

Informal Board Meeting Minutes

19 May 2020, Virtual Meeting

Participants

Co-Chair: David Hegwood (USAID)

Board Members:

Fabrizio Moscatelli (BMGF), Bernhard Worm (BMZ), Conrad Rein (EC), Oriane Barthélemy (MEFA France), Ron Hartman, Willem Wefers Bettink (IFAD), Ueli Mauderli (SDC), Paul van de Logt (MFA Netherlands), Tristan Armstrong (DFAT), Marco Platzer (Italian Cooperation)

Transition Task Force Co-Chair – invited guest: Marc Nolting (GIZ)

Platform Secretariat: Jörg Lohmann, Maurizio Navarra, Oliver Hanschke, Sylvia Otieno, Priscilla Sambiani, Tim Zulawski

Apologies: DfiD, Finland, AfDB

Agenda Day 1

1. Introduction and welcome
2. Platform Co- Chairmanship
3. Quick updates from the Secretariat
 - a) Update on GDPRD financial contributions
 - b) Update on IFAD Staff positions for the Secretariat starting from 1 July
 - c) Development of Strategic Plan 2021 and recruitment of Jim Woodhill
 - d) Discussion on AGA 2020: Date and place
4. Update on COVID-19 Task Force and COVID-19 web page
5. Next Board
 - a) Meeting date and place
 - b) Platform for online meetings: WebEx/Zoom selection
6. AOB

Agenda Point	Overview, Discussions, Decisions, and Agreements
1. Introduction and welcome	<p>The Co-chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and stressed the relevance of this informal Board meeting to catch up on pending issues, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and to deliberate on the way forward.</p> <p>The Co-chair presented the meeting agenda and asked for any additional points before proceeding. No additions were made, and the agenda was approved.</p>
2. Platform Co-Chairmanship	<p>The Co-chair announced that two expression of interest for the Co-Chair position have been received from Paul van de Logt (MFA Netherlands) and Conrad Rein (EC). Since there has been no opportunity for overlap, the Co-Chair proposed to exceptionally have three Co-Chairs, with him staying for as long as the Board will deem necessary. This will allow for a smoother transition, to help cope with the disruptions due to Covid-19, mainly the AGA, and to support the transitioning Secretariat.</p> <p>This proposal was approved by the Board on a no objection basis.</p>



	<p>Decision: Paul van de Logt and Conrad Rein were elected as the new Co-Chairs effective immediately. The current term of David Hegwood is extended for an indefinite period. The three Co-Chairs will serve together on an interim basis until David steps down.</p> <p>The two new Co-Chairs expressed appreciation for this opportunity and stated that they are eager to work with the other Co-Chairs and the Secretariat.</p>
<p>3. Quick updates from the Secretariat</p> <p>a) Update on GDPRD financial contributions</p> <p>b) Update on IFAD Staff positions for the Secretariat starting from 1 July</p> <p>c) Development of Strategic Plan 2021 and recruitment of Jim Woodhill</p> <p>d) Discussion on AGA 2020: Date and place</p>	<p>a) Update on GDPRD financial contributions</p> <p>IFAD Secretariat thanked the members for their support and feedback for moving ahead with the financial contributions. IFAD, then, presented an overview that reflected the status of financial contributions as of 19 May 2020. So far, IFAD, Italian Cooperation, SDC and DFAT* have disbursed their 2020 contributions to IFAD and discussions are ongoing with the remaining members. Some Board members were able to adopt the three-year Letter of Agreement, with annual disbursements. The Secretariat also flagged that, in addition to the core annual contribution, USAID has committed special contributions to support two working groups SDG2 and Land Working Group (50,000 Euros per year for each of the working group).</p> <p>GIZ Secretariat and BMZ stated that discussions are ongoing between BMZ and GIZ to channel Germany's contribution through another GIZ project, as the mandate of GIZ secretariat expires by the end of June.</p> <p>b) Update on IFAD Staff positions for the Secretariat starting from 1 July</p> <p>Following the decisions made in the last Board meeting, the Secretariat shared a document with an estimation of staffing costs with the board and the ToRs for the three proposed staff positions (Coordinator P-4, Communications Coordination Analyst P-2 and Administrative Assistant G-3). The proposals were approved on a no objection basis and in agreement with the Platform Co-chair. IFAD Secretariat has since then moved forward with the process and the job advertisement should be published soon. The staff are expected to be on board in July.</p> <p>DFAT: Inquired about the total annual estimated budget for three staff positions. Secretariat clarified that the annual estimate budget is around 350,000 Euros, in line with the estimation of staffing costs circulated by IFAD in February.</p> <p>c) Development of Strategic Plan 2021 and recruitment of Jim Woodhill</p> <p>Following the mandate received from the Board in February, the IFAD Secretariat circulated the draft ToRs for the Strategic Plan 2021-2025 to the Board. The Secretariat thanked the Board members for the valuable feedback which was incorporated in the final ToRs. The ToRs were approved on a no-objection basis. The formulation process of the Strategic Plan is expected to begin now and last until January 2021 through a series of steps which will include a stocktaking exercise and other tasks, to be defined shortly.</p> <p>The Secretariat proposed the hiring of Jim Woodhill to spearhead the process, and this was also approved on a no objection basis. IFAD is already proceeding with the recruitment. Jim Woodhill is currently developing a proper comprehensive plan and timeline for the consultancy with a list of complete activities which will be shared with the Board once finalized.</p>



