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BIFAD Policy Dialogue on

Agriculture in Africa

Forum No. 2

Convened by the

Board for International Food
and Agricultural Development

In Cooperation with the

Agency for International Development's
Bureau for Africa

February 27, 1985

Department of State
Room 1205
Washington, D. C.

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Foreword

This policy dialogue on agriculture in Africa is the second "Forum" of a series on problems facing the Agency for International Development in implementing its development assistance programs. This "Forum" was jointly sponsored by the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development and A.I.D.'s Bureau for Africa.

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I. Participation

This was the second BIFAD policy dialogue arranged for the Africa Bureau, the first having taken place on February 5, 1985. The meeting was arranged jointly by the BIFAD staff and AID's Africa Bureau. Several developmental and policy experts within and outside the Agency were invited to attend (see attendance list, attachment A). The Africa Bureau had prepared papers for discussion (see attachment B).

Duane Acker, member of BIFAD and President of Kansas State University, chaired the meeting.

Presentations were made by: Ray Love, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Africa Bureau; Marcus Winter, Chief, Division of Agriculture and Rural Development, Office of Technical Resources, Africa Bureau; John Mellor, Director, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI); Brandon Robinson, Senior Fellow, Center for the Study of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Service Institute; Lehman Fletcher, Department of Economics, Iowa State University; John W. Thomas, Harvard Institute for International Development, Harvard University; Christopher Delgado, IFPRI; and Ridley Nelson, The World Bank (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development - IBRD).

II. Format and Issues

Chairman Acker opened the meeting by introducing the issues and outlining the format for the meeting, explaining that food production can and has been increasing in many developing countries, but per capita and national production have been declining in many countries south of the Sahara, where famine is now rampant. These countries have suffered from severe recurring droughts during the past decade. While the consequences of drought cannot be completely avoided, many experts feel that the extreme severity of the impact on agriculture could be mitigated by appropriate research and development policy. Reversing the decline in food production with the

return of rains will require improvements in agricultural development policy. Most countries lack adequate institutional capability for analysis for appropriate policy development and planning. Building such capacity is a long-term business. This is the topic for discussion at this meeting, Dr. Acker stated.

A residual question is how we in BIFAD can be of help to the Africa Bureau. BIFAD offered to arrange this meeting and an be of further assistance in helping to identify roles and ways of involvement of international agricultural research centers, of private institutions, land grant universities and other institutions, he concluded.

The chairman explained that the format was to hear an introductory presentation by Ray Love, situation papers by his staff, discussions, summarization and concluding statements.

Ray Love

In his introductory remarks, Ray Love said that they in the Africa Bureau had found the discussions on policy questions relating to the Africa food situation at the first BIFAD forum on February 5, 1985 to be very useful. He had requested this second forum. Also, at the Bureau's request, the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) had held a session on a related topic, building educational institutions in Africa. The Bureau had also drawn on the World Bank, whose agricultural experts presented their views and reacted to discussion papers on agricultural research prepared by the Bureau and others. The Bureau has been able to incorporate much of the thinking expressed at these sessions in a revised draft of an agricultural research strategy paper, which was passed out at the meeting (see Attachment B). This paper was presented also to Africa mission directors at their recent meeting in Dakar. They will be sending in their comments soon, Ray reported.

Early last year, the Bureau also developed a paper on policy for training for development in institutional capacity in Africa. This is part of the Bureau's new look at its strategy in Africa.

Love added that the Bureau is looking at the needs for institutional development in agricultural universities in Africa in both education and research capacities. There is a need to improve manpower in both areas in agricultural universities.

Love continued, "Now we are focusing on policy research; where to be located; the trade-off of using outside consultants versus developing capacities in the countries selected. We are faced with the problem of how much data to collect, and the problem of developing research capacity versus an interim role for technical assistance. The immediate requirement is to improve policy orientation of the LDCs through technical assistance. The countries must have the capability to know what data is needed, how to collect, analyze and use it in decision-making. We are looking at building universities focusing on agriculture in the development of research and

education. Improvement of research means better trained manpower in separate research institutions and in universities which have the dual role of education and research. Selecting the right countries and the appropriate institutions in these countries, and defining their roles are part of the problem", Love stated.

