



Minutes TWG RYE Meeting

Participants

Group Members

- **Theresa Herbold**, *BMZ*
- **Yessie Meyer**, *Enabel*
- **Anna Befus**, *FAO*
- **Elisenda Estruch Puertas**, *ILO*
- **Ji-Yeun Rim**, *OECD/DEV (Co-Chair)*
- **Genna Tesdall**, *YPARD (Co-Chair)*

GDPRD Secretariat

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

Agenda

ISSUE	ITEM	DETAILS
1.	Welcome and introduction	Ji-Yeun Rim/OECD
2.	Updates from the Secretariat	GDPRD Secretariat
3.	Innovating education and training in agriculture: The experience of Réseau FAR to support youth and farmer inclusion	Audrey Sirvente/FAR
4.	TWG updates	Co-Chairs
5.	Tour de table and miscellaneous	OECD/All
6.	Wrap up and closing	OECD/All

Key Highlights/Issues

1. Welcome and Introduction

- Ji-Yeun Rim (OECD) joined the call as Co-Chair for the last time and will transition to regular membership for future meetings.

2. Updates from the Secretariat

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

The Secretariat provided an overview of ongoing Platform activities.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The 2025 Annual General Assembly (AGA) will take place in Brussels this Friday, 12 December, hosted by the European Commission. This year's AGA will focus on *investing in the future of agri-food systems* and the evolving development finance landscape, including trends in ODA, catalytic capital, and aligning financing efforts. All TWG RYE members are strongly encouraged to attend the event either in-person, or virtually.
 - The Thematic Working Group (TWG) will host a joint session together with the Global Donor Working Group on Land (GDWGL) on [*"The Future of Youth in Agrifood Systems: Tackling the double challenge of access to land and finance"*](#).
 - The session will include a keynote presentation by FAO on the 'State of Youth in Agrifood Systems' report released earlier this year and the upcoming 'State of Land Tenure and Governance' report. Following is an interactive panel discussion, with youth representatives (YPARD and the International Land Coalition) and a speaker from the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).
- The Platform will also hold a special pre-AGA session with Board Members and some invited guests, 'Around the Table: Aligning for Impact in Dynamic Environments'. The conversation will be an informal but strategic discussion on how donors and the broader development community can align their political priorities, narratives and resources to maximize impact amid global instability. The outcomes of the discussion will help shape the Platform's work plan for the coming year.

Q&A and Discussion:

- Will others be able to listen in to the pre-AGA session?
 - The session is closed and limited to Board Members, select donors, and invited speakers.

3. Innovating education and training in agriculture: The experience of Réseau FAR to support youth and farmer inclusion

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

Audrey Sirvente (Réseau FAR) presented the Network's approaches to strengthening agricultural and rural training systems and improving youth and farmer inclusion.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Réseau FAR, created in 2012, brings together 19 African countries and over 5,000 stakeholders (ministries, training centers, producer organizations, NGOs, research institutes, partners) to support the renovation and scaling of Agricultural Technical and Vocational

Education and Training (ATVET) systems. The Network serves as a multi-actor platform offering expertise, peer learning and methodological tools.

- FAR focuses on improving labour-market relevance of training, reaching rural youth, women and farmers excluded from formal systems, and supporting their social and professional integration. Activities span national strategy support, governance of training centers, and international exchange of practices.
- Strengthening linkages with labour-market demand is central to FAR's approach. This includes promoting competency-based training, establishing multi-stakeholder platforms to identify priority value chains and required skills, and improving advisory boards within training centers to adapt curricula and expand internships/apprenticeships. For example, in Togo, 90% of supported training centers now have post-training insertion follow-up systems. In DRC, FAR has trained center managers to implement institutional development projects.
- Studies show rural youth do not reject agriculture itself but its image as low-income, high-risk and socially undervalued. Youth aspirations increasingly center on modern, digital and diversified agrifood opportunities across value chains. Training must therefore cover a broader range of agrifood and rural jobs, integrating entrepreneurship, financial literacy, soft skills and career guidance.
- Flexible training modalities (short modules, alternance, apprenticeships, incubators and post-training support) are critical, particularly for young women and out-of-school youth. Youth participation in designing, monitoring and evaluating training offers improves relevance and uptake.
- Future challenges and obstacles include:
 - Agriculture's low attractiveness, requiring shifts in perceptions and improved working conditions and income prospects.
 - Access to resources (land, finance, infrastructure, energy, connectivity), which continues to limit youth potential, especially for young women.
 - Scaling quality ATVET systems, which requires coherent national frameworks, stable financing and stronger coordination across ministries.
 - Rapid changes linked to climate, digitalisation and evolving agrifood systems, demanding more agile and continuously updated training systems.
 - Shrinking development aid, posing risks to long-term support structures such as FAR.
- Investing in agriculture and rural training that is both demand driven and youth-centered is one of the most powerful levers we have to turn demographic growth into a rural development opportunity rather than a crisis.

