

Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH)  
Planning and Management Committee (PMC) Meeting  
IFPRI, Washington, D.C.  
November 2-3, 2017  
Summary of Action Items

### Introduction

Members of the A4NH Planning and Management Committee (PMC) met with the Program Management Unit (PMU) for two days following the 1<sup>st</sup> annual Independent Steering Committee (ISC) meeting. A list of participants can be found at the end of this summary. John McDermott, A4NH Director, chaired the meeting.

### Meeting Objectives

- To identify priorities and modalities for engaging in the cross-cutting issues of gender and equity and policy coordination and with the agriculture and public health platform and the Rome-based agencies in 2018
- To agree on the new process for collecting and documenting outcomes in Phase II and plan on how to build an A4NH outcome story library
- To share first-year planning experiences with MARLO and identify areas for improvement in future planning and reporting cycles
- To identify priorities and modalities for engaging donors in 2018
- To agree on key events in 2018 where A4NH plans to have a presence

### Action Items

This document summarizes the discussion and action items from the meeting by the general topics discussed.

#### New Reporting Format to ISC

In response to comments raised last year during the Independent Advisory Committee (now the ISC) annual meeting and at the PMC's bi-annual meeting in Nigeria in March 2017, A4NH introduced a new way of reporting to the ISC and structured the 1.5-day meeting in a different way than it had in the past in order to facilitate engagement between the ISC and Flagship Leaders around strategic issues. A slide deck served as A4NH's full report on 2017 achievements and 2018 plans. It was sent to the ISC members to review before the meeting. The agenda was structured so that for each flagship, the ISC could provide strategic comments and clarify issues on the report, but spend most of the time discussing and providing advice on a single 'big issue' that each flagship was facing. Overall, the response to the new format for reporting to the ISC and the meeting itself was positive. The PMC members' suggestions are summarized here for the PMU to consider for next year.

- Allow time for the Flagship Leader to summarize the slide deck report before the ISC gives their comments and ask the ISC discussants assigned to each flagship to focus their comments so we can differentiate what is important and what is commentary. One suggestion was to ask them to

comment on two things that were done well in previous year and two key changes they'd like to see made in next year's plans.

- Consider how we can frame a discussion with the ISC to get their views and advice on A4NH's role as an integrating program for CGIAR.
- Every year, we should not neglect explaining how A4NH is funded and emphasize the proportion of grants (W3 and bilateral) to the W1/W2 allocations.
- It's important that the two new members of the ISC (term: 2018-2021) have technical expertise in nutrition and infectious disease.

### Engagement in Policy Coordination

Following up on comments from the ISC, there was consensus that the Policy Coordination Working Group idea was worth pursuing. However, there was agreement that it would be important to preserve the mandate and activities of the Working Group from the mandate and activities of Flagship 4. There was not a strong interest amongst the PMC members that Flagship 4 should adopt a 'service function' around policy research for other flagships in A4NH or other CRPs. For A4NH's focus countries, the country coordination teams are also obvious avenues for policy coordination, but it was not clear how the mandates of or expectations for these different groups – Flagship 4, Working Group, country teams – might be overlapping. There have already been some investments made in policy engagement and coordination in A4NH, which perhaps needs to be documented within the Working Group's draft strategy to demonstrate how the Working Group builds on or complements other work in A4NH. It was also obvious that A4NH needed to be more systematic about documenting how evidence has been shared with policymakers and how it has been used. It was also noted that there is no budget for the Working Group, so depending on what priorities emerge or in order to respond to flagship needs, negotiation will be required.

Other intentions around A4NH policy coordination expressed by PMC members included sharing information around major engagements and minimizing the burden on in-country partners, being responsive to policy demands by preparing basic background documents with preliminary analysis on general topics we'd expect to be raised, taking an inventory of resources in the country in order to identify where A4NH can add value, making it clearer who are the users of A4NH policy products, and consider identifying a single policy issue that cuts across more than one flagship to pursue.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing Responsibility</b>
Incorporate initial policy coordination activities into 2018 plans for Flagship 4, CCE unit, and Communications as part of 2018 POWB and work plans.	March 2018 <i>PMU with Flagship 4 Leader and CCE Unit</i>
Refine the Policy Coordination Working Group's Draft Strategy into an implementation plan summarizing next steps that will include clarification on roles of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Policy Coordination Working Group;</li> <li>2) policy in FP4 (especially 3C cluster); and</li> <li>3) Country Coordination and Engagement Units.</li> </ol> An annex of stories on what has been done and what is ongoing will be planned with A4NH Communication Specialist and Program Manager in consultation with the Working Group.	October 2018 <i>Policy Coordination Working Group with PMU (Janet and Amanda)</i>

