

Structured Scan 03

The Methodology

Structured Scan 01: An overview of 38 MSP structured scans

Structured Scan 02: General Observations

Structured Scan 03: The Methodology



Evidence for **MS** Platforms

enhancing the effectiveness of
multi-stakeholder platforms in agrifood

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The Evidence for Multistakeholder Platforms (MSPs) research program looks at evidence for and perceptions on how effectively multistakeholder platforms contribute to sustainable solutions for agrifood issues. At the start of the program, structured scans were carried out of existing platforms.

Completed scans and initial analysis of findings can be found in the companion documents:

- > **Structured Scans 01: Overview of 38 structured scans**, <https://tinyurl.com/yc9rk7me>
- > **Structured Scans 02: General Observations**, <https://tinyurl.com/y7qhfzvt>

The purpose of the structured scans is to map the universe of existing agri-focused platforms to understand:

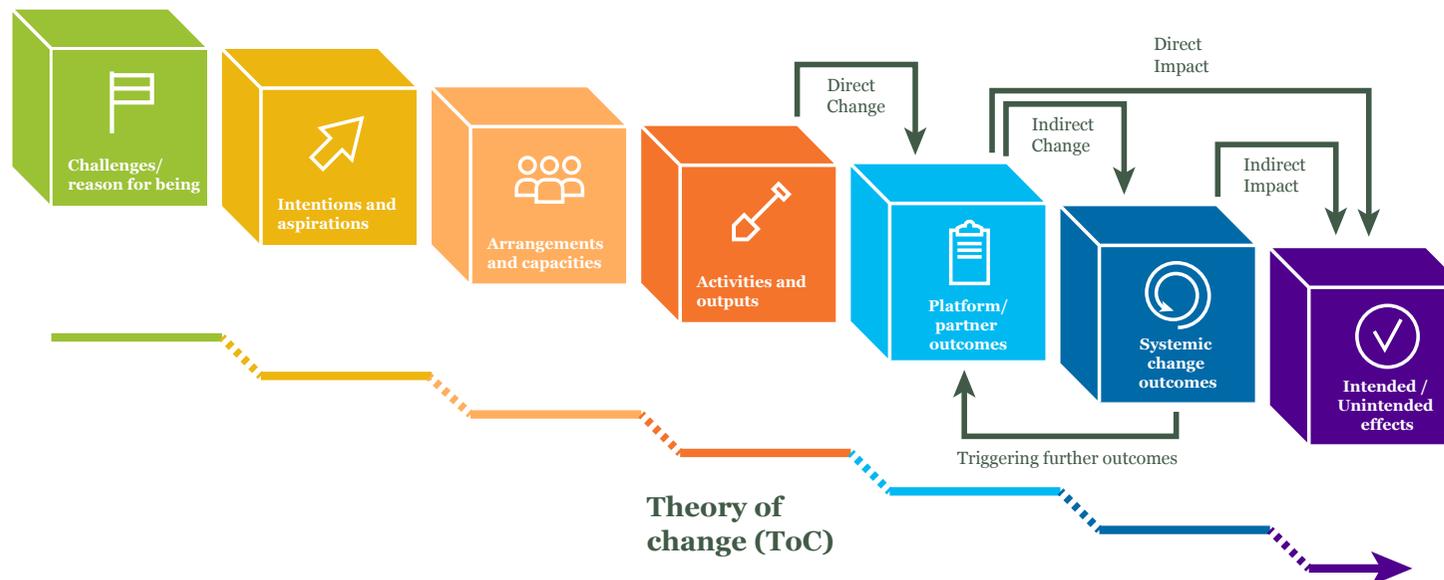
1. **Basic theories of change (ToC)**
2. **Current approaches to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and evidence used**
3. **How effectiveness of platform is assessed against their ToCs**

This document describes the structured process followed for each individual scan. It describes the criteria against which platforms were selected as well as definitions followed.

A **spreadsheet template** was carefully designed to capture key identifying features of the platforms studied. The template allowed consistent use by multiple researchers, leading to comparable information for further analysis.

