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**MINUTES OF THE 3rd CONTINENTAL STEERING SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING TO APPROVE WORKPLANS
AND BUDGETS FOR EOA INITIATIVE UNDER SDC AND SSNC SUPPORT FOR THE YEAR 2016**

HELD ON 8th DECEMBER 2015 AT MIDRAND CONFERENCE CENTRE IN JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA



Prepared by the EOA Interim Secretariat

Nairobi, Kenya

Sub-Committee Members Present

1. Dr. Janet Edeme – African Union Commission (Chairing)
2. Dr. Manuel Flury – Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
3. Zachary Makanya – PELUM Kenya
4. Dr. David Amudavi – Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT)
5. Prof. Simplice Davo Vodouhe - OPEBAB

Apologies

6. Dr. Olugbenga AdeOluwa – Association of Organic Agriculture Practitioners of Nigeria (NOAN).
7. Jonathan Ocran- African Union Commission
8. Maryleen Micheni- PELUM Kenya - Secrétariat support

In attendance - to provide Secretariat Support

9. Venancia Wambua – Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT)- taking minutes

Agenda

1. Opening/ Welcome Remarks by the Chairperson
2. Consideration and Adoption of the Agenda
3. Review of sub-committee previous minutes for meeting held in Arusha, Tanzania
4. Reports on progress from Coordinating Organizations (BvAT & PELUM Kenya)
5. Presentation and Approval of Consolidated Work plans and Budgets for 2016 (SSNC&SDC) by Coordinating Organizations (BvAT & PELUM Kenya)
6. Presentation, Review and Approval of the Comprehensive Mid-term Review for EOA Initiative
7. Any Other Business
8. Date and Venue of the Next Meeting
9. Closing

1. OPENING AND WELCOME REMARKS BY THE CHAIRPERSON

Dr. Janet Edeme the Chair of the committee welcomed all committee members to the meeting and expressed the unfortunate setback that Mr. Jonathan Ocran experienced at the Johannesburg Airport and was not cleared to enter the country due to lack of a readable AU diplomatic passport that could allow him to get into South Africa. She also remarked that it was unfortunate to miss other members like Dr. AdeOluwa who could not make it to the meeting because of not being able to apply for a South African visa, which required three weeks. She welcomed everyone and looked forward to the day's presentations and discussions.

2. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Janet stated that the day would roll out as per the agenda not unless members present had something else to add or amend before adopting the agenda. Review of previous meeting minutes was added as agenda number 3 and the mid-term review for EOA slotted as agenda item number 6.

The agenda was finally adopted by sub-Committee the members.

3. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES FOR THE MEETING HELD IN ARUSHA, TANZANIA

Review of Minute 3.1 Updates on SDC support as provided by BvAT

The Chair took members through the previous minutes and noted that Mali had not submitted its 215 work plan and budget. She requested for updates on the status of EOA in Mali.

It was reported that the West Africa Cluster steering committee planned to visit Mali early in 2016 to have a discussion with all partners and networks involved in EOA implementation and discuss ways to end leadership conflicts in Mali. The proposal is for West Africa Regional Steering Committee to hold a meeting and discuss those issues.

The Chair requested the West RSC to be given the mandate to fast track on the pending Mali issues and provide feedback on the legality and status issues as it was noted by Dr. Flury Manuel that it seemed it would be very difficult to ascertain the legality issues of the status of Mobiom and its capacity to lead.

Zachary noted that the National Platform Steering Committee (NSC) should be involved in the decision making of EOA leadership in Mali. Unfortunately, the current structure of EOA leadership in Mali is not recognized by the committee because the contracts signed are between Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT) and Mobiom as the CLO.

Simplice mentioned that initially the RSC was to have a meeting with EOA Mali leaders on 26th November 2015, but this was not possible and thus they would confirm about the status of the meeting.

David reported that the audit for BvAT and its projects by the Price Water House Coopers (PWC) had been finalized and presented to the Board of Trustees (BOT) of Biovision Africa Trust.

It was clarified that partner funds disbursement was on course in all partner countries apart from Mali partners due to the ongoing power leadership wrangles.

