

**Vision 2020 Conference in Beijing and review of Platform facilitation service in Cambodia
(15 October to 28 October 2007)**

Objectives of the mission:

1. Participation at the **Vision 2020 conference: Taking Action for the World's Poor and Hungry People**, organised by the Chinese "State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development (LGOPAD)" and the "International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)".
2. Review of the Platform's engagement in **Cambodia** (Facilitation service in the land sector) and planning of next steps.

1. Vision 2020 Conference Beijing, China

The *Vision 2020 conference: Taking Action for the World's Poor and Hungry People* was organised by the Chinese "State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development (LGOPAD) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

Conference reflection: A well organised and attended conference with a stated science focus, providing for excellent networking opportunities. To me, the two top presentations were: [Martin Ravallion](#) on inequality and growth, highlighting that pattern of growth matter; and [Akhter Ahmed](#) et al. presenting an assessment of the world's poorest and hungriest, disaggregating the extreme poor into subadjacent poor, medial poor and ultra poor. [Joachim von Braun](#) provided an excellent overview in his closing remarks.

a) The conference:

400 leading international and Chinese policymakers and thinkers from 40 countries (incl. 25 ministerial/vice ministerial participants) did attend. 100 scientific and policy presentations were given. A [summary presentation](#) of the conference is available from the [IFPRI web page](#).

b) Key issues:

- Progress made (China first country to achieve MDG 1 through equitable agricultural develop. linked to services and infrastructure), but concerns about South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa;
- Challenges include: inequality and increasing disparities, exclusion (gender, indigenous people, minorities, disabled ..), growing commodity prices, climate change and health/nutrition issues;
- Agricultural growth is an effective tool to reduce poverty and hunger (particularly for agriculture based economies and even more so when inequality is low and small holder involved);
- For better understanding and targeting, the extreme poor (< 1 \$/day in 1990 PPP) are divided into the three groups: the subadjacent poor (0.75 – 1.0 \$; app. 485 mio. people), the medial poor (0.5 – 0.75 \$; app. 323 mio. people) and the ultra poor (< 0.5 \$, app. 162 mio. people);
- Link equitable, pro-poor growth with social protection early in the development process.

c) Other points:

Platform members (Michael Wales, Christian Henckes and Christoph Langenkamp) met with representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Peoples Republic of China to discuss China's activities as a donor, to start discussing common interests and to invite China to participate at the Platform's annual meeting in Paris. Outcome: China is interested in the activities of the Platform and considers attending the annual meeting. See attachment.

2. Phnom Penh, Cambodia

The mission objective was to review of the Platform's engagement in **Cambodia** (facilitation service in the land sector) and planning of next steps in light of the Platform's steering committee decisions, i.e. disengagement at national level. A more detailed report will be available shortly.

a) The situation:

Since early 2006 and on request of the Royal Cambodian Government (RCG) and the donor community active in the land sector, the Platform provides a facilitation service to develop an programme based approach (PBA) in support of Cambodia's land agenda (Land Administration, Management and Distribution Program – LAMDP). To this end, an international facilitator has implemented six missions and a national facilitator is working from within the RCG Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction (MLMUPC) since January 2007.

Seen as a honest and neutral broker, **achievements so far** include: PBA/LAMDP: Assessment of the land sector situation from a PBA viewpoint; Facilitating consultations to define a road map for a sector programme and assisting in drafting an action plan for LAMDP; facilitation services of the National Facilitator (within and between RCG and DP). **Policy and strategy:** Facilitating the process of sector strategy formulation; preparation of a 'Strategy Status Assessment' as step towards the sector strategy formulation. **Institutions and Capacity Building:** Facilitating the establishment of the PBA/LAMDP Task Force within the Technical Working Group Land (TWGL) and assisting its functioning; Training of the Council for Land Policy (CLP) and Ministry core groups in principles and methods of sector approach and sector programmes. **H&A:** Presenting principles and concepts of PBA and sector approach to the members of the TWGL; facilitation of the preparation of the Partnership Principles (PP) that define partnership roles between the RGC and Development Partners in the land sector; enhanced coordination between key development partners in the land sector.

b) The way ahead:

Resources and capacities of Cambodian institutions involved in the land sector are limited and the RGC as well as DP have appreciated the facilitation support of the Platform. They have requested for it to continue (requests are to actually scale-up). Furthermore, Cambodia is at a critical stage of drafting its land policy, the so called "white paper".

Options:

Current commitments of the Platform's engagement in Cambodia end as per 31 December 2007. Broadly, there are four options on how to proceed:

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Stop facilitation service on 31.12. 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forcing the DPs to assume the responsibility;• Platform can focus on other issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not enough time for the transition;• Needed neutral broker Platform pulls out prematurely, without an exit strategy;• Platform will miss lessons learnt of the process that is only evolving;• Platform would not complete its contribution to land sector PBA.
2. Immediate hand over to another institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potentially improved sustainability of the facilitation services;• Platform's contribution could be multiplied towards several countries and sectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No such an institution could be identified by either stakeholder;• Would require time and capacity building before the regional arrangement would be operational;• A regional institution may not be seen

		<p>as neutral as the Platform;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In such an arrangement, it is not clear what exactly would be Platform role.
<p>3. Achieve a milestone and prepare and implement an exit strategy towards a specific date.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Platform will be involved till a major achievement, accomplish initial commitment; • A milestone with coinciding events can be identified: the “white paper” draft, elections; • “Lessons-learned” of facilitation can be better drawn; • Allows for useful and appropriate exit strategy of Platform involvement; • RCG and DP can prepare follow-up arrangement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pace of achievement of the milestone is beyond Platform’s control.
<p>4. Continue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in the land sector has created trust and good-will towards the Platform (eg. request by the up-scale by TWG Agriculture and Water); • Strong wish and demand by the Cambodian and DP stakeholders for continued Platform services; • Possibility to capitalize on the experiences accumulated over the past two years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would be against SC’s strategic decision; • Requires resources in Cambodia and in the Secretariat; • Stakeholders take the Platform services for granted and gives them a comfortable position; • Would tie the Platform services to a relatively narrow sub-sector (land) and region.

Considering the history of the engagement, the expressed wishes of the RGC and DP and the strategic decision taken by the Platform steering committee in Poggiovalle, **the third option would be the most appropriate way forward.** Option one and four are not real options and no obvious solution could be identified for option 2.

Proposal:

Outline for implementation of option 3 (achieving milestone and exit on a specific date):

- Support the attainment of milestone the public discussion “white paper” draft or similar (RCG plans this to be the case before national elections, likely to be on 27 July 2008);
- Intermediate steps towards the “white paper” will be specified in an Action Plan prepared by a MLMUPC/CLP working group in the coming weeks;
- Regardless of the achievement of the milestone, the Platform services will end on 30 August 2008 to bridge over the likely election date;
- Contracts of IF and NF will be extended accordingly;
- The period will be utilized to assist the RCG and DP to organize an alternative facilitation arrangement and to hand over;
- Facilitation services focused on “white paper process” and operationalization of the partnership principles in the land sector.

A decision should be taken during the Platform SC on 15 November 2007.

3. Other issues:

While being in Cambodia, a OECD DAC POVNET training session was held in Cambodia and I attended the first day. It was agreed to **explore opportunities to collaborate**, particularly towards the preparation of a planned training session focussing on agriculture in January in Mali.