

Notes on the Fourth Meeting of Convenors and Friends in 2022

4 November 2022

1. The fourth meeting for 2022 between Convenors and Friends and the President of IFAD took place on Friday, 4 November. 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 Petter Nilsson and Mr Lucas Lindfors, from Sweden.
3. The provisional agenda was adopted without amendment.

Agenda item 2: Update on plans for the first 100 days of the new presidency

4. The President provided an update on the activities conducted since taking office on 1 October 2022, including attending corporate priority events such as the Africa Adaptation Summit in Rotterdam, the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) 2022 Summit in Kigali, and the UN General Assembly in New York. He also informed participants of the introductory meetings held with the IFAD workforce and the heads of the sister RBA agencies, the executive management retreat to discuss the Fund's direction in the coming years, and upcoming missions.
5. Convenors welcomed the President's participation in high-level events, which promoted visibility, and requested feedback on how IFAD was perceived by external stakeholders. During his missions, the President had noted that the Fund was held in high esteem among heads of state and multilateral development agencies. He further noted a willingness by multilateral development banks to partner with IFAD given its experience in reaching rural poor people. Considering the increasing number of challenges faced by IFAD's target groups, and the small size of the organization, Convenors enquired how and on which areas the President would focus the Fund's resources and efforts. The primary focus areas of the organization would continue to be food systems, smallholder farmers and financing, with a continued focus on its target populations including vulnerable groups such as women, youth and indigenous peoples. IFAD would also continue tackling multidimensional aspects such as climate, by mobilizing funding for and partnering with organizations working on this issue.

Agenda item 3: Executive Board matters

6. *Preparations for EB137*: The Secretary of IFAD ad interim provided an overview of events on the margins of EB137 and of the logistical arrangements in place for the upcoming session. Clarifications were requested on the number of representatives allowed in the Italian Conference Room, and Management noted that IFAD's medical services were assessing whether limitations on the number of participants in the room could be revised. Participants were also informed they would soon receive information on the upcoming annual informal meeting of the RBA governing bodies.
7. Management introduced the item on IFAD's 2023 results-based programme of work, regular and capital budgets, and medium-term strategic budget outlook for 2024-2025, and thanked Member State representatives for attending the informal

seminar held on this topic on Tuesday, 1 November. Management also introduced the Revised IFAD Policy on Targeting, which participants looked forward to reviewing in detail given its important role in the Fund's future direction.

8. Finally, Management introduced the item on the "Review of modalities of formal and informal sessions of the Executive Board and its subsidiary bodies", and provided an overview of the proposed changes to the working modalities of the Board and its subsidiary bodies. Participants welcomed the proposals and requested further information on the proposed introduction on a pilot basis of in-session "batch" approval of items identified in the Board agenda. This procedure would be applied to standard items for approval, namely those items that are currently included on Board agendas for approval through the vote-by-correspondence (VBC) procedure. The Board would be invited to approve the items as a "batch" at the beginning of the session. This would facilitate more timely post-approval processes, for example communicating approvals to recipient governments, updating financial systems, etc. As is the case for the current VBC procedure, these items could be placed on the Board agenda for consideration in session at the request of a member or alternate member of the Board.
9. *Executive Board strategic discussion topics for 2023*: Management informed participants that strategic discussion topics for the 2023 Board sessions were being explored, drawing on the proposals made by Convenors in February 2022, and considering the planned discussions in the context of the consultation on the thirteenth replenishment of IFAD's resources (IFAD13). Management welcomed the feedback received on topics of interest including, next steps in financial reforms, the vision for IFAD13 and IFAD14, leveraging IFAD's capacity to deliver the SDGs, strengthening capacity in non-lending activities, and IFAD's role in addressing the global food crisis.
10. *Eighth Executive Board retreat*: Further to a request made by representatives at the seventh Executive Board retreat, Management proposed to hold the eighth Executive Board retreat in the days preceding the Board session. The retreat would therefore be held in English only on Monday, 8 and Tuesday, 9 May 2023, and would be followed by the 138th session of the Executive Board from Wednesday, 10 to Friday, 12 May 2023. No objections were raised to this proposal, thus the Secretariat would commence preparations and would be in touch with Convenors in due course to discuss format and topics.

Agenda item 4: Preparations for the forty-sixth session of the Governing Council

11. The Secretary of IFAD ad interim provided an overview of the preparations for the forty-sixth session of the Governing Council (GC46). The session is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 14 and Wednesday, 15 February 2023, and discussions are ongoing with FAO to make the necessary arrangements for holding the session at their headquarters in Rome, Italy. The President noted that the choice of the venue, while not ideal in terms of visibility for the Fund, had been made keeping the budget austerity context in mind. Participants looked forward to an interactive session.

Agenda item 5: Other business

12. The Secretary of IFAD ad interim informed participants that tentative dates for Convenors' and Friends meetings in 2023 had been identified, taking into

consideration other planned meetings in the RBA calendar of meetings and events. The proposed dates were: 3 February, 18 April, 8 June, 1 September and 3 November. No objections were received on these dates, which would therefore be tentatively confirmed.

13. Management also raised some key issues related to IFAD13, namely the possibility of hosting one of the consultation sessions outside of IFAD headquarters, the plans to offer a hybrid meeting modality for all IFAD13 sessions while encouraging in-person participation, and the possibility of organizing informal consultations with civil society representatives including for the draft replenishment report. Convenors were also reminded of the need to receive the final list of consultation members from each of the Lists as soon as possible.
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 IFAD13 pre-consultation.