

**Notes on the First Meeting of Convenors and Friends in 2022
4 February 2022**

1. The first meeting for 2022 between Convenors and Friends and the President of IFAD took place on Friday, 4 February. The meeting was held virtually via the Zoom meeting application.

Agenda item 1: Opening remarks by the President and adoption of the agenda

2. The President welcomed participants. Friends in attendance were, for List B: Dr Yaya Olaniran, from Nigeria; and for sub-List C2: Ms Hyo Joo Kang, from the Republic of Korea. Ambassador Bucarello Guzman, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela also joined the meeting.
3. The President expressed his condolences to the Republic of Egypt for the passing of the Ambassador and Permanent Representative to IFAD, His Excellency Alaaeldin Wagih Mohamed Roushdy, and also expressed his support to the people of Tonga following the devastating volcanic eruption and tsunami.
4. The provisional agenda was adopted with no requests for additional items.

Agenda item 2: Update on the forty-fifth session of the Governing Council and related events

5. Management provided an update on the planned programme for the forty-fifth session of the Governing Council and related events, and reminded participants that a new Bureau would be elected at the session.
6. Further information on the format of the IFAD Talk, where Governors were encouraged to engage and interact, was provided. Governors would also have the opportunity to intervene during the consideration of business items. In order to ensure smooth deliberations in the virtual setting, prior notice of where and when Governors may wish to intervene would be much appreciated.

Agenda item 3: Strategic discussions with the President and the Seventh Executive Board retreat

7. Responding to feedback provided by Board representatives, Management proposed to plan ahead for the strategic discussions with the President during the 2022 Executive Board sessions and retreat, and invited participants to provide suggestions on possible topics for consideration.
8. Welcoming Management's responsiveness to the Board's feedback, Convenors proposed that Management consider the impact of previous strategic discussions. Time management for this agenda item was also highlighted as an important issue for future Board sessions.
9. Further to a lively discussion on potential topics for future strategic discussions (see attached annex), the President suggested that further consultation take place with Convenors to identify the priority topics for consideration during Board

sessions, noting that additional topics could also be discussed in informal seminars. He agreed that Management would revert to the Board in April on the value-addition of past strategic discussions.

10. Participants were informed that preparations for the seventh Executive Board retreat, scheduled for Thursday, 28 and Friday, 29 April, were underway. Given the current situation, the retreat would most likely be held in hybrid mode, once again, at Officine Farneto. Similar modalities as the previous retreat would be adopted, including holding the retreat in English only with no interpretation, given the infrastructure at the proposed location, and moderation by an external facilitator. Convenors would be kept informed of any updates.

Agenda item 4: Governing body meetings and related events for 2022

11. In an effort to respond to Member State requests for forward planning, the Secretary presented a calendar of upcoming formal and informal governing body meetings for 2022. Participants were informed of changes to recently scheduled meetings, as well as the extension of the April Board session, which would now take place from 25 to 27 April.

Agenda item 5: Other business

12. Management updated the group on a meeting held between the RBAs and Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed on Thursday, 3 February, to discuss the structure of the United Nations Food Systems Summit (FSS) hub, and advised on proposed staffing and that IFAD would contribute accordingly, further to the Governing Council's approval of the budget. Management also recalled its commitment to present the costing of IFAD's engagement in the follow up to the FSS to the April session of the Executive Board.
13. No other business was raised and the meeting was adjourned.
14. The President thanked participants for attending and looked forward to their participation in the Twelfth Special Session of the Executive Board, scheduled for the afternoon of the same day.
15. The Convenors and Friends would meet again on 11 April.

Annex: Proposed topics for forthcoming Strategic Discussions with the President

Topics proposed by participants for consideration under the Strategic discussion with the President agenda item at the forthcoming Executive Board sessions and at the Board retreat are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Proposed topics for forthcoming Strategic Discussions with the President

IFAD's Financial Model

In an environment of increasing complexity in IFAD's operations, with the need to consider support to highly-indebted countries, fragile and conflict-affected situations, increasing climate-related issues and IFAD's financial sustainability, the Board may wish to consider the following topics:

- Leveraging additional financing and diversifying IFAD's resource base to make every dollar work
- Mobilizing resources in support of increasingly complex operations, strengthened approaches to fragility, conflict and climate challenges and support to highly-indebted countries
- IFAD's financial sustainability and increased impact – benefits and trade-offs

Operations-focus

IFAD's strength lies in its operations and its impact where it is needed most. How can we strengthen IFAD's comparative advantage and double its impact? The Board may wish to consider the following operations-focussed themes:

- Strengthening IFAD's approach in fragile and conflict-affected situations
- Building local capacities in project design, management and monitoring
- Building smallholders' resilience to climate change
- Supporting countries' development of sustainable food systems
- IFAD's role in relation to IFIs in the context of the post Food Systems Summit world

Strategic Partnership-building

Strength lies in numbers and leveraging partnership to increase impact and reach is key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In this area, Board representatives may wish to consider the following themes related to strategic partnership-building:

- Doubling impact by leveraging strategic partnerships
- Scaling up IFAD's engagement with the private sector
- Engaging Government on pro-poor policy development
- IFAD's interconnection with regional and national development banks
- Leveraging and building integrated partnerships at local and national levels
- Building partnerships to advance key issues (e.g., climate change)

Priority-setting

Board representatives have been clear in their call for greater clarity, predictability and prioritization for IFAD's future direction. With this in mind, representatives may wish to consider the following topics:

- Establishing priorities for IFAD13
 - IFAD's ambition in particular around its cross-cutting themes
 - In what areas does IFAD need to accelerate action
 - IFAD's comparative advantage and niche – setting priorities
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