



VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING

12 July 2016, 14:00 – 16:00h CEST

Minutes

Participants

Board members: Mauro Ghirotti (IADC, chair), Shantanu Mathur (IFAD), Raymond Lataste (EC), Monique Calon (MFA NL), Marie Paviot (MFA France), Annelene Bremer (BMZ)

Platform secretariat: Reinhild Ernst, Marion Thompson, Christian Mersmann, Jedi Bukachi, Romy Sato

Apologies

Joseph Coomson (AfDB), Iris Krebber (DFID), Marjaana Pekkola (MFA Finland), Felix Fellmann (SDC)

Agenda

1. Introduction of the new secretariat coordinator
2. Strategic issues
3. Finances
4. Platform high-level meeting and AGA
5. Platform study on donors' finance for ARD

1. Introduction of the new secretariat coordinator

Platform chair IADC welcomed the participants and introduced the new coordinator of the Platform secretariat, Dr. Reinhild Ernst (or *Renée*), who formally joined the secretariat on 1st July 2016. Reinhild expressed her great appreciation of her appointment as coordinator. She remarked that the Platform's strategic initiative Agenda 2030 is excellently placed in the overall debate on how to improve the livelihoods of the rural poor. She further expressed that it is a great moment for her to have joined the Platform secretariat, given all the momentum that the work streams have gained thanks to the strategic direction of the past year. In closing, she mentioned some of the areas that she is already working on with the secretariat team such as the strengthening of the communication strategy, knowledge management and outreach amongst others.

The board members each extended a very warm welcome to Reinhild and expressed their enthusiasm about future cooperation.

2. Strategic issues

i. Work Plan implementation

Land: The CFS has a plenary session on topic of VGGT monitoring, where Gregory Myers from the World Bank will moderate the session and is keen to show the interventions of donors by referring to the land



map that the Platform hosts. The group has applied for a side event at the CFS and will learn the outcome by the end of July. As is routine, the land group will have their second physical meeting in Rome back to back with the CFS.

Trade for ARD: 2nd Physical meeting was held in Rome on June 16th and the report is available on the web. Major outcomes of this meeting are that the work stream's agenda has been endorsed with (i) policy coherence analysis, (ii) trade instruments and (iii) web-based market place with successful initiatives. A draft analysis on diverging interests of the trade and ARD communities and donor reactions/support is planned for the end of September, with telcos to guide the process.

Gender: An info note is planned on the implications of the changing dynamics in rural areas on the feminization of agriculture to inform the gendered dimension of the rural transformation work. A meeting took place between the land and gender groups so as to seek closer coalition, and a meeting between the two groups is anticipated to take place at the sidelines of the CFS.

Inclusive agribusiness: Jim Woodhill has shared a working draft of his report which scopes donor initiatives in inclusive agribusiness and provides recommendations for donors. The report makes a case for a knowledge and learning agenda to allow a better synthesis of this topic and to justify investments. A webinar took place in early July to present the finalized report and follow-up steps will be shared soon.

Nutrition: On 16th June a virtual briefing took place to examine the state of the art of nutrition sensitive agriculture. The general idea of this activity is to structure, review and synthesize previous experiences in nutrition-sensitive agriculture in order to scale up effective nutrition-sensitive interventions.

Climate: MFA-France will contribute supplementary funding in the amount of 30.000 Euro for the purpose of this topic. A side event is being set up for the COP22 in Marrakech. The Platform engaged actively in the Annual Forum of the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture (GACSA) and the secretariat presented the first results of the analysis of donor reactions to climate smart/resilient agriculture on one of the panels of the Forum.

Agenda 2030: The secretariat reported that it is currently drafting the background paper on rural transformation in the context of the strategic initiative as agreed under Objective 2 of the work plan. A doodle will be sent out to members and partners during the week of 18-22 July to decide on when and where the roundtable meeting in September will take place. If the roundtable is foreseen for October, IADC and IFAD agreed to search for a location to hold the roundtable meeting prior to the CFS. IFAD advised that October 14th is World Food Day so that there might be a clash to consider.

During the discussion, some members agreed with IADC earlier proposal that the Platform could bring its comparative advantage by analyzing, in a structured and comprehensive way, the combined implications of development investments and approaches in addressing not only the food challenges on the environment, occupation and poverty reduction. Analysis, suggested to be carried out with the Rome based UN Agencies, whose results could guide the donors in drafting their policies.



John Barret is finalizing the paper on “Implications of Agenda 2030 for Rural Development”, which he presented at the Annual General Assembly in Geneva. The paper will be completed by July 15th. Following requests by Platform members, John made provisions regarding environmental and social safeguards in the paper.

The panel of a CFS side event on urbanization and rural transformation by FAO, IFAD and others will feature the Platform, represented by the secretariat.

IADC commented that in line with Renée’s vision for a stronger communication strategy, it is important to consider some deliverables for the end of the year for the work that is being done at work stream level.

It was agreed to set up a conference call to re-launch the process of the Agenda 2030 group. Prior to that, the secretariat will draft a brief note on the state of the art of the Agenda 2030 work. IADC, IFAD and BMZ will review this note and propose next steps.

ii. Strategic Plan implementation

The secretariat reported that strategic thematic work is being carried out in line with Agenda 2030 priorities and under the stream of rural transformation. In line with the strategic plan, strategic partnerships have been built particularly at work stream level.

