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Members Newsletter

Issue #3

16 June 2026

Welcome to the Members newsletter!

Welcome to our monthly members newsletter. Through this newsletter, you will be able to stay updated on past and upcoming Flagship engagements, our newest members, member achievements, webinars, and more!

Got any **feedback or want to be featured** in our upcoming newsletters? Please contact: lina.khoury@croptrust.org

Want to stop receiving the newsletter? Please send an email to the abovementioned address.

Important Updates

- We are hosting a Youth consultation webinar leading up to the UNCCD COP17 in Mongolia. This webinar will gather perspectives, priorities, and recommendations from youth leaders working across food systems, agriculture, land restoration, climate action, environmental conservation, indigenous and local communities, and civil society. **(DATE TBD)**

Please contact us for inputs and suggestions for our annual meeting at the UN Science Summit (21-22 September 2026)

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Welcoming our Newest Members!

Kijani Group



KijaniGroup

Liberia WASH Initiative: Building the Foundation for Food Security

Through Water At Kijani Group, we believe that food security begins with water security.

Through the Liberia WASH Initiative, we are working alongside the National WASH Commission of Liberia, government institutions, local communities, development partners, and technical stakeholders to strengthen water infrastructure and improve long-term access to safe drinking water across Liberia.

While water is often discussed as a health issue, its role in food security is equally critical. Reliable access to water supports agricultural productivity, strengthens community resilience, improves public health outcomes, and enables sustainable economic development.

The initiative combines infrastructure mapping, water point diagnostics, preventive maintenance systems, digital monitoring tools, and data-driven coordination mechanisms designed to improve the functionality and sustainability of water systems nationwide. By moving from reactive repairs to proactive management, the project aims to reduce infrastructure failures, improve accountability, and increase service reliability for vulnerable communities.

A particularly exciting aspect of the initiative is the integration of digital technologies and innovative financing mechanisms. Through the development of a national monitoring platform and the exploration of carbon finance opportunities, the project seeks to create a scalable and financially sustainable model for water infrastructure management that can be replicated across Liberia and other emerging markets.

The Liberia WASH Initiative reflects a broader vision: connecting water security, food security, climate resilience, public health, and sustainable economic development into a single integrated approach. By strengthening the systems that deliver safe water, we are helping build the foundations for healthier communities, more resilient food systems, and long-term national development.

We welcome opportunities to collaborate with governments, development institutions, investors, NGOs, and private sector partners committed to advancing sustainable development through innovative and scalable water solutions.

By: Alessandro Bugno, Álvaro Monsó & Wani Mwangi

On behalf of Kijani Group

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Program Announcement

Innovative financing for food systems transformation in Burkina Faso.

UNCDF has joined a new Joint SDG Fund programme supporting Burkina Faso's Food Systems Transformation Flagship, a government-led initiative developed with the United Nations system under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator. Implemented in partnership with FAO, UNDP and WFP, the programme aims to strengthen food security, create economic opportunities and build the resilience of rural communities.

Designed as catalytic seed funding, this investment will help mobilize additional public and private financing for the scale-up of food systems interventions across the country. Through innovative financing solutions, UNCDF will work with local financial institutions to expand access to finance for smallholder farmers, cooperatives, food-processing companies and agribusinesses, with a particular focus on women, youth and underserved rural populations.

The programme forms part of a broader flagship portfolio developed by the Government of Burkina Faso and the UN Country Team to accelerate sustainable development and strengthen resilience in the face of food insecurity, climate challenges and economic vulnerability.

The Initiative in Action

FoodGuard Global Summit in Cairo, Egypt - 2 - 4 June 2026

At the invitation of UNIDO, Dr. Conrad Rein joined ministers, UN agencies, industry leaders, investors, and innovators committed to accelerating practical solutions for reducing food loss and waste.

Dr. Rein participated in a high-level panel discussion on building partnerships to strengthen the critical "midstream" of food systems - where food safety, storage, processing, packaging, logistics, and market access determine whether food reaches people or is lost along the way.

It became clear during the panel that food waste is still one of the greatest inefficiencies in global food systems.

