

**2020 ANNUAL  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
(AGA)

**Strengthening  
coordination towards  
SDG2: Pathways for  
food systems  
transformation**

**CONCEPT NOTE**



Global Donor Platform  
for Rural Development

## Background

**The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development** (GDPRD, or “the Platform”) is a network of 40 bilateral and multilateral donors, international financial institutions and foundations that share a common vision on the role of agriculture and rural development in reducing global poverty and combating hunger and malnutrition. The Platform is committed to achieving increased and more effective aid for agriculture and rural development through evidence-based advocacy and knowledge sharing.

Every year, the Platform holds its Annual General Assembly (AGA), an event that provides an open space for debate to Platform members, partners and invited guests on emerging topics in agriculture and rural development (ARD). AGA participants benefit from the core services of the Donor Platform: knowledge sharing, advocacy, and networking on key development issues and strategic directions that affect lives in rural space. AGAs are organized around specific themes: for instance, the 2018 AGA revolved around “Empowering the new generation in the rural space”, while the 2017 edition focused on “Agenda 2030 put into practice: what future for rural development”. 2019 was a particular edition, designed as a Members’ retreat, to discuss the evolving role of the Platform.

Over the coming year, the entire United Nations system and international development agencies will be involved in the design of the Food Systems Summit, which is set to take place in 2021, and will be a key contribution to the Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The current COVID-19 crisis is demonstrating how much all actors engaged in agriculture and rural development depend on each other, and the importance of ensuring that food systems are inclusive, sustainable, resilient and provide for good nutrition.

Despite the constraints of COVID-19, the Board Members of the GDPRD have decided to hold a virtual 2020 AGA between 2 and 5 November, designed as a series of virtual events under the theme of “**Strengthening coordination towards SDG2: Pathways for Food Systems Transformation**”.

## Rationale for the 2020 AGA theme

**The intention of the 2021 Food Systems Summit** is to map out directions for the transformation of food systems needed to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Donors (bilateral development agencies, development banks, foundations and civil society organizations), through their policies, investments, programmes, coordination and support for the global food systems architecture have a critical catalytic role to play in supporting food system transformation.

The problems of current food systems are well understood as are many of the potential solutions. The challenge is in creating pathways for systemic change that can mobilize commitment, inspire action, strengthen the evidence base, reconfigure incentives and enable coordinated responses.

The AGA theme of “Pathways for Food Systems Transformation” will open a discussion on what processes are needed at local, national, regional and global levels to underpin food systems transformation, and the role that donors can play in catalysing and supporting such processes.

The outcomes from the AGA sessions will be taken forward to develop a GDPRD preparatory contribution for the Food Systems Summit. This contribution will assess the ways donors currently support and invest in food systems and identify options for strengthening or changing these in the context of the wider agenda for food systems transformation.

In 2021, UN Secretary-General António Guterres will convene a **Food Systems Summit** to raise global awareness and land global commitments and actions that transform food systems to resolve not only hunger, but to reduce diet-related disease and heal the planet. The Secretary-General is calling for collective action of all citizens to radically change the way we produce, process, and consume food.

# Organizational arrangements

## DATE AND VENUE

The AGA virtual events will be held over a **period of four days, from 2 to 5 November 2020**, through the Zoom platform. The events will be publicly streamed over the internet, and therefore accessible also to those who are not registered.

## PARTICIPANTS/AUDIENCE

The AGA will be designed as an open series of events that will encourage participation from all geographic regions, with representation from governments, international organizations, agribusiness companies, academic and research organizations, think tanks, NGOs, civil society, farmers’ organizations and others. Special attention will be given to the participation of representatives of farmer and rural youth organizations.

## CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS AND CORE PARTNERS

The GDPRD Secretariat will organize the AGA under the leadership of the Platform Board, which will contribute to the event’s design and organization, including by: mobilizing participants and speakers; reviewing background documents to facilitate dialogue at the event; identifying authoritative individuals as possible speakers and panellists, or making other forms of contributions.

