

TMT Journal Update

from Mark Holderness

May 22, 2009

On behalf of the TMT you have already received Journal Updates from Steve Hall, Jonathan Wadsworth and Katherine Sierra - now it is my turn to fill you in on our latest work. In our most recent meeting via teleconference on Thursday, May 14th, our conversation focused on three items: 1) outcomes of the May 11-13 Alliance meeting in Rome; 2) next steps in follow up to the informal London donors meeting; and 3) plans for the upcoming ExCo at CIAT in Cali, Colombia.

Outcomes of the Rome Alliance Meeting

Steve Hall had good news for us - he had just finished a very productive meeting with the Alliance in Rome. We were all very pleased to learn that the DGs and Board Chairs had managed to find unanimous agreement on what they aspired to in an initial Consortium Constitution. Steve was very excited by the quality of discussion and by the outcome. What I also found very encouraging was Steve's belief that the Alliance was able to reach unanimity on a good answer for the System that he felt also met the concerns raised by donors in London - and not simply descending to the "lowest common denominator" of minimal change without giving any real role to the new Consortium Board. I think we all recognize that these are not easy changes for any institution to make when dealing with so many individual centers and management/governance layers. To increase the development value and impact of the system each Center has to take onboard the implications of working in new ways both with other CGIAR Centers and with their partners, and we are all encouraged that this change is beginning to become real. Signs of a truly cooperative system seem to now be emerging and I hope will continue to grow between and beyond the CGIAR Centers. The Alliance will provide more details on the outcomes of the meeting soon.

Next steps from the Informal Donor Workshop

We revisited some of the action items we need to deal with on developing the Fund and the Accountability Framework prior to the ExCo in Cali. The CGIAR Secretariat is working on another revision of the Fund Framework document, which includes a clear roadmap for setting up the Fund. Calling on volunteers from the London Workshop, an informal advisory group on the Fund is now being established to provide high level strategic advice on Fund governance. At the same time, Jonathan Wadsworth is leading the effort to refine the Accountability Framework for the new CGIAR. The team is acting on the feedback from donors to make the framework practical and actionable. We are all looking forward to the revised version that will be presented at ExCo.

Preparing for ExCo

Now that ExCo is less than two weeks away, the TMT is rapidly preparing its presentation and papers, taking on board the feedback we received in London on each of the workstreams. With a primary focus on the reforms underway, this ExCo will not be "business as usual" and will even be structured somewhat differently with breakout groups to allow members more time to digest the latest thinking on implementing the changes and discuss their reactions with each other.

The TMT will have another conference call on 27 May before we next meet in person in Cali on June 3rd prior to ExCo. Kathy Sierra will also join us that day and we will have an open 'townhall' discussion on the ongoing changes with CIAT staff. We are also planning a face-to-face meeting between the TMT and the Alliance DGs and Board Chairs who will be in Cali that afternoon. This will help ensure that we are all better informed about the Centers points of view prior to ExCo.

I hope you found this update useful - and as we have said before we welcome your feedback, positive or negative.

With warm regards,

Mark Holderness

(on behalf of the Transition Management Team)