Gates Foundation

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DIASCA Digital Integration of Agricultural Supply Chains Alliance

COSA Committee On Sustainability Assessment

AGILE DATA & DPI SUMMIT 2026

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Open Space Sessions Reports

Day 2: 9 Breakout Group Conversations

Ideas, Insights, and Pathways for Action

1. Introduction

The Open Space sessions on Day 2 of the *Agile Data & DPI Summit 2026* gave participants the freedom to convene around the topics that mattered most to them. Without a fixed agenda, eight self-organised breakout groups formed organically — each tackling a distinct facet of how digital public infrastructure, agile data, and farmer-centric approaches can transform smallholder agriculture. The conversations ranged from the deeply practical (how farmer data wallets actually perform in the field) to the strategic (how to build a national advocacy case for data infrastructure investment) and the foundational (why we must first agree on what we are even talking about before we can build consensus).

What emerged across these eight sessions is a remarkably consistent set of themes: the centrality of the farmer's voice and trust; the need to move from fragmented pilots to interoperable, sustainable systems; the importance of translating data into tangible value that flows back to producers; and the recognition that digital tools — including AI — must complement rather than replace the human relationships on which agricultural communities depend. Each session generated concrete action points and, crucially, identified who in the room was willing to carry the work forward.

This report captures the substance of each conversation, and is a summary produced with AI support. The full reports are accessible as annexes.

2. Sessions Overview

The diagram below maps all nine Open Space sessions against the ideas categories identified by each group. Several sessions span multiple categories, reflecting the interconnected nature of the discussions. Use Cases dominate, but every session also touches on the conceptual and collaborative foundations required to bring technical projects to life.

Session	Use Case	Conceptual Frameworks	Effective Collaboration	Other
Building Consensus		✓		
Extension Services			✓	
DIASCA	✓	✓	✓	
AI Use Cases	✓			
Expand the Matrix	✓	✓		
Cost of Inaction				✓ Advocacy
Farmer Data Wallets	✓			
Closing the Loop	✓	✓	✓	
Communication for Momentum			✓	✓ Broad comms/ visibility

3. Session Reports

The following sections present each of the eight Open Space sessions in a consistent format: why the topic matters, key points from the conversation, expected impact, and concrete action points. The sessions are presented in the order they were submitted.

3.1 Building Consensus

Convener: Emily Oxford
Participants: Emily Oxford, Martha, Tatyana (Open Supply Hub)
Categories: Conceptual Frameworks

Why It Matters	If stakeholders do not agree on which data they are talking about, building consensus becomes impossible. Jargon like "Agile Data," "DPI," and "EUDR" is not universally understood — including among the farmers whose participation is most needed. Without a shared knowledge foundation, farmer-centric dialogue remains aspirational rather than real.
Key Discussion Points	The most valuable exchange happened not during the formal session but in a one-on-one conversation with a farmer afterward. The farmer did not understand terms like Agile Data, DPI, or EUDR and was unaware that the EUDR existed. Only after a lengthy explanation could the farmer engage meaningfully with the topics under discussion. The conclusion: if the community is serious about farmer centricity, it must start from a shared knowledge foundation — explaining things not just for NGOs, large enterprises, and governments, but in a farmer-centric way.
Expected Impact	Meaningful, inclusive conversations about data that ensure all participants — farmers included — work from the same foundational knowledge.
Action Points	Communicate in farmer-centric language, not only in NGO/enterprise/government-facing terms. Use this insight to influence the direction of all subsequent Summit workstreams.

