INTERPRETING THE REFLECTIVE JOURNALS OF FOOD SECURITY FELLOWS FROM KENYA AND UGANDA: A PROFESSIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

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2004

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
May, 2012

INTERPRETING THE REFLECTIVE JOURNALS OF FOOD SECURITY FELLOWS FROM KENYA AND UGANDA: A PROFESSIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Food security has been on the agenda of governments for many years. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights added "the right to food" as a component of having an acceptable standard of living (United Nations, 1948, article 25). The 1974 World Food Conference proclaimed, "every man, women and child has the inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition" (Mechlem, 2004, p. 634). And as people continued to suffer from hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity, attendees of the 1996 International Food Summit promised to cut hunger in half by 2015 (Bickel, Nord, Price, Hamilton, & Cook, 2000).

The World Food Summit declared that,

> [f]ood security, at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels is achieved when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. (Mechlem, 2004, p. 634)

Moreover, the World Bank claimed world hunger is "the world's most serious health problem and a key indicator of social development because of its effects on health, educational achievement, gender inequality, and poverty" (Coleman-Jensen, 2010, p. 218).

An extreme drought caused the United Nations to pronounce a famine in Africa during

2011, which had not occurred since the 1980s (“International,” 2011). In addition to drought, poor infrastructure and diseases, including malaria, add to the poverty and food insecurity of many African countries (“Special Report,” 2004). “They lack the roads, electricity, health care and teachers needed to break out of poverty” (“Special Report,” 2004, p. 20). In addition, political hostilities have caused an increase in food security-based emergencies in the last 30 years (Wright & Husemann, 2006). Simply put, “Sub-Saharan Africa [e.g., the nations of Kenya and Uganda] cannot produce enough to meet its food needs and remains host to 16 of the 18 most undernourished countries” (Mutimba, Knipscheer, & Naibakelao, 2010, p. 13).

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID, 2011) reported recently that 3.5 million Kenyans and 600,000 Ugandans required humanitarian assistance; moreover, the global acute malnutrition (GAM) prevalence was 15% in Kenya. “Any GAM prevalence above 10 percent is considered to be unacceptable” (Loewenberg, 2011, p. 18). “GAM refers to the total number of children with severe acute malnutrition plus those with moderate acute malnutrition, that is all those with weight for height (WFH) <80% of median, or <-2 Z scores” (Wright & Husemann, 2006, p. 6.). Z scores express the WFH numbers as a standard deviation below the median (Wright & Husemann, 2006).

> Fortunately, some countries in Africa are beginning to see positive results. President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda has fashioned the fastest-growing economy in East Africa, and is the only country in all of Africa to turn the corner on AIDS. All of this is despite Uganda being landlocked and victimized by insurgency in the north backed by Sudan’s Islamist forces. (“Special Report,” 2004, p. 20)

Even though Kenya faces a travel warning from the U.S. Department of State because of possible terrorist risks, it is still described as having a “. . . democratic and development-minded government . . .” (“Special Report,” 2004, p. 20).

One of the main reasons farmers in Africa cannot produce more food is the lack of training for the extension officers who should share improved farming practices with the farmers

(Kanté, 2010; Mutimba et al., 2010). The extension officers are trained mainly in production methods, but farmers also need more information regarding post-harvest processes, value chains and opportunities to continue learning (Kanté, 2010; Mutimba et al., 2010). To help prepare extension officers in areas other than only farming, Mutimba et al. (2010) suggested short courses or degree programs be offered.

The situation in East Africa led faculty members at Oklahoma State University to develop a grant proposal (see Appendix A) focused on improving food security in Kenya and Uganda by catalyzing communication networks between policymakers, community leaders and media professionals (see Figure 1) ("Improving Food Security," 2010). This group of people was selected because of their ability to "provide the catalyst needed to address issues and policies that currently limit food security in these nations" ("Improving Food Security," 2010, p. 5) (see Appendix B). While the project aimed to develop social capital, Ehrhardt, Marsili, and Vega-Redondo (2007) indicated this could not occur without participants being "enhanced by close interaction" (p. 3). When social networks are created, information is easily transferred between network members (Kossinets, Kleinberg, & Watts, 2008). This free-flow of information would be necessary for the program to ". . . be the beginning of a potent and synergistic force for positive change" ("Improving Food Security," 2010, p. 5).

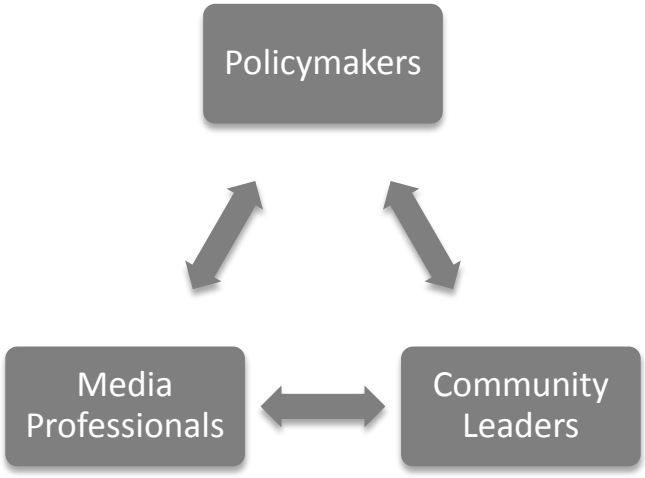

Figure 1. Reciprocal flow of communication between participating Food Security Fellows. Adapted from Improving food security by catalyzing communication networks between key stakeholders: Linking media, policies, and communities in Kenya and Uganda (2010). Grant Proposal funded by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership. Oklahoma State University.

A community leader (i.e., an opinion leader) "is able to influence other individuals' attitudes or overt behavior informally in a desired way with relative frequency" (Rogers, 2003, p. 27). Community leaders were selected because of the perceived authority or *referent power* they possess and also their knowledge of the community's needs in regard to improving food security in the nations of Kenya and Uganda ("Improving Food Security," 2010).

Policymakers "control the political decision-making within a government" ("Improving Food Security," 2010, p. 7). In developing countries, if policymakers aspire for their country to increase its status in a global market, they must find ways to compete with more advanced countries (Millstone & Zwaneberg, 2003). To accomplish this, they must "establish new, or elaborate existing, food policy-making and control regimes" (Millstone & Zwaneberg, 2003, p. 655).

Two important roles of media professionals include "serving as the voice of the people and monitoring governance" ("Improving Food Security," 2010, p. 7). Therefore, they were the connection that could link the participants of this grant-supported program to the public while

also mediating between the community leaders and policymakers ("Improving Food Security," 2010).

Through the grant-funded project, "Improving Food Security by Catalyzing Communication Networks between Key Stakeholders: Linking Media, Policies, and Communities in Kenya and Uganda" (see Appendix C), 26 individuals participated and would be considered Food Security Fellows (FSF) ("Improving Food Security," 2010). The grant-funded project, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, was implemented as a four-phase process. Two phases of the project brought 13 Kenyans and 13 Ugandans to the United States for a five-week, professional development experience. Twelve Food Security Fellows came during April 2011, and the remaining 14 came during September and October 2011. During the Fellows' stay in Oklahoma, they received rigorous training in food production, education/advocacy, food security/sufficiency, nutrition and rural vitality ("Improving Food Security," 2010).

> Through learning experiences in the United States, open dialogue [on food security/sufficiency topics] among the Fellows and their U.S. counterparts, including food security experts, strategies and practices, would be examined and learned as well as 'contextualized' to resonate in the targeted nations. ("Improving Food Security," 2010, p. 1)

The remaining two phases of this reciprocal exchange included two groups of Oklahoma State University faculty and collaborators traveling to Kenya and Uganda to learn more about the regional food security situation and related challenges in the two nations.

The keystone of this program was an 11-day internship, during which the Food Security Fellows worked in a business or organization similar to their professional work settings in Kenya and Uganda. The term *internship* describes work experience designed for students to learn while gaining real-world experience (Green, 1997). For example, a science writer from Uganda, who writes on agricultural topics and the intersection of governmental policies interned in the

Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry. A livestock specialist from the Kenyan Ministry of Agriculture completed her job shadowing experience with county extension educators who work with livestock producers.

The internship/job shadowing experiences were included in the program because, as Zemke and Zemke (1995) stated, "adults are competency-based learners, meaning they want to learn a skill or acquire knowledge that they can apply pragmatically to their immediate circumstances" (p. 40). In addition, Mutimba et al. (2010) shared that "mid-career professionals represent an underexploited group of learners" (p. 20) and they can improve their effectiveness by sharing with others. The interaction with other professionals was an important step to increase the Fellows' food security aptitude because, as Ehrhardt et al. (2007) stated, relationships with advanced colleagues increase competence. This approach allowed the Fellows to gain hands-on experience of how their jobs are done in the United States and how they could have a positive impact on reducing food insecurity in their home countries.

As a part of their experiences in the United States, the Fellows kept a reflective journal. Reflection ". . . leads the learner into a careful observation of the surrounding world and stimulates exploration" (Larson, Bruening & Bruce, 2009, p. 314). "The process of journal writing forces students to integrate new information with what they already know" (Alm, 1996, p. 113). This phenomenon is related closely to Kolb's (1984) definition of experiential learning (see Figure 2) as "a holistic integrative perspective on learning that combines experience, cognition and behavior" (p. 21).

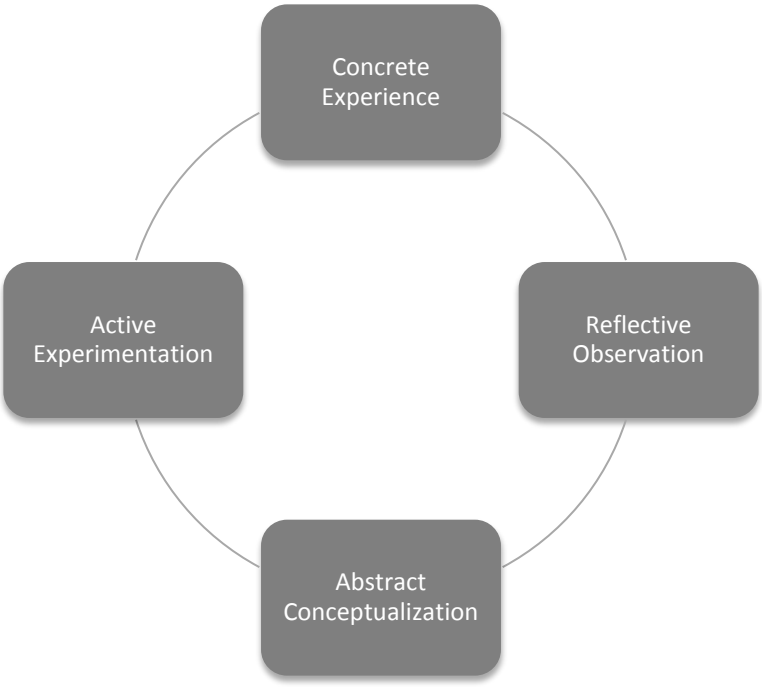

Figure 2. The Experiential Leaning Cycle and Basic Learning Styles. Adapted from *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development* by D. Kolb, 1984.

Based on the previous work of Dewey, Piaget and Lewin, Kolb (1984) theorized that to learn from experience a person must have a receptive predisposition or mental set:

> An openness and willingness to involve oneself in new experiences (concrete experience); observational and reflective skills so these new experiences can be viewed from a variety of perspectives (reflective observation); analytical abilities so integrative ideas and concepts can be created from their observations (abstract conceptualization); and decision-making and problem-solving skills so these new ideas and concepts can be used in actual practice (active experientation). (Merriam, Cafferella, & Baumgartner, 2007, p. 164)

Hubbs and Brand (2005) stated all four stages of Kolb's theory of experiential learning could be achieved through guided reflective journaling. Concrete experience and reflective observation are met through describing and reflecting on an experience; abstract conceptualization is achieved when journal authors begin to question explanations or meanings,

and active experimentation or application occurs when journal authors apply what they have learned to future events (Hubbs & Brand, 2005).

Problem

A wide variety of information and research is available regarding American students or professionals and their travels and experiences while traveling and studying abroad. Russell and Vallade (2009) analyzed American students' reflective journals to evaluate the impact of study-abroad programs, and Larson et al. (2009) used reflective journals to increase the engagement of American students who participated in study-abroad courses. However, a lack of research exists in regard to people who travel to the United States for educational or professional programs and even more so for training involving food security. To improve future opportunities for career development of international professionals, additional research was needed to create a basis for planning, delivering, and evaluating effective programming, especially programs designed to improve the food security of developing countries and their related issues and challenges.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of how select Kenyan and Ugandan Food Security Fellows made meaning of their experiences regarding the culture of the United States, their internship/job shadowing experiences, training procedures, and group activities organized during a grant-funded professional and cultural exchange program.

Research Questions

Three research questions guided this research study.

1. How did the Fellows' understanding of American culture and U.S. citizens change as a result of the professional development program?
2. What were the benefits and challenges as perceived by the Fellows who participated in an internship/job shadowing experience while in the United States?

3. What were the reactions of the Fellows toward the training experiences during their professional development program that resonated regarding their professional roles, especially aspects relevant to improving food security in their home countries?

Scope and Limitations

The study included four limitations:

1. The generalizability of this study is limited to Kenyan and Ugandan Food Security Fellows who participated in the grant-funded project conducted by the faculty at Oklahoma State University during 2011.
2. The scope of this study was limited to the 14 Food Security Fellows who participated in the third phase of the food security project**.**
3. The study used reflective journaling as the method of data collection. As a consequence, the results are limited to the reflection and honesty of the Fellows who participated in the reflective journaling.
4. The chance for error existed when transcribing the data because the Fellows' journal entries were handwritten.

Definition of Terms

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs – an administrative unit of the U.S. Department of State that, " . . . fosters mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries to promote friendly and peaceful relations" (Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, n.d., para 1).

Communication – "a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior" ("Communication," 2012, as cited in Merriam-Webster.com).

Community Leaders – individuals who can significantly influence the attitudes and behaviors of community members (Rogers, 2003).

Culture – " . . . consists of the shared behavior and symbolic meaning systems of a group of people" (Merriam, Cafferella, & Baumgartner, 2007, p. 223).

Food Insecurity – "Limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways" (Bickel et al., 2000, p. 6).

Food Security – "Access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food security includes at a minimum: (1) the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, and (2) an assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways" (Bickel et al., 2000, p. 6).

Food Security Fellow – Key stakeholders in the grant-funded project, including media professionals, policymakers and community leaders from Kenya and Uganda ("Improving Food Security," 2010).

Hunger – "The uneasy or painful sensation caused by a lack of food. The recurrent and involuntary lack of access to food. Hunger may produce malnutrition over time . . . and is a potential, although not necessary, consequence of food insecurity" (Bickel et al., 2000, p. 6).

Internship/Job shadowing – work experience designed for students to learn while gaining real-world experience (Green, 1997).

Kenya – "Republic of East Africa, south of Ethiopia bordering on the Indian Ocean; member of the Commonwealth of Nations; formerly a British crown colony and protectorate" ("Kenya," 2012, as cited in Merriam-Webster.com).

Media Professionals – people who interpret happenings and disseminate the information to the public via various outlets (Wu, Weaver, & Johnson, 1995).

Networking – "the exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions; *specifically* [emphasis added]**:** the cultivation of productive relationships for employment or business" ("Networking," 2012, as cited in Merriam-Webster.com).

Oklahoma – A state developed in 1907 in the central United States, with a population of 3,687,050. Oklahoma ranks fourth in the nation in wheat production, fifth in cattle and calves and eighth in hog production (Oklahoma, 2012).

Oklahoma State University – Founded on December 25, 1890, and formerly known as Oklahoma A&M College, OSU was established as a Land Grant University (Oklahoma State University, 2012).

Policymakers – individuals who develop "generalized guides to action that activates the organizational system, providing bridges between it and its society, and facilitating orderly change, thus bringing the organization closer to its continually changing society" (Ramsey, 1975, p. 3).

Reflective Journaling – A learning strategy that improves comprehension of learned concepts and promotes deeper thinking and understanding (Dunlap, 2006).

Uganda – "Republic of East Africa, north of Lake Victoria; member of the Commonwealth of Nations" ("Uganda," 2012, as cited in Merriam-Webster.com).

U.S. Department of State – An administrative entity of the Federal Government of the United States of America, which is a part of the executive branch. The department is led by the U.S. Secretary of State and includes the administrator for the U.S. Agency for International Development, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, the Counselor and Chief of Staff, and multiple under secretaries (U.S. Department of State, 2009).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the relevant literature that contributed to this research study. Major section titles include Food Security and Its Impact on East Africa, International Internships as a Form of Professional Development, The Value of Cultural Exchange Programs and Overcoming Culture Shock, Reflection and Reflective Journaling, and Conceptual Framework.

Food Security and Its Impact on East Africa

"Hunger is simply not acceptable in our society" (Bickel et al., 2000, p. 1). But according to the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), more than 925 million people populate the world who are hungry every day and two-thirds of them live in only seven countries: Bangladesh, China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia and Pakistan (Food Security, 2011). "The number of hungry people in the world rose to 852 million between 2000 and 2002, up by 18 million from the mid-1990s" (Cohen, 2005, p. 775). Sanchez, Swaminathan, Dobie and Yuksel (2005) noted that 90 percent of the people who suffer from hunger are chronically undernourished, "caused by a constant or recurrent lack of access to food of sufficient quality and quantity, often coupled with poor health and caring practices" (p. 3). In addition, Sanchez et al. (2005) said that more than two billion people consume more than the required amount of calories and protein but still do not receive enough critical micronutrients, therefore, suffering from *hidden hunger*.

Bickel et al. (2000) identified four types of hunger experience from most severe to least severe: cyclical, episodic, prolonged, and brief but intense. Coleman-Jensen (2010) noted that households are able to transition between levels quickly. In a typical household, adults will choose to endure more severe stages of hunger before allowing the children to feel the effects of being hungry (Bickel et al., 2000).

Bickel et al. (2000) found that,

> in the first stage, households experience inadequacy in food supplies and food budgets, feel anxiety about the sufficiency of their food to meet basic needs, and make adjustments to their food budgets and types of food served. As the situation becomes more severe, the food intake of adults is reduced and the adults experience hunger, but they spare the children this experience. In the third stage, children also suffer reduced food intake and hunger while adults' reductions in food intake are more dramatic. (p. 9)

Malnutrition and hunger continue to be a leading cause of sickness worldwide (Sanchez, et al., 2005). These conditions are known to cause poor health among children (Alaimo, Olson, Frongillo, & Briefel, 2001) and poor school outcomes (Dunifon & Kowaleski-Jones, 2003). Adults also experience poorer health, including increased morbidity and mortality (Siefert, Heflin, Corcoran, & Williams, 2004), higher obesity (Bhattacharya, Currie, & Haider, 2004), higher sensitivity to disease (Mechlem, 2004), and an increased incidence of depression (Heflin, Seifert, & Williams, 2005). "The following factors emerged as strongly correlated with high levels of underweight pre-school children in developing countries: poverty, low food production, mothers' lack of education, poor water, sanitation and health facilities, and climatic shocks" (Sanchez et al., 2005 p. 3).

Poverty is a leading cause of food insecurity (Sanchez et al., 2005). Sanchez et al. (2005) also provided two main causes of hunger; the first is a lack of production, and the second is that people who are not food secure cannot purchase the food needed to provide proper nutrition for themselves and their families. "The poorest people [including farmers,] usually buy more food

than they sell. Thus, high food prices tend to worsen poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition" (FAO, 2011, p. 13). Many times the poor must work for little pay because they are desperate to find a job and must accept low wages (Sanchez et al., 2005). "Poor and hungry people often face social and political exclusion. They have little access to education, health services, and safe drinking water" (Sanchez et al., 2005 p. 2). Other than poverty, factors affecting food security include "national and international economic environment, population growth, infrastructure, the climate, the level of investment and donor commitment, access to appropriate training and job skills, asset base, conflict and access to pasture, and the quality of diet, health, and sanitation" (Cohen, 2005, p. 775).

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), in conjunction with Health and Human Services, claimed that consistency was important when developing a national scale to measure food insecurity and hunger (Bickel et al., 2000). The USDA also declared the system must be used at the national, state, and local levels (Bickel et al., 2000); Sanchez et al. (2005) reiterated this concept. The challenge of measuring food insecurity is that it is complex. "Food security is a multidimensional phenomenon which varies through a continuum of successive stages as the condition becomes more severe" (Bickel et al., 2000, p. 1). However, an accurate instrument is necessary for "public officials, policy makers, service providers, and the public" to determine the effectiveness of existing food security programs and also for creating new programs (Bickel et al., 2000, p. 7).

Even though governments around the world are striving to improve food security, the economic impacts of globalization are not always positive. "More than ever before, nation states are helpless to reduce poverty on their own initiatives alone because of the increasing linkages in the world economy" (Akanjit, 2002, p. 3). Braun and Diaz-Bonilla (2008) indicated the increase in globalization has added to the skewedness of income distribution. They also noted the substantial increase in recent food prices. Attempts to curb the impacts of higher prices, both internationally and domestically, have inadvertently distorted trade practices and thus increased

the instability of food prices (Braun & Diaz-Bonilla, 2008). “The countries most exposed to price swings on international markets were typically poor and food importers: they had few reserves and inadequate budgetary means to procure food at high prices; they also lacked the option of restricting exports” (FAO, 2011, p. 8). As many African countries rely on imported goods, they were the most impacted by the recent increase in food prices, and it was predicted that the unstable food prices were likely to continue (FAO, 2011).

“A country’s position in the global economic order affects its level of food security and other indicators of well-being” (Mihalache-O’keef & Li, 2011, p. 72). Sanchez et al. (2005) indicated it is important to find ways that will allow a single village or an entire country to experience self-sustaining growth of the economy. In turn, this will improve the country’s position in the economic order. For this to happen, “several kinds of capital need to be increased: natural (soil nutrients), infrastructure (roads, power telecoms), human (skills and health), and financial (household assets, collateral, microfinance)” (Sanchez, Palm, & Sachs, 2007, p. 2).

Some people argue an increase in foreign capital and improved technology will help to reduce hunger because they will increase the income of all economic classes (Mihalache-O’keef & Li, 2011). On the other hand, “the dependency theory says a country’s reliance on foreign capital and foreign processed goods, even if inducing growth, widens the income gap between the rich and the poor” (Mihalache-O’keef & Li, 2011, p. 72). Emergency food aid is not cheap or reliable; moreover, it decreases the market price and adversely discourages food production at the local level, which increases dependency on more emergency aid (Cohen, 2005). In addition, “the community may become over-dependent on outside help if the agencies remain for too long” (Wright & Husemann, 2006, p. 10). Although these types of interventions have been beneficial, they must also include plans to develop the local production systems and must be prepared to facilitate a transitional period when the emergency aid is going to end (Wright & Husemann, 2006).

