



International Symposium

New Models of Agri-Food Development **Cooperation**
in a Changing Geopolitical Context

SPEAKER BIOS

DAY 1 | 11 NOVEMBER 2025

Opening Session



PARTNER
EVENT

DAY OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN

NOVEMBER 28

Raúl Compés, Director, CIHEAM Zaragoza



Raúl Compés has served as Director of CIHEAM Zaragoza, the Spanish institute of the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM), since 2021. Under his leadership, CIHEAM Zaragoza has advanced its mission of providing high-quality international training, strengthening research, international cooperation, and entrepreneurship projects to address the complex challenges facing Mediterranean food systems. Compés brings to this role extensive expertise in agrifood economics and policy, developed through his academic career at the Polytechnic University of Valencia (UPV), where he serves as a Professor in the Department of Economics and Social Sciences.

Teodoro Miano, Secretary General, CIHEAM



Teodoro Miano, Secretary General of CIHEAM since March 2023. He is Full Professor of Agricultural Chemistry at the University of Bari Aldo Moro. With over 35 years of experience, he has worked on Mediterranean agriculture, sustainable food systems, environmental protection, and innovation. He has served as Vice Rector for International Relations, led scientific societies, coordinated projects, and published extensively. Linked to CIHEAM Bari since 1996, he has contributed to education, research, and cooperation, later becoming Advisory Board member, President, and Italian Delegate to the Governing Board.

Francisco Joaquin Gaztelu Mezquiriz, Director, DG MENA, European Commission



Francisco Gaztelu Mezquiriz is the Director of the North Africa Directorate in the recently created Directorate-General for the Middle East, North Africa, and the Gulf (DG MENA). Previously, he served as Director of the Southern Neighbourhood and Türkiye Directorate, following his role as Head of the Migration Unit, both within the former Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR). His extensive experience includes positions as Head of the Irregular Migration and Return Policy Unit at the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) and Head of Unit for the Multi-Annual Financial Framework, Budget, and Agencies.

Joan Borrell, Deputy Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean



Joan Borrell is a Spanish career diplomat and the UfM Deputy Secretary General in charge of the Higher Education and Research Division since August 2024. Since joining Spain's diplomatic service in 2010, he has primarily focused on Euro-Mediterranean and Euro-Latin American affairs. Prior to the UfM, he served as Deputy Assistant Director for the Maghreb at Spain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and as Desk Officer for the Middle East Peace Process. His international assignments include Tunisia, the Spanish Mission to the UN in New York, and roles in Latin America as Consul General in Bolivia and Director of Spain's Cultural Center in Panama.



CIHEAM Zaragoza

Av. Montañana 1005 - 50059 Zaragoza (Spain) • www.iamz.ciheam.org • (+34) 976 71 60 00



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CHAIRPERSON, RAPPORTEUR AND SPEAKER BIOS

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Session I - When the world changes: rethinking international development cooperation in the new geopolitics

Chairperson:

Ignacio Martínez, Professor of Political Science at the Complutense University of Madrid



Ignacio Martínez holds a PhD in Development Studies from the University of the Basque Country. He is a professor of Political Science at the Complutense University of Madrid, where he coordinates the UCM 2030 Observatory —the university observatory on the challenges of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda. His research focuses on sustainable development and international cooperation policies, global governance, the transnational dimension of democracy, and ecosocial transitions.

Rapporteur:

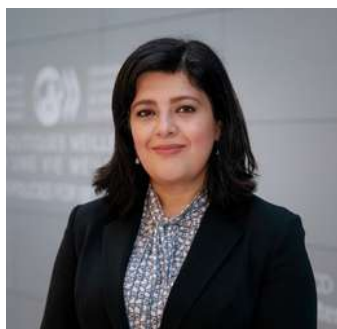
Eduarne Caballero, CERAI's President



A biologist with a Master's degree in Organic Agriculture from the University of Barcelona, she has developed her professional career in Development Cooperation in Africa. In recent years, she has focused on education and outreach in agroecology and food sovereignty. Since 2021, she has been the President of CERAI, becoming the first woman to hold this position within the organisation. She is also one of the founders of the association Biela y Tierra, where she currently works.