3.2 Agricultural Extension: Institutional Shift from Cost-centred to Value-based Service Ecosystems

Convener: Ahmed / Safiyah Beauty

Participants: Breakout group participants

Categories: Effective Collaboration

Why It Matters	Government-subsidised extension services have not kept pace with the scaling of agricultural production. FAO standards call for a ratio of 1 agent per 400–1,000 farmers; in Nigeria the ratio exceeds 1:100,000. Farmers cannot absorb extension as an additional cost, while the low capacity of extension agents undermines data quality — whether collected via human interface or digital tools. The gap between research and adoption at the farm level persists as a result.
Key Discussion Points	The group explored how to shift extension services from a cost-centred to a value-based model. Private extension agents (PEAs) could offer tangible services beyond technical advice — including market access, post-harvest handling, processing, export-readiness quality, standardisation, and compliance. Empowered PEAs can ensure resource-use efficiency, improved productivity, and excellence in data collection for digital institutions and organisations. The model envisions mobilising trained PEAs into host communities for a first year, after which commission-based income allows them to operate independently. Scaling extension delivery this way also supports data privacy, data democracy, shared registries, and shared data policies — all monitored and sustained through PEAs.
Expected Impact	Sustainable, scaled extension services that improve farmer productivity, data quality, and digital adoption — while enabling compliance, standardisation, and food security.
Action Points	Design a value-based service model for private extension agents; train and equip PEAs and mobilise them into communities; build the commission/token structure for second-year independence; integrate PEAs as enablers of data privacy, democracy, and DPI compliance.

3.3 DIASCA — What a DPI Network Needs

Convener: Pascal Ripplinger, Carla, Leonhard (GIZ/DIASCA)

Participants: GIZ and broader group

Categories: Use Case · Conceptual Frameworks · Effective Collaboration

Why It Matters	The session addressed three core questions: What should the DIASCA network look like? What should it not be? And how can more farmer voices be integrated? The answers to these questions shape whether the network becomes a genuinely inclusive, milestone-driven collaboration or an echo chamber of the usual stakeholders.
Key Discussion Points	The group identified concrete mechanisms for strengthening the network: inviting champion farmers, defining clear milestones, showing best practices, and training facilitators. Incentives for farmer participation are essential, as is tailoring knowledge products for different target groups. The discussion also surfaced ideas for connecting farmers and buyers through targeted events, focusing on merging commodity groups, incentivising through government, improving the network registration process, and establishing a DIASCA Innovation Fund or hackathon.
Expected Impact	More farmer voices in the network; a clear, milestone-defined roadmap; visible best practices; and new mechanisms (innovation fund, events) for engagement.
Action Points	Define milestones for the network; identify and invite champion farmers; identify and train facilitators; design incentive structures for farmer participation; develop knowledge products for different target groups; organise events connecting farmers and buyers; explore a DIASCA Innovation Fund or hackathon.

3.4 AI Use Cases: Risks & Opportunities

Convener: Katie Caudle

Participants: Corlena Patterson, Henok Alemayehu, Sheila Agyemang Oppony, Gilbert, Tadesse, Abryan

Categories: Use Case

Why It Matters	AI has the potential to strengthen agile-data practices and DPI for agriculture, yet remains widely underutilised. When deployed responsibly, it can extend advisory services, reduce administrative burdens, support real-time decision-making, and help rebalance power in supply chains. But adoption is limited by low institutional capacity, fragmented pilots, proprietary data, connectivity gaps, and lack of farmer trust.
Key Discussion Points	The group identified three concrete use cases. First, AI-enabled farmer extension services: digital agents providing hyperlocal weather predictions, farm-level analytics, and triage support, anchored in existing human networks rather than replacing extension officers. Risks include political budget cuts, proprietary dataset control, and incorrect advice without uncertainty signalling. Second, autonomous data collection for compliance and traceability: AI-powered identification (e.g. facial recognition for livestock) that automates registration and supports regulatory compliance. Risks include start-up dependency and provider lock-in. Third, AI-assisted dataset merging, cleaning, and registry building: automating deduplication and schema alignment to leapfrog slow data-standard negotiations. Risks include data-holder unwillingness, reduced transparency, and unregulated data marketplaces.
Expected Impact	Faster, higher-quality agricultural data; extended advisory reach without displacing human relationships; reduced administrative burden; stronger farmer agency through transparent, interoperable systems; and a more resilient digital ecosystem.
Action Points	Build out the three use cases with additional examples, principles, and risks from the community; collect diverse case studies across geographies, commodities, and DPI contexts; co-develop shared design principles for responsible, farmer-centred AI in DPI; map priority opportunities for cross-sector collaboration.

