

Global Board Meeting Minutes – In Person at the GNDR Offices, London

Monday 17 February 2025 all day

Board Participants: Emmanuel Seck (Chair of the Global Board), Lorenzo Mota King, Tolekan Ismailova, Mario Flores, Ghada Ahmadein, Dr Khurram Malik, Eena Geslaine Barrun, Tasneen Siddiqui, Peter Curran, Usha Menon, Rdepmta Njeru, Jana Junghardt, Grace Ananda, Diana Enriquez, Ewout van den Blink.

Apologies: Claire Tiffen, Baimba Sissay, Breny Herrera

In attendance from the Secretariat: Nick Roberts, Shivangi Chavda, Marco Concepcion Raba, Rebecca Murphy, Ipsita Sircar, Adessou Kossivi, Kathryn McDonagh, Orla Cunnane, Florencia Pasquale (TPA)

Key:

Resolutions in red text

Links to documents are highlighted

1. Welcome from the Chair

Emmanuel welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was noted that the key objectives to be covered over the next 3 days are the funding situation and strategy from 2025 onwards.

After having followed the completion of the selection process for new independent members of the global board, Peter Curran is put forward for a vote.

Peter Curran was formally elected as the new Independent Global Board Member

2. Recording Apologies

Apologies were received in writing from Claire Tiffen, Baimba Sissay and Breny Herrera

3. Agenda

The Chair presented the agenda for approval.

[20250207_Global Board Meeting Agenda.docx - Google Docs](#)

Resolution: The agenda was approved

4. Global Board December 2024 meeting minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed.

[2024.12.12 Board Meeting Minutes.docx - Google Docs](#)

Resolution: The minutes were approved

5. Secretariat Update

[Secretariat Update, Dec. 2024 - Feb. 2025](#)

[Secretariat update 17022025.pptx - Google Slides](#)

Marcos presented the Secretariat update, summarising activities since the last meeting of the Board in December. This generated a number of questions and comments:

- **Ewout van den Blink** recalled the role of the Board of Trustess. He underlined the importance of it in ensuring that the Network complies with the legal and sustainability requirements that ensure that GNDR's strategic objectives are met and ensure its long-term impact. .
- **Mario Flores** asked for an update on the situation with Stichting GNDR. **Marcos** responded that in order for Stichting GNDR to be able to access EU funding it would have to demonstrate 3 years of operations in the EU. At the moment, we do not have the funds or capacity to support such operations and the initiative has been postponed.
- The financial situation resulting from cuts in US aid and the dismantling of USAID is analysed:
 - The work of the Fundraising team in securing new funding was noted, as well as the need for unrestricted funding to cover overhead costs.
 - It was noted that GNDR will be giving up its London head office from August 2025 when the lease is up, in order to save money.
 - **Lorenzo Mota King** raised the idea of establishing a membership fee for GNDR members. He posited that this would raise unrestricted funding for the network and would also be a show of commitment from the membership to the Network. **Marcos** responded that the idea of a membership fee was discussed at the last In Person Global Board meeting in Nairobi in February 2024 and decided against it at that time. We could revisit the idea of voluntary membership fees, based on the commercial status of the member organisation and their ability to afford it.
- It was noted that the MDS project had zero disallowances at audit and that this is a great achievement by the Secretariat and members. **Grace Ananda** noted that this achievement should be flagged to potential funders as it demonstrates that we are effective stewards of funding.

6. Regional Advisory Groups

The following updates were presented from the Regional Advisory Groups

LAC

[A&C-Reunio de la Junta-FEB2025_Consolidado_v00.pptx - Google Slides](#)

[Regional Updates - Governance - Google Drive](#)

Europe

[Bir Duino 2 - Google Docs](#)

[Tolekan 2025.02.17 Updates from the Regional Representatives Template \(1\) \(1\).docx - Google Docs](#)

[Jana 202502_Regional Update Europe \(1\).docx - Google Docs](#)

[Regional Update Europe.pptx - Google Slides](#)

Asia

[ESEA Report_02172025 - Google Docs](#)

[Tasneem Updates from the Regional Representatives_South Asia.docx - Google Docs](#)

Africa

[UPDATE WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA REGION.pptx - Google Slides](#)

[GNDR REGIONAL UPDATE FOR EASTERN AFRICA - PRESENTED DURING GLOBAL BOARD FEB 2025.docx - Google Docs](#)

[Ghada 2025.02.17 Updates from the NAWA Region - G.Ahmadein.docx - Google Docs](#)

