

TOWARDS ONE CGIAR

30 MARCH 2020

This is a bi-weekly newsletter on the transition to One CGIAR from the co-chairs of the Transition Consultation Forum (TCF). One CGIAR refers to a future, more unified and integrated CGIAR, initially set out in the System Council-endorsed recommendations of the System Reference Group.

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE TRANSITION CONSULTATION FORUM (TCF)

Dear CGIAR colleagues and stakeholders,

We hope this message finds you safe and well as we all grapple with the impacts and new operational reality of the Covid-19 pandemic.

We commend the efforts made by Center/Alliance colleagues, the System Organization, Funders, and partners to share information and coordinate response measures at this critical time. Right now we must do all we can to protect the health and safety of our staff and stakeholders. As we do so, we need to look ahead and seek ways to safeguard the continuity of our operations and collective capabilities. An effective response requires that we come together in solidarity, and that we collaborate across countries, institutions, and disciplines.

This crisis also highlights some of the tangible reasons for which we need One CGIAR: more integrated AR4D to advance 'One Health' and address some of the root causes of global pandemics; common policies, services, and systems to support rapid, coordinated responses to global events; and more pooled funding to facilitate coordinated Funder engagement and risk sharing.

At our 17 March call with the TCF, as well as in subsequent Transition Advisory Group (TAG) discussions, we have collectively begun to assess the implications of Covid-19 for the transition to One CGIAR. As TCF Co-Chairs, we remain committed and engaged in the transition agenda – ensuring that we do this in a highly adaptive way. This means operating via a continuous assessment of risks and opportunities, and being ready to quickly implement course corrections when necessary. We are mindful of the demands that this transition places on staff time and other resources. In transition areas that require deeper integration across CGIAR, and more significant contributions from staff, such as policies and services, most work can wait until a unified governance structure and the One CGIAR Executive Management Team ('EMT') have been established later this year. Accordingly, TAG4 on policies and services remains on hold for the time being.

At the same time, in priority areas for 2020 – including unified governance, the EMT, and a 2030 Research Strategy – work can continue for now and remains on track to the timelines we collectively adopted in February.

Against this complex backdrop, this third edition of our newsletter provides an update on the independent legal opinion on delivering unified governance under One CGIAR; practical steps underway to enhance communication and stakeholder engagement; the code of conduct for the transition, now operational after welcomed inputs since our past call; and an overview of ways to become involved for those that are able to do so. You will also find an up-to-date list of TAG members and a calendar of recent and upcoming meetings and events.

This newsletter goes directly to all TCF and TAG members, CGIAR communities of practice, as well as TAG co-stewards and support staff, and it has been posted on the [CGIAR website](#). Please circulate it broadly to others that you feel would find this helpful. For any feedback and suggestions related to this newsletter, please contact us via email at TCF-Support@cgiar.org.

In closing, at this profoundly transformational time for our people, our partners, and their families, we want to reiterate that as CGIAR we are here for each other. It is what defines us as a partnership, and it is what will allow us to overcome this crisis and emerge stronger.

With kind regards,

Aly Abousabaa, Convener, Center Directors General
Nicole Birrell, Convener, Center Board Chairs

Tony Cavalieri, Member, CGIAR System Council
Marco Ferroni, Chair, CGIAR System Management Board

Aware of the importance of CGIAR's governance structure operating according to best practice and in line with international standards, at its 16th meeting, the System Management Board ('SMB') endorsed a stepwise approach to the establishment of the One CGIAR Common Board by 1 October 2020, in a way that maintains appropriate pace in decision making by the General Assembly of the Centers, the SMB and Center/Alliance Boards alike.

To provide the requisite assurance to Center/Alliance Board members, our Funders, and our headquarter and other host-country partners, that a One CGIAR Common Board is legally possible and meets best practice governance standards for international organizations, the SMB commissioned at that same meeting, the provision of an external independent legal opinion on key questions arising under One CGIAR, including:

