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# **BEST PRACTICES FOR USAID INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS: ASIA AND MIDDLE EAST REGIONS VOLUME I**

**FINAL REPORT**

**August 2011**

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The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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## ACRONYM GLOSSARY

AES-KZ	The AES Group of Companies in Kazakhstan
AME	Asia and Middle East Regions, USAID
AME/ME/TS	Asia and Middle East Bureau Office of Technical Support, USAID
ATQ	Alliance for Teacher Quality
CALS	College of Agriculture and Life Sciences of Cornell University
CAR	Central Asian Republics
CEP	Checklist of Effective Practices
CU	Cornell University
D&G	Democracy and Governance
DGHE	Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of National Education of Indonesia
DMDP	Dual Master's Degree Program in Education
DSP	Doctoral Sandwich Program
ECA	Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, USDoS
EFCA	Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia
ELGA	Experiential Learning in Globalization and Agriculture
ENU	Eurasian National University
EPP	FREEDOM Support Educational Partnerships Program
GDA	Global Development Alliance, USAID
HED	Higher Education for Development
HU	Hashemite University
IKIP	Teacher training institutes in Indonesia
IU	Indiana University
JUST	Jordan University of Science and Technology
JVA	Jordan Valley Authority
JVI	Joint Venture Inkai
JWSE	Jordan Water Skills Enhancement
MEPI	The Middle East Partnership Initiative, USDoS
MOEP	Ministry of Environment Protection of Kazakhstan
MOES	Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan
MONE	Ministry of National Education of Indonesia
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSEME	Master of Science in Environmental Management and Engineering
MWI	Ministry of Water and Irrigation of Jordan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIH	U.S. National Institutes of Health
OSU	The Ohio State University
PAR	Programs of Academic Recharging
PSO	Protocol for Strategic Outcomes
PU	Purdue University
R&D	Research and Development
RFA	Request for Assistance
RFP	Request for Proposals
SEAMOLEC	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Open Learning Center
SOW	Scope of Work
TA	Technical Assistance
TIES	U.S.-Mexico Training, Internships, Exchanges, and Scholarships Partnerships
TNAU	Tamil Nadu Agricultural University
UASD	University of Agricultural Studies Dharwad

UIUC	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
UJ	University of Jordan
UN	State Universities in Indonesia
UNM	University of New Mexico
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollars
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDoS	United States Department of State
USG	United States Government
USIA	United States Information Agency
USINTEC	United States/Indonesia Teacher Education Consortium
US	United States
UT	Indonesia Open University
WAJ	Water Authority Jordan
WERSC	Water and Environment Research and Study Center, UJ
WSU	Washington State University

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This final report describes the research activities and findings of the nine-month long study (November 2010-July 2011) of international higher education institutional partnerships conducted for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Asia and Middle East Bureau Office of Technical Support (AME/ME/TS) by a consultant team fielded by the Aguirre Division of JBS International, Inc. This study was intended to identify “best” practices for higher education partnerships that have built capacity and strengthened host country education institutions, particularly in the Asia and Middle East (AME) Regions.

The importance of international higher education institutional partnerships in the development process has grown over the last half century. Higher education institutions are seen as well-qualified to participate in development cooperation due to their strong ties to different actors within the community, their status as leaders in scientific and technological research, their dedication to teaching and learning, and their experience working across institutional and international borders. Various types of collaborations exist under the partnership rubric, including technical assistance, faculty and student exchanges, and research activities.

Partnerships, as the team has found, encompass a number of different definitions and applications. First, the word “partnership” has been used to describe the collaboration among higher education institutions during an award period; in this sense, the award itself becomes known as a partnership. Second, “partnership” has been used to describe a collaboration set by a memorandum of understanding (MOU), with activities that may or may not be funded by an outside agency. Finally, “partnership” has been used to describe the long-term collaborations across different technical assistance and educational training activities; in this sense, the partnership refers more to the relationship between or among faculty that grew as a result of funded activities and, in many cases, serves as the foundation for current or recent activities.

In conducting this study, the team has given attention to recent USAID policy statements, including the December 2010 *USAID FORWARD* announcement of a reform agenda. At least four of the seven reform agenda focus areas have objectives that are especially relevant to this study:

1. Implementation and Procurement Reform
2. Rebuilding Policy Capacity
3. Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation
4. Science and Technology

VOLUME I of this report includes the results of the research undertaken during the course of the project, including summaries of four case studies, a framework developed by the team to assist with incorporating effective practices into all aspects of the partnership cycle, and recommendations for more effective international higher education institutional partnerships. VOLUME II of this report presents four detailed case studies of partnerships that have taken place between U.S. higher education institutions and similar institutions in Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, and India.

## METHODOLOGY

The research methodology was designed so that each new activity would bring a greater depth of understanding. Generalized and non-specific anecdotal commentary from the literature and documentation review was used to create an expansive matrix of 374 AME higher education institutional partnerships. This information was then used to design a survey that was distributed online to over 450 participants in USAID partnerships with the intent of providing a more comprehensive understanding of former and current partnerships. These results were supplemented by focus groups, which provided an opportunity to probe for deeper insights not immediately apparent in historical reports or survey

responses. Finally, to build on this body of knowledge and to gain greater insights from international partners that the research did not capture, the study team recommended, and the USAID Asia and Middle East Bureau Office of Technical Support approved the selection of, four international higher education partnerships to review in greater depth; for these case studies, members of the team traveled to domestic and international sites to conduct interviews with partnership participants.

Country	Case Study Partnership	Partnership Award + Focus Area
Indonesia	11 Indonesian teacher training universities <i>et al.</i> /The Ohio State University <i>et al.</i> (USAID/HED)	U.S./Indonesia Teacher Education Consortium (USINTEC) – Strengthen teacher education institutions and programs in the Indonesian education system
Jordan	University of Jordan <i>et al.</i> /Washington State University <i>et al.</i> (USAID)	Jordan Water Skills Enhancement (JWSE) Project – Strengthen leadership capacity in the water and agricultural sectors in Jordan
India	Tamil Nadu Agricultural University <i>et al.</i> /Cornell University (USAID/HED)	Experiential Learning in Globalization and Agriculture (ELGA) Project – Develop and jointly implement a two-part International Agriculture and Rural Development Course for graduate and undergraduate students in India
Kazakhstan	Eurasian National University/University of New Mexico/AES Group of Companies in Kazakhstan/Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia (USAID/Global Development Alliance)	MS in Environmental Management and Engineering (MSEME) Program – Produce skilled managers and engineers for electric power and natural resources firms and organizations in Kazakhstan

The case study partnerships involve host countries in four different AME sub-regions: South Asia, East Asia, the Middle East, and Central Asia. In each of the first three of these sub-regions, the case study country's higher education institutions have a history of decades-long collaboration with the lead U.S. higher education institution in the partnership. For more than 45 years, Cornell University (CU) has collaborated with universities and other institutions in India, particularly Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU); for more than 35 years, Washington State University (WSU) has collaborated with universities and other institutions in Jordan, particularly the University of Jordan (UJ); and for more than 25 years, The Ohio State University (OSU) has collaborated with universities and other institutions in Indonesia, particularly the teacher training institutes (IKIPs), which are now state universities (UNs). And although UNM had not previously collaborated with ENU, which had been founded in the latter 1990s, UNM had worked with other Kazakh universities since the mid-1990s.

## FINDINGS

The body of research produced a number of effective practices that relate to four areas in the partnership cycle: planning; communication and coordination; implementation; and evaluation. The research also produced effective practices that relate to reporting and describing outcomes.

In the planning phase, it is important that a higher education institutional partnership demonstrate:

- Extensive U.S. and host country partner collaboration in the design of the project.
- Clear distinction between goals (fixed by contract) and methods that can be amended for "mid-course corrections" to ensure required goal fulfillment.

- Consideration for encouraging host institution academic personnel to remain in country or to return home after completion of foreign study.
- Consideration as to how the goals and objectives of the project can be sustained and expanded after the expiry of the project.
- Attention to realistic consideration of time factors to achieve tasks, most notably on administrative matters and international travel.

An important component to any partnership is its communication and coordination. Effective partnership practices related to this category include:

- Prior agreement of all partners on goals and objectives and full commitment to the partnership and project, including support of head of each linking academic unit.
- Procedures for orientation of partners to management procedures and policies of U.S. Embassy protocols, including report requirements.
- Procedures for orientation of U.S. personnel to host country culture to a depth that would enable ease of communication on all subjects.
- Provision for linkage to key host country personnel, including the Ministry of Education or other national higher education coordinating body.
- Provision of materials on how U.S. higher education operates on issues of degree development, institutional accreditation, and administrative operations.

Project implementation should demonstrate the following effective practices:

- Means for identifying "champions" at U.S. and host country institutions to support operational needs of the project, including senior host institution personnel.
- Means for continuous routine communication among all stakeholders to monitor administrative practice and support effective project progress.
- Means for low-cost communications among U.S. and host country partners using virtual networks, conference calls, webinars, and video conferencing.
- Sensitivity to "early warning" on needs for amending "methods" being used in order to meet stipulated goals in negotiation with USAID.
- Sensitivity to building a broad network of administrative support at U.S. and host country institutions to accommodate changes in administrative leadership.

The evaluation phase of a partnership should demonstrate:

- How routine and constant review of project operations was maintained to ensure that goal fulfillment was being addressed in a consistent manner.
- How scheduled portfolio reviews by USAID were routinely maintained, and routine communication with USAID and other U.S. agencies was maintained.
- How a means for capturing measurable outcomes to support goal achievement was created and supported with narratives on work product.
- That all partners understand why routine assessment, USAID portfolio reviews, and end-of-project summary evaluations are important.
- How U.S. and host country institutions have developed a common appreciation for "quality assurance" practices as part of international measures in higher education.

Finally, outcomes should record and describe:

- The level of achievement of each goal, with descriptive narratives of how success was made possible.
- Examples of "spread" or "spillover" effects of the partnership to the host institution, host community, and U.S. partner institution.
- The partnership practices that contribute to the sustainability of the project.

- The likelihood of continuing financial support for project goals from the host institution, host government, or other donor agencies.
- Documentation of lessons learned and dissemination of publications and information regarding such lessons.

These practices and outcome assessments collectively represent a Checklist of Effective Practices (CEP) developed by the team. This CEP, along with a Protocol for Strategic Outcomes (PSO), should enable USAID or a prospective USAID-funded partnership to apply effective operational practices and achieve the USAID strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following are recommendations that the team believes can improve higher education institutional partnerships, regardless of the types of partnership projects being funded. The first two recommendations address the use of foundational frameworks for achieving and “rating” partnership operational and strategic outcomes, while the other recommendations highlight specific actions USAID might take as it engages in a new chapter of supporting higher education partnerships in all its regions, but notably within Asia and the Middle East. These recommendations are grouped according to their relevance to project planning, project design, and project evaluation.

### **FRAMEWORKS (CEP AND PSO) FOR INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS**

#### **Recommendation 1**

*USAID should consider using the Checklist for Effective Practices and the Protocol for Strategic Outcomes, described in Part Six of this report, to improve its higher education institutional partnership projects’ practices, outcomes, and achievement of strategic goals.*

#### **Recommendation 2**

*USAID should consider using the CEP system of metrics and the PSO system of metrics for reporting on and rating the effectiveness of each partnership’s operational practices and outcomes assessments and the achievement of each of the partnership’s two strategic goals, respectively.*

### **PARTNERSHIP PROJECT PLANNING**

#### **Recommendation 3**

*USAID should emphasize in its project RFPs and in its guidance to prospective higher education institutional partnerships that effective and early planning is critical to the success of such partnerships.*

#### **Recommendation 4**

*USAID should provide greater guidance to prospective and current higher education institutional partners regarding the expenditure of project award funds, and consider granting partners greater flexibility in expending project funds on activities that are important for achieving project outcomes.*

#### **Recommendation 5**

*USAID should ensure that prospective higher education institutional partners recognize the importance of formalizing project partnerships through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and Scope of Work agreed to in writing by all institutional partners; these should address each partner’s roles and responsibilities as well as project operating procedures, management structures, and behavioral rules.*

#### **Recommendation 6**

*USAID should emphasize to higher education partners receiving a USAID project award the critical importance of forming strong institutional relationships from the start of the award.*

**Recommendation 7**

*USAID should specify that each proposal submitted in response to a higher education institutional partnership project RFP needs to include a communication and coordination “plan” for all partners.*

**Recommendation 8**

*USAID, in making an award to a higher education institutional partnership, should ensure that all partner institutions understand the importance of focusing on long-term partnership sustainability starting at the beginning of the project award period, not at its end.*

**PARTNERSHIP PROJECT DESIGN**

**Recommendation 9**

*USAID should seek ways to more effectively incorporate U.S. and international higher education institutional partner priorities and insights into the design of its institutional partnership awards in order to improve project outcomes.*

**Recommendation 10**

*USAID should ensure that its proposal design, announcement, submission, and review process are transparent with respect to higher education institutions and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that may submit or have submitted a proposal for partnership funding.*

**Recommendation 11**

*USAID should not fund higher education institutional partnerships for the purpose of carrying out technical assistance (TA) projects, for such a funding approach is likely to result in either an unsuccessful partnership or an unsuccessful TA project.*

**Recommendation 12**

*USAID should ensure that its higher education institutional partnership RFPs do not discourage project proposals from including multi-disciplinary or cross-sectoral approaches, or activities that do not yield measurable outcomes in the near term.*

**Recommendation 13**

*USAID should develop and implement different institutional partnership award programs for community colleges and technical colleges and for universities.*

**PARTNERSHIP PROJECT EVALUATION**

**Recommendation 14**

*USAID should ensure that all higher education project partners recognize the importance of systematic formative and summative project evaluations, and unambiguously understand USAID’s expectations and requirements relating to the scope, timing, and methodologies of these evaluations.*

**Recommendation 15**

*USAID should respond in a timely and transparent manner to appropriate requests from project institutional partners for approval of “mid-course” changes in project scope, activities, and outcomes that arise from the project’s formative evaluations and other assessments.*

**Recommendation 16**

*USAID, in assessing institutional partnerships, should recognize that achieving the strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening requires a longer-term perspective.*

## INTRODUCTION

This final report describes the research activities and findings of the Asia and Middle East (AME) higher education institutional partnerships study conducted for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Asia and Middle East Bureau Office of Technical Support (AME/ME/TS) by a consultant team fielded by the Aguirre Division of JBS International, Inc. under GEM II BPA Number EDH-E-00-08-00003-00. Aguirre/JBS was contracted “to conduct an in-depth analysis and identify ‘best’ practices for higher education partnerships that have built capacity and strengthened host country education institutions” with special reference to “USAID and non-USAID supported higher education partnerships in the Asia and Middle East Regions”<sup>1</sup> (see Appendix A).

The research design for this study took due note of the importance being given to increasing USAID’s focus on “evidence-based strategic guidance...aimed at improving learning outcomes and institutional sustainability” in partner countries.<sup>2</sup> The December 2010 announcement of the *USAID FORWARD* reform initiative strengthened the Agency’s commitment to this priority by including among its goals “measuring progress...for high impact, sustainable development” by introducing “an improved monitoring and evaluation process ... that links systematic monitoring of performance and evaluation of impact in all program design, budgeting and strategy work.”<sup>3</sup> As a whole, *USAID FORWARD* comprises seven major reforms that seek to change USAID practices at all levels, to which some of the findings in this study speak.<sup>4</sup>

The practice of international higher education partnerships has grown over the last half century to include participation in the development process. Higher education institutions are seen as well-qualified to participate in development cooperation due to their strong ties to different actors within the community, their status as leaders in scientific and technological research, their dedication to teaching and learning, and their experience working across institutional and international borders. Various types of collaborations exist under the partnership rubric, including technical assistance, faculty and student exchanges, and research activities.

Partnerships, for the purposes of this report, encompass a number of different definitions and applications. First, the word “partnership” has been used to describe the collaboration between higher education institutions during an award period; in this sense, the award itself becomes known as a partnership. Second, “partnership” has been used to describe a collaboration set by a memorandum of understanding (MOU), with activities that may or may not be funded by an outside agency. Finally, “partnership” has been used to describe the long-term collaborations across different technical assistance and educational training activities; in this sense, the partnership refers more to the relationship between or among faculty that grew as a result of funded activities and, in many cases, serves as the foundation for current or recent activities. When it is necessary and appropriate, this report makes this distinction.

## METHODOLOGY

The study team designed its research methodology in a sequence so that each new activity would bring a greater depth of understanding. Generalized and non-specific anecdotal commentary from the literature and documentation review was used to create an expansive matrix of AME partnerships. This

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<sup>1</sup> “USAID/Asia and Middle East (AME) Higher Education Institutional Partnerships Study Scope of Work, Section C.” (2010).

<sup>2</sup> USAID. (2011) *USAID Education Strategy 2011-2015*.

[http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/education\\_and\\_universities/documents/USAID\\_ED\\_Strategy\\_feb2011.pdf](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/education_and_universities/documents/USAID_ED_Strategy_feb2011.pdf) Date Accessed: May 10, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> USAID. (2010) *USAID Forward (Announcement)*. <http://forward.usaid.gov/about/overview> Date Accessed: May 10, 2011.

<sup>4</sup> These areas are: Implementation and Procurement Reform, Talent Management, Rebuilding Policy Capacity, Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation, Rebuilding Budget Management, Science and Technology, Innovation.

information was then used to design a survey that was distributed online to over 450 participants in USAID partnerships with the intent of providing a more comprehensive understanding of former and current partnerships. These results were supplemented by focus groups, which provided an opportunity to probe for deeper insights not immediately apparent in historical reports or survey responses. Finally, to build on this body of knowledge, the study team chose four international higher education partnerships to review in greater depth; for these case studies, members of the team traveled to domestic and international sites to conduct interviews with partnership participants.

### **Literature and Documentation Review**

The review of documentation on partnership programs provided a lengthy list of “lessons learned” in terms of practices to improve outcomes for human capacity building and institutional strengthening, as well as to contribute to national development in host countries. These “lessons” were distinct and different from reported activities focusing on goals and impacts of these partnerships. The more technical “lessons” drawn from the review suggested four categories that appear to be critical for successful partnerships: planning, cross-cultural communication, implementation, and assessment. Notably, there were few “lessons” related to assessment, an absence that defines one of the most significant concerns for improving best practices. Moreover, this paucity of “lessons” on assessment has expanded significance because a growing emphasis is now being placed on “formative” assessment,<sup>5</sup> an emphasis that will become even more important in planning and funding future higher education institutional partnerships.

### **AME Partnerships Matrix**

The matrix was developed to provide an overview of AME higher education institutional partnerships of the past several decades. It was designed to collect as much information as was available from 374 partnerships and includes categories for key descriptive information about partnerships (e.g., region/country, area of focus, award dates and amount, funding agency, U.S. and foreign institutions, and cost sharing), as well as information critical for partnership success. The utility of the matrix was established by testing it against selected AME partnerships funded through USAID/Higher Education for Development (HED). Although the test phase did not provide information in all matrix categories, the team concluded that the categories for which information most often was lacking were sufficiently important for assessing partnership success that they needed to be included. The matrix was updated and expanded even as the research moved to later stages of the inquiry process. This approach enabled the team to identify partnership practices and processes worldwide that could be relevant for strengthening future USAID AME partnerships.

### **Survey of USAID Partnership Participants**

To complement the information and insights in its literature and documentation review and in other higher education partnership documents, the study team designed an online survey and distributed it to over 450 USAID higher education partnership participants, in English, Arabic, and Bahasa Indonesia. The pool of survey recipients was limited to those individuals in U.S. and foreign institutions who had participated in partnerships that received USAID funding. Survey questions were based on queries posed by AME/ME/TS and structured to provide a better understanding of the partnership planning and implementation process. As of June 2011, the team had received 67 responses from 52 U.S. and 15 international higher education partnership participants. Of these 67 respondents, 52 fully or substantially completed their surveys. Since some of these 52 respondents did not answer all questions, the number of responses varies by question.

### **Focus Group Design and Implementation**

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<sup>5</sup> Formative assessments are on-going assessments, reviews, and observations that are used by partnerships to improve practices and project outcomes. This contrasts with summative assessments, which are given periodically to determine outcomes at a given point in time, such as the end of a project.

To enrich the survey data and provide additional in-depth perspectives on various aspects of partnerships, the study team conducted two focus groups. These focus groups were composed of U.S. higher education faculty who had directly participated in multiple partnerships, and their input was supplemented by group discussions convened during the site visits to case study countries. The team designed the focus group questions to elicit candid insights about participants' partnership experiences by probing for fundamental elements of successful partnerships and critical preconditions for success, as well as the extent to which partnerships strengthened institutional capacity building. The discussions were organized to test the validity of initial lessons learned through the team's literature and documentation review and survey responses, particularly with respect to the respondents' experiences in creating partnerships, managing and coordinating their implementation, and assessing their outcomes.

### **Case Studies**

Case studies were conducted of four international higher education partnerships: a binational consortium of three U.S. universities and 13 Indonesian partner organizations, including 12 Indonesian universities; a decades-long partnership between Washington State University and the University of Jordan; a long-term partnership between Cornell University and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in India; and a public-private collaboration involving the University of New Mexico and Eurasian National University to create a master's degree program in Kazakhstan. From February through May 2011, the JBS team traveled domestically and internationally to conduct interviews with key partnership participants. These site visits provided an in-depth look from the perspective of the international institutional partners. They allowed greater exploration of the priorities and preferred modalities of higher education leaders for future partnerships. They also permitted testing of the analytical framework which was developed to better manage the collected data.

## **STRUCTURE OF FINAL REPORT**

VOLUME I of this report is divided into seven sections:

- **Part One** describes the contexts and conditions for conducting international higher education partnerships. It focuses on those realities that have a significant impact on a project's success, and to which project managers and administrators should be attentive.
- **Part Two** introduces the concepts of frameworks for analyzing performance objectives and strategic goals. These frameworks were conceived in order to translate research data and insights into categories to support analysis of the practices and results a partnership is expected to achieve.
- **Part Three** provides a historical overview of higher education institutional partnerships by introducing selected data collected during the research activities; additional data are available in the appendices.
- **Part Four** comprises the four case studies conducted in India, Indonesia, Jordan, and Kazakhstan.
- **Part Five** synthesizes and analyzes the findings across all four of the major research activities: the literature and documentation review, including the partnership award matrix; the online survey; the focus groups and discussion groups; and the case study site visits.
- **Part Six** translates the "lessons learned" from the research and analysis into a workable framework for considering "best" or "most effective" practices for future operations.
- **Part Seven** integrates the findings of the research and the applications/metrics tools to assist USAID as it engages in a new chapter of providing assistance for higher education institutional partnerships in all its regions, but notably within Asia and the Middle East.

VOLUME II of this report contains four completed case studies of international higher education partnerships.

## **PART ONE.**

# **CONTEXTS AND CONDITIONS FOR CONDUCTING INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

An analysis of the data collected very clearly shows the limitations of the available information on international higher education institutional partnerships and the challenges of conducting a comparative assessment to inform “evidence-based strategic guidance.” These limitations are due in large part to the fragmentary nature of information and the absence of a consistent framework of presentation. The paucity of historical records suggests a need for more careful examination of successful partnerships. It also shows the importance of having a standard means for defining and then recommending the practices that characterize successful partnerships.

To some degree, partnerships can be affected by the amount of attention devoted to the contexts and conditions that exist at the very earliest stages of planning an international partnership proposal. These contexts and conditions are easily placed in the narrative portion of a research design as standard components of any inquiry. Contexts are relatively fixed and unlikely to change during the conduct of a partnership and can include factors such as the country’s language, culture, system of governance, and higher education institutional forms, i.e., higher education organizational frameworks. Even with their fixed nature, they must be accounted for in the evaluation process.

Conditions, on the other hand, refer to factors such as institutional culture, including the presence of a partnership “champion,” and they are usually most significant in assessing institutional partnership outcomes. These conditions require diligence in consideration from the very first stages of planning a partnership. They must be seen as separate and distinct from “best” or effective practices that occur in the planning and implementation of individual partnerships. However, when evaluating the success of any partnership, there must be sensitivity to how these conditions, whether by their presence or absence, influenced the best efforts of partnership leaders, aided or compromised higher education institutional procedures and management styles, or defined the possible ambiguities in the role of USAID.

With these contexts and conditions considered at the outset, the design and operation of partnerships can be improved by referencing “best” or effective practices, as identified in this report. These partnership contexts and conditions are addressed below.

## **CONTEXTS: COUNTRY AND INSTITUTIONAL**

### **Country Context**

Higher education institutions are a reflection of the country in which they are located. Their student attendance patterns are shaped by elementary and secondary education achievement; their academic programs reflect national goals, faculty qualifications, employment opportunities, and other factors; and the qualifications of faculty reflect their academic and research training at home and abroad. Moreover, these institutions reflect the country’s history, past and present governance systems, and social and cultural norms.

The ministry that has responsibility for higher education is particularly important in the national context, especially in countries in which higher education institutions are part of the ministry. This ministry and its senior officials directly or indirectly shape academic programs and practices through national higher education goals and priorities, institutional oversight, funding policies and practices, relationships with in-country higher education institutional leaders, and its relative openness to decentralized decision making

and autonomy for higher education institutions. In these ways, they also facilitate or limit the establishment, implementation, and sustainability of international higher education institutional partnerships.

### **Institutional Forms**

Equally important to international partnership effectiveness and sustainability are the institutional forms, or organizational frameworks, of the primary partners, regardless of whether these partners are higher education institutions or other organizations such as a funding agency or an implementing organization.

For higher education institutions, these forms are shaped by organizational policies, procedures, and personnel at both the institutional level and the college/school/department level. They also are shaped by academic and research offices at each level, for example, by an associate provost for international affairs and the director of sponsored programs as well as by the principal investigator's associate dean for research and department chair.

## **CONDITIONS: PERSONNEL, PROCEDURES, POLICIES, AND SYSTEMIC REALITIES**

### **Personnel**

One of the most important factors resulting in effective partnerships is the presence of individuals, often referred to as “champions,” who are so dedicated to the substantive ideas underlying a partnership or a partnership award that they are willing to devote extraordinary energies to making it successful. In higher education institutions, these “champions” may have specific academic interests, but they are willing to work outside of their fields of expertise to design partnerships, apply for funding, and implement activities that will extend academic associations in geographic regions central to those scholarly interests.

These “champions” may have decades of success as partnership directors and long-term relationships with key institutional administrators, or have academic, research or administrative experience crucial to partnership success, and a commitment to collaborate with faculty directors of institutional partnerships to ensure that these are as successful as possible. At the same time, partnership “champions” are not necessarily management experts, and their enthusiasm may neglect operational realities. Alternatively, their enthusiasm may continue only so long as there is a professional or personal “payoff,” after which they may move on to other interests. Then the longer-term durability of a partnership loses the individual who has provided the catalytic influence.

