

Global Agricultural Development Initiative

Occasional Papers



Strengthening USAID: A Timeline of Recent Events

May 31, 2011 - Agricultural development has historically been a significant component of U.S. foreign aid. While in the 1980s 25 percent of U.S. foreign aid went to agriculture, that number dropped to six percent by 1990 and was a meager one percent by 2008.¹ As U.S. support for agricultural development has declined, so has the capacity of USAID to deliver agricultural assistance. In 1997, USAID ceased to be an independent agency with the Administrator reporting to the President and was folded into the State Department.² In 2006, the Secretary of State created a Foreign Assistance Bureau within the State Department (State/F) to more closely align the USAID budget and activities with the State Department's diplomacy objectives, ending USAID's budget autonomy. While President G.W. Bush increased the foreign aid budget significantly, the aims of USAID's development work were anchored in the President's National Security Strategy. Furthermore, President Bush's signature development initiatives, such as President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), were placed outside of USAID.

Yet the events of the past two years show that the tide may be turning. On the agricultural assistance front, President Obama's inaugural promise - "To the people of poor nations, we pledge to work alongside you to make your farms flourish..." - launched a renewal of the global agricultural development agenda. This assurance has translated into a series of policy actions: at the G-8 meeting in L'Aquila, Italy, in July 2009, the United States pledged to invest \$3.5 billion in food security and agricultural development over three years; the initiative to fulfill this pledge, Feed the Future, was formally launched by the Secretary of State in May 2010 and was highlighted as a signature program when President Obama issued the first-ever Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) for Global Development in September 2010.

Simultaneously, the resurgence of attention to agriculture has been echoed with calls to strengthen USAID's capacity to serve as an innovative development enterprise. In the aforementioned PPD, the President reaffirmed the nation's "moral obligation and national security interest in providing assistance" to the hungry and designated USAID as the lead development agency.³ The first Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) reiterated this designation. Since these announcements, USAID has launched significant internal shifts and changes, including the USAID FORWARD reform effort and the formation of two new Bureaus, one for Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL) and another for Food Security (BFS).

The breadth and depth of these changes have been impressive. Likewise, the pace of change has been remarkable. When The Chicago Council released its *Renewing American Leadership in the Fight Against Global Hunger and Poverty* report in 2009, the picture was dismal. As an agency, USAID was still grappling with its new State Department mandated priorities to promote "peace and security" - with the goal of "reducing widespread poverty" added in as a result of complaints from the development community.⁴ This coincided with a decline in staffing for USAID in general, as illustrated by the decline in total U.S. personnel direct hires from about 7,000 in 1965-1970 to

just above 2,000 in 2000-2005. To reverse this negative trend and improve USAID's ability to deliver agricultural development assistance, The Chicago Council made two specific recommendations: restore the leadership role of USAID and rebuild USAID's in-house capacity to develop and administer agricultural development assistance programs. The study's Leaders Group warned that if USAID's leadership role in agricultural development was not restored, other initiatives and efforts were likely to falter. Now, since 2009, it appears that many of the report's recommendations—including the prioritization of agricultural development funds, improved leadership and staff capacity at USAID, and improved interagency coordination—have been incorporated into the Administration's international development plans and policies.

This Occasional Paper provides readers with a consolidated yet detailed timeline of significant events that evidence the “turning-tide” for USAID and broader agricultural development assistance. The “timeline” approach demonstrates the scope of the reforms and the swiftness with which they have occurred. Although these developments deserve acknowledgement and praise, the government should not “rest on its laurels.” The accomplishments of the past two years are part of a long-term plan that has only just begun: many pieces have fallen into place, however the hardest work lies ahead.

