

27 November 2025

# Minutes GDWGL Meeting

## Participants

### Group Members

- **Etienne Coyette**, *European Commission*
- **Ward Anseeuw**, *FAO (Chair)*
- **Jenny Lopez**, *FCDO*
- **Wencke Müller-Rilke**, *Germany (BMZ)*
- **Gwen Wordingham**, *Ireland*
- **Gemma Betsema**, *The Netherlands*
- **Chantal Wieckardt**, *The Netherlands*
- **Christina Blank**, *Switzerland*
- **Therese Arnesen**, *Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)*

### Guests

- **Yenly Mendez**, *Colombia/ICARRD+20*
- **Angela Guevara**, *Colombia/ICARRD+20*
- **Heidy Barbosa**, *Colombia/ICARRD+20*
- **Itayosara Rojas Herrera**, *Colombia/ICARRD+20*

### GDPRD Secretariat

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

## Agenda

ISSUE	ITEM	DETAILS
1.	Welcome & Introduction	Ward/FAO
2.	Engagement in ICARRD+20	Colombia/ICARRD+20
3.	Partnerships for development	All
4.	Member updates	All
5.	AOB and Closing	Ward/FAO

# Key Highlights/Issues

## 1. Welcome & Introduction

- Gwen Wordingham *[Ireland]* joined for the first time.

## 2. Engagement in ICARRD+20

### PURPOSE OF SECTION:

*For colleagues from the Colombian government to provide an update on organization of the upcoming ICARRD+20 event.*

### ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- **ICARRD+20** (International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development) will be held in **Cartagena, Colombia on 24 – 28 February, 2026**. The government of Colombia, lead by the Ministry of Agriculture, will host ICARRD+20, with technical support provided by FAO. Preparations are focusing both on substantive content and logistics, ensuring wide participation, including from social organizations and agricultural stakeholders.
- Pre-conference academic meetings will involve Colombian and international institutions (Africa, Europe, Asia, Latin America) to foster exchange and discussion before the main event.
- ICARRD+20 will work toward several goals:
  - Showcase the achievements of Colombia's agrarian reform and rural development over recent years.
  - Engage many actors including government, social movements, academia, and international researchers (i.e., not just state delegations).
  - Expected outputs include the official declaration from participating states; Policy recommendations for land management and sustainable rural development; and Proposals for a 10-year global campaign on land and food production.
  - A highlight will be a meeting of Ministers of Agriculture from the Latin America region, to discuss food security, nutritional plans, and regional integration initiatives.
- Some funding has been made available from France and IFAD, but additional support is being requested to ensure participation, especially from social organizations in Africa and Asia to strengthen inclusivity and impact. There is already strong mobilization from Latin America, emerging in Africa, but further efforts needed for Asia. *[Colombia/ICAARD+20]*
- FAO has received the second draft of the declaration, and is currently preparing the comments. *[FAO]*
  - While all input is welcome, the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is guiding the process of the official declaration. Additional feedback and comments might translate into an annex. *[Colombia/ICAARD+20]*
  - There will be a call for position and policy papers, which will feed into the declaration and broaden global engagement. *[Colombia/ICAARD+20]*
- GDWGL members are encouraged to use their networks to facilitate outreach, and engage with their partner countries to support advocacy and mobilization, particularly in Africa, where awareness among partners remains limited. *[FAO]*
- ICAARD+20 and its declaration will link land with many other global challenges and agendas including hunger, poverty, climate change, the COPs, rural development and rural communities, human rights, etc. The declaration will call for specific actions (both technical

and financial). *[Colombia/ICAARD+20]*

- Participation in ICAARD+20 is highly encouraged. The first ICAARD was extremely important, having led to the establishment of the VGGTs and UNDROP, with 96 states committed. *[FAO; Colombia/ICAARD+20]*

#### **ACTION POINTS:**

- The Chair will facilitate contact between GDWGL members and the Colombian/ICAARD+20 colleagues who wish to collaborate.

### **3. Partnerships for development**

#### **PURPOSE OF SECTION:**

*To discuss strengthening partnerships and collaboration, with reflections from the African Land Policy Conference (ALPC).*