Speakers:

María Pilar Garrido Gonzalo, OECD Director for Development Cooperation



Garrido served as Costa Rica's Minister of Planning and Economic Policy (2018–2022), leading work on climate-resilient development, sustainable public investment, public sector reform, and development cooperation. She previously was Deputy Minister and Chief of Staff to the Technical Secretariat of the 2030 Agenda. With over a decade of experience in sustainable development in Costa Rica, Central America, the Caribbean and Latin America, she has worked with the UNDP, the EU, the Diputació de Barcelona, and NGOs fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships. She holds a BA and MA in Political Science from the University of Costa Rica, and an MSc in Economics from Trinity College.

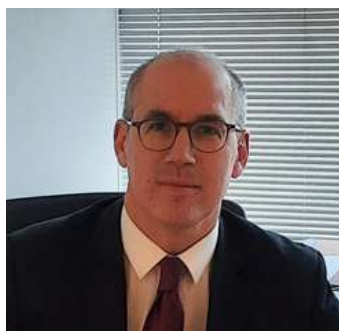


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DAY 1 | 11 NOVEMBER 2025

Session I - When the world changes: rethinking international development cooperation in the new geopolitics

Francisco Joaquin Gaztelu Mezquiriz, Director, DG MENA, European Commission



Francisco Gaztelu Mezquiriz is the Director of the North Africa Directorate in the recently created Directorate-General for the Middle East, North Africa, and the Gulf (DG MENA). Previously, he served as Director of the Southern Neighbourhood and Türkiye Directorate, following his role as Head of the Migration Unit, both within the former Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR). His extensive experience includes positions as Head of the Irregular Migration and Return Policy Unit at the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) and Head of Unit for the Multi-Annual Financial Framework, Budget, and Agencies.

Juan Echanove, Right to Food Lead at FAO



Juan Echanove has over 30 years of international experience in agriculture, rural development, and the right to food. He began his career as a food aid monitor in Croatia, Bosnia, and Cuba, and has worked in Central America, the Middle East, and the Caucasus for Swedish Cooperation, Oxfam, the EU, and the UNDP. He served as Associate Vice President for Food Systems at CARE, coordinating programmes in 70 countries that improved food security for 50 million farmers. Since 2024, he has been leading the Right to Food team at the FAO.

Peggy Martinello, Director of Public Administration and Social Affairs, FIAP



Peggy Martinello holds a degree in Political Science from the Grenoble Institute of Political Studies and a Master's in Cooperation from the Complutense University of Madrid, specialising in governance and social policies. For the past 18 years, she has worked at FIAP, where she has managed European networks, programming, and project management. She is currently Director of Public Administration and Social Affairs, overseeing a team of 70 and coordinating 17 EU and Spanish cooperation programmes covering social cohesion, migration, youth, gender equality, employment, social protection, nutrition, and drug policy.





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Session II - Adapting for impact: the role of European development agencies in a changing world. Reshaping multilateral and bilateral agri-food cooperation

Chairperson:

Juan Antonio Vallés, Director of the Secretariat for Development Cooperation, University of Zaragoza



Juan Antonio Vallés holds a PhD in Physical Science from the University of Zaragoza and is Professor of Optics at the Faculty of Science. With 37 years of teaching experience, he has supervised 25 final-year projects and 3 doctoral theses, and led or participated in over 20 research projects. He has coordinated the degrees in Optics and Optometry and in Physics, and served as Vice-Dean for Internationalisation and Mobility. He is currently Director of the Secretariat for Development Cooperation and Global University Cooperation at the University of Zaragoza.

Rapporteur:

Giorgos Prekatsakis, Supervisor of the Laboratory of Soil Science and Plant Diagnostics, CIHEAM Chania



Giorgos Prekatsakis studied at the Agricultural University of Athens, specialising in pomology and viticulture, and continued his learning journey at Wageningen University, focusing on plant defence processes in a multitrophic context. He trained in teaching at the University of Crete and worked over nine years as an extension agronomist and technical advisor for the Agricultural Cooperative of Gramvousa while managing his mixed organic farm. For the past two years, he has directed the Soil Science and Plant Diagnostics Laboratory at CIHEAM Chania.

Speakers:

Maurizio Navarra, Secretariat Coordinator, Global Donor Platform For Rural Development



Maurizio Navarra is a Senior Partnership Officer coordinating the Secretariat of the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, a network of 45 international agencies focused on investments in food systems, agriculture and rural development. With more than 30 years of experience – 12 in the private sector and 21 in the UN system – he specialises in global engagement, multilateral relations, South-South and Triangular Cooperation, knowledge management and communications. He holds a Master's degree in Political Science and Macroeconomics from the University of Rome "La Sapienza."