Commitments and Announcements: The Beginnings of Reform

September 2008: Congressional Action to Support Global Food Security

On September 22, 2008, Senator Richard Lugar, with sponsorship from Senators Robert Casey and Richard Durbin introduced the Global Food Security Act, which would authorize appropriations for Fiscal Years 2010 through 2014 to provide assistance to foreign countries to promote agricultural development, food security, and improve emergency responses to food crises. The bill was re-introduced into the 111th Congress, and passed through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 31, 2009. Representative Betty McCollum introduced companion legislation into the House in June 2009. The Senate and House bills were combined in spring 2010 to form the Lugar-Casey-McCollum Global Food Security Act. The revised legislation also took into account the principles put forth in the Roadmap to End Global Hunger and Promote Food Security Act, which had been introduced into the House in June 2009 by Representatives JoAnn Emerson and Jim McGovern. The Lugar-Casey-McCollum Global Food Security Act was hotlined for passage in the Senate in summer 2010. Although it had significant support, it was not passed.

April 2009: U.S. Presidential Commitment to Agricultural Development and Congressional Action to Reform Foreign Assistance

Following the conclusion of the G20 London Summit, on April 2, 2009, President Obama called on Congress to double U.S. financial support for agricultural development in developing countries to more than \$1 billion in 2010.

On April 28, 2009, Congressman Howard Berman introduced H.R. 2139, the Initiating Foreign Assistance Reform Act of 2009, which directed the President to develop a national strategy for global development and improve monitoring and evaluation of aid effectiveness. This legislation was later complemented in the Senate by the Kerry-Lugar Foreign Assistance Revitalization and Accountability Act of 2009, S. 1524. Both enjoyed significant bipartisan co-sponsorship and called for a reform and rebuilding process to redefine America's foreign assistance architecture and

strengthen the capacity of USAID. The House version never passed out of committee, and the Senate version, which passed out of committee in November 2009, was never considered on the floor. The Administration has, however, prioritized many of the issues raised, such as staffing, coordination, transparency and accountability.

June 2009: Secretary Clinton Announces U.S. Food Security Strategy Principles

At the 2009 World Food Prize Laureate Announcement ceremony, Secretary Clinton announced seven principles around which the U.S. would form its food security strategy. Principles included supporting sustainable solutions to hunger, investing in country-led plans, strengthening coordination, adopting a comprehensive approach to agricultural investments, working together through multilateral development partnerships, and committing to supporting agricultural investments over the long-term.

July 2009: G8 Commitments to Global Hunger and Food Security and the Announcement of the First QDDR

At the G8 summit in L'Aquila, Italy, President Obama joined global leaders in refocusing development funding on global hunger and food security and committed \$3.5 billion over three years (FY 2010 to FY 2012) to address hunger and poverty worldwide. The United States is only part of the Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food Security; others collectively pledged more than \$20 billion. The L'Aquila Joint Statement on Global Food Security committed the G8 and other participants to five principles: (1) Supporting comprehensive strategies; (2) Investment through country-owned plans; (3) Improving coordination among donors; (4) Leveraging effective multilateral institutions; and (5) Delivering on sustained and accountable commitments. These principles would shape the development of the United States' own initiative over the next few months.

On July 10, 2009, the State Department launched the first QDDR. Carried out under the direction of the Secretary, led by the Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources, and co-chaired by the Administrator of USAID and the State Department's Director of Policy Planning, the primary objective of the QDDR was to develop a whole-of-government approach to U.S. development policy. In a two-phase process of soliciting input from federal personnel in Washington and in the field, the QDDR focused specifically on defining internal State/USAID roles in development and reforms needed to increase USAID's ability to meet development goals, restoring a balance between outsourcing and in-house capacity. By the time of the official release of the QDDR findings in December 2010, many of the strategies outlined in this "blueprint for elevating American 'civilian power' to better advance our national interest" were already being implemented.

September 2009: G20 Commitments and the U.S.' Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative

At the G20 meeting in Pittsburgh, the G20 countries reaffirmed the call for improving global food security, and the U.S. pledged \$475 million to the multilateral component of the initiative, the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) Trust Fund, administered by the World Bank. As of April 2011, only

"Some may ask how is food security related to our own future. ... Well, the answer is that food security is not just about food. But it is all about security – economic security, environmental security, even national security."

