



MINUTES

AGRINATURA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Joint Secretariat:

KROUTILOVÁ Anna (Agrinatura Association Secretary General), POULTER Guy (Agrinatura EEIG Director), LAM Hanneke (Agrinatura EEIG Business Manager)

Others:

MERITAN Regis (EC), ORLANDONI Olimpia (VCA4D), DABAT Marie Helene (VCA4D), OSIRU Moses (RUFORUM), KAHANE Remi (CIRAD- PAEPARD) and others (see Annex 1. "Attendance list"),

1. Opening Session

Agrinatura President Michael Hauser welcomes all participants at the Agrinatura General Assembly 2017, followed by the introduction of Professor Anders Malmer, Director at SLU Global, in SLU Campus, in Uppsala, in Sweden. Also, he reminds to all Agrinatura members the role of Agrinatura Association in the global field of higher education and research in agriculture. The main role of the Agrinatura Association is research and capacity building projects in the field of Agricultural Sciences (Life Sciences).

We recognize the presence of European Commission DG DEVCO and other participants from different organizations/ institutions e.g. EFARD, ICA, FARA, COLEACP, SIDA, ect. All participants were introduced by themselves which was very much appreciated by a President. Agrinatura has very diverse European and international partners within its networks which is a very good asset to the changing EU structure.

2. Minutes and Agenda approval

Minutes from the last General Assembly meeting in Lisbon, 2016, and the Agenda for the current General Assembly (GA, 2017) in Uppsala are approved.

3. Agrinatura Projects Updates

✓ Value Chain Analysis for Development (VCA4D)

Regis Meritan

We are pleased to welcome Mr Regis Meritan from EC DEVCO C1 who explained the EC's vision of cooperation with Agrinatura in the field of agricultural research for development. One important development objective of the EC is to encourage investments from the private sector in agriculture and food security. To ensure that such involvement contributes in a sustainable way to economic growth, poverty reduction and inclusion, the EC created the methodological framework used through the VCA4D project, implemented by Agrinatura.

The aim of EC is to have an as-complete-as-possible picture of what is happening in value chains, encompassing not only the organisational/technical levels, but in particular the three pillars of sustainability (economic, social and environmental analysis). For this purpose, the EC constructed a methodological framework aimed at valorising quantitative data for evidence-based analysis in support of decision making and for tracking projects/policies' impact over time.

Although VCA4D does not have a specific country or commodity focus, some commodities as cocoa, coffee and cotton will receive particular attention given the policy implication for DG DEVCO.

The EC is implementing VCA4D through a Service Contract with Agrinatura (Agrinatura EEIG), with a spirit of building a long-lasting partnership. The analyses are performed by Agrinatura researchers, therefore linking top European independent research to policy makers, both at the European and at partners' country level. Agrinatura researchers can in fact complement the knowledge and skills of the EC through evidence-based analysis and by informing indicators that policy makers need in order to improve their policy formulation, policy dialogue and project management.

The EC reaffirmed the will to establish a long term 'win-win' partnership with Agrinatura, inviting researchers to better connect to policy makers through VCA4D. Though VCA4D (and its phase 2 under forecast) there will be research opportunities for more than 200 Agrinatura researchers in economic, environmental and social sciences. Regis Meritan concluded: 'We as the European Union want to be able to increase our influence on policy orientations in the field of food security and rural development and investments. We need to mobilize the invaluable expertise from European research and knowledge institutions for this purpose building on a long lasting win win partnership'.

Marie Helen Dabat (MHD)

MHD explained the objectives of the VCA4D project, managed by a Project Management Unit (PMU) based in Brussels. The methodological framework of the project was introduced. There are 4 framing questions which each analysis will try to answer: 1. What is the contribution of the VCA to economic growth? 2. Is this economic growth inclusive? 3. Is the value chain socially sustainable? 4. Is the VC environmentally sustainable?

The project started implementation in September 2016, with 8 Value Chain Analyses (VCAs) already being under implementation. Each VCA involves a team of 4 experts: one economist, one environmentalist (specialised in LCA), one social expert. These three experts (coming from Agrinatura members) are supported in their field work by a national expert. Other activities of the project include the creation of an information sharing system and training and communication activities both with the EC and with developing countries.

