jamie Fischer, Food Assistance Division, Office of Capacity Building and Development, Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA

The USDA LRP pilot program is operating on a small budget—\$25m this year, \$25m more on the way. The first distributions have been to African nations under P4P(?) proposals to ensure they have the capacity to do market impact assessment. They must make sure purchases can be monitored to prevent negative market impacts.

This year, \$12.5m in funding is committed, and several more proposals are under review to use the remaining resources. These are split between emergency and non-emergency proposals; the largest is \$4.7m in Niger and smallest is \$100,000 in Mali. We are seeking to fund emergency programs to gauge the success of LRP. Since USDA traditionally does development-type programs and USAID has the budget for emergency programs, they're getting most of the proposals. Activities must wrap up by Sept 2011, so we're trying to get proposals in early to start implementing.

The first challenge for us was the number of development proposals; we've tried to accommodate funding requests while recognizing there's a short window of time to implement. We must prioritize emergency programs from now on. We also face challenges related to development programs' sustainability under such short timelines. A number of interested PVOs are coming in with add-on activities to previous in-kind programs, adding value without creating false expectations that the project will continue indefinitely. We must have these sorts of exit/transition strategies.

On the positive side, there is interest in small-scale targeted development programs for agricultural initiatives or intervention to complement in-kind aid. In the realm of McGovern-Dole, there are lots of proposals related to the nutritional content of school meals and diet diversification. One success has been in Mali – we granted \$1m to WFP to procure smallholder commodities, including from women already receiving support through McGovern-Dole. They had formed a savings and loan group and had had no defaults; proceeds were used for income-generating activities. They were targeted for LRP. With these women(?), however, it's not possible to ramp up production further. They remain marginally food insecure; a drought would tip the balance.

Phil Thomas, Assistant Director, International Affairs and Trade, GAO

The 2008 GAO review in preparation for the Farm Bill was requested by the Senate Agriculture Committee. It found that it took 4-6 months to deliver commodities, and administrative costs were \$.60-.65 per \$1. In wake of this report, Congressman Payne asked GAO, with WFP and USAID assistance, to look at LRP and analyze its cost and timeliness. This review found that from 2001-2008, LRP was 25% less costly than in-kind aid overall (globally); in Africa, 34% less costly; in Asia, 29%. From 2004-2008, time saved on delivery was 56 days; 106 days for regionally procured; 112 days for locally procured. We tried to look at issues associated with economic and agricultural development.

P4P is just beginning – it's too early to evaluate LRP as a whole, though time and cost savings have been clearly document. It can provide flexibility but is not a replacement for in-kind aid. Rather, it's a tool for emergency and non-emergency situations. It provides favorable pressure for in-kind food aid to be more effective in prepositioning, procurement, and shipping.

There are still concerns about challenges: a lack of reliable suppliers; restricted donor funds; poor infrastructure; weak legal systems and institutions; quality standards too high for producers; unreliable market intelligence; and problems of quality which affect both in-kind and LRP. Cargo preference requirements have yet to be dealt with – the twenty year old MoU needs updating, and must deal with regional procurement in particular. There are efforts underway to reconcile that, but the process is slow and tedious.

GAO has consistently found M&E deficiencies in both in-kind aid and LRP and has called for a more strategic approach and M&E upgrades in all programs. The Gates model is \$.15 per \$1. The USG has historically minimized this funding. It's time to follow up on GAO recommendations, particularly since there's a growing interest in accountability on the Hill. Within the next year or two, GAO will call again for increased effectiveness.

Q&A

There are often transport company monopolies in African countries. How can we know if benefits are being captured and the quality of smallholder products is improved?

- **Allan Jury:** P4P countries are often more stable, so there are fewer problems with monopolies. This is still something we must look at. On the quality side—in Guatemala they are piloting a simple kit of key points that can be taken to the field to check storage facilities and recommend steps to improve them. Drying is the main problem. We have invested resources in warehousing and other supply-side factors to address this.

- **Jamie Fischer:** We're seeing small-scale targeted agricultural development programs taking a decentralized approach at the village level. This cuts transport costs significantly. In non-surplus areas, transport costs are built into commodity prices so it's not just one company monopolizing the market. Seeing that some areas don't have warehousing systems, we try to stagger delivery of shipments.

