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JUST RURAL TRANSITION

Newsletter | 05 May 2020

Since its launch at the United Nations Climate Action Summit in September 2019, the Just Rural Transition (JRT) initiative continues to grow and evolve. This newsletter marks the establishment of the JRT Secretariat based at Meridian Institute, with thanks to the support of the UK's Department for International Development.

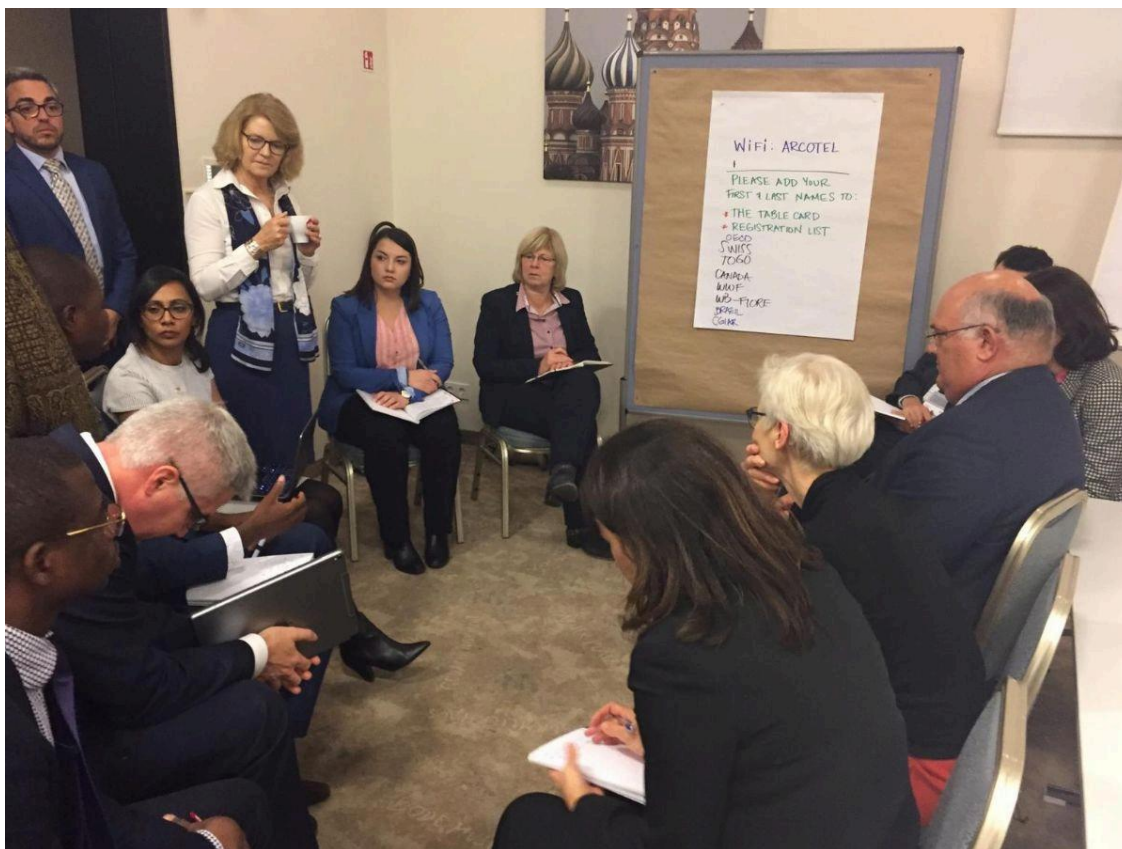


**Introduction by Melissa Pinfield,
Executive Director of the JRT Secretariat**

I'm delighted and honoured to be working with Meridian colleagues to support the Just Rural Transition. A huge thank you to all those who participated in the recent webinar where we outlined some of the emerging action areas that the JRT will support. It was great to hear from so many people within the JRT network on potential collaboration opportunities. As the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic plays out through our economies and societies - with devastating consequences for many vulnerable communities - the need for effective, pragmatic and coordinated action to strengthen the resilience of food and land use systems and support food producers has never felt more pertinent.

In the coming weeks and months, we will be seeking your views and input to emerging priority work areas through webinars and bilateral consultations. We will also be creating a new JRT website and providing (virtual) opportunities for the diverse JRT community to interact with each another. The role of the Secretariat is to support you – the JRT community - to build collective knowledge and understanding and find common ground to collaborate and accelerate action in specific geographies or sectoral issues. There is a wealth of knowledge and experience out there, and a political window of opportunity in

Policy Action Coalition (PAC) *Repurposing and Reinvesting Government Support for Food and Agriculture*



The PAC will continue to be supported by Ann Tutwiler as well as the JRT Secretariat based at Meridian. Through the PAC, participating governments, knowledge and implementation partners are working together to support the redirecting of public support (agricultural subsidies and price supports) and policies to the food and agricultural sector to support the development of resilient, sustainable food systems that meet twenty-first century challenges. The PAC will build a peer-to-peer learning platform and develop policy briefs, case studies and toolkits to support stakeholders move forward with policy reform and implementation. It will convene multi-stakeholder dialogues in partner countries and build momentum for reform at the global level.

