

A KEY THEME IN
DEVELOPMENT AND
THE AGENDA 2030
PERSPECTIVE AND
APPROACHES ARE
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FORM IS FOCUSING
SCUTTING ISSUES

Global Donor Platform
for Rural Development



2016 Annual Report



2016 Annual Report

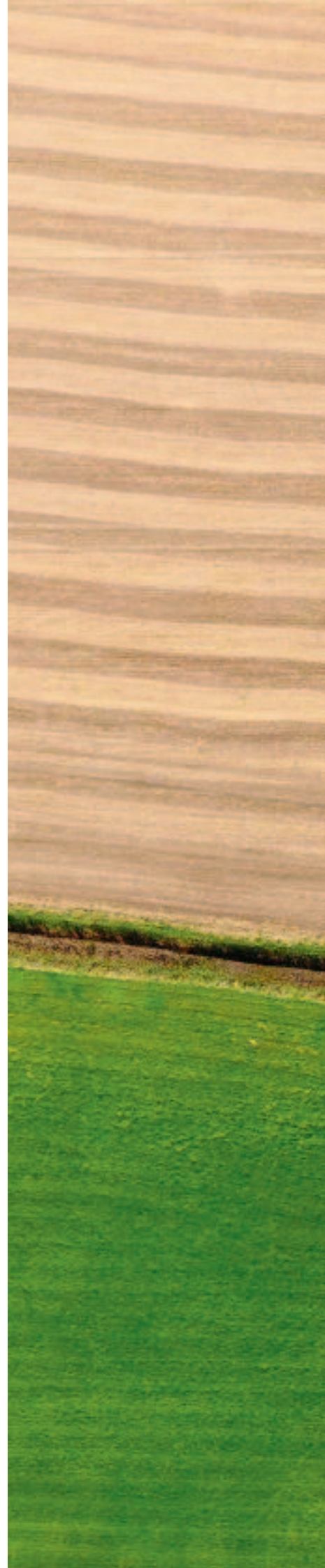
Promoting Sustainable
Rural Transformation



Global Donor Platform
for Rural Development

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About us

The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development is a network of 38 bilateral and multilateral donors, international financing institutions, intergovernmental organisations, and development agencies. In the first year of the Sustainable Development Goals implementation, the donors focused on finding a common strategy to react to the rapid structural changes in rural areas caused by the processes of urbanisation, migration and the climate change impacts on agriculture. The members continue to share a common vision that rural livelihoods and agriculture are at the centre of the SDGs new call for sustainability and social, environmental and economic development in rural areas. Strengthening their position will help guide inclusive development and ensure food and nutrition security.

Strategic Focus

The Platform's strategic focus is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Certainly, the Platform views the goals of Agenda 2030 for economic, social and environmental sustainability through a rural lens. The transformation process that rural areas are currently undergoing has dramatic impacts on the most vulnerable population groups, making it especially important for donors to ensure that the SDGs implementation in rural areas really does not leave anyone behind.

The Platform's strategic focus is on enhancing agriculture, food systems and rural livelihoods as part of rural transformation. Rural transformation is the process of change in rural areas that can be influenced by buffering negative trends and amplifying positive support to inclusive development of rural areas.

The Platform's Board

The Board is the voice of the Platform in championing agriculture, food systems and rural development. The Board is charged with taking a long-term strategic view of the Platform's future and guaranteeing the quality of its outputs. The Board is led by two co-chairs elected by the Board to serve for two years. They also engage on a regular basis with the secretariat as a management team.

At the physical Board meeting in January 2016, the Board members agreed to specific actions to support the implementation of Agenda 2030 and to engage in the process of rural transformation according to the vision and mission of the



Platform as well as the policy priorities of each member organisation. The work plan 2016 focused on the interlinkages between SDGs and the current ODA programmes which the donors seek to enhance and to unfold a more comprehensive and holistic support of the agricultural sector and agricultural value chains in line with the political imperative of Agenda 2030.

In 2016, the Platform had 12 Board members. Co-chairs Mauro Ghirotti (Italian Agency for Development Cooperation – IADC) and Shantanu Mathur (IFAD) led the Board.



At the physical Board meeting in January in Geneva on the side-lines of the Annual General Assembly 2016, the Board members discussed the political implications of Agenda 2030 and processes of urbanisation and migration on their policies. They agreed on the new Strategic Initiative Agenda 2030 for rural transformation and adopted the 2016 work plan and the work streams. At the second Board meeting in June 2016, the secretariat presented the on-going activities in the different work streams, the outputs and products and their strategic relation to the implementation of Agenda 2030. Additionally the organisation of the 2017 Annual General Assembly and the organisation of a first high-level forum of donor representatives was agreed upon to discuss the future of agriculture and rural development priorities when implementing the Agenda 2030 in the next decades.

All the meeting minutes are accessible through the
> [Platform website](http://www.donorplatform.org) (www.donorplatform.org).



Membership Developments

The Platform membership has remained constant at 38 members in 2016. Several members are re-structuring their financial support to agriculture and rural development, due to the impact of migration and urbanisation. With the growing demand for financial investments to implement the SDGs, donors' initiatives are strategically searching for opportunities to leverage and cooperate with non-traditional donors and the private sector.

New Focal Points Focal points are actively sharing information and knowledge within their organisation and with other focal points. There were four new focal points in 2016: Vincent Glaesener (LUX Dev), Katja Eichner (KfW), Aidan Fitzpatrick (Irish Aid), Mushtaq Ahmed (Global Affairs Canada) and Patrick Herlant (European Commission).