The United States plus 185 other nations determined, at the 1996 International Food Summit, that each country would be responsible for reducing its own hunger (Bickel et al., 2000). Sanchez et al. (2005) recommended that countries increase their budget line, specifically in agriculture; moreover, the authors recommended African governments "invest at least 10 percent of their national budget . . . to make necessary investments in rural energy, infrastructure, health, education, and conservation" (p. 12).

The Food and Agricultural Organization (2011) stated:

> Investment in agriculture will improve competitiveness of domestic production, increase farmers' profits and make food more affordable for the poor. These investments should consider the rights of existing users of land and related natural resources, benefit local communities, promote food security and not cause undue harm to the environment. (p. 42)

If a country is to have sustainable economic development, it must also focus on human development; and human development cannot occur without food security (Radha & Prasanna, 2010). The role of women in ensuring food security is also paramount.

> Women are a crucial component of improving food security in developing countries because of their dominant role in gaining access to food for the family, their decision-making role, their access to and control over resources, their education, and their nutritional knowledge matter much in measuring the nutritional status of the family members. (Radha & Prasanna, 2010, p. 312)

In many countries, however, women's poor status is a dominant factor in food insecurity (Wright & Husemann, 2006). This is reflected in low birth weights, associated with high levels of anemia and low rates of weight gain in pregnant women. Often times, women ignore their nutritional needs to provide for the needs of their children (Wright & Husemann, 2006). For example, "60% of pregnant women in the Samburu district [of Kenya] are malnourished, placing their lives and

those of their unborn children at great risk, while children in the district were better off with 19% acutely malnourished" (Carter, 2006. p. 1).

The quality of childcare is reduced by women's "lack of education, economic opportunity, and freedom outside the home, all of which restrict knowledge transmission, self-esteem, and income generation" (Sanchez et al., 2005, p. 6). If women are going to be the driving force to reduce malnutrition, especially in children, women and young girls need to have more access to public services, including credit services, healthcare, such as additional nutrition for pregnant and lactating mothers, and education (Sanchez et al., 2005). Radha and Prasanna (2010) said that giving women access to these resources impacts society and food security in a positive way.

Radha and Prasanna (2010) concluded that,

> micro-credit facilities should be examined as an effective and sustainable strategy for supporting women's livelihood, and asset creation is necessary because women belonging to economically under-privileged classes are often over worked and under paid so they remain poor, because they have no productive assets. (p. 317)

Sub-Sarahan Africa is home to 239 million hungry people (World Hunger Education Service, 2012). "Sub-Sarahan Africa . . . is the only region of the world where hunger is increasing" (Sanchez et al., 2005 p. 1). In addition, it is the only region drastically off-track to meet the Millennium Development Goals, as established by the Task Force on Hunger, by 2015 (Sanchez et al., 2007). "Several biophysical and economic constraints impede sub-Saharan Africa's escape from extreme poverty, including extremely low productivity of food production, heavy burden of infectious disease, and insufficient core infrastructure in water, roads, power and telecommunications" (Sanchez et al., 2007 p. 1).

Mihalacha-O'keef and Li (2011) reported that, in May 2006, 39 nations needed support from other countries to address food security emergencies; 25 of those countries were in Africa. Many reasons contribute to food insecurity in Africa, and a major factor is the number of people

living in rural and developing areas. Sanchez et al. (2007) reported that more than 70 percent of people in Africa live in rural areas, and 30 percent of the population does not receive proper nutrition. “Low food production persists in rural areas . . . remote from markets and where agricultural production is risky. Poor access to markets means many farmers are unable to diversify into higher value commodities or add value through processing” (Sanchez et al., 2005 p. 4). More research is needed on Africa’s staple crops, including sorghum, millet and cassava, if these farmers are to increase their productivity (USAID, 1995).

Former United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan stated the need for a “uniquely African Green Revolution in the twenty-first century. This revolution would capitalize on existing knowledge to transform the region’s agriculture, nutrition, and markets, using the pro-poor, pro-women, and pro-environment interventions” (Sanchez et al., 2005 p. 10).

This literature shows the frightful need to address the issues of food insecurity, specifically in developing countries. Therefore, this project aimed to “improve the prospects of ensuring food security in Kenya and Uganda by providing professional development for three key stakeholder groups whose collaboration stands to multiply their collective impact on food insufficiency: community leaders, media specialists, and policymakers” (“Improving Food Security,” 2010, p. 1).

International Internships as a Form of Professional Development

After the events of September 11, 2001, it was realized that America is not immune to global issues (Collins & Davidson, 2001).

> Our nation needs to build and maintain partnerships worldwide, cooperating with other governments with shared interests to achieve the kind of security and quality of life citizens expect. At the same time, we realized that our higher education system has not sufficiently equipped the present generation of Americans for the new global context. (Collins & Davidson, 2001, p. 51)

"General findings show that American education is behind in terms of development of international programs, and specifically areas such as language requirements, exchange programs, and internships for both students and faculty" (Webb, Mayer, Pioche, & Allen, 1999, p. 381). However, "little has been written about cross-cultural education that utilized experiential learning" (Boyle, Nackerud, & Kilpatrick, 1999, p. 202).

Chau (1990) said international experiential learning allows students to adapt more easily to different cultures and value the cultural integrity of people different from themselves. "Well-designed study abroad and cultural exchange programs based on the experiential learning model allow students to build upon knowledge obtained in the classroom by effectively applying it in real-world situations" (Pires, 2000, p. 40).

Jones and Bjelland (2004) said:

> It is important, however, to look beyond international student internships simply as work experiences. Rather, the hallmark of international agricultural internships is the concept of applied academics, wherein internships are designed to help the student gain a clearer perspective of a set of core and discipline specific competencies that are transferable to any work or career setting. (p. 963)

Webb et al. (1999) identified international internships as the second most important characteristic of producing employable graduates, second only to language training. In addition, they found employers hold "knowledge of other cultures, cross-cultural communication skills, and experience in international business" just as highly as they hold a college degree (Webb et al., 1999, p. 392). Bruening and Shao (2005) determined experiential learning was the most effective teaching method when students were learning in a different country and that internships and field trips caused students to look at things from a new perspective. "Four of the top five rated international teaching methods focused on direct active learning of students in international settings" (Bruening & Shao, 2005, p. 53).

"One in six U.S. jobs is directly tied to international trade" (Bruening & Shao, 2005, p. 48). "One major challenge for multinational employers is hiring people who can function effectively and efficiently across national boundaries" (Webb et al., 1999, p. 380). Webb et al. (1999) also concluded that employers desire a "diverse educational background" when selecting new employees and that international experiences, specifically work experience and internships, were given more value than receiving traditional international education programs. Boyle et al. (1999) asserted that students needed more meaningful experiences than simply the traditional curriculum.

Employers are not the only people who value hands-on experience. For example, Rodriguez and Roberts (2011) concluded that students preferred hands-on methods of gaining knowledge over traditional classroom settings. Wingenbach, Chmielewski, Smith, Piña, and Hamilton (2006) said "students involved in hands-on experiences in these international settings increased their problem-solving processes and critical thinking skills" (p. 81). Harder, Lamm, and Vergot (2010) added "activities that provided hands-on experience were considered to be the most important for professional and personal development" (p. 4).

Boyle et al. (1999) described the reciprocal benefits of social work, as experienced by students participating in international internships:

> Latin American social workers have developed unique approaches to generalist social work with a strong emphasis on community development. These models could also be useful in rural areas of the US [United States]. Thus, an interchange has many mutually beneficial aspects for both the host students and faculty and the guests from the US [United States]. (p. 204)

Moreover, the participants of these programs appreciated the opportunity to share ideas with their colleagues (Boyle et al., 1999).

Bryan and Sprague (1997) studied the effects of international internships on student teachers and found them to have a dramatic impact in multiple areas, including "initial hiring,

retention in teaching, attitudes toward students, attitudes toward a second language, curriculum choices, teaching flexibility, and teaching strategies" (Bryan & Sprague, 1997, p. 199). One participant even noted, "it absolutely guaranteed me employment" (Bryan & Sprague, 1997, p. 200). Students value "gaining hands-on experience, opportunities to work on real-world problems, and understanding the significance of teamwork in the workplace" (Jones, Wu, & Hargrove, 2002, p. 163). Even though the majority of internships are unpaid, "the experience garnered in the internship far surpasses the value of a salary earned during the internship" (Adler, 2003, p. 4). Engstrom and Jones (2007) studied eight social work students who completed international internships in Thailand and found the internship program to have been the most important aspect of their education. "They learned to live in a culture not their own, gained insight into their own cultural assumptions, and began to embrace a more ethnorelativistic position" (Engstrom & Jones, 2007, p. 148).

The American Council of Education (2002) recognized the need for an increase in study abroad and international internships, and Webb et al. (1999) concluded that foreign exchange programs and internships should be curriculum requirements. "It is clear that the advantages of an overseas internship experience warrant the time and energy that university educators spend to create these opportunities" (Bryan & Sprague, 1997, p. 201). "The realization before us now is that the question is not whether international/intercultural education should be a significant part of our colleges: without it what we call 'education' is incomplete and insufficient for our contemporary and future needs" (Maidstone, 1995, p. 7).

When individuals undertake an international internship or job shadowing opportunity, they immerse themselves in an ocean of new experiences, the culmination of which will impact their lives and potentially the lives of others in their home nations and in the countries they visit (Chau, 1990). Therefore, this literature can be applied to the extensive development and planning necessary to host beneficial international internship and job shadowing experiences (Bryan & Sprague, 1997) for students and professionals.

The Value of Cultural Exchange Programs and Overcoming Culture Shock

Prior to the early 1970s, references to agricultural education and international experiences were not frequent (Wingenbach et al., 2006). More recent, agricultural education programs have recognized the importance of globalization (Wingenbach et al., 2006). Globalization means "operating on a global scale that rapidly cuts across national boundaries, drawing more and more of the world into webs of interconnection, integrating and stretching cultures and communities across space and time, and compressing our spatial and temporal horizons" (Inda & Rosaldo, 2008, p. 12). Harari (1992) said:

> Since the students we now help educate will live in a highly interdependent and multicultural world, it is obvious that irrespective of the narrower academic and professional skills acquired by these students they will need also to acquire a reasonable degree of knowledge and skills with respect to the interconnectedness of peoples and societies and cross-cultural communication. (p. 53)

"Students" includes adult learners who may study and learn in a myriad of contexts, for example, professional exchanges involving internships and job shadowing experiences.

Bruening and Frick (2004) clarified that organizations desire employees with international experiences and exposure to foreign language skills. Participating in cultural exchange programs helps participants gain global exposure, an understanding of global issues, and diversity (Brueing & Frick, 2004). People must understand the interconnectedness of societies and how global issues impact their lives to be successful in today's society (Ludwig & McGirr, 2003).

Suarez (2003) recommended two-way cultural exchanges as a way to develop diversity and cultural sensitivity, and Acker and Scanes (2000) concluded that involving students and faculty in cultural exchanges would expand the opportunities for global agricultural research. Engstrom and Jones (2007) explained that having two-way exchanges prevents international

activities from becoming “one-directional and flow to the more powerful” (p. 148). Dooley, Dooley, and Carranza (2008) said “many of the problems facing our world today need interdisciplinary and multi-national solutions” (p. 164). “A guiding principle behind efforts to achieve greater understanding and mutual respect among the peoples of the world through cultural exchange is the belief that people learn to live together by *living together* [emphasis added]” (Pires, 2000, p. 41).

In terms of the professional development gained from participating in cultural exchange programs, Gallagher (2002) described the benefits of forming collegial partnerships with international peers. And Rogers (1993) maintained that the ability to gain knowledge, skills, and technical ideas increased.

“An international experience can serve as a motivation for continued learning” (Roberts & Jones, 2009, p. 408). Not only can international experiences increase desire to learn about other cultures, but also these experiences can impact career interest and a yearning to travel internationally again (Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011) as well as increase the desire to volunteer in an international setting (Pires, 2000). “Study abroad positively and unequivocally influences the career path, world view and self-confidence in students” (Dwyer & Peters, 2004, p. 56). Wingenbach et al. (2006) said study-abroad opportunities “increased students’ foreign language capabilities, cultural knowledge, international interests, concerns and sensitivity, while they matured in their thought processes and developed unique individual characteristics” (p. 81). “Participation in study abroad programs enhances academic, social and cultural skills of students, makes them aware of transnational issues, and makes them better leaders of tomorrow” (Özturgut, 2007, p. 44); all of which should mitigate culture shock.

Participants in a study conducted by Odell, Williams, Lawrence, Gartin, and Smith (2002) not only gained awareness of global issues, they also modified preconceived notions about their host countries. Odell et al. (2002) found students gained knowledge about the host country and their home country. These exchange programs allowed participants to view their own country

and culture from a new perspective (Pires, 2000). The understanding of these different perspectives "can be dramatic when the two cultures involved are separated not only by linguistic, social, philosophical, and historical differences, but also by gaping economic disparities such as those that exist between Africa and America" (Pires, 2000, p. 42). In particular, it gives students an appreciation of these differences and helps to "transcend the labels of haves and have nots" (Pires, 2000, p. 42).

"We should find it disheartening that most Americans continue to have a rather abysmal understanding of the world's second largest continent, on which 12 percent of humanity lives" (Pires, 2000, p. 39). This is why Pires (2000) shared the need to promote study abroad and cultural exchange programs, specifically in Africa. Jones and Dos Santos (2008) said, "many of the U.S. State Department authorized programs require a reciprocity condition that American students also do similar programs abroad" (p. 281).

Wingenbach et al. (2006) shared that students' changed perceptions about their host country, Mexico. "The initial negative, stereotypical attitudes and beliefs about poverty, work ethic, and outdated agricultural practices were replaced by positive, progressive beliefs" (p. 86).

Having a cultural awareness can impact the global community as well as local communities (Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011). For example, county extension agents in the United States disseminate information and research from the university level to the public, and if those agents have developed cross-cultural competencies they can more easily transfer information in a globally complex world (Ludwig, 2002). "The gap between domestic and international issues is shrinking and extension cannot fully serve local clientele until it develops effective programs to enhance public understanding of global issues" (Ludwig & McGirr, 2003, p. 410).

Rodriguez and Roberts (2011) concluded the best practices for preparing participants for cultural experiences include "addressing concerns about safety, cultural considerations, travel preparation, identifying preexisting knowledge, and preflection" (p. 29). Preflection needs to be

the starting point as it "provides a bridge between thinking about an experience and actually learning from the experience" (Jones & Bjelland, 2004, p. 963).

Proper preparation before the exchange program readies participants for the "sensory rich" experience, thus allowing them to be more focused and retain valuable information (Roberts & Jones, 2009). Preparing learners for what is to come provides the framework for continual learning, and ensuring participants have adequate information will reduce stress and anxiety while also building excitement (Roberts & Jones, 2009). McGowan (2007) echoed this position: "without the proper preparation and knowledge of what to expect when entering another country, one will not reap the full benefits from such a program" (p. 62). Students who completed preflection activities will be more apt to understand the learning experiences (Jones & Bjelland, 2004).

"Strong emotions, particularly worries about safety should not be ignored" (Roberts & Jones, 2009, p. 406). Addressing safety concerns, packing lists, cultural practices, and schedules can greatly reduce anxiety and provide a more enjoyable experience (Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011).

Rodriguez and Roberts (2011) concluded that the best educational practices for instructors to facilitate during international learning experiences were to ensure "course structure, community involvement, extracurricular activities, and reflection" occurred (p. 29). Combining these practices will give participants more opportunities for interaction with the host culture and people (Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011).

Participants want be involved in the learning processes that occur during a cultural exchange program (Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011). Providing opportunities for interaction with host families or local citizens increase the likelihood of more authentic events occuring (Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011). Myles and Cheng (2003) found participants who interacted more frequently with people from their host country were quicker to adapt to the new and different environment. This interaction also decreased the language barrier and allowed participants to gain more knowledge

of the culture (Myles & Cheng, 2003). Dooley et al. (2008) also shared the benefits of personal interaction and relationships with local citizens; they supported including cultural activities such as museums to gain understanding of the history and heritage of the local community.

Being in an international and unfamiliar experience could easily become overwhelming, especially for novice travelers (Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011). Because of this, educators must be aware of cognitive overload (Roberts & Jones, 2009). One particular example for preventing overload is guided reflection (Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011).

Reflecting about an experience after its completion can prolong the experience, thus increasing the opportunity for learning and extending the motivation to put the newly learned information to work (Roberts & Jones, 2009). Post-reflection activities should relate back to preflection (Roberts & Jones, 2009). To fully understand their learning experience and how their thoughts and perceptions changed, reflection should also occur after students have returned to their natural setting (Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011).

Geelhoed, Abe, and Talbot (2003) described culture shock as a prominent barrier that prevents people from participating in global experiences. “When students experience the accumulated strains of relating to the challenges of an unfamiliar environment, they experience culture shock” (Boyle et al., 1999, p. 203). Zhai (2004) identified other barriers of international participation such as expense, fear of being immersed with people from another culture, homesickness, and political conflict. Andreasen (2003) identified the language barrier and not being able to communicate effectively as a reason for individuals not participating in international experiences. Harder et al. (2010) also indicated cost and work obligations as limitations that hinder participation in international programs. In addition, Dooley et al. (2008) identified “overall anxiety regarding travel” (p. 163) as a hindrance to students partaking in international learning opportunities. However, “acknowledging these fears, coupled with a desire to overcome them, will provide the strength to see beyond the physical barriers to international work and confront the innate fears that hold one back” (Andreasen, 2003, p. 68).

This literature is applicable to the development of professional exchange programs, including those that include mid-career professionals. This kind of exchange allows participants to experience a new cultural paradigm and take that knowledge back to their respective countries (Suarez, 2003). It also allows for those who host exchange participants to broaden their understanding of other cultural mores and facilitate future interactions with people from other countries (Pires, 2000). These types of interactions promote healthy and intelligent communication, which allows for better social, economic and political relations amongst nations (Gallagher, 2002).

Reflection and Reflective Journaling

John Dewey is considered an important developer of the concept of reflection as an approach to learning (Hatton & Smith, 1995). "He considered it to be a special form of problem solving, thinking to resolve an issue which involved active chaining, a careful ordering of ideas linking each with its predecessors" (Hatton & Smith, 1995, p. 33). Boud (2001) defined reflection as "those intellectual and affective activities in which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to new understandings and appreciations" (p. 10).

Reflection is a "fundamental part of the learning process" (Roberts, 2002, p. 45). Kolb (1984) described it as "the way we give meaning to the world" (p. 147). It causes learners to "recapture, notice and re-evaluate their experience" (Boud & Walker, 1993, p. 99) and provides a vehicle to transform experiences into knowledge (Roberts, 2002). For reflection to occur, people must recall the event and make connections between what they learned and how they felt about it (Roberts, 2002). Reflection also can be utilized as a method of self-evaluation. Thorpe (2002) described it as "a means of monitoring our own learning, both what we know, how we know it and the process through which we learn" (p. 80).

Reflection can happen in a number of ways and times, specifically before, during and after an experience (Boud, 2001). "Reflection by teachers and learners before the learning event is as important as reflection during, or after it" (Boud & Walker, 1998, p. 203). Boud (2001)

stated that pre-reflection is used to prepare oneself for what is to come and consists of three stages. At the beginning the focus is on the learner, his or her expectations and predicted outcomes. During this period, the learner will determine how he or she can add value to the experience, what is wanted from an experience, and what may interfere with these plans (Boud, 2001). Second, the context is the focus; the purpose of this stage is to clarify logistical questions, including what is needed to make the experience beneficial. And the third stage of pre-reflection is a focus on learning skills. This stage is important in preparing oneself to utilize the opportunities presented (Boud, 2001).

The next stage is reflection during an event or experience. “Through noticing, intervening and reflection-in-action, we can steer ourselves through events in accordance with what our intentions are and with what we take with us to help us through the process” (Boud, 2001, p. 13). Noticing is simply being aware of both external happenings and inner thoughts, while reflection-in-action involves combining all three features to make meaning of an individual’s involvement in the experience (Boud, 2001).

The most important reflection occurs after the event or experience has transpired. This is partly because the “immediate pressure of acting in real time has passed” (Boud, 2001, p. 13). This involves the individual thinking about the experience, focusing on the feelings and emotions that occurred because of the event, and reevaluating the experience (Boud, 2001). Reevaluation includes “relating new information to that which is already known, seeking relationships between new and old ideas, determining the authenticity for ourselves of the ideas and feelings that have resulted, and making the resulting knowledge one’s own” (Boud, 2001, p. 14).

Van Manen (1977) indicated three levels of reflectivity: technical reflection, practical reflection, and critical reflection. The first level pertains to the means by which information is provided or how an event is created, the second level evaluates assumptions, and the final stage of reflectivity considers the moral and ethical issues of the particular event or experience (Zeichner & Liston, 1987).

Boud and Walker (1998) identified several challenges associated with promoting reflection. Too much structure and guidance leads to "recipe following" and reflection becomes ritualized or linear. Not enough structure leads to disarray and students may not reach conclusions from their reflecting process (Boud & Walker, 1998). "How much help to give must be influenced by the level of study and prior experience, together with the goals of the process" (Thorpe, 2000, p. 92). Furthermore, simply providing time for reflection does not ensure reflection will occur (Boud & Walker, 1998). Schön (1983) indicated the quality of reflection is based on the context in which it is used and the time allowed for it. Those facilitating the reflection process must "create situations in which learners are able to make their own meaning rather than have it imposed on them" (Boud & Walker, 1998, p. 199). The effectiveness of reflection assignments is based on the commitment of the facilitator (Thorpe, 2000).

Effective reflection can assist learning; however, poorly designed reflection assignments may inhibit the act of learning (Boud, 2001). "There are no reflective activities which are guaranteed to lead to learning, and conversely there are no learning activities guaranteed to lead to reflection" (Boud & Walker, 1998, p. 193). Reflection is the mind's way of taking unprocessed material from an experience and making meaning of what has occurred (Boud, 2001). "It involves exploring often messy and confused events and focusing on the thoughts and emotions that accompany them" (Boud, 2001, p. 10).