Looking at the 2008/2009 budget supplementals and money allocated for LRP in the Development Account, is there a brighter future for LRP?

- **John Brooks:** I'm not sure about the development assistance component. The LRP focus has been on emergency situations thus far. **Dale Skoric:** \$30m is being used for P4P, not through FFP. There is \$20m for LRP.
- **Allan Jury:** There are no resources dedicated for development-oriented LRP. The FTF Guide highlights linkages that also appear in the P4P criteria. The goal of those projects won't be reducing cost or delivery time, but will be sustainable long-term impact. With a compelling case for development among smallholders linked to national plans, it could be considered as one of several activities under FTF.

P4P has found credit and input services a challenge. How might USAID and USDA better support the LRP environment?

- **Susan Bradley:** FTF's intent is to be supportive of P4P, PVOs interested in development, and others in making LRP work for the smallholder. We can do this with emergency procurements, but also need to support existing development objectives. We should see changes over the next twelve months with regard to LRP and its impact.

WFP has part of its website devoted to procurement locations. There must be tremendous shipment costs associated with moving food globally. Has there been review of the costs of shipping LRPs in comparison to US in-kind shipping?

- **Allan Jury:** Import parity is used in shipment decisions—we look at the cost of buying locally vs. the cost of buying elsewhere + transport costs. There has been no global study because decisions are completely dependent on context and location. In Uganda, which is landlocked and has significant local food production, local procurement can provide significant cost savings. In some other countries, which are food deficit and where internal transport costs are far greater than international shipping costs, there is not as much of a difference between LRP and international in-kind assistance. Variation between countries is too wide to generalize.

PANEL #2: IMPROVING THE NUTRITIONAL QUALITY OF FOOD AID AND TARGETING

Mary Chambliss, PCHPA Board of Directors

It's fascinating to chart which topics the food security community is interested in over time. Nutrition is an issue that was long neglected and is now considering of crucial importance. Much research coming out of US domestic programs has highlighted both positive and negative nutritional impacts of food aid, leading to this focus.

A two-year food aid quality study underway at FFP and Tufts University is looking at science and technology information. There have been two meetings with USAID and USDA people to create a report on food aid quality toward the end of 2011.

Bonnie McClafferty, HarvestPlus; *“Improving the Nutritional Quality of Staple Crops through biofortification: An Innovation and Opportunity for Food Assistance”*

HarvestPlus is looking at micronutrient deficiencies; they’ve been found to have a profound impact on child mortality and entire populations in regions where the food supply is limited to staples. Weapons in the nutrition arsenal include supplementation for critical and clinical situations, fortification, and diet diversity—the ultimate solution, which poverty constrains. The CGIAR idea is breeding for micronutrient content rather than production alone.

This aims for a population intervention, not a targeted one. . Biofortification is designed to shift populations from insufficiency to sufficiency with the food that is already eaten every day. That said, as with many food-based interventions, mothers’ health is an obvious entry point. This is particularly true for minerals; breast milk vitamin content may improve with vitamin A-rich staples.

There are three main questions that need to be addressed with biofortification. First, can breeding be successful in increasing nutrients without affecting yields? Targets for crop micronutrient content are set by nutritionists. The aim is to provide a goal for plant breeders that will have a measurable impact on nutritional status given estimated consumption levels, bioavailability and other parameters. The plant breeding process starts with identifying genetic variation in crops that have elevated levels of these nutrients, then re-introducing these varieties and their genes into the high yielding staple crops currently under development.

Second, will micronutrients be absorbed at sufficient levels that we’ll see change? There are lots of studies, usually 3-year, on effectiveness. Numerous studies are underway that include dietary intake analysis, development of effective nutritional indicators for foods, bioavailability studies of these crops, and human efficacy and effectiveness studies.

And finally, will farmers adopt the technology and will consumers eat the crops? HarvestPlus is just beginning to tackle this enormous question. Pro-vitamin sweet potatoes have been disseminated in Mozambique and Uganda, and studies that shed light on the most effective way to disseminate these new nutritious crops have been conducted and the sweet potato themselves are having an impact.