Section 3 provides detailed information on each item in the template captured in the structured scans. This information was originally written as a manual how to follow the template designed. This style has been maintained so it can be used by anyone wanting to map further platforms. Should you do so, please do share your scans as we would welcome including them on our website.

For the reader who simply wants to understand the methodology followed, it is sufficient to focus on the definitions provided for each item. “How to” instructions can be readily skipped.



Program logic

The structured scans map the first part of the program's logical framework (see figure 1). This framework shows an assumed flow from the challenge that has led to the creation of a platform, through the role of the platform to deal with that challenge, how it is then set-up to carry out its intended role and on through to intended and unintended system change and impact. Publicly available information only allows the scans to touch the first half of this flow: reason for being, role and setup. The scans do not capture the second part in any detail, namely the mechanisms through which it creates impact and the aspired value for society and nature. The second part of the research program works with five platforms to look at this in depth. Future work of the research program will give lead to better understanding of how MSPs work in practice, and the kinds of evidence that is needed to assess whether they are being effective at carrying out their intended role.

Information sources

All the structured scans map information presented by platforms themselves through readily available sources, notably main platform website and documents that can be directly downloaded from there. In the case the platform did not have a website, the main information source could have been a press release, or the main donor's website. For example, the Patient Procurement Platform (now Farmers to Market Alliance) was described on the World Food Programme website.

We do not include information from members' websites or from third party sources. As much as possible the structured scans avoid interpreting the information provided by the platforms, and seek to capture it as faithfully as possible. Text is copied or paraphrased, with clear reference to verifiable sources.

At the structured scan stage, the research focused on mapping and not analysis. Therefore the structured scans do not critique or analyse the platform theory of change, M&E approach or evidence presented. They do not assess assumptions in the theory of change, quality of evidence provided or wider (positive or negative) impacts of the platform. Where the platforms themselves provided their own analysis it is reflected in the scans.

Several cycles of platform identification and selection led to the final shortlist of platforms for which structured scans were made. 50 platforms were selected that were thought to meet the following criteria. For 38 full structured scans could be completed, the others either did not prove to meet criteria or there was insufficient information available.

Criteria

Food and/or agriculture focus Does the platform focus on addressing challenges and achieving outcomes in agri-food value chains?

Open-ended or long-term time horizon Is the envisioned platform collaboration open-ended – i.e. without a specific end date which would be more typical of a project or programme; or alternatively, does it have a long-term (a decade or more) time horizon?

Multiple government and private sector members Does the platform have two or more members from the public sector and two or more members from the private sector?

Action oriented Does the platform seek to catalyse action – usually in terms of business investment, policy change or new initiative – i.e. avoiding collaborations and networks focused only on learning or knowledge exchange?

Target systemic challenges Does the platform seek to catalyse solutions to systemic challenges - in other words, challenges that are long-term, complex and which require a

combination of approaches to solve? Complex problems are influenced by many actors, and their multiple interactions affect outcomes in unpredictable ways.

Catalytic Does the platform seek to catalyse multiple initiatives, such as policy change, increased investment and partnerships, which are beyond the direct actions of the platform?

Definitions

We use the following definitions in defining the research focus and in describing research results.

Multi-stakeholder platform We define a multistakeholder platform (MSP) as an action-oriented collaboration between multiple private and public stakeholders, and possibly civil society members. MSPs seek sustainable solutions to complex and systemic challenges which no one party can achieve alone, catalysing multiple effects on a long-term or open-ended time horizon. We do not consider purely learning and knowledge networks.

Theory of Change A theory of change makes explicit presumed cause-and-effect changes that lead to how a system will function in the future, including desired outcomes and impacts. Each outcome is tied to one or more activities, with an often-complicated web of activities needed to deliver the change. The most important outcomes of change generated are not likely to be the direct effect of a specific activity, but rather wider changes in the system or. A theory of change should also capture thinking and assumptions on how change will happen.

