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AFRICA BUREAU
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT,
WITH POLICY GUIDELINES

Africa Agriculture & Rural Development Task Force

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I. SUMMARY

AID/W is developing and refining worldwide policies and strategies for implementing the directives provided in the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) as amended. This airgram outlines the Africa Bureau strategy for implementing the worldwide agricultural and rural development sector policies, and suggests policy guidelines for country program and project preparation.

After providing background on key FAA directives and an agricultural production sector policy paper soon to be released, the African situation is reviewed and international experience related to it. Then, the strategy is developed and policy guidelines suggested. Finally, AID staffing needs are considered.

Based on the premise that AID is going to address its resources to programs helping the poorest majorities, the overall strategy is: (1) to increase food supplies through increased production and other means (such as improved processing, storage and preservation) so as to effect a reduction in malnutrition and hunger, and (2) to increase income among the rural poor by increasing their productivity in agriculture and the generation of employment in the rural areas so they can share in the benefits of economic growth. Specifically, in FY 79 and beyond, AID's agricultural development program strategy in Africa calls for:

First -- Developing policies and institutions which involve the rural poor in the process of economic development, stressing food production.

- Second — Expanding national capacities to develop and disseminate new technologies that require low cost inputs, conserve energy and are simple to manage.
- Third — Broadening access to needed inputs, information, financing and markets, especially for the smallholder and small pastoralist.
- Fourth — Creating supporting physical infrastructure.

II. BACKGROUND

The Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) as amended contains three programming directives that are especially important to sub-Saharan African countries covered by the Africa Bureau. A.I.D. is (1) to focus its programs on the "critical problems of the functional sectors which affect the lives of the majority of people in developing countries..."; (2) "to give highest priority to undertakings submitted by host governments which directly improve the lives of the poorest of their people," and (3) to integrate women into development efforts.^{1/}

The vast majority of the poor in Africa* live in rural areas and are dependent upon agriculture for a livelihood. Food production, rural development and nutrition are especially critical problems affecting their lives. Women do a large proportion of all agricultural work and have traditionally played an important part in the subsistence economies of many African countries. The FAA directives clearly call for expanded A.I.D. programs based on vigorous projects in the agri/rural sectors with objectives responsive to the new directives.

New resources and methods of operation are available to A.I.D. to implement the directives. Title XII^{2/} provides opportunities to better involve U.S. Land Grant and other eligible universities in research and country programs in food production, nutrition, rural development and related areas. The new international organization studying appropriate technology will soon turn to agriculture.^{3/} New program and project approaches, such as the collaborative method^{4/} which involves the host country and educational or research institutions more deeply in planning are available.

*"Africa" refers to those countries south of the Sahara, excluding South Africa and Rhodesia.

A.I.D. is developing and refining strategies responsive to the directives for the various sectors and sub-sectors. For food and agricultural production, what has been called a "broadly participatory" strategy is emerging that calls for assistance in, (1) increasing national capacity to expand food supplies to alleviate hunger, and (2) increasing the participation of the poor majorities in the process and benefits of development. A paper stating policies to implement the strategy is being prepared.^{5/}

AID's general food and agriculture strategy/policy is applicable to Africa in principle, but conditions differ from the worldwide norm and adaptation is required. The AID strategy/policy places heavy emphasis on cereals, much less on root crops and little on the problems of pastoralists or resource conservation and management. While cereals production is important in Africa, strong emphasis must be given to pastoral problems since so many of the poor are dependent upon livestock. Root crops--low in many nutrients--are the predominant source of food for many Africans. Ecological degradation is serious in Africa, and farming systems with attention to resource conservation and management must be stressed for income, nutritional and conservation reasons.

This document attempts to adapt the general AID agricultural strategy/policy to African conditions.

III. THE AGRI/RURAL SITUATION IN AFRICA IN LIGHT OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

With the exception of the few African countries with mineral resources, soil, water and climate are the natural resources upon which economic development must be based. Fortunately in most countries the potential to increase agricultural production is very substantial; however, the exact extent is subject to controversy among experts. The member nations of FAO in Africa believe and have declared that the continent's resources are capable of producing food and agricultural products sufficient not only to satisfy adequately the needs of the African people, but also for export^{6/}.

African national leaders and aid agencies have long recognized the need for increasing food and other agricultural production. Increased production is needed for a) exporting (foreign exchange), b) food for rapidly rising urban populations, c) nutritional improvement and reducing famine risks, and d) raising rural incomes.

Taking note of the need and the potential, African countries have consistently listed increasing agricultural production as one of the major goals in their national plans. Yet, USDA estimates food produced per capita in 1975 was less than in 1955^{7/}, and according to the African FAO member nations, agricultural performance has declined in the past 15 years.^{8/} Large quantities of food are being imported, mainly from developed countries. The imports utilize scarce foreign exchange, increase debt and are diverting funds that could be made available for development purposes. Even with imports, the diets of millions of Africans are inadequate, and many face the threat of famine.

The people most susceptible to famine and malnutrition are rural residents whose major economic activity is food production and recent migrants to the cities from rural areas. Utilizing a minimum of purchased inputs, and relying on traditional methods, the typical rural family in Africa works a small tract of land or herds a few livestock, spending many days of labor to produce a total food supply which at best provides only a meager subsistence. Production is highly dependent upon weather and acts of God. When drought, flood or pestilence strikes, people suffer immeasurably. Frequently the labor requirement for the subsistence crop is concentrated into a critically short period, therefore, production cannot readily be increased. In many areas rapid increases in population and ecological degradation are reducing the resource base per family and the number on the very edge of survival is increasing. Unless something changes past trends, the long run outlook for several million Africans is grim.

Within Africa there are differences among countries, areas, crops and products. Dualistic agricultural economies have emerged in many countries -- a commercial sub-sector and a subsistence sub-sector. Yields per hectare, production per man year of labor and return to investment in the commercial sector are frequently satisfactory. The commercial sub-sector is often export based. Numerous successful projects can be cited where productivity has been increased and small farmer/herder incomes raised. Areas close to urban markets have fared reasonably well.

Farm or pastoral families with access to adequate land, capital and markets; and who have managerial skills have generally obtained

reasonable incomes. The problem is that the majority of Africans are dependent on subsistence farming where productivity is so low, living levels are of necessity unsatisfactory. Low productivity is the first order cause of rural, thus general, poverty; and it is linked directly to malnutrition and famine.