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Session II - Adapting for impact: the role of European development agencies in a changing world. Reshaping multilateral and bilateral agri-food cooperation

Santiago Morán, Head of Regional Programmes Department with Arab Countries, AECID, Spain



Santiago Morán is Head of Regional Programmes in the Department of Cooperation with the Arab World at the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID). With over eleven years at AECID, he has also served as Spanish Cooperation Coordinator for Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, and as Head of Service for Latin America and the Caribbean. He holds a Master's in Strategies and Technologies for Human Development, a Master's in Archival Studies, and a degree in Geography and History.

Elisabeth Claverie de Saint Martin, Chief Executive Officer, CIRAD



Elisabeth Claverie studied at France's prestigious École Normale Supérieure and École Nationale d'Administration, and began her career as a researcher in microeconomics. She joined the Civil Service in 1993 and quickly began to work under the direct authority of three French ministers (Finance, Research and Foreign Affairs), as well as the service of the Spanish government. In 2013 she was appointed Senior Advisor to the Executive Director for France at the World Bank-IMF in Washington DC, where she worked on the elaboration and management of public development aid policies. She joined the CIRAD in 2018 as General Director of Research and Strategy before being appointed CEO in June 2021.

Federica de Gaetano - Head of Food Safety and Health. Permanent Representation of Italy in Brussels



Federica de Gaetano holds a degree and a PhD in Science, with professional experience as a Food Safety Expert at the Italian Ministry of Agriculture for 10 years and at the European Commission's DG SANTE for 7 years. Since 2020, she has served as Food Security and Rural Development Expert at the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS). She is Co-Chair of the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD) and participates in the G7/EU Food Security Working Group, contributing to international policy discussions for low- and middle-income countries, including initiatives under Italy's Mattei Plan in Africa.

Songbae Lee, former Agricultural Finance Team Lead, USAID



Songbae's most recent appointment was the USAID Agricultural Finance Team Lead supporting efforts to mobilise capital for agriculture. Before this role, he spent eight years at Calvert Impact Capital, a non-profit impact investing debt fund, where he was responsible for deal origination, credit assessment, and ongoing portfolio monitoring. Prior to that, he worked for Dresdner Kleinwort Wasserstein in their global energy investment banking group in New York City, Bank of America Securities in their real estate investment banking group in San Francisco, and Mercy Corps in their microfinance institution in Kyrgyzstan. He holds an MBA from the University of Chicago and a BSc from the University of Vermont.





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Session III - Development cooperation from the perspective of southern and eastern Mediterranean countries' needs

Chairperson:

**Manuel Nogales, Executive Director, Acodea –
Agriagencia de España**



Manuel Nogales holds a degree in Business Administration and Management and a Master's in International Business Management. He is the Executive Director of Acodea with over 15 years of experience in international cooperation and business, focusing on strengthening cooperatives and producer organisations. He has led initiatives in Europe, Latin America, and Africa to promote sustainable rural development. His work centres on building alliances and advancing cooperativism as a driver of economic and social transformation.

Rapporteur:

**Alun Jones, Head of the Projects Unit at
CIHEAM Zaragoza**



Alun Jones has over 25 years of international cooperation experience working in the United Nations, the European Union and CIHEAM. Currently Head of the Projects Unit at CIHEAM Zaragoza, he promotes innovation and international cooperation in the agrifood sector through research and development cooperation projects. Previously, he led global communications and advocacy at the UN Crime and Drugs Office, managed the Press Office of the EU Economic and Social Committee, and was Deputy Head of Press at the European Food Safety Authority.

Speakers:

Fernando Ledo Casablanacas, African Development Bank Counsellor on food production and agriculture



Fernando Ledo Casablanacas studied Economics at the University of Buenos Aires and holds a Master's in International Relations from the Barcelona Institute of International Studies. He has over 17 years of development experience, working in Central America, Mexico, and later Africa for Intermón Oxfam. Since 2014, he has been based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, at the African Development Bank, where he served as Senior Advisor to the Executive Board. He currently advises the Agriculture and Agro-industry Department, focusing on technology transfer for maize, soybean, and rice production in semi-arid savannah regions.



