

GODAN 2.0: The road ahead

For innovation in Agriculture and Nutrition

Business Plan

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Executive Summary

When it was formally announced in October 2013, GODAN was established as a five year project. Since then it has emerged from being a small, new unknown entity, to become a truly global point of reference in Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition, currently assembling more than 760 partner organizations from across the globe. As with any enterprise going through such rapid growth, now is the time for GODAN to determine if the initiative should continue, and if so, prepare for its next phase in a manner that would serve its purpose and partners best.

Yet as no decision has been taken as to whether GODAN should continue to exist in the middle to long term, we are proposing that 2019 be a year of transition, leading to a *three years transformation period (2020-2022) that would secure gains/progress made, further enhance direct members interaction, adjust its governance mechanisms to reflect the true global composition of the network, and finally, allow for impact sustainability with or without the continuation of the Secretariat based on what donors/members decide*. This is how we propose to achieve this, focusing on the following elements:

- **Adjusting the Secretariat' s operations to the maturing needs from the network**
- **Provide for increasing and demonstrating impact.**
- **Broaden and secure the funding base of the Secretariat.**

Increasingly entities from both public and private sector are opening datasets. While there is room for much more to be made open, the capacity to find, understand and make use of data still needs to be enhanced, and lessons learned need to be further documented and disseminated. Moreover, the overall policy environment regarding open data in agriculture and nutrition is still underdeveloped in various governments and other organizations; they now request advice and technical support from GODAN for this purpose. Finally, in order to achieve these goals, and sustain in the long term, GODAN's funding base needs to be broadened and the path towards a greater self-sufficiency must be defined.

As these fundamental adjustments require a prudent, interactive approach, a gradual implementation is hereby proposed in a three year 'transformation period' running from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2022. This plan is based on comments received on the proposals made in the GODAN 2.0 discussion paper, proposing specific modalities for such implementation.

What we do

We are a network of organizations working towards a world where actors throughout the value chain for agriculture and nutrition are more efficient, innovative, equitable (e.g. by gender, socioeconomic status) and accountable; from, for example, greater yields and access to markets for farmers, through to more nutritious and safe food available to consumers.

We believe that improving the open availability, use and enrichment of data, and meaningful engagement from stakeholders enables this vision and stimulates the innovation that is required to ensure global nutrition security. GODAN contributes to make this happen through:

Advocate for high level policy conducive to the release, dissemination and use of open data. The major 2016 GODAN Summit, for the first time uniting all of its partners, GODAN' s presence at the HLF in New York, and more recently, The Nairobi Declaration, uniting 15 African ministers from various countries are illustrations of this type of effort. Similarly, GODAN' s close involvement with the Global Forum for Innovation in Agriculture (GFIA) provided for the mobilization of a number of private sector companies across the globe, and the support of an ethics code of conduct on privacy and data management by manufacturers.

Facilitating access to tools and intellectual assets by collect and publish discussion papers, case studies, narratives, mapping exercises. Make access to partner resources easier, user friendly and data driven. Open access tools, mapping, policy and advocacy instruments are made available through the network.

Provide strategic guidance through key global associations. As GODAN's footprint and reputation grew across the globe, more and more the Secretariat has been asked to play a high level advisory role on data in agriculture and/or nutrition, by high level organizations/networks such as GEO, GEOGLAM, AAPARI, EU, APAD, NNEDPro, etc. This type of strategic involvement allows for a very powerful influence on the policies governing members of these networks and a significant outreach despite the Secretariat's limited resources.

Global advocacy is the heart of what GODAN does. While its ultimate aim is a global adoption of open data as a de facto standard in agriculture and nutrition, the achievement of this goal involves a significant public/general awareness and mobilization effort, as the subject is still unknown by many, and its benefits insufficiently documented. This is why the Secretariat makes extensive use of electronic/social media as well as of 'champions', opinion leaders in their region or technical area.

