



Board meeting, Geneva, Switzerland

22 January 2016, 9:00 – 13:00 CET

Participants:

Board members: Mauro Ghirotti (MFAIC-Italy), Marjaana Pekkola (MFA Finland), Annelene Bremer (BMZ), David Hegwood (USAID), Craig Robinson (DFAT-Australia), Felix Fellman (SDC), Joseph Coompsen (AfDB), Monique Calon (MFA-The Netherlands), Nikita Eriksen-Hamel (Global Affairs Canada), Maria Ketting (EC), Marie Paviot (MFA-France), Shantanu Mathur (IFAD).

Platform secretariat: Christian Mersmann, Martina Karaparusheva, Jedi Bukachi, Romy Sato

Apologies: Iris Krebber (DFID), Marketa Jonasova (World Bank)

Decisions and agreements

AGENDA ITEM	DECISIONS and AGREEMENTS
<p>1. Welcome and action points of AGA Geneva</p>	<p>MFA-Finland welcomed members of the board and presented the highlights of the pre-AGA and AGA Day 1 and 2. The co-chairs encouraged the Board meeting participants to make all decisions required for strategic and annual plan and progress report.</p> <p>As recommended in the new Strategic Plan, the concept of the AGA will be revisited in 2016 (see work plan 2016) to improve the outcomes of the AGAs in terms of focus, strategic analyses and exchange with key ARD partners and institutions. Final decision to be taken by next board meeting in June 2016.</p> <p>The new Strategic Plan offers a great opportunity to improve the efficiency and impact of the Platform. Co-chairs called upon the Board members to strengthen the internal communication and the decision making process, to concentrate management on key issues and processes and to allow a proper degree of delegation in carrying out approved actions, jointly with the Secretariat. In such regard, the steady support of the Secretariat is fundamental. Therefore, there was a renewed request for clear task description of the staff members (i.e., who does what). It was agreed that directions of the Platform could be agreed upon also by e-mail communication and on a no-objection basis.</p> <p>Management meetings should be kept short, targeted and effective. Members are invited to participate and contribute to the strategic focus of the ongoing work.</p> <p>MFA-Finland informed the participants that her term as co-chair is coming to an end and will not be prolonged. She urged the board members to volunteer for the position.</p>
<p>2. Agenda</p>	<p>The agenda was presented and accepted by the board</p>



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<p>3. Strategic Plan and Agenda 2030</p> <p>(i) Way forward with Strategic Plan 2016-2020</p> <p>(ii) Integration of Charter with Strategic Plan 2016-2020</p> <p>(iii) Discussion on new members' and partners' engagement</p>	<p>The Strategic Plan was endorsed after one agreed change in wording to replace “Biennial Global Report on Rural Development” by “a flagship publication on the theme of rural transformation/development”</p> <p>It was agreed that there was no longer a need for the Charter of the Platform.</p> <p>The roles of contact points (formerly focal points) should be proactive in drawing in expert colleagues from member organisations for the different work streams. At the same time the Board should define measures to encourage the active involvement of the contact points also through the active support of the Secretariat.</p> <p>The meaning of supplementary funds need to be clarified (co-chairs, secretariat and USAID will prepare materials for this discussion) – proposals and suggestions on the use of such financial contributions by 29.2.2016.</p> <p>Thematic group workplans and comments on the organisation of the strategic plan, should be sent until 31.3.2016.</p>
<p>4. Draft work plan 2016 taking into account the comments from Members' Day</p>	<p>The board endorsed the Work Plan 2016 of the Platform – detailed activities will be presented once the work streams have submitted their work programmes for 2016 by latest 31 March 2016.</p> <p>Under the Strategic Initiative 2030 of the Platform, specific actions for the Platform are planned to engage on the implementation of Agenda 2030 and on rural transformation. MFAIC-Italy, BMZ and IFAD will lead this call and propose areas of engagement and action points supported by the secretariat and John Barrett, facilitating consultant.</p> <p>SDC proposed to focus on the SDGs, particularly 1, 2 and 8 and build information systems towards their implementation: a long-term goal that will secure continuity and results. Thematic work should be flexible and responsive to members' needs and priorities through the year and feed – wherever possible – into the work on rural transformation.</p> <p>IFAD proposal to include poor farmers – agreed to include Goal from strategic plan also to the annual plan in addition of mission, vision and outcome</p> <p>Next to some minor amendments to the work plan 2016, agreements related to the work plan were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each proposed work theme should be promoted and supported by a Platform member with the active support of the Secretariat. - Activities proposed by work streams should follow the criteria of (i) inclusiveness – that they include cross-cutting topics such as gender etc.; and (ii) leadership –



	<p>that there should be a member in the lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secretariat should share with board members a list of all colleagues in their organisation, engaging in the different work streams - Secretariat and Global Affairs Canada should make a proposal on how to address the suggestion of “knowledge sharing at the country level” (see output 4/G) - Climate smart agriculture and CAADP should not constitute work streams, but topics which are covered by the secretariat, who will engage in the relevant fora and share information with Platform members - The trade in agriculture and private sector work streams could merge. <p>The Secretariat would prepare the different dossiers for a smooth discussion and rapid decision making.</p>
<p>5. Finances</p> <p>(i) Report on finances 2015</p> <p>(ii) Draft 2016 indicative budget</p> <p>(iii) Outlook contributions</p>	<p>The board approved the budget group’s report on finances 2015. The indicative budget 2016 of the Platform was approved.</p> <p>Budget allocation requests by the different work streams should be agreed upon by late March 2016 through work programmes .</p> <p>All participants agreed that the budget needs to be more focused on the strategic plan and board priorities. Thematic working group leaders will account for activities, outcomes and results with the support of the Secretariat.</p> <p>In case of unclear budget issues, board members should send specific questions to budget group to respond. Budget group and Marion Thompson of the secretariat to clarify differences between budget figures and availability of funding.</p> <p>In consideration of the analysis issued by the Secretariat on possible financial shortfalls, it was recommended to focus expenses on key activities and by increasing efficiency. The advice of the Budget group on this topic will be most useful.</p> <p>Netherlands and France processing payments (delayed for 2015). All members were recommended to move to multi-year-payments.</p> <p>It was agreed that board members will strive to send indications on their contributions until 31.3 of the same year. This will allow the Secretariat and the Budget group better planning perspective and allow a more accurate allocation of funds towards thematic workplan activities.</p>
<p>6. Election of co-chair, replacement for Finland</p>	<p>The co-chairs will approach directly some candidates in the board for the vacant position. MFA-Finland will remain temporarily in the position until a new co-chair is identified and elected.</p>



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	<p>It was also discussed and agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The new co-chair will share responsibilities with MFAIC-Italy, which still has another year of mandate. - With the new Strategic Plan, the co-chairs and the secretariat have the trust from the board to pursue activities directly with the work streams leaders
<p>7. AOB</p>	<p>Global Affairs Canada requested all board members to briefly inform about the status of finance of their agencies to the ARD agenda.</p> <p>It was concluded that several agencies are going through significant changes, with some raising their ODA - though more specifically to support climate change and migration-related issues – while others are facing drastic budgetary cuts.</p> <p>The work plan 2016 includes a work stream on ARD finance which will feed into the aforementioned flagship publication.</p>
<p>8. Summary of decisions and good-bye</p>	<p>The co-chairs thanked all board members for their participation and closed the meeting that ended a very busy and fruitful working week and opened a new phase for the Platform.</p>