"Now we are focusing on research policy for these selected countries. We are looking at trade-offs in the use of outside consultants to do research versus developing indigenous capacities. In other words, technical assistance versus development of institutional capacity for policy analysis, planning and decision making. A question is, how much data is needed? Enough data base is needed for the right policy decision to be made by collaborating LDCs. We need to have a better identification of the policy issues for collaborating our development assistance programs with LDCs", Love concluded.

He introduced Marc Winter for presentation of the issues paper on policy that had been developed by the Bureau (Listed in B).

Marc Winter

Marc Winter summarized the policy reforms in agriculture that are taking place in a number of countries, identified in an AID survey of 20 African countries in 1984:

- o 10 countries are in the process of stabilizing their economies by reducing deficits;
- o 10 have devalued their currencies;
- o 8 have reduced consumer subsidies;
- o 6 have reduced agricultural input subsidies;
- o 4 have increased interest rates;
- o 14 have substantially increased agricultural produce prices;
- o 11 are in the process of some sort of reform of parastatals;
- o 9 are restricting public sector hiring, public sector wage increases, or both.

We need to match receptivity to change to developing indigenous capacity.

Winter stated that in 1984, AID was involved in 33 projects in 14 countries in policy analysis and institution development. These projects were in addition to those of the Africa regional offices and the centrally-funded AID-Washington projects on policy. They expect that 6 to 8 percent of the projects will last 4 to 5 years.

AID capital support (ESF, Economic Support Funds) to African countries is increasing more than in other regions. This support offers an opportunity for useful dialogue with host governments for improvement of policies. Information on the appropriate policy is needed for short and long-term assistance in building institutions for policy analysis and planning.

Questions on policy that the Bureau would like answers to are:

- (1) How broad should the definition of agricultural policy be?
- (2) What is the appropriate mode for assisting host governments in building capacity in policy analysis and planning?
- (3) Where in the host country should the focus be for developing institutional capacity?
- (4) What should be the role of U.S. universities, other related institutions and private firms for agricultural policy analysis in Africa?

Ray Love emphasized the urgency of these questions. The Bureau is beginning to focus on economic and political issues in Africa in dealing with Congress. The Bureau requested Congress for a \$500 million supplement aimed at influencing policy changes where the LDCs were interested and willing to make changes. Congress granted \$75 million and wants to wait and see what the results are before awarding additional grants.

In implementing this program, the Bureau has started this year with four countries: Mali, Zambia, Rwanda and Malawi. "We are feeling our way", Love said. "We want to establish some bench-marks for multi-year analysis." Love added that the Bureau wants to get the issues on the table, look at the need for institutional analysis capability, get a firm data base, look at a technical assistance package, and determine the shortcomings of this approach, which would be tied to agreed-on policy reforms.

The Bureau is working with the World Bank and others. Love said that AID has warned the recipients of aid in this area that they must show a positive change, or else the aid will be cut. He cited the example of Kenya which was cut by \$20 million last year for failing to carry out required market reforms.

John Mellor said that he had been overwhelmed by the shift of the United States to policy issues, particularly on the broad, macro level. In this respect, he had found a division existing in the thinking between agricultural economists and general economists. Conceptually, the underlying problem is the tremendous resource investments needed to be mobilized to get agriculture moving. Price changes sometimes sought by agricultural economists as a policy solution often only create new distortions.

On the other hand, macro economists usually do not understand agricultural production issues.

Mellor agreed with what had been said about the need to develop institutional capacity for policy analysis and recommendations.

He felt that the Foreign Assistance Act had expanded the supply of trained people in LDCs and training to the Ph.D. level which had added substantially

to the intellectual capability in countries in Africa. However, the turn-around is not yet complete. There is a huge pipeline that must be filled.

