



2nd Steering Committee Retreat
Poggiovalle/Italy, September 24-26, 2007

Minutes

Objective of the SC retreat:

Fostering a common vision and understanding of Platform activities:

Are we strategically well positioned and organised so that our activities contribute to i) reaching greater and ii) more effective investments in ARD?

Participants:

Mushtaq Ahmed (CIDA), Marc Debois (EC), John Barrett (DFID), Michael Wales (FAO), Christoph Kohlmeyer (BMZ), Willi Graf (SDC), Nwanze Okidegbe (WB), Chris Delgado (WB), Brian Baldwin (IFAD). From the Platform Secretariat: Christian Henckes, Sonja Bartelt, Ada Hakobyan, Miriam Heidtmann, Christoph Langenkamp

Moderator:

Rebecca Metzner (FAO)

Overview of topics discussed (see detailed agenda attached):

Introduction:

- Review and outlook, Analyzing status quo/strategic development of the Platform
- Identification of main challenges and focus activities

Review of Platform activities:

- Pillar I: Advocacy and Outreach of the Platform
- Pillar II: Shared learning and Innovation
- Pillar III: Aid Effectiveness Activities

Operational issues:

- The Platform Charter Review
- Strategic partnerships and cooperations; stakeholder analysis
- Platform budget and finances/overview membership contributions 2007-2010
- CSO initiative – status quo, main challenge and road ahead
- WDR dissemination and follow-up
- Platform Annual Meeting

Note: Topics are not listed according to the actual agenda but arranged for better understanding to fit under introduction, activities and operational issues. Immediate action points resulting from the discussions were already adistributed on October 2 (see attached).



Topic 1: Introduction: Review and outlook, identification of main challenges and focus activities

Review and outlook:

Participants of the 1st SC retreat in Wakefield 2005 stated the following achievements, opportunities and challenges for the Platform :

- **achievements:**, Platform activities were narrowed down over the past 2 years esp. regarding pilot countries, definition of facilitation service communication strategy, policy advisor, JDRC, MDG paper; Platform has a better and more coherent view on what AE means for ARD
- **opportunities:** Platform should seek actively new partnerships and position the Platform at the interface between technical system to political system
- **challenges:** FPs need to get more involved in Platform activities, Platform still needs to respect that ‘it is better to crawl before you walk before you run!’, effectiveness of disseminating Platform knowledge needs to be improved; demands/expectations on coordination/facilitation of the Platform are growing; Platform has proven its worth, but visibility is not there yet.

Identification of main challenges and focus activities (brainstorming exercise with all participants using cards):

Strengths: real progress to date; consensus on ARD is growing; Platform has links with other ag players; Platform is flexible, innovative and fast; Platform members are friends; Platform receives growing NGO attention

Weaknesses: roles of members, FPs, associates are not clearly defined; role of local facilitation is not understood by all in the same way; poor contacts with CSOs and private sector players; weak dissemination of knowledge among members

Threats: Platform activities are not adding value to bilateral/institutional activities/to aid effectiveness/to country governments; Platform focuses too much on political level than on technical/practical level; uncontrolled Platform growth due to increasing demand, Platform loses neutrality; Platform competes for donor operational funding; other donor coordination mechanisms override Platform; ‘mission drift’: what is within our mandate; borders? Higher expectations than what can be delivered; increasing number of ‘new’ donors outside our group

Opportunities: rural development is back on agenda; move from aid to international cooperation; Platform's trial and error phase is over, now we can concentrate/intensify on activities that add value; focus on the demand from donors and DC governments; embrace CSOs more effectively; join discussion on adaptation and mitigation to face climate; partnerships with other ARD initiatives; improved learning



Topic 2: Pillar I: Outreach and Policy-Dialogue, followed by stakeholder analysis

Sonja Bartelt presented milestones of Pillar 1 (see ppt attached).

The following questions were put forward for discussion:

- a) what does the Platform has to do more to reach target audience or is it enough what we are doing?
- b) How do we keep up the momentum for agriculture being back on the agenda?

