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Progress Report on the IFAD Partnership Framework

Addendum

Management's response to Member States' comments

Executive Board — 135th Session
Rome, 25-27 April 2022

For: Information

Comments from Ireland	Management response
<p>Ireland welcomes the frank, clear and concise report on progress on the partnership framework. We welcome the serious approach to embedding partnerships into COSOPs and to being more intentional about the selection and prioritisation of partnerships.</p> <p>We strongly support the conclusion in paragraph 16 that efforts are needed to better prioritize and plan strategically for engagement in global and regional policy forums and expand and deepen IFAD's engagement with the private sector.</p>	<p>Thank you for the positive feedback.</p> <p>IFAD fully agrees with Ireland's comments on the importance of prioritizing and planning strategically for engagement in policy forums at all levels.</p> <p>As outlined in the progress report, during IFAD12, IFAD will continue building strategic partnerships to deliver increased impact while ensuring better prioritization and monitoring of partnership performance.</p>
<p>We are concerned that IFAD's policy engagement is the weakest of all the areas tracked for country programmes and we strongly agree that IFAD can achieve more by better prioritising its global engagement, setting clear and measurable objectives and leveraging leadership opportunities.</p>	<p>Indeed, IFAD is already taking steps to improve the effectiveness of its policy engagement at both the country programme and the global levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the country level. Under IFAD12, IFAD has committed to strengthening its country-level policy engagement (CLPE) toolbox, to integrate indicators for policy engagement impact into COSOPs, and to improve the share of country programmes rated 4 and above for CLPE to 90 per cent. Two cross-departmental ad hoc working groups were established in the first quarter of 2022 to work on the two monitorable actions (MAs) in the IFAD12 Results Management Framework related to CLPE (MA 29 and MA 30). COSOP guidelines and templates are being revised to integrate the relevant indicators. Work is also ongoing on the compilation of practical "how to" tools for key steps in the CLPE process, and to organize internal sensitization events and develop e-learning modules. Moreover, in 2020, IFAD's Quality Assurance Group undertook an assessment of the quality at entry of project designs with regard to CLPE, which helped to identify key aspects that need to be considered in future project designs and implementation. • At the global level, IFAD reinforced its internal processes in 2022 for planning and prioritizing its policy engagement, with a focus on ensuring stronger positioning in selected relevant global forums. The thematic priorities for IFAD's global policy engagement are derived from the IFAD12 commitments: climate and the

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	<p>environment; finance for development; social inclusion; innovation and digitalization; and fragility and/or crisis response. IFAD seeks to achieve clear intended policy outcomes related to these themes (e.g. for financial commitments on climate adaptation and biodiversity to be confirmed or increased at global forums; for small-scale producers, indigenous peoples and poor rural people to be duly recognized and included in initiatives tracking and devising responses to international crises). Having these priority outcomes in mind helps shape decisions on the amount of resources to allocate for a given global event or policy process. It also helps form connections across different processes and enable resources to be used more efficiently, as IFAD can develop one common narrative around the identified themes, and use that to prioritize the preparation of knowledge products and speeches.</p> <p>Examples of IFAD’s engagement in prioritized forums in 2022 so far include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Monetary Fund (IMF) - World Bank Spring Meetings. The IFAD President participated in a United States Treasury-hosted event, featuring Janet Yellen, Secretary of the Treasury; the Finance Chairs of the G20 and G7; the heads of the IMF, World Bank and IFAD; and lead technical experts to discuss the urgent response to the ongoing food security crisis and to mobilize the international financial institutions to accelerate and expand their response to assist impacted countries. IFAD was also featured strongly in an event on “Accelerating Action for Food Security and Resilience”. This showcased leadership in the food finance agenda and crisis response. • An active participation in the G20. IFAD contributes to various platforms of the G20, cutting across the two major tracks, respectively under the ministers for finance and central bank governors and under G20 Leaders’ sherpas. IFAD has been invited by the Indonesian Presidency to actively support the activities of several working groups, including the agriculture, development, environment and climate, and finance tracks. It is contributing to the finalization of concept notes and involved in policy discussions. These will feed into decisions at the G20 Leaders’ Summit. • COP15 and COP27. Arrangements are already in place for IFAD to have a strong, visible role at the COP meetings this year, building on the successful experience of COP26. Next week, an IFAD delegation will travel to attend COP15. Following the Head of States Summit, IFAD will host a pavilion at COP15, where several side events will take place, including on the Great Green Wall and the Land Degradation