Mellor said that we must be concerned about the institutional framework for assistance in training for developing institutional capacity in the policy arena.

In Asia, this task had been carried out largely by AID. Now AID is a smaller actor. IBRD is involved and should play an important role. It is important where the training takes place. If trained in Europe, there is a language problem for the Africans. There should be a substantial amount of training to the master's level. Asian institutions could provide training of Africans to the master's level. A few candidates could be trained to the master's level in African institutions. There should also be training to the Ph.D. level, much of which could be provided in the United States.

The cost of training to the Ph.D. level should not be a deterrent. This cost is about equal to the cost of one expatriate working in Africa for about one year.

There is a problem in secondary education in Africa to provide a pool for higher education.

Another problem is making more effective use of trained manpower by networking of LDC scientists with outside scientists to reenforce and help upgrade the African scientists.

Mellor saw an important role for IFPRI in serving as a nucleus in building a policy network in Africa. He said that IFPRI, being international, has greater acceptability (than bilateral agencies). IFPRI has a substantial mass of policy experts - 8 or 9 - working in Africa. Any comparable institution in the United States would have no more than 2 such policy experts. We need to react with capability of institutions in Europe for an effective network, but the job should not be exclusively European.

In order to make the network effective, IFPRI would need "discretionary funds" for "strategic research" for identifying cost factors, labor supply and demand, and pricing policy. The discretionary funds would be used by host country institutions participating in the research with IFPRI.

Mellor confessed that he did not have the answers and that we are not too well prepared to get the answers.

Mellor argued for the need for AID and IBRD to build a data base in order to get at building bureaus of economic analysis and data collection in African countries. This would require advanced university training of Africans.

With AID financing, IFPRI and U.S. universities could react to show how data can be used. It is IFPRI's thinking that such bureaus should be located in

the ministries of agriculture. Mellor tentatively suggested that we should also look for an additional policy unit in the government outside of agriculture. It should deal with macro-level issues with a heavy agricultural orientation. The question of the best location is open; a ministry of finance, a central bank, or the President's office are possibilities.

On the choice of countries, Mellor favored a pragmatic approach, depending on quality of the AID office in the location. Nigeria, with one-fourth the entire population of Sub-Saharan Africa, offers a critical mass. It is a country of poor people, despite the oil income. We need to get back to doing in Nigeria what we were doing before OPIC when AID played a major role in institutional development at the Universities of Ibadan and others. Financial resource requirements would be minimized by the oil money in the Government. However, there would be a need for some AID money.

Brandon Robinson commented on the Africa Bureau's policy paper. Capacity building is affected by the kind of policy that is being dealt with. He was not sure that all policy issues could fit into either economic slot, macro or micro. There is a need to define a sector for policy issues in terms of human needs and the government's functions that deal with the sector.

In macro-economic policy, there are distortions that affect agriculture, as for example, foreign exchange rates. This has been demonstrated by the IMF/IBRD (International Monetary Fund and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) financial crisis. There is need for some training in this area as well as consultants to study situations (in reference to the question of the mix of technical assistance and institution development raised by Love).

He felt that not enough attention had been given to macro economic policy and to development of institutional capability.

In planning, it is important to stick to long-range goals, to and help develop the policymaking process, and avoid getting diverted by crises. We need to understand the labor supply and the effect of technology on this supply. Self-help and self-reliance should be the objectives.

Robinson felt that the model for building capacity should be country specific, and that collaborative sector analysis projects would be suitable for some time. For this, a resident advisor with a technical assistance role is needed along with short-term consultants. On the issue of advice on policy versus capacity building, Robinson felt that it was not an "either" "or" situation. Both are needed. He cited the Zambia case as being relevant to his argument.

Building institutional capacity for policy analysis will require rapid expansion of high level training of an adequate number to fill the staff needs of the institutions being developed. Such institutional development

will require establishment of new procedures alien to host countries. This will require an understanding of the purpose of the training and of technical assistance.

