REPORT ON AFRICA LEAD LESSONS LEARNED WORKSHOP: SUSTAINING THE MOMENTUM - CHAMPIONS TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONS
(WINDSOR HOTEL, NAIROBI, JUNE 11-12, 2013)
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Africa Leadership Training and Capacity Building Program
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over two days of sharing of facts and figures as well as testimonials workshop participants created a powerful picture of how the project affected lives, communities and institutions. This was especially so of the program’s signature Champions for Change transformative leadership training. Equally important, if less dramatic, the workshop helped crystallize a set of lessons learned from this unique project focused on leadership training as a means to drive transformative change in the agriculture and food security sector. And from these lessons the participants recommended further action that they themselves could take in the absence of a follow on project, as well as actions to be taken by a follow on program that would sustain the momentum and ensure the scaling up for food security that is the official slogan of Africa Lead.

The workshop took place from Tuesday, June 11 to Wednesday, June 12, at the Windsor Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya, and brought together USAID, Champions and other beneficiaries of the project, CAADP representatives, and project implementers (see attached participant list) to seek to capture the essence of what Africa Lead has accomplished, including capturing the Champions “brand,” and seek ways to build upon what Africa Lead leaves behind primarily in the way of energized Champions, strengthened institutions, increased knowledge, and honed leadership training and other individual and institutional capacity strengthening tools.

The stated objectives of the workshop were:

- Create a shared understanding of what has been achieved through the project and lessons that have been learned.

- Look ahead and discuss how to build on lessons learned to support continued contributions to missions’ FTF programs and to the AU CAADP agenda.

As Jeff Hill put it during his closing remarks:

We have faced many challenges with FTF over the last few years and getting results. And what I know is when the going got tough, Africa Lead was there to help. 3-4 years ago, there was a tough challenge; we needed momentum around CAADP and capacity. But no one knew how to do this or was doing capacity building. The challenges that were given to the team were met and they have brought innovation and have helped to lead a strong agenda as we go forth. There are tough challenges and real strong work that needs to be attended to. In 2014, the AU is going to make that the year of agriculture, moving into a new generation with a summit in July 2014 about these set of issues. There are issues about institution change and reform and if it does not come up on the agenda, then we will have failed. It is critically important that this message is put forth; the AU is ready for that message. It will be a mistake if that is not on the platform because then it won’t take place for the next 10 years.

OBJECTIVE 1A: CREATING A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED THROUGH THE PROJECT

To create a shared understanding, Africa Lead staff provided an overview of the project background, purpose and accomplishments. This was done in progressively greater detail ending in presentations
about specific training events, assessments, institutional capacity initiatives. USAID staff also explained to the workshop participants how the project had been conceived and why. This gave the participants a broad view of the range and depth of types of activity supported by Africa Lead, and deepened a sense of the dynamism, responsiveness, focus and flexibility of the project.

Some of the things that workshop participants agreed to have been the legacy of Africa Lead:

- Energized or re-energized Champions for Change for Food Security (“we were infected,” “it was like a religion,” “we laughed, we got angry, we cried…” “the training quite literally changed my life, my perspective of who I was” “the training changed me from a human ‘being’ to a human ‘doing’,” “I want to talk about ‘value change,’ not just ‘value chains,’” “participants were embarrassed to action,” “enhanced, self-confident leaders,” “Champions, placed like a seed, germinate,” “Beyond the numbers, each Champion constitutes a ‘center of excellence, a center of influence,’” “a new religion of people called Champions,” “a ‘brand’ with strong name recognition,” “Africa Lead created a new ‘religion’ of believers also called ‘champions’ with an infections passion……,” “crusader, ambassador,” “Champions produce champions,”)

- Enhanced enabling environment for dealing with food security questions and challenges

- Enhanced capacity of two key West African regional agriculture and food security institutes, CORAF/WECARD and CILSS. In a testament to CORAF’s recent improvement, the institute was recently congratulated by their donors for progress they had made in the last 6 months, at least part of the credit, according to CORAF representative was due to the Africa Lead capacity building support that has been provided in the past year.

- An increased sense of urgency about food security and the need to act NOW!! As well as a broadened and deepened discussion about food security and agriculture-led development

- Expanded knowledge and understanding of CAADP principles, rationale and approach

- Nascent Champion networks

- A body of knowledge about the areas needing support and attention to strengthen institutions and processes important to agriculture policy, programs and innovation

- A cadre of highly experienced (they were already highly talented) African regional trainers in transformational leadership and change management.

- A powerful ready-to-use transformational leadership curriculum with notes for trainers who want to use the material for cascade training.