Since its launch in September 2019, the PAC has expanded its membership and formed strong relationships with other interested parties in the broader agricultural community. This includes close coordination with the World Bank, whose Technical Assistance programme to Realign Agricultural Policies and Support for Sustainable Food Systems will support selected countries. Malawi and the World Farmers' Organisation both joined the

Coordinator, reflected that “it was great to see countries as diverse as Brazil and Togo sharing lessons learned with each other. The meeting really illustrated to me the value and importance of peer to peer learning opportunities. The priority in the coming weeks is to consult PAC partners and think through medium to long term impacts of COVID-19 on the food and agricultural sector and implications for the PAC’s work in supporting countries who want to repurpose their government support to the sector.”

A key priority for PAC Coordinator, Ann Tutwiler, supported by the JRT Secretariat based at Meridian, is to consult PAC partners and think through implications of COVID-19 on this work.

The PAC is currently recruiting a specialist to undertake policy and economic analysis and develop knowledge products for the PAC community. For more information on these and other activities, please contact the PAC Coordinator directly at atutwiler@merid.org or via pac@merid.org.

Investment Partnerships Network (IPN)

Scaling Finance for the Just Rural Transition

The IPN - led by World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) – will work with interested food, agribusiness and finance sector companies to accelerate and scale investments that contribute to transformation of landscapes and agricultural supply chains in line with the JRT objectives. This includes developing and aligning investment criteria, facilitating new investment partnerships and scaling proven models – such as the Sustainable Rice Landscapes Initiative.

“The food and agriculture sectors have underinvested in and underleveraged nature-based solutions, technology and innovation particularly in ways that are inclusive, and regenerative. Together we must accelerate and strengthen financial mechanisms to stimulate food system transformation, ranging from basic to cutting edge.” - Diane Holdorf, Managing Director, Food and Nature, WBCSD

The IPN is currently undertaking a landscape analysis to identify key stakeholders from WBCSD’s membership and the broader finance community, clarify roles and processes and assess relevant COVID-19 implications. The IPN will be organising webinars to promote engagement on these issues in the coming months. If you would like to get involved in shaping this initiative, please contact ipn@merid.org for more information.

WBCSD is currently recruiting for an experienced program manager to lead this work. To

Community News

The Climate Investment Funds recently launched their [Just Transition Initiative](#) (JTI), a new partnership with the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). The Initiative will develop an interactive learning platform of resources, guidance, policy recommendations and strategies informed by consultations, literature review and case study analysis.

The case study analysis will draw on the CIF's unique experience as a multi-MDB climate fund that has been deploying US\$8.1 billion across 300 projects in 72 developing countries. The initiative will also develop a comprehensive framework to assess and define just transitions that can assist CIF and partners to identify investments and technical assistance in support of just transition strategies.

The first phase of the JTI will focus on the energy transition but the learning platform and framework will incorporate multi-sectoral implications of the low-carbon and climate-resilient transition, including those related to the rural economy. There is great potential for the JRT community to contribute to and benefit from this aligned initiative.

Upcoming Events and Opportunities

Later this month the JRT Secretariat will be hosting a webinar with the [Rights and Resources Initiative](#) to explore how knowledge and learning around efforts to secure land rights and land tenure can be integrated into the JRT's efforts focused on policy reform and investment criteria. Invites to the JRT network will shortly be sent out.

In addition to utilizing remote opportunities for connecting, the JRT Secretariat and partners will be looking for, and welcome suggestions on other ways to work effectively together through this difficult period.

If you would like your upcoming webinar or any other engagement opportunity to be listed in the next newsletter, please contact the editor on jrt@merid.org.

The JRT Website and Communications

support knowledge sharing within the JRT community. In the interim, our valued partner, the Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) is hosting information on the JRT [here](#). We are immensely thankful to them for this support!

As we develop the JRT website and our communications and engagement strategy, we would welcome partnering with JRT community members who have communications expertise and resources. Please contact the JRT Secretariat at jrt@merid.org if you have ideas and suggestions to contribute to this.

Contributions to upcoming newsletters

Please contact the JRT Secretariat at jrt@merid.org if you have feedback or ideas for content that can feature in the next JRT newsletter. This could include upcoming webinars and events, new initiatives and work, relevant blogposts and research or other information important of interest to the growing JRT community.

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