

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
between the  
**United States Agency for International Development (USAID)**  
and the  
**National Science Foundation (NSF)**

**I. Purpose**

The United States Agency for International Development (herein referred to as "USAID") and the National Science Foundation (herein referred to as "NSF") share complementary goals. One of USAID's goals is to expand the capacity of higher education institutions to effectively address the critical needs and challenges facing developing countries worldwide. NSF seeks to provide U.S. scientists and engineers, in collaboration with scientists and engineers worldwide, with collaborative research and education opportunities that can result in benefits to society. Whereas USAID typically works with a variety of higher education, NGO, public, and private sector partners to implement training and technical assistance programs that increase the human and institutional capacity of higher education institutions in developing countries, NSF typically supports the U.S. side of research and education collaboration between individuals at higher education and research institutions. Greater communication regarding these respective efforts should reveal opportunities for coordination, collaboration and/or complementary investments. Subject to the terms of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and consistent with all USAID and NSF policy and regulation and competition requirements for procurement and assistance, USAID and NSF seek to leverage each other's respective strengths, experience, technologies, methodologies, investments and resources (both human, in-kind and monetary) in order to pursue a broadly scoped initiative (herein referred to as "the Initiative") focused on supporting a range of specific scientific research and higher education projects in developing countries that advance the respective missions of both organizations.

The purpose of this MOU is to set forth the understandings and intentions of the Parties with regard to these shared and complementary goals. The Parties are entering into this MOU while wishing to maintain their own separate and unique missions and mandates, and their own accountabilities. Nothing in this MOU shall be construed as superseding or interfering in any way with other agreements or contracts entered into between the parties, either prior to or subsequent to the signing of the MOU. The Parties further specifically acknowledge that this MOU is not an obligation of funds, nor does it constitute a legally binding commitment by either party.

## **II. Authorities**

NSF is acting pursuant to the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 as amended, 42 USC 1861 et seq.

USAID is acting pursuant to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, 22 USC 2151 et seq.

These authorizations for the organizations, together with the internal policies and procedures of each, define the authority of these organizations to enter into this MOU and jointly to support research and development of interest to both agencies.

## **III. Background**

USAID and NSF are both organizations with an extensive history of working with higher education personnel and institutions to address critical needs in a wide range of sectors, including but not limited to science and technology, agriculture and natural resource management, health, and engineering and infrastructure. USAID is an independent Federal government agency that supports international development and advances U.S. foreign policy objectives under the overall foreign policy guidance of the U.S. Secretary of State.

NSF is an independent Federal agency created by Congress in 1950 "to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense..." With an annual budget of about \$6.06 billion, NSF is the funding source for approximately 20 percent of all federally supported basic research conducted by America's colleges and universities. NSF supports research in disciplines including the biological sciences, computer and information sciences, education, engineering, geosciences, mathematical and physical sciences, and social, behavioral and economic sciences. NSF encourages and supports research by U.S. scientists, working in collaboration with international scientists, in over 100 countries, although its funding support is largely limited to the support of U.S. scientists engaged in such international research.

USAID is engaged in development in over 80 countries worldwide and disburses approximately \$14 billion in foreign assistance each year to build human and institutional capacity in developing countries. Through its Missions worldwide, USAID has a long-term in-country presence of professional field staff dedicated to programs in a broad range of sectors, including providing technical assistance and capacity building in democracy and governance, agriculture and natural resource management, education, public health, and economic development. Within its development portfolio, USAID collaborates with a wide array of higher education institutions in the United States and developing countries to implement a broad range of programs, projects, and activities.

#### **IV. Relationships of the Participants**

USAID and NSF expect to leverage their respective research and higher education investments to support collaborative activities between higher education institutions, researchers and faculty in developing countries and the United States. To that end, each organization has identified key offices and programs to serve as the initial channels for interagency collaboration and as the catalytic agents working to achieve greater cooperation across the full range of complementary programs and activities.

Within USAID, the Office of Education will provide the initial management needed to develop the working relationship and foster collaboration with NSF. The Office of Education will also engage other USAID offices so as to broaden USAID involvement and foster the most effective management of the initiative. In addition, to providing potential programming venues, such as the Higher Education for Development Program or the FORECAST Program, the Office of Education will actively facilitate communication with USAID Missions, technical bureaus, and regional bureaus regarding possible opportunities for collaboration with NSF. Initial USAID-supported venues for advancing the relationship with NSF include the following programs:

1. Higher Education for Development
2. Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research

Within NSF, the Office of International Science and Engineering will provide the management needed to develop the working relationship and foster collaboration with USAID. While the Office of International Science and Engineering will provide initial potential programming venues, programs managed in other NSF directorates will be encouraged to participate in this Initiative. Initial NSF venues for advancing the relationship with USAID include the following programs:

1. International Research and Education: Planning Visits and Workshops
2. Pan-American Advanced Studies Institutes

While the programs listed above will serve as the initial nexus for USAID and NSF collaboration, it is expected that other NSF and USAID programs will come to work together under this MOU. The greatest area of potential interagency complementarity exists between the large number of research awards made by other NSF units and the large number of program activities administered by USAID at the Mission and Regional Office level.

For example, USAID's core of its development portfolio is undertaken through the leadership of its more than 80 Missions and Regional Programs worldwide, as well as through a large number of implementing for-profit and not-for-profit entities, both U.S. based and non-U.S., in-country organizations. NSF investment in research and education in countries where USAID is also active includes several hundred research projects representing an investment over \$100M annually, involving research in virtually all science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. In light of these diverse opportunities and investments, the Parties intend to utilize a

range of supporting and/or implementing divisions and field offices to advance and implement the Initiative.

