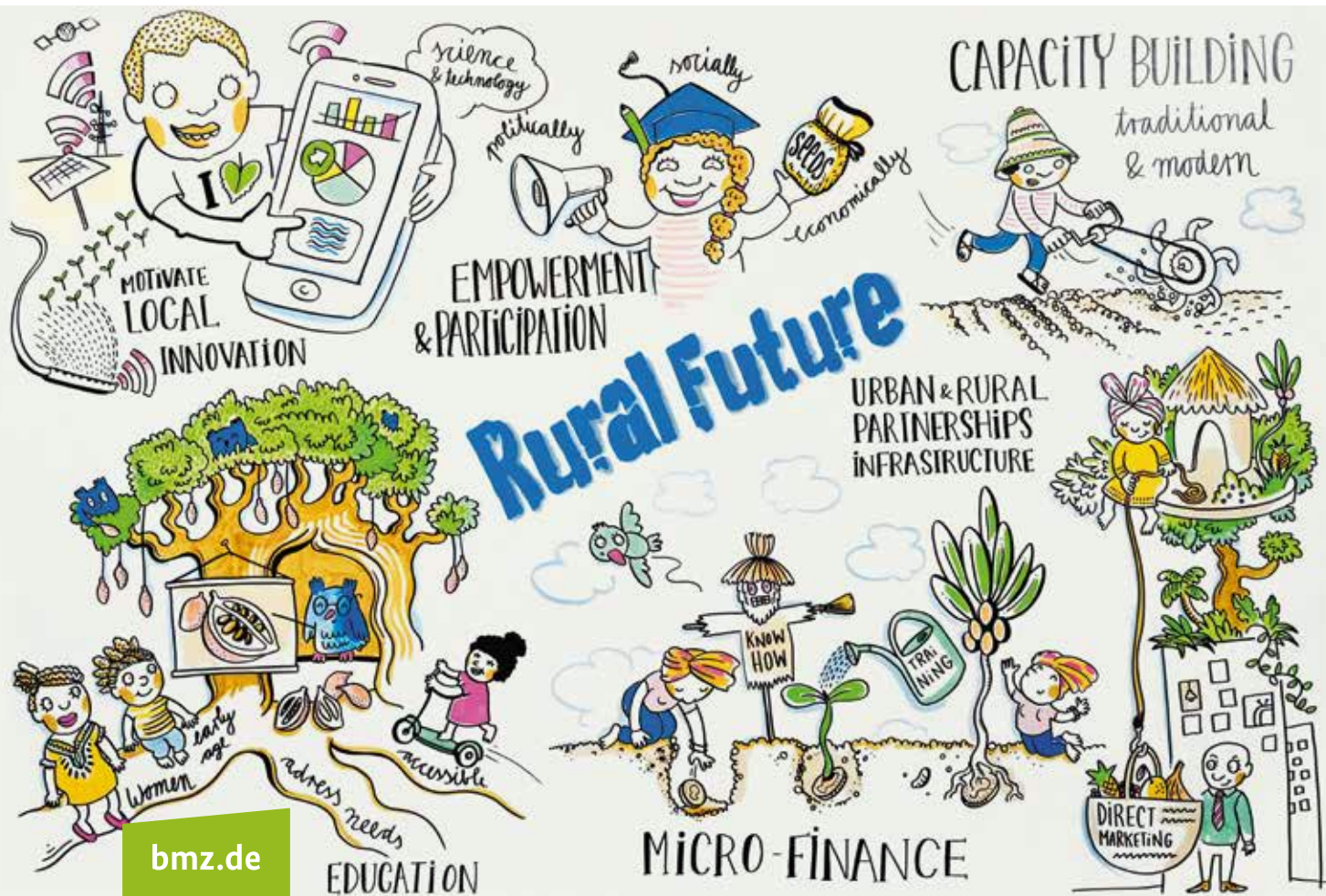




Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

Berlin Charter

Creating Opportunities with the Young Generation in the Rural World
Joint call for action by science, the private sector and civil society



bmz.de



Berlin Charter

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*“The demands of the Berlin Charter concern us all:
the governments of G20 countries, partner countries,
the private sector, civil society and the youth of
the world.”*

German Development Minister Gerd Müller

→ A FUTURE FOR PEOPLE IN RURAL AREAS

Dear readers,

Even today, more than 70 per cent of all the people in the world who are hungry or poor live in rural areas. In Africa alone, one young rural inhabitant in every two is thinking about moving away. Right now, many rural areas are not a place to stay – that needs to change, because the world's population is going to keep growing. Rural areas need to offer people a future – young people especially need real opportunities in the rural world.

Knowing this, in 2017, an international and independent group of experts drafted the Berlin Charter – in collaboration with professionals from academia, civil society and the private sector and the general public. The Charter is a modern guiding vision for forward-looking rural development. It shows the challenges, but above all possible solutions for rural areas: strategic dissemination of new technologies, access to innovations, improved infrastructure, good governance, closer ties between urban and rural areas, rigorous protection of resources, adaptation to climate change and, above all, creating new jobs.

The Berlin Charter gives the young generation a voice. Young people know very well what they need to make their lives in rural areas more attractive. Many of them have already begun to use their creativity and innovative energy to take the rural world into a more liveable future. Optimism is their greatest asset, as we have recently learnt from an SMS survey among 10,000 young Africans. More than 90 per cent believe that their prospects for the future will be better if the general conditions in rural areas improve.

The demands of the Berlin Charter concern us all: the governments of G20 countries, partner countries, the private sector, civil society and the youth of the world. Through numerous projects on rural development and its special initiative ONE WORLD – No Hunger, the BMZ is working with its partner countries to make the rural world liveable and forward-looking.

I would like to thank all those who played a part in drawing up the Charter. I will do everything in my power to ensure that its forward-looking proposals are implemented in German and international development policy.