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Session III - Development cooperation from the perspective of southern and eastern Mediterranean countries' needs

Kanj Hamade, Senior Economic Development Consultant and Academic (Lebanon)



Kanj Hamade is an economic development consultant and academic, based in Beirut and Athens, with over 20 years of experience in agriculture, food security, sustainable livelihoods, labor market systems, and rural development. He has worked across NENA countries with UN agencies, donors, NGOs, and research institutions, leading evaluations, evidence-based programming, and policy research. He holds a PhD in Agricultural Economics from the University of Bologna and is a CIHEAM Bari Alumnus. He previously served as an Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics at the Lebanese University.

Adel Abd El Azim, President of the Agricultural Research Centre (Egypt)



Professor Dr. Adel Abdel Azim serves as the President of the Agricultural Research Center (ARC) at the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, Arab Republic of Egypt. He is widely recognised as one of Egypt's foremost scientific and institutional leaders in agricultural research, cotton production, and sustainable agricultural systems. With over 30 years of professional and scientific experience, he has made significant contributions to applied agricultural research, innovation, and policy development, combining scientific excellence with a strategic vision for sustainable development and food security.

Lamiaie Ghaouti, Director of the National Institute for Agricultural Research (Morocco)



Lamiaie Ghaouti is the Director General of INRA, Morocco. She holds a PhD in Agronomy, specialising in plant breeding and genetics, from Georg-August University of Göttingen (2007) and received the Kurt von Rümker Award (2009). Former Professor and Head of the Department of Plant Production, Protection and Biotechnology at IAV Hassan II, she also served as Director of Cooperation and Chair of the CIHEAM Advisory Committee (2019–2022), earning the CIHEAM Medal of Merit in 2023.





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Workshop - Thematic proposals for a new development cooperation paradigm: water, food security, climate, gender & youth

Chairperson:

Octavi Quintana Trías, Director of PRIMA Foundation



Octavi Quintana is Director of PRIMA, the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area. A medical doctor specialised in intensive medicine, he has served as Director of Málaga Hospital, Deputy Director of INSALUD, Vice-President of the European Commission Ethics Group, and President of the European Council Bioethics Committee. He has directed international affairs at the Spanish Health Ministry, coordinated humanitarian aid in Rwanda, Burundi, Bosnia, and Kosovo, and served as Director of Health Research at the European Commission.

Rapporteur:

Emna Sferi, Executive Assistant to the Director at CIHEAM Zaragoza



Emna Sferi is an agronomist graduated from the *École d'Horticulture et d'Élevage de Chott Mariem* (Tunisia). She holds a Master's in Rural Development and Environment from CIHEAM Zaragoza and a Diploma of Advanced Studies from the University of Zaragoza, where she published scientific articles on land-use change, landscape, and transhumance. She has worked at the International Expo Zaragoza 2008's Volunteer Department, collaborated with REAS on women's entrepreneurship projects, and is currently part of the CIHEAM Zaragoza team.

Speakers:

Christine Campeau, Global Policy Director, Food and Nutrition Systems, CARE



Christine Campeau leads the execution of CARE's policy and advocacy on food and nutrition systems at global, regional, and national levels. Her goal is to accelerate the fundamental shifts in mindsets, incentives, policies, practices, and resource allocations to improve food and nutrition security. Raised on a farm in Southern Ontario, Christine has spent countless hours working and volunteering on farms from Malawi to the Philippines. She builds on that experience to unite actors to develop resilient food systems and decent work for all. It also means that Christine spends as much time with farmers and retailers, volunteering to feed the homeless, cooking in her kitchen, as she does on policy.



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Workshop - Thematic proposals for a new development cooperation paradigm: water, food security, climate, gender & youth

Anna Jenderedjian, Gender and Social Protection Specialist, FAO



Anna Jenderedjian is a Gender and Social Protection Specialist at the FAO, working across Europe and Central Asia. She has led initiatives in the Western Balkans, Ukraine, Moldova, and the South Caucasus, integrating gender equality into agricultural, social protection, and climate strategies. At the FAO, she supports governments in strengthening policies and institutions, embedding gender mainstreaming in programming and ensuring rural women's voices inform decision-making. She also teaches rural sociology courses at The Ohio State University (USA). She holds a PhD in Agriculture and postgraduate degrees in Environmental and Social Sciences.