France and Co-Chair expressed appreciation to the Secretariat for their monthly email updates. The updates help board members keep track of the various activities of the Platform including the working groups.

d) Discussion on AGA 2020: Date and place

The Co-chair introduced this agenda item by stating that this year's AGA will not take place as originally planned in IFAD in July. He clarified that this is not a decision point but rather a discussion point to get feedback on realities on the ground and start thinking about the next AGA. In addition, it was initially planned that the AGA would focus on the role of the private sector in food systems, in view of the upcoming Food Systems summit. However, given the current situation, he suggested that it is worth considering broadening the focus of the AGA and investigating how the Platform can contribute to the Food Systems summit more effectively.

IFAD Secretariat stated that based on the Board guidance, a Preparation Committee was established, and the agreed title for the AGA was the **Role of the Private Sector in building sustainable and Resilient Foods Systems**. The preparations were well on track and the concept note was almost finalized. However, these plans have now been suspended. He then tabled three options going forward: Wait to see if the CFS will take place as originally planned and have the AGA back to back with it; postponing it to 2021; or holding a virtual AGA.

GIZ Secretariat pointed out that they have had some experience with online events recently as most organizations have been forced to use more innovative digital formats. But these have limitations especially considering time zones. All the same, this provides an opportunity for more innovative formats with limited carbon footprints.

Co-chair pointed out that it will be challenging to have the AGA this year, but that there is an opportunity for the Platform to provide inputs to the Food Systems summit. Stressed that there is no need to abandon the work on private sector engagement, but members should consider expanding the scope of the AGA. So far, there is no clear indication from Summit organizers on its format and subsequently how the Platform fits into it, and so it might be difficult for the Platform to plan for it. There are however indications of a broad stakeholder process, including the establishment of a champions and an advisory committee, as well as a scientific committee.

MFA Netherlands proposed that since the Food System Summit is still being put together, the Platform should move forward with the planning of the AGA and later, if there is an opportunity, feed into the summit. He added that it is safe to go with the private sector topic as there is still a lot of work to be done on that front. He supports the option of having a virtual meeting and pointed out a need for an innovative approach.

DFAT shared the same sentiments as MFA Netherlands. Noted out that there is a lot going on the food system space now and that it has created an opportunity for knowledge exchange amongst donors especially on COVID-19 implications.

IFAD pointed out that a virtual meeting is a chance for innovation. IFAD further stated that given the current situation, there is no guarantee that the AGA will take place next year post-COVID-19 if cancelled this year. Emphasized that there is going to be an increased focus on agriculture going forward. IFAD further noted that an update on the Food System Summit has been shared with its Members States and will be shared with the Board through the IFAD Secretariat. Decisions are expected around the date and venue of the summit. In



