



**GLOBAL DONOR PLATFORM FOR RURAL
DEVELOPMENT
STOCKTAKING REPORT**

Report prepared by:
Dr. Jim Woodhill, Independent Consultant, AgriFood Nexus
Ms. Mandakini Surie, Independent consultant
Ms. Sylvia Otieno, Researcher and Intern with IFAD

Table of Contents

Acronyms	iii
Executive Summary	iv
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Methodology	1
1.2 Background.....	2
1.3 Value Add	3
1.4 Context	5
2 Performance and Achievements	8
2.1 Overview.....	8
2.2 Thematic working groups	10
2.2.1 Land governance	11
2.2.2 SDG2 Roadmap.....	15
2.2.3 Rural Youth	18
2.2.4 Inclusive Agri-business and Trade	21
2.2.5 Gender	22
2.2.6 Climate Change	23
2.2.7 Summary Analysis of Thematic Working Groups	24
2.3 Annual General Assembly.....	25
2.4 GDPRD Contribution to the SDGs	28
2.5 Communications and Outreach	28
3 Governance and Operations	31
3.1 Board.....	31
3.2 Membership	31
3.3 Secretariat	33
3.4 Funding.....	35
4 Conclusions and Recommendations	37
4.1 Key Contradictions and Dilemmas	37
4.2 Future Relevance	39
4.3 Membership	39
4.4 Funding.....	41
4.5 Purpose and Objectives.....	42
4.5.1 Strategic Influence.....	45

4.5.2	Knowledge brokering.....	47
4.5.3	Networking and convening.....	48
4.6	Thematic Focus	49
4.7	Services to Members.....	51
4.8	Operational Modalities.....	52
4.9	Board and Secretariat.....	53
4.10	Communications and Outreach	54
4.11	New Strategic Plan	55
5	Compilation of Recommendations.....	56
Annexes	61
	Annex 1. Terms of Reference for development of the GDPRD Strategic Plan 2021-2025	61
	Annex 2. List of Platform Documents Reviewed	64
	Annex 3. Current List of Platform Members	65
	Annex 4. Key Informant Interview Questions	66
	Annex 5. List of Interview Respondents	67
	Annex 6. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development Member Survey	68
	Annex 7. Outline for Strategic Plan	74

Acronyms

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFC	French Development Agency
AfDB	Africa Development Bank
AUC	Africa Union Commission
BMGF	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia
EC	European Commission
ECDPM	The European Centre for Development Policy Management
FCDO	Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDA	French Development Agency
FOLU	Food and Land Use Coalition
GAIN	Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
GDPRD	Global Donor Platform for Rural Development
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GLOPAN	Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition
IADC	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
ICTSD	International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ITC	International Trade Centre
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LuxDev	Luxembourg Agency for Development Cooperation
MEAE	Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs France
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition Movement
TWGs	Thematic Working Groups
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organization

Executive Summary

The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD) was established in 2003 to bring together donors that share a common vision on the role of agriculture and rural development (ARD) in tackling global poverty and hunger. It convenes donor organizations making substantive investments in agriculture, rural development, and food systems issues, to exchange information, discuss emerging priority issues, and determine effective strategies to address them. Nearly two decades on, with a membership of 40 donor and multilateral organisations, the Platform remains highly relevant and valued by its members as a unique forum for the global donor community. However, to retain its relevance in the future, the Platform must respond to new challenges and opportunities in its external environment and its internal operations.

To reflect on these issues, in February 2020, the Board members of the GDPRD, mandated the Secretariat to develop the new Strategic Plan (2021-2025)¹, and as a part of that process commission a stock-taking analysis of the Platform's activities, performance, and achievements over a five-year period (2015-2020). This coincides with a transition of the hosting organisation of the platform from GIZ to IFAD. This report presents the findings from the stock-taking analysis which was conducted between July – November 2020. It involved a detailed literature review, key informant interviews with the Platform members, and an online survey. The report, and the decisions that flow from its recommendations, will be the basis from which the new strategic plan is formulated.

Based on the findings of this report, it is possible to posit a “glass half full” and a “glass half empty” position for where the Platform currently stands. On the one hand, in light of increasing global attention to the critical importance of food and food systems issues to achieving the SDGs, the Platform has a key and strategic role to play in assisting donors to align their thinking and investment strategies and to ensure that food and rural development issues remain high on government and donor agendas. There is also no doubt that over the last five years the GDPRD has made series of valuable contributions to the global agenda of rural development and food systems (agricultural development/food and nutrition security) and provided a much-valued networking function. On the other hand, it is also evident that the Platform today is grappling with a set of critical issues regarding its objectives, membership, governance structure, functions, and operations. These factors have constrained its performance over the recent past. To realise its full potential and to remain relevant into the future, the Platform will need to address and resolve these issues.

The work of the GDPRD sits at the intersection of a set of critical global issues that have a profound impact on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and longer-term human prosperity and security. Delivering sufficient nutritionally diverse, safe, and sustainably produced food to consumers in urban and rural areas is one of the most critically important challenges the world has to face. At the same time, vast numbers of people in rural areas continue to face poverty, inequality, and vulnerability, with the potential for widespread humanitarian crises, social and political instability, and migration pressures. These challenges will be greatly exacerbated by climate change. However, there are also substantial opportunities for responding driven by growing food demands, increased awareness of food and climate issues, and technological innovation.

¹ Every five years, the Platform members agree on a new Strategic Plan, which guides the work of the GDPRD, including its strategic orientations, vision and mission, results measurement framework, governance, and funding.

The GDPRD can play a key role by assisting donors to align their thinking and investment strategies, by helping to ensure that food and rural development issues are appropriately prioritised within overall development financing, by identifying proactive and timely responses to emerging issues and crises, and through enabling donors to learn from each other's policy and programming experiences. The challenges and necessary responses require systemic thinking and approaches that cut across traditional sectoral and stakeholder boundaries. There is arguably a profound need for the global donor community to align and coordinate in helping to bring about the systemic change so urgently needed and for which the wellbeing of so many of the world's most vulnerable people will depend.

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Overall

Conclusion 1.1: The Platform is widely seen as an important, valuable and unique mechanism for helping to optimise the impact and alignment of donor investments, and has particular relevance in the context of the emerging food systems agenda and the need to accelerate progress on the SDGs. However, over recent years, while having made some important and valuable contributions, the Platform has not realised its full potential, nor had a sufficiently high profile within donor agencies or with the wider development sector.

Conclusion 1.2: The transition of the Platform's Secretariat to IFAD, the continued commitment of a set of lead donors to the Platform and the need for an aligned engagement of donors in the Food Systems Summit process creates the conditions for successfully reinvigorating the Platform.

Recommendation 1.1: The Platform reword its focus to be on 'food systems and rural development'.

Recommendation 1.2: All donors making investments related to food systems and rural development should consider joining the Platform as full members, and the existing membership and board be highly focused on realising the full potential of the Platform over the period of the new strategic plan.

2. Performance and Achievements

Conclusion 2.1: While 52% of members surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied with the performance of the Platform a near equal number of 48% were only somewhat satisfied, dissatisfied, or neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. This reflects the mixed picture of the Platform's performance over its last strategic plan period and a more recent winding down of activity and engagement. At the same time, there is a very positive perception of the Platform's performance around enabling networking between members.

Conclusion 2.2: A substantial number of valuable meetings, events, and reports have been delivered by the Platform's working groups, and well attended and generally well appreciated Annual General Assemblies (AGAs) have been held each year. However, the lack of a results-oriented planning framework for the Platform makes it difficult to fully assess the outcomes and impact of these efforts.

Conclusion 2.3: Out of six thematic working groups that have operated over the last strategic plan period, only two are currently fully functional (land governance and SDG2 Roadmap working groups). The land governance group is a wider stakeholder group hosted by the Platform; the SDG2 Roadmap group was initiated beyond the Platform and then merged with the Platform. There is a need to substantially rethink the Platform's thematic working group *modus operandi* in the new strategic plan.

Conclusion 2.4: The Platform is faced with a series of core contradictions and dilemmas to which it must respond in a new strategic plan. A good number of these dilemmas and issues have been raised

in past reviews but then not adequately dealt with. They are: advocacy objective vs inability to represent a “donor position”; the expectation of advocacy/influence vs limited senior-level engagement; donor focus vs engagement with recipient organisations; knowledge sharing ambitions vs capacity and comparative advantage to deliver; ambition to be member-led vs limited time and capacity of members to engage; and need for a systemic orientation vs sectoral boundaries.

Recommendation 2.1: The Platform should consider using the term “strategic influencing” rather than “advocacy” in the new strategic plan to emphasise the importance of its work on supporting policy innovation by its membership and across the wider development community, while recognising that some members feel the Platform should not be characterised as an “advocacy” body.

Recommendation 2.2: To ensure relevance and viability into the future the Platform must focus on providing value to the senior management of its member organisations and to convening high-level events that bring the senior level management of donors together with the senior levels of recipient organisations.

Recommendation 2.3: The Platform should maintain its donor focus and niche while ensuring that it engages through its activities sufficiently with other stakeholders to ensure that its strategic influencing is well informed by their views.

Recommendation 2.4: Knowledge sharing activities of the Platform need to be highly focused, targeted to specific needs and requests of the membership, and aligned with priorities for strategic influencing.

Recommendation 2.5: The Platform’s Secretariat needs to be adequately resourced and supported to effectively service and support its membership. At the same time, the Platform must build greater commitment and ownership from its membership to drive its agenda and activities forward.

Recommendation 2.6: The Platform should take a more systemic approach to issues, assess the consequences of this for its operations, and engage more cross-sectorally.

3. Membership and Funding

Conclusion 3.1: Membership has been an issue for the Platform for some time, in terms of who should be members, who pays, and in the difficulty of meeting the Secretariat’s operating costs through membership fees. The Platform currently has a somewhat messy 4-tiered system of membership and partners. There is unambiguous clarity from members that the Platform should maintain its identity as a donor platform and not drift into being a wider multi-stakeholder group. However, it does also need to engage with a wider constituency to undertake its work. There are a complex and conflicting set of issues around membership and funding that require further attention.

Recommendation 3.1: The Platform reassesses and simplifies its membership structure and guidelines based on the issues raised by the stocktaking report and focus on increasing the numbers of fee-paying donor members to approximately twenty. For practical simplicity, and conflict of interest reasons, the Platform could consider limiting full membership to donors (bilaterals, international financial institutions, regional development banks and foundations). Multi-lateral organisations and strategic partners would then all be associate members (acknowledging that the Board has the power to accept or reject any special cases of requests for full fee paying membership). The services and engagement for full members and associate members should be carefully clarified in the new strategic plan and an updated Charter.

Recommendation 3.2: The Platform be more explicit about the services it provides its members and the services its members want. It can achieve this by more regularly engaging members to assess the kinds of services that would add value for them and which they would like to see the Platform deliver.

Recommendation 3.3: In consultation with its members the Platform develop a realistic longer-term funding model that addresses the range of funding issues raised by the stocktaking report. It should also make a renewed and concerted effort to raise the number of fee-paying members to 20. Where potential members are unable to pay membership dues for administrative reasons alternative mechanisms enabling them to contribute to the work of the Platform and be considered full members should be explored.

Recommendation 3.4: The current core of full (board) members who have committed to the transition and future of the Platform ensure the secretariat is adequately financially supported during the transition period so that over the coming two years it is able to function effectively and deliver on renewed and increased expectations. If necessary supplementary funding to complement fees should be considered.

4. Purpose, Objectives and Focus

Conclusion 4.1: The justification, purpose, and objectives/focus of the Platform that have been in place since its inception and which have evolved somewhat over time in their form of articulation, remain broadly appropriate. There is however a need to better align the justification with the current context and sharpen the Platform's focus for the future.

Recommendation 4.1: The Platform updates its vision, mission, and objectives for the new Strategic Plan, as proposed by the Stocktaking Report (see Box 1 below), to align with the evolution of the Platform's focus, recent developments, and views of the membership.

Recommendation 4.2: The Platform revises its Charter to make it current with the Platform's future directions and the current development context.

Recommendation 4.3: The Platform reconceives its advocacy function as strategic influencing and substantially strengthen this area of its work by:

- a) Undertaking an annual horizon scan to identify priority focal areas
- b) Supporting the membership in aligning and preparing for global and regional forums and processes
- c) Develop an annual results-oriented influencing plan
- d) Holding an annual senior-level 'heads of sector' meeting
- e) Upgrading the profile of the AGA to engage high-level staff from its membership and partners and to focus on emerging issues that are of strategic importance to the directions of donor investments.

Recommendation 4.4: The Platform develop a far more focused, strategic, and member-driven knowledge brokering programme that closely aligns with strategic influencing priorities, it should:

- a) be delivered through a more diverse set of modalities than just thematic working groups,
- b) be results/outcomes-focused and timebound,
- c) involve short one-off activities as well as longer-run processes,
- d) align with the comparative advantage of the platform and not seek to duplicate the technical knowledge capabilities of many other organisations.

Recommendation 4.5: The Platform recognise the high value that is put on networking by its members and work to optimise this through its activities, while also acknowledging the intangible benefits which can be hard to fully assess. It should do this by:

- a) Supporting a strong network of contact/focal points across all Platform members and partners,
- b) Bringing donor staff together in face to face and virtual working groups, seminars and forums,
- c) Brokering direct linkages between donors on request,
- d) Promoting interesting work being done by staff of members to other members through blogs, social media, news updates and mailings,
- e) Hosting the Annual General Assembly,
- f) Maintaining and sharing up-to-date contact lists for those with key food system and rural development responsibilities across donors.

Recommendation 4.6: The Platform takes a more strategic approach to establishing its areas of thematic focus, guided by a horizon scanning process and the guiding questions proposed by the Stocktaking Report. In doing so it should give more attention to cross-cutting issues related to the role of donors in catalysing and mobilising change from local to global scales and less attention to technical/sectoral issues where it has much less comparative advantage.

Recommendation 4.7: The Platform focus for the coming year on preparation for the Food Systems Summit and then conduct an agenda-setting exercise post the Summit that would provide a three-year outlook of key areas for focus.

5. Future Operations

Conclusion 5.1: A substantial proportion of the Platform operations and activities have been structured around its Thematic Working Groups. While this has produced valuable contributions in niche areas, it has also constrained the ability of the Platform to respond nimbly to emerging issues and opportunities, focus on cross-cutting issues and to undertake focused one-off events or activities.

Recommendation 5.1: The Platform broadens its operational modalities to complement thematic working groups with a more diverse range of focused activities, shorter-term task groups, and one-off convenings that are results-oriented and time-bound. It can do this by:

- a) Clearly identifying the needs of members, annual priorities, and results to be achieved and designing activities around this rather than relying just on on-going thematic groups.
- b) Having a clear Platform wide results-oriented annual workplan that integrates plans for thematic working groups (which have largely not existed).
- c) Utilise short-term task groups alongside thematic working groups and ensure both are results oriented and time-bound.

Conclusion 5.2: The Board must bear responsibility for less-than-optimal functioning of the Platform over recent years. This is reflected in the survey in that less than 50% of respondents felt the Board had performed satisfactorily or very satisfactorily. However, clearly the Board and its current co-chairs have been highly committed to a successful transition of the Platform to IFAD and to strengthening its position through the current strategic planning process.

Recommendation 5.2: The Platform encourages strong and pro-active engagement from its board members and nominate co-chairs who are able to effectively promote and represent the Platform within in the wider development community. The Platform considers a permanent executive board group of three co-chairs to help share the load and expand the scope for profiling the work of the Platform.

Conclusion 5.3: To realise its potential the Platform must have a competent and well-performing Secretariat. Secretariat staff need to find a careful balance between ensuring the Platform is driven by active engagement of the membership, while at the same time providing highly pro-active and strategic support to deliver on planned activities. From the survey, it appears that the membership has been largely satisfied with the performance of the Secretariat.

Recommendation 5.3: The Platform recognises that a competent, proactive and adequately staffed Secretariat, effectively guided by the Board is fundamental to the Platform's success. Given the strong emphasis of the Platform on strategic influencing and knowledge brokering, mid to senior-level staff or consultants to support these functions should be considered.

Conclusion 5.4: Effective communication is essential to the effectiveness and profile of the Platform. However, the Platform's comprehensive Communication Strategy has been only partially implemented and the Platform has had very limited social media presence and proactive communication with a wider audience.

Recommendation 5.4: The Platform should progress implementation of its recently developed Communication Strategy but should also revisit it in the context of the new Strategic Plan. The Platform should strive to use its communication tools (website, social mediate) more effectively to strategically engage and communicate with its members and externally to a wider audience.

Recommendation 5.5: The Platform agrees to the structure for the new strategic plan as detailed in Annex 7.

Box 1. Proposed Updated Vision and Mission

The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development works across the domains of food systems, food and nutrition security, agriculture, and rural livelihoods. It has a particular focus on Sustainable Development Goal Two and the intersection with other the other Sustainable Development Goals.

Vision

Donors effectively catalyse change: Donor investments enable a transformation of food systems for better access to safe and nutritious food, improved environmental sustainability, and more prosperous rural communities.

Mission

Brokering donor collaboration for impact: The Platform brokers donor collaboration to enhance the impact of their policies, investments and programmes for food systems and rural development.

Box 2. Proposed Updated Objectives**Objectives**

Strategic influencing: To help shape the thinking, policies and programming of the global donor community, and other actors, on food systems and rural development to accelerate progress towards the SDGs and longer-term prosperity and sustainability.

The Platform does this by:

- A horizon scanning process that identifies key emerging issues and opportunities to which donors may need to respond.
- Convening task teams on key issues which bring together donors and other stakeholders to identify options for responding.
- Convening high level events and briefings that help to keep members up to date on latest thinking and evidence.
- Hosting an annual meeting of senior responsible managers for food systems/agriculture/rural development across the membership.
- Mobilising new joint efforts by donors to respond to emerging issues or funding gaps.
- Supporting communication and alignment between donors in their preparations for bilateral engagement in key global forums and processes.
- Profiling and discussing key emerging issues with high level representatives during its Annual General Assembly.

Knowledge sharing: To broker the sharing of evidence, lessons, insights, and technical expertise necessary for donors to align efforts, learn from each other and improve the impact of their food system and rural development related policies and programmes.

The Platform does this by:

- Identifying policy and programming questions and issues donors have and assisting to resolve these by linking with the experience of other donors or relevant sources of expertise.
- Convening working groups and seminars that enable donor staff to share experiences and lesson with each other on priority topics.
- Holding virtual briefing sessions on emerging issues, new research or new evaluations targeted to the specific needs of donors.
- The Platform's website providing a resource portal for members to have easy access to each other's key policies, reports, and evaluations.
- Providing blogs and a social media feeds targeted to the interests of donors.

Networking and convening: To strengthen networking, relationships and communication between donors and other actors as a foundation for collaboration and innovation.

The Platform does this by:

- Supporting a network of focal points across all Platform members.
- Bringing donor staff together in both face to face and virtual working groups, seminars and forums.
- Brokering direct linkages between donors on request.
- Promoting interesting work being done by staff of members to other members through blogs, social media, news updates and mailings.
- Hosting the Annual General Assembly that provides a space for in-depth engagement between donors and other partners.
- Maintaining up-to-date contact lists for those with key food system and rural development responsibilities across donors.

Outline for Strategic Plan

1. Background
2. Key Findings and Recommendations of 2020 Stocktake
3. Context
4. Revised Vision, Mission and Objectives
5. Revised Funding, Membership and Governance
6. Strategic Focus
 - Foods Systems Summit
 - Supporting national transformation plans
 - Optimising the Catalytic and Enabling Role of Donors
 - SDG2 Working group
7. Thematic Priorities (options)
 - Building Back Better from COVID / food systems resilience
 - Climate and Food Systems
 - Catalysing and de-risking responsible private sector investment
 - Optimising ICT Potential
 - Transformation of small-scale farming
 - National policy support for restructuring incentives frameworks
 - Gender
 - Land (continued)
 - Youth (continued)
8. Operational Focus
 - Connecting with Member needs
 - Diversifying operational modalities
 - Mobilising the delivery capacity of the new secretariat
 - Rebuilding a strategic influencing capability
 - Extending the membership base and securing resources
 - Strengthening results-oriented planning and reporting
9. Secretariat Structure and Responsibilities

1 Introduction

The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD) or “Platform” is a network of 40 bilateral and multilateral donors, international financial institutions, and foundations that share a common vision on the role of agriculture and rural development in reducing global poverty and combating hunger and malnutrition (see Annex 3 for a list of current Platform members). The Platform is committed to achieving increased and more effective aid for agriculture and rural development through evidence-based advocacy and knowledge sharing. In addition to its Board and other members, the Platform enjoys the contribution of several institutions that participate in an Annual General Assembly (AGA), meetings and Thematic Working Groups (TWGs), who are all committed to achieving increased and more effective aid for agriculture and rural development through evidence-based advocacy and knowledge sharing. The Platform Secretariat supports members’ initiatives to enhance development effectiveness through knowledge sharing and advocacy.

Every five years, the Platform members agree on a new Strategic Plan, which guides the work of the GDPRD, including its strategic orientations, vision and mission, results measurement framework, governance, and funding. In February 2020, the Board members of the GDPRD mandated the IFAD Secretariat to develop the new Strategic Plan (2021-2025), which will build on the previous edition and review the vision, strategy, and working priorities of the Platform, in light of a number of emerging priorities. In July 2020, IFAD hired an external team of consultants IFAD to anchor and lead the development of the Strategic Plan (see Annex 1 for the Terms of Reference). The three-member team includes Dr. Jim Woodhill, an independent consultant and Honorary Research Associate with the University of Oxford's Environmental Change Institute; Mandakini Surie, an independent consultant working on water, energy, food, and sustainable development issues in South Asia; and Sylvia Otieno, a researcher and intern with IFAD.

As a first step in the development of the new Strategic Plan, consultants conducted a stock-taking analysis with the objective of (i) assessing the Platform’s value add, past performance and future directions and (ii) providing a set of recommendations to guide the development of the Platform’s new Strategic Plan 2021-25. This report provides a readout of key findings and recommendations from the stocktaking analysis.

1.1 Methodology

The stock-taking analysis combined primary and secondary research methods and tools including (i) literature review, (ii) online survey and (iii) key informant interviews to gain insights on the Platform – its value add, performance, achievements and future directions.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions, the stock-taking analysis was conducted entirely virtually and remotely by the consultant team.

Literature review: As a first step, the consultant team conducted a detailed literature review of key Platform documents including – strategic documents and plans, work, plans, annual reports, minutes of meetings, past evaluations, and reviews. Over 40 documents were reviewed and analysed (see Annex 2 for the list of documents reviewed).

Online Survey: Based on the literature review, the consultant team developed a multi-part online survey to seek member views on the role, function, performance, and future directions of the Platform. The survey was designed to be engaging, participatory and to seek data, information, insights, and candid views from Platform members on key issues and challenges faced by the Platform

(see Annex 6 for Survey Questionnaire). The survey was rolled out to 206 members on August 25, 2020, and in total 61 responses were received.

Key Informant Interviews: Alongside the survey, the consultant team conducted key informant interviews with Platform members that have been involved in its governance, management and operation over the last few years (see Annex 4 Key Informant Interview Questionnaire) to seek in-depth responses from members on key aspects of the Platform's value add, performance, and future directions. As of October 2020, 17 members were interviewed in the first round of one on one interviews.

Limitations: The team acknowledges certain limitations to the research and documentation process for the stock-taking report. The member survey was rolled out to over 200 members but received 61 responses despite several reminders and follow up by the Secretariat. More broadly, the Platform does not have a monitoring and evaluation framework and/or a consistent way of reporting results. Consequently, making assessments of the Platform's performance and achievements was quite challenging. The transition of the secretariate from GIZ to IFAD also meant some gaps in access to historical knowledge and detailed financial information. Lastly, the Covid-19 pandemic and associated work and travel restrictions required the team to conduct the stock-taking analysis virtually, working remotely across three locations – Oxford (UK), Bonn (Germany) and New Delhi (India). The team would like to acknowledge and thank the Platform's Maurizio Navarra, Secretariat Coordinator and Sylvia Otieno, Intern at IFAD for their invaluable support in facilitating the stock-taking process.

1.2 Background

The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development was formed in 2003 in Bonn, Germany following an emerging consensus among donors that more coordinated and collective action is required in rural development to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) especially MDG1 (to halve hunger and poverty by 2015). It aims to “enhance the impact of development investments in agriculture, food systems, and rural livelihoods through informed policy and programming”. Its vision is framed around pathways to achieve Zero Hunger – “Prosperous and sustainable rural communities underpinning global food and nutrition security”. The Platform offers a neutral convening space for its members to work together on issues of common interest, share experience, and expertise, and network informally with other Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) professionals through the following three objectives:

- Knowledge-sharing
- Advocacy
- Networking

The Platform's membership is voluntary and comprises both paying and non-paying members. Full members are members contributing a minimum of 50,000 Euros per year and have one seat on the Platform board. Associate members are members that do not contribute financially to the Platform and are welcomed to participate in specific thematic areas or activities. All members (Full and Associate) nominate one representative known as a Focal point, who represents the respective organization at Platform meetings and actively participates in the formulation of joint Platform policies and work programs. The Platform also has a Partner group which is composed of research organizations, global and regional networks and global initiatives, and private sector networks that share a common interest in agriculture and rural development. All members meet once a year in the Platform General Assembly, which is usually hosted by a one-member organization on a rotational basis and supported both logistically and in terms of its content by the Platform Secretariat and the General Assembly task force. See Annex 3 for a full list of current Platform members.

