

Global Governance - Discussions and Proposals

Session One *[Session **Two** Tues 6th October - Scroll DOWN]*

Time: **Sat October 3rd 1100**

Link for call:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88536189245?pwd=UVY2bEJbUxlaU0wcWFjYTFiR2pRUT09>

Meeting ID: 885 3618 9245

Password: 621255

[Miro board](#) for this session

UTC	Focus
11:00	Session intro (purpose, format)
11:10	Presentation of governance models similar to what we have/want - Sociocracy - Holocracy - La Via Campesina - Urgenci
11:40	Brainstorming our existing governance structure

	- What “circles” do we have - What principles do we follow in organizing
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Background research (history and case studies) for Gen.

[Governance Review - OFN history and other models](#)

Summary

Links:

[Google Doc](#)

[Miro board](#)

Lynne's presentation on [La Via Campesina](#)

[Recording](#)

[Discourse post](#)

What is the purpose of this session?

Clarify what our current organizational structure is, whether we need a step change in this structure, and if so what form this structure might take

What outcomes/deliverables do we want?

A better idea of how OFN might be structured going forward

Who is facilitating? Gen

Who is scribing? Gen

Summary:

Presentation through Miro board and Lynne's powerpoint ([La Via Campesina](#)) of governance models similar to what we have/want.

We then collaboratively constructed a map of what "circles" we need in OFN, though noting that this does not include all of what happens in OFN, nor all of what OFN needs (e.g. movement element)

We also identified questions we want to answer (pink box on Miro board)

Actions:

- We will have a follow-up session on Tuesday ([Google Doc](#)) at which we will discuss:
 - How do information, resources, decisions flow between circles? (This will also connect to session re: tools)
 - How do people get added to the SysAdmin pool
- Need also to consult with wider movement re: do you see yourself represented here? Do you see a way into this structure?

Detailed notes:

Details in the [Miro board](#)

Session Two - Tues 6th October

Time: **Tues October 6th 1100 UTC**

Link for call: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87610239786?pwd=Rzc0NjY1REIERHQzaWtiNyt4UmJKUT09>

Meeting ID: 876 1023 9786

Password: 621255

Summary

Links:

[Google Doc](#)

[Miro board](#)

[Recording](#)

[Discourse post](#)

What is the purpose of this session?

- Clear pathways for global governance and coordination
- Agreement on some key actions

NB. Very tight facilitation in this session to keep ourselves tool agnostic throughout

Who is facilitating? Kirsten

Who is scribing? Gen

What outcomes/deliverables do we want?

45 mins Circles Pt 2: Agreement on next steps for implementation of revised Circles structure for decision-making and information flow

45 mins Discussions & Proposals: very rough draft run . .

30 mins Overview of Forthcoming Sessions: can we see potential cohesion in discussions

Summary:

We spent the majority of the session working on the circles. Kirsten took the draft circles and sub-circles we identified in Session One in the [Miro board](#) and translated them into the below table. We then collaboratively edited this table, adding more detail on the purpose, functioning and membership of each circle, and using comments to indicate open questions. Our subsequent discussion highlighted some open questions and potential changes to the circle structure elaborated so far.

We then spent some time brainstorming and discussing information flows between circles. We identified some principles that are important to us (e.g. defaulting to open), as well as potential ways of realizing these principles (e.g. dedicated communicator roles), and ways in which our current information flows are not functioning optimally (e.g. global monthly catch-up).

As these first steps took quite a while, we then decided to skip the draft run exercise, where we would have attempted a “Coordination Circle” meeting, assigning Action Items surfaced during the Global Gathering to specific circles.

Instead we spent some time identifying open questions that we have yet to answer. We then tried to identify upcoming sessions during the Global Gathering where these questions might be addressed further.

Actions:

- Rachel will take the lead on a decision-making discussion
- We will establish coordination circle

Detailed notes:

See below - collaborative documenting

Circles Part 2

What do we have already . . existing OR planned / agreed from global gathering sessions (10 mins to fill, 10 mins to discuss)

- I have put the 'top level' suggested circles, except for Platform where we definitely already have multiple rows . .

