

**INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXAMINATION and/or REQUEST FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION**

**PROGRAM DATA**

**Program/Project Title:** Borlaug Legacy Capacity Strengthening (BLCS) Program for Food Security  
**Program/Project Number:** TBD  
**Project Country(ies):** Global  
**Funding Period:** FY 2011 - FY 2015  
**Revised Life of Program Funding:** \$67.25 million (est.)

**IEE Amendment:** Yes \_\_\_ No X **If yes, date of original IEE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**IEE Prepared by:** Gary Alex, BFS **Date:** 3/4/2011  
Name/Office

**ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

Categorical Exclusion \_\_\_\_\_ Negative Determination \_\_\_\_\_  
Positive Determination \_\_\_\_\_ Negative Determination w/ Conditions X  
Deferral \_\_\_\_\_

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDED THRESHOLD DECISION**

This IEE covers the Borlaug Legacy Capacity Strengthening (BLCS) Program for Food Security. The Program is being funded to provide broad capacity strengthening support to agricultural development and food security initiatives at the country level.

None of the activities under the Program is expected to result in actions that may directly affect the environment. Construction of facilities is not planned. Improved agricultural sector training and education resulting from the Program should have a positive impact on environmental and natural resource management. Certain aspects of activities envisioned under the BLCS Program may involve recommendations relating to campus construction or development of training and research programs relating to pesticide use or genetically modified organisms. Therefore, a Negative Determination with Conditions is recommended, with the following conditions:

The BFS AOTR/COTR shall ensure that:

- No pesticides may be procured or used, or recommended for procurement or use without first completing an amendment to this Initial Environmental Examination that addresses the requirements of 22 CFR 216.3(b) including a Pesticide Evaluation Report/Safe Use Action Plan which must be approved in writing by the BFS Bureau Environmental Officer.

- No Genetically Engineered Organisms (GEOs) are procured, tested, or recommended for procurement or use without first completing the required USAID biosafety review and using the resulting information as part of the basis for undertaking an amendment to this IEE which must be approved in writing by the EGAT Bureau Environmental Officer. This includes research on GEOs.
- No construction activities shall be recommended or designed without ensuring compliance with relevant environmental regulations and completion of the required Initial Environmental Evaluation;
- Organizations implementing Program activities will integrate environmental concerns appropriately into Program work plans and procedures and will carry out training and training program development activities to promote sustainable, environmentally-sound agriculture and rural development. The MAETS Project will develop guidelines for such training program development and implementation and will share these with other implementing organizations.

Recommended By: Rob B. Bertram June 17, 2011  
 Rob Bertram  
 Director, BFS/ART  
 Date

Concurrence: Joyce A. Jalko 6/17/11  
 Joyce A. Jalko  
 BFS Acting Bureau Environmental Officer  
 Date

Approved: X  
 Disapproved: \_\_\_\_\_

Clearances:

BFS: DThomas	Cleared	<u>4/13/2011</u>
BFS: EWitte	Cleared	<u>4/14/2011</u>
BFS: CCohen	Cleared	<u>4/20/2011</u>
BFS: JMaurer	Cleared	<u>4/28/2011</u>
BFS: SKawa	Cleared	<u>4/18/2011</u>

## Initial Environmental Examination

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Program for Food Security

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#### 1. Background

Development of human and institutional capacity in developing countries is critical to realizing sustainable solutions to problems of food insecurity, poverty, and climate change. This relies on Agricultural Education, Training and Research (AETR) programs and institutions. Most developing countries have established degree-granting faculties of agriculture, often with past USAID assistance. In recent years, the number of these universities has grown along with demand for education. Agricultural training at the secondary, vocational and certificate levels has been more varied and often not very systematic. In many respects, AETR institutions have been remarkably successful in training scientists, administrators and technicians and developing the innovations that supported the dramatic growth of agriculture over the past 40 years. Despite these accomplishments, AETR institutions now face severe constraints and new challenges.

Constraints on AETR institutions and programs relate to their ability to adequately serve needs of the sector and rural people in their respective countries. Some constraints have been with the institutions since their establishment and others are emerging with the changing environment for operation of sector institutions and programs. Key issues relate to: relevance and linkages to stakeholders in country, teaching methods, funding, staff quality, policies and administration, networking among AETR institutions, and access to other knowledge sources, such as CGIAR and U.S land grant universities. Additional challenges relate to the content of education and training programs and the need to remain current in: environmental and natural resources issues, market globalization and commercialization of agriculture, new technologies (biotechnologies and ICTs), and needs of diverse stakeholders (agribusiness, consumers, farmer organizations, etc.).

