



Note: Status of Platform Joint Principles

Prepared by Platform Secretariat and presented to the Board on March 14, 2008.

Implementing the Paris Declaration at sector level: Joint principles for enhancing aid effectiveness in agriculture and rural development programmes

Background:

In 2005, donor nations have committed to the Paris Declaration, aiming to improving the effectiveness of its aid through the principles of ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability. These principles of the Paris Declaration need to be adopted, applied and adapted to the characteristics of each sector. While in other sectors like health and education, the application of the general principles of the Paris Declaration has worked well, the rural sector has proven to be less responsive due to sector specificities.

Since its launch in 2004, the Platform activities were geared towards the development of a Code of Conduct to advise stakeholders on key principles towards greater aid effectiveness at sector level. Its engagements at country and Head Quarter level have led to a series of experiences and lessons-learned, which were translated (among others) into the "Platform Cornerstones" and the "Joint Principles"¹. In 2006, the Platform launched its first draft of **"Joint principles for enhancing aid effectiveness in agriculture and rural development programmes"** during the EU Forum on sustainable rural development in Berlin.

A multi-institutional task force has been charged to further develop and refine the principles for the wider membership. The principles were introduced and discussed during the Platform's General Assembly in December 2007. Discussions have shown that the principles need to be refined and advanced. The following Board meeting decided to engage in series of strategic activities to consolidate and capitalize on the Platform's experiences along its three outputs. The Platform's harvesting exercise, as well as the external evaluation aim to consolidate its experiences and lessons learned with a view to refine Platform products and to increase its impact and relevance.

In this light, it was decided to advance the Joint Principles in various steps:

1. accentuate sector specificities: mapping the Principles against the Paris Declaration (until first quarter 2008);
2. clarify responses/actions needed at head quarter and field level: define level of action of joint principles;
3. advance principles with outcomes of the Platform's ongoing harvesting and dissemination efforts (second quarter 2008);
4. re-activate Task Force and develop further Road Map for endorsement and implementation (second quarter 2008).

¹ See background material: Kohlmeyer/Harvey „Improved donor coordination for rural development 2004“;



Paris Declaration Commitments and indicators and application at sector level

Note: JP=Platform Joint Principles

| Paris Commitments and targets for donors | | Donors in agriculture and rural development agree to: (Platform Joint Principles) | |
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| 1. Ownership | | At global level, donors agree to: | At country level, donors agree to: |
| Donors committ to: | Targets (Paris indicators): | | |
| 1.1. Respect partner country leadership and help strengthen their capacity to exercise it. | 1.1.1. Partner countries have operational development policies with clear strategic priorities (Indicator 1) | | Development partners to support country level institutional reforms such as improved public financial management and civil service reforms that are needed to make administrative strengthening possible at sectoral level. These reforms need to be conceived, prepared and implemented in a way that supports specific requirements of agriculture and rural development. (JP 13) |
| 2. Alignment | | | |
| Donors committ to: | Targets: | | |
| 2.1. base their overall support on partners national development strategies | 2.1.1. Partner countries have procurement and public financial mgmt systems that adhere to broadly accepted best practices or have a reform programme in place to achieve these. | | |
| 2.2 link funding to a single framework of conditions and/or manageable set of indicators. | 2.2.1 Aid flows are aligned to partner countries priorities and reported on budget. | | Align their programs and projects in ARD with the strategies of partner governments in order to strengthen ownership, sustainability, and policy coherence. (JP3) The inclusion of central government institutions such as ministries of finance and planning, in the identification, preparation and monitoring of all forms of support for ARD, in order to strengthen partner governments' capacity in planning aid modalities and finan- |