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	<p>Neutrality Transformative Project of Caribbean Small Island Developing States. With regard to COP27, IFAD is already actively engaging with the Egyptian COP Presidency and the United Nations Country Team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and preparations for the 2023 global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples Forum at IFAD. IFAD has a long-standing active role in the UNPFII. This year, IFAD will address the forum plenary sessions on relevant themes and organize side events. The events will focus, respectively, on: (1) IFAD’s experience in operationalizing the principle of free, prior and informed consent; (2) the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility; and (3) a new digital toolbox on sustainable and resilient indigenous peoples’ food systems for improved nutrition.
<p>However, on all of these issues we would like to get a better sense of IFAD’s assessment on the adequacy of its resources. Partnerships take time, are labour-intensive and require staff and the organisation to be flexible and responsive. This raises the question of whether the ambitions of the partnership framework are realistic in the face of the limits on the Regular Budget.</p>	<p>IFAD fully agrees that resource limitations need to be taken into account and are a constraint when selecting and prioritizing partnerships or global processes for IFAD to engage in.</p> <p>As a result, IFAD aims to increase the impact of its engagement and partnerships, mainly through better planning and more prioritized action, without spending additional resources. This is the objective of the partnership framework, i.e. to improve the prioritization, delivery and monitoring of the Fund’s partnerships.</p> <p>Moving forward, as most items in the framework’s action plan have been completed, and IFAD has been shown to perform well in relation to the objectives and outcomes laid out in the framework, IFAD’s focus will be on prioritization. As mentioned in the report, IFAD will look to improve monitoring and reporting on partnership performance and to deepen its engagement with the private sector, including through skills development programmes and better internal coordination, and building on existing tools. The latter activities will not necessarily require additional resources, and can help with better prioritization in the medium to long term.</p> <p>However, budget constraints do limit the amount of time and resources that can be dedicated to managing existing partnerships, or to developing new ones. With additional resources, IFAD could do more to pursue partnerships at all levels, and increase its visibility.</p>

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<p>The report notes that there is not much rigour in how partnerships are assessed in internal procedures and outlines the need for more rigour in scoring and analysing data and for improved monitoring. While we applaud the emphasis on rigour and evidence we would sound a note of caution. Partnerships can be opportunistic and idiosyncratic, sometimes relying on personal chemistry and personal relationships. Clarity on objectives and outcomes is of course valuable, but there will be limits on what can be captured in formal systems.</p>	<p>IFAD fully agrees with Ireland’s statement. IFAD establishes partnerships with a large diversity of organizations in a wide range of contexts, and with varying levels of formality. The partnership framework and associated tools are meant to support the work of IFAD staff in managing partnerships, while recognizing that, in many cases, partnerships will evolve naturally – not following formal steps or established goals.</p>
<p>4 Finally, we note the comment (para 12i) that while IFAD is perceived as helpful, it is not seen as influential in the policy despite evidence of actual impact on policy in many contexts. In terms of visibility, IFAD is, in our view, punching below its weight. This has knock on effects on its funding as well as influence. This is serious a) because IFAD has a lot of offer which is not being utilised by the development community more widely and b) because of IFAD’s particular role in ensuring “that policy issues affecting vulnerable rural populations are identified and included in policy decisions at different levels, with particular focus on increasing financing to support food systems”.</p>	<p>IFAD fully agrees on the importance of raising its visibility and influence in the global arena.</p> <p>To this end, the steps mentioned above aim to enhance IFAD’s ability to engage globally, leveraging leadership opportunities around certain themes and issues.</p> <p>Moreover, IFAD’s engagement at the global level is supported by a comprehensive strategic communications approach, which was reviewed by the Executive Board in December 2021. This includes a number of action areas to increase its visibility in the coming years (e.g. an in-depth redesign and restructuring of ifad.org; increased engagement with target media outlets; campaigns around key events linked to the priority global events; partnerships with expert advocacy institutions such as Global Citizen and Goodwill Ambassadors to raise awareness on Sustainable Development Goal 2 and related issues).</p>