

ILC Secretariat Management Response to the Independent Mid-Term Review of the Strategy 2016-2021

For information and guidance by the 31st Council

Introduction and overall assessment

ILC's strategy 2016-2021 is divided into two three-year cycles. *MDF* and *Resultante* were appointed to undertake a Mid-Term Review, in order to guide adjustments for the second cycle (2019-21), with the following objectives:

1. Assess achievements towards the expected results, outcomes as well as unexpected results and impacts
2. Assess the relevance and effectiveness of the Roadmap in support of ILC's Theory of Change, particularly its main implementation axes, results framework and business model, in delivering the strategy, and recommend possible adjustments to the Roadmap
3. Identify challenges that have impeded the effectiveness of ILC and successes that should be built upon
4. Recommend actions to be taken for the second half of the strategy (2019-21)

The review was undertaken between June 2017 and April 2018. Preliminary findings were shared in a workshop with the 30th Council on 13th December 2017. A first draft report was then prepared for comments and a fact-check to the ILC Secretariat on 28th February 2018. The final report was delivered on 16th April. The *MDF-Resultante* consortium delivered a high-quality report. We are pleased that it strongly affirms the continuing validity of ILC's Strategy, and the findings and recommendations are a useful and robust basis for enhancing the effectiveness and impact of ILC 2019-21.

We appreciate the actor-based approach the reviewers used, with the high participation of ILC's membership; interviews with over hundred and forty internal and external stakeholders, participation in all regional assemblies, and country studies in Bangladesh, Cameroon, Guatemala, Nepal, Peru, and Tanzania. This has enabled a review based on the distinctiveness of ILC as a network, which captures the diversity it embraces as well as the significance of the joint efforts of members. The approach of the reviewers has helped to develop a set of findings and recommendations that adequately respond to the objectives of the review.

This management response comments on the findings and recommendations, categorising its 33 challenges into three main axes of work: ILC operations, measuring results and applying the strategy. In putting the recommendations into practice, we outline two significant steps we will make in how ILC applies its strategy in 2019-21; a **more catalytic operating model**, and **taking the next steps beyond regionalisation**.

On the findings and recommendations

The positive findings of the review are highly significant for the work of ILC under its current strategy. In particular, we note that:

- The ILC Strategy remains valid. Despite its ambitious transformative intentions, it has demonstrated its potential to galvanise the ILC membership towards realising people-centred land governance.
- ILC's delivery mechanisms for its membership are well-thought and work effectively for the type of organisation ILC is. Many could be slightly adjusted, but none are in need of major change.
- NES remains the vehicle that most characterises ILC's capacity to support change, and it gives a unique image to entire network, including recognition from governments.

- Regionalisation has played an important role in network evolution. It is highly appreciated by members, and has helped build a multi-nodal structure where decision-making, representation and support are strongly distributed across cornerstones in the network.

The report identifies 33 challenges and corresponding recommendations. We find all 33 valid. As the reviewers did not categorise the recommendations according to the structure of the Roadmap, our response is structured according to three broad, but related, categories in which the recommendations fall.

1. **Recommendations on ILC operations (#1-12).** These are useful for the Secretariat, RCUs, and members involved in NES or CBI platforms to improve their impact. None require major shifts, but all provide useful insights in continuing to build the effectiveness of ILC operations.
2. **Recommendations on how ILC applies its strategy (#2, 9, 17-33).** These recommendations are aimed at how ILC applies the strategy to reach its highest potential. They imply taking significant steps in two particular areas of how ILC functions over the next triennium:
 - a. Adopt an operating model that is strongly **catalytic and service oriented** to members; in what ILC funds, how it plans and budgets, and what opportunities it provides (#2,8,9,14,21,32,33)
 - b. Take the next steps beyond regionalisation, to also build the governance, strategic, operational and support dimensions of **sub-regions, constituencies and cornerstones**¹ (#11,17,18,20-31)
3. **Recommendations on measuring results (#13-16).** These are useful for revising ILC's results framework.

ILC management response and Council role

How the ILC support team responds to the recommendations, the role of ILC's governance bodies, and accountability for their implementation will be different for each of the above blocks.

1. **Recommendations on ILC operations:** The Secretariat and RCUs will integrate the recommended measures into ILC operations. No council involvement is required, with exception of recommendations #2 and #9 on the financing structure of ILC operations, which is elaborated under block 2 below.
Accountability: The integration of these straightforward recommendations into the operations of ILC will start immediately. They will be fully integrated from January 2019, and will be reflected in the annual reports made by the Secretariat and RCUs.
2. **Recommendations on how ILC applies its strategy:** The two significant steps in the evolution of how ILC implements its strategy imply changes to the ILC operating model. They will affect how members interact and are supported by the ILC network and how the network functions. They thus form the major part of this response, and require revisions to the Roadmap for 2019-21.
Accountability: These changes, are summarised below for the consideration of the 31st Council of June 2018. Guided by the Council decisions, the Secretariat will elaborate each of them into proposed revisions to the Roadmap, for approval by the 32nd Council in December 2018. They will define ILC's operating model from January 2019 until the end of the strategy in December 2021.
3. **Recommendations on measuring results:** The Secretariat will draft a revised results framework that better captures the achievements of ILC as a network towards people-centred land governance, also taking into account recommendations from the EC ROM report and the Gender Audit.
Accountability: The 32nd Council of December 2018 will finalise and approve the new results framework to be used to measure ILC's achievements 2019-2021. It will be included into the revised Roadmap.

¹ Cornerstones are platforms, with their own governance arrangements, where members and their partners work together to implement strategic initiatives (NESs, CBIs etc), guided by ILC's governance and benefitting from ILC's support structures.

