

**Notes on the First Meeting of Convenors and Friends in 2023
3 February 2023**

1. The first meeting of 2023 for the Convenors and Friends with the President of IFAD took place on Friday, 3 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 A, Ms Gloria Wiseman (Canada); and for List B, Ms Lamia Ben Redouane (Algeria) and Mr Ahmed Zentani (Libya).
3. The President announced that the arrears of Somalia outside Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) entitlements had been cleared with the generous support of Belgium, Italy, Sweden and Germany, hence enabling IFAD to re-engage with Somalia with core resources. He also noted that IFAD was working with the World Bank with regard to access to the Bank's Debt Relief Trust Fund (DRTF) with an eye to allocation of funds to Somalia.
4. The provisional agenda was adopted without amendment.

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

5. The Secretary, ad interim provided an update on the organization of the upcoming 46th Governing Council and related events. Convenors were reminded that this is the first in-person GC since 2020 and that it will take place on 14-15 February at FAO headquarters.
6. Prior to the formal opening of the session, the Governing Council would be advised of the new Governor for Peru who, in accordance with Rule 12.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council, would be proposed to take over as GC Chair. In the absence of any objection, the new Governor would be considered duly elected and take the Chair.
7. The following participants had confirmed keynote addresses at the inaugural ceremony: the President of Somalia (in-person); the Prime Minister of Barbados (video statement), the FAO Director General and the WFP Executive Director. Following the statement by the President of IFAD, the Bureau Chair will proceed with business items, followed by a Centre stage event with the President of Somalia and the President of IFAD.
8. The Launch of IFAD13 and High-level Dialogue with Governors would take place on Day 1. The former would include calls for action by key stakeholders and partners as well as a ministerial segment, while the High-level Dialogue with Governors would focus on the Governing Council Theme 'Accelerating action for food security.'
9. Four interactive sessions were foreseen - two on each day:
 - Day 1
 - Indigenous Peoples' climate leadership
 - Making private sector climate adaptation finance work for small-scale producers.
 - Day 2
 - Youth and agriculture

- Challenges and opportunities in the water-food-energy nexus.

Detailed Concept Notes were available on the Member States Interactive Platform.

10. The Special Adviser on Africa to the United Nations Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General, Ms Cristina Duarte would participate as the high-level speaker for the IFADTalk on day 2.
11. Convenors welcomed the update and requested information regarding participants and time limits for interventions from the floor. The Office of the Secretary was available to address any such queries in respect of disclosure policies. It was noted that interventions were limited to 3 minutes.
12. Noting the change in Governor which impacted the Chair of the Governing Council Bureau, the Secretariat assured Convenors that there had been outreach with the Peruvian authorities who had confirmed the new Governor (Minister for Economy and Finance of Peru) wished to continue in the role as Bureau Chair. It was recalled that the Bureau consisted of a Chair and Vice-Chair and as such, business continuity was safeguarded in the event that the new Governor was not in a position to take over the role of Bureau Chair.
13. In response to the call for greater diversity in the choice of panellists, Management assured Convenors that every effort was being made to have a diverse group of panellists, taking into consideration both geographic representation and gender balance.

Agenda item 3: Update on the Consultation on the Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources (IFAD13)

14. The Associate Vice-President, External Relations and Governance Department, Ms Satu Santala, provided an overview on preparations for the upcoming Consultation on the Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources (IFAD13). She noted that the First Session of IFAD13 would be held on 16-17 February and that all documents were available on the IFAD Member States Platform. Convenors were encouraged to communicate the list countries who would be included in the composition of the consultation as soon as possible.
15. The main objective for the first session was to have a discussion on the status of delivery of IFAD12 and lessons learned, as well as to achieve consensus on the broad priorities for IFAD13, with an eye to setting a foundation for more detailed discussions in June.
16. An IFAD13 technical meeting would be organized on 5 April to share initial ideas on the possible IFAD13 financial scenarios, and seek members’ feedback, possibly discussing the proposed Climate Additional Contributions outlined in the IFAD13 Directions paper.
17. Convenors’ input was also sought on the proposals that had been floated regarding:
 - (i) the possibility for silent observers from Member States not on the IFAD13 composition and 3 representatives of Indigenous Peoples, Farmers’ Organizations and Youth to follow proceedings of IFAD13 meetings. The European Commission was also raised as an important financing partner to be considered as a silent observer; and

- (ii) Hosting Consultation sessions outside of Rome. Discussions had been held with two Member States, one List B and one List A, who had expressed interest in hosting the 3rd and 4th sessions of the IFAD13 replenishment consultations. This could present an opportunity to attract greater political and financial support for IFAD13. Regarding costs, it was noted that IFAD would follow the common practice in other IFI replenishments and would ensure there are no additional unforeseen costs for IFAD.
18. Convenors welcomed the update on IFAD 13 and the issues raised. Whereas additional feedback was expected from List members, with regard to meetings outside Rome, Convenors noted the importance of clarity on costs and the potential impact on the mobilization of resources. It was also noted that both options could be considered if a suitable package is offered that would allow members to attend. The Replenishment meeting which had been held in Doha in 2005 was recalled as a very positive and fruitful meeting, which had fostered consensus-building. Concerns were raised regarding silent observers, with some members emphasizing IFAD's nature as a Member States-based organization. It was recommended that IFAD limit the number of silent observers, and that efforts be made to avoid conflicts of interest and the raising of civil society groups' expectations, notably given the IFAD13 discussions on financial and climate issues.