So where are these crops? HarvestPlus biofortified crops have been transferred to agricultural research institutes in developing countries; they are public goods owned by the countries that want to take them on. These include biofortified zinc- rice in South Asia, Provitamin A sweet potatoes in Uganda and Mozambique, Provitamin A maize in Zambia, Provitamin A cassava in Nigeria and DRC, and iron-fortified beans in Rwanda and DRC. HarvestPlus will assist extension services with the new technology. NGOs will be critical for bringing technology and encouraging acceptance among farmers particularly in Africa.

This has much relevance for food assistance. The next step is to weave crops in LRP programs.

Ron Croushorn, Director, Food Assistance Division, Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA

In the 1960s and 70s, we distributed a larger quantity of food assistance – the focus was on supply and availability. Into the 2000s, we started focusing more on nutrition. One product that spurred interest was corn-soy blend, which was used for energy and protein among vulnerable populations. There were questions coming from nutritionists about the actual delivery of nutrition at the human level, however. There were also problems with the quality of C-S blends. GAO issued 2008 and 2009 reports on food aid quality, while SUSTAIN did studies through USDA to improve commodity specifications and lab protocols for testing. There’s a USAID/Tufts study in progress now. Lots of groups have become interested in these quality issues.

Often, we can see quality problems visually, particularly when dealing with less processed products. But if quality problems are hidden through processing, we need to resort to science. This is where we are, and it will continue to be an issue in quality assessment.

Congress has expressed great interest in nutrition for food assistance programs. In FY2010 appropriations, \$14m was set aside for nutritious and micronutrient-fortified food products. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture was granted \$4m to support development and field testing of new products for all US food assistance programs.

Another \$10m was granted through the McGovern-Dole appropriation for product development and food testing for the McGovern-Dole program specifically. They had to make sure money would be used consistently within the program. Priority was given to R&D programs already in existence so new efforts would be a continuation of existing programs. This spring we solicited proposals and received 3 responses; awards will be given over the next month. This may not absorb the full \$10m, so we will consider re-soliciting.

We work through WFP and PVOs for grant implementation, but there could be great role for private sector groups looking to invest in developing and testing new product. Non-traditional partnerships will be critical in making the pilot program work.

Anne Swindale, Project Director, FANTA-2: *“Improving Cost-Effectiveness of Prevention of Malnutrition in Under Twos Approach” (PM2A)*

PM2A is a food assistance approach to prevent child nutrition that targets a package of health and nutrition interventions to all pregnant women, mothers of children, and children under two years. This period is considered that of greatest vulnerability and greatest potential for benefit (the “1,000 day window of opportunity”) for which there are lifelong consequences of non-intervention. This program targets prevention and is a population-based intervention rather than one that targets specifically malnourished children. The core PM2A package has three components: behavior change communication to improve critical behaviors around feeding, hygiene, and health seeking; preventative health services for critical interventions and identifying severe acute malnutrition; and conditional food rations (individual for mother/child or family).

There is a strong evidence base for this approach. In an effectiveness trial comparing preventive (all children under two) to curative approaches (malnourished under 5), prevention worked much better against stunting, underweight, etc. However, they couldn't document absolute impact due to lack of control group in the study. FFP has funded the “limited scale up” of PM2A in Burundi and Guatemala, which will provide new testing ground as they seek to lower cost and improve effectiveness. New research initiatives will allow for a control group. They will consider the impact of varying ration size and composition, comparing CSB, micronutrient sprinkles, and lipid-based nutrient supplements, then assess impact during the duration of exposure. It will take 4-5 years to finish these studies. We can also build an evidence base in other ways. T2 awardees are experimenting with PM2A approach, understanding that Haiti model doesn't fit everywhere.

Q&A

What sort of basic fortification can you achieve working with national and local millers in fortification and food blending?

- **Bonnie McClafferty:** Biofortified crops can provide a large percentage of micronutrient needs. At the Rwanda WFP warehouse, there are just beans in bags. But there's work being done in small mills. GAIN is working a lot on this.

Some programs address “under two”s, but there is a gap between there and school feeding. What can be done, and what is role of school feeding?

- **Anne Swindale:** Breast feeding rations are a critical component, but it's the complementary feeding from 6-24 months when decreases in nutritional status generally occur. PM2A provides

services through a child's second birthday. Yes, there is a gap between there and school feeding. The malnutrition-related outcomes for 3-5 aren't stunting. They might have micronutrient deficiencies and we should consider targeting those, but stunting must be dealt with before 24 months. We should still be shifting toward implementing through the education sector due to other benefits.