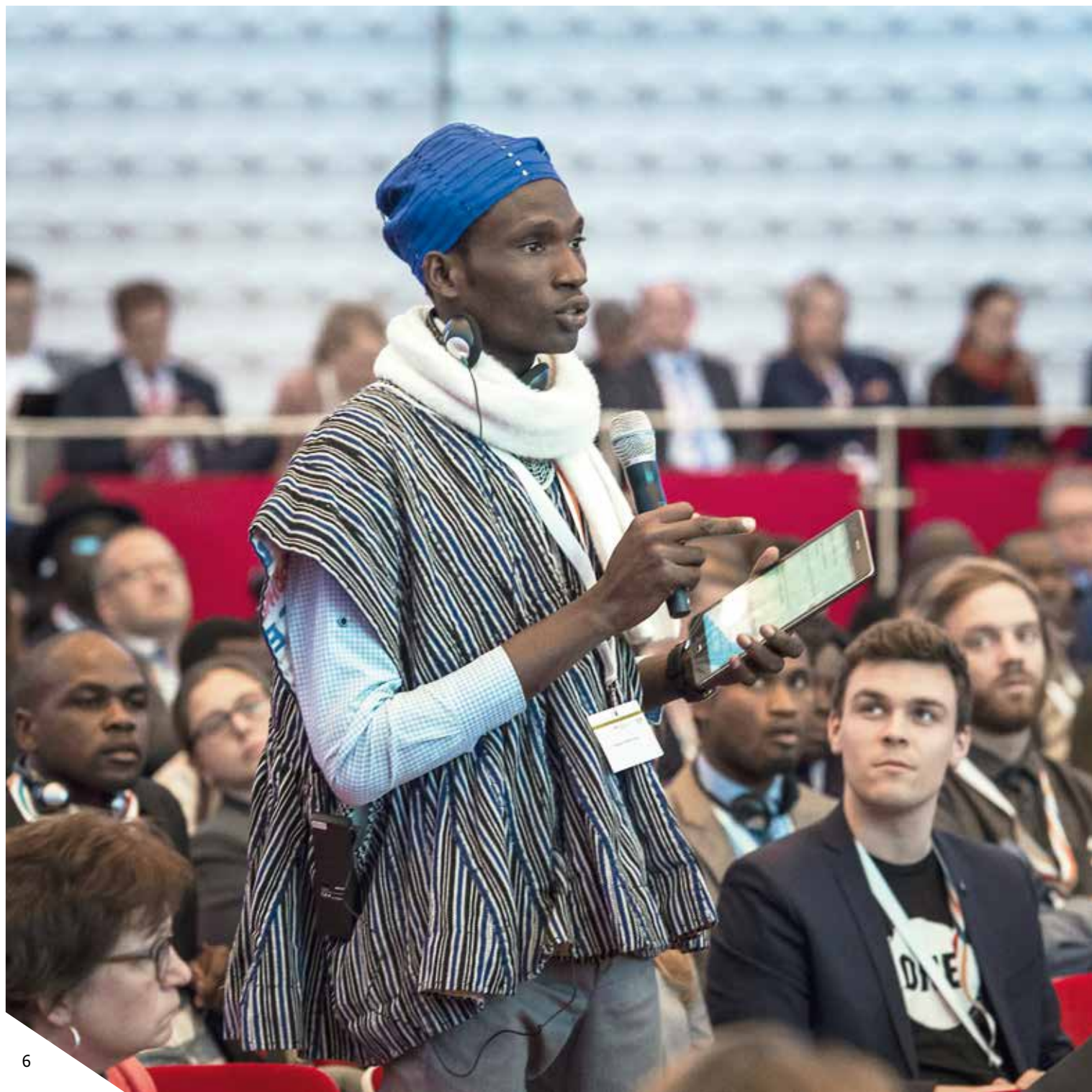
Yours, Gerd Müller

Federal Minister for Economic
Cooperation and Development



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→ PATHWAY TO THE BERLIN CHARTER AND FOLLOW UP

Prof. Joachim von Braun and Dr. Agnes Kalibata

The sustainable economic development of rural areas will be crucial for people living on our planet today and in the future. It must include the protection of our natural resources – soils, water, forests, biodiversity and climate. The future of the rural world and in particular the future of the young generation in rural areas is of importance to all of us. Transition to urbanization and broader structural transformation is underway. But if we want to see a development process which is inclusive and offers opportunities for all – smallholder farmers, young people and women – there is need to get involved locally and globally and step up our collective efforts.

The Charter in this brochure was developed in a process aiming to agree on key messages and demands for rural development. It brought together development experts, civil society and the private sector and opened up a fresh discussion with the global public and hundreds of conference participants.

When the German Ministry of Economic Development and Cooperation (BMZ) approached us towards the end of 2016 to chair a group of individuals to come up with an independent vision in a Rural Development Charter, we gladly accepted. Our goal was a jointly agreed “Call for Action” to policymakers and stakeholders around the world.

In consultation with us, invitations by the Ministry were extended to 17 internationally renowned experts and stakeholders in the area of rural development. Each member was nominated to bring in her or his individual or institutional background, representing science, civil society, private sector and development institutions, or very personal experiences in rural areas.



Chairing the Berlin Charter advisory committee: Dr Agnes Kalibata (Alliance for a Green Africa, Kenya), and Prof. Joachim von Braun (Center for Development Research, Germany)



A first draft was elaborated, and immediately shared widely, in different fora and via a public e-consultation process. But at the heart of the participatory process were the intensive and enlightening discussions in early spring with young people from all over Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Germany.

These young people told us precisely what they would need for them to become creators of prosperous, sustainable rural futures: better education, better access to finance and communication and information technologies and opportunities for more political participation. They also made a passionate plea: Follow words with deeds and make the charter's calls reality.





“These young people told us precisely what they would need for them to become creators of prosperous, sustainable rural futures: better education, better access to finance and communication and information technologies and opportunities for more political participation.”

Dr Agnes Kalibata and Prof. Joachim von Braun



More than 130 young people from G20 states and various African countries contributed to the charter by bringing in their perspectives.