The Platform board is the central decision-making body and is responsible for the long-term strategic development of the Platform's future and guarantees the quality of its output. The Platform board is supported by a Secretariat which is the management unit of the Platform and is with the executive authority of implementing the Platform's annual work plan within the budget lines agreed by the Board. Until 2019, the Secretariat was hosted by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of Germany and administered by the German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ) in Bonn, Germany. However, starting January 2020, the Secretariat hosting button transitioned to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Rome, Italy.

The Platform with the support of the Secretariat engages in a diverse range of activities that are in line with the Workplan and the Strategic Plan. Such activities include Annual General Assemblies, participating in member and partner events, commissioning studies and publications, and various activities of thematic working groups. The Annual General Assembly is the most important event and has the objective of providing an open space for debate and/or consensus by Platform members, partners, and other guests on emerging topics in agriculture and rural development. Thematic working groups are typically led by one (or more) representative from GDPRD members and one staff member from the Secretariat and usually focus on one theme. The Platform currently has three active thematic working groups: Land, Rural Youth, and SDG2 Roadmap. These working groups engage in different activities including participating in high-level events, organizing side events, and developing studies, publications, and policy briefs amongst others. The Platform also engages in various cross-cutting themes for example the newly developed COVID-19 task force which focuses on improved donor coordination amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

All platform's activities are supported through financial contributions by its members. Financial contributions to the Platform are either in cash and/or in-kind and include core-funding and financial contributions with donor restrictions that relate to themes activities or regional programmes of the Platform. All funding allocations for the Platform activities are managed by the Secretariat per the work plan endorsed by the Board.

1.3 Value Add

One of the overarching questions the stock-taking analysis looked at was the Platform's value add and the extent to which it services a unique function. Amongst several forums focused on agriculture and rural development, the Platform stands out as one of the only exclusively donor forum that brings together like-minded donors making investments in the agriculture and rural development (ARD) space. In the context of constrained development assistance budgets and competing donor priorities, and limited time for donor engagement, the access that the Platform provides to other like-minded donors and actors is highly valued.

"The Platform is the only donor platform where they [donors] can discuss views, common problems and opportunities concerning the rural development sector."

"If the Platform did not exist, someone would invent it"

This view is reinforced by members who feel that the Platform continues to be a relevant forum that focuses attention on agriculture, food systems and rural development issues and their role in addressing global poverty alleviation, hunger and malnutrition goals and targets. Out of a total of 50 survey respondents, 66% agreed with the statement that *"...the Platform provides a unique function in supporting global food systems and rural development efforts not provided by other platforms, networks or organisations"*.²

² GDPRD Survey 2020. Q8

Members also see clear organisational benefits as members of the Platform. In response to a survey question seeking member views on the value add of the Platform (see Figure 1), 90% of 50 respondents valued the opportunity provided to build networks and connections, 82% valued the exchange of knowledge and policy perspectives, 75% valued the convening of meetings and events and 58%, access to information about up to date developments.³ However, only 62% of respondents felt that the Platform played a valuable role in influencing the global agenda on agriculture rural development and food systems issues.

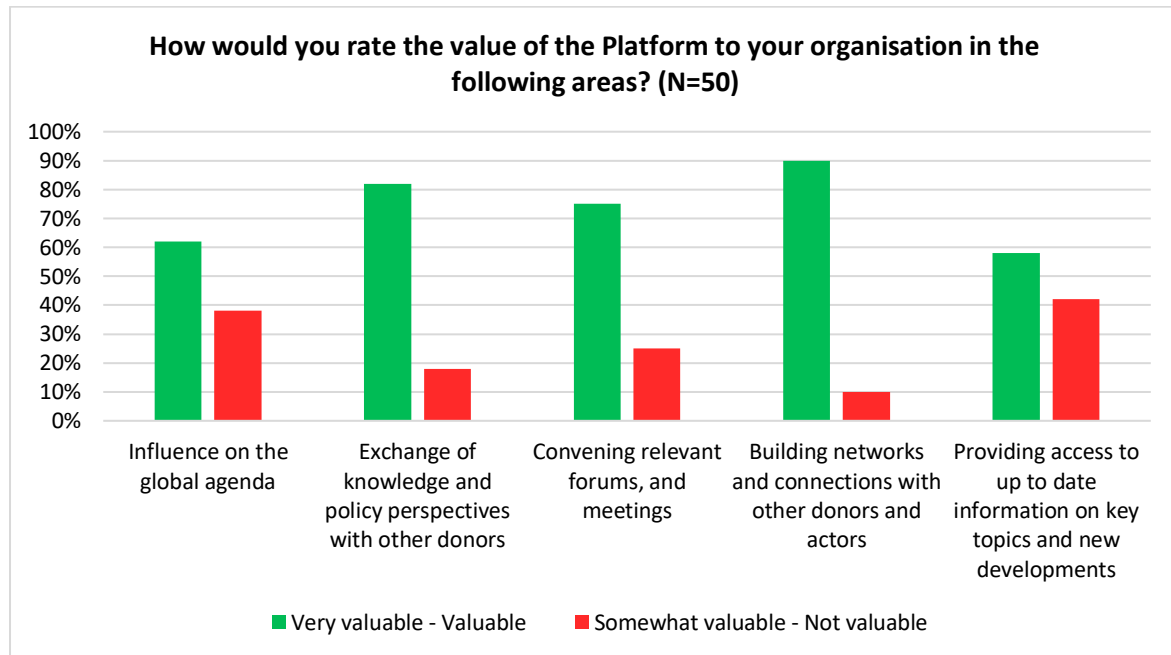


Figure 1: Value of the Platform

This was reflected in interviews where members undoubtedly value the networking, knowledge exchange, and convening functions of the Platform over its advocacy and knowledge generation functions. Interviews with members also highlighted certain value add contributions of the Platform that are significant but difficult to quantify:

Informal Exchange of Information: Members emphasised the important opportunity the Platform provides to informally exchange views, issues, and challenges amongst donors. Forums such as the AGA, TWG meetings, and other events, provide donors with an opportunity to network behind the scenes, exchange information and intelligence on internal policy processes, decisions and to exchange more political views informally. The informal and frank exchange of views thus represents an often intangible but very valued aspect of the Platform's value add to members.

³ GDPRD Survey 2020. Q4

“The Platform has been a real success as a network. It tends to be undervalued and that is a mistake. It is somewhat intangible. It has enabled donors to work together and really influence the global agenda on agriculture, food security and nutrition.”

Discuss policy challenges: The Platform provides an opportunity for members to talk beyond technical issues to discuss policy and political level challenges internally and externally. Given a constant pressure and strain on donor resources, the opportunity to “measure the temperature”⁴ within other agencies and determine donor priorities, pressures, and opportunities is very useful. In turn, understanding what other donors are doing in the space, enables members to advocate or make a case within their own organisations to take up particular issues or take

particular policy positions on specific issues.

Broader voice and representation: As a Platform of over 40 donor organisations, the Platform serves to “broaden the tent of donors” and provide members with access to views and perspectives from a diverse range of donors and groups that are making investments and programming in the same space.

Achieve greater donor alignment: In the context of an increasingly aid constrained international environment and competing donor priorities, the Platform has the potential to support and encourage greater donor synergy and alignment in terms of their priorities and investments in the ARD and FS space.

To conclude, members see great value in the continued existence of the Platform as a means to continue focusing attention on critical ARD and food systems issues and challenges and as a forum that brings together donors to network, exchange information, and discuss policy challenges. As one member noted, “if the Platform did not exist, someone would invent it”. However, members feel that the Platform could be more effective in its advocacy role. As noted above, just over 60% of members feel that the Platform has an influence on the global RD agenda (see Fig. 1 above). Going forward members expressed the view that the Platform needs to play more of a strategic influencing role in supporting and fostering greater donor alignment, effectiveness, and efficiency in their ARD and FS investments.

1.4 Context

The work of the GDPRD sits at the intersection of a set of critical global issues that have a profound impact on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and longer-term human prosperity and security. Delivering sufficient nutritionally diverse, safe, and sustainably produced food to consumers in urban and rural areas is one of the most critically important challenges the world has to face. At the same vast numbers of people in rural areas continue to face poverty, inequality and vulnerability, with the potential for widespread humanitarian crises, social and political instability and migration pressures. These challenges will be greatly exacerbated by climate change. However, there are also substantial opportunities for responding driven by growing food demands, increased awareness of food and climate issues, and technological innovation.

Recognition of how critical food issues are to the achievement of the SDGs has led to a new focus on food systems and the UN Secretary-General calling a Food Systems Summit in 2021. There is today a more nuanced understanding of the interconnections between food, food systems, agriculture, rural development poverty alleviation, and hunger eradication. Since the 2008 food prices crisis, the global discourse on food security has shifted significantly towards one of food systems. The focus on food systems reflects growing evidence and understanding of the deep interconnectedness between

⁴ Member interview

natural systems, the production, distribution and consumption of food, and the links between these and social, economic and political contexts. Addressing global food security, malnutrition and poverty requires an integrated, intersectional and cross-disciplinary approach. The 2020 COVID pandemic has also underscored the vulnerability of food production and distribution, and how vulnerable poorer people (who still live predominantly in rural areas) are to system-wide shocks.

Responding to the challenges and opportunities for transforming rural economies and food systems will require innovation and coordination on a vast scale from local to global levels. This calls for global public good investments to support research, enable multi-stakeholder collaboration and coalitions for change, broker policy learning and innovation, fund pilot initiatives, catalyse and de-risk responsible investments from the private sector and financial institutions, respond to crises, and support efforts of poorer nations. This makes investments by the global donor community into rural development and food systems of vital importance. However, these resources are modest relative to total food system investments, overall development financing and other financial flows. It is consequently critical that the public good resources to support food systems transformation and SDG2 do not diminish and that they are used in optimally catalytic, coordinated, and complementary ways.

It is in this context that the GDPRD has a key role to play. In particular by assisting donors to align their thinking and investment strategies, by helping to ensure that food and rural development issues are appropriately prioritised within overall development financing, by identifying proactive and timely responses to emerging issues and crises, and through enabling donors to learn from each other's policy and programming experiences.

The global institutional architecture for food security, agriculture and food systems is crowded, highly complex, and not always effective. It involves multiple UN organisations and international financial institutions, the Cooperative Group on International Agricultural Research, the World Committee on Food Security, numerous high-level platforms and initiatives including GAIN, SUN Movement, GLOPAN and FOLU, private sector platforms supported through the World Economic Forum and the World Business Council for Sustainable development, regional initiatives including CAADP and G7 and G20 processes. It is important to note that it is funding decisions by donors that to a large extent drive and keep in place these architectural arrangements. Within this complexity, the GDPRD is the only platform for donors themselves to engage with each other and work to align their positions and funding priorities.

In looking to the future there are a number of important trends and uncertainties that will shape the context for the strategic planning of the Platform.

Need for a systemic approach: It is increasingly recognised that the challenges of good nutrition, tackling rural poverty and enabling sustainable and resilient food production can only be achieved through systemic approaches. Such approaches need to cut across traditional policy and donor funding domains (silos) such as health, agriculture, economic development, trade, and environment. The GDPRD's heritage and membership lie predominately in the fields of agriculture and food security. Tremendous challenges lie in, on one hand, breaking down and crossing traditional barriers to work systemically and, on the other, not creating so much complexity that focused action becomes impossible.

Shifting dynamics of development: The dramatic rise in capabilities of individuals and institutions of the Global South, the emergence of economically powerful middle-income countries who are also

becoming donors, development scepticism and populist politics in traditional donor countries, calls for the “de-colonisation” of development thinking, and the likely fallout from COVID-19 are all factors reshaping the dynamics of development cooperation and financing. This does not mean that public good resources for tackling global challenges are any less needed or important. But it does mean they are under pressure and that the way they are justified and used is in significant flux.

Multilateralism under pressure: The traditional “Washington Consensus” and associated multi-lateral institutions and processes are under financial and legitimacy pressure as new powers emerge, popularist politics has its influence and the UN Systems struggles to reform. This has blowback effects on the degree of cooperation and coordination between donors, with development cooperation resources being viewed more explicitly as tools for pursuing the national interests of donors and an agenda of “mutual prosperity”. In this context, informal mechanisms such as the Platform can have a valuable role to play in helping to keep donors connected and aligned and in helping to link the relevance of rural development and food systems issues to wider development and political agendas.

Need for private sector action and investment: Food systems and economic activity in rural areas are predominantly private sector driven and financed. This is a very different dynamic for development than work in, for example, the health and education sectors (although here too the private sector is increasingly important). Ultimately change will only come when private sector actors change the way they operate and invest. Donor funding is very small relative to the investments of farmers themselves and those of domestic and international firms in the food and agriculture sectors. The scale of the challenges relative to donor funds means that donor resources can only ever have a catalytic role. This makes alignment and complementarity of donor funding critical, with a need to focus on how policies can create the right incentives and enabling conditions for responsible private sector investment.

Climate change: Food systems are one of the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases, while also being highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Further climate finance may open up new forms of economic activity for farmers. Climate change must be central to the thinking about food systems transformation and the vulnerabilities of rural people. This requires a far more cross-sectoral oriented approach than has been characteristic of past development work in the food and agriculture space.

Responses to COVID: The COVID pandemic has been a shock to economic systems, a crisis for poverty alleviation, and a disruption to how the world functions that will play out in unknown ways for some years to come. Pressure on resources will be a reality, while there is also much discussion of what “building back better” could entail. It would seem that much of the virtual way the world has learned to operate will be here to stay. Meanwhile, the pandemic has also illustrated the significant vulnerability of food systems and poorer groups in society, with a corresponding need to enhance mechanisms that enable resilience.

The implications of this context for GDPRD are four-fold:

- 1) Food systems and the links with rural poverty are and will remain a key development issue, central to the challenge of meeting the SDGs and responding to the climate crisis.
- 2) Optimising the catalytic role of limited global public good resources from bilateral donors and philanthropic foundations is key to driving the innovations and transformations that are needed.

- 3) Increased uncertainty and turbulence are inevitable making forums such as the GDPRD that can support donors in responding quickly, effectively, and in coordinated ways increasingly important.
- 4) Responding to all these challenges requires understanding, open channels of communication, trust, and networks of dialogue that cut across sectors, national boundaries, and the formal processes of international engagement. This is a networking and convening function core to objectives of the Platform.

2 Performance and Achievements

2.1 Overview

The stock-taking analysis reviewed the Platform's key activities, performance, and achievements over a five-year period (2015-2020). Drawing on a detailed literature review, member survey, and key informant interviews, the analysis focused on Platform activities across the following areas:

- Thematic Working Groups
- Annual General Assembly
- Communications and Outreach.

From this analysis, it is evident that the Platform has made some valuable contributions in a number of areas - particularly land governance and SDG2 thematic areas. Its work and networking is appreciated and recognised by its members, who see value in a platform that brings together like-minded donors who are making investments in the food systems and rural development space. However, it is difficult to be specific about the aggregate achievements and impact of the Platform's activities. This stems from a lack of evidence and equally the absence of a results-focused system of monitoring and reporting of Platform activities. Further, it is clear from the survey responses that there are mixed views on the overall performance of the platform. It is clear that particularly over more recent times the Platform has not been fully realising its potential nor adequately meeting member expectations.

Survey Response to Members' Perceptions of Performance

In the online survey, members were asked to share their views on the overall performance of the Platform in the last five years. The survey responses reveal a split picture. While many members are satisfied (52%) with the performance of the Platform, a nearly equal proportion (44%) feel that there is significant room for improvement in how the Platform operates (see Figure 2).

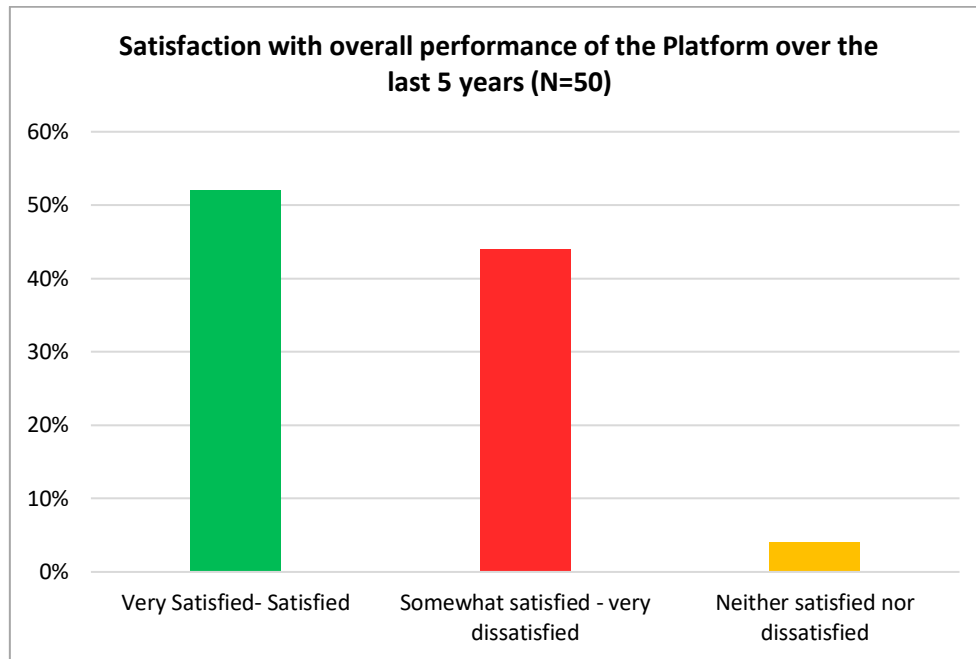


Figure 2: Satisfaction with Platform's overall performance

The survey also sought member feedback on the Platform's performance across the following areas (see Figure 3):

- Core functions:** With respect to the Platform's core functions and activities related to advocacy, knowledge sharing, networking, and development of knowledge products, out of a total of 50 respondents, 72% expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the Platform's role in fostering networking between members, donors and other partners, followed by knowledge sharing (52%). Notably, while 44% were satisfied with the Platform's performance on advocacy, nearly an equal number were dissatisfied (42%). Views were similarly split on the development of knowledge products
- Planning and delivery:** 54% of members reported a 54% satisfaction rate on planning and implementation of Platform activities while 36% reported a less than satisfied and 10% neutral.
- Monitoring and evaluation:** In terms of reporting and monitoring of Platform activities and results, member views were split nearly equally with 44% satisfied, 42% less than satisfied, and 14% neutral.

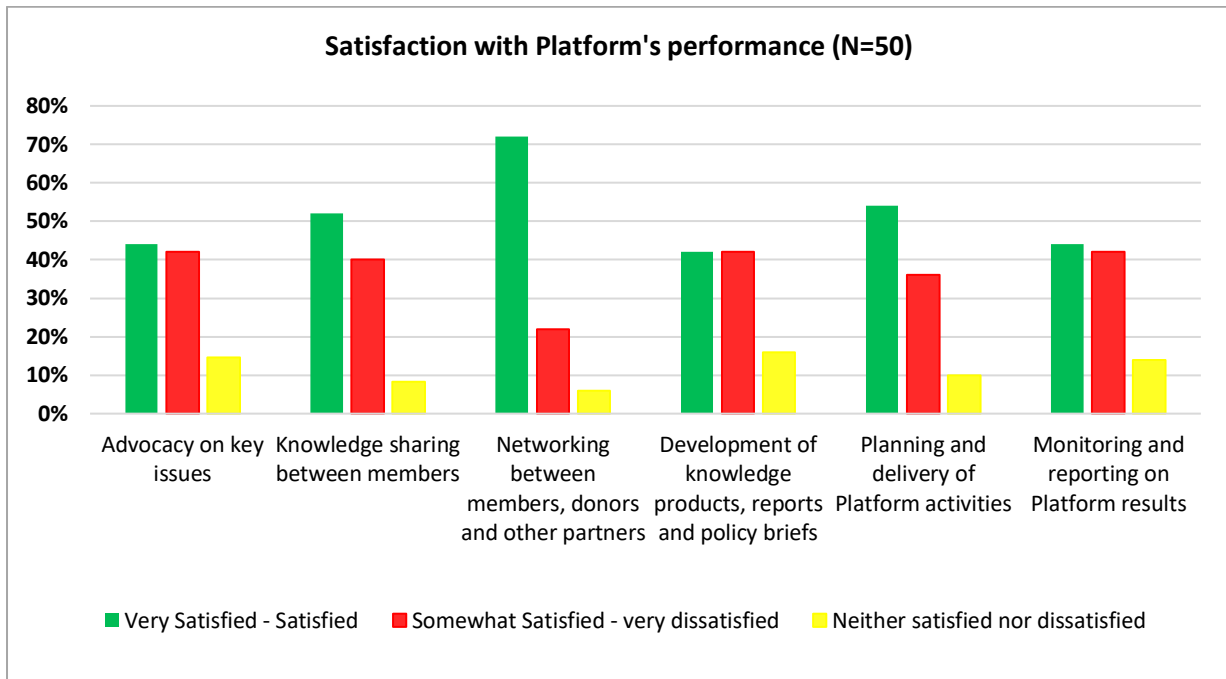


Figure 3: Satisfaction with Platform's performance

2.2 Thematic working groups

Most of the Platform's work and activities are delivered through its Thematic Working Groups (TWGs), which have functioned with varying degrees of intensity over the review period. There is considerable diversity across the groups in terms of their history, structure, and what they have delivered. Generally, the TWGs undertake activities that contribute to all three of the Platform's objectives of advocacy, knowledge sharing, and networking.

It is notable that with a few exceptions, almost none of the TWG's have had clear terms of reference, objectives, or work plans. Consequently, it is often difficult to be explicit about outcomes and impacts. Further, while members generally expressed appreciation for the working groups and valued their activities few members were able to be very precise about their impact.

The TWGs assessed in this 2015-2020 stocktake are

1. Land governance
2. SDG 2
3. Rural Youth
4. Climate Change
5. Inclusive Agri-business and Trade
6. Gender

The TWGs serve as forums where donor members can come together around a shared interest or issue to share information, experience, lessons learned, and explore collaborative opportunities. Broadly, the work of the TWGs is focused on (i) developing and implementing a plan of work around a specific thematic area; (ii) sharing information on policy and institutional developments; (iv) organising meetings, side events etc; (iv) commissioning studies and knowledge products etc.⁵ In

⁵ GDPRD (2019) Annual Report pp. 20

practice, there is a lot of variety in how the TWGs operate and the activities that they are engaged in (see Table 1).

Table 1: Overview of Platform's thematic working groups

Thematic Working Group	Year Formed	No. of Members	Main Activities	Events	Web Stories	Publications/Policy Briefs/Studies
Land	2013	29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land Governance Programme Map SDG 2 land indicators Global Land Governance Report 	12	27	9
SDG 2	2018	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory of change Ceres2030 50x2030 Initiative Survey donors SDG2 reporting Innovation and Research Mapping of SDG2.3 donor programs and projects Cooperation with the Private sector 	7	46	1
Rural Youth	2018	9	<i>In the process of defining their core activities</i>	5	14	2
Inclusive Agribusiness and Trade	2014	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive Agribusiness Trade and ARD (Agriculture and Rural Development) 	12	20	4
Gender			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2007 Gender Internal Assessment Gender and Agriculture Library 	2	14	1
Climate Change		12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Alliance for Smart Agriculture The NDC Partnership African Climate-Smart Agriculture Alliance NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) 	4	17	1

2.2.1 Land governance

The Global Donor Platform Working Group on Land Governance (GDWGL) is one of the Platform's most dynamic thematic working groups. However, it is of a different character to other TWG having been established independently from the Platform. The Platform hosts the land group and provides secretarial support. It has a membership much wider than the Platform itself and most of its members identify with the land working group rather than with the Platform. The working group has been very active over a number of years and has an influence on the land agenda in many forums.

It was created in 2013 at a donor roundtable meeting - held on the margins of the World Bank's Annual Conference on Land and Poverty held in Washington D.C – in response to concerns over land tenure and governance issues. It was agreed at the meeting that the TWG would be facilitated by the Secretariat of the Platform.

The group has one of the largest memberships of any of the Platform's TWGs with 29 members. Through its activities, the group also convenes a diverse range of external donors, partners, and organisations that are actively working on land issues at a country, regional, and global level. The GDWGL is a key advocate of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT)⁶ and supports advocacy, dialogue, and knowledge sharing amongst donors in support of its implementation.

In the last five years, the GDWGL has been focused on a core set of activities that include:

- a) *Land governance map and database*: The Land Governance Programme Map initiative was launched to improve donor coordination on the implementation of the VGGT. The land map and database provides information on the location, duration, funding, and scope of donor-supported programs. The database currently has information on over 800 programs (active and completed) and information related to the investments of over 20 donors. The information is publicly available and serves as a valuable source of data and information for Platform members, donors, and other stakeholders that are working on land issues, and efforts to improve food security and nutrition, reduce land-related conflicts, and promote economic growth.
- o *Advocacy on the SDG land tenure indicators*: The GDWGL actively advocates for the recognition of land tenure issues as critical to achieving the SDGs. In 2015, the group successfully advocated for and influenced the language of SDG indicator 1.4.2 focusing on the security of land tenure. Subsequently, the GDWGL together with other international stakeholders, has focused on elevating land tenure indicators from Tier 3 to Tier 2 and finally Tier 1 within the SDG classification.⁷ Reaching Tier I requires 50% of the countries and 50% of the total population for each region to regularly report back to the data custodians and the UN. In this context, the land working group is working to provide regular updates on the SDG

Land Working Group Members

- ADA – Austria*
- AFD – France*
- AfDB*
- BMZ*
- EC*
- FAO*
- FCDO*
- GIZ*
- Global Affairs Canada
- IADC – Italy*
- IFAD*
- IFC
- Kartverket
- MCC
- MFA – NL*
- MFA – Denmark*
- MFA- Finland*
- MEAE – France*
- Omidyar Network
- Placefund
- RVO Netherlands
- SIDA
- SDC*
- UN Habitat/GLTN
- USAID*
- World Bank*

***Platform members**

⁶ The first internationally negotiated and agreed soft-law instrument on land tenure governance.

