



Minutes Board Meeting

Participants

Board Members

- **Conrad Rein**,
European Commission (Co-Chair)
- **Jan Brix**, *Germany*
- **Manon Bellon**, *France*
- **Ammad Bahalim**, *Gates Foundation*
- **Fabrizio Moscatelli**, *Gates Foundation*
- **Ron Hartman**, *IFAD*
- **Federica de Gaetano**, *Italy*
- **Naomi Sterk**, *The Netherlands*
- **Bruce Campbell**, *Switzerland*
- **Sung Lee**, *United States*

Guests

- **Patrick McManus**, *Ireland*
- **Carin Smaller**, *Shamba Centre*
- **Oshani Perera**, *Shamba Centre*
- **Francine Picard**, *Shamba Centre*
- **Lysiane Lefebvre**, *Shamba Centre*

GDPRD Secretariat

- **Maurizio Navarra**
- **Michelle Tang**
- **Alessandro Cordova**
- **Monique Amar**
- **Jim Woodhill**

Agenda

ISSUE	ITEM (DAY ONE)	DETAILS
1.	Welcome and Introduction	Co-Chairs/Secretariat
2.	Country-Level Donor Coordination Workstream Updates	Jim Woodhill
3.	Workplan and Budget	Secretariat
4.	AGA 2023	Secretariat
ISSUE	ITEM (DAY TWO)	DETAILS
5.	Financing Workstream Updates	Shamba Centre
6.	SDG2 Roadmap TWG and Hesat2030 Updates	TWG SDG2 Co-Chairs
7.	Updates from the Secretariat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communications achievements - Annual report - Recommendations database and food systems architecture database - Data event recap and next steps 	Secretariat
8.	AOB and closing	Co-Chairs

Key Highlights/Issues

1. Welcome and Introduction

- The new Board member from the Netherlands, Ms Naomi Sterk, was introduced.
- The Board welcomed Patrick McManus from Ireland; in this Board meeting as observer, Ireland will request full Board membership shortly.

2. Country-Level Donor Coordination Workstream Updates

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

Jim Woodhill, Senior Advisor to the Platform, presented a status update on the country-level donor coordination workstream, which has recently included a number of interviews that will feed into a final planned high-level seminar and report.

[\[PowerPoint available in Annex I\]](#)

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Interviews with high-level representatives from international organizations and governments will continue to be conducted. Recent interview highlights include: Hussein Mohammed Bashe, Minister of Agriculture in Tanzania; Zlatan Milišić, UN Resident Coordinator in Tanzania; Juan Echanove, Associate Vice-President of CARE; Marcy Vigoda, SUN Movement Secretariat Director; and Lawrence Haddad, Executive Director of GAIN.
- Some key messages that have arisen from the interviews so far include:
 - Coordination and a food systems approach are crucial, but the coordination mechanisms that stemmed from the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) and the global food systems agenda are not necessarily effective;
 - While countries often also work in sector silos, there are increasing good examples of national food systems coordination, facilitated by heads of government departments;
 - Donor actions must be in line with country strategies and priorities;
 - Donors and governments must work together on integrated and multi-layer investment plans and models at country level;
 - Data, finance, and policy innovation all offer opportunities for further coordination;
 - Options to pilot or conceptualize some sort of GDPRD country-level collaborative programming could be explored by the Board.
- The original plan following the interviews was to hold a three-part, regionally-focused seminar series this spring; however, country-level response in some regions was insufficient. The revised plan is to hold one high-level, virtual session in June. The interviews and seminars will collate into a report which will feed in the 2023 AGA. The June event will be co-organised by the European Commission. The European Commission will also involve its EU Delegations. Further Board members are welcome to co-organize. **[European Commission, Jim Woodhill]**
- There are varying degrees of internal coordination within governments, both in donor and partner countries. It is valuable to hear country-level perspectives on coordination and alignment, to understand what is and is not working. Some good examples of coordination could potentially be scaled up, including those based on UN mechanisms. **[European Commission, IFAD, Switzerland, United States, Jim Woodhill]**

- Food systems transformation pathways are extremely diverse, and progress on them has been varied. However, it is positive that the concept of food systems is being used to understand that agriculture, health, nutrition, environment, humanitarian, and livelihood agendas must be linked up. **[IFAD, Ireland, Italy, Jim Woodhill]**
- The national food systems transformation pathways do not always get a lot of internal traction, sometimes because they are affected by internal politics, or because other policy framework documents are considered more relevant. **[Ireland, Jim Woodhill]**
- There is interest in a GDPRD pilot project on collaborative programming at country level. The remaining interviews and report, along with a clear plan for such a project would need to be developed before full support is guaranteed. **[European Commission, France, IFAD]**

3. Workplan and budget

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

The Platform Secretariat presented the 2022 budget expenditures, the 2023 Workplan and Budget Forecast to the Board, for approval [\[Annex II and III\]](#).