Agenda item 4: Governance highlights

a. Lessons from 2022

19. The Associate Vice-President, Programme Management, Mr Donal Brown, provided an update on (i) the 2022 Portfolio performance and (ii) the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility and the Crisis Response Initiative.
20. *The 2022 Portfolio performance.* The update provided Convenors and Friends with an overview on the performance of IFAD's country programme portfolio in 2022 (as of December 2022, the first year of IFAD12), including its performance against IFAD12 Results Management Framework (RMF) commitments.
21. 2022 was a crucial year after two years of coronavirus-related restrictions, and challenges on the ground resulting from initial impact on the portfolio of the Ukraine war and also the downturn in the global economy.
22. As seen in IFAD's reporting against its strategic objectives in the IFAD12 Results Management Framework, IFAD had exceeded its IFAD11 targets on economic mobility, production, market access, and resilience with results currently above IFAD12 targets. IFAD remains on track for thematic areas of performance at project completion, especially for Effectiveness, Gender Equality, Adaptation to Climate Change, and Environment and Natural Resources Management (ENRM).
23. The challenges highlighted included nutrition, climate financing, sustainability, and scaling up. Most are recurring issues with remedial actions in progress, but all require continuous monitoring.
24. The Rural Poor Stimulus Facility (RPSF) completed last year and the ongoing aggregation of results and impacts showed that it provided much needed support to rural poor people and their livelihoods, with many projects surpassing outreach targets, which aimed at reaching at least 20 million people. It also provided useful lessons which would prove useful in identifying ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness in responding to crises. Mr. Brown noted that both RPSF and CRI

predominantly implement by anchoring in ongoing IFAD projects, or through partners with strong local contextual knowledge (NGOs, FOs, etc.). Initial results show encouraging evidence that the RPSF had a positive impact on countering the adverse effects of COVID-19 on livelihoods and food security.

25. *The Crisis Response Initiative (CRI)*, launched in May 2022, channels grant resources to protect productive livelihoods from the impacts of the current crisis on agricultural inputs, food and fuel markets and prices. The initiative's activities fall under four core pillars: (i) Ensuring rural communities' access to necessary to inputs; (ii) Investing in small-scale infrastructure; (iii) Supporting access to finance; and (iv) Facilitating access to markets. The CRI targets 22 of the most affected and poorest countries, depending upon the funding available (so far project proposals have been designed and funded for: Somalia, Yemen, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Haiti, Madagascar and Burundi). In late summer 2022, IFAD had received a total of EUR 11 million. In late fall 2022, donors had provided an additional EUR 30 million and US\$10 million. IFAD is committed to report annually and regularly to the EB on the results of the CRI.
26. Convenors welcomed the update and sought clarification on the extent to which IFAD12 had been affected by currency exchange rate fluctuations. Management emphasized that IFAD was following currency movements very carefully and looking at impacts of exchange rates on programming. It was emphasized that all of the Fund's financing agreements included some contingency to offset potential fluctuations. Efforts had also been made to reach out to the major hedging agencies. This issue would be addressed in more detail at the Technical meeting on financial scenarios on 5 April.

b. Looking towards 2023

27. The Secretary ad interim updated Convenors on upcoming governance events. A calendar of upcoming formal and informal governing body meetings for the current year was shared to facilitate forward planning. Convenors were reminded that the Eighth Executive Board retreat would be held on 8-9 May and would be facilitated by Mr Bob Wright, who had facilitated previous Board retreats at IFAD. The 138th session of the Executive Board would take place after the retreat, from 10 to 12 May. Among the items to be considered at the May Board were, the revised targeting policy, on which an informal seminar would take place on Tuesday, 21 March; the corporate-level evaluation of IFAD's decentralization experience; an update to the Integrated Borrowing Framework; a review of IFAD's ordinary loan pricing; and the Review of Modalities of formal and informal sessions of the Executive Board and subsidiary bodies, on which an informal seminar would also be held on 21 March.

Agenda item 5: Other business

28. Members noted that the Vice-President would soon conclude his mandate at IFAD and expressed their appreciation for his contribution to the Fund. Convenors encouraged an open, transparent process for the appointment of a new Vice-President. The President stated that terms of reference would be issued in due course and that an external firm would be engaged in the process to ensure a good cohort of candidates. A decision would likely be taken in 2-3 months' time. The President also stated his expectation for the role to be less representational and

more executive in approach and that gender and geographical considerations would be taken into consideration in the selection.

29. The President thanked the outgoing List A Convenor, Ms Bjørg Skotnes of Norway, and welcomed Mr Ronald Meyer of Germany to the role. He thanked participants for attending and looked forward to their participation in the upcoming Governing Council and IFAD13 consultation.