Since the 1972-1974 world food crisis, national planners in Africa and aid agencies have placed greater emphasis on the physical problems constraining food production. There are many physical and biological constraints, and the revision in priorities is at least partially appropriate; however, food deficits and the low rural income situation in Africa are not due solely, or perhaps even primarily, to inadequacies in quantity or quality of resources, or lack of knowledge concerning how to increase production. The most logical conclusion concerning Africa's low productivity and slow agricultural progress, both absolute and relative to the rest of the world, is that productivity has not increased primarily because a socio-economic environment conducive to increasing productivity of the vast majority of rural people has not existed. Where people have had access to resources, marketing services and price protection as in some commercial sub-sectors, production has been raised. For most people there has not been adequate encouragement for increased per capita production, nor has the existing institutional framework fostered the adoption of production increasing technologies.

When policies and institutions are inappropriate, introducing new technology or resource development, stock ingredients in many of

the national plans and aid agency programs of the past. are rarely successful). The single factor approach, whether it be extension, mechanization, fertilizer use, new breeds, new seeds, etc., has very limited impact. A comprehensive approach to the entire sector is required. Most African countries will require assistance to develop and implement a comprehensive approach to agricultural and rural development.

Much of the low productivity and slow rural progress in Africa can be attributed to institutional shortcomings. Progress is being made, but existing rural institutions do not foster and support a highly productive agricultural economy with widespread benefits. Based on experience and research, the following are needed for rapid progress:

(a) Governmental agencies responsible for agriculture and rural development which are "people oriented," flexible and able to effectively deliver a coordinated program to the field.

(b) Development agencies able to reach all segments of the farming and pastoral sub-sectors with new technology at relatively low cost.

(c) Tested inputs and methods for increasing production substantially at low cost. (Packages of practices with high benefit-to-cost ratios.)

(d) A reliable, efficient market system that provides price protection to farmer/pastoralists in all areas of the country.

(e) An efficient system for distributing purchased farm supplies to all segments of agriculture.

(f) A credit and banking system serving both large and small farmers and pastoralists.

(g) Training and educational institutions responsive to the needs of development.

(h) An efficient transportation system which extends into the rural areas.

(i) Sufficient security of land tenure to encourage producers to adopt practices that have a residual effect, and conserve resources for future use.

(j) Institutions for improving the quality of life in the more remote areas.

(k) A capacity to collect and analyze data for project planning.

While a review of African agri/rural conditions reveals much promise, agriculture in many parts of Africa is characterized by levels of technology, human understanding, and institutional organizations which are unable to cope adequately with the problems brought about by rapid population growth and ever increasing demands upon the environment. The result is a deterioration in the quality of life as evidenced by poverty, malnutrition, disease, social stagnation, and failure to progress at satisfactory rates in aggregate. The problem is complex, and there are many constraints which are beyond the capability of most African nations to remove quickly without external assistance.

IV. STRATEGY AND POLICY GUIDELINES

A. The Basic Strategies

A sound strategy for development in any specific country, as well as for the major regions *, will recognize the complexity of interactions

*A region may be several nations such as the Sahelian area (members of CLISS) Eastern Africa, or Africa as a whole.

among modes of production, knowledge, supporting infrastructure/
institutional arrangements, and the resource base. Policies, programs and
projects to implement the strategy must provide incentives or relax con-
straints that exist at all levels.

AID's approach is predicated on the principle that the people of
Africa, as all other people in the world, should have reliable access
to adequate diets at reasonable cost, as well as incremental gains in
other factors contributing to improved quality of life. Based on the
premise (which logically follows from the directives) that AID is going
to address its resources to programs which help the poorest majorities,
the overall strategy is:

- 1) to increase food supplies through increased production and other
means (such as improved processing, storage and preservation)
so as to effect a reduction in malnutrition and hunger, and
- 2) to raise incomes of the rural poor by increasing their pro-
ductivity in agriculture and by generating employment in
rural areas so they can share in the benefits of economic growth.

Specifically, in FY 79 and beyond, AID's agricultural development
program strategy in Africa calls for:

- First -- Developing policies and institutions which will involve the rural
poor in the process of economic development, stressing food pro-
duction, (see Section B below),
- Second-- Expanding national capacities to develop and disseminate new
technologies, with priority to food production and marketing that

require low cost inputs, conserve energy, and are simple to manage (see Section C below),

Third— Broadening access to needed inputs, information, financing, and markets, especially for the smallholder and small pastoralist (see Section D below), and

Fourth— Creating supporting physical infrastructure (see Section E below).

B. Developing Policies and Institutions Which Will Involve the Rural Poor in the Process of Economic Development, Stressing Food Production

Highest priority is given to developing policies and institutions to involve the rural poor in the process of economic development because without them, activities in C, D, and E are not likely to yield high or lasting benefits in terms of AID's directives. For example, roads (E) are vital for development, and AID is prepared to assist in their construction; however, unless host country policies and institutions serve the needs of the rural poor, the primary beneficiaries will be large farmers or pastoralists, landowners, and relatively well-to-do businessmen. To develop appropriate policies and institutions calls for:

1. National and regional food policy planning,
2. Increased emphasis on the agri/rural sector, especially food production,
3. Improving national agri/rural sector planning capability, especially for preparation of specific programs and projects to reach the subsistence sub-sector and other rural poor,
4. Increased, but cautious attention to institution building,
5. Giving first priority to improving productivity in the

subsistence sub-sector,

6. Shifting agricultural sector activities toward those areas where the poor reside,
7. Encouraging "people oriented" area planning,
8. Higher priority to settlement schemes,
9. Increased emphasis on the role of women in development,
10. Consideration of quality of life issues in all activities, and
11. Judicious Use of PL 480,

The above eleven points are discussed below, and policy guidelines provided.

1. National and Regional Food Policy Planning

Given the soil, water and climate resources of Africa, the agricultural sector performance during the past fifteen years is cause for concern, and in each country and regionally, re-evaluation of past programs and policies are needed. Large numbers of African people should not have to be malnourished and face the threat of famine. Food imports which are a serious drain on the economic development potential of many countries ~~developed~~ can and should be reduced. African nations should not assume they can rely on /countries to provide them with food security, as was done during the recent drought. Increasing the food supply and making it available to the masses, mainly through increasing real income, need priority attention.

