

Minutes of the Meeting

Steinfurth Conclave on Agriculture Advisory Services

Steinfurth, Germany on 23/24 July 2009

In a brief meeting at GTZ Headquarters in Eschborn on May 19, 2009, representatives of GTZ, the World Bank, IFPRI, AGRIDEA, and SDC discussed interest in working together more closely in support of AFAAS and FARA in Africa. The discussion also focused on developing a proposal to establish a global forum for agricultural advisory services – something more formal and with more institutional capacity than has previously existed. Such a forum would build upon and benefit from, but would go beyond, the very useful informal network function that has been available through the Neuchatel Initiative for over a decade now. It was agreed to meet again with a somewhat larger group of interested partners further to develop practical proposals in the areas discussed – and to do so prior to the upcoming meetings of the Neuchatel Initiative so that any proposals might be presented and discussed with the participants there.

In a follow-up to the Eschborn meeting, GTZ organized and hosted a somewhat larger meeting on July 23-24 in Steinfurth, Germany. Mr. Volker Hoffman (Professor of Agricultural Extension at the University of Hohenheim) served as a facilitator for the meeting. Participants in this second meeting included: Helmut Albert (WB), Max Baumann (GTZ/Reporter), Magdalena Blum (FAO), Sanne Chipeta (DAAS), Ian Christoplos (Glemminge Development Research), Pierre-André Cordey (SDC), Kristin Davis (IFPRI), Christian Henckes (GTZ), Silim Nahdy (AFAAS/NAADS), David Nielson (WB), Daniel Roduner (AGRIDEA), Adekunle Wale (FARA). Participating from Washington, D.C. via phone link was Mark Holderness (GFAR).

Objectives of the meeting

1. To discuss support for the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
2. To discuss options for a renewed international effort to promote agricultural extension, education and innovation systems
3. To prepare an input for the annual meeting of the Neuchâtel Initiative

Support for the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services

The African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) is a new and potentially important element of the institutional landscape for African agriculture. As such, it could serve as an important actor in the successful implementation of CAADP more particularly CAADP Pillar 4. AFAAS has established and launched itself on a shoe-string budget – without external assistance. Additional funding to make AFAAS fully operational has been secured (although not yet accessed) – it will be channeled through FARA Joint Donor Trust

Fund. It is anticipated that the issues which have caused delays in channeling this funding for AFAAS through FARA will be resolved within a few weeks time. But even when this initial funding arrives, it will fall well short of covering the full operational cost of AFAAS for the first five years.

A proposal for further funding for AFAAS (under the title Market Oriented Agricultural Advisory Services – MOAAS) was elaborated in connection with the NI meeting in Kampala in November 2008. MOAAS is elaborated in a (stand-alone) project format and encompasses a substantial subset of the proposed overall budget for AFAAS. To date, no funding has been committed against the MOAAS project proposal.

Even taken together, the funding scheduled to flow to AFAAS through FARA plus the MOAAS proposal would not fully finance the proposed overall budget for AFAAS. Given the importance of its intended role, participants at Steinfurth agreed on the importance of attempting to secure full funding for the proposed overall budget for AFAAS. Further, the Steinfurth participants agreed to work together toward this end. It was also agreed that the search for funding for AFAAS would be facilitated by modifications in the documentation and presentation of AFAAS's plans. The main modifications needed would be: (1) consolidate AFAAS plans (including those to be financed through MOAAS, those to be financed with funds from EC through FARA MDTF, and others) into a single comprehensive five year Strategic and Operational Plan; (2) expand and further elaborate (in consultation with FARA and NEPAD) on the services that AFAAS would provide to CAADP roundtable and compact processes at country and regional levels (and cost it adequately – the current budget as presented in the MOAAS proposal severely underfunds this).ⁱ

It was agreed that consultants would be contracted to work with AFAAS in the elaboration of the documentation along the lines suggested above. The World Bank will finance the work of the consultants. Draft documents will be discussed with FARA (and NEPAD) and then with an initial group of development partners (including GTZ, SDC, and the WB). First drafts of the comprehensive strategic and operational plans would be circulated for comment and discussion at the NI meetings in September. Steinfurth participants would also discuss a strategy for seeking additional funding needed for AFAAS at that time.

[A Global Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services preliminary name to be revised after NI meeting](#)

For a number of years, participants in the Neuchatel Initiative (NI) have discussed the need for a global forum for agricultural advisory services – something with more institutional capacity than NI itself has established so far. Such a forum would build upon and benefit from, but would go beyond, the very useful informal network function that has existed through NI for over a decade now. NI has developed proposals for a very modest version of such an initiative – and these have been ostensibly endorsed at NI meetings. Little progress has been made toward implementing these proposals – in large part due to lack of funding, but also in part due to lack of consensus about the proposal,

Participants at Steinfurth agreed that the need for such a global forum remains, and that the very modest approach proposed earlier by NI would not constitute a sufficient critical mass to achieve these aims. Further, prospects for the successful creation of such a forum are more favorable now than in the past – there are indications that several institutions are interested to provide initial funding; the evolution of the institutional landscape (FAO, CGIAR, GFAR, etc.) is creating institutional space for such a forum; there is greater recognition of the institutional vacuum for networking and capacity development in agricultural advisory services, a niche that the proposed global forum could fill; there are more resources for agricultural development and there will be greater need for professional expertise to be mobilized in support of new proposals for investment in advisory services and related programs; new mechanisms for support to agricultural programs are being established, etc..