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton
Remarks at the Clinton Global Initiative
Closing Plenary
September, 2009

\$66.6 million of the U.S. pledge has been delivered though an additional \$100 million has been appropriated in FY 2011. Later in the month, the State Department - then the lead coordinating agency for the Administration's food security efforts - issued a Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative consultation document that outlined the priorities and strategy for the Administration's global food security initiative and invited input from across government and the private sector. Though this document did not specifically suggest strengthening USAID, it outlined the Administration's commitment to implementing the L'Aquila principles and emphasized the need for a whole-of-government strategy that would draw on investments from other donors, the private sector, and partner countries.

November 2009: The Sense of the Senate

The Senate passed a Sense of the Senate on empowering and strengthening USAID (S. Res. 312), asking that an Administrator be nominated expediently, and that the Administrator should serve as the chief advocate for U.S. development capacity in national security deliberations. It further stated that USAID must be empowered to be the primary development agency and that the Administrator should increase the number of Foreign Service Officers while reducing reliance on contractor personnel.⁵

Appointments and Launches: The Reforms Take Shape

January 2010: The Appointment of a New USAID Administrator

The position of the USAID Administrator was vacant for almost the entire first year of the Obama presidency, prompting complaints from the highest levels of the administration. In July 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called the appointment process "a nightmare" and "frustrating beyond words."⁶ In November, with Acting Administrator Alonzo Fulgham allowed to serve only one more week as "acting" under the Federal Vacancies Reform Act, Dr. Rajiv Shah was nominated for the position. Having already been vetted for his position as USDA Undersecretary for Research, Education and Economics and Chief Scientist, he sailed through the confirmation process. He was sworn in as Administrator on January 7, 2010, and was tested early when the earthquake struck Haiti less than a week later.

While the Administrator position has finally been filled, other top leadership appointments throughout USAID have been painfully slow. Several key posts, including the Global Hunger and Food Security Coordinator (the head of the Feed the Future initiative), remain unfilled, with Administrator Shah serving as the Acting Coordinator.⁷ Critics have suggested that the "leadership vacuum" at USAID has provided an opening for other federal agencies, such as the Department of Defense (DOD) and USDA, to play a bigger role in long-term development activities that typically have been under the jurisdiction of USAID.⁸

May 2010: The Launch of the Feed the Future Guide

Based on the priorities outlined in the Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative consultation document, the Feed the Future Guide was formally launched by Administrator Shah in May 2010. This document expanded upon the Initiative's strategy and outlined a set of country and regional priorities and benchmarks. While the Department of State was the principal agency developing the Feed the Future Guide, USAID is the primary agency responsible for coordinating its

implementation. By entrusting USAID with this task, the President and the Secretary of State have empowered the agency and challenged it to strengthen its capacity in agricultural development.

Building on the aforementioned L'Aquila principles, the two primary objectives of Feed the Future are (1) to accelerate inclusive agricultural sector growth as a force multiplier for other dimensions of development and (2) to reduce poverty and improve the nutritional status of populations in developing countries, particularly among women and children, by addressing root causes of hunger. The three cross-cutting priorities of the initiative are gender, environment, and climate change. Feed the Future retains a strong U.S. commitment to emergency humanitarian assistance, but focuses on economic growth as an overall poverty reduction strategy.⁹

The Feed the Future initiative is selective in its work and focuses on 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa (12), Asia (4), and Latin America and the Caribbean (4). Operating under a country-led paradigm, the program provides investments in two phases, first to develop and then to implement the investment plan developed in each host country. The country investment plans are coordinated with USAID's broader country development cooperation strategies (CDCS). As of April 2011, multi-year strategies have been developed for 19 countries, as well as the East and West Africa regions; summaries for 13 of these are available on the Feed the Future website.¹⁰ Strategies for Bangladesh, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana, and Senegal were approved in early March 2011.