- **Ron Croushorn:** The McGovern-Dole program is \$100-200m in funding, largely for school feeding, though it has multiple goals. One goal is to provide incentive to send kids to school. It's about education, building up facilities, and teacher trainings. The program has the ability to fund MCH-type programs. It does fund some take-home ration programs which try to address these gaps. We're looking at USAID and MCH-type approaches for complementary programs in USAID/USDA funding.

What is the role and input of local actors in planning and implementing initiatives?

- **Bonnie McClafferty:** Though seeds are initially developed at international research centers, work is done in national centers after. They are given over free of charge for governments to use in food security initiatives. Original nutrition targets are based on local requirements – they look at nutritional insufficiencies and adjust breeding targets to meet requirements of communities.
- **Anne Swindale:** PVO implementing partners are generally good about participatory approaches to program development and implementation. There's a lot to be learned from this approach.
- **Ron Croushorn:** For both WFP and PVOs, it's critical to have local actors involved and on-board. We see it in dealing with local farmers groups, getting national governments involved in school feeding, and training communities to take on responsibility in those programs. We also see parent-teacher organizations created to continue school nutrition programs. There is real acceptance of these development approaches within countries.

PANEL #3: IMPLEMENTING A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH, AND OLD AND NEW TOOLS TO IMPROVE COUNTRY CAPACITY TO MANAGE FOOD SECURITY

Ellen Levinson, President, Levinson & Associates and Executive Director, Alliance for Global Food Security

Food security, defined under FTF, has four components: availability, access, utilization, stability. There is more to consider than LRP; we need appropriate programs to make proper use of available food (nutrition) and ensure stability of food intake at sufficient levels. FTF is guided by the five Rome Principles, which are accepted by many donor and host country governments: invest in country-owned plans for results-based programs and partnerships; strengthen strategic coordination with diverse partners and stakeholders; ensure a comprehensive approach to accelerate inclusive agriculture-led growth and support nutrition; leverage the benefits of multilateral institutions; and deliver on sustained and accountable commitments.

Currently, through U.S. food aid programs, integrated food security programs are being conducted that show improved agricultural productivity, incomes and nutrition of poor, rural households and communities. This is possible because those programs are tailored for the communities they target and integrate a variety of methodologies such as farmer field schools and extension services, strengthening farmer-owned businesses and helping them increase income through participation in processing and marketing, and improving nutrition through “mothers’ clubs” that activate the community to support appropriate child health and nutrition practices (including through production of nutritious foods for the household). Integrated food security programming has not been conducted using development assistance funds because those funds tend to be “stove-piped” for a specific type of activity, such as production or research. However, in other contexts USAID has supported more

dynamic programming with economic support or development assistance funds, allowing funds to be used in more creative ways to address local needs. One example are “Community Livelihood Programs” that build community capacity to determine needs, prioritize needs, develop project plans and obtain funding to support those priorities.

Many of the nongovernmental organizations, such as those that are members of the Alliance for Global Food Security, are already active in integrated food security programs and have a key role to play in developing food security plans and in implementation.. We also need to be sure that private sector is engaged, as that is a critical avenue for sustainable development and growth.

Today’s panel will follow a discussion format, focusing on the following questions:

- How does FtF fit into the broader development context? How well does it address leadership and coordination? Is it sufficiently inclusive and comprehensive?
- Will the implementation plan achieve the FtF goals and objectives? Is the “tool kit” sufficient? Does it cover such things as capacity building, engaging the poor, best practices, monitoring, and evaluation?
- What will the Community Development Fund accomplish? Will a variety of modalities and integrated approaches to address food security needs of the rural poor be permitted outside of food aid programs?

Vijaya Ramachandran, Senior Fellow, Center for Global Development

FTF is much needed. It came after three decades of neglect of agriculture in multilateral institutions (World Bank and multilateral development banks) as well as bilaterals. WB agricultural units were absorbed in natural resource and environment units. We saw an exodus of agricultural scientists and agronomists as the field shifted. There was little interest in serious problems related to increased productivity. We hope to see a reversal of that trend now.

