

GODAN Governance

Launched in October 2013, the Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition initiative (GODAN) is a voluntary association that welcomes all those who wish to join as partners and to participate in shaping coordinated activities that can deliver on the potential of open data for agriculture and nutrition. Together, partners seek to support this initiative through the following guidelines and principles, enshrined in the GODAN Statement of Purpose.

In line with global movements for open data and open access, the initiative seeks to:

- advocate for open data and open access policies by default, in both public and private sectors, whilst respecting and working to balance openness with legitimate concerns in relation to privacy, security, community rights and commercial interests
- advocate for the release and re-usability of data in support of Innovation and Economic Growth, Improved Service Delivery and Effective Governance, and Improved Environmental and Social Outcomes

With a focus on open data for agriculture and nutrition the initiative seeks to:

- advocate for new and existing open data initiatives to set a core focus on agriculture and nutrition data
- encourage the agreement on and release of common sets of agricultural and nutrition data
- increase widespread awareness of ongoing activities, innovations and good practices
- advocate for collaborative efforts on future agriculture and nutrition open data endeavours
- promote programs, good practices, and lessons learned that enable the use of open data particularly by and for the rural and urban poor

At present, GODAN is not an independent legal entity and this also applies to the GODAN Secretariat, which is currently hosted by CABI.

The Secretariat in seeking to support the broader partner network is managed as a CABI Programme, conforming to CABI's internal performance monitoring and financial management processes. Responsibility for formal programme M&E currently resides with DFID under their reporting frameworks.

GODAN's key governance mechanisms are the GODAN Partners meeting, the GODAN Steering Committee, and the GODAN Secretariat whose roles, responsibilities and composition are specified below.

I- The GODAN Partners Meeting (GPM)

1. Purpose:

Efforts will be made to hold a GODAN Partners Meeting(s) (GPM) to provide a platform for exchange of ideas between partners and with the Secretariat. GPMs will be done through one or more physical or virtual meetings, as logistics and other considerations allow. GPMs will facilitate:

- Strategic focus of GODAN activities on priority issues for the partners
- Review of GODAN activities held during the previous year
- Discussions and input into the workplans of the Secretariat
- New initiatives of interest to GODAN
- Suggestion of priority sector foci for GODAN.
- Sharing progress, developments, success stories and lessons learned
- Enhancing the participants' knowledge on Open Data, Agriculture and Nutrition.

2. Participation:

- All registered partners are eligible and invited to attend GPMs, and to suggest topics, speakers or discussion items.
- Non-GODAN partners may be invited as observers.
- Specialists and Experts may be invited to participate to help facilitate, and bring new ideas and knowledge.
- The cost of participation at the GPMs will normally be borne by the Partner.
- Partners may be supported financially to attend only if they represent a particular user or voice that would be under-represented if they didn't attend, and where absence of this type of member would be detrimental to the engagement objectives of GODAN. Supported partners will be required to evidence the value of being supported to the Secretariat.

3. Meetings and decision making:

- GPMs will preferably be held adjacent to key political, agricultural, agricultural information, nutritional/nutrition focused, or open data meetings, where several partners are already attending.

- Resolutions will normally be made by consensus. If strong diverging opinions are voiced, they will be recorded as such.
- The GPMs will be chaired by the Chairperson of the Steering Committee, or his/her delegate from the Secretariat, who will act as formal rapporteur of proceedings.
- Draft agenda for the GPMs will be communicated at least one month ahead of time to all GODAN partners; suggestions or comments will be incorporated/taken into account to the maximum extent possible.

II- The Steering Committee (SC)

1. Purpose:

The Steering Committee (SC) is a convening forum to provide strategic oversight and guidance to GODAN's development. It is composed of ongoing GODAN donors, supported by non-voting technical experts proposed by the Secretariat to provide a specific strategic input into defined technical areas.

The Steering Committee will::

- Overseeing the implementation by the Secretariat of the policies, financial and programmatic priorities approved by the SC, in compliance with the conditions stipulated in the agreements between the Secretariat and individual GODAN Donors.
- Seeking to achieve coordination of activities and interventions that are not funded through the GODAN Secretariat, but are of significant relevance to the implementation of its approved strategy. Interventions of this nature include all relevant interventions that are funded through bilateral arrangements, self-funding modalities, or any other activities outside the GODAN mechanisms.
- The SC will meet at least twice a year to monitor progress in implementation of the approved GODAN strategy, evaluate its impact, and make decisions on the strategic allocation of resources based on the contributions committed by all GODAN Donors
- SC meetings will normally be held alternatively through videoconference, and in person ahead of an annual GPM.
- Additional/ad-hoc meetings of the SC may be held if required.
- Draft SC meetings agenda will be circulated by the Secretariat ahead of time for comments and suggestions, factoring in decisions made in previous SC meetings.
- Non SC partners may be invited as non-voting participants to SC meetings to present good practices and lessons learned that could be of interest to the implementation of GODAN goals and mission.
- Currently, the USG is acting as joint signatory with CABI for all core GODAN Secretariat contractual issues, while DFID has taken the leadership in monitoring and evaluation. This attribution of duties may be reviewed/amended by the SC as needed.