(Platform) Secretariat A “secretariat” loosely designates the platform leadership, structures, administration and direct activities. It is distinct from the individual leadership, structures, administration and activities of platform members or participants. In some cases, platforms may have an actual secretariat, with dedicated offices and staff. However, in others there may be a much smaller and/or more informal structure such as a coordination team, possibly housed in a larger institution.

(Platform) Members or participants Throughout this document we use the term “member” to designate the direct participants in the platform, who commit to the aims of the platform and invest time, effort and often funding towards these aims. Some platforms may use other terms – e.g. participant or even partner to refer to what this document calls members.

3. Structured scan: explanatory overview

The entire following section gives details on how the structured scans were built from a common spreadsheet template. These details are written as instructions for any who may wish to use the spreadsheet to easily follow the same process for additional platforms. A definition is given for each item in the spreadsheet, which makes clear what the central question is of that item as well as specific instructions how to answer the question. Practical guidance is given what to look for; this is not exhaustive but is to trigger a researcher's creativity.

The spreadsheet template can be downloaded here:

> **Excell template**, <https://tinyurl.com/yaz9ghlk>

General instructions

- Add the name and logo of the platform, location, name of researcher and date at the top of the spreadsheet. Add also the main source used for the scan (in most cases this will be the main platform website)
- In response to each question in the methodology, select relevant text from platform documents and website, and paste into excel sheet under "Platform Information" (column F).
- Researchers will need to exercise judgement in responding to the sections. The aim is to capture enough information to paint a clear picture of platform scope, purpose and function, but not necessarily to capture every detail. It is important to be clear where information is taken verbatim, and where it is altered, and to have a clear source to go back to full data if needed.
- The "What to look for" guidance in each sub-section of the methodology is NOT intended to be a prescriptive list or set of categories. Rather it is intended to help point the researchers to where the relevant information might likely be found on a platform website.
- If no information can be found for an item (ie row in the spreadsheet), please add n/a in Column F. Most platforms will have n/a in at least some of the cells. Researchers should not try to fill all the cells with data but to accurately reflect what is reported by platforms, including indicating where no relevant information is presented.
- In Column G, please summarise the response from Column F in 50 words.
- Include the source where data came from in Column H. Add either the link to webpage or name of document, to allow others to trace back to it, including specific details such as date accessed, or page numbers for documents in Column I.
- Where clarifications or comments are needed – for example if the researcher has found conflicting information, or believes that there is a further story beyond the publicly presented information, these should be included in the 'Researcher Comments' column (Column J).
- Please use "direct quotes" to indicate text that has been copied directly. However, where the response to a specific question is lengthy, then it is acceptable to paraphrase/ summarise, as long as there is a clear reference to the original source(s), so that the full information can be easily located if needed.

Summary Description (one line)

Definition: Please summarise in one line what is the objective of the platform, in terms of goal, geography, crop (if appropriate) and membership.

What to look for:

- Short statement on homepage of website or the “About Us” page
- Where a succinct summary is not available, researcher would compose this based on their understanding of the platform scope and objectives.

Duration/maturity

Definition: This question captures the length of time the platform has existed, in number of years. In most cases this will be a simple statement of the year the platform started and a calculation of the number of years it has been in existence, and wherever possible responses should be quantitative. However, there may be some cases where platforms have merged and morphed over time, where such as simple statement is not possible. In this case a short description of the evolution of the platform and key dates over time is also acceptable.

What to look for:

- Date started
- “History” or “Timeline” section

Crop/(s)

Definition: This question helps to define the scope of activity of the platform. Some platforms will be very specific in their crop focus (e.g. “cashew”), while others may have a broader scope (“horticulture”). In still other cases, platforms will have no specific crop focus at all and will instead address other issues (food security) which cut across a number of crops. The researcher should capture the appropriate crop(s), or indicate, “no specific crop focus”. Where some crops are listed, researcher should be sure to ensure whether the list is exhaustive or indicative.

