

# Africa-U.S. Higher Education Initiative



**REGIONAL INITIATIVE IN  
SCIENCE AND EDUCATION**

**INAUGURAL MEETING**

**Nairobi, Kenya  
October 6-7, 2008**

# Consultations and Research



- **Formation of an advisory committee of US and African stakeholders**
- **Consultations with African ambassadors and other experts on Africa higher education**
- **Review of the literature**
- **Phone conversations with African Vice-Chancellors**
- **Co-hosted Higher Education workshop with USAID Africa Bureau**
  - **75 African & U.S. vice-chancellors and university representatives**
- **Visits to Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Ethiopia.**

# Consultations and Research



- 5 week electronic consultation – 650 forum members discussing RFA framework and broad issues related to higher education capacity building partnerships. [www.africa-initiative.org](http://www.africa-initiative.org)
- USAID’s Regional Summit on Higher Education meeting in Kigali, Rwanda, Oct. 21-24.
- POSTPONED– Ministerial Meeting on Higher Education, Lusaka, Zambia October 27-31.

# Mission of the Initiative



**Enhance and empower higher education institutions in Africa and the U.S. to contribute more effectively to African development and transformation.**

# Our Vision



- **Higher education institutions in Africa that**
  - meet Africa's human resource needs
  - increase the development of new, relevant knowledge and technology
  - provide opportunities for historically disadvantaged populations, and
  - are engaged in Africa's transformation and economic, social and political development.
- **U.S. higher education institutions knowledgeable about African affairs and more deeply engaged in Africa.**

# Initiative Objectives



- **A well-funded program that provides**
  - competitively determined resources for mutually beneficial African-U.S. higher education collaboration
  - within a time-frame consistent with successful institutional capacity development.
- **An interactive web portal for African and U.S. higher education institutions to**
  - share information and learn from each other's experiences
  - collaborate on advocacy
  - provide the platform for the grant application process – posting of RFA, submission of proposals, etc.

# Our Core Principles



## Collaboration, shared ownership, partnership.

- All partners in the relationship need to be committed to learning and changing – not a one-way relationship.
- Partnership of equals – capacity building in the African institution should be determined by the African institution.
- Focus on collaboration and exchange – not discrete projects at each institution.

# Our Core Principles



## Focus on human capacity development.

- Primary focus is on people and relationships – not buildings or major infrastructure.
  - The Initiative *will* allow funds to be used for the purchase of equipment, the development of libraries, etc. but the backbone of the collaboration is the capacity development of people and of the organizational structures that shape an institution.
  - We recognize that the computerization of campuses is *essential* for human capacity building. Thus we are also trying to figure out how best to build on the infrastructure investments that are being made on the continent – especially in ICT.

# Our Core Principles



## Focus on development and problem solving.

- A goal of the Initiative is to encourage and facilitate the transformation of institutions in Africa so that they are **problem** and **community-oriented**, connected to their societies and capable of meeting their societies' human resource, knowledge and technology needs.
- We plan to do this by asking applicants to frame their proposals around a specific societal problem. We do not want to pre-determine what the problems are – want to leave that to emerge through the proposal process.
  - A problem-orientation does not need to imply a focus on research – the problem can be, for example, a lack of high quality basic and secondary education teachers.

# Our Core Principles



## Institutional transformation and sustainability.

- The Initiative is not just trying to strengthen institutions as they are in Africa, but transform the role they play in their countries and regions.
- Focus will be on increasing their connectedness to the public, private and civil society sectors.
- Sustainability of the investment will depend on success of the transformation –
  - so that the value of higher education institutions will be recognized and rewarded in the long-term.
  - so that institutions can attract and retain strong faculty into the future.

# Our Core Principles



## Need for a long-term time frame.

- It takes time to develop programs collaboratively – if you want genuine partnership, you need to build in the time for building relationships, developing trust, communication, consultation, and planning.
- Long-term *commitment* of funding is key to institutional and human capacity building so that partners operate with a certain degree of certainty about the future.
  - At the same time – continued funding is contingent on performance and the achievement of benchmarks by all partners.

# Fields of Focus



- **Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources**
- **Science & Technology**
- **Engineering**
- **Health**
- **Education & Teacher Training**
- **Business, Management & Economics**

# Capacity Building Priorities



- Faculty development
- Curriculum development
- Research and technology development
- Leadership, management, marketing and advocacy
- Development of linkages with public, private, and civil society
- Financial diversification
- Improvement of teaching and research facilities and equipment

# The Competitive Grants Program



- **Two Stages**
  - **Consultative planning grants**
    - ✦ Important for the development of successful long-term collaboration.
  - **Long term (10-15 year) program implementation grants**
    - ✦ Substantial funding annually per partnership.
- **Partnership proposals must include an accredited U.S. higher education institution and an accredited or recognized African higher education institution.**
- **Additional partners can include university networks or consortia, research institutions, NGOs, regional organizations, international, national and local government bodies, private sector firms, etc.**

# Funding



- **Current Funding**
  - USAID - \$1 million
  - Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation - \$100,000
- **Potential Long-Term Funding Sources**
  - Congress
  - PEPFAR
  - Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
  - Multilateral donors
  - Other foundations
  - Private sector

# E-Consultation



E-Consultation Forum

[www.africa-initiative.org](http://www.africa-initiative.org)

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