Convene member events, showcases, hackathons etc. with the goal of creating new initiatives combining strengths/capacities of partners from the same or different sectors. These events provide a direct opportunity for partners to share their experience and make their expertise available, as a foundation to new opportunities both in agriculture and in nutrition, for actors throughout the entire value chain.

Who is our audience

The audience for GODAN reflects the geographical and technical diversity of actors in the world of the agriculture and nutrition. One can look at these audiences as four main groups, reflected as such in GODAN's communication strategy and our partnership structure: Governments, private sector, knowledge (research and academia) and civil society. While the common goal is for all to contribute to open data in agriculture and nutrition, the angle varies, reflecting the respective priorities of these sectors and the nature of their involvement with data:

Governments:

- They generate and manage large quantities of data
- They have the capacity to open and disseminate it
- They define the legal/policy environment in which data can freely flow, internally and externally.
- Some fear that opening data may raise security concerns.

Private sector:

- They possess and generate large quantities of data
- They have a large capacity to handle it
- They understand the importance of data as a tool to stimulate business
- They fund a lot of research
- They have copyright and commercial protection concerns.

Knowledge:

- Research generates considerable amount of data
- Research/academia data is at the forefront of innovation
- Often works in partnership with private sector, which stimulates data generation and usage, but can sometimes delay its release.
- While its mission is to generate and make knowledge used, it often lacks the policies and/or infrastructure to allow it easily.

Civil society:

- Is often unaware of the availability of data and of the one it generates.
- Considers access to public data as a right
- Has privacy and data ownership concerns.

Strategic Alliances

As the GODAN partnership continues to expand quite rapidly, it was found that a strategic alliance/involvement in significant technical and/or geographic networks allows both for a greater, cost-effective reach, as well as for meaningful influence on members of these networks. The Secretariat's involvement in these networks typically lies in one or more of its staff acting as strategic advisors or in some other form of senior level representation. Examples of such networks are listed below:

- AAPRESID: Asociación Argentina de Productores en Siembra Directa
- APAARI: Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions
- EU/EC/FITFORFOOD2030: European Commission, Fit for Food 2030 Programme
- GCAN: Global Conservation Agriculture Network
- GEOGLAM: Global Earth Observation Agriculture Monitoring
- GFAR: Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation
- GFIA: Global Forum on Innovation in Agriculture
- IGAD: Interest Group on Agriculture Data
- NNEdPro: Need for Nutrition Education Programme/Global Centre for Nutrition and Health
- PAFO: Pan African Farmers Organization
- PUSH: Presidents United to solve Hunger
- RDA: Research Data Alliance

Beyond the additional outreach (multiplying effect) that these networks provide to GODAN, they also provide a wealth of technical expertise which is made available through events or bilateral/multilateral opportunities the Secretariat is associated with. This complements the knowledge shared by technical champion organizations and experts from Governments, Private Sector and knowledge institutions in the context of workgroups, joint publications or other technical initiatives.

Opportunity

Problem

The world needs to produce more nutritious food, and in quantities that are sufficient for populations across the globe.

Solution

Innovation.

Knowledge and awareness are critical to changing existing practices in food production (including transport and storage) and consumption. A key vehicle for knowledge transfer is data, for better decision making processes across the entire food value chain. In turn, demand for new practices drives further innovation.

This requires the continuation of significant advocacy/awareness efforts vis-à-vis the various GODAN audiences, along with sustained strategic guidance such as the one provided by the GODAN Secretariat in association with experts from across the network.

Why GODAN?