Partners The Platform continued the strong cooperation with partners involved in the different work streams. The inclusive agribusiness and trade working group advanced the partnership with the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) and the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), and also established closer collaboration with the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the University of Wageningen. Partnership

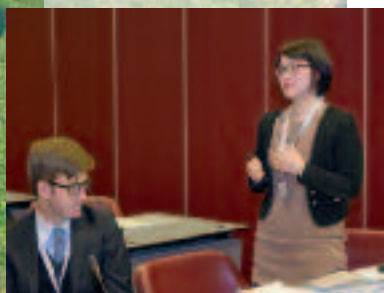


Box 1

Members of the Platform

- African Development Bank (AfDB)*
- Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)*
- Austria – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Austrian Development Agency (ADA)
- Belgium – Directorate-General for Development Cooperation
- Belgian Technical Cooperation
- Global Affairs Canada
- Denmark – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- European Commission – Directorate-General DEVCO*
- Finland – Ministry of Foreign Affairs*
- Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)
- France – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development*
- French Development Agency (AFD)
- Germany – Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)*
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- Global Mechanism of the UNCCD (UNCCD GM)
- Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)(co-chair)*
- Italian Agency for Development Cooperation – Italy (IADC) (co-chair)*
- International Development Research Centre – Canada (IDRC)
- Irish Aid – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- KfW German Bank for Reconstruction, Germany
- Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)
- Luxembourg – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- The Netherlands – Ministry of Foreign Affairs*
- Norway – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- Spain – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)*
- United Kingdom – Department for International Development (DFID)*
- United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)*
- The World Bank (WB)
- World Food Programme (WFP)
- World Trade Organisation (WTO)

* Board member



was also re-established with the CAADP Development Partners Coordination Group, where most of the donors of the Platform are actively engaged. Furthermore, under the gender work stream, collaboration with Oxfam was established in the nexus area of gender responsiveness in agribusiness. Numerous partners are also involved in the other work streams of the Platform, especially in the work of the Land group and the Platform's Strategic Initiative Agenda 2030 for rural transformation.

Platform Secretariat

The platform secretariat has continued supporting the donors in their efforts to implement the overall strategic goals set out in the Strategic Plan and completing the activities in the annual work plan. The secretariat supported the members in information dissemination and knowledge sharing on topics relevant to their work and strategic goals. In close collaboration with the Board and members, the secretariat also led the organisation and planning of the AGA. The secretariat reported regularly to the Platform Budget Group and Board on budget execution. In December 2016, the Budget Group gained a new member: MFAID-France joined MFA-Finland and DFID, making the group three members strong.

Based in Bonn, Germany the secretariat team is serviced by the administrative structure of GIZ on behalf of the host, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Beyond the intense work within the various work streams, the close cooperation with the German international development work offers multiple benefits for the Platform and the secretariat. The secretariat arranges for peer reviews and profound exchange of experiences, the use of specific strategies and programmatic approaches on particular topics.

The secretariat services primarily the membership of the Platform and its work streams. In its global outreach, the secretariat also participates in major global ARD events and when and where appropriate, communicates collective positions of the Platform. The secretariat provided all board members with the annual independent external audit report and its 2015 Annual Report in June 2016. In 2016, the secretariat said goodbye to the Office Manager – Sonja Phelps – and welcomed a new secretariat coordinator, Reinhild Ernst and new Office Manager, Svetlana Silova.

The secretariat team in 2016 included Reinhild Ernst (secretariat coordinator as of July 2016), Christian Mersmann (Policy Analyst), Romy Sato (Policy Analyst), Jedi Bukachi (Junior Policy Officer), Martina Karaparusheva (Junior Policy Officer), Marion Thompson (Finance Administrator), Svetlana Silova (Office Manager as of October 2016) and Simone Miller (Finance Administration). Programme consultants supported the team in thematic, communication, design related tasks and event management.

Message from the Chairs

2016, marked by profound international developments, was the first year of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation. It was hence a year of learning, reflection and adaptation to the new way we should conduct development assistance in the next decades. We are facing the challenge of transforming Agenda 2030 into concrete and articulated actions partly because its universality implies re-structuring our sectoral thinking into more cross-sectoral patterns. Some of the major questions we dealt with therefore concern how systemic but also how focused and practical donor programmes can be to tackle the challenges of sustainable development and of inclusive rural transformation, as well as what Agenda 2030 means for international finance institutions and their lending portfolios.



As co-chairs, we actively supported members, partners and the secretariat to strategically position the Platform at the centre of these discussions that include G7, G20 and CFS, about the future of agriculture and rural development (ARD) within SDGs implementation. In fact, our Annual General Assembly in January 2017, where we welcomed many new partners, was entitled **Agenda 2030 put into practice – what future for rural development?**

Shortly after the Agenda 2030 was agreed upon it became clear that its implementation would require changes in processes and planning. The interconnectedness, universality and ambition of the SDGs force us to think beyond our own frame of agriculture and rural development, when addressing the upcoming challenges and realising the rising opportunities on a planet in rapid and continuous transformation. It was quite clear, from the constructive discussion we engaged in, that more attention should be paid not only to food and nutrition security, but also to environmental and social issues, particularly job and income generation. In this new vision, economic growth, gender, climate change, finance and land governance acquire new strategic and operational significance.

Therefore, in 2016, we as the Platform, focused on exploring the potential of prioritising SDGs and their targets. The SDGs, however, have to be seen in the context of the new development architecture following the agreement on Finance for Development and the modernisation of ODA that provide new opportunities for developing countries and the Platform membership.

We all would agree that Agenda 2030 calls for actions beyond governments that include civil organisations, the private sector, the finance sector and the society as a whole. The Agenda created momentum and optimism that will guide the process for a world without poverty, inequalities and hunger and where environmental, social, economic sustainability and governance are the guiding principles of development. We welcomed this achievement and used 2016 to explore coherent ways of working with development partners. We believe that regular exchange and networking will ultimately serve as the stepping point towards stable partnerships.