People write journals for many reasons; some people want to create a memory of an event, some express their feelings and emotions, and others use the act of journal writing as therapy (Boud, 2001). "Journaling in its various forms is a means for recording personal thoughts, daily experiences, and evolving insights" (Hiemstra, 2001, p. 19). Journal entries can be used to revisit past reflections and can be coupled with newly formed opinions and experiences to further the learning process (Hiemstra, 2001). Even professional development can be accomplished through journaling when the writer challenges "dilemmas, contradictions, and evolving worldviews" (Hiemstra, 2001, p. 20).

"There is considerable evidence of the tremendous benefit possible through a journaling technique" (Hiemstra, 2001, p. 25). Those benefits include, but are not limited to, personal growth and development, intuition and self-expression, problem solving, stress reduction and health benefits, and reflection and critical thinking (Hiemstra, 2001). Kerka (2002) described four benefits of learning journals: "Articulating connections between new and existing knowledge improves learning; writing about learning is a way of demonstrating what has been learned; journal writing accentuates favorable learning conditions; and reflection encourages deep rather than surface learning" (Kerka, 2002, p. 3).

Writing tasks are often used as reflection tools because the authors must be specific about what they do or think; in turn, this promotes an attitude of reflection (Hatton & Smith, 1995). "The reflective journal holds potential for serving as a mirror to reflect the student's heart and mind" (Hubbs & Brand, 2005, p. 60). Specifically, journal writing can be "a form of reflective practice, that is, as a device for working with events and experiences in order to extract meaning from them" (Boud, 2001, p. 9). Moon (1999) shared three advantages of using journals as a reflective tool: "to deepen the quality of learning; to increase active involvement in learning and personal ownership of learning; and to enhance professional practice or the professional self in practice" (p. 188).

> Journaling has been accepted internationally as a valued learning tool in continuing-competence programs in countries such as Canada, Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Continuing competence is defined as the promotion of good practice through continuous quality improvement. (Gillis, 2001, p. 55)

"The advantage available in most journaling formats of being able to review or reread earlier reflections makes a progressive clarification of insights possible" (Hiemstra, 2001, p. 20). Rodriguez and Roberts (2011) indicated that journals are an excellent tool for reflection as they not only allow students to reflect but also to synthesize their contributions. Using a journal as a tool for reflection and learning causes students to rely on themselves instead of the teachers,

because they are responsible for “identifying, exploring, and fulfilling their learning needs” (Gillis, 2001, p. 55). Journaling gives students control over their learning processes (Gillis, 2001).

Moon (1999) indicated journals were a specific tool for increasing higher-order thinking skills. Gillis (2001) outlined multiple outcomes of using reflective journals with registered nurses. Those advantages included:

> enhanced progress, growth, and accountability as a professional; development of skills in critical thinking, reflection, self-awareness, and self-confidence; a base for understanding theory; a means to assess its relevancy to practice; and an understanding of when and how to adapt it to fit the realities of practice. (Gillis, 2001, p. 56-57)

Because the process of reflection is different for every individual, facilitators who foster reflection must provide flexible opportunities that are context-specific (Boud & Walker, 1998). The purpose of the reflection assignment must be specific to achieve participant buy-in (Thorpe, 2000). To this end, Roberts (2002) recommended several thinking points for those administering reflection:

> How do you enable learners to make connections between theory and their own personal contexts? How do you make this type of thinking part of the conscious skills and attitudes with which they engage in their studies? And how do you realize these objectives by maximizing the opportunities for dialogue? (p. 50)

Prompting is an important part of the process of learning through reflection (Roberts, 2002). “Asking questions beforehand increases the intentionality of the consciousness or the ‘orientation of the mind to its object’ thus deepening the experience” (Russell & Vallade, 2009, p. 104).

One concern with journal writing is students may write differently because they know the instructor will read their entries (Walker, 2006), i.e., “they write what they think the instructor wants to hear instead of writing about what is true to them” (Walker, 2006, p. 220). Writing reflectively makes students vulnerable because they have expressed their inner thoughts and

feelings; for that reason, teachers and facilitators must establish a strong sense of trust with the writers (Walker, 2006). Epp (2008) showed an increase in time spent with teachers resulted in an increase in trust; therefore, students were more willing to open up and share their true feelings while writing.

Conceptual Framework

Learning is "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). To maximize the transformation of learning, this research study was guided by Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning (see Figure 2). Kolb's (1984) four phases include concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. A learner lives through an experience, reflects or observes said experience, forms abstract concepts or implications regarding the experience, and then uses those implications to guide his or her choices of future experiences (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2001). The theory also allows the learner to "choose which set of learning abilities he or she will use in a specific learning situation" (Kolb et al., 2001, p. 230), for it is not necessary the stages be experienced chronologically. Some people prefer to learn by experiencing and others would rather learn by analyzing, i.e., "watchers favor reflective observation, while doers favor active experimentation" (Kolb et al., 2001 , p. 230). Moreover, reflective journaling allows journal writers to describe and illuminate their understanding of all four stages of experiential learning (Hubbs & Brand, 2005). Therefore, Kolb's experiential learning model fitted well with this study's methodological approach to data collection and analysis, and served as its conceptual prism for understanding and interpreting the phenomenon studied.

Summary

Even though food security has been on the forefront of government policy for decades, 925 million people remain hungry (Food Security, 2011). With poverty being one of the main causes of food insecurity, high food prices continue to exacerbate the food security situation

worldwide (FAO, 2011). The high price of food particularly hurts developing countries that rely on imported goods and many of these countries are in Africa (FAO, 2011). Sub-Saharan Africa "is the only region of the world where hunger is increasing" (Sanchez et al, 2005, p. 1). Because of this, Sanchez et al. (2005) indicated villages and countries must find ways to sustain economic growth. Specifically, Sanchez et al. (2005) recommended countries increase their budget line and at least 10% of the budget needs to be invested in agricultural endeavors. Moreover, the role of women should not be overlooked in fighting hunger because they play a crucial role in a country's ability to improve its food security (Radha & Prasanna, 2010). Improving the infrastructure in rural areas is also a critical step in increasing food security (Sanchez et al., 2005).

Reflection is a crucial aspect in the learning process (Roberts, 2002). Reflecting is particularly important during experiential learning as it is one of the four stages of Kolb's (1984) theory for such. Using journals as a tool for reflection allows learners to experience all four stages of experiential learning. Learners achieve concrete experience and reflective observation through describing the event and reflecting on what occurred; questioning the meaning of events leads to abstract conceptualization; and active experimentation occurs when journal authors use what they have learned in future events (Hubbs & Brand, 2005).

Boud (2001) indicated reflection should occur before, during and after an event that was intended to induce learning. This is in agreement with Rodriguez and Roberts (2011), Jones and Bjelland (2004), Roberts and Jones (2009) and McGowan (2007) who shared the importance of preflection, reflection, and post reflection for cultural exchange programs. Webb et al. (1999) found that participation in international internships was the second most important characteristic of employable graduates and employers ranked cross-cultural experiences as highly as they did an applicant having a college degree. With proper planning and preparation, cultural exchange programs and international internships can be invaluable for students and professionals, including the individuals whose perceptions were described by the study undertaken.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes methods selected and used to achieve the purpose of the study and answer its research questions. The chapter is divided into five sections: Introduction, which includes the purpose of the study, research questions, and general information; Setting and Participants; Procedures; Data Analysis; and Trustworthiness and Validity.

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of how select Kenyan and Ugandan Food Security Fellows made meaning of their experiences regarding the culture of the United States, their internship/job shadowing experiences, training procedures, and group activities organized during a grant-funded, professional and cultural exchange program. The inquiry aimed to identify patterns of understanding the Food Security Fellows gathered from program participation and how they planned to transfer their newly gained knowledge to their home countries. The results from this qualitative study may be used to develop interdisciplinary study programs that will allow for an exchange of knowledge, policies, management systems, and successfully implemented techniques between countries in the future.

Three research questions guided this research study.

1. How did the Fellows' understanding of American culture and U.S. citizens change as a result of the professional development program?
2. What were the benefits and challenges as perceived by the Fellows who participated in an internship/job shadowing experience while in the United States?

3. What were the reactions of the Fellows toward the training experiences during their professional development program that resonated regarding their professional roles, especially aspects relevant to improving food security in their home countries?

A qualitative content analysis was used to analyze the reflective journals of 14 Food Security Fellows. Babbie (2001) defined content analysis as "the study of recorded human communications" (p. 304). The overall aim of content analysis is "to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study" (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992, p. 314). Qualitative research was used as it focuses on "naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 10).

To gain understanding of how participants made meaning of their experiences, the Fellows recorded daily journal entries during their stay in the United States. This study analyzed the written journal entries of 14 Food Security Fellows from Kenya and Uganda who participated in a professional and cultural exchange program designed to improve food security in East Africa. The journal entries provide rich, thick descriptions of the experiences shared by the Fellows. "Journals offer accurate perspectives of participants at a specific time, eliminating any change of perspective due to post phenomenon experiences" (Klein, Lawver & Davis, 2007, p. 101).

Berg (2007) concluded journals and other personal documents are "frequently underestimated in contemporary research" (p. 291). Berg (2007) continued about journals:

> It is the very fact that these documents do reflect the subjective views and perceptions of their creators that makes them useful as data. It is precisely through this subjectivity that these documents provide information and insight about the subject that might not be captured through some other more pedestrian data-collection technique. (p. 291)

McClure and Fuhrman (2011) studied the benefits and practicality of using graduate students as extension consultants in Georgia. They found graduate students helped to alleviate the stress of decreased travel budgets of faculty members with extension appointments. The authors recommended implementing reflective journals to allow students to "document their progress"

and recognized journals as an effective method for instructors to evaluate the progress of students (McClure & Fuhrman, 2011, p. 4). Greiman and Covington (2007) studied reflective journals of agricultural education student teachers to gain "insight into the process of developing reflective practitioners" (p. 120). Student teachers appreciated the opportunity to reflect, the effect reflection had on their ability to solve pedagogical issues and having a record of events; however, some students viewed writing journal entries as a chore (Greiman & Covington, 2007).

Setting and Participants

The grant-funded project, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, was implemented as a four-phase process. The first and third phases of the project brought 26 Kenyans and Ugandans to the United States for a five-week, professional development experience. Twelve Food Security Fellows came during April 2011, and the remaining 14 came during September and October 2011. The remaining two phases of this reciprocal exchange included two groups of Oklahoma State University faculty and collaborators traveling to Kenya and Uganda to learn more about the regional food security situation and related challenges in the two nations.

The population for this study was the 14 Food Security Fellows who participated in the third phase of the grant-funded project aimed at reducing food security in Kenya and Uganda. The participants were selected based on an application and interview process. During the spring of 2011, applications for participation in this professional development program were sent to project coordinators in Kenya and Uganda (see Appendix D). After receiving and analyzing the completed applications, OSU faculty determined who would receive a face-to-face interview. During the second phase of the project, faculty members from the Oklahoma State University Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership personally interviewed applicants in their home countries and selected those to invite for program participation. Selected participants were notified of their admission into the program (see Appendix E). Six of the seven Ugandan participants were male, and altogether included two community leaders, two

policymakers, and three media professionals. The seven Kenyan participants included three community leaders, two policymakers, and two media professionals with four males and three females.

The 14 participants included in this study spent five weeks in the United States. During the first four weeks, the Fellows were housed on the campus of Oklahoma State University, where they received training in food production, education/advocacy, food security/sufficiency, nutrition, and rural vitality ("Improving Food Security," 2010; see Appendix F). During the weekends, programming included cultural activities for the Fellows to gain a well-rounded, cultural experience. OSU faculty and staff secured hosts for the internship or job shadowing portion of the exchange program (see Appendix G). On the tenth day of the program schedule (see Appendix F), the Fellows began an 11 day internship with an organization or company similar to the jobs they held in their home countries, as shown in Table 1. After completing the internships, additional professional development opportunities were conducted on the OSU campus. The fifth week of the program included the Fellows participating in a conference in Washington, D.C., hosted by the U.S. Department of State.

Table 1

Fellows (by alias) and their Internship/Job shadowing Hosts (N = 14)

Alias	Host
Marie	OSU Communications
David	Payne County Commissioner's Office
Matthew	OSU School of Educational Studies (Educational Technology Program)
Luke	*Daily Oklahoman* (Oklahoma's largest daily newspaper)
John	Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry
James	Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives
Michael	OSU Department of Agricultural Economics
Mark	OETA The Oklahoma Network (public television)
Paul	KOSU (public radio)
Sara	Maisha International Orphanage
Adam	Payne County Cooperative Extension Office
Kate	Payne County Cooperative Extension Office
Tim	American Association for Retired Persons of Oklahoma
Anne	National Women in Agriculture Association

Note. The Fellows were given aliases for the purpose of the study and in accordance with OSU's Institutional Review Board procedures.

During their stay in Oklahoma, the Fellows resided in on-campus apartments where communal living and sharing of rooms provided additional opportunities for exchange and interaction to occur. These interactions may have influenced the Fellows' reflective procedures.

Faculty members from Oklahoma State University developed the grant proposal. Dr. D. Dwayne Cartmell II was responsible for the overall coordination of the program, including the budget and expenditures. Dr. M. Craig Edwards assisted with overall coordination and also served as the contact person with embassy officials and Department of State personnel. Drs. Cindy Blackwell, Shelly Sitton and J. Tanner Robertson assisted with coordination and served as writing and public relations specialists. Dr. Barbara Stoecker was the primary consultant for human nutrition issues and strategies related to improving food security in Kenya and Uganda. Dr. Traci Irani (University of Florida) served as the external evaluator of the project. Patrick Saisi, doctoral student and graduate associate, served as a liaison between African partners and project team leaders. Denise George, master's student and graduate assistant, assisted with schedule development and was the liaison between content presenters and internship/job shadowing hosts.

A plethora of volunteers and experts were needed to provide the training program. Various Oklahoma State University faculty members and staff shared their expertise and knowledge with the Fellows. Topics covered included food production, education/advocacy, food security/sufficiency, nutrition and rural vitality ("Improving Food Security," 2010). In addition, many industry leaders were needed to host the Fellows during their internship/job shadowing experiences.

Procedures

The following procedures were followed during this study. Prior to conducting this study, permission was sought and obtained from the Oklahoma State University Office of University Research and the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The application number was AG-1145 (see Appendix H). During an initial program session, the participants were read a script (see Appendix I) to give background information on the voluntary study and presented with a consent form (see Appendix J) on which they could agree or disagree to participate. All 14 Fellows agreed to participate and were given a composition notebook for journaling their experiences. After

realizing the Fellows were using their composition notebooks to take notes during presentations, the researcher provided the participants with an additional notebook with the journal prompts attached to its inside cover. This modification allowed the participants to keep their notes separate from their journal entries.

Hubbs and Brand (2005) said expectations should be clear and guidance should be provided when expecting students to reflect. In addition, Dunlap (2006) concluded that the facilitator of the journaling exercise should "provide students with cues or guided questions to help them focus their journal responses" (p. 22). Therefore, journal prompts were provided to promote reflection and assist the researcher in answering the research questions (see Appendix K). Preflection questions were included in the journal prompts to help participants ready themselves for the program and reflective questions were included based on daily experiences. Five months after the participants returned home, OSU faculty and collaborators conducted post reflection activities during the fourth and final stage of the grant-funded project. However, results from the post reflection activities were not included in this study.

After the completion of the program, participants left their journal with the researcher who transcribed the information verbatim. The journals were returned to the Fellows during the fourth phase of the project when OSU faculty and collaborators returned to Africa. After the journals (see Appendix L) were transcribed, the researcher used ATLAS.ti to code and store the data. The ATLAS.ti program "enables you to organize your text, graphic, audio, and visual data files, along with your coding, memos, and findings into a project" (Creswell, 2007, p. 166).

Data Analysis

A conventional method of content analysis was used to analyze the journal entries (see Appendix L) of the 14 participants, as the purpose of the study was to describe the phenomenon (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) of how Food Security Fellows made meaning of their experiences. This study used an inductive approach to coding data, where codes and themes were developed based on the data being analyzed rather than deductive methods which have pre-developed codes and

themes based on previous research or theory (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). When using inductive analysis, "qualitative researchers build their patterns, categories, and themes from the 'bottom-up,' by organizing the data into increasingly more abstract units of information" (Creswell, 2007, p. 38).

The first step in data analysis was for the researcher to become immersed in the data, which occurs through multiple readings of the transcriptions (Tesch, 1990). Reexamining the data gave multiple stages to the analysis process. Journal entries were read prior to transcribing, during the transcription process, and again after all entries were transcribed to ensure complete data immersion and comprehension. While transcribing the journal entries, the researcher created memos of reactions and possible interpretations of the data. Memoing "could be in the form of preliminary propositions (hypotheses), ideas about emerging categories, or some aspects of the connection of categories" (Creswell, 2007, p. 239). Next, the transcribed journal entries were converted from Microsoft Word documents to text files by the researcher and those files were uploaded to the ATLAS.ti program.

Fourteen separate documents were coded, as the entirety of each individual's journal remained in a single document. Line-by-line or open coding (Creswell, 2007) was utilized to ensure the reading of each recorded word and for the development of unique codes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Open coding "involves taking data and segmenting them into categories of information" (Creswell, 2007, p. 239-240). The level of abstraction of content to be coded was one to two sentences of the participants' words. After coding three journals, the codes were revised and redefined so that the study's research questions could be addressed and justified through journal entries. This modified method of coding enabled constant comparison of the data; thus, codes and research questions as codes were adjusted continually (Creswell, 2007). This technique was used to assist the researcher in establishing continuity within each code or category. As the researcher analyzed more journals, more codes emerged; therefore, the researcher re-examined previously coded journals to remain consistent with the coding process.

Memos were developed (Creswell, 2007) and captured on the ATLAS.ti program to help the researcher define the codes and also to assist in creating inferences based on latent content. The memos assisted the researcher in determining which code would be assigned to each excerpt of text.

After completion of the line-by-line coding, 41 codes were present. Quotes from these codes were printed and sorted into related categories based on the research questions. Themes were then developed from the coded data (Creswell, 2007). “The researcher analyzes the data for specific themes, aggregating information into large clusters of ideas and providing details that support the themes” (Creswell, 2007, p. 244). The themes were then used to organize the findings for each research question.

Researcher Reflexivity

To address reflexivity in the study, a daily researcher reflexive journal was kept. The reflexive journal described biases and assumptions of the researcher that may have influenced the analysis and interpretation of the data collected. Reflexivity means “the writer is conscious of the biases, values, and experiences that he or she brings to a qualitative research study” (Creswell, 2007, p. 243). To show reflexivity, “the researcher comments on past experiences, biases, prejudices, and orientations that have likely shaped the interpretation and approach to the study” (Creswell, 2007, p. 208). To acknowledge biases, the researcher reports involvement in the planning and execution of the Fellows’ training program as well as day-to-day interactions. Involvement also occurred during the 12-day period when the researcher and other OSU collaborators traveled to Uganda the summer prior to conducting this research.

Quality of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is often negatively critiqued in scientific research as it fails to “adhere to [the] canons of reliability and validation” (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 31), as attributed to traditional quantitative research methods. Therefore, multiple techniques to improve the quality of this study were performed. To protect the identity of the Food Security Fellows,

aliases were assigned to each participant and an extensive audit trail was kept during the entire research process. The findings are emic in nature as they originated from the participants' perspectives rather than the researcher's (Berg, 2007).

Creswell and Miller (2000) described eight frequently used techniques to improve the validity of qualitative research. "Examining these eight procedures as a whole, I recommend that qualitative researchers engage in at least two of them in any given study" (Creswell, 2007, p. 209). The researcher used four of these procedures in conducting this research study: clarifying researcher bias (reflexivity), member checking, rich, thick descriptions, and peer debriefing (Creswell, 2007).

Member reflection allows "for sharing and dialoguing with participants about the study's findings, and providing opportunities for questions, critique, feedback, affirmation, and even collaboration" (Tracy, 2010, p. 844). Each participant was provided, via electronic mail, a document containing the transcription of their journal entries and was given a week to respond with changes. This allowed the Fellows to "judge the accuracy and credibility of the account" (Creswell, 2007, p. 208). Member checking or reflection was especially important because the journals were originally handwritten and a slight language barrier existed between the researcher and the participants. Four participants responded with changes that were made in the researcher's data. Lincoln and Guba (1985) said member checking was "the most critical technique for establishing credibility" (p. 314).

Rich, thick descriptions of the participants' views and settings were developed to help the reader determine generalizability or transferability of this study to possible future interdisciplinary exchange programs. Using specific descriptions of the participants' experiences, the reader can determine if the findings would be transferable or applicable to other scenarios (Creswell, 2007).

In addition, weekly peer-debriefing sessions were conducted that offered external assessment of data interpretations and the effect of the researcher's biases. Peer debriefing

"provides an external check of the research process" (Creswell, 2007, p. 208). Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the peer reviewer as someone who inquires about methodology and the interpretations of the researcher. Peers involved in the debriefing sessions included a Ph.D. candidate from Kenya, two Ph.D. candidates from OSU who traveled to Uganda in the fourth stage of the grant-funded project, an OSU professor who specializes in qualitative research, and three other qualitative researchers.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The findings of this study are organized by the three research questions this study sought to answer.

Findings Related to Research Question 1

Research Question 1: How did the Fellows' understanding of American culture and U.S. citizens change as a result of the professional development program?

Assertion: The participants' journals indicated an excitement to see the vast infrastructure, technology and big cities of the United States. Conversely, they shared feelings of anxiety in their journal entries in regard to understanding American accents and their accents being understood, being treated unfairly because of their race, and the perceived unfriendliness of Americans.

During the participants' five-week stay in the United States, they wrote about the welcoming and generous spirit of Americans who were willing to provide assistance and share their expertise. They also realized that Americans tend to lack global knowledge, especially about Africa. At the completion of the program, many participants indicated a changed attitude toward Americans, their diversity, and their culture. This experience has led to participants' understanding the passion and commitment of Americans. It also left some of the participants wanting to return to the United States to further their education. They also expressed the desire to share the opportunities for scholarships and fellowships to study in the United States with their peers in Kenya and Uganda.

Substantiation: After a thematic analysis by the researcher, four themes emerged and were used to organize the study's findings:

1. The Fellows left the United States with a more positive attitude about Americans when compared to their attitudes toward Americans on arrival into the United States.
2. The Fellows found citizens of the United States to have a lack of knowledge about world geography and worldly issues.
3. The Fellows found citizens of the United States to be generous, helpful, and dedicated to their careers and relationships.
4. The Fellows noticed a sense of community, which left them inspired to do more.