Addressing this challenge requires more than awareness - it requires coordinated action across governments, international organizations, industry, science, and finance.

The discussions in Cairo reinforced a clear message: food security is not only about producing more food. It is about building resilient, efficient, and sustainable food systems that reduce loss, create value, and improve livelihoods across Africa and beyond.



We do not lack capital. We do not lack innovation. We do not lack institutions. What we lack is the collective ability to mobilize them at the scale and speed this moment requires.



That was the message delivered by our Co-Chair, Dr. Nasser Alkahtani, at the Bilbao Bootcamp 2, where leaders from governments, development finance institutions, investors, philanthropies, the UN system, and the private sector convened to explore how territorial solutions can become investable at scale.

In his keynote address, Dr. Alkahtani argued that if territorial finance is to deliver meaningful development outcomes, three conditions are essential:

- ✓ Credible territorial pipelines built around measurable development outcomes
- ✓ Blended finance structures that reduce risk for commercial investors while safeguarding development impact
- ✓ Partnerships that connect local priorities with national policy frameworks and global capital markets

As he noted: ***"The question before us is not whether capital exists. The question is how we build the institutional architecture that allows capital to flow efficiently into territories."***



Dr. Conrad Rein, contributed to the high-level roundtable on Unlocking Private Capital: De-Risking and Sustainable Business Models, sharing lessons from mobilizing investment for resilient food systems and translating local priorities into bankable opportunities.

The Global Flagship Initiative for Food Security also showcased its collaboration in Cameroon as a practical example of how catalytic partnerships, blended finance approaches, and strong local ownership can unlock investment, reduce risk, and accelerate implementation. As momentum builds, this model offers valuable lessons for replication across countries and regions.

A recurring theme throughout Bilbao was clear: development does not happen in policy documents. It happens in communities, territories, and local economies. Yet too many of these remain underfinanced despite the abundance of global capital.

Food security sits at the center of this challenge. It is not only a humanitarian imperative - it is an economic, climate, and stability imperative. Investing in resilient food systems means investing in jobs, local value chains, climate adaptation, and long-term prosperity.

Bilbao was also an opportunity to deepen the partnership between the Global Flagship Initiative for Food Security, the Government of Spain, and the United Nations Joint SDG Fund.



Building on the collaboration launched at @FFD4 in Seville, our shared focus is clear: translating global commitments into investable, locally owned solutions that deliver measurable impact for communities and food systems.

From Bilbao, one message stands out: *The future of development finance will not be defined by how much capital exists. It will be defined by whether that capital reaches the people, communities, and territories where it can create lasting impact.*

Our engagements at the UNFCCC June Climate Meetings (SB64) in Bonn, Germany

From Crisis to Opportunity: Scaling Green Fertilisers for Global Food Security - A High-Level Discussion in Bonn Thursday, 11 June 2026

Hosted by: *Clim-Eat & The Global Flagship Initiative for Food Security*

This high-level discussion brought together senior policymakers, researchers, and practitioners, where the global dependence of fossil fuel based fertilisers and the vulnerabilities this creates for food security was highlighted.

Speakers underscored the importance of accelerating innovation in green fertilisers, bio-based inputs, and circular approaches while supporting farmers through knowledge-sharing and investment. Discussions also highlighted opportunities for decentralised green ammonia production, blended fertiliser solutions, and stronger integration of soil health, biodiversity, and climate objectives. The dialogue reinforced a shared message: transforming fertiliser systems is not only a climate imperative but also a critical step towards building more resilient, equitable, and food-secure futures.



Thank you to Dr. Dhanush Dinesh, the founder of Clim-Eat, and Senni Alho (Clim-Eat), for this wonderful and fruitful collaboration!

Climate Smart Agriculture: An Opportunity for the Future of Youth Friday, 12 June 2026

Hosted by: *Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network Global (GCSAYN) & the Global Flagship Initiative for Food Security*

This side event showcased GCSAYN's work and the impact of the Virtual Academy, highlighting how youth-led capacity-building initiatives can contribute to the implementation of climate-resilient agricultural systems and support the objectives of the UNFCCC, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). It also highlighted the imperative role of climate-smart agriculture in creating opportunities for young people while advancing food security, resilience, and sustainable development.

