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Building the Base for Global Food Security: Agricultural Education and Training

September 21, 2011

Today's Presenters

Wesley Weidemann, Weidemann Associates

Bill Rivera, Independent Consultant

Charles Maguire, Independent Consultant



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How We Got Here

Wesley Weidemann, Ph.D.

President, Weidemann Associates, Inc.



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- Study directed by Gary Alex of USAID Bureau for Food Security on contract to Weidemann Associates
- Extensive review of literature by Dr. Bill Rivera
- Issues and papers discussed at Roundtable on January 5, 2011
- Synthesis paper prepared by Dr. Charles Maguire
- Technical brief prepared for USAID field personnel



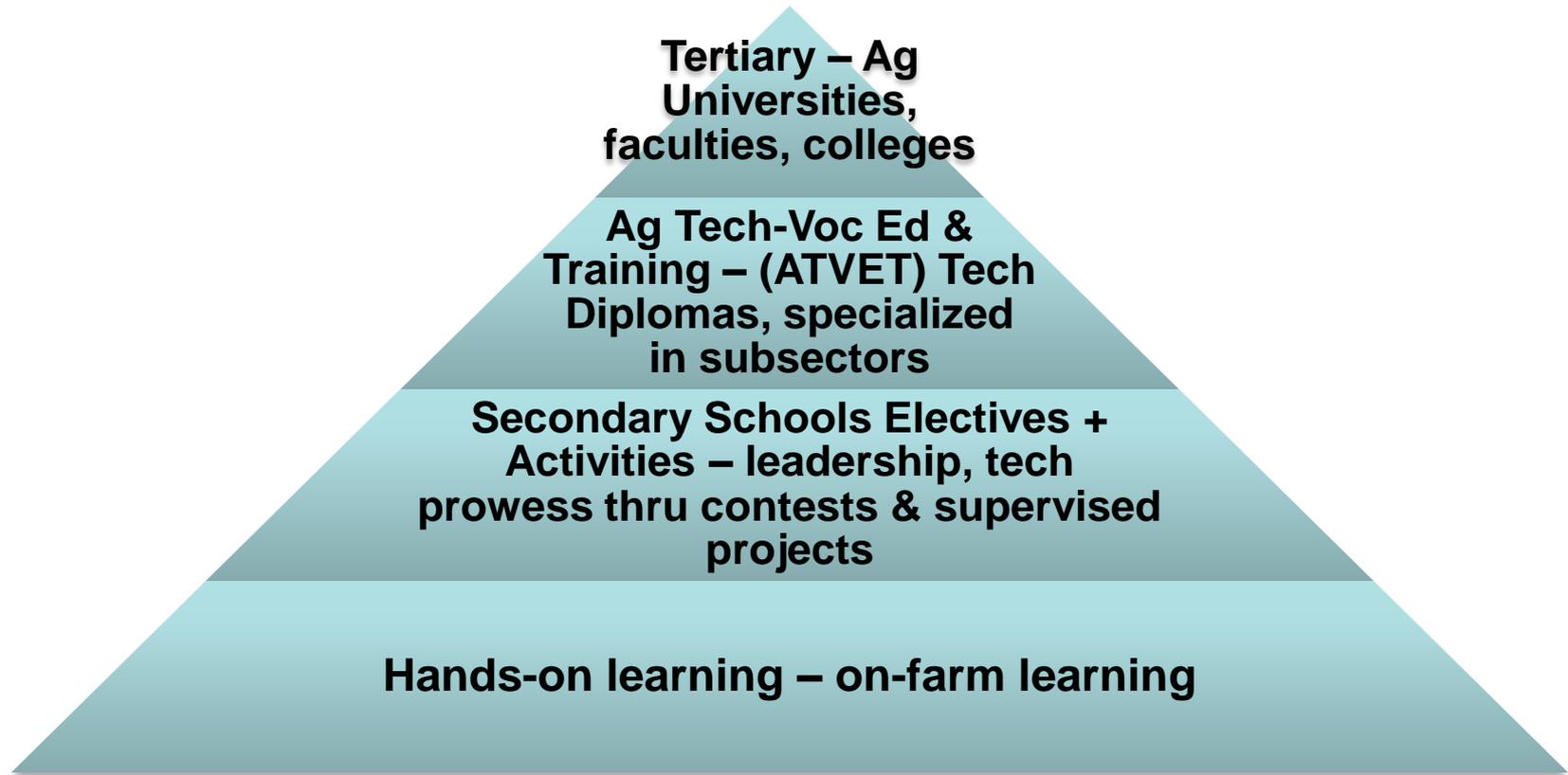
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Post Secondary AET

W.M Rivera, Ph.D.