Food and rural poverty are primarily, but not entirely, problems the individual countries must face. National self-sufficiency in food production is not necessarily sound policy. Resources vary

greatly, and of comparative advantage indicates some countries should be major exporters of food products (Sudan, for example), while others should probably continue to import (Mauritania, for example). Sound planning will determine where the various products should be produced, and who should export and import. Sound plans will include linkages among the African countries, as well as to countries outside the region.

Policy. AID will: 1) Encourage all nations and the regional groups to develop plans for solving food problems, and to aggressively pursue projects and policies to implement those plans, 2) Provide technical assistance in food production, policy analysis and planning to individual nations and regional efforts such as CLISS, and 3) Cooperate with other aid donors whenever and wherever possible.

2. Increased Emphasis on the Agri/Rural Sector, Especially Food Production

In Africa the agriculture sector is the major source of gross domestic product and the predominant employer of people. Given the world food situation and specifically the food scarcity in Africa, development in the agricultural sector represents the best opportunity for economic development in many countries. Increased productivity, hence income generation for the masses in agriculture, will not only lessen the risk of famine and improve diets, but can create a demand for urban-produced industrial goods and services, thus stimulating and accelerating the rate of overall economic growth and development. More favorable terms of trade for the agricultural sector will encourage investment in the rural areas — reducing the tendency for capital to precipitate into non or low productive

ventures such as rental houses for high income people in the urban areas. It follows that in most rural development programs, which may include a wide range of activities, increasing productivity in agriculture will be the hard-core economic activity. (In the remainder of this paper the term agri/rural refers to agriculturally based economic activities.)

Policy. AID will: 1) Encourage African countries to accord the food/agriculture sector a role in the overall national strategy for economic development commensurate with its potential contribution, and 2) Direct increased resources to agri/rural sector programs and projects.

3. Improving National Agri/Rural Sector Planning Capability, Especially for Preparing Economically Viable Projects and Programs to Reach the Subsistence Sub-Sector and Other Rural Poor.

If the pace of development is to be accelerated and the scarce, limited resources of African countries and aid agencies used wisely, then each nation must have an overall strategy for the development of the agricultural sector, and national plans to implement the strategy. AID and other aid agencies have a vital stake in each country preparing an agri/rural sector plan based on a sound strategy, and then each agency keying its assistance to the plan.

The preparation of improved plans requires:

(a) Sector Analyses: Good planning requires inventories of both resources and institutions (including an objective determination of their capability), an understanding of linkages within agriculture and to other sectors, and orderly forecasts of costs and impacts from alternative

courses of action. This calls for good data — especially concerning producer response to alternative incentives and market projections.

(b) National Goal Reconciliation: Efficiency versus equity is a major issue. In most African countries, agricultural production could be increased rather rapidly and production efficiency increased if national agricultural programs concentrated on a few farmers with adequate land, access to capital, and managerial talent. But, "producing more" or "national food self-sufficiency" without economic analyses demonstrating they represent wise resource use and achieve widespread distribution of the benefits from development are not satisfactory goals for any African country, nor are they consistent with AID's policy. Whose production is to be encouraged is a vital question for both the host country and AID in all agricultural programs.

(c) Identification of Constraints: Physical resource constraints exist everywhere; most African countries have available a very limited supply of technically trained personnel; capital is limited and its opportunity cost high; and institutions have many inadequacies. Strategy preparation will take constraints into account, and develop programs and projects which avoid or alleviate them.

Managerial skills are scarce in most of Africa; therefore, a good strategy calls for project designs which involve the least complexity in decision-making in implementation, while bringing forth large increases in productivity in relation to the requirement for technically trained personnel. Since capital is traditionally a limiting factor, programs and projects should be examined to determine whether the

use of capital proposed obtains increases in production greater than for other uses.

(d) Balance Between Programs to Meet Short Term and Long Term Needs: In many African countries, great potential exists for increasing agricultural production from investments in irrigation development and other activities which yield a favorable benefit-cost ratio, but the benefits occur mainly in the distant future. Unfortunately, in many of these same countries, capital is scarce, and the desperate need is for activities which will increase productivity rapidly. A sound strategy for development will provide balance between investment programs which yield high benefits and meet pressing short run needs, and those that develop the long run capability of the country.

(e) Projects and Policies Targeted to Specific, Identified Clientele: All rural people do not face the same limitations, nor will they respond to the same incentives. If scarce governmental resources are to be used wisely, projects and policies need to be based on a better understanding of the clientele.

The following groups of production units can be identified in all countries:

Group 1 - The subsistence farmer or pastoralist and his family who lack adequate land and capital resources to rise above a subsistence level. People in this group are uneducated, know little about proper diets or sanitation, and farm or raise animals by age-old methods. They may be organized into villages with some aspects of production under family management, and other aspects communally managed.

They may be nomadic — organized into clans or other units. From a practical standpoint, it is extremely difficult to help this group, and projects with a bankable internal rate of return, or even a benefit/cost ratio greater than one are hard to prepare. Without good planning and effective project management, government can spend much with little to show. Yet, these are the people most susceptible to famine and malnutrition. They face the greatest risk of becoming displaced by progress. Past governmental programs have done the least for them.

If the incentive and opportunity are provided, self-help programs costing little and with modest benefits may be possible. An improved variety of sorghum, millet or other crop might increase the family food supply, a better rooster improve their poultry flock, range control increase off-take, a sanitary well cap improve health, a school make it possible for the children to break the poverty chain, or a cooperative lower the costs of the few items they buy. The key problem in program and project design is keeping costs below benefits.

Group 2 - The predominantly subsistence farmer/pastoralist who will remain primarily in the subsistence sub-sector, but who can be reached by a relatively low cost facility to develop limited technical and managerial skills. If farmers or pastoralists in this group have available land resources that will enable them to develop a small cash crop of livestock enterprise, they can produce a surplus for the market. There are many of them in Africa, and with well designed and efficiently administered projects, they can become productive enough to lead dignified, satisfying lives. They need new types of policies and institutions which

provide better access to the supportive services listed below. Package programs in integrated area development projects can yield good benefit/cost ratios.

