



**BIFADEC**

**BOARD FOR INTERNATIONAL FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT  
AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

*on the*

**FUTURE OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**

**December 16, 1992**

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**RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE  
FUTURE OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION\***

*It is time to redefine our national goals, including those related to restructuring assistance to developing countries in the post-Cold War world. We know the key elements of effective development assistance. Numerous studies, including one this Board commissioned, provide convincing arguments that such a program is in our country's best interest. The task ahead is to translate these elements into new programs and priorities and to build consensus for them.*

*Some people question the need to aid others in view of compelling needs at home. But many important domestic concerns are intertwined with trends in the rest of the world. While our domestic problems cannot be solved abroad, what we do abroad should also help us. We serve U.S. interests by 1) promoting broadly shared economic growth, 2) addressing global issues, and 3) expanding economic and political freedom in the developing world.*

*To address these three tasks well, we must join others in an improved multilateral effort. A strategically focused bilateral program is also important, one based on our comparative strengths, concentrated in key countries, and acknowledging the critical importance of both correct policies and human resources.*

*A development agency for the nineties should have sufficient autonomy to pursue goals apart from fluctuating priorities. It should assure strong central leadership, while using a reduced presence abroad to monitor and coordinate cooperative activity.*

*Development activities should be environmentally sound and sustainable by host countries well beyond U.S. involvement.*

*Higher education institutions have much to contribute to the U.S. program. In the process, they can help to expand an informed and supportive citizenry, an essential ingredient for a successful development cooperation program for the nineties.*

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*\*The Board for International Food and Agricultural Development and Economic Cooperation (BIFADEC) was asked to advise on the future of foreign aid, the sustainability of its impact, and the role of U.S. higher education in regard to it. In offering suggestions, BIFADEC chooses to concentrate on "development assistance," its main concern, and leave to others the other components of foreign aid, such as military and security assistance and emergency relief. BIFADEC members are: Mr. Wales H. Madden, Jr., Chairman (Attorney-at-Law); Dr. John Byrne (President, Oregon State Univ.); Dr. John DiBiaggio (President, Tufts Univ.); The Honorable Paul Findley (Editor-Publisher); Mr. Christopher Hicks (Attorney-at-Law); Dr. William H. Mobley (President, Texas A&M Univ.); and Dr. Wendell G. Rayburn (President of Lincoln Univ., Missouri).*

## THE NEW CONTEXT AND PURPOSES FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The world is in transition: toward more open and interdependent economies and more open and democratic societies; toward more attention to global health, demographic and environmental concerns; toward greater reliance on multilateral cooperation; and toward realignments of loyalties and even national borders as ethnic differences cause contention. These new realities, global in sweep and impact, provide opportunities in both domestic and foreign affairs. Previous boundaries that separated domestic and foreign concerns have been irreversibly breached.

The solutions to three clusters of long-term, fundamental concerns, high on our national agenda, have important international elements. These concerns serve as the basis for an agenda for cooperation with developing countries and emerging democracies:

1. **Broadly Shared Economic Growth. Transitional and developing country participation in an expanding global economy serves U.S. economic, security and humanitarian interests by increasing markets for our products, increasing employment and income at home while reducing poverty, malnutrition and hunger and, potentially, regional tensions around the world.**
2. **Addressing Global Issues. Environment, health, population growth and migration, food security and other vital concerns of this country transcend national borders and, therefore, must be addressed jointly with other countries.**
3. **Economic and Political Freedom. Respect for freedom and human rights by others contributes to political stability abroad and to our own ability to trade, travel, and live in peace and tranquility.**

Progress toward these three objectives will benefit the U.S. while also serving the needs of transitional and developing countries. They fall within the frequently expressed American humanitarian interest in helping improve human and institutional capacity and opportunities for people to deal with their own problems and meet their own needs. They respond to our nation's

sense of responsibility in the world and can be addressed within prevailing financial constraints. Presented clearly, the American public will accept them.

#### HOW TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES

The prospects for international cooperation are better than ever before, now that the Cold War is over. More can be accomplished through multilateral efforts. This will require improvements in multilateral agency management and programs and timely, but not necessarily larger, financial contributions. Greater U.S. participation and leadership are essential; and new vehicles for multilateral cooperation may be needed.

Our leadership of multilateral efforts will be more effective if we maintain a bilateral program to focus attention on our priorities and lead the way with innovative solutions. And multilateral efforts alone will not bring the same level of scientific, technological, economic and institutional cooperation between our country and the developing countries as would a bilateral program. These considerations call for the continuation of a modest, strategically focused bilateral program. It should build on our own experience in developing countries and foster permanent ties between our societies--especially in commerce, agriculture, science and technology, higher education and research, and the activities of private voluntary organizations (PVOs).