## **V. Goals and Objectives**

Under this MOU, NSF and USAID will determine whether and how USAID and NSF collaboration might enhance the impact and enduring results of each organization's respective investments. For example, USAID might expand the impact of NSF-supported activities through complementary assistance to local institutional capacity development or by augmenting the participation of the non-U.S. participants in the NSF activities. Likewise, NSF might expand the impact of USAID-supported activities via solicitations that address major research challenges relevant to both the U.S. and to the USAID mission in developing countries.

USAID and NSF intend to focus initial engagement and collaboration on Higher Education and Research Capacity Development. The objective is to use NSF grants and USAID support to link the USAID and NSF communities. In the case of NSF, this community includes among others, U.S. scientists, STEM students, and institutions of higher education. In the case of USAID, this community includes developing country scientists and institutions of higher education, non-governmental organizations, private sector organizations, and developing country government officials. This collaboration will proceed in a manner that increases the human and institutional capacity of the latter entities to address critical development needs and problems. In addition, both USAID and NSF will work to develop public-private partnerships and leverage additional resources in support of their collaborative activities.

Possible types of activities that might be supported by one or both agencies include basic research with an applied dimension, faculty development (including sandwich programs), technical assistance activities in agriculture, health, natural resource management, or engineering, and the development of information and communications technology (ICT) platforms for research and teaching collaboration. Initial focal points that have been identified for projects under this MOU include, but are not limited to:

1. Water-related projects
2. Information Technology
3. Supply Chains
4. Construction Research
5. Food Security
6. Hazard Awareness, Prevention, Mitigation

Special priority will be given to water-related projects.

To that end, USAID and NSF will:

- endeavor to align resources to scale up or enlarge the impact of existing and planned programs in the above mentioned focus area (Higher Education Capacity Development);
- develop a select number of high impact demonstration pilots and proof of concepts (POCs) in developing countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Africa;
- develop means to engage and inform their respective communities in this cooperative effort to strengthen the role of scientific information and scientific training in the development process;
- create awareness and promote success by promoting public relations, case studies, and testimonials;
- support efforts to scale up and/or replicate successful programs, pilots and POCs;
- conduct semi-annual reviews of joint projects entered into under this MOU to track and monitor progress of the Initiative; and
- jointly share best practices.

## **VI. Implementation**

This MOU provides for a broad-based Initiative between the Parties. The MOU establishes a foundation for a more robust future relationship between the two agencies. It reflects a shared value and focus for seeking joint collaboration opportunities within each organization's respective vision, mission, and program focus, and for establishing country-and project-specific collaboration opportunities.

Within USAID and NSF, the implementation of this MOU is expected to take the form of the following:

- Creating an ongoing Management Committee consisting of an equal number of representatives of USAID and NSF. This Committee will have the overall responsibility for carrying out this agreement. That responsibility will include the development (or delegation of such development) of Memorandums of Activity (MOA) or project sub-agreements if and when such MOAs or sub-agreements are deemed necessary or appropriate to the successful implementation of specific projects or activities;
- Disseminating within the Parties' respective organizations and communities this MOU, inviting potential opportunities for joint collaboration and establishing a procedure by which the implementing organizations may

identify and propose potential projects;

- Proposals received at NSF will be evaluated according to the standard NSF merit review criteria of intellectual merit and broader impacts. The review will be conducted using the standard NSF merit review processes, including conflict of interests and confidentiality policies;
- Develop any specific review criteria (in addition to the agencies' existing review criteria) that are relevant to this cooperation;
- Establishing internal processes, procedures and relevant review criteria to include continuous review of program plans, the development and monitoring of success benchmarks regarding the USAID-NSF collaboration, project plans, publicly announced solicitations for the purpose of identifying and defining potential opportunities for collaboration, and evaluation of projects supported under this MOU;
- Periodically assessing the success and progress of projects launched pursuant to this MOU and recommending improvements to this MOU and/or implementing procedures; and
- Preparing periodic status reports on each of the projects undertaken through Project MOAs under this MOU.

## **VII. Designated Points of Contact**

The primary point of contact and liaison from each Party to this MOU is as follows:

### **For USAID:**

U.S. Agency for International  
Development EGAT/ED/HEW  
Rm. RRB 3.09-101  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20523

Attention: Martin J. Hewitt  
Telephone: 202-712-1531  
Facsimile: 202-216-3229  
eMail: [mhewitt@usaid.gov](mailto:mhewitt@usaid.gov)

### **For NSF:**

National Science Foundation  
Office of International Science and  
Engineering Room 940.08  
4201 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22230

Attention: Wayne Patterson  
Telephone: 703-292-8189  
Facsimile: 703-292-9176  
eMail: [wpatters@nsf.gov](mailto:wpatters@nsf.gov)

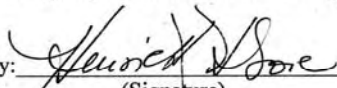
#### VIII. Effective Date, Duration, Amendments, and Termination

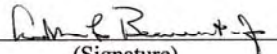
This MOU shall be effective when signed by both Parties. The initial duration of this MOU is established at 3 years from signing. However, the duration may be extended beyond this period if both Parties agree in writing. In addition, this MOU may be amended if both Parties agree in writing. Either party may terminate this MOU at any time upon advance written notice to the other Party with such termination becoming effective upon the date set forth in such written notice.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties, each acting through their duly authorized representatives, have caused this MOU to be signed in their names and delivered as of this 30 day of April, 2008.

U.S. Agency for International Development

The National Science Foundation

By:   
(Signature)

By:   
(Signature)

Name: Henrietta H. Fore  
Title: Administrator, U.S. Agency for  
International Development

Name: Arden L. Bement, Jr.  
Title: Director, National Science  
Foundation

Date: April 30, 2008

Date: April 30, 2008

Document: USAID-NSF-MOU.doc