

Notes on the Third Meeting of Convenors and Friends in 2022
30 August 2022

1. The third meeting for 2022 between Convenors and Friends and the President of IFAD took place on Tuesday, 30 August. 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 A: Mr Sylvain Fournel, from France.
3. The President clarified that given the length of the meeting, a few agenda items had been removed and would be discussed at the next Convenors and Friends meeting. The provisional agenda was adopted without amendment.

Agenda item 2: Presidential transition

4. The President-elect Alvaro Lario provided an update on the steps being taken to ensure a smooth presidential transition, noting he would be the Officer in Charge during the month of September, with the exception of the week of EB136. Convenors were informed that an Executive Management Committee retreat would be held before the end of September, to lay out IFAD's strategy for the coming years, including for the thirteenth replenishment of IFAD's resources. He also noted that there had been some changes in the Fund's middle management, and that an interim CFO would be appointed in due course. The President-elect briefed participants on his upcoming travels, which would include the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) 2022 Summit, meetings with the IMF and AfDB in Rotterdam, and the 77th session of the UN General Assembly.
5. Convenors expressed interest in conveying feedback from their Lists on the first special session of the Governing Council, in particular the lessons learned from the appointment of the President process, and enquired whether there were any plans to review the procedures for future elections. Preliminary feedback included that the use of paper ballots was time consuming, that delegates not in the plenary were unable to follow proceedings of the private meeting, and questioned whether IFAD was following best practices related to the transparency of the voting process. Management clarified that for each appointment process the Governing Council could decide on the voting modality to be used, and that IFAD had developed an electronic voting system. Management also informed participants that consultations were ongoing with the Governing Council Bureau to put forward recommendations for the revision of the established practice, for the Governing Council's approval.

Agenda item 3: 136th session of the Executive Board

6. The Secretary of IFAD provided an overview of events on the margins of EB136 and of the logistical arrangements in place for the upcoming session, including the farewell reception for the President that would take place on Monday, 12 September. The President also informed participants that President-elect Alvaro Lario would participate in the session in his dual capacity as CFO and President-elect, and would be leading the responses from Management together with the Vice-President.

7. Management introduced the item "Update on IFAD's activities related to the global food crisis response", which would be presented at the upcoming Board session for review. Participants welcomed the topic of this paper, highlighting the relevance of IFAD's work in the current context, and looked forward to the Board discussion.
8. Management also introduced the document presenting the high-level preview of IFAD's 2023 regular budget and projections for 2024 and 2025, providing a brief overview of the two possible budget scenarios and the related implications on the Fund's business. Participants welcomed the opportunity to have bilateral meetings with Management ahead of the Board session, and reiterated the importance of clear justifications for each of the two scenarios.
9. Finally, Management informed participants that the Board would be presented with a request to replenish the IFAD West Bank and Gaza Fund from regular grant resources with the objective of attracting additional funding from interested donors to implement a strategic initiative in Palestine, for which the European Commission, among other donors, had already expressed an interest.

Agenda item 4: Other business

10. 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 were ongoing, the Secretariat was monitoring the situation in the country closely, and Convenors were reminded to submit the list of participants to the Office of the Secretary by 2 September.
11. Participants were also reminded of the need to elect a new Chairperson for the Evaluation Committee at its 118th session, and that the Executive Board would be invited to elect representatives of the Governing Council on the IFAD Staff Pension Committee at the forthcoming Board session.
12. Further to a proposal made by the President, the Office of the Secretary had identified Tuesday, 11 October from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. (Rome time) for an additional meeting between Convenors and Friends and the President-elect. A clash with the 50th session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) was noted and the Secretariat would ascertain whether another date was feasible. Convenors were also informed that the Convenors and Friends' meeting scheduled for Friday, 4 November would be moved to the morning hours given that the pre-consultation session for the thirteenth replenishment of IFAD's resources would take place on the same day.
13. Further to a request by a Convenor, an update on activities related to the Presidential transition would be added under agenda item 9, Other business, of the 136th session of the Executive Board.
14. No other business was raised and the meeting was adjourned.
15. The President thanked participants for attending and looked forward to their participation in the upcoming session of the Executive Board.