Group 3 - Young farmers or pastoralists with limited resources, who, if offered the opportunity via supervised credit, marketing programs and training opportunities, could become the operators of small commercially-oriented operations. People in this group are scattered throughout most economies. They can be efficient, produce for the world market, and feed large urban areas. They can furnish the foundation for a high-level, market-oriented agri-industrial economy in the future.

Group 4 - Large-scale commercial farms or ranches. These may be classified in three subgroups: private, public, and cooperative. They can attract capital from external sources, supply both world (export) and urban markets with food at reasonable prices through efficient production, train local people, and accumulate capital. They employ many of the landless, and given proper policy, can contribute substantially to development.

A project (or policy) that will induce a large farm in Group 4 to produce more will likely have no effect on the subsistence farmers who make up Group 1. A project aimed at benefitting Group 1 would likely be irrelevant to Group 4.

In the development of national strategies, all groups have a role to play. Some African countries need foreign exchange and food for

growing urban areas badly, therefore commercial farming may properly be given high priority in their strategies because the goal of increased agricultural production for export and to feed urban centers probably can be met most effectively and quickly by concentration on Groups 3 and 4. Also, increased production there increases the tax base. However, the strategy must recognize that the need for extending the opportunity to increase productivity to the large numbers of the rural poor in Groups 1 and 2 will not be met by projects responsive to the needs of Groups 3 and 4. A balanced national program, with policies and projects responsive to the specific needs of clearly identified clientele is required.

— Policy. AID will: 1) Encourage African countries to increase their capability to plan for the full development* of their agri/rural sectors, 2) Provide technical assistance to increase the capabilities and effectiveness of national planning and policy-making organizations, including project preparation, with highest priority to food production and reaching the rural poor, and 3) Encourage African regional organizations (ECA, OAU, CLISS, etc.) to assist member nations.

4. Increased, but cautious, Attention to Institution Building

AID policy paper soon to be released for the agricultural production sector recognizes that developing country progress in food production and alleviating rural poverty has been constrained by institutional inadequacies. Agriculture in Africa has been especially restricted

*Full development will include smallholders, pastoralists and the landless rural poor.

by institutional inadequacies (see Part III); and increased emphasis on institution building is appropriate, but caution is required. Project evaluations of AID's many agricultural institution building activities during the past 25 years indicates that many of the institutional forms were not adapted to African conditions, and results disappointing.

Country programming techniques currently used by aid agencies do not always identify national institutional requirements. What AID and other donors frequently have for a "program" is a collection of projects. They assist with one crop or livestock species, serve a specific area or strengthen a single institution. They distort governmental services and create inequities. For example, aid donors frequently compete for the better counterparts and drain scarce technically trained personnel away from what may be equally important non-aid related national or local programs.

What is needed is a mechanism to highlight the national agri/rural development institutional needs. New project approaches may be in order, and AID's staffing pattern will need revision. A national agri/rural development project that is incrementally funded may be appropriate in some countries. For staffing implications, see Part V.

5. First Priority to Increasing Food Production and Security in the Subsistence Sub-Sector, while Recognizing the Importance of the Commercial Sub-Sector.

The logical starting place in a national development program is with food production among subsistence farmer/pastoralists because the number of people in the sub-sector is so great relatively little

progress can be made in raising the average level of living unless their problems are attacked directly. The first concern of families in the sub-sector is their food supply. However, as indicated above, commercial (including "quasi-commercial") agriculture can contribute substantially to earning foreign exchange and providing a reliable, relatively low cost food supply, therefore it needs attention too. Also, while subsistence farmers and pastoralists can improve their quality of life, the economic development process in agriculture is basically a matter of shifting farm/pastoralist families up the spectrum from subsistence to commercial.

Policy. AID will: 1) Make the hard core of most country programs the provision of technical and other assistance which encourages improvement in subsistence agriculture to the extent of each family producing, (a) enough food to meet family requirements, and (b) a marketable surplus for cash income for the family and to contribute to the food needs of the non-farm population, thus fostering the economic development process. 2) Recognize that commercial agriculture has a role to play in most African countries, and when appropriate attention is being given to spreading the benefits from economic growth to the masses of rural people, consider assistance to the commercial sub-sector, relying primarily on loan funding.

6. Shifting Agriculture Sector Activities to the Areas Where the Rural Poor Reside

Throughout Africa wide margins, both positive and negative, exist between current productivity and long run potential productivity of

the land resource. Some lands are undeveloped in relation to potential, and others are over-exploited in relation to long term human and livestock carrying capacity. In some locations the natural productive capacity of the land resource or its potential are being permanently modified by mismanagement and erosion, and permanent, irreversible environmental damage is occurring.

Modern systems of soil classification include a factor defining appropriate (optimum) management systems for each classification category. The applicable management systems are based on use potential, and if utilized systematically will maximize the long term productivity of the land, and presumably farm and national incomes too. (The latter is generally, but not completely, accepted by economists.) Soils with higher use potential will normally respond favorably to more intensive use of productive inputs such as labor, capital and management per unit of land. Soils with lower use potential may respond favorably to initial intensification, but limitations to increasing yields due to low rainfall, etc., are soon encountered, so only extensive application of inputs is economically and technically justified. In Africa, to the present time, most developmental efforts have been concentrated on the higher potential areas, and most aid programs have involved intensive use of inputs, capital and management.

Given AID's directives, note must be made of the fact low income and rural poverty are more prevalent in those areas which are over-populated in relation to the natural productive potential of the land, and

these areas coincide with the most severe rates of erosion and environmental damage. These areas include:

- (a) Areas in the Sudan and arid regions where rainfall levels are less than 600 millimeters per year. These areas contain about six million persons, and the absolute poorest of the poor apparently are to be found in them. Rainfall levels are too low and unreliable to support extensive cash crop production, and the sale of livestock represents _____ the predominant source of cash revenue. Because export-oriented development programs of the past have by-passed this zone, infrastructure is meager, the extension services are very rudimentary, and input/marketing services nil.
- (b) Mountain enclaves with severe income and environmental problems. Many of these enclaves were once dependent upon forestry. Population pressure on the land excludes significant production of cash crops, and erosion has become a very serious problem. Reforestation has potential, and may be the only source of cash income, but pay-off is slow.
- (c) "Marginal lands" settled because of population pressure on higher potential lands, such as Kenya and the highlands of Ethiopia. Settlers are often able to control only small acreages and the humid area technology and institutions they bring with them lead to seriously low income,

periodic famine, and ecological degradation. The settlers are interfering with time-honored livestock management and grazing patterns, with adverse effects on the pastoralists.

