



Global Donor Platform  
for Rural Development

# MINUTES THEMATIC WORKING GROUP ON RURAL YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

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## PARTICIPANTS

- Anna Befus, FAO
  - Elisenda Estruch Puertas, ILO
  - Esther Penunia, AFA
  - Gituku Ngene, Mercy Corps
  - Frank Bertelmann, GIZ
  - Jane Lowicki-Zucca, USAID
  - Jeongha Kim, FAO
  - Jessie Fagam, FAO
  - Nick Goetschalckx, European Commission
  - Nikka Rivera, AFA
  - Sven Braulik, GIZ
- GDPRD Secretariat:**
- Lise Saga
  - Sierra Berardelli

## AGENDA

Issue	Item	Details
1.	Welcome and Introduction	Anna/FAO
2.	Update from the Secretariat	Lise/GDPRD
3.	Green Jobs Webinar Series	Anna/Jessie/FAO
4.	AGA Impressions and Outlook	Anna/FAO/GIZ
5.	Presentation of Mercy Corps	Gituku Ngene/Mercy Corps
6.	Tour de Table	All
7.	Wrap-up and Closing	Anna/FAO

# KEY HIGHLIGHTS/ISSUES

## 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

- This call was the last regular call before summer holidays.
- A new member Nikka Rivera, Land Rights and Young Farmers coordinator from the Asian Farmers Association (AFA) was introduced.

## 2. UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARIAT

- The work on the new website continues, with the aim to launch in September/October.
- The AGA took place on 14 and 15 June, followed by a Board Meeting on 16 June.
- There will be a Senior Managers Meeting in October and a work stream on donor finance in the fall. A horizon scanning will be conducted for the Platform's efforts moving forward.
- Lise will end her consultancy for the Secretariat and is participating in her last call.

## 3. GREEN JOBS WEBINAR SERIES

- Sharing of ideas for the next webinar in the series on Green Jobs for Rural Youth was encouraged. A preparatory meeting in May gathered initial ideas.
- Preliminary topic ideas include contextualizing green jobs and the green economy, and contextualizing green jobs in agricultural labour markets, giving concrete examples of what makes jobs considered green, considering both environmental sustainability and decent work.
- Agreement to hold a preparatory meeting for the webinar series on the afternoon on Monday 5 September, exact time TBC. Email discussion of the potential topics for the next webinar will continue in the meantime.

## 4. AGA IMPRESSIONS AND OUTLOOK

- The group's session, "Rural Youth Employment and Food Systems Transformation: Solutions in times of (multiple) crisis!" was held successfully at the AGA on 15 June. Event materials are available on the Platform's website.
- The AGA presents an opportunity to follow up as a group by building upon the overall theme of the implementation of national pathways. A possible strategy could be through coordination with partner countries with projects on the ground, potentially in Madagascar, Kenya and Uganda who had representatives at the AGA session.
- Stefanos Fotiou of the Food Systems Coordination Hub could be consulted on this work to exchange views of possible strategies.
- USAID has made a funding proposal for rapid mapping of existing international coalitions to understand where gaps can be filled. USAID has also emphasized youth, employment and entrepreneurship in their global food security strategy, demonstrated in a coming white paper on green jobs for youth and women in agriculture.
- Generation Africa, a thematic working group on youth related to AGRA, have been piloting a youth in agriculture ecosystem development framework (YEDF) in Senegal

and Rwanda to map stakeholder work in these countries and will focus on investment planning at the country level. This could be useful for the group to learn more about.

- More visibility on the topic of youth in food systems transformation, the TWG, and the need for coordination is needed. The Platform's support is essential for this.