What to look for:

- Crop(s) indicated in the platform name
- Crop(s) described in the About Us section
- Activities

Geographic scope of the platform

Definition: This question helps to define the scope of activity of the platform. Some platforms will be very specific in their geographical focus (e.g. specific country), while others may have a broader scope (“Africa”). Often this scope will be indicated as part of the name, “Grow Africa”. In some cases, platforms may be global and have no specific geographical focus. The researcher should capture the country(s) or region(s) where the platform intends to operate or indicate, “no specific geographical focus”. Where some countries or regions are listed, researcher should be sure to ensure the list defines the scope of platform activity (e.g. African Cashew Initiative), rather than the main countries of activity.

For example, Roundtable on Responsible Soy (RTRS) may focus on Brazil and a handful of major soy producers, but is not limited to this scope – any country that produces soy could

be included. So the answer for RTRS would be “no specific geographical focus”. Note that the scope may be sub-national – e.g. SAGCOT focuses on the southern corridor of Tanzania.

What to look for:

- Country or region indicated in the platform name
- Country or region described in the About Us section
- Activities

Current geographic activity

Definition: This question indicates where the platform is currently active. In some cases, this will be the same as the scope, e.g. the Ghana Grains Partnership has Ghana as its scope and also where it is currently active. However, in other cases, the platform may be active only in some areas that are part of its potential scope. For example, the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition has Africa as its scope, but is currently active in 10 countries in Africa, and not the whole continent. Often the current geographic activity is found in a list of countries or regions. Note that the area of activity may be sub-national – e.g. SAGCOT work in the southern corridor of Tanzania.

What to look for:

- Country or region described in the About Us section
- List of partner or member countries
- Activities

Private sector members

Definition: The aim is to identify all the private sector members of the platform by name. However, where the list is longer than 10-15, then it would be better to describe the private sector members (how many and what type of companies) and add a link or other source in order to access the full list. Where platforms do not list their members, then a description should be developed based on interpretation from the website and other relevant materials.

What to look for:

- “Who Are We”
- Membership section
- List of registered members
- Membership type
- List of members of working groups or other committees can also shed light

Government Members

Definition: The aim is to identify by name all the specific governments, government agencies or government ministries that are members of the platform. Care should be taken to only list members and not government bodies that the platform engages with or partners with as an external entity. Where the list is longer than 10-15, then it would be better to describe the government members (how many and what type) and add a link or other source in order to access the full list. Where platforms do not list their members, then a description should be developed based on interpretation from the website and other relevant materials.

What to look for:

- “Who Are We”
- Membership section
- List of registered members
- Membership type
- List of members of working groups or other committees can also shed light

International/Regional Donors and Agencies

Definition: The aim is to identify by name all the donors and multi-lateral agencies that are members of the platform. This may include bilateral donors, multi-lateral donors, the World Bank, UN agencies or other regional or international development agencies. Many, though not all, will be funding agencies. Care should be taken to only list members and not agencies that might collaborate with the platform or provide funds for specific activities but which are not members. Where platforms do not list their members, then a description should be developed based on interpretation from the website and other relevant materials

What to look for:

- “Who Are We”
- Membership section
- List of registered members
- Membership type
- List of members of working groups or other committees can also shed light

Civil Society / NGOs members

Definition: The aim is to identify by name all NGOs and civil society organisations that are members of the platform. This may include international or local organisations (but not farmers’ associations, as these are listed separately). Care should be taken to only list members and not organisations that are implementing partners but not members. Where platforms do not list their members, then a description should be developed based on interpretation from the website and other relevant materials.

What to look for:

- “Who Are We”
- Membership section
- List of registered members
- Membership type
- List of members of working groups or other committees can also shed light

Farmers' Organisations

Definition: The aim is to identify by name all farmers' organisations that are members of the platform. This may include producer organisations, as well as umbrella associations of farmers.

Care should be taken to only list members and not organisations that are implementing partners but not members. Where platforms do not list their members, then a description should be developed based on interpretation from the website and other relevant materials

What to look for:

- “Who Are We”
- Membership section
- List of registered members
- Membership type
- List of members of working groups or other committees can also shed light

Expert / Technical / Research members

Definition: The aim is to identify by name all expert organisations that are members of the platform. This may include researchers, technical experts and academic organisations, for example (though not NGOs and civil society organisations, which may also provide expert input but which are not primarily technical or research bodies).