## Engagement in Gender and Equity

The new CGIAR gender platform for Phase II is housed under PIM, as a flagship, and coordination is based at KIT in the Netherlands. The platform is having their first workshop and scientific conference for Phase II in Amsterdam the week of December 4. The GEE Unit will be leading a learning lab on using the WEAI for nutrition-sensitive programming during the week. The readership for the Gender-Nutrition Idea Exchange (GNIE), hosted on [www.a4nh.cgiar.org](http://www.a4nh.cgiar.org), has increased with each blog post receiving an average of 700 readers. This is a good way for A4NH researchers to feature their research. PMC members were encouraged to think of GNIE as part of their outreach and dissemination strategy. In the past year, the GEE Unit has provided technical assistance to the A4NH community in a variety of ways including reviewing proposals; providing advice on indicators and survey instruments around women's empowerment; and giving support on analysis, writing, editing to produce gender-focused research products.

The PMC had a preliminary discussion on the results from the External Review on Equity that was shared in the ISC meeting. There were positive reactions to the suggestion to identify students to analyze existing datasets with an equity lens. The PMC requested tailored advice for each flagship on things they could do differently to address different dimensions of equity or even what dimensions of equity were most important to tackle in each flagship. The discussion also highlighted areas where the PMU could make small changes to the information it collects about work on gender within MARLO to include other aspects of equity and incorporate this into our internal program monitoring. We also might be missing some of the gender work in A4NH because of the way the questions are worded in MARLO. Amanda will consult with the GEE Unit, and if relevant the MARLO family, on this before we start 2018 planning.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing Responsibility</b>
Send comments on the draft report on External Review of Equity Research in A4NH.	November 17, 2017 <i>PMC</i>
Reassess how we are collecting information about gender research in A4NH during planning and reporting.	January 2017 <i>Amanda with GEE Unit</i>
Develop management response to the review and action items. Initial ideas that seemed worth pursuing that will be included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find ways to resource an equity advisor or equity consultants with a strong background in whatever dimension of equity A4NH decides to emphasize</li> <li>• Consider forming a small group within A4NH (3-4 persons) to act as a task group for the GEE Unit to recommend what could be done in the short-term and report to the rest of the PMC at the March face-to-face meeting. Managing Partners would be asked to nominate someone from their institute.</li> </ul>	January-February 2017 <i>PMU with PMC</i>

## Engagement with the Rome-based agencies

James Garrett provided an update to PMC on his activities as A4NH liaison to the Rome-based agencies (RBA) – FAO, IFAD, and WFP. Since the March meeting in Nigeria, James has helped identify and link several A4NH Managing Partners to appropriate contacts and assisted with proposal development. James also participates in the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition, Committee on World Food Security, and the RBA coordination working group on Sustainable Value Chains for Nutrition. Some of the other RBA coordination working groups that might be of interest to members of A4NH include: RBA Coordination on Nutrition in Africa, Food Loss and Waste, and Homegrown School Feeding Programs.

In Phase I, A4NH seconded James to IFAD. Although the relationship does not exist formally, James continues to provide support in several areas including facilitating interactions that support the A4NH agenda and activities, such as country portfolio reviews, background studies on integrating BCC and nutrition education, and guide on nutrition-sensitive value chains. He's also involved in an A4NH/CCAFS joint publication on climate change. James is the PI for an IFAD grant called *Linking research to action around nutrition-sensitive agriculture*, which will involve more A4NH Managing Partners starting in 2018 as part of analyses on needs, use, and gaps, and process and impact evaluations to assess the gaps identified

This session was primarily information sharing; there were no action items identified.

