



Note: Status country requests

presented by the Platform Secretariat to the Steering Committee on March 14, 2008

Topic: Various countries have contacted the Platform asking for support in their national efforts to move from project aid to harmonized and government-led development approaches. The note summarizes the current discussions on how to deal with country requests after in-country facilitation lists the countries and the respective follow-up.

Board decisions and discussions:

1. Following the Platform Board decision in September 2007, the Platform is phasing out its in-country facilitation service. The Platform attempts to consolidate the experiences and lessons learned from its activities through its "harvesting exercise" with view to utilise the consolidated experiences and lessons learned to refine Platform products, such as the Joint Principles, as well as to better focus, plan and implement its output thus to increase impact and relevance.
2. With respect to the future development of the Platform's country support/engagement Board members discussed that first and foremost it needs to be understood what kind of support the national sector coordination group expects from a global coordination mechanism. In this regard, country requests shall be discussed among the SC to decide on a case-to case basis on the way forward.
3. In any case, the Platform Secretariat may facilitate the exchange of conceptual findings of Platform studies and analysis via video conferences or mail. In Africa this might be in coordination with the CAADP process and in Central America with RUTA. Further support may be provided through the provision of professional contacts or resource persons with experiences in the application of AE principles in agriculture.
4. All activities are to be discussed with the Steering Committee (and communicated to the Board) for information, discussion and approval where necessary.

Status of requests:

- **Niger. January 31, 2008:** official request by the Minister of Agriculture and President of the Interdepartmental Committee of Piloting of the Rural Development Strategy, wishing to profit from the Platform's experiences in formulating rural PBAs. The request was forwarded by a technical advisor, not the donor coordination group.
Next steps: Preparing an official answer to the Minister by the Platform Chairman and subsequently sending an email detailing the possibilities of Platform support as detailed above.
- **Rwanda. October 15, 2007:** official request from Rwanda to support the conceptual development of a SWAP following the CAADP Country Round



Table, enquiring for an exchange of experiences with a country with a “functioning” rural SWAp, as well as enquiring to accompany the SWAp design in that country. Further request by the donor coordination group at the **end of January** for support in facilitating an agri SWAp.

On February 4, 2008, the Secretariat conducted a video conference with the Rwandan Director of Planning, the World Bank’s coordinator of that process and the Platform’s international facilitator for Cambodia to clarify Rwanda’s needs and expectations and to answer any technical questions. The Secretariat passed publications, mails and contacts to the country representatives.

Next steps: depending on further requests

- **Nicaragua. September 24, 2007:** A formal request was placed from Nicaragua’s Minister of Agriculture to continue with Platform support in order to advance with the territorialization of PRORURAL (in Spanish). Secretariat Coordinator communicated in Managua that Platform “phase III” ceased by end of December 2007 and will not continue into 2008. Currently donor country representatives are looking into innovative mechanisms to continue with Platform’s approach of a neutral broker through a locally or regionally administrated trust fund.
Next steps: During Feb and March 2008, an evaluation exercise is taking place serving two purposes : i) assessing the implementation experience, results and lessons learned of the country’s OH&A Action Plan, serving as an important input to Nica’s own mid-term review exercise; and ii) assessing the Platform’s facilitation service in Nica, feeding into the Platform’s “harvesting experience” for pillar 3
- **Cambodia:** The Platform is currently initiating and supporting the process towards a meaningful slow phasing out, including a reasonable transition period to allow the PBA process to continue on a sustainable basis until September 2008. A detailed budget and an action plan have been introduced to the Board in Paris.
Next steps: This handing-over to country-led initiatives is expected to last from January 2008 to August 2008. A mission by the Platform’s IF to Cambodia was completed successfully at the beginning of February, supporting the White Paper process, the finalisation of the partnership principles, and identifying alternative facilitation arrangements.
- **Vietnam** has (inofficially) inquired about Platform support for a formulation of a Rural Strategy based on our JDRC. Additionally the Director of International Cooperation, Dr. Minh, was present in Paris, introducing the results of the documentation exercise on sector coordination in Vietnam, conducted jointly by MARD and the Platform.
Next steps: the Platform will publish the joint study. Vietnam is processing the further development of its rural development strategy, using the JDRC as base.
- **Honduras. September 10, 2007:** official letter from the Ministry of Agriculture to cooperate with the Platform (in Spanish).
Next steps: