

Notes on the Second Meeting of Convenors and Friends in 2023
18 April 2023

1. The second meeting of 2023 for the Convenors and Friends with the President of IFAD took place on Tuesday, 18 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 Mr Kuraya Yoshihiro of Japan in his first meeting as List A Co-Convenor. There was one Friend in attendance for List B, Ms Lamia Ben Redouane (Algeria).
3. The provisional agenda was adopted as presented.

Agenda item 3: 138th session of the Executive Board

4. The President introduced the item and noted that while three EB 138 agenda items had been identified for discussion, Management was ready to respond to any queries or comments related to other agenda items.
5. *Strategic discussion with the President of IFAD – Addressing fragility through a focus on rural livelihoods: a reflection on IFAD’s present and future role:* Management introduced the topic of the forthcoming strategic discussion with the President, seeking participants’ early feedback. Convenors welcomed the choice of the topic, and looked forward to the discussion at EB 138. Participants reiterated the importance of having a common understanding of the definition of the term ‘fragility’.
6. *Corporate-level evaluation (CLE) of IFAD’s decentralization experience:* further to an introduction by Management, participants reiterated their support for the continued decentralization of the organization, highlighted its importance in the context of the Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources (IFAD13), and recognized the independence of the report. It was noted that the discussion at the 120th session of the Evaluation Committee had focused on the six recommendations contained in the report, and that it had been proposed that the Board be updated regularly on this topic, through an oral update at the September Board session, and an annual report to the December Board session. Participants looked forward to the Board discussion.
7. *Overview of EB 139 and EB 140:* Management presented this new document for information, which provided an overview of the forthcoming two Board sessions, in this case the 139th and 140th sessions. It was noted that its purpose was to facilitate forward planning, and an inclusive and iterative feedback process, especially with regards to new and revised policies and strategies. Convenors appreciated the document, and in particular the topic of the strategic discussion for the September Board session. It was noted that a briefing on IFAD’s engagement in and progress towards the food systems transformation agenda would be welcome. Management informed participants that this was being planned for Friday, 12 May, and that invitations would be posted in the coming days. This would precede the Food Systems Summit Stocktaking Moment convened by the Secretary-General, taking place from 24 to 26 July in Rome, hosted by the Government of Italy.

Agenda item 2: Eighth retreat of the Executive Board

8. The Secretary of IFAD ad interim provided an update on the preparations for the eighth Executive Board retreat, which would take place on Monday, 8 and Tuesday, 9 May at Villa Tuscolana (<https://www.villatuscolana.com/>). Management noted that the retreat programme was being finalized by the retreat facilitator, in consultation with the Convenors, and would be shared with Board members as soon as available. Convenors were also updated on the status of registrations for the retreat, and were requested to encourage members of their Lists who had not already done so, to respond promptly to allow for final information to be provided to the venue on rooming and hospitality requirements. At the request of some Board representatives, participation on a self-paying basis was available, and all representatives would be informed accordingly.
9. Convenors welcomed the update. Considering there was some overlap between the themes which were discussed at the seventh Executive Board retreat, and those proposed for the upcoming retreat, Convenors highlighted the importance of avoiding duplication. Management noted that the retreat facilitator had been briefed on previous retreats and relevant information had been provided to him to ensure that he was well equipped to steer the Board's discussions at the retreat.

Agenda item 4: Update on the Consultation on the Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD13)

10. The Associate Vice-President, External Relations and Governance Department, Ms Satu Santala, provided an update on the informal technical meeting held on 5 April, and the preparations for the upcoming second session in June. Management was following up with interested Member States on the IFAD13 composition to further discuss the details of the Additional Climate Contributions in advance of the June session, and Convenors were invited to inform Management of countries interested in being part of the discussions. Participants were also informed that IFAD had already received four official pledges for IFAD13, from the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Kingdom of Cambodia, Niger, and the Republic of South Sudan.
11. Convenors welcomed the update and requested information on the expected release date of the MOPAN assessment findings, and how these would feed into the IFAD13 process. Management noted that discussions were ongoing to identify the best course of action, and Convenors would be informed in due course.

Agenda item 5: C&F meeting modalities

12. The Secretary ad interim recalled the purpose of the Convenors and Friends' meetings, namely to create the opportunity for strategic dialogue between Convenors and Management, while facilitating a two-way exchange of information. Noting the recent changes in the meeting modality as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Secretary ad interim presented a proposal for the Convenors' consideration. These meetings could be organized following a two-phased approach, which would allow Convenors to convey List feedback and issues or concerns to Management at the meeting with the President:
 - Convenors would first have an informal virtual meeting with the Secretariat and relevant senior managers to discuss the agenda of upcoming governing body meetings, where specific topics or issues requiring discussion would be highlighted. These meetings would take place about 3 weeks before the

governing body meeting in question, and could be followed by internal List meetings;

- The meeting with the President could then be held as a lunch or breakfast meeting, when possible, the week before the Board session or relevant governing body meeting. Convenors could use this meeting to convey feedback from their Lists.
13. Convenors welcomed the proposal, and congratulated Management for its forward-looking approach in terms of engagement with IFAD's Members. Participants recalled the already high number of meetings on the RBA calendar, but this new approach was expected to increase the efficiency of these meetings. Convenors were encouraged to provide any additional feedback to the Secretariat in writing, and would be informed of the new dates for the forthcoming formal and informal Convenors and Friends meetings.

Agenda item 6: Other business

14. Convenors requested an update on the status of the recruitment of two senior management roles, namely the Vice-President and the Associate Vice-President of the Financial Operations Department (FOD) and Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The President informed participants that the recruitment of the new Vice-President was still ongoing and was expected to be completed towards the end of May or early June, and that the new AVP-FOD and CFO, Mr Hernan Danery Alvarado, had been appointed as of Monday, 17 April. An announcement regarding the AVP-FOD and CFO would be posted on the Member States Interactive Platform in the coming days. It was noted that such information should be shared promptly with representatives.
15. No other business was raised and the meeting was adjourned.
16. The President thanked participants for attending and looked forward to their participation in the upcoming Executive Board retreat and 138th session.