Also, younger faculty members may be less likely to take on leadership roles in a partnership if advised that such activity falls outside the promotion and tenure criteria. While “champions” thus may be more experienced than other partnership participants, they also may be less enthusiastic about sustaining a partnership beyond the original project plan or funding cycle. Instead, they may assume new institutional responsibilities, relocate to other institutions, or retire. The historical absence of documentation on outcomes of USAID partnerships considered in the literature and documentation review may reflect this diminished institutional or individual interest in maintaining a careful record of outcomes useful for future planning. For sustaining partnerships, continuity of leadership is vital, especially when considering the longer-term strategic goals of “capacity building” and “institutional strengthening.”

### **Procedures: Institutional Administrative Practices**

Although international partnerships are not the core business of American higher education institutions and are secondary to the primary instructional activities, they benefit from supportive administrative practices in these institutions, whose mission statements increasingly embrace the value of such

partnerships. In the study team's case study interviews, institutional administrators strongly affirmed that international partnerships and partnership awards are vital in the 21st century, since they enable faculty to gain new information, insights, and perspectives from partner institutions with different cultures and different training and research approaches. These administrators also view international partnership awards as important, even if they are small and have limited indirect cost rates, because they enable faculty to start collaborative projects in countries for which it may be difficult to get external funding.

For higher education institutional administrators, the build-up of aggregate research revenue from grants contributes to status among peer research institutions and verifiably assists in expanding and sustaining a network of contacts with donor agencies. Institutional executive officers also often find it useful to promote international partnerships among an institution's private donors, leading to further administrative practices that facilitate these partnerships.

Yet institutional administrative practices also may serve as a disincentive for seeking partnership awards. Unless an international project is tied to substantial external funding with relatively lucrative negotiated indirect cost rates, the prospect of costs to be absorbed by the institution, the availability of internal funds for cost sharing, the need to appoint replacement staff during a grant period, and the magnitude of government oversight may cause diminished levels of enthusiasm among institutional administrators, even with a "champion" in place at the department or college level. Moreover, "soft" funding in times of economic constraint places non-core activities at risk. What is apparent is that higher education institutions and other organizations make international partnership choices using a broader range of management criteria than does an academic department chair or a faculty member.

International partner institutions also may have different perspectives regarding partnership management that can compromise the speed at which objectives can be realized or larger policy goals advanced. These perspectives are often concentrated at the procedural level and involve administrative practices. Historical systems of management and process are often inherited and by design continue to reflect a different pace of academic operations. In a time when operations are time-sensitive to funding cycles, an institution that still reflects a different administrative approach inhibits program operations. Moreover, cultural elements and political agendas that are beyond the American partner's scope, knowledge, or capacity to influence can affect international partner institution operations.

### **Policies: Senior Management Continuity**

The third feature derived from the literature and documentation review and subsequent research is the frequent lack of senior management continuity in international partner institutions or organizations. Although higher education partnership directors and academic department "champions" may retire or relocate, they generally remain engaged in international partnerships longer than academic deans, associate provosts for international affairs, vice-chancellors for academic affairs, and other senior administrators, who shift on a relatively routine basis in many institutions. Executive officers of higher education institutions, like executives of other organizations, are a mobile group, and a new incumbent in an executive position may not share his or her predecessor's enthusiasm for an international partnership.

Correspondingly, the appointments of senior administrators at overseas higher education institutions and other organizations often are for specific terms, with term limits or age-based retirement stipulated irrespective of performance. Replacement of talented personnel is often done without due regard to management skills. The intrusion of government ministry or academic politics shifts priorities, changes strategic interests, re-deploys administrative assets, and re-aligns budgetary commitments. These conditions can exist even when there is notable mid-level management leadership and a generalized institutional commitment to support international linkages.

### **Systemic Realities: USAID Interests and Procedures**

The anecdotal commentary derived from the research provides a clear message: USAID is an interested party that has to be considered in the operation and assessment of international partnerships and programs. This USAID role is not a challenge *per se*, but it is a significant factor that must be recognized in the design and implementation of international higher education institutional partnerships.

USAID involvement is significantly linked to the achievement of the Agency's strategic goals. Achieving development outcomes, "building human capacity," and "strengthening institutions" are distinct from the operational elements of an international institutional partnership. As a general rule, these goals are more long term in the policy planning process. In many regards, they require cultural shifts that only occur in associations with host country partner personnel that are of longer duration. This reality serves to encourage the consideration of longer-term funding cycles as an important "best practice" in realizing success of a partnership.

USAID involvement also requires a need for sensitivity to changing pedagogies that are rapidly transforming the learning processes in tertiary, or post-secondary, education. American institutions are aware of these changes and use them effectively. Blogs, reflective writings, "chat rooms," webinars, and electronic linkages among partner institutions have supplanted more traditional modes of instruction. Use of these new methods is growing at an exponential rate, suggesting that appropriate concern for and support of innovative approaches to learning should be incorporated into partnership practice from proposal design to operational implementation.

## **PART TWO.**

# **FRAMEWORKS FOR ANALYZING PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC GOALS**

Analysis of the performance of international higher education institutional partnerships in terms of “best” or “most effective” practices requires inquiry that must occur at two distinct levels. The first level of research on “most effective” practices is directed toward evaluating success in meeting the stated partnership performance objectives, which are operational in nature.

By contrast, the results of an evaluation of those performance objectives combine to inform judgments on larger strategic goals, goals that are a central feature of the policy process as contained in the *USAID FORWARD* reform initiative. The second level of inquiry involves measuring progress in achieving the strategic goals of USAID institutional partnerships, namely, human capacity building and institutional strengthening, and requires a different framework of analysis from the one used for examining success in achieving operational performance objectives.

The literature and documentation review that culminated in an extensive matrix summarizing data from 374 USAID and non-USAID AME partnerships, the USAID partnership participant survey, the group conversations domestically and on-site in host countries, and the case studies all have contributed to the team’s development of analytic frameworks to be used at these two levels of inquiry. The concepts underlying these frameworks are introduced below.

## **ACHIEVING PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES**

The existing reports on the partnerships examined by the team have a disproportionate focus on the substantive work of the partnerships, for example, education, health, community building, agriculture, or other activities; they seldom formally address operational practices. This attention to the substantive activities is understandable, as it creates a record for public scrutiny. What is less clear in many of these partnerships is whether activities carried out or attempted were done as well as possible – and whether they produced outcomes that addressed the original objectives. In fact, there have been completed projects in which the achievement of the original objectives was not fully realized.

More important, although perhaps less fascinating, is the fundamental need to determine if partnership outcomes reveal practices used in planning, communication and coordination, implementation, and evaluation that can be measurably assessed in order to make judgments on varying levels of partnership success or failure. By definition, practices can be considered the routine actions associated with continuing operations. Where such practices are well defined and carried out with due diligence, the results are more likely to be optimal.

The team’s survey of USAID partnership participants and the responses from discussion group participants affirmed that certain practices that encourage positive outcomes should be incorporated into every partnership. Moreover, survey respondents and discussion group participants indicated that the absence of a particular practice can compromise the desired outcomes. The overlap in findings led to the categorizing of practices that, if effectively incorporated into a partnership, encourage the likelihood of achieving objectives with higher levels of performance and greater realization of desired outcomes.

### **Operational Practices and Outcome Measures**

Through its research, the team identified numerous operational practices and outcome measures that address the performance of a higher education institutional partner in the United States or the host

country. These operational practices clustered into four categories, with outcome measures constituting a fifth category. The five categories, which collectively constitute the performance objectives framework, are as follows:

- **Planning Practices:** This category consists of the degree of prior planning that has occurred among the proposed partners and the level of collaboration in the exchange of ideas in terms of assessing needs, developing work plans, budgeting for implementation, and specifying partner obligations and objectives.
- **Communication and Coordination Practices:** The success of any partnership is heavily dependent on how much attention and respect are shown toward colleagues to ensure collaborative support among institutional leaders and participants in all partner institutions and organizations and to avoid or mitigate partnership misunderstandings.
- **Implementation Practices:** As a partnership goes forward, it establishes logistics in project operations in an effort to resolve problems, ensure continuity of operations among key personnel, and fulfill obligations to meet deadlines for deliverables. It also may engage in some level of activities aimed at encouraging sustainability of operations beyond the terms of the funded period of support.
- **Evaluation Practices:** This category looks at the use of formative assessment tools and processes for monitoring project operations and indicating progress toward stated performance objectives. The level of assessment undertaken by a partnership demonstrates its concern for identifying operational aspects that need to be amended to meet more fully expectations of a particular objective.
- **Outcomes Assessment:** At the conclusion of a partnership project, an assessment of the objectives of the project can be undertaken internally or by an external reviewer. This is a separate task from the on-going evaluation process that is designed to permit “mid-course corrections.” The outcomes assessment serves the purpose of identifying those actions that give promise of encouraging sustainability beyond the project period and measuring the “spread effects” or “spillover” from planned operations that draw in new cohorts of stakeholders to the planned partnership activities or produce unanticipated outcomes.

In combination, the operational practices and outcome measures selected for this framework ought to be observable in effective partnerships and become the basis for designing a “checklist,” or framework, for improving the results of a partnership. In a succinct form, the “checklist” would summarize how practices were employed in the partnership to obtain “most effective” outcomes; practices would only merit the designation “most effective” if carried out with observable levels of success in achieving the intended results. The “checklist” could be used at various stages of partnership development, for example, as a way of planning the partnership project, conducting a formative evaluation of the partnership during project implementation, and assessing the results of the partnership upon project completion.

This framework is developed in greater detail and applied in Part Six of this report, following an examination of the team’s findings from its research and case studies in Parts Three through Five.

## **ACHIEVING PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIC GOALS**

A review of the research materials used in partnership project evaluation including focus group guidelines, design-a-program exercises, and the FREEDOM Support Educational Partnerships Program (EPP) protocol for U.S. EPP grantees provides useful information. However, it also reveals how difficult it is to gather data that focus specifically on formalizing the task of “greater accountability among

development actors” through a “renewed Agency commitment to measuring from results.”<sup>6</sup> That concern correlates fully with the Scope of Work for this study of identifying “most effective” partnership practices, which also must include measurement to provide evidence of achieving the strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening for national development.

Stepping back from current data summaries and pragmatic approaches to the collection of evaluative materials, it is useful to examine a better way to gather data in a format that is measurable and can improve both the design and operations of USAID institutional partnership projects. Analyses of the strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening are, by design, matters of “systems performance,” as indicated below:

- A. **Human Capacity and Human Capacity Building:** Each individual participant in a higher education institutional partnership is a “system” capable of operating in such a way as to enhance his or her human capacity. Human capacity building is thus a process of enabling an individual to achieve an even higher level of performance.
- B. **Institutions and Institutional Strengthening:** Institutions, agencies, and governments are “systems” of varying complexity that are capable of operating in ways that can enhance their institutional capacity. Institutional strengthening is thus a process of enabling the interacting parts of an institution to achieve an even higher level of performance.

For purposes of this report, both partnership participants and partnership institutions are treated as “learning systems,” and emphasis is placed on the process of how learning affects the characteristics of “systems” in order to determine if “capacity building” and “strengthening,” are occurring. What is desired is an awareness of how systems “learn” in order to be more effective.

This focus on learning leads, in turn, to consideration of what ought to be observed or measured in order to demonstrate that learning is resulting in improved “capacity” or “strength.” What is desired is to be able to gather evidence that establishes on a measurable basis that “individual capacity building” or “institutional strengthening” has occurred.

A review of social systems theory identifies five performance criteria that all “systems,” whether they are individuals or complex organizations, share to some extent. These criteria, which provide a foundation for designing and implementing USAID institutional partnerships, are learning, complexity, flexibility, productivity, and durability. This means that, throughout the entire process of developing a partnership project, participants must pay attention to how planned activities will incorporate teaching methodologies that identify learning, complexity, flexibility, productivity, and durability as central features in support of strategic outcomes.

These five performance criteria are examined below in terms of each of the USAID strategic goals for higher education institutional partnerships: human capacity building and institutional strengthening.

### **Performance Criteria in Human Capacity Building**

For an individual participating in an institutional partnership (e.g., a faculty member in a U.S. or host country higher education institution who uses partnership involvement to advance an international research agenda, or a student earning a degree under a partnership program to expand the abilities of the workforce), the five performance criteria can be defined and measured in the following manner:

- **Learning:** The individual should demonstrate the absorption of greater breadth of knowledge in one or more fields of study to expand personal intellectual awareness, such knowledge being provided in courses of inquiry or training as part of the partnership.

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<sup>6</sup> Shah, Rajiv. “The Modern Development Enterprise.” Speech by the USAID Administrator at the Center for Global Development, Washington, DC, January 19, 2011.

- **Complexity:** The individual should demonstrate that exposure to alternative paradigms for analysis or information extends the range of his/her intellect by command of additional material, which provides an expanded basis for creativity in inquiry.
- **Flexibility:** The individual should acquire greater ability to recombine knowledge and skills for assessing issues, realigning skills, and responding to questions posed and problems requiring solution.
- **Productivity:** The individual should be positioned to engage more effectively with her/his environment and demonstrate an enhanced level of productiveness in terms of intellectual range, analytic focus, synthesis of skills, capacity to think strategically, and ability to contribute to the community.
- **Durability:** The individual should gain a greater sense of personal and physical well-being from the benefits derived from the first four criteria and improve his/her ability to function more effectively in society and respond more efficiently to threats to personal conditions.

### **Performance Criteria in Institutional Strengthening**

For a U.S. or host country higher education institution and other organizations in a USAID partnership, activities that demonstrate greater institutional strength from a systemic standpoint should be defined and measured. With additional training, this can be done in the following manner:

- **Learning:** A higher education institution or other partnership organization should demonstrate an awareness of techniques, policy options, and methods that leads to improved use of facilities, better management of personnel, stronger academic programming in research and teaching, or other actions that strengthen the institution.
- **Complexity:** Growth in institutional complexity should be demonstrated by the increased differentiation of tasks evidenced in the creation of offices (structure) and in the assignment of duties of increased specificity for particular tasks of new program development (functions).
- **Flexibility:** Higher education partners should show a capacity to shift resources, personnel, and use of facilities to serve more effectively the needs of the staff, faculty, and students.
- **Productivity:** A partnership institution should increase operational productivity through a combination of administrative learning; more detailed differentiation of assigned tasks in management, research, and instruction; and more explicit resource allocation.
- **Durability:** The combination of learning, structural complexity, capacity of informed deployment of assets, and measurable growth in productivity should create strength to ameliorate the impact of economic, social, and political events that can confront a higher education institution.

In combination, these five performance criteria for designing and implementing institutional partnerships that can achieve the strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening ought to be observable or measurable in effective partnerships. These criteria also become the basis for the study team's design of a framework for use in measuring the strategic outcomes of a partnership. This framework is developed in greater detail and applied in Part Six of this report, following an examination of the team's findings from its research and case studies in Parts Three through Five.

## PART THREE.

# HISTORICAL REVIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

All U.S. higher education institutions and their overseas partners ought to approach the design of institutional collaboration with appreciation for the contexts and conditions for achieving successful outcomes, including early attention to personnel, procedures, policies, and systemic realities. The situational influences identified in Part Two also need to be appreciated, anticipated, and accommodated. To illustrate these realities, the study team’s extensive review of decades of higher education partnership activities established an empirical but generally suggestive basis for further exploration to identify the important “lessons learned” from past and current partnerships. Further, that additional research serves to strengthen conclusions about those elements of a partnership that represent the most effective practices.

## DIMENSIONS OF THE PARTNERSHIPS MATRIX AND THE PARTICIPANT SURVEY

### Matrix Overview

The matrix includes 374 AME higher education institutional partnerships, of which 237 were funded by U.S. Government (USG) agencies. Of these 237 USG partnerships, 196 were funded by USAID, the U.S. Department of State (USDoS), and the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) combined. In addition, 23 partnerships were funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and 18 by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Fogarty Center. Slightly more than 70 percent of the 374 AME institutional partnerships are in the Asia region, with the rest in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Gulf.

Four of the matrix listings are institutional partnership programs, for which specific partnership information was lacking. These four programs include two programs funded by USAID in Egypt (315 partnerships and 60 partnerships, respectively) and two programs funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), U.S. Department of State – one in Algeria (9 partnerships) and one in Tunisia (9 partnerships). Had information on these 393 partnerships been available, the matrix would have included a total of 763 AME partnerships, of which 626 were USG-funded and 502 were USAID-funded.

**Table I. AME Matrix Partnerships, by Funder and AME Sub-Region**

	Total 374	USAID 129	USIA 28	USDoS 39	USDA 23	NIH 18
Regional Asia	13	1	-	-	1	-
Central Asia	81	5	16	12	-	-
South Asia	76	42	2	3	9	5
East Asia	96	25	7	1	13	12
Middle East/Gulf	61	30	2	13	-	
North Africa	47	26	1	10	-	1

For many AME partnerships in the matrix, the team either was unable to identify the primary program area of a partnership or a partnership addressed multiple program areas; thus, it is impossible to categorize all the 374 partnerships by primary program areas. Nevertheless:

- More than 40 partnerships focused on education;
- More than 35 partnerships focused on each of agriculture, health, and environment/natural resources/transportation;
- More than 25 partnerships focused on economic development/economic growth/economics/trade; and

- More than 20 partnerships focused on each of democracy and governance/public policy/journalism and business.

### **Survey Overview**

An online survey was distributed to over 450 USAID higher education partnership participants, in English, Arabic, and Bahasa Indonesia. As of June 2011, the team had received 67 responses from 52 U.S. and 15 international higher education partnership participants. Of these 67 respondents, 52 fully or substantially had completed their surveys. The lower number of responses from international participants, while in actuality a higher rate of response than from their domestic counterparts, reflects some of the difficulty the team had in finding international contacts for higher education partnerships. Project records often contained contact information for the U.S. partner only; contact information for the international partner, when available, was usually incomplete, and often no longer valid. However, the international site visits provided an opportunity to capture in greater detail, as with the domestic focus groups, those criteria and practices that were of greatest importance to a select group of international participants.

Of the total respondents, almost all reported being at primarily public universities, with two at community colleges, and one at an international higher education organization. Half of the respondents have been active in three or more USAID partnerships, and more than two-thirds in two or more partnerships. Less than one-third of the partnerships listed involved institutional partners in the Asia and Middle East regions, including non-USAID partner countries.

Virtually all reported partnerships started activities during 1998-2010, though three started in 1988 or earlier; none began during 1989-1997. Almost half of the partnerships are still active. The majority of the partnerships focused on education, followed by the environment and agriculture/animal science/forestry. Roughly three-fourths of the partnerships were funded at more than USD 200,000 and about half of the partnerships were part of a formal assessment. Most partnerships were impacted by external contexts in the host country.

## **COLLECTED INSIGHTS FROM QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

### **Findings and Lessons Learned from the Literature Review and Survey**

By far the main partnership development goal reported by the survey respondents who answered this item was strengthening institutional capacity (including program development) in international partner institutions. This is reinforced by the fact that, for all respondents as well as for just the U.S. respondents, the two most common partnership activities were improving curriculum development and strengthening faculty and/or staff development. By comparison, the two most common activities reported by international respondents were strengthening faculty and/or staff development and improving analytical/research capability.

### **Characteristics of Successful Partnerships**

As a whole, the U.S. and international respondents reported that, on average, the four characteristics of greatest importance in creating and sustaining successful international partnerships are, in ranked order:

- Effective partnership management;
- Committed heads of partner institutions;
- Clear partnership goals; and
- Collaboration on the design of goals and activities of the partnership.

Respondents reported that the next most important characteristics are, in ranked order:

- Adequate funding;

- Collaborative decision-making processes;
- Activities focused on achieving goals; and
- Length of funding period.

The characteristic these respondents viewed as being of least importance in creating and sustaining successful partnerships is being part of a consortium of institutions.

The international respondents reported similar results; they were unanimous in saying that five characteristics are of greatest, and equal, importance in creating and sustaining successful international partnerships, namely:

- Effective partnership management;
- Committed heads of partner institutions;
- Clear partnership goals;
- Activities focused on achieving goals; and
- Measurable and sustainable outcomes.

Of least importance to these six international respondents are length of funding period and being part of a consortium of institutions.

### **Partnership Practices Facilitating Success**

Regarding the goal of strengthening host country institutional capacity development, survey respondents reported that the following partnership practices contributed to success:

- Joint strategic planning with partners;
- Joint curriculum development and teaching;
- Assistance to the host country institution in establishing an advisory board composed of leading industry representatives, to serve as a key resource for faculty;
- Building a grants management group;
- Shared decision making;
- Host country institutional staff development activities;
- Linkages with the host country private sector, including meeting with local business persons;
- Collaborative research, with joint research proposals and presentations;
- Cross-academic unit relationships;
- Hands-on, field-based training and applied research;
- Host country stakeholder “buy-in” through shared work and benefits;
- Employment of competent host country staff;
- Lead U.S. and host country partners travel to the others’ institutions;
- Educational and cultural site visits;
- U.S. participant home stays in host country;
- Bilateral exchanges;
- “Sandwich” graduate degree training at U.S. institutions;
- Web-based repository of all project materials;
- Delivery of services hand-in-hand with research and training activities;
- Attention to international partners’ self-identified needs;
- Training in strategic visioning for host country community leaders to help them develop long-term strategic plans and short-term business plans;
- Close working relationships between partner institutions, and trust between institutional project directors;
- Close coordination with host country USAID mission and Ministry of Education; and
- Short courses in international partner institution taught by U.S. faculty.

**“Take time to get acquainted and build rapport....the foundation of a happy relationship.”**

### **Partnership Practices Hindering Success**

Partnership practices and issues hindering success in achieving the goal of strengthening the development of host country institutional capacity included:

- Poor understanding of project goal and management by host country institutional leadership;
- Partnership initiated and driven by institutional leadership, not project faculty;
- Host country faculty’s negative attitudes toward change;
- Lack of financial accountability and transparency in host country institution;
- Uncertainty concerning political stability in host country;
- Weak host country institutional commitment to work plans and schedules, hindering progress;
- Staff and administrative changes at international partner institution;
- Limited financial resources to support faculty development and U.S. “sandwich” training;
- Activities that focus on individual development or self-serving research at the expense of strengthening institutional capacity;
- Poor host institution mentoring;
- Older faculty near retirement often sent to the United States for host country institution political reasons;
- Lack of salary funds in award to get U.S. faculty to host country and to get host country faculty members to commit themselves to partnership activities and outcomes;
- Lack of English proficiency among international partner institution participants and lack of host country language proficiency among U.S. institution participants;
- Poor governance structure of international partner institution; and
- Few, if any, time or recognition rewards for U.S. faculty in their home institution.

### **External Contexts Facilitating Success**

External contexts facilitating success in achieving goal of strengthening the development of host country institutional capacity included:

- Strong relationship with host country government ministries;
- Strong understanding of and respect for region’s cultural influences on the partnership;
- Inclusion of participants from host country non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well as the government in the partnership;
- Host country private sector eagerness to establish stronger contacts with partner institution;
- Common language and livable setting in host country;
- Assistance from U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) in host country; and
- U.S. funding agency commitment.

### **External Contexts Hindering Success**

External contexts hindering success in achieving goal of strengthening the development of host country institutional capacity included:

- Concerns about safety in host country by potential U.S. faculty participants;
- Lack of U.S. Embassy support or insights about host country contexts;
- Lack of USAID mission’s concern or interest in programs not funded bilaterally;
- Restrictive and cumbersome U.S. visa processes for visitors to the United States, resulting in long delays (and sometimes refusals) to grant visas, made worse when visas do not permit flexibility for host country student course work in the United States;

- Political disruption or changes that affect participation of principal host country persons;
- Failure of local government in host country to meet obligations for cost sharing and for sending promised participants to partnership programs;
- Unacknowledged differences in culture;
- Political climate in host country that places pressure on partnership to fulfill development goals and also places limits on the partnership's areas of focus;
- Language barrier for U.S. participants in communicating with host country partner participants;
- Inadequate attention by U.S. Embassies to partnership projects; and
- Political influence of the host country's national university on the USAID mission.

**“Refusal to grant visas destroyed the whole partnership and made it useless.”**

### Post-Partnership Perspectives

If respondents were to do partnerships over again, they would do several things differently, including:

- Focus more on the planning phase, ensuring partners share a clear vision;
- Focus more in the early phases of the partnership on post-partnership sustainability;
- Seek third-party funding with jointly developed grant proposal at start of partnership;
- Spend more time on planning and reflection and less time on activities;
- Develop stronger relationships in host country institution and with U.S. Embassy;
- Integrate U.S. lead institution more deeply into decision making that affects the partner institution;
- Lay out more formal expectations in advance for U.S. and host country partners;
- Formalize a leadership structure and mission for the partnership;
- Involve institutional administrators (e.g., finance, sponsored research) on a partnership management team;
- Identify an external business/industry entity as a formal partner to facilitate progress;
- Encourage partner institutions to sustain progress on partnership's objectives;
- Improve bilingual language skills among international and U.S. participants;
- Communicate partnership successes more effectively through presentations;
- Focus more on research;
- Conduct more evaluations;
- Have a five-year award time frame, not a two- or three-year time frame;
- Improve selection of faculty and student partnership participants; and
- Obtain greater support and buy-in from Ministry of Education early in the project.

**“I never put all of my eggs in the USAID basket.”**

### Focus Group Findings/Lessons Learned

The insights gained by the team in the focus groups largely substantiated the lessons learned by the team through the literature and documentation review and survey responses. At the same time, several insights pointed the team toward further inquiry on partnerships. These insights included the following observations:

- **Strong relationships are essential.** Focus group participants emphasized that the most important element of a successful partnership is a long-term commitment by partner institutions, including a willingness to sustain the partnership with funds from institutional budgets, if necessary. Participants also emphasized the need to establish strong relationships

between potential partners well before opportunities for funded partnerships arise. Partnerships established in response to a Request for Proposals (RFP) were not as successful because they had not built the necessary levels of communication and trust that long-term partnerships foster. One participant described a recent experience in which an Asian institutional partner said its main fear is partnering with U.S. institutions that are trying to “rip them off.” In addition, relationships are more fruitful if established with high-level individuals, such as rectors or chancellors, though in some cases deans or directors might be appropriate.