As per experience of the first months of implementation, the demands of the EC in terms of expertise are rising; therefore there is a need for mobilising and engaging researchers from the whole pool of Agrinatura members. In fact through VCA4D, researchers have the opportunity for example to closely cooperate with policy makers, collect data to be used for publications, connect the VCAs to their research interests, create strong working networks with a wider expertise in Europe.

✓ **PAEPARD – Lessons Learnt on Innovation**

Jonas Mugabe and Remi Kahane

The overall objectives of the PAEPARD project aims to build joint African-European multistakeholder partnerships in ARD contributing to achieving the SDGs. Specific objectives are enhanced, more equitable, more demand-driven, and mutually beneficial collaboration of Africa and Europe on ARD with the aim of attaining the SDGs. The Demand – led research mechanism in needs of the users is implemented by the 19 consortia in 17 African countries. There are 4 instruments what are used: Communication and capacity strengthening, Competitive Funds, Incentive Funds for Consortia, Users Led Process for Consortia. The Users-Led Process (ULP) is a participatory collective learning and owned brokering mechanism. PAEPARD works with soybean milk in Benin, compost in Burkina Faso, mango in West Africa. The role of multistakeholder partnership in the project is very important component. Nevertheless, African-European partnerships need time to build trust and funding which is necessary, although not sufficient. In the end, the capacity dialogue and work together has become the key of success in building successful partnerships.

✓ **Master in Science ,Food Security and Climate Change‘ (FSCC)**

Didier Pillot

We ,supervise‘ building of the capacities in the South by itself, not only by research but also by student mobility. We develop capacities, skills and new curriculum. It will have influences in academia as well as in the policy making. There is also a potential to make a linkage with professional sector. The project is under the flagship of Erasmus + CBHE, where the main coordinator is Kasetsart University (Thailand) and other partners from Asia and Europe, Agrinatura as the whole and 3 EU members.

Agrinatura is a full partner in FSCC and we see it as a great advantage. Agrinatura takes a role in quality assurance, building curricula – matching of competences, summer course, exchange of staff and student. There is still space for Agrinatura member universities to participate in the project.

✓ **NIPN (National Information Platform for Nutrition)**

Mélanie Broin

NIPN project has the aim to facilitate the building of database in less developed countries, create coordination team and make national information

platforms in nutrition (NIPs). The National Information Platforms for Nutrition (NIPN) initiative is part of an ambitious programme launched by the European Commission (EC) to fight malnutrition in the developing countries affected by this burden, with the objective of contributing to the global reduction in the incidence of stunting in alignment with target set for 2025 by the World Health Assembly and in support of the commitments of the EU Nutrition Action Plan. The Global Support Facility (GSF) is a NIPN's tool which currently comprises a team of five staff, hired through Agrinatura member institutions (Agropolis International and the Natural Resources Institute of the University of Greenwich). It is hosted and managed by Agropolis International in Montpellier, France. GSF main role is to ensure: coordination of the initiative within and between countries, support countries to design and establish each NIPN, capacity building and technical assistance, links with SUN and other initiatives to ensure coherence. Countries included are Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Kenya, Niger, Laos, Uganda. From the last year the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation decided to joint the project in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Guatemala, Zambia.

✓ **CDAIS - Global Partnership on developing Innovation Capacities in Agriculture**

Myra Wopereis

CDAIS project is engaging people in the change process, from policy makers to young professionals. It is born out of the recognition that countries in Africa, Asia, Central America and Europe are changing their approach to agricultural R&D i.e. some have merged research and advisory services into a single agency and multi-stakeholder platforms have become common. National strategies are prioritizing innovation systems and experimenting with their implementation.

CDAIS is a global partnership (funded by the EU for 4 years) that aims to strengthen the capacity of countries and key stakeholders to innovate in the context of complex agricultural systems, to improve rural livelihoods. The goal of the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) project is to promote innovation that meets the needs of small farmers, small and medium-sized agribusiness, and consumers. It brings together key stakeholders in agricultural innovation systems around selected niche partnerships in eight pilot countries i.e., Angola, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Laos and Rwanda.

✓ **SIMPLE - Support of International Platform Merging Labour and Education**

Petra Chaloupková

SIMPLE is Erasmus + Capacity Building in Higher Education Action's Encouragement of cooperation of academic sector (HEIs) with professional sector in the area of agriculture and life sciences in selected Asian countries (Cambodia,

Indonesia and Thailand), leading to an enhanced employability of those universities' alumni. Agrinatura is an associated partner together with SEARCA and YPARD.