⁷ Specifically, the group has been working towards a reclassification to tier 1 of SDG land indicator 1.4.2 and land indicator 5.a.1 the reclassification to tier I of SDG land indicator 1.4.2, as well as the a second land indicator 5.a.1 which is particularly focusing on women in agriculture, and advocating for their inclusion in voluntary national reviews – by October 2020. Land tenure and land use is also part of other indicators such as SDG 2 (food security, which refers for data collection to 1.4.2), SDG 11, SDG 15 (reducing land degradation as covered by target 15.3 and indicator 15.3.1 among other important targets on forestry), and SDG 16.

land indicators as well as all other advocacy and implementation towards tenure security for all.

- *High-level events:* The GDWGL has organised several high-level events that have served to keep land tenure and governance issues prominent on the donor agenda. For example, at the 2019 CFS 46 in Rome, the GDWGL members held side events to highlight and raise the profile of land tenure security and the VGGTs in the context of national security. Similarly, on the side-lines of the 2019 African Land Policy Conference, the Group endorsed a concept note for a Global Land Governance Report. The core objective of the report is to produce a single global evidence-based report on the status of land tenure and governance issues as a reference point for policymakers, linking global and country commitments in the frameworks of the VGGTs, SDGs, and others.

In addition to these activities between 2015-2020, the Land working group has organised a number of meetings, high-level events and produced a variety of reports, publications, and policy briefs (see Table 2 for more details).

Table 2: Global Donor Working Group on Land activities 2015-2020

Year	Past Events and Meetings	Studies and Reports
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert meeting on VGGGT integration in donor activities • Effective Approaches to Strengthen Coherence Across Individual Donor Governments Regarding Responsible Land Governance -2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Governance as a Corporate Performance Standard: Opportunities, Challenges and Recommended Next Steps • Characteristics of Successful Model for Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships to Improve Land Governance in Developing Countries - 2015 • Scoping Study on Open Data, Innovative Technology-Based Solutions for Better Land Governance -2015 • 2 policy briefs on joint advocacy that resulted in the inclusion of land target and indicators under SDG1
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel session at the World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty presenting outcomes of the four studies commissioned by the GDWGL • Webinar on land rights and Investment Treaties • Co-hosted a side event at the Open Government Partnership Summit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECDPM (Paul) and the Donor Platform had co-published a paper on aligning trade and agriculture
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side event at the World Bank Land Conference • Side event at the committee on World Food Security 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A policy brief reaffirming donors' commitment to monitor land tenure progress in the framework of the Agenda 2030
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized a session at the Land and Poverty conference of the World Bank. • Held a webinar on the nexus between land rights and the urban continuum – Bridging the Gap on Land Governance and Tenure along the Urban-Rural Continuum. • Side event during the Global Land Forum in Indonesia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018, Paul Engel's paper on aligning Aid for Trade and Agriculture – see here

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held a side-event at the Committee for Food Security in Rome in partnership with ILC, Land Portal, the IFAD, Global Land Indicators Initiative, and MCC 	
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held a policy session at the World Bank Land & Poverty Conference • Co-hosted a side event at the High-Level Political Forum 2019 • Reconvened the topic of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) engagement at the 46th session of the Committee on World Food Security at CFS 46 in October 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hired a consultant to broadly scope available data on land tenure indicators and prepare PPT Slides for the chair for the donor session at the 2019 WB conference.

Member reflections on performance/achievements

The working group is recognised and valued by Platform members as playing a key role in keeping issues of land tenure and governance high on the donor agenda, ensuring the implementation of the VGGT, and continuing to advocate for the recognition of secure tenure rights as critical to the achievement of the SDGs. This was expressed in member interviews, where the working group was seen as providing a “flexible and fluid” space for donors to come together to discuss issues that are central to rural development, land governance and tenure, and ultimately the 2030 Agenda. It was noted by a member that land issues often get overlooked by governments and by the donor community and therefore having a group that is explicitly focused on keeping these issues high on the agenda is critically important. By enabling a two-way discussion between donors, recipients, partners and other stakeholders at different levels, the working group facilitates an engaged and productive exchange of views.

In response to a survey question on the performance of the GDWGL, respondents reported a high satisfaction with the objectives (80%), planning and implementation of activities (72%), and its communication with its member (78%). However, members also feel that there is room to improve the group’s performance in specific areas. Specifically, survey respondents emphasised the need to (i) refresh the objectives and work plan of the group, (ii) improve communication between and amongst members particularly as it relates to activities, (iii) encourage members to be more proactive in planning and implementation of activities and (iv) a focus more on monitoring and reporting and results.

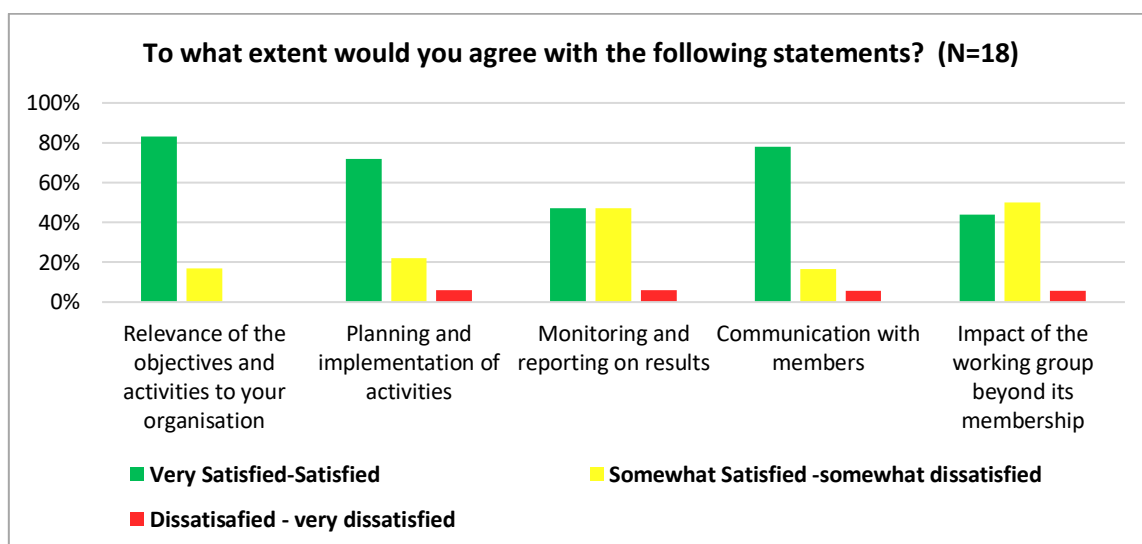


Figure 4: Satisfaction with GDWGL's performance

To conclude, the GDWGL functions quite differently when compared to other Platform's TWGs. As a group that was established by donors who saw a role for the Platform in facilitating its activities in many ways, the GDWGL is hosted by the Platform rather than being driven or administered by it. Being hosted by the Platform provides the GDWGL with greater flexibility and room to operate than if it was hosted by a bilateral or multilateral agency.

The GDWGL is evidently valued by its members and its work is recognised across a broad range of the Platform's members. Several factors account for this. First, the GDWGL has a clearly defined niche which has made it easier for the group and its membership to prioritise and focus their attention and efforts around specific issues i.e. land governance map and the SDG indicators for example. Second, the group has a clearly defined ToR, work plan, and is actively chaired with good levels of participation amongst its members. Third, the group has a broad and diverse membership that is keenly invested in the issues and sees value in the existence of the group as a means to bring together different donors, partners, organisations, and stakeholders working on land governance and tenure issues. Last but not least, through targeted and focused advocacy at a high level around a specific set of issues, the group has been able to demonstrate its value add to its members but beyond that to a broader audience outside the Platform.

2.2.2 SDG2 Roadmap

In 2018, building on the Platform's 2030 Agenda, the Secretariat was requested to facilitate the work of the SDG2 Road Map Group - an initiative backed by 14 donors – over one-third of the Platform members – to raise political support and address data gaps for the implementation of SDG2. Following a request by the group to the Board, in 2019, the SDG2 Road Map Group became a Platform TWG.

SDG2 TWG functions as an informal group that brings together senior representatives from different donor agencies that are actively working in agriculture, food security, and nutrition space. The group shares "a common vision for eliminating rural poverty, hunger and malnutrition through sustainable agriculture. The group does not have a nominated Chair but is driven forward by a committed and dedicated group of donor

SDG2 TWG Members

- AICS
- BMGF
- BMZ
- DFID
- DFAT
- EC
- IADC
- MEAE France
- MFA NL
- USAID

members⁸ from within the Platform. The group also engages with a range of stakeholders outside the Platform including academic and research institutions and the private sector, through its different initiatives and activities (described in greater detail below).

Compared with some of the other Platform TWGs, SDG2 has a very clear and high-level political agenda. Specifically, the group works is working towards building a consensus amongst donors to develop a concrete road map to achieve SDG2 that will (i) develop an evidence base for improved decision making; (ii) provide a framework for coordination on key action areas and (ii) generate political will and support to mobilise resources for agriculture, food security and nutrition. The working group is extremely focused and targeted in its efforts and activities. The SDG2 Roadmap is carried out in seven major areas led by a combination of donor organizations, of which the Secretariat regularly supports via email, physical meetings, or video conferences. These include the following initiatives:

- a) **Theory of Change (BMZ, Gates Foundation):** The SDG2 Roadmap group has produced a joint Theory of Change in which 14 donor organizations agree on a common purpose and strategy to achieve SDG2. This living document serves as the basis for key messages which each agency can use in external communications on SDG2, resilience, food security and nutrition⁹.
- b) **Ceres2030 (BMZ, Gates Foundation – implemented by IISD, IFPRI, and Cornell University):** A partnership between Cornell University, IFPRI and IISD to develop a cost estimate for achieving SDG 2.3 and 2.4 by 2030 alongside a synthesis of published research on eight research questions focused on agricultural interventions.¹⁰
- c) **50x2030 Initiative (USAID, Gates Foundation, BMZ, IADC, DFAT Australia, FAO, World Bank, IFAD):** Aims to produce the largest-ever collection of data for agriculture development across 50 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America by 2030. The Donor members have since established a joint project, with the three implementing agencies, FAO, IFAD, and World Bank, which is financed by a Multi-Donor Trust Fund at the World Bank. A separate, independent project structure has been set-up, with its own Partnership Council and Program Management Center. Donor members report regularly on the progress of the project to the SDG2 Roadmap group¹¹.
- d) **Survey donors SDG2 reporting (MFA-NL):** MFA NL commissioned a survey in 2018 on the Platform members' SDG2 reporting to identify possible opportunities in the global alignment and coordination of donor SDG2 reporting.
- e) **Innovation & Research (BMZ, EU):** Evaluating existing research initiatives and establish synergies. Focus on research agendas of EU DeSIRA, CGIAR –Crops to end hunger.
- f) **Mapping of SDG2.3 donor programs and projects (UK DFID):** Modelled on GDPRD's Land Group map, with possible hosting on Donor Platform website. The concept for a scoping exercise was initiated in mid-2018.
- g) **Cooperation with the Private Sector (Australia DFAT, MFA-NL):** Alignment with private sector activities, especially supporting the enabling environment for investments, the availability of affordable credit, reducing risks through public-private partnerships and reinforcing

⁸ AICS, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, BMZ, DFID, DFAT, European Commission, IADC, MEAE France, MFA NL, USAID

⁹ Global Donor Platform for Rural Development: Annual General Report 2018

¹⁰ Global Donor Platform for Rural Development Official website: <https://www.donorplatform.org/donors-efforts-in-sdgs-implementation.html>

¹¹ Global Donor Platform for Rural Development 2020. SDG2 Roadmap Handover Report

international guidelines for responsible agricultural investment. No concrete actions yet defined.

Additionally, between 2018-2020, the SDG2 working group has organised a number of high level meetings and events at forums such as the UN General Assembly and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) (see Table 3 for details).

Table 3: Global Donor Working Group on SDG2 activities 2015-2020

Year	Meeting and Events	Studies/Reports/Publications/Policy briefs
2018	Ceres 2030 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory Board meeting, Bonn, December 2018 • Sustainable solutions to end hunger, CFS, October 2018 50 x 2030 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of "50 by 2030" initiative for Data to End Hunger, at UNGA, September 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018, Inventory of Donor Mapping on SDG2 Results Reporting, written by Ben Haagsma, Fair & Sustainable Consulting
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Systems Informal Donor Coordination Meeting • A Ceres2030 perspective: Reducing Post-Harvest Losses in Agriculture, CFS, October 2019 	
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a Common Narrative on SDG2: The Road to the Food Systems Summit Informal Meeting of the SDG2-Roadmap Group • Ceres2030: What works to end hunger? @GIZ, February 2020, Bonn 	

Member reflections on performance/achievements

The SDG2 Roadmap group is highly regarded by Platform members as an example of where a forum like the Platform can add value in bringing donors together to address and contribute to global discussions on critically important issues. The working group's activities and advocacy are highly visible to even those members that are not directly engaged in its activities. In a survey question on the Platform's three most significant achievements in the last five years, several members highlighted the work of the SDG2 working group. Similarly, in interviews, members reflected on the critical importance of the group and commended its efforts to bring attention to and supporting the need for better data and evidence to support country and national level efforts to achieve SDG2. The group's activities are seen as a positive example of what can be achieved when donors come together around a shared goal and objective. In the words of one member, the SDG2 roadmap group "really represents the core of the Platform's objectives" and a group that "could represent the Platform itself".

"The SDG 2 Roadmap group really represents the core of the Platform's objectives other types of organisations."

In response to a survey question on the TWG's performance, members generally expressed a high degree of satisfaction with its objectives and activities (100%), planning and implementation of activities (92%), communication with its members (92%), and its broader impact beyond the membership (77%) (see Figure 5). In

terms of the working group's key achievements, in the last five years, members commended the

group's push towards better data for achieving SDG2, and the work of the 50x2030 and CERES 2030 initiatives. Member suggestions to improve its performance include engaging with more donors, engaging and encouraging more youth participation, and working more broadly towards simpler and harmonising ways to collect data.

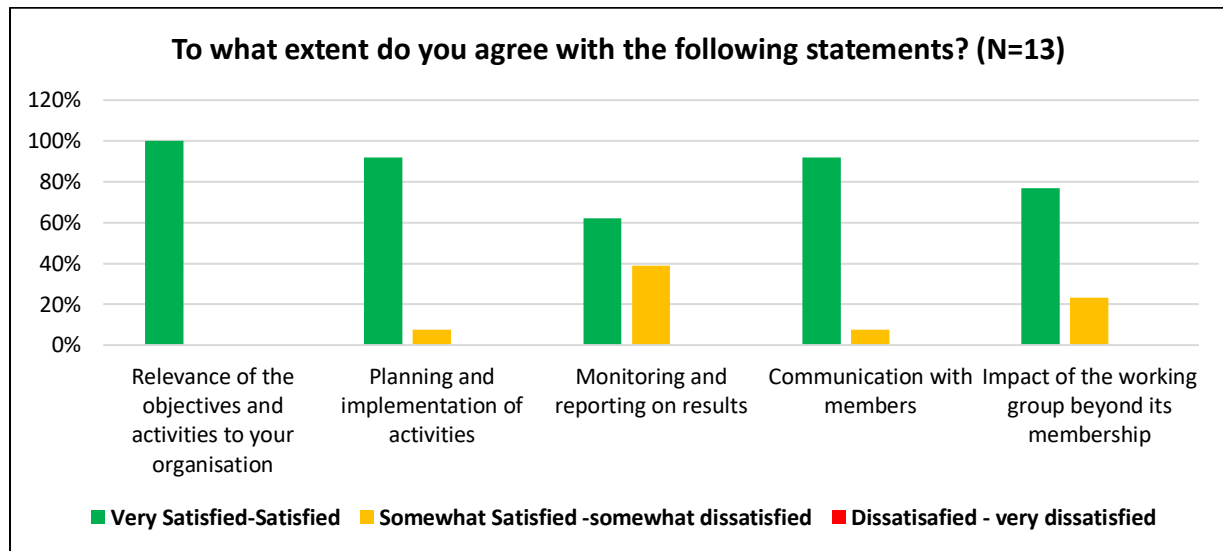


Figure 5: Satisfaction with SDG 2 Working Group performance

To conclude, the SDG2 Road map is one of the Platform's most active and engaged thematic working groups. Alongside the land governance working group, it is highly regarded by members for its clarity of purpose, objectives, activities, and its effectiveness in galvanizing member engagement and participation around a concrete agenda. As with the land working group, SDG2 is a TWG that was incubated outside the Platform, but over time has come to form a lot of its core activities. Despite being an informal working group, it has a driven and committed set of members that have taken ownership and leadership. The working group has a concrete agenda, set of activities and initiatives that are oriented towards the achievement of a tangible, measurable goal and outcome. The working group and its members are linked and plugged into several high-level discussions and forums and in this way have a pathway towards achieving the broader goals and objectives of the group.

2.2.3 Rural Youth

The Platform's TWG on Rural Youth was formed in 2018 and is the youngest of the Platform's thematic working groups. The TWG was formed in the wake of the 2018 AGA which focused on the theme "Young and ready to move – empowering the new generation in the rural space". As a lead-up to the AGA, the Donor Platform commissioned a Compendium on Donor Engagement in Rural Youth which provided insights on donor engagement and priorities in engaging with rural youth. With 14 members¹², the TWG on Rural Youth functions as a donor-catalysed working group that seeks to advise donors, governments, and civil society organisations on the most effective ways to support and

¹² Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (IADC), African Development Bank Group (AFDB), US Agency for International Development (USAID), Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), SPIRE, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), Asia Development Bank (ADB), MEAE – France and youth representatives.

empower youth, allowing them to productively contribute to and benefit from sustainable rural livelihoods and food value chain systems.¹³

A distinguishing feature of the TWG on rural youth is that it aims for 50% representation of youth representatives and 50% representation from development actors. The TWG does not have a work plan, but a review of the meeting minutes since 2018 indicates on-going discussion about the development of a work plan and the need to more concretely establish a workflow structure for the group including the establishment of a group chair.¹⁴ The TWG draws on the “Compendium on Donor Engagement with Youth” as a key publication to define its activities.¹⁵ Additionally, in 2019 the group undertook a mapping exercise to identify youth networks in Africa. The report “Insights into Youth Networks – Working Around Agriculture and Rural Development in Africa” has been well received by Platform members and provides an insight on how rural youth in Africa interact and voice their interests and looks at youth networks.

Rural Youth TWG Members

- ADB*
- AFDB*
- AFD*
- All Native Groi
- AUC
- CAADP Youth Network
- FAO*
- GIZ*
- IADC*
- MEAE*
- NORAD
- SPIRE
- OECD*
- Tech4Agr

In the last two years, the TWG on rural youth has gathered momentum and organised a series of side events in 2019 (see Table 4). It is also one of the more active TWGs proactive in terms of information, knowledge sharing, and outreach. In 2019, a total of 13 web-articles were released on the Platform’s website, making “Rural Youth” one of the top three Platform themes, together with Agenda 2030/SDG2 Roadmap and Land Governance.

Table 4: Global Donor Working Group on Rural Youth - Activities 2015-2020

Year	Past Events and Meetings	Studies/Reports/Publications
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 2018: Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in Rome • October 2018: Webinar on opportunities for the rural youth agenda. Members and partners came together to learn about donor’s engagement with rural youth as well as to learn about the youth-driven CAADP youth network.¹⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Compendium on Donor Engagement with Youth</u>
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>June 2019: 2 side events at the AGA in Zurich, Switzerland</u> • <u>October 2019: 46th session of the Committee on Food Security (CFS) Rome, Italy in October 2019.</u> • November 2019: <u>Side event on “Rural youth and decent jobs creation in food systems”</u> held by the TWG on Rural Youth in Addis Abbas, Ethiopia. Organised back to back with the Youth Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment (YES!) Forum 2019 along the side-lines of the World Export Development Forum (WEDF) and the Africa Industrialization Week (18 – 22 November). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Insights into Youth Networks – Working Around Agriculture and Rural Development in Africa</u>

¹³ GDPRD Thematic Working Group on Youth - Empowering Youth for Today and Tomorrow Concept Note.2018

¹⁴ TWG on Rural Youth, Meeting Minutes October 2018, February 2019, October 2019, June 2020.

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ GDPRD: 2018 Annual general report

Member reflections on performance/achievements

While a nascent working group, members see a lot of potential in the TWG on Rural Youth and are appreciative of its activities to date. In response to a survey question on the Platform's three most significant achievements in the last 5 years, members listed the youth working group and AGA on rural youth, alongside the TWGs on land and SDG2. Similarly, members of the TWG on Rural Youth report a high degree of satisfaction (78%) with the group's activities (see Figure 6). However, members also feel that there is scope for the group to improve its performance in certain areas i.e. planning and implementation, communication with members, monitoring and reporting of results and its outreach and impact beyond the membership.

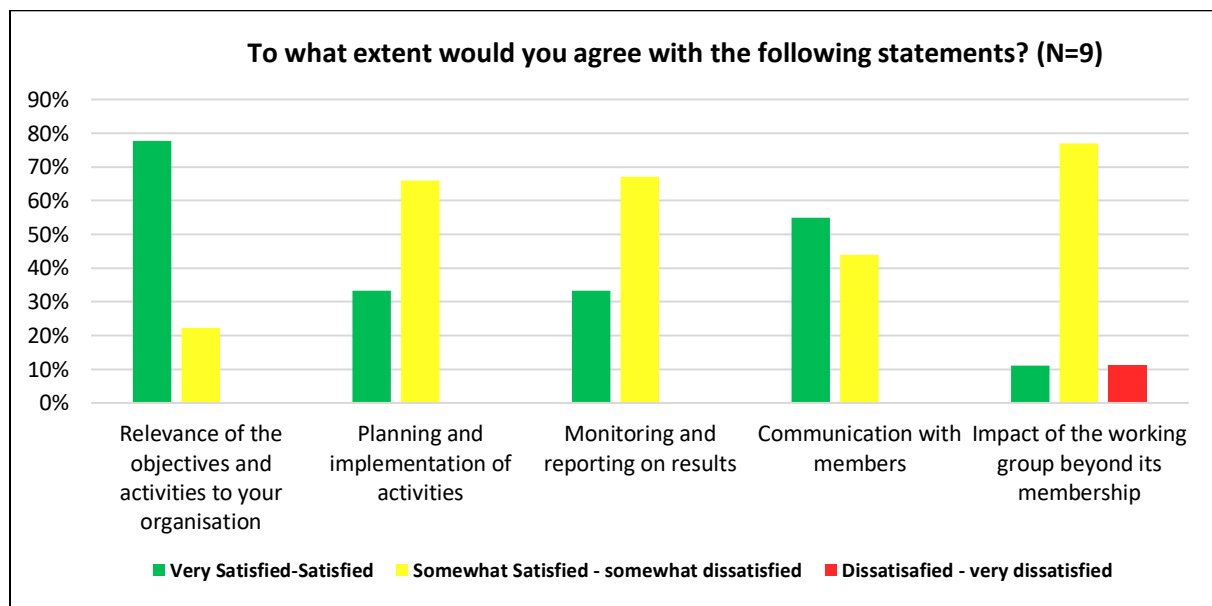


Figure 6: Satisfaction with Global Donor Working Group on Rural Youth's performance

In terms of recommendations to improve the future functioning of the working group, respondents emphasised the need to clarify the goals and objectives of the working group, the need to develop a strategic work plan that clearly defines the interests and activities of members. Respondents also emphasized the need to increase youth participation and for the group to facilitate greater exchange and coordination amongst members beyond routine update calls.

To conclude, while the TWG on Rural Youth is the youngest of the Platform's working groups, in a short time it has generated a lot of member interest and is recognised as a thematically relevant and current issue that is of value to members. As a group that has youth engagement at its core, there is tremendous scope for the group to engage with a new generation of rural development and food systems practitioners. While it is difficult to assess the group's performance or achievements at this stage, amongst the Platform's many themes, it remains relevant and an area where members see a continued role for the Platform.

2.2.4 Inclusive Agri-business and Trade

The Inclusive Agri-business and Trade TWG was initiated by the Platform in 2015 in response to growing donor attention to private sector engagement and an emerging “mutual prosperity” agenda that included trade relations. Driven largely by the Platform secretariat the group was relatively active over several years. However, its efforts over the last two years have dropped off and it is effectively dormant currently.

