

## **Notes on the Second Meeting of Convenors and Friends in 2026 2 April 2026**

1. The second meeting of 2026 of the Convenors and Friends with the President of IFAD took place on Thursday, 2 April, at IFAD Headquarters. All Convenors were present. Three Friends attended: for List A, Ms Eleni Papasolomontos (Cyprus); for sub-List C1, Mr Gerson Dos Santos (Angola); and for sub-List C2, Dr Jujavarapu Balaji (India). The Secretary welcomed Mr François Gautier (France) as the new List A Convenor, and Ms Susann Nilsson (Sweden) as the new List A Co-Convenor.

### **Agenda item 1: Opening and Adoption of the Agenda**

2. The President welcomed Convenors and noted the complex global context. He announced that Spain has formally supported his candidacy for re-election as President of IFAD at the Governing Council in 2027, reaffirming his commitment to a second term and to continuing institutional transformation. He expressed appreciation to India and Germany for their joint RBA collaboration paper, highlighting its relevance for upcoming discussions. Turning to operations, he emphasized that global shocks—particularly the evolving situation in the Middle East—were rapidly impacting local systems through rising energy, fertilizer, and food costs, with significant spillover risks for vulnerable, import-dependent countries, especially in Africa and South-East Asia. He noted emerging operational challenges, including not only increased costs but also reduced remittances, and outlined IFAD’s response through flexible financing tools, adaptive project management, and coordination with international partners, while underscoring that the overall impact remained uncertain and dependent on the duration of the crisis.
3. The Vice-President added that the crisis was creating operational pressures across IFAD’s portfolio, with rising input and logistics costs, procurement constraints and implementation delays affecting project delivery, alongside increasing fiscal strain on governments that may influence counterpart funding and pipeline decisions. IFAD is actively monitoring these risks across regions and scenarios, while adapting supervision modalities and project management approaches, including remote and hybrid implementation where needed. She emphasized that IFAD is leveraging its existing operational flexibility—through faster disbursements, simplified procurement, contingency mechanisms and streamlined restructuring—to maintain project momentum and mitigate disruptions, while strengthening coordination with the Rome-based agencies (RBAs), the wider UN system and the MDBs.
4. The President provided an update on IFAD14, noting strong and steady progress built on the solid implementation of IFAD13, with strategic directions around markets, rural employment and resilience, supported by the enablers of private sector development and innovation. He emphasized that these priorities both continue and sharpen IFAD’s focus, reflecting evidence on where the greatest impact for rural communities can be achieved, and highlighted that IFAD has evolved into a stronger, more decentralized institution with expanded regional presence and a significantly matured private sector offer across both sovereign and non-sovereign operations. He also underscored the strength of IFAD’s partnership model, which has mobilized high levels of co-financing (with a 1:2.34 US\$ ratio), and encouraged Member States to engage in the upcoming discussions on the IFAD14 financial framework, to help shape a fit-for-purpose replenishment that delivers effectively for rural populations.

5. The President then updated participants on his recent engagements, highlighting a series of high-level events that have strengthened IFAD's strategic positioning and outreach for IFAD14. He noted his participation in the World Governments Summit in Dubai, where he advanced partnerships in the Gulf, including a co-financing agreement with the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, and his attendance at the Munich Security Conference, where he underscored the link between food systems and global security. He also referenced his official visit to Norway, where he engaged senior leadership to reinforce IFAD's role as a high-impact development partner.
6. Looking ahead, he emphasized that his forthcoming engagements—including the World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington D.C., the Finance in Common and G7 Development Ministerial in Paris, the Africa Forward Summit in Nairobi, UN coordination meetings in Tokyo, and bilateral visits to Ireland and the United Kingdom—will be used strategically to deepen partnerships, mobilize support, and sustain momentum for IFAD14.
7. Convenors highlighted concerns regarding the medium-term impact of the crisis, particularly the delayed effects of fertilizer shortages on future agricultural production, noting the concentration of supply in the Gulf and the potential scale of impact on vulnerable populations, as reflected in partner data, including from FAO and WFP. They emphasized the importance of strong coordination among the Rome-based agencies, the wider UN system and MDBs to ensure a coherent and collective response, avoid duplication of efforts, and build on existing joint mechanisms such as the FAO-IFAD co-led food security working group. In response, Management confirmed that IFAD was closely aligned with partners and actively contributing to coordinated analytical and operational efforts, drawing on shared data and joint platforms.
8. Convenors also raised concerns regarding staff safety and morale in affected areas; Management reassured that only a limited number of staff are directly impacted, and that a dedicated task force, coordinated with security services based in Cairo, is closely monitoring the situation, maintaining regular contact with staff, and implementing appropriate measures, including strengthened field-level security capacity, to ensure their safety and well-being.