Finally, the discussion on the document was opened up to hundreds of workshop participants during the conference “ONE WORLD – No Hunger. Future of the Rural World” at end of April 2017 in Berlin. With their contributions, the earlier draft was significantly changed and adopted by acclamation at the conference, as it is presented in this brochure.

The “Berlin Charter” was handed over to Germany’s Federal Minister Dr. Gerd Müller during the conference and he promised to carry on its spirit and content, and he committed

to support actions on the ground. With a set sequence of G20 meetings taking place in Germany, a very influential group of decision-makers was already within reach.

However, it is now not only for the policymakers and the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development to live up to the promise and the expectations outlined in the Charter. It is also for all of us as stakeholders who have been involved in the process to follow up within our institutions or as individuals in order to bring the call

to life. Only then we can say we have made a contribution to the future of the rural world. And we shall follow up by taking a look at the related outcomes in the coming years.

→ THE WAY TOWARDS THE BERLIN CHARTER



KICK-OFF



CONSULTATION AND
CONSOLIDATION



FINALIZATION

01/2017

02/2017

03/2017

04/2017

Charter Draft Version

by independent
Charter Advisory Committee

Chairs:

Prof. Joachim von Braun,
Dr Agnes Kalibata

Public Online Consultation

Draft commented on by civil society,
private sector, individuals,
development partners

Discussions and Reflections

- with stakeholder groups on food security and rural development
- with international and German youth representatives

Validation of Charter

Official handover
to the Federal Minister
for Economic Cooperation
and Development





BERLIN CHARTER

We, participants of the Berlin conference “ONE World No Hunger. Future of the Rural World”, coming from civil society, private and public sector and academia, express this call for action and encourage governments worldwide, the German Government and G20 as well as the United Nations to identify effective ways to monitor progress, facilitate implementation of these proposals and accept accountability. We underline that many actions require new partnerships between governments, civil society, private sector actors and development partners, and we structure this call for action accordingly.



CREATING OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE YOUNG GENERATION IN THE RURAL WORLD – CALL FOR ACTION

Aiming for transformative change, we call on the G20 governments to commit to significant, quantified and time-bound targets in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in particular:

1. to lift at least 600 million people out of hunger and undernutrition by 2025 with appropriate agricultural, nutrition and anti-poverty policies. At the same time the malnutrition of hidden hunger affecting about two billion people because of micronutrient deficiencies is to be significantly reduced, and the investment in capacity for sound monitoring of this malnutrition by the specialised organisations be accelerated. It is noted that G7 had already made a commitment in 2015 to lift 500 million out of hunger and malnutrition; and address rising rates of overweight and obesity;



2. to take concerted political and humanitarian actions to immediately end the food crises situations in East Africa, the Horn of Africa and other locations of acute suffering; support agriculture actions that address droughts and climate change and the agenda of the African Malabo declaration on agriculture¹;

3. to facilitate access to innovative education and youth training for all by 2025 by increased investments in rural education, including vocational training for young entrepreneurs;

4. to cut youth underemployment at least by half by 2025 through increased support of investment in rural infrastructure and services in rural areas combined with job creating active labour market policies at a large scale; as important measures to promote prosperity and reduce rural-urban inequality;

5. to provide equitable and affordable access for all, especially youth in rural areas, to information and communication technologies (ICTs) and provide opportunity for peer to peer learning.

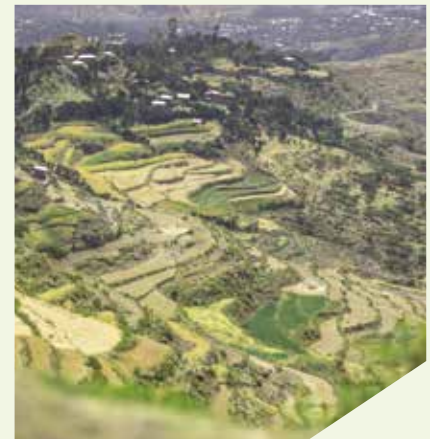
¹: At the Assembly in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, 2014 African Union Heads of State and Government adopted the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods.



Some key issues need to be addressed jointly by all stakeholders. Therefore, we call on all national governments, development partners and finance institutions, the private sector, civil society and youth:

1. to jointly draft development strategies with the participation of local stakeholders and communities, in particular youth and women, which implies an effective reinvestment in the knowledge base on changing rural livelihoods and statistical systems to inform evidence-based diagnoses, visions and objectives;

- 2. to respect, protect and fulfil human rights, including the right to food, water and sanitation;
- 3. to undertake additional and scalable joint efforts for creating new rural opportunities with a special focus on decent and attractive jobs for the young generation, cutting underemployment of youth at least in half by 2025;
- 4. to pursue a new long-term, enhanced development partnership between Europe and Africa at a large scale through a type of “Marshall Plan with Africa” as presented by the German Government;



5. to realise the enormous potential of smallholders, family farms, pastoralists and small-scale fishers and the emerging processing and distribution sectors/small and medium enterprises through improvement of legal frameworks including land rights and rights to genetic resources, innovation, access to skills development, access to markets, infrastructure, services and finance, linkages to value adding processing in rural areas and risk reduction measures such as insurance systems; and acknowledge the transformative power of local organisation;

6. to encourage education and media institutions to help improve the social image of farmers, pastoralists and fishers since both have been stamped with backwardness for a long time;



7. to make smart and responsible use of appropriate ICTs to realise the potential of digitisation more systematically, without ignoring the challenges of unregulated digitisation. That includes ICT-based service platforms in rural areas for agricultural extension services, open source local innovation and knowledge databases, business connections and mobile banking;

8. to reverse ongoing trends concerning the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems, effectively implement the Paris Agreement with regard to climate change. Drought-affected areas need particular support to overcome food insecurity, irreversible deterioration of the natural resource base and the disintegration of rural communities. Sustainable management of water resources warrants particular attention.