BIOFACH report was also prepared by David Amudavi and shared with Jonathan Ocran. Members were encouraged to attend the BIOFACH Trade Fair which was recommended to be an eye opener to global potential of organic agriculture. BIOFACH gives an opportunity for business linkages, meeting potential business people looking for products to supply and thus establishing contacts with potential suppliers. Like a case of NOGAMU's engagement with BIOFACH where they have had an opportunity to meet

international marketers and suppliers. The Chair requested the agenda for BIOFACH to be shared early in advance to AUC so that they could consider participation and support. (**Action:** CSC secretariat).

Members were also informed that the 10% overheads for CLOs and PIPs were implemented from 2015 Budgets onwards.

Review of minute 3.2: ***Updates by PELUM Kenya under SSNC support***

Zachary reported that Ms Karin Hook (SSNC) had sent her apologies through him and an official letter to the Chair of CSC explaining their plans on handling the various issues and setbacks faced by their partners under EOA. It was clarified that the current funding cycle ends in 2015 and 2016 would be a bridging year. Zachary reported that although the work plans for 2016 had been developed there was no certainty until approved by SIDA for 2016 implementation. He further clarified that in 2015 TOAM was not part of the SSNC implementation.

It was not clear whether the planned second audit by SSNC on TOAM accounts had taken pace and hence the members recommended a side meeting to be held with Jordan Gama of TOAM to provide the needed clarifications. The committee also desired to follow up on the status of TOAM & SSNC relationship so that a way forward could be sought.

Review on minute 3.3 ***Reactions to the presentations of the Reports on progress from Coordinating Organizations (BvAT & PELUM Kenya)***

David reported that Partner monitoring visits had been undertaken and he would brief the committee during his presentation on the relevant agenda item. Manuel clarified that Consolidated Partner Work plans were approved in November 2014 during the sub-committee meeting and not May 2015 as reported.

Zachary clarified that he had requested SSNC to send him what partners had submitted as work plans for 2016 and that's what he planned to present. During the sub-committee meeting held in November 2014 for review and approval of partner work plans and budgets, PELUM Kenya did not have much to present on behalf of partners funded by SSNC because the work plans were not submitted to PELUM as requested. This is because PELUM is not fully in charge of coordinating partner activities under SSNC's contribution an issue they feel needed to be sorted out.

Merging of activities for SSNC and SDC was noted to be a challenge currently given the different funding phases and contractual agreements with the donors. For instance, SSNC gives annual contractual agreements while SDC has a 5 year phase agreement. This needs to be harmonized to ease merging of work plans and budgets. Instances of delayed signing of agreements and release of funds by SSNC had created uncertainty in starting projects on time. The 2015 contracts were signed in June and funds released in July.

Thus the committee felt that SSNC needed to consider their funding period and disbursement schedule because these had a direct bearing on merging of EOA partner work plans and budgets.

However the committee advised that issue of double accounting should be avoided at all costs. Currently SSNC has been checking its partner budgets to avoid double accounting by requesting BvAT to share the partner work plans for their SDC funded projects.

The Chair reiterated the need to ensure there is no duplication of activities in the planning and use of funds allocated.

Manuel stated the need to have the characterization of the different contributions of funding partners joining EOA initiative developed and agreed upon.

The need to visit Sida for further EOA support was revisited with Zachary noting that Sida funds multi structures & government institutions unlike SSNC whose support is only channeled through civil society organizations.

David explained that the planned Stockholm visit to Sida was not successful perhaps due to inappropriate timing and Sida never confirmed the appointment.

Further clarification was sought by members on the representation of stakeholders on National Steering Committee and also generally on the work of National Platforms. David noted that National Platform structures and operations seem not to have been well understood. The structures are still young and support by CLOs and NSC to bring on board more and diverse stakeholders. It has not been reported or shown how strong farmer organizations have been engaged in these platforms. It was noted that the Kenya Farmers Federation in Kenya is yet to come on board in the Kenya National Platform. We need to be clear of what constitutes the national platform and how well it is composed to ensure inclusivity of diverse stakeholders. In short, we need to come up with a clear structure of the NP and how to monitor implementation of its activities and reporting.

