



**Side Event
at The 4th International Conference on
Financing for Development**

Sevilla, Spain

**“AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY TRANSFORMATION (ACT) FUND:
PUBLIC-PRIVATE INVESTMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION
AND DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY SECTOR”**

Organized by Common Fund for Commodities and ACT Fund

By teleconference, 2 July 2025, 15:00-16:30 CET

[Register for the event here](#)

Background

Agriculture is the backbone of economic development in many emerging economies, contributing significantly to employment and GDP. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) represent the majority in agricultural value chains, and SMEs routinely face severe financial constraints, impeding their potential for growth. In the agricultural commodity sector SMEs are critical to connecting smallholder farmers to high-value markets, and poor risk perception in agri-businesses presents an insurmountable obstacle to most impact investors in taking advantage of the opportunities in agricultural commodity sector in the Global South.

The ACT Fund is a public-private partnership designed to confront one of the most pressing challenges in development: the chronic underfunding of the agricultural value chains in developing countries. To bridge this critical financing gap, ACT Fund takes high-touch approach to overcome obstacles to investments by impact conscious private money.

Building on CFC's longstanding expertise in impact investing, the ACT Fund is a \$100 million blended finance vehicle focused on supporting high-potential agri-SMEs, boosting climate and economic resilience,

and scaling sustainable commodity production. With a catalytic \$20 million first-loss commitment from the CFC, the Fund provides a powerful combination of risk mitigation and tailored technical assistance (TA), strategically engineered to maximize both developmental impact and investor returns.

Drawing on the CFC's extensive project pipeline, the Fund repackages initiatives into investable, de-risked opportunities transparent and investable for diverse investor groups. Through multiple tailored tranches, the ACT Fund accommodates a broad spectrum of impact investors—from those seeking higher returns with managed risk to those prioritizing concessional capital—offering a concrete example of how blended finance can overcome barriers to private sector engagement in development.

The ACT Fund underscores the imperative to move beyond isolated efforts towards deployment of coordinated public-private instruments that enable private financiers to come to agriculture in the Global South at scale. The ACT Fund stands as a model for how strategic, blended finance solutions can unlock capital where it is needed most.

Objectives of the side event

- 1. Bring attention to the magnitude of growth potential for impact investment in sustainable agriculture in Developing Countries:** look into the potential of the ACT Fund's \$10 million Technical Assistance Facility to contribute to capacity development and innovation to enhance transparency of investment opportunities as well as their financial and impact outcomes.
- 2. Introduce the ACT Fund:** Present the ACT Fund as a new and unique mechanism that channels finance into the most impactful segments of agricultural value chains, aiming to bolster resilience, increase income, and preserve natural capital.
- 3. Showcase Public-Private Collaboration:** Highlight how CFC's investment expertise, coupled with public and private support, enables investment in high-impact results, attracting a diverse set of investors interested in sustainable agricultural transformation.
- 4. Engage Stakeholders:** Create a platform for dialogue between governments, international organizations, private investors, and agri-SMEs to discuss challenges, opportunities, and synergies to unlock financing for commodity value chains and sustainable agriculture.

Programme and names of speakers/panelists

Moderator: *Mr. Andrey Kuleshov, Chief of Strategy and Development, Common Fund for Commodities*

Opening Remarks

Mr. Nicolaus Cromme, Chief Operations Officer, Common Fund for Commodities

Keynote address: How financial architecture blocks investment in centers of growth

Dr. Lisa Sachs, Director, Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment, Columbia Law School - Columbia Climate School

ACT Fund: Opening new opportunities for private investment in development

Mr. Michael van den Berg, Director, ACT Fund

The case for investment in regenerative agriculture

Mr. Fernando Russo, Founder and General Manager, Meraki Impact

Impact capital as strategic vehicle to support enterprise growth in the Global South

Ms. Melanie Machingawuta, Senior Director, Inclusive Investment - TechnoServe

Case Study: Presentation by an agri-SME projects financed in CFC-ACT framework

Mr. Dominikus Collenberg, Founder and CEO, Organic Africa Ltd. (Zimbabwe)

Q&A Session: An open floor for participants to engage directly with ACT Fund representatives and discuss pathways for collaboration.

Guiding Questions for discussion/s

- The **untouched potential of private investment** in sustainable development in developing countries, and the structural problems of global financial architecture which block this potential;
- **Innovative Financing Solutions for Agri-SMEs:** Showcasing ACT's diverse portfolio of short-term liquidity, long-term capital, and quasi-equity instruments to support SMEs at different growth stages.
- **Rating credit risks and impact to align private sector investment with SDGs:** ACT's commitment to benchmark its impact, specifically aligning with the SDGs focusing on poverty reduction, gender equality, climate action, and biodiversity conservation.
- **Building Climate Resilience and Biodiversity:** How ACT integrates regenerative agricultural practices and promotes biodiversity-friendly farming to build resilient value chains.
- Increased visibility and understanding of the **ACT Fund's unique model** among potential investors, development agencies, and policy makers.
- Identification of **collaboration opportunities with other impact funds**, international development programs, and private sector entities interested in co-investment.
- **Policy recommendations** to address the deficiencies in financial sector to create more favourable conditions for impact investment in agriculture including support for the scalability of investments in biodiversity, regenerative agriculture practices and climate resilience.