

Recourse Board meeting agenda

6 July 2021, 2-5.30pm CET

AGENDA (timings in CET)

1.Introductions, welcome and agreement of agenda - FOR APPROVAL	Chair	See Doc 1	2.00-2.10
2.Election of new Board members Election of new Chair and Treasurer – FOR DECISION	Chair		2.10-2.20
3.Revisit action items from last Board meeting – FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION	Nezir	See Doc 2	2.20-2.35
4.Budget update – FOR DISCUSSION	Daniel	See Doc 3	2.35-2.50
5. Fundraising update – FOR DISCUSSION	Kate and Nezir	See Doc 4	2.50-3.15
BREAK			3.15-3.30
6. Highlights of the last year and introduction to staff - FOR DISCUSSION	All staff		3.30-4.15
7. New policies/procedures: Risk register – FOR DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL; Safeguarding – appointment of leads and approval of complaints process – FOR DECISION AND APPROVAL	Kate	See Doc 5&6	4.15-4.30
8. Advisory Committee proposal - FOR DISCUSSION	Nezir	See Doc 7	4.30-4.45

9. AOB

Chair

4.45-5.00

Notes

Item 1

Present: (remotely)

Board

Theodoros Chronopoulos,
Susanne Breitkopf
Makoma Lekalakala
Joe Athialy

Staff

Kate Geary
Nezir Sinani
Fran Witt
Petra Kjell
Sargon Nissan

Note: Recourse's part-time consultants Heike Mainhardt, Jen Derillo, Ceren Temizyurek and Daniel Lakey joined the meeting to discuss item 6 and Daniel Lakey also joined to discuss item 4.

Agenda adopted subject to catching up on time.

Item 2

Election of board members

- 1) Theodoros Chronopoulos - nominated SB, approved JA
- 2) Makoma Lekalakala - nominated SB, approved JA

Appointment of new chair & treasurer

JA - Proposed Susanne as chair, and TC as incoming treasurer though with initial support

TC - Will accept position but would feel more comfortable with support from someone with familiarity with the organisation's finances

SB - Propose to continue with informal interim responsibilities until next board meeting, to work with TC and Daniel Lakey, to prepare TC for position

DECISION:

JA nominated Susanne for chair (Theodoros seconded)

JA nominated Theo for treasurer (Susanne seconded)

KG - Treasurer will not have to exercise formal their responsibilities until November reporting cycle, allowing preparation and familiarisation including via quarterly updates from Daniel

SB - Note the support and solid relationship between board and accountant, who is invariably available and supportive.

Item 3

NS

1. Liability insurance for board members has been secured - up to 1 million euro coverage, and info, though originally in Dutch, is available in English.
Important development due to a new legal framework in force as of 1 July 2021.
2. Due to shift of residence from Netherlands to Kosovo and implications of pension, pension contributions accumulated for Nezir will be paid to Kosovo
3. Mediator process has continued, details to be discussed further during executive session.
4. Reserves policy was revised & approved by board, but wish to invite feedback from new board members.
NS to share with new members and in particular TC as new treasurer.
5. Board role - Kate led development of new information pack.
6. Campaign strategies - discussion over potential of two more 'upstream' strategies, These are being developed on i) rights and accountability, and ii) ecological justice

ACTION: SB - Request to circulate new insurance policy to all board members. Nezir will do.

Item 4

DL

Budget update - based on month 5

- This format is used to share with staff monthly and board quarterly, as basis for quarterly discussion with treasurer
- These are last updated monthly figures as June entries still open for few more days
Showing cumulative figures up to May
- Budget column B is approved budget from December board meeting
 - Presented as totals, but grant by grant and other analytical breakdowns are available
- Column C is sum of all grants currently contributing to current workplans
- Worth recalling that budget assumptions are naturally subject to change, hence column B will necessarily evolve
 - The approved budget is thus useful to anchor comparisons and see evolution of income and expenditures. As these occur, Daniel consults with directors
The evolving budget is not routinely shared, but important to understand that is

under continuous review in order to control expenditures and ensure budget is always balanced throughout the year