- **Reporting outcomes is challenging.** Measuring relationships in the USAID assessment and reporting system is difficult. From the viewpoint of U.S. institutional partners (and, in many cases, their international partners), the primary objective of a USAID partnership is to establish and maintain long-term partner relationships. Yet USAID’s focus on short-term results (usually inputs and outputs) and required reports to monitor compliance with award guidance are judged to be excessive in some cases, inhibiting professional dialogue and new initiatives appropriate to the partnership, and not helpful in strengthening institutions.

“... with the USAID grant we spent so much time reporting we barely had any time to do any work.”

- **Formative assessment has limited impact.** Formative assessment is prominent in planning and implementing partnerships, but the focus group participants said its results often do not lead to appropriate or necessary changes in partnership activities. In addition to the current USAID proposal process requiring the specification in advance of all outcomes, it is often difficult to obtain USAID/U.S. Department of State approval of award changes.
- **Expanding awareness of other donors’ activities is important.** Focus group participants observed that USAID incorrectly thinks the United States is the only “game” in town when host country institutions want to partner with industrialized country institutions. For example, institutions from France, Germany, Australia, and other countries actively seek partners in Indonesia. These nations often approach host country institutions with a clearer understanding than USAID of these potential partners’ highly educated faculty and highest priority problems, which frequently are long-term research and other development outcomes rather than the short-term training and other activities USAID often has funded.

“[The USAID partnership model] is a charity-based NGO model, not a partnership.”

- **Bureaucratic challenges are common.** Focus group participants described a variety of challenges in working effectively with the administrative bureaucracies of higher education institutions, especially U.S. institutions, which often do not give priority to the operational and financial necessities of small international institutional partnership programs. The lead U.S. partner institution may find it too burdensome and time-consuming to make sub-awards to international partners, for example, given the differences in institutional financial management systems and the difficulty in receiving sub-award financial reports in a timely manner.
- **Partnerships should be regionally funded.** Focus group participants recommended that USAID increasingly fund partnerships on a regional basis, given the challenges of selecting one institution from an expanding number of institutions in many countries that would welcome collaboration and networking and could achieve partnership objectives.

## **PART FOUR.**

# **CASE STUDIES OF SELECTED USAID AME PARTNERSHIPS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Case Study Selection Criteria**

The selection process for case studies followed the completion of other research and analytical tasks, including the review of literature, the survey of participants, and the discussions with focus groups. This research provided a database of past and current partnership awards and led to a general consensus on effective practices; it also presented a wide array of factors to consider when choosing possible case studies.

The study team was cognizant of the need to ensure adequate coverage and balance. Four criteria were initially used to identify partnerships in the Asia and Middle East Regions as potential case studies that – as a group – would include:

- Geographic sub-regions, with at least one site in each of the AME sub-regions of the Middle East/ North Africa, South Asia, Central Asia and East Asia;
- Different types of institutions, with a mix of well-established flagship universities and newer or less-established universities;
- Partnership objectives, with examples of the range of sectoral focus areas – agriculture; environment and natural resources management; business and business education; democracy and governance, public policy, and journalism; education; health; and economic growth and trade; and
- Recent award dates, with partnerships whose funding started after 2000 to ensure that there would be sufficient institutional memory of the partnership award and its associated activities within the universities.

After reviewing its AME matrix and other documentation, the study team concluded that the international higher education institutional partnership awards funded by non-U.S. partners reflected those countries' development priorities and objectives; were managed differently from USAID partnerships; were individual, rather than institutional, collaborations; or were awards about which the team would have had great difficulty obtaining partnership information and access.

The team thus limited its attention to the approximately 50 percent of the 374 partnership awards in the AME matrix that had been funded by U.S. government agencies. After exploring websites relating to a range of these partnerships, the team concluded that conducting case studies of projects funded by U.S. agencies other than USAID would involve time-consuming and potentially difficult negotiations about access to partnership participants, insights, and information in the United States and in the AME regions. Moreover, the team also found it very difficult to obtain information from USAID or from partnership directors or their institutions about older USAID partnership awards. Indeed, as noted in Part Three, the team received only three survey responses from any participants in USAID partnerships that started before 1998 – and those respondents were involved in partnerships beginning in 1988 or before.

#### **Application of Case Study Selection Criteria**

The site selection criteria allowed for better management of data, narrowing the list of potential case studies to partnerships in 19 AME countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Morocco, Nepal, Philippines, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tunisia, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, and West Bank/Gaza.

Several additional factors were used to reduce further the list of partnerships to be considered. Potential case studies would focus on non-research partnerships and non-exchange programs; the adequacy of available partnership information and perceptions of general partnership success; and opportunities for meeting with host country institutions, particularly those that had accommodated multiple partnerships from a variety of funders in various sectors.

### Recommendations for Country Priorities and Partnership Case Studies

The countries and types of institutions recommended for case studies, shown in the table below, provided an appropriate balance in terms of geography and sectoral and technical focus (e.g., agriculture, environmental/natural resource management, education, water). Alternatives were also examined, and included a community college model and a country that unexpectedly became involved in a revolution.

**Table 2. List of Case Study Partnerships**

Country	Case Study Partnership	Partnership Award + Focus Area
Indonesia	11 Indonesian teacher training universities <i>et al.</i> /The Ohio State University <i>et al.</i> (USAID/IHED)	U.S./Indonesia Teacher Education Consortium (USINTEC) – Strengthen teacher education institutions and programs in the Indonesian education system
Jordan	University of Jordan <i>et al.</i> /Washington State University <i>et al.</i> (USAID)	Jordan Water Skills Enhancement (JWSE) Project – Strengthen leadership capacity in the water and agricultural sectors in Jordan
India	Tamil Nadu Agricultural University <i>et al.</i> /Cornell University (USAID/IHED)	Experiential Learning in Globalization and Agriculture (ELGA) Project – Develop and jointly implement a two-part International Agriculture and Rural Development Course for graduate and undergraduate students in India
Kazakhstan	Eurasian National University/University of New Mexico/AES Group of Companies in Kazakhstan/Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia (USAID/Global Development Alliance)	MS in Environmental Management and Engineering (MSEME) Program – Produce skilled managers and engineers for electric power and natural resources firms and organizations in Kazakhstan

The USAID Asia and Middle East Bureau Office of Technical Support judged the case study priorities recommended in the table to provide the best balance and the richest opportunity for assessing “best practices” and approved the team’s recommendations.

### Case Study Methodology

For each of the four case studies, the team sought information on the partnership performance practices and measures, and on the human capacity building and institutional strengthening outcomes outlined in Part Two. However, each case study also had idiosyncratic elements, which are appropriate for partnerships of different sizes, cultures, organizational structures, and purposes. Nonetheless, in combination, the four case studies did produce the consolidated set of “lessons learned” that define the “best” or “most effective” practices for international higher education partnerships and the characteristics to be observed and measured by participants in current and future partnerships to advance the strategic goals of capacity building and institutional strengthening.

To inform the study of effective practices undertaken by successful USAID AME partnerships, the team incorporated domestic and international site visits in the case studies, which provided opportunities for

- In-depth observation of selected partnerships from the perspective of the international institutional partners;
- Consultation with key higher education leaders as to their priorities and preferred formats for such partnerships in the future;
- Testing and refining the validity of a “checklist” of effective practices and outcome measures; and
- Gathering the perspective of staff of USAID missions on partnerships.

In carrying out these case studies, the team obtained most partnership information and insights through intensive interviews conducted at participating U.S. and host country higher education institutions and other partner organizations, supplemented by interviews with USAID and government ministry officials and other important host country constituencies. To facilitate comparisons across case studies, the team developed interview protocols for the different roles of participants in the partnerships, including partnership directors, university academic and research administrators, and faculty members. Each case study team consisted of two study team members, who tailored the interview and observational protocols to their partnership case study when appropriate.

International interviews were conducted during site visits to each of the four partnership host countries. All data collection activities were conducted in culturally sensitive ways, working, as appropriate, with local resource persons. The case study teams also conducted site visits to the lead U.S. institution in three of the four partnerships; for the Kazakhstan partnership, the team relied on telephone interviews because several of the key partnership participants at the lead U.S. institution had relocated to other institutions.

To research the case studies, the teams made use of the reports and analyses described in Part Three of this report, as well as additional documentation that became available during U.S. and overseas visits, such as memoranda of understanding, partnership program brochures, proposals to external funders leading to partnership awards, and partnership reports.

The study team’s four full case studies, which are included in VOLUME II of this report, offer detailed looks at each partnership’s country and institutional contexts and conditions; its most significant and effective practices and outcomes; and its human capacity building and institutional strengthening achievements. The following brief summaries highlight fundamental characteristics of each partnership, as well as its “most effective” practices and outcomes.

## **U.S./INDONESIA TEACHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM (USINTEC) PARTNERSHIP: AN INDONESIA CASE STUDY SUMMARY**

### **Background**

Since 2006, The Ohio State University (OSU) has been the lead partner in the U.S./Indonesia Teacher Education Consortium (USINTEC), a binational consortium involving 13 Indonesian partners – 11 teacher training universities, the Indonesian Open University (UT), and the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Open Learning Center (SEAMOLEC) – and two other U.S. partners – Indiana University (IU) and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). USINTEC exists within the context of OSU involvement in Indonesian teacher education projects and partnerships since 1986. This long-term collaboration facilitated the implementation of USINTEC and has contributed significantly to its partnership practices, programs, outcomes, and sustainability.

USINTEC's mission is to "promote collaboration and mutual understanding of the United States and Indonesia through higher education partnerships" and to "strengthen institutional capacity in teacher education through collaborative development of innovative educational programs and research to be conducted in the U.S. and Indonesia." Its activities address the Indonesian requirement that 1 million new teachers earn 4-year undergraduate ( $S_1$ ) degrees and that 1.7 million current teachers upgrade their education to  $S_1$  levels within the next few years to be certified. For Indonesia to achieve this national goal, it is essential to develop new teacher education programs and to upgrade the educational levels and knowledge of the teacher training university lecturers who prepare these teachers.

This is a case study of the USINTEC partnership and its programs, not a case study only of its 2007-10 USAID/HED "Strengthening Institutional Capacity in Elementary Teacher Education" award of USD 125,000. One year after the award ended, and almost three years after nearly all award funds had been spent on partnership activities, USINTEC remains an active partnership. To date, its programs have included:

- USAID/HED award activities, primarily national and institutional teacher workshops in Indonesia to strengthen Indonesian USINTEC teacher training universities' faculty and programs;
- Teacher Quality and School Leadership Graduate Non-Degree Master's Sandwich Program, to increase knowledge of U.S. teacher and school administrator preparation practices/programs;
- Doctoral Sandwich Program (DSP), to provide four-month U.S. university opportunities for participants to access resources that can improve the quality of their dissertation research;
- Programs of Academic Recharging (PAR), to provide professional development opportunities in the United States for Indonesian USINTEC administrators and faculty with doctoral degrees; and
- International Dual Master's Degree Programs in Education (DMDPs), to enable Indonesians concurrently to earn master's degrees from Indonesian and U.S. USINTEC universities in a two-year integrated program co-taught by Indonesian and U.S. faculty.

The success of the USINTEC partnership results from its effective operational practices, which are associated with each of the four categories in the study team's performance objectives framework: planning, communication and coordination, implementation, and evaluation. These practices are addressed below, together with an assessment of partnership outcomes.

## **Effective Practices**

### ***Planning Practices***

Under OSU's leadership, all USINTEC partners collaborated in planning USINTEC and in developing the Scope of Work (SOW) underlying the memorandum of understanding, signed by the heads of all 16 partners in 2006, that created USINTEC; all USINTEC partners collaborated in planning the April 2006 USINTEC proposal to USAID/HED.

The primary purpose of USINTEC was partnering with Indonesian teacher training institutions to address the national goal of upgrading the education and training of more than 2 million teachers, and it did not change over time; the USINTEC institutional directors made appropriate minor "mid-course corrections" because the USAID/HED award was finalized one year later than anticipated, but that did not change the award objective. USINTEC institutions also gave attention during planning to post-award sustainability by having all USINTEC partner heads sign the MOU, by emphasizing the importance of continuing communications with key Ministry of National Education (MONE) officials regarding funding, by avoiding "fracturing" USINTEC by not "pairing up" U.S. and Indonesian partners for programs, and by moving from project mode to program mode through the International Dual Master's Degree Programs in Education (DMDPs).

USINTEC Sandwich Program, PAR, and DMDP academic participants had MONE scholarships or other support requiring their return to their home institutions after their U.S. study. USINTEC realistically

planned activities and administrative tasks, although it did not anticipate the increasing difficulty that Indonesian Sandwich Program and PAR participants are having getting visas in time to travel to the United States for their programs.

### **Communication and Coordination Practices**

In 2005 and 2006, the heads of all 16 partners agreed on 5-year SOW objectives, signed the MOU creating USINTEC, and agreed on objectives in the 2007-10 USAID/HED award. The Ohio State University (OSU) informed USINTEC partners about USAID/HED report requirements, but OSU did not make sub-awards to Indonesian partners so they did not need to know U.S. Embassy protocols. MONE funds for the DSP and PAR programs went directly to Indonesian USINTEC faculty.

Since the OSU USINTEC institutional director had worked in Indonesia starting in 1986 and the other U.S. USINTEC institutional directors also had worked in Indonesia, they provided detailed orientations to Indonesian culture for U.S. USINTEC participants prior to the 2007 and 2008 USAID/HED-funded USINTEC national and institutional workshops in Indonesia.

USINTEC institutional directors had excellent, decades-long relationships with leading MONE officials, including those in the Directorate General for Higher Education (DGHE); OSU and Indonesian USINTEC institutional directors met with these important officials frequently. During DMDP planning, the OSU USINTEC institutional director shared materials with Indonesian USINTEC institutional directors about U.S. master's degree programs in teacher education and U.S. USINTEC universities' policies and procedures related to international dual degree programs. However, issues of Indonesian institutional or program accreditation were not addressed.

### **Implementation Practices**

USINTEC academic and research "champions" at OSU campus-wide, college, and department levels existed prior to USINTEC implementation and fully supported the partnership's operational needs. Long-term relationships among all U.S. USINTEC institutional directors existed, which facilitated engaging "champions" at IU and UIUC. The OSU USINTEC institutional director, who is also the USINTEC executive director, has dedicated almost all of her time since 2005 to ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of USINTEC, including maintaining continuous communication among Indonesian partners to enhance their teacher education academic programs and administrative practices. There were no USAID/HED sub-awards, so OSU did not need to monitor partners' financial practices.

USINTEC objectives in its USAID/HED proposal basically stayed the same, although HED approved without question minor USINTEC/OSU award "mid-course corrections" due to the one-year delay in OSU's receipt of the award. USINTEC "mid-course corrections" not requiring USAID/HED negotiation included delaying the establishment of the USD 21-million Alliance for Teacher Quality (ATQ) as USINTEC's public-private "development arm," and relying instead on substantial MONE funding for DSP and PAR participation during USINTEC's first 5 years; these mid-course corrections delayed USINTEC's plan for a national office and national coordinator in Indonesia.

The OSU institutional director has built a broad network of academic and research support for USINTEC at all levels at OSU, as well as broad institutionalized support for USINTEC programs through approval of the USINTEC SOW, MOU, and DMDPs at all OSU levels. There has been little turnover in Indonesian USINTEC institutional directors.

### **Evaluation Practices**

USINTEC submitted semi-annual reports on award activities to USAID/HED. It also frequently conducted informal evaluations of its programs, including USAID/HED award activities. DSP and PAR evaluation at OSU occurred mainly through oral feedback from Indonesian participants.

USINTEC reported that the USAID/HED “mid-course evaluation” served as the consortium’s formative evaluation; other OSU-HED communications occurred as needed. Indonesian USINTEC institutions provided the USINTEC executive director with program participation data and outcomes, for example, by monitoring the teacher education program contributions of returning DSP and PAR participants in terms of better classroom management, greater active learning in courses, and more effective collaboration with elementary and secondary school teachers. USINTEC monitored summer 2007 and summer 2008 Indonesian workshop participants to identify their institutional and teacher education program affiliations and to understand the diffusion of results from USAID/HED award activities across Indonesia.

The USINTEC executive director understood the value of summative evaluations, but viewed them as less necessary for USINTEC because the USINTEC universities and institutional directors have worked together for so many years that informal evaluation occurs continuously and is used for program improvement. USINTEC has not conducted summative evaluations of the DSP and PAR programs because they are administered by MONE independent of USINTEC. U.S. USINTEC institutional directors are familiar with “quality assurance” practices and have incorporated them into collaborative partnership and program planning, implementation, and evaluation with Indonesian USINTEC partners for the DMDPs and other programs.

### **Outcomes Assessment**

Currently, USINTEC remains an active, effective binational consortium whose partners have strengthened their institutional capacity. It has created and is helping to sustain a network of teacher preparation universities, and its focus on the Indonesian teacher education goal has led to major Directorate General for Higher Education (DGHE) support. USINTEC scholars are able to compare U.S./Indonesia pedagogy practices and research and have greater access to U.S. resources and scholars. The partnership has promoted partners’ global engagement and teacher education insights. Finally, through the DMDPs, USINTEC partners are creating a “structure” for moving USINTEC from “personalization” to “institutionalization” in partner institutions.

### **Sustainability Outcomes – First Five Years (2006-11)**

Long-term partnership sustainability requires long-term partner accountability, which in turn requires long-term partner relationships and collaboration; this characterizes USINTEC, whose programs have been planned and implemented in the context of decades-long OSU-Indonesia relationships and collaboration. All 16 U.S. and Indonesian USINTEC institutions that signed the USINTEC MOU 5 years ago remain institutional partners.

The OSU institutional director has strengthened OSU institutional support for USINTEC at all OSU levels. This individual, who is also the USINTEC executive director, and whose commitment and insight was primarily responsible for the creation of USINTEC, continues to provide effective, collaborative, and responsive leadership for USINTEC. However, the next few years are likely to require her and other USINTEC institutional directors to address USINTEC leadership succession.

In planning and implementing activities, USINTEC institutional directors continue to avoid “fracturing” USINTEC by “pairing up” U.S. and Indonesian institutions for programs. With DMDP implementation starting, USINTEC is moving beyond “personalization” to “institutionalization” – from a period in which partnership effectiveness depends on the active engagement of individuals, to one in which universities are actively engaged. DMDP implementation is enabling USINTEC to move from project mode to degree program mode, which is critical for longer-term USINTEC sustainability.

USINTEC remains a viable international institutional partnership even without external U.S. funding other than its USAID/HED award. This is due to several factors, including the successful applications of

more than 200 Indonesian USINTEC partners' faculty for DGHE scholarships since 2008; a 2008 commitment by USINTEC partners to provide 1 million U.S. dollars (USD) in institutional resources to support USINTEC during 2008-13; and a March 2011 commitment by USAID/Indonesia to provide four two-year training grants for students in the first DMDP cohort.

## **JORDAN WATER SKILLS ENHANCEMENT AND INFORMATION TO DECISION-MAKERS: A JORDAN CASE STUDY SUMMARY**

### **Introduction**

This case study looks at the 2000-2005 Jordan Water Skills Enhancement and Information to Decision-Makers (JWSE) project. This project, led by Washington State University (WSU) and the Water and Environment Research and Study Center (WERSC) at the University of Jordan, involved two additional Jordanian universities, Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) and Hashemite University (HU), and one additional U.S. university, Purdue University (PU). It provided non-degree short course training in support of Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI) programs to improve human and institutional capacities for analysis, planning, and management of water resources in Jordan.

The purpose of this case study is to identify factors that lead to relative success and/or limitations of program impact; in particular, it examines the effectiveness of partnership practices involving: planning and needs assessment, performance monitoring and evaluation, coordination and communication, and financial and logistics management, as well as factors unique to the partnership. It also places this 5-year project in the context of the now 36-year-long cooperative development relationship that exists between Washington State University and the University of Jordan.

In spring 2011, study team members travelled to Washington State University's Pullman campus and to Jordan for meetings and interviews. The study team received excellent cooperation and ready access to key people, with many additional contacts facilitated by faculty at WSU and WERSC/UJ.

### **Background**

Jordan's water supply is one of the lowest in the world, causing it to be categorized as a water-poor country. The scarcity of available water resources poses restrictions on development in the economic and agricultural sectors; two-thirds of Jordan's water supply goes toward agricultural crops. Growing demand for water in urban and industrial areas is increasing the difficulty of meeting Jordan's water needs and necessitating intense efforts in water conservation, wastewater treatment and recycling, water rationing, and other measures. In Jordan, water is discussed in terms of a sector, rather than its wider relationship to the economy. This narrow focus inhibits development of an integrative strategy.

Jordan's economic growth and the alleviation of poverty require continued efforts to develop integrated, comprehensive, and sustainable strategies combining agricultural, industrial, and urban requirements for water and for water use. In turn, such strategies require sustained research and analysis and the training of professionals at all levels to design, implement, and maintain the policies and systems. This is the basic rationale for the USAID and Jordanian emphasis on partnerships in the water, agriculture, and natural resources management sectors.

Current and past USAID activities in the water sector have included construction, technical assistance, and institutional strengthening. The major focus of USAID assistance has been integrated water resources management. As a result, the Agency supports projects that relate to the effective use of reclaimed water and recycling; the creation of a profitable but less water-intensive agricultural sector;

and the use of social marketing to increase awareness of practical ways to protect and conserve the municipal water supply.<sup>7</sup>

### **Jordan Water Skills Enhancement and Information to Decision-Makers (JWSE)**

JWSE is the most recently completed, funded project in the WSU-UJ partnership history, though joint research, faculty exchanges, and other non-funded activities continue to take place. From 1975 to 2005, five major projects implemented under the WSU-UJ partnership provided degree training to 38 individuals: 10 in the Faculty of Agriculture, 19 through the Jordan Valley Agriculture Services project, and 9 through the Jordan National Agriculture Development project. These projects also provided non-degree training to a total of 877 Jordanians: 11 in the Faculty of Agriculture; 39 in the Jordan Valley Agriculture Services project; 27 in the Jordan National Agriculture Development project; 17 through the University Development Linkages Program; and 669 in the JWSE project. Jordanian graduates from WSU have provided and are currently providing leadership at all levels in Jordanian institutions, including serving as ministers, university presidents, and deans of faculties.

The long-term impact on WSU of this international relationship also has been substantial. It has enriched the work at the WSU Water Center, which serves as a resource for Washington State and the region. At least 145 WSU faculty members have spent time in Jordan taking part in a variety of training, research, and technical collaboration activities. Forty-seven of these participated in training programs under the Water Skills Enhancement and Information to Decision-Makers project.

The JWSE project contributed to building human capacity among water specialists in Jordanian ministries and among faculty who research and teach about water-related issues both in the United States and in Jordan. The training courses conducted under JWSE over a four-year period had a significant impact on the development of human capacity primarily in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, but also in the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry of Public Works and Housing. A total of 669 water resource professionals, including engineers, scientists, and technicians, participated.

The direct transfer of knowledge to ministry personnel on topics related to the management of water, drought, and wastewater facilities, among others, as well as on project management and impact assessments provided opportunities for this information to be integrated into decisions concerning water-related issues. Faculty participation in the training courses led to strengthening of the water science and engineering programs at the universities. It also strengthened the professors' own teaching abilities and provided them access to practitioners who presented real-world problems that needed to be addressed.

The role of the UJ Water and Environment Research and Study Center in the project also increased its own capacity to manage and implement large-scale research and training projects. The WERSC, in turn, is now a resource for the ministries and other institutions in Jordan, and increasingly for the entire region. For example, the WSU international program has more recently included assistance with water and irrigation programs in Iraq and Afghanistan. The assistance activities in Iraq and Afghanistan have been conducted in partnership with Jordanian universities, with much of the training occurring in Jordan.

### **Partnership Characteristics**

A number of characteristics define the JWSE project and the WSU-UJ partnership. The history of the partnership is perhaps the main characteristic that differentiates it from other development projects. The long relationship of working together across departments, institutions, and even generations has facilitated mutual understanding, leading to more effective communication, project design, and outcomes.

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<sup>7</sup> USAID, [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/environment/water/water\\_jordan.html](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/water/water_jordan.html). Date Accessed June 15, 2011.

This history also enabled successful pre-proposal planning and assessment that was detailed and systematic. The heavy investment on the front end allowed adequate time for the Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI) to conduct a needs assessment and for the JWSE team to plan the project accordingly. It also created an opportunity to incorporate specific USAID goals such as gender diversity and the participation of more than one ministry into the project. Through its own individual course evaluations and the annual assessments, the project also had the flexibility to meet the changing needs of the MWI.

The independence of the Water and Environment Research and Study Center from any one faculty makes cross-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary teams feasible. WERSC's own account within the University of Jordan's accounting office facilitates transfer of funds and removes some of the hurdles from managing the finances of an international project.

Finally, a number of lessons have been drawn from the JWSE project and the WSU-UJ partnership. The first is that partnerships develop over time. Sustained and sustainable partnerships build through several stages, from technical assistance, training, and knowledge transfer to technical cooperation, exchanges, and joint research to institutional partnerships with the capacities for further activities. These capacities develop in a predictable sequence and cannot easily be leapfrogged or accelerated. Also, the development of trusted relationships takes time and should be treated as a separate objective from the more immediate accomplishment of specific project or program performance objectives.

At each stage of the developing partnership, there need to be champions, both strong advocates and leaders for the specific activities, and senior administrators (e.g., deans, presidents/rectors) who see the value of the activities to the university and its program development strategies. The likelihood of a sustained relationship is proportional to the number of faculty involved, preferably including faculty from multiple disciplines. The relationship is not likely to be linear over time or compartmentalized in a narrowly defined sector or discipline.

Start-up funding for initial activities involved in the development of institutional linkages and relationships is needed before more specific or ambitious partnership activities can be developed or are likely to be successful and sustained. Additionally, U.S. partners should not assume that supplies and equipment routinely available in U.S. universities and laboratories will be present in the partner university. To the extent possible, everything should be budgeted and either included within the grant or otherwise planned for provision by the U.S. university or other sources of support.

USAID assistance is in the first instance to the local government, generally the relevant ministry or public authority, not to the university. The "clients" for the local university, in this case the University of Jordan, are the Ministry of Water and Irrigation and the Ministry of Agriculture and, through the respective Secretaries-General, the Jordan Valley Authority and the Water Authority of Jordan. The U.S. partner universities (WSU, along with Purdue University) must navigate between their obligations to their funding client (USAID) and their partnership client (UJ/WERSC).

USAID institutional memory needs strengthening, at least with respect to the earlier activities supported in the agriculture and water sectors and the personal, professional, and institutional linkages established by earlier programs. In part, this appears to be due to a near-complete turnover of USAID staff from those responsible for programs in these sectors five or six years ago. Also, it appears to be due to USAID practices regarding strategic objectives and the categorization of programs and program funding. Resources for projects related to water, and to other areas, are finite, and funding does not appear to make strategic use of the capacity that has been developed through prior projects. This is further complicated by the competition among higher education institutions, which can lead to less-than-optimal cooperation on important issues.