We call on national and local governments

1. to honour the above cited global and national commitments and their quantitative goals, such as in the SDGs, Paris Agreement of 2015, and the African Union's Malabo Declaration, and to monitor and submit concrete implementation plans for these commitments;
2. to work toward ending all forms of discrimination against women, youth, people with disabilities and social, religious and ethnic minorities in rural economic, political and social life, and address their special needs; and safeguard and honour the rights of the youth to food, education, health, nutrition, participation, choices, a decent job and prosperous life;
3. to realise sound governance, justice and the rule of law and greater policy coherence and coordination across government departments and along decentralised levels of government; and to increase leadership by local governments in participatory planning rural development and employment and effective fiscal, administrative and political decentralisation that ensures transparency and accountability and gives rural areas and local governments more decision-making power;



4. to offer an enabling environment to create dynamic and profitable economic and social entrepreneurship for rural youth inside and outside the agricultural sector;
5. to foster integrated territorial development strategies, that bring together rural and urban policies, and to recognise the important roles of intermediary cities and towns in addressing rural development and regional inequality; vulnerable landscapes including coastal and mountainous areas and their communities require particular attention;
6. to offer social protection to those in rural and urban areas who are unable to secure their livelihoods under economic or environmental stress, the disabled and the elderly; and services to protect and enhance livelihoods including for ecosystem services and water, sanitation and hygiene sectors;



7. to provide the ground for sustainable investments of the private sector, in particular in social businesses including small and medium enterprises, and support the access to finance and micro venture innovation finance in rural areas;
8. to strengthen innovative education systems and raise access to vocational training that equip young people for the changing demands of the labour market and the expansion of agricultural value chains, with a particular focus on improving access to education opportunities for girls and young women;

9. to support sustainable agricultural and rural modernisation through increased production and productivity, science, technology, innovation and access to finance, noting the potentials of indigenous local knowledge and locally adapted production systems as well as grassroots innovations; and to recognise the critical importance of protecting natural resources as a basis for sustainability and climate resilience;
10. to facilitate the creation of local, national and regional markets through domestic incentives, conducive framework conditions for the private sector and infrastructure support; and to foster regional integration and regional trade and policies to ensure that global market spaces are open for local stakeholders; and create incentives that link the smallholders to markets;
11. to promote and not constrain but give operating space to civil society organisations and recognise farmers and youth organisations as legitimate stakeholders, including in holding governments accountable.



We call on the youth globally

1. to actively engage as agents of change by self-organising in support of their rural communities' development and as entrepreneurs for the sustainable modernisation of the agricultural sector;
2. to engage in information exchange among youth communities nationally and internationally, making use of the increasing opportunities offered by ICTs;
3. to hold policymakers accountable to commitments made, such as the SDGs, and to take concrete actions.

We call on civil society

1. to engage in the implementation of Agenda 2030 and to advance the relevant elements, taking into account the needs and aspirations of rural communities and in particular the youth;
2. to harness creativity and the capacity of bottom-up innovation by rural communities, and channel more investments into the development of rural areas and the participation of rural youth in value chains and business opportunities;
3. to give voice to the rural population, especially women and youth and support them in their collective action to become strong partners for government and private investors.



We call on the private sector

1. to increase pro-poor investments and establish socially viable businesses, including social businesses, serving rural areas in all sectors with a particular focus on youth employment;
2. to provide affordable access to financial services, risk capital and guarantee funds in rural areas, including mobile phone based banking;
3. to invest in the development of value chains and local productive systems that engage smallholders and other small businesses with reliable contracts and decent pay, including shared value approaches in business strategies, whilst taking ecological aspects into account;
4. to invest in primary and secondary skill development, including offering on-the-job training as part of vocational education and training systems;
5. to report in a transparent way on progress made with these initiatives.

We call on bilateral and multilateral development partners

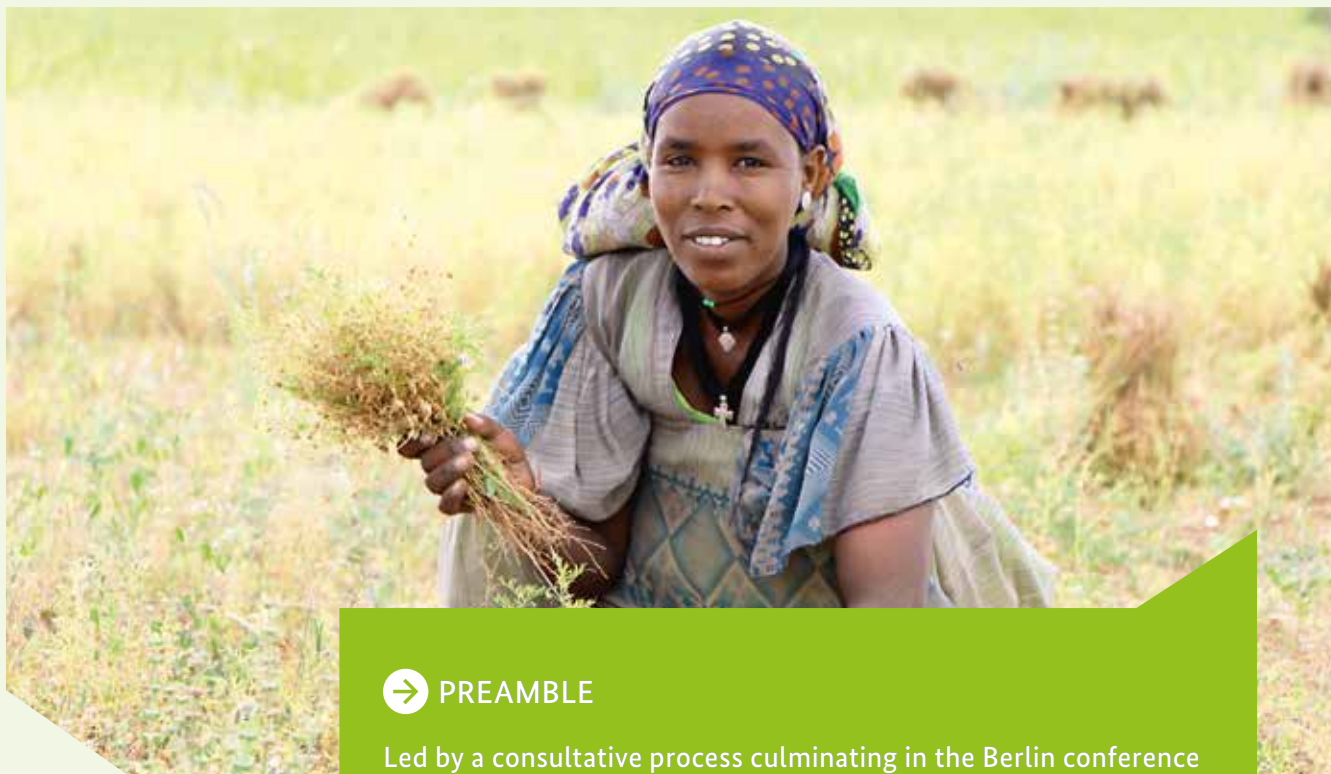
1. to honour the above-cited global commitments as guiding policies, and to monitor and implement plans in line with these commitments;
2. to work towards fair trade and agricultural policies that do not undermine the role of small-scale farmers in providing local and global food security;
3. to align their technical and financial support with country-led policies and programmes tailored to local diversified needs and risk-taking capacities;
4. to increase investments in rural and inter-regional infrastructure, especially transportation, energy, irrigation, and ICTs; and to focus on high-impact investments for innovation and jobs by bilateral and multilateral partners in cooperation with local development organisations; to integrate development efforts and build on existing mechanisms to ensure coherence and sustainability;
5. to allocate increased proportions of ODA to rural development, including the promotion of education and jobs and the improvement of rural life, and to develop a common reporting mechanism to track outcomes;
6. to massively and immediately increase humanitarian aid and fulfil existing commitments in order to end the current hunger crises and food insecurity in emergency situations;
7. to actively reach out to the private sector and non-governmental organisations to tap the innovation potential of the agricultural sector and to jointly work towards pro-poor growth in rural areas.