Q&A and Discussion:

- How does FAR deal with the large gap between youth income aspirations and actual economic conditions (e.g., very low GDP per capita vs. high salary expectations)?
 - Improving the relevance of training, especially through market-informed curricula, practical skills, and better-organized internships, help youth access real opportunities, including income-generating ones like poultry farming, which some pursue independently when training centers do not meet their needs.
- Since most agricultural jobs are low-skilled or casual labour force, how do TVET systems adapt? Are the approaches separate?
 - Many youth are still trained informally by family because formal systems do not meet their needs or aspirations. The solution is improving and renovating the training systems in countries to be more practical, flexible, and demand-driven, while strengthening coordination across ministries. Better-designed courses, short modules and internships, and closer links with the private sector can improve youth

integration into both skilled and lower-skilled roles.

- What approaches help integrate young people, especially young women, into governance mechanisms (i.e., boards), and in FAR's experience, how long do these changes take?
 - FAR has worked intentionally on gender and youth inclusion, resulting in concrete progress: the Board grew from all-male to two women out of five; membership increased from 3 to 10 women among 40 national representatives. Change is slow and requires long-term mindset shifts, but FAR models inclusive governance through its events, publications, and internal practices.
- Are certifications for skills gained informally (e.g., family farming, artisan work), to support mobility into wage employment, being considered?
 - FAR is exploring this. In Togo, FAR-supported centers worked together to help uncertified centers obtain government certification. FAR is also working with AFDI on certification of ROPPA training. Certification is especially important for women. However, in some countries, there are many private training centers that operate effectively.
- How can training systems help youth understand realistic labour-market opportunities?
 - Designing trainings that reflect both youth aspirations and market demand from the ground is important. Many youth want agricultural work but cannot find relevant, practical training. FAR supports competency-based curricula, stronger private-sector engagement, and incorporating youth interests (e.g., modern poultry production, services, processing) to better align expectations with real opportunities.
- How does FAR account for differing subsectors and their institutional complexities?
 - FAR does not specialize by subsector at the network level but works across agricultural and rural value chains. When specialization is needed, FAR draws on member-country experts. Its role is to provide cross-cutting methodologies, not sector-specific technical training.
- Does FAR work with cooperatives/workers' organizations to inform curricula and governance?
 - Yes, FAR includes cooperatives, producer organizations, and workers' representatives in advisory boards and in studies or consultations, recognizing their role in shaping training relevance and labour standards.
- Many youth do not even apply for jobs because they assume companies will not hire "strangers," as hiring practices often favor family or known contacts. This is a significant behavioral and mindset challenge on the demand side, particularly among CEOs, HR staff and managers, where greater emphasis is needed on hiring based on skills rather than personal networks.
 - Strengthening internship systems is also critical: well-organized, longer placements with SMEs can help shift employer perceptions and open doors for youth.
 - Members suggested this could be a valuable topic for a future deep-dive webinar.
- [ILO's Africa Skills Hub](#) includes efforts in relation to TVET and Apprenticeships.

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. The Group and Secretariat thank Ji-Yeun for her dedication and contributions to the TWG RYE over the last two years, as well as

her insights, events, projects and networks. Members are encouraged to share their interest in the [Co-Chairmanship position](#) for 2026-2027 with the Co-Chairs or [Secretariat](#).

- In 2025, the TWG held regular meetings each quarter with in-depth inputs by various members at each session. The group hosted two webinars [Investing in Youth: The Role of Development Banks](#) and “[Development Finance for Youth in a Changing Landscape](#)”, with partners from ILO, AfDB, IsDB, IFAD, Global Environmental Facility (GEF), Helvetas and Sustainable Agriculture Foundation-Bangladesh. The webinar series is member-interest-driven, so the group can consider topics of interest for next year.

5. Tour de Table and Miscellaneous

- ILO is closing the biennium with significant progress through their collaboration with IFAD on the Agrihub project. ILO’s online training on decent jobs for rural youth will take place again next year, dates still tbc.
- ILO and FAO recently launched a [regional report on informality in the agri-food sector](#) in Latin America.
- Enabel’s work this year has focused heavily on monitoring job creation using eight dimensions of decent work. Applying these dimensions in smallholder settings, for example, among millet growers in Senegal, has been challenging, and teams are working toward harmonized definitions and approaches across countries.
- FAO is expanding its expanding focus on improving access to decent employment in agrifood systems for youth with disabilities, including through adapted training and technologies.
- YPARD’s new 4–5-year strategy will be launched early next year, with continued emphasis on agroecology, intersectional youth inclusion (women and youth with disabilities), and more country-level, longer-term training opportunities such as internships and fellowships. Several ongoing projects on agroecology and rural youth employment are advancing, as well as preparation for engagement across the three COPs next year.

6. Wrap Up and Closing

- The next regular call will take place in the first quarter of 2026, 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 the invitation to the TWG session at 2025 AGA widely among their networks.	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