- Whether there is a defined governance code or defined laws or regulations that are legally binding on International Organizations (that have privileges and immunities)?
- Are there any legal requirements on the part of the System Organization or a Center to abide by any specific national governance code or legislation regarding the role of the Board of Trustees/ Governing Board?
- For each Center/ Alliance, based on the Center/ Alliance's own governing instruments, assess whether its Board has the authority to delegate its oversight responsibilities on performance management of the Center's Director General to an empowered executive management team ("EMT") as contemplated in the One CGIAR model.
- Are there any legal concerns, including in relation to notions of organizational independence and autonomy, with the same group of people who are the voting members of the System Management Board also populating, as a 2/3rd voting majority, all of the Boards of CGIAR Centers/ Alliances (with all legal entities having international organization legal status (with privileges and immunities in the jurisdictions of their operations), and which collaborate in different ways, and will increasingly operate on the basis of common policies and business processes and practices)?
- Specifically, would each Center/ Alliance Board constituted as described in the One CGIAR approach be able to effectively carry out its statutory duties under the Center/ Alliance's own governance documents? If there are issues, how could those be effectively mitigated through appropriate governance arrangements (whether committee structures, conflicts of interest provisions, or other relevant approach)?

Through a global tender process overseen by a member of the SMB, CGIAR selected Lalive Law, a Swiss-based law firm to deliver a comprehensive legal opinion on these complex questions. The routing of that work is via the TCF's TAG3, with the final opinion expected to be delivered by 5 April 2020.

Recognizing the value of timely information on the progress of that legal opinion being shared across CGIAR as and when available, Lalive Law shared late on 27 March 2020 their *Initial Summary Findings on the Legal Opinion on Delivering Unified Governance under One CGIAR* (shared with members of the TCF and TAGs via MS Teams). As clearly signaled in the title of that work – this is an initial set of head-line findings based on their ongoing review of the various governing instruments – including detailed statutes, charters, constitutions, rules of procedures, headquarters agreements, side letters and government gazettes.

The work is ongoing – with deep appreciation to especially the Center/ Alliance Board Secretaries group for their guidance and support to ensuring that Lalive has all current governing instruments, and where there are questions that arise on these instruments, guidance and inputs have been quickly provided through both CGIAR's talented pool of internal lawyers, or via Center/ Alliance own external legal counsel.

As we await the full opinion – should colleagues have queries on the Initial Summary Findings, please do communicate those to us through TCF-Support@cgiar.org for on-forwarding to Lalive and discussion also in TAG3.

COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE TRANSITION TO ONE CGIAR

Clear communication, co-creation, and collaboration have been identified as core principles of the transition to One CGIAR. With input from TAG1, the table below captures an initial set of near-term priorities for communication and stakeholder engagement to guide implementation over the coming months. The Transition Program Management Unit ('TPMU') – expected to be operational this May – will be tasked with developing a comprehensive communication strategy and stakeholder engagement plan for the transition process through end-2021. For any feedback and questions on these topics, please contact TCF-Support@cgiar.org.

Tool, platform, product, process	Status as of 30 March
Tools, platforms	
TCF web page	Live, updated with each Newsletter and as needed, and to be enhanced through below, core communication products
MS Teams work space for the TCF and TAGs	Live, updated continuously as a document repository and collaboration platform for the TCF and TAGs
Products	
'Towards One CGIAR' Newsletter series	3 rd edition issued
FAQ on One CGIAR	In progress, expected in next 2 weeks
Standard One CGIAR PPT	In progress, expected in next 2-4 weeks
One CGIAR brochure	In progress, expected in April
Video messages from TCF co-chairs, champions	Not started
Processes	
TCF	Launched in January
TAGs	Launched in February
Structured engagement with Center Boards, including through dialogues on the external legal opinion and with key Funders	In progress
Structured engagement with host and partner countries	Not started
One CGIAR webinar series for staff and stakeholders	Not started

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE TRANSITION TO ONE CGIAR

Following the 17 March TCF call and an opportunity for written input, the following code of conduct was retained to guide TCF and TAG members' engagement in the transition to One CGIAR:

In our capacity as members of the CGIAR Transition Consultation Forum (TCF) and Transition Advisory Groups (TAGs), we will:

- *Act with honesty, integrity, openness, transparency and commitment in the furtherance of One CGIAR*
- *Treat each other with dignity and respect*
- *Collaborate with each other across institutional boundaries*
- *Promote evidence-based decision making, while acknowledging and accepting there are legitimate differences of values, perspectives, and experiences*
- *Act with urgency and support conclusions and decisions that have been reached through meaningful, inclusive consultations*
- *Share information with each other, and – unless otherwise agreed – with other stakeholders within our respective networks, constituencies, and organizations, acting as spokespersons of the transition to One CGIAR*

TRANSITION ADVISORY GROUPS

The Transition Advisory Groups (TAG) represent an extension of the advisory role of the TCF. They will bring multi-stakeholder input and advice across the specific dimensions of the One CGIAR transition. These are the TAGs, their members, and co-stewards as of 30 March 2020.