## **Agenda item 2: Updates from Management**

### **Update on the Consultation on the Fourteenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD14)**

9. The AVP ERD provided an update on the IFAD14 consultation process, with early pledging already signalling strong political engagement. She highlighted broad Member State endorsement of the strategic directions and emphasized that discussions to date had been constructive and would continue to be refined through ongoing consultations.
10. Looking ahead, she outlined key milestones, including the informal seminar on IFAD's financial framework and the first formal consultation session in May, where members would review core documents such as the IFAD13 Mid-Term Review, the Corporate-Level Evaluation on IFAD's performance under IFAD11 and IFAD12, and the IFAD14 Zero Draft Report, which will set out initial financial scenarios and be supported by a paper outlining the proposed principles-based approach to commitments that will focus discussions on new or timebound priorities. The AVP

ERD also noted that the IFAD14 External Chairperson could be available around the time of the EB AIM and EB to speak with members, including those coming from capitals.

### **Agenda item 3: Governance matters**

11. The Secretary briefed Convenors on preparations for upcoming governing body meetings. The 147<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Board would take place on 22 April, with a concise and focused agenda, the documentation for which had been issued in line with established procedures; key items include a strategic discussion on private sector engagement, the annual statement by the IFAD Staff Association, evaluation-related discussions—including the corporate-level evaluation of IFAD11 and IFAD12, and an accelerated timeline for the external peer review of the evaluation function and the CSPE and COSOP for Mexico —and decision items on the Partial Credit Guarantee Pilot Framework and streamlined procedures for memorandums of understanding. Preparations for the 2026 Annual Informal Meeting (AIM), to be held on 20–21 April in Frascati, were also outlined, emphasizing its role as an informal, two-day forum—first for Board-only exchanges and then for dialogue with Management and the President—aimed at fostering open discussion, strengthening relationships, and reflecting on IFAD’s strategic direction, in preparation for 2030.
12. A virtual Executive Board consultation covering operational items would be held on 8 April, and the 9<sup>th</sup> Informal Joint Meeting of the Rome-Based Agencies Governing Bodies was scheduled for the afternoon of 27 April. The latter would focus on inter-agency collaboration on the UN80 reform and school meals. The Secretary encouraged early feedback from Convenors to support effective preparation and smooth conduct of these governance engagements.
13. Convenors raised questions regarding the scope and themes of the AIM, stressing the importance of focusing discussions on priority issues while maintaining clarity between AIM, Executive Board and IFAD14 deliberations; the Secretary responded that a draft agenda would be shared for feedback, guided by common themes emerging from consultations while allowing flexibility for additional informal exchanges. Regarding the 147<sup>th</sup> Executive Board session, Convenors reiterated that the Staff Association intervention should remain a formal statement, with optional expressions of appreciation by Member States but no discussion between ISA and Board members. Management confirmed that this approach would continue.

### **Agenda item 4: Other Business and Closing**

14. Convenors welcomed early preparations for IFAD’s fiftieth Governing Council (GC50), emphasizing that it should serve as a milestone to showcase concrete achievements and impact, with a future focus and capitalizing on the opportunity to enhance IFAD’s visibility—particularly among policymakers—while remaining consistent with its mandate as a development finance institution. Convenors encouraged a broader, year-long approach, including activities at country level, and highlighted the importance of ambition, inclusiveness and coherence in the anniversary programme. Management confirmed that preparations are underway, including work on themes, outreach, target audiences and potential events, and welcomed further input from Convenors.