June 2010: The Establishment of USAID's Bureau of Policy, Planning and Learning

On June 7, Administrator Shah announced the establishment of the PPL Bureau to perform policy analysis, evaluation, and strategic planning coordination for the whole agency. Largely comprised of existing staff from other USAID offices and bureaus, the PPL bureau centralizes functions for five offices (Policy, Strategic and Program Planning, Donor Engagement, Science and Technology, and Learning, Evaluation, and Research). The PPL Bureau consolidated policy- and evaluation-related work housed elsewhere in USAID, including the policy program function of the Office of the Chief Operation Officer, the evaluation division of the Management Bureau, and several functions of the Office of Development Partners. The PPL is also in part a revival of previously existing offices that closed under President Bush, including USAID's Bureau for Policy Planning and Coordination, which folded when Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced the "transformational development" initiative and created the State Department Bureau of Foreign Assistance in 2006. Similarly, USAID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation was closed by Administrator Randall Tobias in 2006.

"Some of you may have heard what Senator Leahy said at the hearing where I presented USAID's budget request. He didn't mince words. He said that USAID was not living up to its potential. And he said, quote: 'USAID needs to change its culture, and change the way it does business.' One of our biggest champions, someone who has supported this agency throughout its history, someone deeply committed to development made matters clear: either USAID reforms itself, or USAID ceases to exist.

So it's been made pretty clear to me – our time to change is now, and our time to change is short. But there's a message that goes beyond USAID – which is that the time to change is also right. We now have a unique opportunity to make dramatic progress toward our ultimate goal of improving the lives and livelihoods of billions of people."

USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah
USAID's Approach to High Impact
Development
Town Hall with the U.S. Global Leadership
Coalition
May 5, 2010

With a staff of approximately 60, the PPL Bureau works closely with the State's long-standing Policy Office (State/P) and the more recently created Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance (State/F) to eliminate unnecessary planning and reporting requirements in order to streamline U.S. foreign assistance. The PPL Bureau reintroduced strategic planning to USAID with more than twenty countries undertaking the development of country development cooperation strategies (CDCS). The remaining missions and platforms will develop CDCS by the end of FY 2013.¹¹ The PPL Bureau works with the Office of Budget and Resource Management to ensure that the USAID budget supports strategic priorities and ties budgets to key initiatives and country strategies, particularly in times of budget austerity.

September 2010: The PPD on Global Development

President Obama announced a new PPD on Global Development on September 22, 2010 - the first since the creation of USAID by John F. Kennedy. Unveiled in a speech at the United Nations, the PPD set a new course for U.S. development programs, calling for a sharper focus on economic growth and democratic governance in countries willing to make a commitment to real economic reforms. The PPD is centered on the "elevation of development as a core pillar of American power," equal to diplomacy and defense.

November 2010: The USAID FORWARD Initiative

Announced by Administrator Shah in November 2010 following an August 2010 presentation to the Secretary of State, the USAID FORWARD initiative defined a specific action plan to achieve the broader policy goals defined in the QDDR (which had not officially been released). The Administrator characterized the reform process as distinctly American: "Giving USAID staff members with bold ideas a chance to see what they can do, and seeking out and supporting local actors with the ideas, imagination and courage to transform their communities and societies."¹² The USAID FORWARD initiative is the core of the USAID strengthening effort, focusing on transformational internal change in seven key areas: procurement, talent management, policy capacity, monitoring and evaluation, budget management, science and technology, and innovation.

In transforming procurement, USAID is streamlining its current processes, increasing the use of small businesses, and using host country systems where possible. Efforts to strengthen local civil society and private sector capacity to improve aid effectiveness are underway; in a pilot project, seven teams, comprised of first-tour Foreign Service Officers and Foreign Service national staff, will work with each mission to increase outreach to local nonprofits and manage the full grant process in each country. Oversight and accountability at USAID will be strengthened by establishing a budget mechanism to fund contracting needs at USAID, elevating accountability for planning and oversight of contractors.