TAG	Topic	Members	Co-Stewards
1. Cross-cutting communication and change management	Communication, change management – including people and culture – coordination across TAGs	Andrews, Nancy Birrell, Nicole Bounjoua, Saad Cavaliere, Tony Ferroni, Marco* Grainger-Jones, Elwyn Johnstone, Gareth Kropff, Martin Marton-Lefèvre, Julia	Restrepo, Juan-Lucas Self, Rinn Smith, Jimmy Smith, Allison Torrance, Lesley Van Heerden, Clarissa Wild, Hilary Wood, Mellissa Victor Kommerell, CIMMYT & Roland Sundstrom, CGIAR System Organization
2. Research	Recommendations 1 (a compelling mission) and 4 (a new research modality)	Abousabaa, Aly Bernhardt, Michel Bertram, Rob Faure, Guy Hubert, Bernard Jallow, Isatou Kramer-LeBlanc, Carole Kropff, Martin* Meinke, Holger Morell, Matthew Nasi, Robert	Ndirpaya, Yarama Ortiz, Oscar Philipps, Michael Pinto, Yvonne Sadoff, Claudia Swinnen, Jo Tollervey, Alan van Ijssel, Wijnand Wells, Barbara Wood, Mellissa* Maya Rajasekharan, Alliance of Bioversity and CIAT & Sonja Vermeulen, CGIAR System Organization
3. Unified governance	Recommendation 2	Birdsall, Nancy Cackler, Mark Falvey, Lindsay Johnson, Alexandra Lenton, Roberto	Ngongi, Amos Namanga Nwanze, Kanayo Potter, Stephen van de Logt, Paul Wild, Hilary* Center co-steward & Karmen Bennett, CGIAR System Organization
4. Policies and services	Recommendation 3.b	To be launched at a later date.	
5. Country and regional engagement	Recommendation 3.c	Abubakar, Yusuf Byerlee, Derek Diaz Luengas, Jorge Mario Évéquoz, Michel Johnson, Alexandra Machado, Pedro Ndirpaya, Yarama	Nigussie, Mandefro Nteranya, Sanginga Restrepo, Juan-Lucas* Roy-Macauley, Harold Selvaraju Ramasamy Sereme, Paco Tollervey, Alan Tom Randolph, ILRI & Nadia Manning- Thomas, CGIAR System Organization
6. Financial management and modalities	Recommendation 5, specifically on the financial management and modalities of One CGIAR	Andrews, Nancy* Ash, Andrew Bernhardt, Michel Birrell, Nicole	Godfrey, Jim Van Gilst, Daniel Wadsworth, Jonathan Witte, Eric Syon Niyogi, IWMI & Jamie Craig, CGIAR System Organization
7. Resource mobilization	Recommendation 5, specifically on resource mobilization	Biddle, Julianne Carberry, Peter Cooke, Rodney Ghezze, Nighisty Guertin, Michelle	Kropff, Martin Self, Rinn* Smith, Jimmy Van der Bliet, Julie Wadsworth, Jonathan Pietro Turilli, CIP & André Zandstra, CGIAR System Organization

* Denotes the convener(s) of the TAG

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

This is a non-exhaustive overview of recent and upcoming meetings and events related to the transition to One CGIAR. More detailed information will be made available on the dedicated MS Teams workspace for the TCF and shared with additional stakeholders as relevant.