In this regard the process of rural transformation could be of vital importance for the implementation of the SDGs. Identifying the dynamics and drivers of the process will help us focus and ultimately help us strengthen the collaboration amongst us and the building of better partnerships with the private sector.

Therefore, we look forward to 2017 as the year that we take our contributions to achieving Agenda 2030 a step forward. We will continue to gain a better understanding of rural transformation and its implications and to identify new and innovative ways to complement on-going initiatives, programmes and policy frameworks. We hope our knowledge and expertise will support a more effective use of the means of cooperation for the SDGs achievement.



Box 2:

Agenda 2030 Goals Directly Relevant to the Platform's Work

- Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all
- Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- Goal 15: Life on Land – Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss

The Year in View

In 2016, the Platform raised its profile in the international fora on agriculture and rural development during the first year of SDG implementation as called for in its newly approved Strategic Plan 2016-2020. One example is the featuring of the Global Donor Platform in the communiqué of the G7 agricultural ministers informing the G7 Ise-Shima Leaders' Declaration in May 2016. In the communiqué, the ministers underscored the convening role of the Platform as open discussion and exchange space and highlighted the need for higher level political engagement and coordination for sustainable agriculture and rural development to achieve Agenda 2030.

The ultimate goal of the Platform for the year 2016 was to understand the implications of Agenda 2030 on rural development and find the place for agriculture in the process of rapid urbanisation and rural transformation. Rural areas are not only directly exposed to economic and environmental impacts, they are also

directly and indirectly affected by urbanisation and migration, by technological development and changes of consumer patterns. As part of the **Strategic Initiative Agenda 2030 for rural transformation** of the Platform, the members gathered around the focal topic on rural transformation. The universality and multi layering of the SDGs correspond with the complexity of drivers and dynamics influencing this process and ultimately rural livelihoods. The international community as a whole agreed that a higher level of coordination, coherence and collaboration amongst donor countries will be required to support the rural areas through the transition they are undergoing and to direct this transition to a positive outcome.

It became clear quite quickly that the steering of this process will be an unbearable task for one single sector. And although agriculture will remain at the centre of political and economic activities in rural areas, members realised that they need to look at the sector through a different lens, by for example reaching the intended outcomes by linking agriculture to **sustainable and inclusive business models and markets** and by actively establishing cooperation pathways with businesses and private sector as a whole.

Additionally, the > [Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development](#) constitutes the global framework for financing development in post-2015 and outlines the new opportunities provided by trade, remittances, blended finance at country level as well as bonds and funds of all types. The “modernisation of ODA” – finalised by OECD/DAC in 2015 – is another element of the emerging new financing architecture of development. It is certain that **climate finance** available through bilateral and multilateral institutions, in particular the Green Climate Fund is increasingly playing an enormous role in financing rural development after the Paris Agreement. Furthermore, its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) called for adaptation and mitigation action through sustainable, climate-resilient agriculture, forestry and environmental management at large. Through the NDCs, rural development is more firmly on the climate change agenda after many years of difficult discussions.

Box 3:

The Functions of the Platform *

- **Knowledge-sharing**
Effective knowledge-sharing means better development results.
- **Advocacy**
Effective advocacy is built upon solid evidence and clear messages
- **Networking**
Networking is at the heart of the Platform's functions

* based on the New Strategic Plan 2016–2020

These new and emerging opportunities were taken up in a cross-sectoral cooperation between the Platform's Strategic Initiative Agenda 2030 for rural transformation and the various work streams which are recorded below. While the Platform followed up on the new paradigms in 2016, the year started with the Annual General Assembly in January 2016 entitled **Agricultural Trade and Rural Development – Duet or Solo Playing?** addressing one of the great opportunities

of the new international cooperation landscape. Partners and members profited from the knowledge exchange and the open discussions which the Platform facilitated. There was a broad concurrence that much further analysis and exchange will be needed to change the sectoral thinking in development assistance and establish new approaches that match the new dimensions of rural development in the Agenda 2030 era. How holistic can donors and IFIs be in their programming following the call of the SDGs for more comprehensive and sustainable approaches to development? Where is the red thread leading through the SDGs? The complexity of development work has changed and it is certainly not one agency or government that can deal with the situation alone.

Box 4:

Some International Meetings and Platform's Side-Events During 2016

JANUARY

- Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA), Berlin, Germany

FEBRUARY

- CFS Working Group on Rural Transformation and Urbanisation, Rome, Italy

MARCH

- World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty, Washington DC, USA
- Expert Meeting on Rural and Regional Policies, OECD, Paris, France

APRIL

- Launch of the OECD/FAO and UNCDF publication at OECD in Paris, France
- Partnership Platform of CAADP, Accra, Ghana
- CFS Working Group on Rural Transformation and Urbanisation, Rome, Italy

JUNE

- Annual Forum of the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture (GACSA), Rome, Italy

SEPTEMBER

- FAO Conference Rural Transformation, Agricultural and Food Systems Transition, Rome, Italy

OCTOBER

- CFS 43, Rome, Italy
- Rural Transformation Roundtable organised by Global Donor Platform, Rome, Italy

NOVEMBER

- COP22 Side-event on financing NDCs lead by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development of France, Marrakesh, Morocco

Platform Themes



Agenda 2030 and Rural Transformation

The Strategic Initiative was led by IFAD, BMZ and IADC Italy

Rural transformation does not happen in isolation, but it is part of the broader process of structural transformation shaped by the interlinkages between agriculture, the rural non-farm economy, manufacturing and services

IFAD, Rural Development Report

The Platform's Strategic Initiative Agenda 2030 for rural transformation was established to guide the activities of the different work streams in view of broader programmes and strategies leading to enhanced sustainability in development. We continued with the analysis of the implications of Agenda 2030 on rural development and the practical changes happening in donor agencies. On the one hand side, consultant John Barrett offered his insights on ways which donors can go to be more holistic in their programmatic approaches and strategies to implement the SDGs. On the other hand, we started to analyse the trends of financial flows to agriculture and rural development under Agenda 2030. This discussion was based on the emerging financing architecture for development following the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) on Finance for Development and the

new opportunities emerging in support of inclusive and rural transformation. The importance of this transformation for the economies of developing countries and for the rural livelihoods of vulnerable groups is characterised by the ubiquitous nature of the drivers and dynamics of the rural transformational processes which interlink all aspects of Agenda 2030.