Robinson pointed out that the demand by host government policy makers for policy advice is needed for decisions on issues that come before them. However, there are areas needing policy that never surface where decision-makers are not aware of the problem. These need to be addressed.

He felt that LDCs are more receptive to receiving help for institution building for policy than they are to receiving advice on the formulation of policy.

Donors should look carefully at the availability of trained resources in the policy arena in designing projects. The resources are spread very thinly and new projects can create a work load for LDCs. We and IBRD need to address this problem. We should initiate a "collaborative inquiry", with host country people to assess resources, and match them and financial resources to ideas of donors. Some ideas may not be feasible to implement.

An analysis must be made part of expenditures in this area in planning future projects in order to estimate the resource gaps.

Lee Fletcher introduced his remarks with the analogy: two crises; (1) Africa, the subject of this meeting; (2) Ames, Iowa, the farm crisis. The two have a common theme: One is a sector of scarcity; the other is a sector of abundance. The common theme is what governments will do and have done. In any of these policy adjustments, there is a cost and people get hurt.

On the question of macro versus micro, the United States discovered that the reciprocal influences of the two are inseparable. Such a macro factor as foreign exchange rates inevitably affects markets, prices and production. In a rural economy, we are dealing with food and people, production for domestic use or export. The macro influences do not stop at the capitol where a decision is made, but affects the micro situation, and differently in different geographic regions.

Timing and duration of policy reforms must be considered. It is not enough to only analyze a policy reform in a one-shot deal. Recurring analysis is also needed to determine the effect of a particular reform. There needs to be institutional capability for recurring analysis.

The institutional capacity for analysis and research work must be close to decision makers. Ministries are the loci for decisions on agricultural policy issues. Therefore, a ministry is the logical location for the institutional capacity for policy analysis.

Fletcher pointed out that this meeting is addressing the process, not the substance, of policy analysis and reform. We need to look at the structure of the political and economic organizations, and within this structure to look at policy issues.

Building capacity is a long-term job. Yet, this Agency is responsible for "seducing and prostituting" projects into short-term activities in the hope that they might continue. In planning, there is no substitute for recognizing the long-term nature of the jobs we are undertaking.

Fletcher agreed that AID, IFPRI and universities must work together on the problem. However, we must understand whose policy agenda we are focusing on when we have multiple interests involved with LDCs.

Collection of data is important as long as there is an understanding of how the data is to be used.

Returning to the question of where the capacity for policy analysis should be located, Fletcher described the pluralistic environment and the variety of institutions existing in developing countries. In looking at long-range goals, it is important to know where the opportunities are and to identify the institutions and their roles.

Planning and economic research units rightfully belong in ministries. However, this is not the place for long-term research and analysis. These belong in autonomous research institutions or universities. This function should be in their charter.

There is great need for Ph.D. and M.A. training to build the analytical capacity in African institutions.

Fletcher agreed that Asian scholars and institutions offered something in developmental experience useful for training of Africans to the M.A. level. Their experience is more appropriate, relevant and applicable to African issues than those offered by institutions in the United States. At the same time, he argued strongly for Ph.D. training to take place in the United States.

The ADC program (Agricultural Development Council, formerly supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, which trained Asians) has dried up and disappeared. A similar program is needed for Africa.

In order to carry out a significant post graduate program, the undergraduate program in Africa needs to be improved. The United States has found that a remedial program of one year for African trainees is required. Even with this, we still have trouble, and the trouble is traceable to undergraduate training. Focusing on improving the agricultural faculties of LDC universities will not solve the problem. We need also to look at humanities, economics, statistics, etc.

On donor coordination, Fletcher pointed out how donors compete for employment of local staffs and getting their projects accepted.

John Thomas accepted the linkage of macro-micro issues, and felt that we were on the wrong track in how we effect policy changes. We must look at

the demand for change. We spend too little time in looking at interests and kinds of styles that influence policy. There is a need to focus on the model for decision-making. Policy-making reform requires an understanding of how policy decision-makers make policy and the environment in which it is made. Logically, policy decisions are made leaving space for maneuvering.

