



TMT Journal Update - from Steve Hall April 14, 2009

Dear All,

After reviewing our effectiveness in explaining what is happening with the CGIAR Change Process, the Transition Management Team has decided to try several new approaches. One of these is to provide more frequent informal updates by e-mail shortly after each TMT meeting, or more frequently if needed.

This is the first of those updates. To re-enforce their informality and show a human face to the TMT, each member of the TMT will take turns to write the update on behalf of us all. I drew the short straw for writing the first one.

Our last TMT meeting was by telephone and the agenda focused on two things. First, how to more effectively help people feel involved and informed about the change. Second, on preparation for the informal donor workshop in London that will be held on the 29th and 30th April.

TMT Communication

We debated the underlying reasons for the concern expressed by some stakeholders about the low profile of the TMT and limited involvement of others in the change process so far. We concluded that there were several reasons for this.

One lies in the lack of clear and timely information on what has been going on and the change in work style needed this year. Following Maputo, there was probably an implicit understanding that the high level of stakeholder engagement last year would continue. The decision in Maputo, however, was to delegate work to much smaller teams and adopt a more executive style of working. The TMT, The Alliance Consortium Planning Team and GFAR have all been operating in this way - it has been essential to get the work done. It was a mistake to not share our debates and discussion about those efforts more fully, widely and quickly so that everyone felt connected.

A second reason lies in the fact that up to now most of the discussion and decision making has been about process rather than content. Put simply, there is not that much of substance to talk about yet. We took the view that until some content was generated there was not much to say. We were wrong.

Moving forward, it is clear that the TMT must adapt its approach to better facilitate the needed change. Part of this will be quicker and more frequent and informal communication like this. Another part will be a more accessible repository of meeting notes and other materials that those who want to dig deeper can access. Increased stakeholder engagement will also be helped by the fact that, as we move into the second quarter of the year, we will be able to start sharing substantive working hypotheses for the various building blocks of the reform. The informal donor workshop in London will be one venue for doing this, but we need to find others.

Informal Donor Workshop

This will be held in London on the 29th and 30th April, 2009. Although we are still working out the details of the meeting, the broad objectives are:

1. Develop a shared understanding of the overall approach and sequencing for the implementation effort and the key implementation risks.
2. Engage donors on status and progress of several critical System pillars, and where appropriate, solicit early feedback on working hypotheses:
 - Fund setup
 - Accountability framework
 - Consortium setup
 - System Strategy and Strategic Results Framework
 - Mega Programmes
 - Global Consultation for Agricultural Research and Development (GCARD)
 - Independent Science and Partnership Council (ISPC)
3. Develop a shared understanding of potential donor commitment to the new Fund and the Change Initiative Fund (CIF)

We feel this will be an important opportunity to update the donors and stakeholders, and use them as a sounding board for the emerging thinking. A detailed agenda and materials will be sent in due course.

I hope you found this update useful - we welcome your feedback, positive or negative. At our next TMT meeting, which is scheduled for the 22nd April we will be reviewing the progress with Consortium Development.

Regards,

Steve Hall
(on behalf of the Transition Management Team)