
IFAD Strategy on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Update

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Useful references: IFAD Strategy on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion ([EB 2021/134/R.9](#)); and IFAD Strategy on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Annual Report ([EB 2022/135/R.21](#)).

Action: The Executive Board is invited to review the update on the IFAD Strategy on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

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IFAD Strategy on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Update

I. Background

1. The wide-ranging background of staff is IFAD's biggest asset. However, not all staff experience the workplace in the same way, which can limit both their ability to grow and IFAD's ability to harness their creative potential.
2. The onset of COVID-19 presented a unique opportunity to rejuvenate IFAD's organizational culture and structure. Instituting a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) framework¹ in 2021 positioned IFAD to keep pace with the diverse needs of its workforce and new ways of working.
3. The IFAD Strategy on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI Strategy), approved in December 2021,² is being implemented in three phases. Management presented the first annual report and update³ to the Executive Board in April 2022, covering phase I (2021) and, in part, phase II (2022) of the implementation plan. Substantial progress has been made on phase II. The following paragraphs describe achievements and activities since the strategy's approval and presents the data sets that will guide the implementation of the strategy in the coming years.

II. Progress update

A. Phase II (2022)

4. Phase II envisaged the following action items: (i) approval of DEI advocates; (ii) revision of the key performance indicator (KPI) scorecard and identification of desired outcomes by the DEI working group (WG); (iii) presentation of the DEI annual report and update to the Executive Board; (iv) establishment of a mechanism by the DEI WG for coordination and knowledge exchange across the Fund; (v) development of a Management compact; (vi) update of Global Staff Survey (GSS) questions; and (vii) roll-out of mandatory awareness training in 2023. The implementation plan served as a guide and integrated additional activities related to other policies and frameworks.

B. DEI advocates

5. A total of 14 DEI advocates with extensive representation in terms of role, grade, age, nationality and location have been nominated. The Human Resources Division and the Ethics Office (ETH) have been conducting periodic awareness-raising sessions for all DEI advocates since mid-2022.
6. The workplan for the DEI advocates focused on two areas: awareness-raising and sensitization, and internal and external coordination and collaboration. The DEI advocates have been advised on the various means (e.g. training and awareness-raising activities, articles, blogs, podcasts and videos) through which they can contribute to knowledge-sharing both internally and externally through United Nations Country Teams, United Nations entities, international financial institutions (IFIs), etc. During 2022, DEI sessions were also conducted at divisional meetings and staff retreats.

C. Benchmarking with United Nations entities and IFIs

7. Recognizing that DEI is key in transforming the United Nations own workforce and workplace, at its session in 2022, the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) established a multidisciplinary WG of DEI focal points composed of diversity experts and led by the Human Resources Network. The WG is focused on delivering (i) a glossary, (ii) principles and vision for DEI, and (iii) good practices for

¹ EB 2021/132/R.4.

² EB 2021/134/R.9.

³ EB 2022/135/R.21.

submission to the HLCM for adoption/feedback. IFAD has shared its strategy and approach in addressing DEI challenges with the WG.

8. The initial findings of the WG indicate the need for a United Nations system-wide DEI vision and framework, similar to the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity and the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) to ensure that DEI is fully considered and integrated. This will ensure that the funds, programme and specialized agencies of the United Nations system have an inclusive and cohesive approach that acknowledges the different areas of DEI and their intersectionality.
9. Aligned with these findings, IFAD has adopted a formal approach on DEI, and in advancing with the strategy's implementation, it is also ensuring that DEI challenges in the changing context are addressed, including how the United Nations system is prioritizing DEI; sharing good practices and the post-COVID-19 dynamics with respect to the "future of work". Internally, IFAD is now carefully reviewing DEI within the broader workplace culture initiatives and the evolving decentralization context, to create an environment in which all IFAD staff experience a sense of belonging to the organization and the community that it encompasses.