There are still concerns going forward. We must stay with this for the long haul to build capacity. We need to see the administration, Congress, and future administrations stick with these initiatives. Changing production systems is not a short term goal. We need to think about incentives to raise productivity and encourage new crop development. We are working at CGD on pool mechanisms in agriculture, including setting up advanced market commitment for new products like biofortified crops and high yield staples. We then get donors to contribute to this pool. We are having some success and are now considering whether this approach be used, with FTF as a catalyst.

The other emerging big-picture concern is the need to look at regional investments, rather than strictly national investments. All current programs are focused on countries, opening the door to favoritism and categories of priorities and non-priorities. Meanwhile, lots of agricultural development, especially in Africa, depends on regional infrastructure (service delivery, roads, markets).

The FTF investment and implementation process has been well thought out. They are seeking to be very inclusive throughout, and it seems well-designed at this stage. The concern is whether we can, on this end, drum up the technological capacity to provide this support over the long term. We must become concerned with outputs and measures, even if it takes a long time to see results, but not go overboard.

Susan Bradley, Senior Policy Adviser, USAID Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance Bureau

The roots of FTF were in the food price crisis. People began questioning where was the agriculture money was then. Second, people looked for research money, and there was none to be seen.

The previous administration started putting together responses to cover a number of things. The first issue addressed was global food supply – developing countries had enormous potential to increase

production and improve global food supply stability. This led to an overly heavy focus on productivity. We have now seen an evolution toward a balance between production and a focus on markets and trade. Not enough time has been spent on regional focus, it's true. In Africa, the regional mechanics must be right.

The past 24 months have seen incredible effort to improve coordination. The State Department has been strong in insisting on pulling actors to the table to tackle turf issues openly. We're seeing the roots of some real changes in coordination. A few are between USAID and USDA, with attempts to coordinate communication, guidance, and program periods and timelines, such as T2 and FFP. There are still questions about where we're going on lots of controversial issues.

In terms of leadership, we have two excellent deputy FTF coordinators. Ambassador Bill Garvelink oversees development and operations, and Ambassador Patricia Haslach oversees diplomacy—commitments and policy component at the country and regional level to make this sustainable. We are hopeful that these two pieces stay in place, but we are waiting for coordinator. These have been good decisions so far, so we're confident it will be a constructive appointment.

It's also a matter of best practices. Our intent coming out of Dakar is to take investment plans (the surface) and translate them into real, detailed programs and projects on the ground. The intent is to deliberately work with host governments, bring civil society and the private sector to the table, and talk best practices to translate into real projects. The dialogue has to change – partners must ask what they're bringing to the table, including best practices.

With regard to capacity building, every focus country has a FY2010 capacity building plan to train 100 people in government, civil society, and the private sector to develop food security networks. These are not just country-based, but regional networks of champions from different backgrounds.

Regarding M&E, we know the importance of demonstrating success. We must not only talk about the people attending a training, but about impact. We need to identify indicators that take us to outcomes, and develop impact assessment tools. This won't be done this year. It might happen sooner in countries benefiting from supplemental resources (West Africa), where we will see impact sooner.

There has been alignment between focus and non-focus countries. One baseline criteria for focus countries was the potential for agriculture to reduce poverty. It had to be a logical investment choice. Focus countries—most if not all—have agriculture providing pathways out of poverty. Some countries not in that group have huge potential as well (DRC, Sudan, Angola) but were not chosen for other reasons. Programming will be aligned through either ESF or development resources they receive – agriculture and food security programming will look very similar. Hopefully, moving forward, we can stop with this focus/non-focus dialogue and move to just food security.

It's true that Phase 1 focuses on capacity building in government, private sector, and civil society. It takes a lot of assistance to enable countries to put together a strategy. A lot of work was undertaken with the AU to define what comprehensive is. In Africa, there was quick progress on the comprehensive aspect. Consultation hasn't been a strong point – it's hard to know how to ensure its quality. We're hopeful that will happen.

We need inclusive agriculture/nutrition assistance linked to emergency assistance. The tricky word is poverty; there are major differences between \$1.25 per day and \$.25 per day. This initiative is not the Initiative to End Hunger in Africa. We must have growth occurring in the \$1/2/3 per day family, but also must focus on what's below. We see it in Latin America as well as Africa – there is a widening gap alongside growth. We're struggling with translating this into guidance. Available implementation plans show the beginnings of engaging extremely poor. It's hoped that lower food prices will translate into lower prices in urban regions – FTF doesn't provide urban safety nets; only rural/agriculture safety nets. We need all actors to help keep us honest about whether we're impacting the poorest families.

