

OFFICIAL FfD4 SIDE EVENT



Global Donor
Platform for
Rural Development

Financing Agrifood Systems for People, Planet and Prosperity

Towards a new pact for mobilizing capital, reforming systems,
and driving transformation at scale

30 June 2025 | 14:30 to 16:00 (CEST) | VIRTUAL ON ZOOM

SPEAKER BIOS

(In alphabetical order)

Alice Ruhweza | President, AGRA

Alice Ruhweza is a global thought leader and international development expert with nearly 30 years of experience in social, economic, and environmental policy. She is the President of AGRA, where she leads efforts to transform agrifood systems for sustainable development in Africa and globally. Previously, Alice was Senior Director for Global Policy at WWF International, influencing sustainability agendas across Africa, Asia, and Europe. As WWF's Africa Region Director, she oversaw operations in 13 countries. She also served as Vice President at Conservation International, where she bridged science and policy for sustainable agriculture. Alice led the UNDP's Global Environmental Finance Unit, mobilizing over US\$1 billion for sustainable development across 44 countries. She holds degrees in Economics and certifications from Harvard, IMD, and Oxford. Alice co-chairs the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Nature and Security and serves as an advisory member of the Strategic Foresight Group, among others.

Chris Isaac | Chief Investment Officer, AgDevCo

Chris Isaac is AgDevCo's Chief Investment Officer (CIO) and one of the company's founding directors. He has been working in development finance in Africa for the past 20 years, including periods living in Namibia and Mozambique. AgDevCo today has \$370m FUM and an active portfolio of 40 agribusiness investments across 11 countries in SSA. Chris started his career in corporate finance with Arthur Andersen. He holds economics degrees from University College, Oxford (BA Hons) and the London School of Economics (MSc).

Chris is a member of AgDevCo's Investment and Executive Committee. He holds a number of board positions in AgDevCo's subsidiary and investee companies, including Hatch Africa, a pan-African poultry business, and Equity for Africa, an equipment leasing company.

Lawrence Haddad | Executive Director, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)

Lawrence Haddad has been GAIN's Executive Director since 2016. In 2020 he was asked by the UN Deputy Secretary General to Chair Action Track 1 of the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit: Ensuring Access to Safe and Nutritious Food for All. Lawrence is the co-founder of the Standing Together for Nutrition, a response to the COVID-19 crisis, and is one of the drivers behind the Initiative on Climate and Nutrition (ICAN) which was formally launched by the Egyptian Government at COP27. Prior to GAIN, Lawrence was lead author of the Global Nutrition Report, Director of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), and Director of the Food Consumption and Nutrition Division at IFPRI. He was made a World Food Prize Laureate in 2018 and was awarded a CMG in the 2023 UK Honours List for his "services to international nutrition, food and agriculture".

SPEAKER BIOS

Maximo Torero Cullen | Chief Economist, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Maximo Torero Cullen is the Chief Economist of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). He joined the Organization in January 2019 as Assistant Director-General for the Economic and Social Development Department. Prior to joining FAO, he was the World Bank Group Executive Director for Argentina, Bolivia, Chile Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay since November 2016 and before the Bank Mr Torero led the Division of the Markets, Trade, and Institutions at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

Roel Messie | Chief Investment Officer, IDH

Roel Messie is Chief Investment Officer of IDH and leads IDH Invest. IDH is an international organisation that convenes, manages and finances large programs with multinational and smaller companies, governments and civil society organisations in the agricultural sector around the globe. IDH Invest is the integrated investment proposition of IDH, with Investment Development and Investment Management as pillars. Investment Development aims to deepen impact by supporting agribusinesses to achieve investment readiness and IDH Investment Management manages investment vehicles and funds for a more inclusive and sustainable agricultural sector in the Global South.

Roel is also the Chief Executive Officer of IDH Investment Management BV. IDH Investment Management, wholly owned by IDH, manages Blended Finance funds with the objective of creating a more sustainable and inclusive agricultural sector in the Global South. IDH Investment Management is the manager of the IDH Farmfit Fund, a EUR 100 million impact Fund that aims to improve the lives of 3 million smallholder farmers. Roel joined IDH in 2018 and prior to that, held various management positions in the Dutch Entrepreneurial Development Bank (FMO) and worked for ABN AMRO Bank. He has over 30 years of investment experience and holds a Master's Degree in law from the University of Leiden.

Ron Hartman | Director, Global Engagement, Partnerships and Resource Mobilization, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

Ron Hartman is IFAD's Director for Global Engagement, Partnerships and Resource Mobilization. He is responsible for leading IFAD's global engagement and multilateral relations including with the private sector; south-south and triangular cooperation, resource mobilization and funds management. Prior to his current position, Ron served as IFAD Country Director and Representative at its South East Asia and the Pacific sub-regional office in Jakarta.

With over 25 years of professional experience, including over 18 years with the United Nations, Ron has acquired an extensive managerial and operational experience in over 25 countries. He has specialized knowledge in promoting sustainable socio-economic development and poverty reduction, public policy and partnerships. In 2011, Ron was awarded the IFAD Presidential Award for outstanding performance.