➔ **This call for action is based on our assessment of the challenges and opportunities that are outlined below in this charter.**



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES THAT SHOULD DRIVE ACTION



→ PREAMBLE

Led by a consultative process culminating in the Berlin conference “ONE WORLD – No Hunger. Future of the Rural World” focussing on innovation, youth, and employment, this Charter was drafted by an international advisory committee composed of experts on rural development, civil society and the private sector². It builds upon the joint vision of shared responsibility across nations and societies for sustainable global development, as set out in the sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

²: The members of the international Advisory Committee are listed at the end of the Charter

- ➔ Around two billion of the world's population are under the age of 15. The 1.2 billion young people aged 15 to 24 living today constitute the largest young generation on the planet ever.
- ➔ With high and growing global underemployment, young people are disproportionately affected by the lack of decent jobs. Youth unemployment rates are estimated to be 2 to 3 times higher than adult unemployment rates. 440 million young people will be entering the labour market between now and 2030 in Africa alone.
- ➔ The youth as agents of change have an essential role to play in achieving the SDGs. Their great potential can improve scale, stability and impact of innovations for the development of the rural space. To unlock the potential of the young generations, their rights and different needs have to be recognised. Youth living in often neglected rural areas need to be linked to the opportunities of innovation and digitisation, and they need job opportunities.

Rural areas are changing as economic growth and broader structural transformation take place. Integrated development strategies that explicitly include smallholder farmers and particularly the young have the potential to offer great developmental prospects for current and future generations. There are no simple solutions: the rural challenges are diverse and, therefore, the global agenda for action on rural change and innovation has to be equally diverse and complex, and adjusted to local circumstances.

THIS CHARTER SHALL:

1. highlight ways to use the diversity, energy, creativity and innovative capacity of youth to seek local solutions to global challenges, foster inclusive rural transformation and ensure that no one is left behind;
2. stimulate a rethinking of rural development in a globalising and urbanising world, recognising the costs of inaction in rural areas, including social tensions because of glaring inequalities;

3. inspire and equip the young generation to take the initiative to contribute to overcoming the challenging situations created by past and current generations and contribute to more equity and development of the areas they live in – as individuals and collectively organised groups;
4. contribute to realising basic human rights of children and youth in particular, and overcoming gender and social inequalities through the implementation and integration of the SDGs;
5. remind policymakers and other stakeholders around the globe to live up to the expectations that the young populations naturally have, by investing in and fostering decent employment and other income-earning opportunities in rural areas, and offering the youth opportunities to pursue their dreams, get a fair share of developmental opportunities and to take advantage of entrepreneurial and innovative opportunities;
6. stimulate coherent policies, incentives and investments that foster the sustainable use of natural resources, including water, soils, forests, fisheries and livestock, and protect the environment and agricultural biodiversity;
7. reconfirm the significant past declarations and commitments, the goals of global, regional and national policies and other multilateral agreements, especially fulfilling the promise of food security for all and implementing the commitments to address climate change³. We emphasise that all these past commitments must be followed up upon more vigorously with implementation actions so that they do not just remain declarations;
8. direct fresh attention to the forthcoming G20 processes towards bold, robust, and specific large scale solutions, advancing the global commitment set out in the 2030 Agenda to build dynamic, sustainable, innovative and people-centred economies, promoting youth employment and women's economic empowerment.

3: L'Aquila Joint Statement on Global Food Security (2009); G7 commitment of 2015 to lift 500 million people out of hunger and fight the triple burden of malnutrition by 2030 (2015); the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT) (2012); UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Paris Agreement (2015); AU Malabo Declaration (2014) and other regional and national commitments.

I. Global Opportunities

1. With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development all countries have agreed, amongst other commitments, to end all forms of poverty and hunger, reduce the gross inequalities of income and wealth, promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth with productive employment and decent work, and sustainably use natural resources.
2. Two of the world's greatest, yet underutilised resources are its young population and particularly women; equitable opportunities and realisation of their human rights can pay high development dividends for all.
3. Innovations, frugal as well as advanced, accessible and affordable technologies and the speed with which they can be shared through responsible digitisation and cooperation can improve public services, boost development and encourage environmental sustainability and economic progress in rural areas, on- and off-farm. Digitisation itself and its economic benefits must also be shared with the poor.