Care should be taken to only list members and not, for example, organisations that are external advisors but not members.

Where platforms do not list their members, then a description may be developed based on interpretation from the website and other relevant materials.

What to look for:

- “Who Are We”
- Membership section
- List of registered members
- Membership type
- List of members of working groups or other committees can also shed light

Other members

Definition: This section captures any other members that do not fit under one of the other headings. Care should be taken to only list members and not partners that are external to the platform.

What to look for:

- “Who Are We”
- Membership section
- List of registered members
- Membership type
- List of members of working groups or other committees can also shed light

Funds committed (per member if available)

Definition: In this section we are looking for quantitative and ideally disaggregated information on the amount of financial support (amount of money) which has been pledged by individual members of the platform - usually the private sector and donor members – where available. The aim here is not so much to capture how much money the secretariat has mobilised (this is covered under section 3), but rather a picture of individual member contributions. Ideally this information will be disaggregated, though in some cases only aggregated information is possible. Where the list is longer than 10-15 members' contribution, then it would be better to describe the funds committed (how much and by what type of members) and add a link or other source in order to access the full list.

Some platforms do not involve specific financial commitments by members, in which case the response should be “none”.

What to look for:

- Financial commitments
- Letter of Intent or Agreement documents
- Evaluation documents / progress against commitments

Funds spent (per member if available)

Definition: In this section we are looking for quantitative and ideally disaggregated information on the amount of funds which has been disbursed by individual members of the platform - usually the private sector and donor members – where available. This may be expressed in an amount of money, or a % of the commitment. Ideally this information will be disaggregated, though in some cases only aggregated information is possible. Where the list is longer than 10-15 members' disbursements, then it would be better to describe the funds disbursed (how much and by what type of members) and add a link or other source in order to access the full list. Some platforms do not involve specific financial commitments by members, in which case the response should be “none”.

What to look for:

- Evaluation documents / progress against commitments

Other relevant information

Definition: This section captures any further general information regarding the platform which seems crucial in understanding the size, scope, reach or other basic characteristics of the platform that might influence its effectiveness.

What to look for:

- Any general information regarding platform scope that doesn't fit under other headings in section 3

This section sets out the key data which positions the platform in relation to a challenge(s) and/or an agenda.

What is the challenge/problem the platform wants to address?

Definition: Given the high commitment of time and energy required to implement platforms, it is assumed that platform members would not come together in this way if there were not a clear need. This question asks for an articulation of the major problem or challenge or failure faced by the country, sector, commodity etc that is the target of the platform. By understanding the platform's definition of the problem, we are better able to understand the motives that lie behind platform goals.

Note: Some platforms may not set out the problem explicitly, and only provide their goals and objectives (from which their definition of challenges could be deduced). Researchers

should focus on capturing the problems set out by the platform, or – if some interpretation of the platform statements into an articulation of the challenge would be helpful – it should be clear that these are interpretations.

What to look for:

- Explanations of the rationale behind the platform vision and goals
- Problem statements
- Need statement
- Problems outlines in relevant (policy) agendas linked to – e.g. CAADP, SDGs

What is the value added of the platform?

Definition: This question seeks to understand (from the perspective of the platform), why a platform involving a mix of stakeholders is the best way address the challenge/problem articulated. Why this challenge is not being/cannot be adequately addressed by individual actors or existing groups of actors. The purpose of the question is to understand the perceived value of the platform, versus other forms of arrangements or solutions.

What to look for:

- “Value proposition”
- Explanation of the roles or resources contributed by different actors towards the solution
- Explanation of failed approaches in the past

Who started the platform?

Definition: This question asks for the name of the organisation or organisations that led the initial development of the platform, where available. This information can help in further understanding what was the original challenge that the platform perceived and set out to address, how the challenge is framed or defined, and by whom.