Nine of the 41 codes were used mainly to answer this research question. Twenty-two quotes compared Ugandan versus American culture, and 14 compared Kenyan and American cultures. Participants from both countries expressed an excitement about the opportunity to spend time in the United States and the chance to interact with and learn from Americans.

Theme: The Fellows left the United States with a more positive attitude about Americans when compared to their attitudes toward Americans on arrival into the United States.

The Ugandans envisioned an individualistic and independent lifestyle of Americans who were always rushing and competing with one another for promotions or the ability to purchase materialistic things. These views were developed in comparison to the community-driven, generous, and mostly rural Ugandan culture, which emphasizes depending on one another. Some of the participants were concerned that Americans would be antisocial, driven by competition, and even racists. David, a senior assistant with his local Ugandan government, said, "I expect Americans to be asocial and highly mean and individualistic as opposed to the openness and welcoming nature of many of the Ugandans characterized with cultural generosity" (P3: 9-11). Michael, a teaching assistant in Uganda, shared his thoughts of the United States as a ". . . culture

of competition where everyone is struggling to make it at a high-level. This contrasts with the Ugandan culture because in Uganda people tend to be satisfied with their status" (P12: 9-10).

A lack of culture and tradition in the United States was mentioned by Marie, a journalist from Uganda: "The United States is highly developed and cultural practices may not be emphasized or some could have died out. In Uganda people still practice and emphasize culture" (P8: 5-8). However, after seeing the Cherokee History Museum in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, (see Appedix F) Michael and James made a connection between the culture, history, and architecture between the Cherokee Indians and Africans. James, a public relations officer in Uganda, wrote:

> Though the Cherokees have integrated with the modern-day Americans, they share a lot in common with Africans in terms of traditional technologies such as construction of wattle [i.e., interwoven twigs] houses, artifacts, tools (spear and arrows) and clothing. One big lesson out of this was the realization that many societies were at the same level of development perhaps some 300 years ago. (P7: 7-19)

The Kenyan participants provided more conflicting responses when comparing their culture with the culture in the United States. Some anticipated Americans to be inhospitable, outgoing, patriotic, and a country lacking culture compared to their diverse, reserved, and communal way of life. Anne, an assistant director of livestock production in Kenya, said, "[w]e are very welcoming and we love visitors and get excited to host. I don't know if the Oklahomans will be the same" (P5: 5-6). While Kate, also an assistant director of livestock production in Kenya, indicated this view:

> America is probably the most diverse country in the world in all aspects, i.e. culturally, religiously, socially, politically and economically, yet there is a sense of unity among the citizens and high levels of patriotism unlike in my country of Kenya. (P6: 6-8)

Mark, an associate editor of special projects at a television network in Kenya, shared that, "[i]n Kenya people live communally or socially, it is very easy to know what a neighbor is doing,

we are very close to each other. I expect Americans to be different because they live individually" (P14: 6-8).

During their time in the United States, many participants' perceptions and thoughts of Americans changed. David wrote to this point:

> I used to think that not many Americans were friendly. What I saw here in the five weeks was different. Although the people I would meet on elevators did not readily show good responses to greetings, those we were meeting in the offices, farms, ranches and other places we visited have been very welcoming and sharing with us. For example, the day I was with the Stillwater City Council, one of the staff was so excited to meet me that he quickly phoned his wife and jointly invited me and hosted me at their home that very evening. I was amazed by this philanthropy and openheartedness. (P3: 909-917)

And Tim, a principal agricultural officer in Kenya, wrote this: "Participating in this program has changed my view about the American people as anti-social. I found the Americans to be courteous, social and always ready to assist" (P9: 174-176).

Theme: The Fellows found citizens of the United States to have a lack of knowledge about world geography and worldly issues.

Seven participants indicated a level of surprise at American's lack of knowledge about Africa. David stated this:

> People of America are ill-exposed. I came to realize that a very small percentage of Americans know the world and what actually goes on. I was surprised that a high percentage of university students actually think Africa is one country, to the extent that they don't even know Uganda exists! (P3: 918-924)

Matthew, a research assistant at a university in Uganda, also shared his thoughts on this subject. "American youths do not know much about what is happening outside of their country. Their views on Africa are only guided by sorrow and lies of hunger, disease, poverty and war that is [sic] seen on TV," he said (P4: 49-51). He also wrote, "[s]ome Americans are so unaware of

our countries and what takes place in the world yet they have access to all of this fast media like the Internet and TV" (P4: 247-249).

Theme: The Fellows found citizens of the United States to be generous, helpful, and dedicated to their careers and relationships.

Other topics mentioned frequently about Americans included the capacity to build relationships with students and coworkers; generosity to others; and a willingness to help. Seventeen quotations recognized commitment, passion, and dedication toward careers; and 14 quotations noted a well-established sense of community. James shared that, "[p]rofessors interact freely with students. They exhibit a mutual respect for each other" (P7: 606-607). Sara, a Kenyan farmer and community volunteer, also commented: "They have free interaction with children and family members. The relationship between professors and students is outstanding. This creates a sense of belonging to students and children" (P10: 9-11).

The participants were specific in commenting on the generosity and willingness of Americans to help. Marie shared a story about her first trip to Wal-Mart. "I was looking for detergent soap and I could not find it so I asked another shopper who took me to the aisle where it was located. That made me realize that Oklahomans are very helpful and kind" (P8: 76-79). Luke, a Ugandan newspaper writer, indicated on multiple times that his internship hosts bought his lunch. He explained one particular example: "Clytie bought me lunch at the cafeteria today. This woman is so nice to me and it feels good working with her, but I'm kind of shy allowing a lady to pay my bill" (P15: 142-143). Three participants wrote about gifts they received from their internship hosts. Luke said, "[a] journalist at the Oklahoman surprised me this morning with gifts for my little daughter, and before I had overcame my excitement my two internship hosts had filled my desk with kids stuff" (P15: 171-173).

The Food Security Fellows were inspired by the dedication they witnessed. Sara shared, "Americans are so passionate with what they do" (P10:15-16), and Luke was ". . . impressed by the sense of purpose among people who stay on top of their game here" (P15: 220-221). Mark

commented about ". . . the importance of teamwork" (P14: 637); Adam indicated, "[h]ere in the U.S., people work together and everything is inclusive" (P13: 16-17), and Kate said, "[i]t's amazing how much we can do working together" (P6: 551). Conversely, David reflected on the lack of commitment of those with whom he works in Uganda:

> I realize that many of the staff I work with are not fully committed in serving the community for which they work. They are not very dedicated, evidenced by the need to follow them every time specific tasks are given to them. But also, the general community in the district seems to lack commitment and passion in whatever they do. (P3: 389-393)

Although the Fellows appreciated the dedication and passion they witnessed in Americans, they indicated a desire to relax and enjoy the weekend. Kate said, "I enjoyed the weekend trip to the Wichita Mountains; however, I would have liked to rest this weekend after a full week of programming" (P6: 75-76).

Theme: The Fellows noticed a sense of community, which left them inspired to do more.

Even though several participants indicated originally they perceived those who live in the United States to be individualistic, they reported multiple experiences of Americans valuing the importance of their community. The act of giving back to communities and donating money or time was a specific take-home point for many participants. After visiting a food bank, Tim wrote, "[t]he spirit of volunteering to assist the less privileged in the community was meaningful" (P9: 187-188). Mark also commented: "[t]his inspired me to be more pro-active in my community work related to food security and with my contacts I can help my village do more in food security. I can be involved in outreach programs" (P14: 146-148). And Luke said, "I've learned that service to humanity is the most important mission of every human being. That I can only be relevant to my community if I am of service to it" (P15: 266-268). "I learned the virtue of giving to the needy members of the society however small my contribution may be," Tim said.

John, a director for communication and partnerships from Uganda, added this statement:

> The belief in a diverse and united society -- patriotic to the ideals of human rights, democracy and accountability by the American society – are issues I saw, experienced and understood why the U.S. is an open, free and highly developed country. These are things I originally viewed as *abstract* [emphasis added] and unreal. (P11: 188-191)

Through this experience, three participants expressed an interest in returning to the United States, specifically Oklahoma State University, to pursue graduate degrees. Michael said,

> I am interested in embarking on my PhD, so if opportunities show up, I will be willing to do it at OSU. If I can pursue my PhD at OSU, this will be the best thing that happens to me because of this exchange visit. (P12: 143-154)

Luke echoed those thoughts: "Stories shared by Samba and Fred made me appreciate the student life of OSU and also challenging oneself to answer the higher call to pursue further studies. I feel like coming back here to benefit from an American education" (P15: 201-203). Although David did not indicate he wanted to return to the United States for an education, he did share, "I will go back and encourage the young graduates who have the urge for further studies to solicit sponsorships and apply for graduate courses n the USA including OSU" (P3: 754-757).

Findings Related to Research Question 2

Research Question 2: What were the benefits and challenges as perceived by the Fellows who participated in an internship/job shadowing experience while in the United States?

Assertion: The internship was a favorite topic of the participants as they had an opportunity for hands-on learning. They welcomed the opportunity to learn from experts in the United States, to develop a network of professionals in their interest areas, and to learn ways they could specifically impact food security in their countries. As a result, participants gained a wider perspective of the career-driven way of life in the United States, and one participant was even offered a full-time position with her internship hosts.

Media interns were given specific tasks/jobs during their internships, and policymakers and community leaders indicated they had more of a job shadowing experience, which, in some

cases, appeared to be less specific or job task-oriented. Other challenges described were based on the participants' perceptions of difficulty associated with implementing particular objectives in their home countries and the short time period of the internship/job shadowing experiences. Ten of the 41 codes were used to answer this research question.

Substantiation: After a thematic analysis, two themes emerged and were used to organize the study's findings.

1. The Fellows welcomed the opportunity to learn from their peers in the United States.
2. The Fellows desired specific jobs but many were given the task of an observer; however, they indicated that learning still occurred.

Theme: The Fellows welcomed the opportunity to learn from their peers in the United States.

Establishing themselves as valuable members of a global society was on the agenda of the Food Security Fellows. The Fellows embraced the opportunity to learn from individuals they perceived to be the best and desired to gain a deeper understanding of how they could transfer their newly gained skills and knowledge to their jobs in Kenya and Uganda.

Matthew wrote, "I'm most excited to relate to American people and to get work experience in an American organization" (P4: 14-15), and Tim said he was excited to ". . . learn how best to do things from Americans who are very successful in so many spheres" (P9: 13-14). And Marie said, "I'm excited about networking during the internship" (P8: 26-27). Sara was thankful for her internship as she ". . . gained critical behavioral competencies, including the ability to develop and maintain strong relationships, decision making, problem solving, team spirit, organizational skills, change management, effectiveness strategic thinking and reliability" (P10: 33-36). Anne wrote, "[p]rofessional guidance is important in order to make realistic, practical and doable strategies" (P5: 141-142). John said, "it is very crucial to learn, understand and interact with other people outside of my country, most importantly Americans. As a citizen of the global community, I hope to appreciate the ways of the people of the USA" (P11: 25-28).

The Fellows understood the value in seeing how other countries and organizations operated. David said, “I feel the experiences have increased my understanding of my job by getting exposed to how things are done differently” (P3: 943-944), and Anne shared, “[t]hese experiences are directly linked to my job. I have a wider understanding from a global perspective” (P5: 133-135). Michael added his view as well:

> Before this internship, I knew my job as a university lecturer was to teach, conduct research and outreach. However, because of the separation of the three functions in Uganda, it is always difficult to connect the three. Experiencing first-hand how the three function at OSU improved my understanding of the job I do. (P12: 174-177)

Theme: The Fellows desired specific jobs but many were given the task of an observer; however, they indicated that learning still occurred.

Media professionals had the most specific job tasks while they completed their internships, which provided them the most hands-on experiences of the Fellows. They created stories aired on television, wrote multiple news stories that were published in Oklahoma newspapers, and produced radio segments.

Matthew shared how his internship broadened his horizons about the use of information and communications technology (ICT) to spread agricultural information:

> Technology development can amazingly improve the way we communicate, grow our crops and can help Uganda be more food secure (P4: 127-128). I can use voicethread to develop videos that illustrate best practices in western Uganda and Uganda at large. I can also create podcasts in farmers’ local languages using Audacity (a voice recorder and editing program) to educate farmers (P4: 142-146). The use of short message service (SMS) to disseminate agriculture content limits the communicator to 160 characters unlike podcasts and videos (P4: 174-175). The podcasts can be used to share extension content in rural villages in Uganda. They can be recorded in different local languages and played on local radio stations and solar-powered mp3 players (P4: 132-135). As a person

> engaged in ICT use in agriculture, there is a lot more at my disposal than just the mobile phone and radio. I have recently started an online channel on quora.com where I will be posting content on agriculture for farmers to access through community based internet kiosks set up by the government, and I will use audio clips to disseminate agricultural information. (P4: 259-264)

Mark was proud to announce, "[t]he story I produced for The Oklahoma News Report comparing drought in Oklahoma and drought in Kenya was aired on Friday, October 7 and has been repeated two times" (P14: 339-342). Luke echoed his excitement: "I've been published in the Daily Oklahoman! The article, about the Listeria outbreak in cantaloupe, was at one point the most viewed on newsok.com and closed the day at number three" (P15: 145-149).

Policymakers and community leaders experienced more job shadowing than interning. They were able to interact with their hosts and observed how things were done, but they lacked the plethora of opportunities to complete assignments on their own, as experienced by the media specialists. They were placed more in the role of an observer. However, they remained very grateful for these opportunities to learn and to their mentors generally.

Tim indicated, "I have learned that I have a very big role to play in order to address food insecurity in my country through provision of enabling policy environment" (P9: 197-198). He added, "[t]he importance of policy advocacy after the policies are drafted is a useful component in policymaking process in my country" (P9: 57-58). And Tim learned a valuable lesson about vulnerable populations: "People over 50 years need a voice to air their concerns since they are vulnerable to discrimination and abuse. There is a need to have community policies that guide advocacy on issues touching seniors" (P9: 123-126).

David's role was ". . . that of a learner, my task was to inquire how things are done at the respective places, policy implications and challenges faced" (P3: 852-853). James shared, "I have learned a great deal of lessons from my internship and more so on how to improve the food

security situation in Africa, especially through correct policy guidelines and implementation processes" (P7: 542-544).

Writing proposals was a common task during the internship/job shadowing experience. Participants researched grant writing opportunities and developed proposals for presentations to share their expertise to improve food security. Michael wrote, "I gained skills in developing development proposals. This will enable me to write fundable proposals targeting food security" (P12: 156-157). According to Sara, "[m]y role during the internship was writing proposals that suit specific company needs" (P10: 98); she also ". . . attended a case study discussion on developing a proposal for grants hosted by a granting organization in the USA" (P10: 93-93).

In addition, participants were impressed by the efficiency of meetings and the ease in which co-workers discussed controversial issues such as money. They embraced the openness and team player attitude of the workplaces where they spent their 11 days of training. David learned ". . . how to conduct an effective meeting. Time is properly managed and resolutions are quickly made through consensus. The average time of the meetings was two hours and yet the agenda was very long" (P3: 585-588). Tim and Mark also commented on meeting management. Tim said, "I learned about efficient time utilization in attending a staff meeting which took thirty minutes and several important issues were discussed" (P9: 60-61), and Mark said, "I learned the importance of time management, planning and goal setting, which can enable me to be more efficient in executing my duties" (P14: 88-89).

The internship portion of the program was not without challenges. For example, Kate "[w]ould have loved to be assigned a specific role during my internship" (P6: 389). Moreover, James said, "I wish the duration of the internship was either two or three weeks to allow us to have a meaningful learning process. A ten-day internship period was very short" (P7: 535-536). Also, the Fellows were affected by the busy schedule during their internship or job shadowing experiences. Mark wrote, "I was feeling exhausted!" (P14: 514).

However, it was also one of the most beneficial experiences for Sara.

> The most meaningful experience was my internship at Miasha International Orphanage and they offered me a job in Nairobi, Kenya! To me, this is a great reward. I mean, it was like a divine connection whereby you meet new people and they change your life. As a community volunteer, this is the right place for me. It will add value to my entire life, personally and professionally as I work for a food security change in various communities. (P10: 159-164)

Findings Related to Research Question 3

Research Question 3: What were the reactions of the Fellows toward the training experiences during their professional development program that resonated regarding their professional roles, especially aspects relevant to improving food security in their home countries?

Assertions: During their stay in the United States, the Fellows widened their understanding of food security and how it impacts their countries at all levels. They witnessed first-hand the importance of involving young people in agriculture at an early age as these formative experiences help instill a passion for agriculture and a desire to make it a career. The Fellows were impressed with the "knowledge triangle" (see Figure 3) approach used by the cooperative extension service as it provides a close linkage between research, extension and the farmer (FAO, 2000). This approach allows best practices to be shared with local farmers to help improve their efficiency and effectiveness.

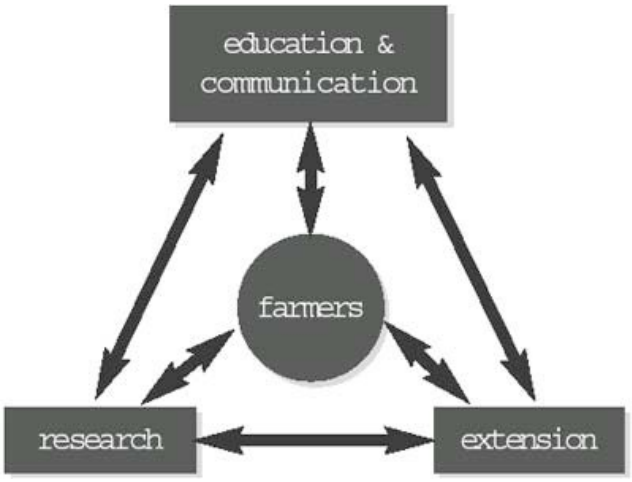

Figure 3. "Knowledge Triangle" – Adapted from Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems for Rural Development (AKIS/RD). Food and Agriculture Organization (2000).

For the Felows to make a difference in their professions, they planned to use various media outlets as allies to share proactively agricultural research and innovative practices. They intended to use their newly expanded networks to enhance their impact on food security and increase their level of commitment to their careers. This program inspired and empowered the participants to make a difference in their local communities, their countries and their continent. However, they expressed an awareness of the challenges they would face as they work to become change agents for the improvement of food security.

Substantiation: After a thematic analysis, five themes emerged and were used to organize the study's findings.

1. If food security and production is to improve, the youth must be involved in agricultural endeavors.
2. Extension services in Kenya and Uganda need to more effectively link teaching and research to be more efficient in sharing best practices with the agriculturists.
3. Using the media as an ally and being proactive can increase agricultural knowledge.
4. Networking is invaluable and should be emphasized.
5. The Fellows believed they can make a difference in their countries.

Theme: If food security and production is to improve, the youth must be involved in agricultural endeavors.

The implications of food security on a nation's security generally were points that could not be missed. David said, "[t]he safety and security of a nation does not depend on the amount of missiles it has but on the strength of its economy and the welfare of its population" (P3: 815-817). And Matthew, Kate, Mark and Luke added, "[f]ood is the cornerstone of national security." John went on to say that, "[o]nce a country strives to improve food security, nutrition and income generation of its people, then such a society embarks on the takeoff of industrialization and modernization of agriculture" (P11: 96-98).

Through this program, the Food Security Fellows recognized the need to involve young people in the agricultural industry. Having seen 4-H and FFA members express their passion for the agricultural industry and commitment to their respective organizations, the Fellows indicated a desire to start similar programs in their countries. Not only did they wish to impart educating the youth about agriculture, they hoped to instill the leadership and citizenship components of these youth development programs. James elaborated on his views:

> The driving force behind agricultural development in the United States has been youth development programs. Two of the most impressive programs include the 4-H youth development program, supported by the federal government, and the Future Farmers of America [i.e., FFA]. One of the greatest lessons I learned out of the interaction with the extension agents and members of American youth development programs (4-H and FFA) was that American agriculture students are trained to support agricultural systems in various areas, including agricultural engineering, manufacturing, agribusiness, marketing, communication and leadership. The leadership component of the training is the most attractive element for the students, and they just love it! Meanwhile, for Uganda, students are trained to engage in agriculture directly, which is very unattractive with no incentives for them. (P7: 118-127)

Careers in agriculture are sometimes the last option for university students in Kenya and Uganda. “I have taught students who are forced to do agriculture by their parents or do it as a last resort because they have failed to be taken for either human medicine or pharmacy. This affects their commitment to learning,” Michael said.

Adam said, “[t]here is a need for developing programs that are educational and focused on agriculture to increase young people’s interests in agriculture and farming” (P13: 52-54). Matthew provided a solution: “The 4-H model gets kids involved in agriculture at such a young age and helps them hear about teamwork and grow a passion to participate in agriculture” (P4: 39-40). Anne added that, “[c]hildren get exposure and guidance to careers very early in life (P5: 62-64). This develops interests and they decide to pursue agriculture at university” (P5: 82-84).

“Apart from being a platform for training future agriculturalist, the FFA and 4-H programs are also a platform for raising future leaders in the United States,” Michael said (P12: 18-20). David expanded that thought: “FFA is very important in promoting nationalism and patriotism in American citizens from childhood. I would term it as a ‘national socialization mechanism’” (P3: 272-274).

Anne and Kate commented on the advantages of giving children the opportunity to engage with positive role models and the benefits these types of organizations provide to families. “Teachers are major influences in the lives of young people,” Anne said (P5: 66-68). Kate indicated that, “[v]olunteers play a big role (P6: 380). It appears 4-H brings families together and strengthens family ties (P6: 462). It was obvious the program has a great impact on the lives of the children and families” (P6: 460-461).

Matthew declared, “[t]o get the youth interested in agriculture, we must make it interesting by designing programs that involve competition, team building, and recognition” (P4: 43-44). And he continued, “I am planning on starting up an FFA like program called FFU (Future Farmers of Uganda) to attract young people to agriculture” (P4: 266-267). James supported

Michael's position: "My particular interest will be to mobilize colleagues and reach out to schools to start a pilot project of FFU based on the American model" (P7: 631-633).

Michael wrote further on this topic:

> The take home message for me is that I need to get a way to interest the youth to engage in agriculture and take it as a rewarding career in Uganda. On return to Uganda, I intend to engage in advocacy to improve the teaching of agriculture at primary and high schools. (P12: 64-68)

Food Security Fellows from Kenya also realized the importance of involving their youth in agriculture at an early age. Adam indicated, "I will start an FFK organization on the school level" (P13: 49). Moreover, Kate said, "[i]ntroducing competition in our 4K clubs in Kenya could make them more popular among the youth" (P6: 470-471).