The TWG on Inclusive Agri-business and Trade essentially brings together two independent workstreams – trade and inclusive agribusiness. There are many synergies between the two workstreams including a common set of donor agencies and partner organisations.¹⁷ The Inclusive agribusiness workstream focuses on market approaches and initiatives aimed at small to medium-scale farmers as a driver to enhance economic opportunities and reduce poverty in the rural space. The trade workstream focuses on the international trade regime, markets, and looking at addressing the gaps between trade policies and agriculture and rural development policies.¹⁸

The joint TWG on Inclusive Agri-business and trade serves as a focal point for agencies that are working to support policies and projects on a range of topics including inclusive agribusiness, sustainable value chains, private sector etc, as well as policy coherence between trade and development, and Aid for Trade.¹⁹

In terms of activities, the TWG Agri-business and trade organised a number of meetings and events between 2015-2018, but its activities appear to have dropped off in the past two years 2019-2020.

Inclusive Agribusiness and Trade TWG Members

- DFAT*
- ECDPM
- EC*
- FAO*
- GIZ*
- ITC*
- ICTSD
- IADC*
- IFAD*
- LuxDev*
- MFA-NL*
- USAID*
- WB*
- WTO*

*Platform members

Table 5: Global Donor Working Group on Inclusive Agri-business and Trade - Activities 2015-2020

Year	Past Events and Meetings	Studies/Reports/Publications
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southeast Asia Roundtable on Inclusive Agribusiness – co-organised with DFAT-Australia, Grow Asia, Seas of Change and other institutions in Vietnam (Hanoi), in September 2015 – report is only available in hard copy. • Trade for ARD informal consultations at MFA NL • Side-event at WTO’s 5th Global Review of Aid for Trade • Virtual briefing on market access for farmers from East Africa • Side event at CFS42 	
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-AGA Inclusive Agribusiness Meeting – Geneva, January 2016 - full report available in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016, Review of IAB initiatives, written by Jim Woodhill • In 2016, ECDPM (Paul) and the Donor Platform had co-published a paper on aligning trade and agriculture

¹⁷ GDPRD official website: <https://www.donorplatform.org/inclusive-agribusiness-and-trade.html>

¹⁸ GDPRD official website: <https://www.donorplatform.org/inclusive-agribusiness-and-trade.html>

¹⁹ GDPRD: 2019 Annual Report

2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop on IAB together with Seas of Change and BEAM Exchange – Brighton, UK, April 2017 • Webinar on “Policy Approaches for Successful Agribusiness: A Review By DFID” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017, Discussion paper on aligning agricultural and rural development and trade policies to improve sustainable development impact
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC Training on inclusive agribusiness – Geneva, January 2018 – This was a training organised for ITC staff, but with external speakers. • Pre-AGA IAB Roundtable - Berlin, June 2018 - report in • Webinar in July 2018 - Facilitating safe trade: lessons and experiences from STDF’s work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018, Paul Engel's paper on aligning Aid for Trade and Agriculture – see here
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-AGA IAB roundtable - Zurich, June 2019 – report as webstory (Pre-AGA IAB roundtable) and other document 	

Member reflections on performance and achievements

The activities of TWG on Inclusive Agribusiness and Trade are not widely known amongst the membership and member responses to a survey question on its performance and achievements were very limited – with only 4 responses (see Figure 7). Limited documentation and evidence of the working group’s activities and achievements make it difficult to objectively evaluate the performance and achievements of the group beyond the fact that they have organised some useful events.

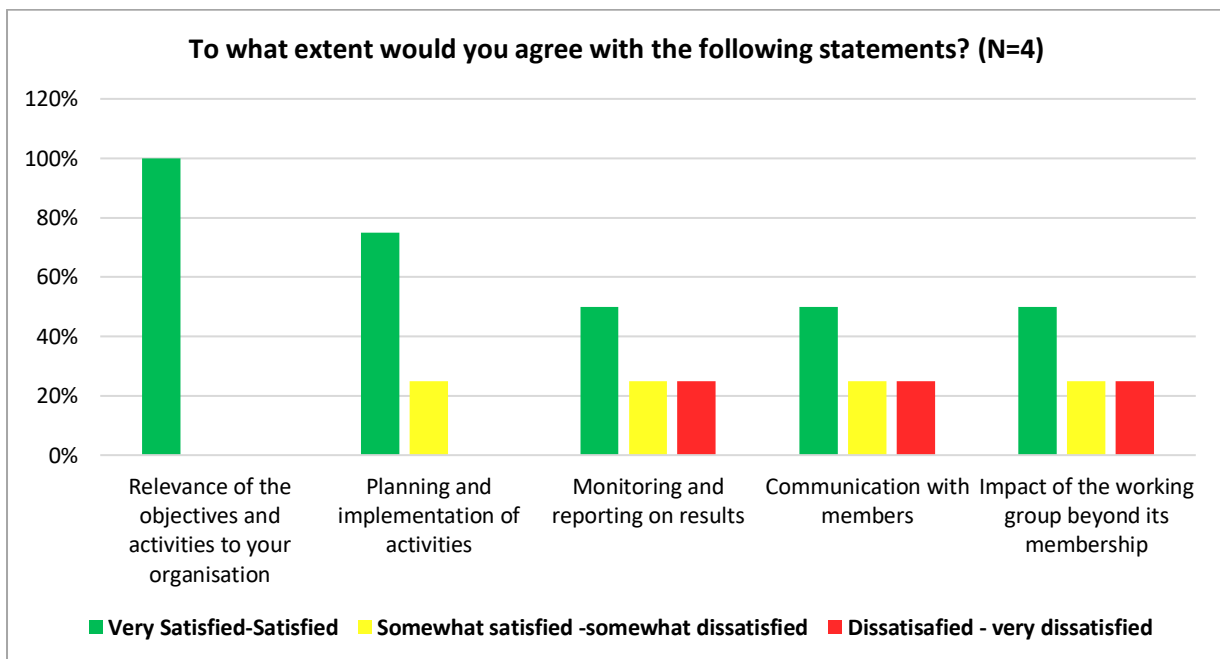


Figure 7: Satisfaction with Global Donor Working Group on Inclusive Agribusiness and Trade's performance

In conclusion, while the TWG on Inclusive Agri-business and Rural Trade was active at one stage – organising a series of events and publications – it has been dormant for some time with limited donor engagement and/or participation. Knowledge of the group and its activities is limited to a few members within the group.

2.2.5 Gender

Gender is not a standalone thematic working group but is regarded as a cross-cutting theme across each of the TWGs. The Secretariat through the Platform’s communication tools seeks to provide news

about current trends, programs, and studies ensuring that members receive news about gender-related issues and can consider them for their programming.²⁰

The Platform's publications pre-date the period 2015-2020:

- *Gender Internal Assessment*: In 2007, the Platform commissioned an internal assessment to help sharpen its approach in promoting gender in ARD and to further mainstream gender into its activities. The study recommended the integration of gender equality as a guiding principle in the Platform's governance structures, activities, advocacy, knowledge generation, communications, and outreach.²¹
- *Gender and Agriculture Library*: The content of the former "gender in ag" website belonging to three Platform members - The World Bank, FAO and IFAD - has been migrated to Platform's website and is administered by the Secretariat. The library is continuously updated with the latest publications, strategies and videos from Platform members and partners.
- *Gender and Agriculture Policy Brief*: In 2010, the Platform produced a policy brief on gender and agriculture providing an overview of the importance of addressing gender and gender inequalities in agriculture and providing policy recommendations on gender mainstreaming.

While gender is viewed as a cross-cutting theme, there is very little information or documentation related to the Platform's on-going gender-related activities or programs and or broader efforts by the Platform to mainstream gender and inclusion across its different areas of operation.

2.2.6 Climate Change

The Platform's TWG on Climate Change facilitates donor responses to the climate challenge in agriculture and rural development. Similar to gender, the Platform's thematic group on climate change functions less as a formal working group than as a broad coalition or strategic alliance of donors within the Platform that are working on/and/or are interested in climate change issues. This is reflected in the fact that the group does not have a ToR or a work plan.

Per the Platform's website, members of the Climate Change TWG are involved in several climate change alliances including:

- **Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture (GACSA)**: GACSA was formed in 2012 and is an inclusive, voluntary, and action-oriented multi-stakeholder platform on CSA. It works to "improve farmers' agricultural productivity and incomes in a sustainable way, build farmers' resilience to extreme weather and changing climate, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with agriculture, when possible".²²
- **The NDC Partnership (NDC-P)**: The Thematic Working Group on Agriculture, Food Security, and Land Use The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development actively engages in the Thematic Working Group on Agriculture, Food Security and Land-use of the NDC Partnership. The core function of the TWG is to foster countries' climate change action in agricultural

²⁰ Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, "Annual Report 2019" (Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, 2019).

²¹ GDPRD Annual Report 2007

²² Ibid. <https://www.donorplatform.org/news-climate-change/id-3rd-annual-forum-of-the-global-alliance-for-climate-smart-agriculture.html>

sectors so that they live up to their full potential to adapt, mitigate, and yield co-benefits from climate change. The FAO facilitates the TWG.

- **African Climate-Smart Agriculture Alliance:** The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) is a strategic framework for pan-African socio-economic development. It launched an alliance of diverse partners to reach six million farming families through Climate-Smart Agriculture processes until 2022. Known as the Africa Climate-Smart Agriculture Alliance, the group aims to contribute to helping 25 million farmers become more resilient and food secure by 2025.
- **The NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA):** The NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) is a technical body and development vehicle of the African Union (AU). The NPCA is responsible for the implementation of NEPAD.

However, it is not clear from the Platform’s website or documentation as to how the TWG members interact with these alliances. In the last five years, the TWG has organised 4 events, produced 1 publication and published 17 web stories on the Platform’s website (see Table 5).

Table 5. Global Donor Working Group on Climate Change - Activities 2015-2020

Year	Past Events and Meetings	Studies and Reports
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side-event at the COP2, Marrakesh, Morocco 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study on donor approaches to support developing countries in their efforts to adapt to climate change
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Platform participated in side-events during the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) Partnership Thematic Working Group meeting in April and the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA) Annual Forum in June 2019 • Organized events and presentations during CFS week • Secretariat, in collaboration with the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), held a climate-resilient agriculture thematic working group meeting back-to-back with the Annual General Assembly 	

To conclude, compared with some of the other working groups, Climate Change TWG is not active. There is no record on the Platform’s website of a standalone work plan, members do not meet regularly and there is no record of any meeting minutes or reporting documentation on the Platform’s website. It is likely this is because the TWG functions more through the climate alliances listed above, but even there is not clear how the group as a whole or members individually engage with the different climate alliances listed above.

2.2.7 Summary Analysis of Thematic Working Groups

In the past five years, the Platform’s Thematic Working Groups have organised a number of events, conferences, developed knowledge products, reports and publications, and convened donors from within and outside the Platform on a number of relevant global agriculture and rural development issues. The Thematic Working Groups are recognised by members as valuable forums to share and exchange knowledge, information, and collaborative opportunities around niche themes. The bespoke

nature of the TWGs has enabled members with specific interests and priorities to champion and push forward a specific agenda – with considerable success- as in the case of TWGs on land governance and SDG 2.

However, from interviews and survey responses, it is clear that that beyond one or two working groups, members have limited knowledge about the Platform’s broader TWG activities. Members also find it difficult to articulate specific achievements or results of TWGs while still valuing their networking function. This relates to the fact that many TWGs function quite informally and do not have a clearly defined work plan or set of activities, but equally to do with the fact that many TWGs do not monitor and report on their activities and results.

The branching out of Platform thematic groups into different areas has also split member interest, engagement and participation too thinly at a time when donors are struggling with reduced budgets and human capacity. As a result, over time many TWGs have failed to sustain member engagement beyond a few events. In fact, the Platform’s two most successful and active working groups – land governance and SDG 2 – have a very different character to the others – with higher levels of donor engagement and participation in their activities. The Land governance TWG for example though incubated within the Platform has over time evolved an independent identity and today is hosted by the Platform rather than being driven by it. Similarly, the SDG 2 working group – while the Secretariat was requested to facilitate the work of the road map group – in practice, the work of the TWG on SDG2 is certainly the core of the Platform’s work and is a real reflection of the kind of high level and strategic advocacy and convening that could be the core business of the Platform.

To conclude, there is a real need to re-think and consolidate a lot of the Platform’s work across different thematic areas and identify where the Platform can play a more effective strategic role in driving the agenda on specific themes forward for example through forums such as the upcoming 2021 Food Systems Summit. Similarly, there is a need to determine what themes should remain TWGs as opposed to thematic issues that the Platform is keen to engage with/highlight through one-time events and/or through an annual event such as the AGA. Lastly, there is drawing from this a need to consider whether the Platform is best positioned in terms of its resources – financial and human – to continue to invest in the kinds of knowledge generation and production activities it has through the TWGs and/or if it should rather focus much more on engaging at a much higher strategic and policy level with its members to galvanize and catalyse investments in particular emerging issues. The real value add for the Platform is much more around it being a forum that catalyses, mobilizes, and galvanizes donor investments in taking the rural development and food systems agenda forward rather than investing in content and knowledge generation – a space that is already crowded and requires considerable investments for it to be done effectively.

2.3 Annual General Assembly

The AGA is a flagship event for the Platform and provides an open space for debate to Platform members, partners, and guests on emerging topics in agriculture and rural development (ARD). Since 2006, the Platform has organised 13 AGA’s with an average attendance of nearly 100-200 stakeholders. AGA participants benefit from the core services of the Donor Platform: knowledge sharing, advocacy, and networking on key development issues and strategic directions that affect lives in rural space.

Each year, the AGA convenes donors, members, and other stakeholders around critically important and emerging themes in the rural development space (see Table 6 for a summary of all past Platform AGA’s). For example, the 2018 AGA revolved around “Empowering the new generation in the rural space”, the 2017 edition focused on “Agenda 2030 put into practice: what future for rural

development” and the 2019 AGA was designed as a Members’ retreat, to discuss the evolving role of the Platform. The recently concluded 2020 virtual AGA focused on the theme of “Pathways for Food Systems Transformation” and specifically the processes needed at different levels and donor actions needed to support and catalyse processes of food systems transformation.

Table 6: Summary of all Platform AGAs to date

Year	Theme/Focus
2020	Strengthening Coordination Towards SDG2: Pathways for Food Systems Transformation
2019	Members work together to influence ideas and resources for sustainable agriculture and food systems transformation
2018	Empowering Rural Young Generation
2017	Agenda 2030 put into practice: what future for rural development?
2016	Agricultural Trade and Rural Development – Duet or solo Playing?
2015	No AGA held
2014	Food Systems and Gender – Women’s empowerment for food security and nutrition
2013	Rethinking Rural Development: Opportunities for New Partnerships and Territorial Approaches in a Changing Rural Environment
2012	Food, Farmers, and Markets
2011	Strengthening Resilience in ARD
2010	Advancing the Strategic Agenda
2009	No AGA held
2008	The first session of the AGA focused on current changes in the global governance in the ARD sector, particularly the implications of the Accra Agenda for Action (CFA) of the High-Task Force on Food Security and the Global Partnership on Agriculture and Food Security (GPAFS). The second part focused on the strategic direction of the Platform and the strategic planning process.
2007	Agriculture is back on the agenda, seizing the opportunity. Election of the Steering Committee and Chairs
2006	Assessment of progress and strategic direction

While the AGA is viewed by members as a useful event to network and convene around shared interests and objectives, there are questions about its effectiveness in influencing and shaping both donor perspectives as well as its contributions to the broader discourse on rural development and food systems.

In response to a survey question on the relevance of the AGA, out of 26 respondents, 62% strongly agreed/agreed that the AGA helps to shape the global agenda on food systems and rural development and 76% agreed that the AGA engaged with an influential audience beyond the Platform’s membership (see Figure 8). An overwhelming 92% agreed that the AGA is well organised and communicated in a timely and effective manner. However, member views are split on the extent to which AGA deliberations are acted upon. In response to a question on feedback/suggestions to improve future AGAs, members shared a number of ideas including scaling back the AGA and clarifying its function and purpose; providing more space for informal exchange and networking amongst participants; increasing the engagement and participation with groups outside the Platform particularly from the global South; and using more virtual tools to keep members engaged throughout the year as opposed to just on an annual basis.

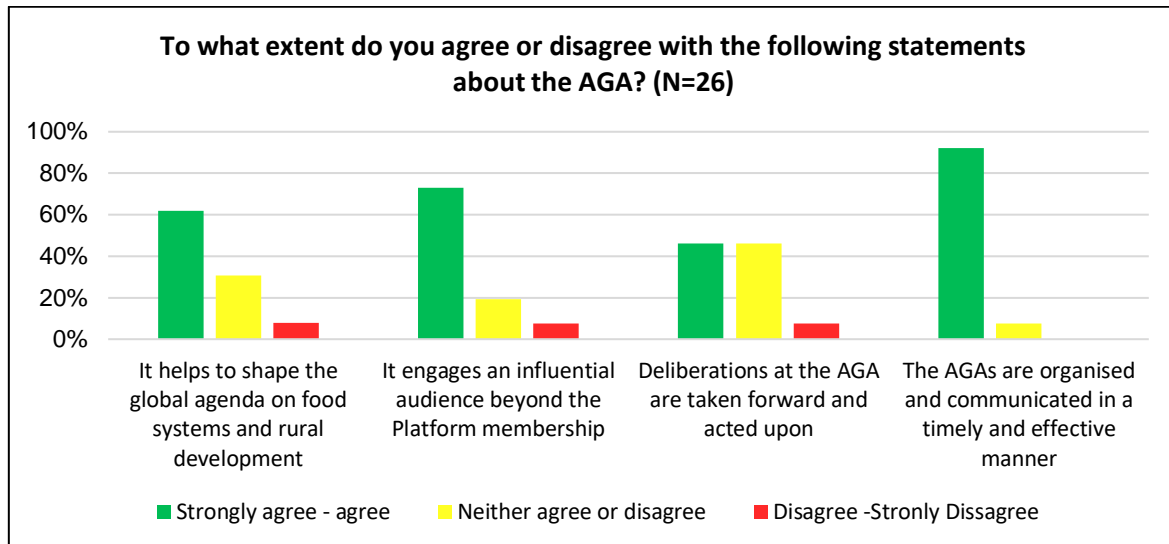


Figure 8: Relevance of Platform's AGAs

To conclude, the AGA remains a key flagship event for the Platform, one that is regarded by members as a useful networking opportunity. Over the years, the AGA has focused on a range of current and emerging thematic issues. However, it has had limited reach and impact beyond the Platform's membership. It appears that in the past, the AGA has struggled to attract high-level speakers, panellists and secure senior-level leadership and engagement by its Platform members. The majority of those attending the AGAs appear to have been at the technical and operational level of the donors rather than at the policy and strategic influencing level. This has presented challenges in terms of sustaining interest in the AGA as an annual event and raised questions about the actioning of deliberations at the AGA. Furthermore, while it is evident that AGA has tremendous value in providing a forum for donors to network and build linkages, it is not regarded by Platform members or the broader community, as a forum that highlights and supports and catalyses donor engagement on critical rural development and food systems issues. However, there is a clear scope for the AGA to play such a role and the recent 2020 AGA is a good insight into how this is possible.

The 2020 AGA represents many firsts for the Platform. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is the first time that the Platform has convened an entirely virtual AGA. The AGA was organised over four days between 2-5 November 2020 and brought together between 100-150 participants in a series of virtual events. The proceedings of the AGA were also live-streamed. In a marked departure from past AGAs, the theme of the AGA was very focused and high level. It was designed to serve as the Platform's key contribution to on-going discussions amongst donors leading up to the 2021 Food Systems Summit. The AGA was organised into four sessions – a high-level event with remarks by Dr. Agnes Kalibata, UN Secretary General's Special Envoy on the Food Systems Summit, and three events organised around specific sub-themes. This year's AGA is a good example of how the Platform can leverage its membership and networks to engage high-level speakers, panelists, and participants to build a discussion amongst donors on critical and emergent food systems and rural development issues. By aligning the discussions of the AGA with the forthcoming FSS, the Platform has also demonstrated its strong potential leading role in contributing to the international agenda on food systems, given its revived focus and vision and the new Strategic Plan.

2.4 GDPRD Contribution to the SDGs

It is our understanding that the Platform played a substantive role in influencing the discussions that went into the formulation of the SDGs particularly around 2014-2015 when the global partnership for development had come together to discuss the post-2015 agenda. It was noted by a member that the GDPRD had commissioned a paper on the SDGs that was quite influential in shaping donor thinking. However, in the course of the stock-taking analysis, the team was unable to find documentation to further examine the contributions made by the Platform to the broader SDG agenda.

2.5 Communications and Outreach

The Platform is currently operating under its new Communication Strategy approved by the Board in January 2019. This strategy has prioritized the Platform's communication audience into three target groups: Target audience 1 which is composed of existing members and partners (60 percent secretariat time allocation); Target audience 2 which is composed of wider donor and rural development community not yet engaged with the Platform (20 percent Secretariat time allocation); and Target audience 3 which comprises the external community interested in agriculture and rural development (20 percent Secretariat time allocation). In recent years, the Platform's communication has largely been focused on supporting the work of thematic working groups and running Annual General Assemblies. However, it has not effectively reached out to the wider audience.

The Platform utilizes a variety of communication tools and channels which are prioritised into 3 levels: Priority A (Website, Newsletter/eUpdate, Activity briefs, Publications, Webinars) Priority B (Social Media) and Priority C (InfoNotes, Blogs, Video Interviews). To date, the main mode of communication has been through Emails and this has been backed up with the information provided by the website. Newsletters continue to be produced and disseminated via emails and the website six times a year. The Platform also produces an Annual report that documents the Platform's activities each year. The three Platform's Social media channels (LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube) remain marginally used. In response to a survey question that asked survey respondents to rank in order of preference how they receive information about Platform's activities (See Figure 9), Email was ranked as the most preferred mode of communication (5.46), followed by the Newsletter (4.13), Platform reports and publications (3.49), website (3.28), Annual report (2.95) and lastly by social media (2.13).

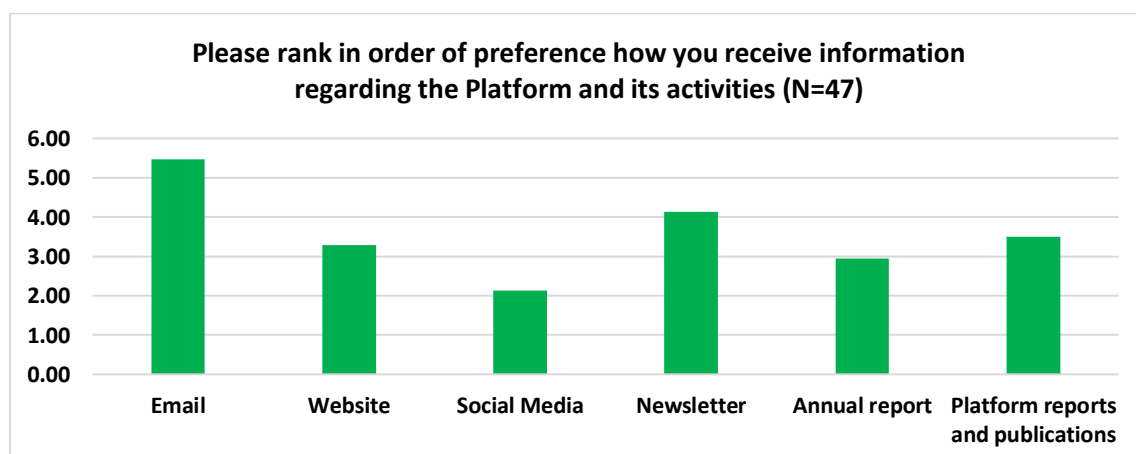


Figure 9: Platform communication tools

Relaunched in 2017, GDPRD's website is the central communication tool and targets all the 3 audiences. The website was relaunched with the idea of making it more sleek, modern, and user-friendly. It contains various information including News (both general and on workstream activities),

Events (AGA, events attended by Secretariat, other events of interest and relevance), Publications, Information on GDPR, and Corporate materials (Platform Strategy, Flyer, and Annual Report). The review team also comprehensively reviewed the Platform website since it is the central communication tool of the Platform. The survey results show that the frequency of website usage remains rather low. In a question that sought to assess the frequency of website usage, 6% of 50 respondents stated that they use it most weeks, 30 percent occasionally each month, 22% occasionally each six months, 34% which was the majority a few times each year, and finally percent using it less than once a year. The survey further sought to assess the performance of the website across specific areas. Figure 10 below gives a summary of the findings.

