

Global Donor Platform for Rural Development

Virtual Board Meeting

17-18 February 2021

Participants

1. **Platform Co-chairs:** David Hegwood (USAID), Paul van de Logt (The Netherlands), Conrad Rein (EU).
2. **Board Members:** Maria Tekülve (BMZ), Ueli Mauderli (SDC), Tristan Armstrong (DFAT), Oriane Barthélemy (MEFA France), Federica De Gaetano (AICS), Sanna-Liisa Taivalmaa (MFA Finland), Sung Lee (USAID), Fabrizio Moscatelli (BMGF)
3. **Guest:** Jim Woodhill (Independent Senior Consultant)
4. **Platform Secretariat:** Maurizio Navarra (Acting Coordinator), Roberta Croce (Intern), Alessandro Cordova (Administrative Assistant)

Day 1

Chair: Conrad Rein (EU)

Agenda:

1. Introduction and welcome
2. Highlights on the Strategic Plan 2021-2025
3. Q&A and discussion on Strategic Plan
4. Final Decision, endorsement and adoption of the Strategic Plan
5. Overview of contributions from 2020
6. GDPRD Workplan and Budget:
 - a. Summary of work and expenditures for 2020
 - b. Results-based work plan and budget for 2021
7. Q&A and discussion on work plan and budget 2020-2021

Agenda Point Day 1	Discussion
1. Highlights on the Strategic Plan 2021-2025	<p>Jim Woodhill presented the main highlights of the Strategic Plan 2021-2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The environment in which the Platform operates is characterized by the strong prominence of the sustainable food systems agenda, and by other game-changing challenges, such as climate change and COVID-19. The GDPRD remains a critical network, with a clear need and demand for it. • The Strategic Plan 2021-2025 proposes an updated vision and mission statements for the Platform: Vision - “Donors effectively catalyse change”; Mission - “Brokering donor collaboration for impact”. • The GDPRD will also focus on 3 main objectives (formerly defined as “Platform functions”): strategic influencing; knowledge sharing; and networking and convening. • In 2021, the Platform will focus its efforts on the food and nutrition agenda, with a strong engagement in the lead up to the Food Systems Summit. In the follow-up of the Summit, it will be important for the Platform to reflect on the outcomes and deliberations of the event, and work on its strategic areas of focus. • Key result areas for the Platform’s performance have been identified: more emphasis on strategic influencing capability; improving connection with member needs; diversifying