Because the GODAN network provides a unique network that is entirely dedicated to innovation in agriculture and nutrition, combining the strengths and ideas of a full range of actors throughout the entire food value chain. As there are currently no other global organization/network like GODAN, specifically focusing on the adoption and use of open data in agriculture and nutrition, we believe that it plays a unique role that appears to be at this time, the most efficient way to make global progress on this critical path. Here is what members of the network see and appreciate most in GODAN's uniqueness:

- **Advocacy:** "We were honored to begin our work with GODAN by helping plan the GODAN Summit in New York in 2016. Since then PUSH at Auburn University has been an active participant in research and communications of the importance of open data in eliminating hunger. GODAN is one of the key organizations that connects universities in the open data movement." Anne Mims Adrian, Open Data Project Manager, Hunger Solutions Institute
- **Evidence-based:** "We cannot build resilience without the right type of data being available to inform the decisions we make. Only an evidence-based approach using credible data will help us transform our economies through agriculture." Willy Bett, Kenya Cabinet, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, GODAN Summit 2016.
- **Experience sharing:** "GODAN is an important space for knowledge and experience in open data and agrifood, and helps us to be connected to the use of data in the agrifood sector." Christopher Brewster, Senior Scientist, TNO
- **Guiding principles:** "GODAN gives us strong guiding principles, reputation and networking to support delivery of the SDGs" Steve Keyworth, Director, Environment Systems
- **Impact:** GODAN helps us in achieving impact goals in policy and in making linkages to new partners" Christopher Addison, Senior Programme Coordinator, CTA
- **Knowledge:** "The awareness and knowledge imparted via GODAN has been invaluable in our journey. Being able to understand and correlate data needs is a skill second to none. The contacts we made through GODAN have greatly improved our profile." Genevieve Leveille Ms. CEO, AgriLedger
- **Leadership:** "It's a forum for us all to at least try to make tangible meaningful change, brings thought leaders together" Richard Williamson, CEO, Generation 10.
- **National policies/capacity:** "Kenya became champion of GODAN in Africa and G77 countries in 2016. The GODAN Secretariat supported Kenya to host the first GODAN African Ministers conference (on open data for agriculture) in June 2017. Since then, Kenya has received capacity building and support to enable web-based portals for open data sharing. Kenya is also developing the African GODAN network and planning to support Uganda to host the second African conference in December 2018." Tom Dienya, Head of Agriculture Statistics Unit, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Kenya
- **Networking:** "As a result of GODAN we have benefitted from a range of networking opportunities." Richard Tiffin, Chief Scientific Officer, Agrimetrix Ltd
- **Resources:** "As a partner, our organization has benefited from GODAN a lot; now EIAR is connected and updated on open data for agriculture. Personally I have benefited from resources and online courses which broaden my knowledge on open data specifically for Agriculture and Nutrition." Tadesse Anberbir, ICT Director Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR)
- **Strategic approach:** "GODAN is a key partner to help us stay aware of the larger strategic landscape." Brian King, Coordinator, CGIAR Platform for Big Data in Agriculture.

Execution

Governance

The current Governance of the GODAN Secretariat/programme has been defined in the original document adopted by its founding donors on the occasion of its conception. At that time it was decided that the Secretariat was to operate under the overall guidance of a Donor Steering Committee (SC), and on a day to day and legal basis, to operate as a CABI (the Secretariat host) project. These discussions are reflected in the SC minutes and the updated GODAN Governance paper, both of which are available on the GODAN website.

Since then, this important document has been revised, acknowledging the arrival of new donors, the rapid expansion of the GODAN network and the necessity to reflect in its governance, the increasing diversity of its membership. For this purpose, a discussion has begun on the possibility of expanding the SC composition/role/nature by allowing a number of non-donors to become part of it, based on criteria to be agreed to. While non donors (as well as the Secretariat ED) would be non-voting members, until now and under its current form, all SC decisions have been made on a consensus basis.

Among the ideas that have recently been raised could be the transformation of the current Steering Committee into a more open advisory body, more consistent with the evolution of GODAN from a traditional project to a more comprehensive global partnership initiative.

In all cases, it will be critical at an early stage during the transition period, to review the GODAN Governance mechanisms and to agree on a formula that will reflect the evolution of the network, continue to guarantee some level of donor control over the resources they provide, and articulate how and to which extent non donors participate in strategic discussions.