#### Engagement with the public health community and the ANH Academy

Jeff Waage led a brainstorming session with the PMC on A4NH's engagement with the public health community and the ANH Academy. In the A4NH full proposal, Flagship 5 proposed a platform to increase interactions between public health and CGIAR to raise the profile of agriculture-health issues in the health research community. The budget is \$50,000/year, which sits in Cluster 3, but the activities do not really sit in any one cluster. In 2017, Flagship 5 has had meetings with the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute and the University of Liverpool. The current plan is to build this platform through a series of focused meetings. One venue for some of these meetings could be during the ANH Academy Week Conference or the ANH Academy more generally (more on this in next paragraph). Advice from the PMC was to assess what platforms already exist in this space, and make it clearer what is meant by platform, who it will reach, and what activities it will prioritize before reassessing whether a platform is the appropriate strategy.

A collaboration between LCIRAH and A4NH for the ANH Academy began in 2014. The Academy itself is largely funded by LSHTM, through LCIRAH whose funding continues through 2019, and A4NH. The ANH Academy Week Conference is funded by DFID (US\$75K in 2017 through the IMMANA grant to LCIRAH) and A4NH (US\$25K in 2017, plans for US\$50K in 2018). Both DFID and BMGF require their agriculture-nutrition grantees to attend the Academy Week Conference with money from their grants. The PMC members expressed interest in supporting the 2018 Academy Week Conference by helping design the program (serve on the scientific or planning committees), promoting the call for abstracts and the event itself through their networks and encouraging early career researchers to attend, and ensuring that A4NH affiliated research is branded. The PMC will talk more later about hosting a side event, perhaps on One Health collaborations with the World Bank, Transform Nutrition-West Africa, or engaging institutions in an agriculture-health platform, for example.

This session was primarily information sharing; there were no action items identified.

#### Documenting Outcomes in Phase II

Following a review of what A4NH means by *outcomes* and how inputs for outcome stories will be reported by A4NH researchers in MARLO, and then further developed into *outcome stories*, two-page full color brochures that can be used for communication and outreach, the PMC discussed issues around credibility of planning and reporting outcomes. At a minimum, the PMU expects that each flagship would submit at least one outcome story for each of its outcome milestones (this is Table 3 in the 2017 POWB). In 2017, the range for outcome milestones per flagship was 1 to 7. However, the discussion with the PMC highlighted how much investment would be required to verify/validate the outcome and then

develop outcome stories and where responsibilities for these activities should sit. Some follow up actions related to outcome reporting and verification and outcome story development and communication were identified. This discussion will be continued at the March face-to-face PMC meeting.

Action	Timing <i>Responsibility</i>
Discuss with MARLO family how to improve the outcome story interface in MARLO	November 2017 <i>PMU (Amanda)</i>
Share feedback with the PMU (Janet and Amanda) on the sample two-page outcome stories that were distributed during the meeting	November 2017 <i>PMC</i>
Re-visit discussion on responsibilities and expectations for outcome verification and outcome story development	March 2017 <i>PMU with PMC</i>

### MARLO De-Brief

MARLO – Managing Agricultural Research for Learning and Outcomes – is A4NH’s new online planning and reporting tool for Phase II. It has been developed as a common tool for, now, eight CRPs and two platforms. A4NH used MARLO for 2017 planning (2017 work plans) and plans to use it for 2018 planning and 2017 reporting. CCAFS is the only other CRP that has fully implemented MARLO so far.

The PMU prepared detailed feedback for each Flagship Leader to share with the flagship team on the 2017 information that was entered in MARLO. The MARLO projects are all “open” so that flagship members can respond to the feedback and make edits. By December 15, all edits should be made.

For 2018 planning, Tigist has collected funding source information from each managing partner financial contact, entered the information in MARLO, and mapped them to the relevant MARLO project(s). At the time of the meeting, Tigist had received 2018 information from most of the managing partners. She was still missing information from IITA and LSHTM. These are preliminary 2018 budgets, which will be confirmed during the work plan/PPA process (starting in mid-March 2018). With preliminary funding source information in MARLO, the PMU would like flagship teams to have added their 2018 deliverables by December 15, so the PMU can begin preparing the 2018 POWB.

Issues raised during the discussion about our first year using MARLO are summarized below.

- Changing the flagship’s impact pathways. The sub-IDOs should remain as they were in the proposal, although some exceptions are being made. The 2022 outcomes should remain as they were in the proposal, although some exceptions are being made. The outcome milestones can be revised annually, so there is flexibility there. An outcome should not have more than three milestones for a given year. In principle, the key outputs should remain the same. The relationships between outcomes – outcome milestones – key outputs should not be changed. The PMU is keeping track of how elements from the Performance Indicator Matrix (PIM) tables are changing from the proposal.
- Quality control options for partners. Managing Partners would like some level of quality control over what is entered in MARLO from their institutions. Bioversity, for example, is creating an internal interface where users enter information that goes into MARLO, get internal approval by line managers, and then enter the information into MARLO. There was a suggestion that a draft interface of MARLO could be developed so partners could fill information before it’s populated in official A4NH MARLO.