What to look for:

- Description of the origin in a ‘history’ section
- List of founding members

Other background information about the creation of the platform

Definition: This section captures any further information regarding the initial development of the platform, in order to better understand the original challenge that the platform perceived and set out to address.

What to look for:

- Any information regarding the origin of the platform that doesn't fit under B.2 or B.3

Other relevant information

Definition: This section captures any further information regarding the articulation of the problems and challenges faced and why current solutions are ineffective and therefore platform approach can make a difference.

What to look for:

- Any information regarding problems and challenges that doesn't fit under other headings in section 3

This section is about the role that the platform is intended to play and the difference it is intended to make.

Platform's Mission and/or Vision

Definition: An overarching, topline statement of what the platform is trying to achieve across its lifetime. This is the highest level statement of the platform's intentions, against which effectiveness could be evaluated.

What to Look for, e.g.:

- Mission statement
- Blueprint
- “The difference they want to make”
- Overarching framework that guides platform activities
- May include vague or generic statements, e.g. support SDGs

Key Objectives or Goal(s) of the Platform

Definition: Long-term goal(s) which contribute to the overarching mission or vision of the platform. Some platforms may articulate different types of goals – which may include long-term impacts and shorter-term and more direct outcomes. However, they should articulate broad goals and not outputs or activities, and should be general across the platform (i.e. not just apply to one member). These may be measurable, though do not necessarily need to be. They represent a rearticulation of the overarching mission and what the platform is trying to achieve.

What to look for:

- Intended “goals” or “objectives”
- “The difference they want to make” section
- General goals linked to “transformation” or “food security”, for example, which seek broad-based benefits for a sector, region or population

Values and Principles

Definition: This questions seeks to identify any values, principles, norms of behaviour, etc, which articulate how the platform is intended to work and how the members of the platform are expected to behave as they implement their commitments or agreed activities. It asks for an articulation of principles and norms (“how”) and not about activities (“what”).

What to look for:

- Espoused values or principles of platform
- Code of conduct and or principles that all members sign up to

What is the public good the platform wants to contribute to?

Definition: By public good we refer to the general (rather than economic) meaning of public good – these are outcomes that result in shared benefit amongst various (though not necessarily all) actors in society. For platforms these refer to outcomes that benefit not only its various members but also have wider societal value. These may include outcomes that are traditionally considered public goods in the economic sense – such as a clean environment, public infrastructure or education – but are not limited to this definition and may include improved access to nutritious food. The value of capturing this information is to better understand the impact the platform is trying to achieve – and whether these are explicitly intended to include broad societal outcomes (versus societal benefits that occur but which are unintended positive spillovers). It is possible that not all platforms have public good

objectives. They may have goals that aim to deliver benefit across their members (though value chain coordination or improved productivity) without necessarily seeking more generalised benefits for society. It is important that this section is left blank if the platform is not explicit about public goods objectives, or if researchers add their own interpretation here, this should be made clear

What to look for:

- Terms such as “shared value”, “shared benefit”
- “The difference they want to make” section
- Goals such as improve food security, reduce poverty and ensure environmental sustainability.

Target group

Definition: This section asks about the intended beneficiaries of the platform. The target groups may include both platform members, and other stakeholders that are not part of the membership. They may be defined in terms of populations, sectors, types of companies, etc. Responses in this category should set out who these beneficiary groups are, as defined by the platform, and how each group relates to the platform (e.g. based on the outcomes they will achieve and/or how they participate in the platform). The aim is to help understand the intentions of the platform not only in terms of quantitative outcomes, but who is intended to benefit from these outcomes.

What to look for:

- Explanation of who will have access to improvements created by the platform – e.g. infrastructure
- Numbers of beneficiaries as part of objectives – e.g. 100,000 smallholder farmers; 500 SMEs

Strategies/Approach

Definition: This is a topline statement of “how” the platform intends to achieve its goals. In other words, what innovation the platform is bringing in terms of arrangements or activities that will allow it to overcome the challenges/problems articulated and achieve the change it is seeking. This is the highest level statement of the organization’s strategies.