- Support the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the approved Work plan, including financial resources and in-kind technical support.

2- Membership:

- The Steering Committee (SC) will comprise a representative from each GODAN Donor who provide cash or in-kind contributions to the core operational costs of the Secretariat and its activities on an ongoing basis, and have contributed in that calendar year [*ipso facto* contribution only to one-off initiatives does not count as a core cost]. At outset, the core SC is composed of GODAN Donors (formerly, members of the Donor Committee), and includes the Secretariat Executive Director, and a representative of the host organisation - the Programme Manager.
- Before each of its meetings the Secretariat will circulate a list of possible non-donor experts (partner or non-partner) that could for a specific meeting being planned, provide valuable strategic/technical input. Guest experts will attend the meeting or part of the meeting unless there is an open objection from a member of the donor core of the SC.
- The members of the SC will within themselves, elect a chairperson, who will serve for a term of two years.
- While being renewable, the elected chairperson should not serve terms consecutively, allowing other partners to hold the chair in between mandates.
- The SC chairperson will preside at meetings of the SC and exercise any other functions required to facilitate its work
- In case of unavailability to attend an SC meeting, the elected Chairperson may designate an alternate person by officially informing other SC members of his/her decision.
- Similarly, SC members will officially nominate their representative and inform other SC members through a communication despatched by the Secretariat.
- Each SC member, with the exception of the Secretariat's Executive Director, and non-voting technical experts, will have one voting right, shall the need arise for a vote.
- As a general rule SC decisions should be made by consensus, making voting an exception more than the regular practice.
- In all cases, no decision made by the SC may be contrary to or impede the implementation of the conditions determined by donors in their contribution to GODAN activities.
- A summary of the SC meeting discussions and its decisions will be posted on the GODAN website.

III- The GODAN Secretariat

After consecutive meetings held between its initial founding visionaries, it was decided to create a Secretariat, whose mission is to assist the GODAN network/partners in the implementation of the dispositions of its Statement of Purpose.

The GODAN Secretariat's mission is to promote and advocate, and share best practice rather than to manage implementation programmes *per se*; it acts to stimulate open data initiatives across the world and within the network in particular.

Following a competitive process, in 2014 CABI was selected to host the said Secretariat and assist both in its setup as well as in its subsequent day-to-day operations, providing administrative, logistical and technical support, performance monitoring and financial management.

CABI appoints and oversees the Executive Director, who carries out day-to-day management of the Secretariat personnel towards the implementation of the overall priorities set by the SC.

The Secretariat became operational in 2015, completing its initial staff complement in the third quarter, submitting proposed governance mechanisms to its donors, expanding membership to hundreds of partners from across the globe. The process used to achieve this was noted in the GODAN inception report, released at the end of October.

Concretely, led by its Executive Director, the Secretariat aims at supporting GODAN in:

- Reporting on the Secretariat's activities including but not limited to the implementation of agreed workplan and milestones, and of the use of its financial and other resources
- Coordinating logistics and communications between SC members and between partners
- Facilitating the participation of GODAN partners in various fora in fields consistent with its Statement of Purpose
- Managing GODAN resources towards optimal implementation of the priorities set by the SC
- Contributing to the dissemination of GODAN goals through various means of communication such as public events, the use of social media, GODAN website and direct participation in various fora
- Assisting Partners in the creation and functioning of GODAN working groups and other collaborative initiatives to convene, equip and empower the network
- Stimulating membership

IV- GODAN Ambassadors & Champions

All GODAN partners should be encouraged to use national and international fora at their disposition in order to promote the values enshrined in the GODAN Statement of Purpose, and to contribute (politically, financially or technically) to GODAN. It is a core principle that all partners' nominated GODAN contact points should seek to promote GODAN and recruit new members. Exceptionally we should wish to more formally designate individuals as 'GODAN Ambassadors' or (having a lesser status) 'Champions'.

These exceptional individuals should benefit from a reputation of leader/expert in an area of interest to GODAN, and be in a position to influence relevant audiences at all levels.

As a general rule, Ambassadors should volunteer on a pro-bono basis, especially as they are expected to exercise their role as part or within their regular advocacy work/interventions.

However in special circumstances, expense reimbursement could be considered should a GODAN Ambassadors be requested to undertake a mission or carry out an activity outside of his/her regular scope of work.

Should a GODAN Ambassador be selected from outside the GODAN partnership/network, nominations and terms of the assignment should be made through the GODAN Steering Committee.

As the number of partners in the GODAN network has substantially increased (a trend which is continuing), GODAN 'Champions', identified across the partnership will be sought, trained as needed and encouraged to speak on behalf of GODAN in relevant fora across the world in support of similar efforts undertaken by SC and Secretariat members.

Wallingford, 16 December 2016