Comments:

- Is the adapted title for pillar I ‘outreach and policy dialogue’ appropriate? What happened to ‘advocacy’?
- Platform needs two kinds of advocacy: a) for agriculture (relevant for the unconvinced) and b) for Platform (relevant for the convinced)
- Platform should define what we want to have differently in 3 years and then identify realistically how we get there through outreach and advocacy over the next 12/24/36 months
- Platform should get politicians where they stand and connect to their messages by providing the linkages to ARD (*Advise*: Link with CTA to use their expertise in reaching ministers in ACP countries)
- Every FP has its own strategy in its own institution to influence its superior about the important role of agriculture... how can the Platform learn from these individual approaches and provide a collective approach?
- Platform should test what its stakeholders are already thinking and invest time and thought on what stakeholders perceive about ARD and then respond to and built on the perception.
- Is the Platform actually engaging into policy dialogue and with whom? Platform has to find a way to articulate views as a global platform and not as single donors

Based on the discussion, a **stakeholder analysis** was performed by all participants. For advocacy and outreach, the Platform should focus on the following target groups:

- 1: donors (OECD members; other RD donor platforms in partner countries),
2. donor country parliaments in the north and partner governments in the south.

In particular, the following specific persons/institutions should be targeted:

- Kathy Sierra (Vice-President of WB);
- M. Konaré (AU president),
- Prabhu Pingali, Rajib Shah (Gates Foundation),
- Suresh Kumar (Clinton Foundation),
- Jan Cedergen (OECD);
- EU chairs

How to reach the specific targets:

- through pre-advocacy support;
- continue Platform BBIs at member institutions,
- through participation in WDR 09 ‘Spatial disparities’



Conclusion: Pillar I is really about Advocacy and Outreach. Facilitating policy-dialogue has to be moved to Pillar II ‘Shared learning and innovation’: The stakeholder analysis has identified key targets for advocacy on which Pillar I activities should focus over the next year.

Next steps: the Secretariat develops a matrix with specific target groups and how to reach them, the matrix will be reviewed during the next SC VC (deadline November 15).

Topic 3: Pillar II: Shared-learning and Innovation

Christoph Langenkamp presented milestones and outlook on Pillar II (see ppt attached). The question put forward for discussion was:

How can the Platform create and support a culture for innovation/create a ‘fertile bed’ for innovation?

Comments:

- Pillar II on shared-learning was originally intended to provide messages for advocacy under pillar I. This led to studies, hot topics etc. The Platform has not yet taken the next step and generated the messages for advocacy from these products.
- Platform members actually know what works in ARD (see WDR 08). Platform needs to consolidate the evidence based behind these messages and achieve consensus among Platform members and then find innovative ways to communicate what works why and how.
- The Joint Policy Briefs are meant as support to FPs to do policy-dialogue and not meant for the Platform itself to do policy-dialogue. It is not an outreach tool for the Platform, but a service for FPs and a global public good.
- Platform members need to have a shared understanding of what is in the policy briefs. Platform should now facilitate discussion among members on Policy Briefs, share the views and agree and then extract the messages for advocacy.

Conclusion: During the discussions, Pillar II ‘shared learning and innovation’ was seen as the core pillar of the Platform which needs to be strengthened to improve dissemination of Platform knowledge in an innovative way and to provide messages for advocacy under Pillar I.

Topic 4: Pillar III: Aid Effectiveness

Miriam Heidtmann presented milestones and outlook on Pillar II (see ppt attached)

The following questions were put forward for discussion:

- a) In-country facilitation: should the Platform close the pilot phase and either upscale/downscale?
- b) With what intentions and how do we strengthen the link to general AE agenda (OECD DAC WPAE, UN Development Forum)?

Comments:

- Platform should focus on collecting and disseminating lessons-learned on AE in ARD and not generate own lessons-learned in countries through in-country facilitation service. Also, Platform should collect such lessons-learned from partner countries, not from donors.