Theme: Extension services in Kenya and Uganda need to more effectively link teaching and research to be more efficient in sharing best practices with the agriculturists.

Seven Fellows commented on the connection of teaching, research and extension (see Figure 4). They noted that although their extension programs are similar, they lack the relationships needed to have the most impact on Kenyan and Ugandan farmers. David shared, "I feel the triangular strength of OSU linking teaching, research and extension is quite important in ensuring food security" (P3: 100-102). Mark added, "[t]here is deliberate effort to bring about linkages between teaching, research and extension. Universities play a key role in research and they pass the information along to extension services" (P12: 171-172).

Mark also recorded this point:

> Through this approach, which empowers the universities (Land Grant) (Figure 4) in the United States to take a lead in developing and disseminating agricultural technologies with support for federal, state and local governments. The extension system in the United States is really perfect and works for the farmer. (P12: 29-31)

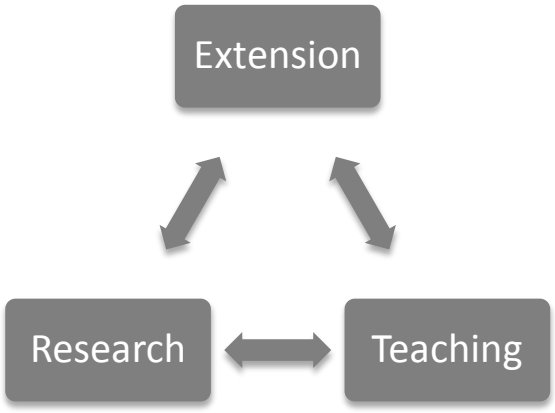

Figure 4. The land grant university systems' triad approach. Adapted from Career ladder program for extension field personnel including: County educators, area specialists, district specialists, CNEP coordinators, and CNEP professionals/special projects. Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service (2012).

Kate compared the United States' extension service with that of the service in Kenya:

> The extension system in the United States is kind of similar with that of Kenya, except for the close collaboration between teaching and research (P6: 84-85). There is a need for enhanced collaboration between research, teaching and communications (extension) in my country to improve food security. (P6: 57-58)

David said, "[t]he inter-connectedness of extension and research make the farmers get the necessary technologies and advice for improving productivity" (P3: 87-89). He went on to say that, "[a]s a policy fellow, I take it as a king pin to be adopted and implemented if the necessary change in food security is to be realized by my local government and the central government as well" (P3: 102-105).

"A country that cannot feed its people cannot sustain itself,' David said (P3: 97). If the Fellows are to improve the food security of their countries, a main objective is to improve the productivity of farmers. David continued, "[t]he United States made a break-through in ensuring food security through promotion of agricultural research and extension, which improved productivity even if fewer people have remained in this sector" (P3: 115-117). Furthermore, Kate said, "[t]he estimated world population in the next 50 years is nine billion people. This would

require about a 50 percent increase in food production" (P6: 490-491). Matthew planned to use his expertise in ICT to improve food production. Per that aim, he wrote: "[a]s the population grows there is a need for science-based agriculture to increase food production in Africa (P4: 53-53). Technology development can amazingly improve the way we communicate, grow our crops and can help Uganda be more food secure" (P4: 127-128).

Theme: Using the media as an ally and being proactive can increase agricultural knowledge.

During this program, participants also learned of the importance of using media sources to spread agricultural information to the public. David said, "[c]ommunication represents what is most widely believed by the Americans to be the most successful engagement in promoting agriculture in the country" (P3: 122-124). Anne added, "[t]he importance of building relationships with the media should not be overlooked" (P5: 72-73). This was echoed by Kate: "There is a need to create trust between agricultural professionals and journalists. If our message is to get to the community, the media will have to be our partner" (P6: 415-417).

Mark also elaborated on this need:

> Policymakers and community leaders are advised not to be antagonizing the media, but to find ways of going about the challenges to get coverage. For instance, instead of focusing on news only, they can entice reporters to do feature stories or documentaries about agricultural topics that do not fall in the news. (P14: 511-515)

In addition to traditional media, the Fellows expanded their views on social media. Matthew said, "the evolution of agvocacy (advocating for agriculture) has occurred because of the ease of information dissemination using social media tools like YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, etc." (P4: 172-174). Or, as Kate stated, "[s]ocial media is a job now, but will soon become a skill. Typing used to be a job too" (P6: 431-432).

David reflected on the role of social media as well:

> I learned that in America, social media is being utilized to promote agriculture through different websites and blogs, Twitter and Facebook. Ag chat and You Tube are other programs from which producers are getting free information with the possibility of asking questions to which answers are given in what are known as "food dialogues" (P3: 762-766)

The Fellows shared how they would use social media to improve food security. James will ". . . use social media to market an organization or business" (P7: 519-520). Tim said, "I learned about the use of social media to catalyze communications and I will be more active in Twitter and Facebook to remain in contact with my peers" (P9: 149-150).

In regard to how participants will use the media to improve food security, David ". . . will go back and share with my colleagues at the workplace, how best to use the media in enhancing extension work" (P3: 170-171). Marie will ". . . increase the articles I write about using technology in animal husbandry because the farmers can achieve so much from improved breeds" (P8: 569-571). Tim said, "I learned about crisis communication . . . I will apply this in recommending drought and food insecurity mitigation measures" (P9: 152-154). And Luke intends to ". . . make a point on being proactive in communication and challenge producers and policymakers to identify the problems in society and help the media understand them and explain them to society" (P15: 232-234).

Theme: Networking is invaluable and should be emphasized.

The Fellows emphasized the benefit of expanding their professional network through participating in this program. Per that, James recorded his view:

> One of the most rewarding experiences while in the United States was being able to establish useful contacts and networks that should help me grow both professionally and personally. I was able to connect with a number of people during my time at OSU, the internship and the professional congress in Washington, DC. It was quite rewarding and

> experiential to share our various cultures and experiences with professionals across the globe. (P7: 613-617)

Using these newly developed contacts will allow Fellows to expand their impact on food security. Tim shared, "I can maximize my ability to improve food security in Kenya through improved linkages between media, the communities and the strengths in policymakers. The network I have established will be very useful in addressing food security in Kenya" (P9: 202-206). For Michael, "[t]his has started a long-term collaboration between Gulu University and Oklahoma State University and I look forward to positive outcomes" (P12, 80-81).

Theme: The Fellows believed they can make a difference.

Overall, the Fellows departed the United States feeling empowered and inspired. Twenty-seven quotations portrayed this inspiration. James shared his motivation:

> I feel I am not the same. I have changed a lot. My worldview has dramatically improved. I feel humbled. I feel I have much respect for others and responsible for all my actions. I am excited to bring about change in my organization and society. I feel I have a duty to my country and the world shall remember me for my contribution. (P7: 621-624)

The Fellows also realized they can make changes without waiting on their governments. To that end, Matthew said, "[i]t's within our powers to initiate change and improve our situations instead of waiting for government" (P4: 116-117). He continued, "[a]t times, we do not need political power to make change in our societies, all we need is the courage and vigor to change the world" (P4: 185-187).

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter reviews the background information, which set the stage for the research study. The summary section includes the study's Problem, Purpose, Research Questions, as well as reviews the Population and Setting, Data Collection and Data Analysis of this research study. Following the summary are the Conclusions and Implications based on the study's findings as well as Recommendations for Practice and Further Research.

Problem

A wide variety of information and research is available regarding American students or professionals and their travels and experiences while traveling and studying abroad. Russell and Vallade (2009) analyzed American students' reflective journals to evaluate the impact of study-abroad programs, and Larson et al. (2009) used reflective journals to increase the engagement of American students who participated in study abroad courses. However, a lack of research exists in regard to people who travel to the United States for educational or professional programs and even more so for training involving food security. To improve future opportunities for career development of international professionals, additional research was needed to create a basis for planning, delivering, and evaluating effective programming, especially programs designed to improve the food security of developing countries and their related issues and challenges.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of how select Kenyan and Ugandan Food Security Fellows made meaning of their experiences regarding the culture of the United States, their internship/job shadowing experiences, training procedures, and group activities organized during a grant-funded professional and cultural exchange program.

Research Questions

1. How did the Fellows' understanding of American culture and U.S. citizens change as a result of the professional development program?
2. What were the benefits and challenges as perceived by the Fellows who participated in an internship/job shadowing experience while in the United States?
3. What were the reactions of the Fellows toward the training experiences during their professional development program that resonated regarding their professional roles, especially aspects relevant to improving food security in their home countries?

Population and Setting

The population for this study included the 14 Food Security Fellows who participated in the third phase of the grant-funded project aimed at reducing food insecurity in Kenya and Uganda ("Improving Food Security," 2010). The participants were chosen based on an application (see Appendix D) and interview process. Faculty members from Oklahoma State University's Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership interviewed applicants in their home countries and selected 14 individuals to participate in the program. Six of the seven Ugandan participants were male, and included two community leaders, two policymakers and three media professionals. The seven Kenyan participants included three community leaders, two policymakers and two media professionals with four males and three females.

The professional exchange program originated from a grant proposal funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The grant-funded project was

designed to “improve the prospects of ensuring food security in Kenya and Uganda by providing professional development for three key stakeholder groups whose collaboration stands to multiply their collective impact on food insufficiency: community leaders, media specialists, and policymakers” (“Improving Food Security,” 2010, p. 1; see Appendix A).

Dr. D. Dwayne Cartmell II was responsible for the overall coordination of the program, including the budget and expenditures. Dr. M. Craig Edwards assisted with overall coordination and also served as the contact person with embassy officials and Department of State personnel. Drs. Cindy Blackwell, Shelly Sitton and J. Tanner Robertson assisted with coordination and public relations. Dr. Barbara Stoecker consulted on human nutrition issues and strategies related to improving food security in Kenya and Uganda. Dr. Traci Irani (University of Florida) was the external evaluator of the project. Patrick Saisi, doctoral student and graduate associate, was a liaison between African partners and project team leaders. Denise George, master’s student and graduate assistant, assisted in developing the project’s schedule and served as a liaison between content presenters and internship/job shadowing hosts.

Many volunteers and experts were needed to complete the program. Various Oklahoma State University faculty members and staff shared their expertise and knowledge with the Fellows on topics such as food production, education/advocacy, food security/sufficiency, nutrition and rural vitality (“Improving Food Security,” 2010). In addition, many industry leaders assisted by hosting the Fellows during their internship/job shadowing experiences.

Data Collection

A qualitative content analysis was used to analyze the Fellows’ reflective journals. Babbie (2001) defined content analysis as “the study of recorded human communications” (p. 304). The overall aim of content analysis is “to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study” (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992, p. 314).

The Fellows kept a reflective journal. Reflection “. . . leads the learner into a careful observation of the surrounding world and stimulates exploration” (Larson, et al., 2009, p. 314).

"The process of journal writing forces students to integrate new information with what they already know" (Alm, 1996, p. 113). This is related closely to Kolb's (1984) definition of experiential learning as "a holistic integrative perspective on learning that combines experience, cognition and behavior" (p. 21), which served as the study's conceptual framework.

Journal prompts (Dunlap, 2006; Hubbs & Brand, 2005) were provided to promote reflection and assist the researcher in answering the study's research questions (see Appendix K). Preflection questions were included in the journal prompts to help participants prepare themselves for the program and reflective questions were posed based on their daily experiences and observations. After the completion of the program, the researcher transcribed journal entries verbatim and used ATLAS.ti to code and store the data.

After the completion of the program, participants left their journals with the researcher for transcription; the journals were returned to the Fellows during the fourth phase of the project. After the journals were transcribed, the researcher used ATLAS.ti to code and store the data.

Data Analysis

A conventional method of content analysis was used to analyze the journal entries of the 14 participants, as the purpose of the study was to describe the phenomenon (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) of how Food Security Fellows made meaning of their experiences. The researcher used an inductive approach to coding the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). When using inductive analysis, "qualitative researchers build their patterns, categories, and themes from the 'bottom-up,' by organizing the data into increasingly more abstract units of information" (Creswell, 2007, p. 38).

The researcher first became immersed in the data, which occurred through multiple readings of the transcriptions (Tesch, 1990); this meant multiple stages in the analysis process. Journal entries were read prior to transcribing, during the transcription process, and again after all entries were transcribed. During transcription, the researcher created memos of reactions and possible interpretations of the data. The transcribed journal entries were converted from

Microsoft Word documents to text files by the researcher and those files were uploaded to the ATLAS.ti program.

Fourteen separate documents were coded, i.e., each individual's journal remained in a single document. Line-by-line or open coding (Creswell, 2007) was done to ensure the reading of each recorded word and for the development of unique codes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). After coding three journals, the codes were revised and redefined so that research questions could be addressed and justified through journal entries. This method enabled constant comparison of the data (Creswell, 2007). This technique assisted the researcher in establishing continuity within each code or category. As more codes emerged, the researcher re-examined previously coded journals to remain consistent. Memos were developed (Creswell, 2007) and captured on the ATLAS.ti program. The memos assisted the researcher in determining which code to assign to each excerpt of text.

As a result of the researcher's coding procedure, 41 codes emerged. Quotes from these codes were printed and sorted into related categories based on the study's research questions, and themes were developed (Creswell, 2007). The themes were used to organize the study's findings.

Conclusions and Implications

Research Question 1: How did the Fellows' understanding of American culture and U.S. citizens change as a result of the professional development program?

The Fellows were eager to experience the United States, as 12 of the 14 had never been to the United States before. They were excited particularly to see the vast infrastructure, technology, and large cities. However, the Fellows were apprehensive about spending time in the United States. The main concerns were the Fellows' fears of the language barrier (i.e., accents and their perceptions of fast-talking Americans), unfair treatment based on race, and concerns about the arrogance and unhelpfulness of Americans. These issues differ from high cost, homesickness and political conflict as mentioned by Boyle et al. (1999) and work obligation concerns described by

Zhai (2004). However, they are similar to the language barriers mentioned by Andreasen (2003) and an overall nervousness of international travel, as described by Dooley et al. (2008).

During the Fellows' stay in Oklahoma and Washington, D.C., they enjoyed the generosity of Americans and appreciated the willingness of U.S. citizens to help them whenever possible. The Fellows also realized that Americans tended to lack global knowledge, especially about Africa and their countries in particular. Notably, some of the Fellows' views were based on their interactions with U.S. undergraduate students, formally and informally. This finding, although beyond the primary scope of this study, is especially alarming as Webb et al. (1999) indicated that many employers hold international competence as a high priority when selecting employees and undergraduate students represent future employee prospects. Bruening and Frick (2004) and Suarez (2003), however, identified participation in cultural exchange programs as an excellent tool to gain understanding of global issues and the value of diversity.

After the program was complete, many of the Fellows had a different attitude toward Americans, specifically the diversity and culture they experienced during their stay. Many of the Fellows expected the culture and diversity of the United States to be lacking. For example, John stated that, "I actually found them [Americans] diverse in race, creed and tribe. From one city to another and from one state to another; Americans are not homogeneous as earlier perceived before I came to interact with them" (P8: 5-8).

The professional exchange program also allowed the Fellows to experience the dedication, passion and commitment of Americans. A combination of experiences left participants with a desire to return to the United States to continue their education. Michael said, "If I can pursue my PhD at OSU, this will be the best thing that happens to me because of this exchange visit" (P12: 144-145). To that end, the Fellows also expressed interests in sharing scholarship and fellowship opportunities with their peers in Kenya and Uganda on their return home.

The fact that Fellows expressed a new outlook on American culture and the people who live in the United States is in agreement with Pires' (2000) position, which stated that international experiences allow people to acquire an understanding of other cultures. Misconceptions about countries will be righted and these experiences help to eliminate the "haves and have nots" (Pires, 2000, p. 42) attitude. Providing participants with specific information before their travel, at the beginning of the program, and continually throughout the program may have helped the Fellows gain a sense of security, which allowed them to overcome the negative aspects of culture shock described by Andreasen (2003).

Research Question 2: What were the benefits and challenges as perceived by the Fellows who participated in an internship/job shadowing experience while in the United States?

The Fellows appreciated greatly the opportunity to complete an internship or job shadow experience or "hands-on" learning opportunities related to their professional positions. This echoes Rodriguez and Roberts (2011) who concluded that students placed a high value on applied learning experiences while undergoing international learning experiences. Even though Rodriguez and Roberts (2011) studied college students, the findings of this study resonated with their findings. Harder et al. (2010) also found hands-on learning activities to be the most effective form of professional development, and Wingenbach (2006) asserted that improved critical thinking skills were gained by completing an international internship. Similar to the findings of Boyle et al. (1999), the Fellows in this exchange program gained knowledge and experience from experts in the United States and increased their network of professionals. This combination gave the Fellows a solid foundation for impacting food security in their home countries, or so they perceived. Furthermore, the Fellows gained a better understanding of the career-driven focus of people in the United States. Moreover, one Fellow was offered full-time employment by her internship hosts at a station in her home country.

Media interns were given specific tasks/jobs during their internships, however, policymakers and community leaders indicated they had more of a job shadowing experience,

which, in some cases, appeared to be less specific or job task-oriented. To this end, a media specialist journaled "the story I produced comparing drought in Oklahoma and drought in Kenya which was aired on Friday, October 7 and has been repeated two times" (P14: 339-341). However, a policymaker described his experience "as a learner, my task was to inquire how things are done at the respective places, policy implications and challenges faced" (P3: 853-854).

Research Question 3: What were the reactions of the Fellows toward the training experiences during their professional development program that resonated regarding their professional roles, especially aspects relevant to improving food security in their home countries?

While in the United States, the Fellows realized the importance of involving young people in agricultural endeavors including the many aspects of food production and provision. Careers in the agriculture sector are not popular choices for many students in Kenya and Uganda. For example, one Fellow said, "as a university lecturer, I have taught students who are either forced to do agriculture by their parents or do it as a last resort because they have failed to be taken for either human medicine, pharmacy" (P12: 62-64). Therefore, the Fellows were impressed with agricultural education/FFA and 4-H programs and how those programs led students toward agricultural careers. This is in agreement with Van Crowder, Lindley, Bruening and Doron (1998) who said more scholarships need to be available to students, in the United States and internationally, who want to study agriculture in developing countries.

The Fellows perceived a need for close links between research, extension and the farmer, as this approach to communication allows best practices to be shared with local farmers to help improve their efficiency and effectiveness (Kanté, 2010; Mutimba et al., 2010). When researching extension practices in Malawi, Green (2009) concluded extension "strategies were based on colonial officials' perceptions about African farmers, rather than detailed empirical knowledge" (p. 121). Further, Michael said, "[t]he extension approach, which empowers the university (Land grant) in the U.S. to take a lead in developing and disseminating ag information" (P12: 28-20). In support, Kate indicated the "need [existed] for enhanced collaboration between research, teaching

and communications (extension) in my country to improve food security" (P6: 57-58). Moreover, David wrote that, "[i]n extension, I also see the role of communication in promoting food security, which has not been of any serious concern in Uganda" (P3: 77-78).

The Fellows identified using media outlets as a method to proactively share agricultural information with the public. They planned to use the networks developed through this grant-funded program to enhance their impact on food security, and also indicated a desire to increase commitment to their respective careers. The professional and cultural exchange program empowered the Fellows to make a difference in their local communities, their countries, and the continent of Africa. The Fellows also journaled, however, about their awareness of the challenges they would face as they work to become change agents and improve food security in their home countries.

Recommendations for Practice

The Fellows expressed apprehensions about participating in this exchange program and traveling to the United States. Based on these concerns, exchange programs should include preflection before the program begins (Jones & Bjelland, 2004; McGowan, 2007; Roberts & Jones, 2009; Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011), reflection during the program (Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011), and post-reflection activities after participants have returned home to receive the greatest benefits (Roberts & Jones, 2009; Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011). During the program, participants should have ample opportunity to experience local culture by interacting with residents (Dooley et al., 2008; Myles & Cheng, 2003; Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011) and visiting significant cultural locations (Dooley et al., 2008; Rodriguez & Roberts, 2011).

The Fellows expressed a change of attitude toward people living in the United States. Based on these findings, the researcher encourages more organizations to host professional and cultural exchange programs to reduce cultural misconceptions. Because of the expressed interests of the Fellows to return to the United States for higher education, the researcher also recommends

that colleges and universities host cultural exchange programs and promote scholarship and professional fellowship opportunities geared to attract international participants.

The findings from this study supported perceptions of more value associated with internship experiences that provided specific tasks or job roles, rather than the Fellows merely observing or being passive learners without doing (i.e., shadowing). Therefore, the researcher recommends that future Fellows participate in internships with actual *hands-on* job roles. Preparing for international internships is no small task; therefore, hosts must be willing to spend time locating internship sites, preparing internship supervisors to work with international participants, and facilitating learning and reflective activities. However, the value of this type of experiential learning easily exceeds the preparation required (Bryan & Sprague, 1997).

Incredible learning value can be derived from individuals participating in cultural exchange programs (Acker & Scanes, 2000; Bruening & Frick, 2004; Dooley et al., 2008; Ludwig & McGirr, 2003; Suarez, 2003). Therefore, it is also recommended that the project's developers continue to seek opportunities to fund, create, and deliver professional and cultural exchange programs. The findings from this study indicated professional exchange programs in regard to improving food security in particular also should be continued with increased emphasis placed on agricultural extension programs, youth development, and activities calibrated to involve youth in agricultural endeavors.

The Fellows recognized and stressed their approval for involving youth in agricultural activities as an avenue for improving food security. Per this, it is recommended that agricultural professionals in developing countries learn about agricultural education/FFA, 4-H and other youth organizations and how they play a role in encouraging students to pursue agricultural careers. In addition, opportunities to facilitate the establishment of these youth development programs in developing countries should be explored (Anonymous, 2011).

Furthermore, the Fellows indicated that increasing the connection between research, extension, and agricultural producers could increase food security in Kenya and Uganda.

Therefore, the researcher recommends agricultural extension professionals develop communication networks with appropriate individuals in developing countries to assist in creating these linkages (see Figure 3).

Future hosts or recruiters of professional and cultural exchange programs should provide explicit expectations for the participants, including the purpose of the program and if it is tourism-based or work/study-based. This recommendation is based on the finding that the Fellows were discouraged with the program's full schedule (see Appendix F) and lack of free time. A basic overview of the program should be given to future participants as well; this could include a schedule, list of what to pack and information about the accommodations. This recommendation is in agreement with Andreasen (2003) and his suggestions to help participants overcome culture shock.