- Grants shown in green and written as 'conf' are confirmed, signed grant agreements, thus all are currently confirmed so all income required by the current budget is currently confirmed
- Current projections for this year indicate a slight decrease in expected expenditure relative to prior year.
- Recognised income only includes grants which have contractually fallen due, and excludes tranches of income that are contingent upon reporting and other actions required by the grant. This is a normal, conservative accounting practice that Recourse adopts. Thus, the follow-on payments are not considered to be at risk, even if not treated in the same way as grants that have contractually fallen due.
- Expenditure to date 150,993 Euros, or 27% of budget, which is low relative to the point in the year this represents (5/12 months), and can see why this is perhaps lower than expected on pro rata basis
 - Given staff costs are broadly fixed at start of year it is an easy area of expenditure to control
 - Partner subcontracts item currently has low expenditure but is often characterised as lumpy, uneven spending
 - Travel and Conferences etc, indicate a low likelihood of being spent due to current pandemic circumstances.
Aware that directors and staff have discussed this with donors in anticipation of not being able to spend those budgets, and re-allocating aspects of those budget lines. Subject to that they may be re-allocated and/or carried forward
 - Overheads somewhat running ahead of budget but these are minor differences
 - Columns on right provide grant-based breakdown
- Note the subsequent tabs provide more detail on Funding breakdown and who in staff leads relationships, detailed analysis of overheads, schedule of staff costs including assumptions and latest actual expenditure, and an analysis of consultant fees to-date
- Daniel's focus tends to be for directors to be aware of exceptional items, surprises or decisions, but happy to amend approach according to directors' needs and preferences
- Final note is that Daniel considers staff managing costs and any budget changes appropriately
- Questions

SB - Note that Theodoros has agreed to accept the position as Treasurer, though will undertake a gradual familiarisation. Also proposes meeting with 3 of them to follow-up, subsequent to TC having chance to familiarise himself

TC - Happy to do so

ACTION: TC, SB and DL to arrange a meeting on Recourse finances in coming weeks

Questions

Q: Income carried forward - origin of this

A: Carried forward elements are related to multi-year grants, so that component is anticipated.

Item 5 - Fundraising Update

KG

- Board support, including contacts, very well appreciated
- Daniel's presentation demonstrates success over last year in fundraising
- All-staff contribute, via quarterly meetings and continuous updating of shared document
- Current secured grants, highlights

BREAK

Item 6

Introductions from Staff/Highlights

Sargon Nissan, IMF Project Manager, joined Jan 2020- change happened quickly. Our efforts are helping to galvanise partners and have made a big difference e.g. to the new IMF surveillance policy. The work on IMF and climate is growing fast and there is not a lot of capacity so Recourse has stepped in, managing a Listserv and a new community.

Daniel Lakey, Independent (2 days per week), joined Sept 2018 - highlight was settling the 2021 budget. Joined for a one off project to put together a comprehensible budget. At beginning July fully-funded is very positive. 2019 decided to change auditors which happened successfully

Kate Geary, Co-Director, joined summer 2016 - Campaign on indirect support for coal through financial intermediaries. Victory in Sept 2020 - IFC published for the first time, and banks announced no new coal. Oct 2020 Hana Bank in Indonesia, Java 9 and 10. Working closely with local groups. Held workshop in Bahasa and English. 11 CSOs took part.

Petra Kjell, Campaigns Manager, since 2016 with BIC Europe. AIIB and ADB have been main focus. Coordination - Environmental and Social Frameworks Review. Working with NGO Forum on ADB and took time to publish reports that set the tone for engagement with shareholders. Led workshop with Wunna in Myanmar. Came up with recommendations with CSOs and did get a fair deal.

Nezir Sinani, Co-Director, with Recourse since 2015. IMF work has been important, and supported by Heike Meinhardt - Energy Access (SSNC) to get the World Bank to do a bit more. Managed to get the Bank to initiate a discussion on Africa Energy Strategy that will hopefully address some of the issues.

Nezir thanks all of the southern groups that are engaging with the work that we do.

Heike Meinhardt, Consultant, has worked on IMF and WB policy lending at the World Bank and on Energy Access. If not for Recourse many of these issues would not have the attention that it has. Recourse helps to reveal what is going on and how the WB was not connecting poor people to energy. Top 5 energy access deficit countries. Every spring meeting there is a panel on EA.

Upcoming work on DPF work of the WB is the key driver of investment into fossil fuels. We've been working with Heike on this. We have a regional focus and we are monitoring WB policy lending in 5 countries in Asia. There is a policy opportunity to shape this lending.