Legal personality / treaty

Legal personality:

As described in the above section, the Secretariat has until now operated as a CABI project, without legal personality other than through its host. While this formula worked relatively well at the beginning, it proved to become inefficient with a global network of this size, in particular on two fronts.

First identity. Complicated by the fact that some of our current staff are both CABI and GODAN (part time) presence during events or statements made at time introduced some confusion as to whose position this meant. Additionally, in some events such as UN related events, the Secretariat having no legal personality of its own, meant our staff had to introduce themselves either as CABI or as part of a partner delegation, once again confusing the understanding of our message and at times, making participation difficult (as qualified partners have a limited number of seats attributed for these events, which they then need to share with us)

Secondly, we noted a strong interest from the private sector, and from private individuals to support the cause defended by GODAN. However to allow for this to successfully happen, the GODAN Secretariat's status should provide for tax/financial incentives (private and corporate) to stimulate private contributions to the network.

Treaty on open data in Agriculture and Nutrition:

Long term (after the transformation period/2022) whether the Secretariat/GODAN continues to exist, its cause should. One of the means that has been proposed was the constitution of an international treaty on open data for agriculture and nutrition; shall such an initiative be decided, a number of partners such as FAO have underlined their expertise and desire to help. During the transformation period we propose to proceed to a more comprehensive review of the pros and cons of this approach, and if enough interest, submit a formal proposal/plan to the partnership to initiate this process

Programmes

During the transformation period, we propose to center the Secretariat's activities in three synergetic core components, reflecting both GODAN's mission and the emerging needs of its network:

- Advocacy
- Partnerships
- Strategic support

Advocacy continues to be a key priority for GODAN. The concept of open data in general, and in particular in the world of agriculture and nutrition, continues to be largely unfamiliar within many regions, and in particular with its most important actors: farmers. For this purpose the Secretariat's advocacy efforts should continue, making more strategic, intensive use of electronic media as a most cost effective method. Additionally, the Secretariat has experienced that building the capacity of local/technical/political opinion leaders allowed for a most impactful approach in educating and influencing our respective audiences on the use and benefits of open data for agriculture and nutrition. Finally, it was found that using specialized communication firms to provide strategic communication guidance is most beneficial and thus should become an integrated part of GODAN's communication toolbox.