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**From:** Patricia Gant <pfgant@yahoo.com>
**To:** "Carla_Denizard@dai.com" <Carla_Denizard@dai.com>; "john_azu@dai.com" <john_azu@dai.com>
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 5, 2013 5:42 PM
**Subject:** I appreciate Africa Lead

Dear Carla/John Azu

Thanks to Africa Lead for igniting the passion in me about food security in Liberia, Africa and the world as a whole. I just wanted to let you know that I appreciate Africa Lead for choosing me as one of the champions of change. If for any reason Africa lead dies today, your legacy will live on forever in me.
OBJECTIVE 1B: CREATING A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF THE LESSONS THAT HAVE BEEN LEARNED

A small group activity helped crystalize the consensus lessons learned from the nearly 3 years of Africa Lead programming. Below is a compilation of the most frequently cited types of lessons identified by participants in the workshop:

- Leadership training does matter and is a critically important heretofore missing element of capacity building for progress in agriculture and food security. Leadership matters because the job of transforming agriculture is not simply a technical matter but is going to require stronger more results oriented institutions led by innovative, team-oriented, results-focused, transformative leaders. Leadership training is important for transforming agriculture in Africa, and when understood is valued by training recipients.

- Using African regional trainers who know how to engage the heart and mind in an African context was indispensable to success of training.

- Assessments are most useful and powerful when they have capacity building programs that flow immediately from them.

- Assessments, being sensitive tasks, require deep engagement and buy-in from all stakeholders, funders and object of assessment alike.

- Combining institutional capacity building with Champion training may be the most effective way to influence institutional performance.

- Periodic reunions are a way to assess progress, discuss behavior change and support the initiatives of Champions invested in.

- Non State Actor (NSA) may be too broad a concept or grouping for effective and cohesive partnering for engagement on CAADP. It may be necessary to support more disaggregated interest groups (e.g. agribusiness policy, land rights, etc.)

OBJECTIVE 2: BUILDING ON LESSONS LEARNED TO SUPPORT CONTINUED CONTRIBUTIONS TO FTF AND CAADP

Going forward and considering how to build upon what was achieved in collaboration with the Africa Lead program, the workshop participants listed the following:

- Cascade training. A number of Champions participating in the workshop recounted how they had taken all or some of the elements of the leadership training and cascaded that to their colleagues or local community groups. This is an indication of how the Africa Lead legacy is being built upon.

- Improved leadership of organizations. Several participants referred to how they had taken practical tools from the training to improve their own ability to create urgency, build guiding teams and otherwise improve their leadership styles and behavior.

- Some indicated that the legacy of training parliamentarians and other politicians in Uganda and Tanzania in response to their requests for such training needs to be replicated in other countries.
• The training is valuable but we need to know consider how to make it sustainably available, to get it inserted into a training organization that can be regularly replicated throughout Africa and made available to leaders up and down the types of food security stakeholders.

OBSERVATIONS
All attendees would almost certainly agree with the observation that the workshop succeeded in achieving both objectives set before it. The mix of participants was right. Participants who were asked to make presentations were briefed on the objectives of the workshop days before the workshop, and facilitation of the workshop at all levels was highly conducive to the spirit of reflection and analysis that was needed for the workshop to succeed. Simply put, the workshop was results-oriented.

Most importantly, however, the presentations from the dais and the participants alike demonstrated the energy and vision of the Champions for Change. Without exception those who spoke, whether they were Champions, other beneficiaries, partners or USAID, did so with intense passion and with memorable turns of phrase -- going from “human beings” to “human doings,” experiencing “value change” rather than “value chains.” Champions, who had been through the 5-day leadership for food security training had a widely-shared consensus that leadership training was indeed the right focus for a capacity building initiative aiming at transforming the agriculture sector for improved productivity and food security. Transformational leadership tied directly to the challenge of eradicating food insecurity was a powerful force for attitudinal and behavior change.

Without exception the Champions in attendance insisted that it was premature for Africa Lead to “die;” they saw substantial unfinished business in that a critical mass of neither individual Champions nor innovative, results-based institutions had yet been reached for the take-off or scaling up for food security to occur. They did, however, state that in the absence of continued support from a flexible capacity building program such as Africa Lead, they would think outside of the box and find ways to build upon the work of Africa Lead both by creating more Champions for Change for Food Security and by transforming key institutions into results-focused organizations. The critical mass needed for systemic change to occur could come in the form of a sufficient number of like-minded Champions and/or a smaller number of revitalized and transformed institutions.
BACKGROUND AND SETTING STAGE FOR WORKSHOP

Since the main purpose of the workshop was to bring together representatives of the immediate stakeholders of the activity to think about and discuss what was accomplished and how what is being left behind by Africa Lead can be used and built upon for deepening and expanding leadership capacity for food security, workshop facilitator, Shirley Erves, stressed that she and the facilitator team of Ed Salt, Kathy Allison and Paul Purnell would be constantly reminding participants to consider lessons and next steps.

Subsequent to this reminder, Shirley “walked” the participants through the workshop program, explaining how each part was designed to help achieve our primary objectives.

The workshop was opened by a welcome address by Sunil Xavier, Acting Deputy Regional Director for USAID/East Africa who explained how Africa Lead had responded to regional Feed the Future and CAADP alignment priorities.