#### 2. Activity Description

The BLCS Program will help developing countries build their human and institutional capital base for dynamic agriculture and rural development. Development of AETR systems and institutions will sustain local institutions for agricultural leadership training. Training of individuals will provide the qualified teachers, researchers, administrators, and outreach program managers that higher education institutions in developing countries require. This will involve a mix of long-term degree and non-degree training, short-term training, study tours, mentoring relationships and advisory services, and other inputs.

The general program approach will be to build on existing institutions, drawing on expertise from land grant universities and CGIAR members to: assess the quality and productivity of selected educational and research institutions and approaches; document and draw lessons from such experiences; disseminate an understanding of the state-of-the-art with regard to effective systems; and integrate good practice recommendations into developing country educational and research systems, strengthening its ability to better respond to farmers needs.

Project activities will support country programs responding to new challenges of enhancing food security and climate change. The BLCS Program will serve as a center of excellence and expertise to facilitate agricultural sector training and aid developing country decision-makers, AETR institutions, and development practitioners improve strategies and investment planning and implementation needed to reform and strengthen AETR systems. The Program will have five inter-related components to address several areas of weakness in the current system of education, training and the national agricultural research systems in selected developing countries.

#### **Component 1. Modernizing Agricultural Education and Training Systems (MAETS)**

The project will support country planning and initiatives to develop AET institutions and programs at various levels needed to support the range of institutional capacities needed in country. The Goal for the MAETS Project is to develop the human and institutional capacity necessary for developing countries to promote rural innovation needed to achieve sustainable food security, reduce poverty, conserve natural resources and address other rural problems. This capacity must rely largely on in-country AET programs and institutions, if it is to be cost-effective, sustainable and relevant:

- The Project will carry out a program of analytical work and synthesis of lessons learned with respect to AET system reform and strengthening in developing countries. This would cover both formal and non-formal training. The Project will analyze needs in different categories of institutions and technical areas and identify policy issues and options for AET systems. The work program would include case studies, evaluations, low-cost pilot projects, and assessments of on-going AET reform programs to document experience and impacts from modernizing service delivery systems. The Project would carry out action research and synthesis of experience on AET issues.
- The Project will provide technical assistance to selected host country organizations—public and private—for the design, evaluation and reform of AET systems and institutions.
- The participant training program strategy will seek to develop and test new ways of managing participant training to increase cost-efficiency and program relevance and effectiveness. The strategy will exploit host country and third country training opportunities, as appropriate.

#### **Component 2. Africa Leadership Training and Capacity Building (Africa Lead)**

The project will support immediate training and human capacity development needs in African countries to enable them to implement programs in line with the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) process. The project will support the Feed the Future Initiative (FTF) and will contribute to the objective of the CAADP. As one component in USAID's Feed the Future initiative, Africa LEAD will help build the capacity through leadership training of champions for African agriculture and food security growth and development and will carry out assessments of selected African institutions that play key roles in agricultural development linked to the CAADP. Key activities of the project will focus on:

- Delivering training modules that give a cadre of Africans the skills and knowledge necessary to scale up activities in agriculture and food security. Courses motivate participants to take the lead in their own institutions, countries, and regions.
- Providing logistical support for seminars as well as follow-up with attendees, including short-term courses offered by other institutions.
- Assessing needs in three regions and participating countries by understanding the roles people and institutions play in meeting FTF goals, and tying those roles to the capacity-building effort; determining which institutions to assess, developing a cost-effective assessment schedule, and tracking institutions' progress; and communicating capacity-building needs to the institutions that implement the training.
- Creating an interactive, easily updated training database that serves as a matchmaking tool that leads institutions to develop appropriate training programs, while ensuring that courses in the database are high quality and applicable to the needs of African leaders.

### **Component 3. Africa Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD)**

The project will provide training and mentoring along with a range of human capacity building activities to enable women development opportunities in leadership roles in agricultural development and research. AWARD Fellows will increase their contributions in the fight against hunger and poverty through:

- Strengthened science skills.
- Augmented leadership abilities.
- Enhanced visibility and networking.
- Increased opportunities to share newly acquired skills, inspiring the next generation of African women agricultural researchers and professionals.