- Platform needs to come up with more explicit statements why AE in ARD is a different issue than is health and education.
- Platform should close the ‘pilot country initiatives’ and move towards regional/continental (CAADP) approaches which is innovative and new. Platform could provide Platform for African politicians to address donors on what they need to do differently.
- Is the Platform duplicating OECD DAC work on AE? Discussion: Platform has taken the PD principles into consideration in its in-country work and had them broken down to the sector in order to get practical advice for ARD experts.. OECD DAC WPAE is actually depending on sector networks to operationalize the PD. They appreciate sector networks, as they usually only talk to policy branches. Therefore, Platform work should be seen as complementary to DAC/WPAE work..
- Part of pillar II will be to collect lessons learned on what is going on in AE. Platform might want to design periodic learning events, maybe organise periodic workshops where we learn from each other. Such events could be called ‘cases to learn from’, not facilitation. We should be flexible, change title and nature of facilitation service..

Conclusion:

Activities under Pillar III on aid effectiveness in ARD need adjustment, especially in the direction of more sharing lessons-learned than in generating the lessons learned through in-country facilitation service. The pilot in-country facilitation service provided the Platform with useful information on the possibilities and constraints of a global donor initiative active in a given country. The pilots have provided the Platform with several products and the link to the field where practical AE in ARD is happening.

Next steps: After a pilot phase of almost 3 years, the in-country facilitation service will be brought to an end, and further adjustments to Pillar III will be discussed during the Annual Platform Meeting in Paris, December 2007.



Topic 5: Operational Issues:

The Platform charter review

Christian Henckes presented on behalf of the Platform Task Force 'Charter Review' the proposed changes (see ppt attached). Key issues were Platform membership, rotation of SC/Chairs, and role of Secretariat.

The proposed changes were discussed at length among all participants, finally decisions were taken by the present SC.

Decisions by the SC:

All institutions which contribute an amount of at least 50.000 Euro per year in cash to the Platform will become official voting members and sit on the newly created 'Board' of the Platform. The number of Board members is not restricted. OECD donor countries and development agencies including international financial institutions are eligible for membership. The Platform will partner with other networks, but these will not become members.

Institutions are members, not individuals. Member institutions should nominate one FP and an alternate. Membership process should become more formalized at a higher hierarchy. Membership in Platform and time allocation for FP role has to be in each FPs job description. Existing ToRs for FPs will be reviewed. Official membership will mean not only to pay but also to accept ToRs and mission of Platform.

The Board members will decide on budget, annual work plan and changes in the charter. The Board provides the Chair and Vice-Chair and decide on new members. Board members can decide to accept non-paying members to the Board who can not pay contributions in cash. The Board meets in the Business Meeting and takes decision by 2/3 majority vote. The Board members will select SC members which will consist of 6 members who take decisions by consensus. The SC will supervise the Secretariat. The ToRs of Secretariat have to be reviewed, GTZ as service provider of the Secretariat will be included in the review.

The Chair will head the Board and Annual Meeting, Vice-Chair will chair the SC. Chairs will be elected for 2 years during the Business Meeting, they can serve for a maximum of 2 terms.

Non-paying institutions will be called 'associates' and can propose partnerships, activities etc. Board members and associates will be invited to the Platforms Annual Meetings.

Next steps: These changes will be included in the charter by the new Charter Task Team (Marc Debois (lead), John Barret, Nwanze Okidegbe, Christoph Kohlmeyer). The reviewed charter will be send to new members of the Board (USAID; France, SDC) for comments by Nov 15, then discussed during a VC, then adopted by old SC to be presented as endorsed document at the Annual Meeting. 2007.