The rapid urbanisation, migration and the growing population in developing countries present a major challenge not only to developing countries, but also to donors and IFIs. What are the priorities in development cooperation which could serve catalytically in times of scarce financial resources? The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) deliberated on "Urbanisation and rural transformation" to agree on how to leverage domestic and international support to rural transformation and to guide the process towards inclusive and sustainable development in rural areas. Urbanisation and migration offer a very high potential for rural areas and CFS and other policy processes continue to define better rural-urban linkages and rural transformation. The Platform remains fully engaged in these global policy developments.

This issue was followed up by the OECD, FAO and UNCDF in their publication [Adopting a territorial approach to food security and nutrition policy](#). With a clear priority on the issue of sustainable food systems, the publication looked into uniting different territorial concepts and generating knowledge and recommendations in one, more generic territorial approach to food security and nutrition. The report shed light on the importance of addressing the great complexity of rural development and the need for inclusiveness of rural development. In September 2016, IFAD published its [Rural Development Report 2016 – fostering inclusive rural transformation](#). The report analysed in depth the different strategies that developing countries can undertake to deal with the rapidly changing rural environment – adapt to the

International Highlights:

- IFAD Rural Development Report 2016: Fostering Inclusive Rural Transformation
- OECD/FAO and UNCDF publication: “Adopting a territorial approach to food security and nutrition policy”
- Creation of the CFS Open Ended Working Group on urbanisation and rural transformation

Platform Highlights:

- Roundtable on Rural Transformation in Rome, Italy
- Background paper on the new momentum for rural transformation
- Study on the implications of Agenda 2030 on rural development
- Ongoing study on the financial trends to agriculture and rural development

donor and IFI interventions need to be revised to fulfil the call for inclusive and comprehensive development according to the SDGs and Agenda 2030.

Addressing rural transformational processes requires a great amount of knowledge of the national, regional and local conditions, but what is the emerging comparative advantage of bilateral donors and IFIs today? Focusing on strengths, experiences and the exchange of knowledge, the debate under the Platform crystallised the best leverage points of intervention of the Platform’s members. Identifying gaps in terms of policy coherence between the most relevant SDGs, analysing emerging opportunities of the new international and national enabling environments and communicating the results to a wider public of partners is the biggest value added of the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development. The continuous strive of the Platform to align members’ activities to new trends in rural development cooperation was once again welcomed.

changing conditions, amplify the benefits of the process, accelerate the pace of transformation or chose a combination of the three.

The Platform observed and engaged in the complex discussions in various fora and organised a roundtable on rural transformation in the attempt to bring all initiatives and “schools of thought” together. All of the Platform’s work was based on the assumption that

Under the umbrella of the Platform’s Strategic Initiative Agenda 2030 for rural transformation and based on the results so far, in 2017 the Platform will focus the work in two areas: on finance for rural development in its conventional, new and innovative forms and on new policy directives and initiatives of the Platform membership as means and opportunities in support to rural transformation. This includes a strong commitment in support of the CAADP implementation processes as well as climate finance available to agriculture and rural development.



Climate Resilient Agriculture

The work stream was led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development (MFAID-France)

In their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) countries offer a clear indication of how they intend to respond to climate change, and where they require international support. The majority of countries expect the agricultural sectors (...) to play a significant role in responding to climate change.

The Agricultural Sectors in the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, FAO

Exploring new financing opportunities through NDCs was the topic for the Platform in 2016. The centre-piece of the Paris Climate Agreement of December 2015 brought a very high prioritisation of adaptation and mitigation actions through sustainable agriculture in most of the developing countries.

Many development institutions have established portfolios for climate relevant interventions. The Platform is undertaking an analysis of reactions of bilateral donors and international finance institutions to the climate challenge in agriculture and rural development as an on-going activity. However, many strategic and programmatic issues still need to be clarified and agreed upon with regard to rural development. Rural development so far has not enjoyed a high policy priority in the climate talks nor in the financial

provisions of bilateral donors and IFIs. The question arises what roles donor/ IFI grants, finance availability like through the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Climate Finance and Facilities of the World Bank, the regional banks and funds, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) will play in the context of large lending portfolios, direct foreign investments and national public expenditure. First results of the analysis were presented at the Annual Forum of the Global Alliance for Climate-smart Agriculture (GACSA) in June 2016 in Rome.

The Platform has been following and engaging in various climate-related processes and initiatives. In institutional terms, alliances and networks are being built, for example the Africa, East Africa and West Africa Climate-smart alliances, the ASEAN Climate Resilience Network and the work of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in Latin America. The Global Alliance on Climate-smart Agriculture (GACSA) has created three action groups on knowledge, investments and enabling conditions, and offers engagement of governments, institutions, NGOs and the private sector. The Platform is fully engaged in the action group on investments and contributes by the on-going analysis of donor responses to climate challenges in agriculture and economic growth in rural areas.

International Highlight:

- Annual Forum of the Global Alliance for Climate-smart Agriculture (GACSA), June 2016, Rome, Italy

Platform Highlights:

- Side-event at the COP22, Marrakesh, Morocco
- Study on climate-resilient agriculture finance instruments will be published in 2017



The Platform is equally engaged in regional activities on financing climate-resilient agriculture. Recent regional developments include the establishment of the Africa Adaptation Initiative (AAI) of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the Initiative for Adaptation of African Agriculture to Climate Change (AAA) by Morocco. Following the Paris Agreement and the importance of the National Determined Contributions (NDCs), the NDC Partnership was launched in Marrakesh at COP 22.