Agenda Point Day 1	Discussion
	<p>operational modalities; ensuring the functioning of the Secretariat; extending the membership base; and improving communications and outreach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three key annual activities will help the Platform achieve the enhanced strategic influencing it will pursue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Horizon Scanning exercise, to identify emerging issues and set a clear agenda for the future engagement of the Platform; ○ Meeting of Senior Managers from member organizations, to ensure the Platform’s decisions and strategic orientations are approved at the highest level; and ○ Annual General Assembly (AGA), to connect with the broad membership.
<p>2. Q&A and discussion on Strategic Plan</p>	<p>The main points raised by the Board were the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board members expressed their general appreciation of the Strategic Plan’s quality and contents. • There is recognition of the Platform’s added value, which is to enable the donor community and provide a space where donors can speak with a harmonized voice. • Members expressed their support to the Platform’s ambitious agenda, even though some recognized that such ambition needs to match the Platform’s limited budget. • Board endorsed the idea of the annual horizon scanning exercise, and requested more information on its actual implementation. • Some members expressed concerns around the strong focus on the Food Systems Summit and requested how the Platform will shape its future thematic areas of focus, aiming for a clear definition of its long-term vision. • There were concerns around the absence of some specific themes – such as agroecology and climate change – and the exclusion of non-food-related agricultural themes in the future of the Platform. <p>Mr. Woodhill addressed the questions and concerns, stating that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Platform’s major challenge is the broad range of potential issues where it could be involved; its response should be to accurately and strategically select the core theme(s) it needs to engage in, looking at its future. • In the past, the Platform has mainly focused on knowledge-sharing activities. The current Strategic Plan, however, provides a clear mandate to the Platform: to focus on emerging issues all donors need to tackle together, such as the food systems agenda, the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the upcoming climate change COP.
<p>3. Final Decision, endorsement and adoption of the Strategic Plan</p>	<p>The Strategic Plan was endorsed by the Board, pending some clarification to the questions and issues raised during the conversation.</p> <p>The Secretariat was requested to circulate the final version of the Plan, asking Board members to provide additional comments by Friday 19 February. Comments will be included in a final version, which will be edited, designed and released to the public, including through the GDPRD website.</p>
<p>4. Overview of contributions from 2020</p>	<p>The Secretariat presented the Members’ financial contributions to the Platform in 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Secretariat thanked the Members for mobilizing their annual membership fees in 2020, and the commitment of some to engage financially for periods going from 3 to 5 years, with annual disbursements. • The total contributions under the IFAD Secretariat received in the second half of 2020 amount to EUR 624.941. • Of these resources, the costs encumbered for hiring the professional staff members in the Secretariat amount to EUR 253.148.
<p>5. GDPRD Work Plan and Budget:</p>	<p>The Secretariat presented the Platform’s expenditures for 2020, noting the following:</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of work and expenditures for 2020) • Results-based work plan and budget for 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the previous years, the majority of the Secretariat’s expenditures were related to travel and organization of meetings, which have not been incurred in 2020, due to the COVID-19 emergency. • The Platform’s total expenditures for the second half of 2020 amount to EUR 346.000, consistently with the Platform’s budget outlook. Relevant portions of costs related to professional staff to be hired by the Secretariat have been encumbered within this amount. • The Secretariat listed all major events organized by the Platform in 2020: 1 Annual General Assembly, 5 Board Meetings, 11 Meetings of Thematic Working Groups, 2 COVID-related meetings, 2 high-level events. <p>The Secretariat introduced the 2021 Work Plan, noting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was developed with a results-based approach, with clear indicators, outputs, outcomes, and measurable targets. • It was based on the decision to focus the Platform’s efforts in the food systems agenda and the 2021 Summit. • It is interconnected with the new Strategic Plan: the six outcome areas of the work plan were selected directly from the Platform’s updated key results areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening the Platform’s strategic influencing capabilities, engaging in global events and organizing the Annual General Assembly. 2. Better recognizing and connecting Members’ needs, hosting Thematic Working Groups on the basis of Board consultations. 3. Diversifying and enhancing operational modalities, providing the Platform with a space to be adaptive and responsive to immediate needs. 4. Improving the Secretariat’s delivery capacity through staffing and needs-based human resources. 5. Extending the fee-paying membership base, for increased resource mobilization. 6. Strengthening communications and outreach, revising the Platform’s Communications Strategy.
<p>6. Q&A and Discussion on Work Plan and Budget 2020-2021</p>	<p>The main points raised by the Board on the 2021 work plan were the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarifications were sought on what the two “products” planned in view of the Platform’s engagement in the Food Systems Summit will be. • Board members also asked how the work plans and budgets of the Thematic Working Groups is envisaged to be included in the overall work Plan and budget of the Platform. • Members also asked the possibility to include the Working Groups’ most strategic objectives in the Work Plan, in order to allow members that are not part of the WGs to see the progress being made. <p>The Secretariat addressed the above points, stating that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature of the two products for the Food Systems Summit will be discussed in the second day of this Board Meeting. • The funding of the Working Groups is included in the overall budget, which includes some resources specifically earmarked to the groups, and additional resources coming from the core budget of the Platform. • The Secretariat encouraged Members to provide earmarked resources for specific Working Groups, similar to what USAID has included in 2020, in the 5-year financing agreement with the Secretariat. • The three active Working Groups (Land Governance, SDG2 Roadmap, and Rural Youth) have been asked to produce their dedicated Work Plans and are currently doing so. However, many of those plans are not yet ready, and will be submitted to the Board at a later stage.

Day 2

Chair: David Hegwood (USAID)

Agenda:

1. GDPRD's contribution to the Food Systems Summit: presentation of the concept and ToRs
2. Q&A and discussion on GDPRD's contribution to the Summit
3. 2021 Annual General Assembly: timing and discussion on alignment to Food Systems Summit
4. Discussion on 2021 AGA
5. Organization of 2021 Senior-level meeting
6. Horizon scanning exercise for 2021-2022
7. Closure of meeting

Agenda Point Day 2	Discussion
<p>1. GDPRD's contribution to the Food Systems Summit: presentation of the concept and ToRs</p>	<p>The Secretariat presented the concept note and ToRs for the planned contribution of the Platform to the Food Systems Summit, which will be articulated in two phases:</p> <p>Stocktaking: a preliminary paper, a stocktaking report, with an analysis of donor trends in terms of food and nutrition security. It will identify areas of focus for donor engagement at the global and national level; provide an analysis of aid flows; and highlight funding and coordination gaps.</p> <p>A White Paper on donor coordination, developed on the basis of the outcomes of the pre-Summit and the Stocktaking paper. It will provide the donor community with a framework for rethinking the food systems agenda, looking at the future and providing a clear set of responses, options and priorities.</p> <p>In this regard, the Secretariat added that the donor community – and the GDPRD – can have a highly influential role in the food systems architecture. The Platform wants to make a case for the catalytic role of the donor community in driving investments and decisions towards food systems transformation, and this is what the White Paper will focus on.</p> <p>The Secretariat added that an important portion of the thinking that will shape the White Paper will include donor coordination at the global strategic level, but the White Paper will also be dedicated to specific recommendations for better country-level coordination, as well as better utilization of data for evidence-based policymaking.</p>
<p>2. Q&A and discussion on GDPRD's contribution to the Summit</p>	<p>The main points of discussion raised by the Board have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stocktaking Report. The Stocktaking Report's objectives should be sharpened. Some members expressed their concern on how the report will include donors' financial investment in food systems. • Schedule and content of the White Paper. Some concerns were also expressed on the timing of the White Paper, whose drafting is scheduled to start before the recommendations of the pre-Summit will be available. • Donor coordination. Members requested clarifications on whether the papers will focus on donor coordination at the global or country level. • Presentation of GDPRD's products. Members asked clarifications on the practical process for presenting the papers to the Summit(s). There were inquiries on the possibility to hold side events during the Pre-Summit and the Summit, as well as inquiries on the possibility to use the 2021 AGA as one of the launching/presentation events. • Gaps within the ToRs. ToRs should elaborate more on how the Platform will help recipient countries decide what their objectives are, and how will it support partner countries to achieve