Jennifer Maurer and Peter Ewell continued the background, welcome and stage setting presentations of the workshop. Both Jennifer and Peter, having been intimately involved in program design and implementation oversight, Jennifer as COR Alternate to Jeff Hill and Peter as POC and Activity Manager for the East and Southern Africa Regional Program of Africa Lead, had the perspective and knowledge of the project’s purpose and activities to succinctly describe the program and how it fit into USAID FTF and CAADP priorities. They both raised the question to participants whether leadership was the right focus and emphasized that ultimately measurement of impact would be required to determine effectiveness of the program and programs such as Africa Lead.
OVERVIEW OF PROJECT AND ITS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A panel presentation by the senior managers of the project, David Tardif-Douglin, Chief of Party, and Kimberly Hickok-Smith (Deputy Chief of Party/Program Director, East and Southern Africa) and Carla Denizard (Deputy Chief of Party/Program Director, West Africa) was designed to ensure that all participants had a common overview of the parameters of Africa Lead. David provided an overview of the purpose, structure, activities and accomplishments of the program as a whole and he moderated a discussion in which Kimberly and Carla gave overviews of their main accomplishments and lessons learned from regional office program implementation. All three looked at what were the main lessons and legacies left behind by the project upon which subsequent capacity strengthening programs could build.

East Africa was the first region to put on the Champions for Change leadership training and as such pioneered many of the approaches used in this key training. East Africa also was deeply involved in the various types of internship programs provided, from standard student-focused internships with Sokoine University to senior and mid-level executive Business-to-Business (B2B) exchanges and other internships.

West Africa played a pioneering role in making the shift from Champions training to sustained institutional capacity building, leading institutional assessments especially of CORAF and CILSS, developing a capacity building plan, preparing curricula for training and rolling out the training identified jointly with the institutions during the assessments. The West Africa program embodies the slogan of the workshop, “Champions Transforming Institutions.”

The following questions were raised during the Q&A session:

Q. What has been the role of the AU and the respective governments in this process and sustaining the momentum?

A. The project was designed to work closely with the AU in support of its CAADP initiatives and thus the project was purposive in collaborating with AU and NPCA where and as possible. Respective government CAADP focal points and teams were regularly invited to participate in trainings both as participants and as presenters.

Q. What was the one secret ingredient that allowed the creativity and diversity of the training and the “can do” attitude of Africa Lead?

A. African trainers, structure and flexibility, strong teams in the regions led by result-oriented, experienced deputy chiefs of party who knew players and institutions in their regions.

Q. What do you think would be possible in terms of initiatives that have emerged late in the process (AU’s internship program, Ugandan parliamentary training) looking ahead?

A. Follow on work is going to be determined by USAID and other stakeholders as Africa Lead programming will end in June (East Africa) and July (West Africa). Africa Lead will do as much as
possible before closing down, but does need some time to close such a big and multi-faceted project down.

**Q. Knowledge management, how is what has been learned going to be made useful for USAID?**

A. The project will focus on an end of project document that emphasizes lessons learned and where key products and tools (e.g., training curriculum, assessment reports, etc.) are to be found and accessed. As needed the project will produce reports for each of the key activity areas to facilitate access of stakeholders to tools. OER-Africa, a unit of SAIDE (South Africa Institute for Distance Education), which has, with help of an Africa Lead grant, taken over the short course database, will be the repository for short courses from third parties as well as the e-learning material from Africa Lead’s Champions for Change leadership training.

**Q. What have been the inter-linkages between institutions that have been trained?**

A. Initially, the purpose was to train a critical mass of CAADP Champions for Change for food security; institutional linkages were not prioritized. Bit by bit the project emphasized the need for institutional strengthening. This culminated in the kind of assistance provided to CORAF and CILSS.
TESTIMONIALS AND INSIGHTS FROM CHAMPIONS PANEL

With parameters having been set and some initial thoughts on lessons, legacies and next steps, the main part of feedback from program stakeholders was to begin. This began with a panel of Champions and other beneficiaries of Africa Lead training and other financial, organizational and logistical support.

A panel of six Champions -- Dr. Moses Zinah (Liberia), Isaac Okorafor (Nigeria), Felicia Owusu Nyantekyi (Ghana), Jackson Kiraka (Kenya), Jacqueline Mkindi (Tanzania), and Sibongile Sibanda (Zimbabwe) -- was moderated by former Africa Lead training managers John Azu (West Africa) and David Omambia (East Africa).

Each was to reflect upon the following questions central to the workshop’s objectives:

- What did the training do to you on a personal level? How did it change your perspectives and influence your organizations?
- What has Africa Lead accomplished?
- What are the key lessons you can glean from your experiences?
- Is focusing on leadership the best and right thing to do?

Details of the panel’s response to these questions are attached in annex, but the gist of the responses is captured below.

**Impact of Champions for Change training, on a personal level, on perspectives and mind-set.**
Without exception those who had participated in the Champions for Change training cited it as a life-changing experience, one of those rare moments in life when mind and heart combined to learn powerfully and to focus ideas. Expressions such as, “One of the three things that have influenced my life is this [Champions for Change leadership training],” and “My whole perspective of who I am and my role changed during that training,” exemplify the consensus view on the panel. As a consequence of this, many of the Champions sought to and did conduct cascade training of the ideas and tools from the training.