- (d) The burn and slash areas where population growth is shortening fallow periods and soils are degrading rapidly.

In selecting development activities, areas or zones are a potential criteria. Readily identifiable areas or zones are those:

- (a) with the lowest incomes and least advantaged groups,
- (b) where serious and continuing loss of productive potential is occurring, and
- (c) where conditions of usage are known to be substantially below potential, providing high return development possibilities.

In the past, host governments and aid agencies generally gave preference to projects and activities in (c) zones, primarily because they provided the greatest potential for technical and economic viability. The basic dilemma AID now faces, given new directives, is that the land in the zones where the more serious income problems are found are, from the standpoint of natural fertility and land use potential, generally marginal. The only way to prevent disaster in some areas is through extensive conservation and drastically altered resource management techniques, such as restricting the numbers of livestock. Modifying the

land use system will require inputs in private and public management which in the least advantaged and most fragile or damaged areas may not be justified by short term economic or financial returns, especially if the capability of the host government to deliver a coordinated program to the field is low.

Policy. AID will: 1) Concentrate assistance on (a) and (b) zones, while recognizing food production and GDP can more easily be increased in (c) zones, and balance in programming among zones is required. 2) Give highest priority to institutional development approaches (project management/coordination/implementation organizations and agencies) which are less management intensive, concentrating on group management and bottom-up self-help activities, since the expected rate of generation of tax revenue and other income sources to government in the low income areas is likely to be very low. 3) Provide grant funding for an extended period for projects tackling the poorest of poor in zones (a) and (b). 4) Provide longer project terms and delayed phase outs for projects in zones (a) and (b).

7. "People Oriented" Area Planning

For very many of the poorest of the poor in Africa to participate in and benefit much from development activities probably means the developmental activities must occur where they are, and rely almost entirely on resources already under their control. Rapid industrialization with resultant massive shifts in population is not in the cards in many African countries. This calls for resource development and management, but for the purpose of meeting the needs of large numbers of people.

Area planning, sometimes under the guise of integrated rural development projects is an approach many countries are using to tackle rural poverty problems. Area planning may force planners to recognize that agriculture is the basic industry around which developmental activities must be centered when they would not do so otherwise, and to allocate more resources to it. Area planning, especially when done at the provincial and country levels, enhances the opportunities for including local people in the planning process.

A problem with aid agency support for area planning (projects) in the past has been the establishment of special institutions (often autonomous), and funding of activities in the area beyond the capability of the national government to provide on a nation-wide basis. The area loses its value as a model for national development.

Policy. AID will: 1) Make a "People orientation" the key theme in in-house agricultural sector activities and in discussions with host governments; 2) Encourage decentralization in planning and administering agricultural activities in host countries with priority given to an area approach (to projects or programs) which directly involves local people in the planning and administrative process, and 3) Give high priority to providing assistance for activities implementing 2) above.

8. Higher Priority to Resettlement Schemes

Experience with settlement schemes has not been uniformly successful; however, there are successful models, and the current situation

is different from the past. The major problem with many of the earlier settlement schemes was the very high cost per family, with substantial investment (both public and private) before the flow of benefits became significant. For many projects the B/C ratio was favorable, but benefits equaled the costs only after the tenth to twentieth year, and the cash flow problem was severe. Given the scarcity of tax revenues and capital in general, the better strategy during the earlier era called for utilizing scarce resources to increase productivity in areas already under cultivation through improved access to better seed, fertilizer, insecticides, etc.

The energy crisis has had a very significant impact on the economic vitality of many programs based on fertilizer usage and mechanization, and the advantage of such programs has been eroded. By comparison, settlement schemes now look better. Also, while most settlement schemes have involved high costs per family settled, unorganized settlement (migration) has been going on, and there are some programs which have re-settled people at modest cost per family. As improved methods of disease (parasite control) become available, transportation improves and the continent's rivers are controlled, interest in settlement will increase.

Policy. AID will: 1) Provide assistance to pilot settlement schemes to determine which project designs produce economically viable activities with a reasonable pay-off rate. 2) Give high priority initially to projects in the host countries which have the demonstrated capability to administer complex activities, and 3) Consider settlement projects only in countries where the agri/rural strategy provides balance between activities with quick pay-off and slow pay-off.

9. Increased Emphasis on the Role of Women in Development

Many studies are now available which document the importance of women as decision makers, as well as a labor source in agriculture. Several studies document how commercialization of agriculture has reduced the role of women, and further impoverished and made them more dependent on males. Other studies demonstrate the key role of women in any attempt to improve nutrition, and identify the poorest of the poor as being members of families where women are the farm management decision-makers. While there is without doubt need for special programs for women in rural development, there is also danger of them being mere tokenism and diverting attention from the real needs. Past programs often tacitly assumed that women's place is only in the home.

Policy. AID will: 1) Give highest priority to providing assistance to programs and projects which establish, or are based on, more equitable policies, and broader access to productivity increasing inputs, information, and services (see C and D below) to women as well as men. 2) Encourage and provide assistance to low purchased input utilizing programs and projects which increase food production in the subsistence sub-sector, since in many parts of Africa a substantial proportion of the subsistence units are those managed by women.

10. Consideration of Quality of Life Issues in All Activities

Rural living in Africa provides few amenities. If people are not to race to the cities at the earliest opportunity, quality of life in the rural areas must be improved, and improving it can be the incentive needed for increasing productivity.

2)

Malnutrition is an important factor in life quality in rural Africa. A significant percentage of the population suffers inevitable damage from malnutrition in the form of inadequate calorie intake or acute protein deficiencies at critical life periods.

Where maize is a major ingredient in diets, introducing the high lysine varieties may contribute greatly; however, other low cost solutions such as consuming ordinary maize plus grain legumes may exist. Improvement in the productivity of village poultry flocks, sheep and goat flocks and swine herds could contribute to meeting the protein deficiency. Areas dependent upon root crops face special problems due to limited amounts of protein, vitamins and minerals in the product.