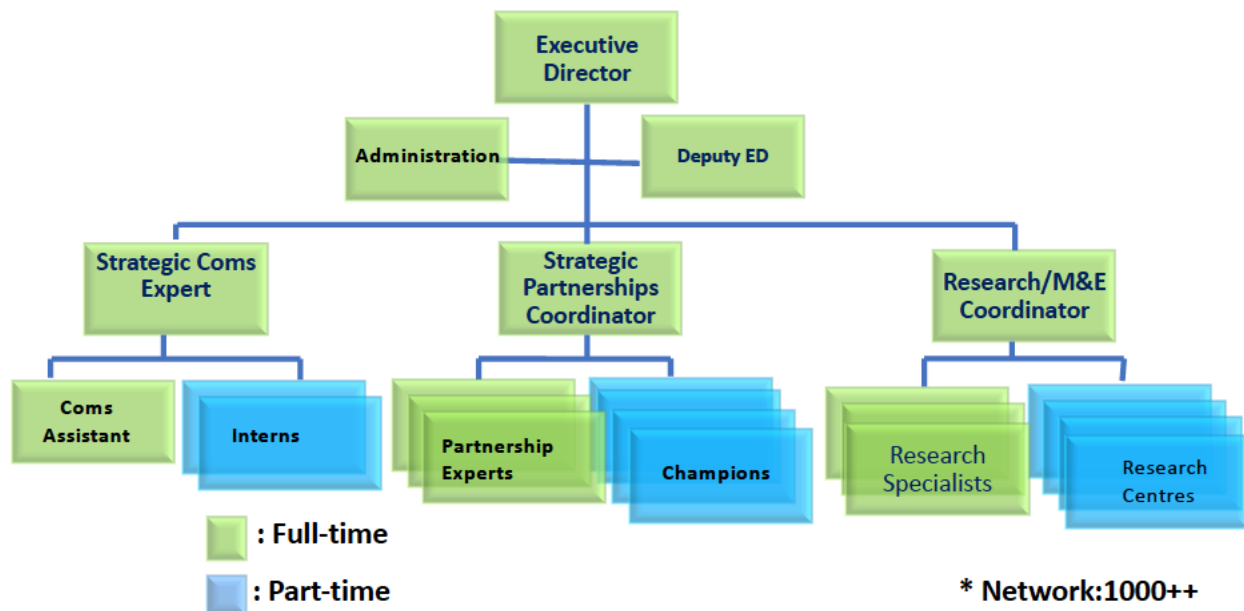
Partnerships: One of the outcomes of GODAN's advocacy efforts is the pledging/commitment made by organizations to support the opening, dissemination, and the use of open data in agriculture and nutrition. Additionally, interaction opportunities generated by GODAN (physical or virtual interactions) greatly stimulate new ideas, new initiatives and innovation as it allows for the connection of entities that have similar interests but which may not have had direct exchanges opportunity before. Such opportunities take many forms such as events, work groups, webinars, etc. The GODAN secretariat intends to put a special emphasis on using technology to facilitate members interaction, whether to help them find each other based on their interests, find and access relevant datasets, find and make data analysis/use tools available etc.; for this purpose the Secretariat proposes that the next iteration of its website incorporates data search capacity, partners login, direct activities broadcast and work groups access, among other improvements.

Strategic support: The GODAN partnership, despite the youth of the network, has evolved quite rapidly not only in terms of numbers (closing in towards 1000 member organizations) but also in terms of the maturity of its partners in understanding open data, its benefits and their own interest in taking this avenue as part of their evolution. However this also triggered an increasing expression of the need for strategic guidance/support along the way. This is why the Secretariat proposes a reorganization of its structure (numbers and technical capacity) as well as a greater use of technical champions that are part of its network. Finally, positioning its staff and champions in key senior advisory positions in strategic networks also proves to be a powerful tool to disseminate its message and accelerate the global movement towards open data in agriculture and nutrition.

The team:

In order to manage these three core action components, we propose a realignment of the Secretariat's programmatic structure (excluding administrative support) accordingly:

GODAN 2.0: Proposed



During the transition period we propose a realignment of the Secretariat programme structure along the priorities defined in this business plan. This will allow for the consolidation of the GODAN network and of interaction mechanisms designed to stimulate data and knowledge exchanges, and the network's ultimate goal: innovation in agriculture and nutrition.

Therefore we propose the following, realigned structure to be used during the subsequent transformation period:

- Executive Director: (EXISTING) Leading the organization; main reporting channel to the Board.
- Deputy ED: (CONVERSION TO FULL TIME): We propose to make this post full time
- Administration: (EXISTING): Various part time functions have been regrouped in this post.
- Strategic Coms expert: (EXISTING)
- Strategic Partnership Coordinator: (EXISTING)
- Research and M&E Coordinator:(EXISTING) Currently secondee
- Coms Assistant: (NEW)
- Partnership Experts: (CONVERSION TO FULL TIME) Currently two part time; any additional experts to be funded within requesting programmes/projects.
- Research specialists: (EXISTING) Secondees from various organizations/governments.

It should be underlined that administrative support staff is not included in this arrangement as we propose that administrative functions continue to be part of a hosting arrangement. Similarly we propose that a greater/increasing part of programme support be self-funded instead of almost exclusively coming from the core Secretariat budget as was the case in the past.