**What Africa Lead accomplished.** The perspectives of the panellists on what Africa Lead has accomplished coalesce around the following ideas. First, Africa Lead, in particular the Champions for Change training, has left a legacy of a way of thinking, a “religion” of visionary leadership and urgency to solve the food security challenges that face Africa and not Africa in an abstract way but each African Champion, who feel a visceral responsibility to “being the change” for food security. A Champions brand
of visionary, results-focused, zealous, networked and proud Champions for Change has been left behind and while small is a critical mass especially to the extent that the Champions are able to influence their institutions or organizations. Changed mind-sets, turbo-charged networks, realization of the critical importance of leadership, these are some of the things that the panellists stated have been left behind as a legacy of the Africa Lead program. Further details on individual responses can be found in the Day One notes in annex.

**Key lessons gleaned from interaction with Africa Lead.**

Put quite concisely by the panellists, key lessons included the critical importance of leadership and the ability to pull together teams, build their capacity and motivate them to innovate and produce results, and putting the various elements of food security into a holistic perspective, seeing the systems that all need to work together to achieve greater agricultural productivity, better nutrition and improved food security. Another lesson had to do with what true leadership or Championing was; leadership has a clear vision to build and coordinate teams and a vision to move boldly toward a shared goal.

**Value of focusing on leadership training.** An unequivocal “Yes!” to the question of whether focusing on leadership was the right thing to do for Africa Lead and capacity building for food security.

A number of participants who had also been in the Champions for Change training or otherwise were beneficiaries of Africa Lead initiatives gave their testimonials and perspectives during the question and answer and comment period following the Champions panel. The importance of leadership was reinforced. The impact of the training on specific individuals and their career progression was brought up as was the importance of attempting to quantify the impact of the training in particular on individuals and ultimately the organizations in which they work. One person from the floor asked that the lessons learned from the project be turned into a set of best practices so as to guide subsequent capacity building programs. More on the Q&A session can be found in the attached Day One notes.
PARTICIPATING USAID MISSION AND CAADP REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVES

Representatives of the missions with the largest buy-ins to the Africa Lead program were able to join the workshop and they were the focus of a panel discussion about how they worked with the program and used it to help them respond to their Feed the Future objectives. They were joined by CAADP focal point representation.

The panel, moderated by Peter Ewell, included Tom Mugisa, Uganda CAADP Focal Point; Tom Hobgood, USAID/Tanzania and Belay Mengistu, USAID/Ghana.

USAID representatives, Tom Hobgood and Belay Mengistu agreed that the program had been responsive and useful to their programs. In Tanzania, Africa Lead was credited as having helped make the work of the mission easier by getting the word out about CAADP and about USAID Forward through the Module 1 and special Module 2 training focused on providing training to potential local implementing partners on processes and procedures needed to conduct business with USAID. Two Champions went from being District to Regional Commissioners, attributing at least part of their success to the skills and new mindset gained from the leadership training. Tom’s challenge was how to ensure that the leadership training could be provided more systematically to policy makers and politicians and how to aggressively go from Champions to highly performing results-focused institutions.

In Ghana, Africa Lead was praised for its flexibility and its ability to engage with high level government officials and hold high level workshops in response to USAID/Ghana needs. Belay Mengistu expressed appreciation for the program’s ability to focus on providing training to leaders from the northern districts of Ghana where the mission is currently focusing most of its attention.

Uganda provided a great example of close collaboration between the CAADP team and Africa Lead as attested by Tom Mugisa. Details of his comments are included in annex, but the comment in this text box encapsulates the gist of his view about working with Africa Lead.

The responses of the panel to the critical question of what the Champion will be doing five years from now if there is no follow on project or continued support to them was instructive. Tom Mugisa agreed that the optimal would be continuation of the project, a sentiment the workshop participants were to express and hear repeatedly throughout the two days. He suggested that with support scaling up would be possible, presumably both at individual levels (increasing numbers to a critical mass) and at institutional levels. But, the energy and skills of Champions would be drawn upon regardless in order to move the CAADP process forward, at least in Uganda. Tom Hobgood insisted that this kind of leadership training would need to continue to be provided for optimal results in terms of agriculture and food security programming and outcomes. This did not imply that the training had to be provided through development assistance, necessarily, however.
DISCUSSION OF LESSONS LEARNED BY TASK

INTERNSHIPS (INTERNS AND HOSTS)
Kimberly Hickok-Smith moderated a panel of participants in two of the three different types of internship programs initiated by Africa Lead – (1) traditional internships with Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) SUGECO program (Sokoine University graduates entrepreneurs cooperative); and (2) senior to mid-level executives engaged in business-to-business (B2B) exchanges. The third type of internship, provision of young professionals to support specific areas of capacity building needs in CORAF and CILSS, was discussed in the session on Institutional Capacity Building, which is covered below.

The internship panellists included hosts and interns, Margaret Komen (host), Julius Wambura (host), Brian Tembo (senior intern), Ernest Likoko (SUA intern), and Lazaro Nyato (SUA intern).

Brian Tembo represented a group of senior grains traders from various organizations in East and Southern Africa who had each spent 3 weeks working with the Commodity Trade Division of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE). As he put it, “the internship has given me the confidence… to bear the weight of being the driver of change.”