Members reaffirmed that countries should use what they already prepared as National Platform guidelines, constitution and structures. NSC should ensure there is a broader participation of stakeholders and follow up on why some important key stakeholders have not joined the NP so far. Zachary raised concerns on laxity/failure of some farmer movements like Kenya Farmers Federation (KENAFF) on joining the National Platforms. These organizations undertake activities to support agriculture in general and thus we need to ensure they support ecological organic agriculture too. Manuel noted that the failure to recruit members to the EOA structures is a key challenge in mainstreaming of EOA.

The size of National Steering Committee membership was still an unresolved issue. Zachary called for the harmonization of the numbers by specifying the maximum number of members on a committee to avoid bloated numbers. It was agreed that the CSC should revisit the general guidelines of selection of

NSC structures and numbers. David clarified that numbers of committee members were not set at the time of selecting the committees. The Chair however called on the committee to first understand the process used by partners in the selection of NSC and how the numbers were set before taking action.

AfroNet operational structures: It was noted that formal collaboration between SDC, BvAT and AfroNet had not been done. However David noted that AfroNet's governance issues looked clear based on the presentation during the AfroNet General Assembly organized during the 3rd Africa Organic Conference in Nigeria.

Members requested that the AfroNet President to brief the CSC members on the structure and governance of AfroNet and its functions. Initially, Afronet's functions were spelt out in the EOA pro-doc but currently it was not clear how it now plays out. The Chair noted that currently Afronet is viewed as a network that is evolving. Chair

EOA secretariat: The Chair had a meeting with NEPAD to seek opportunity to have EOA secretariat hosted by NEPAD. It was reported that NEPAD was very busy and burdened with hosting many secretariats. However they sought clarifications on what was expected of them if they were to consider hosting EOA secretariat.

Zachary reiterated that setting up an EOA secretariat was a big decision that needs to be undertaken and finalized. Given the urgency, he recommended BvAT to be considered to continue hosting the secretariat with support from NEPAD while PELUM Kenya should also be given full mandate to coordinate the Eastern Africa secretariat, a decision that was previously arrived at during a regional steering committee meeting held in Nairobi in May, 2015.

The Chair advised that for purposes of accountability and transparency, selection criteria for the secretariat needs to be developed and presented to the CSC and seconded Zachary's suggestion on who to host the secretariat but also advised that this needs a lot of collaboration between NEPAD and BvAT in terms of coordination.

Zachary suggested that the selection criteria be developed and tabled during the CSC meeting the following day.

Action: David to develop the draft selection criteria of hosting EOA secretariat

The Chair noted with concerns that the issues of hosting the secretariat had taken long and thus needed to take off immediately without any further delays. First, it would be good to know what it implies in terms of resources involved (costing and responsibilities) and generally what is expected of the secretariat.

Zachary also raised concerns on PELUM Kenya's need to have human resource (somebody) supporting the Eastern Africa Regional Steering Committee activities noting that currently hosting the regional secretariat is a big toll for PELUM Kenya as there is no staff dedicated for this task.

The West Africa secretariat is still in the process of being set up.

The Chair proposed to have the 2 organizations (PELUM Kenya and BvAT) hosting the secretariats to operate for 2 years from January 2016. It was also important to have final draft on the implications of such an undertaking by the hosting organizations before the next sub-committee meeting and this too should apply to the West Africa secretariat hosting organization.

The Chair was hopeful with the recently concluded partners training on project and financial management the issue of unspent balances will be a thing of the past. The Chair noted that the 1st 6 months of annual project implementation are usually very critical for reallocation of activities that are not possible for implementation.