What to look for:

- An early summary – usually in the executive summary, value proposition or frontpage of the website, of how the platform will achieve its goals.
- “How we work” section
- An explanation of how the platform will bring together its different members in pursuit of its goals

Other

Definition: This section captures any further information regarding the intentions and aspirations of the platform.

What to look for:

- Any information regarding vision, goals, values, beneficiaries or topline strategies that doesn’t fit under other headings in section 3

This is about the way in which the platform is set up, its organisational forms, structures and key processes, and its governance

Board (or equivalent)

Definition: The purpose of this section is to identify the top-level leadership, according to the platform. Who is responsible for setting or guiding platform priorities and overall strategy, listing individuals as well as their organisations. This will often be a Board of Trustees or Board of Directors. However, the leadership may take other forms, such as informal leadership councils.

What to look for:

- Board leadership
- Leadership Council

Governance structures and key members

Definition: This section identifies the other bodies (apart from the Board) or functions within the platform that are empowered to advise on or make decisions regarding the platform. This includes the overall secretariat, as well as any supporting structures, such as working groups or advisory committees. Responses should describe the structures and the membership – either by listing actual committee members and chairs of committees, or summarising the number and types of organisations represented, as well as the key responsibilities of each structure.

What to look for:

- Secretariat structure, location and executives
- Internal or External Advisory committees, membership and terms of reference
- Working groups addressing specific issues or aspects of the platforms, membership and terms of reference
- Stakeholder representation on these bodies

Organisational structure

Definition: This section sets out the organisational structure of the platform – how it is set up to implement decisions made. This includes the organisation of the secretariat, as well how members relate to the secretariat. Responses should describe the structures and the topline responsibilities for major roles within the structure.

What to look for:

- Organisational charts for secretariat
- Organisational charts or diagram sketching out the platform members and how they relate to the secretariat and each other
- Diagram or summary of different levels or types of membership

Structure and content of membership requirements

Definition: This section captures the structure and key content of any written agreements between the members and the platform, such as a memorandum of understanding; or between individual members in the platform, such as letters of intent by individual governments or companies. These are unlikely to be formal contracts, but they should have a formality that general communications (website, brochure, reports) do not. The main audience of these documents are likely to be the parties to the agreement, but they may also be publically available for purposes of transparency and accountability. It will also indicate membership fees, where applicable.

What to look for:

- “Membership Requirements”
- Formal documents, such as letters, MoUs.
- Reference to formal documents, such as letters, MoUs – even if these are not publicly available.

Secretariat role

Definition: This section describes the role of the secretariat within the platform and the boundaries of that role (what the secretariat will not do). The purpose is to try to understand the respective roles and contributions of the secretariat (versus the platform members) in achieving the vision and objectives of the platform. This is distinct from question 3.4.1 which is more about listing the activities of the secretariat.

What to look for:

- Description of secretariat functions
- Size of secretariat

Financial support (secretariat)

Definition: This sections sets out the main sources of central funding for the platform secretariat to carry out its activities. This funding may come from governments, from member companies and/or from bilateral or multi-lateral donors. It does not include investment funds that the secretariat administers, or other financing by members – e.g. donor or company investment for specific purposes, e.g. a piece of infrastructure. The response will capture which bodies provide the funding for the secretariat, as well as (ideally) the amount of funding received.

What to look for:

- A list of funders or references to “funders”
- Representation on the Board of Trustees, where this is based on funding relationships

Funds disbursed by secretariat

Definition: This sections sets out other funding that the platform manages or controls, which is disbursed to third parties, such as challenge funds or catalytic funds. This funding may come from governments, from member companies and/or from bilateral or multi-lateral donors. It focuses on funds that the secretariat will disburse or use to catalyse further investment and does not include direct donor or company investment (ie which is not administered or managed by the secretariat). The response will capture which bodies provide the funding, as well as (ideally) the amount of funding received.