D. DEI awareness training

10. With the help of experts, IFAD has developed a programme aimed not only at awareness-raising but also at promoting behavioural and cultural change to ensure a self-sustaining DEI culture within the Fund.
11. A three-pronged, phased training programme is foreseen. Work is ongoing on the development of in-house DEI e-learning modules, which are expected to be launched by end Q3 or early Q4 2023 and will be complemented by "talks with experts". These talks are aimed at promoting awareness and encouraging discussion about DEI matters for an inclusive and equitable workplace culture. Roundtable talks to raise awareness on DEI have been envisaged with the Executive Management Committee (EMC) and DEI advocates and will be piloted with six divisional directors (prioritization is based on the results of the GSS), to be rolled out to all divisions subject to resource availability.
12. The growing DEI training curriculum now includes disability inclusion training (developed in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme and launched in Q3 2022) on top of the mandatory IFAD gender equality training and LinkedIn Learning elective courses.⁴

E. Internship programme for Indigenous Peoples

13. In 2022, the Latin America and the Caribbean Division designed an internship programme for Indigenous Peoples, which was endorsed by the DEI WG. This initiative envisages a six-month internship opportunity for Indigenous young people who are recent graduates or are enrolled in university. The programme was launched by the Associate Vice-President, Programme Management Department during the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD, and will be piloted in each IFAD Country Office in Latin America. A first cohort of three interns will start in Q3 2023.
14. This initiative has inspired a possible internship for persons with disabilities, to foster cultural change and improve IFAD's visibility as an employer of choice. A concept note has been produced and further discussion will take place in 2023.⁵

F. Disability inclusion

15. IFAD's commitment to implement the UNDIS and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is part of the overarching DEI agenda. Accordingly, IFAD

⁴ Additional resources include webinars on non-binary and gender non-conforming personnel, disability inclusion training and LinkedIn Learning on psychological safety and neurodiversity.

⁵ The World Food Programme has expressed interest in this initiative and may consider replicating it.

has designed and is implementing its own Disability Inclusion Strategy,⁶ which was approved by the Executive Board in December 2022.

16. The Disability Inclusion Strategy's principles of engagement⁷ are aligned with the key priorities of IFAD's DEI Strategy. A revision of the Human Resources Implementing Procedures is foreseen in order to include: (i) arrangements for reasonable accommodation during all stages of employment; (ii) outreach measures to attract candidates with disabilities; (iii) measures to support staff with dependents with disabilities; and (iv) taking the requirements of staff with disabilities and those with dependents with disabilities into account in IFAD's mobility policy. This measure will be assessed as part of the GSS.
17. In July 2022, IFAD's Gender and Social Inclusion Team presented "SPARK", a help desk designed by IFAD in collaboration with Light for the World, the International Labour Organization and PROCASUR. SPARK offers a range of resources and provides users with access to a team of disability inclusion advisers who can provide technical support for the design and implementation of disability-inclusive rural development projects.

G. Management compact

18. In keeping with IFAD's commitment to a work environment free of all forms of harassment and discrimination, and the zero-tolerance policy on sexual harassment/sexual exploitation and abuse (SH/SEA), a draft compact⁸ for directors and Senior Management is currently at the consultation stage. The draft is articulated around two pillars – "inspire" and "empower" – and reiterates the need for leaders to lead by example and abide by IFAD's core values. In the meantime, standardized objectives for people management, recruitment and workplace culture have been introduced in the performance evaluations of directors and supervisors. A pulse survey is envisaged for Q3 2023 to obtain staff's views on workplace culture. The findings will be used to further refine the compact.

H. Recruitment guidelines with a DEI lens

19. Cultivating an inclusive culture and diverse team requires focusing not only on who to hire, but also on how the hiring process is conducted. Various strategies are under discussion to ensure inclusivity during the process, such as: (i) providing inclusive job descriptions; (ii) ensuring an unbiased hiring process; (iii) providing a detailed explanation of the hiring process and ensuring reasonable accommodation for interviews; and (iv) ensuring that the recruitment panel members are familiar with IFAD's DEI commitments.
20. IFAD's internal recruitment guidelines have also been revised using a DEI lens. The staff selection and appointment process is compliant with IFAD's commitment to ensure equitable geographical distribution and gender balance, and the use of gender-neutral and inclusive language in vacancy notices.

