

The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD)

The GDPRD is a network/partnership platform of 40 influential bilateral and multilateral development agencies, international financial institutions, intergovernmental organizations and foundations. It was established in 2003 on the wave of the Aid Effectiveness agenda, to lobby for increased public and private investments in agriculture and rural development, and now facilitates collaboration to accelerate progress on achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2).

The Platform has a **Board**¹, its main decision-making body, which comprises the focal points of all Platform members who pay an annual membership fee. There are two **co-chairs**², who are elected *ad personam* by the Board members, and who serve as chairs of the Board. The **Secretariat**, hosted at IFAD, is the management unit of the Platform and supports the implementation of the annual work programme. The Platform hosts three **thematic working groups** on areas that contribute to a more comprehensive approach to sustainable development of the rural space: (1) Land governance and tenure, (2) Rural youth employment and (3) Agenda 2030 (SDG 2 Roadmap).

The **vision** of the GDPRD is for donors to **effectively catalyse change**. Donor investments enable the transformation of food systems for better access to safe and nutritious food, improved environmental sustainability and more prosperous rural communities. The **mission** statement of the Platform is to broker donor collaboration for impact, enhancing donors' policies, investments and programmes for food systems and rural development. The Platform does this through (i) **strategic influencing**, by convening high-level meetings and events, and supporting alignment of donors' contributions to key global forums; (ii) **knowledge sharing**, by identifying key policy and programmatic issues, convening working groups and seminars, and curating key resources, including via the Platform website; and (iii) **networking and convening**, by providing opportunities for partnership-building between donors and other actors.

The Donor Platform and Food Systems

The Platform's engagement with the food systems agenda was initiated at the [2020 GDPRD Annual General Assembly](#) (AGA). For the [2021-2025 Strategic Plan](#), the Platform Board decided to articulate its focus as "food systems and rural development". While staying true to the original intent and purpose of the Platform, the new Plan revived its vision, mission and objectives to better reflect the changed context and environment where donors operate and to create a clear link to the food systems agenda. The Platform has produced three major products for its work on food systems: (1) a [Stocktaking Report on "Donor Contributions to Food Systems"](#); (2) a [Declaration of Intent on Food Systems Transformation](#); and (3) a white paper on donor coordination in food systems. Several events have also been held in 2021 on the topic, including a [High Level Event on "Leveraging Change: The Role of Donors in Food Systems Transformation"](#) and a Donor [roundtable on "How Can Donors Support National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation?"](#).

Stocktaking Report

The Stocktaking Report was launched in September 2021 during the high-level event, in the lead up to the Food Systems Summit. The report provides a broad assessment of donor funding for food systems, based on data from the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), interviews with GDPRD members, and information from donor websites.

¹ Current Board members are: Australia; Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; European Commission; Finland; France; Germany; IFAD; Italy; Netherlands; Switzerland; United Kingdom; United States.

² Current co-chairs are: European Commission and Australia (DFAT)

The report distinguishes the main mechanisms in which donor support contributes to food systems. Overwhelmingly, food system-related aid dollars flow through in-country projects and programmes, on various issues, from agricultural research to nutrition programming and education. Funds are also allocated through support to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations organisations, research, development finance, private sector development, and food systems platforms and networks.

Several main conclusions are drawn from the Report. The importance of the food systems framing is highlighted, along with the critical nature of climate change-related resilience. The breadth of funding is wide, covering topics from agriculture to nutrition, while the scale is modest compared to other development topics. The response capability of donor spending might be improved with a systemic food systems framing and stronger organizational architecture for food systems. Finally, the report emphasises the need for donors to better coordinate their efforts in order to catalyse systemic change.

Declaration of Intent

In 2021, the GDPRD also launched a Declaration of Intent on Food Systems Transformation, which was endorsed by all the Platform Board Members. The Declaration signalled the intention of the GDPRD and its members to work proactively and in coordination, to help advance the outcomes of the Summit. The Declaration encourages seven key points for donors to catalyse systemic change:

1. Strengthening coordination among donors
2. Mobilizing responsible investment in food systems from the public and private sector
3. Investing in research and data systems
4. Supporting policy innovation at national and global levels
5. Strengthening the governance architecture for food systems
6. Promoting engagement of private sector actors and value chain innovation
7. Strengthening social protection mechanisms, disaster preparedness and emergency relief programmes

White Paper on donor coordination

The white paper by the GDPRD, to be released in March 2022, is focused on how the donor community should work together and use its catalytic role to transform food systems. It charts the ways in which donors can support food systems transformation, to follow up on the Summit and accelerate progress towards the SDGs. Based on these findings, the white paper provides a framework for re-thinking the food systems agenda by the donor community, looking at the future and providing a set of responses, options and priorities for donors to engage.

Outlook and Directions for 2022

In 2022, the Platform will continue its work towards achieving SDG 2. The launch of the White Paper in March and a Donor Roundtable on Financing in April will solidify GDPRD's engagement with the food systems agenda, and lead up to the AGA in June. The AGA will focus on three important topics for food systems transformation: data, financing, and country-level coordination.

All Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) are engaged in the rural development agenda and focus their efforts on vulnerable groups, such as rural women, youth, and land and food insecure populations. The TWGs are active within the Platform; each group meets regularly, and all are planning upcoming events for the 2022 year.