

Session 12. What should the governance structure for an inter-linked GODAN-CIARD look like? How do we define a set of roles and key functions of a Secretariat which would allow several different partners, large and small to play a role?

Rapporteur's write-up of breakout group 12B discussion

Summary

A lively discussion with a range of opinions. No firm consensus was reached on a recommendation for inter-linking CIARD and GODAN. All felt that there would be a benefit to both from closer working but that a formal merger wasn't necessarily the way to go. People were also agreed that neither GODAN nor CIARD were ideal acronyms so there could be an opportunity to convene around a common strapline such as 'open agricultural knowledge for all'. However, many other also felt that the distinctions between each and unique identities should also be properly maintained. Conversation was structured around three key areas:

1. Structure of a possible joint Secretariat
2. Shared functions of a Secretariat for the CIARD and GODAN movements
3. Inter-linking CIARD and GODAN
 1. Structure of a possible joint Secretariat
 - Need to identify the energy/resources of all partners (CIARD and GODAN) to identify the best possible working structures
 - Do we need a Secretariat or just a Coordination Unit? Who prioritises their activities?
 - Need some form of Steering Group, linked to the Secretariat and drawn from members
 - Entity must accommodate high-level policy/advocacy and technical functions with one over-arching umbrella. Some expressed doubt that this was possible within one organisation and may need two.
 - Is there already a common vision or set of values? Need a process to develop these
 - Grab the low-hanging fruit from both CIARD and GODAN now. Take time to explore a possible joint strategy between CIARD and GODAN (and possibly others)
 - Need a finite timeframe of one month to discuss options and models to develop a single vision and governance structure.
 - Some felt should go ahead and establish the GODAN Secretariat now and refine it later should a merger with CIARD be agreed after wider consultation
 - Need to map functions against proposed structures and checklists

2. Shared Functions of a joint CIARD-GODAN Secretariat (no attempt was made to allocate these to either or both movements)

- Advocacy (based on a political vision)
- Capacity-development
- Coordination/mapping
- Networking platform
- Standardisation (technical standards in ag open data)
- Best practice in case studies
- Globalising the open data movement
- Governance of data/information
- Expanding the partners, especially with political big players such as governments and the private sector e.g. Google, Facebook
- Infrastructure/technical components (beyond standards). Information management
- Education and training
- Intellectual property issues and identification of related policy issues
- Horizon-scanning and visioning the future
- Portfolio of instruments- policy templates, toolkits etc

3. Interlinking CIARD and GODAN

- Most think that CIARD and GODAN should work closely together
- Reasons for 'yes' to formal interlinking/merging:
 - Need to coordinate multiple initiatives/efforts
 - GODAN works more at the policy level, CIARD at the grassroots
 - Share some common goals, plus some unique ones (shared strength)
 - Need a single voice to maximise efficacy of these efforts
- Reasons for 'no' to formal interlinking/merging:
 - Is already a strong vision/history behind CIARD. Why reinvent this?
 - Some are sceptical about involving CIARD in open data at the political level
 - CIARD has several more partners than GODAN. Need the voices of 160+ countries to be heard distinctly.
 - Issue of power relations. Need to ensure that the collective voice of CIARD is maintained and not dwarfed.
 - Open data is not just for development purposes
 - GODAN should focus on debate and advocacy at the political level
- Reasons for 'don't know' to formal interlinking/merging:
 - Names don't matter but content and reputation do. Is a matter of perception.
 - Coordination is good but better to retain some levels of independence

- Who do we want to influence? Policymakers or farmers?
May need to be separate target audiences for CIARD and GODAN
- GODAN has a specific focus on open data which is narrower than that of CIARD