## **MASTER OF SCIENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND ENGINEERING (MSEME) PARTNERSHIP: A KAZAKHSTAN CASE STUDY SUMMARY**

### **Background**

From 2005 until 2010, after a year of planning, a public-private partnership successfully created a sustainable Master of Science in Environmental Management and Engineering (MSEME) program at the Eurasian National University (ENU), in Astana, Kazakhstan. Implemented and managed by the Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia (EFCA), this partnership was primarily funded by The AES Group of Companies in Kazakhstan (AES-KZ) and by USAID through a Global Development Alliance (GDA) award. The higher education institutional partners were ENU and the University of New Mexico (UNM); the latter provided ENU with technical assistance in curriculum development and training. AES-KZ gave EFCA the initial 5-year partnership grant of USD 550,000, which USAID/GDA leveraged with a grant of USD 483,000 for the 5-year period; the USAID/Central Asian Republics (CAR) Mission estimates that total MSEME partnership support exceeded USD 1.4 million.

This is a case study of the MSEME partnership, two of whose five partners were ENU and UNM. While significantly contributing to the success of the MSEME partnership, the ENU-UNM collaboration was not a USAID-funded institutional partnership (like the USAID/HED institutional partnerships). AES-KZ and USAID/GDA funding went to EFCA. EFCA separately selected and funded ENU and UNM as partners; there was no prior UNM collaboration with ENU or other Kazakh universities. EFCA, USAID/GDA, AES-KZ, and ENU focused on implementing the MSEME program; they did not seek to establish an ENU-UNM institutional partnership, although the ENU-UNM collaboration may lead to that.

The goal of the MSEME program, which was developed to meet U.S./European academic and professional standards, is “to help Kazakhstan produce its own environmental engineers ... who will design and implement the next generation of environmental management solutions for [water-borne and air-borne pollution in] the region.” Kazakhstan needs skilled managers and engineers able to identify and fix environmental problems and who know the Kazakh electric power generation, regulatory, and natural resource contexts, since the country’s economy is largely built on the extraction, use, and export of oil, gas, and other resources.

The success of the MSEME partnership results from its effective practices, which are associated with planning, communication and coordination, implementation, and evaluation. These practices are addressed below, together with an assessment of partnership outcomes.

### **Effective Practices**

#### **Planning Practices**

AES-KZ and EFCA collaborated extensively in designing the MSEME partnership; subsequently, starting in 2005, EFCA, ENU, and UNM collaborated extensively in planning and implementing the partnership’s MSEME program. Establishing a sustainable MSEME program at ENU was the sole primary purpose of the partnership and did not change; EFCA, as implementing partner, managed ENU and UNM activities, making appropriate “mid-course corrections” to achieve this objective.

The sustainability of the MSEME partnership was always a priority for EFCA and the partnership’s funders; EFCA ensured that this also was a priority for UNM and ENU through its awards to them. Ninety percent retention of ENU MSEME program faculty has contributed to sustainability. EFCA was a hands-on partnership implementer with substantial experience in managing administrative and other factors in dozens of diverse partnership projects annually.

### **Communication and Coordination Practices**

The heads of EFCA, AES-KZ, and ENU were fully committed to partnership objectives; top-level USAID commitment is unknown; top-level UNM commitment was unclear but unnecessary, since UNM involvement was limited to faculty technical assistance to ENU. EFCA, as implementing partner, was fully aware of management procedures and policies of USAID; it was unnecessary for ENU and UNM to be aware of USAID and U.S. Embassy protocols other than what EFCA shared with them; AES-KZ did not work with USAID.

All partners except UNM were Kazakhstan-based. EFCA and ENU provided orientations to UNM regarding Kazakh culture, higher education, government, etc. UNM faculty learned first-hand about these contexts during ENU workshops and other collaborations. EFCA had direct contact with the Kazakh Ministry of Education and Science (MOES). AES-KZ, USAID, and UNM, on the other hand, had no direct contacts with the Kazakh Ministry of Education and Science about the MSEM partnership and needed none. ENU is part of MOES and, through the ENU rector, had and continues to have MOES contacts.

EFCA ensured that routine communication among its staff, ENU, and UNM supported project progress; EFCA also kept AES-KZ and the USAID/CAR Mission well informed. Communication among the four Kazakh partners was low-cost and included regular one-on-one meetings of EFCA with each of the funding partners, in-person meetings with ENU, and regular electronic communication with UNM; therefore, cost was not a problem.

UNM and EFCA initially recommended that the MSEM program seek international accreditation by the end of the partnership; however, in a “mid-course correction,” EFCA, ENU, and UNM decided it was unnecessary and too expensive in the near term.

### **Implementation Practices**

The Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia was familiar with Eurasian National University (ENU) and worked with the ENU rector and MOES officials to select ENU as a partner, reach agreement on ENU responsibilities in the partnership, and maintain regular communication. The ENU rector was a strong “champion” and appointed the first MSEM program head as ENU vice rector for international programs in 2006. In contrast, the new ENU rector appointed in 2008 and the two new vice rectors for international programs appointed since 2008 support the MSEM program but are less invested in it. No senior UNM administrator was a “champion” of the MSEM partnership, and none was needed. The most critical “champions” for a sustainable MSEM partnership are top ENU and MOES officials.

EFCA’s close oversight of the MSEM program enabled it to respond to “early warning” signs for “mid-course corrections” that ensured the partnership met its objectives. EFCA informed but did not negotiate with funding partners, which had delegated project management to the foundation.

The structure and culture of Kazakh universities and MOES university control inhibited building a network of ENU administrative support; MSEM program faculty members are “separated” from ENU administrators. When the ENU rector and vice rector for international programs were replaced in 2008, the rector was appointed by the MOES and he, in turn, appointed a new vice rector in 2008 and again in 2010. Neither EFCA nor UNM viewed it as necessary to build a network of administrative support in UNM, given the nature of ENU-UNM collaboration within the context of the MSEM partnership.

### **Evaluation Practices**

EFCA required semi-annual financial/narrative reports and a final report from ENU and UNM, and sent all reports to AES-KZ and the USAID/CAR Mission for information. EFCA also provided quarterly

financial/narrative reports and a final report to each of the two primary partnership funders, AES-KZ and USAID. The case study team could not determine how the USAID/CAR Mission monitored project reports from EFCA and maintained routine communication with EFCA. ENU and UNM reported measurable outcomes in their regular narrative reports to EFCA.

Not all partners understood the importance of either summative evaluations or the funding and implementing partners' evaluation expectations, which were not clearly articulated. UNM faculty were familiar with "quality assurance" practices and recommended that MSEM program seek international accreditation; the partners later set aside this objective as unnecessary and too costly, since the MSEM program had been successfully implemented and was educating skilled environmental managers and engineers.

## **Outcomes Assessment**

### ***Achievement of MSEM Partnership Objectives***

The MSEM program was the first such program established in Kazakhstan with international standards, and it remains active and sustainable. Through May 2011, there have been 47 MSEM graduates. Of the 42 graduates through May 2010, "about 33-34" are employed "according to their specialties" with Kazakh ecological companies, government regulatory offices, Ph.D. programs, "project organizations," and international organizations outside Kazakhstan.

Through fall 2010, the MOES has provided 52 full-time, 2-year scholarships for MSEM students; an additional 13 students have chosen to self-finance their degrees. MSEM program faculty have been trained by UNM in a new curriculum and new teaching methods, and have developed and are teaching MSEM program courses. The Department of Ecology was created to administer the MSEM program and is designated the "International Department of Management and Engineering in the Field of Environmental Protection," which is able to award a "double degree" that includes a UNM certificate. The ENU Department of Ecology officially opened its Laboratory for Ecological Research in fall 2009 to meet the research needs of students, faculty, and commercial firms.

### ***Unanticipated MSEM Partnership Outcomes***

Following successful implementation of the MSEM program, in 2007 a Ph.D. in Ecology program was started in the ENU Department of Ecology, contributing to a stronger research focus in the department, providing opportunities for MSEM and Ph.D. students to work together on research, and enhancing MSEM faculty research skills.

Joint Venture Inkai (JVI), a uranium mining company in south Kazakhstan, has provided USD 50,000 since 2007 for MSEM faculty and students to provide training and resource materials to secondary school teachers and students; this also has helped the MSEM faculty and students to understand better environmental monitoring techniques.

MSEM faculty members, as a result of their learning new teaching methods and developing new MSEM courses, have won awards given to top professors in Kazakhstan. Twenty percent of the students entering the MSEM program through fall 2010 were self-financing students, affirming student demand for the program and enhancing the program's longer-term financial sustainability.

### ***Sustainability of the MSEM Program***

UNM and ENU established international educational standards for the MSEM program that are shaping the development of other such graduate programs in Kazakhstan; this places the MSEM program in a national leadership position relative to Kazakh graduate environmental education and increases the likelihood of program sustainability. The MSEM program has been successfully integrated into the ENU academic structure.

Kazakh public and private sector employers are hiring MSEME graduates, who have the skills to identify and address water-borne and air-borne environmental problems. The Department of Ecology's Laboratory for Ecological Research has the equipment needed by Kazakh companies to conduct contract research on environmental pollution.

The MSEME partnership has ended, as has its support to ENU, but it is expected that the MOES will continue to support the MSEME program and scholarship costs through ENU. EFCA is seeking funding for proposals (e.g., water management) that, if funded, would benefit the MSEME program indirectly, although EFCA likely would not be involved in managing any such new projects. Kazakh ecological companies are willing to pay to use the Laboratory for Ecological Research on environmental pollution, once ENU and the MOES work out contracting procedures.

Final EFCA documentation of the MSEME partnership is still unknown, since EFCA submitted its final reports to AES-KZ and the USAID/CAR Mission only in early summer 2011; final reports from ENU and UNM to EFCA also were unavailable to the case study team.

## **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN GLOBALIZATION AND AGRICULTURE (ELGA) PROJECT: AN INDIA CASE STUDY SUMMARY**

### **Background**

From 2004-2006, USAID/HED funded the Experiential Learning in Globalization and Agriculture (ELGA) project between Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), University of Agricultural Sciences Dharwad (UASD), and Sathguru Management Consultants. This project was one of the most recent partnership projects in the almost half century of collaboration between Cornell University and its Indian higher education institutional partners.

The ELGA grant built on another USAID-funded activity, the Agricultural Biotechnology Support Project II. Supported by USAID/EGAT, this project provided opportunities for exchange, joint research, and cooperation with the private sector and was critical in building the relationships among the partners. Other supported joint activities among the partner institutions included two additional HED grants, "Building University Capacity to Develop and Improve Fruits and Vegetables Supply Chain Management in India," and "The Center for Food Safety and Quality for India for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." In addition, several programs supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) furthered the partnership among the institutions, including the Agri-Business Management Program and Norman Borlaug Fellowships.

Against this backdrop of long collaboration, the main goals of the ELGA project were to:

1. Provide a better understanding to graduate students of issues that influence international agriculture and rural development;
2. Create awareness of issues that have an effect on the global food chain; and
3. Develop opportunities for collaboration between students and faculty to solve problems across cultures.

In order to achieve these goals, the partnership developed, and then expanded, a joint International Agriculture and Rural Development (IARD) course. Faculty and students from Indian and U.S. institutions participated in the IARD course in-person and virtually. The course work was interdisciplinary, with departments such as Animal Science, Food Science, Plant Breeding and Genetics, Applied Economics and Management, Biotechnology, Organic Farming, Plant Molecular Biology, Food and Agricultural Process Engineering, and others participating. In addition to the partner institutions,

key stakeholders in these activities were other state agricultural universities and the private sector in India.

Cornell University remains committed to engagement in India in order to develop public-private sector linkages to boost productivity, exports, and incomes and to create jointly, curricula addressing agriculture development issues and creating skilled, globally aware graduates.

## **Effective Practices**

### ***Planning Practices***

All partners were fully involved in an extensive planning process. Such attention to planning eliminated or minimized wasting resources. In the planning stage, the partners realistically assessed the amount of time required to complete the project's activities and paid special attention to funds transfer. In this case, the partners established the Cornell-Sathguru Foundation, which is the equivalent of a U.S. 501(c)(3) organization, that facilitated rapid transfer and commitment of funds, while avoiding the university bureaucracy. From the beginning partners gave extensive consideration to project sustainability, with a focus on securing financial assistance for the project from the host country. Options for long-term funding were explored in the planning phase and then pursued during the implementation phase.

Planners of the project also paid special attention to ensuring that host country participants remained in-country in order to build the intellectual capital of their institutions. Project activities were planned whereby participating faculty and students could learn how to transfer the knowledge and skills gained at their institutions to impact their communities and country positively.

Collaborative planning was a hallmark of ELGA. This planning focused not on the creation of a strategic master plan, but rather on sound planning at the project level that took into account institutional strengths and weaknesses, as well as the value propositions for each partner. Consultants at Sathguru played a key role in the planning process by using their extensive knowledge of the private sector in India and emphasizing the learning process. This practice of engaging in detailed planning allowed the partners to make mid-course corrections when needed.

### ***Communication and Coordination Practices***

ELGA partners addressed communication and coordination from the beginning by explicitly discussing each party's expectations. Prior to starting activities, the partners reached agreement on goals and objectives. They also created subordinate tasks with separate management contracts. The history of these institutions working together provided extensive knowledge of management procedures, which ensured that all partners understood USAID and USG requirements.

Routine and continuous communication took place at all levels throughout the implementation of the project. The partners took advantage of low-cost communications technology, but also used more expensive formats, such as videoconferencing, when it was determined that face-to-face contact would be the most expeditious way to achieve desired outcomes. Partners also took advantage of travel on other projects to advance goals for the ELGA grant. Peers across institutions were empowered to work directly with one another, thereby limiting communications obstacles if one person was unavailable. This also enabled the linkages among peers to be deeper and more intensive than they would otherwise have been.

Finally, all partners were aware of the need for cross-cultural sensitivity in their communications. Established relationships at the senior administrative levels allowed for greater focus on ensuring that students and faculty gained as much as possible from their participation. In the first year, the partners provided orientations to students and faculty; in the second year, partners built in time for Indian

students to become familiar with the expectations and requirements of studying at a U.S. university for a semester.

### **Implementation Practices**

Senior leadership at all participating institutions was experienced, aware, and engaged at a tactical level. Cornell University administrators were well-informed about operational issues and visited Tamil Nadu Agricultural University; their Indian counterparts were similarly well-informed and provided support for ongoing activities. The need for and identification of “champions” was well-articulated, which led to emphasizing the need not for a single champion, but for a team of champions in every department. In addition, there was a top-to-bottom commitment of administrative staff, subordinate staff and students, in recognition of the fact that they all were integral to the success of the project.

Each institution had a number of faculty mentors who supported the participating students, and who led or participated in the classes and site visits. Each institution also had a committee that selected the students who participated and, in the case of the Indian students, who received financial assistance. The partners established common evaluation and grading procedures for the IARD course, as well as common feedback mechanisms. Each year, the faculty and administrators reviewed the student and faculty course feedback and determined whether adjustments were required. If adjustments were significant, the faculty also participated in joint curriculum development.

A significant portion of the logistical arrangements was managed by Sathguru, which allowed the students and faculty to focus on their academic and field experiences. Logistical management was a major task because it involved moving large groups of students and faculty around to different cities, and setting up site visits with multiple private-sector organizations in different sectors.

The project leaders and administrative staff constantly monitored the progress of the activities. One key method for doing that was CALS’ practice of issuing sub-grants, effectively task orders, to Sathguru for each phase of the implementation process, with specific deliverables and a budget against which it should invoice. Though it required a considerable amount of effort to maintain that system, it was very effective in tracking the level of effort required to accomplish the activities and determine how funds were used and where estimated costs were inaccurate. This system enabled the CALS team to learn from each activity and to produce clean audits whenever they were required.

### **Evaluation Practices**

The partners established a system for reviewing the achievement of goals each year. In addition, the sub-grants enabled CALS to monitor progress on each sub-task and ensure that there was programmatic and financial accountability. All partners understood the importance of assessment, and Sathguru supported the effective use of assessment throughout the partnership. Sathguru was helpful to the partners in this regard, as well, since its staff could assist the partners with “quality assurance” practices.

Given the short duration of the ELGA grant, there was no portfolio review with USAID.

### **Outcomes Assessment**

#### **Achievement of ELGA Partnership Objectives**

ELGA achieved its stated partnership objectives. The participating U.S. students acquired international experience in agriculture through their visits to India, and the participating Indian students acquired international experience through their visits to the United States. All students were exposed to frontier areas of science and state-of-the-art laboratories, and participated in innovative joint learning processes such as special lectures and group work via Blackboard and videoconferencing. The faculty reported that participating students (both Indian and U.S.) had gained self-confidence, in general terms and

specifically for higher academic pursuits. The Indian faculty noted that Indian students, in particular, gained a better sense of the emerging challenges and opportunities in agriculture, the complexity of Indian and global agriculture, and the multitude of career options in global agriculture. In addition, these students were more self-confident than previously, with improved written and spoken English communication skills.

The faculty members who participated also acquired international experience and integrated lessons learned into the curriculum. They synthesized a new course encompassing growing concerns of globalization in agriculture, which expanded their views beyond their individual specializations, and they explored the possibilities of research collaborations and faculty exchanges in cross-cutting theme areas.

The institutional impacts were significant as well. The partner institutions revised existing curricula and developed new courses to align better with the demands of the private-sector market in agriculture. The Indian universities invested additional resources in expanding their libraries and laboratories to serve better the needs of their students and faculty.

### **Sustainability Outcomes**

This partnership has demonstrated sustainability in the five years since USAID/HED funding ended. The IARD course continues to be offered yearly. The participants at all levels were highly motivated during ELGA implementation and this included motivation to find resources on both the U.S. and Indian fronts to continue offering the course after the end of USAID/HED funding. The Indian students continue to be supported by resources from the Sir Navajbal Ratan Tata Trust, and the U.S. students pay for their own expenses or, in a few cases, have received some assistance from their departments. Additional activities have continued under a number of other partnership and grants, including the Agricultural Knowledge Initiative (funded by USDA), and the newly awarded Agriculture Innovation Partnership that involves all ELGA partners and several other institutions.

The cooperation under ELGA served as the catalyst for the establishment of two joint master's programs between CALS and TNAU: the Master of Professional Studies (MPS) in Food Science at CALS and Master of Technology (M. Tech) in Food Processing and Marketing at TNAU; and the MPS in Plant Breeding and Genetics and M. Tech in Biotechnology and Business Management at TNAU. These are the first joint degree programs for both institutions and represent a significant milestone in the partnership.

## **PART FIVE.**

# **COMMENTARY ON CASE STUDY PARTNERSHIP PRACTICES AND OUTCOMES**

Each of the four case studies examined a particular partnership award and also the partnership that received the award. This dual focus is necessary because the partnership context often exists much longer than the partnership award itself and also significantly affects partnership award performance and achievements.

After commenting on the four case study partnerships, their partner institutions, and their awards, this section highlights the institutional forms and conditions of these successful international institutional partnerships, their effective practices and outcome measures, and their human capacity building and institutional strengthening achievements.

## **PARTNERSHIPS AND PARTNERS**

The case study partnerships involve host countries in four different AME sub-regions: South Asia, East Asia, the Middle East, and Central Asia. In each of the first three of these sub-regions, the case study country's higher education institutions have a history of decades-long collaboration with the lead U.S. higher education institution in the partnership. For more than 45 years, Cornell University (CU) has collaborated with universities and other institutions in India, particularly Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU); for more than 35 years, Washington State University (WSU) has collaborated with universities and other institutions in Jordan, particularly the University of Jordan (UJ); and for more than 25 years, The Ohio State University (OSU) has collaborated with universities and other institutions in Indonesia, particularly the teacher training institutes (IKIPs), which are now state universities (UNs).

These long-term higher education collaborations have created and fostered trust among the partners. These collaborations also provided the country and institutional contexts and stimulus for various projects prior to the awards that are the focus of these three case studies. In the 1970s, for example, more than one-fourth of the Jordanians who earned USAID-funded doctoral degrees at U.S. universities did so at WSU – and some of these scholars later became presidents of Jordanian universities (including the University of Jordan) and government ministers, reinforcing WSU/Jordan relationships. Meanwhile, during the late 1980s and the 1990s, OSU partnered with Indonesian IKIPs, government ministries, and other institutions on World Bank and U.S. Department of State-funded teacher training, development, and reform projects. Similarly, Cornell has worked with Sathguru on a number of initiatives since the mid-1990s, particularly in the area of executive education in food-related industries. Cornell has also worked with Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) and the University of Agricultural Sciences Dharwad (as well as many other consortium members) on the Agricultural Biotechnology Support Project II, also funded by USAID since 2002. And although ENU was a new institution, UNM had collaborated with and received partnership awards to work with other Kazakh universities since the mid-1990s.

Across all the universities, these collaborations often were informal, perhaps involving an exchange of faculty or a collaborative research project. At other times, a more formal partnership was created to address particular host country challenges or to facilitate the submission of a proposal for an externally funded award. For example, after more than one year of planning led by OSU, the USINTEC partnership was formally created to address the Indonesian national goal that more than 2 million new and current teachers earn 4-year undergraduate (S1) degrees in the next decade. This binational consortium was implemented through a detailed 5-year plan of work and an MOU jointly developed and signed by the rectors/presidents of 11 Indonesian teacher training universities, 2 other Indonesian higher

education partners, and 3 U.S. universities (OSU, Indiana University (IU), and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC)).

The Kazakhstan case study partnership was very different. It focused narrowly on a particular national priority, namely, developing and implementing a Master of Science in Environmental Management and Engineering (MSEME) program at a leading Kazakh university that would meet international environmental protection standards and produce skilled employees for the Kazakh electric power and natural resources sectors. University partners were selected only after primary funding had been committed for the project, and the funders were not concerned about whether the two university partners would continue to work together after partnership funding ended, although this was not ruled out.

The numbers and types of partners also differed among the partnerships. The USINTEC partnership was a binational consortium, with all 13 Indonesian partners engaged in the education of teachers and OSU serving as the lead among the three U.S. universities, all of which have excellent teacher education programs as well. The JWSE partnership had WSU as the lead U.S. institution, working with Purdue University, while UJ was the lead Jordanian institution, working with the Jordanian Ministry of Water and Irrigation, the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), Hashemite University, and other Jordanian ministries. In India, Cornell University partnered not only with TNAU (as the lead institution) but also with the University of Agricultural Sciences Dharwad, Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University, and Sathguru Management Consultants. Although USAID/HED was the funder of the awards received and implemented by two of these three partnerships, it was not viewed as a partner in either one of them.

In Kazakhstan, on the other hand, USAID (through its GDA initiative) was a partner in the public-private MSEME partnership. Other partners were a private business subsidiary (The AES Group of Companies in Kazakhstan – AES-KZ), a Central Asian non-governmental organization (Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia – EFCA), and two universities (ENU and UNM). USAID/GDA was one of two funding partners with AES-KZ; the implementing partner was EFCA; and the higher education partners were ENU and UNM. Unlike the other three partnerships, however, the Kazakh and U.S. universities had no role in the selection of the other partners, since ENU and then UNM were the last partners selected; in reality, the ENU-UNM collaboration was not an institutional partnership but simply a part of the five-partner partnership, with UNM faculty providing technical assistance to ENU.

## **PARTNERSHIP AWARDS AND FUNDING AGENCIES**

For each of the three USAID-funded case study partnership awards, the funding went to the lead U.S. educational institution (CU, OSU, WSU), which in turn managed the award. For the Kazakhstan partnership award, though, USAID/GDA and AES-KZ funding went directly to EFCA, which managed the funds and served as implementing partner; EFCA then separately selected (and separately funded) ENU and UNM.

The duration and size of the partnership awards also differed. The Kazakhstan partnership award (and the partnership itself) was for 5 years, with total funding from the 2 primary funders (AES-KZ and USAID/GDA) exceeding USD 1 million; the Jordan award, with its 2 no-cost extensions, was also for 5 years and totaled USD 1,930,080, while each of the other awards was for 3 years. Moreover, the USAID/HED awards were smaller; for example, the Indonesia award totaled USD 125,000 and the India award totaled USD 300,000 (with a cost-share of USD 690,000).

## **INSTITUTIONAL FORMS AND CONDITIONS OF SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS**

The team observed a number of institutional forms and conditions that contributed significantly to the success of the partnerships and the achievement of partnership award objectives. These characteristics were similar for the India, Indonesia, and Jordan partnership awards, since these awards were all made in the context of decades-long U.S.-host country institutional collaborations. The forms, conditions, and operational features of the Kazakhstan partnership and partnership award were quite different from those of the other partnerships. Following are brief notes about several important characteristics observed in one or more of the partnership case studies.

### **Responsive Institutional Context in Lead Partner Institution**

For the USAID/HED-funded awards in India, Indonesia, and the Mission-funded award in Jordan, the U.S. lead institution was the lead partner. The CU, OSU, and WSU institutional contexts provided very supportive environments; academic and research administrators throughout each university trusted the partnership project director as someone who understood well the host country context, the host country partner institutions and their lead participants, as well as the challenges associated with the focus area of the award. The fact that these case study partnerships supported and were consistent with the institutions' internationalization priorities further contributed to institutional responsiveness.

For the Kazakhstan partnership, the lead partner institution was the implementing partner EFCA, not the U.S. university. EFCA gave full institutional support to the management of the MSEME partnership, from its relationships with the co-funders (AES-KZ and USAID/GDA) to its relationships with the two universities (UNM and ENU) responsible for planning and implementing the MSEME program, and its relationship with the Ministry of Education and Science (MOES).

### **Extensive U.S. and Host Country Partner Collaboration and Communication**

In India, Indonesia, and Jordan, extensive and effective collaboration and communication between the key U.S. and host country participants have characterized partner relationships for decades, given the long institutional collaboration of the main U.S. and host country institutions. This collaboration and communication also has existed within the U.S. lead institution for each of these three partnerships as well as between that institution and its U.S. institutional partners.

In Kazakhstan, the collaboration and communication between the higher education partners UNM and ENU was equally effective, although less extensive than in the other partnerships because EFCA was the implementing partner and funded UNM faculty participation through a sub-award. ENU-UNM relationships were effective because ENU wanted and needed UNM technical assistance; UNM faculty participants were fully committed to fulfilling their five-year responsibilities to the partnership project as specified in their proposal to EFCA, and EFCA required UNM-ENU collaboration and communication.