The process of policy reform requires improvement in supply of statistics and analysis. Often the problem is that there is too much data for processing. We must be more exact on our priorities and on what kind of data we want and how we plan to use them.

Thomas cited the Kenyan case to illustrate his point about interests and style. This was the case when he offered the Under-Secretary several options on a certain policy issue. Whereupon, the Under-Secretary advised him that Kenya could afford only one option.

Thomas criticized much of the policy analysis by donors as being irrelevant.

On the question of whether a government agency or a university should do the policy analysis, Thomas pointed out that governments are sometimes suspicious of using universities because of fear of radicalism. On the other hand, universities are eager to take government's money, but want autonomy in research and take the purist viewpoint of research freedom.

In the agricultural sector, in the short run, policy analysis must be done within the government, although parastatals have to be dealt with. Policy-makers are vulnerable. If the wrong policy decision is made, someone calls the President's office or the decision-maker gets roasted in the newspapers.

Coordination among ministries and government agencies should be improved. Thomas cited a case where a National Cereals Board and the Ministry of Agriculture were focusing on the wrong policy issues concerning pricing policy. They were focusing on warehouse, stocks, etc.

He made a case for both long and short-term consultants and long-term technical assistance of resident advisors (10-15 years).

On the question of retention of trained national staffs, Thomas discussed the saturation approach in training versus specific project training. He felt that technical assistance is both part of the problem as well as the solution. There needs to be a sense of professionalism in technical assistance in order to instill professionalism among local staffs. These staffs must learn to think of themselves as professionals and not as GS-5 clerks. Technical assistance can help create a professional network for local staffs to help stimulate a professional identity.

Christopher Delgado made the "wrap-up" presentation. He saw the role of donors in policy interventions with governments as being that of improving the policy process for improving policy. Policy advise is not the same as

research. Policy advisors don't know what to do without research. Policy research is the same as other research, according to Delgado. A demand needs to be created for the end product, and a constituency developed for the specific application of the research results. The long-term goal is to improve the intellectual capacity of the government. Most government decision-makers need to strengthen their decisions on policy.

Research provides them the material to justify their decisions. Such material provided through technical assistance is quite different from "telling them what to do".

There is need for an independent institution with capacity to call on discretionary funding to provide good policy research. Some independence for research can be found in a wing of government in a different position from the implementation arm. Good researchers are not good implementers. The Lagos plan was developed by Ministries of Planning; the Ministries of Finance were the implementers.

In order to get policy research moving in Africa, there needs to be core support for capacity development with assured continuity. Development of analytical capacity must be emphasized, not just data collection, which cannot be used without the analytical capacity.

Delgado argued for an independent institution with an environment where the people are forced to talk with each other. In this way, the macro-micro gap can be bridged. The required mass may be a minimum of 10, but no more than 15 people. Development of such capacity requires advanced training to the Ph.D. level.

Regarding U.S. universities in Africa, Delgado felt that they need to play an important role in supporting undergraduate teaching in Africa and training of African people to the Ph.D. level in the United States. Also, they need to be involved more in institution building in Africa, perhaps those African institutes concerned with food policy research. His concern was that U.S. universities are not well equipped to do the job, and less now than they were 10 years ago. AID does have a coordinating responsibility to encourage development of such capacity.

A few years ago AID sought to develop capacity in universities to engage in institution building and development assistance overseas in its 211-d program (Section 211-d in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended). What AID was saying to universities was "You are the experts, you tell us what to do". A fair degree of latitude was given to the universities to do the job. Delgado added that it seemed to him that recently, even with Title XII, AID was exercising much tighter control. This makes it hard for universities to staff themselves to do the job.

Delgado reiterated that the donors know quite a bit about the process and that we need to support the development of the capacity to follow the appropriate policy rather than focusing on a specific policy change.

