

Dear Colleagues,

Our recent TMT meeting in Washington was a rare opportunity for an in-person meeting not linked to a major event such as ExCo, allowing us to concentrate fully on reviewing progress, ensuring that coordination across the workstreams and identifying next steps. The good news is that we are broadly on schedule. Ren said it well in the last TMT journal—we are on track, but with lots of work to do.

Before I share highlights of our various discussions, let me offer some reflections about where we are and what's now needed. First, things are getting more complex at this stage of the reform. In the first half of the year, each TMT member was highly focused on individual workstreams and ensuring they were moving along. Now we have the added responsibility to weaving these elements together so that we achieve a coherent system. Second, as we launch a series of inter-related consultations (e.g. for the Global Consultation on Agriculture and Rural Development and the Consortium Constitution), we need to move beyond individual input toward dialogue, virtual or otherwise. We now need to help the various advisory groups (e.g. on the Fund, the Accountability Framework and the Consortium Constitution) work as teams to address concerns, arrive at durable solutions and achieve the buy-in that is so crucial for success.

Most of our time at the meeting was devoted to discussing accountability and monitoring and evaluation. We worked through each of the workstreams in some detail to get an overview of the accountability issues in each so that the overarching accountability framework and the accompanying accountability maps can be revised appropriately. One of the key discussions was how to reconcile the accountabilities we specify for each key actor in the system to avoid duplication or gaps. We haven't worked out how best to do that yet, but we're working on it.

Another key topic of conversation was stakeholder engagement. We reviewed a robust list of key individuals/organizations to make sure we are not missing anyone out in our consultations, and that we focus especially on talking with and understanding the perspective of those people who have concerns so they can be addressed. This will be a standing item on our agenda from now on.

It will be no surprise to hear that we also discussed the topic of money, both for this year in terms of the Change Initiative Fund (CIF) and the transitional funding arrangements for 2009. Concerning the CIF, we are working to collect the funds pledged by donors, and attract the further funding needed to cover the necessary costs. We have also mapped the timing of payments to make sure we have enough in the pot when commitments fall due.

The other topic we discussed concerning funding is the transitional arrangements that will be needed next year. 2010 will be an important transition year for the CGIAR. Although we will have agreed the broad outlines of the new system and the high level of operational details, much more work will be needed to fully operationalize the new model. Entering 2010 we must recognize that, among other things:

- The SRF and Megaprograms will not be operational;
- The new CGIAR Fund, expected to be in place, will just be gaining momentum; and
- The Consortium will still be under establishment.

In consequence, 2010 carries particular risks. Key among these is the possibility of unintended funding instabilities for Centers that will disrupt current programs and damage morale. The TMT has now developed a preliminary proposal for how to handle this situation. We will be sharing that with everyone shortly.

Since these journal updates are meant to be informal and brief, I will stop here. As always, we hope this update is informative and useful, and we welcome your feedback—both positive and negative – and, of course, your queries.

Regards,

Steve

(On behalf of the Transition Management Team)