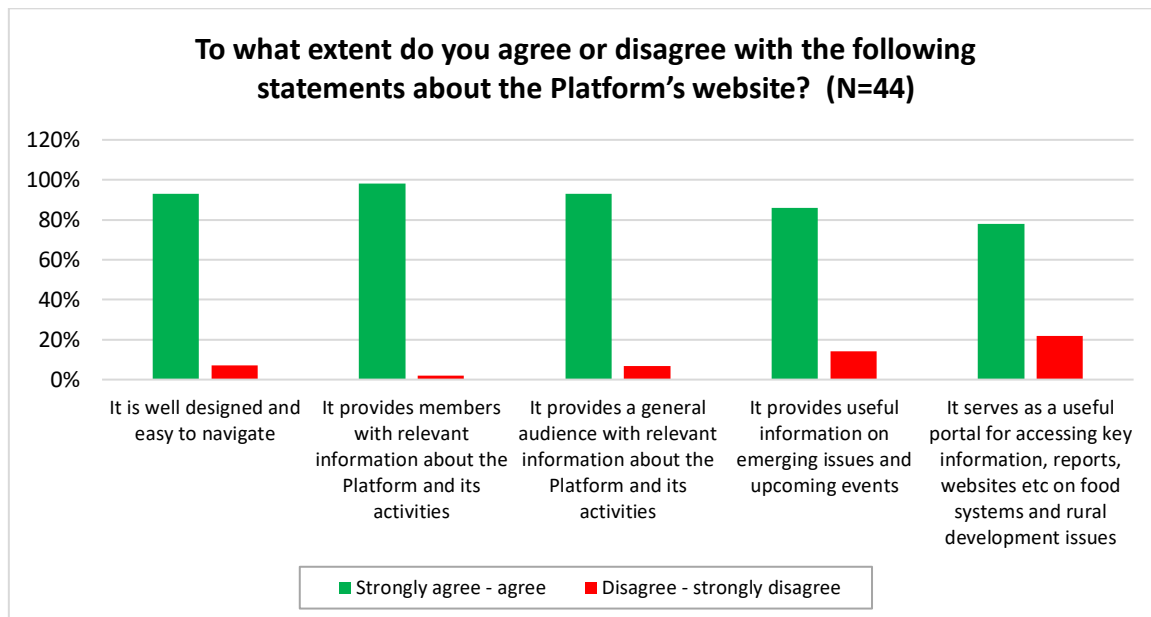


Figure 10: Relevance of Platform's Website

Overall, the website appears to serve more like a repository of information versus a tool of communication. Based on its assessment, the website can potentially serve the following functions:

- It can support the activities of the Platform including the work of thematic working groups and planning of the AGA. For example, the website has dedicated pages for all its thematic working areas. However, these pages need to be reorganized and updated to make them more concise, accessible, and consistent.
- It can provide useful resources for members and the wider audience including updates on upcoming events and access to high-level political reports and documents. Currently, the website has an interactive events calendar that updates its members on upcoming relevant events.
- It can profile the work of the global donor community in the wider development agenda. The COVID-19 webpage is a good example of how the Platform has managed to serve this role efficiently.
- It can promote the sharing of technical knowledge however this function would require a lot of resources.

The Platform has a comprehensive Communication Strategy that is yet to be fully implemented to realize its potential. Whilst its communication and outreach have effectively served its members, more effort needs to be put to reach out to the wider audience. Overall, the use of the website and other communication tools need to be more strategically aligned to the outcomes of the Strategic Plan.

There needs to be absolute clarity of purpose for the website; whether it should continue serving as a repository for information or whether it should be tailored to be an effective communication tool. Further orientation and development of the Platform's communication tools need to reflect on the lessons learnt out of the COVID-19 pandemic. This pandemic has opened a whole line of thinking and has resulted in innovative virtual platforms that the Platform can utilize. Finally, there needs to be a better alignment in the use of social media.

3 Governance and Operations

Over the last five years, the governance and operations of the Platform have functioned adequately to support the activities it has undertaken. However the Secretariat function and size have been significantly reduced in the transition to International Fund for Agriculture (IFAD) and there is a need for a fairly substantial rethink of governance, membership, and Secretariat for the Platform to take a more effective role in the future. Over years the Platform's paying membership has dropped while the overall membership continues to increase, which has created an unsustainable model. Funding continues to be a big issue in supporting various Platform activities.

3.1 Board

The Platform's board is the central decision-making body and is responsible for the long-term strategic development of the Platform. It comprises the contact points of all Platform members that pay the agreed annual membership contribution. The Platform currently has 13 board members (see the list in annex 3). The board is chaired by two Co-chairs who are elected ad personam by the board and are mandated to serve for two years. Given the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure a smooth transition of the Secretariat to IFAD, the Platform exceptionally has three Co-chairs: USAID, European Commission, and the Netherlands. The board meets formally twice a year. The first meeting is during the Annual General Assembly to approve the annual plan and budget adopted by members as part of the multi-year programme of work. The second meeting is mid-year to review Platform's progress. Additionally, the board can organize informal virtual meetings throughout the year on a need basis.

This review assessed the level of satisfaction with the Board across three areas and the views were split. In a survey question to the board's performance, 47% out of 47 respondents were very satisfied/satisfied with the Board's role in strategically positioning the Platform, 42% were somewhat satisfied/ very dissatisfied with its role in guiding the Secretariat and thematic working groups and 52% were very satisfied/ satisfied with its role in ensuring the financial sustainability of the Platform (see Figure 11).

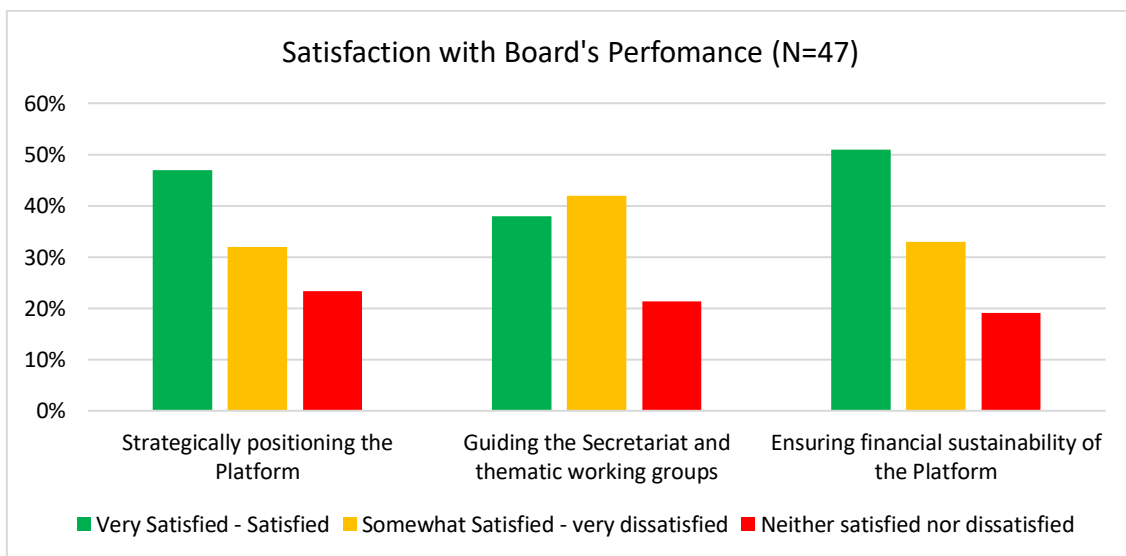


Figure 11: Satisfaction with the Board's Performance

3.2 Membership

The Platform's membership is voluntary and open to donor countries (bilateral and multilateral), non-traditional donors including foundations, multilateral development banks as well as UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations. Currently, the Platform has 40 members and of these 14 are full

members and constitute the decision-making board. Annex 3 provides a list of all current Platform members. Each member appoints a contact point that represents the respective organizations at the Platform meetings and who actively participate in the formulation of joint policies and work programmes. An analysis of the Platform's membership between 2006-2019 shows that generally, the paying membership has continued to drop while the overall membership has continued to rise. Figure 12 below presents a summary of the Platform's membership analysis between 2006 and 2019.

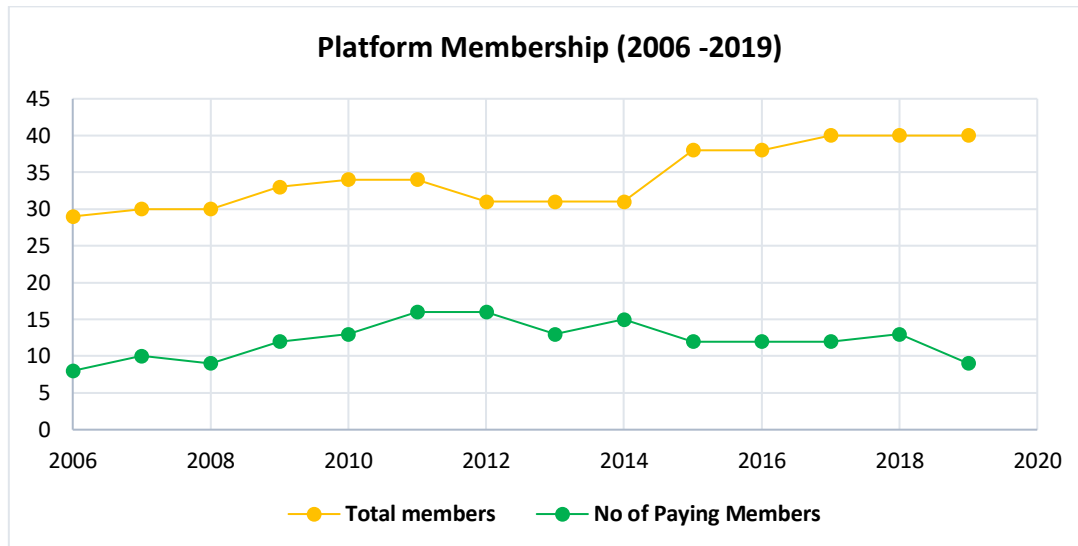


Figure 12: Platform's membership between 2006-2019

The stocktake review also assessed future membership options for the Platform. In a survey question that sought to assess the future membership direction of the Platform (see Figure 13), 70% out of 47 respondents strongly agree/agree the Platform should remain primarily as a forum to convene OECD donors and International agencies, 81% agreed that the membership should include donor agencies of emerging economies, 89% strongly agreed/agreed that membership should include international and regional financial institutions and 74% strongly agreed/agreed that the membership should include philanthropic foundations. Views were split on the extent to which the Platform's membership should be expanded to include private sector platforms, civil society organizations, and farmer organizations.

From the interview responses, while the majority of the respondents acknowledge the importance of a wider engagement, they emphasized the need of limiting the Platform's membership to donors making substantial public investments. One interview respondent argued that opening the membership to include NGOs, CSOs and the private sector will eventually change the nature and purpose of GDPRD by turning it into a discussion platform rather than a coordination platform. Other arguments stated against opening the Platform's membership include: risk of having vested interests within different members especially those that are donor beneficiaries, the Platform's impact and unique added value is likely to be diluted, and exclusivity ensures that members participate in the right way.

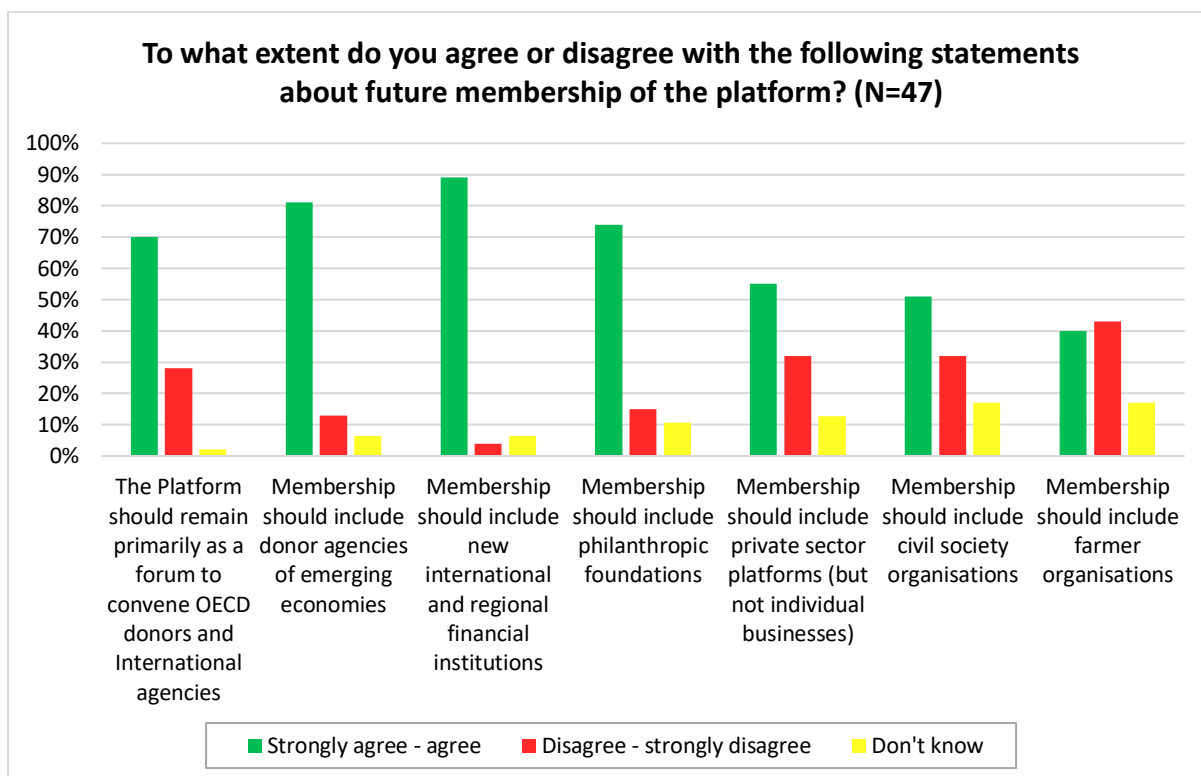


Figure 13: Future of Platform's membership

Further, some respondents felt that the current multi-layer membership category is rather confusing and expressed the need for clearly defining the different membership categories. This could include clearly defining the criteria for joining and the services offered to each membership category. One respondent pointed out that currently, both paying and non-paying members receive the same services, and thus there are no real incentives for paying the subscription fees. Moreover, most interview respondents also strongly expressed the need for more advocacy and target services to attract and build the paying membership base. From the stocktake analysis, even though the Platform currently has 40 plus members and partners, only a small percentage of this current membership actively engages in different Platform activities including thematic working groups.

In conclusion, from the interview responses, there is a strong agreement that the Platform's membership should be limited to actors that make a substantial public good investment to maintain its integrity as a donor Platform. However, the members acknowledge the importance of engagement with other actors within the agriculture and rural development sector realm. The Platform is currently running an unsustainable model with an increasing membership base but with a reducing number of paying members and consequently reduced Platform funding to run its core activities. The Platform should also strive to engage members more efficiently by providing them with valuable and unique services to attract more paying members. In addition to increasing its membership base, the Platform should also focus on effectively engaging its current membership.

3.3 Secretariat

The Secretariat is the central management unit of the Platform and has the executive authority of implementing the Platform's annual work plan within the budget lines agreed by the Board each calendar year. At present, the Secretariat is hosted at the International Fund for Agricultural Development, Rome Italy. Until June 2020, it was hosted by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Development Cooperation (BMZ) and administered by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in Bonn Germany. Based on a review of the Annual Reports between 2007-

2020, the Secretariat size was varied and ranged between 2-8 Full-time equivalent staff with the following key positions: Secretariat Coordinator, Communication Advisor, Senior and junior policy Advisors, Office Manager, Finance Administration, and interns. Additionally, over the years, the Secretariat has been supported by consultants that have been hired on a need basis. However, following the Secretariat transition and based on the Board decision, the size of the Secretariat has been reduced to 3-5 full-time equivalent staff. IFAD is in the process of recruiting three key positions: Secretariat Coordinator, Communications Officer, and Administrative assistant. In the interim, the Secretariat functions are supported by an acting Secretariat Coordinator and an intern.

The size of the Secretariat remains a debatable issue. While the interview respondents appreciated the strategic role that a well-resourced Secretariat could play, most of the interviewed members preferred a leaner and more focused Secretariat. As noted by some interviewed respondents, in the earlier years, the Secretariat was resource-intensive, with a dedicated policy advisor for each thematic working group. According to the Task Force Recommendations, between 2016-2019, staff-cost was the highest expense accounting for approximately 56.6% of the average contribution.

“Multi-stakeholder and long-term platforms require a full-time secretariat”

Members are generally satisfied with the Secretariat’s performance. In a survey question that assessed that the level of satisfaction with the Platform’s Secretariat (see Figure 14), 65% of 48 respondents are very satisfied/satisfied with the Secretariat’s role in supporting the strategic direction of the Platform, 83% very satisfied/satisfied with the Secretariat’s role in supporting the Platform activities and events, 79% very satisfied with the Secretariat’s role in communicating with members and other actors, and finally 65% were very satisfied/satisfied with the Secretariat’s role in monitoring and reporting of the Platform’s work.

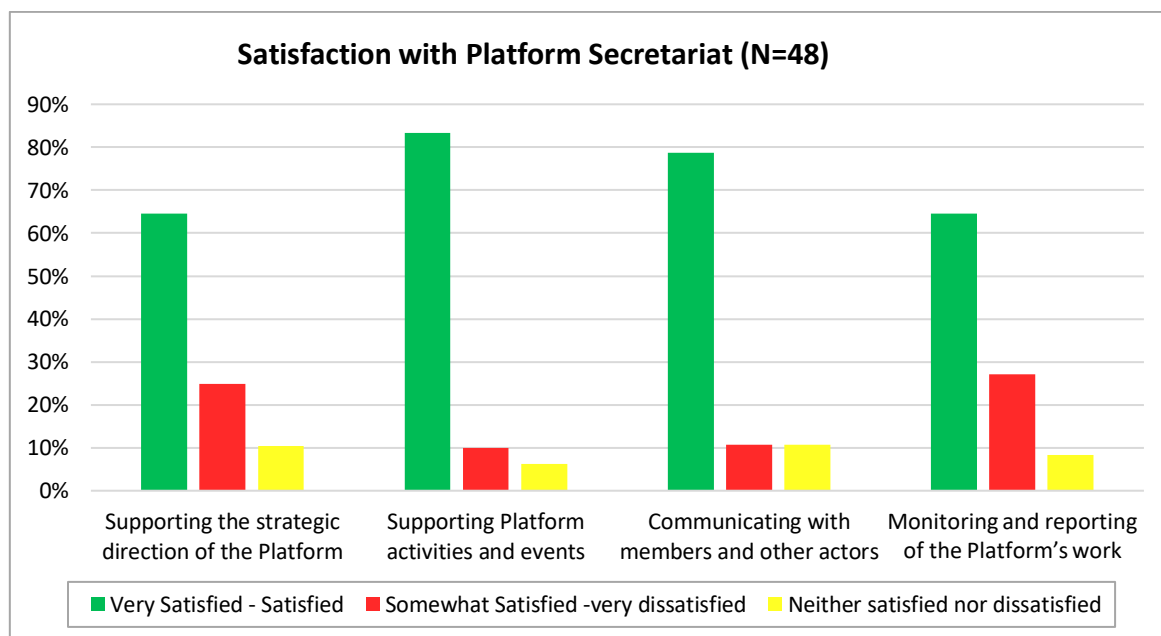


Figure 14: Satisfaction with the Platform's Secretariat

To conclude, there is a considerable appreciation of the role that the Secretariat plays critical role in implementing the Platform’s strategic plan and supporting its activities as revealed by both the survey and the interview respondents. While in the earlier years the Secretariat was well-resourced with an average of 9 FTE staff, its size has been reduced to 3 FTEs due to resource limitations. From the interviews, it is clear that the future size and scope of the Secretariat remains a debatable issue and

will be greatly determined not only by the Platform's future strategic orientation and priorities including the number of thematic working groups but also its resource base.

3.4 Funding

Platform's core funding is financed by annual 50000 Euros membership fees. This funding supports the Platform's core programme of work and includes budgets for activities of the thematic working groups, annual general assemblies, and staff and administrative costs. In addition to the core funding, members are encouraged to contribute supplementary funding that supports the activities and management of specific thematic working groups/themes. For example, in 2020, USAID contributed additional supplementary funding to support the SDG2 Roadmap and land working group.

The analysis of the Platform's funding between 2006-2019 suggests that the financial contributions with the number of paying members varying over the years. There has also been an uneven financial contribution with BMZ and EC contributing approximately 72% of the total contributions.²³ The Platform has received approximately 18.8 million Euros between 2006-2019 from its members and an average of 1.3 million Euros per year. Figure 15 below provides a summary of the Platforms expenditure and financial contributions (includes membership fees plus supplementary contributions) between 2006 -2020 as documented in the Annual General Reports.

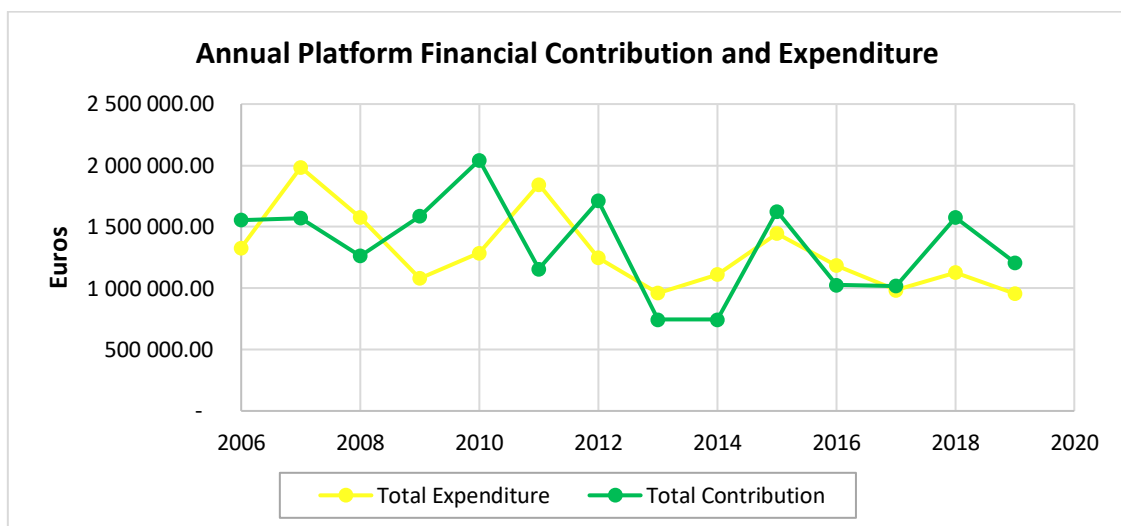


Figure 15: Annual Platform's financial contribution and expenditure

²³ GDPRD 2019 Task Force Recommendations.

The Platform's expenditure reporting on specific budget lines has been inconsistent over the years, thus difficulty in determining the total actual expenditure for various budget lines. Only the following budget lines have been consistently reported over the years: AGA, travels, website management, events, publications, and staff and management costs. Using the available information contained in previous annual general reports, Figure 16 below provides an estimate of Platform's expenditure on various budget lines between 2006 – 2019. Staff and management costs have been the largest expense utilizing approximately 44% of the total expenditure, followed by support to various thematic working groups/topics (26%) and indirect GIZ support costs (10%). Funds spent on supporting the activities of various thematic working groups have only been reported between the periods 2001-2011 and 2007-2008, thus the difficulty in determining the total expenditure spent on each working group.

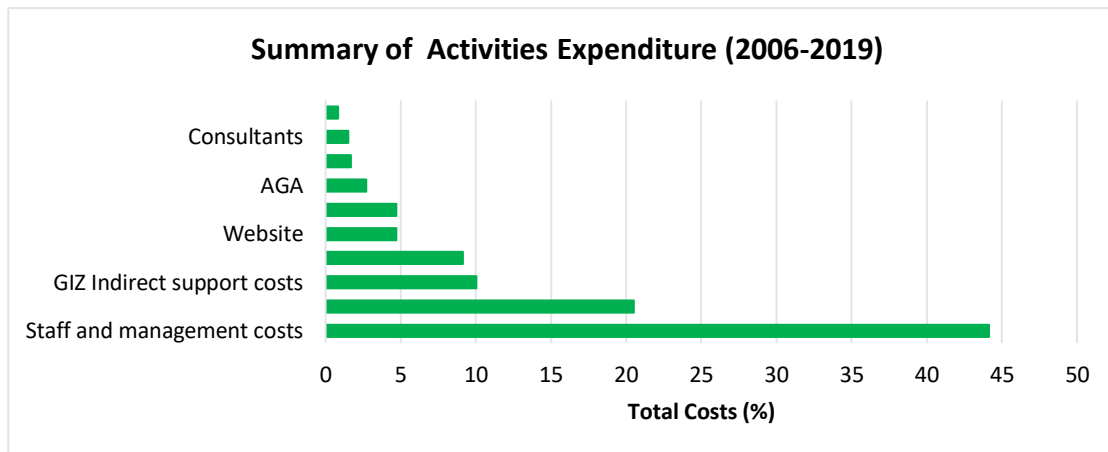


Figure 16: Summary of activities expenditure (2006-2019)

In summary, the current Platform's funding model appears to be inconsistent and unsustainable limiting the Platform to annual work plans. There is a current recommendation for members to commit to a minimum of three-year contracts for multi-year funding to stabilize cash flows and to allow both strategic and administrative multi-year planning. Further, to effectively support various Platform activities, there is a clear need for innovative and sustainable funding models that can increase the resource base of the Platform.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

There is no doubt that over the last five years the GDPRD has made a series of valuable contributions to the global agenda of rural development and food systems (agricultural development/food and nutrition security). Further, its networking function is highly valued by its core group of active members. There has also been no hesitation from those interviewed or from those surveyed that a platform that brings donors together is necessary and valuable. This reflects the 2019 decision by the membership to keep the Platform functional and host it at IFAD.

However, it is also very clear that the Platform is not realising its full potential, and that to be effective and justify its existence into the future fundamental changes will be needed. This is reflected by the survey data which show that while just above 50% are satisfied or very satisfied with the platform nearly 50% are only somewhat satisfied, unsatisfied, or neither satisfied nor unsatisfied.

While the networking function is much valued, this is a very intangible element of the Platform's work to assess. Apart from the AGAs which are also valued by the membership, the highlights of the Platform's work have occurred through the Land and SDG2 thematic working groups. However, the Land group is almost an independent group that is hosted by the Platform, with many of its members identifying with it rather than with the GDPRD. The SDG2 working group was initially established and got its momentum outside of the Platform, but then subsumed into the platform. The other Thematic Working Groups have only been marginally active and currently have little momentum.