III. Key performance indicators – results and analysis

21. The DEI WG has refined the KPIs initially contained in annex III of the DEI Strategy in light of the comments received from the Executive Board during its session in December 2021 (the revised KPI scorecard is included in appendix I). In this regard, outcome indicator 4 on geographical representation has now been split into two targets with distinct time frames (2025 and 2030).

⁶ EB 2022/137/R.7.

⁷ (i) Respect for the inherent dignity, individual autonomy and independence of all persons; (ii) non-discrimination; (iii) full and effective participation and inclusion; (iv) respect for difference; (v) equal opportunities; (vi) accessibility; and (vii) gender equality.

⁸ This compact is also included in the 2022-2023 SH/SEA action plan, to be presented to the April session of the Executive Board.

22. For ease of monitoring and progress reporting, disaggregated data for outcome indicator 1 – women’s representation at senior level, indicator 2 – gender parity in all grades and indicator 4 – increased representation of List B and C countries, as well as additional workforce data have been analysed. The data consider all IFAD staff (at headquarters and in the field), namely staff on short-term, fixed-term, continuing/indefinite appointments and Junior Professional Officers, as per detailed definitions below. Non-staff contracts are also included.
23. Considering that IFAD will present yearly updates to the Executive Board on these particular indicators, it will be possible to monitor progress starting from 2023 onwards, treating 2022 as the baseline. Additionally, where the same data were reported in the previous Executive Board update,⁹ 2021 data will be presented to indicate progress since then.
24. For the results and analysis that follow, the data reported in the charts are effective 1 January of the year under consideration, unless otherwise indicated. Additionally, the following definitions are adopted:¹⁰
- (a) **All workforce:** All categories of staff on fixed-term, continuing and indefinite appointment, staff on short-term contracts, Junior Professional Officers (JPOs), non-staff.
 - (b) **Fixed-term (FT) staff:** All categories of staff on fixed-term, continuing and indefinite appointment, including JPOs.
 - (c) **Short-term (ST) staff:** Staff on short-term contracts.
 - (d) **International Professional (IP) staff:** Internationally recruited staff belonging to the definition of FT staff above, in the IP and higher categories (including directors, Associate Vice-Presidents and the Vice-President), excluding JPOs.
 - (e) **Junior Professional Officers:** IP staff recruited under the JPO programme sponsored by donor countries belonging to the definition of FT staff above.
 - (f) **National Professional (NP) staff:** Nationally recruited staff belonging to the definition of FT staff above, in the National Professional Officer category.
 - (g) **General Service (GS) staff:** Nationally recruited staff belonging to the definition of FT staff above, in the General Service category, located at headquarters and in the field.
 - (h) **Non-staff:** Consultants, interns and other individuals holding a non-staff contract (i.e. conference service providers, teachers, fellows and those with special service agreements).¹¹
 - (i) **Headquarters and liaison offices (HQ&LO):** Staff located in Rome and in the IFAD liaison offices (New York and Washington, D.C.; Riyadh; and Yokohama).
 - (j) **Field:** Staff located in all non-HQ&LO duty stations.

I. Gender outcome indicators

25. The Human Resources Division monitors several key indicators on diversity and workforce composition for the IFAD Results Management Framework and the Report on IFAD’s Development Effectiveness. These include the percentage of women FT

⁹ EB 2021/132/R.4.