[Baimba 2025.02.17 Updates from the Regional Representatives Template \(1\).doc - Google Docs](#)

The Global Board members reflected on the updates from the RAGs, and some key points are highlighted:

- The role of the NFPs is considered key for the governance of the Network, and still, we have some countries where no focal point was elected. It's stressed the need to promote participation at national level, and better coordination between Regional representatives and NFPs.
- It's noted that civic space is shrinking, and geopolitical tensions and funding issues are adding huge complexities for social participation
- It's noted as well, the need of promoting the policy job at local, national and regional level... some progress has been made at regional level, but still, not enough.
- At the same time, the Secretariat is encouraged to continue to invest efforts in fostering communication and collaboration among members. The role of NFPs was discussed. Usha Menon noted that our NFPs are leaders within their local communities. We need to leverage that network of community leaders in our fundraising efforts and narrative. We should celebrate as volunteers who believe in the GNDR mission and place in spaces where the GNDR flag is being flown.

7. USAID Freeze Impact

Ewout van den Blink and Nick Roberts presented an assessment of the impact of the USAID funding freeze.

[20250217_USAIDfreeze.pptx - Google Slides](#)

Marcos noted the measures taken to face the situation, summarised as follows:

- Ensuring the financial viability of the organisation
- Protecting jobs
- Informing key stakeholders (staff, partners, trustees)
- Prepare to respond to the suspension or termination of the project
- Financial analysis
- Outcome impact analysis
- Collect data and stories
- Identify potential donors and proactive outreach
- Coordination with other key networks and stakeholders

GNDR needs the support of the Global Board in mapping where we have connections to donors who might be able to fund us relatively quickly.

In terms of the impact of the USAID situation on our members, GNDR wants to be there to support its members. We will undertake a member survey to understand the impact on them. At the same time, we will make an appeal to other donors and stakeholders to support our members who have lost funding as a result of the USAID freeze. We already have feedback from our members directly impacted by the termination of the LLHS project.

We will have a statement from the Global Board prepared by the end of the In Person meeting.

GNDR will create a 2 pager document on the LLHS for Board Members to use when approaching potential donors.

Usha Menon noted that Board Members have standing as a result of their position and they can use it when approaching connections for funding via LinkedIn etc.

8. Updates from the Working Groups

The following updates were presented by the Working Groups:

[2025.01.28 Recommendations from MWG.docx - Google Docs](#)

The MWG recommends that GNDR consider what our offer is to members and what products we can offer them in order to encourage them to pay a voluntary membership fee.

[2025.02.05 Recommendations from FAWG.docx - Google Docs](#)

The main item for discussion was the Executive Order of the US President, issued on 20th January, which has led to an immediate 90-day suspension on all USAID activities. This includes our largest grant, Local Leadership for Humanitarian Solutions (LLHS), and therefore has serious financial implications for GNDR. The group agreed that, for planning and budgeting purposes, we need to adopt a 'worst case scenario', and assume the eventual cancellation of this grant and of any future funding from USAID

[2025.02.06 Recommendations from GWG.docx - Google Docs](#)

Following the Governance WG recommendations, it's approved to:

- Reopen the nomination process for the second Independent Global Board member.
- Postpone for 3 months the Final evaluation of the current strategy and the process for the development of the new global strategy, due to the USAID funding issue. This way, the new Global Strategy will now be ready for presentation and review by the Global Board at the Global Summit 2026.

[2025.02.07 RWG recommendations.docx](#)

Tuesday 18 February 2025 all day

1. Where are we heading? DRR and Risk Drivers current scenario and way forward

Ipsita Sircar and Shivangi Chavda from the GNDR Secretariat presented a session on trends in DRR.

We are five years away from the end of Sendai and there is currently no discussion of a new framework. If UNDRR ceases to exist, does GNDR seek to occupy that space in their absence?

Discussion is extended but the conclusion is summed up in the need to to break the mould of DRR to be at the forefront of DRR remaining relevant.

2. Mapping strategic partners & revisiting our business model

The Global Board discussed new products that could potentially form part of a new business model for GNDR. We explored how GNDR creates and delivers its work and then captures its value. It was noted that it is important that any such products serve GNDR's core objectives and honour our purpose as a purpose-driven organisation.

We looked at our five pillars of activity for scope to create products as part of a new business model. We prioritized creating value propositions in each of the five areas. We are looking to monetize the services we provide.