It is well possible to mount "glass half full" or "glass half empty" position for where the Platform currently stands. The critical issue is to understand why it is "half empty" and what is required to ensure its effectiveness increases rather than further dissipates over the coming period.

The emerging global concerns over inadequate progress on the SDGs, and the need to transform food systems along with the upcoming Food systems Summit and the critical catalytic role that donors play creates a powerful justification for the Platform. However, almost universally, the membership considers that the Platform must take on a more effective strategic influencing role.

The Platform is faced with a series of core contradictions and dilemmas to which it must respond in a new strategic plan. A good number of these dilemmas and issues have been raised in past reviews but then not adequately dealt with.

Given the clear value seen by members in the continuation of the Platform, there is a need for all donor members to support the Platform to become fully functional so that it can be more effective and responsive to the needs of its membership.

4.1 Key Contradictions and Dilemmas

1) Advocacy objective vs inability to represent a "donor position": The Platform aims to have an influence on the global agenda on rural development and food systems, however, given that it is not a representative body of donors, it is not appropriate for it develop and advocate for policy positions. Consequently, over time there has been some tension and confusion around what the advocacy objective means in practice. Largely the Platform needs to have its influencing role through its membership, by helping its members to share perspectives, lessons and align thinking. It needs to work through its membership rather than on behalf of its membership, which means less of a public-facing advocacy role than may be assumed. However, this does not mean that the Platform cannot on behalf of its membership hold high-level convening events and support strategic thinking about challenging issues.

Recommendation: The Platform should consider using the term “strategic influencing” rather than “advocacy” in the new strategic plan to emphasise the importance of its work on supporting policy innovation by its membership and across the wider development community, while recognising that some members feel the Platform should not be characterised as an “advocacy” body

2) Expectation of influence vs limited senior-level engagement: There has been a consistent objective for the Platform to help keep rural development, agriculture and food issues high on the global development agenda and to help donors make more effective and aligned policy and programming decisions. However, the Platform over the last two strategic plan periods has not succeeded in any substantial engagement of the senior management of its own membership or of other organisations. Its events and activities are valued at a technical and operational level but are not seen as “go to” events at the high level. The 2020 AGA was an exception, in part made possible by operating virtually and the alignment with the Food Systems Summit.

Recommendation: To ensure relevance and viability into the future the Platform must focus on providing value to the senior management of its member organisations and to convening high-level events that bring the senior level management of donors together with the senior level of recipient organisations.

3) Donor focus vs responding to recipient organisations: In wishing to influence positively the directions of rural development and food systems it is essential that the Platform engages with and hears from those who receive or are influenced by donor funding. This need creates questions about where to put the boundary of membership and opens issues of different types of association with the Platform. The Land working group for example is very much a multi-stakeholder group while being focused largely on the implications for donors.

Recommendation: The Platform should maintain its donor focus and niche, while ensuring that it engages, through its activities, sufficiently with other stakeholders to ensure that its strategic influencing is well informed by the views of other stakeholders.

4) Knowledge sharing vs capacity and comparative advantage: The Platform aims to provide knowledge sharing to improve the strategies and policies of its members. However, there is a vast set of topics and issues on which knowledge could be shared and numerous other institutions working in this space. Knowledge sharing effectively across a broad range of themes is a potentially huge undertaking and beyond what can be supported by a small secretariat. Further, the absorptive capacity of Platform members to engage in a lot of activities or to access and use information that has been shared is quite constrained. There is a need to distinguish between knowledge sharing on technical issues, updates on key events and political processes versus, and sharing between members of internal development lessons.

Recommendation: Knowledge sharing activities of the Platform need to be highly focused, targeted to specific needs and requests of the membership, and aligned with priorities for strategic influencing.

5) Member led vs membership capacity: The Platform has operated with a clear assumption that its work should be led by the membership with the Secretariat playing a supportive role. However, an increasing reality is that staff of the member organisations have very limited time to give beyond their immediate day to day priorities. Platform activities easily fall into the important but not urgent category. A proactive, effective, and sufficiently resourced Secretariat consequentially become critical. However, it is also vital that the work of the Platform does not become a Secretariat initiated and driven. This dilemma needs to be recognised and responded to by the Board in the way it guides the

Secretariat, mobilises resources for Platform activities, and builds commitment for engagement from the membership.

Recommendation: The Platform's Secretariat needs to be adequately resourced and supported to effectively service and support its membership. At the same time, the Platform must build greater commitment and ownership from its membership to drive its agenda and activities forward.

6) Systems Orientation vs Sectoral Boundaries: The food systems agenda points to the need for a far more systemic approach to the challenges of poverty, nutrition, and environment that cuts across traditional sectoral and disciplinary boundaries. However, the Platform has historically been aligned mainly with the agriculture and food security sections of donor agencies. To be effective in the future and around a food systems agenda the Platform will need to reach out to and engage a broader constituency across donor agencies.

Recommendation: The Platform takes a more systemic approach to issues, assess the consequences of this for its operations, and engage more cross-sectorally.

4.2 Future Relevance

As articulated in section 1.4, the importance of rural development and food security issues to the SDGs and longer-term prosperity and sustainability, combined with the important role donors play in investing in critical global public goods creates a strong and clear justification for the Platform. However, going forward the Platform needs to engage much more around emerging food systems issues and play a more strategic influencing role in supporting donors to target, align and optimally deploy their global public good investments to catalyze an inclusive, sustainable, healthy, and resilient food systems and rural transformation.

Recommendation: To maintain its relevance going forward the Platform needs to orient towards engaging more around emerging food systems issues and play a more strategic influencing role in catalysing donor engagement, commitment, and investments towards a more inclusive, sustainable, healthy, and resilient food systems and rural transformation.

4.3 Membership

Membership has been an issue for the Platform for some time, both in terms of who should be members and who pays. Only paying members are entitled to be board members. Interviews and the survey with the existing Board and membership make it clear that the Platform should maintain its identity as a platform for donors. There is concern that if it expands its membership, it loses a clear identity and focus, and risks becoming a multi-stakeholder forum and duplicating the role of other forums and in particular the Committee World Food Security (CFS). Consequently, in moving forward there is a need to revisit the membership rules of the Platform's Charter.

The membership survey gave apparently conflicting views in high values for both remaining an OECD focused donor group and for opening up to a wider membership. In follow up discussions this seems to reflect the desire for discussions with like-minded donors, while at the same time recognising the importance and value of engaging with a wider constituency of both donors and other actors. The challenge is how to meet both needs. Membership should derive from the core purpose of the Platform. From this review, members have given a clear message that the core purpose is to support donors (bilateral donors, international and regional financial institutions, and foundations) optimise the effectiveness of the public good investments they make towards food systems and rural development. The Platform Charter allows for membership of multi-lateral organisations. While not

donors, these do support the delivery of global public goods and provide much of the technical knowledge and implementation capacity needed for donor investments to be effective.

Currently, there are four categories of association with Platform, full members who pay fees, associate members who fill the criteria of membership but who do not pay fees, strategic partners and operational partners.

Issues have been raised by some Platform members that having multi-lateral organisations, who are beneficiaries of donor investments, as full members and part of the Board could create conflicts of interest. It should also be noted that among multilateral organizations, there is a number of international and regional financial organisations, including IFAD, that are both recipients of donor funds, through replenishment processes, and who act as donors in terms of making large grants or loans to other organisations

In practice, currently there are no membership due paying international organisations and only one financial institution, the African Development Bank. Currently, fee-paying members include eight bilateral donors, the European Commission, the Gates Foundation, African Development Bank and IFAD. In the past, the World Bank and FAO have also been paying members. Most multi-lateral organisations find it difficult to pay the membership dues, and if they do in effect, they need to raise this money from donors.

While the work of the Platform does support donors to assess their policy and programming directions, it has no direct role in the funding decisions that donors ultimately make. A board member with a long history with the Platform was unable to identify any situations where real or potential conflicts of interest arose. While conflict of interest is a valid issue, the benefits of the expertise that multi-lateral institutions can bring to the work of the Platform would seem to out way the potential risk of conflicts of interest, provided the Board is aware of this issue and responds appropriately should such a situation arise.

However, some rationalisation and clarification of membership and association would seem prudent. Two options could be considered.

Option One: recognising the donor identity of the Platform, and that currently it is only donors who are paying members, formalise this situation. Make full membership, and hence board positions only available to donor organizations (bilateral donors, international and regional financial institutions and foundations). Other multi-lateral non-donor organisations would then be eligible as associate members, along with non-due paying bilateral donors. The associate membership category could be enlarged to include strategic partners. It would seem questionable if an operational partner category is needed, however there could be a Platform Network of organisations who want to be updated on Platform work and receive invitations to any public events held by the Platform.

Option Two: This would be the same as option one except that non-donor multi-lateral organisations would still be entitled to be full members.

A key challenge for the Platform is to increase the number of due-paying donor members. Over the period of the last strategic plan, the Platform did attempt to increase its paying membership, but without any success. There are some 30 bilateral donors, 6-10 financial institutions and perhaps up

“On the one extreme we have the CFS which is all inclusive, and on the other extreme, just a platform for bilateral donors. But no one would be comfortable with either extreme...we need to think about that space in between and what is our relationship with these other types of organisations.”

to 10 foundations who could be approached as full members. If half of this group were due-paying members it would provide significant legitimacy to the Platform and cover Secretariat costs.

An issue has been the equity of full and associate members receiving the same services from the Platform. Arguably a distinction needs to be made here between non-paying donors and non-paying multi-lateral organisations/strategic partners. The Platform is set up to serve the needs of donors so if multi-lateral organisations or strategic partners also benefit in some way this is secondary and probably in the interests of the donors anyway. The bigger issue is when other donors are free-riding. A solution here could be option one above and only make full membership available to donors not associate membership.

“All donors in the space should be welcomed. But there is a need to stick to the definition of donors. Exclusivity is helpful to get people to participate....we do not need another CSF” .

The general feedback from the existing membership is that the Platform should be as inclusive as possible of all organisations who do align with the membership criteria, including non-traditional donors and foundations. However, there was also recognition of the value of “like-minded” bilateral donors being able to caucus through the platform. If the Platform became very much more diverse than its current makeup alternative mechanisms may need to be found to support this role of the Platform.

Should, in the future, the Platform be successful in attracting a significant number of additional fee-paying members who are then entitled to be on the Board it may be necessary to revisit the Board structure to keep board numbers manageable.

Recommendation: The Platform reassesses and simplify its membership structure and guidelines based on the issues raised by the stocktaking report and focus on increasing the numbers of fee-paying donor members to approximately twenty. For practical, simplicity and conflict of interest reasons, the Platform could consider limiting full membership to donors (bilateral donors, international financial institutions, regional development banks, and foundations). Multi-lateral organisations (who are not donors) and strategic partners would then all be associate members (acknowledging that the Board has the power to accept or reject any special cases of requests for full fee paying membership). The services and engagement for full members and associate members should be carefully clarified in the new strategic plan and in an updated Charter.

Recommendation: The Platform be more explicit about the services it provides its members and the services its members want. It can achieve this by engaging more regularly engaging members to assess the kinds of services that would add value for them and which they would like to see the Platform deliver.

4.4 Funding

Funding is currently a significant issue for the Platform. The Transition Task Force of 2019 recommended a Secretariat of five FTE. This along with operating costs requires a budget in the order of 750,000 to 1 million Euro, depending on the nature of specific work undertaken by the Platform. The 12 full members who currently pay fees gives the Platform a budget of 600,000 Euro. Consequently, to have an adequately resourced secretariat there needs to be an increase in the numbers of fee-paying members and/or additional contributions made by some members.

The Transition Task Force considered this issue and did not consider there was merit in changing the current fee rate.

With the aim of having a broader and more actively engaged membership, funding and membership dues become a challenging issue. To encourage membership and payment of dues members need to see value and services for their membership, which in turn requires an effective and adequately resourced secretariat. If paying and non-paying members receive the same services from the platform there is little incentive to pay. There is also an argument that by paying dues members may be more actively engaged and committed to the Platform.

There are also practical issues around payment of membership dues. The review team has heard that administrative issues make this impossible for the World Bank and one bilateral donor, who otherwise would wish to be full members. For smaller donors and bilateral agencies, the 50,000 Euros may be too high to justify relative to other demands for resources.

In terms of administrative constraints to paying membership fees, it could be that members contribute in other ways for work that needs to be done by the Platform. If this is at least equivalent to the fee rate the member could then be considered a full member and have a place on the Board. Such options should be explored with those who face administrative obstacles.

“They [the Platform] should not rely on regular funding but try and mobilise funding for very specific issues in funding the work of the Platform.”

The idea of a multi-donor trust fund to support the work of the Platform has also been raised, however it is not clear if this would be feasible or any less problematic.

In the immediate to short-term, the future effectiveness of the Platform will likely require at least some of the current members of the platform, who committed themselves to the

transition of the Platform, to provide some additional resources beyond their membership fee. With the Platform on a stronger footing a longer-term and more sustainable funding model for the Platform will need to be considered and developed by the Board. The Board should be very aware of the Catch 22. Without sufficient resources the Platform will be unable to deliver what is needed for it to be seen as adding value, and without being seen as adding value it will hard to mobilise resources. With constrained resources, at least in the short term, the Platform will need to be highly focused on areas where it can add most value.

Recommendation: In consultation with its members the Platform develop a realistic longer-term funding model that addresses the range of funding issues raised by the stocktaking report. It should also make a renewed and concerted effort to raise the number of fee-paying members to 20. Where potential members are unable to pay membership dues for administrative reasons alternative mechanisms enabling them to contribute to the work of the Platform and be considered full members should be explored.

Recommendation: The current core of full (board) members who have committed to the transition and future of the Platform ensure the secretariat is adequately financially supported during the transition period so that over the coming two years it is able to function effectively and deliver on renewed and increased expectations. If necessary supplementary funding to complement fees should be considered.

4.5 Purpose and Objectives

The original 2008 Charter of the Platform states its ultimate objective as being: “to reduce poverty in developing countries and enhance sustainable economic growth in rural areas through improved cooperation and collaboration between international development partners and coordinated dialogue with partner countries.”

In practice the Platform has focused on rural development and poverty alleviation largely through agriculture. Over time, food and nutrition security and more recently food systems have been red threads of the Platform's focus. It has adopted SDG2 as a primary focus within the SDG framework. The Platform Board members, focal points and engagement come largely from the agriculture/food security departments of the members.

With the evolution towards food systems thinking and in the context of the Food Systems Summit, the current and future domain of focus for the platform, as articulated by most members interviewed, should be on food systems transformation and how this can help to tackle rural poverty, hunger and malnutrition and drive rural economic development.

Broadly, the original objectives of the 2008 Charter remain relevant in terms of promoting the importance of agriculture and rural development for wider development objectives, supporting donors to enhance the impact of their work, and enabling donor collaboration and alignment.

However, over various iterations of strategic plans the stated vision, mission and objectives of the Platform have evolved from the original Charter.

For the next strategic plan, to align with the food systems agenda and to sharpen the focus of the Platform's work a proposed updated vision, mission, and set of objectives is given in Box 1 (see below).

Recommendation: The Platform update its vision, mission, and objectives for the new Strategic Plan, as proposed in Box 1, to align with the evolution of the Platform's focus, recent developments, and views of the membership.

Recommendation: The Platform revise its Charter to make it current with the Platform's future directions and the current development context.

Box 1. Proposed Updated Vision, Mission and Objectives

The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development works across the domains of food systems, food and nutrition security, agriculture, and rural livelihoods. It has a particular focus on Sustainable Development Goal Two and the intersection with other the other Sustainable Development Goals.

Vision

Donors effectively catalyse change: Donor investments enable a transformation of food systems for better access to safe and nutritious food, improved environmental sustainability, and more prosperous rural communities.

Mission

Brokering donor collaboration for impact: The Platform brokers donor collaboration to enhance the impact of their policies, investments and programmes for food systems and rural development.

Objectives

Strategic influencing: To help shape the thinking, policies and programming of the global donor community, and other actors, on food systems and rural development to accelerate progress towards the SDGs and longer-term prosperity and sustainability.

The Platform does this by:

- A horizon scanning process that identifies key emerging issues and opportunities to which donors may need to respond.
- Convening task teams on key issues which bring together donors and other stakeholders to identify options for responding.
- Convening high level events and briefings that help to keep members up to date on latest thinking and evidence.
- Hosting an annual meeting of senior responsible managers for food systems/agriculture/rural development across the membership.
- Mobilising new joint efforts by donors to respond to emerging issues or funding gaps.
- Supporting communication and alignment between donors in their preparations for bilateral engagement in key global forums and processes.
- Profiling and discussing key emerging issues with high level representatives during its Annual General Assembly.

Knowledge sharing: To broker the sharing of evidence, lessons, insights, and technical expertise necessary for donors to align efforts, learn from each other and improve the impact of their food system and rural development related policies and programmes.

The Platform does this by:

- Identifying policy and programming questions and issues donors have and assisting to resolve these by linking with the experience of other donors or relevant sources of expertise.
- Convening working groups and seminars that enable donor staff to share experiences and lesson with each other on priority topics.
- Holding virtual briefing sessions on emerging issues, new research or new evaluations targeted to the specific needs of donors.
- The Platform's website providing a resource portal for members to have easy access to each other's key policies, reports, and evaluations.
- Providing blogs and a social media feeds targeted to the interests of donors.

Networking and convening: To strengthen networking, relationships and communication between donors and other actors as a foundation for collaboration and innovation.

The Platform does this by:

- Supporting a network of focal points across all Platform members.
- Bringing donor staff together in both face to face and virtual working groups, seminars and forums.
- Brokering direct linkages between donors on request.
- Promoting interesting work being done by staff of members to other members through blogs, social media, news updates and mailings.
- Hosting the Annual General Assembly that provides a space for in-depth engagement between donors and other partners.
- Maintaining up-to-date contact lists for those with key food system and rural development responsibilities across donors.

4.5.1 Strategic Influence

An original driving reason for the establishment of the Platform was to advocate for the importance of investing in agriculture and rural development to tackle rural poverty. This came on the back of decades of declining donor investments into the agriculture sector. The 2008 food price crisis saw somewhat of a reversal of this trend.

The members interviewed gave a largely consistent view about the importance of the Platform having a strong advocacy/strategic influencing role but also expressed concern that Platform has not optimised its potential in this regard over recent years. There are however some importance nuances to be understood that can help the Platform be more effective in the future.

Firstly, it is somewhat strange for donors to set up a mechanism to advocate back to themselves about the importance of food, agriculture, and rural development issues. Second, the Platform is not set up to create common donor positions on issues or to advocate on behalf of all its members. What the

Platform can do is help to raise issues, encourage innovative thinking, bring evidence to the table and support donors in aligning their directions. It can also help mount the arguments for why food systems, agriculture and rural development are critical to achieving wider development objectives.

The advocacy concept has not been seen as appropriate by all members. Given this, it is recommended that the new strategic plan refer to strategic influencing as an alternative. The key function of the Platform in relation to strategic influencing is to help shape the thinking, policies and programming of its membership in response to emerging issues and opportunities. An additional role is in supporting alignment and coordination, while recognising that members will still have their own politically driven agendas and priorities. In influencing global agendas and processes, be it SDG processes, the Food Systems Summit, G20 and G7 processes or engagement in the CFS, the role the Platform is to work “back through” its membership in helping them to bring aligned and/or complementary perspectives through their bilateral engagement in such fora and processes.

The Platform can also, in its own right, open up thinking and dialogue between donors and other stakeholders, through its AGA, working groups and other activities. Which can be helpful in working towards consensus on issues and helping to identify how collectively donors can be most effective in utilising their resources.

There is a consistent view from the current membership that the Platform has not succeeded in sufficiently connecting with and engaging the senior leadership of its members or of other organisations and stakeholder groups. This is seen as essential if the Platform is to be effective in its strategic influencing role and develop credibility for its future. The potential of the Platform to do so in an effective way was well illustrated by the 2020 virtual AGA.

Ways that the Platform could strengthen its strategic influencing role include:

Horizon scan: Undertake an annual horizon scan to identify emerging issues, donor concerns, and upcoming forums and process to which the Platform could assist its membership respond. Such a scan could have a three-year outlook but be updated annually and focus on priorities for the coming year. This would not preclude responding to unexpected crises that may also emerge such as COVID. Such a process would assist the Platform and its members to be proactive in identifying and setting a forward agenda in the food systems and rural development arena. The scan would be light but strategic process based largely on the existing expertise and insights of Donor and their partners.

Annual influencing plan: Based on the horizon scan the Platform develops a focused and prioritised strategic influencing plan of action that includes clear results and processes.

Heads of sector meeting: Convene on an annual basis a meeting of the most senior managers within the membership who have responsibility for food systems/agriculture/rural development.

Upgrade the profile of the AGA. As was done for the 2020 AGA, engage high level contributors to the AGA and ensure it is focused on issues of relevance to the wider development community and the interface with role of donors.

Global/regional engagement support: Engage with the membership on key upcoming global or regional forums and processes and how the Platform could support individual members and the membership at large to more effectively engage. This may include working collectively with the membership to gather evidence, prepare background discussion/white papers, convene donor preparation meetings, consult with other stakeholders and hold side-events.

Joint donor initiatives: Identify and mobilise joint donor efforts to respond to critical gaps in knowledge and programming and emerging issues. For example, the SDG2 working group's support for the CERES initiative or coordinated responses to a new issues such as COVID.

Recommendation: The Platform reconceive its advocacy function as strategic influencing and substantially strengthen this area of its work by:

- a) **Undertaking an annual horizon scan to identify priority focal areas**
- b) **Supporting the membership in aligning and preparing for global and regional forums and processes**
- c) **Develop an annual results-oriented influencing plan**
- d) **Holding an annual senior level 'heads of sector' meeting**
- e) **Upgrading the profile of the AGA to engage high level staff from its membership and partners and to focus on emerging issues that are of strategic importance to the directions of donor investments.**

4.5.2 Knowledge brokering

A critical and valued role of the Platform is to facilitate the sharing of knowledge, experience, lessons and policy developments between members. However, there are also significant challenges for the Platform in the knowledge brokering objective. First, there is a huge range of technical and policy issues around which knowledge could potentially be shared. Second, staff of the members are usually very busy and have little time to engage in perhaps valuable but not immediately essential knowledge sharing processes. Third, in a world of Google and so many other sources of knowledge and expertise it can be hard for the Platform to provide added value. Finally, the Platform has minimal resources with which to carry out knowledge curation and brokering functions.

As articulated in section 2.2, Thematic Working Groups which have focused on knowledge sharing, without being linked to an advocacy/strategic influencing agenda or without clear objectives have proved difficult to mobilise and sustain.

This means the Platform's knowledge brokering needs to be highly focused and targeted. In general members interviewed have suggested that knowledge brokering needs to be focused on sharing member policy and programming lessons and directions and linked to the strategic influencing agenda. In essence this implies assisting members to gain access to valuable information within the membership that is not in the public domain.

It is also important to note that members have very different levels of staff and technical capacity. Some smaller donors have indicated the value of knowledge sharing on technical issues, while other donors already have significant in-house technical expertise. Knowledge sharing also needs to take account of the very different backgrounds of staff in donor agencies. In some cases, they are specialists who know the field extremely well, in other cases, they are generalists who may have little background knowledge or experience. The Platform needs to take this into account in providing knowledge brokering services.

In the past it seems that knowledge sharing has evolved from the Platform identifying an issue that has emerged on the global agenda (youth, gender, private sector, trade), sometimes linked with AGA's, and then establishing a thematic working group for this to be discussed by the membership. What this has missed is a clear understanding of the specific knowledge needs of the individual members and an objective of what will be the result from knowledge sharing.

For the successful Land working group, this has been rather different. The group appears, despite lacking clear workplans, to have generally had an eye on upcoming events and processes through which it could progress the land agenda, and on the knowledge/evidence it would need to prosecute this agenda.

Given these issues, the following principles are suggested to guide knowledge brokering activities:

1. As a first priority, align knowledge brokering to the specific needs of the strategic influencing agenda.
2. Drive knowledge sharing from a clearly expressed need from members
3. Have clear objectives and end points for knowledge sharing – what will be the outcome?
4. Focus on sharing knowledge held by members that other members would not otherwise be able to easily access.
5. Provide high level, well synthesised strategic updates on critical emerging issues and events
6. Offer a range of modalities for knowledge sharing including working groups, one-off meetings, seminars, blogs, social media and information on the website, briefing notes.

An approach to knowledge brokering that the Platform may wish to explore is the Knowledge for Development (K4D) Programme of FCDO. This provides a combination of learning journeys, rapid evidence reports and knowledge products. The full scope of this is well beyond the resources of the Platform but lessons could be learned. In particular from the learning journey approach which has a very structured mechanism for results driven and time-bound learning processes that engage staff in a sequenced set of facilitated events, supported with evidence reports and knowledge products.

Key knowledge sharing activities that could be integrated into an overall knowledge sharing process include:

- Identifying policy and programming questions and issues donors have and assisting to resolve these by linking with the experience of other donors or relevant sources of expertise.
- Convening working groups and seminars that enable donor staff to share experiences and lessons on priority topics.
- Holding virtual briefing sessions on emerging issues, new research or new evaluations targeted to the specific needs of donors.
- The Platform website providing a resource portal for members to have easy access to each other's key policies, reports, and evaluations.
- Providing blogs and a social media feeds targeted to the interests of donors.
- Maintaining an agenda of key global and regional events that members should be aware of.

