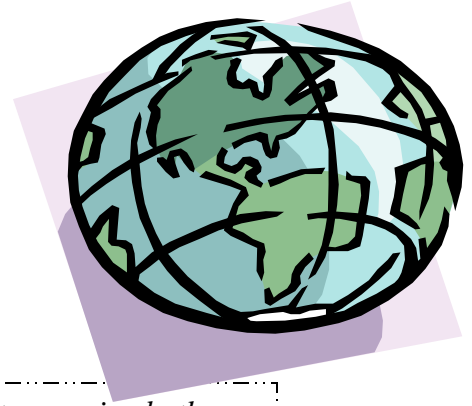


# UWEX Cooperative Extension

International Planning Retreat

October 28 – 29, 2002

Stevens Point



*The purpose of the retreat is to examine both our international efforts and intentions.*

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## Retreat Background

UWEX has long history of international efforts, we have strong skills to share, faculty that is interested in international work, and we have a lot to learn from international groups and programs. Albrecht, Crave, and Havlovic, in their presentation at the 2001 Outreach Scholarship conference reminded us that international work helps us in two important ways: *it increases our sensitivity to cultural differences which can help us deal more effectively with differences in Wisconsin and it challenges our conventional methods of teaching and learning.*

NASULGC's International Agriculture 1998 section report noted stated, *"We urgently need to find ways to increase the level of engagement of our resident teaching faculty, research scientists, and Extension agents in addressing the global dimension."*

Clearly Extension has much to benefit from an increased international presence. However, nationwide there is not a high level of involvement in international activities. Barb Ludwig, in her August 1999 JOE article investigated the barriers to participation in international work for Ohio State Extension staff. The top three barriers she identified were: a lack of time, not a programming priority; and a lack of experience.

UWEX Cooperative Extension currently has a working policy, but no mission, vision, goals, or action plans. The majority of its international work is with core "internationalists" who have significant international experience and are professionally and personally motivated to contribute in this sphere. Others, with more to gain and share have had a limited role to date. For the institution international work has not been a high priority as evidenced by a lack of training, orientation, or work being done. Also there has been little systematic attempt to capture range of work done, results, or opportunities. Finally, USDA CSREES International Programs will be launching a new initiative to assist in globalizing extension. This will be a modest grant program to provide seed funds to enhance state cooperative extension international efforts.

## Retreat Purpose

For these reasons, the Dean's office and the ESP/UWEX International Committee proposed this retreat. The purpose is to examine both our international efforts and intentions. The following

pages present the results of the retreat. It includes a brief review of highlights from our international work over the past five years, a SWOT analysis on our international work, proposed vision and mission statements, and the identification our top goals. Finally, next steps are proposed.

I would like to thank the Dean's office for supporting this planning retreat, both in concept and financially. Thanks to Mike McGirr, from CSREES International Programs for his participation, Mary Andrews and her colleagues at MSU Extension for their excellent presentation; and to Sherwin Bowen for describing the Wisconsin-Nicaragua Partners programs. I appreciate the assistance provide by UWEX Center District Director Sue Buck with the logistics. A special thanks to Glen Easter who helped to design the retreat but at the last moment was not able to attend. Last, thanks to the participants for their energy and concern for this topic.

**Retreat Participants:**

- Ellen Fizzesimmons
- Tom Cadwallader
- Tom Svyerud
- Aleisha Harelstad
- Mary Crave
- Sue Buck
- Mike McGirr
- Kristin Hill
- Kay Hobbler
- Dave Marcouiller
- John Preissing
- JoAnn Hinz
- Arlen Albrecht



Windshield Analysis – Our international programming highlights in past five years

- Participation in Nicaraguan programs through Partners of the Americas
- Participation in the Farmer to Farmer programs
- Designing and leading international experiences through the Wisconsin Rural Leadership Program
- Participation in the WRLP, generating resource materials and international connections through WRLP
- Training of Russian professionals through US sponsored Russian training programs
- 4H international programs expanded to include Japan, NIS, Mexico, and South Korea
- Hundreds of student exchanges through the 4H international programs
- A large assortment of professional consultancies and volunteer experiences with a large assortment of organizations (see following section for partial listing)
- Leading Wisconsin dairy producers to Mexico for training programs
- Design and teaching in Nicaraguan municipal officials training
- Design and teaching in Nicaraguan leadership program
- Scholarship paper presented on UWEX International work experiences at 2001 Outreach Scholarship Conference
- Domestic training on tools for international work (ie Rapid Rural Appraisals)
- ESP supported training of UWEX staff in Spanish
- Support of Hmong 4H clubs
- Active participation in TC110 program (historical)