### **Full Commitment to Partnership by U.S. and Host Country Partners**

U.S. and host country lead institutions in the three USAID/HED-funded partnerships had support at all institutional levels and, as appropriate, have supported partnership activities with institutional funds to complement their partnerships' external awards. At OSU, for example, school and college officials have provided USINTEC with office space and operating support from internal funds since 2006; in 2008 the 16 U.S. and Indonesian partners committed at least USD 1 million in institutional funds over 5 years to support partnership programs and operations.

In the Kazakhstan partnership, the U.S. partner (UNM) was not fully committed as an institution; the only UNM participants were the fewer-than-five faculty members who consulted with and assisted ENU in planning and implementing its MSEME program. However, these UNM faculty members were fully committed to the partnership project, and no other UNM institutional commitment was needed by

ENU or requested by EFCA in its agreement with UNM. Moreover, ENU, EFCA, and the funders were fully committed to the partnership; at ENU, for example, the strong support of the rector and vice rector for international programs was crucial during the initial implementation of the MSEM program.

### **Active Engagement by Partner Institution “Champions”**

All U.S. and host country primary partner institutions in each of the three long-term partnerships had at least one and usually several “champions” who were actively engaged in the partnership. These “champions” included senior faculty/researchers, deans and department chairs, associate provosts or vice rectors for international programs, project managers, and other partnership participants. Typically, the greater a partner’s leadership role, the more institutional “champions” it had throughout the institution. Thus, The Ohio State University (OSU) had more institutional “champions” than did USINTEC partners Indiana University (IU) and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), while Eurasian National University (ENU) had more institutional “champions” than The AES Group of Companies in Kazakhstan (AES-KZ) or the University of New Mexico (UNM).

Washington State University and the University of Jordan both had, and continue to have, similar numbers of “champions” due to the long history and the types of training conducted during the partnership. The number of “champions” at these institutions reflects the shared leadership roles of both WSU and UJ in planning and implementing projects, and the expectation of a peer-to-peer partnership.

### **Engagement of Key Government Decision-Makers**

Engagement of key government decision-makers has been important in several of the partnerships. In Jordan, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation and other government bodies were primary partners, actively involved in the partnership and its projects. This engagement was built on years of collaboration between these ministries, WSU, and Jordanian partner universities, and was reinforced by the fact that several high officials of these ministries had earned doctoral degrees at WSU.

Indonesia and Kazakhstan provide additional examples. Over the past two decades, the OSU USINTEC institutional director (and USINTEC executive director) has traveled to Indonesia several times a year to meet with top officials in the Ministry of National Education (MONE) to ensure that they remain well-informed about OSU-Indonesian (and now USINTEC) collaborations in support of Indonesian teacher education goals. These relationships have been very important for ensuring continuing MONE support for USINTEC programs. In addition, given the Kazakh president’s role in the creation of ENU in the late 1990s, the MOES responsibility for higher education, and the national importance of developing a MSEM program meeting international standards, chief Ministry of Education and Science (MOES) and Ministry of Environmental Protection (MOEP) officials were supportive of the MSEM partnership.

### **U.S. Partner Institution Sensitivity to Host Country Culture**

The long-term collaborations of CU, OSU, and WSU with numerous institutions in India, Indonesia, and Jordan, respectively, has brought dozens and dozens of faculty, researchers, and administrators from each of these universities to its partner country. These international partnership participants – and, through them, others on their respective campuses – have become sensitive to the host country culture in universities, government ministries, communities, and society. Indeed, one of the significant factors in Cornell’s success in working with a variety of Indian universities over time is its faculty’s ability to assess quickly the institutions’ strengths and weaknesses, and to ensure that roles and responsibilities enable the partners to use their strengths and compensate for their weaknesses. Institutional sensitivity to Kazakh culture was much less at UNM, given that much of its past experience with Kazakhstan was centered in one faculty member, that only a few faculty traveled to ENU through this partnership, and

that UNM participation was more in the nature of a consulting faculty arrangement than an institutional partnership.

### **Early Attention to Partnership Sustainability**

Early attention to partnership sustainability was not a characteristic of the MSEM program partnership in Kazakhstan. Sustainability of the public-private partnership was never an objective of the funding and implementing partners; rather, the objective was to develop and implement a sustainable MSEM program.

A different situation existed in the other partnerships. When those partnerships were funded, they were simply the most recent collaborations between the lead U.S. universities and institutions in their respective partnership countries; each of the CU-India, OSU-Indonesia, and WSU-Jordan collaborations already had demonstrated its sustainability through previous partnerships and awards. There are some differences, though. The USINTEC partnership, created to help Indonesia meet its national teacher education goal by educating current and future teachers and strengthening teacher education programs and universities, addressed its long-term sustainability during the organizational phase through its binational consortium structure, its five-year program plan, and other steps – and USINTEC remains active and viable today.

In the case of India, the partners continued to work on the Agricultural Biotechnology Support Project II until it ended in 2009. In addition, Cornell and TNAU established a dual degree program in 2008 that graduated its first class in January 2011. Further, Cornell received a USD 50 million endowment from the Tata Trust in 2008 – half of which is being used to support the Tata-Cornell Initiative in Agriculture and Nutrition and the other half of which is supporting the Tata Scholarship Fund for Students from India, which helps more Indian students attend Cornell University. Finally, in 2011 Cornell was awarded a new USD 9.6 million Agricultural Innovation Partnership program that will build on the successes of its prior work with TNAU and UASD, and transfer the knowledge and innovation from its recent partnerships to other universities in India. The Jordan partnership award, meanwhile, has formally ended, but WSU-Jordan collaborations continue in the context of prior relationships.

### **Long-Term Partnership Horizon**

Partnership planning should not be *ad hoc*, nor should program implementation begin only when planning is finished and the projected program starting date is near. Case study partnership project directors at participating institutions took a long-term view of project planning and implementation requirements and sought to minimize potential implementation delays. In the Kazakhstan case, the implementing partner EFCA currently manages dozens of public-private partnership projects each year and has experience in focusing on the long-term horizon while managing ongoing activities. In the other three cases, the lead U.S. institution (and overall lead partner) has a great deal of experience in working with host country institutions and in being able to anticipate and respond to project challenges while focusing on long-term priorities and objectives.

## **“MOST EFFECTIVE” PRACTICES AND OUTCOME MEASURES**

As outlined in Part Two, the team, through its research activities, identified numerous operational practices and measures that appeared to lead to “most effective” outcomes; these practices clustered into four categories, with outcome measures constituting a fifth category. In designing a “checklist” for use in improving the results of a partnership, the team examined the “most effective” practices employed in the four case study partnerships. These practices, as well as partnership outcome measures, are discussed below in the framework of these five categories. Since this is a compilation of practices and outcome measures from four partnerships, several practices and measures appear more than once.

### **Planning Practices**

- Lead U.S. institutions and key host country partners clearly identified the benefit for their organizations in entering a partnership with the other institutions.
- With the lead U.S. institution coordinating the process, all U.S. and host country partners collaborated in planning the partnership and in developing its Scope of Work and MOU, which was signed by the heads of all partner institutions.
- Host country partners collaborated extensively in designing the partnership.
- The primary purpose of the partnership was to address a key national goal of the host country; although a few minor “mid-course corrections” needed to be made, this primary purpose did not change throughout the partnership.
- Faculty from host country institutions who participated in partnership programs in the United States had received host country ministry scholarships or other support that required their return to their home institutions after their U.S. study.
- The sustainability of the partnership was always a priority for host country partners; participants from host country institutions who came to the United States were here no longer than a semester.
- U.S. and host country partners gave attention during planning to post-award sustainability by having all partner heads sign the partnership MOU; by emphasizing the importance of continuing communications with key host country ministry officials; by avoiding actions that would “fragment” the partnership consortia; and by moving the partnership from project mode to program mode.
- Contributing to the sustainability of the partnership project in the lead host country higher education institution has been the institution’s nearly 100 percent retention of project faculty, even though top university administrators may have changed.
- The partnership realistically planned activities and administrative tasks, although it did not anticipate the increasing difficulty that host country partner faculty would have getting visas in time to travel to the United States to participate in partnership programs.
- The host country organization that served as implementing partner was very experienced in managing administrative and other factors in dozens of host country public-private partnership projects annually.

### **Communication and Coordination Practices**

- In planning the partnership, the heads of all U.S. and host country partners agreed on multi-year partnership objectives and on objectives in proposals they would submit for external funding.
- The heads of all host country public and private partners were fully committed to partnership objectives.
- The lead U.S. institution informed host country partners about USAID reporting requirements; however, in most cases it did not make sub-awards to these partners, so they did not need to know U.S. Government financial reporting requirements and protocols; host country ministry support for partnership programs went directly to host country partner faculty.
- Since the U.S. institutional partner coordinators had worked in the host countries for many years, they provided detailed orientations to host country culture for other U.S. partner participants prior to their initial travel to the host country.
- Host country partners provided continuing orientations to U.S. higher education institutional participants about host country culture, higher education, government, etc., prior to and during these participants’ collaborations with host country partners.
- Partnership coordinators at all U.S. and host country institutions had excellent, long-term relationships with key host country ministry officials and met with these officials frequently.
- The lead and most active host country partners had direct and regular contacts with the host country Ministry of Education.

- During partnership program planning, the project director at the lead U.S. partner institution shared materials with host country partners' institutional coordinators about U.S. master's degree programs and U.S. universities' policies and procedures related to dual degree programs.
- The host country's implementing partner ensured that routine communication among all U.S. and host country partners supported project progress and kept the partners well informed.
- Communications among the four host country primary partners were low cost and included regular one-on-one meetings among the implementing partner and the funding partners, in-person meetings with host country university contacts, and regular electronic communication with U.S. university participants; cost was not a problem. Some partners also had videoconferencing capability, which they felt was extremely helpful.

### **Implementation Practices**

- Partnership academic and research “champions” existed at all levels of the lead U.S. higher education institution prior to partnership implementation and fully supported the partnership's operational needs; long-term relationships also existed between all U.S. partner institutions, facilitating the engagement of “champions” at other U.S. partner institutions as well.
- The host country implementing partner that was not a higher education institution worked closely with the host country partner university to determine partnership responsibilities; also, the head of that university was a strong “champion” of the partnership program, which was very important for its effective implementation.
- The partnership coordinator at one lead U.S. higher education institution has dedicated almost all her time for the past six years to ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of the partnership, including maintaining continuous communication among host country partners to enhance their academic programs and administrative practices.
- Sub-awards can be effective, and one good practice observed was developing a budget for each activity in the work plan and a separate scope of work and sub-award for each of those activities so that resource use can be easily tracked. This system is too cumbersome for many universities, however, and in the case of India, the management consulting firm partner administered all the financial resources for the Indian partners, which also allowed them to respond more quickly.
- Objectives in the partnership's USAID proposal basically stayed unchanged, but when minor award “mid-course corrections” were needed due to an unanticipated one-year delay in finalizing one award or changing circumstances in another, they were approved without questions.
- The partnership responded to “early warning” signs by making “mid-course corrections” that ensured the partnership achieved its objectives; these “corrections” did not need to be negotiated with funding partners, including USAID.

### **Evaluation Practices**

- The partnership submitted semi-annual reports on award activities to USAID and conducted frequent informal evaluations of its programs and activities, mainly through oral or written feedback from program participants.
- The host country implementing partner required semi-annual financial/narrative reports and a final report from each of the U.S. and host country university partners, and forwarded these reports to the funding partners, including USAID, for information purposes; the implementing partner itself sent quarterly financial/narrative reports and a final report to each of the primary funders.
- One partnership reported that the USAID “mid-course evaluation” served as the partnership's formative evaluation; communications between the lead U.S. partner and HED occurred as needed.

- Host country partners provided the partnership director with program participation data and outcomes by monitoring the human capacity building and institutional strengthening contributions of partnership program participants after they returned to their home institutions in the host country.
- The U.S. and host country higher education institutional partners reported measurable outcomes to the partnership's implementing partner in their regular narrative reports.
- Partnership directors understood the value of summative evaluations, but viewed them as less necessary for the partnerships because the U.S. and host country partner institutions had worked together for so many years that informal feedback and evaluation occur continuously and are used for program improvement.
- U.S. higher education institutional coordinators were familiar with "quality assurance" practices and incorporated them into collaborative partnership and program planning, implementation, and evaluation with host country partners.

### **Outcome Measures**

At the conclusion of a partnership, an examination of partnership outcomes is important to assess planned partnership achievements, unplanned partnership outcomes, partnership sustainability, the likelihood of continuing financial support, and documentation and dissemination of lessons learned. Following are representative outcome measures taken from the four partnership case studies.

### **Achievement of Partnership Objectives**

The USINTEC (Indonesia) partnership remains an effective binational consortium several years after the end of its USAID/HED award, as demonstrated by the following achievements:

- The partnership's focus on a host country primary national development goal has led to substantial support for partnership programs from the host country Ministry of Education.
- The partnership has institutionally strengthened host country higher education institutional partners.
- The partnership has created and is helping to sustain a network of teacher preparation universities.
- The partnership has enabled host country institutional partner scholars to compare U.S. and host country pedagogy practices and research.
- The partnership has provided host country partner institutions' scholars with greater access to U.S. resources and scholars.
- The partnership has promoted host country partners' global engagement and teacher education insights.
- The partnership's higher education institutions are creating a "structure" for moving the partnership from "personalization" to "institutionalization" in partner institutions.

The JWSE partnership was successful in providing non-degree short course training in support of programs of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI) to improve human and institutional capacities for analysis, planning, and management of water resources in Jordan:

- The program provided short-term skills training and development including best practices for assessment and solutions for water-related issues in Jordan's MWI through training in the United States and Jordan.
- Participating faculty and researchers carried out analytical studies that provided practical information needed by decision-makers in the water sector.
- The program offered 38 courses to over 800 staff from MWI, the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA), the Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) and other involved parties at the University of Jordan.
- The participants developed trusted professional and personal relationships which are necessary for the sustainability of future partnerships.

The MSEME (Kazakhstan) partnership established the first host country master's degree program in environmental management and engineering with international standards, which remains active and effective; its achievements include:

- About 80 percent of its 42 MSEME graduates through May 2010 are employed "according to their specialties" by host country ecological companies, government regulatory offices "project organizations," Ph.D. programs, and international organizations outside the host country, according to the program's administrators and faculty.
- Through fall 2010, the host country Ministry of Education provided 52 full-time, 2-year scholarships for MSEME program students.
- MSEME program faculty members have been trained in a new curriculum and new teaching methods, and have developed and are now teaching new graduate courses.
- A new department was created to administer the MSEME program and is able to award a "double degree" with a U.S. higher education institution.
- A new Laboratory for Ecological Research was established and equipped to meet the research needs of MSEME faculty and students and of host country commercial firms.

In India, the ELGA partnership created opportunities for U.S. and host country students and faculty to expand their knowledge of international agriculture and rural development. The program has continued well past the end of the partnership award. Its achievements include:

- Students obtained first-hand experience with rural development at the grass-roots level and bridge the gap between laboratory-based research and field work.
- Students were exposed to courses in Agricultural Systems, Animal Sciences, Rural Infrastructure and Development, and Value Addition and Global Marketing in interactive settings that encourage participation.
- Students were exposed to how universities and the private sector work in tandem to develop new agricultural and food products for markets.
- Faculty and students expanded their knowledge of biotechnology and nanotechnology in agriculture.

### **Unanticipated Partnership Outcomes**

The USINTEC partnership did not anticipate:

- Reaching more than 1,600 host country teacher education university faculty and school teachers during host country national and institutional workshops;
- The very positive press coverage throughout the host country about partnership programs and activities;
- The difficulty it experienced in attracting public-private development partners to secure and leverage long-term partnership program funding;
- The difficulty it experienced in obtaining more USAID funding than its one small partnership award (USD 125,000);
- The difficulty it experienced in obtaining the necessary resources to establish a partnership office and appoint a partnership coordinator in the host country to enhance partnership effectiveness;
- The relatively high turnover of host country higher education partners' rectors, although most other important institutional administrators have remained in their positions.

The JWSE partnership did not anticipate:

- The extended partnership period;
- The challenges associated with research activities;
- The success of WSU/UJ graduates in Jordan, including those who have been appointed university presidents and one who was named a Minister of Education.

The MSEME partnership did not anticipate:

- The establishment of a doctoral program in environmental management and engineering following the successful implementation of the MSEME program; the doctoral program provides greater research opportunities for MSEME students and enhances MSEME faculty research skills;
- Financial support from a host country company for MSEME program faculty and students to provide training and resources in environmental monitoring techniques to secondary school teachers and students;
- Two members of the MSEME faculty being among the top professors in the host country as a result of their UNM-facilitated new teaching methods and MSEME courses;
- The willingness of host country students to self-finance their enrollment in the MSEME program when Ministry of Education scholarships were unavailable, affirming student demand and enhancing longer-term program financial sustainability.

The ELGA partnership did not anticipate:

- The establishment of a dual master's degree program between the partners;
- The establishment of a USD 25 million Tata Scholarship Fund for Students from India;
- The application of the first U.S. student to a master's program at the host country institution;
- Changes in the teaching styles of some instructors after their participation in the program;
- The leadership of the host country institutions in aligning the curricula for all state agricultural universities across the country.

### **Partnership and Partnership Program Sustainability**

For some partnership funders, partnership sustainability is a high priority; for other funders, the highest priority is partnership program sustainability, with little or no regard as to whether the partnership formed to develop and implement a sustainable program continues past the end of the funding period.

The following outcome measures address the sustainability of the case study partnerships and partnership programs, as well as partnership and partnership program financial sustainability:

The USINTEC partnership shows evidence of sustainability by:

- Demonstrating long-term partner accountability, which results from long-term partner relationships and collaboration; an important factor is that programs have been planned and implemented in the context of decades-long relationships and collaboration between a U.S. higher education institution and a host country;
- Retaining all U.S. and host country institutions that created the partnership as partners six years later – and almost three years after all USAID award funds were gone;
- Having as much or more support at all levels of the lead U.S. university now than it had when the partnership was created;
- Still having as executive director the person whose commitment and insight were primarily responsible for the creation of the partnership and who continues to provide effective, collaborative, and responsive leadership;
- Having U.S. and host country institutional partner coordinators who continue to avoid “fracturing” the partnership by “pairing up” U.S. and host country institutions for specific partnership programs;
- Moving beyond “personalization” to “institutionalization,” from a period in which partnership effectiveness has depended on the active engagement of individuals, to one in which the higher education partner institutions themselves are actively engaged;
- Moving, through its new dual degree programs, from project mode to degree program mode, which is critical for longer-term sustainability.

The JWSE partnership program shows evidence of sustainability by:

- Establishing a strong foundation for sustained future water activities in the Kingdom of Jordan;
- Developing a sustainable partnership through sequential steps that evolved from technical assistance in 1975 with the Faculty of Agriculture partnership;
- Maintaining the 30-year duration of relationships and activities between the University of Washington and the University of Jordan; first interactions between the universities started in 1974, with the need to enhance the UJ Faculty of Agriculture through technical assistance.

The MSEME partnership program shows evidence of sustainability by:

- Having been established in accord with international educational and professional standards and thus shaping the development of similar graduate programs in the host country; this places the partnership in a national leadership position relative to host country graduate education and training;
- Being successfully integrated into the academic structure of the host country higher education institution in which it was established;
- Having its program graduates hired by host country public- and private-sector employers, who find these graduates to have the skills to meet their needs and those of the host country;
- Having research facilities, such as the Laboratory for Ecological Research, which have the equipment needed by host country companies to conduct contract research.

The ELGA partnership shows evidence of sustainability by:

- Demonstrating continued partnership activities several years past the end of the partnership award;
- Establishing a dual master's degree program;
- Continuing collaboration among the partners on other activities, including the Agricultural Biotechnology Support Program II and the Agricultural Innovation Partnership.

Continuation of financial support after the end of a USAID partnership award, while neither necessary nor sufficient, is important for partnership or partnership program sustainability:

- An international institutional partnership such as USINTEC is financially sustainable without external U.S. funding when there continues to be other support available for its programs and operations, such as host country Ministry of Education scholarships for partners' faculty to study at U.S. university partners; commitments by U.S. and host country partners to provide significant support over several years from institutional resources to support program activities unfunded by other donors; and commitments by the USAID/host country mission to support host country participation in partnership academic, research, or exchange programs.
- At the same time, in all likelihood, an active international higher education institutional partnership, such as USINTEC, that has demonstrated its sustainability without continuous U.S. government funding could more effectively achieve U.S. and host country development objectives were it to receive U.S. government funding periodically.
- An international partnership program, such as the MSEME program, established in a host country public university is likely to be financially sustainable if the Ministry of Education continues to support both program operational costs and student scholarships; yet such a program and its university also need to continue to seek external project funding and, as appropriate, provide fee-based services for public and private organizations and individuals to supplement government support.
- A student and faculty exchange program, such as ELGA, requires resources; in ELGA's case, these are currently provided by the Tata Scholarship Fund, Cornell's departmental support, and the students' own ability to pay.

### **Documentation and Dissemination**

- The USINTEC partnership strategy for documentation and dissemination has emphasized the communication of information about partnership activities and outcomes to media outlets by the partnership executive director and by U.S. and host country partner institutions. However, in its early years, the partnership did not anticipate the very positive “bottom-up” press coverage throughout the country that followed the 2007 and 2008 USAID/HED-funded national and institutional workshops; nor did it anticipate the publicity in host country partner institutions’ local areas associated with the MONE scholarship awards received by more than 200 members of the Indonesian USINTEC faculty to study at U.S. USINTEC universities.
- The USINTEC partnership recognized the importance of documenting and sharing lessons learned, although the long-term collaborations and relationships among its U.S. and host country partner institutions have generally led partners to share lessons learned informally and orally rather than through systematic documentation and dissemination; this is similar to what has occurred with regard to the evaluation of the USINTEC partnership.
- Final documentation of the MSEM partnership is unknown, since the implementing partner only submitted its final reports to the funding partners in early summer 2011; final reports from the U.S. and host country university partners to the implementing partner also were not yet available in early summer 2011.
- Cornell University’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) published a book, “International Agriculture and Rural Development: A Unique Educational Odyssey,” on its experience in 2009. It includes not only the period covered by the partnership award, but more recent years as well.
- The JWSE partnership yielded research on watershed activities.
- The JWSE partnership prepared materials and marketed the trainings to other ministries.

## **PART SIX.**

# **APPLICATIONS OF PRACTICES AND PROTOCOLS TO ACHIEVE EFFECTIVE OPERATIONAL AND STRATEGIC OUTCOMES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This part of the report provides guidance on the development and conduct of higher education institutional partnerships by presenting what might be considered a “handbook” for the application of practices and protocols to achieve effective operational and strategic outcomes. This guidance responds to USAID’s interest in establishing analytic frameworks for distinguishing “most effective” partnership practices and outcome measures, and for assessing the extent to which a partnership achieves the strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening.

To this end, the study team has divided the partnership development process into three distinct parts that, when combined, constitute a progression that should produce desired and useful outcomes and a measurable return on USAID investment of support in the partnership. The three parts of this development process for a higher education institutional partnership are:

1. Preliminary planning of partnership development that includes examination of the contexts and conditions (see Part One of this report) in which the lead U.S. higher education institution and its U.S. and host country partners will implement the partnership.
2. Detailed presentation and application of a Checklist of Effective Practices (CEP), the concept of which was introduced in Part Two of this report and which is informed by the study team’s research, including case studies. The application of the CEP includes an examination of planning practices, communication and coordination practices, implementation practices, evaluation practices, and outcomes assessment that should be considered in developing a higher education institutional partnership. The CEP summarizes how practices have been employed in a partnership to obtain “most effective” outcomes and to meet the stated partnership objectives.
3. Detailed presentation of a Protocol for Strategic Outcomes (PSO), the concept of which also was introduced in Part Two of this report, for assessing the extent to which higher education institutional partners achieved the strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening. The application of the PSO includes, for each of these two strategic goals, an examination of five performance criteria – learning, complexity, flexibility, productivity, and durability – which provide a foundation for designing and implementing a USAID institutional partnership and for examining a partnership to determine the extent to which these goals have been achieved.

These three parts of the partnership development process are interrelated. The CEP practices and outcome measures are shaped and influenced by the preliminary planning related to partnership contexts and conditions, as are partnership performance objectives. A partnership more fully displays the five PSO performance criteria and achieves its strategic goals when the partnership contexts and conditions have been taken into account and when the partnership exhibits “most effective” practices and outcome measures. For example, institutional partner durability more readily occurs when the partner has long-term partnership “champions,” effective and supportive administrative procedures, and institutional policies that encourage low turnover of senior executive officers.

Accompanying the presentation and application of each of the CEP and the PSO in this section is a system of metrics for reporting, rating, and “scoring” the outcomes.

## EXAMINING THE CONTEXTS AND CONDITIONS OF A PROPOSED PARTNERSHIP

Preliminary planning is the necessary first stage in the development of a new institutional partnership. The prospect of creating a higher education institutional partnership needs to involve much more than the inspiration of a single faculty member or even a few faculty in an academic department. The team's review of data on several decades of partnerships and, more importantly, its examination of current and recent partnerships in the case studies demonstrate that a number of pre-conditions need or ought to be in place, pre-conditions that should be carefully scrutinized as an idea for a partnership matures. Like any good research endeavor, this inquiry needs to identify the variables that will have an influence on the implementation and operation of the proposed partnership.

Both contexts and conditions affect the likelihood of success at the earliest stages of planning an international partnership. The host country context and the institutional partner contexts, or institutional forms, are relatively fixed and unlikely to change during the conduct of a partnership; however, they must be considered. The conditions, which usually are more significant than the contexts in assisting or impeding partnership development, can be grouped into four categories, as addressed in Part One of this report: institutional personnel, institutional procedures, institutional policies, and USAID systemic realities.