4. REPORTS ON PROGRESS FROM COORDINATING ORGANIZATIONS (BVAT & PELUM KENYA)

Biovision Africa Trust presentation by Dr. David Amudavi

- BvAT planned and facilitated a partners training on project and financial management with a well known and recognized Kenyan project management training consultant/facilitator (Dr John Chikati of Regional Partnership Resource Development) who made the training successful. During the training, participants noted disconnect between finance officers and project managers and the participants appreciated the need to work together.
- However there was not enough time to get a critic on report writing technical skills and group work presentations and discussions.
- Issues were also raised as to what extent the project managers stuck to budget lines. For instance, paying for expenses of a vehicle that has developed mechanical problems on transit to the field to undertake EOA work compared to expenses of fixing a grounded vehicle to undertake EOA work. Participants were engaged on how to handle such situations and much more.
- It was clarified that a similar partners training workshop would be undertaken in West Africa given that partners from Mali and Senegal did not attend the training due to travel logistics.
- It was noted that some organizations do not undertake yearly institutional audits a situation that was worrying.
- There was also a lot of multi-stakeholder contracting that caused delays in project implementation.
- It was also noted that some of the Pillar Implementing Partners (PIPs) were not aware of amounts that should be disbursed to them and timelines of disbursement.

Reactions to presentation by BvAT

The Chair noted that most issues that have led to poor project management should now be addressed by the project management training and was looking forward to tremendous improvements. She also

noted that a lot of critical thinking needed to go into proposal development and budgets in order to avoid poor implementation and misallocation /misuse of funds.

The Chair urged the Lead Coordinating Agency to ensure proper and transparent communication with PIPs. It was emphasized that PIPs should be made aware of the amounts and timelines on when funds are disbursed from the coordinating agency. Setbacks with a lot of multi partner multi contracting could be monitored closely and tamed through quarterly monitoring to ensure delay set-backs like are addressed in time. However, it was recommended that flexibility in time lines was important and so was giving partners enough time to execute and deliver.

The Chair noted that issues of auditing will depend on whether it is a requirement to have annual audits undertaken by project implementing partners. She clarified that project annual audits should be a separate activity with its own budget line allocations. The Chair urged the lead agency to make frequent partner monitoring visits and to give time lines on the monitoring frequencies.

The Chair expressed her appreciation to the partner project and financial management training and was hopeful that there will be improvements from 2016. She also requested the partner trainings to be held on a yearly basis and that BvAT should have planned trainings in its yearly planned activities. A needs analysis should be developed and data base of trainings developed with a pool of experts trained to become TOTs to train the rest and replicate the skills and work.

The Chair sought clarification on which activities Afronet was supported to undertake under the SDC EOA funding. Additionally, the issue of unspent funds should be discussed and consensuses realized on whether they should roll over or strike them off completely.

Manuel expressed his concerns with the Eastern Africa RSC platform unspent funds for 2015 and about the state of implementation by CLOs given their huge unspent funds for 2015. He noted this was very worrying and could imply that partners do not have the capacity to implement activities. He suggested that such funds should not be rolled over to 2016 but have partners plan afresh on activities they feel they were capable of implementing. He noted that partners (CLOs) do not seem to realize the immense efforts needed from them to execute this initiative. He stressed that should be made aware of this immense task. Manuel seconded the idea of developing a pool of trainers /data base.

Zachary requested that CEOs of CLO be brought together for planning purposes so that they can ensure accountability and implementation stay on course. He advised that partners should be mandated to give yearly audit reports and management letters before funds are disbursed. He further noted that the Eastern Africa RSC pending issues had been resolved especially with the hosting of the RSC secretariat and co-Chair and thus activities would be fast-tracked to ensure they are on course.

Simplice also welcomed the idea of yearly training of partners and requested that the trainings to be Training of Trainers (TOTs) kind so that they could be extended to other partners. He also noted that Dakar FAO conference was a good engagement with EOA. He requested the current EOA structure to seek ways of funding for and engagement and collaborations with other countries currently not part of

the EOA support and have keen interest in EOA such as Burkina-Faso and Cameroon. He urged the committee to strategize on how to involve them more.

