

Notes on the Second Meeting of Convenors and Friends in 2022
11 April 2022

1. The second meeting for 2022 between Convenors and Friends and the President of IFAD took place on Monday, 11 April. 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, and congratulated Norway on assuming the role of List A Convenor, and Germany on assuming the role of List A Co-Convenor. Friends in attendance were, for List A: Ms Gloria Wiseman, from Canada; and for sub-List C2: Mr Khalid Mehboob, from Pakistan. The Convenor of sub-List C1, Mr Médi MOUNGUI of Cameroon, advised that he would not be able to attend the meeting due to a prior commitment related to the FAO Regional Conference for Africa in Malabo.
3. Updates on a number of issues were provided as follows:
 - a. The recent mission with Norway's Minister of International Development Anne Beathe Tvinnereim in late February/early March in Malawi, and the mission in Dubai to participate in the World Government Summit in late March.
 - b. The informal meeting on IFAD's response to the global impacts of the war in Ukraine. Appreciation was expressed for the level of participation by Member States. IFAD continued to engage with the Secretary General's Steering Committee of the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy, and Finance, and at country level through UN Country Teams and the Rome-based agencies (RBAs). A concept note for a crisis response initiative was being prepared and would be shared with Member States to update on IFAD's proposed response and encourage Member States' contributions.
 - c. Implementation of IFAD12 commitments and IFAD's contribution of US\$250,000 from its grant resources in support of the United Nations Food Systems Summit Hub activities.
4. Participants congratulated the President on his recent appointment as Director-General of the International Labour Organization.
5. The provisional agenda was adopted without amendment.

Agenda item 2: 135th session of the Executive Board

6. The Secretary of IFAD provided an overview of events on the margins of EB135 and of the logistical arrangements in place for the upcoming session.

Agenda item 2(a): IFAD's participation in the HIPC Initiative

7. Management provided an overview of the two HIPC country cases for Somalia and Sudan to be presented for the Board's approval at the upcoming session. Participants expressed appreciation for the information provided through the informal seminar held in February and the bilateral meetings with Member States.

Agenda item 2(c): Strategic discussion – a Medium and Long-Term Vision for Development Finance in IFAD

8. Management introduced the externally commissioned strategic discussion paper that would be presented at the upcoming Board session, noting that the aim was to initiate a strategic dialogue process between Member States and Management ahead of IFAD13. Participants welcomed the document, and the opportunity to benefit from expertise external to IFAD.
9. Participants welcomed Management’s proposal to organize technical seminars on topics which would inform the Fund’s priorities and areas of focus for IFAD13. Considering the intense RBA calendar of events for the coming months, the President requested further outreach to Convenors to gauge the appetite for a second Board retreat to consider such topics.

Agenda item 2(b): Medium-term Strategic Direction and Budget (2023-2025)

10. Further to Member States’ request at the 134th session of the Board to revise IFAD’s budget process, Management prepared a medium-term budget outlook for the three-year period between 2023 and 2025, which was presented to the Audit Committee in March.
11. Management introduced the key features of the budget outlook, including providing an overview of the key cost drivers, and the three cost scenarios. Information on the costs related to decentralization – past, present and future – would be shared. Further to the Board’s guidance on the scenarios presented, Management would provide costed options for prioritization.

Agenda item 3: Seventh retreat of the Executive Board

12. The Secretary of IFAD provided an update on the preparations for the seventh Executive Board retreat, which would take place on Thursday, 28 and Friday, 29 April at Officine Farneto. Considering ongoing travel restrictions, the event would be organized in hybrid format, to allow for both in-presence and virtual attendance of Board members. Management noted that the retreat facilitators would liaise with Convenors in preparation for the event, and that the retreat programme would be shared with Board members in due course.

Agenda item 4: Appointment of the President of IFAD

13. The Secretary of IFAD briefed participants on the main activities and milestones in the lead up to the appointment of the President, to be considered by the Governing Council at its first special session on Thursday, 7 July. It was noted that the call for nominations would be open until Friday, 6 May, and that a communication would be issued to all IFAD Member States on the nominations received, no later than Sunday, 28 May.
14. Participants were also informed of the preparation process for the membership meeting with candidates, to be held during the week of 6 June, which would require the involvement of both the Governing Council Bureau and Convenors. The Secretary of IFAD recalled the inputs that would be provided by Convenors, including the nominations of three tellers, one from each List, to exercise an oversight role in the election process, and expressed appreciation for their cooperation.

Agenda item 5: Other business

15. The Secretary of IFAD provided an update on the Executive Board country visit to Sierra Leone, scheduled to take place between 21 and 25 November. Preparations for the visit had begun, and the invitation letter to Board members would be issued in May.
16. No other business was raised and the meeting was adjourned.
17. The President thanked participants for attending and looked forward to their participation in the upcoming session of the Executive Board.