Julius Wambura and Margaret Komen represented host companies who took SUA interns into their businesses and their lives. They recounted how much they had benefitted from the experiences noting that young interns often come up with new ways of doing old things, not to mention the low cost of interns. The greatest benefit to hosts especially in the SUA internship program was the new ideas that come with young energetic interns. Both hosts when asked whether they would continue as hosts to interns either from SUA or elsewhere were enthusiastically supportive of the idea, suggesting that this was an activity that could be sustained and in fact that they do already in some situations provide support from their own funds for interns.

Ernest Likoko and Lazaro Nyato represented the many interns who had been able to take advantage of working with host companies such as those represented by Julius and Margaret, and supported by Africa Lead and SUGECO. The details of their stories are attached in Day One notes, but the main gist was that the linkages, confidence and new ideas the interns gained were of great value to each. Lazaro has leveraged his experience to sign new contracts to supply grain to a processor. He was already an entrepreneur – doing landscaping contracts and other agricultural consulting -- before he undertook his MBA studies at SUA. With his studies and internship he has become even more successful and capable in identifying new business opportunities and in developing them. Ernest is taking the
knowledge he has gained from his internship to his new job with the SUA initiative, SUGECO, which will allow SUA to expand the program.

**NON-STATE ACTOR (NSA) WORKSHOPS AND SUPPORT**

Africa Lead supported a series of training workshops aimed at strengthening networking among non-state actor groups in a number of countries. Representatives of the NSA group, both the CAADP NSA Task Team, which operates at the continental level in meetings such as the CAADP Partnership Platform, which takes place annually, and national NSA Task Teams joined in a panel moderated by Gathoni Mungai, who had taken the lead for Africa Lead in collaborating with NSA Task Teams to deliver the training workshops mentioned above.

Panellists for this session included Gathoni Mungai as moderator, Ian Mashingaidze of FANRPAN and Lucy Muchoki of PANAAC, both members of the CAADP NSA Task Team.

To frame the topic, Gathoni Mungai gave an overview of the number of NSA training workshops Africa Lead had supported and talked briefly about some of the lessons learned, including the possibility that NSA was too broad a grouping for effective working together in engaging government on CAADP and National Agriculture Investment Plans (NAIPS).

Lucy Muchoki explained how the national NSA training workshops had come about, from a meeting including Jeff Hill, the CAADP NSA Task Team and Africa Lead on the fringes of the Yaounde CAADP Partnership Platform Conference in 2011. She reiterated her conviction that it is through NSA participation in broad agriculture and food security programs such as CAADP that “we will see change in Africa.”

Ian Mashingaidze frankly discussed the hopes and expectations of NSA groups coming together into national platforms, something which has not really taken place in most countries. There remain many challenges for the NSA groupings to strongly engage government in CAADP at all levels, national, regional and continental. He pointed out that as we move forward this needs to be looked at and solutions for stronger NSA engagement come up with.

Two key and very relevant questions were raised and responded to during the Q&A session: (1) Where is NSA going to be 2 years from now without Africa Lead support? Where are the Task teams going? And (2) What is NSA Task Force next plan?

Where is NSA going to be in two years without Africa Lead support? Where are the Task teams going? Responding to this question, there was a general agreement that non-state actors needed to continue to strengthen their ability to engage government on agriculture and food security policy and program issues and that by having a voice the various component parts of the NSA could only improve the legitimacy of the policy process. However, where there was debate was how best to do that.

Lucy made it quite clear that the process, once begun with NSA groups developing their work plans, would not be allowed to die. Ian pointed out that he, FANRPAN and the CAADP NSA Task Team needed a platform or source for the names and contact information for all NSA training workshop participants, and that armed with these lists there was a good chance that networking and mutual support could continue even without Africa Lead support.

Some comments from non-panellists included Carla Denizard expressing her disappointment that the NSA country Task Teams had often not taken off. She wondered what kind of continuing assistance
would need to be provided to get these teams to take off. John Azu observed that the NSA momentum did not build despite their key role in countries like Ghana in the policy process and thus the need for them (the NSA groups) to strengthen their role.

**What is NSA Task Force next plan?** This question was aimed at the two representatives of NSA Task Team at the continental/CAADP/NPCA level, Lucy Muchoki and Ian Mashangaidze. In response, Lucy pointed out that the NSA Task Team at the continental level and at some country levels, have a clear sense of what they need to do and a road map and national coordinators preparing to move the process forward. Ian, for his part, put it this way, in each country we “...Have advocacy plan on main points we want to focus on. Want to challenge the minister of Finance and where funding going. And want Ministry of Agriculture to tell us where the funding is going and make sure it is going into important investments. We will work to challenge our government about the 10%. We need message to get to all stakeholders and need to inform key stakeholders about CAADP through media. Investment plans are important. Many countries are waiting for governments to endorse the CAADP and NSA can play a role in this.”

**CHAMPIONS FOR CHANGE LEADERSHIP TRAINING PERSPECTIVES AND KEY LESSONS LEARNED**

This session began with an inspiring presentation by Katharine Coon on what she had learned from an intensive series of key informant interviews with more than 100 Champions and other beneficiaries of the Africa Lead program. Katharine led a two-person team which conducted these one-hour or longer interviews in 10 countries. The team was supported by Africa Lead regional staff.