The Fellows also noted American's general lack of knowledge about Africa; therefore, more students in the United States should be encouraged to take part in study abroad or cultural exchange programs involving countries in Africa. Including international exchange participants in undergraduates' course experiences could increase the global knowledge of U.S. students, and if students establish a personal connection with someone from a different country their interests could be peaked to learn about that nation and region of the world. Perhaps, geography curriculum in the United States' elementary, middle, and high schools should be revised to emphasize more topics on the countries of Africa.

The researcher also recommends that future providers of this type of programming, who include reflective journaling as part of the experience, provide two notebooks or composition books to each participant. This approach would provide one book for note-taking during the experience and another for reflective journaling. Also, if journal prompts are included, the hosts should attach the prompts to the notebook intended for journaling purposes.

Recommendations for Further Research

Previous research shows a need for international internships, e.g., Webb et al. (1999) indicated the value of international internships to increase diversity and global competence amongst participants. Moreover, Bryan and Sprague (1997) found international internships to increase an individual's attractiveness to potential employers, and Maidstone (1995) concluded they are important in gaining a well-rounded background. Based on a lack of information on international internships, the need existed for additional research in this area, specifically international internships designed for mid-career professionals as opposed to students. And the need for systematic inquiry on the learning experience of professionals whose job roles involve issues of improving food security also existed.

Post-reflection interviews conducted during the final phase of the grant-funded project described in this study, in which OSU faculty and collaborators interviewed Food Security Fellows five months after their return home from the program, should be analyzed and reported. This study captured what the Fellows said they had learned and intended to use professionally. With the post-reflection data, including interviews of some of the Fellows' supervisors and co-workers, coupled with findings from the project's evaluation, which are forthcoming, a significant opportunity exists to "triangulate" these findings. Such an analysis could provide a richer and more complete understanding of the professional and cultural exchange program's impact on the Fellows, especially regarding their work behaviors and the improvement of food security in their respective countries.

A follow-up study should be conducted to examine communication behaviors between the Fellows over time to ascertain any lasting impacts on their networking and communication practices – between the three professional groups represented and as individuals – especially in regard to improving food security in east Africa. And further research should be conducted to understand the benefits and challenges of mid-career professionals participating in international internships. In addition, university officials should consider providing support for ongoing

cultural exchange programs designed to increase the global knowledge of U.S. faculty members and students.

Additional research should be conducted to describe the qualitative differences between internships and job shadowing experiences, especially related to learning in the context of improving food security. Might circumstances exist in which one type of learning experience would be more appropriate than the other?

Based on the challenge of transcribing the handwritten journals of the participants, i.e., the likelihood of errors occurring, it is also recommended that future researchers ask their participants to use an electronic method of journaling. This procedure would also prevent participants from making notes from presentations in their journals. However, this approach could require time spent in a computer lab and for that time allocation to be made a part of the program's schedule.

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APPPENDICES

APPENDIX A

GRANT PROPOSAL

Grant Proposal

Improving Food Security by Catalyzing Communication Networks between Key Stakeholders: Linking Media, Policies, and Communities in Kenya and Uganda

Executive Summary

Food deprivation blights the world's collective humanity. The need to improve food security in Sub-Saharan Africa is an enormous and pernicious problem. Food insecurity debilitates individual human performance and can even foment conflict and genocide. It lessens the potential of entire societies and regions. Kenyans and Ugandans are no strangers to the devastating effects of food scarcity. Nearly four million Kenyans and more than two million Ugandans require food assistance regularly (USAID, 2008, 2009).

The proposed project seeks to improve the prospects of ensuring food security in Kenya and Uganda by providing professional development for three key stakeholder groups whose collaboration stands to multiply their collective impact on food insufficiency: community leaders, media specialists, and policymakers. These individuals would be the project's *Food Security Fellows (FSF)*. The project proposes to improve communication flow among and between these groups by their and U.S. counterparts participating in two-way, reciprocal exchanges. A "centerpiece" of the U.S. program would be the *FSF* undergoing internship/job-shadowing experiences appropriate for their professional roles and aspirations. This approach held great value for the proposers' DOS, BECA-supported exchange project with Malian media specialists and U.S. media professionals as well as subsequent follow-on activities thereafter.

Through learning experiences in the United States, open dialogue among the *FSF* and their U.S. counterparts, including food security experts, strategies and practices would be examined and learned as well as "contextualized" to resonate in the targeted nations. The model would facilitate and even synergize the traditional flow of communication while stressing food security policy and its impact on local communities. The U.S. participants would benefit significantly through their interactions with the *FSF* and reciprocal travel to Kenya and Uganda.

Improving Food Security by Catalyzing Communication Networks between Key Stakeholders: Linking Media, Policies, and Communities in Kenya and Uganda

Project Rationale/Need/Justification

"Jacques Diouf, director general of the FAO, has stressed that the world's poor, mostly landless laborers and the residents of urban slums, both groups that are largely beyond the reach of global media, are suffering a '"silent hunger crisis'" (Runge & Runge, 2010, p. 8). The world's poor often include small-scale periurban and urban farmers who are usually itinerant and landless as well as petty traders such as "food hawkers" (Mugalavi, 2008) and their families. Former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman and his co-author, Catherine Bertini, (2009) called on the United States "to adopt different tactics in designing both agricultural-assistance projects and food-aid operations …" and "strengthen research, training, and other links between the U.S. land-grant universities … and their counterparts in the developing world" (p. 101). They stressed the need for improved use of "communications technology in agricultural-extension work" (p. 101), in particular.

The number of people living in poverty in Kenya alone is estimated to be 56% of the total population (GoK, 2003); i.e., more than 20 million persons. What is more, an estimated 3.8 million Kenyans (~10% of its total population) are in need of emergency food assistance (USAID, 2009). In Uganda, the government estimates 2.14 million Ugandans require food assistance regularly (USAID, 2008). Too frequently, these individuals' voices go unheard and unheeded.

Moreover, a significant problem that often exacerbates food security is the marginalizing of poor people in regard to decision-making and access to decision-makers. Many government appointees at the sub-national level wield enormous power in deciding what they believe the people need (Chitere, 2005). But often a lack of a clear policy direction and weak leadership at

the provincial and local levels confounds societal problems, including effective solutions to endemic poverty and hunger (Acker & Gasperini, 2008; Jivetti, 2007; Omiti, Owino, Otieno, & Odundo, 2002). Frequently, women and children are particularly disadvantaged and marginalized (Bertini & Glickman, 2009; Jivetti; Saisi & Edwards, 2008). Effective communication, including professionalized communicators, efficient networks, and appropriate forums, are needed to provide a *voice for the voiceless* in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

The "Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems for Rural Development (AKIS/RD)" "'knowledge triangle'" (see Figure 1) developed and proffered by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the World Bank (2000, p. 2), identifies key stakeholders and their relationships to one another in the agricultural and food system. The AKIS/RD model

> links rural people and institutions to promote mutual learning and generate, share and utilize agriculture-related technology, knowledge and information. The system integrates farmers, agricultural educators, researchers and extensionists to harness knowledge and information from various sources for better farming and improved livelihoods . (p. 2)

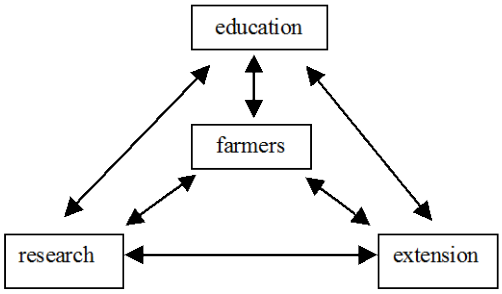

Figure 1. "Knowledge Triangle" - Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems for Rural Development (AKIS/RD) (Food and Agricultural Organization, 2000).

Frequently, this "knowledge and information" involves *change*, i.e., the adoption of innovation or an innovative practice, especially the adoption of technologies by individuals w ho

populate the agricultural and food supply chain. However, in Kenya, not unlike much of SSA, including Uganda, limited and unadopted technologies have been severe constraints to agricultural production and food security in marginalized areas (Action by C hurches Together International, 2003). To that point, Rōling (2004), a proponent of AKIS/RD as it relates to *communication for development*, emphatically stated, "Innovation is not the end -of pipe result of a linear process but the emergent property of inte raction among multiple stakeholders in an AKIS," i.e., "a network of actors" (p. 18). He asserted, "the network is based on shared perceptions with respect to the issues at stake" (p. 18). Rōling has described this form of communication further as the "co-creation of knowledge" (Navarro, 2008; Rōling) among key stakeholders. This approach supports innovation, including innovative practices impacting food security, as having a "systemic nature" that is multi -faceted, dynamic, and organic in its form and function (Knickel, Brunori, Rand, & Proost, 2009).

This project proposes for sustainable, positive change to occur regarding food security, another complementary "network of actors" implied by the AKIS/RD Knowledge Triangle must be recognized and catalyzed. These actors and their communication network (see Figure 2) form the basis of selecting exchange participants as *Food Security Fellows (FSF)* for this project. This project recognizes the importance of actively engaging community leaders, media professiona ls, and policymakers to collaborate and address the social, economic, and political issues intertwined with food security (i.e., food insufficiency or "insecurity") in Kenya and Uganda by giving a voice to those who frequently lack one.

Communication Networks

Twelve Kenyans and 12 Ugandans will be selected as project participants. Two separate groups would visit the United States. Both groups will consist of local leaders, media

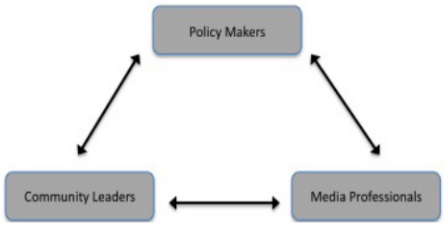

Figure 2. Reciprocal Flow of Communication between Participating *Food Security Fellows*

professionals, and policymakers (see Figure 1). Two members of each sub group by country (see Table 1) will be selected for each U.S.-based program. OSU faculty working with resident facilitators in both countries and respective U.S. Embassy officials will identify individuals appropriate for the *FSF Program.*

Table 1. Proposed African Participants by Sub Group and U.S. -based Program Time Frames

May – June 2011	**November – December 2011**
2 Kenyan media professionals – TBD	2 Kenyan media professionals – TBD
2 Ugandan media professionals – TBD	2 Ugandan media professionals – TBD
2 Kenyan community leaders – TBD	2 Kenyan community leaders – TBD
2 Ugandan community leaders – TBD	2 Ugandan community leaders – TBD
2 Kenyan policymakers – TBD	2 Kenyan policymakers – TBD
2 Ugandan policymakers – TBD	2 Ugandan policymakers – TBD

Building from a multi-step flow model of communications, this project proposes improved communication flow (see Figure 2) among community leaders, media professionals, and policymakers that would provide the catalyst needed to address issues and policies that currently limit food security in these nations. This proposed model suggests a *FSF Program* could be the beginning of a potent and synergistic force for positive change. Through learning experiences in the United States and open dialogue among African Fellows (Table 1) and their

U.S. counterparts, including food security experts, strategies and practices would be examined and learned as well as "contextualized" to resonate in the targeted nations. Effective communication practices within and between groups as well as their target audiences, individually and collectively, would be stressed during the planned two -way exchange experiences. Moreover, this model would facilitate and even catalyze the traditional flow of communication while stressing food security policy and its impact on local communities.

By developing communication networks among Kenyan, Ugandan, and U.S. community leaders, media professionals, and policymakers, this project intends to grow social capital. Historically, societies have improved the human condition through participation and involvement in social groups (Durkheim, 1984; Lin, 2008). However, social capital is developed only if strong communication networks are formed (Ehrhardt, Marsili, & Vega-Redondo, 2007). These networks are believed to create pathways where information flows freely and often (Kossinets, Kleinberg, & Watts, 2008). Although larger social networks do not guarantee communication flow among all members of a network (Kossinets et al.), a reciprocal, smaller "network of actors" are more interconnected and could form more intense bonds, thus creating a stronger flow of communication within and between this network (Ehrhardt et al.).

The sub-groups forming this smaller communication network were chosen based on their roles and/or influence on the greater society. Community leaders (i.e., opinion leaders) are individuals of a larger social system but are influential "actors" within that system (Rogers, 2003). This project proposes community leaders are important to the communication network not only because of their status but also knowledge of the issue(s) their communities must overcome to alleviate food shortages in Kenya and Uganda.

Media professionals in democratic nations have many roles, such as serving as the voice of the people and monitoring governance. Informed by the World Bank's study "Consultations with the Poor," James Wolfensohn, its former president, stated freedom of the press "is absolutely at the core of equitable development" and is the "searchlight of transparency" to be shone on a nation's institutional actors and their behaviors that influence economic growth, capital investment, and entrepreneurial capacity-building. Thus, media professionals within this proposed communication network could be a critical mediator between the other "actors."

Finally, policymakers control the political decision-making within a government. Faced with the "natural" challenges of policymaking, policymakers in less developed countries are confronted by international pressures to compete with developed countries in the global market (Millstone & Zwanenberg, 2003). So, as their agricultural economies move into the global market, policymakers "find they need to establish new, or elaborate existing, food policy-making and control regimes" (p. 655).

Project Goal/Objectives/Anticipated Outcomes

The project's goal is to integrate community leaders, media professionals, and policymakers from Kenya and Uganda as part of a *FSFs'* two-way exchange program between the countries and their professional counterparts in the United States. The program's focus is "improving food security in the context of developing nations"; however, opportunities for the learning and growth of U.S. citizens would be emphasized equally. Specific objectives are:

1. To assist African community leaders, media professionals, and policymakers in understanding, acquiring, and practicing professional standards related to food security;

2. To provide African community leaders, media professionals, and policymakers real - world experience in U.S. policy, media, commerce, and education related to food security;
3. To provide U.S. community leaders, media professionals, policymakers, and univ ersity faculty real-world experience in aspects of policy, media, commerce, and education related to food security issues in the nations of Kenya and Uganda;
4. To develop future collaborations (e.g., DOS alumni and follow-on initiatives) among and between African community leaders, media professionals, and policymakers as well as their U.S. counterparts; and
5. To build capacity for future collaborations between African and U.S. community leaders, media professionals, and policymakers regarding food security an d related issues.

Background Information on Implementing Organization

OSU's Institutional Capacity and Commitment

Founded in 1890 as Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Oklahoma State University's commitment to extension and outreach is well grou nded in its mission, history, and activities. OSU began providing international education through participation in President Harry S. Truman's Point Four Program (later known as USAID) in 1949. Through this program and many others since, OSU has offered its technological and scientific expertise to educate and assist many people in developing countries. Improving agricultural and food production systems and practices has been central to OSU's international outreach efforts (see Attachment D).

OSU's extension and outreach expenditures continue to grow each year as the institution dedicates more of its faculty time to educating those beyond its campuses. In 2008 alone, Sponsored Program expenditures were more than $270 million, including external awards for

Sponsored Extension, Outreach, and Research. Faculty of the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (DASNR) have implemented a wide array of educational programs from training media specialists in Mali who report on agricultural and food security issues to providing curriculum development expertise per a *BSc Programme for Agricultural Extension Education* in Kenya (Kock et al., 2009).

Similar to the proposed project, the previous DOS, BECA project with Malian media specialists that OSU faculty conducted during 2007 (Cartmell et al., 2008, 2009; Robertson et al., in press; Sitton et al., 2009) exemplified the land-grant heritage and mission of OSU. The completed project was titled **"Nurturing the 'Fourth Estate': Professional Development for Media Specialists in the Republic of Mali, West Africa" ($227,392).** Our institution's agricultural communications and education faculty together with Oklahoma media professionals worked closely with 14 Malian media specialists to help them acquire professi onal skills and attitudes as well as better understand the unique role and responsibilities of a free press in a democratic society. Four of the project's key team members are proposers of this project (see Attachments A). Faculty networks already have received commitments for guest speakers/topic presenters, tours, and internships/job-shadowing experiences for in-coming exchange participants (see Attachments B) to create interactions with experts, direct observations, opportunities for professional practice, guided reflection, and follow-on activities.

Roles and Responsibilities

Proposed Experiential Learning Model and the Role of Internships and Job-shadowing

Adults expect *immediacy of application* from their learning and value learning they deem important in the present or near-term (Knowles, 1990). Kolb (1984) posited as people experience the world their perceptions are transformed and thereafter guide the selection of new experiences

(see Figure 3). And, an individual's "theory of action has not been lear ned in the most important sense unless it can be put into practice" (Argyris & Schön, 1989, p. 12). Active, experiential learning, in particular, holds great potential for creating new perceptions or "personal theories" and modifying pre-existing cognitive understanding and affective beliefs.

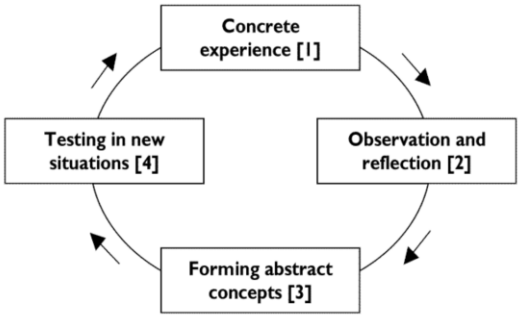

Figure 3. Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (1984). (Informal Education, 1996, 2005)

Opportunities for experiential learning and practice, as well as the potential for creating new perceptions or "personal theories" and modifying pre-existing ones will be powerful tool s to support the learning of Kenyan and Ugandan Fellows as they acquire and practice new professional behaviors and competencies related to food security. Internship/job -shadowing experiences, in parti cular, if conducted in context-rich settings, offer a valuable venue in which greater understanding and behavioral change occurs. Brown, Collins, and Duguid (1996) described this approach to learning as "cognitive apprenticeship," i.e., learning relying on context and authenticity, which is precisely what effective internship and job -shadowing experiences provide.

The exchange Fellows will intern/job shadow in agencies and with local, county, and state organizations that support the training of media specia lists, policymakers, and community leaders in Oklahoma (see Attachments B and C). How these entities communicate internally as

well as their use of external communication networks will be stressed. The Fellows will undergo concrete experiences, collaborate with expert mentors to help interpret and reflect on their experiences, participate in opportunities to abstract "lessons learned" toward future experiences, test new "theories" through active experimentation, and then apply newly acquired attitudes and knowledge as new experiences arise (Kolb, 1984; Informal Education, 1996, 2005). Their internship/job-shadowing experiences will provide an on-going and recurring cycle of professional growth and development. This portion of the program supports the achieve ment of **Objectives/Activities 1, 2, 4, and 5**. Project Team Members (PTM) will monitor the quality of these experiences as they occur at various locales in Oklahoma. Monitoring will include PTM making on-site visits as well as telephone and e-mail contact with the Fellows and their mentors.

OSU's Department of Agricultural Education, Communications, and Leadership has a long history of successful internships for undergraduate and graduate students. Internships and/or job-shadowing experiences are required o f all undergraduates. Students generally spend a semester or summer under the guidance of professionals; the mentoring during those experiences is critical to their professional growth. Already, several potential internship/job -shadowing partners (see Attachments B and C) have expressed their support and willingness to host Fellows through this exchange program; additional internship/job -shadowing sites are being explored.

The **exchange program's external evaluator** (see Attachment A) will select a sample of the internships/job-shadowing settings to observe and conduct key informant interviews. (See Attachment C to view a comprehensive schematic of the training model envisioned to support the exchange program's purpose and objectives.)

Administration/Supervision of J-1 Visas and Recruitment/Selection of Fellows

The proposers (PTM) are prepared to assist the BECA in meeting all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62. The J Exchange Visitor Program is the responsibility of International Students and Scholars Office (ISS) at OSU. OSU has one Responsible Officer (RO) and three Alternate Responsible Officers (ARO). OSU has recently been approved for re-designation by the Department of State for the Exchange Visitor Program.

The RO and ARO screen all Exchange Visitor (EV) requests in the student and scholar categories. As part of the program, the following information will be provided to all EVs and their inviting departments:

- Pre-arrival information to assist with the regulations and compliance for the EV as well as a reminder to the department regarding their obligation to the EV;
- Orientation program in verbal and written format;
- Access to cross-cultural events and experiences available on and off campus; and
- Encourage reciprocity throughout the university departments.

Also, as part of the program's administration, OSU adheres to the regulations under 22 C.F.R. part 62, which includes monitoring of exchange visitors, reporting a change of address in SEVIS, verifying health insurance compliance for the exchange visitor and family members, and updating ROs and Alternate ROs in SEVIS.

In addition, OSU issues the DS-2019 under the regulations of 22 C.F.R. 62.11(d), which includes the obligations to manage the production and distribution of the SEVIS DS-2019. Prior to issuing the DS-2019, the RO/ARO's verify the following:

- EV's qualification to participate in the program;

- English language skills necessary to participate in the program;
- Adequate financial resources for the EV and family members, if applicable; and
- Understanding of mandatory health insurance.

Another part of the program administration includes keeping records of all DS -2019s issued, the arrival and departure dates of the EV's, and the EV's who do not arrive on campus. Also, ISS office staff completes the annual report requirement with four components, which OSU submits to the Department of State in July each year. The ISS office monitors all aspects of the EV program, and the RO/AROs ensure OSU is in compliance.

Project Management Plan

Twelve Kenyans and 12 Ugandans will be selected as project participants. Two separate groups would visit the United States. Both groups will consist of local leaders, media professionals, and policymakers. Two members of each sub group by country (see Table 1) will be selected for each U.S.-based program. OSU faculty working with resident facilitators in both countries and respective U.S. Embassy officials will identify individuals appropriate for the *FSF Program* (Phase 1).

The second phase will consist of one African group (see Table 1) traveling to the U.S., specifically Oklahoma, for the program. Business leaders and advocates with direct connections to agricultural and food production, education and/or advocacy, food security/sufficiency, and rural vitality will serve as topic presenters and project collaborators during the participants' five - week exchange. Participants will be paired with U.S. counterparts for short-term "internships" or "job shadowing" experiences. This immersion will provide them multiple opportunities to experience U.S. professional roles and culture pertaining to agricultural and food commerce as well as real-world experiences to learn knowledge and skills related to communicating about and

resolving food security issues in their own country. PTM with signif icant experience in managing internships and shadowing opportunities will facilitate, monitor, and evaluate the program described (see Attachment C).

The project's third phase will send 12 U.S. team members, including OSU faculty and selected collaborators, to Kenya and Uganda (~2.5 weeks) to learn about food security issues through interaction with the African Fellows and their constituencies.

The fourth phase will consist of a second African group traveling to the U.S. for the abovementioned program.