Noura Abdelwahab, Socio-Economics and Gender Expert, International Water Management Institute



Noura Abdelwahab is a senior socio-economist and gender equality expert with over 20 years of experience providing strategic advisory and research services across the MENA region, including Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Iraq, and Syria. She is a dynamic leader in integrating gender-focused innovation frameworks into development initiatives, with a strong emphasis on the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) nexus and climate peace and security. She has spearheaded comprehensive gender and climate finance assessments and led the development of innovative, inclusive climate finance solutions.

Eva D. Castro Outeiriño, President, UN Women Spain



Expert in sustainability, gender equality, and project management, focused on linking the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs with social transformation and the promotion of a gender perspective in public policies and corporate projects. She holds a degree in Sociology and a Diploma in Social Work, as well as certifications in Project Management (PMP®) and Sustainability (GRI). Her projects have been recognised with the Luisa Villalta Award 2023 and were recently finalists for the 2025 European Capitals of Inclusion and Diversity Awards. She is an active member of various women's leadership networks, including Executivas de Galicia, S de Social, and La ciencia es femenino.

Dario Pollicino, IUCN



Darío Pollicino holds an MSc in Development Studies from SOAS University of London and a Master's in Agricultural Heritage Systems from the University of Florence. He gained extensive experience on sustainable socio-ecological landscapes through work with the FAO's Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) Secretariat. Since 2023, he has been part of the Nature Conservation and Food Systems department at IUCN's Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation, fostering an agroecological transition, promoting resilient agricultural landscapes, and engaging in policy analysis and advocacy across the Mediterranean.





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Session IV. The role of NGOs in the new development cooperation architecture

Chairperson:

Mauricio Valiente, General Director, CEAR



Professional with extensive experience and specialised training in human rights. Before becoming director, he served as coordinator of CEAR's legal team and as the organisation's Director of Policies and Campaigns. He also has broad professional experience in the social sector. In recent years, he has held various positions of responsibility and public representation, always focusing on social policies, migration processes, and democratic memory.

Rapporteur:

Rubén Expósito, External Consultant, CIHEAM Zaragoza



Graduate in Chemical Engineering. Master's in Industrial and Agri-Food Biotechnology. He began his professional career in agricultural research, focusing on sustainability and respect for the environment. He is currently an external consultant for CIHEAM Zaragoza, specialising in development cooperation. In recent years, he has collaborated with several NGOs on food security and rural development projects with a gender perspective in Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.

Speakers:

Pablo Martínez Osés, Head of Research and Advocacy in International Cooperation, Oxfam Intermón



Graduate in Philosophy, Master's in Contemporary Latin American Studies, PhD in Political Science and International Relations. Coordinator of the 0.7% Platform (1993–98), Development Worker in Nicaragua (1995), Post-Mitch Response Coordinator in Central America (Caritas Honduras, 1998–2003), International Analyst (Caritas Spain, 2003–04), Coordinator of the "Zero Poverty" Campaign (CONGDE, 2005–06), and Executive Secretary of the 2015 and Beyond Platform (2006–16). Advisor to Madrid City Council (2015–18). Director General of the Union of Ibero-American Capital Cities (UCCI, 2018–19). Lecturer at UAM and UC3M (2020–23).



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Session IV. Round table – The role of NGOs in the new development cooperation architecture

Macarena Cotelo, Projects Director, Fundación Promoción Social



Director of Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Projects at Fundación Promoción Social, which she joined in 1989, and a member of its Board of Trustees since 2006. Law graduate and Business Advisor from the Pontifical University of Comillas, and member of the Madrid Bar Association. She has led education, rural development, food security, gender equality, employment, and health projects in the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America, with a particular emphasis on multi-annual interventions that have had a strong impact on social and economic development. Member of the Executive Committee of the Center for Middle East Studies (CEMO), she chairs the Euro-Arab Network for Development and Integration (READI).

Jérôme Fauré, Executive Director of Coordination SUD



Agricultural engineer with over 30 years of experience in international development. He began his career with Venezuela's FONAIAP and later joined France's leading NGO, CCFD-Terre Solidaire, where he became Director of International Partnerships. At Oxfam, he led regional programmes in South America and in Cuba, as Country Director focused on climate resilience, gender equality, and rural economy issues. At FAO Havana, he supported Cuba's National Plan for Food Sovereignty working with universities, ministries, civil society organisations and UN agencies. Since 2024, he serves in Paris as Executive Director of Coordination SUD, a network of 188 French NGOs.