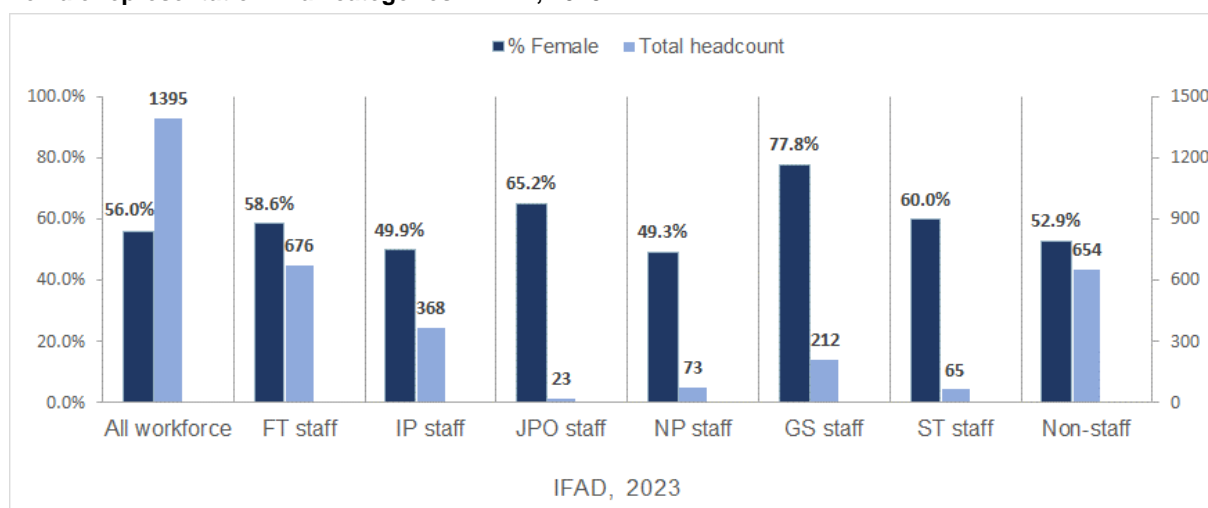
¹⁰ Exclusions: staff on coterminous contracts, staff from hosted entities, holders of service contracts, staff on special agreements, staff on special leave without pay, staff on special leave with full pay, the President of IFAD and the Director, Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD.

¹¹ In order to ensure a more appropriate reflection of real figures, the number of non-staff are reported with effective date as of 1 February of the year under consideration.

staff and women on non-staff contracts, and the percentage of female staff in the IP and higher categories in positions at P-5 and above.

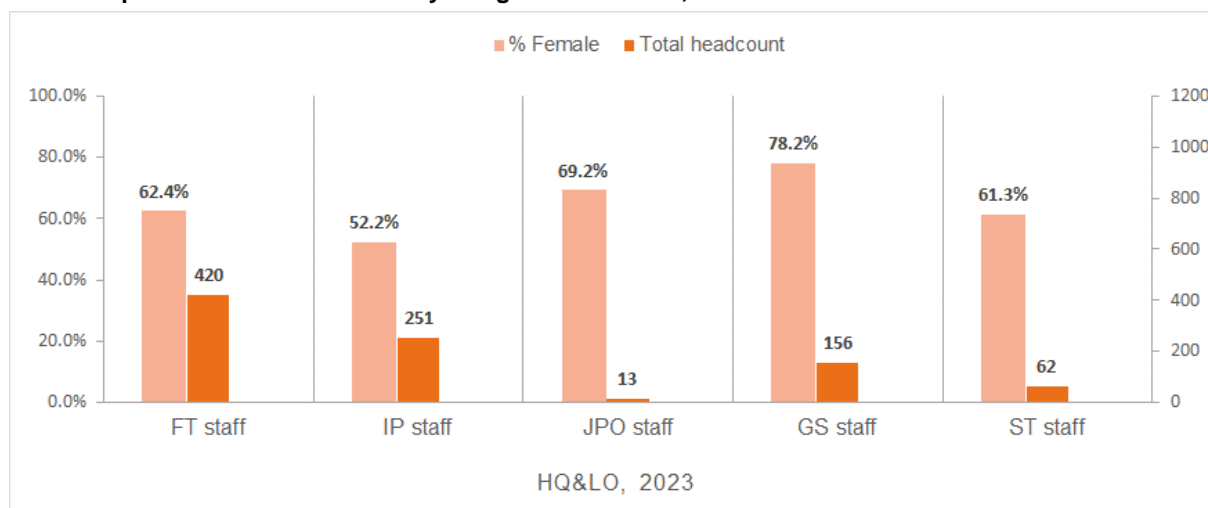
26. As requested by the Executive Board, disaggregated data on the percentage of women in all staff categories and non-staff are presented below (figure 1). Additionally, the proportion of women in all staff-only categories by location is shown in figures 2 and 3. Figure 1 shows that the percentage of female representation in all IFAD’s workforce is 6.0 per cent above gender parity (i.e. 56.0 per cent). Since the IP staff and NP staff categories reach almost gender parity (49.9 per cent and 49.3 per cent respectively), the higher female representation across the workforce is driven by an overrepresentation of women in the GS staff category (77.8 per cent) and, to a lesser extent, in JPO staff (65.2 per cent), ST staff (60.0 per cent) and non-staff (52.9 per cent). This finding is further corroborated by the percentage of women in the FT staff category (58.6 per cent), which does not include non-staff, and therefore is attributable only to the overrepresentation in the GS staff category.