Participants in Steinfurth agreed to work together in the formulation of a new proposal for the establishment of an institutional structure to meet the agreed need. Among the issues discussed in this regard were the following (presented with initial agreements on each):

- ❖ mandate of the proposed institution – a written proposal will be prepared in this regard building from the proposals recently discussed through NI;
- ❖ institutional options for the establishment of such a global forum (e.g., as a new office within CGIAR, or within FAO, or within GFAR, or as a new and separate institution with strong links to GFAR, and others) – after much deliberation about the options (including detailed discussion with GFAR), it was agreed to initiate actions toward the establishment of a new Global Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (GFAAS), and also to pursue further discussion with GFAR about possible merger of the proposed GFAAS with GFAR, or, short of merger to establish GFAAS with explicit partnership and collaboration with GFAR;
- ❖ possible sources of funding for an initial start-up phase and for the longer term core support – GTZ and SDC agreed to provide initial start-up funding and facilities for the proposed GFAAS;
- ❖ physical location of the proposed global forum – a new office for GFAAS will be established in Berlin in the interim.

A team of consultants (initially Ian Christoplos and Sanne Chipeta) will work closely with Steinfurth participants in drafting a complete proposal for the inception phase and the longer term strategic and operational plans for GFAAS. Their work will be financed by GTZ and SDC. They will consult closely in coming weeks with GFAR to develop a more considered set of options about the relationship (or merger) between the proposed GFAAS and GFAR. Prior to the NI meetings in September, the consultants will circulate a first draft of their findings (including institutional options) and of a proposal for the establishment of GFAAS to Steinfurth participants. Steinfurth participants will meet just prior to the NI meetings to discuss the draft proposal and to prepare for its wider discussion with participants in the NI meetings. Mark Holderness invited the presentation of a revised proposal for discussion at the GCARD meetings in March.

The group decided to write a proposal for GFAAS and agreed on the following agenda:

Next Steps:

1. Max Baumann to circulate for draft minutes of the meeting for comment by end of July 2009
2. Revised minutes (reflecting comments and suggestions from participants) completed and circulated to participants by first week in August 2009.
3. Daniel Roduner forwards the minutes to the NI-mailing list
4. Negotiation of supports and commitments with donors (SDC, World Bank, BMGF, ...)
5. Outline a proposal of inception led by Ian Christoplos, supported by Sanne Chipeta and Max Baumann. Max Baumann will also coordinate the further communication. The first draft will be circulated to the Steinfurth task force (all participants of the Steinfurth meeting) until end of August.
6. SDC and GTZ will assure the funding for the elaboration of the draft proposal.

19.09.09:

7. The Steinfurth task force meets again on 19.09.09 in Assisi, Italy for final adjustments on GFAAS presentation to NI-affiliates

20.-22.09.09:

8. Presentation of AFAAS comprehensive strategic and operational plans
9. Presentation of the GFAAS proposal on NI-Annual Meeting in Assisi
10. Launch of inception phase of GFAAS

After Assisi:

11. Steinfurth participants work together to seek funding commitments from donors for AFAAS and for GFAAS
12. Rent Office and nominate staff for GFAAS
13. Develop work program for 2010 for GFAAS

GCARD-Conference Montpellier (28-31 March 2010)

14. GFAAS slot in main conference plus side event
15. Presentation of a paper on building a consensus around approaches to agriculture advisory services

Between September and March and beyond:

16. Institutional setup, working procedures and budget of GFAAS
17. Prepare all necessary steps for launching formally GFAAS in September 2010

September 2010:

18. Launching of GFAAS : First formal GFAAS meeting

ⁱ Among the guidelines suggested by the Steinfurth participants w/r to the reformulated strategic and operational plan for AFAAS were that, it should have the following characteristics:

- Include all activities planned for 5 years
- Include budget for all activities and operational costs
 - Salaries
 - Facilities
 - Variable costs
 - Fixed costs
 - Program costs
- Include financing plan
 - All sources of funding
- Include indications of managerial and administrative procedures
 - Financial management procedures and capacities
 - Procurement guidelines
 - HR policies and procedures
 - Staffing plan
- Institutional structure
- Role within global structures
 - Link to NI, GFAR
 - Link to CGIAR
 - Link to ...
- Linkage to FARA and CAADP
 - Current arrangements
 - Plan to gain and use their endorsement to
 - Raise profile in Africa
 - Solidify credibility w/in African institutional landscape
 - As basis for access to financial support earmarked for implementation of CAADP
- Further develop (in consultation with FARA) the services that can be offered by AFAAS to CAADP roundtable and compact processes at country and regional levels and cost it adequately (current budget severely underfunds this) – assistance to:
 - strategic planning,
 - policy reform
 - institutional reform
 - program design
 -