Discussion

The chairman asked Ray Love to start the discussion by responding to the presentation.

Love began on the question of long-term commitment. He said that the Agency gives lip service to adhering to a long-term commitment. However, the process of "locking" it in is not very secure. People in AID who make such commitments may not be around after five years, and AID's policy may change. Also, Congress may push us in another direction. However, we try. Recently, the Bureau has made a commitment to support involvement in institutional development with a university in the Cameroon over a twenty-year period. The problem is one of assuring a continued commitment by our successors.

The more serious issue is how we structure the process. Assuring that it will stick is difficult. I am not confident. We need to think the whole process through. AID needs to build support for what we are trying. We need to build a broader constituency among international institutions, the U.S. university system, host countries and Congress on where we are going. AID is the least reliable of all for assuring that we stay the course. We fluctuate on priorities and approaches.

We donors should think the process through more clearly. We don't have a good fix. We are trying to do what we can. But when we talk to people on the Hill, we find people who are against what we are trying to do. While they don't "blow us out the door", they are successful in reducing our level of effort and shifting priorities.

The second question is a much broader issue. That is, "what are our options". It isn't a question of "are the Title XII universities equipped to do the job, but what are their strengths, and what are the options elsewhere?" We have gained a good insight into Title XII universities through BIFAD. What are some of the other institutions and their capabilities outside the land grant university system (the non-Title XII universities)? What are the options elsewhere, the private sector? Where is a broader institutional capacity?

To what degree should AID be thinking about a long-term solution to the problem by helping to develop institutional capacity in the United States? It is hard to find more than a handful of people to work on policy questions. Then, how should we go about the process of developing the institutions over a long period of time? And is it worth the effort and expense of spending that amount of money on developing 211-d type of resources to help develop university capacity over a period of time, or not?

These are some of the operational problems. If we want to work on these problems, who in the United States do we turn to?

John Eriksson, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Research, Bureau for Science and Technology (S&T/B), commented on the opposition on the Hill by independent voluntary organizations such as Bread For The World who are seeking food aid and are opposed to many of AID's programs. He called attention to a series of forums on world food issues which have been sponsored by the Overseas Development Council for Congressional staffers and others. These forums afford a good opportunity to bring in outsiders to react with these staffers to help develop our constituency. AID recently had the directors of international research centers to one of the forums.

Eriksson did not completely agree with Delgado and John Mellor on core budget support of policy institutes. He said AID's experience with core budget support had not been too good. On the other hand, support for specific policy projects would be self-defeating. Somewhere in between might be a satisfactory approach.

Cheryl Christensen, Economic Research Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture (ERS/USDA) made an appeal for creating institutional capacity to systematically collect data on a broad national scale continuously to permit analysis of the differential impact of programs over a three or four year span of time. There is need for a broad data base across income groups and sectors over a long period to make analytical judgement. There is a need to collect basic data accurately in areas of production by crops, yields, prices, stocks, amounts traded, etc. Accurate basic data of this sort just doesn't exist in most countries, Christensen stated. Most of the data provided to FAO, the World Bank and us by host governments is based on estimates of population and is not reliable. One can find bits and pieces of reliable data in the more advanced countries like Kenya, but not reliable national data. Universities cannot put much emphasis on data collection on a broad scale, although they may have good data on a single project for a single given period.

She said that policy emphasis is different from technical advise and research, and improving the process is different from the two. A lot of talent linked together is needed. She thought that an independent research institute is no substitute for a unit in a ministry. Looking at the situation realistically, policy decisions are made in days. In order to get the information needed in these countries within weeks, must have a "floating group" of people. This process must be improved. There is need to train the "staff level" people in many ministries who will be concerned with maintaining data and accessing data and packaging the information into form that is relevant to policy emphasis. One must also look at the strength of a country to implement policy, especially in the field when the policy decision is made at the capitol.