The main questions to which the interviewees sought questions were:

- Did transformative leadership and management trainings have an impact on participant’s knowledge, attitudes, motivations or behaviors?
- Did participants do anything different after training?
- What did the champions themselves identify as best practices and Lessons learned?

The premise of the project, that leadership training was an important and often forgotten element for success in agricultural productivity and food security, seems to have been powerfully vindicated by the interviewees.

Did transformative leadership and management trainings have an impact on participant’s knowledge, attitudes, motivations or behaviors? While there is always a variety of experiences in training, most champions attributed long-term changes in attitudes, values and actions, an increased sense of urgency, expressing anger and frustration and wanted to see action and results, and said they shifted to a greater sense of
responsibility. They developed more of a sense of purpose and as leaders became more open to other ideas and approaches with more emphasis on mentoring and modelling the way.

A Champions “brand” of visionary, results-focused, leaders focused on improving food security was developed and internalized by many (as exemplified by participants in the workshop). As Katharine put it, “The Champion brand – scaling up food security in Africa was based on moral principles that lie outside of politics”

Another assessment of Katharine’s from the interviews was that the power of the Champions for Change leadership training lay in this powerful point: “This was different leadership training because it was leadership training build around CAADP and food security not just general leadership. It’s not leadership in the abstract.”

For greater detail on the thoughtful responses of Champions about the training and other aspects of Africa Lead programming, one can read the report entitled “Energizing Champions for Food Security: Reflections on What Works, Why and What are the Challenges”, which is accessible on the thumb drive that was provided to participants of the workshop. Some additional detail is also in the notes in annex to this report.

Following Katharine Coon’s presentation, two of Africa Lead’s star regional trainers, Mary Njenga (East and Southern Africa) and Agatha Johnson (West Africa) gave their perspectives on how the training had been structured and delivered and what they had learned from providing the training on numerous occasions. Their presentations were moderated by Paul Purnell, one of the US-based master trainers and curriculum designers.

A few points raised by both regional trainers included the importance of the Training of Trainers event which served not only to prepare the regional trainers for their gruelling but rewarding exercise, but also honed the curriculum and made it more accessible to an African audience. Among other things that came out of the TOT was a branding of “CAADP Champions of Change for Food Security,” one of the keys of which was the use of the term “champion” rather than “leader.” The regional trainers advised the curriculum designers and TOT trainers that the term “leader” had been debased and devalued in much of Africa but that “champion” carried connotations of visionary, selfless service to one’s people, which is what the training was seeking to reinforce within the agriculture and food security sector.

The importance of symbolism that reinforced urgency (little girl) and that concretized the issue (food security pot) were highlighted by Mary and Agatha. These touch points of the training have been reiterated by many Champions as having helped them focus on the challenge and get to the heart as well as to the head on the issues of agricultural productivity and food security.

During the question and answer session participants raised questions related to how to institutionalize the champions training both in terms of getting more training done and getting the benefit of new approaches to leadership infused into key institutions. Testimonials were made of the transformative power of the training and how it has been cascaded to others. And a number of participants raised concerns about whether a critical mass of Champions and newly results-oriented institutions had yet been achieved and if not, how that would be accomplished.

**INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENTS**

Africa Lead’s experience and lessons learned from conducting institutional capacity needs assessments was discussed by a panel including John Azu, Kimberly Hickok-Smith and David Tardif-Douglin, Africa
Lead staff who had all had some involvement in at least one or two assessments and thus had special perspective on the process.

Of the many assessments conducted by Africa Lead, most fell into three main categories:

- Assessments of regional institutions
- Assessments of CAADP Coordination Units
- Assessments of Institutional Architecture for Agriculture Policy

The panel emphasized the following learning from conducting institutional capacity assessments:

- Involve top management of institution in initial planning so they understand the purpose and are ready to engage in assessments
- Participatory or facilitated self-assessments methodology is a learning exercise and not simply a response to external demands for accountability
- Ownership by the institution of the assessment process is important and increases the probability that the findings will be implemented.
- Uniform assessment process facilitates the gathering and use of the findings
- Assessments provide dual purpose by permitting low hanging fruit to increase organizations performance without external assistance
- It’s important to consider the peculiar characteristics of Government ministries during planning and conduct of assessment – different strategies for different institutions.

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

In this session the panellists, led by Carla Denizard, spoke about the full capacity development package provided to regional institutions such as CORAF, CILSS and ECOWAS, from institutional capacity assessment to development of an institution-approved capacity development plan, to curriculum development and roll out of a series of trainings designed to improve the results-focus and ability of the target institutions to more effectively fulfil their mandates.

The panellists included Moderator, Carla Denizard Panel; Ibrahim Lumumba, CILSS; Frances Konu, CORAF; and Pauline Petryszyn, CILSS intern.