4. Bio-economy offers great potential for more biologically based, rather than fossil fuel based, economies with new, sustainably produced products and opportunities for growth and employment in rural areas. Biological resources, however, must not be overused, and food security has priority. Social and ecological standards are important for the implementation of sound policies and investments.

5. Urban and rural areas are increasingly interconnected by the reciprocal flows of information, goods, services and people engaged in multi-local livelihood systems. As a result, new territories and functional spaces are emerging around growing towns and secondary cities leading to a fading rural-urban divide. Progress in rural development will greatly benefit cities too. Balanced migration is an opportunity, yet migration should not be mainly driven by lack of opportunities in rural areas.
6. Rural and urban food demand is increasing in terms of diversity, quantity and quality. The demand from changing diets can be met by rural areas provided the farming community is well connected to markets and the diverse potential of the agricultural sector is fully and also sustainably utilised. The sector offers opportunities for value addition, healthier diets, new jobs in food systems and regional trade.

II. Global Challenges

1. The global population is set to grow to about 9.5 billion and, by 2050, two thirds of the world's population will live in cities and fast growing intermediate towns. Despite this trend, it is likely that in many countries, especially in Africa and in Asia, many regions will remain predominantly rural.

2. About two billion people still live in poverty and around 767 million live in extreme poverty according to the World Bank estimates. Close to 800 million are suffering from hunger and nearly two billion from malnutrition, with women and girls affected particularly severely. Most of them live in rural areas and depend on agriculture (including farming, animal husbandry incl. pastoralism, fishing and forestry) and the natural resources for their livelihoods, food security and income.

3. The large and growing young generation living in the world today needs decent jobs. Youth unemployment rates are estimated to be two to three times higher than adult unemployment rates. The creation of jobs will be a mammoth task for governments, the private sector and development organisations in future years.

4. In the past, the international community and national governments have neglected the comprehensive development of rural areas. While the tide has slowly been turning for the last decade, new impetus is needed to sharply accelerate this nascent trend and support inclusive transformation. Neglect of this cause has worsened urban ability to absorb new immigrants in search of better opportunities.

5. The transformation of manufacturing and the growing role of services will only provide economic opportunities for the rural youth if new skills are accessible to them. Otherwise, the young labour force will continue to be drained from the rural areas, with the risk of rural societies falling into decay.



6. Because rural areas are poorer and lack infrastructures and services, they are prone to conflicts, be they terrorism, civil war or disputes over land and natural resources, which require tailored responses. Resulting migration flows bring many challenges, both for the home and the host regions. Peace and safety in rural areas is a prerequisite for the sustainable development of these regions.

7. As rural areas are highly diverse – in demographic structure and settlement patterns, economic opportunities, geography, connectedness and natural resource endowment, and in the way they are utilised by the population – there is no one-size-fits-all solution to development. Conducive framework conditions need to be in place to foster sustainable and inclusive development. Policies and other measures need to be fine-tuned at the regional level so as to take these differing contexts into account.



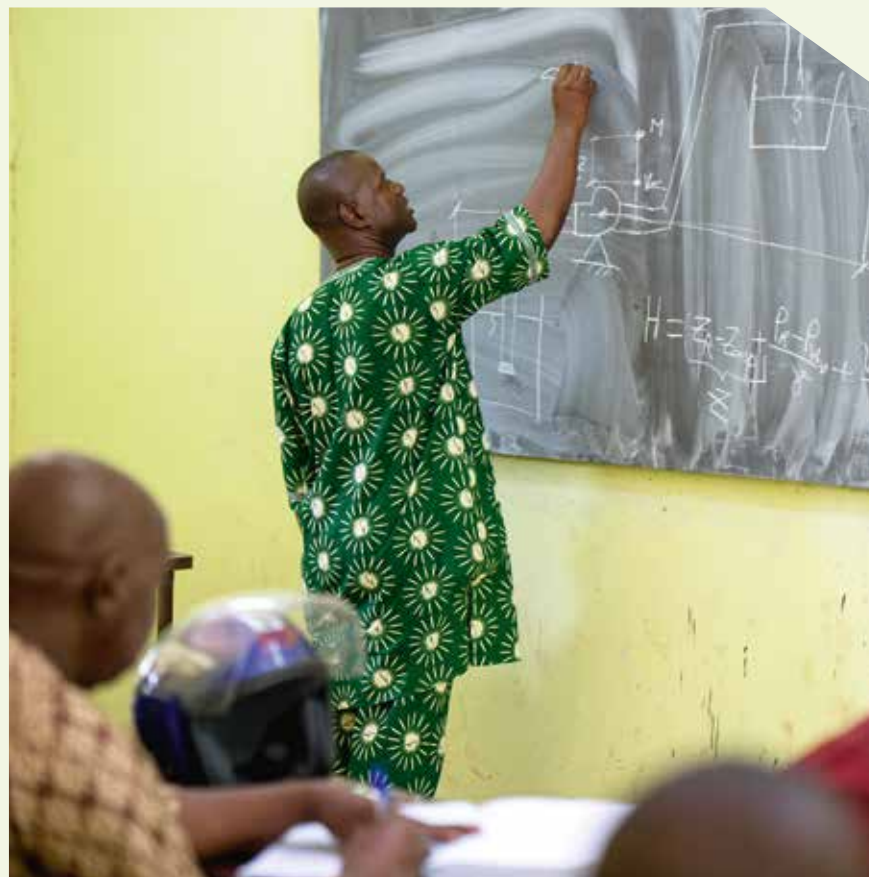
8. Climate change, overexploitation of natural resources and degradation of ecosystems are exacerbating the challenges faced by rural populations as they strive for a decent life. Many production systems in rural areas are unsustainable, leading to land degradation, loss of biodiversity, depletion and pollution of water resources, and high greenhouse gas emissions. Many times, urban waste disposal systems affect rural water supplies and other infrastructure.