Outlook Platform Budget and Finances/Overview membership contributions 2007-2010



Sonja Bartelt presented the budget estimate for 2007-2010 (see annex)

Comments:

- Clarification: all Platform members who have an institutional interest in CAADP are covering the costs for Platform support to CAADP; the Platform trust fund is not subsidizing the CAADP process.
- Budget needs to show activity sublines with budget allocation for better transparency
- Inflation rate is considered in the budget

Next steps:

- Christoph and Nwanze revise together with Sonja and Marc Witzel the breakdown of the budget to present estimates and expected contributions at the Annual Meeting. Two scenarios (high/low) will be provided.

Location of Secretariat:

The Secretariat will have to change current office within BMZ in May 2008 due to general agreements with GTZ whose staff will move out of the main BMZ buildings into a separate building on the premises of BMZ..

The following options for the new location of the Platform Secretariat were suggested: a) GTZ annex of BMZ in Bonn, b) housing outside BMZ in Bonn (e.g UN campus), c) GTZ house Berlin d) Brussels. The new location was not decided.

Christoph Kohlmeyer confirmed that as long as Germany hosts the Secretariat it will cover the costs for housing.

It was pointed out though that the Platform budget actually includes already rent for 3 offices (for Secretariat staff based at GTZ HQ in Eschborn: Miriam, Ada, Marc Witzel).

Next steps: The Secretariat will prepare concrete options for discussion at the Paris meeting.

Staffing of Secretariat:

Manfreds position (50%) is vacant and Miriam will be on maternity leave starting in November (60 %).

Next steps: Based on the results of the SC retreat regarding the future direction of Platform activities, the Secretariat will define the need for further support at the Secretariat and present it at the Annual Meeting.

External evaluation:

The ToRs for the planned external evaluation of the Platform were discussed and the following changes were decided:

- length for consultancy was cut to 45 days instead of 90.
- evaluating the Platforms network ability was considered as too premature and should be only a minor component of the evaluation. Instead the focus should be put on achieving Platform mission, objectives and outputs.
- There is no need for an inception report, a full report is sufficient.



- The evaluator should do a stakeholder evaluation during the Annual Meeting. The inclusion of partner country representatives in the evaluation was seen as too premature.

Next steps: Secretariat adapts ToRs, contracts consultant by mid-November.

Annual Meeting in Paris

The Annual Meeting, including a Business Meeting will take place on December 12-14 in Paris, the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs has kindly proposed to host the meeting. The exact location in Paris is not yet identified, using OECD DAC facilities is also possibility. The SC decided not to hire a consultant to conceptualize and organize the meeting. However, a consultant will be hired to draw up a report of the meeting.

The Annual Meeting will last 1.5 days, to be followed by 1 day business meeting. For this Annual Meeting, the old charter will be valid, the new Charter will be presented and valid from hereon.

The Annual Meeting will stay focussed on the Platform mission and target OECD/ OECD DAC through technical discussions on AE and role of Agriculture (WDR 08). The Annual Meeting will also include session to report back to all members with Platform activity results such as studies.

The Global Network of African Farmers Association will meet right before the Annual Meeting in Paris which might offer the opportunity for a side-event.

Next steps: A Task Force for Annual Meeting (Florence, Ada, Brian, MW, Cko, John) will prepare a concept by October 15 when Brian will be in Paris to contact people at OECD.

Topic 7: Information sharing

- a) Mushtaq presented an update on the CSO Study (see ppt attached)
- b) Chris Delgado presented key messages from the WDR 08

Note:

The SC retreat was followed by a 1 day workshop on the Platform facilitated Code of Conduct for effective ARD programs. Participants were Marc Debois, Michael Wales, Willi Graf, Christian Henckes, Sonja Bartelt, Miriam Heidtmann and Klaus Talvela (moderator). Tiina Huvio and Susan Thompson participated in a 2 hrs phone conference. Minutes of the workshop are distributed separately.

Annex:

- a) Agenda
- b) Pillar I review
- c) Pillar II review
- d) Pillar III review
- e) Charter review
- f) Budget Overview 2007-2010
- g) CSO study
- h) WDR 2008 key messages
- i) Immediate action points (distributed on October 2)