Carla described the process by which training programs were identified and developed for CORAF, CILSS and ECOWAS/ECOWAP. The key lessons she identified from the process included:

- The need to validate and review findings with the institutions
- The reality that mid and senior Level professionals have very limited opportunities to take courses and were excited to participate creates a common purpose and unity among staff
- Follow-up coaching and tech assessment and engagement with young interns helped facilitate the process of change and application of new skills
- Implementation period was too short. Lots of scheduling challenge and postpone activities.
Significant individual and institutional changes have occurred in workplace but the time period is too short to measure the greater impact and outcomes

Our diverse and specialized pool of training and coaching service providers helped ensure high quality of training and rapid deployment and delivery of services

Frances Konu, M&E specialist at CORAF highlighted his perception that the Africa Lead assessment and capacity building support has had an immediate impact on CORAF. As a regional body coordinating and supporting agricultural research in 22 countries, CORAF is a critically important institution for meeting the goals of transforming agriculture in the region for improved food security. The training has reached the level of the CORAF Executive Director and there is an increasing results orientation among the institute’s staff.

Ibrahim Lumumba, M&E chief at CILSS, which works in 17 West African countries, stated that while it is premature to point to system-wide impacts at this stage, “...we have seen improvement in all these areas, particularly in M&E and knowledge management. Less change with our leadership, this could be because they are always gone and hard to get them to attend trainings. We have seen improvements in information systems – accessibility has been increased. We didn’t have a PMP before and now we do – draft one we are working on.” He also said that the combination of training and follow up had made the Africa Lead training particularly effective. An intern in the human resources management section of CILSS, Pauline Petryszyn, spoke of her involvement in implementing the action plan related to HRM for CILSS and what she had learned in the process.

During the Q&A session, these comments by Jacqueline Mkindi, Tanzania Horticultural Association (TAHA), which had been the focus of an assessment, and Jeff Hill, COR were emblematic:

Jacqueline Mkindi: “By being a witness of the assessment of TAHA – it was more than an assessment; it helped to advise us to operate more professionally. Soon after the assessment we worked on the recommendations. To confirm that the assessment wasn’t a one off thing; we kept referring to Kimberly and John Azu. We were able to sign a contract with USAID. We have also signed a contract with the government of Tanzania to work with the infrastructure of small farmers. Wish to thank Africa Lead for being our ambassador. We will not let you down. We will achieve this.”

Jeff Hill: How do we get a better handle of what have? How do we secure it? What needs to be put in to place, what institutional reforms, what should be targeted before implementation? There is a rich set of experience, evidence that real things have happened, how do we get a better handle on clarifying those resources and individuals? How document and capture as evidence of what has happened and if we continue what do we create? How to ensure you have commitment to do more? How do you demonstrate capacity building and show results. How do you chart the way forward....?

SHORT COURSE DATABASE

After developing a web-based database of short courses provided by institutions in Africa and elsewhere that would be of relevance to managing the development and implementation of agriculture and food security policies and programs, Africa Lead provided a grant to SAIDE’s OER-Africa program to continue to develop and manage the database, which as of the time of the workshop had 1,338 short courses from 151 institutions (see website www.africaleadftf.org).

Catherine Ngugi, OER-Africa, based in Nairobi made a presentation about the short course database. She pointed out that there had been 902 website visits in the first month, of which 570 were from Africa,
and 72% were new visitors, and confirmed further that the Africa Lead grant was seen as a catalyst for an activity that OER-Africa intends to continue to support with its own funds. “Going forward, as an African organization, we will continue to make this resource available. We will make sure people know about it. It is important to train the right people. People that are implementing, but making sure we are talking to the right people is a challenge. Also it has been important to train people on how to upload the courses.”
**CONCLUSION**

Perhaps the best way to frame the conclusion is to repeat the notes from Tom Mugisa’s recap of Day One of the workshop and the notes from Jeff Hill’s presentation on Day Two:

From Tom Mugisa (paraphrased through notes of his speech):

- Yesterday was an outpouring of the “Spirit of the heart”
- Africa Lead created a new “religion” of believers called “champions” – infectious passion, from “human-being” to “human-doer.” Behind the numbers of people trained you have real individual centers of influence.
- Africa Lead targeted the correct big picture – set the stage for the world leaders’ recognition of the need to end food security with Africa Heads of states and government commitment to CAADP.
- Africa Lead was correctly packaged and delivered. Great management, buy-in from missions and governments, good curriculum, touched many different institutions, brought the need for action right now. Effective triggers for action.
- Evidence from champions is the proof of success, sharing their experiences and what they have learned about CAADP. How it was an eye-opener, motivated by trainers, how were infected by passion, empowering.
- Africa Lead has been used and the results are visible – leaders trained, key institution and stakeholders targeted, empower network, partnerships, internships.
- Internships exceeded expectations
- NSA – brought together different stakeholders within that group that often is not recognized. NSA framework Brings together all of these actors and helps bring them into the process. Missing at RECS level. Needs more support and follow-up.

From Jeff Hill’s concluding remarks:

- The momentum is not stopping here and we need to continue to work toward that change the agenda.

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From: Isaac Okorafor  
<nedu97@yahoo.com>  
To: "Carla_Denizard@dai.com"  
<Carla_Denizard@dai.com>,  
"johnazuu@yahoo.com",  
"idi.issa@cilss.bf"  
<idi.issa@cilss.bf>,  

Date: 06/24/2013 10:07 AM  
Subject: Re: Big Thank You!  