In focusing on finance for the achievement of the NDCs through sustainable agriculture, the Platform and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development (MFAID) France organised a side event at FCCC COP 22 in Marrakesh in November 2016 – “Nationally Determined Contributions and Agriculture: the challenge of effective international support” (MFAID-France, ECOWAS, FAO, EC, IFAD). MFAID-France provided a supplementary budget for the work stream climate resilient agriculture in 2016. The Platform prepared for an expert consultation in Paris which will be organised in June 2017.

Conceptional considerations in the work stream climate resilient agriculture included:

- Programmatic approaches for long-term impact as opposed to short-term project approaches;
- Integrating NDCs and their climate finance into national sectoral strategies and programmes of developing countries, e.g. CAAPD/National Agriculture Investment Plans (NAIPS);
- New approaches by international donor/IFI support mechanisms to contribute to climate-relevant transformational change through agriculture and rural development – what lessons of the past (Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness etc.) need to be considered?
- Blending finance for climate adaptation and mitigation from all sources in programmatic approaches in agriculture and rural development – efforts to support national and regional coordination in developing countries by the international (donor) community;
- Governance, decentralisation and coordination – what are the instruments and capacities needed to absorb climate finance into agricultural development and rural transformation?

Land Governance

The Global Working Group on Land was led by USAID and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development France (MFAID-France)

Implementing the Voluntary Guidelines (VGGT) is a long-term goal and we, members of the Global Donor Working Group on Land, are all playing an absolutely necessary part in this goal. Together with other stakeholders we have helped to turn the Voluntary Guidelines into a global public good.

Andrew Hilton,
Senior Land Tenure Officer, FAO

The Global Donor Working Group on Land (GDWGL) had an intense year in 2016, particularly taking stock of how donor-supported initiatives worldwide were implementing the Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT), and discussing with different stakeholders how to assess impact of land governance projects.

Early in the year the GDWGL engaged in continuous communication with the Secretariat of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to exchange ideas on how to monitor the impact of the VGGTs, which completed four years since endorsement. At the CFS43 plenary session on this topic, the GDWGL was com-

mended several times by country delegates as an effective space for donor harmonisation and debate on land issues.

To advocate an effective monitoring of the VGGTs, the GDWGL submitted joint inputs to the CFS-led VGGT stocktaking exercise in April, and prepared a policy brief on “Donor Land Group’s Position on Taking Stock of VGGT Implementation” widely shared through the Platform communication channels and in external websites.

Despite the good coordination at the global level, CFS members recognised that a lot still needs to be done at the national and local level. There is a particular need to standardise the quantitative indicators used across countries to measure the results, while also addressing the resource and capacity gaps for countries to do so, and to mainstream the VGGTs in national policies, laws and systems.

Evaluating the impact of land governance initiatives, beyond the specific application of the VGGTs, is a topic of constant interest for the donor community. In October 2016, the GDWGL used the attention given to VGGTs monitoring to also organise a side event during the CFS43 to discuss with the diverse audience of this meeting in Rome the need and challenges to harmonise data for impact evaluations. Examples from India, Ukraine and Tanzania underscored the importance of monitoring key performance indicators, routinely collecting data, adopting low cost and feasible data collection methodologies, and ensuring common understanding and buy-in to the M&E framework by governments.

Two physical meetings of the GDWGL (as usual, back-to-back to the World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty and back-to-back to the CFS) remained



as the key occasion for members to exchange views on how the Group has been performing as a collective voice in strategic land policy issues, and to define future actions. In the physical meetings in 2016, the GDWGL was updated on the SDG land indicator, which it strongly advocated in 2015. UN-Habitat and the World Bank, the custodian agencies for this indicator in the official discussions about SDG indicators, are leading the preparation of metadata and methodology for countries to report on the land indicator, and more work is expected for 2017.

As part of its work plan 2016, the GDWGL started to reach out to the country level (pilots in Senegal, Myanmar and Colombia) to identify and support similar donor networks in the countries. The Group has agreed to start organising country-focused webinars to raise awareness to land tenure issues and train Embassy and Mission staff on the VGGTs. Through such online media and in meetings, the GDWGL tries to also keep members up-to-date on new emerging topics in land governance.

Platform Highlights:

- Panel session at the World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty presenting outcomes of the four studies commissioned by the GDWGL
- Cooperation with CFS on monitoring the impact of the VGGT
- New Land Governance Programme Map
- the Norwegian Mapping Authority (Kartverket) officially joined the GDWGL on behalf of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Webinar on Land rights and Investment Treaties
- Co-hosting a side event at the Open Government Partnership Summit on Improving openness and transparency in land based investments

Gender and Youth

The work stream was led by FAO

The women's agenda is the agenda of half the population in all countries, and has to be an integral part of everything we do to score high on any Sustainable Development Goals.

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Women

We have to radically change the way all actors have responded to the Youth bulge and their entering into the job market (...) we have to start thinking laterally about how actions in one area can have simultaneous benefits in others."

Estherine Lisinge-Fotabong,
NEPAD

It is recognised that women make a crucial contribution to the agricultural sector and to food and nutrition security and that agriculture is central to the livelihoods of rural women. As cultivators of food both commercially and for subsistence, women dominate agricultural production in many parts of the world.

Despite this, women remain disadvantaged stakeholders in agriculture and rural development because of existing gender gaps in their access and ownership of land (and the sizes of land they command), their access to modern agricultural inputs, financial and extension services, education, technologies and other important inputs for their livelihoods. In turn, this results in the underperformance of agriculture in many countries, and women remain more vulnerable to extreme poverty. The gap also hinders overarching development goals because evidence indicates that women's income is more likely to be spent on food and children's needs.

