

CFS 53 SIDE EVENT (SE26)

Blended Finance and Impact Measurement in Agrifood Systems: The Catalytic Capital Framework

Concept Note and Agenda

Thursday 23 October 2025 | 13:30-14:45 CET | Philippines Room, FAO HQ, Rome and On Zoom

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Lead organizers:

Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD)
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

Other organizers:

Agri-SME Learning Collective

Abstract:

The Thematic Working Group on Sustainable/Blended Finance for Food Systems was established in April 2024 by the GDPRD. It brings together representatives from donor organizations, philanthropies, public funds and foundations to explore innovative financing approaches aimed at increasing the impact of donor and public funds on food systems.

This session will present the work being done as the group's first initiative, to standardize the assessment of additionality and impact in agri-SME blended finance through a Catalytic Capital Framework. Supported by Canada, Norway, Switzerland, the UK and the US, and led by the Agri-SME Learning Collective, the framework aims to enhance decision-making, accountability and collaboration by providing a common language for donors, intermediaries and policymakers.

The session will discuss the challenges in measuring and standardizing the impact of blended finance instruments across impact investors and donors. It will showcase how the framework can guide catalytic capital deployment, strengthen impact measurement, and inform policies that promote food security and sustainable agricultural investment. By standardizing assessments of impact and additionality, the framework aligns with CFS's mission to enhance inclusive, sustainable financing.

Objectives:

1. Present the new GDPRD Thematic Working Group on Sustainable/Blended Finance for Food Systems, and its first collaboration to establish the different ways donors and capital providers are gathering, interpreting, and making decisions on impact and additionality related information.
2. Highlight the challenges that result from the lack of standardized definitions and methodologies in assessing catalytic capital in blended finance structures.
3. Present the Catalytic Capital Framework as a proposed tool for standardizing and assessing capital additionality and impact in agri-SME blended financing.
4. Showcase how the framework will be able to help donors, capital providers, policy makers and other stakeholders to enhance accountability and the effectiveness of blended capital in food systems.

Relevance to CFS work:

By providing insights on leveraging catalytic capital to drive meaningful change, this session reinforces the CFS's commitment to strengthening responsible investment and financing for food security, a key priority under the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) 2024- 2027. The long-term objective of the framework is to enhance policy and decision-making by providing standardized tools for assessing capital additionality and impact, enabling policymakers and donors to make more evidence-based financing decisions. The event will foster multi-stakeholder collaboration by bringing together donors, intermediaries, policymakers, and researchers to improve capital allocation and impact measurement in food systems.

Linkages to CFS policy products:

Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition
Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems
Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition

Provisional Agenda:

Moderator: **Maurizio Navarra**, Secretariat Coordinator, GDPRD

Time	Segment	Speakers
13:30-13:35 (5 min)	INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME The Thematic Working Group on Sustainable/Blended Finance for Food Systems	Maurizio Navarra , Senior Partnership Office, IFAD and Secretariat Coordinator, GDPRD
13:35-13:40 (5 min)	SCENE-SETTING Innovative financing approaches Challenges and opportunities	Tuleen Alkhoffash , Senior Private Sector Officer, IFAD, and Co-Chair of GDPRD Thematic Working Group
13:40-13:55 (15 min)	THE CATALYTIC CAPITAL FRAMEWORK How the framework assesses additionality, impact and context as a “north star” for measuring catalytic capital.	Eda Dokle , Coordinator of the ASLC, and CSAF Data & Learning Manager
13:55-14:30 (35 min)	PANEL DISCUSSION Insights from donor-testing cohort and the need for a framework	Anders Aabo , Senior Adviser, Department for Climate, Nature and the Private Sector, Section for Food, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, Norad Peter Beez , Senior Policy Advisor and Program Manager - Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, SDC Radio Save , Commercial Agriculture and Sustainable Investment Lead, United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, FCDO Songbae Lee , former Agricultural Finance Team Lead, USAID
14:30-14:40 (10 min)	INTERACTIVE Q&A	
14:40-14:45 (5 min)	CLOSING REMARKS Next phase opportunities	Songbae Lee , Independent Advisor, and Co-Chair of GDPRD Thematic Working Group

Focal points:

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