Another suggestion relates to the "Resilience Fund", through which GNDR could operate as fund managers for big donors to give money to CSOs and grassroots orgs. We have shown ourselves to be good stewards of funding - for example no disallowances in our USAID audit.

Usha Menon raised the idea of creating an impact statement to show what success looks like in 5 years time.

The following ideas for products were discussed:

- Training - e.g. a women's mentoring programme
- Online training offerings
- A film festival featuring films from CSOs working in DRR
- Fundraising - e.g. the Resilience Fund
- VFL as our flagship programme

The idea of a membership fee was discussed as part of the GNDR business model. The concern about losing members if a compulsory membership fee was introduced comes up. If we introduce fees we need to be clear about what we are offering through membership of GNDR. Smaller orgs will want access to fundraising and GNDR projects. We will also monitor any reduction in our membership numbers as a result of introducing voluntary fees.

It was agreed that a voluntary membership fee is a pressing issue due to the current financial situation. Introducing a voluntary membership fee is a process that would need to be carefully managed in order not to alienate members. The fee should be based on an organisation's income and the timelines for its introduction should be made clear to members.

Peter Curran suggested using the first year of a voluntary membership fee as a consultation on membership fees. This consultation would identify the capacity of our members to pay and how much it should be.

We should also look at the indirect impacts of a membership fee, such as any extra administrative work created.

It's approved that the Secretariat will create a business case for a voluntary membership fee to be discussed and approved at the next Global Board meeting in June, after being informed and assessed by the Membership Working Group.

3. GNDR's role to play

Rebecca Murphy led a session on GNDR's unique selling price (USP) and its role to play in the DRR space.

She asked the Board members to think about how they would describe GNDR's work to a family member over dinner in plain language.

We will develop a role statement and then use that role statement to inform our business model.

GNDR is:

- The voice of local organisations
- A leader on DRR
- A group of experts on DRR
- A leader on research through an annual report from VFL
- A policy influencer through Cop and the Global Platform
- A campaigning organisation
- A place for our members to connect and engage – e.g. at the Global Summit
- The largest global network of DRR CSOs
- A place to find new evidence on DRR in accessible language – e.g. MDS Cookbook
- A network of locally-led organisations
- A network that has the trust of our members
- A place to go for training and certification on DRR topics – e.g. the LLA

Wednesday 19 February 2025 all day

1. Promoting localisation through bottom-up governance

Emmanuel led the first session of the last day's discussions, which focussed on the analysis of our governance, and success stories in our network, for the promotion of a bottom-up approach.

Ghada gave the example of RAED acting as a GNDR member, but also as a regional platform;

Jana gave the example of the The Swiss NGO DRR Platform, for national and regional coordination. Aspects considered and discussed for the national level are the followings:

- The need for constant coordination with National Focal Points.
- Support efforts at national level to increase the Network's visibility.
- Support the mapping exercise, at national level, of organisations to connect with.
- Support the promotion of National Networks for DRR, as in the examples of Egypt, Sweden and Switzerland.
- Revise the qualification of NFPs, following the criteria recommended by the Membership and Governance Working Groups.
- Promote the use of the Community Platform to ensure a better coordination between Regional Representatives and NFPs.

There was also discussion about the regional level and the need of revisiting the role of RAGs. Aspects considered were as follows:

- The need to promote further engagements with regional stakeholders, such as GNDR's participation in the Africa Group for DRR.
- The need to track performance of regional representatives, following the KPIs recommended by the Membership and Governance Working Groups.
- The need to formalise the advisory role of former NFPs and Regional representatives, to strengthen the Network's "memory" and scope.
- Promote the coordination between regional representatives in each region, as the Americas region has been doing.
- It's proposed to create a guide to improve RAGs engagements and impacts.

2. Global Strategy 2026-30

Peter led a discussion/workshop on the development of the new 5-year strategy, the group being divided into subgroups and tasked with identifying what should be the key elements and high priority areas of our new strategy.

It was agreed that a Board working group should be set up to steer the development of the new strategy, with representation from each of the regions.

There was also discussion regarding the letter to be sent to USAID in the light of the recent Executive Order and the suspension of our LLHS project. It was agreed that the tone should not be over-aggressive, and the content should focus on the DRR perspective

3. Meeting evaluation and wrap up

Peter wrapped things up with a (highly creative!) pictorial/narrative wall summary of the meeting and slide show. Marcos thanked everyone for their attendance and active participation in the event

The meeting concluded around 16.00 pm GMT.