Dear Carla,

Thank you so very much for a great meeting in Nairobi. This greeting would have come early but I had issues with my mailing system. Nairobi was for me not just a stock taking event by Africa Lead, it was the veritable push that I needed to fire me onto the next level. I was particularly thrilled by the success of the mentoring aspect of the project which for me bears the life element of the project itself. Making new Champion friends in the midst of old ones was exciting. I do hope we will all keep this bond unbroken and serving Africa truly.

Thank you again and May God bless you real good for making me part of this.

Daalu!  

Isaac Okorafor
• I want to applaud the team for strong evidence about the strong curriculum and what has been done in creating a group of trainers. They give stories that everyone can carry with them and understand.

• Acknowledge the spillover from Africa Lead; the AU commissioner contributed her re-election to Africa Lead.

• Having people engage as Champions, we need thousands, 20,000 people to have this really succeed. How do you move from this to something at that scale?

• We need clarity of commitment upfront. We need the commitment of change of the people and institutions upfront so we can see that in the beginning.

• This openness, branding, and inclusiveness are important

• We need a sound commitment for the next generation; it is not going to happen overnight, it could take 10 years, but these efforts have played an important role to frame that.

For those who would like to look in greater detail at the deliberations and notes from the two days of the workshop, please see that attached appendices.

The workshop closed with group work aimed at identifying key lessons learned and next steps (see notes in annex) for maintaining the momentum and for ensuring that the end result of developing a strong cadre of Champions for Change for Food Security would be stronger, more results-oriented and effective organizations and institutions, both government, private sector, and civil society, that will drive transformation in Africa’s agriculture. The workshop ended with clear commitment on the part of participants to foster the development of a critical mass of change agents and effective organizations; participants left the workshop enthusiastic, reenergized and "recommitted" to take this to another level.
ANNEX 1: WORKSHOP PROGRAM

SUSTAINING THE MOMENTUM: Champions Transforming Institutions

Africa Lead Lessons Learned Workshop

Windsor Hotel, Nairobi

June 11-12, 2013

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- Create a shared understanding of what has been achieved through the project and lessons that have been learned.
- Look ahead and discuss how to build on lessons learned to support continued contributions to missions’ FTF programs and to the AU CAADP agenda.

WORKSHOP AGENDA

Tuesday, June 11

8:30 Welcome, Introductions, Overview of the Workshop – Shirley Erves

- Call to Order
- Welcome to Kenya – Sunil Xavier, Acting Deputy Regional Director for USAID/East Africa.
- Getting started – Introduction of participants/Objectives/Agenda

9:15 Opening Comments - Setting the Stage for the Workshop – Jennifer Maurer, USAID/W and Peter Ewell, East Africa Regional Mission

9:30 Overview of Africa Lead Project Activities – David Tardif-Douglin, Carla Denizard and Kimberly Hickok Smith

10:30 TEA BREAK

11:00 Q&A and Plenary discussion -- Africa Lead Project Overview

11:30 Module 1 Champions of Change Panel — Moderated by John Azu and David Omambia. Panel: Dr. Moses Zinah, Liberia; Mrs. Felicia Owusu Nyantekyi, Ghana; Jackson Kiraka, Kenya; Jackie Mkindi, Tanzania; Sibongile Sibanda, Zimbabwe

1:00 LUNCH
2:00  **Contributions of Africa Lead to USAID and CAADP Programs** – Moderated by Peter Ewell.  
Panel: Tom Hobgood, USAID/Tanzania; Belay Mengistu, USAID/Ghana; Tom Mugisa, Uganda (CAADP Focal Point) Q&A

2:45  **Internships** –Moderator: Kimberly Hickok Smith.  
Panel: Margaret Komen, Julius Wambura, Brian Tembo, Ernest Likoko, Lazaro Nyato

3:45  **AFTERNOON BREAK**

4:15  **Non-State Actors** – Moderator: Gathoni Mungai  
Panel: Ian Mashingaidze, FANRPAN; Lucy Muchoki, PANAAC and CAADP NSA Task Team

5:15  Close

6:00  **Reception**

**Wednesday, June 12**

8:15  **Welcome/Overview of Wednesday agenda**

Recap of Wednesday Discussions and Lessons Learned – Tom Mugisa

Comments – Jeff Hill, USAID Bureau of Food Security, Washington

9:15  **Institutional Assessments** –David Tardif-Douglin, John Azu, and David Omambia

10:15  **TEA BREAK**

10:45  **Lessons Learned from AL Leadership Training Programs** – Katharine Coon  
Perspectives from Regional Trainers – Mary Njenga, East Africa program and Agatha Johnson, West Africa program

Plenary Q&A, and discussion including comments from other Champions – Paul Purnell

12:15  **Institutional Capacity Development** – Moderator: Carla Denizard  
Panel: Frances Konu, CORAF; Ibrahim Idi Issa, CILSS; Pauline Petryszyn, CILSS intern

1:30  **LUNCH**

2:30  **OER Overview** – Catherine Ngugi, Project Director, OER Africa

3:00  **Summary of lessons learned and issues moving forward**

4:00  **Closing Comments** – Jeff Hill, David Tardif-Douglin, Kimberly and Carla

4:30  **TEA BREAK**

5:00  **Lessons Learned related to USAID Operational Issues** – Closed Meeting for USAID and Africa Lead Project Staff