David supported the recommendation that BvAT should work on Monitoring visits plan and schedules to enable fact track partners work progress in project implementation. This will also help in tackling issues as they arise. He also clarified the issue of partner audits by explaining that audits have been centralized in the SDC project by mandating implementing partners (CLOs and PIPs) to send their financial supporting documents and/or certified original/photocopy stamped documents. SDC has no provision for funds for direct audits by CLOs. However partners should be urged to undertake annual organizational audits. He supported the idea of seeking ways of engaging non EOA countries like Cameroon who now plan to host the 4th Africa Organic Conference and seem very keen in joining the EOA network. We need strategies on how to engage them more in EOA meetings and workshops.

Manuel noted that AfroNet has a role to play in bringing non EOA countries on board like the case of Ghana who already have an EOA platform. The funds allocated in the current EOA regions should be able to spread the work of EOA to other countries. We need to create a larger continental platform by using existing partners in EOA to bring other countries on board.

Members were informed that Ghana was part of EOA through the Pro Eco project but was not part of the EOA funded by SSNC and SDC. We need to identify and scan through the countries on what we can identify as EOA. David suggested a strategy of reaching out to other countries be developed and also sharing of success stories on what has been happening so far in the untapped countries.

Janet seconded the idea of developing a strategy of engagement/criteria on how to engage the rest of the countries.

Action: The interim secretariats to take over development of the criteria for bringing on board other countries.

Zachary agreed by stating that processes are driven by individuals and thus we need to mobilize few people with interest who can drive the EOA processes and bring the untapped countries on board.

PELUM Kenya presentation and discussions

Zachary explained that the EOA Programme for 2015 Country achievements for Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia were based on the progress so far made for the period up to October/November 2015, for the Pillars under implementation in each country. He noted that whereas not all the countries were implementing all the pillars, the Programme in Eastern Africa is based on a framework of six Pillars, namely:

- Pillar 1: Research, Training and Extension (RTE)
- Pillar 2: Information and Communication (I&C)

- Pillar 3: Value Chain and Market Development (VCD)
- Pillar 4: Networking and Partnerships (N&P)
- Pillar 5: Policy and Programme Development (PPD)
- Pillar 6: Institutional Capacity Development

Among major achievements and progress to note were the write shop held to develop EOA monitoring and evaluation guidelines and a gender document.

Action: Zachary to share M&E guidelines and gender document with the CSC members.

Zachary reported that PELUM Kenya had been given mandate to host the Eastern Africa Regional Steering Committee secretariat through a meeting held by some members of the RSC members in May 2015 in Kenya at Kivi Hotel. However the Chair sought clarification on where the RSC got their mandate to nominate PELUM Kenya to take over as the secretariat.

The Chair advised PELUM Kenya to give a broader picture of the EOA implementation from country partners.

Manuel noted that Uganda's progress report was very general with no much details of specific progress and achievements of activities while Kenya needed to show the overall contribution because they show specific activities.

David noted that outputs and outcomes were confusing and this needed to be clarified.

Zachary responded by clarifying that the establishment of RSC secretariat came up during a meeting held in Nairobi in June by some members of the RSC members who were taking part in the Write shop organized by PELUM Kenya. However the Chair clarified that such decision should be included in the agenda as information to be tabled to the CSC for discussion and approval. The mandate for structures in EOA-I comes from the CSC.

The Chair noted the procedure used by PELUM Kenya to table the information to members was not procedural and that final decision should not have been made by the RSC members but the CSC members. She clarified that such proposals should be tabled before the sub-committee before final decision is made. Thus this matter was to be tabled the following day to the CSC. Zachary apologized for the improper procedural process undertaken to establish the RSC interim secretariat

Members also noted that there was a lot of confusion during Zachary's presentation on whether activities reported by partners were supported by funds from SSNC or SDC with a lot of similarities being noted like for NOGAMU, Uganda, handling Value chain and market development pillar 3.

David requested the partners to report on a result based approach rather than activity based. Proper reporting needs to show clearly the changes that were achieved following the activities implemented, addressing the ‘so what question’ question.

5. PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL OF CONSOLIDATED WORK PLANS AND BUDGETS FOR 2016 (SSNC & SDC) BY COORDINATING ORGANIZATIONS (BVAT & PELUM KENYA)

Presentation and discussions on BvAT SDC consolidated work plans and budgets for 2016

David presented the main observations made on the country workplans.