Vega Díez, International Cooperation Director, CERAI



Agricultural engineer specialised in agroecology and international cooperation. She began her career in Spain working with European aid programmes for organic farming, before pursuing her vocation of working in Africa with local women farmers in arid regions. She has 20 years of experience in development projects aimed at strengthening the food sovereignty of rural communities in Latin America and Africa, and is the Director of International Cooperation at the NGO CERAI.





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Session V. Civil society in developing countries: perspectives on current and future development cooperation

Chairperson: Abdel-Rahman Ghandour, President of
Résonances Humanitaires, France



Rapporteur: Raquel Álvarez, Project Manager at
CIHEAM Zaragoza



Abdel-Rahman Ghandour is President of Résonances Humanitaires and has 30 years' experience in international solidarity and diplomacy. A graduate of the American University of Beirut, the School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London) and Sciences Po Paris, he has held senior roles with Doctors Without Borders, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and several United Nations bodies, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), or the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Researcher and science communicator specialised in plant biology. In 2023, she defended her doctoral thesis in Plant Biology and Biotechnology at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, focused on the molecular processes that regulate floral development. In addition to her research profile, she has trained in science communication, an area where she combines her interest in bringing science closer to society with international project management. Currently, she works as a project manager at CIHEAM Zaragoza, where she promotes initiatives related to agriculture, sustainability, and innovation in the agri-food sector.

Speakers:

Haneen Zaidan, General Director of the Rural Women's Development Society (RWDS), Palestine



General Director of the Rural Women's Development Society and a leading advocate for women's rights and gender equality in Palestine. She holds a Master's in Planning and Political Development from Al-Najah University. She is a community activist and is known for her founding roles and her work in empowering organisations and grassroots movements. She serves as a Board member of the Palestinian Center for Peace and Development, the Palestinian Hydrology Group, and the Arab Center for Agricultural Development, and leads as the Head of the Steering Committee for the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organization (PNGO) while also overseeing the Women and Youth sector within the PNGO.



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Session V. Civil society in developing countries: perspectives on current and future development cooperation

Edna Lizeth Mulcue Sánchez, Agency for Reincorporation and Normalisation, Colombia



Political scientist and public administrator with a specialisation in Government and Public Policy. As an indigenous woman from the Nasa people, her career has been guided by the defence of territorial autonomy and the strengthening of peace in ethnic territories. She currently works at the Agency for Reincorporation and Normalisation, supporting signatories of the Peace Agreement. From her experience, she identifies armed conflict and illicit economies as threats to food sovereignty and promotes “Nasa Tul” gardens as a traditional indigenous practice. For her, peace, food security, and territorial defence are interconnected processes.

Delicia Coronado Rivera, Director of the School of Health and Education for Farmers, Peru



Director of the NGO School of Health and Education for Farmers (ESCAES) in Peru. She holds a Master’s degree in Education and has strong pedagogical and didactic skills in facilitating processes for human and social capital development, soft skills, gender, and human rights. She has experience in rural development; in applying the *Reflect-Acción* methodology; in supporting empowerment processes with women’s organisations and productive enterprises; in management, monitoring, and evaluation at the NGO ESCAES, bringing empathy and transparency to her work with multidisciplinary teams.

Hortense Sombié Hein, Independent Consultant, President of the Association *Action Résilience à l'Insécurité Alimentaire* in Burkina Faso, Casheschool Collaborator and Mentor for the British Red Cross



Seasoned humanitarian and development specialist with over two decades of experience leading programmes across West and Central Africa. She currently serves as the CVA Learning and Localisation Adviser for the British Red Cross in the Sahel and Central Africa, where she supports 18 Red Cross National Societies in strengthening their capacity to deliver cash and voucher assistance (CVA) aligned with localisation and resilience goals. Previously, she was the Food Security and Livelihoods Programs Coordinator at the Burkina Faso Red Cross, managing projects funded by the Generalitat Valenciana, Belgium’s DGD, ECHO, and other partners. Her career spans a wide range of thematic areas.





