



## 4 FOOD SYSTEMS AGENDA AND DONOR COORDINATION

When it comes to food systems transformation, the challenge of donor coordination is even more complex. A food systems approach necessitates normative, structural and mindset shifts in how we think and operate to a more integrated and holistic approach that requires key actors within the food systems landscape to think and work more collaboratively.

The GDPRD's [2022 white paper on transforming food systems](#) notes:

“Transforming food systems will require deep structural changes in societal understanding, in how markets function, in public policy and expenditure, and in processes of innovation, all of which are influenced by power relations and vested interests.”

These structural transformations will need to happen in the context of increasing global complexity, uncertainty and crisis. To be effective, donors will have to focus on interventions that create the enabling conditions for systemic change, are responsive and able to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances, and tackle the political and economic barriers to equitable and sustainable development.

## BOX 1 LIST OF AREAS OF ACTION FOR DONORS TO SUPPORT FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

- 1 Strengthen coordination among donors and other actors to support national pathways for food systems transformation.
- 2 Mobilize responsible investments in food systems from the public and private sectors.
- 3 Promote the engagement of private sector actors and value chain innovation for sustainable development.
- 4 Support policy innovation.
- 5 Invest in research and data systems.
- 6 Strengthen governance for food systems transformation.
- 7 Strengthen universal social protection mechanisms, disaster preparedness and emergency relief programmes.

Source: GDPRD (2022), *Transforming Food Systems: Directions for enhancing the catalytic role of donors* (Secretariat of the GDPRD).

The white paper also emphasizes that donors can catalyse food systems transformation by supporting national pathways, policy innovation, and research and data production, and by promoting private sector engagement, while also ensuring social protection and disaster preparedness. Specifically, donors can (i) coordinate and align their work to ensure the integration and coherence of their investments and initiatives, thereby avoiding overlap and strengthening the contributions of each individual stakeholder; (ii) pay greater attention to the structural barriers that need to be overcome; and (iii) adopt a systemic approach to addressing food-related issues and development challenges. The paper outlines seven action areas for donors to consider (see BOX 1).

The GDPRD's [2022 Annual General Assembly](#) also highlighted the critical importance of more effective coordination to support national pathways for food systems transformation. Donors and experts emphasized the need to strengthen donor coordination at the country level, and for donors to assist governments in developing national pathways for food systems transformation and in their subsequent implementation.