We are grateful to everyone who supported us in the planning of this important event. A huge thank you goes out to our speakers and the input they provided, as well as everyone who joined this event!

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS

The Global Flagship Initiative for Food Security to Convene Science, Business and Policy Leaders at UNGA81 Science Summit

The Global Flagship Initiative for Food Security is set to make a major contribution to the Science Summit during the 81st United Nations General Assembly (UNGA81) with a series of high-profile engagements on 21 and 22 September 2026 that will bring together leaders from science, government, business, finance, and international organizations.

At a time when food systems are under unprecedented pressure from climate change, biodiversity loss, conflict, and economic volatility, the Flagship will showcase how science-driven innovation and cross-sector collaboration can accelerate progress toward global food security. The programme will highlight practical solutions and emerging opportunities to strengthen agricultural resilience, improve nutrition, and support sustainable development worldwide.

A key feature of the Flagship's presence at the Summit will be the active participation of private sector leaders, whose investments, technologies, and partnerships are increasingly essential to scaling solutions and delivering impact at speed. By creating a platform for dialogue between researchers, policymakers, investors, and industry, the Global Flagship Initiative aims to foster new collaborations capable of transforming food systems and creating shared value for people and the planet.

The Summit will also provide the setting for the **Global Flagship Initiative's Annual Members Meeting**, bringing together its growing network of partners to review progress, exchange ideas, and shape the Initiative's strategic priorities for the coming year. The meeting will offer an opportunity to celebrate achievements, welcome new partners, and strengthen collective action around a shared vision of a food-secure future.

With an exciting programme of discussions, networking opportunities, and partnership-building activities, the Global Flagship Initiative's engagement at UNGA81 promises to be a dynamic gathering of thought leaders and changemakers committed to harnessing science and innovation to address one of humanity's greatest challenges: ensuring food security for all.

Members Spotlight

IOFS Advances Regional Cooperation, Innovation, and Biodiversity at 7th General Assembly in Astana

The Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS), a proud member of the Global Flagship Initiative for Food Security (GFIFS), successfully convened on online format its 7th General Assembly (7GA) on 13-14 May 2026, under the chairmanship of the Republic of Kazakhstan, marking a pivotal milestone in the collective mission to build resilient, sustainable agrifood systems across the Global South.

Against the backdrop of intensifying global climate pressures and severe geopolitical disruptions to energy and fertilizer trade networks, the 7GA rallied Member States under a unified banner of rapid structural innovation and deepened south-south cooperation.



المنظمة الإسلامية للأمن الغذائي
Islamic Organisation for Food Security

L'Organisation Islamique pour la Sécurité Alimentaire

Kazakhstan Takes the Helm and its Visionary Chairmanship Initiatives

A cornerstone of this year's Assembly was the official transition of leadership, with Kazakhstan formally taking over the Chairmanship of the IOFS for the third time, following previous similar roles in 2016 and 2021. Addressing the delegation, Kazakhstan's Minister of Agriculture, H.E. Mr. Aidarbek Saparov, emphasized the nation's readiness to steer the organization toward practical, high-impact outcomes, leveraging its strategic positioning as a major agricultural producer to stabilize food supply chains across the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) geography.

As the newly minted Chair of the 7GA, Kazakhstan introduced three major flagship initiatives designed to unite research, commerce, and academia across member countries:



Food Security and Innovation Knowledge Hub: Hosted by Kazakhstan, this centralized hub will serve as a dedicated platform for research, innovation, and knowledge-sharing in sustainable agriculture.

Global Islamic Food Security Expo: A premier international exhibition platform for OIC Member States and global stakeholders to showcase agrifood innovations and forge public-private partnerships.



Forum of National Agrarian Institutes:

This inaugural forum will operationalize the Association of Agriculture Academies (AAA), fulfilling a resolution originally adopted during the 6GA in Doha, Qatar, in 2023.