Draft Circles	Objective/s, Responsibilities	Current Roles (if existing)	Who does this (now)?	How open?	Who might lead / participate?	Current Comms / Info	Assets to be maintained by this circle
Instances / Affiliates "The Movement"	Onboarding new instances Documentation to support new instances Documentation of our democratic decisions Maintaining connection between people across the organisation		Nick, Jen, Rachel			Monthly global hangout #ofn-g-affiliates	
Technical deployment of new instances		Deployment	Devs, instance managers		New funded post?	#deployment, #instance-managers	Superadmin handbook
<i>Building the instance community</i>		Global Gardener	Theresa, Kirsten, Jen, Myriam, Nick		Nick New funded post?	Zoom calls with new instance teams	handbook
	Beneficiary contributors				Users, instance managers, producers, shoppers		
	Create local conditions conducive to OFN enterprises thriving Fundraising for local work and toward global	Instance managers	Instance managers		Instance managers	Individual instance about sites/forums/SM	

Sector Development	Be OFNs outward facing activities Write articles for posting, offer/coordinate presentations at global events, undertake research on OFN, develops and maintains partnerships with other global food/farming networks/organizations important to us, scans the global food/farming environment for trends and briefs the community New resources and products	Global Gardener	Theresa, Kirsten, Jen, Myriam, Nick,	Fully open	Might each different sub-circle have a different lead? ie - when the workload is too great for one person to lead the whole circle?		Question - I'm not seeing how sector dev and partnerships circles differ
			Instances are doing their own work on this too... that could be coordinated				
Platform							
• Product	Developing the Platform in alignment with the OFN organizational vision and the needs of the global community, translate the product strategy into an executable plan	Product Manager	Jana, Kirsten, Lynne, Rachel		Syncing wiith Design and Instance Managers	#product-curation, #product-and-design, #delivery-train, Meetings: Product Curation (bi-weekly), Product & Design (weekly), Delivery-Train (bi-weekly)	
• Design	To include existing community users and those	Product design UX Research	Eriol, sue, mario Instance	Good intentions	Eriol or 'lead designer'	#ux_ofn #design_ofn	Brand assets Prototypes for features

	not reflected in the current community. To produce design work in response to product and organizational vision.	Visual/content design	designers	maybe 50-60%	Supported by other designers	Product listed above ^^ Bi-weekly design sync	Design docs User research both product related and wider user research
• Sys Admin		Back end dev or sysadmin more specifically	Matt, Luis, Pau, Maikel	95% open?		#deployment	The ofn-install codebase, documentation, Github wiki
• Dev	Fix bugs and develop new features for the platform	Front/back-end/ Full stack dev	Matt, Luis, Pau, Maikel	95% open?		#bugs, #dev,	The codebase, documentation, Github wikis
• Testing	Verifies new code addresses bugs/new features and minimizes regressions	Tester	Filipe, Lynne, Jen, Rachel	Fully open		#testing	The codebase, the testing handbook
• Comms	User guide updates Release announcements	Instance managers, user guide team				#user-guide #instance-managers #global-community	
Support Support for Support (vs direct user support)					Emily volunteered to coordinate the support for support aspects of the instance management guide		In the support meetings we referred to the 'instance management guide
Communications							,
• <i>Information management</i>	Keep track of how we share, look for, and keep our "organizational memory" current	User guide team, librarians/curators	Louise, Eriol, Emily, Jen	Mostly open		Vtiger in France, UK and Australia	User guides in various languages
<i>Outreach/marketing</i>	Social media management Website content		Jen, Fran, Mishkat,				

	Social media creation Content creation about org (not user facing content)		Ronella, Linda				
Human Richness							
- <i>Heart</i>	Holding space for whole people		Nick			#heart-channel, #holding-the-culture Ongoing monthly listening circles from heart channel Option for monthly listening circles from holding the culture channel	
- <i>Team processes</i>	Creating processes and resources that operationalise our values		Jen, Nick			#operationalising-our-values Instance check in sessions - e.g. UK weekly catch ups	
Coordination	Maintain coherence across the Circles and 'spheres' of activity	No formalised roles					
Finance	Manage the global wallet : recommend / decide on team increases / decreases : fund-raising	No formalised roles	Kirsten, Lynne	Semi-closed . . not sure if it needs to be		Global Product Budget Spreadsheet #(c)global-budget #(c) fund-raising #pitch-and-present #ofn-g-affiliates	
Legal		No formalised roles	Ad hoc, as needed				
Partnerships			Ad hoc, as needed				

