



Global Donor Platform  
for Rural Development

## GDWGL Telco Minutes

13 May 2020

### Participants:

1. Peter Sidler – SDC (Chair)
2. Javier Molina Cruz – FAO (Vice - Chair)
3. Amy Regas – PlaceFund/Omidyar Network
4. Caleb Stevens – USAID
5. Emily Weeks - USAID
6. Jennifer Lisher – MCC
7. Chris Penrose-Buckley – DFID
8. Claire McConnell – DFID
9. Thea Hilhorst– World Bank
10. Linus Benedikt Pott – World Bank
11. Wael Zakout – World Bank
12. Andre Teyssier – World Bank
13. Dominik Wellmann – GIZ
14. Graefen Christian – GIZ
15. Himsel Harald Hugo - GIZ
16. Everlyne Nairesiae – UN-Habitat/GLII
17. Liversage, Harold – IFAD
18. Barbanente Giulia – IFAD
19. Romano Francesca – FAO
20. Evtimor Vladimir – FAO
21. Tea Dabrundashvili - FAO
22. Betsema Gemma – RVO NL
23. Etienne Coyette – EU
24. Robert Lewis Lettington– UN Habitat

### Secretariat:

1. Maurizio Navarra - IFAD
2. Sylvia Otieno – GIZ
3. Romy Sato - GIZ

### Main decisions:

#### Main Decisions

- **Donor updates** – Members requested to send their updates in few bullets to Sylvia for compilation. Secretariat to circulate the updates together with the meeting’s minutes.
- **Global Land Governance Report** – The core team (FAO, GLTN and ILC) to share the minutes of their next scheduled meeting with GDWGL member together with the agreed next steps. Interested GDWGL members will then be invited to give their inputs and support the preparation of the GLGR.
- **Scaling Up/Advocacy of Land Agenda** – DFID, ILC and FAO to work on developing a draft Framework for Action. The draft to be shared with members for feedback once finalized.
- **Covid-19 impact on land work and priorities** – FAO to share the draft joint policy paper with GDWGL members. Interested GDWGL members will be invited to give their feedback, share their experiences related to Covid-19-land-nexus and continue this discussion in the coming months to build a case for land efforts during this pandemic.
- **Platform/ GDWGL Transition Update** – All working groups will be informed accordingly as soon as Chairmanship decision has been reached. Also, IFAD will issue an official communication once the transition has taken place.
- **Chairmanship** – FAO (Vice-Chair) took over the Chairmanship. New Chair to explore different options and then approach potential candidates for Vice-Chairmanship. Members to be updated for official approval of new Vice-Chair.

## 1. Welcome and Agenda for the Call

The Chair opened the meeting by thanking everyone and going over the agenda. Because of time constraints, members were not able to give their updates. GDWGL members were requested to send their updates in few bullets to Secretariat for compilation and sharing together with the minutes.

## 2. Global Land Governance Report by Vice Chair (FAO)

The preliminary concept note which is still a work-in-progress was shared earlier with GDWGL members for feedback. FAO flagged two issues that needed further deliberation on. The first one concerns the institutional set up of the Global Land Governance Report. The circulated concept note proposes that a secretariat be set up which will coordinate the process. Additionally, there are still questions as to whether to have an Advisory team, ideally composed of GDWGL members to help broaden the ownership of this report, and a Technical team, that will undertake tasks such as peer-review, contribution of contents and data analysis among others. A Technical team would overlook the first issue of the report. The core team has already developed a preliminary idea of the outline, as presented in the concept note, though it is still a bit general. There is need to narrow it down and incorporate the impacts of Covid-19 pandemic on the Land Agenda. To move forward, the core team has scheduled a meeting on 14 May 2020 to further discuss these issues and develop a more concrete overview of how the report will look like. The team welcomes thoughts and comments from the members. The core team will share with the GDWGL the refined concept and suggest an inclusive process in order for GDWGL members to provide inputs and support the preparation of the GLGR. The aim is to make it as much an inclusive process as possible.

### Discussion

**World Bank:** Inquired if there are plans to establish or collect baseline data on land tenure aspect as this will form a basis of measuring and monitoring the progress made going forward.

**DFID:** Would like to know whether the core team has already developed/is planning to develop a communication strategy as the report can only make an impact if it is shared widely and reaches a target audience that goes beyond the land community. Also inquired whether there are plans to commission further analysis on the evidences on why it matters to invest in land. Additionally, DFID pointed out that the content needs to be more focused, and stressed that country by country baseline is critical, as it will be a recurring focus of future reports.