In 2016, the Platform's Gender Group identified a number of thematic areas of the Platform's work in which to negotiate stronger attention to gender, in line with recommendations from the Platform's board. The most fruitful collaboration so far is between gender and inclusive agribusiness thematic areas. In response to the recommendation that donors need to address knowledge gaps on how agribusiness can contribute to SDGs achievement (as presented in the "Agribusiness – State of Play" paper written by consultant Jim Woodhill), several members from both work streams contributed to the preparation of the terms of reference for an analysis of the gender responsiveness of agribusiness and value chain projects. The consultant in charge, Clare Bishop-Sambrook, will complete the work in spring 2017.

In 2016, the membership also demonstrated a strong interest in bringing better attention to the topic of rural youth in order to understand the challenges and opportunities brought about by Africa's demographics – Africa has the fastest growing and the most youthful population in the world and by



2040, it will have the largest workforce in the world. Moreover, the trends in rural-urban linkages around much of the world show that youth are leaving rural areas for the cities in search of better opportunities.

The looming questions of how to create jobs in agriculture and make agriculture attractive to young people were thus tackled in an online discussion, where the Platform invited three young speakers to discuss about “Youth and agriculture, what should donors know?”. The real life experiences they conveyed to the donors highlighted that they need support to enhance their entrepreneurship skills, gain access to credit with fair conditions, have improved access to farming innovations and assets such as land, have enhanced decision making opportunities and have enhanced strategic networking opportunities among others.



International Highlights

Gender and Youth:

- African Union’s theme 2016 “The year of human rights, with a particular focus on the rights of women”
- G7 International Forum for Empowering Women and Youth in Agriculture and Food Systems
- 2nd Africa Rural Development Forum “Transforming Africa’s Rural Area through Skills Development, Job Creation and Youth Economic Empowerment”

Platform Highlight Gender and Youth:

- Online discussion – Youth and Agribusiness: What should donors know?

Nutrition

The work stream was led by Lynn Brown

“Over the past decade, momentum around nutrition has been steadily building, with governments and stakeholders around the world acknowledging nutrition as a key component of development.”

Global Nutrition Report 2016

Agriculture has a fundamental role in delivering nutrition. Agriculture is responsible for producing all the raw materials either for direct consumption or for the food industry. The relative mix of agricultural research and production determines relative prices of different foods and whether a healthy diversified diet is available and accessible to all. Today the world produces more than enough staple grains to feed everyone more than adequately but this is not true for fruits and vegetables. The process of rural transformation, reinforced by migration and urbanisation, changes diets and tastes and ultimately causes adjustments in value chains and agriculture/food related industries. Small holder farmers need to adapt to the new demand and learn how to produce the right foods safely and sustainably. As more and

more consumers are living in urban areas, their diets and food demands are evolving. Understanding the food consumption patterns, combining them with local sustainable food production and partnering with public health will be key to developing nutritious and sustainable diets.

In the first meeting after the agreement on the SDGs, the agricultural ministers of the G20 agreed to promote food security, nutrition and sustainable agricultural growth and rural development. The G20 decisions re-enforced the outcomes from the GFFA meeting, where the participating ministers focused on ensuring food security for rural areas and urban cities, while strengthening sustainable agricultural production and supporting inclusive supply and value chains.

The Global Panel for Agriculture, Food Systems and Nutrition and the AU's Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA) held a High-Level Roundtable, with input from the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, at the CAADP Partners Meeting in Accra, Ghana. Hosted by the former President of Ghana John Kufuor, with Sierra Leonean Minister of Agriculture Monty Jones, the roundtable addressed aflatoxin food safety challenges in Africa which threaten the achievement of the Malabo Declaration with a goal of inspiring champions on the continent to move the agenda forward. The Global Panel launched the policy brief "Assuring Safe Food Systems: Policy Options for a Healthier Food Supply" at the roundtable, which reviews food safety issues that are critical to poor and vulnerable populations in low- and middle-income countries, including aflatoxins.



The Platform nutrition workstream hosted a virtual briefing to examine the state of the art in nutrition-sensitive agriculture (NSA) both from a conceptual point of view and regarding its translation into practice. During the well-attended briefing, members heard from FAO, HarvestPlus, the Spring Project/USAID, and Action Against Hunger, and discussed ways to structure and synthesise previous experiences in nutrition-sensitive agriculture in order to scale up effective nutrition-sensitive interventions.

Perhaps one of the most direct agriculture – nutrition linkages is the breeding of nutrition enhanced crops, led by HarvestPlus, which has often been discussed in the workstream. We look ahead to another exciting year as the linkages of nutrition and agriculture evolve into a focus on food systems.

International Highlight:

- G20 agricultural ministers agreed on G20 Food security and nutrition framework and G20 Action Plan on food security and sustainable food systems

Platform Highlights:

- High-level meeting on aflatoxins at the 12th Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program Partnership Platform.
- Present at the Committee on World Food Security 43
- Webinar on nutrition-sensitive agriculture



Inclusive Agribusiness and Trade

The work stream was led by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands

A strong case has been made by this community of donors that one very important road towards safe and secure nutritious food supplies is to increase trade amongst ourselves

Martha Byanyima, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)

The year 2016 started big on inclusive market-oriented rural development. The Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the Platform debated **Agricultural Trade and Rural Development – Duet or solo Playing?** The assembly was framed around the debate of policy coherence between strategic orientations of agricultural production and trade, as well as achieving a better balance between national development priorities and the collective livelihoods in rural areas. Participants were asked to consider opportunities in a context of rapid urbanisation and migration, and how to respond to the call for poverty reduction and the empowerment of women through economic growth. No trade and market access is possible without trade facilitation and the application of standards. These two elements were central to the discussion

on how to enhance inclusive agribusiness and market access for farming communities. Trade agreements under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and regional agreements like the European Partnership Agreements with ACP-countries were discussed operationally in the context of the Enhanced Integrated Frameworks (EIF). The primary focus was to bring the two communities of agriculture & rural development (ARD) and trade closer to jointly design policies and strategies.

