

CHRONOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

This section provides a succinct and salient summary that clearly illustrates the long term commitment among key partners and highlights the genesis of this initiative. The collaborative nature of the Namibian-U.S. team has created a partnership where all members feel at home regardless of the campus they are on. A special focus is placed on the leveraged and collaborative efforts that currently exist or are planned for the future.

1998: Michelle Owens (now Glenn) and Bill Lindley (who facilitated the development of this strategic plan), both from FAO, implemented a project to support the development of the University of Namibia's (UNAM) Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR).

1999: Owens arranged for founding Dean Osmund Mwandemele to travel to the University of Arizona (UA) where the first 5-year MOA was created. Jack Elliot served as the UA PI.

2000: Two UNAM faculty members, after a rigorous selection process, arrive at the University of Arizona to earn graduate degrees.

2001: Jack Elliot assists the FANR with their curriculum review where they moved from the quarter to a semester system. Most research laboratories were new, but not utilized to the fullest extent.

2002: Jim Knight and Jack Elliot conduct faculty development workshops on teaching improvement for FANR. Faculty want assistance on utilizing research laboratories more effectively.

2003: UNAM faculty members complete their UA graduate degrees and return to Namibia.

2004: The second 5-year MOA between UNAM and UA is initiated.

2005: UNAM begins a two-year partnership with the LSU AgCenter under the USAID-funded Partnerships for Food Industry Development. Over the course of the two years, stakeholders receive training in Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP, both Train-the-Trainer instruction and for basic certification) and a community cattle producing association improves its market linkages.

2006: Martin Schneider, Elliot and Owens conduct initial focus groups with all FANR departments and seven stakeholder groups to establish baseline documentation on needs.

2007: UNAM agrees to host the 2011 Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education (AIAEE) annual conference.

2008: Kanyomeka, Schneider, Mwandemele, Glenn, and Elliot begin formal work on preparing the USAID/HED planning grant proposal with eleven stakeholder groups. To gain a better understanding of UNAM and country-wide capacity, they visited several branch campuses, research centers, ministries, and NGOs. Initial planning for the 2011 AIAEE/UNAM conference included planning pre-conference research workshops and post-conference educational tours.

As one of the USAID/HED planning grant recipients, the remainder of this chronology will be delineated as USAID/HED influenced activities or collaborative and leveraged projects. For example, in 2009 the items will be labeled as 2009 and 2009 HED.

2009: Stakeholder groups provided input that helped finalize this USAID/HED ten-year strategic plan. The Agricultural Scientific Society of Namibia (AGRISSON) and the World Conference on Computers in Agriculture (WCCA) voted to join the AIAEE/UNAM 2011 conference being held in Windhoek, Namibia. A 3rd MOA, this time with Texas A&M and UNAM, was developed and approved with the help of the Norman Borlaug Institute of International Agriculture. Gary Wingenbach was selected as the International Agriculture Program Leader for Texas A&M University, Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications. Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences initiated a system-wide globalization project to internationalize the curriculum, support student exchanges, and create international minors, certificates, and degrees.

2009 HED: Created a USAID/HED strategic plan with a Ten-Year Vision: “The University of Namibia, through its proposed Namibia International Centre of Excellence (NICE) for Value Chain Economic Development, will advance economic growth, reduce poverty, and improve the quality of life in rural communities throughout Namibia as well as provide a positive and practical model for the entire Southern African region.”

2010: Planning for the Windhoek, Namibia 2011 “World Conference on Sustainable Value Chain Agriculture for Food Security and Economic Development” by AIAEE, UNAM, AGRISSEON, and WCCA occurs with a special emphasis on creating collaborative research opportunities for UNAM faculty. Texas A&M University’s U.S. Department of State for Capacity Building for Undergraduate or Graduate Study Abroad students will be selected by PI Wingenbach to participate in the 2011 World Conference in Namibia. A “Fulbright Scholars-in-Residency (SIRS) Program” is being developed that will bring a University of Namibia scholar to Texas A&M for a semester.

2010 HED: A NICE Advisory Committee is established and initial meetings take place. Implementing the HED grant goals and objectives is its key purpose. The Committee will work directly with Project personnel and its new director. Initial plans to house NICE in the newly created Department of Agricultural and Extension Education (AEE) are unveiled. Establishing distance delivery technologies to enable UNAM faculty to receive advanced degrees while staying in Namibia is a high priority. The technologies will also be utilized to disseminate “Value Chain Agriculture Education Materials” to UNAM’s satellite centres, regional campuses and local communities. Up to ten collaborative UNAM/U.S. faculty teams of two are established to study “Value Chain” as it relates to sustainability, food security, and economic development. Grants operations, scientific writing, and proposal development workshops are offered.