- Many find the table format more efficient than the Miro board - also uncovers distance between how things are now and the somewhat idealised org structure we constructed on the Miro board
- Lynne: Lack of overlap between circles in this format hides the fact that in reality many of these functions significantly overlap
 - Kirsten: question then is whether we should have overlapping circles or information connections between distinct circles
 - Point at this point perhaps is to make circles functional groups in their own right

Possible changes to circles:

- Rachel: Possible Delivery circle that brings non tech and tech delivery
- Not sure about separation of Support and Platform
 - Also a question of why it's outside the Instance circle
- Theresa: Very hard to think about this outside of Instances, for example a Partnership might be managed by an instance outside/on behalf of of Global
- Perhaps Support is a circle that should map across Platform and Instances overlap
- Instance roles should map to global circles in a standard way
- Theresa highlights that the circles look different depending on whether approaching from a specific instance level, global level, etc.
 - Theresa: Making use of this variety of perspectives, one question we can ask re: connections between circles is “who does this circle see as the main other circles it must communicate with?”

Pausing this part of the discussion here - we have more work to do on what circles we have/want

Information flows

- **Information flows and needs that need to go between circles?**
- **What might this look like information, resources, decisions flow between circles? (Timezones, this will also connect to session re: tools) (5 mins to fill, 5 to discuss)**

We make the assumption that all info is public (and that suggests discourse over slack to me), but by exception information is restricted (so open by default)

Each circle as it convenes needs to describe its preferred communication methods/tools for 'incoming' and 'outgoing' from the circle. This becomes our inside OFN communications plan.

I think we've done great info flow for this virtual assembly - can we mirror some of it? Links to the drive seem to be working for lots of us - I've been able to find info very easily

Maybe each circle is asked to appoint a 'communicator' as a role - and cross circle comms is their focus. (I don't communicate with a circle, I communicate with a person) (the tools chosen should be secondary to the person whose role it is)

Every circle need to document decisions in a common way, in order to be accessible to all - who defines what this is, the deliverer or the receiver of information?

I think we are missing an "internal comms" role that would "sum up" in a more digested form what comes out of the circles. We can't follow everything and we shouldn't have to.

The global meeting spreadsheet with a tab for each meeting works well for someone hoping to catch up

Maybe have regular instance showcases like we have had during the GG; where each instance can present some of their interesting users and talk more about how they manage their instance on a day-to-day basis - support systems, finances, culture, comms, etc.

Regular meetings

- Meeting agendas available for people to add items to
- High level meeting notes that people can see, comment and follow up on

One appointee within a circle acts as a "summarizer" or delegate to other circles who need to know what that circle is working on.

People attend the global monthly meetings. They have a clearly defined purpose and audience.

In my last org we had circle Objectives Key Results that were public and presented to other circles and 'agreed on' different circles had different kinds of timings for meetings but all were welcome at every meeting if convenient and also there was **always a tl;dr in slack channels**.

Circle links were delegates from other circles where the work had the most impact so e.g. design had a circle link into dev and dev into design and design into customer support/community engagement and vice versa. When there was something that a circle was doing that impacted a circle...say a grant that included design work then the fundraising circle made sure to involve design in that decision/process but design didn't go to every fundraising meeting.

Allhands meetings...I wonder if this is possible? Or even needed

Tools wise, my last org exclusively used google docs and a good(?) drive folder system However, the community were less involved in organisational workings. Tools wise we wanted to try <https://www.loomio.org/> at one point

Discussion:

- Hernan: has a process-first approach, argues structure should come out of the processes.
- Theresa: each circle will have a mix of people intel- vs. external-focused. So maybe we need to make communication requirements explicit.
- Kirsten: One challenge is that we have multiple streams of change going on in OFN at the moment, so our processes aren't stable right now. Chicken-egg problem, especially since the global gathering format requires that all of these changes be discussed semi-simultaneously.
- Define how we define the required documentation - who gets to say how information will be communicated, those receiving or those 'transmitting'
- Rachel: Circles have the responsibility to move forward on their work and communicate that at the same time. Up until now there has been maybe more of a requirement that people "fetch" information proactively. Suggests that the OFN community should define how information is communicated from a given circle, rather than the choice of format being up to each circle. Then use those standard formats to present regular "digest".
- Jen draws a distinction between static written information versus conversation - guiding to understanding, space for dialogue.

