



MFA Forum Executive Committee Meeting

Agenda

1. Updates on following working groups:
 - a. Bangladesh
 - b. Lesotho
 - c. Morocco
 - d. Americas
 - e. Responsible Closure
2. MFA Forum strategy meeting - brief on strategic options
3. Update on Finance
4. Any other business

Attendees:

Lynda Yanz, MSN
Duncan Pruett, Oxfam International
Susan Hayter, ILO
Oscar Ortega, Inditex
Simon Zadek, AccountAbility (Chair)
Miriam Neale, AccountAbility (Minutes, 1st September)
Judy Gearhart, SAI (Observer)
Patterson Brown, USAID (Observer)

Apologies:

Jose Salazar, ILO
Alan Roberts, ETI
Javier Chercoles, Inditex
Sasha Radovich, AccountAbility

Update on Americas

There was an Americas Working Group meeting in San Francisco on 1st August. It was a very productive meeting and next steps were discussed in depth, with further discussion by teleconference planned. A workplan with key principles is likely to be presented at the strategy meeting and further outreach to other brands in the region is planned.



It is not yet decided if this group will focus its work in a specific country. There seems to be considerable scope for collaboration at the regional level, and to address the issue of responsible closure in the region.

Update on Morocco

Stakeholders in Morocco seem open to MFA Forum engagement there and there is willingness to collaborate.

The ILO is leading there and has offered to host an MFAF conference in Morocco, some time from 17th November onwards.

Update on Responsible Closure

The Responsible Closure working group first met in June and has recently clarified next steps to propose at the strategy meeting. The RC group proposes compiling case studies of different closure scenarios and the particular challenges that arise in different situations. The aim being to identify responsibilities of different actors and identify best practice.

The ExCo emphasized the need to set out practical action that can be taken with regard to closures. MSN is looking to draw up an education tool that outlines what different groups should be doing in relation to closures.

Update on Bangladesh

The Bangladesh WG has drawn up a concept paper proposing a 3-month steering committee, including the Secretariat and local stakeholders, to develop a 3 year project plan for collaborative action to sustain the RMG industry. This will be reviewed next week and is currently being reviewed by stakeholders.

Update on Lesotho

The Lesotho WG has developed a Terms of Reference to guide the work going forward and this will be discussed at the strategy meeting. Key issues are how the group is led and how the MFAF works with stakeholders in the country.

Strategy options

The interviews and teleconferences undertaken in the last two months have raised various views as to how the MFAF should work in future.

Different views tabled for strategy meeting include:

1. We need to become more structured, disciplined, and mobilize resource to accelerate work in-country. Otherwise inertia and lack of resource/time will mean we slow down.

Versus

The MFA Forum



2. We need to get more efficient but should basically maintain work approach as it is today, not more structured, entrepreneurial as it is today.

In addition, some are saying that:

3. We need to get more involved in implementation (e.g. resourcing, budget management)
4. We should only be involved in implementing in a facilitation role (i.e. and not manage budgets)
5. One constituency saying that we should engage with a single partner in the country to implement.
6. We need an in-country capacity in the country, and partners are not a substitute to this.

The Secretariat view is that we need to step up managerial and implementation effectiveness of the MFAF, but do not need a step-wise change.

Some views from ExCo are:

- There are very different experiences from country to country so we should keep working as we are.
- It is important to build a relationship with the government and get results, and it is necessary to be in the country for this.

Update on Finance

It seems to the Secretariat that there is a significant difference in terms of the finance needed to manage work on the ground as opposed to a relatively light strategy so far.

The Secretariat would rather leverage funding with participant involvement. The ExCo was supportive of this.

USAID and the Levi Foundation have committed to funding the MFA Forum core. The Secretariat is in conversation with companies about funding.

AOB

Oxfam International is considering how they can become involved in the Morocco work and the other MFAF working groups as there has been a change in the representatives on the MFAF. Duncan and Sandra will discuss this with participants face-to-face at the strategy meetings.

Actions

- Arrange an ExCo breakfast meeting from 8am - 9am on 6th September.
- Arrange telephone-based ExCo the week following strategy meeting.