3.5 Expand the Matrix: Testing an Interoperable Sandbox for Deforestation-Free Trade

Convener: Greg Sampson & Greg Tajchman
Participants: 5+ additional contributors

Categories: Use Case · Conceptual Frameworks

Why It Matters	The EUDR ecosystem is expanding rapidly — data-collection tools, traceability systems, national warehouses, and AI risk engines — but fragmentation risks duplication and high costs for countries. ITC proposed consolidating what already exists by mapping solutions, identifying interoperability pathways, and testing combinations through a sandbox model. The UN and ITC can act as neutral conveners, bringing tools and open ecosystems together.
Key Discussion Points	The group identified strong complementarity between data collection, national registries, traceability systems, and auxiliary services like AI weather prediction. Opportunities include integrating existing DPI building blocks — automatic asset registration via AgStack GeoIDs, designing an integration adapter for INATrace, and referencing sustainability data from COSA interventions and legality mapping. A sandbox environment would let countries discover, learn about, and test configurations before national deployment. The group also noted that open source is not automatically free: licensing and sustainability models must be carefully assessed. ITC is positioned as orchestrator and bridge-builder, not a software provider — building adapters to connect existing systems rather than replacing them.
Expected Impact	Greater alignment across tools and systems; strengthened existing solutions; shared learning from implementation experiences; and surfaced trade-offs and limitations.
Action Points	Document blueprints for already tested or piloted DPI integrations; give more visibility to implementation partners and promote their work; test assumptions and identify trade-offs for integrating additional DPI blocks; scope and estimate costs of further technical integrations.

3.6 The Cost of Inaction on National Data Infrastructure

Convener: Benjamin Addom (Commonwealth Secretariat)

Participants: Krishan Bheenick, Kirchuffs Atengble, Jonas Spekker, Gretchen Villegas, Lars Kahnert, Katie Cavelle, Bryan S Anyomi, Sheila Agyemang Oppong

Categories: Advocacy

Why It Matters	There is an urgent need for advocacy materials that make the business case to national-level policymakers for investing in data infrastructure. The materials must present a compelling value proposition backed by credible figures — not only financial metrics but also public-good indicators that resonate with government priorities.
Key Discussion Points	The group discussed how a private-sector approach requires believable numbers on key metrics, while public-sector policy-making demands broader considerations. Proposed lines of intervention include using market access for export products (e.g. EUDR, traceability systems that position a country as low-risk for sourcing — as Malaysia has done) and framing the country as a resilient landscape for agricultural investment. Indicators should span macro, sectoral, private-sector, and societal levels: GDP contribution, CAADP indicators, SDGs, youth employment, trade metrics, reduction in inequality. The methodology would draw on desk research, before-and-after comparisons, and projections — inspired by approaches from the health and environment sectors. The report should also propose a monitoring mechanism with data analytics to institutionalise regular measurement.
Expected Impact	A snapshot comparison of the cost of inaction versus the opportunity gained through investment in national data infrastructure, with a replicable methodology and a proposed monitoring mechanism for continued updating.
Action Points	Develop a concept note among Summit partners; continue online interactions to identify additional contributors; initiate desk research on methods from other sectors, indicators, data availability, and target countries; establish who brings what — human resources, funding, institutional backing.

