

Minutes from meeting in the External Panel on 3 September 2026

- Members: Director Katja Lindskov Jacobsen, University of Copenhagen (Chair)
Chief Advisor Mattias Söderberg, DanChurchAid (Deputy chair)
Senior Researcher Adam Moe Fejerskov, Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS)
Director Dorte Petersen, PlanBørnefonden
Chief for International Sustainability Irene Quist Mortensen, Arla Foods
Special advisor to the UN Secretary-General Jens Wandel, United Nations (UN) (online)
Professor John Rand, University of Copenhagen
Entrepreneur Nicolai Sederberg Rottbøll, Our World 2050
Senior Director for Policy, Programme and Partnerships Sanne Frost Helt, World Diabetes Foundation
- MFA: Under-Secretary for Development Policy Ole Thonke
Head of Department Tove Degnol, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, LEARNING
Deputy Head of Department Mette Bech Pilgaard, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, LEARNING
Head of Section Lotte Blom Salmonsens, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, LEARNING
- Agenda item 2: Head of Secretariat Anette Aarestrup, Secretariat for Government-to-Government Cooperation, MYNSEK
- Agenda item 3: Head of Department Karen Grønlund Røge, Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Policy, MULTI
Team Leader Mads Wegner Hove, Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Policy, MULTI
Special Advisor Nanna Svejborg, Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Policy, MULTI
Chief Advisor Simon Feldbæk Peitersen, Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Policy, MULTI (online)

Agenda item 1: Opening remarks

The Under-Secretary for Development Policy gave a brief orientation of the postponement of the proposed finance act 2027 until primo October. Further, he briefly commented on the public debate regarding development cooperation.

With reference to the Rules of Procedure for the External Panel, the Chair asked if members had any conflicts of interest related to the agenda item. No member announced potential conflict of interest.

Agenda item 2: Introduction to Strategic Sector Cooperation (SSC)

The Head of the Secretariat for Government-to-Government Cooperation (MYNSEK) gave an introduction to Strategic Sector Cooperation (SSC) and explained how the Ministry is working with the matter. The Panel subsequently raised questions and discussed, among other matters, exit strategies for the SSC-projects, follow-up on the mid-term review conducted in 2025, monitoring of results, and incorporation of local (and civil) stakeholders.

Agenda item 3: International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions (ICARS) 2026-2030

DKK 313.3 million

Department for Multilateral Cooperation (MULTI)

The Panel welcomed the proposed project and underlined the importance of the agenda concerning antimicrobial resistance (AMR), noting that it remains an under-prioritised agenda.

The Panel recommended:

- To ensure that the importance of the agenda concerning Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) is clearly reflected throughout the project document.
- To clarify the added value of ICARS, elaborate on the concrete targets for results, and clearly outline the role of ICARS in the international AMR architecture in the project document.
- To develop a strategy for how to secure financial sustainability for the organisation.
- To secure finance for implementation of multisectoral AMR National Action Plans (NAP), with a focus on localisation and scaling.
- To ensure a stronger focus on poverty, participation of the private sector, localisation, and climate risks in the project design.

Other issues mentioned by the Panel included how ICARS is working with equal partnerships; the role of ICARS in fragile and conflicted contexts; caution when scaling up; importance of clarifying the criteria for choosing projects; administrative costs and in-country costs; the need to strengthen the theory of change (ToC) by focusing on assumptions and how ICARS expects to

achieve results; recommendation to prepare a baseline; the need to improve the risk assessment, including fragility, policy and climate; and recommendation to make the project document less generic.