

Kerry Clark

Bio Sketch and Vision Statement

Background: Kerry Clark is a Research Assistant Professor for Sustainable Crop Systems in the MU Division of Applied Social Sciences and Director of Smallholder Mechanization for the USAID Soybean Innovation Lab (SIL). SIL is a multi-disciplinary, multi-university team conducting research for development of soybean production systems in sub-Saharan Africa. Kerry works with governmental and private organizations across Africa to promote sustainability and productivity in smallholder agriculture. Much of her work depends on building programs and collaborations with international research centers (CGIARs), national agricultural research institutions, NGOs, in-country USAID projects and providers, and the private sector. She and a team of three Ghanaian engineers work to improve agricultural equipment manufacturing capacity in Africa by training welders and artisans across the continent to build and market a multi-crop thresher, which can significantly reduce farm drudgery and improve agricultural productivity. She mentors a Ghanaian start-up that just won the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Annual Innovation Showcase in Nairobi. Prior to her current positions, Kerry served MU as a Research Associate in Soybean Breeding for 20 years and worked seasonally in Costa Rica for over a decade developing new soybean lines. She also served for three years in the U.S. Peace Corps in Mali, West Africa.

Vision Statement: Kerry's vision for CAFNR International Programs (CIP) is to develop strong partnerships for global agricultural development and to improve the reputation of MU as an institution that can make profound contributions to international research, education and extension. CIP will help CAFNR faculty achieve greater impact by developing more diverse collaborations and increasing our commitment to communicating our resources and capabilities to the international research and development community. Because it is uniquely situated as a cross-disciplinary program, CIP will facilitate formation of focused research teams, which will allow CAFNR faculty to quickly mobilize when funding opportunities arise. CIP will help CAFNR students to access opportunities for impactful international experiences that lead them to greater cultural competency and empathy for people who are different from themselves. CIP will develop programs for students that help them engage as facilitators, innovators and entrepreneurs in areas of the world where social responsibility is a necessary business goal. The world's best universities all have strong global engagement and it is Kerry's vision to see that CAFNR and MU make it to the top tier of international programs.