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The 2023 Workplan is focused on a long-term, results-oriented food systems perspective, as per guidance at the [2022 Senior Managers meeting](#). The Workplan design is very similar to previous years, in that outcome areas are the same. The strategic influencing, knowledge and networking focused areas refer to the Platform's work on the SDG2 agenda, country-level donor coordination, data for food systems transformation, and the new workstream on finance. There are also internal outcomes, such as those related to the Secretariat's delivery capacity and communications.
- The Workplan's focus on outreach refers to both potential new Board members, and to others who do not plan to become Board members but can actively be engaged in other Platform activities. Outreach to potential new members is curated and targeted to each donor and organization. **[Maurizio Navarra]**
- Some members are highly active in the Platform's various workstreams, whereas others are not. It could be useful to broaden membership for more visibility, but could also be better to keep membership limited for more fruitful discussions. A conversation on the target/appropriate size of the Platform may be necessary in the future. **[France, Switzerland]**
- All but two Board members contributions for 2022 have been received, with the remaining two payments actively in progress. Given that travel and in-person meetings were still not fully restored in 2022, much of last year's budget was dedicated to consultancies and communications activities. Notable forecasted expenditures for 2023 include the AGA, Secretariat travel, and consultancies for the country-level coordination and financing workstreams. **[Maurizio Navarra]**

ACTION POINTS:

- The Work Plan and Budget for 2023 were both approved.

4. AGA 2023

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

The Secretariat presented its proposal for the theme of the 2023 Annual General Assembly (AGA). The idea is to commemorate the GDPRD's 20th anniversary, reflecting on the aid effectiveness agenda and charting donor directions for the future. Logistical details of the AGA were discussed. [\[Preliminary paper available in Annex IV\]](#)

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Given that the GDPRD reaches its 20th anniversary in 2023, the AGA is the perfect time to look back at the past two decades of the Platform, donor coordination, and the aid effectiveness agenda. This AGA theme will be used to reflect on how useful the aid effectiveness agenda has been, and how today's tools can renovate it into something more valuable. This theme brings together all the active Platform work on the food systems transformation agenda, country-level donor coordination, data, and finance. To inform discussions, a report will be commissioned which will outline the evolution of rural development since 2000, including key food systems indicators.
- The AGA is being proposed for September or October, and could be held in a location other than Rome, should one of the Board members be available to host in their country (costs covered by the Secretariat). The Secretariat welcomes any Board member to join the AGA prep committee, along with the Secretariat and Co-Chairs. **[Monique Amar]**
- Board members are always encouraged to actively participate in shaping the AGA agenda, including by mobilizing speakers from their countries and exercising their convening powers. The AGA should, and will, actively incorporate themes from last year's White Paper. **[Maurizio Navarra, Switzerland]**
- Given busy schedules in September, there is preference for the AGA being held in October. To reduce travel, it could be held alongside the in-person Senior Managers meeting, which is usually in November. **[France, Maurizio Navarra, Switzerland]**

ACTION POINTS:

- Board members to comment on the AGA theme proposal by Friday, 10 March.
- Secretariat to poll members on their preferred dates for the AGA (October being the preferred option).
- The Secretariat to organize a meeting of the AGA prep committee; Switzerland will join.

5. Financing workstream updates

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

The Shamba Centre presented updates and clarifications on the upcoming finance workstream, which was proposed at [December's Board meeting](#). The presentation focused on the feedback and comments received from the Board, which were particularly on blended finance. Workstream activities, methodologies, and timelines were discussed. [\[PowerPoint available in Annex VI\]](#)

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Board members requested clarification on the definition of blended finance, as well as its additionality. Blended finance refers to the mobilization of private finance to unlock additional, commercial finance that otherwise would not be directed to development activities. The workstream will focus on GDPRD needs, that is, assessing blended finance in terms of innovation, leverage, impact, and returns.
- Activities in this workstream will consist of: (1) investigating donor strategies used to innovate and increase their impact, including integrating food systems into other thematic areas; (2) studying prevailing trends in blended finance; (3) presenting findings to GDPRD stakeholders; and (4) provide recommendations to the GDPRD on the value-added of a sustainable finance workstream.
- The primary methodology for the work will be through formal interviews with a variety of relevant parties (e.g., donors, funds, working groups, hubs). A nine-month implementation plan was presented, showing the timing of activities between April and December 2023.

[Shamba Centre]

- Breaking down silos can leverage more money for similar objectives, and should be discussed in this work. For example, with the increasing amount of funds directed at emergency food assistance, it will be important to leverage this finance to better contribute to development. Further, the incentives and risks around blended finance should be assessed. **[France, Shamba Centre, Switzerland]**
- Blended finance could be an important way to support SMEs, and it would be helpful to understand how. As well, IFIs are an important player in this field, and should be included in the proposed interviews. However, there is a risk that the current workstream proposal already has too large of a scope, therefore making it difficult to provide recommendations on such a broad topic. The goal is therefore to start broad and eventually narrow the themes throughout the operationalization of the workstream. **[Shamba Centre, United States]**
- Board members can discuss this topic with both their internal and external colleagues, and introduce them to the Shamba Centre, which will present diverse views to integrate into the workstream. **[European Commission, France, Shamba Centre]**

ACTION POINTS:

- Board members to provide the Shamba Centre with introductions to their colleagues working on blended finance.
- Board members with connections in the G20 Sustainable Finance working group are also encouraged to connect Shamba Centre for further interviews and to make sure the G20 is also included.