Policy. AID will: 1) Encourage projects which have a direct linkage to quality of life improving facilities. 2) Provide assistance to well-planned studies to determine low cost methods for improving nutrition, including determining whether introducing high lysine corn is practical. 3) Encourage and provide assistance to programs and projects which introduce mixed farming for economic, nutritional and conservation reasons.

11. Judicious Use of PL 480

Food and other products imported under PL 480 can either hinder or support national development efforts. Food imported under PL 480 may stabilize prices and be of benefit, or depress farm gate prices and discourage production; prevent inflation, or encourage host governments to spend beyond their means; tide a country over a period while desirable new policies take effect, or delay the adoption of such policies. Several

extensive papers are available on the topic.

Policy. AID will: 1) Carefully review PL 480 purchases and insofar as possible insure that both the initial distribution and currency reflows contribute to agri/rural development, 2) Give priority to providing PL 480 food to people being resettled (see 8 above), during the transitional stage in resource conservation and development programs (as in the Sahelian Development Program), and to alleviate famine during drought or other unusual conditions.

C. Expanding National Capacity to Develop and Disseminate New Technologies, With Priority to Food Production and Marketing That Require Low Cost Inputs, Conserve Energy, and are Simple to Manage.

The strategy calls for:

1. Increased emphasis on research institution building, stressing food production and technology for small farmer/pastoralists,
2. Renewed attention to creating effective outreach (extension) systems,
3. Relieving the trained personnel constraints.

The above points are discussed below and policy guidelines provided.

1. Increased Emphasis on Research Institution Building, Stressing Food Production and Technology For Small Farmer/Pastoralists.

Improved technology is known, or can be developed, which will contribute to raising productivity and increasing the food supply. Technology transfer and development are thus logical parts of national agricultural development strategies. Title XII of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1975 provides for involvement of U.S. universities in AID programs, with emphasis on technology transfer and training. The worldwide system of 13 international research centers, with several in Africa, is increasing its

capability very rapidly.

Although research has been done in some African countries for many years and proven technology upon which to initiate programs for development in most African countries exists, what is known will not go far, and unfortunately the existing national systems are often not directed to solving the more critical problems local people face. Export crops have received major attention and mixed farming/livestock systems almost totally ignored. Economic and social analyses of impacts are rarely available. Proven packages of practices profitable for small scale dryland farming (crop produced on stored soil moisture) are lacking, as is knowledge concerning which irrigation systems and methods for applying water are best. Research is generally oriented toward the question "How to produce more," especially per hectare and/or per head, when the two questions needing priority attention are (1) "How to get more produced economically?" and (2) "How to increase the productivity of the typical family in the agri/rural sector?"

Past programs in which aid agencies were involved have sometimes transferred technology which was adapted to conditions in the United States, or other western developed countries, i.e. labor — scarce and expensive, capital — plentiful and low-cost, energy — cheap and plentiful, management — capable of fine tuning operations, and infrastructure — extensive, flexible and responsive to new needs. These conditions do not exist in Africa, and research attuned to local conditions is required. Two problems inherent in technology transfer or development activities which Africa needs to avoid are, (1) the tendency

for new, efficiency-increasing technology to be adopted first by the farmer-stockman with an adequate acreage of land, access to capital and management skills; therefore, widening the rich-poor gap, and (2) certain technologies being misused with irreversible impacts on ecology.

Mechanization per se should not be shunned. Selective mechanization may appropriately be utilized to break constraints caused by seasonal labor peaks, to eliminate sheer drudgery, or to increase production and thus yield benefits beyond labor and other power saved. Also, mechanization which would increase or accelerate the date at which projects may become productive may justify its use.

All African countries are developing national research organizations and given the fact new technology is highly site specific, improving the national research organizations' capability is a logical high priority; however, linkages among African countries and to the international research organizations will stretch budgets and provide the intellectual stimulation researchers must have to be effective.

Policy. AID will: 1) Give priority to utilizing Title XII in programs and projects which improve the applied research capability of national research organizations in food production and technology adapted to subsistence sub-sector conditions, and support to the international system. 2) Assist in adaptive research projects determining the returns/costs from various production systems, and production packages for small farm/pastoralist situations. 3) Assist in projects which demonstrate new technology appropriate to the technical-cultural milieu, i.e. in general, labor-intensive, simple, low cost, low risk, profitable, and easily intergratable into an input and services delivery system which will reach small

based on agricultural subject matter.

3. Relieving the Technically-Trained Personnel Constraint

In all parts of Africa technology development and testing, dissemination of information and the management of agricultural programs are constrained by manpower problems. First, the quantity of personnel available in many skill areas is grossly inadequate; second, the quality of training is a problem; and third, the trained manpower that is available is frequently not used to capacity because of administrative weaknesses and budgetary limitations.

It would be unrealistic to believe that accelerated agricultural development could occur without substantial training. The United States is uniquely qualified to provide assistance, especially in dry-land farming, range management, irrigation, agricultural economics, research and extension. Title XIII provides unique opportunities to link U.S. institutions with expertise in training to African institutions.

Curricula in formal training institutions are commonly slanted toward the theoretical aspects of agriculture and are generally weak in practical training, in the managerial arts, and in the social sciences. Plant sciences and animal sciences are frequently not taught in an integrated manner. Livestock training stresses animal health and slights animal nutrition, forage production, management, etc. Graduates expect to be employed by governments and a self-help philosophy is not firmly embedded in them. Most government cadres will require additional training (or upgrading) in order to be able to perform effectively in their assigned duties.

The failure of developing countries to utilize existing manpower to the fullest extent is commonplace. Inadequate budgets and failure of supervisors to understand what technically trained young people can and should contribute are serious problems. Looking ahead in Africa, trained manpower is a resource which cannot be wasted, and the problem cannot be attacked only through training, but also must include projects designed to improve both middle level and higher level administration.

Policy. AID will: 1) Encourage and assist national agri/rural sector manpower surveys and analyses. 2) Assist existing African training institutions to improve the practical and clinical aspects of their programs. (Existing curricula are most likely to require strengthening in dryland farming, agricultural economics, rural sociology/rural institutions, ecology/resource (range) management, program (project) development and planning, staff/project management, and statistics and sample methods.) 3) Encourage and assist in the development of quality middle level (non-professional) and undergraduate training programs for appropriate numbers of government cadre and persons for the private sector. 4) In cooperation with other aid donors, consider establishing training centers within each region and sub-region for selected (high volume) specialities, undergraduate (or graduate) levels. 5) Encourage one or more U.S. universities to develop service programs catering to specific African training needs for highly specialized (low volume) subject areas under the auspices of Title XII. (Range

management is an example.) 6) Assist in-service training activities which do not remove government cadre for long periods from the services they perform and are critically needed. 7) Encourage mutual assistance among African countries to the utmost, and assistance may be provided to the more advanced African countries if they will serve surrounding areas.