The fifth phase would be a repeat of phase three with other selected U.S. participants. (The planned phases and anticipated travel are in accord with the funding agency's expectations.)

Table 2 illustrates a simple project management plan, delineating dates, events/tasks, and collaborators for each phase of the project. A more detailed schedule of planned activities for each phase of the project can be found in Attachment C.

The Project's Commitment to and Support of Diversity

OSU's commitment to diversity is inscribed in and guided by its Office of Institutional Diversity's mission statement:

> To develop and support efforts that help the Oklahoma State University System achieve and maintain environments, where all members are actively broadening their perspectives about differences; actively seeking to know individuals; actively including all members of the community in every aspect of the organization; and where students achieve academic excellence. (Oklahoma State University Office of Institutional Diversity, n.d., para. 1)

The team assembled to implement the proposed project includes diversity of gender, age, and academic rank (see Attachment A). This will be extended to representatives of entities who have indicated their willingness to serve as internship/job -shadowing providers for the international participants (see Attachments B and C). For example, the general manager of

Table 2. Project Management Plan

Dates	Phase	Major Events/Tasks	Person(s)/Group(s) Responsible
9/1/10 – 12/31/10	1	Recruitment of Kenyan/Uganda participants (see related documents in Attachment C);	PTM, Makerere University, Gulu University, Moi University, Egerton University, Kenyatta University, Kenyan Resident Facilitator, Ugandan Resident Facilitator, Kenyan U.S. Embassy, and Ugandan U.S. Embassy
1/1/11 – 04/30/11	1	Plan travel itineraries, lodging arrangements, and all activities for the first group of fellowship participants. Schedule evaluator travel and make any arrangements for the evaluator as needed.	PTM, Graduate Research Assistant, Internship Cooperators, Guest Speakers, Kenyan Resident Facilitator, Ugandan Resident Facilitator, and External Evaluator
5/1/11 – 6/30/11	2	Conduct the Food Security Fellowship program for the first group of participants (see detailed schedule in Attachment C)	PTM, Graduate Research Assistant, Internship Cooperators, Guest Speakers, and External Evaluator
7/1/11 – 7/31/11	3	Make travel itineraries, lodging arrangements, transportation arrangements, etc. for the first U.S. participant group's travel to Uganda/Kenya	PTM, U.S. Participants, Graduate Research Assistant, Kenyan Resident Facilitator, and Ugandan Resident Facilitator
8/1/11 – 8/31/11	3	Carry out the activities associated with phase 3 of the project (see detailed schedule in Attachment C)	PTM, U.S. Participants, Graduate Research Assistant, Kenyan Resident Facilitator, and Ugandan Resident Facilitator
9/1/11 – 10/31/11	4	Plan travel itineraries, lodging arrangements, and all activities for the second group of fellowship participants. Schedule evaluator travel and make any arrangements for the evaluator as needed.	PTM, Graduate Research Assistant, Internship Cooperators, Guest Speakers, Kenyan Resident Facilitator, Ugandan Resident Facilitator, and External Evaluator
11/1/11 – 11/30/11	4	Conduct the Food Security Fellowship program for the second group of participants (see detailed schedule in Attachment C)	PTM, Graduate Research Assistant, Internship Cooperators, Guest Speakers, and External Evaluator
11/1/11 – 11/30/11	5	Make travel itineraries, lodging arrangements, transportation arrangements, etc. for the second U.S. participant group's travel to Uganda/Kenya.	PTM, U.S. Participants, Graduate Research Assistant, Kenyan Resident Facilitator, and Ugandan Resident Facilitator
12/1/11 – 12/20/11	5	Carry out the activities associated with phase 5 of the project (see detailed schedule in Attachment C)	PTM, U.S. Participants, Graduate Research Assistant, Kenyan Resident Facilitator, and Ugandan Resident Facilitator
12/21/11 – 8/31/12	X	Complete final reporting procedures as required by the DOS. Complete the external evaluation of the project. Facilitate and monitor on-going DOS alumni//follow-on activities supporting the project's long-term, sustainable relationships and initiatives	PTM, Graduate Research Assistant, Kenyan Resident Facilitator and Ugandan Resident Facilitator, and External Evaluator

Note: The final Phase **X** will be for post-grant reporting, completion of the evaluation, and nurturing/monitoring of follow-on activities. It is not listed as a programmatic phase in the project narrative and is listed as Phase **X** in this table.

KOSU, Stillwater's National Public Radio affiliate, is a female. In addit ion, residents of Oklahoma include more than 30 recognized Native American nations (tribes), e.g., the Cherokee and Choctaw are headquartered in our state. Two of the PTMs have a Native American heritage. So, the African participants will have numerous con tacts, formal and informal, with Oklahomans of Native American ancestry. To that end, the participants will visit and tour Sequoyah's Cabin State Park in eastern Oklahoma. Sequoyah is honored as developer of the Cherokee alphabet or "syllabary." The state park in his honor is one of many places where the cultural heritage and contributions of Native Americans is recognized and celebrated in Oklahoma.

As an example of both "geographic diversity" as well as tribal/ethnic diversity, recruitment efforts would target participants from the West Pokot and Marakwet districts of the North Rift Valley Province of Kenya. OSU faculty are working currently with colleagues at MU in Kenya to develop and deliver programming to improve the economic livelihoods of Kenyans in that region. Both districts are considered marginalized areas of Kenya: poverty is endemic; literacy and higher learning is substantially underdeveloped; wealth -generating resources are scarce; and the provision of state-sponsored assistance has not been distributed equitably (Mwaura, 2005). Capacity-building initiatives designed to work collaboratively with intended beneficiaries and their advocates, e.g., community leaders, those who report on their needs, and responsible policymakers, are sorely needed. Similar marginalized areas will be recruited from in Uganda.

The Oklahoma Experience

As developing democracies, Kenya and Uganda face a multitude of challenges, including terrorism, domestic and international, which is exacerbated by food insecurity and its attendant ills. As residents of Oklahoma, the proposers are keenly aware of how societal disaffection and

resulting terrorist acts look and feel in our state and in our nation. Even after 15 years, memories of the domestic terrorism action at the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City, which killed 167 innocent Oklahomans, including a number of children, still remains fresh in our minds. (The Oklahoma City Bombing Memorial is a destination the exchange Fellows will visit.) We understand the need for disparate and unique voices to communicate regardless of social strata, ethnicity, or religion. Accordingly, we embrace the opportunity to interact and collaborate with the Fellows such that mutual understandings of our cultures and peoples are enhanced and valued.

Our range of civic engagement opportunities will span from interacting with adult volunteers who guide and support aspiring agriculturists (e.g., Payne County 4 -H Club members) to experiencing how a moderate-sized Midwestern city and university strives to achieve social cohesion and cooperation. Numerous opportunities to observe and investigate civic responsibility and community involvement, especially activities resonating with agriculture, food, and rural vitality, will fill the span of our proposed exchange programs. U.S. citizens who travel to Africa as reciprocal exchange participants will be given multiple opportunities to experience the people and cultures of Kenya and Uganda. Person-to-person relationships established during stateside programs will help to ensure those opportunities.

In learning and sharing with our Kenyan and Ugandan colleagues, we can help open their eyes to what is an essential component of any sustainable society: an integrated education system supporting agricultural and food production. This is a fundamental premise on which OSU was founded and remains part of its core mission as a land-grant university in the 21st century (Herren & Edwards, 2002). Using our experiences and academic preparation, the proposers are well-positioned and committed to making a difference in the lives of participants, African and

American. Moreover, we will use what would be our newly enhanced global perspectives and cross-cultural understandings to broaden the education of students in our cl assrooms (Navarro & Edwards, 2008) and fellow citizens in our community, state, and nation.

Post-Grant Plan

Follow-on activities fall naturally in line with OSU's land grant mission, which stat es "Oklahoma State University is a multi -campus public land-grant educational system that improves the lives of people in Oklahoma, the nation, and the world through integrated, high - quality teaching, research, and outreach" (Oklahoma State University System , n.d., para. 1). With this mission in mind, the program will actively and directly connect participants to multiple food-related Extension experts who can continue to serve as on -going resources for the program participants. Many of these Extension experts produce *Fact Sheets* on a variety of agriculturally related topics that are available on the OSU Web site. These *Fact Sheets*, which include e-mail contact information of the author, will be introduced and emphasized to participants throughout the program. Because these *Fact Sheets* include best practices for a mult itude of agricultural topics, and because they will be available for participants to use as well as pass along to their colleagues, this resource will create a strong multiplier effect.

In addition, participants will be connected to their internship/job-shadowing hosts, and these connections will be encouraged through a listserv of all participants, PTMs, and internship/job-shadowing hosts. A similar listserv from a previous project has proven highly successful and continues to be active. From the "Nurturing the Fourth Estate" project, participants, intern hosts, and PTMs remain connected and serve as resources for one another. This success offers a strong model on which to build and strengthen the current project.

Evaluation Plan

A formal research evaluation strategy is an interwoven component of this project. Plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the project include measures designed to assess both program outputs and outcomes. The evaluation benchmarks described below will provide meaningful data to guide the work of the project team and accountability information for the sponsoring agency. The broad constructs to be examined are designed to measure effectiveness of the proposed project activities/objectives in terms of the following : (1) knowledge gain and planned behavior change as a function of participating in the formal and informal learning experiences that are at the core of the proposed exchange program, focusing especially on Kenyan and Ugandan *FSF* participants' abilities to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for understanding, acquiring, and putting into practice professional standards related to food security; (2) perceived satisfaction and learning achieved as a result of participating in a program that maintains balanced and representative diversity with respect to political, social , and cultural life on the part of beneficiaries, project leaders , and cooperators (3) change/gain in demonstrated skills/competencies associated with improved communications flow and effective communications practices, and (4) institutional changes, focusing on increased opportunities for follow-on consultancy, collaboration , and partnership between African community leaders, media professionals , and policymakers as well as their U.S. counterparts. More details regarding the evaluation plan, including sample instruments, can be found in Attachment C.

Budget

Form SF-424A provides information regarding the budget. In addition, a copy of the comprehensive budget and budget narrative, including breakout s of the administrative budget and program budget can be found in Attachment E.

Working with the Public Affairs Sections

It is the intent of the PTM to work closely with the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Uganda (see Attachment B) to further develop plans for program implementation and to recruit and select exchange participants. PTM anticipate significant consultations with the Embassies' respective Public Affairs Officers (POA) and/or their designee(s) to plan and deliver as strong a program as possible. When delivering a similar project with Malian journalists during 2006 and 2007, the PTM developed a strong working relationship with the PAO at the time from the U.S. Embassy in Mali, Mrs. Stephanie Syptak, and her staff (see Attachment B).

The PTM also anticipate colleagues at Moi University (MU) and Egerton University in Kenya and Makerere University and Gulu University in Uganda (see Attachment B), in relevant departments and programs, as well as "resident facilitators" sup ported by the grant (see Budget Narrative in Attachment E), will assist with recruitment and screening of appropriate exchange participants (see Table 1). For example, Dr. Susan Chebet, principal administrative officer for Extension and Outreach at Moi University, has com mitted her unit's support regarding the recruitment of appropriate Kenyan Fellows (see Attachment B).

Finally, no commitments or assurances have been made to any individuals regarding their selection for participation in the proposed program. Again, PTM understand completely that the final selection of Fellows will be made with full approval of cognizant officials at the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Uganda as well as the DOS, BECA.

Acknowledging ECA's Financial Support

The PTM will acknowledge ECA's financial support and use the Department seal, when possible, on any literature, recruitment pieces, and media created as a result of this project.

Example promotional pieces from the previously funded DOS -BECA project with Malian media specialists can be found in Attachment C or on the Web at http://mali.okstate.edu/.

Alumni Outreach/Follow-on/Engagement

PTMs will use the DOS Alumni and ExchangesConnect Web sites for continued dialogue and sharing of ideas. Two days of training will be devoted to the use and emphasis of these collaborative resources. To ensure on-going dialogue is active and dynamic, PTMs will coach participants on the proper use of the Web sites, encouraging them to share successes and struggles beyond the time boundaries of the funded project. In addition, PTMs will collect and post to the Web site all media coverage and other project related outcomes. This approach worked extremely well in the proposers' Malian media specialist exchange project (see Attachment C). Additionally, PTMs will continue to dialogue with participants and other parties met through the experiences of the project with plans for further development of this effort in the future.

APPENDIX B

NEWS ARTICLE

Vol. 23 No. 6 September 30, 2011

News from OSU Communications

OSU sponsors project to improve food security in Horn of Africa

A group of journalists, farmers, community leaders and policymakers from Kenya and Uganda are in Oklahoma for the next few weeks.

The project sponsored by the OSU Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership is part of a U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs grant. OSU developed the grant "to improve the prospects of ensuring food security in Kenya and Uganda," said Dwayne Cartmell, project co-director.

The project goal is to improve food security and insufficiency through four phases of a citizen exchange program among Kenyan and Ugandan community leaders, media professionals and policymakers, and their U.S. counterparts. These individuals are the project's food security fellows.

The group's five week visit in the United States is the third phase of this project. The individuals from the two African countries are participating in internships with counterparts across the state and on the OSU campus.

For example, Esther Nakkazi, a journalist from Uganda, is interning with OSU Communications. In the office, she will see how the university communicates with the campus as well as the general public and will be interacting with the staff to help further her knowledge of communications in a university setting.

"I am very excited about this opportunity," Nakkazi said. "This gives me a chance to have a hands-on experience with how work gets done in the U.S."

Nakkazi added she learned a lot about food security, communications and the United States in the classroom and now she's getting a first-hand look at how communications gets disseminated in another country.

"I hope to use this knowledge to improve food security among communities in Uganda and throughout Africa through my writing,"

The first phase occurred in April and consisted of six people from both Kenya and Uganda spending four weeks in Oklahoma and one week in Washington, D.C.

During their stay in Oklahoma, the first group of food security fellows received rigorous professional development training in the areas of food production, education/advocacy, food security/sufficiency, nutrition and rural vitality, Cartmell said. They also participated in a ten-day internship that matched their professional interests and goals.

After hosting the group, the next stage in the grant involved OSU faculty members and collaborators traveling to the two countries.

While the rest of Oklahoma suffered through multiple days of 100-degree heat during the summer, 15 OSU faculty members and collaborators spent two weeks in Kenya and Uganda addressing food security issues in the Horn of Africa.

Oklahoma State University faculty and students received a tour of a Ugandan school farm as part of a grant to help improve the prospects of ensuring food security in Kenya and Uganda.

The Horn of Africa, which includes Kenya, is experiencing one of its worst droughts in recent decades. The call for humanitarian assistance, including food aid, is being sounded around the globe. According to USAID's fact sheet, the number of people requiring assistance in the affected countries was approaching 13 million.

"The advantages of traveling to the African countries are two-fold," Cartmell said. "It provides the U.S. collaborators first-hand experience of the policy, media, commerce and educational issues faced by Kenya and Uganda and built capacity for future collaborations."

The fourth and final stage of the project will be similar to stage two, with teams from OSU traveling to Kenya and Uganda. Cartmell said this provides international experiences for additional graduate students and project collaborators. The fourth stage is scheduled to occur in the spring of 2012.

APPENDIX C

PRESS RELEASE

Oklahoma State University
Agricultural Education, Communications & Leadership
448 Agricultural Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078 • 405-744-8036 • FAX 405-744-5176

April 22, 2011 — For Immediate Release
Contact: Denise George, Project Graduate Assistant
405-744-8135

OSU Department Hosts African Food Security Fellows
By Denise George

The OSU Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership is hosting 12 community leaders, media specialists and policymakers from Kenya and Uganda during the month of April in an effort to improve food security in the participants' home countries.

Hosting these food security fellows is the first of four phases of a grant through the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The overall goal of this program is to examine the social, political and economic factors that impact food security/sufficiency in Kenya and Uganda, said Dwayne Cartmell, project lead co-director.

During the five-week exchange program, participants are receiving in-depth professional development training in the areas of food production, education/advocacy, food security/sufficiency, nutrition and rural vitality.

Additionally, the food security fellows have been paired with a U.S. counterpart to complete a 10-day internship/job shadowing experience.

"The internships provide the on-the-ground segment of the program," said Shelly Sitton, project co-director. "These opportunities offer the fellows first-hand experience to learn ways to implement change in their respective countries."

The fellows are completing their internships at KOSU; Oklahoma Farm Bureau; the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry; the Radio Oklahoma Network; the OSU Department of Plant and Soil Sciences; OSU Department of Nutritional Sciences; "SUNUP," a weekly TV show produced by the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service; the Payne County Extension office; and the Oklahoma House of Representatives.

"Community leaders, media specialists and policymakers were selected to participate in the program because those three groups stand to develop a communication triangle needed to create a change in their countries," said Craig Edwards, project co-director.

Combining this with an information exchange and hands-on experience will have the greatest collaborative impact on food security in Kenya and Uganda, said Cindy Blackwell, project co-director.

Before returning to Africa, participants will develop a plan of action to maximize the benefits of this program. This will include a strategy to disseminate newly acquired knowledge and how that can impact food security.

"This program has been an exciting opportunity for us," said Philip Chemwok, farm manager for Moi University in Kenya. "We are appreciative for this experience."

While in Oklahoma, participants have experienced the history and culture of Oklahoma by visiting various tourist attractions. They also have experienced the atmosphere of Oklahoma State University.

Contacts:
Dwayne Cartmell Dwayne.cartmell@okstate.edu
Craig Edwards craig.edwards@okstate.edu
Cindy Blackwell cindy.blackwell@okstate.edu
Shelly Sitton shelly.sitton@okstate.edu (cell: 405-614-0302)

APPENDIX D

APPLICATION

Oklahoma State University
Agricultural Education, Communications & Leadership
448 Agricultural Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078 • 405-744-8036 • FAX 405-744-5176

U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Professional Exchanges Program

Improving Food Security by Catalyzing Communication Networks between Key Stakeholders: Linking Media, Policies, and Communities in Kenya and Uganda

This project is being funded by the U.S. Department of State and seeks to improve the prospects of ensuring food security in Kenya and Uganda by providing professional development for three key stakeholder groups whose collaboration stands to multiply their collective impact on food insufficiency: community leaders, media specialists, and policymakers. These individuals would be the project's *Food Security Fellows (FSF)*. The project plans to improve communication flow among and between these groups by their and U.S. counterparts participating in two-way, reciprocal exchanges. A focus of the U.S. program would be the *FSF* undergoing internship/job shadowing experiences appropriate for their professional roles and aspirations.

Through learning experiences in the United States, open dialogue among the *FSF* and with their U.S. counterparts, including food security experts, strategies and practices for better communication will be examined and. The model will facilitate and even synergize the traditional flow of communication while stressing food security policy and its impact on local communities.

By filling out the application below, you are applying to be a part of the second travel team (**Expected Arrival in the U.S.: September 17, 2011; Expected Departure from the U.S.: October 22, 2011)** to the United States for this professional development opportunity. The information sought below will be used to fill out a DS-2019 for a J visa to come to the U.S. should you be selected and approved for this opportunity. This information is requested by the U.S. Department of State. Note: All information provided, where applicable, must match that which is found on your official passport. **Please submit a scanned copy of your passport information page and your résumé with this document.** Those applicants selected for further consideration may be contacted to schedule an interview with U.S. team members between July 8 and July 20.

1. Family/Last Name: _____

2. First Name: _____ 3. Middle Name: _____

4. Gender: _____ 5. Country of Current Citizenship: _____

6. Date of Birth (please spell out the month of your birth): _____

7. City/Town/Village of Birth: _____

8. Country of Birth: _____ 9. City of Visa Interview: _____

10. Country of Legal Permanent Residence: _____

11. Home Address: _____

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448 Agricultural Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078 • 405-744-8036 • FAX 405-744-5176

12. Email Address: _____

13. Cell Phone: _____ 14. Languages: _____

15. Job Title: _____

16. Employer: _____

17. Employer Address: _____

18. Describe your job responsibilities.

19. What are your professional interests?

20. Do you have regular and dependable Internet access?

21. How will this experience help you grow professionally in your current career path?

22. Where professionally would you like to be in 10 years?

23. Have you ever been to the United States? If so, when and for what purpose?

24. What is your educational background and training related to your current professional position?

25. Can you meet travel requirements to obtain a Visa per the attached sheet?

26. Are you available for travel during the dates listed above?

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27. Would you be willing to share a room with one of your fellow project participants?

28. Do you smoke?

APPENDIX E

ACCEPTANCE LETTER

Oklahoma State University
Agricultural Education, Communications & Leadership
448 Agricultural Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078 • 405-744-8036 • FAX 405-744-5176

August 17, 2011

[redacted]

Dear [redacted]:

Congratulations! We are excited to invite you to be one of seven Ugandan participants in a grant project funded by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs: "**Improving Food Security by Catalyzing Communication Networks between Key Stakeholders: Linking Media, Policies, and Communities in Kenya and Uganda.**"

As a participant, you will come to the Oklahoma State University campus in Stillwater, Oklahoma, U.S.A. Your travel will begin **September 16, 2011.** You will arrive in Oklahoma on **September 17** and stay in Stillwater until **October 16.** On October 16, you will travel to a U.S. Department of State meeting in Washington, D.C., and leave from there on October 22 to return to Uganda with your arrival home on **October 23, 2011.**

Four faculty members from the OSU Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership will host a total of 14 community leaders, policymakers, and media specialists from Kenya and Uganda as part of a this grant project.

Our program's focus is "improving food security in the context of developing nations." Objectively speaking, the project is designed to:

1. Assist African community leaders, media professionals, and policymakers in understanding, acquiring, and practicing professional standards related to food security.
2. Provide African community leaders, media professionals, and policymakers with real-world experience in the U.S. policy, media, commerce, and education related to food security.

As part of the five-week exchange program, you will receive professional development training and will participate in an internship/job shadowing experience based upon your personal professional goals. This combination will provide you with multiple opportunities to experience U.S. professional roles and culture pertaining to agricultural and food commerce as well as real-world experiences to learn and gain skills related to communicating about and resolving food security issues in your country.

The grant will provide your travel and lodging as well as meals from the time you arrive in Stillwater until you depart for home, including your stay in our nation's capital: Washington, D.C.

As you have questions about the program, please send a message to dwayne.cartmell@okstate.edu or to abelatukwase@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing you in September!