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Session VI. (Part 1) - Spain's decentralised cooperation landscape: current status and emerging trends. The regional approach

Chairperson:

Rafael Monterde-Díaz, Associate Professor – Polytechnical University of Valencia



Senior Lecturer at the Polytechnical University of Valencia, where he specialises in Project Management with a focus on development cooperation. He holds a Doctorate in Industrial Engineering from UPV, with further studies in sustainability management at Arizona State University and INCAE Business School (Costa Rica). At postgraduate level, he teaches "Development Cooperation Project Cycle Management". With 25 years of experience, he has conducted extensive evaluation work in development cooperation, including over 30 field-based final evaluations and hundreds of ex-ante project assessments for donors.

Rapporteur:

Ana Cristina Blasco, Co-director of the Chair of Solidarity and Global Citizenship - University of Zaragoza



Lecturer in Research Methods and Educational Diagnosis at the Department of Education Sciences, University of Zaragoza. She is Co-Director of the Chair of Solidarity and Global Citizenship at the University of Zaragoza and teaches on the Master's in Development Cooperation at the university's Cooperation Chair. She holds a PhD in Education from the University of Zaragoza and a degree in Pedagogy from Rovira i Virgili University. Her research encompasses global citizenship, educational guidance and inclusion, and educational technology, resulting in numerous scientific publications through national and international research projects.

Speakers:

Carles Xavier López, Governing Board for Decentralised Cooperation, CONGDE



Member of the Governing Board of the Spanish Development NGO Coordinator (CONGDE), serving as spokesperson for Decentralised Cooperation. He is a board member of the Valencia Development NGO Coordinator (CVONGD), where he previously served as President (2010-2014), and is part of the coordination team at La Tenda de Tot el Món, a Fair Trade NGO. He also sits on the Valencian Development Cooperation Council and the Regional Citizen Participation Council. Currently Director of Colegio Mayor Rector Peset and Cultural Manager at the University of Valencia, he holds a degree in Pedagogy (DEA), a Master's in Cultural Services Management, and a diploma in Teaching (Special Education).



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Session VI. (Part 1) - Spain's decentralised cooperation landscape: current status and emerging trends. The regional approach

Juanma Balerdi Urdanpilleta, Manager of Euskal Fondoa



Juanma Balerdi is Director of Euskal Fondoa, an association of Basque local authorities engaged in development cooperation, since 1994.

Jordi Cuadras, Confederation of Cooperation and Solidarity Funds (CONFOCOS)



President of the Spanish Confederation of Cooperation and Solidarity Funds (CONFOCOS) and President of the Catalan Cooperation Fund (Fons Català de Cooperació). He serves as leader of the opposition on Igualada City Council. He holds a degree in Journalism from the Faculty of Communication Sciences at the Autonomous University of Barcelona.

Manuel Redaño, Andalusian Municipal Fund for Solidarity (FAMSI)



Manager of the Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity (FAMSI), an organisation bringing together over 200 local governments and Andalusian entities in solidarity and development cooperation policies. From 2008 to 2016, he served as Coordinator of the ART-UNDP Support Antenna in Seville, where he coordinated the 1st World Forum of Local Development Agencies held in Seville in 2011. Previously (2000-2008), he coordinated the Andalusian Local Development Network (RADEL) with over 300 local development agencies and served as technical head for local economic development and development cooperation commissions at the Andalusian Federation of Municipalities and Provinces. A local development agent since 1989, he has managed numerous local development programmes and actively participated in international forums.





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New Models of Agri-Food Development **Cooperation**
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CHAIRPERSON, RAPPOREUR AND SPEAKER BIOS

DAY 2 | 12 NOVEMBER 2025

Session VI. (Part 2) - Spain's decentralised cooperation landscape: current status and emerging trends. The local approach

Chairperson: Ricardo Álvarez Domínguez, President of the
Aragonese Federation of Solidarity (FAS)



Graduate in Physical Science. Retired professor from the School of Engineering and Architecture of the University of Zaragoza, where he held various positions. He was Director of the University School of Industrial Technical Engineering, President of the University Senate Board and the Teaching Evaluation and Control Commission, Assistant to the Rector for Construction and Equipment, and Director of the Chair of Development Cooperation. He was also President of the Federation of Neighbourhood Associations of Zaragoza and was named Distinguished Citizen by the City Council. A founding member of *Acción Solidaria Aragonesa*, he is currently President of the Aragonese Federation of Solidarity.

