

**Notes on the First Meeting of Convenors and Friends in 2024**  
**30 January 2024**

1. The first meeting of 2024 for the Convenors and Friends with the President of IFAD took place as a breakfast meeting on Tuesday, 30 January, at IFAD Headquarters.

**Agenda item 1: Opening remarks by the President and adoption of the agenda**

2. The President opened the meeting and welcomed participants. Four Friends were in attendance: for List A, Mr Jan Bade (Netherlands); for List B, Ms Erma Rheindrayani and Mr Purna Cita Nugraha (Indonesia) and Dr Yaya Olaniran (Nigeria). The Convenor of sub-List C1, Mr Médi MOUNGUI of Cameroon, advised that he would not be able to attend the meeting as he was out of the country.
3. The President provided an update on his recent travels, including his participation in the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos and his visit to Algeria.
4. The provisional agenda was adopted with the addition of an item under other business, namely an update on the institutional changes envisaged within IFAD in the coming months.

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

5. The Secretary provided an update on the preparations for the forty-seventh session of the Governing Council, which would be held at IFAD headquarters on 14-15 February, and informed that the session would be preceded by the Farmers Forum whose closing session would be open to all Member States representatives. A number of business items would be considered by the Council, including the election of the new Governing Council Bureau and the Executive Board members and alternate members for the 2024-2026 term of office, the two applications for non-original membership from the Republics of Lithuania and Serbia, the Report of the Governing Council Bureau on the review of the process leading to the appointment of the President and the Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD13), which would have a dedicated segment in the afternoon of Wednesday, 14 February. Information was also provided on the planned interactive sessions and side events. The schedule for the session would be updated regularly and made available on the Member States Interactive Platform.
6. At the request of representatives, Management provided further details on the session's desired outcomes. This year's session would have a future focus, reflecting on IFAD's future trajectory and the impact of innovation. Governors would be invited to share their insights and reflections, particularly during the Governors' roundtable which aimed to generate thinking and debate in view of the development of IFAD's new Strategic Framework 2025-2031. In response to a request from participants, Management provided an update on IFAD's operations in fragile contexts and the impact of conflicts, with a particular focus on Yemen and Palestine. Management would provide additional details soonest.
7. The President provided an update on the Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD Resources and the status of pledges.

### **Agenda item 3: Executive Board matters**

8. The Secretary provided an overview of the lessons learned on past Executive Board strategic discussions, highlighting that they contributed to inform and elaborate IFAD's approaches in some areas and to prioritize certain items and were important to gather Members' insights and concerns. The Secretary also expressed appreciation for the proposals made by Convenors at the December 2023 meeting and through the EB140 feedback survey. Participants were informed of the selected topics for the next two Executive Board sessions, namely "Innovating to maximize development impact: how innovation enhances IFAD's delivery effectiveness" for the 141<sup>st</sup> session and "IFAD's financing for 2030 and beyond" for the 142<sup>nd</sup> session. Representatives expressed interest in these topics and put forth additional proposals for Management's consideration, including IFAD's engagement with the private sector, IFAD's mainstreaming themes, nature-based solutions and IFAD's engagement in specific fragile contexts. The importance of involving the Board in the development of the climate, environment and biodiversity strategy was also noted, either through a strategic discussion or other form of engagement.
9. The Secretary provided an update on the preparations for the 2024 Annual informal meeting of the Executive Board, which would take place on Monday, 22 and Tuesday, 23 April, and informed participants that meetings between the facilitator and the Convenors would be organized after the Governing Council session to develop the programme.
10. The Secretary provided an overview of the main items envisaged for the 141<sup>st</sup> session of the Executive Board in April. Representatives were informed that, considering the limited number of items, the session could be concluded in one day. Therefore, while taking note of the representatives' request to have a break between the Annual informal meeting and the Executive Board session, it was agreed to hold the session the whole day on Wednesday, 24 April, thus freeing up 25 April which is a public holiday in Italy.
11. On the appointment of members to the subsidiary bodies of the Executive Board, Convenors were invited to communicate the nominations for each List by Wednesday, 20 March.
12. Regarding the statement of the IFAD Staff Association (ISA), Management recalled the modus operandi followed in the last two years. As expressed at the C&F meeting in June 2023, Convenors reiterated the importance of ensuring clarity of roles between the Board and Management, and to manage expectations. The ISA representative would join the Board session only to read the statement. Efforts would be made to ensure posting of the statement ahead of the session for the Board's information and, after delivery in session, representatives would have the possibility to express their appreciation to staff. If the need arose to go into greater detail, a closed session could be held.

### **Agenda item 4: Other business**

13. With regard to upcoming institutional changes, the President underscored that his aim was to prepare the institution for the future and that the Fund's core focus would be its operations. No fundamental changes were envisaged but rather a consolidation of functions, and a more defined division of labour between the President and the Vice-President, with the latter being more focused on operations. Such changes would be announced in March and implemented by September.

14. In closing, the President thanked participants for attending and looked forward to their participation in the upcoming forty-seventh session of the Governing Council.