



8 May 2025

Minutes GDWGL Meeting

Participants

Group Members

- **Etienne Coyette**, *European Commission*
- **Wencke Müller-Rilke**, *BMZ*
- **Ward Anseeuw**, *FAO (Chair)*
- **Ingeborg Gaarde**, *FAO*
- **Jenny Lopez**, *FCDO*
- **Poppy Rodrigues**, *FCDO*
- **Saskia Simonson**, *FCDO*
- **Louise Metay**, *France*
- **Oliver Puginier**, *GIZ*
- **Anja Schwiertz**, *GIZ*
- **Alexander Strunck**, *GIZ*
- **Nanny Wiechert**, *GIZ*
- **Rikke Grand**, *IFAD*

- **Gemma Betsema**, *the Netherlands*
- **Imke Greven**, *the Netherlands*
- **Anna Schreiber**, *WHH*
- **Mika-Petteri Törhönen**, *World Bank*

Guests

- **Michael Taylor**, *ILC*
- **Marcy Vigoda**, *ILC*

GDPRD Secretariat

- **Monique Amar**
- **Sierra Berardelli**
- **Alessandro Cordova**

Agenda

ISSUE	ITEM	DETAILS
1.	Welcome & Introduction	Ward/FAO
2.	GDWGL Workplan -Review of the draft 2025-2026 workplan	All
3.	Strategic Partnership for Inclusive Land Reforms	All
4.	AOB and Closing	Ward/FAO

Key Highlights/Issues

1. Welcome & Introduction

- The GDWGL met in a hybrid format at the World Bank Land Conference in Washington, D.C.

2. GDWGL Workplan

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

To review the zero draft of the GDWGL 2025-2026 Workplan [Annex I].

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The GDWGL workplan focuses on strategic functions and thematic priorities of concern to the whole group (Track 1) and on topics or emerging themes of interest to some, but not all members, and with no clear collective role for the group (Track 2). Most GDWGL work occurs in Track 1, on **Member Exchanges**, **Global Advocacy**, and **Country-level Coordination**.
- A new 2025-2026 workplan has been drafted [Annex I], based on the previous workplans and on feedback from the last meeting. It has been revised into a table format, rather than a narrative. All feedback is welcome. *[FAO, GDPRD Secretariat]*

Member Exchanges

- It would be helpful to have a focused update on funding and strategic planning, given that several donors are in the process of changing funding environments. *[FCDO]*
 - The whole development sector is going through a massive shift, which means that there is extensive opportunity to learn from the past and plan for the future. It would be extremely helpful to have a conversation later in 2025 on how land partners can learn and enter this new period, in order to be prepared and repositioned. *[ILC]*

Global Advocacy

- Advocacy at global events, such as ICARRD+20 and GLF, is critical for securing commitments, and therefore key for GDWGL coordination. The [Global Action on Land](#) is another important item where coordination will be needed. *[FAO, FCDO]*
 - Colleagues who are not strongly focused on land tend to be present in these negotiations, so communication and aligned messaging is needed. *[the Netherlands]*
 - Cohesive messaging is critical, but the mechanics (i.e., timing, decision-making) are not always clear. More emphasis should be put on mapping and planning in advance, and advocating beyond the land sector, to strategize in areas where land governance is not always present. *[FAO, ILC]*
 - The GDWGL will coordinate strategy and messaging ahead of COP30. *[FAO, FCDO]*
- Is Section 2.3 on the GDWGL Knowledge Hub and website adequate? *[FAO]*
 - When redesigning the website, the GDPRD wanted to ensure that the working groups each had knowledge hubs. Since the Land Portal exists, this is less relevant for the GDWGL compared to other working groups. Land-related events will continue to be shared on the GDPRD website. *[GDPRD Secretariat, the Netherlands]*

Country-level Coordination

- Land Portal is now hosting the donor program map overview, which offers some opportunity for further country-level coordination and analysis of trends. *[the Netherlands]*

- It would be useful to speak with the GDPRD's other thematic working groups (e.g., on rural youth employment) about their strategies for donor coordination at country level. *[FAO]*
- Was Section 3.2 (lessons learned documents on country-level coordination) ever achieved, and do members still want to keep this in the workplan? *[FAO]*
 - In the past, USAID and France started working on a document about Senegal, but it was never completed. Although difficult in practice, it is valuable to keep this item on the workplan. *[Netherlands]*
 - Who would be the target audience for these types of documents? The information presented would vary depending on the audiences' level of expertise. *[FCDO]*
 - Is there a place to share good examples of recent land reforms at country-level? Perhaps a compendium of recent land reforms could be gathered to examine and build on what has been achieved, which would be helpful to use and advocate for land at conferences like ICARRD+20. *[IFAD]*
- Land reforms should not be perceived as being initiated by donors, but rather at country government level and civil society. *[World Bank]*

ACTION POINTS:

- GDWGL members are welcome to share further ideas for the Workplan via [email](#).
- The next GDWGL meeting will focus on aligned messaging and strategies ahead of COP30.

