



Thematic Working Group on Rural Youth Employment

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Context

The GDPRD Thematic Working Group (TWG) on Rural Youth Employment (RYE) was initially formed following a GDPRD Board decision during the 2018 AGA that focused on Rural Youth. **It is a donor-catalysed TWG** with significant youth participation. Its role is to advise donors, governments and civil society organizations on the most effective ways to create decent employment opportunities in rural areas, particularly in agri-food systems and emerging green sectors and to support the empowerment of youth to productively contribute to and benefit from sustainable rural livelihoods.

After five years and with the GDPRD secretariat hosted by IFAD, the TWG members continue to sharpen and adjust its strategic orientation to adapt to rural youth's changing environments. Therefore, the initial concept note is amended to emphasize the **focus on developing decent job opportunities in rural areas, particularly in sustainable agri-food system as well as green jobs such as in ecotourism, natural resource management and clean energy systems**, especially for the growing youth population in Africa.

In 2018, the **"Compendium on donor engagement with rural youth"** provided a first overview of ongoing donor initiatives, revealing the heterogeneity of young women and men, and the realities they face in rural areas. Rural youth require **differentiated pathways for empowerment** than urban youth. Employment promotion and economic empowerment of rural youth includes dimensions such as political and civic engagement, qualification and skills development, strengthening self-confidence and the ability to make choices and be heard, as well as access to resources such as land, finance, quality education and health, to strengthen youth as key actors for future development.

Globally, millions of young people are bound to engage in agriculture. This young generation will shape the future of agricultural and rural development. Members of the TWG believe in the important of having **a joint space to exchange and develop ideas, update and rally each other towards common outcomes**. Donors and development practitioners, together with youth representatives, the TWG aims to advance policies and programmes for creating more and better jobs for young people in agri-food systems with a view to revitalize rural areas.

Objectives

The objective of the TWG is **to promote decent employment and income opportunities for youth in rural areas through their engagement in sustainable agri-food systems, green economies and other non-farm activities**. The TWG believes in an inclusive rural transformation approach by designing youth-sensitive programmes and increasing youth mainstreaming in relevant donor activities. This includes:

1. Improved alignment with and link to international policy processes, initiatives, and platforms like the G20/G7, Committee on World Food Security (CFS), Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth and others;
2. Increased (strategic) coherence and coordination among donors and development agencies, national and local institutions;
3. **Evaluate and co-create innovative approaches** how donors can boost decent rural youth employment across their operations;
4. Strategic engagement with and empowerment of rural youth and youth organizations;
5. Joint engagement and collaboration with other stakeholders like the private sector, service providers, agripreneur organizations, etc.

The TWG members will work to achieve its objective through:

- a) **Sharing evidence-based concepts and approaches** to effectively promote youth-specific and inclusive programming to create, decent, profitable, innovative and inclusive employment in agri-food systems along diverse value chains.
- b) Using its convening power and potential for advocacy for **engaging in international processes and promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships** among donors, multilaterals, regional and national institutions working with the diverse actors including youth, donors, governments, universities and civil society organizations.
- c) Mobilizing resources for **catalytic and niche activities aimed at engaging and empowering rural youth** and those that enhance coordination of donor youth programmes, for developing knowledge sharing products and sponsoring youth participation in relevant meetings and fora.
- d) **Promoting learning and collaboration** across a variety of means, including South-to-South and North-to-South youth cooperation, rural-urban linkages, intergenerational linkages and innovative partnerships.

2. Membership

The TWG RYE was established by the GDPRD in 2018 with leadership from the AfDB, IADC, USAID, NORAD and with initial participation of several youth leaders and organizations. Since then, membership has grown to include BMZ/GIZ, AFD as well as international organization such as IFAD, FAO, OECD and ILO.

The following are general criteria for membership:

- a) Participation in the TWG is **open to all GDPRD members**.
- b) Youth-led organizations, private sector, producers' organizations, think tanks, research institutes, development agencies and international organizations with a commitment to increase youth

engagement in their activities can join on an **invitation-basis**.

- c) Interested institutions should not have any potential conflict of interest with the overall goals of the TWG or the GDPRD as a whole.

Invited organization are encouraged **to appoint a focal person and be committed to actively engage in and contribute to the TWG**. Regular activities of the group include four virtual meeting a year and ad-hoc webinars. Contributions to the group's mandate include willingness to share information on own projects and reports, comment in writing or verbally to policy processes the group engages in and support co-chairs in recommending speakers for webinars and in-depth sessions. and be willing to participate in regular group calls and meetings; active engagement is defined as contributions in-writing, during meetings, or speaker contributions to webinars and in-depth meeting features. Members should be committed to sharing information and data regarding activities and programmes related to innovative and sustainable finance and be willing to participate in regular group meetings and joint TWG activities.

An invitation to TWG Membership takes place through the following process:

1. The GDPRD Secretariat and current members of the TWG identify potential member organizations to be considered;
2. Candidate members of the TWG are invited to a TWG meeting and invited to present themselves;
3. TWG members decide on a non-objection basis whether to invite to membership.

If members wish to cease membership, they notify the chair and cease to be members 30 days after receipt of written confirmation by chair of receipt of the withdrawal request.

Observers to group meetings are welcome at the discretion of members.

3. Chair/Co-Chair Function

The Chair/Co-Chair of the TWG functions as direct contact person for the Platform Secretariat. The Chair shall **guide the group, coordinate meetings, and act as a focal person** with members and others externally.