University of Maryland, Retired

The Structure of AET





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POST SECONDARY AET LITERATURE REVIEW FINDINGS

Two Generic terms:

Agriculture education and training includes all levels and duration, from full-time degrees to short-term and continuing education

Post-secondary (including tertiary) education includes all AET at post-secondary education



The Literature Review

- Universities and middle level education
- Agricultural technical secondary schools including post-high school programs, agricultural extension, and continuing education
- Human resource development perspectives emphasizing the need for linkages among AET institutions and programs



Findings: Practical Issues

- Leadership and capacity in the variety of AET institutions and programs
- Curriculum and curriculum development
- Faculty/instructor development
- Student/participant development
- Physical infrastructure, equipment and technology

Formal and Informal AET

Formal

- Academic programs, courses, and training activities planned & implemented in organized setting.
- Frequently classroom based - professor, lecturer, teacher, facilitator, or trainer guides learning process.
- Curricula designed to enable learners to obtain information, knowledge, & skills required to master the content of the learning activity.
- Student/learner progress is measured through examinations, quizzes, or demonstrated competencies. Formal agricultural education includes university degree programs, vocational technical courses, secondary school courses, and in-service and structured life-long learning training activities.

Informal

- Dynamic, informal learning system greatly influences how information, knowledge, and skills are obtained, channeled and used in agriculture.
- At heart of system are farmers, farming families, services they receive, contacts they make on a regular basis.
- Involves awareness-raising and training provided to farmers by public extension and research services, by traders who purchase farm products and supply farm inputs, and by the media, which convey a variety of information to rural communities.
- Farmer-to-farmer communication - powerful for education in informal system because farmers communicate easily with peers, observe the techniques and skills used by others, and quickly adopt what they perceive as successful practices.



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Overview: Four major sources of Agricultural Knowledge Information Systems

- Schools with agricultural education and training programs
- Extension (education) services
- In-service training programs (public and private)
- Mass media/distance learning



Higher Education

- Post-graduate level post secondary AET (Eicher) needed to advance research
- Higher education partnerships, positive impact
- Caveat: Don't invest in mediocrity or in universities not supported by governments



Challenges Facing Post Secondary AET

- The knowledge challenge (what to teach?)
The curriculum development issue
- The labor challenge (focus on job skills)
The workforce education issue
- The outreach challenge (focus on out-of-school education)
continuing and extension education



Remember Post Secondary Agricultural Technical Education and Training

- The labor challenge
- The exodus of PhDs
- The need for connection to local agricultural knowledge and information demands



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AET: Past, Present and Future

The Case for Investment Now

Charles J. Maguire, Ph.D.



What is Agricultural Education and Training?