USAID will improve its talent management by better leveraging Foreign Service, civil service, and Foreign Service national staff, as well as improving hiring processes. Administrator Shah announced that a tactical staffing plan would be finished by December 2010; this, however, has not been publically released.¹³ U.S. officer staffing at USAID has declined over the past few decades, from a high of 15,000 permanent U.S. direct hire staff members during the Vietnam War to fewer than 3,000 in 2009.¹⁴ In testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs in 2008, former USAID Administrator Peter McPherson noted, "In 1980 USAID had 2,000 permanent foreign affairs officers, which had declined to about 1,000 in 2008." Of those, only 16 were agriculture experts.¹⁵ In 2008, Congress provided funding for a special Development Leadership Initiative (DLI), a multi-

year effort to enhance USAID's capabilities and increase its overseas presence. The DLI called for doubling the size of USAID's Foreign Service workforce at a rate of 300 new FSOs per year from 2008 to 2012. When the 18th class was inducted in May 2011, over 720 new Foreign Service Officers had been hired. Approximately 100 new officers will be hired with 2011 funds bringing the total to over 800 new officers. The target to double the number of Foreign Service Officers from the 2008 total of 1,000 to a new total of 2,000 remains the same and USAID is optimistic that it can achieve that.¹⁶ As of March 2011, USAID had hired 56 additional agricultural Foreign Service Officers, over halfway to its goal of a net increase of 105 agriculture FSOs by 2013.¹⁷

The QDDR later echoed this commitment to human capital, promising to triple mid-level hiring at USAID and creating a new Senior Technical Group Career Track to provide a career path for USAID's technical experts. Beyond the surge in new hiring under USAID's DLI, however, USAID FORWARD seeks largely to redirect human capital already in the federal government through expanded use of fellowships, expanded authority to hire for specialized needs ("Schedule B"), and expanding detail assignments between USAID and State (as in the case of USAID's newly created budget office).

In rebuilding its policy capacity, USAID created the PPL Bureau as discussed in the previous section. The PPL Bureau will work closely with the Office of Budget and Resource Management, which will increase USAID's in-house responsibility and capacity to manage constrained budget resources. The Office of Budget and Resource Management and the PPL Bureau will develop a framework for focusing development assistance geographically and budget guidance that ties requests to strategic priorities, work that was previously done by State/F. The new office will be responsible for the comprehensive USAID budget proposal for FY 2013, which will then be integrated into the joint State/USAID budget review. Although USAID has created the budget office, State Department officials have made clear that all budgeting matters will still be under the ultimate control of State/F.¹⁸

In strengthening its monitoring and evaluation practices, USAID seeks to make monitoring more systemic, improving data collection to inform decision making, and improving the transfer of knowledge to enhance programs, making up for traditional underinvestment in these areas.¹⁹ This will help the agency overcome the weaknesses of current practice – variable quality and quantity of evaluations and lack of explicit evaluation standards and methodology.²⁰ Evaluation policy now requires evaluations be "registered" at the time they are initiated, obviating the possibility of publicizing only successes and not failures. Evaluation findings are also to be made publicly available within three months of being finalized, a practice that was previously not widely implemented by USAID.

USAID is also seeking to transform its development capabilities through science and technology. Its goals include upgrading internal science and technology capabilities, leading Grand Challenges for Development, and building capacity in developing countries through cooperative research grants, improved access to scientific knowledge, and training. To increase its internal science and technology capacity, USAID is expanding its use of American Association for the Advancement of Science and Jefferson Science Fellows, as well as increasing hiring of technical experts through the DLI. To strengthen its capacity abroad, USAID will continue to partner with the National Science Foundation to create new research partnerships between U.S. and developing world scientists around shared challenges, as well as establish training grants with research institutions.