The U.S. bilateral program should be well coordinated with those of others. It should be guided by the following:

1. A focus on the three objectives set forth above which serve our national interests. The Executive Branch and Congress should define these together in ways which will lessen micro-management and the perceived need for appropriation earmarks.
2. The widespread consensus, as summarized in recent reports, on what is effective in accelerating and sustaining broadly based growth and reducing poverty in poor countries. High on the list is investment in human and institutional capability, an essential component of successful development.
3. Use of a more collaborative style in our relationship with developing countries. We must take full advantage of growing opportunities for the U.S. and developing countries to derive mutual benefit from cooperative efforts. How we operate may be as important as what we do.
4. Recognition of our comparative strengths (i.e., in various aspects of science and technology, building of human capacity, private sector marketing and management, agricultural and health science, and economic analysis, among others) and, at the same time, our serious financial resource constraints.
5. Acknowledgment that, while appropriate internal policies are necessary for development progress, growth itself comes from investments in human and physical capital, productivity-enhancing technologies and institutions, and balanced use of natural resources to meet the needs of present and future generations.
6. Concentration in countries where policies and programs seem to favor success, and where that success may resonate among neighbors. This will help determine the mix of bilateral and multilateral efforts in various countries and may result in a minimal bilateral presence, if any, in some countries.
7. A focus on helping small farmers produce more food, which is still an urgent need in many developing countries. Among other strategies, this should involve adapting the "land-grant model" of higher education as specified under BIFADEC legislation (Title XII), to meet needs internationally.

#### HOW TO ORGANIZE OUR EFFORTS

Given the objectives of a redefined bilateral program, the following organizational principles should apply:

1. The agency responsible for the development cooperation program should have sufficient autonomy to operate somewhat apart from fluctuating shorter term priorities. It must marshal the required operational and technical skills and forge collaborative relationships with host country governments, PVOs, universities, private enterprise, and other donors.
2. The structure of the agency should reflect its need to facilitate collaborative activities and build durable relationships between our institutions and counterparts in the developing and transitional countries. It should also reflect the distinct channels through which resources from various parts of our diverse, pluralistic society--our great national strength in the eyes of many--can be marshaled. The Title XII partnership of A.I.D. and the universities is a good model. State and local institutions should also be involved.
3. The central agency should provide strategic focus, insuring attention to priority areas and countries, dealing with and helping improve multilateral development agencies and programs, and exercising overall program oversight. It would present funding requests to Congress and channel appropriated funds to subordinate units, other U.S. government agencies, PVOs, universities and other nongovernmental organizations. It would maintain a reduced number of missions abroad.
4. Overseas missions and representatives are needed to maintain liaison with the host government and other donors on development issues and strategies. Where needed, missions would recommend, facilitate, evaluate and coordinate country-level bilateral activities. Most of those activities would be developed and carried out jointly by local and U.S. cooperating entities, with mission staff primarily responsible for monitoring progress and counseling host country leaders on how to achieve broad-based economic growth, more democratic processes and other conditions needed for successful development. In key countries, they would administer programs to support country-specific objectives. They would also serve as the U.S. operating entity to coordinate other activities, such as disaster or refugee relief and security assistance.

#### SUSTAINABLE RESULTS

A primary objective of most development activities is to obtain positive impact that will be sustained by indigenous institutions and resources after the foreign assistance ends. Evaluations have identified the following factors as being essential to the achievement of this objective. These factors should frame the nature of cooperative efforts undertaken:

- There should be a high degree of local demand and "ownership." Local participants in the collaboration should control and take responsibility for what, when and how things occur and for the results flowing from them.
- Popular awareness, participation and benefits are important, as are carefully drawn environmental appraisals.
- Development of local human and institutional capacities to undertake and continue the activity is essential;
- Institutional flexibility and responsibility to pursue alternative, multiple sources of funding should be built in from the beginning.
- All parties to the collaboration should contribute to, benefit from, and take pride in the results.

#### THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Indigenous systems of higher education are critically important elements of the development and transition processes. They produce future leaders and are primary mechanisms for both creation of new knowledge and for the acquisition, adaptation and utilization of knowledge developed elsewhere. The latter is increasingly important as new information and communications technology accelerates change and alters the way national economies and societies function. As a result, investments in human and institutional development, including higher education, have become an even higher priority in national development strategies.

The U.S. has an advantage in that American higher education is widely respected for its general quality, broad societal concerns, and alliances with agriculture, private industry, PVOs and other community organizations. It has been an essential contributor to development in this country and around the world. Hundreds of thousands of foreign students from abroad study at American universities and colleges each year, making higher education a \$5 billion export industry as future leaders from the developing world

in science and technology, management, business, and other relevant fields are trained here in the United States.

The U.S. higher education community--including universities, colleges and community colleges--offers significant resources needed for development cooperation, including scientific and technical knowledge with particular comparative advantages in research, human resource and technology development, and agricultural sciences. It already has considerable experience in working with higher education and research institutions in the developing and transitional countries with support from A.I.D. and others. It is time to build on this experience and strength, especially in view of the current efforts by U.S. universities and colleges to add international dimensions to their programs.

To be funded, a bilateral program of development cooperation will require a broad base of informed public support. To be successful, it also must have access to the best scientific, technical and area expertise available. The U.S. higher education community can help provide both.

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