Speakers:

Nerea Marín Mainar, Member of the Provincial Council of Zaragoza



Deputy Mayor and Councillor for the areas of Culture, Tourism and Heritage, Sports, Festivities, and Citizen Participation of the Municipality of Morata de Jalón (Zaragoza, Spain). Additionally, she is Deputy Councillor for the areas of Democratic Memory and Solidarity and Development Cooperation at the Provincial Council of Zaragoza. Graduate in History, Master's in Research and Advanced Studies in Medieval and Modern History, and Master's in Secondary Education.

Rapporteur: Teresa Coma, Chair of Development
Cooperation at the University of Zaragoza



PhD in Psychology and Learning from the University of Zaragoza and Graduate in Educational Sciences, Social Pedagogy from the Autonomous University of Barcelona. Associate Professor at the Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Education, University of Zaragoza. Director of the Chair of Development Cooperation. Member of the Government of Aragon's Reference Research Group "Education and Diversity" (S49_23R). She participates in national and international R&D projects. Her research focuses on social education, global citizenship education, interculturality, and methodologies for social transformation.



CHAIRPERSON, RAPPORTEUR AND SPEAKER BIOS

DAY 2 | 12 NOVEMBER 2025

Session VI. (Part 2) - Spain's decentralised cooperation landscape: current status and emerging trends. The local approach

Aitor Pérez Ruiz, Chief Consultant at ECOPER and expert in decentralised cooperation



Economist, political scientist and PhD in Global Governance and Rule of Law. He has more than 25 years of experience in international cooperation and more than 15 as an independent evaluator for organisations such as UNESCO, UNCTAD, ILO and UNICEF, among others. Expert in decentralised cooperation, he has worked with Spanish municipalities and regions and international municipal networks. He is Associate Professor at Queen's University (Canada) and academic collaborator at the University of Salamanca (Spain).

Juan David Gómez-Quintero, Professor, Researcher and Writer, University of Zaragoza



He holds a PhD in Sociology from the University of Zaragoza (Spain) after obtaining his bachelor's degree in Sociology in Medellín (Colombia). He is interested in teaching, research, and social action. He has been a lecturer at the universities of San Buenaventura (Colombia), San Jorge, and Zaragoza (Spain), teaching undergraduate and graduate courses on subjects such as sociology, social work, gender, public policy, migration, and cooperation. He has fifty scientific publications including articles, books, and book chapters.

Adrijana Pinek, Peacebuilding and Project Manager Expert, UN Verification Mission in Colombia



A political affairs, peacebuilding, and project management professional with over 12 years of experience in post-conflict and development contexts in the Balkans and South America, working for the United Nations and international NGOs. She has a strong educational and practical background in reintegration processes, conflict resolution, security, and human rights, including a Master's degree in International Humanitarian Action. From 2016 to 2024, she was UN Liaison Officer in Colombia.





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Closing Session

Alun Jones, Head of the Projects Unit at CIHEAM Zaragoza



Alun Jones has over 25 years of international cooperation experience working in the United Nations, the European Union and CIHEAM. Currently Head of the Projects Unit at CIHEAM Zaragoza, he promotes innovation and international cooperation in the agrifood sector through research and development cooperation projects. Previously, he led global communications and advocacy at the UN Crime and Drugs Office, managed the Press Office of the EU Economic and Social Committee, and was Deputy Head of Press at the European Food Safety Authority.

Cecilia García Gasalla, Director of Cooperation with Africa, the Arab World and Asia, AECID



Cecilia García Gasalla is Director of Cooperation with Africa, the Arab World and Asia at AECID, Spain's development cooperation agency. A career diplomat since 2005, she has served as Deputy Head of Mission at Spanish embassies in Côte d'Ivoire, Algeria, Zimbabwe, Mauritania and Senegal, and as Counsellor at the Embassy in Dublin. In Madrid, her positions have included Deputy Director of the Human Rights Office and Deputy Sub-Director for Sub-Saharan Africa. She holds degrees in Geography and History and in Law, plus a Master's in International Law and International Relations.

Miguel Ángel Riesgo, Counsellor for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of the MAPA to the OECD



Miguel Ángel Riesgo is the Counsellor for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food at the Embassy of Spain in France and at Spain's Permanent Delegation to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). A senior civil servant in the Spanish National Veterinary Corps, he previously served as President of the Spanish Agricultural Guarantee Fund (FEGA), leading the coordination and management of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) funds in Spain. He is the Spanish Delegate on the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) Governing Board, where he also serves as Vice President.