Agenda Point Day 2	Discussion
	<p>such objectives. The ToRs should also reflect more on how the GDPRD will help countries engage better and more effectively in the Food Systems Summit.</p> <p>Jim Woodhill and the Secretariat addressed the points as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including information on financial resources on food systems will be a challenge, as reporting is still anchored to the traditional dimensions of “food security” and “rural development”, rather than that of “food systems”. The focus of the Stocktaking Report should be to collect and distil any pre-existing relevant information and make it digestible for the Summit’s broader audience. • The Stocktaking Report should identify trends, challenges and opportunities within the donor community. This dimension will flow into the White Paper. • The White Paper should expand the findings of the pre-Summit and explore implications for the donor community. However, some preparatory work will need to start before the pre-Summit, based on the emerging themes. • GDPRD’s products for the FSS will be presented/launched in the context of special events. However, it is still unclear whether these will be side events within the Summit/pre-Summit or independent, parallel events. • In this regard, the option exists to use the AGA as the GDPRD event that would follow up and look beyond the Summit, rather conceptualizing it as an input into the Summit itself. Some members therefore endorsed the idea to organize the AGA after the FSS, in early 2022. • A preparatory committee on the FSS consisting of the Co-Chairs, Jim Woodhill and the Secretariat will be established, to coordinate the process for developing the GDPRD products for the FSS as well as the launching events. The committee will report back to the Board.
<p>3. 2021 Annual General Assembly: timing and discussion on alignment to Food Systems Summit</p>	<p>The Secretariat recalled the process followed in the past for the organization of the AGA, highlighting the current challenges posed by the COVID-19 restrictions.</p> <p>For a decision on the 2021 AGA, based on the conversations in this Board session, the following issues were left to the Board to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme: Shall the AGA be dedicated to following discussions related to the FSS? Or would it make sense to organize it under a different theme? • Timing: Shall the AGA take place before or after the Summit? • Purpose: Should the Platform organize the AGA as one of the launching/presentation events for the GDPRD products of the Food Systems Summit?
<p>4. Discussion on 2021 AGA</p>	<p>The main points of discussion from the Board have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was general support for holding an in-person AGA. A final decision on the timing of the AGA will be made taking into account the schedule of other events the Platform plans to host this year. • The Co-Chairs and the Secretariat will make a proposal to the Board, taking into account all of the 2021 planned events - the FSS events, the high-level meeting and the AGA.
<p>5. Organization of 2021 Senior-level Meeting</p>	<p>The Secretariat introduced its vision regarding the organization of the Senior-level Meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting is understood to be a GDPRD internal event, with the aim of strengthening its network and validating its strategic and operational directions. • Being an internal event, it will not be used to publicly launch GDPRD’s products for the Food Systems Summit. • Board members agreed that, for the launching of such products, the organization of a Ministerial-level meeting is a better option. • The Board expressed general agreement on the above points.

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<p>6. Horizon Scanning Exercise for 2021-2022</p>	<p>The Secretariat introduced its vision regarding the Horizon Scanning exercise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While priorities for 2021 are more or less set, the horizon scanning exercise has been identified as a valuable process for the post-FSS years. • It would ensure the annual work plan of the Platform is developed and implemented strategically, by listening to what the most relevant issues for the Members are. • Examples of such issues could be COVID, the Food Systems Summit’s outcomes, meetings and events happening during the year with a view on how the Platform can engage them. • Such longer-term perspective will have to be prioritized in a 3-year work plan. • The Horizon Scanning exercise will also build on the deliberations of the Senior-level Meetings and the AGA. <p>The Board expressed general agreement on the initiative, stressing the necessity to work on concrete deliverables. However, since such initiative will not take place until next year, the concrete modalities of its implementation have not yet been laid out.</p>