Labor is also a key focus. Developing off-farm opportunities and livelihood diversification are discussed in FTF.

The Community Development Fund a tool for resilience funding. The tensions around such funding have been related to measuring investment impact. It's hard to demonstrate the impact of preventative measures. Maybe this money can help message that in way that makes sense. It's not meant

to do away with monetization. The administration is intent on reducing the use of monetization where it's not having any development impact. It has helped build markets in many places, such as Mozambique. But it is often hard to do and not as efficient as cash transfers.

Bruce White, Catholic Relief Services

At the recent Dakar ECOWAS business meeting, it was interesting to leave DC and see the process unfolding on the ground. It's encouraging that you can see the machinery going. Only 4 ECOWAS countries are targets of FTF, but each of the 15 ECOWAS countries is dovetailing on the multilateral process and is planning domestic action on agricultural. It was a lightbulb moment.

FTF represents a difficult balancing act. These are ambitious goals. The USG needs to provide guidance without being patronizing. There is lots of work to be done on the issue of country-led programs. All donors have thought that NGOs/CSOs should be closely involved, but there are no specific ideas brought forward. The whole ECOWAS meeting was about money and exchange with local governments. They wanted to involve civil society, but there's no money flowing to local CSOs. Countries are supposed to be putting 10% of their budgets aside for agriculture, but governments and donors have not suggested any specific way of developing public-private partnerships at the national level.

The comprehensive approach is a long list of balancing acts. It's important from our perspective to not forget about poor in this context. For example, it's interesting to see the process unfold with "agricultural productivity" and "food security" used interchangeably. Are we talking about national food security or food security among the poor? Digging down and working with the poor, it's more difficult, but there are already lots of wonderful programs in existence. We need to identify, replicate, scale up existing programs. Realistically, the FTF Guide is trying to achieve MDG 1. If we take good programs and cost effectively scale-up, you can move these national indicators.

Monetization has sparked lively discussion in the development community for a long time. CRS monetizes food aid but is looking for alternatives where they are more appropriate. It's a balancing act. We're seeking alternatives, not substitutions, to provide additional tools. The Community Development Fund proposal is seen as wonderful opportunity to provide additional resources to complement monetization and expand 202E. We're now between Farm Bills and need to put development assistance inside FFP for flexibility of implementation for CRS and others. This needs authorizing language.

Gawain Kripke, Oxfam America

With regard to the inclusive nature of FTF, USG parties have been open in the consultative process. It has been somewhat disorganized, but there is not too much to criticize in process. Translating this inclusive nature into country- and multilateral-level processes adds complexity. It hasn't been as effective. They have been trying to hitch FTF to existing flawed processes and have struggled to open up processes in countries without being overbearing. These are philosophical questions yet to be resolved. From country offices, we are hearing that CAADP and FTF consultations haven't been ideal. There are not diverse enough views. We have a long way to go, and we need better ways for implementing and measuring.

At the multilateral level, the Obama administration has been good at cheerleading and fundraising, but the money hasn't all come in. Additionally, the effort has yet to synthesize in clear way with the UN system or other systems perceived to be more established and legitimate. It has yet to be truly incorporated in the multilateral system.

FTF is trying to be truly comprehensive in the US – this is a real virtue. The challenge is the limited money available with which numerous things must be accomplished. It's hard to make choices

about spending to have the highest impact. We need quick victories to maintain political momentum. We recognize that the initiative will have to be selective.

One innovation of FTF is not seeing crisis solutions as strictly food aid. It makes a logical leap to see an easy solution to a proximate problem as insufficient. On the implementation side, however, our aid infrastructure is hollowed out. It takes time to hire, train, and fight turf battles. We might not have this time in light of budget deficits, etc. We need to give people a lot of room to operate without being overbearing.

Inclusive agricultural growth is not controversial, but measuring it is a challenge. We know pro-poor growth can be achieved through agriculture. There are lots of investment that might not be that inclusive, however, like the land-grab phenomenon. Obviously we want to be careful about investments drifting there. There seems to be tension between investing in growth and investing in resilience. Growth is obvious, but investors don't usually want to invest in resilience because it's harm reduction, not getting rich.