# Structure

**The AGA will feature one high-level session and three events** that will deepen the conversation, discussing and analysing some of the principles emerging from the high-level panel. Arrangements will be made to maximize opportunities for dialogue and participation, within the sessions and through social media.

2 NOVEMBER 2020

## Transforming food systems: Implications for coordination and financing



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**Objectives:** To explore the processes, coordination and financing needed from local to global levels to bring about a sustainable, equitable and resilient transformation of food systems, and to assess the future roles of donors.  
**Outcomes:** Participants are sensitized to the processes and pathways that will be needed to drive food systems transformation and what this means for the functioning of the food systems architecture.

The high-level event will focus on critical questions related to the supporting, coordination and financing roles of the donor community, for instance:

- What processes at local, national, regional and global levels are needed to bring about transformation, and what are the implications for donors?
- Is there something fundamentally different that needs to happen to achieve a food system transformation? (What is working well, what is not and what are the gaps?)
- Is funding within the global food system architecture directed in the right way across areas such as:
  - national and regional research
  - national dialogue and policy innovation/coordination
  - incentive structures
  - catalysing investment
  - private sector engagement/partnerships
  - regional and global platforms

- integration of nutrition, agriculture, rural development, climate change, environment etc.
- Social protection
- What is the role of different stakeholders in food systems transformation?
- What role can donors play to support this transformation and how does it align or vary with current investments?
- What could be the niche and value add of the GDPRD in supporting food systems transformation?

3 NOVEMBER 2020

EVENT #2



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## Pathways for food systems transformation

**Objectives:** Discuss and analyse the insights and outcomes of the high-level panel.

**Outcomes:** Participants contribute to developing a few elements of a statement/position on transitioning to sustainable food systems, to use as an initial contribution for shaping GDPRD's contribution to the Food Systems Summit.

The session will take inspiration from the themes emerging from the high-level panel, and pick a number of themes on which participants will be requested to work in breakout sessions, deepening the themes and providing some options for developing the position of GDPRD in view of the Food Systems Summit.

Two or three senior-level speakers will stimulate the conversation by presenting focused interventions, to which a moderated breakout session will follow.

4 NOVEMBER 2020

EVENT #3



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## Food Systems: Data for evidence-based policymaking

**Objectives:** Review two key initiatives using data-smart agriculture to support decision-making.

**Outcomes:** Decisions and capacities on improving food systems are developed through data that is being used more openly, effectively, and efficiently.

How can international organizations and development partners evaluate the agricultural interventions that can transform the lives and incomes of the world's poorest farmers, while preserving the environment? How can we produce high-quality and timely agricultural data and make evidence-based decision-making in agriculture the norm?

Two initiatives, namely Ceres2030<sup>1</sup> and 50x2030<sup>2</sup>, supported by the GDPRD members, aim to build a stronger capacity to produce, analyse, interpret, and apply data to decisions in the agricultural sector, and provide the infrastructure to build evidence-informed policies for rural development and food security.

How do such tools support decision-making? How will they support the global efforts to food systems transformation?

<sup>1</sup> <https://ceres2030.org>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.data4sdgs.org/50by2030>

5 NOVEMBER 2020

EVENT #4



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## Catalysing responsible private sector investments for food systems transformation

**Objectives:** Discuss how global public goods and donor support can help to mobilize responsible private sector investments for food systems transformation.

**Outcomes:** Public and private sector stakeholders explore and understand pathways towards responsible investment in agri-food value chains.

The private sector holds the potential to generate much-needed investment in agriculture and food systems, and ensure responsible supply chains that can benefit small-scale producers, workers and consumers. However, **irresponsible business and financial sector operations can undermine this potential.**

Responsible investments in food and agriculture require the proactive engagement and commitment of all concerned partners, particularly in the business sectors of developing countries. To advance on such agenda, it is imperative that global financial institutions and organizations cooperate adequately and promote key coordinated effort towards responsible investment in agri-food value chains.

The event will address the following key questions:

- How can we promote more responsible private sector investments contributing to food systems transformation?
- What is the investment gap?
- What is the potential role of the private sector in transforming food systems, both at the international and national levels?
- How do we make private sector investment more responsible?

