

FTA ISC MEETING #6
SPECIAL ROUND TABLE WORKSHOP WITH FTA FP LEADERS
28 JUNE 2017
FAO HQ, Rome (Cuba Room)

PAPER 0

REV 4

WORKSHOP items for discussion and provisional agenda

There are a few strategic issues, key for the future of FTA, which FTA's ISC would like to discuss with FTA senior management (Director and FP Leaders) during part of its next face to face ISC meeting. The objective is to engage in a round-table discussion, ISC members- FTA senior management, based upon documents prepared in advance, in order to better inform the decisions ISC needs to make on these issues and to facilitate a collective understanding of possible options. Each of the following four issues would thus be discussed in an inclusive round-table manner before ISC makes a decision.

1. What programmatic **priority setting mechanism** does FTA need for allocating W1+2 resources in a transparent and effective manner (i) at CRP level among FPs and (ii) within FPs?
 - a. A common understanding of the roles of W1-2 funds in FTA would be a strong asset for the programme. It would allow FTA to be clear and have a shared understanding about what additional work would be put in motion with an increased W1-2 allocation, and by extension, what work would be postponed with a decrease in W1-2.
 - b. Such a priority-setting mechanism has been requested by ISPC, which considers that the approved proposal for phase 2 is too driven by bilateral resources, as well as by ISC which considers that programmatic priority-setting is a must for a large programme to be strategic and effective.
 - c. An imbalance between funds allocated to CG and non-CG partners is currently manifest, with 2 centres receiving 80% of W1-2 and non-CG partners receiving very small percentages of these funds. A transparent allocation of funds to FP based upon FTA's research for development priorities and upon the performance of each FP would help remedy the situation. ISC requested FTA's Director to design such an allocation of fund process, entailing a clear priority-setting mechanism at its November 2016 meeting.
2. ISC approved last year a general **approach for vetting bilateral projects into FTA**. How is it working, does it need improvements to ensure alignment of the vetting process with the priority setting mechanism referred to above?
3. How can FTA **assess the performance of each FP** in a transparent and equitable manner? The process used in 2016 was a transitional process and has been criticised by two key partners as not sufficiently transparent. FTA needs such a process, which should reflect a common understanding of expectations within the CRP. If possible, progress on a set of FTA indicators that are aligned with FTA's research for

development priorities and that will also be used for the POWB and in FTA's Annual monitoring reports to the SMO.

4. A while ago ISC was going to discuss the **rules of engagement and ways of selecting FP leaders and cross-cutting theme (CCT) leaders** (and related criteria). Budget issues and the complex proposal submission process took precedence. The time has now come to discuss such rules to clarify them in view of the evolving demands on FP leaders and CCT leads.

The round-table discussions would be focused on options for resolving these issues. The expected outputs would be:

- Discussion of options (all workshop participants) and decision (ISC) on a mechanism for W1+2 allocations and FTA project vetting process in 2018 and beyond that addresses points 1, 2 and 3 above. Approval by ISC of a priority setting mechanism and mechanism to assess FP performance resulting in W1-2 allocations that are transparent and effective (i) across FPs, (ii) within FPs and (iii) across main partners. This mechanism would also clarify how bilateral funds are aligned with FTA's priorities.
- Agreement (ISC) on process, including ISC's contributions and approval, to prepare FTA 2018 POWB, given the implications of the above, and consideration of the CGIAR calendar.
- Decision (ISC) on engagement rules for (i) FP leaders, (ii) CoAs leads, and (iii) leaders of Cross cutting themes. This will be critical for future nominations.

To prepare for these round-table discussions, the ISC request the Director to prepare, with the FP leaders and the leader of the CCT on monitoring evaluation learning and impact assessment -who is also invited to participate to the round tables given the nature of the issues and his very relevant expertise-, and with support of the FTA scientists, four background documents. Each should present options to respond to and pro-actively address the 4 key issues above. Background documents for issues one and three should additionally include an analysis of the potential benefits (e.g., for fund raising, for partnerships) and potential risks (e.g., political conflicts, increasing bureaucracy in CGIAR) of the options discussed.

Provisional timetable for the round table workshop

Time set aside for these round-table discussions: one full day on 28 June. ISC decisions on the round-table items will take place after the round-table discussions, on Thursday 29 June morning.

Item	Background document	Expected Outcomes
SPECIAL ROUND TABLE WORKSHOP WEDNESDAY 27 JUNE 8:30 – 12:30		
0. Agenda approval (5')	Workshop draft agenda – this doc	Adoption of the agenda
1. Priority setting mechanism (2h30)	Workshop Paper 1 (W1+2 priority setting)	Discussion on options
2. FTA project vetting mechanism (1h00)	Workshop Paper 2 (FTA project mapping mechanism)	Discussion on options
14:00 – 18:30		
3. Performance assessment in FTA (1h45)	Workshop Paper 3 (performance assessment)	Discussion on options
4. Rules of engagements and ToRs of FP leaders and Cluster leaders (1h45)	Workshop Paper 4a (Cover note) Workshop Paper 4b (Flagship Leaders ToRs and RoE) Workshop Paper 4c (CCT Leaders ToRs and RoE)	Discussion on options
6. Any other business (15')		
7. Wrap up and conclusions (15')		