A Bold Mandate for Innovation and Biodiversity

To drive long-term structural efficiency and maximize on-the-ground impact, the 7GA passed several transformative resolutions that directly reshape how the organization operates and delivers on its mandate:

(a) Rewarding Innovation: Reflecting the shared GFIFS focus on technological advancement, the Assembly established the IOFS Award to recognize and reward outstanding innovations that contribute to agricultural development and food security across OIC Member States.

(b) A Fresh Visual Identity: To reflect its evolving, forward-looking mission, the IOFS officially rebranded by adopting an updated logo and flag.

(c) Evolving Governance: The Assembly finalized the new composition of the IOFS Executive Board following the completion of the operational terms of the Republic of The Gambia, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the United Arab Emirates, as they were replaced by Arab Republic of Egypt, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Republic of Turkiye.

(d) Expanding Footprint: Highlighting a commitment to decentralized regional cooperation, the 7GA approved the establishment of a new IOFS Regional Office in the Kingdom of Morocco.

(e) Rewarding Innovation: Reflecting the shared GFIFS focus on technological advancement, the Assembly established the IOFS Award to recognize and reward outstanding innovations that contribute to agricultural development and food security across OIC Member States.



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Empowering the Next Generation: WAYA 2027

Championing inclusivity and aligned with the youth empowerment narratives highlighted in GFIFS Newsletter #1, the 7GA officially launched 2027 as the IOFS Year of Women Agrileaders & Youth Agripreneurs (WAYA). Orchestrated in close coordination with the Kazakhstani Chairmanship, this initiative will focus global advocacy and resource mobilization toward women and youth leading the charge in agrifood innovation.

Driving Collective Impact

The outcomes of the 7GA are a testament of the wise leadership of the IOFS by its Director General, H.E. Ambassador Berik Aryn. They also seamlessly mirror the values of the Global Flagship Initiative for Food Security. By streamlining its governance, rewarding scientific breakthroughs, and building localized infrastructure, the IOFS continues to translate the shared ambitions of SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 13 (Climate Action) into tangible realities on the ground. Fellow GFIFS members can look forward to emerging opportunities for technical collaboration and shared knowledge networks under this revitalized chapter.

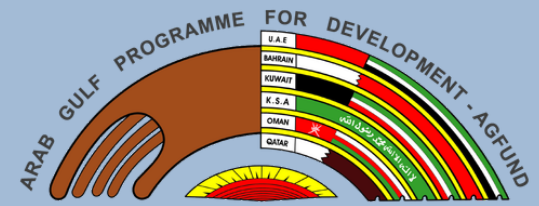
To learn more about these initiatives or to explore collaborative frameworks arising from the 7th General Assembly, visit iofs.org.

Members Spotlight

AGFUND - Small Loans, Big Impact: Women Building Economic Resilience in Ethiopia and Somalia

Across Ethiopia and Somalia, women are building brighter futures for their families through Action Against Hunger's SheCanManage: Empowering Women to Build Economic Resilience project, funded by AGFUND.

In Ethiopia's Somali Region, women who once had little access to savings, loans, or financial services are joining Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) to pool resources, access small loans, and launch businesses. One participant, Ardo Osman, a widow and mother of seven, used a \$150 loan to purchase goats for fattening and resale, earning a \$100 profit in just two months. Today, she is contributing to her household income and saving for her children's education. Since the project began, 200 women have joined savings groups, collectively saving more than \$3,500 and creating a safety net for emergencies.



برنامج الخليج العربي للتنمية - أجفند
AGFUND



Ardo received a 150 USD loan to buy four goats, within two months she sold them.

"I depended completely on relatives and neighbors for food and clothing. Now I can contribute to my family's needs," she said proudly.

"I even started saving for my children's education," said Ardo.

In neighboring Somalia, 34-year-old Arfoon Abdi Hussien's life has also been transformed through a Self-Help Group supported by the project. Previously dependent on her husband's limited income, Arfoon accessed a \$230 group loan that helped her start a grocery business while her husband launched a tailoring enterprise.

Arfoon at her grocery stall.



“Before joining the group, I had no income. No voice. My husband was struggling and I felt helpless watching my nine children living in uncertainty.

