

COLLABORATIVE AND LEVERAGED ACTIVITIES

As noted in the next section (Chronological Perspectives: Past, Present, and Future), over a decade of collaboration among the University of Namibia (UNAM) and key institutions of higher education in the United States has spawned many initiatives. This section is devoted to current and proposed collaborative activities that leverage and synergize resources to advance economic growth, reduce poverty, increase food security, and improve the quality of life in rural communities throughout Namibia and to provide a vital resource for economic development for the entire Southern African region. It is anticipated that more proposed activities will evolve as the project progresses and that many of the proposed efforts will become current projects.

Current Collaborative Activities

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA): The third MOA between the University of Namibia and Texas A&M University (formerly University of Arizona with PI Elliot) provides formal guidance to capacity building activities that are prominent in this USAID/HED strategic plan as Goal/Indicators, 3, 4, and 5.

World Conference on Sustainable Value Chain Agriculture for Food Security and Economic Development: The decision by the University of Namibia to host the World Conference in Windhoek, Namibia was made in 2007. Since then the Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education (AIAEE – Gary Wingenbach is the current President and a Project Partner) has joined forces with the Agricultural Scientific Society of Namibia (AGRISSON – Luke Kanyomeka is the current Chair and a Project Partner) and the World Conference on Computers in Agriculture (WCCA) to create a forum for Namibian scientists to showcase their research on a world stage. The World Conference is being leveraged as a research dissemination venue for collaborative projects between UNAM/NICE faculty and U.S. mentors - Goal/Indicators 5 and 6. It is anticipated that many collaborative efforts will emerge during the next two years as researchers from around the planet make connections with Namibian scholars.

Dr. James Knight (a Project Partner) Sabbatical, Spring, 2011: The timing of Dr. Knight's sabbatical was designed to support the MOA and Goal/Indicator 3. Dr. Knight's expertise in teaching and learning will be leveraged as he works with Dr. Erika Maass (a Project Partner) to create and present the Academic Certificates of Excellence in Methods of Teaching Adults in Rural Communities; Contextual Learning; Experiential Education; and Distance Delivery. In addition, he will provide guidance on Goal/Indicators 1 and 2. Dr. Knight serves as Head in a top ten ranked U.S. Agricultural Education Department, and his experience will be invaluable as UNAM establishes its Department of Agricultural and Extension Education (AEE) and its Namibian International Centre of Excellence for Value Chain Economic Development (NICE).

Study Abroad: In response to a call from the U.S. Department of State for Capacity Building for Undergraduate or Graduate Study Abroad, the Texas A&M Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications (Gary Wingenbach is a Project Partner) and the Norman E. Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture (a Project Partner) successfully acquired funding for the *Norman Borlaug Young Agricultural Scientist Study Abroad Program*. A primary objective of

this program is to establish a Texas A&M University study abroad program in agricultural and natural resources with the University of Namibia-Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR, Martin Schneider, Interim Executive Dean is a Project Partner and PI). Study and research abroad opportunities with the University of Namibia will enhance Texas A&M undergraduate/graduate students' perspectives on creating niche markets for specialized products such as the Kalahari truffle, plant and animal diseases affecting food security, economic policy formation, and the collaborative research, teaching, and outreach processes needed to alleviate hunger. The study tour is being leveraged to occur during the summer of 2011, so study tour students can participate in the World Conference with their Namibian colleagues in conjunction with Goal/Indicator 5.

2013 AGRISSEON Conference: The Agricultural Scientific Society of Namibia (AGRISSEON – Luke Kanyomeka is the current Chair and a Project Partner) meets biennially and supports the notion of providing an in-country venue for research presentations in support of Goal/Indicator 5.

Proposed Collaborative Activities

Developing UNAM's Scientific Laboratories: Two proposals have been submitted by Texas A&M professors Larry Johnson, James Lindner, G.D. Allen, Mark Holtzapple, and William Klemm that will be leveraged to improve UNAM's research capacity Goal/Indicator 5. A synergistic relationship between the "GK12 Fellows Integrate Global STEM Research in Rural K12, Community, and Distance Settings" proposal and the "Fellows Integrate Global STEM Research (FIGSR)" proposal has been designed to enhance the intellectual merit and broader impacts of research. The purpose of the FIGSR project is to train graduate Fellow to integrate global STEM search in science education for middle school students. Specific activities that tie the projects together include training STEM graduate Fellows in global research as they improve their skills in communication, leadership, teamwork, and teaching and improving use of the University of Namibia's (UNAM) science laboratories by increasing international collaborations. FIGSR project personnel will collaborate with UNAM faculties on developing scientific laboratories that can be effectively used for transformational research. Dr. Lindner is a distance education expert and his talents will be leveraged in conjunction with Goal/Indicator 6.1.1.

Scholars-in-Residence: The Texas A&M University Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications (ALEC), in collaboration with Prairie View A&M University, will submit a proposal to the Fulbright Scholars-in-Residency (SIRS) Program in Fall 2010 by Dr. Theresa Pesl Murphrey. The SIRS program will provide an opportunity for ALEC to host a Scholar-in-Residence from the University of Namibia-Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The Scholar, in collaboration with faculty at Texas A&M in College Station and Prairie View, will deliver lectures on Namibia and Africa, attend scholarly programs in Texas, and conduct research with other Texas A&M faculty supporting Goal/Indicator 5. The SIRS program also provides financial support for the Scholar's family to accompany him/her to Texas. Dr. Murphrey is a distance education expert and her talents will be leveraged in conjunction with Goal/Indicator 6.1.1 and Goal/Indicator 4.2.2.