IADC mentioned that a G7 International Symposium in Tokyo on food and nutrition security will take place at the end of October and encouraged those participating in the Symposium to also represent the Platform so as to offer a more articulated donors’ view in the implementation of Elmau commitments, notably in nutrition. This is particularly because the Ise-Shima G7 outcome document makes clear reference to the Platform as a key partner in the dialogue between G7 and the wider donor community.

iii. Work stream complementarity

The secretariat reported that while the inclusive agribusiness and trade groups place emphasis on different areas, their discussions are synergetic and there are opportunities to work closer together. At the end of the year, the groups will discuss on how to carry their work forward in a more coordinated manner. The gender group has taken forward the suggestion of the board and linked with other thematic areas.

Further prospects for complementarity have been posed by members such as how nutrition sensitive agriculture within the value chains can be discussed under the inclusive agribusiness work stream. As requested by MFA-NL and supported by others, the topic of rural youth should also be further explored and better linked with other work streams, however, not necessarily together with gender. It was agreed to particularly link rural youth to the work streams of inclusive agribusiness, Agenda 2030 and Rural Transformation.



3. Finances

On behalf of the Platform budget group (DFID and Finland-MFA), who could not attend the board meeting, the secretariat presented the status of Platform finances with the endorsement of the budget group per accounting status 30 June 2016.

Regarding member contribution agreements:

A presentation of the status of contribution agreements regarding member years 2016 (+) was reviewed and the following pointed out:

At present, there are 7 signed contribution agreements regarding member year 2016 as follows: AfDB, BMZ and DFID each with a multi-annual agreement until 2018, DFAT-Australia with a multi-annual agreement to 2017 and EC, SDC and USAID each for 2016. In processing at the time of the board meeting are 3 agreements: Finland-MFA (2016+2017), Netherlands-MFA (2016-2018, close to signature) and France (2016, close to signature).

For 3 members, the scope and duration of their respective contribution 2016(+) will be determined yet: IADC, IFAD and Global Affairs-Canada. All three members have indicated that relevant information will be provided to the secretariat as soon as available.

It was pointed out that there will be 13 Platform Board members in 2016 if agreements are concluded for all members listed above.

Regarding the status of the 2016 Platform indicative budget:

Based on budget data and a presentation provided to board members prior to the board meeting, the 2016 Platform indicative budget was reviewed per accounting booking status 30 June 2016. In particular, total 2016 indicative plan costs (€ 1.690.485) were reflected against total booked costs and commitments thus far (€ 1.109.258).

Preliminary indications are that, if all agreements which are currently in processing for 2016 are signed (3 members) and if yet outstanding commitments for financial contributions for 2016 are made (3 members), the 2016 Platform plan indicative budget will be approximately met in terms of available funding.

The secretariat pointed out that commitments are only entered within the scope of available budget (signed contributions).

Based on the preliminary balance under budget section “Activity related budget items”, an overview depicting the 2016 initial budget allocation of budget to the work streams was reviewed. It was agreed that the secretariat may share the data, as approved by the budget group, with the work streams.

Regarding “Proposal on Operational Procedure for the Allocation of the Indicative Budget of the Platform to the Work Streams”:

Upon request of the budget group, the secretariat had prepared and forwarded to the board a draft proposal on the “Operational Procedure for the Allocation of the Indicative Budget of the Platform to the Work Streams”, which was reviewed during the board meeting. The proposal, enhancing Annex 3 of the Strategic Plan, outlines clear procedures on future budget distribution to the work streams for the upcoming years in order to streamline the process and allow aimed decisions in a realistic operational timeframe. It was agreed to forward the proposal again to the board members, this time in form of a decision sheet, seeking their approval to formalize the proposed procedure by end of September 2016.

4. Platform high-level meeting and AGA

It was agreed that the envisaged high level meeting on the future of agriculture and rural development in overall development cooperation should be pushed to the AGA in January 2017, because of the unavailability of the colleagues in September. This idea could line up well with suggestions that the design of the AGA should be revisited, to offer a higher level meeting on the first day of the AGA. BMZ welcomed the idea of having a high level meeting day, and the secretariat welcomed the suggestions of the board.

The host and topic of the next AGA are yet to be established. It was agreed that the secretariat will follow-up with the European Commission to establish the possibility of having the upcoming AGA in Brussels.

5. Platform study on donors’ finance for ARD

The secretariat reported that the first version of the study should be ready at the end of July.

Action points

Agenda point	Task	Due dates	Responsible
Work plan implementation – Rural transformation	Send out reminder doodle to members and partners to decide when and where the roundtable meeting will take place.	Completed	Secretariat
Work plan implementation – Inclusive agribusiness (IAB)	Explore how to link IAB and rural youth in the group discussions	Aug-Sep	Secretariat and IAB Group members
Work plan implementation – Agenda 2030	Draft a note on the current status of the Agenda 2030 work. Send to IADC, IFAD and	End of August	Secretariat, IADC, BMZ, IFAD

	BMZ.		
Finances	<p>(i)_ Secretariat informs work streams about 2016 budget allocation.</p> <p>(ii)_ Distribute a decision sheet to board members requesting their endorsement of the proposal “Operational Procedures for the Allocation of Indicative Budget of the Work Streams” by the end of September.</p>	<p>(i) Ongoing</p> <p>(ii) End of September</p>	Secretariat (on behalf of the budget group)