The contexts and conditions that shape the preliminary planning of partnership development also might be termed "parameters," "independent variables," and "intervening variables":

- **"Parameters":** These elements are generally external to the institutional contexts of the partner institutions. They can include host country education ministries and their policies, unanticipated shifts of national development objectives, international economic issues, or notable changes in the social context of a host country that rapidly or unexpectedly affect the equilibrium of national life in that country.
- **"Independent Variables":** These variables are relatively fixed and must be accommodated as they are encountered by the institutional partners. They cannot be changed or amended without substantial effort, and must be integrated into the partnership processes. Moreover, these variables are vital to the success of collaboration between partner institutions. They include, for example, the formal administrative structures of the participating higher education institutions as well as the historical models of tertiary education employed by the U.S. and host institutions (e.g., the British model of university life found in most Commonwealth countries or the academic models influenced by practices developed in 19<sup>th</sup> century France). Institutional human resource policies governing the appointment of personnel, fixed retirement ages, and limited administrative terms are crucial as well. Fiscal policies and standards for accounting and auditing funds need to be part of the review process of these fixed conditions that will impact partnership operations if resource transfers cannot be accommodated in a timely fashion.
- **"Intervening Variables":** These variables, which need to be considered as the preliminary planning of a partnership goes forward, are less precise but nonetheless of vital importance. They include, for example, the levels and types of prior relationships and shared experiences between the proposed U.S. and host country higher education institutional partners. Prior experiences should be measured in years of association and not single encounters at academic meetings or electronic communications resulting from shared research or academic interests. A history of face-to-face communication is essential. There should be consideration of partner institutions' maturity in international exchanges of resources and cooperation on scholarly projects, as well as how substantive this experience is in terms of project inquiry and how effective it is in terms of managing the practical operations of an institutional partnership. Finally, there needs to be a determination of what kinds of "champions" or dedicated professionals are needed in each institution to ensure operations will go smoothly. Without the

dedication of each partner's human resource base, a partnership's success is problematic from the outset, and partnership objectives and strategic goals can be compromised.

U.S. and host country higher education institutions and other organizations beginning their planning of an international institutional partnership need to incorporate these "parameters" and "variables" into their preliminary planning discussions and actions. How this incorporation takes place must be decided by the partner institutions, given the distinctive contexts and conditions associated with any group of potential institutional partners. If it is done, though, the actual development of a higher education partnership can proceed with greater confidence in its outcomes.

## CHECKLIST OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

The Checklist of Effective Practices was conceived from the outcomes of the research, including the literature and documentation review of historical higher education partnerships, the survey of partnership participants, and the commentary from the discussion groups. The partnership practices and outcome assessments identified in that research were then examined in the field during site visits to both U.S. and host country institutions in the four selected case study partnerships. The "most effective" practices described here were drawn from the overlapping commentary on what worked best in partnership operations as well as responses regarding what does not work effectively and should be guarded against in project operations. The 20 "operational" practices are presented in four categories with five items in each category. A fifth category of five items is devoted to assessment of partnership outcomes.

The CEP has been designed for use by different personnel engaged in the development of a higher education institutional partnership, partnership proposal, partnership project, or partnership Request for Assistance (RFA) or Request for Proposals (RFP). These uses include:

- **Partnership Development and Proposal Review:** In the preliminary planning stage, the potential partners can use the CEP as a guide to planning a project that has an enhanced likelihood of realizing proposed outcomes. Once the partners submit a proposal to a funding agency, the CEP can become a framework for use by the funding agency in evaluating the proposal relative to the integrity of the proposed project, the potential for fulfilling proposed objectives and goals, and the "return on investment" that will be realized from funding support.
- **Interim Partnership Evaluation:** When implementation of a partnership project has begun, the CEP can be used as a framework to conduct routine USAID portfolio reviews as well as to assist partnership directors in carrying out "mid-course corrections" on project practices that are not meeting original expectations. This is helpful in improving outcomes without the partnership deviating from original objectives that are part of the funding commitments.
- **Assessment of Partnership Results:** The CEP can serve as a summary document at the conclusion of a partnership, with operational outcomes assessed in a format that permits comparative judgments on the success of the partnership and offers a clear statement of accountability in the use of resources. Moreover, this assessment of outcomes provides the foundation for the last stage of review, which is the examination of the strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening.

## CHECKLIST OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICES: WORKSHEET

### CHECKLIST OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICES (CEP) IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

GENERAL INFORMATION ON PROJECT:
TITLE:
PARTNERS:
COSTS:
DURATION:

**STATUS OF REPORT:**

- Used as a Planning Guide in the Development of a Project
- Applied During Project Implementation to Assess Progress on Goal Achievement
- Used as a Basis for Reporting on Outcomes of a Project

**PLANNING should demonstrate:**

1. Extensive U.S. and host country partner collaboration in the design of the project
2. Clear distinction between goals (fixed by contract) and methods that can be amended for "mid-course corrections" to ensure required goal fulfillment
3. Consideration for encouraging host institution academic personnel to remain in country or to return home after completion of foreign study
4. Consideration as to how the goals and objectives of the project can be sustained and expanded after the expiry of the project
5. Attention to realistic consideration of time factors to achieve tasks, most notably on administrative matters and international travel

**PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION should demonstrate:**

11. Means for identifying "champions" at U.S. and host country institutions to support operational needs of the project, including senior host institution
12. Means for continuous routine communication among all stakeholders to monitor administrative practice and support effective project progress
13. Means for low-cost communications among U.S. and host country partners using virtual networks, conference calls, webinars, and video conferencing
14. Sensitivity to "early warning" on needs for amending "methods" being used in order to meet stipulated goals in negotiation with USAID
15. Sensitivity to building a broad network of administrative support at U.S. and host country institutions to accommodate changes in administrative leadership

**COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION should demonstrate:**

6. Prior agreement of all partners on goals and objectives and full commitment to the partnership and project, including support of head of each linking
7. Procedures for orientation of partners to management procedures and policies of U.S. Embassy protocols, including report requirements
8. Procedures for orientation of U.S. personnel to host country culture to a depth that would enable ease of communication on all subjects
9. Provision for linkage to key host country personnel, including the Ministry of Education or other national higher education coordinating body
10. Provision of materials on how U.S. higher education operates on issues of degree development, institutional accreditation, and administrative operations

**EVALUATION should demonstrate:**

16. How routine and constant review of project operations was maintained to ensure that goal fulfillment was being addressed in a consistent manner
17. How scheduled portfolio reviews by USAID were routinely maintained, and routine communication with USAID and other U.S. agencies was maintained
18. How a means for capturing measurable outcomes to support goal achievement was created and supported with narratives on work product
19. That all partners understand why routine assessment, USAID portfolio reviews, and end-of-project summary evaluations are important
20. How U.S. and host country institutions have developed a common appreciation for "quality assurance" practices as part of international measures

**OUTCOMES should record and describe:**

21. The level of achievement of each goal, with descriptive narratives of how success was made possible
22. Examples of "spread" or "spillover" effects of the partnership to the host institution, host community, and U.S. partner institution
23. The partnership practices that contribute to the sustainability of the project
24. The likelihood of continuing financial support for project goals from the host institution, host government, or other donor agencies
25. Documentation of lessons learned and dissemination of publications and information regarding such lessons


## APPLICATION OF THE CHECKLIST OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

The instructions provided here offer summary guidance for the completion of each section of the Checklist of Effective Practices (CEP). The information in these instructions should prove to be helpful in the development of effective practices for an international higher education institutional partnership.

### A. Planning Practices (CEP Items 1-5):

1. Joint Planning: There should be clear and unambiguous indicators that, from the earliest stages, all of the partners have participated fully in the conceptualization and development of the higher education partnership, preferably indicating a long-term association prior to the commencement of project planning.
2. Clear Distinction between Goals and Objectives: This distinction is often confused, with objectives being seen as goals. Yet they are different. Objectives are “tactical” in nature and are used to achieve goals. Goal statements are more strategic in design and concept. It is important to appreciate this difference, as it will influence the measurement of success at the conclusion of the partnership. Objectives can be adjusted; goals are fixed.
3. Retention of Academic Resources in the Host Country: When a partnership and its project include opportunities for host country personnel to study or conduct research at a U.S. partner institution, planning should consider ensuring that these personnel return to their host country institutions; otherwise, the partnership is unlikely to be sustainable for the longer term. The partnership should consider:
  - a. Building incentives to provide research opportunities in the host country partners;
  - b. Providing equipment and improving curriculum and collegial support to reduce “brain drain”; and
  - c. Balancing human capacity and technical assistance to ensure the host country partners retain expertise to maintain equipment in vital research and communication areas.
4. Consideration of How Results of the Project Can Be Sustained: Even at the planning stage, partners should give consideration to how revenue streams, personnel resources, and institutional operations can be put in place to encourage long-term durability.
5. Dealing with Realistic Time Frames: Planning must take into account a realistic sense of how long it takes to complete tasks, particularly the lead time required when planning international travel between the partner institutions; several persons interviewed during case study site visits spoke about the months-long delays, even rejections, that AME faculty can experience when they apply for U.S. visas to participate in partnership activities.

### B. Communication and Coordination Practices (CEP Items 6-10):

6. Prior Agreement on Planned Actions and Goals: There needs to be demonstrable evidence of equal and full commitment by all partners to the partnership in order that all partners avoid misunderstandings and unfulfilled expectations. It is especially important to have this mutual understanding at the senior levels of administration in all partner institutions.
7. Orientation to Management Procedures: The U.S. partners should make all host country partners aware of relevant U.S. Embassy protocols and policy coordination requirements as well as financial reporting, travel, and logistical requirements relating to partnership activities.
8. Education in the Host Country Culture: U.S. partner personnel should demonstrate a full and in-depth understanding of host country culture that would permit exploration of common interests and issues by all partners; engagement among partners that goes beyond the standard levels of hospitality and common courtesy; and encouragement of good listening skills by donors and non-host country partners.
9. Linkage to Key Host Country Personnel: An international institutional partnership should have a mechanism for involving the host country decision-makers (e.g., officials in the Ministry of

Education or other national higher education coordinating body) when assistance is needed in addressing bureaucratic obstacles.

10. Provision of Awareness of How U.S. Higher Education Operates: U.S. partners should give attention to orienting host country personnel to how the U.S. higher education system operates in terms of degree development, procedures for quality assurance and accreditation, academic and research standards that must be maintained, and institutional policies and procedures for enrolling students from overseas.

**C. Implementation Practices (CEP Items 11-15):**

11. Identification of Key Leadership Personnel: Attention should be given to identifying partnership “champions” – individual personnel – at multiple levels within participating institutions to ensure the dynamism of partnership operations. This should include the core support of an academic unit (e.g., department, school, college) at the U.S. and host country partner institutions and must involve more than a single motivated principal investigator.
12. Mechanisms for Continuous Routine Communication Support Progress: The partnership should demonstrate how routine and effective communication would be encouraged among all parties to support effective project progress and assist in modifying practices and activities that are not as effective as planned.
13. Use of Low-Cost Communication Practices: The partnership should demonstrate how low-cost communication in the form of virtual networks, conference calls, blogs, webinars, and video conferences is used among all partners.
14. Monitoring Administrative Procedures for Effective Practice: The partnership should demonstrate its commitment to monitoring administrative procedures by using cost-effective measures, return on investment, and downstream benefits via leveraged funding, as well as approaches that expedite partnership operations.
15. Administrative Change and Collective Problem Solving: Partners should anticipate changes in senior administration at partner institutions and be prepared to implement creative responses to maintain continuity of partnership operations.

**D. Evaluation Practices (CEP Items 16-20):**

16. Supporting “Mid-Course Corrections”: Partners should support and carry out “formative” or “continuing” assessment during partnership operations so that “mid-course corrections” can be implemented in a routine and orderly fashion as a means of tracking progress.
17. Maintaining Portfolio Reviews: The lead U.S. institution in a USAID-funded partnership should, with the full support of all partners, encourage USAID to conduct routine six-month progress reviews in a reporting format with item analysis.
18. Capturing Measurable Evaluative Data: Routine reviews of partnership activities should use a reporting format and item analysis to capture specific quantitative and qualitative information that is consistent with formats and analyses commonly used by U.S. and host country partner institutions.
19. Ensuring Partner Awareness of the Importance of Assessment: The partnership should demonstrate how U.S. and host country partner institutions have a mutual understanding of the importance of assessment.
20. Encouraging “Quality Assurance” among Partner Institutions: The partnership should show how it links concern for assessment with emergent interests in “quality assurance,” e.g., the need for common understanding on such issues as plagiarism in student performance.

**E. Outcomes Assessment (CEP Items 21-25):**

21. Summarize Clearly the Fulfillment of Partnership Objectives: A partnership needs to summarize clearly the extent to which specifically stated performance objectives are fulfilled in order to identify success or to indicate what compromised the planned outcomes.
22. Identify “Spread Effects” in the Host Country and in Partner Institutions: A very important element of any partnership is the unanticipated “spillover” of impact to similar areas of operations or to a larger community. These “spread effects” can be internal to one or more U.S. and host country institutions, as well as to other stakeholders or the host country itself.
23. Describe the Likelihood of the Sustainability of Partnership Operations: This provides a way of summarizing outcomes, which can then be used in completing an analysis of capacity building and institutional strengthening.
24. Describe the Progress on Institutional or Unit Accreditation: This section should describe any progress made by a host country institution in terms of achieving institutional accreditation or accreditation of specific schools, colleges, or programs by national or international agencies or associations.
25. Document the Lessons Learned and their Dissemination: The partnership should prepare articles, journal entries, monographs, and other documentation relating to partnership lessons learned and outcomes, as well as maintain a record of the dissemination of this documentation in print and electronic media so that the outcomes are known and available.

## **CHECKLIST OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICES SYSTEM OF METRICS**

The application of effective partnership operational practices and outcomes assessments requires a system for reporting and rating the effectiveness of these practices and assessments. Such a system, when used appropriately, also offers the potential for “scoring” the outcomes of a partnership in terms of the fulfillment of operational objectives and even distinguishing between the performance levels of various higher education institutional partnerships.

The CEP system of metrics presented here meets the criteria of simplicity and utility. It is easily applied by various partnership stakeholders, for example, by one or more of the partners to evaluate their own institutional performance or by an external evaluator to provide an independent judgment of the “return on investment” for the partnership. The three elements of this system are addressed below.

### **Reporting on the Effectiveness of Partnership Practices and Outcome Assessments Using the CEP**

The first step in creating a measurement of partnership effectiveness is the preparation of a short statement (e.g., at most one-half page, single-spaced, and limited to 500 words) on each of the 25 effective practices and outcomes assessments in the CEP. Each of these 25 short statements should describe what was achieved in the partnership with regard to the fulfillment of that practice or outcome. This approach, which the team has successfully demonstrated in some USAID/HED partnerships, would likely result in a total of 12-15 pages of commentary about the partnership covering all 25 items in the CEP.

These 25 brief statements could be prepared by the partnership project director, another partnership participant, or another partnership stakeholder (e.g., a funding agency program officer or evaluator). The relative brevity and simplicity of this reporting format eliminates the burden of overly detailed and less effective partnership reports and provides an opportunity for diverse partnership stakeholders to gain useful information and insights about the relative effectiveness of partnership practices and outcomes assessments.

### **Rating the Effectiveness of Partnership Practices and Assessed Outcomes Using the CEP**

As the next step in measuring partnership results, the team recommends that the effectiveness of each of the 25 CEP items be rated, using the short statements in the first step. The partnership participant who prepared the short statements could assign each of the 25 CEP items one of the following five ratings:

- Exceptional: Results exceed expectations in terms of objective fulfillment, successful completion of activities, “spillover” to other cognate interests, and sustained performance of newly absorbed skills.
- Significant: Meets expectations in terms of planned objectives and identifies linkages to planned activities for future action or consideration while demonstrating potential for sustainability.
- Moderate: Objective fulfilled and possible future activities and cognate linkages suggested.
- Marginal: Partial fulfillment of objectives and identification of weaknesses in the project design.
- Immaterial: Minimal objective fulfillment and limited realization of planned outcomes.

This effectiveness rating system for each of the CEP items associated with a partnership is subjective. Nevertheless, a partnership stakeholder who is informed about the partnership, its contexts and conditions, and its practices and outcomes has the opportunity through this system not only to summarize the effectiveness of each of the partnership’s 25 CEP items in a short statement but also to assign a qualitative rating to each of these items based on his/her earlier statement of effectiveness.

### **Scoring the Effectiveness of Partnership Practices and Assessed Outcomes Using the CEP**

In some instances and for some USAID higher education institutional partnerships, it also may be appropriate for the rater to give a (subjective) numeric score to the effectiveness rating assigned in the preceding step for each partnership practice and assessed outcome. This could also provide an opportunity, when appropriate, for a stakeholder in several partnerships (e.g., a funding agency) to develop a single numeric score for each partnership and then to compare these scores to make a judgment as to which partnership might have the more effective operational practices and outcomes assessments.

This scoring could be accomplished by associating each of the five rating categories above with a score of 1 to 5, with “5” representing “Exceptional,” “4” representing “Significant,” “3” representing “Moderate,” “2” representing “Marginal,” and “1” representing “Immaterial.” Thus a score of “1” for a CEP item would be the lowest score, meaning that the partnership was only minimally effective in realizing that practice or outcome. On the other hand, a score of “5” for a CEP item would mean that the partnership was exceptionally effective in realizing that practice or outcome. Such a system would enable the partnership rater to compare the relative effectiveness of the partnership in realizing different CEP practices.

In addition, by using this scoring system, a partnership being evaluated on the extent it uses the “most effective” practices as set forth in the CEP could achieve a maximum score of “5” on each of the 25 CEP items, for a maximum total score of “125.” If the partnership rater decided to produce a single numeric rating score (i.e., an “average” rating across the 25 items) for the partnership, the total score could be divided by 25. Thus, a partnership’s total score of “95” divided by 25 would produce an “overall effectiveness score” of “3.8” for the partnership.

Using this three-step CEP system of metrics, a rater could assess the effectiveness of a partnership in several ways: with a short statement about each of the 25 CEP items, with a rating of each of the 25 CEP items (ranging from “Exceptional” to “Immaterial”), with a numeric score for each of the 25 CEP items, and with an “overall effectiveness score.” This system makes it relatively easy to compare

partnerships in different ways, including by their respective “overall effectiveness scores.” More complicated systems of weighted scaling for various items are, of course, always feasible.

It is very important to emphasize the limitations of this CEP system of metrics, however. The system and its application are dependent on the rater’s experience with higher education institutional partnerships, his/her information and insights regarding effective partnership practices and outcomes assessments, and her/his objectivity in the reporting, rating, and scoring processes. Two raters of the same partnership might give the partnership very different “CEP item effectiveness scores” and “overall effectiveness scores,” for example. Moreover, the same rater might give a partnership different scores at different times in the life of a partnership. Nevertheless, when used appropriately, with transparency and objectivity, this CEP system of metrics can be an important way to inform judgments about the effectiveness of higher education institutional partnerships supported by USAID and other funding agencies.

## **PROTOCOL FOR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES**

When measuring a higher education institutional partnership’s achievement of its strategic goals, the challenge of assessing whether human capacity is actually improved or institutions are really strengthened is no easy task. For example, it is easy to count the number of people in the host country partner institutions who may have received training as part of an international partnership, but that does not indicate that human capacity in the host country institutions has actually been increased. What is desired is a relatively simple technique that can be applied to produce a clear understanding of whether, indeed, there has been a real shift upward in the ability to be engaged in complex tasks and perform at a verifiably higher level.

Similarly, a system is required to examine the results of an institutional partnership as a vehicle for strengthening a higher education institution so that it may undertake more complex tasks and produce desired outcomes that were previously beyond its capacities. Again, this approach to measuring performance should be characterized by simplicity so that it can be easily applied by a partnership project director and readily interpreted by other partnership stakeholders, such as a funding agency program officer or evaluator.

Part Two of this report described how the study team views both partnership participants and partnership institutions as “learning systems” to determine whether human capacity building and institutional strengthening, respectively, are occurring. This focus on learning led the team to consider what ought to be observed or measured to demonstrate improved “capacity” or “strength.” Its review of social systems theory identified five performance criteria that all systems share to some extent, whether they are individuals or large complex institutions. These performance criteria, which form the framework for the team’s Protocol for Strategic Outcomes, are:

- Learning
- Complexity
- Flexibility
- Durability
- Productivity

The single most important characteristic in the PSO is a system’s learning capacity that permits the development of alternative behavior. As that ability increases, the system is able to engage in ever more complex behavior that can be directed toward newly developed goals. This is true for individuals as well as highly structured organizations, including higher education institutions. At the same time, hesitancy

or refusal to learn and then engage in more complex activities can easily lead to pathologies of performance for both individuals and organizations.

As systems master abilities to both learn and create more complex sets of activities or operations, they discover abilities to examine situations with greater sophistication when confronted with new needs or external challenges. This leads to the ability to “re-commit” or “re-deploy” assets to new tasks. Systems with advanced learning capacity are more skillful at using assets, whether they are time, intellect, or monetary resources, which are fungible, to shift action to results that are more productive or more likely to strengthen institutional operations. The outcome of such coordination of this “learning-complex behavior-asset redeployment” sequence is greater productivity as defined by goals sought. Finally, as a consequence of such action, a system – whether an individual or a large institution – becomes potentially stronger and more likely to be more durable or sustainable for the longer term.

## **APPLICATION OF THE PROTOCOL FOR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES**

The summary guidance offered here for the application of the Protocol for Strategic Outcomes performance criteria is intended to help measure the extent to which the two USAID strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening are achieved in an international higher education institutional partnership.

### **Measuring Partnership Human Capacity Building Using the PSO**

For an individual participating in an institutional partnership (e.g., a faculty member in a U.S. or host country higher education institution who uses partnership involvement to advance an international research agenda, or a student earning a degree under a partnership program to expand the abilities of the workforce), the five performance criteria can be defined and measured in the following manner:

1. **Learning:** The individual should demonstrate the absorption of greater breadth of knowledge in one or more fields of study to expand personal intellectual awareness, such knowledge being provided in courses of inquiry or training as part of the partnership. Learning involves the capacity to take in new information and combine it with previously learned information to produce new insights. For measurement purposes, this requires the careful design of teaching methodologies that take the goals and objectives of teaching very seriously. Examination of the teaching methods and tests used in training could, for example, determine if learning is occurring at a satisfactory rate.
2. **Complexity:** The individual should be able to demonstrate that exposure to alternative paradigms for analysis or information extends the range of the individual’s intellect by command of additional material, which provides an expanded basis for creativity in examining subjects of inquiry. Teaching individuals theory or methods of analysis helps to construct webs of understanding that result in fuller appreciation of the intricacy of a specific subject. The application of knowledge and theory can be assessed in instructional methodologies as they explore an individual’s capacity to merge empirical and normative theory in the application of data to produce informed conclusions.
3. **Flexibility:** The individual should acquire greater ability to recombine knowledge and skills for assessing issues, realigning skills, and responding to questions posed and problems requiring solution. Measurement of this ability requires an assessment of how the individual merges previously learned data and theory with recently acquired information to form new syntheses of insight that contribute to understanding complex phenomena.
4. **Productivity:** The individual should be positioned to engage more effectively with her/his environment and demonstrate an enhanced level of productiveness in terms of intellectual range, analytic focus, synthesis of skills, capacity to think strategically, and ability to contribute to the community. The application of new learning to newly learned paradigms encourages the

synthesis of theory and data to produce insight contributing to greater productivity by the individual. This is an especially significant outcome in the conduct of cross-cultural higher education institutional partnerships.

5. **Durability:** The combination of benefits derived from the first four criteria should promote an enhanced sense of personal and physical well-being for the individual and improve his/her ability to function more effectively in society and respond more efficiently to threats to personal conditions. The operational integration of these other criteria should result in the enhancement of an individual's career over a sustained period of time. Measurement of durability is thus necessarily long term.

### **Measuring Partnership Institutional Strengthening Using the PSO**

For a U.S. or host country higher education institution and other partner organizations in a USAID partnership, activities that demonstrate greater institutional strength should be defined and measured. With additional training, this can be done in the following manner:

1. **Learning:** A higher education institution or other partnership organization should demonstrate an awareness of techniques, policy options, and methods that permits improved use of facilities, better management of personnel, stronger academic programming in research and teaching, or other actions that strengthen the institution. Institutional learning is a complex phenomenon that requires a structural/cultural congruence less easily developed in country contexts where historical cultures are seeking to or must work within the framework of imported institutional forms. Nevertheless, all partnership institutions need to demonstrate the ability to learn in order to be effective.
2. **Complexity:** Growth in institutional complexity should be demonstrated by the increased differentiation of tasks notable in the creation of offices (structure) and in the assigned duties of increased specificity for particular tasks of new program development (functions). This is most easily done by the training of administrative staff in management techniques and, most important, the elements of decision making and systems analysis. This training involves both analysis of empirical data and sophisticated decisional analysis.
3. **Flexibility:** Higher education partners should demonstrate a capacity to shift resources, personnel, and use of facilities to serve more effectively the needs of the staff, faculty, and students. Through new learning and the use of decision theory, an institution is better positioned to apply tools of management in a flexible manner in responding to challenges from various constituencies, both external and internal, thus strengthening the institution.
4. **Productivity:** A partnership institution should increase operational effectiveness through a combination of administrative learning; more detailed differentiation of assigned tasks in management, research, and instruction; and more explicit resource allocation. Effective and skilled management is critical to preserving the institutional balance that is conducive to maximum productivity of a higher education institution.
5. **Durability:** The combination of learning, structural complexity, capacity of informed deployment of assets, and measurable growth in productivity should create strength to ameliorate the impact of economic, social, and political parameters that can confront a higher education institution. This strength, in turn, can contribute to the enduring sustainability of the institution. The more a partner institution is sensitive to the importance of using administrative learning, built on sound theoretical premises, to flexibly respond to institutional needs, the more the strength of the institution will improve and effective university operations will be sustained.

### **PROTOCOL FOR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES SYSTEM OF METRICS**

Achievement of a partnership's strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening requires a system for reporting and rating the extent to which these goals are achieved. Such a system,

when used appropriately, also offers the potential for “scoring” the performance of a partnership in terms of the fulfillment of these goals, as well as distinguishing among the performance levels of various higher education institutional partnerships.

The PSO system of metrics presented here is very similar to the CEP system of metrics presented previously. Like the CEP system, the PSO system meets the criteria of simplicity and utility, and it is easily applied by various partnership stakeholders. However, the PSO system of metrics is applied separately for each of the two strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening.

The three elements of this PSO system are addressed below. Since the system elements are the same for both strategic goals, the application of these elements to the two goals will be discussed together.

### **Reporting on the Partnership Achievement of Each Strategic Goal Using the PSO**

Similar to the first step in using the CEP system of metrics, the first step in creating a measurement of a partnership’s achievement of each of its two strategic goals is the preparation of a short statement (e.g., at most one-half page, single-spaced, no more than 500 words) on each of the five performance criteria in the PSO. For the goal of human capacity building, each of the five short statements should describe what was achieved in the partnership with regard to one of the five performance criteria; the same would be the case for the partnership’s goal of institutional strengthening. Thus, for each of the two strategic goals, this approach would result in a total of about 2,500 words of commentary about the extent of the partnership’s achievement of that goal.