The Community Development Fund is an important step. From Oxfam's view, food assistance is a scarce resource, so we must ask an ethical question of whether this should be used to raise funds. It's shown to be an inefficient way to send money to places in need, but there has been no political support for an alternative. This is one such politically-supported alternative. The argument that has kept monetization alive could be evaporating if FTF momentum can be maintained.

Q&A

What level of coordination is there between high-level donors to make sure these numerous country-led, comprehensively developed implementation plans don't place undue burden on national governments?

- **Tom Hobgood** (Africa Bureau): Country-led is not the same as government-led. The challenge is to make sure of that. We must increase the private sector and civil society roles in the process. Countries are meant to base solutions, strategies, and investments on thorough analysis of how to reach the poor.
- **Bruce White**: US PVOs are wanting to provide a voice for local CSO partners. One aspect of that is not just implementing programs, but addressing social accountability. We need to find formal mechanisms to provide more participatory government programming and budgeting, plus formal feedback mechanisms.
- **Susan Bradley**: The Global Agriculture and Food Security Program multi-donor trust fund, housed at the WB, serves a very useful purpose. USAID commitments don't put funds in anybody's pipeline for 12 months. The Trust Fund is moving money rapidly to support investment plans with holes to be filled. There have already been five awards. One is being given to Bangladesh for \$50m, a large portion of which is going to vulnerability reduction for smallholders—a resilience project. Are country strategies just one more burden? Yes, in a way. But this is also pressure they've placed on themselves. Country-led means different things for different people.

What is the role of genetically modified seeds in FTF, in light of agro-ecological alternatives?

- **Vijaya Ramachandran**: There is a recent Center for Strategic and International Studies report by Jennifer Cook examining African perspectives on GMOs.
- **Bruce White**: CRS is neutral on the subject. The development community wants to move people up the hunger chain quickly – GMOs are one way. However, populations truly in need of help don't always have the technology to use them.

Tom Hobgood (Africa Bureau): Returning to the comprehensive aspect of FTF, this is not just about the definition of food security, but also requires paying attention to market. Agriculture must be paired with nutrition. We must focus on reaching the poor. We didn't talk about the private sector enough, or about

women's roles. We can't be successful in increasing growth or encouraging agriculture without granting women access to the inputs they need.

CLOSING

H.E. Amelia Sumbana, Ambassador of Mozambique to the US

This has been an important discussion and important lens for Africa. Congress and the administration have demonstrated strong concerns about coordination. The new initiative needs to address training clearly, particularly among farmers and community associations. The quality of food assistance products is another concern.

We must remember that to feed the people, we must feed the markets and develop the countries. Governments have been placed as central part and partners in this process to make agriculture sustainable and be able to attain food security. This means availability and accessibility for all. Cash and vouchers must be considered, as well as the consolidation of monetization, and LRP. *Coordination* among participants is particularly key. The private sector also has a lot of stakeholders involved. Women's participation is fundamental as well, as they are vital in all steps of production chain. We've heard about child and maternal health through nutrition and how M&E drives us to accountability.

Challenges remain: infrastructure, market intelligence, communication, energy, natural resources, capacity building, and unexploited resources. There is room to do a lot.

Julie Howard, Executive Director & CEO, PCHPA

This event has clearly met the Partnership's core goals – we have had experts speaking honestly and without agenda in a constructive discussion. It has already been a long journey. LRP is now part of our food assistance toolkit. Nutrition no longer marginalized. We have new lenses through which to look.

The most unease is about time. Coordination also – there is a drive to integrate programs in significant way. We need to work at that. This will take place at the field level (country and regional). If these efforts have positive outcomes, it will be because country missions feel empowered to take up country plans, discuss with local stakeholders, and have oversight and decision-making power. We need decentralization. The question is, how will this happen?

Finally, we are not hearing enough about goal 5-10 years from now. Who will run this program? It's not yet clear what the path is to create local CSO capacity. We need voices from field.

Steve McDonald, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

This has been a productive day, but it's time to ratchet up the discussion. We can't forget the linkages between food security and conflict. We need to think of these as a whole; it's a very valuable way of bringing us out of stove-piped thinking. We must take an integrated approach.