Two big steps in ILC's evolution: what this means in practice

ILC will adopt an operating model that is strongly catalytic and service oriented to members; in what ILC funds, how it plans and budgets, and what opportunities it provides (#2,8,9,14,21,32,33)

ILC membership will see three main changes in 2019-2021, as follows:

1. **ILC strategic initiatives and the network will increasingly be led by members, not by support structures:** members will organise themselves in initiative-specific platforms that constitute the cornerstones of the ILC network. Cornerstones will ensure the full participation of all members in the governance, planning and budgeting of strategic initiatives. Participating members will co-build and contribute to the budget of their strategic initiative. Resource mobilisation will be integrated into the planning cycle by including a financial sustainability plan into proposals. The role of the 'ILC Support Team' (RCUs and the Secretariat) will be less in administering funds and increasingly to facilitate the strategic orientation, financial and implementation capacity and opportunity for impact of the cornerstones.
2. **ILC will support members catalytically, not as a donor.** Funding and technical assistance provided to cornerstones through ILC will 'kick start' strategic initiatives, coordination and implementation capacities. ILC will provide core funding based on strategic vision, potential for impact and sound governance, rather than activities. To fund members in this manner, ILC has to primarily raise unrestricted funds. This will enable long-term core funding (platform-building, strategy, governance, facilitation) of member-led initiatives. Tied funds for implementation will be the responsibility of cornerstones. ILC may provide initial funds for implementation, but these will be phased down over time as the capacities of, and resources mobilised by, cornerstones are scaled up.
3. **Planning, budgeting, implementation and reporting processes will be longer-term and more streamlined:** 'Core funding' of cornerstones will enable them to move from a one to a three-year planning, budgeting and implementation cycle. This will also make planning and reporting formats simpler and longer term.

One support team in practice: the ILC support team will be integrated into a single management structure, with an increasing presence in the regions. RCUs will be strengthened as the key support mechanism to the governance and operations of cornerstones in the regions. The global secretariat will be more clearly responsible for cross-regional and global functions. Overall, the ILC support team will be more dispersed in the network, with a greater presence in the regions.

The Secretariat Director and the three Regional Coordinators will develop a single functional organogram with both regional and global functions. The annual performance objectives and reports of Regional Coordinators and Director will be approved concurrently by the Regional Committees and the Council.

'One team' will better integrate RCUs with the global secretariat. It will preserve the benefits of decentralisation (RCUs providing support close to members, accountability to regional committees for supporting delivery of regional strategies), while mitigating its risks (duplication of functions, isolation of RCUs, different performance standards).

The cost of the ILC support team will in part be covered by voluntary contributions of members, over and above fees, and targets will be set in this regard.

ILC will take the next steps beyond regionalisation, to also build the governance, strategic, operational and support dimensions of sub-regions, constituencies and cornerstones (#11,17,18,20-31)

ILC membership and Council will see three main changes by 2019-2021, as follows:

1. **Members will take stronger strategic leadership through regional platforms:** There will be a decisive shift in the function of Regional Assemblies to fully become a space of strategic orientation and mutual accountability. Planning will be done independently by cornerstones with their own governance mechanisms, reporting to Regional Assemblies. This will allow Regional Assemblies to define regional strategies, against which to review and approve work plans and budgets. Regional Committees will propose funding priorities to Regional Assemblies, aligned with Regional Strategies. This will empower the Steering Committees with a more political mandate, while reducing perceived conflicts of interest in budget allocation. The role of the ILC Council will also evolve with less emphasis on specific strategic initiatives and more on overseeing the ‘context-strategies-priorities-achievements’ continuum against the ten commitments. Sub-regional cornerstones will also be supported to enable sub-regional strategizing in distinct sub-regional contexts.
2. **Strategic and other key partners will add and receive more value from the ILC network:** Strategic partners, Council members and other key partners will be enabled to play a more strategic role in ILC by: (i) changing the format for the annual face-to-face Council meetings by integrating parallel and overlapping programmes targeted at different constituencies, allowing participation of targeted partners from within and beyond the network who can add value to the discussion, providing capacity building for Council members, and rotating the hosting; (ii) increasing possibilities for the country offices of strategic partners to be directly involved (operationally and financially) with NESs and CBIs that align with their priorities; and (iii) inviting important constituency-based organisations to participate in regional platforms as strategic partners.
3. **Enhanced capacity building for cornerstones and other network members, with a strong focus on gender justice:** Major focus will be given by ILC over the next three years to strengthen the capacity of cornerstones to strategize, plan, mobilise resources, and have an impact on policies and practices. These will be facilitated by new tools such as the Competency Map, the Learning Hub and MemberNet. Member-led ‘Technical Facilities’ will offer support to members across the network, such as on leadership, good governance, securing community land rights, and data, among others. Gender justice will be incorporated as a crosscutting approach and value across ILC operations, which also relies on reinforcement of capacity building process and elaboration of resource materials. Capacity building will be distributed across the network, promoting possibilities for rotation of focal points of cornerstone platforms, and limiting one member becoming the focal point for multiple initiatives. This will encourage wider and more diverse leadership to emerge within the network, and in particular will support constituency-based organisations to play a greater role in the work and life of ILC.

Finally a corollary to the changes above, a **revised results framework will better capture the achievements of ILC**. It will be simpler with less indicators, it will include measurement of ILC contribution to capacity building for land actors/solution-oriented competencies, and will re-define impact as the part of the change which ILC contributes to and link with the Dashboard for the ten commitments. **A Risk Management Matrix will be annexed to the revised Roadmap.**