- It was noted that activity 1.1.1 and 1.1.3 were similar in terms of implementation and delivery and thus should be merged.
- Types and number of communication materials and costing need to be broken down.
- Activity 2.1.4 did not indicate specific figures on activities to be undertaken.
- The decision on what to do with funds left unspent by partner for 2015 would be determined once final annual reports are submitted in February 2016. This would determine whether it is a case of under spending or not undertaking certain activities.
- Time frame for preparation and submissions and finalization of work plans and budgets 2016 was presented to the members.
- Manuel requested that CLOs should come together after the Mid-Term Review Report to discuss the mainstreaming strategies in the different countries and the implications of the MTR report. He also suggested that CLOs should reduce overall budget by 10% for 2016 including the carryovers and monitor their spending within the year to check if they needed more funds and revise the work plans and budgets again to fit into their scenarios by increasing their implementation capacity.
- **Action:** BvAT to pick up the plan for bringing together the CLOs after the MTR.
- Manuel stated that we could have countries focusing on important activities according to their situations on ground. Countries need to develop their own set of priorities through development of National Strategic Plans. We need to readjust and let countries focus on what works for them and not dwell on allocated activities.
- **Action:** BvAT to discuss with each partner on what works for them and leave out unrealistic activities.
- Simplice suggested that the training planned for West Africa countries could be held to coincide with country monitoring visits. BvAT to plan for this.
- The Chair underscored the need for reprioritization of activities and pillars by Partners. In particular, focus should be on where partners can make maximum impact. She cautioned against over-budgeting by the partners.
- The Chair mentioned that she would take action to link partners with Africa Seeds Network based in Abidjan as the network as continental mandate to verse seed initiatives on the continent. The Chair also noted that given the language differences between Francophone and Anglophone countries, the cost element of translation needs to be catered for in the production of materials.

- The Chair advised on work plan indicators. They need to be worded well e.g. if we are talking about number of reports we indicate that they should be for instance a minimum of 6 country reports so as not to exclude Mali and avoid creating negative impression in case they don't do anything.
- David underscored the need to analyze the capacity of organizations to implement activities. He also reiterated the need to support PELUM Kenya and BvAT to be supported for the additional responsibilities of hosting regional and continental secretariats respectively. The cost implications in terms of extra staff and other costs this needs to be determined.
- The Chair sought clarification on whether it was possible to allocate resources for staff support from original budgets supported by SSNC and SDC.
- Zachary supported the idea by suggesting that we could ask SSNC and SDC to support the staff.
- Manuel cautioned on the danger of hugely shifting from programmes to coordination. Instead this could be done under the already existing budgets. He also noted that there must be an additional value to the staff responsibilities. If no additional value is evident it won't make sense to allocate and hire staff.
- Members agreed that the final approval of the workplans and budgets based on these discussions will be approved virtually.

Presentation and discussions on PELUM Kenya SSNC consolidated work plans and budgets for 2016

- Members were informed that the SSNC work plans and budgets were compiled by Ms Erika E. Kalu of SSNC head office.
- It was noted that the compiled activities by Erika were not very clear and should adopt the work planning style by BvAT SDC support.
- Manuel suggested that we need to mandate CLOs to harmonize and integrate the EOA work plans for coherence purposes. That is, for this case SSNC and SDC harmonization.
- However Zachary explained that this would not work because SSNC works with its partners directly and thus CLOs would hit a big setback. Manuel clarified that it should be more of an informative role rather than a formal one. This will ensure such roles do not have any legal implications but only CLOs will be ensuring harmonization and coherence.
- David advised that SSNC should appreciate structures and systems set up for the EOA Initiative. He noted that the work plans and budgets presented by PELUM Kenya should not be accepted as the final documents because they had not satisfactorily followed the set structure of workplan and budget preparations.
- Simplice supported the idea of having organizations benefiting from SSNC support liaising with CLOs to submit work plans and budgets give work plans that give a broader picture of EOA for each country.
- The Chair also supported the idea of having CLOs incorporate activities from other partner organizations supported by SSNC into their country work plans.