When	What	Who
RECENT		
5–7 February, 2020	CGIAR ‘Big Lifts’ workshop in Eschborn, Germany, provided multi-stakeholder input towards the implementation of SRG recommendations 1 (mission) and 4 (new research modality)	Invited guests, including representatives of Funders, Centers, ISDC, and the System Organization
12 February, 2020	Virtual meeting of the General Assembly of the Centers to consider process to reconstitute the SMB and approve associated amendments to the Charter of the CGIAR System Organization	Members of the General Assembly, Secretariat support
19 February, 2020	1st call of the Transition Consultation Forum (TCF) to discuss proposed forward directions for TCF and TAGs	TCF members, support
17 March, 2020	2nd call of the Transition Consultation Forum (TCF) to share early updates across TAGs, to review time lines, and to discuss the implications of COVID-19 on the transition	TCF members, support
UPCOMING		
14-17 April, 2020	Series of TCF calls for TAGs to report back on their deliberations and seek input on key work products	TCF and TAG members, support
5-6 May, 2020	17th meeting of the SMB (virtual)	SMB members, active observers, invited guests, and Secretariat support
9-10 June, 2020	10th meeting of the CGIAR System Council (virtual)	System Council members, active observers, invited guests, and Secretariat support

CONTACT US

TCF-Support@cgiar.org

GETTING INVOLVED

For CGIAR staff and stakeholders who wish to get involved in or be better informed of the transition to One CGIAR, relevant avenues are set out below. This section will be updated with each edition of the Newsletter series.

Transition Consultation Forum (TCF)	<p>The TCF is a high-level consultation mechanism for the transition. It includes members of the former System Reference Group (SRG), as well as all other Center Board Chairs and Directors General, all other interested voting members of the System Council, and the ISDC Chair. Membership in the TCF remains open to System Council members who have not yet joined. TCF members are invited to join a TAG and provide input on the advice prepared by other TAGs. Stakeholders, in their capacity as TCF members, are consulted and informed, but not responsible or accountable for delivering the transition to One CGIAR.</p>
Transition Advisory Groups (TAG)	<p>TAGs are multi-stakeholder advisory groups applying the principles of System-wide collaboration and co-creation. TAGs provide input and advice in support of relevant decision-making entities, including the SMB, the System Council, the General Assembly of the Centers, and Center Boards. TAGs remain open to any current and future members of the TCF that have not yet expressed an interest in joining a TAG, as well as other stakeholders that are not CGIAR staff and could bring a relevant contribution to the work of the TAG. TAGs decide on their own membership, in accordance with guidance from the TCF co-chairs. Stakeholders, in their capacity as TAG members, are consulted and informed, but not responsible or accountable for delivering the transition to One CGIAR.</p>
CGIAR Communities of Practice (CoP)	<p>TAGs have been encouraged to engage with the CGIAR CoP(s) that can provide relevant input and expertise and act as CGIAR-wide ideas networks and feedback loops. Some TAGs have extended a standing invitation to the conveners of relevant CoPs to participate in their meetings as guests. The invited conveners and/or TAG co-stewards will ensure that CoP members are informed of the work of the TAGs and have opportunities to provide input on and contribute towards relevant work products. CGIAR staff, in their capacity as CoP members, are consulted and informed, but not responsible or accountable for delivering the transition to One CGIAR.</p>
TAG support teams	<p>The work of the TAGs is supported by cross-System support teams, led by co-stewards. The support teams are currently made up of their co-stewards and a small number of System Organization staff and consultants. The co-stewards will be responsible for identifying and filling any capacity gaps, either through consultants or by drawing on additional Center/ System Organization staff time (typically 25—50% of their time, from a few months up to a year), compensated through dedicated transition funds. Where Center staff are sought to join a support team, co-stewards will circulate an open call for nominations to Center DGs as the decision-makers on staff deployment. Support team members retain their existing reporting lines, but will be responsible for delivery in line with TAG guidance and coordinated by the Transition Program Management Unit (TPMU).</p>
Other means of engagement	<p>We will keep stakeholders up to date about transition progress through regular newsletters, the TCF web page, and other channels under development (e.g. a One CGIAR webinar series, Senior Manager information kits, up-to-date FAQ), with associated feedback mechanisms. TAGs, with their support teams, will identify and communicate additional ways to engage with stakeholders.</p>

BACKGROUND: WHAT IS ONE CGIAR?

One CGIAR is a dynamic reformulation of CGIAR's partnerships, knowledge, assets, and global presence, aiming for greater integration in the face of the interdependent challenges facing today's world. One CGIAR comprises (i) a sharper mission statement and impact focus to 2030, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals; (ii) unified governance under a 'One CGIAR Common Board'; (iii) institutional integration, including stronger management, common policies and services, and a unified country presence; (iv) a new research modality; as well as (v) more, and pooled, funding. For further details, please refer to the [TCF web page](#).