3. Strategic Partnership for Inclusive Land Reforms

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

For GIZ to present the partnership, which includes RVO, FAO, GIZ, and ILC, on inclusive land policies, multi-stakeholder approaches, and the exchange of concrete opportunities for collaboration.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- There is increasing demand for support to land policy reforms, with 8 new country requests coming from Africa in the last year. FAO, WHH, ILC, and GIZ currently support more than 30 multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs) that vary widely in structure. There are many challenges to such reforms, including gaps between global initiatives and national reform processes and projects being implemented in silos. Coordination is still ad hoc, and this often results in duplicated efforts and confusion and inefficiency on the ground.
- Several coordination initiatives exist, such as the Land Collaborative, Convergence Group (an ILC initiative) and the VGGT+10 initiative, but mainly operate at the global level. The need for better donor coordination has been discussed at various recent global and regional events, including the 2024 World Bank Land Conference and GIZ's Knowledge Exchange Week.
- A working mapping tool (in the format of a Google Sheet to allow easy access and updating) was developed to track support to land reforms in Africa. The tool helps avoid duplication and track government requests.
 - One successful example of coordination was Niger's National Roadmap for land policy reform, where 14 development partners met bimonthly over 7 years to align and coordinate on a land policy formulation process. The group transitioned from policy support to reform implementation and is still active.
 - A second example was in Chad, where FAO, Oxfam, and Kadaster International transitioned from fragmented projects to a singular, joint program with shared indicators and timelines, resulting in smoother implementation. This highlighted the power of complementary roles, e.g., FAO supported as a liaison with government, Oxfam on advocacy and mobilization and Kadaster International on

technical land administration, all supported by RVO.

- The key lesson learned was that roles must be defined in partnerships, based on clear mandates, to reduce confusion and competition, allowing stakeholders to work complementarily and avoid duplication. Partnership is a skill, and project delivery staff should be trained to develop collaborative approaches. **[GIZ, FAO]**
- The overarching question is how to develop a coordination approach that effectively connects the global donor community with national and local interventions in support of inclusive land reforms? What are the bottlenecks for better coordination? Some proposed solutions include:
 - Continued use of the mapping tool;
 - Support for national-led coordination mechanisms that align with reform roadmaps;
 - Development of a checklist (or similar tool) to assess coordination mechanisms;
 - Establish a benchmarking process to enable comparability and mutual learning;
 - Explore the GDWGL's interest in a potential role as a global coordination platform of such processes. **[FAO]**

Q&A and Discussion:

- Would the tool mentioned in the proposed solutions be a separate tool to what already exists, that is complementary but non-public and based at the national level? **[FAO]**
 - Yes, this is one of the proposed mechanisms. **[FAO]**
- It should be standard that only national government-led policy processes are legitimate. Fragmented donor initiatives within one country are outdated and counterproductive. There should be in-country donor coordination groups and joint implementation units that include both the government and donors to ensure sustainability; the World Bank might play a role in facilitating this. **[World Bank]**
 - All the presented examples are national government-led processes with strong donor support. Ideally, governments should always lead, but these platforms can still add value through basic information sharing. **[FAO]**
- When starting new land projects, we should build on the recommendations of this partnership. Is this incorporated in the GDWGL's new Work Plan? **[GIZ]**
 - Yes, under item 3.1. The GDWGL are welcome to adopt this tool. **[FAO]**
- Coordination in every aspect isn't necessary; targeted collaboration works best, particularly as donors come and go. The VGGTs emphasize multi-stakeholder platforms as a core mechanism for good land governance. **[ILC]**
- ILC supports the idea of a simple coordination tracking mechanism to map existing platforms and efforts. ILC is active in 30+ countries and ready to collaborate on this. **[ILC]**
- Coordination often fails due to lack of accountability. Embedding coordination indicators into project design can ensure regular coordination. **[WHH]**
 - Strengthening partner capacity to coordinate is also key. **[GIZ]**
- Permanent structures like embassies can lead coordination since projects are temporary. **[GIZ]**
- Even a simple mapping tool greatly helps coordination. More advanced solutions, like benchmarking, are useful but secondary. **[FCDO]**
- How is the tool being updated? How can it be accessed? **[FAO]**
 - The Google drive is fully open and editable, otherwise additions can be sent to [Ingeborg Gaarde \(FAO\) via email](#). **[FAO]**
 - It will be a shared responsibility to keep the tool updated; time and effort will be needed to maintain it. **[FCDO, FAO]**

- The tool currently focuses on Africa only; it could be expanded to a global level. *[GIZ]*
- IFAD is interested in coordinating at country level with loan projects that have land governance activities. *[IFAD]*

4. AOB & Closing

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

For members to discuss other pressing issues.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The role of Co-Chair is still open, and all GDWGL members who are interested are encouraged to contact Ward or the Secretariat. *[GDPRD Secretariat]*

Summary of action points

ITEM	ACTION	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
1.	Consider taking on the role of GDWGL Co-Chair	Ongoing	All
2.	Share feedback on the draft Workplan via email.	ASAP	All
3.	Share revised Workplan for comment and eventual approval	ASAP	FAO, GDPRD Secretariat