Next Steps - who / how to implement from here

- Jen: How is it that monthly global meetings are no longer coordination meetings?
 - Lynne: have they become instance-manager circles?
 - Jen: Key people are missing from these meetings so we don't have the information available to make decisions at these meetings, more importantly we feel that decisions we make won't stand because they impact the workflow of people who aren't there. Also need to define how open these are.
- Thomas: how are decisions made within OFN? Who gets a say on a given decision? Are circles empowered to make decisions? Can people enter and leave circles as they wish? If someone leaves, how to ensure continuity of role.
- Rachel: In France they make all decisions asynchronously (via Loomio, as example). Does it make sense to keep the monthly meeting where decisions are made synchronously. But would miss global meeting for connection and sharing overview of instances.
 - Nick: perhaps monthly global meetings are for holding the culture, and decisions are made elsewhere
 - Jen: it's been sad and frustrating to see people excited to meet "new people" at the global gathering, when these people aren't new, they've been at these monthly meetings that some existing community members no longer attend. People need to be able to contribute to decisions. Nick: other circles are open -can join and contribute to decisions there?

- Lynne: seems like there's a mismatch of expectations around a meeting that's no longer working.
- Kirsten: demonstrates a tension that might emerge for circles more generally. Meeting-overwhelm for some community members means e.g. global monthly meeting gets knocked off people's schedules. Resource limit. How many circles can be realistically maintained?
- Rachel: question of how empowered circles are to make decisions independently. This won't be answered by tools, but connects to that discussion. Important to have specific discussion about decision-making processes first.
- When is a circle sufficiently filled?
 - Eriol: "There was a general rule in my last place that if a circle had less than 4 people consistently it wasn't a circle anymore"
 - Nick: gaps in circles are ok, some circles are aspirational. Good to surface this tension/need.
- Hernan - uses a structure in his coop to define different types of decision eg "big" decisions that get made by everyone. Smaller decisions can be made independently.
- Thomas suggests we do some reading re: sociocracy etc. so we don't end up falling into traps already flagged and addressed by existing systems.
 - Lynne: Important to build on what we already have - we don't have the time or energy to scrap what we already have and start afresh
- Hernan - what are the tensions now? then with understanding that - look to models for ideas for how to solve that.
 - Lynne: Clear tensions - e.g. funding for sector dev; Can we have instance management circle that also feeds into design etc?

Next actions:

- Tools discussion
- Decision-making discussion - Rachel
- Establish coordination circle

Discussions & Proposals

'Sensing' a Coordination Circle . . and a little bit of mapping to Circles . .

- **Visibility:** bring together actions / intentions from streams of Gathering and other discussions and make them visible / accessible
- **Action Overview:** info sharing and testing 'Circles'
- **Proposals:** are there things that we might discuss and agree (if/where agreement in a broader group is useful).

10 mins to populate

30 mins to discuss - brief overviews / actions

Process	Action Overview / Proposal	Circle?	Who?	Resourced?
Global Governance				
Refine and implement Circles: Miro ; Next Steps				
Process for Instance to get added to sys admin pool	Proposal			
<i>What we love, what we fear, holding the culture</i>				
<i>a Global Legal Structure</i>				
<i>Tools to Support Us</i>				
<i>Organisational Vision</i>	TBC			
<i>Impact</i>	TBC			
Scanning External Trends in food and tech				

Operationalising Our Values				
Code of Conduct				
Our global pay scale				
Listening Circles, Nature Based Witnessing				
Thriving Instances	TBC			
Global Support				
Improving OFN global branding and design				
User Guide				
Drop-In / How Do I Sessions				
Food Scene Investigations - Linking support with design				
Design Pipe				
Product Vision and Process				