III. Strategic Elements of Sustainable Rural Development



Education, Skills, and Agriculture

1. Rural education, vocational training and apprenticeship systems must function as motivators for the young generation and foster their potential as drivers of change and empower them to negotiate and stand in for their rights. They specifically need to address the equal access and aspirations of girls and young women who remain disadvantaged in terms of access, especially in rural areas.



2. The skills and education of the young rural population have to match the requirements of the labour market as the economy grows and develops over time, including the types of skills needed for expanding value chains and retaining higher value addition in the rural economy.

3. Agriculture and food system related education and vocational training has to expand and be adapted to local conditions. Training that links management and economic skills to technical knowledge is needed to prepare the youth for modernising food systems and agriculture in a sustainable way.



Entrepreneurship and Jobs

1. The starting point for all efforts to generate employment should be an integrated approach that combines measures aimed at fostering adequate labour demand, ensuring a skilled labour supply, matching supply and demand and pursuing employment-supportive economic policies.
2. Appropriate structural change and strong economic linkages create attractive on- and off-farm employment opportunities and fair incomes, which is fundamentally important for rural households, especially for the young generation. Accelerated economic growth that embraces farmers as well as small businesses and medium-sized enterprises in rural low-income contexts is therefore needed.
3. Social businesses that put the creation of social value at the heart of their business activities can be harnessed to create employment and income opportunities while also promoting societal goals related, e.g., to health, food security or poverty reduction.
4. Fresh thinking about active employment policies is called for. This would entail sound planning in each country, ownership and accountability for programmes and policies, and responsibility for self-monitoring by the countries themselves. For the low-skilled youth, large-scale public employment programmes should be considered while investing in improved education and skills.
5. Productive and sustainable agriculture systems are of great social and economic importance. They need a secured legal and economic environment. The associated value chains and up- and downstream linkages are engines of rural growth providing place-bound jobs. With increasing quality and quantity of agricultural products, better access to markets and a fair sharing of added value, the agricultural sector can uplift livelihoods of rural communities.



6. A modern rural life has to meet the young generation's aspirations for pleasant living conditions and diversified economic opportunities. Employment in agriculture, both in production and along value chains, has to become an attractive and remunerative option for the long-term occupational future of young generations.

7. In order to allow the agricultural sector's potential to be realised, regional and international trade regimes have to be conducive and fair so that also smallholders and family farms can benefit from globalised trade. Socially and environmentally sustainable transformation in smallholder agriculture can also offer opportunities for rural job creation.



8. An increase in labour productivity within sound agro-ecological systems through technological and institutional innovations will change the perception of agriculture and portray a modern vision of the sector in politics, the media and society as a whole including among the youth.

Innovation and Digital Opportunities

1. Research, documentation, value addition and dissemination of knowledge is a pre-requisite for successful sustainable economic development and key to modernising food and agricultural systems and rural non-farm sectors. Indigenous innovation and knowledge sharing should be considered.

2. Digitisation is a game changer for rural areas. It can improve access to public services, health, education and financial services. It can help connect people in distant places, create business opportunities, bring entertainment and services, and provide new tools for youth to engage with others.



3. Mechanisation offers huge potential, making the entire agricultural sector more productive and attractive for young people. Special attention has to be given to the type of mechanisation that supports the access of small-scale agricultural producers, in particular women, to appropriate technologies for improved labour productivity, developing high-value products and fostering local processing. Innovative business models for improving access to mechanisation without ownership (such as equipment leasing services through ICTs) can advance productivity in cooperative arrangements.



Sustainable Landscapes, Environment, and Farming

1. Natural resources are a primary asset of the rural world and their sustainable use in production systems must be the guiding principle for any development path. Rural people must have fair and equitable access to the benefits of those resources, and policies and investments need to be aligned to more sustainable resource use.
2. Pollution brought about by industrialisation, urbanisation and unsustainable agricultural practices also affects the land, water and air in rural areas, and the people living in these areas. In particular the linkage between soil health, animal and crop health, and ultimately human health has to be studied and addressed with a “One Health” concept.

3. Climate resilience and adaptation within rural populations is a key priority for action. Rural populations, in particular farmers engaging in agro-ecological practices, can safeguard entire landscapes against the effects of climate change and improve rural living conditions, resilience, and quality of life. This needs to be recognised economically and socially through adequate reward and benefit sharing mechanisms as well as through secure tenure of land, fisheries and forests. New instruments, such as climate risk insurance, can be used to buffer the economic consequences of extreme weather events and help the rural population cope with residual climate risks.

4. Smallholder farmers, particularly women and youth, can play a key role in soil rehabilitation and climate mitigation through, amongst others, sustainable land use choices and forestry, as their smaller scale can be conducive to many climate-

smart agricultural practices and their production systems can make efficient use of natural resources. This requires both strengthened land rights and strong farmer organisations to act collectively in cooperation.





Food & Nutrition Security and Social Protection

1. Youth's chances are very much determined early in life. Health and nutrition of mothers and children lay the foundation for youth's future prosperity. Investing in healthy lives at a young age is investing in both their individual future prospects and the collective prospects of their country.
2. Rural areas are the source of nutritious food. Local and regional food security requires vibrant and resourceful agricultural communities, incorporating the potentials of small-holder farmers.
3. To make sure that no one is left behind, social protection measures such as cash transfers, pensions, unemployment benefits, insurance and nutrition programmes are necessary. They must reach those who do not have the means to secure their livelihoods themselves.



4. The development of a care economy in rural areas to provide childcare, elderly care services and the protection of breastfeeding mothers, for example, will be needed so that rural women and youth are able to pursue their own careers in the labour market.
5. To secure the right to food, sufficient local and regional production as well as the development of local food systems, have to be promoted to provide for a balanced diet that prevents nutritional deficiencies.