4. New Projects:

Didier Pillot

✓ **Jometa project**

Moses Osiru

Moses Osiru from RUFORUM makes an update of the project in preparation which is in process of preparation with Agrinatura's collaboration. He explains the objectives of the project and the partners, which are Uganda, Mozambique, Ghana and European partners (SupAgro, Lisbon University, SLU,...). There is an opportunity for any of the members, who would be interested, to be funded by this project.

✓ **Participatory and Integrative Support of Agricultural Initiative (PISAI)**

Didier Pillot

This project aims on graduates production and involves 4 main Thai universities situated in key agricultural production areas that cover different geographical parts of the country. Kasetsart University was established as the agricultural university in Bangkok, the center of country development. Prince of Songkla University was established as the hub of higher education in the South of Thailand and the Faculty of Natural Resources is among the first priority faculties in supporting agricultural development in the region. Chiangmai University is the northern education hub, particularly in agriculture, as there are many hill tribe peoples and flat highland areas suitable for the production as the main sites of the King's agricultural development projects which play an extremely important role in both the economy and society. Khon Kaen University is the first university established in the Northeast where the climate is drastic in the dry season and majority of people are poor. The four Thai consortium universities have had a large impact on agricultural science with high quality education, and have long term experience in EU project management and participation. Our EU partners, SupAgro, UCPH, CULS and UHEL were selected based on their outstanding skills, competences and experience.

✓ **Development - Oriented Research and Education for Cambodian Agricultural Transition (DORECAT)**

The DORECAT consortium brings together six different HEIs in Cambodia and in Europe that are all specialised in Agriculture and Life Sciences: 3 HEIs in Cambodia: the applicant - Royal University of Agriculture- and two other HEIs of lower levels, Prek Leap National School of Agriculture (PLNSA) and Kompong Cham

National School of Agriculture (KCNSA). 3 HEIs in Europe, in France (Montpellier SupAgro), Hungary (Szent István University) and Spain (Universidad Pablo de Olavide in Seville). The project will improve the curricula and the development oriented-research at Cambodian HEIs through strong support and sharing experiences and lesson-learnt from the European HEIs partners as well as from the Cambodian partners from professional institutions. This will also help ensuring and strengthening the effective collaboration and communication within partners. AGRINATURA and SEARCA will commission an independent transversal evaluation of the revision of the courses by RUA, PLNSA and KCNSA.

- ✓ **Master in European Innovations for a Sustainable Management of Albanian Territories, rural areas and agriculture: instruments, policies, strategies (SmartAL)**

Agrinatura wants to prepare with other European partners a project which will help Albania to become an EU member in the certain time. When the moment of change comes they have to know how to lead an expertises and competencies for agricultural policies. The main objective of the project is to address the new identified job market needs induced by the new and forthcoming public policies in Albania. Design at least 9 shared specific teaching modules filling the gap between the existing offer and the market job needs. Offer to Albanian teaching staff innovative tools and methodologies. Develop a long term blended research network of EU and Albania researchers on these thematic. Collaborate to the capacity building and generational renewal of Albanian University staff.

The conclusion of the first part of the GA 2017 is closing by a president Michael Hauser by a question for today, if we really align with our projects to the goals that we has set up?

5. Activity and Financial Reports, Strategic discussion, President' s Handover

5.1. Activity Report 2016: Activities, Projects, Partnerships

Didier Pillot presents Activity report 2016 - the main points mentioned are:

- *play* a pro-active policy advocacy role for AKD (Agricultural knowledge for Development) - participated actively to the last GCARD in South Africa (April 2016). Efforts were put in this, which results low outcomes.
- *build* strategic alliances, partnerships and networks with and between stakeholders, both in the North and in the South - GCHERA as a global network on education, Memorandum of understanding with FAO, with ICA, supporting Tropentag conference, RUFORUM and with SEARCA

- *organise* Joint International Programmes and projects(Academic partnerships and business opportunities) - Erasmus mundus to Erasmus +, VCA4D, FSCC
- *provide* support for evidence based policy making (capitalisation) – capitalisation envisaged with JOMETA

5.2. Financial report 2016, Budget 2017, Statutes, Secretariat Updates, and President Handover

Michael Hauser makes a brief resume of the Agrinatura evolution from its inception giving thanks to long-term involved members Guy Poulter, Didier Pillot and Phillip Pettuninghen.