*Conclusion: We have done quite a bit of international work which has benefited our overseas' partners, our local partners, and ourselves.*

## Partial Listing of Organizations with International Programs where UWEX Cooperative Extension has participated:

- VOCA/ACDI
- CNFA
- Land O'Lakes
- Global Citizens
- Global Volunteers
- USDA
  - Foreign Agricultural Service
  - Disaster agency
  - CSREES international programs
- Friendship Force
- 4H Programs
  - Adult chaperones
  - Internships
- Professional Associations
  - CDS international
  - AIAEE
  - IFHE
  - AIARD
  - ICA
  - IAF
- Rotary International

*Conclusion: There are already a variety of opportunities for international outreach, but most are little known to the majority of people in the institution. Mike McGirr also commented that the USDA programs, and CSREES in particular, were not cited by many. This is all the more reason for his participation at the retreat.*

## SWOT Analysis

SWOT Analysis is an examination of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that an organization, community, group, or even an endeavor may face. Strengths and Weaknesses are considered to part of the internal environment that confronts the organization. Opportunities and Threats are external to the organization. Together, they provide an analysis of the possibilities when looking at an issue.

### Internal Environment

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#### Strengths

- We're educators
- We have a lot to offer – technical expertise
- Our knowledge matches need
- Adaptability to community needs
- We have credibility, nationwide, in extension
- We have people with Peace Corps overseas experience
- Our public policy approach provides big picture relevant to community development
- We're a learning organization
- We have key people who have supported international work, over time
- Our mission meshes with international development work
- Extension credibility worldwide
- People want us
- We want to participate, we're committed

#### Weaknesses

- There's a lack of time
- Complications with defining our use of time
- Not defined as a priority
- Risk may be liability
- Unequal defining of how to use time
- County resources may also be scarce
- Domestic economic conditions make it more difficult to support international work
- Lack of funds
- Political perspective may limit support
- Lack of organizational networking w/in UWEX for international work
- Inconsistent support for staff
- Little scholarship on issue
- Lack of shared expectations and understanding
- Actions and people involved are spread across state and system
- Insufficient marketing of local benefits

# SWOT Analysis

## External Environment

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### Opportunities

- Personal Experience
- North Central Regional learning
- Professional growth
- Multi-state cooperative experiences for novices
- Changing demographics
- USDA national initiative
- Diverse expertise and niches
- Federal funds, potential growth
- USAID refocusing on agriculture again
- Learning language
- Already established groups
- Internet
- Recognition of globalization
- There are places interested in the development of Ext Services and our experience
- DPI state standards

### Threats

- Family Obligations
- Terrorism security
- Concerns about liability
- Lack of support from stakeholders
- Health concerns
- Gender issues
- Language barriers
- Increasing competition for funds
- Use of public funds (county and state)
- Pre-conceived notions about “helping”

*Conclusion: Through the SWOT analysis it became clear there were many positive reasons to proceed ahead with strengthening our international programs. At the same time, the group recognized that federal, state, and local budgets were going to make it difficult to greatly increase our international programs. However, modest amounts of internal funding could be leveraged with outside sources to increase our international work. We can also increase the international dimension of our work, in a variety of ways, with little additional cost.*

## Developing a Vision Statement for UWEX Cooperative Extension

A vision statement is a shared picture of the future we seek to create (Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*, 1990). A vision statement should also be inspirational, an ideal to strive for, see an evolving future; be simple, use images and metaphors, and represent a collective sense of what is important to an organization and why. To develop a vision statement for our international work, each participant was asked to complete the following sentence and then to share it with the group.

UWEX Cooperative Extension international efforts will be

...\_\_\_\_\_.

*The major themes that emerged from this exercise included:*

- There will be local benefits and impacts through strengthened international understanding
- There will be local, institutional, and international partnerships
- Will be recognized as a vibrant and credible organization able to work on a global scale
- Will be recognized as offering significant opportunities for all staff
- As an institutional supported two-way partnership with a variety of countries to improve global understanding and quality of life for all involved
- Will do good works, will make a difference
- Will be vibrant, not static
- Pro-active in seeking out opportunities for staff and opportunities to assist
- Will seek to improve the quality of life for people in Wisconsin and the world.
- Will include Innovative, multi-dimensional efforts, involving mentoring partnerships with credible international agencies

From these many themes, a possible vision statement for us is:

*UWEX Cooperative Extension will have a focused, vibrant, and active international program linking Wisconsin to the world to benefit our staff, communities, and international partners.*

## A Mission Statement for UWEX Cooperative Extension

A mission statement describes the direction and purpose of a group or organization. An effective mission statement is: It is short and to the point, lets people know how they fit in; non technical, provides a focus, indicates impact and outcome, makes the group distinct, is philosophical in a practical sense, and includes key descriptive words that are unique to the organization (Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, *Facilitation Resources*, 1999). To develop a mission statement for our international work, each participant was asked to complete the following sentence and then to share it with the group.