6. Updates on SDG2 Roadmap TWG and Hesat2030

PURPOSE OF SECTION

A brief synopsis of the SDG2 Roadmap TWG's 2022 activities was given. The future of two main initiatives stemming from the TWG, Ceres2030 and 50x2030, were discussed. The convening power and collaborative nature of the TWG was noted and appreciated.

ISSUES DISCUSSED

- In 2022, the TWG convened in the context of the food price crisis, which is having significant impacts on the SDG2 agenda. The TWG also came together to discuss the end phases of two of their co-investments, Ceres2030 and 50x2030.
 - **Ceres2030/Hesat2030:** Some group members have now re-invested in the next phase of the initiative, which will be called Hesat2030. A concept note will be shared shortly and presented at the TWG meeting on 28 February.
 - **50x2030:** With many grants coming to an end, there are current discussions on how to re-invest in the initiative, as well as consideration of the collective donor role in the project. **[Gates Foundation]**
- Sung Lee (USAID) has accepted to continue US' role as Co-Chair of the TWG.

7. Updates from the Secretariat

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

The Secretariat updated the Board on recent activities and achievements. Current work on the 2022 Annual Report and Food Systems Architecture Database was described. Recent Platform achievements were outlined, including a thriving communications capacity [\[PowerPoint available in Annex VI\]](#), the finalization of the Recommendations Database, and a successful data event.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

• **Communications Achievements in 2022.**

- There has been significantly increased engagement on the Platform website, LinkedIn, Twitter, and e-newsletter. Written communications (e.g., the AGA report, the White Paper, meeting minutes) have been revamped for shorter, punchier documents. A corporate toolkit has been developed for all stakeholders to present and share the Platform with others. The thematic working groups all have their own active pages and knowledge hubs on the GDPRD website.
- In 2023, communications efforts will focus on the Platform's 20th anniversary, along with the donor coordination, data, and financing workstreams. Knowledge sharing will be improved through website updates, including a possible new microsite. The Secretariat is looking into developing an Instagram account this year. The Meet Our Members interview series is progressing well, and a short survey will be shared with the Board to elicit feedback on the latest communications updates. **[Michelle Tang]**
- Instagram would be a good channel for the Platform. It could be used to engage with youth, particularly young farmers in Africa, who the Platform should reach out to more. **[European Commission, France, Netherlands]**

• **Annual Report 2022.** The 2022 Annual Report is under works with a senior writer. Food systems in times of crisis will be the main topic for the report, given how the GDPRD adapted its activities to address the crises. The thematic working groups and White Paper will also be highlighted. It will be a shorter, more innovative report than in past years. **[Michelle Tang]**

• Recommendations Database and Food Systems Architecture Database.

- The [Food Systems Recommendations Database](#) is now fully functional and up-to-date with 49 of the latest global reports. The content of the database is now in a maintenance phase, and technical upgrades are being explored.
- A new Food Systems Architecture Database is now being developed. The interactive, mapping tool will give users a clear idea of how the plethora of food systems-related organizations, initiatives, research groups, platforms, etc. fit together. Each item will be categorized by category, scale, and primary focus. **[Alessandro Cordova]**

• **Data Event Recap and Next Steps.** The GDPRD co-organized an event with the EU, IFAD, and GPSDD on 13 February, titled "[Assessing the Data Quantum Leap in Agriculture and Food Systems: Consultations for New Strategic Directions](#)". Approximately 90 people attended, both virtually and in-person. A high-level panel opened the session, thirteen data initiatives presented their work, and closing sessions took a final look at past progress and future directions. There was a strong call for the GDPRD to continue working on donor coordination in data, and a concrete proposal will be put forward to the Board in due time.

- Key messages from the event included: (1) the data revolution worked in making data collection cheaper and faster; (2) better coordination is necessary among donors and international organizations; (3) data must be better used by policy- and decision-makers; and (4) data produced by public institutions must remain relevant to avoid making private sector data the norm. **[Maurizio Navarra]**

8. AOB and closing

- The School Meals Coalition will have its first international meeting this fall; France is actively involved in this coalition, and is happy to share information and/or materials with other Board members. The Nutrition for Growth summit is being planned for 2024 or 2025. **[France]**
- The FARM (Food and Agriculture Resilience Mission) initiative aims to improve coordination

between donors and farmers, to scale up projects which focus on value chains and national food sovereignty. A FARM secretariat is currently being established at IFAD with France's support, and an international, multilateral advisory committee will be established. The initiative is moving quickly to action, with one project already being funded in Cameroon.

[France, IFAD] [Information sheet available in Annex VII](#)