Recommendation: The Platform develop a far more focused, strategic and member driven knowledge brokering programme that closely aligns with strategic influencing priorities, it should:

- a) be delivered through a more diverse set of modalities than just thematic working groups,***
- b) be results/outcomes focus and timebound,***
- c) involve short one-off activities as well longer-run processes,***
- d) align with the comparative advantage of the platform and not seek to duplicate the technical knowledge capabilities of many other organisations.***

4.5.3 Networking and convening

Interviews with members made it extremely clear that the networking the Platform offers is highly valued. It was noted that this provides benefits for donors that is intangible and hard to assess but nevertheless very important. The activities of the Platform enable donor staff to get to know each

other and build relationships that then leads to much more cross-donor communication than would otherwise happen. Members noted that it simply makes it easier to jump on the phone and speak to a colleague in another agency. This enables sharing of information, updating each other on policy developments, informal aligning of positions being developed for global events, gaining support for briefing of senior staff or supporting the organisation of high-level events.

The Platform also helps donor staff to engage with the wider network of actors in the food systems and rural development arena. The networking support is of particular value for staff in donor agencies who are generalists and who may be new to the field.

Convening donors and other groups is a critical element of being able to undertake strategic influencing and knowledge brokering.

Key networking and convening activities for the Platform include:

- Supporting a network of focal points across all Platform members.
- Bringing donor staff together in both face to face and virtual working groups, seminars and forums.
- Brokering direct linkages between donors on request.
- Promoting interesting work being done by staff of members to other members through blogs, social media, news updates and mailings.
- Hosting the Annual General Assembly that provides a space for in-depth engagement between donors and other partners.
- Maintaining up-to-date contact lists for those with key food system and rural development responsibilities across donors.

Recommendation: The Platform recognise the high value that is put on networking by its members and work to optimise this through its activities, while also acknowledging the intangible benefits which can be hard to fully assess. It should do this by:

- a) Supporting a strong network of contact/focal points across all Platform members and partners.***
- b) Bringing donor staff together in face to face and virtual working groups, seminars, and forums.***
- c) Brokering direct linkages between donors on request.***
- d) Promoting interesting work being done by staff of members to other members through blogs, social media, news updates and mailings.***
- e) Hosting the Annual General Assembly***
- f) Maintaining and sharing up-to-date contact lists for those with key food system and rural development responsibilities across donors.***

4.6 Thematic Focus

What should the Platform focus on over the period of its next strategic plan? Historically it has oriented its work around specific themes backed up by thematic working groups (land, gender, private sector development and trade, youth, climate). More recently it has also focused on directions needed to realise SDG2, which led to the CERES initiative to assess the investments needed to achieve SDG2. It also brought donors together around the challenges of COVID and it is now working on a contribution to the UN Food Systems Summit.

These more recent foci illustrate a shift towards tackling more strategic overarching issues and not necessary working through the traditional thematic working group structure. In line with the proposed vision and mission it is suggested that the Platform develop its focus around the following questions:

- 1) Where are there gaps or weaknesses in the overall volume, focus or balance of the global public goods needed to catalyse food systems change and rural development in pursuit of the SDGs and how could the donor community respond?
- 2) What are critical emerging issues, crises or opportunities to which donors will need to respond?
- 3) What collective processes are needed at local, national, regional or global levels to help catalyse change?
- 4) What are key upcoming regional or global forums, processes and meeting where the Platform could support its members to align and optimise their engagement?

As discussed above, it is proposed that the future work of the Platform be guided by a more structured annual horizon scanning process that would assess such questions.

For the coming year it is clear that the UN Food Systems Summit is critical event for the Platform and its members to engage with, both in terms of preparation follow-up action. Responding to the consequences of COVID and how a building back better agenda might be oriented towards food systems and rural development is another key area.

A menu of other strategic issues that the Platform could assess in terms of setting priorities include:

- Responding to the climate crisis.
- Catalysing increased private sector responsible investment into agriculture and food systems.
- Optimising the science, policy, and practice interface for scaling and accelerating innovation.
- Strengthening national statistical and data generation to provide the information needed to assess and guide food systems change and rural development.
- What progress is actually being made in women and girls' economic empowerment and how can this be accelerated.
- Supporting national level policy innovation to create enabling incentives for food systems transformation.
- Enhancing local, national, regional and global foresight and scenario analysis capabilities.
- Optimising the potential of digital technologies.
- Rethinking the role of the informal markets so they are more efficient, safe, and equitable.
- Supporting transition strategies to more diverse and high nutrient value food production.
- Transition strategies for small-scale agriculture.
- Enhancing the resilience of food systems and rural communities.
- Scaling up innovative social protection mechanisms and better aligning them with risk management.
- The challenges of transport, energy, market and telecommunications infrastructure in rural areas.

In practice, preparing for the Food Systems Summit will largely occupy the efforts of the Platform till the end of 2021, and the outcomes of the Summit will then be a starting point for setting Platform priorities for the following several years.

Recommendation: The Platform take a more strategic approach to establishing its areas of thematic focus guided by a horizon scanning process and the guiding questions proposed by the Stocktaking

Report. *In doing so it should give more attention to cross-cutting issues related to the role of donors in catalysing and mobilisation change from local to global scales and less attention to technical/sectoral issues where it has much less comparative advantage.*

Recommendation: *The Platform focus for the coming year on preparation for the Food Systems Summit and then conduct an agenda setting exercise post the Summit that would provide a three-year outlook of key areas for focus.*

4.7 Services to Members

As a Platform that is driven by members that make paying contributions, there is a real question around the kinds of services that the Platform does and ideally should provide to its members. Currently, a small group of members financially support the core activities of the Platform that include its operations, and activities through the thematic working groups and the AGA etc. But as described above this is an unsustainable model. In interviews, members emphasised the need for the Platform to demonstrate more effectively what donor contributions were delivering – not just in terms of results but also in terms of the services offered/provided to members. In the context of an increasingly aid constrained environment when donors are faced with difficult investment decisions, it has become even more important for the Platform to demonstrate its value add to its members and consider the kinds of services they would find most valuable.

In response to a survey question on the kinds of services members would value from the Platform going forward (see Figure 17), there is a strong demand for the Platform to keep members updated on key events and forums. Members also see continued value in the Platform hosting cross-member thematic groups and convening the AGA on an annual basis and curating a high-quality member-oriented website. Going forward, the Platform can be more responsive and adaptive to the needs of its membership but checking in more regularly to determine the kinds of issues, services and support that the Platform can offer.

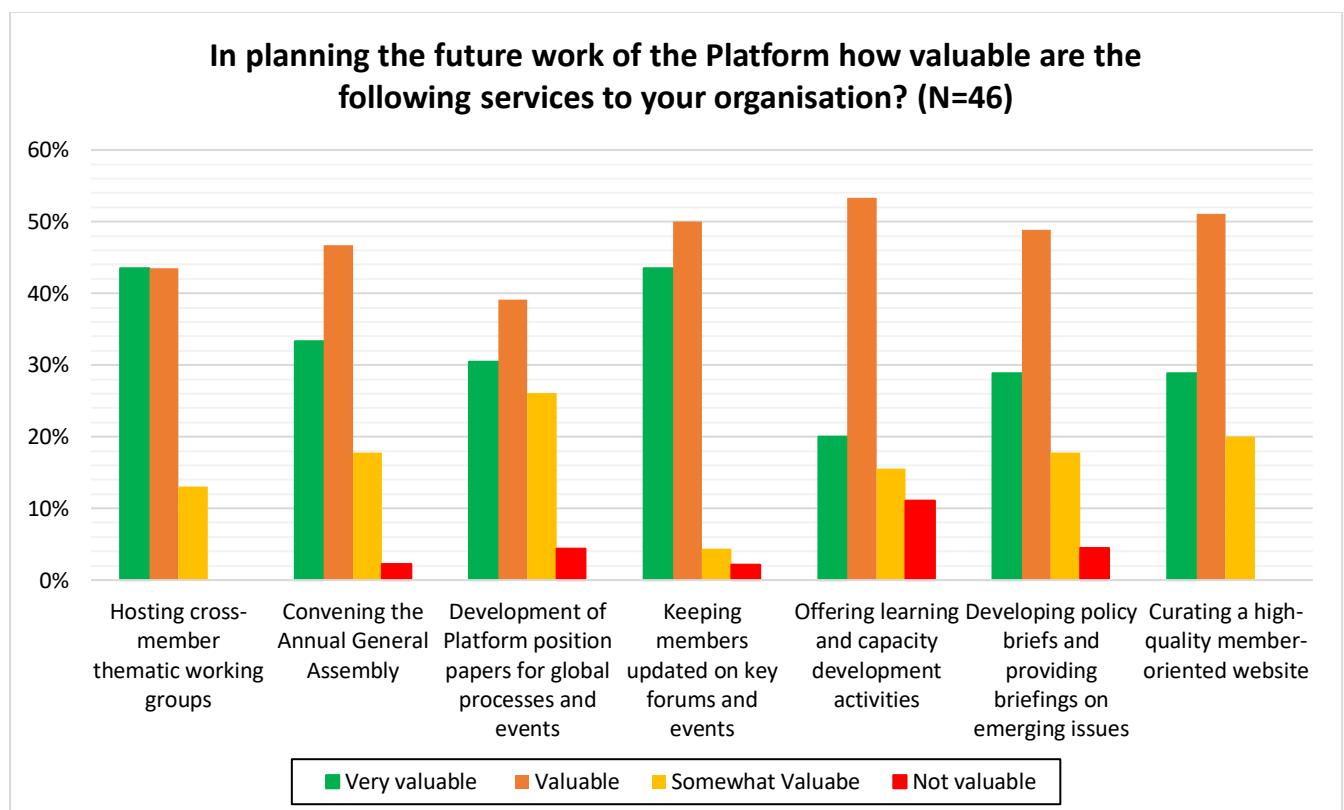


Figure 57: Future services to members

Recommendation: The Platform be more explicit about the services it provides its members and the services its members want. It can achieve this by engaging more regularly engaging members to assess the kinds of services that would add value for them and which they would like to see the Platform deliver.

4.8 Operational Modalities

The Platform operations and activities are primarily structured around the work of its Thematic Working Groups. While this has produced some valuable contributions in niche areas, it has constrained the ability of the Platform to respond nimbly to emerging issues and opportunities.

Going forward, the Platform should consider a range of different operational modalities that are driven by a horizon scanning process (already described above) that identifies key issues that the Platform can focus on over a three-year horizon and which is revisited on an annual rolling basis. By so doing, the Platform can be more responsive to the needs and priorities of its members and more strategic in its approach in engaging its membership in response to emerging food systems and rural development issues and challenges.

With respect to its Thematic Working Groups, the Platform needs to make a decision on which thematic areas are best served by a full-fledged working group structure as opposed to standalone events or meetings that the Platform could convene around a topical issue once or twice a year. In interviews several members spoke of about the fact that following an initial interest, many Thematic Working Groups have been unable to sustain member interest and engagement over time resulting in a loss of momentum. Members also expressed the need for the Thematic Working Groups to have very clearly defined goals, objectives, programs of work and timelines of operation. The Platform will also need to make a clear distinction between working groups that are hosted by the Platform such as the Land Working Group and those that are clearly incubated and hosted within the Platform itself and the kinds of resources and support that would be needed from the Platform and Secretariat to service them.

The way in which the Platform delivers its work program can also involve a more diverse range of activities that are not structured around a thematic working group structure. This could involve meetings, conference or workshops around emerging priority issues and themes; commissioning short pieces of timely research on emerging topics of member interest; formation of time bound task groups such as the COVID-19 task force etc; and hosting of on-going communities of practice such as the Land Working Group. Where there is demand for thematic working groups, these can be established and facilitated by the Secretariat with adequate support and resources provided for the latter to perform this function effectively. The Platform should develop an annual work plan for the Platform as a whole (as opposed to individual thematic working groups) that outlines its annual objectives, activities, and deliverables. The work plan should be linked to the Platform's operating budget. It should be sufficiently results oriented and focused in order to be able to assess performance at the end of the year.

Recommendation: The Platform broadens its operational modalities to complement thematic working groups with a more diverse range of focused activities, shorter-term task groups, and one-off convenings that are results-oriented and time-bound. It can do this by:

- a) Clearly identifying the needs of members, annual priorities and results to be achieved and designing activities around this rather than relying just on on-going thematic groups.
- b) Having a clear Platform wide results-oriented annual workplan rather than a set of individual thematic working group plans.

- c) ***Utilise short-term task groups alongside thematic working groups and ensure both are results oriented and time-bound.***

4.9 Board and Secretariat

No substantial issues have been raised regarding the functioning of the Board. However, clearly the Board must bear responsibility for less-than-optimal functioning of the Platform over recent years. This is reflected in the survey in that less than 50% of respondents felt the Board had performed satisfactorily or very satisfactorily. However clearly the Board and its current co-chairs have been highly committed to a successful transition of the Platform to IFAD and to strengthening its position through the current strategic planning process.

For the Board to be effective it needs members who are able and willing to champion the Platform within their own organisations and beyond and provide sufficient input to guide the work of the Platform. The co-chairs are particularly critical to the functioning of the board and in playing an 'executive board' function for the secretariat. Having three co-chairs over the recent period seems to have been quite effective and it may be worth considering continuing with such a model as an executive board, particularly if the Platform attracts more paying members and hence board members.

There is a sense that for some donors board members engage almost from a personal interest and commitment rather than with the full backing and support of their organisations. An annual Platform meeting of donor "heads of sector" could be a way of gaining greater support for the role that board members play.

Recommendation: The Platform encourages strong and pro-active engagement from its board members and nominate co-chairs who are able to effectively promote and represent the Platform within in the wider development community. The Platform consider a permanent executive board group of three co-chairs to help share the load and expand the scope for profiling the work of the Platform.

The view of the consultant team is that to realise its potential the Platform must have a competent and well-performing secretariat. As also outlined in section 4.1, that secretariat staff need to find a careful balance between ensuring the Platform is driven by active engagement of the membership, while at the same time providing highly pro-active and strategic support.

It should be noted that from the survey it appears that the membership has been largely satisfied with the performance of the Secretariat, albeit slightly less so with its role in supporting the strategic directions of the Platform.

The transition plan has specified a reduction of staff in the secretariat from 9 to 5 FTE, but has not specified the staff makeup for the new secretariat. There remains uncertainty about what functions could be internalised into IFAD operations and the staffing levels that will be possible within the budget given the current numbers of fee-paying members.

However, given the previous analysis in this report the following key functions are suggested (noting that some will be integrated into IFAD systems and not require budget). In the initial stages of the transition all functions may not be possible and/or some would need to be part-time. In the longer run given the ambitions of the Platform it would seem difficult for the Secretariat to deliver on expectations without all the functions being filled at close to full-time.

1. Platform Coordinator – senior level: Overall, management and coordination of the Secretariat

2. Policy Advisor – senior level: Supports strategic engagement of the Platform with members and global and regional processes
3. Knowledge and Learning Lead - mid to senior level: strategic guidance of knowledge brokering function and thematic working groups
4. Communications Officer - mid level: produces material for newsletters, website and maintains social media presence.
5. Programme Advisor/Intern - junior level: general support for work plan implementation
6. Administration and Communication Support
7. Contracts and finance

Experience working with the Platform is an ideal intern role and Secretariat capability could perhaps be enhanced with extra interns.

Recommendation: The Platform recognise that a competent, proactive and adequately staffed Secretariat, effectively guided by the Board is fundamental to the Platform’s success. Given the strong emphasis of the Platform on strategic influencing and knowledge brokering mid to senior level staff or consultants to support these functions should be considered.

4.10 Communications and Outreach

As discussed in Section 2.5, the Platform’s communication and outreach in recent years has largely been focused on the work of the Thematic Working Groups and in supporting the Annual General Assemblies. While the Platform has developed a comprehensive Communication Strategy that outlines the use of different communication tools and specific audiences for the Platform’s work, it is yet to be fully implemented. Beyond its immediate membership, the Platform has also been less than effective in its outreach and communication to a wider audience.

Going forward, drawing from its Communication Strategy, the Platform can be more strategic and effective in how it engages internally with its members and externally with a broader constituency of actors working in the food systems and rural development space. It can also be more purposeful in how uses its website, social media platforms and other communication tools to reach out to, update and communicate information about its activities, upcoming events, and provides updates to its membership on different issues. The Platform’s communication and outreach strategy should be aligned with the outcomes of its new Strategic Plan and seek to be more purposeful and strategic in its communication internally with members and externally with a wider audience.

Recommendation: The Platform should progress implementation of its recently developed Communication Strategy but should also revisit it in the context of the new Strategic Plan. The Platform should strive to use its communication tools (website, social mediate) more effectively to strategically engage and communicate with its members and externally to a wider audience.

4.11 New Strategic Plan

A proposed outline for a new strategic plan is given in Annex 7. The strategic plan would incorporate relevant material from the Stocktaking Report and Board decisions taken on the recommendations. Given the upcoming Food Systems Summit, it would focus on higher level objectives and principles for operation rather than try at this stage to identify specific and detailed thematic areas on which to focus. It would however identify likely areas to which the platform may need to give attention.

Recommendation: The Platform agree to the structure for the new strategic plan as detailed in Annex 7.

5 Compilation of Recommendations

1. Overall

Conclusion 1.1: The Platform is widely seen as an important, valuable and unique mechanism for helping to optimise the impact and alignment of donor investments, and has particular relevance in the context of the emerging food systems agenda and the need to accelerate progress on the SDGs. However, over recent years, while having made some important and valuable contributions, the Platform has not realised its full potential, nor had a sufficiently high profile within donor agencies or with the wider development sector.

Conclusion 1.2: The transition of the Platform’s Secretariat to IFAD, the continued commitment of a set of lead donors to the Platform and the need for an aligned engagement of donors in the Food Systems Summit process creates the conditions for successfully reinvigorating the Platform.

Recommendation 1.1: The Platform reword its focus to be on ‘food systems and rural development’.

Recommendation 1.2: All donors making investments related to food systems and rural development should consider joining the Platform as full members, and the existing membership and board be highly focused on realising the full potential of the Platform over the period of the new strategic plan.

2. Performance and Achievements

Conclusion 2.1: While 52% of members surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied with the performance of the Platform a near equal number of 48% were only somewhat satisfied, dissatisfied, or neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. This reflects the mixed picture of the Platform’s performance over its last strategic plan period and a more recent winding down of activity and engagement. At the same time, there is a very positive perception of the Platform’s performance around enabling networking between members.

Conclusion 2.2: A substantial number of valuable meetings, events, and reports have been delivered by the Platform’s working groups, and well attended and generally well appreciated Annual General Assemblies (AGAs) have been held each year. However, the lack of a results-oriented planning framework for the Platform makes it difficult to fully assess the outcomes and impact of these efforts.

Conclusion 2.3: Out of six thematic working groups that have operated over the last strategic plan period, only two are currently fully functional (land governance and SDG2 Roadmap working groups). The land governance group is a wider stakeholder group hosted by the Platform; the SDG2 Roadmap group was initiated beyond the Platform and then merged with the Platform. There is a need to substantially rethink the Platform’s thematic working group *modi operandi* in the new strategic plan.

Conclusion 2.4: The Platform is faced with a series of core contradictions and dilemmas to which it must respond in a new strategic plan. A good number of these dilemmas and issues have been raised in past reviews but then not adequately dealt with. They are: advocacy objective vs inability to represent a “donor position”; the expectation of advocacy/influence vs limited senior-level engagement; donor focus vs engagement with recipient organisations; knowledge sharing ambitions vs capacity and comparative advantage to deliver; ambition to be member-led vs limited time and capacity of members to engage; and need for a systemic orientation vs sectoral boundaries.

Recommendation 2.1: The Platform should consider using the term “strategic influencing” rather than “advocacy” in the new strategic plan to emphasise the importance of its work on supporting policy

innovation by its membership and across the wider development community, while recognising that some members feel the Platform should not be characterised as an “advocacy” body.

Recommendation 2.2: To ensure relevance and viability into the future the Platform must focus on providing value to the senior management of its member organisations and to convening high-level events that bring the senior level management of donors together with the senior levels of recipient organisations.

Recommendation 2.3: The Platform should maintain its donor focus and niche while ensuring that it engages through its activities sufficiently with other stakeholders to ensure that its strategic influencing is well informed by their views.

Recommendation 2.4: Knowledge sharing activities of the Platform need to be highly focused, targeted to specific needs and requests of the membership, and aligned with priorities for strategic influencing.

Recommendation 2.5: The Platform’s Secretariat needs to be adequately resourced and supported to effectively service and support its membership. At the same time, the Platform must build greater commitment and ownership from its membership to drive its agenda and activities forward.

Recommendation 2.6: The Platform should take a more systemic approach to issues, assess the consequences of this for its operations, and engage more cross-sectorally.

3. Membership and Funding

Conclusion 3.1: Membership has been an issue for the Platform for some time, in terms of who should be members, who pays, and in the difficulty of meeting the Secretariat’s operating costs through membership fees. The Platform currently has a somewhat messy 4-tiered system of membership and partners. There is unambiguous clarity from members that the Platform should maintain its identity as a donor platform and not drift into being a wider multi-stakeholder group. However, it does also need to engage with a wider constituency to undertake its work. There are a complex and conflicting set of issues around membership and funding that require further attention.

Recommendation 3.1: The Platform reassesses and simplifies its membership structure and guidelines based on the issues raised by the stocktaking report and focus on increasing the numbers of fee-paying donor members to approximately twenty. For practical simplicity, and conflict of interest reasons, the Platform could consider limiting full membership to donors (bilaterals, international financial institutions, regional development banks and foundations). Multi-lateral organisations and strategic partners would then all be associate members (acknowledging that the Board has the power to accept or reject any special cases of requests for full fee paying membership). The services and engagement for full members and associate members should be carefully clarified in the new strategic plan and an updated Charter.

Recommendation 3.2: The Platform be more explicit about the services it provides its members and the services its members want. It can achieve this by more regularly engaging members to assess the kinds of services that would add value for them and which they would like to see the Platform deliver.

Recommendation 3.3: In consultation with its members the Platform develop a realistic longer-term funding model that addresses the range of funding issues raised by the stocktaking report. It should also make a renewed and concerted effort to raise the number of fee-paying members to 20. Where potential members are unable to pay membership dues for administrative reasons alternative

mechanisms enabling them to contribute to the work of the Platform and be considered full members should be explored.

Recommendation 3.4: The current core of full (board) members who have committed to the transition and future of the Platform ensure the secretariat is adequately financially supported during the transition period so that over the coming two years it is able to function effectively and deliver on renewed and increased expectations. If necessary supplementary funding to complement fees should be considered.

4. Purpose, Objectives and Focus

Conclusion 4.1: The justification, purpose, and objectives/focus of the Platform that have been in place since its inception and which have evolved somewhat over time in their form of articulation, remain broadly appropriate. There is however a need to better align the justification with the current context and sharpen the Platform's focus for the future.

Recommendation 4.1: The Platform updates its vision, mission, and objectives for the new Strategic Plan, as proposed by the Stocktaking Report (see Box 1 below), to align with the evolution of the Platform's focus, recent developments, and views of the membership.

Recommendation 4.2: The Platform revises its Charter to make it current with the Platform's future directions and the current development context.

Recommendation 4.3: The Platform reconceives its advocacy function as strategic influencing and substantially strengthen this area of its work by:

- f) Undertaking an annual horizon scan to identify priority focal areas
- g) Supporting the membership in aligning and preparing for global and regional forums and processes
- h) Develop an annual results-oriented influencing plan
- i) Holding an annual senior-level 'heads of sector' meeting
- j) Upgrading the profile of the AGA to engage high-level staff from its membership and partners and to focus on emerging issues that are of strategic importance to the directions of donor investments.

Recommendation 4.4: The Platform develop a far more focused, strategic, and member-driven knowledge brokering programme that closely aligns with strategic influencing priorities, it should:

- e) be delivered through a more diverse set of modalities than just thematic working groups,
- f) be results/outcomes-focused and timebound,
- g) involve short one-off activities as well as longer-run processes,
- h) align with the comparative advantage of the platform and not seek to duplicate the technical knowledge capabilities of many other organisations.

Recommendation 4.5: The Platform recognise the high value that is put on networking by its members and work to optimise this through its activities, while also acknowledging the intangible benefits which can be hard to fully assess. It should do this by:

- g) Supporting a strong network of contact/focal points across all Platform members and partners,
- h) Bringing donor staff together in face to face and virtual working groups, seminars and forums,
- i) Brokering direct linkages between donors on request,

- j) Promoting interesting work being done by staff of members to other members through blogs, social media, news updates and mailings,
- k) Hosting the Annual General Assembly,
- l) Maintaining and sharing up-to-date contact lists for those with key food system and rural development responsibilities across donors.

Recommendation 4.6: The Platform takes a more strategic approach to establishing its areas of thematic focus, guided by a horizon scanning process and the guiding questions proposed by the Stocktaking Report. In doing so it should give more attention to cross-cutting issues related to the role of donors in catalysing and mobilising change from local to global scales and less attention to technical/sectoral issues where it has much less comparative advantage.

Recommendation 4.7: The Platform focus for the coming year on preparation for the Food Systems Summit and then conduct an agenda-setting exercise post the Summit that would provide a three-year outlook of key areas for focus.