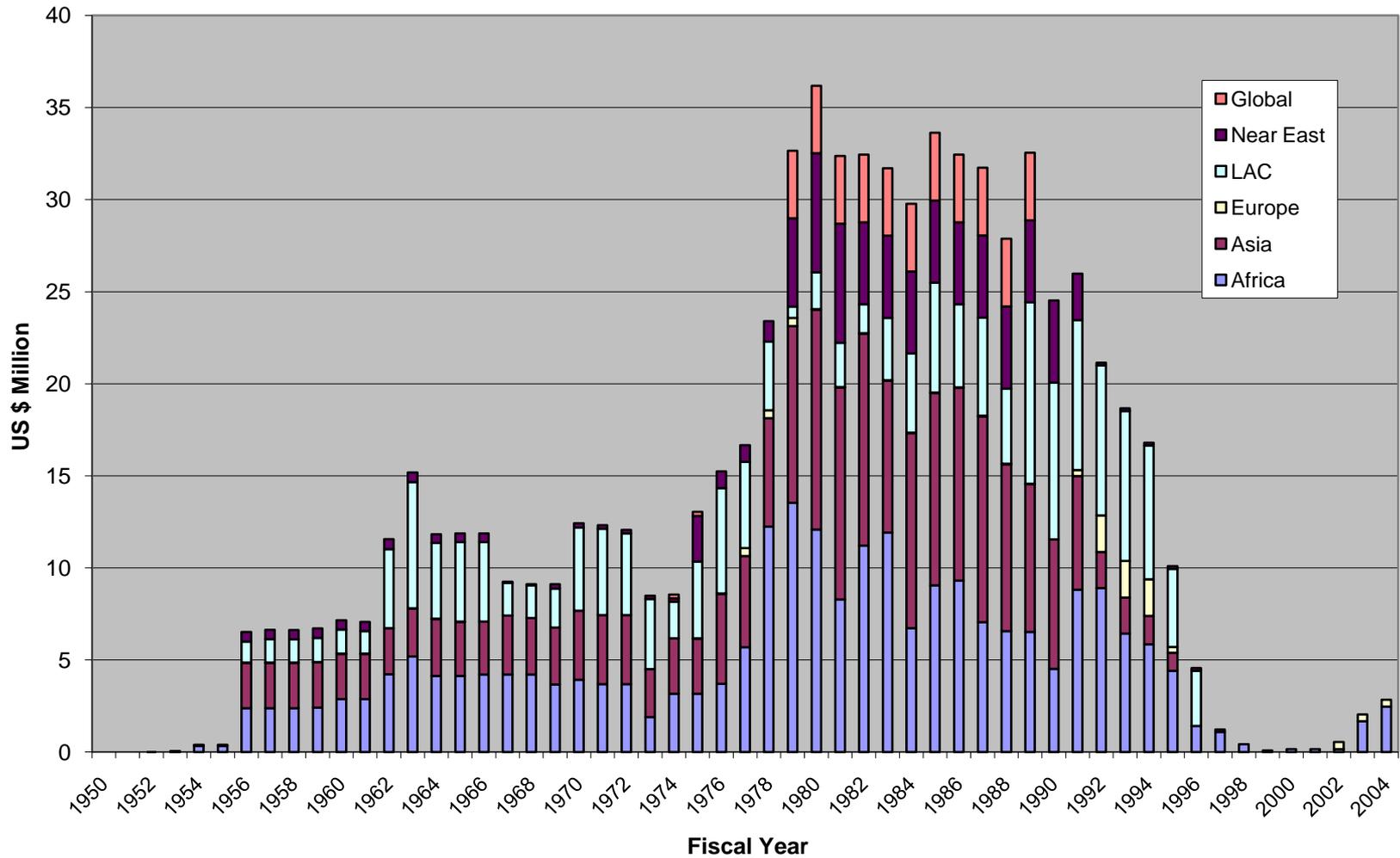
- Formal and Informal education and training activities that build capacity for agriculture sector and rural development
- Encompasses higher education (AHE), Diploma and Certificate levels; vocational-technical training; in-service training; and informal knowledge and skill acquisition



Past Investment in AET

- Fear of widespread world hunger spurred investment in the 1960s – 1980s
- USAID the biggest investor with support from multilateral and bi-lateral organizations
- Investment slowed and virtually stopped since the end of the 1980s

Estimated USAID Funding for Agricultural Education Institutions--1951-2004 (US\$ million)





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A New Era: New Concerns

- Population growth continues
- More urbanization
- Climate variability
- Demand for animal protein
- Decline of critical natural resources
- Increase in input costs – especially energy
- Global competition for raw materials
- Yield stagnation



What is needed?

- New knowledge and skills packages
- New curricula
- Better AET governance
- Clarification of the role and importance of AET in agriculture sector development
- Strategies and policies for AET
- Reliable funding



So why don't we invest and solve the problem?

- AET public sector systems are managed by Ministries of Education and Agriculture
- Governance is poor
- Links to clients are weak
- Links within and between AET institutions are weak
- Isolation from sector realities
- Inadequate funding
- Absent strategies for AET and policies to support reform



Investment Priorities

- Stakeholder dialogue to define role of AET in development agenda
- Policies to underpin AET
- Curriculum change
- Governance reform
- Gender balance in student and staff areas
- Technician training
- Raising teaching standards



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Comments or Questions?



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Harvesting the Future

A farmer clears wheat harvested by a two-wheel tractor at a demonstration plot during a training under ACDI/VOCA's Afghanistan IDEA-NEW project. Photo credit: Helen Palfreyman, ACDI/VOCA



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