Infrastructure and Enhanced Rural-Urban Linkages

1. Non-discriminatory and barrier-free access to infrastructure (roads, water and sanitation, waste management, electricity, information/ internet) and services (education, health, financial services including insurance) is key for overcoming territorial inequalities. This is also true within rural areas and between rural and urban areas. This requires large upscaling of investments by governments and private sector.
2. Bypassed regions and sectors will need to be included through proactive strategies specially tailored to these institutionalised forms of exclusion and inequality. Innovations in clean energy, in food and agriculture, in water and sanitation and in the construction and management of common property are particularly important.

3. Rural areas are existential for cities and towns. They provide food, water, renewable energy and protection from natural disasters. Recognizing the values and compensation for ecosystems services is rare. At the same time, job creation and opportunities for education and innovation hubs in urban areas can contribute greatly to the mitigation of poverty and underemployment in rural areas.

4. Strong rural-urban linkages through infrastructure, social networks, flows of goods and investments and ICTs are needed to take advantage of the win-win opportunities for both rural and urban areas that urbanisation can bring.

5. New consumption patterns of growing urban middle classes offer new economic opportunities for rural areas provided they are well connected to urban markets.

6. Rural and urban development policies have to be aligned to foster the convergence between rural and urban growth. Particular attention should be given to the potential of intermediary and secondary towns as drivers for entrepreneurship and employment creation.



Sound Governance, Finance and Funding

1. It is the people and their organisations and institutions that make rural areas strong; only strong organisations can effect change from the bottom-up.
2. There is need for a responsive and capable state at all levels to deliver public services while supporting participation and this will require massive investment in institution building.





3. A strong civil society – including farmers, fishers, pastoralists, and youth organisations – that participates in political processes and is actively involved in shaping rural development is essential for development.

4. Corruption takes a heavy toll on governance mechanisms. Empowering youth to fight corruption is important. The right to information constitutes an important pillar of transparency in governance.

5. All forces of society need to be mobilised and brought together in partnerships: the private and the public sector, civil society organisations and academia. But different groups have different interests. Rural development policies have to be rights-based, conflict-sensitive and transparent, and they must include mechanisms to support dialogue amongst all stakeholders, including smallholder farmers, women, and youth.

6. Strong legal frameworks are required that address the rights and status of family farm members, respect gender equality and facilitate the smooth inter-generational transfer of assets and transparent tenure rights.

7. Land, forest, water and fishing rights, access to and control over natural resources, transparent land-use planning and functioning land (sales and rental) markets are essential for the sustainable development of rural and urban areas. The equality of women and youths needs special attention.

8. There is a need for comprehensive development strategies and national investment programmes with well-designed project pipelines. Framework conditions must allow the private sector to thrive and to facilitate pro-poor growth.

9. Smart financing strategies are needed that sustainably leverage private investment into new small and medium-sized rural businesses. Special attention needs to be given to not just conventional agricultural credits, but also to facilitate access to risk capital for entrepreneurs, including through adapted products, guaranty funds and services with specific (digital) crowdsourcing and distribution channels in rural areas.
10. A predictable and business friendly investment climate is a key component in creating rural jobs and a decisive factor for a prospering society.
11. Legal measures to encourage contract farming arrangements between agribusiness firms and farmer groups, especially youths and women, and the strengthening of producers' organisations will increase farmers' access to advanced technology, formal credit, quality inputs, market and insurance.
12. Public investment should also be used to facilitate private pro-poor investments tailored to the diverse context of women and youths in rural areas. Rural public works programmes can be an additional component.
13. Gender-sensitive and inclusive access to finance for farmers and their organisations, business start-ups, entrepreneurship and risk mitigation strategies like insurance will be required so as to encourage local economic development; local financial institutions have to offer products and services tailored to the demands of small-holder farmers and SMEs.
14. Appropriate reward and benefit sharing mechanisms, such as payments for environmental services, can support the adoption of sustainable agriculture. These new services can be funded through innovative tools and imply an effective political will.
15. Investments have to be aligned with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and secure compliance with them by providing the local population with effective mechanisms for consultation, implementation, monitoring and sanctioning.



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The Advisory Committee consulted with many others around the world engaged in sustainable development, while drafting this charter, including through an open web-based dialogue. All contributions and comments on an earlier draft are gratefully acknowledged.



WHAT THE BERLIN CHARTER MEANS FOR AFRICA

Dr. Akinwumi Ayodeji Adesina, President African Development Bank

Why there is no alternative to the development of Africa's rural areas

As someone who grew up in a rural area myself, I am very mindful of the challenges in the rural economies of Africa: lack of electricity, water, poor sanitation, poor infrastructure and limited economic opportunities. Agriculture, which is the main source of livelihoods in the rural economies, has great potential but has been under-performing due to lack of access by farmers to technologies to raise their productivity, limited access to affordable finance, and weak linkages to markets. Unfortunately for many in the rural areas, life is simply too tough – especially for the millions of youths who feel their lives are trapped in a cycle of poverty.

The key to creating hope for these millions of youths in the rural areas, and millions of farmers, is to simply change the rural space. We must transform the rural economies from zones of economic misery to zones of economic prosperity. Instead of Africa spending \$35 billion annually

importing food – an amount that will rise to \$110 billion by 2025 if the current trend continues – it should turn these into new sources of wealth by focusing on feeding itself from a vibrant and competitive agriculture sector.

In light of this, we welcome the Berlin Charter as a timely and laudable call to action to unite efforts to transform Africa's rural areas into engines of economic growth. For its part, the African Development Bank has committed to invest US \$24



billion in the agriculture sector over the next 10 years, to help drive the transformation of African agriculture.

We must accelerate the creation of jobs for the youths and end the current high rates of migration from rural to urban areas; and worse, the migration crisis to Europe as the youths look for better economic opportunities. The future of Africa's youth does not lie in Europe and neither does it lie at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea. It lies in a more prosperous Africa, growing fast and able to create quality jobs for its millions of young people. That is why the African Development Bank launched the Jobs for Africa's Youth Strategy, to help create 25 million jobs for the youths over the next ten years.

The African Development Bank stands fully ready to work with the G20 to help create a better future for Africa's youth by transforming the rural areas all across Africa. Let's move now from words to real action!



➔ IMPRESSIONS FROM THE CHARTER PROCESS





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