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| | | | cial administration. (JP 12) |
| 2.3 use country systems and procedures to the maximum extent possible. | | | Align their procedures with respect to ARD with those of partner governments, using national systems as far as possible, in order to reduce transaction costs. (JP4) Support to governments to enhance the involvement of all stakeholders (government institutions, development partners, private sector, civil society) in all ARD programs , recognizing the crucial role that private sector and civil society play as drivers of economic growth and poverty reduction in rural areas. (JP 11) |
| 2.4 avoid the creation of implementation parallel structures (PIUs) | 2.4.1. no new PIUs per country | | |
| 2.5 adopt harmonised performance assessment frameworks for country systems | | | |
| 2.6 Align analytical and financial support with partners capacity development objectives and strategies | 2.6.1. capacity development programs are provided through coordinated programs consistent with partners national development strategies | Promotion and implementation of joint support to capacity development of the Government and other stakeholders as an integral part of ARD interventions. (JP 10) | Promotion and implementation of joint support to capacity development of the Government and other stakeholders as an integral part of ARD interventions. (JP 10) |
| 2.7 provide reliable indicative commitments of aid over a multi-year framework and disburse aid in a timely and predictable fashion | 2.7.1. Aid is more predictable for partner countries, disbursements released according to agreed schedules in annual or multi-annual frameworks | Provide credible medium-term aid commitments so as to ensure continuity and to increase the predictability of partner government financing for agriculture and rural development, recognizing that ARD programs are long-term processes. (JP 5) | Provide credible medium-term aid commitments so as to ensure continuity and to increase the predictability of partner government financing for agriculture and rural development, recognizing that ARD programs are long-term processes. (JP 5) |
| 2.8 rely to the maximum extent possible on transparent partner government budget and account- | 2.8.1. use of partner countries public financial management and procurement systems | | |

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| ing mechanisms | | | |
| 3. Harmonisation | | | |
| Donors commit to: | Targets: | | |
| 3.1. implement common arrangements at country level for planning, funding, disbursement, etc of aid activities | 3.1.1. Aid is provided through program-based approaches | | Undertake practical measures to improve the coordination and harmonization of development assistance of donor agencies and international financing institutions active in ARD at country level, and to strive for the inclusion of non-traditional donors and civil society in these processes. (JP 1) To include decentralisation and devolution dimensions from the outset. (JP 9) |
| 3.2. work together to reduce the number of separate, duplicative missions to the field and diagnostic reviews | 3.2.1. reduce the number of uncoordinated missions; increase the number of joint missions and analysis with other donors | | Implementation of joint activities at country level in order to minimize the transaction costs of development assistance, including joint missions with jointly prepared terms of reference, joint analytical work and studies, joint arrangements for technical assistance, joint programmatic support modalities such as direct budget support and basket funding, joint institutional assessments, and joint assistance strategies. When feasible, these activities should be coordinated by Government institutions. (JP 8) |
| 3.3. make use of their respective comparative advantage and on how to achieve donor complementarity at country and sector level | | | Identify lead donors in the ARD sector , based on comparative advantages and considering delegated cooperation and silent partnerships. (JP2) |
| 3.4. reform procedures and strengthen incentives for management and staff to work towards harmonisation, alignment and results | | The creation of adequate incentive systems for donor agency and IFI personnel in order to encourage the operationalization of aid effectiveness measures and the application of mechanisms to strengthen linkages between departments within agencies, and especially between head offices and field rep- | |

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| | | resentations. (JP 7) | |
| 4. Managing for results | | | |
| Donors commit to: | Targets: | | |
| 4.1. link country programming and resources to results and align them with effective partner country performance assessment frameworks | 4.1.1. Partner countries have transparent and monitorable performance assessment frameworks to assess development progress against national development strategies | | |
| 4.2. harmonise their monitoring and reporting requirements | | | |
| 4.3. work with partner countries in a participatory approach to strengthen country capacities and demands for results based management | | Support the development of a practical, feasible, relevant and shared framework of result indicators (not more than 25) that are consistent with the national development strategy, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy, and sectoral ARD strategy, to be set up from the start of any program, and to use national M&E systems. (JP 6) | Support the development of a practical, feasible, relevant and shared framework of result indicators (not more than 25) that are consistent with the national development strategy, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy, and sectoral ARD strategy, to be set up from the start of any program, and to use national M&E systems. (JP 6) |
| 5. Mutual accountability | | | |
| Donors commit to: | Targets: | | |
| 5.1. Provide timely, transparent and comprehensive information on aid flows to complement national budget presentations | 5.1.1. Mutual assessments of progress in implementing agreed commitments on aid effectiveness including those in the Paris Declaration | | |
| 5.2. jointly assess with partner countries mutual progress in implementing agreed commitments on aid effectiveness | | | |
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