These five brief statements for each of the partnership’s two strategic goals could be prepared by the partnership project director, another partnership participant in a U.S. or host country partner institution, or another partnership stakeholder such as a funding agency program officer or evaluator. The relative brevity and simplicity of this reporting format does not create an unwarranted burden on a partnership project director or a different individual who might be reporting on the partnership, yet it provides useful information and insights about whether the partnership has achieved each of the strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening.

### **Rating the Partnership Achievement of Each Strategic Goal Using the PSO**

The second step in using the PSO system of metrics is similar to the second step in using the CEP system of metrics. Here the team recommends that, for each of the two strategic goals, the extent of the partnership’s achievement of each of the five PSO criteria be rated relative to a five-category rating scheme similar to that used in the CEP system, namely:

- Exceptional: Results exceed expectations in terms of strategic goal achievement.
- Significant: Meets expectations in terms of strategic goal achievement.
- Moderate: Minimal strategic goal achievement.
- Marginal: Partial strategic goal achievement.
- Immaterial: Very limited or no strategic goal achievement.

This rating process would use the two 2,500-word strategic goal statements discussed in the section above. The person who prepared the short statements could assign each of the five PSO criteria one of the above five ratings, based on the brief statement that he/she had prepared for that criterion, using tests of individuals trained, analyses of institutional policies or management structures, or other means to determine that rating.

In this way, each partnership has five ratings for each strategic goal, one for each of the five PSO criteria for which a short statement of goal achievement had been prepared. For example, considering in turn the five 500-word statements reported for a partnership’s achievement of the human capacity building

goal, the partnership might be rated “Significant” relative to the “Learning” criterion, “Exceptional” relative to the “Complexity” criterion, “Marginal” relative to the “Flexibility” criterion, “Significant” relative to the “Productivity” criterion, and “Significant” relative to the “Durability” criterion. For the institutional strengthening goal, the partnership would have another set of five ratings.

### **Scoring the Partnership Achievement of Each Strategic Goal Using the PSO**

In some instances and for some USAID higher education institutional partnerships, it may be appropriate for the rater to give a (subjective) numeric score to the strategic goal achievement rating assigned in the preceding step for each PSO criterion and each strategic goal. This could also provide an opportunity, when appropriate, for a stakeholder in several partnerships (e.g., a funding agency) to develop a single numeric “strategic goal achievement score” for each partnership and each strategic goal, and then to compare these “scores” to make a judgment as to which partnership might have more fully achieved one or the other of the two strategic goals.

As in the case of the CEP system of metrics, this scoring of the PSO system could be accomplished by associating each of the five rating categories above with a score of 1 to 5, with “5” representing “Exceptional,” “4” representing “Significant,” “3” representing “Moderate,” “2” representing “Marginal,” and “1” representing “Immaterial.” Thus a score of “1” for a PSO criterion associated with a specific strategic goal would be the lowest score, meaning that the partnership’s achievement of that goal was very limited or non-existent. On the other hand, a score of “5” for a PSO criterion would mean that the partnership was exceptionally effective in achieving the specified strategic goal relative to that criterion. Such a system would enable the partnership rater to compare, for each of the partnership’s strategic goals, the extent to which the partnership achieved different PSO criteria, for example.

Using this scoring system, a partnership being evaluated on the extent to which it achieves the five PSO criteria relative to a particular strategic goal could achieve a maximum score of “5” on each of the five PSO criteria, for a maximum total score of “25.” If the partnership rater decided to produce a single numeric rating score (i.e., an “average” rating across the five criteria) for the partnership, the total score could be divided by 5.

Thus, for example, if a partnership’s total “strategic goal achievement score” relative to the goal of institutional strengthening were “22,” then dividing that score by 5 (representing the five PSO criteria) would produce an “overall strategic goal achievement score” of “4.4” for the partnership relative to the institutional strengthening goal. If that same partnership’s total “strategic goal achievement score” relative to the goal of human capacity building were “18,” then it would have an “overall strategic goal score” of “3.6” relative to the human capacity building goal. Comparing these results then suggests that the partnership is more fully achieving the goal of institutional strengthening than the goal of human capacity building.

Using this three-step PSO system of metrics for each strategic goal, a partnership rater could assess the extent of goal achievement by the partnership at several levels: with short statements about goal achievement relative to each of the five PSO criteria, with a rating for each of the five PSO criteria (ranging from “Exceptional” to “Immaterial”), with a numeric score for each of the five PSO criteria, and with an “overall strategic goal achievement score.” This PSO system thus makes it relatively easy to consider comparing partnerships at various levels of analysis, including by their respective “overall strategic goal achievement scores.” More complicated systems of weighted scaling for various items are, of course, always feasible.

It is very important to emphasize the limitations of this PSO system of metrics, however. The system and its application is dependent on the rater’s experience with higher education institutional

partnerships, his/her information and insights regarding the strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening, and her/his objectivity in the reporting, rating, and scoring processes. Two raters of the same partnership might give the partnership very different “PSO criteria achievement scores” and “overall strategic goal achievement scores,” for example. Moreover, the same rater might give a partnership different scores at different times in the life of a partnership. Nevertheless, when used appropriately, with transparency and objectivity, this PSO system of metrics can be an important way to inform judgments about the effectiveness of higher education institutional partnerships supported by USAID and other funding agencies.

## **PART SEVEN. IMPROVING PARTNERSHIP PRACTICES TO REALIZE USAID POLICY GOALS IN THE AME REGIONS**

This JBS International, Inc. report has been prepared in response to a request from the USAID Asia and Middle East Bureau Office of Technical Support (ME/TS) “to conduct an in-depth analysis and identify ‘best’ practices for higher education partnerships that have built capacity and strengthened host country education institutions” with special reference to “USAID and non-USAID supported higher education partnerships in the Asia and Middle East Regions.”

To assist USAID in realizing its policy goals in the AME Regions, this report first examined “parameters” and “variables” that shape the host country and institutional contexts and the institutional conditions of international higher education partnerships (Part One). In Part Two, the team translated research information and insights from its literature and documentation review (including a matrix of USAID and non-USAID AME partnerships), its USAID partnership participant survey responses and group conversations, and its AME partnership case studies into two preliminary conceptual frameworks – one for analyzing partnership performance through its operational practices and outcome measures and one for assessing the fulfillment of a partnership’s strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening through an analysis of performance criteria.

Through its partnership research and case studies (Parts Three and Four), the team gained deeper insights into the assessment of higher education partnerships and the development of frameworks for analyzing partnership practices and outcome measures and for assessing human capacity building and institutional strengthening (Part Five).

Part Six provided guidance for prospective USAID higher education institutional partnerships as well as for USAID offices engaged in designing, funding, overseeing, and assessing such partnerships. This section highlighted the importance of the contexts and conditions shaping a new partnership, and specified two frameworks – a Checklist of Effective Practices (CEP) and a Protocol for Strategic Outcomes (PSO). These frameworks should enable USAID or a prospective USAID-funded partnership to apply effective operational practices and achieve the USAID strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening. Part Six concluded by specifying a system of metrics for each framework.

This concluding part of the final report integrates the study’s research findings with the analytic frameworks and systems of metrics to assist USAID in supporting more effective higher education institutional partnerships to achieve its policy goals in all regions, but notably Asia and the Middle East.

### **USAID POLICY AGENDA**

In conducting this study, the team has given attention to recent USAID policy statements, including the December 2010 *USAID FORWARD* announcement of a reform agenda focused on seven areas:<sup>8</sup>

- Implementation and Procurement Reform
- Talent Management
- Rebuilding Policy Capacity
- Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation
- Rebuilding Budget Management
- Science and Technology

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<sup>8</sup> USAID FORWARD Reform Agenda. <http://forward.usaid.gov/home>. Date Accessed: July 5, 2011.

- Innovation

Four of these reform agenda focus areas have objectives that are especially relevant to this study:

1. Implementation and Procurement Reform
  - Strengthening partner country capacity to improve aid effectiveness and sustainability
  - Strengthening partner country civil society and private sector capacity to improve aid effectiveness and sustainability
  - Increasing competition for prime contract awards and broadening USAID’s partner base
  - Using U.S. government resources more efficiently and effectively (e.g., through fixed price contracts, coordinated procurement with other U.S. government agencies)
  - Strengthening collaboration and partnership with bilateral, multilateral, and international donors to increase synergies and avoid duplication
2. Rebuilding Policy Capacity
  - Producing and disseminating high-quality development policies and strategies, with initial focus on four topics (including education)
  - Streamlining and reducing planning and reporting burdens so USAID staff can spend more time thinking and acting strategically, designing and evaluating projects, etc.
  - Reestablishing, through project design, a rigorous, analytically based approach to achieving results targeted in country-level strategic planning
  - Collaborating more intensively with traditional and emerging development partners
3. Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation
  - Improving data collection to inform decision making
  - Improving USAID ability to learn from implementation experience and using this knowledge to enhance future strategic decisions
4. Science and Technology
  - Leveraging federal science agencies and academic research investments to address shared challenges that affect Americans at home and developing countries abroad

To realize these reform agenda objectives, USAID needs to strengthen its higher education institutional partnerships by:

- Increasing the likelihood that USAID-supported partnerships use operational practices that lead to the “most effective” outcomes and the achievement of performance objectives;
- Providing a foundation for designing and implementing USAID institutional partnerships characterized by learning, complexity, flexibility, productivity, and durability; and
- Fulfilling, to the greatest extent possible, the USAID higher education institutional partnership strategic goals of capacity building and institutional strengthening.

## **USAID PARTNERSHIP MODELS**

There is no one “best” model that USAID should support to strengthen its higher education institutional partnerships in the three critically important ways noted above and to realize its reform agenda objectives. Rather, there are several good models, and each has benefits and limitations relative to these higher education partnerships.

Science and technology “innovation awards,” an element of the *USAID FORWARD* reform agenda, may achieve USAID research and development (R&D) outcomes to a greater extent than other higher education support programs – and might even subsume these other programs. At the same time, while R&D awards build human capacity, they may not strengthen institutions or produce sustainable long-term institutional partnerships that demonstrate the CEP practices and PSO criteria outlined in Part Six

of this report. However, the USAID/Indonesia Collaborative Partnerships initiative, begun in late 2009, appears to give greater attention in its research-focused partnerships to institutional strengthening than do the USAID “innovation awards.”

The two-stage community college institutional partnership planning and implementation awards funded by the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and administered by Higher Education for Development (HED) offer a model for other USAID-funded AME higher education institutional partnerships, including those in which U.S. universities are the lead partner. Such two-stage awards place greater emphasis on planning than do typical one-stage awards, unless the latter awards only fund project planning, and not implementation.

Public-private co-funding of institutional partnerships and their projects can take different forms. USAID/Global Development Alliance (GDA)-supported projects involving U.S. and host country higher education institutions start with private-sector funding, which is leveraged by USAID funding. While these partnerships may involve collaboration between U.S. and host country higher education institutions (e.g., the Kazakhstan case study in this report), they are not higher education institutional partnerships. Primary partnership funding usually does not go directly to either of these institutions but is managed on behalf of the partnership by a funding or implementing partner. On the other hand, the U.S.-Mexico Training, Internships, Exchanges, and Scholarships (TIES) partnerships, funded through USAID/HED, are higher education institutional partnerships with HED funding received by the lead U.S. institution. In addition, private-sector funding is solicited and received by the institutional partners, thus creating a different public-private partnership model.

While some USAID-supported higher education partnerships involve a single U.S. institution and a single host country institution, others involve a higher education institutional consortium or a consortium having both higher education institutions and non-higher education organizations (e.g., government ministries, management consulting firms) as partners. The team’s experience with AME partnerships suggests that higher education partnerships are more effective and more sustainable over the long term when they involve more than one institution in a single host country or institutions from several host countries. Indeed, the team was advised by USAID partnership participants that USAID increasingly should look to fund partnerships on a regional basis, engaging multiple institutions in one or more partner countries in collaborative networking.

A partnership-funding model that bestows larger, longer-term awards has some advantages but also some disadvantages. On the plus side, a model with a longer-term award may achieve more fully the strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening. However, a partnership-funding model that employs larger, longer-term awards may diminish the number of higher education institutions that can be funded through such partnerships, given budget limitations. This type of partnership funding also tends to be awarded to major universities in the United States and host countries that have well-developed institutional project support systems, making it difficult for institutions less experienced in managing international partnerships to receive funding. On the other hand, while smaller, shorter-term awards enable a wider range of institutions to participate in partnership projects, these institutions are less likely to demonstrate effectiveness and outcomes in the shorter award period. Thus, it is important that USAID continue to support both long-term and short-term awards through its partnership-funding models.

## **USAID PARTNERSHIP RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study team offers 16 recommendations that USAID should consider to improve its higher education institutional partnerships, regardless of the types of partnership projects it funds. The first two

recommendations address the use of foundational frameworks for achieving and “rating” partnership operational and strategic outcomes. The other 14 recommendations highlight specific actions USAID might take as it engages in a new chapter of supporting higher education partnerships in all its regions, but notably within Asia and the Middle East. These recommendations are grouped according to their relevance to project planning, project design, and project evaluation.

## **FRAMEWORKS (CEP AND PSO) FOR INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS**

### **Recommendation 1**

***USAID should consider using the Checklist for Effective Practices and the Protocol for Strategic Outcomes, described in Part Six of this report, to improve its higher education institutional partnership projects’ practices, outcomes, and achievement of strategic goals. Ways in which USAID might use one or both of these frameworks include the following:***

- ***USAID should consider including a requirement in each higher education partnership project RFP that the CEP practices and outcomes assessments and the PSO performance criteria be addressed in every proposal submitted for project funding;***
- ***USAID should encourage prospective higher education partnership teams to use the CEP and the PSO as guidance in preparing proposals for USAID partnership awards;***
- ***USAID should consider using the CEP and the PSO in reviewing partnership project funding proposals;***
- ***USAID should consider recommending that the higher education institutional partnerships it funds use the elements in the CEP and the PSO in preparing their formative and summative evaluations and reporting them to USAID; and***
- ***USAID should consider using the CEP and the PSO to assess a partnership’s formative and summative evaluations of its project award.***

The CEP summarizes how practices have been employed in a higher education partnership to obtain “most effective” outcomes and to meet the stated partnership objectives. The PSO complements the CEP by assessing the extent to which the partners achieved the strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening. Together, these two frameworks provide a foundation for designing and implementing successful USAID institutional partnerships. Thus, not only USAID, but also partner countries and U.S. and international institutional partners would benefit from the use of the CEP and the PSO in ways such as those recommended here.

### **Recommendation 2**

***USAID should consider using the CEP system of metrics and the PSO system of metrics for reporting on and rating the effectiveness of each partnership’s operational practices and outcomes assessments and the achievement of each of the partnership’s two strategic goals, respectively.***

The November 2010 USAID announcement of the *USAID FORWARD* reform agenda stated that, among other things, USAID is “building metrics into its implementation agreements to achieve capacity building objectives.”<sup>9</sup> As a result, the study team concluded it was important to develop not only the CEP and the PSO, but also a system of metrics for each of those two frameworks. (See Part Six of this report.) The three elements of each of these two systems of metrics enable someone with knowledge of a partnership’s practices, outcomes, and strategic goals such as a USAID official, partnership director, or external evaluator to “score” the partnership with respect to the fulfillment of operational objectives

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<sup>9</sup> “USAID Announces *USAID FORWARD* Reform Agenda.” Fact Sheet. (November 18, 2010) <http://www.usaid.gov/press/factsheets/2010/fs101118.html>. Date Accessed: July 7, 2011.

and the achievement of each strategic goal, as well as to distinguish among the performance levels of various higher education partnerships through a comparison of CEP and PSO partnership “scores.”

## **PARTNERSHIP PROJECT PLANNING**

### **Recommendation 3**

***USAID should emphasize in its project RFPs and in its guidance to prospective higher education institutional partnerships that effective and early planning is critical to the success of such partnerships.***

Several directors of USAID-supported higher education institutional partnership projects in which funding has ended reported that they now recognize they should have given significantly greater attention to planning these projects and ensuring at the start that all partners shared a common vision. Partnerships without such planning are less likely to be sustainable and less likely to achieve the USAID strategic goals of capacity building and institutional strengthening. Partnership project directors’ inadequate attention to planning often results from USAID partnership monitoring and assessment practices; these practices tend to emphasize the “quantification” of project outcomes and, thus, lead project directors to pay too little attention to planning, given the difficulty of “quantifying” planning practices and outcomes.

### **Recommendation 4**

***USAID should provide greater guidance to prospective and current higher education institutional partners regarding the expenditure of project award funds, and consider granting partners greater flexibility in expending project funds on activities that are important for achieving project outcomes.***

Throughout its literature and documentation review, analysis of survey responses and group discussions, and case studies, the team was struck by the general lack of USAID guidance on allowable uses of partnership award funds, financial monitoring, and audit requirements. This absence of USAID guidance on effective financial practices is a risk factor for higher education institutional partnerships, as well as a factor potentially inhibiting effective partnership outcomes. Some partnership awards have not allowed grant funds to be used for salaries by either U.S. or international higher education institutional partners, even when such expenditures would have significantly improved partnership outcomes. Allowable uses of funds have included mainly travel and travel-related expenses, materials and equipment (with strict rules as to sources and uses), communications, and publishing. For example, although host country partner institution scholarships for U.S. graduate study often could have been funded by a partnership award, the partner institutions have needed to make other funding arrangements when the graduate study extended beyond the partnership award period.

### **Recommendation 5**

***USAID should ensure that prospective higher education institutional partners recognize the importance of formalizing project partnerships through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and Scope of Work agreed to in writing by all institutional partners; these should address each partner’s roles and responsibilities as well as project operating procedures, management structures, and behavioral rules.***

Partnership project directors often do not realize until after a project ends that they should have given closer attention to formalizing the partnership prior to receiving the project award. Only afterward do they fully recognize the importance of having an MOU signed by all partners before the project starts, with the MOU covering all operating procedures as well as formal expectations and behavioral rules for both U.S. and host country partners. It also is useful for the MOU to formalize a project leadership

structure and to state clearly the partners' shared vision and project objectives; without such an MOU, a partnership involving academic personnel with varied backgrounds from institutions with diverse cultures and practices often leads to discordant "missions."

### **Recommendation 6**

***USAID should emphasize to higher education partners receiving a USAID project award the critical importance of forming strong institutional relationships from the start of the award.***

One of the most important elements of a successful higher education partnership is a long-term commitment by the partner institutions, including a willingness to sustain partnership activities with institutional funds when project funding may be unavailable. Thus, it is important to establish strong relationships among potential partners before opportunities for partnership project funding arise. These institutional relationships are stronger when the partners recognize each other's potential contributions to the partnership as well as each partner's strengths and limitations, then collaborate and share partnership responsibilities in line with institutional capabilities and resources. The most successful USAID partnerships benefit all partners and, long term, achieve the strategic goals of capacity building and institutional strengthening, as well as support national development in the partner country.

### **Recommendation 7**

***USAID should specify that each proposal submitted in response to a higher education institutional partnership project RFP needs to include a communication and coordination "plan" for all partners.***

Partnerships are more likely to achieve their performance objectives and strategic goals when institutional partner representatives effectively communicate with other partners and stakeholders in the United States and the host country. Regrettably, this is often not the case. Higher education partnership participants often assume that, since they communicate well within their own institutions, they are able to communicate effectively with all types of participants in host country partner institutions. U.S. participants in a USAID-supported partnership that lacks a communication and coordination "plan" at the start of the partnership often fail to realize that communicating effectively with their international partners is essential to understanding the host country and institutional partners' political, cultural, policy, and other contexts and conditions. Without effective communication and coordination among all partners, host country partners also are frequently hesitant to advise U.S. participants about how to communicate with other important host country stakeholders (e.g., host country government ministries) whose "buy in" is essential for partnership success.

### **Recommendation 8**

***USAID, in making an award to a higher education institutional partnership, should ensure that all partner institutions understand the importance of focusing on long-term partnership sustainability starting at the beginning of the project award period, not at its end.***

Directors of prior USAID-supported higher education institutional partnerships frequently regret that they waited too long before giving attention to the long-term sustainability of their partnerships. They would have welcomed guidance from USAID advising them when they received their USAID awards that they should begin exploring third-party funding via grant proposals developed by all partners as soon as possible. Indeed, these partnership directors stressed that focusing on post-USAID award sustainability during the early partnership and partnership proposal planning stages, even before receiving a USAID award, is crucial.

## **PARTNERSHIP PROJECT DESIGN**

### **Recommendation 9**

***USAID should seek ways to more effectively incorporate U.S. and international higher education institutional partner priorities and insights into the design of its institutional partnership awards in order to improve project outcomes.***

USAID partnership funding models do not always consider higher education institutional priorities, insights, or cycles. For example, partnership support through a Global Development Alliance (GDA) award has at times reflected USAID's development objectives and partner businesses' core interests more than higher education institutional partners' priorities. Higher Education for Development (HED) awards allow USAID and its country missions to influence the criteria for project design as set forth in the RFA/RFP, the amount of funding, and any "mid-course corrections" that might be needed to achieve the operational objectives of a specific program.

### **Recommendation 10**

***USAID should ensure that its proposal design, announcement, submission, and review process are transparent with respect to higher education institutions and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that may submit or have submitted a proposal for partnership funding.***

U.S. higher education institutions do not always view the USAID proposal process as merit-based. They believe that proposals submitted by U.S. higher education institutions that have strong name recognition sometimes carry greater weight in the review stage. Also, funding opportunities released by USAID missions do not always have a wide enough distribution list, and many potential local partners are often overlooked. Little institutional memory exists within USAID missions regarding outcomes of prior partnership projects, limiting the effectiveness of some longer-term partnership projects. Publicly available information about current and past program activities also is often lacking, inhibiting better project design.

### **Recommendation 11**

***USAID should not fund higher education institutional partnerships for the purpose of carrying out technical assistance (TA) projects, for such a funding approach is likely to result in either an unsuccessful partnership or an unsuccessful TA project.***

International higher education technical assistance projects, even large ones, are unlikely to mature into partnerships. TA projects have and need a single decision maker (e.g., chief of party, principal investigator); this is very different from an institutional partnership, with its two leaders (U.S. and international) or leadership team. Partner institutions can develop a successful TA project within their partnership, but it is rare to develop a successful partnership within a TA project. TA projects tend to have scopes of work that are more rigid and fixed than those of partnerships. Also, partnership relationships develop over the long term (e.g., 10-15 years), while TA projects are shorter; the longer relationships among partner institutions lead to intergenerational knowledge transfer and mentoring of new participants, which do not generally occur within TA projects. Moreover, USAID efforts to control the variables in a partnership project may produce TA-like results, but such attempts to control what is done will not increase the odds of fostering a successful institutional partnership; in fact, too much USAID control over a partnership project will handicap the partner institutions and diminish the outcomes.

### **Recommendation 12**

***USAID should ensure that its higher education institutional partnership RFPs do not discourage project proposals from including multi-disciplinary or cross-sectoral approaches, or activities that do not yield measurable outcomes in the near term.***

Some higher education institutions believe that USAID partnership funding discourages multi-disciplinary or cross-sectoral project approaches. Yet the focus area of a partnership project is not always limited to or easily contained by a single academic unit, program area, or sector, reflecting the multiple levels of activity or external factors associated with some projects and topics. Without major modifications that may lessen project outcomes, some partnership projects do not easily fit into one sector, and single-discipline or single-sector partnership funding can become an obstacle to the realization of USAID strategic goals. In addition, USAID's reliance on numbers can discourage or limit the inclusion of some activities – such as research – that do not easily provide short-term quantitative results but may be necessary for project success.

### **Recommendation 13**

***USAID should develop and implement different institutional partnership award programs for community colleges and technical colleges and for universities.***

The contexts and conditions within which international community college or technical college partnerships carry out projects are quite different from those within which university partnerships carry out their projects, both in the United States and in partner countries. For example, community colleges typically do not train faculty for appointments in other community colleges, and community college faculty “turn over” more frequently than do university faculty. The dynamics of long-term community college partnerships also are quite different from those of university partnerships; indeed, long-term international community college partnerships are unlikely, except possibly when the lead U.S. partner is a statewide or sub-state regional community college system rather than a single community college.

## **PARTNERSHIP PROJECT EVALUATION**

### **Recommendation 14**

***USAID should ensure that all higher education project partners recognize the importance of systematic formative and summative project evaluations, and unambiguously understand USAID's expectations and requirements relating to the scope, timing, and methodologies of these evaluations.***

Evaluation activities are a very important element of any partnership project, yet the team's research and case studies suggest that these activities often receive too little attention. Moreover, views about evaluation requirements and expectations often vary among partners. U.S. and host country institutions that have had long-term relationships often believe they are able to obtain better formative and summative evaluations through their on-going and informal communications among partners than they actually receive. In other partnerships, the lead U.S. higher education institutional partner at times had quite different views about what kinds of evaluations were expected as a condition of the partnership award than did USAID or another primary funding partner, or even the implementing partner of a project partnership. All partners need to be explicit about who is responsible for what kinds of evaluations, as well as how and when such evaluations should be conducted.

### **Recommendation 15**

***USAID should respond in a timely and transparent manner to appropriate requests from project institutional partners for approval of “mid-course” changes in project scope, activities, and outcomes that arise from the project's formative evaluations and other assessments.***

Although project modifications often are relatively easily agreed to by USAID as long as overall partnership goals and specified project outcomes are unchanged, there is a perception among USAID higher education institutional partners that the administrative authorization of changes is too time-consuming and burdensome. Thus, higher education partners often do not seek such “mid-course corrections” even when these changes are suggested by formative evaluations and would enable them to achieve more readily specified project outcomes. In addition, although partnership participants reported that they find it significantly more challenging to apply for and to administer institutional partnership contracts than institutional partnership grants, they believe the USAID grant award process requiring the specification of outcomes in advance limits the effectiveness and desirability of USAID partnerships in view of the perceived difficulty in making “mid-course corrections.”

**Recommendation 16**

***USAID, in assessing institutional partnerships, should recognize that achieving the strategic goals of human capacity building and institutional strengthening requires a longer-term perspective.***

Reporting and measuring the outcomes of USAID-supported higher education partnerships is challenging. Partnership participants indicated that measuring relationships in the USAID assessment and reporting system is difficult, since the primary objective of many USAID partnerships – although not all (e.g., USAID/GDA-supported partnerships) – is to establish and maintain long-term institutional partner relationships. USAID’s focus on short-term results and required reports to monitor compliance with award guidance is viewed as excessive in some cases, inhibiting partner initiatives more likely to achieve capacity building and institutional strengthening.

## **APPENDICES**

## **Appendix A: USAID/AME Higher Education Institutional Partnerships Study Scope of Work Section C**

### **SECTION C – DESCRIPTION / SPECIFICATIONS/STATEMENT OF WORK**

#### **C.1 BACKGROUND**

It is a priority of the current Administration to increase USAID's focus on evidence based programming and increase effective partnerships for development. This focus on more effective programming and partnerships directly applies to USAID support for Higher Education partnerships.