Anna Kroutilová

The Financial Report of Agrinatura Association accounts as well as the Budget for 2107 is presented. The key points are described in more detail. The Budget for the year 2017 is proposed to all GA members present in the room. The copies of all documents has been distributed in advance. There are no objections. The validation of changes in Agrinatura Statutes proposed during the last GA meeting in Lisbon are approved with no objections from all present members representing member institutions/ organizations. The official registration address is changed to Gembloux, one of it' s members, which was officially agreed with a Gembloux representative Laurent de Potter last year and confirmed through the year.

The Budget 2017 and changes in Statutes are unanimously accepted by GA with no objections.

Agrinatura Association Secretariat (Anna Krutilova, Secretary General) and Agrinatura-EEIG Secretariat (Hanneke Lam, Business Manager) endeavour to maintain closer cooperation on the base of the exchange of information, regular virtual meetings, updates and e-mail exchange and information distribution. Furthermore, closer cooperation within PMU in the VCA4D project and both secretariats is implemented by regular updates and information sharing.

Agrinatura Association has a re-new member University of Göttingen - Georg-August-Universität Göttingen due to the collaboration on FSCC project. Agrinatura currently has 28 member institutions/universities from 15 European countries.

The Handover between current president, Michael Hauser, and new President, Carolyn Glynn has been done. Carolyn Glynn elected as a new Agrinatura President launches her mandate with passion and courage describing the development history in Sweden and explains her efforts which she will aim to lead Agrinatura as a leading HEI Agricultural Platform in the near future.

5.3. Strategic orientations

Moses Osiru (RUFORUM) - Highlights RUFORUM' s initiative to establish some kind of initiative between Agrinatura nad RUFORUM towards impacting smallscale farmers on the ground. RUFORUM endeavour to propose a joint programme between Agrinatura and Ruforum to bring the real impact.

FAO - What can be done in better way? We have not been able to tap the potential of Agrinatura. FAO opens its partnerships within different stakeholders – private, academia, NGOs, and Agrinatura is considered to be as one of its strong partners. Green Climate Fund or other funds are available to offer Agrinatura their resources – there is a need for the experts which Agrinatura can provide.

Stephen Onakuse - we are not project driven, we have to think strategically, publications exchange, specify our aims

Agropolis International – we need more projects, what we are concretely doing, workshops/seminars in Brussels or Rome – for exchanges what we are doing for them

Carolin Callenius (University of Hohenheim)- we need to focus on communication. Also, how do we access and get data. The projects are needed in the policy dialogue and advocacy work. We should know who will talk on behalf of Agrinatura. Where is our focus and where we want to go in the coming years. We have to support a strategic discussions with the aim of concrete objectives.

Francois Stepmen - we need long term partnerships and long term project, we have to approach more donors

Jean Michel Sers – the presence of Agrinatura in the global scene is very important task. The representation of Agrinatura in big events is essential. We have to be seen in the international environment as a facilitator to perform research together.

Michael Hauser – asks if we really align with our projects to our set goals? Also, he points out that Agrinatura is as good as its all members. Do we bring the next 2 M EUR for the strengthening Europe relationships?

Marie Helen Dabat – highlights the need to involve more researchers in the framework of the VCA4D project, asking for wider dissemination of calls and for their collaboration.

Carolyn Glynn – makes a wish list where is: delegation to the members, synthesis, delegating responsibility at the level of a research organization/university, a focus on communication and reflection

6. Election of New Members, BD Members, Vice-President:

As the last point of the agenda is the election of new Vice-President and new Board of Directors Members. As a new Vice - President replacing current, Didier Pillot, is elected Tim Chancellor (NRI) as a very experienced and a long-term BD member. New composition of BD is revived with Stephen Onakuse (University College Cork). All former BD members maintain in the BD.

A new Agrinatura member University of Göttingen - Georg-August-Universität Göttingen is approved by the whole GA.

7. Closure of the General Assembly

Madeleine Fogde (SEI, Stockholm Environment Institute) - Swedish resources space is available and a director of Swedish national research aims to bridge research and policy together with SLU and Agrinatura as well due to the fact that Agrinatura brings international dialogue to Sweden.