Brandon Robinson responded to a question Ray Love had raised about how to structure the process. He referred to the Kenya case of IRS (Institute of Research and Statistics). IRS collects data quite regularly, every three or four years for processing. Robinson felt that the forms were not well formulated and not well guided in terms of policy issues and specification of data.

On the question of linkages and the argument of analysis versus data, Robinson felt that this was a phony argument. It is a dichotomy that we should not accept. We use the acronym, "DCPAPI", "Data-Collection, Processing, Analysis, Policy-Making, Implementation". This acronym covers the whole range.

In Kenya, it is a shocking thing to confess that we as donors allowed the IRS data to sit around because it was not being expeditiously processed at the Central Bureau of Statistics. This is something that should have been attended to years ago. In the meantime, foreign assistance agencies spent millions with a flimsy data base because nobody was processing the data.

This was a solvable problem. We could have gotten data processors, systems analysts, trained them, topped their salaries and processed the data.

The way to develop and improve the process is to start using the data. In use, the needs become clearer and specifications can be changed. Malawi has a whole warehouse full of data that has never been used. The World Bank developed the specifications for the forms.

The idea is to introduce a comprehensive process. You don't have to choose between one thing and another.

Robinson responded to Ray Love's question about where do we go to get the expertise and who are the people in the United States who have this kind of policy analysis and formulation experience. Robinson's appraisal of the situation was that a whole range of expertise is involved in policy analysis: agricultural experts, agricultural development specialists, people who have an awareness of development problems, etc. There's nobody in this room that would fit all the requirements. These talents must be linked together in some way.

There must be a clarity in AID's methodology itself. We've got to know where we're going and the nature of the job. The talent requirements vary between data collection and policy analysis. In Rwanda, AID is using the U.S. Bureau of Census for collecting data. This is the appropriate agency for the job. Universities are not well equipped for this job. On the other hand, in Zambia, AID is using Iowa State for contribution on policy analysis. They are an appropriate institute for this job. We have to be sure about the nature of the whole job, and select the institution which is appropriate for the job.

On the question of a research institute for policy, the important thing is to introduce the process. A certain amount of political analysis may be necessary. However, a research institute is not a substitute for a unit in a ministry.

John Thomas responded that there is no good piece for institutional analysis. Regarding the IRS in Kenya and the institutional analysis problem, we had a problem with the Central Bureau of Statistics in getting

the statistics analyzed. They had different goals and wanted to be a professional organization. So Kenya went ahead and set up a simplified unit to collect data needed by IRS.

Thomas disagreed with Delgado about an independent research institute. Such an institute has its own goal, and is a great obstacle, he felt.

Ridley Nelson mentioned a point not touched on in the presentations. He cautioned against generalizing on Africa. Don't assume that two units concerned with policy research and analysis may be needed, as for example one in the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Finance. Two units would be impossible in Tanzania he said, where all decisions are political.

He saw capacity building and technical assistance as running hand-in-hand. Technical assistance is needed to provide on-the-job training in research and analysis.

On building a demand, he emphasized the need to get some quick pay-offs in research. There is a healthy skepticism of governments to outside-imposed models. Many have resulted in failures. It must be recognized that policy is often distorted because of decisions based on benefits to policy makers. "They know", he said.

He supported Christensen's argument that data has to be geared to what the capacity is for taking and analyzing data and what can reasonably be expected to be achieved in implementation.

While recognizing that collaboration between IBRD and AID is important, it is not easy, Ridley said. It is unrealistic to say that the Bank will support a particular institution in a particular country.

Ridley agreed with a previous speaker that governments are suspicious of universities. For this reason, donors must be careful in channeling of staff through universities to the government, and in the use of universities to analyze data and make recommendations to governments.

Cal Martin called attention to one experience of AID in data gathering and analysis that did not pay off. The sector assessment and analysis done by AID in Latin America which was supposed to provide policy guidance is not being used.

Rex Daly, economist formerly with the USDA and now a private consultant, emphasized the need to look at what data and information is available in a country without elaborate studies for policy guidance. Ministers have to respond to daily and week-by-week demand. Information must be supplied to meet these immediate demands.