5. Future Operations

Conclusion 5.1: A substantial proportion of the Platform operations and activities have been structured around its Thematic Working Groups. While this has produced valuable contributions in niche areas, it has also constrained the ability of the Platform to respond nimbly to emerging issues and opportunities, focus on cross-cutting issues and to undertake focused one-off events or activities.

Recommendation 5.1: The Platform broadens its operational modalities to complement thematic working groups with a more diverse range of focused activities, shorter-term task groups, and one-off convenings that are results-oriented and time-bound. It can do this by:

- d) Clearly identifying the needs of members, annual priorities, and results to be achieved and designing activities around this rather than relying just on on-going thematic groups.
- e) Having a clear Platform wide results-oriented annual workplan that integrates plans for thematic working groups (which have largely not existed).
- f) Utilise short-term task groups alongside thematic working groups and ensure both are results oriented and time-bound.

Conclusion 5.2: The Board must bear responsibility for less-than-optimal functioning of the Platform over recent years. This is reflected in the survey in that less than 50% of respondents felt the Board had performed satisfactorily or very satisfactorily. However, clearly the Board and its current co-chairs have been highly committed to a successful transition of the Platform to IFAD and to strengthening its position through the current strategic planning process.

Recommendation 5.2: The Platform encourages strong and pro-active engagement from its board members and nominate co-chairs who are able to effectively promote and represent the Platform within in the wider development community. The Platform considers a permanent executive board group of three co-chairs to help share the load and expand the scope for profiling the work of the Platform.

Conclusion 5.3: To realise its potential the Platform must have a competent and well-performing Secretariat. Secretariat staff need to find a careful balance between ensuring the Platform is driven by active engagement of the membership, while at the same time providing highly pro-active and strategic support to deliver on planned activities. From the survey, it appears that the membership has been largely satisfied with the performance of the Secretariat.

Recommendation 5.3: The Platform recognises that a competent, proactive and adequately staffed Secretariat, effectively guided by the Board is fundamental to the Platform's success. Given the strong emphasis of the Platform on strategic influencing and knowledge brokering, mid to senior-level staff or consultants to support these functions should be considered.

Conclusion 5.4: Effective communication is essential to the effectiveness and profile of the Platform. However, the Platform's comprehensive Communication Strategy has been only partially implemented and the Platform has had very limited social media presence and proactive communication with a wider audience.

Recommendation 5.4: The Platform should progress implementation of its recently developed Communication Strategy but should also revisit it in the context of the new Strategic Plan. The Platform should strive to use its communication tools (website, social mediate) more effectively to strategically engage and communicate with its members and externally to a wider audience.

Recommendation 5.5: The Platform agrees to the structure for the new strategic plan as detailed in Annex 7.

Annexes

Annex 1. Terms of Reference for development of the GDPRD Strategic Plan 2021-2025

Background

The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD, or “the Platform”) is a network of bilateral and multilateral donors, international financial institutions and foundations that share a common vision of the role that agriculture and rural development play in reducing global poverty and combating hunger and malnutrition. In addition to its Board and other members, the Platform enjoys the contribution of several institutions that participate in General Assemblies, meetings and Thematic Working Groups (TWGs), who are all committed to achieving increased and more effective aid for agriculture and rural development through evidence-based advocacy and knowledge sharing. The Platform Secretariat supports members’ initiatives to enhance development effectiveness through knowledge sharing and advocacy. The Secretariat has been supported by the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and hosted by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) for 16 years; starting from 1 January 2020, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) was selected as the new host. Currently, both GIZ and IFAD are managing the transition process through a joint Secretariat, which will be operational until 30 June 2020; starting from 1 July 2020, IFAD will fully host the Secretariat.

Every five years, the Platform members agree on a new Strategic Plan, which guides the work of the GDPRD, including its strategic orientations, vision and mission, results measurement framework, governance, and funding. The first Strategic Plan (2016-2020) was launched in 2016, with a focus on ensuring that “evidence-based donor policies and programmes for sustainable agriculture and rural transformation enhance food and nutrition security, economic growth and reduce poverty and inequality in rural development”.

Objectives

The Board members of the GDPRD, during the meeting held in February 2020 in Rome, have mandated the IFAD Secretariat to develop the new Strategic Plan (2021-2025), which will build on the previous edition and review the vision, strategy and working priorities of the Platform, in light of a number of emerging priorities, such as:

7. The need to revive and revamp the membership of the Platform, considering the evolving role played by new and emerging economies, which will also look at the criteria for including new members and the positioning of the GDPRD vis-à-vis such new contributors;
8. The functions and working modalities of the Technical Working Groups (TWGs);
9. The changes in the Secretariat hosting entity; and
10. The reduced budget²⁴ available for the Secretariat, both in terms of core resources and potential resources mobilized through supplementary contributions.

Overall, the new Strategic Plan 2021-2025 will articulate the following aspects:

1. **A revised strategic orientation** for the Platform, building on its history and the emerging international development priorities, identifying and leveraging particular opportunities associated with the transition from GIZ to IFAD. The change in the Secretariat and the work and recommendations by the Transition Task Force (TTF) also provide an opportunity to review the Members’ expectations for the GDPRD. Members will be provided with facts and emerging challenges they and the international

²⁴ In the past, the Platform has received core contributions from its members, as well as additional grants from BMZ and the European Commission dedicated to specific tasks (e.g. for the Working Groups). Based on consultations with Board members, it is understood that such supplementary contributions will be discontinued. While this does not prevent other members from providing additional contributions during the course of the year, the budget estimation for 2020 was developed on the assumption that only core contributions will be available.

community will be confronting in the next 2 years (for instance, the debate on food systems and the Summit in 2021), but also looking at the longer time horizon (i.e. the next 8 years).

2. **A review of the role and functions of the GDPRD**, looking at the Platform’s achievements and results and based on the strategic orientations (above). Currently, the GDPRD is mostly a partnership platform for knowledge exchange, networking and advocacy. Some members have felt over time that there is enormous potential to strengthen its roles beyond sharing and networking, for instance with a view to: (i) strengthening exchanges on common international policy agenda issues; and (ii) seeking ways to improve international dialogue among donors and beyond on policies and strategies related to agriculture, rural development, sustainable and healthy food systems, food security and nutrition.
3. **An updated framework for the GDPRD membership**: As of today, the Platform enjoys the partnership of some 40 members, some of which are also part of the Board. Currently, members of the Platform who do not contribute financially are not eligible to be part of the Board (even if some Board members have sometimes not paid). The Strategic Plan 2021-2025 should review ways and means to raise more sustainable funding and improve the participation of a diverse pool of donors and partners for improved dialogue. The review should consider ways to highlight and expand the benefits of membership. The Platform was established in 2003 as a direct response of the Paris Declaration and the Aid Effectiveness agenda; as such, membership has mostly been limited to “traditional” donors from developed countries (Europe, US, Canada, Australia, etc.) and few multilateral institutions. The Strategic Plan will review modalities to engage new partners, including emerging economies with strong agriculture and rural development agendas, as well as “new” international financial institutions (e.g. AIIB, NDB, etc.).
4. An analysis of the role of **outreach and communications of the GDPRD** and the perceived (and real) gap in the space the Platform wishes to occupy: the members have often stated that communication and outreach are two essential functions of the Platform. To this end, an ambitious communication strategy was developed by the GIZ Secretariat in November 2018, which outlined the Platform’s engagement in terms of: (i) knowledge generation and dissemination; (ii) facilitating communication among the membership; (iii) analysis of data on donor programmes; and (iv) promotion of the Platform as an attractive tool for knowledge sharing and networking. The changes in the Secretariat, the budget availability and the articulation of a new strategic orientation will require the Platform to review its communications, with the aim of strengthening the **advocacy** dimension enshrined in the Platform to keep/put rural development and sustainable and healthy food systems at the centre of the international agenda, as well as the **branding** inside and outside the membership. The consultant will therefore look at the role of communication for the Platform with a view to analysing its potential to: collate, distil and circulate relevant information and resources to members; challenge and engage actively with member organizations to progress shared understanding and conceptualisation of key rural development issues; and directly advocate and influence global development dialogue/policies, with the aim of elevating the status and profile of rural development.
5. **A review of thematic working groups (TWGs)**: One of the key assets of the GDPRD are (some of) the TWGs, which the members value considerably. Some of the TWGs have been working very well, holding several meetings throughout the year and enjoying active participation of Platform members; others have been less active, not producing substantive outputs, and they have often lacked articulated work plans. The consultant will review the working modalities and functions of the TWGs, reviewing the fundamental role and potential of the TWG model to support donor’s key objectives/policy priorities and providing recommendations on the process for creating new groups or managing existing groups. Budget implications and support needed from the Secretariat will also be analysed.
6. **A review of the Secretariat’s annual planning and budgeting**: The GDPRD Secretariat has been generously supported by many Members – in addition to the core resources provided by the Board members (EUR 50,000 each), some members (in particular BMZ and EU) have provided substantial supplementary funding over the past years. These contributions have been administered by the Platform Secretariat to finance the cost of staff (GIZ staff working in the Secretariat); consultancies; knowledge products; and events (such as the Annual General Assembly, the “AGA”). The Strategic Plan should review modalities for implementing a results-based work plan, with clear outcomes, outputs and deliverables, as well as an indicative annual budget. The consultant will provide recommendations

on how the Secretariat should allocate the resources from the core budget as well as resources coming from additional contributions. In addition, a strategy to generate more funding from donors who are not paying their contribution (benefits and services as incentives), will be part of the review.

Deliverables and methodology

The development of the Strategic Plan 2021-2025 will take place starting from June 2020, and will require the recruitment of a Senior Consultant (**ToRs available in Annex I**), hired according to IFAD HR policies, who will work on the following deliverables:

11. **A stock-taking analysis on the GDPRD**, based on literature review²⁵ of the previous Strategic Plan, as well as other relevant strategy/policy documents and evaluations/assessments (including the Transition Task Force recommendations). The stock-taking will provide a brief assessment of the Platform's strategy and operational modalities, highlighting the most relevant issues identified with the members, potential future donors, other thought leaders, as well as other professionals that were involved in the Platform in the past, including from ex- or non-member institutions. The consultant will also develop options for the way forward and recommendations, which will be reviewed and discussed with the Board and will form the basis for the development of the Strategic Plan. The consultant will conduct the stock-taking under the supervision of the Secretariat Coordinator, interacting with Board and other Platform members as needed, including through phone interviews and meetings. The consultant will also be requested to participate in Board sessions, virtually or in person, as needed. **Development timeline: June – October 2020.**
12. **The Strategic Plan 2021-2025.** The consultant will prepare the Strategic Plan, based on the stock-taking analysis and other information collected. The preparation of the Plan will require the organization of virtual interactions with the Board members (tbd) and other individuals that may be identified by the Board members. The draft Strategic Plan will be reviewed by the Secretariat and the Board and submitted to the Board for the final approval. **Development timeline: August 2020-January 2021.**

Timeline

ID	Description	Months											
		M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J			
1	Recruitment of consultant	X											
2	Preparation of ToRs for the stock-taking analysis	X	X										
3	Presentation of outline of stock-taking analysis		X										
4	Interviews, conversations and meetings for the stock-taking analysis		X	X									
5	Drafting of stock-taking analysis			X	X								
6	Presentation of stock-taking draft, and review by the Board					X							
7	Finalization of stock-taking analysis					X							
8	Preparation of outline for the Strategic Plan 2021-2025				X								
9	Approval of outline of Strategic Plan					X							
10	Drafting of Strategic Plan					X	X	X					
11	Presentation of first draft and first review by the Board								X				
12	Preparation of second draft and second review by the Board									X			
13	Approval and launching of Strategic Plan												X

²⁵ In this regard, the Secretariat (GIZ side) will prepare a top ten list of documents to be reviewed by the consultant and communicate them prior to the start of the consultancy.

Annex 2. List of Platform Documents Reviewed

1. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2005). Progress Report.
2. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2006). Progress Report.
3. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2007). Progress Report.
4. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2008). Annual General Report.
5. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2009). Annual General Report.
6. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2010). Annual General Report.
7. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2011). Annual General Report.
8. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2012). Annual General Report.
9. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2013). Annual General Report.
10. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2014). Annual General Report.
11. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2015). Annual General Report.
12. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2016). Annual General Report.
13. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2017). Annual General Report.
14. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2018). Annual General Report.
15. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2019). Annual General Report.
16. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2019). Member Feedback Report.
17. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2009). Strategic Plan 2009-2011.
18. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2012). Strategic Plan 2012-2015.
19. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2016). Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020.
20. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2008). Platform Charter.
21. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2019). Transition Task Force Recommendations for the Board towards a realigned GDPRD.
22. Global Donor Working Group on Land (2019). Member 'Code of Conduct' on Country-Level Coordination.
23. Global Donor Working Group on Land (2015). Work Plan 2015.
24. Global Donor Working Group on Land (2015). Terms of Reference.
25. Global Donor Working Group on land Work Plan 2017-2018
26. Global Donor Working Group on land Work Plan 2018-2020
27. Global Donor Working Group on Land. Platform Info Note
28. Global Donor Working Group on Land. Three-year Road Map, October 2014-October 2017.
29. Global Donor Working Group on Land. Platform Policy Brief. 2017
30. Global Donor Working Group on Land. Policy Brief No.14. SDG Land Indicator.2017
31. Global Donor Working Group on Land. Policy Brief No. 12. Land Indicator is Critical to Ending Poverty and Must Remain in SDG Goal 1.2015
32. Global Donor Working Group on Inclusive Agribusiness and Trade. Work Programme 2017-2018
33. Global Donor Working Group on Rural Youth (2018). Concept Note.
34. Global Donor Working Group on Rural Youth (2020). Insights into Youth Networks Working Around Agriculture and Rural Development in Africa.
35. Global Donor Platform for Rural Youth (2018). Donor Engagement with Rural Youth Compendium.
36. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2019). Platform Workplan.
37. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development 2020. SDG2 Roadmap Handover
38. Royal Tropical Institute (2015). Final Evaluation Report. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development.
39. SDG 2 Roadmap Initiative (2018)
40. SDG 2 Roadmap Initiative Meeting Minutes (2018) April
41. SDG 2 Roadmap Initiative Meeting Minutes (2018) June
42. BMZ (2019) SDG 2 Road Map Group – Key Messages.
43. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (2010) Platform Policy Brief on Gender and Agriculture.

Annex 3. Current List of Platform Members

Platform Members	Board Member	Thematic Working Group			
		Land	SDG2 Roadmap	Rural Youth	Inclusive Agribusiness and Trade
African Development Bank Group	✓	✓		✓	
Asian Development Bank				✓	
Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	✓		✓		
Austrian Development Agency					
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	✓		✓		
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)		✓		✓	✓
Enabel, the Belgian Development Agency					
European Commission	✓	✓	✓		✓
Federal Ministry of European and International Affairs - Austria					
Finland – Ministry of Foreign Affairs		✓	✓		
Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office	✓	✓	✓		
French Development Agency		✓			
Food and Agriculture Organisation		✓		✓	✓
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development	✓	✓	✓		
Global Affairs Canada		✓	✓		
Global Mechanism of UNCCD					
Inter-American Development Bank					
International Development Research Centre					
International Trade Centre					✓
Irish Aid - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade					
International Fund for Agricultural Development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Italian Agency for Development Cooperation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kfw Development Bank					
Korea International Cooperation Agency					
Luxembourg Agency for Development Cooperation					✓
Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs France	✓		✓	✓	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belgium					
Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Denmark		✓			
Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Norway				✓	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation – Spain					
OECD Development Centre				✓	
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation					
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency		✓	✓		
The Netherlands – Ministry of Foreign Affairs	✓	✓	✓		✓
The World Bank		✓			✓
U.S. Agency for International Development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
UN Women					
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime					
World Food Programme					
World Trade Organization					✓

Annex 4. Key Informant Interview Questions

Value Add and Niche

1. In your opinion, what is the unique value add of the Platform?
 - a. How has being part of the Platform benefitted your organisation and you?
2. In what ways do you think the Platform has contributed to global food systems and rural development?
 - a. Do you think it has had as much of an impact or influence as it could/should?
 - b. If not, why not?

Performance

3. How well do you think the Platform has performed over the past 5 years?
 - a. What stand out as its main achievements/impacts?
 - b. What would you say are the main strengths and weaknesses of the Platform?
4. What do you see as the main successes and challenges in the governance, management, and funding of the Platform?

Future Directions

1. What do you think the future focus of the Platform should be?
 - a. What sorts of rural development and food systems issues should it be tackling?
 - b. What sorts of services and support should it be providing to its members and constituencies?
2. What changes (if any) are needed in the vision, mission, and objectives of the Platform (see Attachment 1 for reference) and/or in the governance, membership, management, and funding of the Platform for it to respond to your view of its future?
1. Is there any further advice can you give that would help in the development and adoption of the new strategic plan

Annex 5. List of Interview Respondents

Name	Organization	Role in Platform
David Hegwood	U.S. Agency for International Development	Co-chair, Contact point SDG2 Working Group
Conrad Rein	European Commission	Co-chair/ Board member
Paul van de Logt	The Netherlands – Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Co-chair/ Board member
Ammad Bahalim	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Board Member
Sanna-Liisa Taivalmaa	Finland – Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Board Member
Tristan Armstrong	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Board Member
Ueli Mauderli	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	Board Member
Marco Platzer	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation	Board Member
Federica de Gaetano	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation	Focal Point
Maurizio Bonavia	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation	Focal Point
Paolo Enrico Sertoli	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation	Focal Point
Nikita Eriksen-Hamel	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Canada	Former Platform Co-chair/ Focal point
Patrick Herlant	Food and Agriculture Organization	Former Platform Co-chair
Shantanu Mathur	International Fund for Agricultural Development	Former Platform Co-chair/Focal point
Sarah A. Simons	The World Bank	Focal point
Javier Molina Cruz	Food and Agriculture Organization	Chair – Land Working Group
Christian Mersmann	Retiree	Former Policy Advisor for the Platform

Annex 6. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development Member Survey

General Information

1. What is your affiliation with the Platform? (select all that are relevant)

- Full Member
- Associate Member
- Contact Point
- Board Member
- Secretariat Member
- Thematic Working Group Member
- Partner
- Other (please specify)

2. How many years have you been involved in the Platform?

- More than 10 years
- 5 to 10 years
- 3 – 5 years
- 1-3 years
- Less than 1 year

3. How familiar are you with the Platform and its activities?

- I have an in-depth understanding of the Platform and its activities.
- I have a general understanding of the Platform and its activities.
- I have a limited understanding of the Platform and its activities.

Part A. Past Value and Performance of the Platform

Value and Performance to Date

1. How would you rate the value the Platform to your organisation in the following areas?

	Very valuable	Valuable	Somewhat valuable	Not valuable
Influence on the global agenda	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exchange of knowledge and policy perspectives with other donors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Convening relevant forums, and meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Building networks and connections with other donors and actors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing access to up to date information on key topics and new developments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide additional comments on how the Platform has been of value to your organisation

Text box/descriptive

2. How satisfied are you with the overall performance of the Platform over the last 5 years?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

3. How satisfied are you with the performance of the Platform in the following areas?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied

Advocacy on key issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge sharing between members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking between members, donors and other partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Development of knowledge products, reports and policy briefs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Planning and delivery of Platform activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Monitoring and reporting on Platform results	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. How do you rate the following statement “The Platform provides a unique function in supporting global food systems and rural development efforts not provided by other platforms, networks or organisations”?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I cannot say/answer

5. List what you consider as the 3 most significant achievements of the Platform’s achievements over the last 5 years?

Text box/descriptive

6. How satisfied are you with the performance of the Platform’s Board in the following areas?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Strategically positioning the Platform	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Guiding the Secretariat and thematic working groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensuring financial sustainability of the Platform	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. How satisfied are you with the performance of the Secretariat in the following areas?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Moderately dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Supporting the strategic direction of the Platform	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting Platform activities and events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicating with members and other actors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Monitoring and reporting of the Platform’s work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. How would you rate the engagement of Platform members?

- Most Platform members engage and participate regularly in Platform activities.
- About half of Platform members engage and participate regularly in Platform activities.
- Only a few Platform members engage and participate regularly in Platform activities.

- Do not know.

9. What reflections or lessons do you have about the governance, management, and funding of the Platform over the last 5 years?

Text box/descriptive

Part B Assessment of Platform Activities

Annual General Assembly

1. Have you attended a Platform Annual General Assembly (AGA) meeting?

- Yes (if yes survey moves on to Qs. 2)
- No (if no, survey skips to the next sub-section)

2. How many Annual General Assembly meetings have you attended in the last 5 years?

- None
- 1
- 2-3
- 3-4
- 5

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Annual General Assembly (AGA)?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I cannot say/answer
It helps to shape the global agenda on food systems and rural development	○	○	○	○	○
It engages an influential audience beyond the Platform membership	○	○	○	○	○
Deliberations at the AGA are taken forward and acted upon	○	○	○	○	○
The AGAs are organised and communicated in a timely and effective manner	○	○	○	○	○

4. What feedback and suggestions do you have to improve future Annual General Assemblies?

Text box/descriptive

Thematic Working Groups

1. Are you a member of any of the Platform's Thematic Working Groups?

- Yes (if yes, survey goes to Qs 2.)
- No (if no, survey skips and goes to the next sub-section)

2. Please select those Thematic Working Groups of which you are a member (select as many as apply)

- SDG2 Roadmap
- Rural Youth
- Land Governance
- Agribusiness and Trade

For each working group, the same set of questions would drop down for example:

3. How satisfied are you with the performance of the working group in the following areas?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Relevance of the objectives and activities to your organisation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Planning and implementation of activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Monitoring and reporting on results	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication with members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impact of the working group beyond its membership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. List what you consider as three highlights of the working group's achievements over the last 5 years?

Text box/descriptive

5. What suggestions do you have to improve the performance of the working group?

Text box/descriptive

Communications and Outreach

1. Please rank in order of preference how you receive information regarding the Platform and its activities (tick the two main forms)?

- Email
- Website
- Social media
- Newsletter
- Annual Report
- Platform reports and publications

2. How often do you use the Platform's website?

- Most weeks
- Occasionally each month
- Occasionally each six months
- A few times each year
- Less than once a year
- Never

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Platform's website?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It is well designed and easy to navigate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It provides members with relevant information about the Platform and its activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It provides a general audience with relevant information about the Platform and its activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It provides useful information about food systems and rural development issues and events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It serves as a useful portal for accessing key information, reports, websites etc on food systems and rural development issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. How many people in your organisation do you estimate have made use of Platform activities and knowledge products over the last 5 years?
- 1-2
 - 2-5
 - 5-10
 - 10-20
 - More than 20
 - Don't know
5. What feedback and suggestions do you have to improve the Platform's communication and outreach going forward?

Text box/descriptive

Part B – Future Focus and Orientation

1. How do you rate the following statement: "The Platform has a unique value add for supporting food systems and rural development into the future and should be maintained and strengthened"?
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
2. Thinking of the next 5 years, what do you see as the most valuable functions for the Platform?

	Very valuable	Valuable	Somewhat valuable	Not valuable
Advocating for food system and rural development issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge brokering amongst members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Convening donors, governments, civil society, partners, and private sector on key issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coordination and liaison between donors on policies and funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Thinking about the next 5 years, what are the 3 most critical food systems and rural development challenges you feel the Platform should focus on (be as specific as possible)?

Text box/descriptive

4. Thinking about the next 5 years what do you see as three areas of uncertainty for food systems and rural development to which the platform may need to respond to?

Text box/descriptive

5. In planning the future work of the Platform how valuable would the following services be to your organisation.

	Very valuable	Valuable	Somewhat valuable	Not valuable
Hosting cross-member thematic working groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Convening the Annual General Assembly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Development of Platform position papers for global processes and events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Keeping members updated on key forums and events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offering learning and capacity development activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Developing policy briefs and providing briefings on emerging issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Curating a high-quality member-oriented website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about future membership of the platform?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
The Platform should remain primarily as a forum to convene OECD donors and international agencies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Membership should include donor agencies of emerging economies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Membership should include new international and regional financial institutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Membership should include philanthropic foundations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Membership should include private sector platforms (but not individual businesses)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Membership should include civil society organisations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Membership should include farmer organisations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide any other additional comments about the Platform's membership

Text box/descriptive

7. What 3 priorities or areas of focus would you like to see covered in the new Strategic Plan (2021-2025)?

Text box/descriptive

8. Please share any additional feedback or comments on the Platform that can help to develop the next five-year strategic plan

Text box/descriptive

Annex 7. Outline for Strategic Plan

10. Background
11. Key Findings and Recommendations of 2020 Stocktake
12. Context
13. Revised Vision, Mission and Objectives
14. Revised Funding, Membership and Governance
15. Strategic Focus
 - Foods Systems Summit
 - Supporting national transformation plans
 - Optimising the Catalytic and Enabling Role of Donors
 - SDG2 Working group
16. Thematic Priorities (options)
 - Building Back Better from COVID / food systems resilience
 - Climate and Food Systems
 - Catalysing and de-risking responsible private sector investment
 - Optimising ICT Potential
 - Transformation of small-scale farming
 - National policy support for restructuring incentives frameworks
 - Gender
 - Land (continued)
 - Youth (continued)
17. Operational Focus
 - Connecting with Member needs
 - Diversifying operational modalities
 - Mobilising the delivery capacity of the new secretariat
 - Rebuilding a strategic influencing capability
 - Extending the membership base and securing resources
 - Strengthening results-oriented planning and reporting
18. Secretariat Structure and Responsibilities