After the AGA debates on trade and market access, the Platform continued the deliberations by commissioning the study “Aligning ARD and trade policies to improve sustainable development impact”. The first draft compared notes on ARD and trade policies identifying synergies and trade-offs between issues like food self-sufficiency, the free trade agenda, phyto-sanitary standards and small-scale farmers compliance, regional integration of basic food products and their value-chain versus global markets and cash crop production. The next steps for tackling this important, but controversial debate are set for 2017.

On inclusive agribusiness a major report engaged various members in constructive discussions through conference calls, interviews and a webinar between January and September. “Inclusive Agribusiness – The state of play”, written by consultant Jim Woodhill, scoped donors and partners’ initiatives in this area and provided recommendations for future support by donors, particularly in addressing knowledge gaps. The main argument was that much is being done on inclusive agribusiness, but the information is not well synthesised and catalysed to scale up initiatives and to demonstrate how these efforts are contributing to the important goals of ending hunger, inclusive economic growth, job creation etc.

**Platform Highlights Trade:**

- Annual General Assembly on coherence between trade and agricultural policy
- Study aligning ARD and trade policies
- Physical meeting of the working group on trade in Rome, Italy

After such discussions, Platform members supported the co-organisation of a workshop to explore in more detail how to address the knowledge (and synthesis narrative) gaps in inclusive agribusiness. The workshop was planned for early 2017, with the expectation to also allow for peer-knowledge sharing between officers from donor organisations working with private sector-related topics, but who are often dispersed through different departments in their agencies (agriculture, private sector engagement, trade etc).



Knowledge Exchange and Networking

The Platform is continuously producing knowledge pieces. In 2016 we published **two studies**: one on the “Implications of Agenda 2030 on rural development” and one analysing the “Inclusive Agribusiness – The state of play”. The studies were based on discussions that have taken place between the members of the Platform and looked into specific issues and practices that will support the donors’ efforts to implement agriculture and rural development related SDGs. Furthermore, the secretariat drafted a **Background paper** on the new momentum for rural transforma-

tion and the future of donor programmes in rural development. The Platform also facilitated the analysis of future financing priorities and climate finance available for agriculture and rural development programmes. We shared our success stories through the Platform’s newsletter – the eUpdate – that goes out to more than 500 subscribers. With the six newsletters in 2016 we shared different information and knowledge pieces that reflected on issues of agriculture and rural development.

Annual Report The Platform’s Annual report 2015 reflected on the work and achievements of the Platform during an important year of change and transition. It captured the most important knowledge exchange opportunities and networking activities amongst members and partners.

Box 5:

Website and Social Media Highlights over 2016

Web articles created	82
Virtual Briefings	8
Calendar entries	117
Site visits	13 319
Page views	39 777
Average visit duration	2:50 mins
eUpdate issues	6
Twitter followers	2 982
Tweets	8 889

Online Communication Tools

Website In 2016, we started the process of re-designing the Platform's website in order to better communicate the products of the Platform. The objective was to present the information and knowledge in a more accessible way for the members and partners, make it user friendly and more interactive and use the latest technology. We posted 82 webstories and eight virtual briefings. The site was visited more than 13 thousand times, with an average duration of 2:50 minutes per visit.

Online Depositories The Platform is hosting one global donor database of land governance projects. The Global Donor Working Group on Land re-designed the map to display the gathered information in a more responsive way. The database offers information on the location, duration and scope of projects funded and implemented by the members of the group. The map was also integrated to the Land Portal, increasing the visibility and transparency of donor-funded land projects. The gender subpage is also housing a library for research and knowledge pieces on cross cutting issues related to gender, agriculture and rural development.

Twitter The secretariat team continued to connect and engage with members and partners through Twitter. The team has actively posted from events, re-tweeted messages and connected back to the website. The Platform's Twitter account has close to 3000 subscribers and posted more than 2200 new tweets.

Virtual Briefings The secretariat's team is tracking the international agriculture and rural development discussions and is reporting regularly on new developments. Part of the reporting is the closer exchange with key persons and the focused presentation of important issues and initiatives. In 2016, we focused our efforts on facilitating virtual briefings that offer an insight into concrete issues that occupy the members. The secretariat's team organised briefings on youth employment, land policy and nutrition-sensitive agriculture programming. The eight virtual briefings gathered a live audience of more than 150 members, partners and other interested actors and were watched by thousands of people online.



Looking Ahead

With the growing challenge for the donor agencies and IFIs to support the achievement of the SDGs in 2030 under the new development effectiveness agenda, the Platform continues to advocate for an open dialogue amongst the membership and partnership and with like-minded constituencies over strategic issues in agriculture and rural development. While the world at large is facing the overwhelming complexity and universality of Agenda 2030, we have set ourselves priorities for 2017 such as development finance modalities and financial flows, economic growth and job creation, inclusive agribusiness, policy coherence in agriculture and trade, responsible governance of land tenure, climate resilient agriculture finance, nutrition-sensitive agriculture and gender mainstreaming to guide the initiatives of the Platform membership.

