



Minutes TWG RYE Meeting

Participants

Group Members

- **Theresa Herbold**, *BMZ*
- **Yessie Meyer**, *Enabel*
- **Anna Befus**, *FAO*
- **Rahul Antao**, *IFAD*
- **Elisenda Estruch Puertas**, *ILO*
- **Ji-Yeun Rim**, *OECD/DEV (Co-Chair)*
- **Tim Diphooorn**, *One Acre Fund*
- **Victor Mugo Muiru**, *One Acre Fund*
- **Cyriaque Hakizimana**, *PLAAS*
- **Genna Tesdall**, *YPARD (Co-Chair)*

GDPRD Secretariat

- **Maurizio Navarra**
- **Michelle Tang**
- **Alessandro Cordova**
- **Sierra Berardelli**
- **Monique Amar**

Agenda

ISSUE	ITEM	DETAILS
1.	Welcome and introduction	Genna Tesdall/YPARD
2.	Updates from the Secretariat	GDPRD Secretariat
3.	EU youth policies and programmes in external action	Ana Torres Fraile/EU
4.	TWG updates	YPARD/AII
5.	Tour de table and miscellaneous	YPARD/AII
6.	Wrap up and closing	YPARD/AII

Key Highlights/Issues

1. Welcome and Introduction

- Ana Torres Fraile (EU) joined the call for the first time. Victor Mugo Muiro joined the call for the first time in his new capacity as Global Youth Engagement Lead with One Acre Fund.

2. Updates from the Secretariat

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

The Secretariat provided an overview of ongoing Platform activities.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The GDPRD launched its latest White Paper, "[Financing Agrifood Systems for People, Planet and Prosperity](#)", at an official side event during the Fourth International Financing for Development Conference (FfD4). The Paper highlights the urgency of mobilizing finance for agrifood systems and identifies key action areas for different actors (e.g., bilateral donors, IFIs) to catalyze solutions.
- Preparations are underway for the Platform's annual Senior Managers Meeting in October, which will provide guidance for the Strategic Plan 2026-2030. Discussions will focus on how to sharpen the Platform's value proposition for donors in a context of shrinking budgets and increasing fragmentation.
- The 2025 Annual General Assembly (AGA) will take place in Brussels in December (date TBC), hosted by the European Commission. The AGA theme will focus on the future of the development finance agenda and how donors and partners can position themselves to leverage new financing instruments. Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) will be invited to organize sessions, as in previous years.

Q&A and Discussion:

- Are the dates for the AGA confirmed?
 - Not yet. It will most likely take place during the first two weeks of December.

3. EU youth policies and programmes in external action

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

Ana Torres Fraile of the European Commission presented the EU's Youth Action Plan in External Action (2022-2027).

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The EU Youth Action Plan (YAP) is a policy framework which aims to promote meaningful youth participation and empowerment across EU external policies. The Plan complements the internal EU Youth Strategy by extending its scope globally and is currently undergoing a midterm evaluation. YAP responds to the requests from EU Member States to integrate youth perspectives into external action, a demand from young people for greater involvement in policymaking, and the demographic importance of youth inclusion.
- The principles guiding YAP include evidence-based policymaking and accountability (through improved youth data), a rights-based and gender-equality approach, inclusivity participatory approach for transformative change, and youth inclusion.
- The YAP is structured around three main pillars:
 - **Partnership to engage:** ensuring youth voices are heard in decision-making at local,

regional, and multilateral levels. This includes support for youth participation in UN processes, regional summits, and civic life, as well as the establishment of EU-level and delegation-level Youth Sounding Boards to provide regular input.

- **Partnerships to empower:** tackling inequalities by improving access to education, employment, entrepreneurship, health, and opportunities linked to green and digital transitions. Initiatives include increased funding for education, and the Youth Empowerment Fund, which provides accessible grants for grassroots youth organizations, particularly those in rural and marginalized communities.
- **Partnership to connect:** expanding mobility, networks, and exchanges through programs such as Erasmus+ and the Africa-Europe Youth Academy, designed to foster leadership and partnerships between young multipliers from both continents

Q&A and Discussion:

- Do you foresee the shifts in ODA impacting budget allocations for youth programs?
 - Many initiatives under the YAP do not require large investments but instead institutional mindset shifts; the Plan emphasizes mainstreaming youth as a horizontal priority across all sectors. Although the EU's top priorities under the current Commissioner include the Global Gateway, fragility and migration, youth mainstreaming remains relevant across these areas and many EU delegations continue to establish Youth Sounding Boards.
- How will the Plan ensure accessibility for rural youth and overcome the complexity of EU funding processes?
 - Accessibility is being addressed through diverse Youth Sounding Boards, community-based networks (e.g., Red Cross, scouts), and tools like UNICEF's U-Report for outreach to those without internet access. To ease funding barriers, the EU promotes cascade models where lead partners must work with grassroots and youth organizations.
- Beyond participation and governance, is there dedicated funding for decent employment projects or corporations? Access to decent work is an important part of empowering youth, as many rural youths cannot engage in policy dialogue without livelihoods to support this.
 - Decent employment is a priority in most EU delegations' strategies, particularly in Africa. The Global Gateway initiative is strongly linked to creating skills and employment opportunities.