2011: The AIAEE/UNAM/AGRISSON/WCCA “World Conference on Sustainable Value Chain Agriculture for Food Security and Economic Development” occurs from July 3-8 with over 300 participants from all corners of the globe. Dr. Jim Knight is on a 6-month sabbatical that focuses on implementing MOA activities especially as they relate to faculty development in teaching and learning. A proposed synergistic relationship (see Collaborative and Leveraged Activities) between the “GK12 Fellows Integrate Global STEM Research in Rural K12, Community, and Distance Settings” and the “Fellows Integrate Global STEM Research (FIGSR),” if successful, will provide funding for a dozen Texas A&M University graduate students to work with University of Namibia laboratory technicians prior to the World Conference.

2011 HED: The UNAM/U.S. faculty team reports on their collaborative “Value Chain” research at the World Conference. AEE and NICE documents are submitted to appropriate UNAM officials. Academic Certificates of Excellence (ACE) are developed in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning Improvement Unit (TLIU) and delivered in four pedagogical areas annually. The NICE web portal is initiated. Grant and scientific writing workshops continue annually. The distance delivered graduate program is modified to work within the UNAM system. Plans to enhance collaborative activities are reviewed.

2012: Student/faculty exchange programs between UNAM and U.S. partner universities continue.

2012 HED: The NICE Advisory Committee continues to meet regularly and facilitate the transformation of NICE from a project initiative to an effective International Centre of Excellence. They also provide guidance on curriculum issues as they relate to Value Chain applications (e.g., value chain selection, value chain analysis, value chain strategy, design and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation). The first cohort of six UNAM/NICE faculty members begin the four-year process to achieve graduate degrees via distance education technologies. Successful faculty research teams continue to study value chain approaches and experiences, and present their findings at international research meetings and other scholarly venues. The faculty mentoring effort will continue through 2020 with new teams being added each year and unproductive teams counseled on expectations or eliminated from receiving direct support.

2013: “Value Chain” agricultural development approaches continue to be a major focus with AGRISSEON during its biennial conference.

2013 HED: NICE reaches out to invite other professionals in the southern Africa region to join in its efforts to strengthen higher education human capacity, curriculum, outreach, and research programs for the purpose of addressing economic growth, poverty reduction, and food security in local communities using a Value Chain approach. NICE focuses its efforts on implementing its plan for outreach activities by utilizing a “best practices” format at two or more of its eight satellite centres or five regional campuses and continuing the professional development workshops.

2014 HED: Outreach activities are expanded to other receptive satellite centres or regional campuses. The second cohort of six UNAM faculty members begins the four-year process to achieve graduate degrees via distance education technologies. This process is repeated every other year until 2016. The NICE Advisory Committee reviews the original goal statements (see “Strategic Plan” section) and, if funding allows, begin to implement the original goal two (K-12 teacher education). All activities that follow which involve teacher education and secondary schools are associated with goal two. Discussions begin with secondary schools and with teacher education programs to incorporate Value Chain Economic Development perspectives within their curriculums.

2015 HED: The original activities associated with goal one (this proposed Strategic Plan continue to evolve and expand. Teacher education approves a Value Chain infusion effort into appropriate programs. Secondary schools approve incorporating Value Chain Economic Development perspectives in their curriculums.

2016 HED: The first cohort of six UNAM faculty receive their graduate degrees with a special research emphasis in Value Chain applications. A graduating class is expected every other year until 2020. Outreach activities are occurring in local communities and schools located near eight of the 13 satellite centres and regional campuses.

2017 HED: Activities associated with goals one and two continue.

2018 HED: UNAM/NICE, in conjunction with interested stakeholders and the TLIU, hosts a tertiary student Value Chain forum.

2019 HED: UNAM hosts a Value Chain Best Practices conference to celebrate and acknowledge the successes generated from the USAID/HED project. Outreach activities are occurring in local communities and schools surrounding all of the satellite centres and regional campuses.

2020 HED: During the last year of the projected funding, the Namibian International Centre of Excellence (NICE) for Value Chain Economic Development is recognized regionally as the location for aspiring faculty to learn the latest developments in Value Chain research and applications. The public educational system incorporates Value Chain Economic Development perspectives within the secondary curriculum and the teacher education programs.