Figure 1
Female representation in all categories – IFAD, 2023



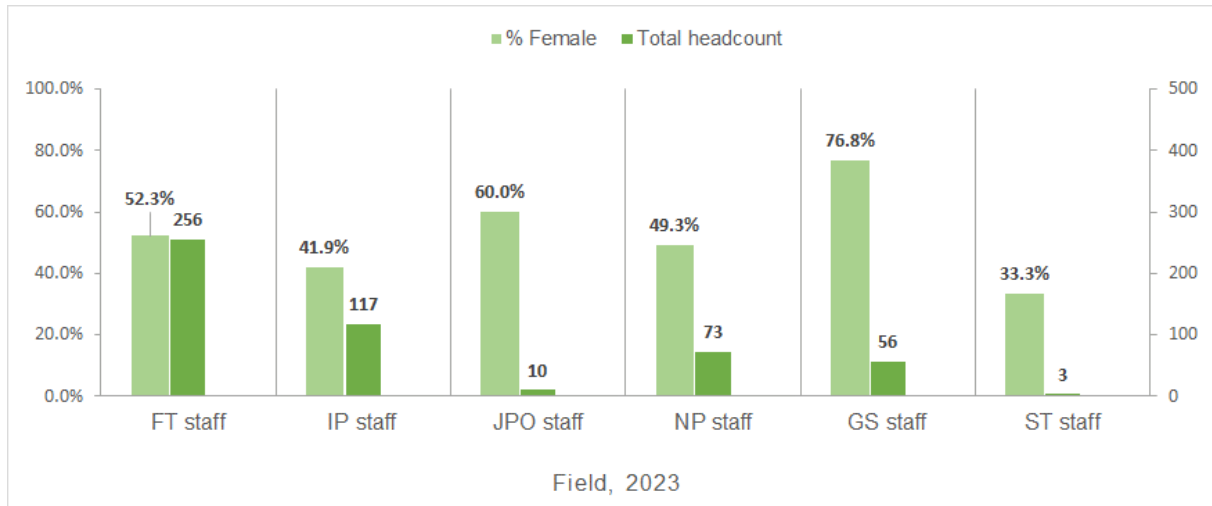
27. Figure 2 below on distribution of female staff in HQ&LO shows a similar gender pattern to IFAD overall. Female overrepresentation among FT staff is slightly more pronounced, driven by a higher percentage of women, and the slightly offsetting effect of the lack of NP staff.