4. TWG updates

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

To review the TWG's current work.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The Chairmanship of the TWG rotates on a biannual basis. Ji-Yeun Rim/OECD will complete the two-year chairmanship rotation in the end of 2025. Members are encouraged to share their interest in the [Co-Chairmanship position](#) for 2026-2027 with the Co-Chairs or [Secretariat](#).
- The TWG will hold its next webinar, "[Development Finance for Youth in a Changing Landscape](#)" on October 7, 15:00-16:15 CET. The webinar will explore how emerging financing mechanisms can contribute to youth employment creation, with speakers from IFAD, Global Environmental Facility (GEF), Helvetas and Sustainable Agriculture Foundation-Bangladesh. Members are encouraged to [register](#) and share widely among their networks.
- The TWG's session at the 2025 AGA could build upon the finance theme explored during the webinar series, in line with the overall AGA theme. The session could be structured around a

clear value proposition: *why invest in youth, why now, and through what mechanisms*. Possible case studies on blended finance, green financing, and carbon credit-based projects could be included. Members are encouraged to contribute ideas and potential speakers for the session; a smaller planning group will be formed with interested members.

- The session could also link with broader priorities, including fragility, migration, climate change and conflict, as well as intersections with gender and Indigenous rights.
- Digitalization should also be considered, given its centrality to youth across sectors.
- This year's session should focus on what was not covered during last year's AGA on financing and should be forward looking.
- If the AGA is held in Brussels, a strategic approach should be taken to align the session with Brussels-based actors and stakeholders and shape a clear message to donors on the importance of investments in youth.

5. Tour de Table and Miscellaneous

- FAO launched the [Status of Youth in Agrifood Systems](#) in July. Regional launch events are planned, beginning with Latin America in November.
- FAO will contribute to the World Food Forum (10–17 October, Rome), with side events including *Voices for Change: Youth-Led Governance for Urban Agrifood System Transformation* and *Youth with Disabilities as Champions of Inclusive Rural Transformation*.
- FAO's is expanding its work on the uptake of the CFS policy recommendations on youth engagement and employment, to in-country uptake in Latin America.
- IFAD is finalizing its Rural Youth Action Plan, which will be launched in December 2025. It is also developing Rural Youth Alliances to connect young people at the grassroots level and ensure their perspectives inform both IFAD projects and national food system dialogues.
- IFAD's Governing Council 2026 will be entirely dedicated to rural youth, with a strong focus on women, in line with the International Year of the Rural Woman Farmer. IFAD14, its next replenishment process, will prioritize jobs in rural economies, with youth employment as a central theme.
- YPARD, FAO and IFAD are jointly contributing to the GEF Food Systems Integrated Program, which includes agroecology trainings for youth in selected countries and the development of a youth strategy or action plan.
- YPARD launched the [Building Women & Youth-led Network Alliances for Agroecology and Organic Agriculture Program \(BWYNAAO\)](#) project in Uganda, supporting women- and youth-led networks across around 30 countries under the KCOA network. Activities include fellowships, internships and awareness-raising activities.
- ILO held its Decent Jobs for Youth Academy 2025 over the summer and the [Rural Development Academy](#) is currently ongoing.
- ILO, the EU, IFAD, and the World Food Forum are co-organizing a webinar, *Innovative Solutions for Rural Youth Employment: Policy and Practice*, on 30 September, 14:00-15:00 CET. Members are encouraged to [register](#).
- ILO, FAO, the African Union, and partners will organize a side event during the [CFS](#). While not exclusively youth-focused, it will highlight rural youth within the [Job Agri Initiative](#) and the [Decent Work for Equitable Food Systems Coalition](#).

6. Wrap Up and Closing

- Members attending the CFS and World Food Forum in Rome may connect for an in-person catch-up or coffee meeting.

- The next regular call will take place in the end of 2025 alongside the AGA, date and time TBC.

Summary of action points

ITEM	ACTION	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
1.	Members to express interest in taking on Co-Chairmanship role for 2026-2027.	ASAP	All
2.	Members to share feedback on the topic/potential speakers for TWG session at 2025 AGA.	ASAP	All
3.	Members to suggest topics for in-depth inputs and/or their availability to present own activities.	ASAP	All
3.	Provide event/publication updates to Michelle Tang/Secretariat for the TWG RYE website.	Rolling basis	All