Finally, we also propose that requests for programme guidance/support by major organizations/programmes be conditional to funding, and that this approach be encouraged as a regular Secretariat work practice.

Financial plan:

Financial sustainability:

In order to maximize impact during this transformation period, a consistent funding strategy is proposed, heavily relying on further improvement of the GODAN branding, much greater use of technology and a high level strategic approach to the implementation of the GODAN communication strategy.

This will be based on the following:

1. Mobilize existing and new core Governments as donors: In addition to pursuing the expansion of the GODAN footprint and its support to national policies on open data for agriculture and nutrition, this strategy capitalizes on the interest expressed by a range of Governments, big and small, to take a greater part in GODAN. Core funding required from our key partners for the functioning of the network during the transformation period is illustrated in the following section.

2. GODAN branding: GODAN's credibility and image has grown proportionally to the size of its global network. Moving from being an unknown entity to have become a global reference in open data for agriculture and nutrition is very appealing for private sector entities looking for avenues to improve their image, reflect their adoption of open data, transparency and interoperable standards. Therefore greater efforts will be deployed in order to allow private sector to be publicly associated/branded with GODAN as official sponsors. Similarly civil society, especially interested by the transparency open data provides also offer support opportunities. However in both cases a key motivation factor is tax deductible contributions that a new legal status for the secretariat (refer to the ' legal personality' section in this business plan) offers.

3. General public: There again the possibility to make tax deductible contributions to GODAN is an important factor. However another improvement the Secretariat plans to do is to allow/recognize individual support. As we recall that GODAN was essentially conceived as a network of organisations, it has until now been practically impossible for individuals to express their support (other than verbally) to the work carried out by GODAN. We therefore believe that a special ' supporter' status/category should be put in place, along with the possibility to contribute directly to GODAN through individual contributions. The vast number of organisations/websites which allow for direct individual contributions have long paved the way for this to be implemented.

4. Regular fund raising campaigns: GODAN's fund raising strategy will intensify its efforts in relation to major events in which the Secretariat should be involved (mobilizing event sponsors). However in addition to these ad hoc efforts, annual events strategically chosen should trigger regular calls for funding to the various audiences that GODAN addresses. Whether it is the annual GODAN fund raiser or more targeted occasions, the Secretariat plans to implement regular public solicitations for funding.

5. Events: Finally, as GODAN's capacity and credibility increased, its participation to events (key advocacy for a) initially required to have GODAN as sponsors. Since then an increasing number of event organizers are inviting us to speak without GODAN having to be a sponsor (though getting branding in place). Now we plan to move to step three, which is to seek participant fees on selected GODAN organized events.

We believe that the implementation of the above will allow for an increase in the GODAN programmes/outreach intensity during the transformation period, hence increase mobilization around open data for agriculture and nutrition, while allowing for a greater self-sustainability shall this become the direction agreed to by the GODAN members.

Core funding required:

GODAN PARTNERSHIP CORE FUNDING (GDP):

	----- Current cycle -----			-Transition-		---Transformation period ---			
Year/ Cost item	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL 2020-2022
Internal trading	7,278	564	127,310	51,000	77,000	60,000	70,000	70,000	200,000
Staff costs	168,510	355,687	273,388	220,000	288,000	390,000	400,000	410,000	1,200,000
Programme	247,503	1,281,128	667,542	244,000	88,750	395,000	405,000	410,000	1,170,000
Other costs	161,770	341,459	262,452	271,160	302,400	90,000	95,000	100,000	285,000
Total:	585,061	1,978,838	1,330,692	786,160	756,150	935,000	970,000	990,000	2,895,000

Note: Forecast deficit for 2019: £ 150,000 (without changes) This means that shall there be no transformation period, the forecasted deficit for 2019 would have to be absorbed through gradual staff and programmes reductions/phasing out.

Assuming there will be a transformation period, the funding required maintaining core GODAN activities and increasing its impact and partner support represents a reduction of 11% over existing funding levels. This is made possible by improved programmatic practices, greater use of technology, overall efficiency gains, and gradually shifting programmes from core to self-funding.