3.7 Farmer Data Wallets: Pilots & Lessons Learnt

Convener: Chloe Viala

Participants: Grzegorz (ITC), Tetyana (Digital Green), Carlos & Elena (COSA), Corlena, Jerome (GIZ), Brian (CIAT), others

Categories: Use Case

Why It Matters	The concept of farmer data wallets is regularly presented as a solution for farmer data ownership and agency, yet there are few synthesised conclusions about scalability, challenges, and lessons from the pilots that have been carried out. Without an honest assessment of what has and hasn't worked, the community risks repeating costly experiments.
Key Discussion Points	The group distinguished between static data (e.g. polygon data, updated infrequently) and complex, dynamic data (yields, inputs, transactions). Complex data is difficult to put in a farmer-centric wallet without a clear use case and farmer demand. Digital Green shared a pilot failure in Kenya where cooperatives lacked capacity to manage wallets; GIZ reported cocoa-sector farmers deleting wallet apps to free phone storage because the data was not used often enough. Maintenance costs for a simple app run to 50–100k€ per year. However, a simpler concept emerged: the data wallet as a "personal health record" — storing key information that farmers can share when needed, rather than capturing every transaction. Examples included QR-code farmer cards (CIAT), transaction histories enabling bank credit scoring, and Android personal data stores as inspiration. The group also challenged the assumption that farmer data must be perfectly structured, suggesting that a loosely organised, farmer-controlled space may be more realistic and sustainable.
Expected Impact	Farmers gain agency and control over data about them and their farms, without requiring costly, high-maintenance digital tools — through simpler, more pragmatic approaches.
Action Points	Continue mapping pilots and lessons learnt, including use cases; investigate existing simple online data-safe and wallet tools; connect with practitioners (CIAT, ITC, Digital Green, PbN) for further exchange.

3.8 Closing the Loop: Farmer Data into Actionable Agronomic Feedback

Convener: Kumbukani Munthali (African Fertilizer & Agribusiness Partnership)

Participants: Ama, Louis, Yurley, Dadirai, Learnmore, Jonathan, Gertrude, Tokozile, and others

Categories: Use Case · Conceptual Frameworks · Effective Collaboration

Why It Matters	Farmers give data but get nothing in return — no feedback, no actionable insights. This one-way extraction breaks trust, produces low-quality data, perpetuates top-down agricultural systems, and prevents farmers from understanding their own progress or regression over time. Until the loop is closed, data collection will remain extractive.
Key Discussion Points	The group defined what useful feedback looks like: oral and in local languages; specific to the farmer's crops, season, and community; simple, actionable, timely, and tangible; and consistent enough to rebuild broken trust. Delivery channels discussed include community radio (farmer programmes), community meetings, SMS in local languages, storytelling, pictures, and drama groups. The emphasis was on measuring farmer decision change — not just data volume collected — as the true indicator of impact.
Expected Impact	Better data quality and volume; a consistent, gap-free flow of information; improved farmer decisions and productivity; stronger farmer-system trust; more responsive programmes; and genuinely farmer-centred programme designs.
Action Points	Design an organisational Agile Data Farmer Feedback Mechanism (ADFFM); map existing feedback channels; design reciprocal data agreements with farmers; pilot feedback mechanisms; measure farmer decision change, not just data collected.

3.9 Communication for Momentum

Convener: Audra Wilson-Max

Participants: Audra, Raphael, and other breakout group participants

Categories: Effective Collaboration

Why It Matters	Sustained communication is essential for five reasons: to achieve scale across the community, to enable cross-pollination of ideas between workstreams and organisations, to build trust and understanding among diverse stakeholders, to document and monitor progress, and — simply — because the work matters and deserves visibility.
Key Discussion Points	The group focused on how to share insights meaningfully and maintain momentum beyond the Summit. Proposed communication channels and formats include: sharing success stories, learning, and case studies; hosting webinars and a virtual series; incorporating AI into communications workflows; keeping messages short, simple, and relatable through storytelling; convening an annual summit; and producing documented outcomes from each engagement. The emphasis was on communication as a strategic enabler — not an afterthought — that accelerates adoption, deepens understanding, and sustains the community's collective energy.
Expected Impact	Accelerated adoption of DPI and agile-data approaches; increased understanding across stakeholder groups; and sustained momentum for the community's work beyond the Summit.
Action Points	Establish a communications committee to coordinate ongoing outreach; explore AI-assisted tools for content creation and dissemination.