Finally, in improving and highlighting innovation, USAID formed a Development Innovation Ventures (DIV) Fund. It has also created an innovation fellows program to help USAID staff develop

and test new innovations, connect with private sector and global thought-leaders, and promote best practices for development. USAID released the first DIV program statement in July 2010, received 104 proposals, and awarded 13 grants to projects ranging from improving rural solar access and creating an affordable fuel-cell powered bicycle to developing a new SMS election monitoring platform to reduce election fraud.

November 2010: The Establishment of the Bureau for Food Security

USAID's work on Feed the Future is driven by the Bureau for Food Security (BFS), a new unit officially announced by Administrator Shah in November 2010. USAID, through the office of the Feed the Future Coordinator and the Deputy Coordinator for Development, leads the overall implementation and coordination of the Feed the Future, and the BFS leads USAID's contributions to the Feed the Future initiative. The Feed the Future Coordinator and Deputy Coordinators retain overall responsibility for interagency coordination among USAID, the State Department, the MCC, USDA, and other agencies.

According to a USAID representative, BFS will eventually be composed of 80 to 90 personnel, including both new hires and employees who moved from the agency's regional and pillar bureaus including the Economic, Growth, Agriculture and Trade (EGAT) bureau.²¹ EGAT's agricultural functions will be subsumed by BFS. The Bureau for Food Security has its own Director for Budget and Planning (who shifted from OMB), a further indication that the devolution of budgeting from State/F to USAID is a serious commitment.²² William Garvelink, a 31-year veteran of USAID and Former Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was appointed as Assistant to the Administrator to lead the initiative while continuing to serve as the Deputy Coordinator for Development; and Patricia Haslach was appointed Deputy Coordinator for Diplomacy. Though the initiative is to be led by a single Global Hunger and Food Security Coordinator, none has been named.

December 2010: The Release of the QDDR and the Foreign Assistance Dashboard

The QDDR, released on December 15, 2010, recommitted the U.S. government to making USAID a preeminent global development agency and contained specific, explicit language about elevating USAID and focusing its efforts on food security.

The QDDR reiterated USAID's lead role on the Presidential global development initiatives on food security (Feed the Future) and global health (Global Health Initiative), pending USAID's achievement of defined benchmarks by September 2012 for the latter. The QDDR also called for elevating USAID's representation in the interagency policymaking processes by making USAID mission directors in the field the primary development advisors to U.S. Chiefs of Mission, and by confirming the USAID Administrator as Alternate Governor of the African, Asian, and Inter-American development banks. It also committed to continuing to implement the USAID FORWARD agenda and specifically referenced building USAID's human capital and improving oversight and accountability.

"Change is not easy, but these reforms also represent a vote of confidence in USAID, confidence that you can and will make the changes that are needed to continue to build a modern, efficient, world class, leading development agency. Now, with that vote of confidence does come the responsibility to deliver, and I know and trust that you will."

Secretary of State Hilary Clinton
Town Hall Meeting at USAID
December 17, 2010

The QDDR outlines important changes to the budgeting process. The 2006 creation of the Office of the Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance (State/F) established the position concurrently held with the USAID Administrator. The Obama Administration manages foreign assistance through two separate streams: the USAID Administrator and the Deputy Secretary of State for Management. The previous State/F will become the Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources and will be led by a Director, who will manage the integrated State/USAID budget formulation process and approve the use of appropriated funds.

The launch of the QDDR also saw the start of a comprehensive interagency collaboration process, which has been actively realized by the Feed the Future initiative through regular interagency meetings and the establishment of country-specific working groups in Washington in addition to the groups at the field level.²³ Via this inclusive system, USAID and Feed the Future are mobilizing the broad expertise of the U.S. government as a whole.

