



Symposium Wrap-up

Friday August 26, 2011

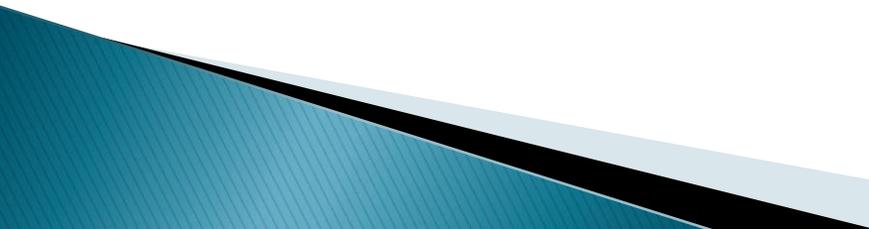
Gathenya Plenary

- ▶ How to deal with the short-term research challenge?
- ▶ How do we build partnerships between LGUs and African institutions?
- ▶ What role can information technology (ICT) play?
 - These might serve as good research questions
 - Document examples of what works
 - Establish LGU experiment stations in all African nations
 - Perhaps with existing NARIs or CGIARs
 - Perhaps a major component would be virtual

Interdisciplinary Engagement

- ▶ How can a project like this be replicated when it's so individually driven?
 - ▶ How can university policies be changed to provide incentives for such work?
 - ▶ And how can it be done in a way that there are broader local community benefits?
 - ▶ When building such a project, how do you manage the multidisciplinaryity?
 - ▶ Can we create a portal to give various collaborators access to Penn State's faculty and information? (e.g. India–Africa model)
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Educational engagement

- ▶ How can we get the tangible and intangible educational goals communicated and incentivized?
 - ▶ How do we address the language barrier?
 - Good to do at least some study of language
 - Good to seek out Penn State students from the country and have conversations with them before going to do research
 - ▶ Important to have reflection time for students after study-abroad experience
 - ▶ Unmentioned challenge: Funding
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Research–Extension Collaborations

- ▶ Genuine and trusting partnerships are needed to overcome host of barriers
 - Great opportunity to collaborate on publications
 - Opportunity to learn from past failures
- ▶ How to mainstream gender in research–extension?
- ▶ How to promote participatory research–extension system (including farmers, extension, researchers, and policy makers)?
 - How do we get African policy makers committed?
How do we get US policy makers committed?

Extra-academic Perspectives

- ▶ African continent has substantial consumer potential and agricultural production potential
 - “Regional trading blocks” becomes a more useful concept than looking at individual nations
 - Need competent research teams.
 - Need to involve policy makers
 - Need African problem-solving approach
 - Curriculum development to produce African scientists
 - How to better use technology

- ▶ Universities can and should expose young people to African needs and outreach opportunities
 - ▶ Teaching and learning
 - Universities should be less a passive observer and more of a champion of ideas and projects.
 - Missing out on comparative learning opportunities
 - Have to recognize the importance of rural organizations, such as cooperatives, in the African context
 - ▶ Refocus donors, make extension more effective
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