”

Joining the Self-Help Group (SHG) gave me a chance I never expected,” said Arfoon.

”

Together, the businesses are generating income, strengthening household stability, and creating new opportunities for their nine children. Beyond the financial gains, Arfoon says the experience has increased her confidence and given her a greater voice in household decisions.

These stories demonstrate how access to savings groups, financial literacy training, and small loans can help women not only grow businesses, but also build resilience, strengthen families, and create lasting economic change in their communities.

Follow AGFUND on LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/agfundprogram/posts/?feedView=all>

OR check their website: <https://agfund.org>

Written Piece - Preventing the Predictable: Why El Niño Demands Early Action

By Dr. Markus Enenkel, The World Bank Group.

*Disclaimer *The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the World Bank, its Board of Executive Directors, or the governments they represent*

Imagine someone told you that, based on robust historical data, there was a 90% chance that you will have a car accident on your next drive — without telling you whether it would be a dent or a total write-off. Would you drive differently? Avoid the highway at rush hour? Check your insurance? Or would you just hope the forecast was wrong?



The latest climate forecasts put the probability of El Niño conditions from August 2026 onward at above 90%. Peak intensity is expected in the November 2026–January 2027 season — but just like in the example above, we do not know yet how bad the impact will be.

El Niño is a periodic warming of the tropical Pacific Ocean that disrupts climate patterns across the world. Rising sea surface temperatures change atmospheric conditions in ways that reach far beyond the ocean: shifting monsoons, suppressing rainfall in some regions while intensifying it dramatically in others, and reshaping the tracks and intensity of tropical storms. Major historical El Niño events in 1983, 1998, and 2016 triggered some of the worst droughts, crop failures, and food crises of the past half-century.

There is, however, a crucial opportunity embedded in current predictions. Forecasts provide a critical window before climate shocks can translate into impacts that might last for years.

One realistic scenario that could evolve in the next 12–18 months

1

Late 2026: El Niño reaches its peak

Rainfall deficits emerge across Central America, Southern Africa, and Southeast Asia. Planting seasons are disrupted before the crisis becomes visible and before El Niño impacts become a major news headline.

2

Early 2027: Harvests fail

Crop shortfalls start to materialize. Southern Africa maize deficits can reach 10–25%. In parts of Ethiopia, the numbers are much higher. Southeast Asia rice production might decline.

3

Mid 2027: Hunger spreads

Low production ripples through supply chains. Prices spike, purchasing power collapses. Food insecurity might occur more than 12 months after the climate signal.

Where the Risk is Highest

Southern Africa

Rainfall deficits across Zimbabwe and South Africa regularly drive maize shortfalls with price shocks rippling region-wide. The October planting season is a critical window.

Horn of Africa

After a very challenging Oct-Dec season in 2025, Ethiopia will experience increased drought risk from Jul-Sep, then flood risk from Oct-Dec. Somalia is already affected by drought conditions. El Niño-related flood risk will increase in late 2026.

Central America

Based on seasonal forecasts, the drought risk in the Dry Corridor is already increasing. The 2015–16 event caused crop losses exceeding 50% in the worst-affected communities. August–November will be a critical preparation window.

South & Southeast Asia

A weakened monsoon threatens staple crops across the region. Rice yields across Indonesia, the Philippines, and Myanmar could decline. In Myanmar, these shocks compound an already acute hunger crisis, worsened by the 2025 earthquake.

Compounding Pressures and the Case for Acting Now

Fertilizer prices have surged more than 30% in 2026 following disruptions to supply routes through the Strait of Hormuz. At the same time, 67 million people already need food assistance in East and Southern Africa, and nearly 53 million more face acute food insecurity in West and Central Africa during the June–August lean season — all before El Niño has even peaked. The upcoming event will also unfold in a warmer world where even a moderate El Niño could hit harder than historical precedents suggest. The 1997–98 El Niño alone is estimated to have reduced global income by \$5.7 trillion over the five years that followed. The cost of early action is always lower than emergency response, and once food insecurity is visible, the damage is already done. A predictable crisis is a preventable one. The question is not whether we can afford to prepare — it is whether we can afford not to.

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