- Who's responsible for the information in MARLO. Every flagship used a slightly different approach for 2017 planning, but for the most part, it was a flagship manager that had collected all the information (through spreadsheets) and then copied that information in MARLO for all the MARLO projects in the flagship. Until we go through the first round of reporting in MARLO, it is difficult to say if a similar approach would work. For example, should each individual responsible for deliverables report their deliverables in MARLO or should it be one representative from each partner that collects this information from colleagues and enters it in MARLO or should it be the MARLO Project Leader's responsibility to collect the information from each partner and enter it. Once all this information is in MARLO, the cluster and flagship leaders prepare a synthesis of the progress at cluster and flagship levels. The PMU is not prescribing how this should be done, but Flagship Leaders should have a process and communicate it to the flagship members.
- Usefulness of summary reports. The summary reports are limited right now to Excel spreadsheets and do not contain the information that flagship leaders readily need without a lot of manual effort to reorganize the spreadsheet or combine multiple spreadsheets. We need to know which countries in which MARLO Projects/Funding Sources are active and we need flagship summaries that list the projects, the deliverables (in full, not just IDs), and funding sources (by title, not just IDs).
- Monitoring investment in cross-cutting issues (capacity development, gender, youth) in MARLO. Like in Phase I, we are asking partners to provide estimates of how much of a funding source's budget is being spent on gender research. Estimating gender resources is difficult. There is a flow chart, tailored for A4NH, in the Dropbox folder, MARLO Resources for A4NH Users, that could help. The PMU and GEE Unit wants this information because it helps us explain A4NH's work on gender – investment, outputs, and outcomes.

Action	Timing Responsibility
Provide feedback the PMC raised in the meeting to the MARLO family	November 2017 PMU (Amanda)
Share 2017-18 planning and reporting timelines and templates with PMC when received from the SMO	November 2017 (expected) PMU (Amanda)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and respond to the PMU's feedback by making edits to MARLO projects</li> <li>• Begin adding 2018 deliverables that can be used for the 2018 POWB (we will come back to this later to finalize for the work plans/PPAs)</li> </ul>	December 15, 2017 Flagship Leaders and teams

### 2018 Schedule of Events

The 2018 Schedule of Events was updated based on inputs shared in today's meeting. It will be updated periodically and posted in the A4NH Essentials library on TeamSpace (link [here](#)).

### Donor Engagement Priorities in 2018

A summary of the current and proposed funding to A4NH in 2018, by donor, was shared with the PMC members during this session. The Window 2 (W2) donors have not earmarked their funds to A4NH, although some donors to other CRPs have done that. The PMC members shared information about donor engagement in 2017 and opportunities in 2018, which was noted by the PMU and will be reflected in the next iteration of the donor summary table. The most significant, upcoming opportunities that John will lead are listed below. He will liaise with relevant PMC members as appropriate.

- The European Commission (EC) plans to fund two to three CRPs through W2 starting in 2018. They have asked A4NH to prepare a 5-page proposal, which John will coordinate with other members of the PMU in November. It will be shared with the PMC before finalizing.
- John will be visiting the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) the first week of December. Australia has been a consistent W2 donor, but John would like to convince them to expand to W3. Australia has a strong interest in fish and food safety and their geographical focus is primarily Southeast Asia and South Asia. They fund several regional projects, so they could be a good resource for any comparative studies A4NH may want to pursue.
- In Phase I, Canada's contribution to A4NH through W2 was linked to a G8 commitment. John will look for ways to highlight past investments (nearly US\$60M in Phase I) and align with new and evolving Canadian interests in gender and nutrition (but the nutrition is less linked to agriculture than it was before).

Action	Timing <i>Responsibility</i>
Prepare and submit W2 proposal to the EC	November 30, 2017 <i>PMU (John with Amanda and Janet) with review by PMC (~November 22)</i>
Update Donor Funding 2018 and maintain latest version on TeamSpace	November 30, 2017 and then update at least quarterly <i>PMU (John and Tigist)</i>

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