**PlaceFund/Omidyar:** Suggested the inclusion of a short and punchy executive summary section that explains why land matters to help grab the attention of non-land people.

**Secretariat:** Inquired whether the core team has considered cooperating with the Land Portal which is currently working on country profiles on land governance and has collected massive amount of information for each of these countries.

**MCC:** Pointed out that there is currently non-uniformity of country evidence out there (different countries have different data sets) and inquired how the different data sets will be merged in the Global Land Governance Report to give coherent information/picture of the state of land across countries.

**Chair:** Inquired about the next steps for the core-team and how GDWGL members can support the development of the first issue of the report.

Among the main reactions it can be noted three main features: (i) the inclusiveness of the process, (ii) questions related to data and possible baselines to be used also for future reports, and (iii) explorations around how the communication around the report and the report (products) best provokes governments and policy makers' interest.

**FAO:** Pointed out that the issues raised during this discussion are part of the agenda items of the core-meeting planned for 14 May 2020. The core team recognizes that there is the challenge of data non-uniformity across

countries and there is a need for a discussion on how to put together the available information and what aspects to report on.

**GLTN:** The core team is yet to unpack the contribution of each partner and their potential role in providing the required critical data. They are developing a Framework of Action for this report that will reflect on the possible contributions/support from different partners and communication issues. Once developed, the framework will create an opportunity for GDWGL members to support the process. In terms of meetings and activities, they are currently exploring other digital options for hosting meetings such as Zoom with selected partners who will be expected to bring different contributions including expert discussions. The team will share the projections with the group on when exactly this will take place once it is decided.

**MCC:** Pointed out that on the proposed outline, impacts on livelihoods such as agricultural production and income, and impacts on territorial planning have not been included. Suggested the use of geospatial and administrative data in addition to survey data when addressing such livelihood impacts. Stressed on the importance of collecting baseline data as this will help track progress made in the first and consecutive reports particularly because some impacts related to changes in land tenure often take longer to be realized on the ground, thus difficultly in measuring success on the short-term.

### **3. Scaling Up/Advocacy of Land Agenda by DFID**

Recapped on the process leading to this initiative. There is a very large gap of unrecognised legitimate tenure rights, rising pressure on land, weak political will and lack of global attention and funding for land; the business as usual approach will only result on the partial realisation of SGD targets. Learning from other sectors and global change processes, seven key elements were identified that together can help drive change: Clear evidence base; a Framework of Action; building toward a movement; mobilising influential land champions; getting the land agenda on high-level events; working towards a land summit to force new commitments; and the Global land report.

DFID reported that they held an informal meeting in March, which was well attended with the participation of interested GDWGL members together with other partners. The minutes of the meeting have been shared with the GDWGL members. From the meeting, it was proposed that a smaller group be convened, which then should identify two or three concrete elements they could begin to shape and define; and work to build some momentum around them. From the meeting, there was a broad consensus on the need for an ambitious agenda and collaboration with different stakeholder groups including the not-so-usual partners.

Apart from the Global Land Report, the other key element is the development of a Framework of Action. Efforts should be directed towards trying to develop a statement that makes a case for investing in land initiatives, scaling up the land agenda, defining the political ask and framing it in a political smart way, and putting evidence together of why this will make a difference. The reference group is designed to be non-exclusive. Once finalized, the core team will share a more detailed outline of how the Framework of Action might look like with GDWGL members for inputs. DFID further clarified that the members of the working group may take part in the initiative, but it is not a GDWGL initiative.

### **Discussion**

**GLTN:** Pointed out that there are several agencies coming up with initiatives and inquired how the Global Land Agenda can incorporate and harmonize different efforts that donors are putting in. The Global Land Governance Report as a platform can facilitate such a convergence and deliver it in a more coherent way.

**Chair:** proposed that further clarifications on the Framework of Action and how GDWGL members can contribute be discussed at the next Group call, possibly in July.