6. PRESENTATION, REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE COMPREHENSIVE MID-TERM REVIEW FOR EOA INITIATIVE

- Members were informed that the TOR for Mid Term review of EOA was almost finalized and the process involved review and inputs from SDC, SSNC and some EOA partners. The specific objectives of the MTR are:
 - a) Assess the EOA Initiative's plans, achievements, experiences, and lessons, regarding available EOA best practices, sustainable organic farming systems and seed quality and make recommendations for improvement.
 - b) Test the relationships between the projects' efforts and progress so far made towards EOA's goal, including analysis of the institutional and project implementation framework set up as well as the degree and consequences of implementation towards country strategic policies and plans, and relevant regional and continental declarations spelt out in the EOA Strategic Plan (2015-25) and Action Plan (2015-2020).
 - c) Highlight issues and challenges affecting effective and efficient implementation of the project and recommend how to move the project forward.
- The Review will focus on six aspects:
 - a) Networking and linkages
 - b) Relevance
 - c) Effectiveness
 - d) Efficiency
 - e) Sustainability and Effects
 - f) Lessons learnt and recommendations
- The main outputs of the MTR will be:
 - a) An inception report elaborating the Evaluation Methodology and Tools including sampling and data collection procedures, a detailed schedule of activities to be undertaken across the eight countries (work plan).
 - b) An Aide Memoire (intermediate report with key findings and recommendations) to be presented to a Sub-Committee of the CSC in a consultative workshop in Addis Ababa on 5 April 2016.
 - c) The MTR Draft and Final Reports -The final report will be discussed and approved by the CSC at its next meeting in May 2015.
 - d) Catalogue all reports produced since the start of the project (2012).
 - e) A Summary of the Project Evaluation Report.
- The support materials for the Review will include:
 - a) AU Decision on Organic Farming
 - b) EOA Strategic Plan (2015-2025) and EOA Action Plan (2015-2020)
 - c) SDC and SSNC Project Documents (for the period 2013-2018)
 - d) Project Logframes (Consolidated country logframes)
 - e) Baseline Survey Reports 2014 (Benin, Mali and Senegal)
 - f) Project Country and Consolidated Annual Reports (2014 and 2015)
 - g) Minutes of the Continental Steering Committee meetings (2013-2015)

- h) Report of the Review of SSNC contribution to EOA in Eastern Africa
 - i) African Organic Conference Declarations (2012 and 2015)
- The Chair requested the document to be presented to the sub-committee before being finalized and referred to the CSC.
 - The Chair requested to have the TOR advert undertaken in all EOA partner implementing countries in newspapers with a wide readership.
 - The Chair observed that we should assess objectively what benefits the report of the MTR would have for each of the donors involved.
 - Zachary noted that the results of the MTR would help SSNC address some issues they are facing in funding EOA effectively.
 - Manuel clarified that the main objective of the MTR is to help SDC address emerging issues early. By reviewing the initiative early enough it would be clear how the initiative is being established at various institutional levels and structures. He explained that focus is more on the establishment of EOA (relevance, effectiveness) and not much on impact.
 - The report will give an eye-view for future support of EOA from SDC and that evaluation results have to be out by end of March 2016 so that this could be shared with SIDA in case they still have interest in supporting the EOA Initiative.
 - Members agreed that the team of consultants selected should have someone who speaks French or recruit one.
 - Zachary noted that the AU decision document on organic farming should be included on list of documents to be reviewed by the consultants.
 - The Chair explained that the EOA Strategic Plan (10yrs) and Action Plan (5yrs) should be the documents used to gauge/measure progress of EOA because the report has to be presented to AU Africa Ministers.
 - Manuel suggested the review work to start latest in early February 2016 and that the advert should close in December 2015 and that applicants should indicate when they are available.

7. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

- Members agreed to have the date and venue of the next meeting run back to back with the main CSC and thus this would be identified during the CSC meeting.
- Members also agreed to have the meeting linked with presentations of the Mid-term report to the committee which should be in Ethiopia, Addis Ababa in AU offices on the April 5th 2016.