What to look for:

- A list of funders or references to “funders”
- Source funding for financing mechanisms (e.g. challenge funds or catalytic funds) controlled by the secretariat

Other relevant information

Definition: This section captures any further information regarding platform arrangements and capacities.

What to look for:

- Any information regarding platform arrangements and capacities that doesn't fit under other headings in section 3

This is about what the platform essentially does and delivers. It focuses on both the activities that the secretariat directly performs and those which the secretariat mobilises from amongst its members. For example, a certain type of research or tool might be commissioned by the secretariat and this might be provided by one of the members. It could also, for example, include interactions and plans of platform members that are developed in the context of a platform workshop. It would not include private sector investments (e.g. in a factory) which might be the outcome of the platform activities but is not a direct output.

Core activities

Definition: This section provides a high level overview of what the secretariat does on a regular basis to support the platform as a whole (rather than specific products and services in the next 2 questions). This may include awareness raising, representation of its members on other bodies, mobilising new members, catalysing funding, etc. Where there is a long list of activities, researchers may group and summarise (though indicating where this is the researcher's interpretation).

What to look for:

- Activities involving awareness raise and the platform 'brand'
- Activities involving mobilisation (of members, funds)
- Activities involving representation of the platform in other fora
- Activities involving enforcement (e.g. of commitments, principles)
- Key administrative activities

Core products

Definition: This section identifies specific products that the platform produces, which may be used by one or more of its members and stakeholders. For example, this may include communication and knowledge products, such as research and tools, or financing products such as a technical assistance facility.

What to look for:

- Research and tools
- Financing mechanisms administered by the secretariat

Core services

Definition: This section identifies specific services that the platform offers, which may be used by one or more of its members and stakeholders.

What to look for:

- Training and capacity building
- Information services (e.g. around land availability; investment showcases)
- Brokering functions (e.g. between specific members, rather than in relation to the platform as a whole)
- Advice and analysis

Other relevant information

Definition: This section captures any further information regarding platform activities and output.

What to look for:

- Any information regarding activities and outputs that doesn't fit under other headings in section 3.4

This is about how the platform tracks performance and effects. Monitoring and evaluation processes aims to assess current platform performance in terms of outputs, outcomes and/or impact in relation to goals, and to improve management of the platform through learning and feedback provided. Processes may be set up primarily to response to government and donor requirements, although (modified) processes can also be understood as a crucial part of company and platform management and decision-making.

Approach to/plans for M&E

Definition: This section seeks to identify the intentions of the platform regarding M&E plan. This may include an overarching M&E plan and/or whether it requires any formal M&E from members. The aim is to try to understand what information the platform is trying to capture that contributes to (a) assessment of effectiveness and (b) improved management. It may also include, for example, services or financing that the secretariat provides in order to enable (better) M&E by members.

What to look for:

- M&E Plan
- M&E requirements of members
- Requirements to report on key performance indicators

Actual M&E performed

Definition: This section seeks to understand what type of M&E (if any) the platform has performed and/or has been performed by members in relation to platform activities. The question looks for a statement that assessment(s) have taken place, as well as other relevant details (when, by whom, scope). Where the assessment is publically available, a link or reference to the source document should be provided, so that that could be followed up in future; however, the question does not ask for the results of the assessment(s).

What to look for:

- Statement that M&E is performed by platform and/or members
- Information on the parameters of the assessment(s)
- Evidence that the assessment(s) has/have actually taken place (e.g. M&E reports)
- Logframe
- Results chains

Use of M&E input in decision making or learning

Definition: Where an M&E assessment has taken place, this section seeks to understand whether any of the findings have influenced decision-making or led to adaptations in platform processes and design, either at the level of the platform or its members. These are likely to be in the form of statements identifying key challenges or key learnings and how the platform or its members have responded. The aim is to try to understand whether M&E is being used to contribute to improved platform effectiveness.

What to look for:

- Key learnings
- Key challenges
- Strategy updates

Other relevant information

Definition: This section captures any further information regarding monitoring and evaluation.

What to look for:

- Any information regarding M&E that doesn't fit under other headings in section 3