USAID has a long history of support for higher education capacity development. Throughout the 1970s and into the early 1980s, USAID put significant resources into programs that were intended to strengthen and increase the capacity of host-country universities. This was often done by providing opportunities for Master's and Doctoral students to study in the United States. There was an implicit understanding that many of the graduates would return to their respective home universities and apply the knowledge gained in the U.S. to the development needs of their country. In other cases, higher education programs directly supported institutional development through the establishment and strengthening of faculties and institutions.

In the mid to late 1980s, the development community—including USAID—moved away from higher education programming and university partnerships in favor of a greater focus on basic education. While USAID continued to sponsor Higher Education partnerships, they tended to be more narrowly focused and complimented USAID's program or project objectives. Due to the funding limitations and decreased planning and implementation time periods, the longer term objectives of capacity building yielded to shorter term results. Now, it seems the international community is revisiting the importance of higher education and is interested in examining how partnerships can better support institutional capacity building.

Since 1998, USAID has supported more than 400 higher education partnerships worldwide and 70 higher education partnerships in the Asia and Middle East (AME) region. These partnerships span a variety of sectors including Economic Growth and Environment; Agriculture; Education, Health, and Democracy and Governance. Other sector areas of focus include Energy, Gender and ICT. Most of these partnerships were implemented through the Higher Education for Development (HED) program, which is managed by the Office of Education in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade.

From 2000 until 2006, the United States Government invested \$11.6 million in higher education partnerships in the AME regions. The USG-sponsored Higher Education Summit for Global Development in April 2008 helped to consolidate momentum from previous years to focus on higher education partnerships to support development goals. As follow-on to this Summit, the Asia and Middle East (AME) regions supported two regional summits: 1) the Asia Regional Summit held in Dhaka in October 2008; and 2) the BMENA Technical and Community College Symposium held in Amman in June 2009.

Over the past two years USAID supported several global and regional assessments and evaluations of higher education partnerships. In 2009, for example, USAID and HED conducted an impact assessment of 28 Higher Education Partnership programs across the Asia region. This evaluation was undertaken by JBS International. The findings from the impact assessment were useful, but did not provide a sufficient level of detail about the strategic and operational dimensions of successful partnerships that are critical to inform and guide future programming. Similar evaluations have yielded useful information but did not provide sufficient analysis on how successful partnerships were conceived, implemented and sustained

over time. What is needed is a comprehensive and detailed identification and analysis of Best Practices that have strengthened higher education institutions in the region to meet their goals.

In addition to the USAID higher education partnerships described above, other development agencies have supported higher education partnerships in the AME regions. These partnerships may also provide valuable information on best practices for institutional development. Therefore, non-USAID supported Higher Education partnerships will be included in this research and analysis, described below,

## **C.2 SCOPE OF WORK**

To conduct an in-depth analysis and identify best practices for higher education partnerships that have built capacity and strengthened host country education institutions. The contractor will conduct in-depth analyses of USAID and non-USAID supported higher education partnerships in the Asia and Middle East Regions and will develop analytic products described in section C.3 and C.4 below.

## **C. 3. IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Contractor shall provide contract management necessary to fulfill all the requirements of this task order. It is expected that the analysis will utilize a variety of research methodologies that include documentation reviews, surveys, site visits, and case studies. The contractor will be expected to prepare a research plan for conducting the analysis, as described below. It is expected that the analysis will address key questions that include:

1. What are the specific characteristics of effective higher education partnerships?
2. How and in what settings might these characteristics and practices be replicated?
3. How do members of host-country universities view partnerships and how do they define success?
4. How do members of U.S. universities view partnerships and how do they define success?
5. How and to what extent have partnerships strengthened institutional capacity and how are improvements in capacity measured?
  - What were the specific actions and occurrences that lead to, supported, and contributed to effective partnerships?
  - What was the political, institutional, and economic context within which key promising practices unfolded?
  - When and how did the contextual forces facilitate or constrain the practice?
  - When and how did the sequence, combination, or quality of actions and occurrences around a practice result in success?
  - When, how, and why did similar sequences, combinations, and quality fall short of intended goals?
6. Which practices led to the most effective relationships between partners?
7. Which practices led to the best engagement of external stakeholders?
8. Which practices led to the most significant capacity building to contribute to USAID sectoral goals and to development impact generally?
9. Which practices from other regions and other donors' program merit consideration for future higher education programming?
10. What practices have been less successful or problematic, and why?
11. Based on the analysis, what are the most successful best practices that can be used for future higher education programming?

It is anticipated that findings from the documentation review and surveys will be used to identify effective higher education partnerships that have improved host country institutional capacities. A short list of effective partnerships will be used to identify and select up to four partnerships for which in-depth case studies will be developed. USAID will approve the final list of partnerships selected for the case studies. It is expected that the partnership case studies will examine and distill the rich context and

characteristics of effective partnerships including specific circumstances and strategies that contributed to effective partnerships. Importantly, the case studies will provide voice and perspective from the host-country universities including leaders, faculty members, students, and the communities served by universities.

#### **RESEARCH PARAMETERS**

The parameters for the analysis and case study development on effective higher education partnerships are intentionally broad. The analysis should review higher education partnerships in the Asia and Middle East regions that have been developed over the past 40 years and should include examples of effective higher education partnerships supported by USAID, other development agencies, foundations, and public and private sector entities. It is expected that the case studies will include examples from USAID and non-USAID supported higher education partnership programs.

#### **C.4. DELIVERABLES:**

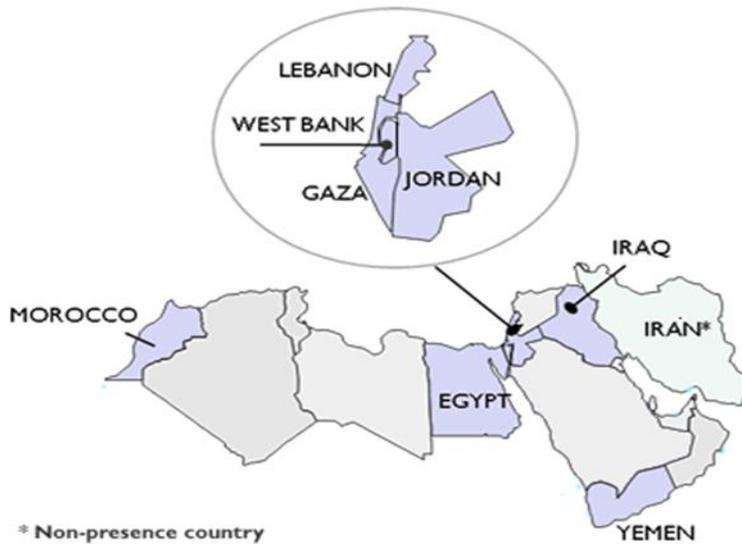
- 1) A work plan that includes the research methodology and instruments that will be used to conduct the analysis. The work plan should also include a timeline for submitting to USAID key deliverables.
- 2) A comprehensive documentation and literature review of USAID and non-USAID higher education partnerships in the Asia and Middle East regions.
- 3) A matrix of university partnerships in the Asia and Middle East regions that includes, at a minimum, funding levels, time frame, sector focus, and development outcomes. The matrix should also include information on the extent to which the outcomes have been sustained.
- 4) A summary report which provides a detailed subset of the partnerships in the matrix that describes the extent to which the partnerships had an implicit or explicit focus on capacity development. The summary should illustrate partnerships that demonstrated varying degrees of institutional capacity building, from low to high.
- 5) Based on deliverables 1-4 above, a short list of proposed partnerships for the in-depth case studies.
- 6) Conduct up to four in-depth case studies.
- 7) Draft case study reports.
- 8) Final case study reports
- 9) Draft final report that includes a summary and synthesis of deliverables 1-8 above, as well as a evidence-based lessons learned and recommendations on best practices for supporting effective higher education partnerships
- 10) Final report
- 11) Final presentation of results in Washington DC.

## Appendix B: Maps of the USAID Asia and Middle East Regions

### USAID/ASIA



### USAID/MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA



## Appendix C: USAID Support for Higher Education: A Brief History

### USAID SUPPORT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION: A BRIEF HISTORY<sup>10</sup>

1800s-1940s	Individual, sporadic efforts based on personal affiliations between U.S. university personnel and university colleagues abroad; numerous foreign students attend U.S. universities.
1949	President Truman calls for a U.S. foreign assistance program in his inaugural address that will “make the benefits of our scientific advance and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.” Chairman of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges commits the land-grant university community to the program, identifying agricultural development as a primary U.S. strength and foreign development assistance need.
1950	Congress creates the “Point Four Program,” administered by the Technical Cooperation Administration, thus initiating the first formal overseas development assistance program. Based on the successful Marshall Plan, the “Point Four Program” directly transplanted U.S. technology in lesser developed countries (LDCs).
1950s	United States supports 26 alliances between universities in the United States and in LDCs.
1961	Congress passes the omnibus Foreign Assistance Act (Public Law 87-195) which declares the “encouragement and sustained support of the people of developing countries in their efforts to acquire the knowledge and resources essential to development and to build the economic, political, and social institutions which will improve the quality of their lives” a principal foreign policy objective. The Act mandated the creation of an agency to administer economic assistance programs, and in November 1961 President Kennedy signed legislation establishing the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).
early 1960s	USAID emphasis shifts from university alliances to “institution building”: training LDC students at U.S. universities; providing U.S. university faculty to research, teach, and advise at LDC institutions; and supplying LDC institutions with materials and equipment.
1966	Congress enacts section 211 (d) of the Foreign Assistance Act (Public Law 89-583) allotting \$10 million for research and educational institutions to strengthen their programs (“capacity-building”) concerned with economic and social development of LDCs.
1973	Congress enacts the “New Directions” amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act (Public Law 93-189), emphasizing assistance to the “poorest of the poor” and de-emphasizing the role of universities in development assistance.
1970-75	USAID-funded contracts to universities drop by 50 percent.
1975	Congress creates Title XII “Famine Prevention and Freedom from Hunger” in amendments to the Foreign Assistance Act (Public Law 94-161), calling for a formal partnership between USAID and U.S. universities in activities related to food and agriculture. The Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD) was created to intermediate between land-grant universities and USAID. Cooperative Research Support Programs (CRSPs) began.
1980	USAID creates the Office of Forestry, Environment, and Natural Resources; prepares policy determinations on “Environment and Natural Resources Aspects of Development Assistance” and a “Statement on Environment and Sustainable Development.”
1983	USAID updates its policy paper on “Environment and Natural Resources,” which later became the basis for a new Environmental Initiative under the 1990 restructuring of the agency.
1982-86	USAID prepares policy determinations on Basic Education and Skills Training and on Participant Training. Neither gives priority to university capacity building or strengthening.
1985-88	LAC Training Initiative -- Central and Latin America Scholarship Program (CLASP) authorized in 1985,

<sup>10</sup> Does not include higher education support from the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Information Agency, Fulbright Programs, and other programs funded by the U.S. Government.

	<p>then subsequently modified, expanded, and disaggregated as the Presidential Training Initiative for the Islands Caribbean (PTITC), the Andean Peace Scholarship Program (APSP), and the Central America Peace Scholars (CAPS) Program.</p> <p>Among the effects were a) participant training became “scholarships” de-linked from capacity building programs; b) scholarships became taxable as benefits to the individuals; c) USAID established an Office of International Training and training offices/officers in the regional bureaus and larger missions; d) pressures to increase numbers (quadrupling) and to spread scholarships among more institutions led to short course training at the expense of long-term; and e) university programs began to have matching grant requirements.</p>
1988	USAID announces an agency reorganization, including creation of a Center for University Cooperation in Development administered by the Bureau for Science and Technology, that consolidated BIFAD and the Office of Research and University Relations.
1990	USAID defines a new mission, embodied in four development initiatives: 1) Democracy Initiative; 2) Partnership for Business and Development (which became EGAT); 3) Family and Development, including food security (which became Health/Population); and 4) Environment.
1991	University Development Linkages Program (UDLP) matching grants, administered through Center for University Cooperation and Development, S&T Bureau.
1992	Association Liaison Office for International Cooperation in Development (ALO) established through a USAID Cooperative Agreement with consortium of higher education associations; initially mainly a liaison and coordination office; issues its first RFA in 1997.
2002	Institutional Development Program begins, administered through UNCF.
2003	The Middle East Partnerships Initiative (MEPI) begins, with USDoS and ALO.
2006	ALO becomes Higher Education for Development (HED).

Sources:

- Office of Technology Assessment, “New Opportunities for U.S. Universities in Development Assistance: Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Environment,” 1991; <http://www.fas.org/ota/reports/9131.pdf>.
- F. Method. “Retrospective Study of AID Assistance to Education, 1960-1979,” Creative Associates, 1980; available through USAID Center for Development Information and Evaluation.
- Various online sources associated with programs and other references in the table.
- F. Method, personal background knowledge.

## Appendix D: USAID Partnerships Survey Results

### USAID Higher Education Institutional Partnerships Survey Results\*\*

#### 1. Please select your location.

Answer	Response	%
United States	52	78
International	15	22
Total	67	100

#### 2. Please select your state and institution.

Answer	Responses
Total	50

#### 3. If your institution is not listed, please type the name in the box below. (open ended)

\*Respondents provided open-ended answers

#### 4. Please write in your country and institution.

Country	Institution*
Kenya	
Thailand	
Indonesia	
Somaliland	
Mexico	
Indonesia	
Kenya	
Lesotho	

\*Respondents provided open-ended answers

#### 5. In how many international higher education institutional partnerships have you been active?

Answer	Response	%
Zero	2	3%
One	16	27%
Two	12	20%
Three or more	30	50%
Total	60	100%

#### 6. Please list the lead international partner institution and country for each of these partnerships. (Limit: 3)\*

Total Responses	50
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\*Respondents provided open-ended answers

#### 7. What is (or was) your role in the partnership? (Please check one)

Answer	Response	%
Partnership coordinator or deputy coordinator	37	71%
Partnership faculty and/or researcher	9	17%
NGO partner	1	2%
Host country government partner	0	0%

Private sector partner	0	0%
Other*	5	10%
Total	52	100%

\*Respondents provided open-ended responses

**8. In what year did you start working with this partnership?**

Answer	Response	%
2010	2	4%
2009	4	8%
2008	6	12%
2007	6	12%
2006	5	10%
2005	4	8%
2004	2	4%
2003	2	4%
2002	3	6%
2001	2	4%
2000	4	8%
1999	5	10%
1998	2	4%
1997	0	0%
1996	0	0%
1995	0	0%
1994	0	0%
1993	0	0%
1992	0	0%
1991	0	0%
1990	0	0%
1989	0	0%
1988	1	2%
1987 and earlier	2	4%
Total	50	100%

**9. In what year did you end your work?**

Answer	Response	%
Currently active	22	44%
2010	6	12%
2009	6	12%
2008	2	4%
2007	1	2%
2006	2	4%
2007	0	0%
2006	2	4%
2005	4	8%
2004	2	4%
2003	1	2%
2002	1	2%
2001	1	2%
2000	0	0%
1999	0	0%

1998	0	0%
1997	0	0%
1996	0	0%
1995	0	0%
1994	0	0%
1993	0	0%
1992	0	0%
1991	0	0%
1990	0	0%
1989	0	0%
1988	0	0%
1987 and earlier	0	0%
Total	50	100%

**10. In what program area(s) is (or was) the partnership active? (Please check all that apply)**

Answer	Response	%
Environment	17	34%
Agriculture/Agriculture Business/Animal Science	17	34%
Population/Health/Nutrition/HIV/AIDS	11	22%
Economic Development/Business	13	26%
Democracy & Governance/Public Policy/Journalism	8	16%
Education	35	70%
ICT/Distance Education	6	12%
Workforce/Entrepreneur Development	8	16%
Other*	7	14%

\*Respondents provided open-ended answers

**11. Does (or did) the partnership have a corollary focus (e.g., gender issues, environment, energy policy, ICT/information systems, workforce development, ESL, etc.)?**

Answer	Response	%
Yes	25	50%
No	25	50%
Total	50	100%

**12. What is (or was) the corollary focus? (Open-ended)**

\*Respondents provided open-ended answers

**13. What is (or was) the total amount of the partnership award from the funding organization?**

Answer	Response	%
\$100,000 or less	6	13%
\$100,001-\$200,000	8	17%
\$200,001-\$300,000	10	22%
More than \$300,000	17	37%
Do not know/recall	5	11%
Total	46	100%

**14. Which of the following was the main development goal of the partnership? (please choose one)**

Answer	Response	%
To develop capacities and/or programs within the international partner institution	35	76%
To develop capacities and/or programs outside the international partner institution	5	11%
To support research and knowledge generation on development topics	2	4%
To support development of public policies (national, regional, local)	0	0%
Other*	4	9%
Total	46	100%

\*Respondents provided open-ended answers

**15. Do (or did) the partnership's activities achieve the goal of strengthening the international partner's institutional capacity?**

Answer	Response	%
Yes	38	84%
No	1	2%
Do not know	6	13%
Total	45	100%

**16. Which of the following are (or were) among the activities? (Please mark all that apply.)**

Answer	Response	%
Improve curriculum development	32	84%
Strengthen faculty and/or staff development	35	92%
Strengthen academic units	21	55%
Improve analytical and research capacity	22	58%
Increase university outreach	23	61%
Improve financial management	3	8%
Increase capacity of teacher training	17	45%
Improve application of technology	13	34%
Foster collaboration with other institutions	24	63%
Improve public policy	13	34%
Other*	3	8%

\*Respondents provided open-ended answers

**17. Please identify the degree to which those activities achieved the goal of strengthening the international partner's institutional capacity.**

Question	Achieved beyond original goals	Fully achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved	Responses
Improve curriculum development	9	11	11	0	31
Strengthen faculty and/or staff development	9	11	15	0	35
Strengthen academic units	2	10	8	1	21
Improve analytical and research capacity	6	4	10	2	22
Increase university outreach	10	7	5	1	23
Improve financial management	1	0	1	1	3
Increase capacity of teacher training	3	5	8	1	17
Improve application of technology	5	3	4	1	13

Foster collaboration with other institutions	7	8	8	0	23
Improve public policy	4	3	3	2	12
Other	2	0	1	0	3

**18. Please indicate which of those activities are still continuing.**

Question	Still continuing	Responses
Improve curriculum development	19	19
Strengthen faculty and/or staff development	26	26
Strengthen academic units	14	14
Improve analytical and research capacity	16	16
Increase university outreach	19	19
Improve financial management	3	3
Increase capacity of teacher training	13	13
Improve application of technology	10	10
Foster collaboration with other institutions	17	17
Improve public policy	6	6
Other	2	2

**19. Please list specific practices which facilitated supporting the goal of strengthening the international partner's institutional capacity. In addition, identify specific practices which hindered this success. (open ended)**

\*Respondents provided open-ended answers

**20. Which of the following activities were included in the project planning phase of the partnership?**

Question	Included	Not included	Do not know/recall	Responses
Collaboration with partner institutions on Terms of Reference/Expected Outcomes	31	3	4	38
Adherence to Funding Guidelines	30	5	3	38
Attentiveness to Cultural Factors	27	7	4	38
Planned Formative Assessment	20	11	7	38
Detailed Statements of Practices to be Employed	15	16	7	38
Summative Assessment	23	9	6	38

**21. Which of the following components does (or did) the partnership include? (Please mark all that apply)**

Answer	Response	%
A reflection and/or learning component (e.g., an evaluation component)	27	71%
Conferences/seminars	26	68%
Case studies and/or documentation	22	58%
Faculty exchanges	28	74%
Information networking	22	58%
Publications	23	61%
Service learning	10	26%
Other	7	18%
Total Responses	38	

**22. Do (or did) external contexts have an impact on the success of the partnership (for example, cultural, political, institutional, economic, linguistic, visa and/or travel restrictions, etc.)?**

Answer	Response	%
Yes	31	82%
No	6	16%
Do not know/recall	1	3%
Total	38	100%

**23. Please list the external contexts which facilitated that success. In addition, identify the external contexts which hindered that success. (open ended)**

\*Respondents provided open-ended answers

**24. Has the partnership been part of a formal assessment or evaluation?**

Answer	Response	%
Yes	19	50%
No	15	39%
Do not know/recall	4	11%
Total	38	100%

**25. If you could do the partnership over again, what would you do differently?(open ended)**

\*Respondents provided open-ended answers

**26. Following are characteristics that are often said to be important in creating and sustaining successful international higher education institutional partnerships. Based on your experience with such partnerships, please give each characteristic a rating from very important to not important indicating the importance of that characteristic in creating successful international partnerships.**

Question	Very important	Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Responses
Adequate funding	23	7	1	0	31
Length of funding period	23	5	2	1	31
Committed heads of partner institutions	27	4	0	0	31
Effective partnership management	28	3	0	0	31
Collaboration on the design of goals and activities of the partnership	24	5	0	1	30
Clear partnership goals	25	5	1	0	31
Activities focused on achieving goals	20	11	0	0	31
Measurable and sustainable outcomes	22	6	2	1	31
Relevance of outcomes to host country development goals	17	10	4	0	31
Collaborative decision-making processes	23	6	1	1	31
Transparent funding and resource allocation	17	10	4	0	31
Presence of written agreements	13	12	5	1	31
Interim assessment of partnership activities	13	14	2	2	31
Evaluation component as part of the partnership	15	12	2	2	31
Being part of a consortium of institutions	8	9	10	4	31

Time and resources to support needs assessment and planning prior to implementation	19	8	3	1	31
Expectations of follow-on funding (USAID or other)	8	18	3	2	31
Access to professional networks and exchange mechanisms	7	17	7	0	31
Joint development activities of mutual benefit to partnership institutions	11	17	1	1	30
Other*	0	1	1	0	2

\*Respondents provided open-ended answers

**27. We welcome any other comments you would like to share about the successes and/or practices of the partnership. (open ended)**

\*Respondents provided open-ended answers

**28. Would you be interested in participating in a small group conference call to further discuss your experiences with international higher education partnerships?**

Answer	Response	%
Yes	12	71%
No, thank you	5	29%
Total	17	100%

**29. If you have participated in more than one partnership, would you be interested in completing this survey for a second partnership?**

Answer	Response	%
Yes	6	18%
No, thank you/Not applicable	28	82%
Total	34	100%

\*\*Data reflect primary survey results.

## Appendix E: USAID Partnerships Focus Group Protocol

### Focus Group Script

Good Morning/Afternoon! My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this important discussion! Our group includes (introduce all parties or have them introduce themselves). (Ask each person to identify the partnership they were involved in, their position, the dates of the partnership and the main goal(s) of the partner of the partnership.)

Your contribution can be very helpful as we seek to assist USAID to identify practices and procedures that can make current and future partnerships more effective in achieving planned goals. A review of literature and documents reporting on partnerships in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and parts of Latin America has been completed. We have also indexed partnerships conducted over the past forty years.

This is how you can be of greatest assistance:

Many of the reports considered contain clues and inferences to how activities went very well. There are also references to how things did not go so well – such as visa problems and some financial management issues. Most of these clues are mentioned in passing as anecdotes and yet they contain a great deal of insight as to what is really happening during the implementation of a partnership. I am going to ask a series of open-ended questions that are divided into several categories: partnership planning, partnership operations, and partnership assessment.

We welcome your thoughts, and please ask for clarification if a question does not make complete sense.

#### PLANNING

1. *What was your role in the planning of the partnership?*
2. *Did you have close contact with individuals at the host institution that would be the site of the partnership activity?*
3. *What position did your counterpart at the host institution hold?*
4. *Was she/he readily available?*
5. *How was the proposed partnership tied to existing activities at your institution?*
6. *Did your institution have sufficient expertise to implement the proposed partnership?*
7. *How much time was spent on clarifying the goals and objectives of the partnership?*
8. *Did your planning build in forms of “formative assessment” to be implemented during the partnership to make sure progress toward goals was on track?*
9. *Did your partnership set out specific techniques, teaching methodologies or instructional practices to be used in the conduct of the partnership?*
10. **WHAT OTHER PLANNING ELEMENTS DID YOU BUILD IN TO THE PARTNERSHIP DESIGN WHICH HAVE NOT MENTIONED?**

#### COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

11. *Was the partnership design shared in draft form with the personnel of the host institution to insure clarity of planned goals?*
12. *Was there common agreement that the goals/objectives and expected outcomes were fully understood*

13. Do you think the completed plan took adequate account of cultural variables that would have an impact on the outcomes of the partnership?
14. Was the external environment (government, society, etc.) in the host institution's country "facilitative" of the partnership? If so, how? If not, in what ways and were these purely procedural and administrative?
15. Sometimes the folkways and academic culture of a host university has its own set of idiosyncrasies! Was your host institution "facilitative" of all the partnership was seeking to accomplish? What conditions might have compromised facilitation of partnership goals?

## OPERATIONS

Now, let's spend a few minutes considering aspects of partnership operations that made it work well or could make it work more effectively.

16. Was the partnership well organized when it began operations?
17. Who handled the details between your university and the host university?
18. How did travel arrangements go? Any serious glitches?
19. Sometimes trying to do too much at one time can overwhelm the partners! Did you have a planned sequence for introducing the various activities of the partnership?
20. Was the sequencing of activities a collaborative effort with host institution counterparts?

## EVALUATION

21. What kind of "summative" assessment was planned for the assessment of the partnership at the completion of the project?
22. Did you implement your plan for "formative" assessment? Were you able to make necessary mid-course corrections in planning where necessary?
23. Did your approach to "summative" assessment provide for any "metrics" that would measure outcomes in a scalable format?
24. What form did your end of partnership evaluations take?
25. Did you assess all aspects of the partnership: planning, operations and results of planned activities?
26. Did the host institution have an organized process for "quality assurance" of each activity? Does your institution have such practices?

## OUTCOMES

27. Did you provide a written summary on fulfillment of partnership goals?
28. What were the "spread effects" or "spillover" of partnership at the host institution? Host country? And your university?
29. What was the likelihood that the activities of the partnership will be sustained for the longer term?
30. Did your host university partner make any progress on national or international accreditation of schools, colleges and programs?
31. How extensively were the results of your partnership documented and disseminated to others?

WHAT OTHER DIMENSIONS OF PLANNING, OPERATIONS COMMUNICATION, EVALUATION AND OUTCOMES WOULD IT BE HELPFUL TO CONSIDER TO MAKE FUTURE PARTNERSHIPS MORE SUCCESSFUL IN TERMS OF BEST PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES?

Thanks so much for your assistance!