D. Broadening Access to Needed Inputs, Information, Financing and Markets, Especially for the Smallholder and Small Pastoralist

Limited use of purchased inputs and supportive services is a major constraint to increasing production in Africa. Fertilizer utilization per hectare for comparable soils and crops elsewhere in the world is low, credit use is modest, and the fact such a high percentage of agricultural production is on a subsistence level is illustrative of the low utilization of marketing institutions. The situation varies by crop and by area, and in some countries, producers for export have relatively good access to the inputs and services needed to increase production; but most farmers and pastoralists do not. The small farmer and herder rarely has access to what is needed. The strategy to accomplish D calls for:

1. Special programs and projects for the subsistence sub-sectors,
2. Increasing input availability,
3. Experimental credit programs, and
4. Greater emphasis on marketing/storage/processing.

The above points are discussed below, and policy guidelines provided.

1. Special Programs and Projects for the Subsistence Sub-Sectors

Where there exists a technology that is applicable to small producer conditions and profitable for them to adopt, the key constraint to their realizing the benefits is a lack of access to agricultural institutions, inputs, marketing services, and infrastructure. The small producer constraint incorporates at least four components:

- (a) The knowledge to do a better job with the resources currently available to him and to use new inputs,
- (b) The timely availability of proper agricultural inputs (fertilizer, improved seeds, pesticides, water for livestock, animal health services, supplementary feed),
- (c) The credit to purchase the inputs, and
- (d) The markets and/or storage facilities to dispose of the surplus production at protected prices which minimize risk.

While it is desirable to view these components as one "package" rather than discreet elements independent of each other, usually one component of the package constitutes a more critical aspect of the small producer access constraint than others. This varies by type of agriculture (crop or livestock), ecological potential, and socio-economic characteristics.

Projects and programs to improve small producer access face many problems. The first is that traditionally efforts to reach the smaller producers have not been economically viable; therefore, Ministries of Finance and Planning Organizations have not been particularly supportive. Several reasons can be given for small producer programs

not yielding higher benefit/cost ratios. Success depends upon governmental agencies delivering a coordinated program to the field, and in most African countries this has been beyond the capability of existing organizations. Increased production requires sale of the surplus, and stable markets have not been available. Credit has traditionally been extended on the one-on-one basis, and for extremely small producers, such an approach is inefficient. Extension workers have tried to operate on a one-on-one basis, and the impact has been small in light of the cost.

Experience to date in projects to improve small producer access indicate the following increases probability for success:

- (a) Dealing with farmers in groups (including villages) rather than individually so as to make better use of extension assistance, credit, marketing and supplies (multi-purpose local cooperatives may offer great hope if properly organized and supported),
- (b) Using the production package approach (which is an effective means of obtaining high overall returns from technical inputs),
- (c) Extending credit through a multi-purpose organization that also handles marketing (therefore, is in a position to collect loans),
- (d) Making needed inputs readily available at the right time, and
- (e) Protecting markets sufficiently to induce a subsistence, survival oriented family to produce for it while avoiding excessive demands on the national treasury.

Policy. AID will: 1) Build country programs around the concept that increased production and social justice can be achieved most readily by policies and programs which provide "...the physical and institutional facilities that will allow all farmers in regions where higher production is possible to produce for the market, using increasing amounts of purchased inputs."^{7/} 2) Encourage and assist in the design and testing of pilot projects which broaden the access of small farmers and pastoralists to needed inputs, marketing services and other services which will increase their productivity, and if successful, assist in nationwide implementation. 3) Give priority to projects concentrating on food production. 4) Assist in developing cooperative systems which will serve small farmer/pastoralist needs.

2. Increasing Input Availability

Fertilizer and other purchased inputs are costly and scarce in much of Africa. Problems in delivering agricultural inputs to small producers include ministerial jurisdictional problems, financing (including the release of foreign exchange to purchase them abroad), absolute restrictions in the supply (larger farmers bid them away from small farmers), and lack of local distribution facilities.

In much of Africa the resourcefulness and resources of the private sector are being ignored or discriminated against in the provision of inputs, yet the quickest and most effective way for government

to leverage its limited resources may be through proper regulation and encouragement of the private entrepreneur.

Policy. AID will: 1) Encourage the development of cost effective distribution systems which will include private enterprise for physical inputs and services to large numbers of producers, and support the effort by technical and capital assistance through grants and loans. 2) Priority will be given to input programs which are a part of an integrated approach to improving access, either functionally or through rural area development projects.

3. Experimental Credit Programs

Availability of credit is a serious constraint in some areas, but not in others. In most areas the institutional arrangement for distributing credit to smallholders is a problem, as is the lack of technological packages of proven effectiveness which justify credit use. Credit programs designed to serve as a development catalyst used largely in isolation have not been successful. In many countries credit programs have proliferated, and coordination and consolidation would be helpful.

Policy. AID will: 1) Encourage and assist in the development of appropriate credit institutions in areas where there already exists a known technology in which small farmers and pastoralists can profitably invest. 2) Assist pilot projects (experimental efforts) utilizing group lending, and multiple purpose cooperatives at the local level which may be the only economically viable system for delivering the package of inputs and services to poor households which need to become more productive.

4. Greater Emphasis on Marketing/Storage/Processing

Post-harvest losses are high in Africa. Several studies indicate losses generally around 20%, and occasionally as high as 40%. Improved storage and processing of foods could contribute greatly to reducing famine and malnutrition. Private enterprise has a role to play, but is frequently being ignored or deliberately constrained. Commercial storage in higher risk areas, when coupled with national and regional storage policies, could do much to alleviate periodic, drought-caused famine.

Marketing is a major constraint to increasing the productivity of small producers. The system is complicated, costly, and in the eyes of the producers unreliable. Several African countries are approaching the vulnerable stage when production first exceeds local consumption requirements. A system for assembling, shipping, etc., to distant, often foreign, markets is lacking. Guaranteed prices, and assurance that a local organization will buy increased production are known to be required for rapid transition of small producers into a market-oriented economy.