### **4. Covid-19 impact on land work and priorities – Joint policy note by Rome-based Agencies**

FAO has been thinking about how to respond to new threats in the context of this pandemic. As this is an emerging issue, there is still inadequate hard data. Challenge remains on how to consider food security in the short and long run, and how to leverage land tenure issues in a way that food security is ensured. The other

angle is how we can use this as an opportunity to help communities build livelihood resilience and mainstream the issues of sustainability in food systems. We consider the way resources are being used, and how they will be used in the future. FAO is currently working on a policy note that links tenure issues to response to the pandemic and looks at how different actors can engage in a way that lays the ground for the sustainable food systems in the long run. The preliminary draft has been shared with IFAD and FAO are currently waiting for their feedback. The draft will also be shared with World Food Programme with a view of having a common Rome-based Agencies' perspective on how to respond and move forward into the future when dealing with land issues in the framework of the pandemic. Once the three institutions have a more concrete ground, the draft policy note will be shared with GDWGL members for their feedback.

## **Discussion**

**DFID:** For many of the members, this pandemic continues to put pressure on existing work and at least for DFID increased expenditure on Covid-19 globally and falling GDP has also put pressure on the budgets. There is thus a need to justify why land matters in the context of this pandemic. Efforts have now been put on making predictions on how this will play out, and how land will be impacted. Currently working on collecting more evidence on situation and have so far received some feedback from some of their partners who are directly working on the ground. DFID stressed on the importance of sharing the evidence collected on the real impacts within the Working Group, as this will help make a case for land. Additionally, there is need for sharing information on how different members respond to the pandemic both in the short and long term and questioned whether there are better ways that the land sector can respond quickly.

**World Bank:** Stated that they are also experiencing the same challenges. Clearly, at least on the short term, there is a serious pressure on their programme. World Bank is helping countries to respond to the pandemic, and the priority on land probably will drop. The Bank recently developed a broader strategy on helping countries to respond to the COVID-19 that has four pillars: Emergency response to the health care system support, support to the poor through the social safety nets maybe through conditional and unconditional cash payments, supporting the private sector and **long term recovery and sustaining the economic gains and development** of the countries. WB stressed that there is a need and opportunity for GDWGL to position land on the fourth element. GDWGL can work collectively by comparing notes on the situation on the ground and how land will be affected. The physical space for countries to work on land will be very limited and the question remains on how best to support countries to do serious reforms on land including the participation of the private sector. The Global Land Governance Report should dedicate a chapter on this that will analyse the impacts and develop a strategy on how to move the agenda forward building on the recovery from COVID-19.

**UN Habitat:** Pointed out three issues that the members should look out for: Short-term pressure on land tenure resulting from evictions, indication of upcoming longer-term impacts on land markets in the urban areas, and pressure on city wide land management and land use planning.

**MCC:** Suggested that the linkages between the land governance report and Covid-19 be explored as there is real likelihood that predicted changes that might impact land security will be disconnected from the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **5. Platform/ GDWGL Transition Update**

Secretariat transition is fully operational. GIZ is in charge until June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020, and IFAD takes over as the official host of the Platform on July 1<sup>st</sup>. IFAD secretariat will be staffed as of 1<sup>st</sup> of July and will include three positions: a coordinator, a Communication Analyst, and a Programme Assistant. IFAD will continue to provide the services previously provided by GIZ secretariat from July. Few board members have provided their financial contributions, also including all the direct support of the activities of the working group, and GDWGL will be one of the groups that will be supported financially by the Secretariat. The current Co-Chair for the GDPRD is David Hegwood (USAID) until June 30<sup>th</sup>. An informal board meeting has been scheduled for May 19<sup>th</sup>, and new co-Chairs to be nominated during that meeting.

**Chair:** Reminded all members of the group that the *Global Donor Platform for Rural Development*, where the GDWGL is part of, depends on member contributions and thus the GDWGL members have an interest that their constituencies pay the membership fees in order to capacitate bodies such as the GDWGL Secretariat with the needed resources. The Chair also officially appreciated IFAD to take over the hosting of the GDPRD.

## **6. AOB**

### **Handing over chairmanship to FAO**

The GDWGL chair is to assume a new position at the end of May and will no longer represent SDC in GDWGL. Bernard Zaugg will remain the future focal point. The chair expressed sincere gratitude to the Group and stated that that it was a pleasure to have been serving as Vice-Chair and then Chair of this dynamic and relevant coordination body. As of the end of this meeting, and without any opposition, FAO took over the role of Chairmanship. Members expressed their sincere gratitude to Peter for having led the Group and congratulated him on his work and wished him well in his future endeavours. The Vice-Chair stated they are yet to decide on the new Vice-chair, and in the coming weeks they will be exploring different options and then approaching partners for final approval by the group.