## 5. PRESENTATION OF MERCY CORPS

- Gituku Ngene, Senior Advisor for youth employment and innovation at Mercy Corps in South Africa gave a presentation. The Mercy Corps focuses on key pillars of systemic change in market systems, the economy, and digitalisation of jobs. They work across 17 countries in Africa, and are the custodians of the Job Tech Alliance, which gather stakeholders across Africa to contribute to the Job tech ecosystem.
- A 2017 World Bank Report showed that 70% of youth employment programmes failed to achieve positive labour market outcomes. The Mercy Corps objectives have been framed around enhancing outcomes for job quality and security at scale. Their target groups are young people to reach the labour market, women who are disadvantaged, discriminated and vulnerable, migrants, refugees, displaced people and people with disabilities. Mercy Corps have 54 global initiatives on youth employment and 17 programmes running in Africa
- As part of their strategy, Mercy Corps focuses on market systems and job tech. The market system approach is seen as new in the youth employment space and has potential for localization. The approach includes looking at supporting functions of the labour market, with the core function being supply and demand of workers. It is central to understand which barriers prevent youth from acquiring jobs.
  - Mercy Corps work together with strong collaborators for growing and creating better jobs, while also focusing on the supply side to strengthen the capacity of vulnerable job seekers, and working to enhance job matching mechanisms.

### Q&A:

How many youth have you targeted across these different categories of interventions? How are you approaching youth-focused jobs diagnostics, including with an eye towards greener outcomes?

- The Mercy Corps have given themselves the ambitious target of 1.000.000 jobs over the next five years across both initiatives – market systems and job tech.
- It has been important to invest in labour market assessments, stakeholder analysis and a rigorous monitoring and evaluation system. In terms of the green outcomes, the Corps is developing a green jobs strategy.

With regards to the goal of 1.000.000 jobs, how are jobs measured? Are they full time, formal/informal or decent jobs?

- The Mercy Corps has worked closely with the principles of the Fair Work Foundation to define the quality and definition of a job. The focus is on creating new jobs, but also increasing quality of existing jobs.

Did the World Bank project, which defined 70% of employment projects as failed, describe why they failed? Why have you chosen to use the market development approach and the job tech approach in combination? How are the approaches interrelated and implemented?

- The report challenged the lack of market driven approaches, with a current focus on skills-building without appreciation for the market structure and lack of jobs.

- In many cases, results from donor funded projects are requested almost immediately. For the market system programs, the outcomes will be visible on a longer term. The two approaches can therefore work in tandem to create short and long-term results.

How is the labour market assessment done? What stakeholders are involved?

- For the labour market assessments, this is context and country-specific. In Ethiopia the Corps worked with the job creation commission in the government. Where there are weaker government structures, the Mercy Corps have done the assessments themselves but also involving other stakeholders.

How do you reach out to the target groups of rural and vulnerable youth and women?

- Job tech has an inherent gap in reaching the target group of rural youth, and this barrier has been important for the work, focusing on infrastructure, social norms and working closely with national and regional governments, community groups and civil society groups to bridge the gaps. The start-ups that the Corps work with for job tech are also important partners, and the Mercy Corps can act as a de-risking agent here.

## 6. TOUR DE TABLE

**ILO:** A new report on youth employment will be released in August, deepening economic topics such as the green and blue economy. Occupational safety and health is now a fundamental principle, which is a key issue in agriculture.

**EU:** A Youth Action Plan has been developed and will be launched by November of this year.

**AFA:** A web series on the project “Young Farmers for Sustainable Agri Enterprises” have just finished. The project is based on a fund to give small grants to young farmers from 10 countries with innovative business proposals over the next 6 months.

## 7. WRAP-UP AND CLOSING

- The CFS negotiations will be discussed in the next meeting or via email.
- The next regular call will take place on 8 September in the afternoon, exact time TBC. The European Commissions will provide an input on their youth-focused programmes and initiatives.

## SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

Agenda item	Action	Timeline	Responsible Person(s)
3	Share ideas for next webinar	ASAP	All
3	Organize preparatory call for the next webinar on Green Jobs for Rural Youth	5 September	Co-Chairs
3	Share minutes from last preparatory meeting on the webinar series		Jessie/Secretariat
7	Organize next regular call	8 September	Co-Chairs