The fellowships have three types of capacity building activities. Mentoring Partnerships will provide one-to-one monthly mentoring by a senior scientist or professional for each AWARD Fellow. Science Skills will be developed through workshops and seminars on science writing and proposal writing, regional or international professional conferences, opportunities to apply for a competitive research attachment at leading international universities and institutions, membership in professional associations training to use

electronic science libraries. Leadership Development will be promoted through participation in the CGIAR internationally recognized Women's Leadership and Management Course and support to hosting community role modeling events.

#### **Component 4. Fellowships**

The Fellowship Program will provide a suite of training and research support activities for agricultural scientists and administrative staff. The project objective is to develop the human capacity base that will contribute to agricultural development through research and research management roles, as well as to strengthen the state of knowledge on effective human capacity development approaches. The project will include the following programmatic elements:

- Support for entry-level long-term degree students to conduct their field research, with relevant mentoring, at international agricultural research centers in 3-12 month internships.
- Support for US-based, short-term scientific training and collaborative research opportunities to visiting researchers, policymakers, and university faculty.
- Support for US graduate students wishing to conduct degree research in an international research center, a national research center, or other appropriate partner.
- Support for practitioner roundtables and other mechanisms for developing and disseminating best practices in individual capacity development.
- Support for the testing of innovative, cost-effective approaches in fellowship and mentorship program design that have the high impact on the development of strategic institutions (e.g., distance learning programs, sandwich programs).

#### **Component 5. USAID-World Bank Collaboration in Support of Tertiary Agricultural Education in Africa**

Human capital is an essential building block for improved growth in the agricultural sector, yet Africa's capacity to provide tertiary agricultural education (TAE) has eroded substantially for several decades. Africans are now reversing this trend including through CAADP Country Agricultural Investment Plans and regional collaboration. USAID and the World Bank are also now scaling up TAE in new strategies for support to education. Through their joint support, USAID and the Bank will help CAADP partners mobilize resources to plan for increased TAE investment under a common framework; ensure investments are made within the common TAE framework; and jointly support initial, prioritized TAE investments. To this end, USAID and the Bank will provide technical assistance to CAADP partners, collaborate on TAE investment, and explore establishing a trust fund with other partners for TAE coordination, and program development and implementation.

Working with African institutions, USAID and WB areas of TAE collaboration may include:

- Develop an African strategic plan for TAE

- Mainstream TAE into CAADP materials and processes
- With development partners, establish a \$2M TAE multi-donor trust fund (MDTF). Later, this MDTF will be expanded to support TAE partnerships, curricula reform, IT approaches, etc.
- Establish a common TAE framework and coordination mechanism. The framework would govern priorities and work, including for the MDTF.
- Mobilize financial support for TAE under the common framework
- Jointly design and implement planned and future African TAE programs
- Support TAE systems for four national and four regional/sub-regional systems
- Jointly design and sponsor regional modular workshops to help African TAE institutions put together development strategies and investment plans at country/regional levels

### **3. Environmental Impact and Recommended Threshold Determination**

Many of the activities anticipated under the B.L.C.S program focus on assessments, training, research, knowledge transfer, curricula development, and institutional strengthening to ensure that AETR programs receive appropriate attention and investments needed to support food security, climate change, poverty reduction, and other global objectives. They will have limited, if any, direct impact on the environment and would qualify for a Categorical Exclusion under 22 CFR 216.2(c):

- per 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i) for activities limited to education, technical assistance or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.).
- per 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(iii) for activities limited to the performance of analyses, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings.
- per 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(v) for activities limited to document and information transfers.
- per 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(xiv) for activities limited to studies, projects or programs intended to develop the capability of Project countries to engage in development planning, except to the extent designed to result in activities directly affecting the environment.

Improved agricultural sector training and education resulting from the Project should have a positive impact on environmental and natural resource management. Certain aspects of activities envisioned under the B.L.C.S Program may involve recommendations relating to campus/research site construction or development of training programs and training relating to pesticide use or genetically modified organisms. Therefore, a Negative Determination with Conditions is recommended, with the following conditions:

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