Sincerely,

Dwayne Cartmell

Dwayne Cartmell, Ph.D.
Project Director

APPENDIX F

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Draft Daily Schedule – "Improving Food Security…" – September/October 2011

Date	8:30 to 10 a.m.	10:30 a.m. to noon	Noon to 1:30 p.m.	1:30 to 3:00 p.m.	3:15 to 4:45 p.m.	Evening
Saturday, Sept 17 Edwards/Grad Student	In Transit to Oklahoma					Check into university housing followed by informal meeting with program coordinators
Sunday, Sept 18 Dwayne/Craig	Morning: Personal Time 1 p.m. Lunch at New China Buffet Driving tour of Stillwater followed by Dinner at Sirloin Stockade – 6 p.m. 7 p.m. Sharing professional relations to food security					
Monday, Sept 19 George/Edwards	Pickup Fellows at 8:30 a.m. — 9 a.m. refreshments Photos for DOS **Room: 439 AGH**	Walk to ISS office to get materials such as IDs, etc., followed by visit to bank for VISA cards, etc.	Lunch at New China Buffet	Survey Data Collection; introductions, Stillwater transportation, expectations, and goal-setting exercise (Craig Edwards) **Room: 410 AGH**	Shopping for food items/cell phones, etc.	
Tuesday, Sept 20 Jon Ramsey	Orientation to Oklahoma and U.S. culture (Jeremy Cook)(Jon Ramsey) **Room: 412 AGH**	Land-grant philosophy as it relates to food security (Jon Ramsey) 10:15 – 11:30 **Room: 412 AGH**	Lunch Bring in Pizzas or box lunch 11:30 – 12:30 **Room: 412 AGH**	A moderated panel discussion with Food Security Fellows from Uganda (AGED 4713) 12:30 – 1:45 p.m. **Room: 101 AGH**	Food and Agricultural Biosecurity presentation and give a tour of NIMFFAB (Jacque Fletcher)(Jon Ramsey) 2:15 – 3:15	Shopping, Computer time, etc.
Wednesday, Sept 21	Cooperative Extension Panel (Sallee, Anderson & Rash) **Room: 439 AGH**	Tour of FAPC (Erin Johnson)	Lunch on your own	Secondary AGED model (Craig Edwards) **Room: 439 AGH**	Youth Leadership Development in the Context of Agricultural Education: Implications for Ensuring a Nation's Food Security (Baker, Brown, Blackburn) **Room: 439 AGH**	Dinner on own
Thursday, Sept 22	Interviews with Feature Writing and Editing class AGCM 4113 8:30 – 10:15 a.m. 225 AGH	John Peter Zenger (Cindy Blackwell via Skype) **Room:**	Lunch 11:30 – 12:30 Bring in Pizzas or box lunch 11:30 – 12:30 **Room:**	A moderated panel discussion with Food Security Fellows from Kenya (AGED 4713) 12:30 – 1:45 p.m.	Poster Design (Shelly Sitton) **Room: 439 AGH**	Economic implications of Food Security (Jeff Vitale) 3:30 – 4:45 p.m. **Room: 439 AGH**

						Room: 439 AGH	
Friday, Sept 23	Leave at 8:00 a.m. for Great State Fair of Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom (Theater of Barn 3) 9 a.m. (new intro starts approx. every 20 min) *MIAG Seminar (2 Kenyans/2 Ugandans) • 10:30 a.m. • HES 330*				**Urban Harvest** 1:30 – 3 p.m. 3355 S Purdue, just north of SW 36th between Meridian and Macarthur. (Mason Weaver 405-821-3775)		Go to SW Oklahoma Dwayne & Sutton JC
Saturday, Sept 24	Structured Cultural/Educational Activities SW Oklahoma – Great Plains Museum, Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge Lunch @ Meers Overnight at Quartz Mountain						
Sunday, Sept 25	Thomas, OK around 10 – 11 a.m. for history of family farm Lunch @ Thomas Ag Ed Dept Purebred Hereford operation & Show pigs Dobbins feedlot – cowboys on horses/hydraulic chute/processing cattle, etc.						
Monday, Sept 26	Greenseeker/Tour Biosystems Lab (Bill Raun) **374 Ag Hall**	Nutrition… (Dr. Josh Phelps) 11:00 – noon **Room: 439 AGH**	Dept. Sponsored Lunch with internship cooperators **Room: 439 AGH**	Prepare for internships with cooperators (Shelly Sitton) **Room: 410 AGH**	Post-Harvest Storage, Pest Protection (George Opit) 3:15 – 5 p.m. **Room: 410 AGH**		
Tuesday, Sept 27	Job Shadowing/Internships						
Wednesday, Sept 28	Job Shadowing/Internships						
Thursday, Sept 29	Job Shadowing/Internships						
Friday, Sept 30	Job Shadowing/Internships						
Saturday, Oct 1	NE Oklahoma/Tahlequah/Structured Cultural/Educational Activities						
Sunday, Oct 2	Personal Time						
Monday, Oct 3	Job Shadowing/Internships; Optional Dinner at 5 p.m. at the Kappa Delta Sorority House						
Tuesday, Oct 4	Job Shadowing/Internships; 4:30 p.m. Native American Event at the CWH Museum; STW FSFs leave AGH ~ 3 p.m.; OKC pickups begin at 3:45 p.m. (tentative)						
Wednesday, Oct 5	Job Shadowing/Internships						
Thursday, Oct 6	Job Shadowing/Internships						
Friday, Oct 7	Job Shadowing/Internships						
Saturday, Oct 8	OKC Structured Cultural/Educational Activities: National Memorial, Oklahoma History Museum & OKC Zoo; Lunch at						
Sunday, Oct 9	Personal Time						
Monday, Oct 10	Job Shadowing/Internships; Meeting with Dr. Jim Hynes from Sam Houston State University						
Tuesday, Oct 11	Job Shadowing/Internships						
Wednesday, Oct 12	Panel on Graduate Studies beginning at 8:30 a.m. (Coordinated/hosted by Craig Edwards) **Room: 439 AGH**	Working with the Media & News Release Development Exercise (Rachel Hubbard) **Room: 439 AGH**	Lunch on your own	Visit the Langston Goat Research Langston, Okla. Roger Merkel, Leader International 466-6134			

Thursday, Oct 13	OSU Farm Visits 8:30 – Agronomy Research Station (meet at building #613) 10 – Dairy	Provided Lunch at Nazarene Student Center with MAIP Students	Using social media to catalyze communication networks (Traci Naile) **Room: 439 AGH**	Debriefing: Applying What You've Learned (Craig Edwards) **Room: 439 AGH**	

Friday, Oct 14	Evaluation (Tracy Irani) **Room: 412 AGH**	International Studies & Outreach program with Dr. David Henneberry 11 – 1:30 Lunch at Wes Watkins Center (Sponsored by International Studies & Outreach)	Jim Shideler – tour of WWC Community Service Coordinator, Global	Crisis Communication: Vis-à-vis Times of Famine, Natural Disasters, Conflict, and Maintaining Food Security (Dwayne Cartmell & Tanner Robertson) **Room: 439 AGH**	Women's Soccer vs. Texas 7 p.m.
Saturday, Oct 15	Additional Evaluation Time (if needed)	Shopping in Stillwater			Prepare to Travel to Washington and Home
Sunday, Oct 16	Depart for Airport in Tulsa to travel to Washington, D.C.				
Monday, Oct 17	In DC				
Tuesday, Oct 18	In DC				
Wednesday, Oct 19	In DC				
Thursday, Oct 20	In DC				
Friday, Oct 21	In DC				
Saturday, Oct. 22	Leave for Africa from DC				

APPENDIX G

LETTER TO POTENTIAL INTERNSHIP HOSTS

Oklahoma State University
Agricultural Education, Communications & Leadership
448 Agricultural Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078 • 405-744-8036 • FAX 405-744-5176

September 16, 2011

John McCarroll, Executive Director
OETA - The Oklahoma Network
7403 North Kelley Avenue
Oklahoma City, OK 73111

Dear Mr. McCarroll:

The Oklahoma State University Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership has received a grant from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. As part of our efforts, we are seeking assistance from you and from other organizations to provide professional development opportunities for the project.

Our grant project seeks to improve the prospects of ensuring food security in Kenya and Uganda by providing **professional development** for three key stakeholder groups **(community leaders, policymakers, and media specialists)** whose collaboration stands to multiply their collective impact on food insufficiency.

The project's goal is to integrate 12 participants from Kenya and Uganda as part of an exchange program between the countries and their professional counterparts in the United States. Participants will be in the United States September 17 – October 22, 2011, and will complete training programs to enhance their professional skill set and to increase their impact on food security in their home country as well as participate in multiple cultural events. During their stay, we also plan to have them participate in an "internship" (job shadow) for 11 weekdays between **September 27, 2011, and October 11, 2011**.

As we plan for project implementation, we have identified your and your organization as a potential internship location. You were selected because we believe your organization's professional goals and responsibilities are a potential match for one or more of our candidates. Given this information, would you be willing to assist us in the project by hosting an intern? If so, we will facilitate future contact with you -- individually and collectively -- regarding project needs and opportunities for collaboration, especially as it relates to what your particular organization or entity could provide. Please note, our participants are funded by the DOS grant; therefore, your commitment is for your time and your experience. You should not expect to have any financial commitment to the project.

We are excited about this opportunity and of your possible interest in hosting one of the television professionals from Kenya, Alex Ayiego. If you confirm your commitment to the program, I will forward all of the additional documents via email.

Sincerely,

Shelly Sitton

Shelly Peper Sitton
Professor of Agricultural Communications
Project Co-director

Copy: Dick Pryor

APPENDIX H

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date:	Monday, September 19, 2011
IRB Application No	AG1145
Proposal Title:	Perceptions of Ugandan and Kenyan Exchange Participants
Reviewed and Processed as:	Exempt

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved **Protocol Expires: 9/18/2012**

Principal Investigator(s):

Denise George
441 Ag Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078

Shelly Sitton
448 Ag Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

☒ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Shelia H. Kennison

Shelia Kennison, Chair
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX I

SCRIPT

Script:

Food Security Fellows:

I need your assistance in documenting your experiences during your trip to the United States. If you agree to participate, there will be a few questions to answer before you depart from your home country, you will write responses to daily journal prompts, and there will be some follow-up questions to answer after you return home. You will be provided a journal in which you may write your responses to the journal prompts.

The information gathered will be used to evaluate the grant project as well as to help me evaluate your perceptions of the United States and the experiences you have. In order to ensure the organic nature of this evaluation, we ask that you are open and honest when responding to the journal prompts. Any reports may include quotes but will not be attributed to you by name but rather by "Participant X". Please understand your participation is voluntary. Your involvement in this project will not be viewed negatively if you choose not to participate. By signing the consent form, you agree to participate in this journaling experience realizing the information you provide will be anonymously of public record.

APPENDIX J

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORM

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

PROJECT TITLE: Perceptions of Kenyan and Ugandan Exchange Participants

INVESTIGATORS: Denise George, B. S. Kansas State University; Shelly Sitton, Ph.D. Oklahoma State University, Dwayne Cartmell, Ph.D. University of Missouri; Craig Edwards, Ph.D. Texas A&M University

PURPOSE:
This study will examine the perceptions of Kenyan and Ugandan Food Security Fellows with regards to the United States, participation in the exchange program, and food security. This study will be a part of the overall evaluation of the "Improving Food Security by Catalyzing Communication Networks between Key Stakeholders: Linking Media, Policies, and Communities in Kenya and Uganda" grant funded by the Department of State. You are being asked to participate because of your involvement with the grant, and if you choose to participate the researcher will analyze your journal entries. The research will be the basis of the PI's thesis.

PROCEDURES
You will complete daily journal entries based upon your responses to the provided journal prompts. Some questions will be based upon your expectations of the United States, your internship, what you learned, what you wish you had learned, and your overall experience with this exchange program. The amount of time you spend on your journal entries will vary from day to day, however it should not last more than 30 minutes per day.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION:
There are no known risks associated with this project which are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION:
There are no expected benefit from participating in this study. However, if you are interested, we will send you a copy of the results of the study when it is finished.

CONFIDENTIALITY:
The records of this study will be kept private. Any written results will discuss group findings and will not include information that will identify you. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers and individuals responsible for research oversight will have access to the records. It is possible that the consent process and data collection will be observed by research oversight staff responsible for safeguarding the rights and wellbeing of people who participate in research.

COMPENSATION:
You will receive one composition notebook to record your journal entries. The journal will be returned to you when the OSU team visits Kenya and Uganda.

CONTACTS :
You may contact any of the researchers at the following addresses and phone numbers, should you desire to discuss your participation in the study and/or request information about the results of the study: Denise George, B.S., 441 Agricultural Hall, Dept. of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405) 744-6793. If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact Dr. Shelia Kennison, IRB Chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu

PARTICIPANT RIGHTS:
I understand that my participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time, without penalty.

CONSENT DOCUMENTATION:
I have been fully informed about the procedures listed here. I am aware of what I will be asked to do and of the benefits of my participation. I also understand the following statements:

I affirm that I am 18 years of age or older.

I have read and fully understand this consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form will be given to me. I hereby give permission for my participation in this study.

_____ _____
Signature of Participant Date

I certify that I have personally explained this document before requesting that the participant sign it.

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date

Okla. State Univ.
IRB
Approved 9/19/11
Expires 9/18/12
IRB # AG1145

APPENDIX K

JOURNAL PROMPTS

Journal prompts upon arrival in the U.S.

1. How do you expect the culture of the United States to be different from Kenya/Uganda?
2. What are you most excited to see/experience in the United States?
3. What are you the most apprehensive about?
4. What do you hope to gain personally by participating in this exchange program?
5. What do you hope to gain professionally by participating in this exchange program?
6. What role do you think the United States plays in changing food security in Kenya/Uganda?

Daily journal prompts while in the U.S.

1. Describe what you learned today and how that could be applied to your personal life.
2. Describe what you learned today and how that could be applied to your professional life.
3. If you could change something about today, what would you change? Why?
4. What do you wish you had learned but didn't?

Journal prompts upon completion of the two-week internship

1. Describe your role during your two-week internship experience.
2. Describe what you learned during your internship.
3. What do you wish you had done during your internship that you did not do?
4. Specifically explain how the internship experience increased your ability to improve food security.

Journal prompts upon completion of program in the U.S.

1. Describe the most difficult part of your experience.
2. How has participating in this program changed how you view the people, culture, and beliefs Americans?
3. Explain what surprised you the most about your experience in the United States.
4. Describe the two most rewarding or meaningful experiences you had while in the United States. Why were they rewarding/meaningful?
5. Explain how this experience increased your understanding of your own work or job.
6. What have you learned about yourself during this experience?
7. How will you take what you have learned from this experience back to Kenya/Uganda?
8. How can you maximize your impact to improve food security in your home country/community based on what you learned during this experience?

APPENDIX L

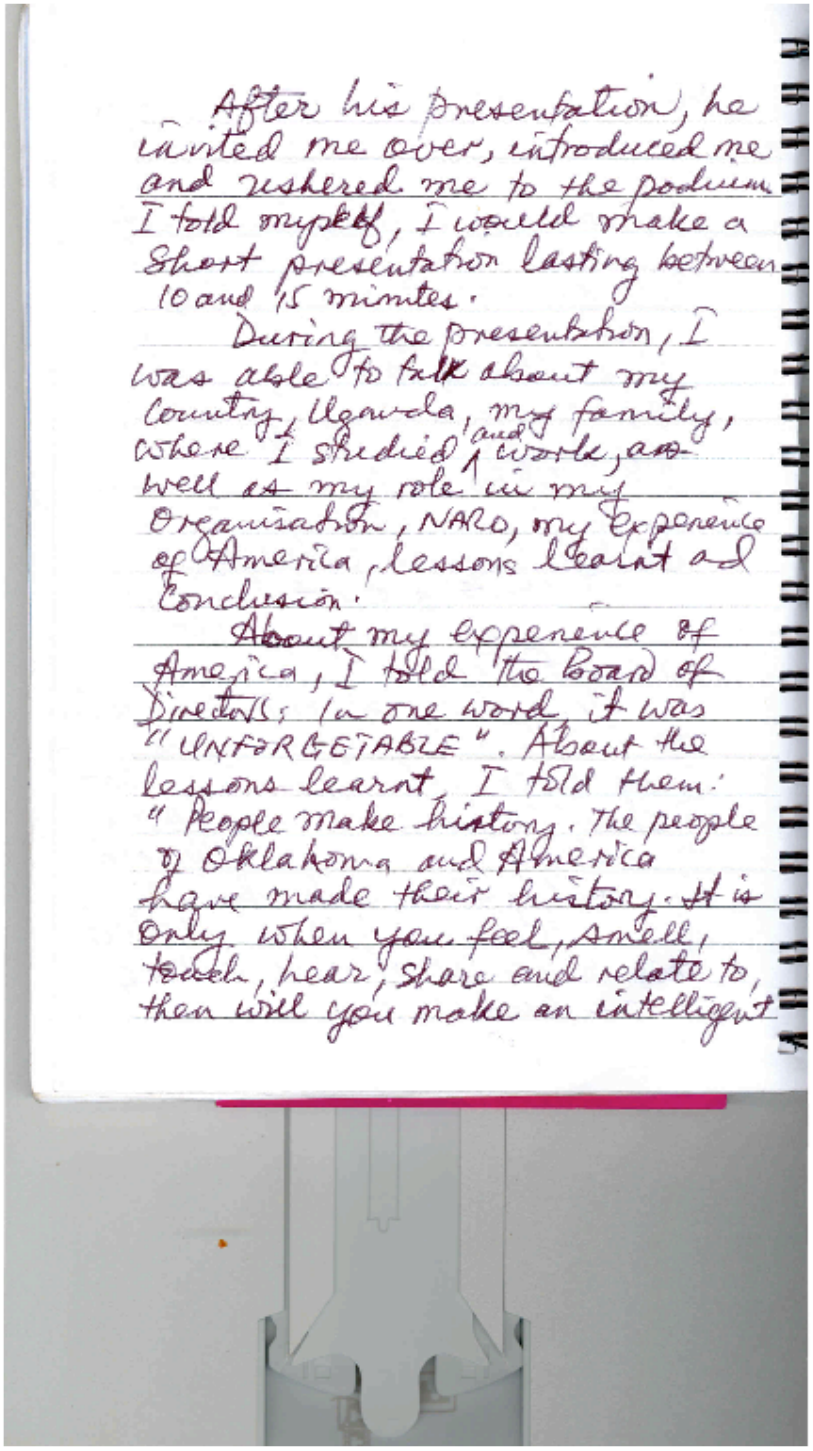
EXAMPLE JOURNAL ENTRY

Monday, October 10: Presentation to the OAEC Board

It was a beautiful day. What I would describe as a "Typical Ugandan weather. The sky was clear revealing majestic blue sky. It was an important day for me because later in the day I would be making a presentation to some 30 members of the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives (OAEC).

I spent a great deal of the morning preparing for the presentation.

Mr. Sydney Sperry, the Director of Public Relations and Communication came over and informed me that I should get ready by 3.45pm to make a presentation. He said he would first make his Presentation, and then introduce me to the Board. The feeling was awesome.



After his presentation, he invited me over, introduced me and ushered me to the podium. I told myself, I would make a short presentation lasting between 10 and 15 minutes.

During the presentation, I was able to talk about my country, Uganda, my family, where I studied and worked, as well as my role in my Organisation, NARO, my experience of America, lessons learnt and conclusion.

About my experience of America, I told the Board of Directors; in one word, it was "UNFORGETABLE". About the lessons learnt, I told them: "People make history. The people of Oklahoma and America have made their history. It is only when you feel, smell, touch, hear, share and relate to, then will you make an intelligent

conclusion about people and their society."

The presentation received a near standing ovation as many board members came over to congratulate me after the speech.

It was Mr. Dusty Richards, who could not hide his excitement. He came over to me and said, "Thanks for the presentation. I am Mr. Dusty Richards. I am an author." He reached in his bag, pulled a novel entitled: Texan Blood Feud. He autographed with the words: "Robert, read as the pages fly" and handover to me.

I later learnt that Mr. Richards is a prolific writer of all times - with over 85 novels to his ~~name~~ name. He has been recognised by Oklahoma State in the "Hall of Fame".

VITA

Denise Kathleen George

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: INTERPRETING THE REFLECTIVE JOURNALS OF FOOD SECURITY FELLOWS FROM KENYA AND UGANDA: A PROFESSIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Major Field: Agricultural Communications

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Agricultural Communications at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2012.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education at Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas in 2004.

Experience:

Graduate Research Assistant in Agricultural Communications at Oklahoma State University from August 2010 – May 2012.

Adjunct Biology Faculty at Northern Oklahoma College in Stillwater, Oklahoma from August 2011 – May 2012.

Agricultural Instructor/FFA Advisor at Arkansas City High School, Arkansas City, Kansas from August 2005 – May 2010.

Name: Denise George Date of Degree: May, 2012

Institution: Oklahoma State University Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: INTERPRETING THE REFLECTIVE JOURNALS OF FOOD SECURITY FELLOWS FROM KENYA AND UGANDA: A PROFESSIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Pages in Study: 143 Candidate for the Degree of Master of Science

Major Field: Agricultural Communications

Scope and Method of Study: The population for this study was the 14 policymakers, community leaders, and media professionals from Kenya and Uganda who participated in the grant-funded project aimed to reduce food insecurity by catalyzing communication networks between those groups. The study assessed perceptions of the Food Security Fellows regarding the culture and people of the United States, the benefits and challenges of participating in an international internship/job shadowing experience, and the training experiences that resonated with the Fellows regarding their professional roles and how they could improve food security in their respective countries. A qualitative content analysis was used to analyze the reflective journal entries of the participants.

Findings and Conclusions: Based on the journal entries, the Fellows were skeptical of how they would be treated in the United States, including fears of racism, but still excited to see the United States and learn from experts in their career fields. During their five-week stay, they described experiencing a welcoming and generous spirit when interacting with Americans and some indicated a desire to return to the United States to pursue an advanced degree. Related to their internship/job shadowing experience, the Fellows desired hands-on, job-specific tasks. Media professionals were given more specific tasks to complete (i.e., wrote news stories, produced television segments) than community leaders and policy makers who were given more passive roles of "shadowing" or observing. Nevertheless, the Fellows were grateful for the opportunity to learn how professional tasks were done in the United States and share ideas with their internship/job shadowing hosts. Based on their programming experiences, the Fellows indicated that a significant need existed to involve the youth of their respective countries in agricultural endeavors to promote careers in agriculture. The participants also recognized the need for Extension services in Kenya and Uganda to more effectively link with teaching and research (i.e., similar to the U.S. land-grant university model), which could improve agricultural production and efficiency. And the Fellows traveled back to Africa empowered with the belief they could make a difference in their countries, especially in regard to improving food security and reducing hunger.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. M. Craig Edwards