Fran Witt, Joined May 2021, looking at CPF frameworks in some Asian countries, and supporting some of the DPF work Heike mentioned. As Indonesian CPF published just as it began, has led to engagement with CSOs to develop a response to the concerns around the CPF especially its advocacy of accelerating use of gas & bio-gas as a transition fuel and its treatment of climate policy as a phased approach that separates the current crisis from decarbonisation needs. Exciting place to start and very positive response from Recourse's partners

Jen Derillo, Communications Manager, Jan 2018 - highlights when design and organise the reports. She learns a lot through laying out the work. In Recourse exposed to different cultures and work ethics.

Ceren, since July 2019, working on research on FIs. - a great opportunity for mutual learning. Working on IFC FIs and equity investments. There was a big equity investment into one of the Turkish Banks that went on to invest in an energy company and coal. Ceren raised the investment in a meeting with IFC, and IFC confirmed they would engage with Fibabank over coal investments.

Makoma, Earthlife Africa - feels she is in the right space. The work they are doing is holding the development banks accountable and is excited to be engaging. Makoma is a renewables advocate and exposes environmental corruption, and climate change space.

Theodoros has worked in development and human rights for 20 years. Works with young people in emerging economies. Is delighted to have already been elected treasurer.

Joe wants to appreciate the great impact we are bringing in with such a small team. A lot of joint working and collaboration with others and hope we can continue to expand that.

Susanne relatively low resource and high impact. We are punching way above our weight.

Item 7: Policy Section

KG

The Risk Register - when was chair of the Forest People's Programmes was impressed by the idea of a Risk Register. It identifies potential risks and mitigations to help avert crises.

- Includes issues of finance, to ensure funding sustainability.
- Also focuses on organisational growth - we want to move from working with consultants to staff.
- We have the ability to build partnerships and be strategically led by our partners and an advisory committee.
- Safeguarding - we have been able to build our safeguarding strategy and are grateful that Theodoros has joined with experience.
- Brexit - we have 3 staff in the UK, visa costs might be difficult.
- Board turn over has been high and we want to invite a new Dutch member.
- Covid has affected staff personally and professionally

Q&A:

- Joe asks if there is a risk within civil society space restriction that Recourse could be impacted as well
- Theodoros also mentioned the possibility of litigation
- Changes that will come through pandemics and climate change, particularly to staff based around the globe especially where more at risk
- Makoma mentioned digital and personal security risks and important to have measures in place.
- Theodoros suggests could we have a network of lawyers that could step in with expertise when needed.

ACTION: we will revisit the risk register at next Board meeting - living document.

Safeguarding

KG

We have a Safeguarding Policy approved last year. A policy is no good if it's not operationalised. Needs a clear process. This is based on FPP, and it's about when staff or partners bring a complaint. Kate suggests could have a comment period so new Board members have time to comment. Susanne has some experience of this from working in other organisations.

We aim for 2 members of the Board responsible for safeguarding, one male and one female.

DECISION: Joe and Susanne offered to be Safeguarding leads on the Board. This was agreed by all.

Theodoros has read the policy - best practice means it needs to be reviewed regularly. It would be good to have a term within the policy to ensure it is reviewed. Absolutely in favor of approving now, but would like to add comments.

DECISION: Board agreed that Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually.

ACTION: Board to review Safeguarding Policy and complaints process, comment in next months, and approve at next Board meeting.

Advisory Committee

Nezir - In the last board meeting we talked about making sure the organisation is as strategic as possible, advocacy, research and working with communities and partners around the world. How do we best connect with partners, who they are and who else we could work with, especially in the South.

The Advisory Committee - we have identified a number of people we might engage. From a legal perspective our statutes allow an advisory board. On a practical level we considered it would be useful. What do we want the Advisory Board to do? How do we interact with it?

ACTION: An Advisory Committee ToR was shared with the Board for their input. Nezir will resend for their input within August and then further steps will be identified to move the discussion forward.

Susanne agreed and hopes it will be a useful addition to the work of Recourse. Process to advance over the summer.

Proposal for a Dutch Speaking Board Member

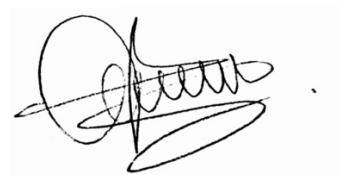
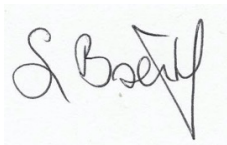
Nezir and Kate have put together a list of ideas for potential candidates. We recommended two people to approach.

ACTION: Kate will recirculate the proposal for Dutch Board members to the Board.

Signed as a true record of this meeting:

Susanne Breitkopf (Chair)

Theodoros Chronopoulos



Date 26 August 2021

Date 28 July 2021