The purpose UWEX Cooperative Extension international efforts will be  
...\_\_\_\_\_.

*The major themes that emerged from this exercise included:*

- Should utilize Extension philosophy and model
- Partnerships are important
- The approach should respect local knowledge and culture
- The efforts should be needs driven
- It should be of benefit to the people of Wisconsin
- It should benefit the staff
- It should benefit the international community
- There should be clear institutional support for the international efforts, even if modest
- Adaptability is important

From these many themes, a possible mission statement for us is:

*The purpose of UWEX Cooperative Extension international efforts is to contribute to the improvement of Wisconsin and international communities through the sharing of expertise and experiences.*

By way of comparison, “The mission of International Extension Programming at Michigan State University is to enhance international, multicultural and technological competencies for informed participation in global affairs.”

## UWEX Cooperative Extension goals for their international effort

A vision and mission can provide a focus on the future and a purpose. Goals provide the strategies and ideas to bring the vision and mission closer to reality. Like the mission, the organizational goals should be doable but also stretch the organization. For the purpose of this exercise the group defined their goals with a two year time horizon.

To identify the goals a modified nominal group process was used. The full group divided into two smaller groups to brainstorm for possible goals. After identifying their goals, the lists were shared and similar goals combined. Finally, each participant was given five points to vote for their top priorities. The resulting information is meant as a straw poll and not to uniformly determine which would be the next steps of the international group. The top five goals are cited below, followed by the complete list from each group:

- Create a Team International with designated leadership
- Develop and maintain a scholarship context for international programs
- Develop institutional capacity and context to carry out international programs and to support staff in this work
- Provide staff training related in international work
- Develop evaluation instruments that tout the benefit of international work or at least speak to the benefits

The full list of goals for each group is presented below.

No.	Goals for Group I
1.	Designate leadership for international programs be recognized by administration and colleagues
2.	Include a reporting component for our international work
3.	Encourage cross programming for our international work
4.	Provide training for our international work
5.	Provide clear guidelines concerning time commitments and other issues for international work
6.	Have a well communicated international program
7.	Provide good communication on international opportunities
8.	Develop a team website for international programs
9.	Provide assistance for staff to communicate about their international assistance locally
10.	Prepare a training module for staff on international work and expectations
11.	Become part of extension's and other organization's international networks
12.	Enable program follow up on impacts of international work
13.	Collaborate with other entities on projects
14.	Provide a group experience to learn more about global perspectives
15.	Develop as benefit to attract people to Extension

No.	Goals for Group II
1.	Designate a lead person for international programs
2.	Develop tools or workbooks to guide in the preparation and post trip experiences, including websites
3.	Identify contacts with partners
4.	Provide training
5.	Develop institutional capacity and context to carry out international programs and to support staff in this work
6.	Find resources to support international efforts
7.	Develop and maintain a scholarship context for international programs
8.	Develop evaluation instruments that tout the benefit of international work or at least speak to the benefits
9.	Provide formal and informal recognition for international work.
10.	Encourage and promote language training
11.	Include elements of international training in diversity training
12.	Establish a team plan of work for international programs
13.	Develop a communication's network with key contacts identified within the state

## Conclusion

The planning group discussed the next steps for their work. The UWEX/ESP International Committee was heavily represented at the retreat, but others in the institution also participated. Together, all will be needed to make progress on the goals mentioned. The group also believed it was important to note that some goals may take additional resources while others can be addressed without additional funds.

The group agreed to the next steps:

1. Each member will review the results for accuracy and clarity. Return any observations to John Preissing by mid-December, 2002.
2. The results will be presented to the Dean, the CEAC Committee, and the UWEX International/ESP Committee. It will be shared with the partners who assisted during the retreat (USDA CSREES International Programs, MSU Extension International Programs, and Wisconsin – Nicaragua Partners).
3. We will seek approval for our plans from Extension Administration.
4. The results will be shared institution-wide.
5. The UWEX/ESP International Committee will work in their early 2003 meetings to develop actions plans for the top five goals. The other goals will also be analyzed to see if some can be implemented quickly.
6. John Preissing, the UWEX Cooperative Extension International Liaison, will maintain contact with USDA CSREES International Programs on partnership and new seed money grant initiatives that may occur.