Even including additional funds required to offset the forecasted 2019 deficit, the total requirements for core funding still represent a *decrease* (8%) compared to existing funding levels.

Monitoring and Evaluation

As for any advocacy based organization, impact is generated over time, with beneficiaries/partners interaction moving from awareness to achievement: *first knowledge of GODAN identity/branding*, then of the *topic/open data*, then as to *the 'how'*, and finally to *action*: open data policy, releasing datasets, developing applications, etc.

We believe that while research, publications, reports from work groups or other initiatives are essential, it is important to step back and have a regular overview of the overall progress achieved. The Secretariat will be presenting a short overview along with this business plan.

Furthermore during the transformation period we propose to put a greater emphasis on M&E. For this purpose a comprehensive evaluation is to be completed by the end of 2018, while the M&E function will be officially incorporated in the duties of the /research and M&E Specialist position that we are proposing as part of the revised Secretariat organigramme, illustrated in the previous section.

Operations

Locations & Facilities

The GODAN Secretariat is currently hosted in the CABI HQ premises in Wallingford UK. In this context, CABI provides the secretariat with office space and administrative functions such as HR, travel, payroll etc., and acts as the Secretariat's trustee.

It should be noted that a number of GODAN staff (including part time and secondees) are physically located outside the UK in various facilities generally provided by the seconding organizations. This arrangement reflects the decentralized nature of the GODAN, and is expected to continue.

It is important to separate the physical hosting functions from the administrative support functions, both of which thanks to today's technology can be managed concurrently or separately, as reflected by various comments/expressions of interests received by the Secretariat.

As a number of parties (including CABI) have expressed interest in the possibility of hosting the Secretariat during the transformation phase, we recommend that a formal request for proposals be initiated and that the exercise be completed before the end of the current calendar year.

Technology

The administrative systems used by GODAN at this point in time, are those provided by the hosting organization, CABI. This includes web hosting/support, which has over time reached, and one could say exceeded capacity. This is why the Secretariat has made increasing use of external resources and is in the process of contracting a new website host with greater bandwidth and overall technical capacity.

As described above, during the transition period, the Secretariat plans to significantly upgrade the capacity of its website in order to allow for expanded outreach, increased resources availability and easier, more direct inter-member exchanges/interaction. Beyond the actual modifications of the GODAN website's own functionality, we plan to make more of the network's resources directly accessible through it, leading to partner resources while avoiding duplication.

Equipment & Tools

At the present time, desks, computers and other office equipment is provided by CABI under our hosting arrangement. It is expected that this/a similar facility will be built in hosting arrangements for the transformation period.

Milestones & Metrics

Milestone	Due Date	Who's Responsible
Adoption draft GODAN Business Plan	July 27, 2018	ED/Chair
RFP for hosting Secretariat released	September 1, 2018	Secretariat
Hosting and funding proposals received	October 1, 2018	GODAN partners
Revised/final business plan	November 1, 2018	Secretariat
Adoption of the final business plan	December 1, 2018	Steering Committee
Transition structure in place	December 31, 2018	Secretariat
End of the transformation period	December 31, 2022	

Forecast

This financial plan was developed based upon previous years, tracking trends in cost effectiveness of various means of intervention.

We believe that the global footprint and credibility established by the Secretariat is there to stay and is more than likely to generate additional interest and demands as the GODAN network is clearly addressing a need that was until then unfulfilled.

If trends continue as we have seen so far, it is likely that the GODAN partnership will near 1000 member organizations before the end of the current year. While it is difficult to predict the level of its market penetration by the end of the proposed three year transformation period, it is clear that the number will continue to increase.

However it is also clear that technical/advisory support will also continue to increase; therefore it is of high importance that adjustments proposed by the Secretariat be supported by the partners community.