Daly agreed with the need for independence of institutions in policy analysis and recommendations, but at the same time he felt there is a need

to "keep their feet to the fire". They must keep up-to-date on what is going on day-to-day. All these independent studies start with "what is there".

Lee Fletcher disagreed about the view expressed against studies. The question is the entry point for studies, which are necessary to look at long-term needs.

On selling policy analysis, one must be careful not to oversell. Don't enlarge the analysis to include all kinds of variables. There are some variables that cannot be included. For example, it is taken for granted that all decisions by governments are influenced by political factors.

Delgado rebutted the argument against autonomous research institutions. These are necessary to look at future, long-range, policy questions, he stated. If controlled by ministries, the research would be limited to their needs which is short-range.

Delgado cautioned against relying on expatriates, who usually work on a two-year rotation, for continuity in policy analysis and recommendations.

Christensen argued for collection of data by government agencies. Also, donors should look to their governments for experience in collecting and maintaining the kinds of data and information that are needed by governments. The environment for collecting, analyzing and applying national statistics is not found in universities and the private sector, she maintained.

Dr. Acker thanked the participants and offered the services of BIFAD in any kind of follow-up to this symposium that would be helpful to the Africa Bureau. He asked Ray Love to express his reactions to the meeting.

Love replied that the primary purpose of the meeting was to open the subject up for discussion among a group of experts. Many of the issues have been touched on. The short-term versus long-term issue is a dichotomy that we in AID have created in our process. Data collection is necessary to tie assistance to the process of reaching tangible goals and sell governments. But, we don't have time to do analysis. We can't wait. We have to look at certain components. We need to look at long-term investments, the data needed, the institutions needed and where we can get the advisors. We need to make a long-term component in the middle of our Economic Assistance Package and the IMF program with part of it devoted to institutional development projects in policy analysis and planning. In the Mali case, what data is relevant to decision making process? We can't collect a lot of data to supply the information. There is not a clear focus on the kind of information necessary.

Love referred to Thomas' Kenya experience and asked, "What is driving the decision making? How can we work with Mr. Murly (the Minister of Agriculture) and make sure they can participate in the process?".

It is agreed that we can't generalize on Africa. We cannot supply a couple of equations for the whole of Africa.

There are about ten countries where major programs are working. In some there is a political reason for being there. Others are not important politically. In the middle, he was not sure. We need to disaggregate Africa in our own priorities. Maybe we need to pick some countries which are not the biggest recipients, and work with them on developing capacity for policy analysis and planning.

Then who do we go to? The USDA, the land grant Colleges, other universities or the private sector?

We have the problem of how to use certain groups, such as the minorities. We need to do some hard looking, can't make false starts. We need to enter into long-term understanding in association with certain countries. We are not willing to go back to 211-d. How can we be assured of availability of expertise?

Donor coordination is a major concern. We Need to avoid overlapping and competing with each other. Not sure the mechanism is working, Love continued.

We are looking at the Bank (IBRD). The Bank hasn't looked at sector issues. There is a real challenge to the Bank to look at ways to coordinate. A lot of work will fail unless we do.

Love agreed that the point made by John Mellor on Nigeria is good considered in terms of the total population addressed. This is a question that AID should study in drawing on the capacity of graduate countries. But who are the people and where do we find them, Love asked?

BIFAD-AID-Africa Bureau's
Agriculture Policy Meeting

Department of State
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ATTENDANCE

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Marcus L. Winter	AID/AFR/TR/ARD
Ridley Nelson	World Bank
Brandon Robinson	CSFA/FSI
Christopher Delgado	IFPRI
John Stovall	AID/BIFAD/S
John Eriksson	AID/S&T
John Mellor	IFPRI
Alexander R. Love	AID/AFR
Lehman B. Fletcher	Iowa State University
Cheryl Christensen	USDA/ERS
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