The SDGs reflect on the world as a whole and it is our aim to reduce the complexity of the SDGs by agreeing on appropriate modes of implementation. Therefore, the complexity of Agenda 2030 should not limit our activities but rather focus them. In 2016, we dedicated our efforts to understand better the nexus between rural livelihoods and poverty reduction, economic growth and agribusiness as well as climate resilience and responsible land governance. These substantive priorities continue to be analysed in the light of the new development opportunities such as trade, finance beyond ODA and the new political commitments of the international community and national governments in developing countries. In particular, the Platform will more pro-actively engage in the Development Partners Coordination Group (DPCG) in support of the Comprehensive Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

The Platform membership is very aware of the high competition between development sectors for ODA and other development investments due to migration, conflict and displacement as well as post-conflict reconstruction efforts. However, sustainable food and nutrition systems remain the prerequisites for sustainable development, reduction of economic and social inequalities and inclusive economic growth. The Platform needs to use 2017 to advocate the need to increase targeted investments and reach out to decision makers in the organisations of its membership to discuss and apply new forms of finance and new ways of supporting rural transformation in legal, strategic and political as well as operational terms.

Overall, capital for investment into rural development is available worldwide and the new structure of development finance offers the international community new opportunities to go beyond ODA and establish new cooperation to leverage alternative financial resources.

Guided by the interest of the membership, the Platform will continue to establish closer connections with partners and private sector in order to scale up the impacts of the on-going efforts to achieve the SDGs. The Platform's focus will remain the enhancement of donor and IFI programmes in terms of development effectiveness in agriculture and rural development – we strive to support a more coherent and multi-layered approach towards agriculture and rural development in 2017 in the spirit of Agenda 2030.

Costs and Financial Contributions for Platform Activities in 2016

At the Platform Board meeting held in Geneva in January 2016, the Board endorsed the 2016 Platform work plan and the corresponding indicative budget which was based on signed-and forecast contributions and roll-over budget from the previous year. While the various work groups had in 2016 each developed individual work plans, this was within the scope and under the umbrella of the overall 2016 Platform work plan and budget.

The Platform 2016 to 2020 Strategic Plan, which is largely based on the results of an extensive external evaluation of the Platform which was conducted from August 2014 to May 2015, focuses amongst others not only on the vision and mission of the Platform for the years to come but also spells out its funding mechanisms. While the minimum annual membership fee ensuring a seat on the Board continues to be EUR 50.000, members are encouraged to provide supplemental- and in-kind contributions to enhance the yearly core-funding and thus to broaden the spectrum of possible actions under the overall and/or work group specific work plans. The administrative management of the Platform trust fund continues to be managed by GIZ who has received an extension from the BMZ to fulfil this role under the current commission until including 2018.

Contributions 2016

Eleven Board members had a signed contribution agreement for member year 2016. These include the African Development Bank (EUR 50.000), Australia-Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (EUR 50.000), Department for International Development (DFID, GBP 55.000), European Commission (EUR 404.704), Finland-Ministry of Foreign Affairs (EUR 50.000), France-Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development (EUR 50.000 core-funding and addi-

tionally EUR 30.000 supplementary funding towards the climate work group), German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ, EUR 444.586), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD, EUR 50.000), Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (EUR 50.000), Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC, EUR 50.000), and the United States Agency for international Development (USAID, EUR 50.000).

To enhance Platform budget security and planning and to minimize administrative procedures, members continue to be encouraged to enter into multi-annual agreements. At the end of 2016, seven Platform members held contribution agreements for the purpose of the Platform which go beyond 2016, these are: AfDB (until 2018), Australia-DFAT (until 2017), DFID (until 2018), Finland-MFA (until 2017), BMZ (commission extended to GIZ until 2018), NL-MFA (until 2018) and SDC (until 2020). This nearly doubles the number of signed multi-annual agreements as compared with the year-end review 2015.

Funds received from member contributions in the trust fund in 2016 totalled EUR 1.025.674,91. This included some EUR 51.117,78 from Canada-DFAT retroactively for member year 2015. It needs to be noted that funds received in a given year do not necessarily correspond to the costs incurred in the same financial year as contributions may arrive with delay at times and/or be rendered in advance.

Indicative Budget and Costs 2016

Actual costs in 2016 totalled EUR 1.239.243,61 (please refer to the following table, audited figures). In terms of percent, this sum represents 73,3% of the total approved 2016 indicative budget which allotted for up to EUR 1.690.485 in terms of plan costs. Member con-

tributions ensured the financing of a number of fruitful measures carried within the realm of the work plan in 2016 as has been elaborated on throughout this annual report. Besides financing the overall operations of the secretariat including staff- and general governance costs, consultancy assignments were engaged to implement such measures as the complete re-designing of the Platform website, various engagements ensuring professional expertise and logistics-man-

agement at the Annual General Assembly held in Geneva and several engagements to support the programmatic work of the Platform amongst others.

The external audit of the 2016 Platform costs and contributions has been conducted in April 2017. The official audit report and financial statement will be forwarded to Board members in the course of May/June 2017.

Table 1: Costs and Endorsed Activities 2016

Activity related budget items	Euro
Website, special event website, web-host, IT support	89.666,59
Annual General Assembly	33.092,08
Events	9.215,37
Consultants	193.867,31
Publications	21.375,00
Non-staff travels	28.670,94
Staff travels	52.974,30
Miscellaneous items	0,00
Sub-total, Activity related budget items (I)	428.861,59
Staff- and management related budget items	Euro
Secretariat coordinator (01/2016, 07–12/2016)	
ARD advisor -1	
ARD advisor -2 (01–09/2016 100%, 10–12/2016 80%)	
Junior ARD advisor -1	
Junior ARD advisor -2	
Contracts- and finance manager	
Office manager (01–09/2016 70%, 10–12/2016 100%)	
Administrative officer 60% (01–08/2016 60%, 09–12/2016 50%)	
sub-total staff	575.239,39
Office rent and communication infrastructure, office materials	56.843,26
General admin and management	22.483,27
Independent external audit	13.248,25
Sub-total, Staff- and management related budget items (II)	667.814,17
Total costs and outputs (I+II)	1.096.675,76
GIZ Indirect Support Costs (ISC)	142.567,85
Total costs 2016	1.239.243,61

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