Cooperatives are emerging as the primary local component of most small producer access systems, including marketing. Multi-purpose cooperatives handling agricultural inputs, credit, and providing marketing/storage and extension type services may be the only workable institutional arrangement available.

Policy. AID will: 1) Provide assistance to plan national marketing, storage, and processing strategy, encouraging an appropriate role for private enterprise, and loan fund economically viable commercial

projects. 2) Emphasize and assist with marketing programs designed to increase small farmer and pastoralist access, with highest priority to those that are an integral part of a small farmer/pastoralist project. 3) Encourage and assist projects testing alternative local cooperative arrangements and national systems.

E. Creating Supporting Physical Infrastructure

Although substantial progress has been made, infrastructure is still a serious constraint to agri/rural progress in most of Africa. Little progress can be made without strengthening it. Infrastructure construction is very tempting to aid donors because it is easy to manage and highly visible. The problem is that infrastructure construction without the programs implicit in B, C, and D will contribute little to AID's directive objectives.

The strategy calls for:

1. Improving the transportation system, especially rural roads,
2. Increasing input production,
3. Creating national storage systems (including central storage), and
4. Orderly development of the continent's water resources.

The above are discussed below, and policy guidelines provided.

1. Improving the transportation system, especially rural roads

Rural development is highly dependent upon transportation. The economic development process applied to agriculture involves shifting people from subsistence up the ladder into the commercial sector. Increasing productivity calls for utilizing increasing quantities of purchased

inputs and producing additional products for the market. The inputs must be moved in by train, truck, cart, donkey or camel, and the product moved out. Extension and other service workers must be mobile.

While the whole transportation system in most countries needs attention, lack of rural roads is the major infrastructure constraint for the rural poor. Few African countries have even the trunk roads which are required for productive rural economies, let alone the secondary (minor) or farm-to-market roads. Most governments are committed to improving and expanding transportation infrastructure as rapidly as possible.

Policy. AID will: 1) Provide technical assistance and funds for road construction when the roads are supportive of rural development activities; 2) Priority will be given to road construction in areas where AID has other activities, especially small farmer or pastoralist programs.

2. Increasing Input Production

While crop yields in Africa are near the lowest in the world, the region's natural resources which will support increased production remain largely undeveloped. Special reference is made to natural gas and phosphate rock. Limited research to date has indicated that most soils of the region are critically deficient in phosphorous and nitrogen.

Policy. AID will: 1) Encourage the development of phosphate rock deposits in the region to support crop production. (This would include rock mining, grinding, design and construction of distribution systems, and acid processing.) 2) Encourage the development of nitrogen fertilizer production facilities (Nigeria and Zaire).

3. Creating National Storage Systems, Including Central Storage

The recent Sahelian drought demonstrated dramatically the need for central storage, and more specifically, the development of storage systems throughout Africa. The marketing system cannot function effectively without adequate storage facilities.

Policy. AID will: Encourage projects to determine storage requirements and optimal locations, and when sound plans and policies have been prepared, facility construction funded by either loans or grants will be considered.

4. Orderly Development of the Continent's Water Resources

The rivers and streams of Africa are a largely untapped resource available for development. The potential is tremendous, but so are the problems. Some projects will involve minor infrastructure and relatively low investment, but many must be very large. Salinity and other problems are appearing in old projects, and they must be revised. The economic feasibility of much of the needed development is unknown, but given current high construction costs there is a strong possibility many projects would yield low internal rates of return.

Policy. AID will: 1) Encourage and provide assistance for feasibility analyses of alternative irrigation systems and methods of system (project) management, 2) Encourage and provide assistance for the more promising smaller, simpler projects and when development represents a favorable payoff rate, assist with construction, and 3) In cooperation with other donors, provide assistance in planning for the development of the major, especially multi-national rivers.

V. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AID AFRICA STRATEGY/POLICY

Agriculture, being a manipulation of human and natural resources, is dependent upon natural and social relationships for advancement. To assist in devising a national agricultural/rural development strategy and with its implementation requires the services of a balanced staff of agricultural and rural development officers. The staff should be knowledgeable concerning all phases of agriculture and rural development in the host country, although AID may be assisting in the implementation of a relatively small segment of the total agri/rural sector development activities. Responsibilities include: (1) continual agri/rural sector assessment in terms of the national demands placed upon it, (2) conceptualizing action programs addressing sector goals, (3) determining requirements for implementing programs, and (4) supervising AID's agri/rural activities.

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Where A.I.D. Mission is in the early stages of a program and little involvement on the part of A.I.D. is anticipated, one person, an agricultural/rural development (ARD) officer might suffice; however, he or she will have to be supplemented by TDY assistance.

The office should be supplemented as the opportunity for involvement increases, and decisions are made A.I.D. will respond to requests for assistance. In light of AID's directives, the minimum staff in most African countries should consist of:

1. An agricultural/rural development officer responsible for the entire scope of the agricultural/rural sector program and accountable to the senior A.I.D. officer.

2. A national planning, project evaluation, resource allocation and market development adviser, probably with training in agricultural economics,

3. A plant sciences adviser, responsible for programs concerned primarily with crops, soils and pastures,

4. A livestock or range adviser, responsible for programs concerned primarily with the animal and range sciences, and

5. An outreach (extension) adviser concerned with rural communication and information delivery.

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ENDNOTES

- 1 Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended, see AID/TO Circular A 488.
- 2 Famine Prevention and Freedom from Hunger, Title XII of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended.
- 3 Appropriate Technology Incorporated (see Section 107, Foreign Assistance Act of 1975)
- 4 Authorized in Section 298(d), (3) of Title XII.
- 5 Draft copies of a paper by Mellor and Erickson presented to the Title XII Board are available. The final policy statement is expected soon.
- 6 Freeport Declaration C/CN. 14/658 Annex.
- 7 Food Production Indicies, 1976, USDA, ERS
- 8 Op cit 6
- 9 Op cit 5
- 10 Mosher, A.T., "Agricultural Planning," Proceedings, CENTO Seminar on Agricultural Planning, CENTO Secretariat, Ankara, 1971, pp. 56-91.