One day after the release of the QDDR, State and USAID launched a Foreign Assistance Dashboard, an online interface through which the public can view State and USAID budget and appropriations data from FY 2006 to FY 2011 – an outcome of the reform effort’s firm commitment to transparency. The Dashboard was well received by the NGO community, with the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network calling it “a concrete sign that the Obama Administration is moving forward to implement the reforms.”²⁴ Owen Barder, Visiting Fellow at the Center for Global Development, wrote: “It democratizes aid, removing the monopoly of information and power from governments and aid professionals...It also makes it possible for communities to collaborate, for citizens to hold governments to account and for the beneficiaries of aid to speak for themselves.”²⁵ The true utility of the Foreign Assistance Dashboard, however, will hinge on incorporating data from all 26 agencies that deliver U.S. foreign assistance, not solely from USAID and the Department of State.

Gearing up for Implementation: The Reforms are Operationalized

January 2011: The Draft Feed the Future Research Strategy

Although the official Feed the Future Research Strategy has not been released, a draft strategy was circulated at a meeting to mobilize the U.S. and international research communities around Feed the Future goals, held by USAID, USDA, and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), in partnership with the Board on International Food and Agricultural Development at Purdue University in January 2011. A research forum to address the research agenda is scheduled to take place in late June 2011; prior to that, APLU will engage the research community in an e-consultation that will provide the framework for discussions at the June meeting.

The FY11 budget request allocated approximately nine percent (\$145 million) of Feed the Future funds to research and development, with the majority going to the Norman Borlaug Commemorative Research Initiative, a partnership between USAID and USDA. The research priorities are clustered in three general areas: advancing productivity, transforming production systems, and improving nutrition and food safety. Rather than setting out ambitious new research priorities, Feed the Future’s research agenda centralizes research linkages and leverages existing partnerships to focus on Feed the Future countries and goals. Partners will include the Collaborative Research Support Programs, U.S. land-grant universities, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Allocation

of Feed the Future research and development funding to these partners had not yet been made public. The BFS will also directly engage USAID field missions to better utilize research outcomes.²⁶

February 2011: Release of the Indicators for the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

On February 2, 2011, USAID released a comprehensive set of monitoring and evaluation indicators, which will be used by the major U.S. government agencies with food security activities. Feed the Future has developed eight whole-of-government indicators as well as 46 additional project indicators. Gender is a cross-cutting theme not only in Feed the Future programming but also in data collection; for most indicators, data will be disaggregated by sex.²⁷ The whole-of-government framework includes both performance monitoring (collecting data for standard indicators to reveal what is occurring and whether performance is on track) and impact evaluation (examining causal links between program activities and results to examine if, how, and to what extent program objectives have been met). Core indicators for Feed the Future will be integrated into country and regional strategies, with baseline data collected and targets set. The overarching goal of the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy is to enable Feed the Future to collect high quality statistical data to support tracking food security trends and monitoring investment of Feed the Future funds, while also ensuring that USAID has the analytical capacity to use data to support program design.

April 2011: Reorganizations within the Bureau for Food Security

In late March 2011, Julie Howard, former Executive Director and CEO of the Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa, replaced Ambassador Garvelink as Deputy Coordinator for Development. Ambassador Haslach left Feed the Future to work on Iraq reconstruction. Paul Weisenfeld, Former Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean, was appointed to the position of Assistant to the Administrator for the Bureau for Food Security. Ambassador Haslach's position as Deputy Coordinator for Diplomacy remains unfilled. As of April 2011, the BFS was still undergoing internal restructuring, the details of which have not yet been made public. According to an internal memo obtained by *The Hagstrom Report* and published online, the Bureau will be organized into four teams: a regionally-structured country strategy implementation team; a market access team that will leverage private sector and NGO partners; a research, development, and thought leadership team; and a resource management, planning and evaluation team that will provide budget, procurement, human resources, monitoring, and evaluation.²⁸

Looking Forward: May 2011 and Onwards

As mentioned at the outset of this paper, the aforementioned developments should be commended, but they should also serve as a reminder that overall USAID reform and Feed the Future have only just begun. According to Administrator Shah, "At the end of the day, what we're trying to do is create kind of commercially viable agriculture sectors in these countries to eliminate the fact that every time prices do spike a little bit, it creates a lot of unrest and a lot of human suffering."²⁹ Creating commercially viable agriculture takes time, and Feed the Future is a program designed for long-term results; its full impact may take a decade or more to bear fruit.