## Communication

A communication plan will be developed for the AGA by the GDPRD Secretariat in cooperation with the Communications divisions/departments of the Board members and other partners as appropriate. Webcast of AGA will also be available on the website of the GDPRD.

## Provisional programme

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Strengthening  
coordination towards  
SDG2: Pathways for  
food systems  
transformation

### MONDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2020

15:00-17:00

CET – Rome, Paris & Brussels

09:00-11:00

EST – New York & Washington, D.C.

22:00-00:00

CST – Beijing

**Transforming food  
systems: Implications  
for coordination and  
financing**

HIGH-LEVEL  
EVENT

**MODERATOR: Jim Woodhill**, AgriFoodNexus Consulting, Honorary Research Associate, Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford

#### OPENING REMARKS:

**Paul van de Logt**, Head, Food and Nutrition Security, The Netherlands, and Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, Co-chair

**Agnes Kalibata**, United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy on the Food Systems Summit

**Michelle Nunn**, President and CEO, CARE U.S.A.

**Marie Haga**, Associate Vice-President, External Relations and Governance Department, International Fund for Agricultural Development

#### PANELLISTS:

**Hanneke Faber**, President, Foods & Refreshment, Unilever

**Ibrahim Assane Mayaki**, Chief Executive Officer, African Union Development Agency, New Partnership for Africa's Development

**Carla Montesi**, Director, Planet and Prosperity (DEVCO.C), Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission

**Johan Swinnen**, Director-General, International Food Policy Research Institute

**Joan Valadou**, Head of the Human Development Department, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, France

**Martien van Nieuwkoop**, Global Director, Agriculture and Food Global Practice, The World Bank

### TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2020

15:00-17:00

CET – Rome, Paris & Brussels

09:00-11:00

EST – New York & Washington, D.C.

22:00-00:00

CST – Beijing

**Pathways for food  
systems transformation**

EVENT #2

**MODERATOR: Ron Hartman**, Director, Global Engagement, Partnership and Resource Mobilization Division, International Fund for Agricultural Development

#### PANELLISTS:

**Tristan Armstrong**, Sector Specialist, Agricultural Productivity and Food Security, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia

**Conrad Rein**, Policy Officer, Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission

**Paul van de Logt**, Head, Food and Nutrition Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands



Strengthening coordination towards SDG2: Pathways for food systems transformation

WEDNESDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2020

15:00-16:30  
CET – Rome, Paris & Brussels

**Food systems:  
Data for evidence-based  
policymaking**



09:00-10:30  
EST – New York & Washington, D.C.

22:00-23:30  
CST – Beijing

**MODERATOR:** Ammad Bahalim, Policy Officer, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

**PANELLISTS:**

- Jaron Porciello, Co-Director Ceres2030, Cornell University
- David Laborde, Co-Director Ceres2030, International Food Policy Research Institute
- El-Iza Mohamedou, Programme Manager, 50x2030
- Thule Lenneiy, Coordinator, Agriculture Transformation Office, Ministry of Agriculture Kenya

THURSDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2020

15:00-16:30  
CET – Rome, Paris & Brussels

**Catalysing responsible  
private sector investments  
for food systems  
transformation**



09:00-10:30  
EST – New York & Washington, D.C.

22:00-23:30  
CST – Beijing

**MODERATOR:** Jim Woodhill, AgriFoodNexus Consulting, Honorary Research Associate, Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford

**OPENING REMARKS:**

David Hegwood, Senior Advisor, Global Engagement Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, U.S. Agency for International Development

**PANELLISTS:**

- Sean de Cleene, Head, Food Systems Initiative and Member of the Executive Committee, World Economic Forum
- Leesa Shrader, Program Director, AgriFin Accelerate and AgriFin Digital Farmer, Programs, Mercy Corps
- Ishmael Sunga, Chief Executive Officer, Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions
- Berry Marttin, Member of the Managing Board, Rabobank
- Chea Serey, Assistant Governor and Director General of Central Banking, National Bank of Cambodia



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for Rural Development**

hosted by the International Fund for  
Agricultural Development (IFAD)

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