#### **ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Partnerships and strengthened collaboration were strongly emphasized at the ALPC:
  - A pre-conference side event (with participation from FAO, ILC, Oxfam, IDLO, GIZ and others) focused on partnerships for development, emphasizing the same two layers of collaboration.
  - The ALPC itself highlighted the urgent need to strengthen collaboration among development partners at two levels: country-level inclusive processes related to land and policy, and alignment and coordination among development partners to support those processes more effectively.
  - Throughout the conference, participants stressed that collaboration is essential, especially as overall funding is decreasing.
  - The African Union expressed interest in taking a bigger role by facilitating partner coordination on the African continent, mobilizing countries, and helping institutionalize a continental coordination mechanism.
- These discussions at the ALPC therefore mirrored what the GDWGL has been discussing for years: how to better work together as development partners and strengthen the impact of what's happening on the ground? The GDWGL and other land partners have used various tools, including the shared Excel file (country-by-country mapping of donor actions) to coordinate at national level and explore strategies to strengthen in-country collaboration. The online platform with Land Portal also could be used more effectively. *[FAO]*
  - There is no one-size-fits-all approach to this type of alignment, but the GDWGL setting is already a good first step. For future meetings, it could be interesting to have 1-2 examples of country coordination. *[The Netherlands]*
  - The manual data entry approach was not effective, which was why the shift was made to the IATI donor reporting and collaboration with Land Portal. Perhaps Land Portal could perform a quick analysis on countries with high donor activity, potential coordination hotspots, and gaps and opportunities to present at the next GDWGL meeting? *[The Netherlands]*

#### **ACTION POINTS:**

- The Secretariat and Chair will reach out to Land Portal to possibly present at the next GDWGL meeting.

## 4. Member Updates

### PURPOSE OF SECTION:

*For members to share updates on their ongoing and new land-related projects and programmes.*

### ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The Global Donor Platform will hold its [Annual General Assembly \(AGA\)](#) in Brussels, Belgium on 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 GDWGL members are strongly encouraged to attend the event either in-person, or virtually.
  - The GDWGL and the TWG on Rural Youth Employment will hold a joint session on *"The future of youth in agri-food systems: tackling the double challenge of access to land and finance"*, with contributions from a youth representative of YPARD and the ILC Youth Coalition. **[GDPRD]**
- The Strengthening Advisory Capacities for Africa programme received a no-cost extension through November 2026, helping ensure sustainable integration of ALPC. BMZ's new global programme will be contracted shortly and begin in early 2026. **[BMZ]**
- BMZ, the Netherlands, and the EC will also meet to explore options for a potential Team Europe Initiative on land. Other donors interested in joining this discussion are invited to contact BMZ. **[BMZ]**
- The second phase of Land-at-Scale is expected to start in early 2026. A more detailed presentation may be shared at the next GDWGL meeting. **[Netherlands]**
- OHCHR intends to participate in-person at the AGA and ICARRD+20, including active engagement by the Working Group on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) in ICARRD.
  - Colombia, Germany and Switzerland have also confirmed their participation at ICARRD. **[FAO]**
  - Switzerland's embassy in Colombia will participate. **[Switzerland]**
  - The EU Delegation in Bogotá has confirmed, but HQ participation is TBC. **[European Commission]**
  - The Netherlands is waiting for a decision by the Ministry of Agriculture. **[Netherlands]**
- Country-level engagement continues, including extensive work in Honduras on land-related conflict, forced evictions, killings of Garifuna communities, and judicial capacity-building. A new initiative has also begun in Papua New Guinea, supporting a parliamentary committee on land reform and advancing tenure security for customary lands. **[OHCHR]**
- OHCHR has several publications forthcoming, including a joint FAQ on Land and Human Rights with FAO and UN-Habitat (expected early 2026) and follow-up work on the Pinheiro Principles. **[OHCHR]**
- A call for inputs is now open from the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food for the upcoming report on land rights. All stakeholders, including partner countries, are encouraged to contribute by the 9 December 2025 deadline. **[Switzerland]**
- The State of Land Tenure and Governance Report has been delayed by senior leadership but should be launched at a dedicated side event during ICAARD+20. **[FAO]**
- The UNFCCC Adaptation Monitoring Framework was adopted at COP in Belém, including land-tenure indicators as disaggregation indicators under Target 9B. Land issues are now being positioned more strongly across CBD, UNFCCC, and UNCCD, and FAO has been invited to present at upcoming UNCCD sessions. **[FAO]**

- Challenges in securing dedicated financing for land governance within the final years of the current Multiannual Financial Framework (ending 2027) are ongoing. With growing prioritization of the Global Gateway, traditional entry points for land governance support are under pressure. More information is expected at the next meeting, following internal discussions. *[European Commission]*
- Ireland is conducting a retrospective review of Irish Aid’s spending on food and nutrition security, particularly on intersections with land governance, women’s empowerment, and rural/off-farm livelihoods. *[Ireland]*

5. AOB & Closing

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

*For members to discuss other pressing issues.*

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The next GDWGL meeting will take place in early 2026 and may include contributions from Land Portal, one or two countries to present on partnership models, as well as further updates on Land-at-Scale. *[FAO]*

Summary of action points

ITEM	ACTION	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
1.	Put Colombian ICARRD+20 representatives in touch with interested GDWGL members	ASAP	Chair