Data Food Consortium				
Collaborative Logistics				
OFNs role in supporting global trade				
Regenerative Agriculture				
Dev Open Space				
Dev OFN-Install				
Instance Showcases				
• Latin America				
• Canada				
• UK				
• India				
• West Africa				
• USA				
• France				
• Australia				

Burning Questions / Gaps

Our Burning Questions about how all this comes together . . (10 mins)

Global monthly meetings - what are they doing, who needs to be there, what gets decided

- Is the current monthly meeting serving our needs?
-

Next Steps: How will we follow through on this evolution / upgrade

- Should we start moving our governance model toward an existing system (holacracy for example)? Or Sociocracy as another example
- Are there priority circles that currently don't exist, that need to - to increase transparency, participation etc?
- Revise / agree our 'starting' set of circles
- Communicate / implement - what existing meetings / channels etc can we adapt to do this
- How can we make best use of people like Eriol, Hernan, Davie, etc, etc who have experience of working in organisations like this?
- Can we be agile about these changes?

Who is going to join which circles?

- And which circles do we need now vs which are just placeholders to remember the amount of work that goes in?
- Are circles required when we realise there are 4+ people doing a thing. So if there aren't how does that circle fit into a wider circle.
- How does a new circle get introduced (like a circle for diversity/equity/inclusion)

Expand the pool of circle participants

- Should we be trying to pull in more global contributors who aren't instance-allied so people are more able to prioritise global work?
- How can we know the project or initiative driven by all the part of OFN, in order to let newcomers get into what they want to do for OFN ?
- How do we keep new people or people who aren't here in touch with what circles there are and how to join?

- Building a culture where new people feel invited to circles but not coerced or expected to join a circle above and beyond their instance level work

What is the accountability / **responsibility** of a circle (complete depending its resources, only in a pre define scope...) ?

How do we make **decisions** - open/closed, asynchronous/synchronous

- What kind of flexibility can we offer ourselves? So we aren't setting such unrelenting standards re. Complete inclusion in decisions vs. trust that a good decision gets made?

How to ensure **transparency and information flows between** circles, how to identify need for "links"?

Workload

- Am I holding tasks too tightly? How do we distribute these tasks more?
- How do we balance the meeting load that usually stems from new global gathering initiatives (e.g. if we introduce meetings to coordinate circles) with the impact on people's work/life balance/time with families due to inhospitable time zones?

Money

- How can we raise enough money to pay for all the work?
- I'd love to understand more about tensions re. paid/unpaid/expectations/responsibility < the global pay session might raise these satellite Q's
- How can we build in good 'buffer' or space for these ways of working from a \$£€ perspective and a time/energy perspective?
- How to include meeting time as paid time?
- How do we keep up all the intense work of managing a fast-growing instance and at the same time give enough attention to the really important question of how OFN global is evolving?

Where do languages fit into this? Will we evolve beyond working almost exclusively in English?

Potential synergies for including some parts of this in forthcoming sessions (10 mins)

it seems like every session could include a brief conversation about which circles that session touches

OFN France	•
Regen Ag skill share	•
Measuring our impact - globally!	•
Developers Open Space	•
Presenting the Data Food Consortium	•
Global Governance - Tools to support us	• have a feeling that the tools session tomorrow will end up being a continuation of many of these questions, even if indirectly or if it's outside the originally intended scope
Creating Thriving OFN Instances 2	•
Listening Circle 2	•
Drop in Session - 'How Do I?' 2	•
OFN Australia	•
Our global pay scale	• Money questions are likely to get picked up here. IE some of these • How can we raise enough money to pay for all the work? • I'd love to understand more about tensions re. paid/unpaid/expectations/responsibility < the global pay session might raise these satellite Q's • How can we build in good 'buffer' or space for these ways of working from a \$£€ perspective and a time/energy perspective? • How to include meeting time as paid time?

	• How do we keep up all the intense work of managing a fast-growing instance and at the same time give enough attention to the really important question of how OFN global is evolving?
Drop in Session - 'How Do I?' 3	•
OFN Install - Deployments	•
OFN Vision 2	• Some of the above questions might be considered in this session
Improving OFN global branding and design	•
Closing Session	•
Drop in Session - 'How Do I?' 4	•