	<p>terms of the governance structure, the advisory committee is almost in place, the science panel is largely in place and the champions group is under discussion at the moment. The summit secretariat is finally in place so things should move very fast now.</p> <p>BMGF inquired whether Italy will be hosting one of the pre-summit meetings, as originally expected.</p> <p>Italian Cooperation responded that they do not have any information on that but will inquire and revert. Also stressed that the Platform should not miss out on having the AGA this year as many agriculture related issues are coming up. Stated that they are in favour of having a virtual edition of AGA 2020.</p> <p>MEFA France stated that they are interested in receiving the draft concept note on the private sector that the secretariat worked on. Inquired whether the Platform still wants to focus on the private sector theme, since the German SDG2 Event is not taking place anymore. Additionally, inquired about the Platform’s contribution and participation in the Food Summit, particularly in the Champion’s group.</p> <p>Co-chair responded that so far it is not clear on whether the Platform will be part of the Champions group, but regardless, it still has ample opportunities to contribute to the process. Mentioned that he had been invited earlier in his capacity as Co-chair to the Friends of Champions group (majorly composed of NGOs) which was convened to help establish the champions group.</p> <p>GIZ Secretariat proposed that this agenda point be put as an agenda item for the next meeting.</p> <p>BMZ stated that they support either having a virtual AGA format or postponing to the second half of the year or to next year as long it focusses on a useful topic. For a virtual format, he suggested that the AGA be kept useful, short and concise. Proposed that the AGA also focuses on the implications of COVID-19 and food security.</p> <p>SDC also stressed that it is useful to have the existing concept note with the private sector theme in order to complement it with new upcoming topics and to think about an online modality.</p> <p>Co-chair stated that there is a need for further discussion and suggested that the AGA Preparatory Committee reconvenes. The Co-chair also strongly encouraged other Board members to join that group. He stressed that due to the pandemic it might be appropriate to plan for a virtual AGA. He also pointed out the AGA creates an opportunity for a collective engagement with a broader stakeholder community and provides an opportunity to provide inputs to both the Summit and the pandemic.</p> <p>Action Point: The Co-chairs and secretariat will meet and discuss how to move forward with the AGA and send out a note to the Board. The Secretariat will circulate the existing concept note and reconvene the Prep Committee with a broader participation.</p>
<p>4. Update on COVID-19 Task Force and COVID-19 web page</p>	<p>Chair: Thanked the secretariat for setting up the Covid-19 landing webpage and pointed out that there is a real role for the platform in helping to facilitate discussions among donors on how they are responding to longer term impacts of COVID-19 on food security.</p>



	<p>MFA Netherlands recapped on the process leading to the formation of the Task Force. DFID initiated a conversation among donors on what initial analysis were on the implications of COVID-19 on food and nutrition security. The conversation was very useful and the following areas were highlighted for more exchange: Analytical work; Country-studies and deep dives; and Scalable action. A follow-up call was convened two weeks ago, specifically on analytical work, and CGIAR was invited to share information on analytical issues. Report of this call has been shared with the Board. A second call on country analysis is scheduled to take place in two weeks' time.</p> <p>GIZ Secretariat explained that a new COVID-19 topic page has been set up on the GDPRD website in order to inform each other about ongoing actions regarding the pandemic and coordinate response amongst GDPRD Membership. Secretariat gave a brief presentation of the new topic page and stated that it provides an overview of publications and links of Platform member organizations. Some members already provided materials and there are no restrictions on the type of materials.</p> <p>MFA Netherlands recommended that the Platform be connected to other Platforms doing with similar work and stated that he is happy to be a contact person for the page.</p> <p>Chair urged members to share relevant and freely accessible material on their COVID-19 responses and strategies with the secretariat.</p> <p>Action point: Members requested to share relevant and freely accessible material on their COVID-19 responses and strategies with the Secretariat.</p>
<p>5. Next Board</p> <p>a) Meeting date and place</p> <p>b) Platform for online meetings: WebEx/Zoom selection</p>	<p>a) Meeting date and place</p> <p>GIZ Secretariat stated that the last board meeting took place in early February in Rome. Next date was foreseen for the last week of June in Rome, and this is no longer possible. There is a need to find a new date, place and format for the next meeting.</p> <p>Co-chair stated that there is a need for a virtual meeting at the end of June or early July, especially because of the Secretariat transition in case there are issues to be resolved.</p> <p>DFAT added that depending on the time, Jim Woodhill should also be invited to the meeting to discuss the ideas coming up with the Board on the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Action Point: Co-chairs will consult with the Secretariat on a suitable time and get back to the Board.</p> <p>b) Platform for online meetings: WebEx/Zoom selection</p> <p>GIZ Secretariat gave a brief history and current situation on various communication platforms. Platform communication has always been through CISCO WebEx. Currently, WebEx is outdated and is not stable. Zoom is a good communication platform, but it still has its limitations for instance BMZ, GIZ and DFID are only allowed to participate only via dial in option because of data protection concerns.</p> <p>IFAD Secretariat stressed that there is a need to balance between an option that is fully inclusive like WebEx but of lower quality, and a solution like Zoom that is effective and has better connectivity, but with some security-related concerns.</p>



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	<p>Co-chair stated that this is an important point for discussion, and there is an urgent need to figure out on what works best for everyone. Once the date for the next Board meeting is decided, the Secretariat is requested to send out a survey to the members, with a list of options. The results will then help in too choose the best option for the platform.</p> <p>Action point: The Co-chairs and the secretariat to figure out a date for the next meeting. Secretariat to send out a survey to members once the date is fixed with a list of options for a suitable platform for online meetings</p>
6. AOB	No AOB