Sustaining Congressional enthusiasm through changing political environments will likewise be a challenge. In Administrator Shah's testimony to the House Foreign Affairs Committee on March 16, 2011, he noted that the Administration's FY 2012 budget outlines significant cuts by eliminating

bilateral development assistance in 11 countries and closing USAID missions in three, cutting development assistance for at least 20 countries by half, and reallocates funding and staff toward priority countries and initiatives.³⁰ He also justified the funds requested for Feed the Future, “For the \$1.1 billion we are requesting for bilateral agricultural development programs, we will be able to help up to 18 million people in up to 20 countries—most of them women—grow enough food to feed their families and break the grips of hunger and poverty.”

Less than a month after these FY 2012 discussions, Congress passed the FY 2011 budget, which cut Foreign Operations funds to \$31.3 billion - a \$3.5 billion reduction from FY 2010 and a \$5.1 billion reduction from the FY 2011 request.³¹ State/USAID Development Assistance funding will continue at roughly the same level as FY 2010 - however the actual FY 2011 numbers reflect a 15 percent cut to what the President put forward in his FY 2011 request. The change in House leadership and the federal budget deficit situation make prospects for increases to U.S. foreign assistance funding uncertain.

Is USAID sufficiently reinvigorated and strengthened to carry out the Administration’s ambitious development agenda? Only partially, but efforts over the past two years have been a promising start. As early as November 2010, Administrator Shah expressed optimism about changes within USAID. “I’m happy to say the tide is turning; USAID has reestablished a policy bureau, introduced a new science and technology division, and ramped up its hiring of development professionals to levels we haven’t seen in over a decade.”³² Administrator Shah has also indicated that Feed the Future is a flagship effort for USAID and a key plank in the administration’s global development strategy, but, “We have to be honest about the stakes involved...Our credibility rests on its success.”³³ Feed the Future and USAID are faced with high expectations and high stakes.

Global Agricultural Development Initiative Occasional Papers

Global Agricultural Development Initiative Occasional Papers offer a platform for disseminating key observations and insights on emerging developments on agricultural development, food security, and related issues. While the Global Agricultural Development Initiative is responsible for all statements of fact and expressions of opinion contained herein, individual members of the Initiative may not agree with the paper in its entirety. The Chicago Council takes no institutional position on policy issues.

Global Agricultural Development Initiative

Launched in 2009 and expanded in 2010, the Global Agricultural Development Initiative supports a renewed U.S. focus on agricultural development as a means to increase food security, alleviate global poverty and spur economic development. The Initiative aims to provide support, technical assistance and innovation towards the formulation and implementation of U.S. global agricultural development policies and offer external evaluation and accountability for U.S. progress on its policy commitments. For more information, please visit: www.thechicagocouncil.org/globalagdevelopment.

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs

Founded in 1922 as The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs is a leading independent, nonpartisan organization committed to influencing the discourse on global issues through contributions to opinion and policy formation, leadership dialogue, and public learning.

¹ William Garvelink, "Food Security, Nutrition and HIV/AIDS," Remarks at the 27th UNAIDS Program Coordinating Board Meeting, Opening Plenary Panel (December 9, 2010) <http://www.usaid.gov/press/speeches/2010/sp101208.html>.

² United States General Accounting Office, "Foreign Assistance: USAID's Reengineering at Overseas Missions", (September 1997); M. Peter McPherson (former head of USAID, 1981 – 1987), Personal Communication with The Chicago Council on Global Affairs (May 2011).

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