Figure 1
Female representation in all staff-only categories – HQ&LO, 2023



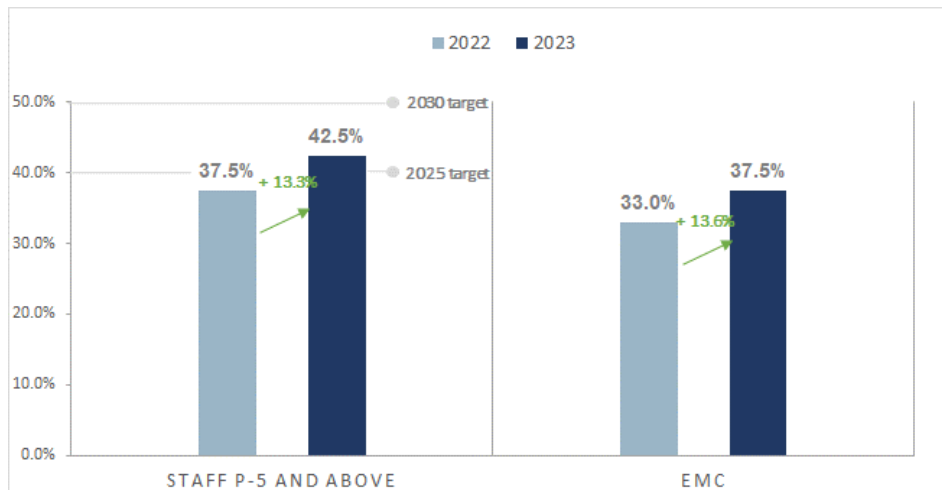
28. Last, figure 3 displays the distribution of female staff in the field. While gender parity is almost reached among FT staff (52.3 per cent) and in the subset of NP staff (49.3 per cent), the category breakdown suggests this is because of a starker disparity between underrepresentation of women in the IP and ST staff categories on one hand, and overrepresentation in the GS staff category on the other, compared to the whole of IFAD and HQ&LO.

Figure 2
Female representation in all staff-only categories – field, 2023



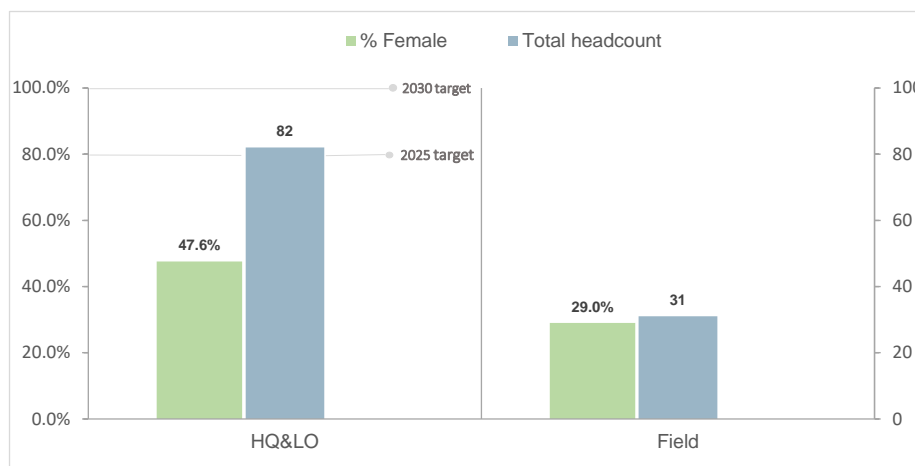
29. Overall, figures 1, 2 and 3 highlight that the Fund is heading in the right direction with regard to gender parity in the IP staff category (at HQ&LO), NP staff and non-staff categories. IFAD will continue to focus on this element through targeted recruitment and internal mobility approaches aimed at balancing gender distribution among field IP staff and, more markedly, in the GS staff category.
30. Figure 4 shows the trend in representation of women at the P-5 level and above and in the EMC over 2022/2023. The EMC is chaired by the President of IFAD and is composed of the Vice-President, Associate Vice-Presidents and the Chief of Staff. The category P-5 and above includes members of the EMC. The President of IFAD is not included in the data in figure 4.
31. Due to targeted outreach activities and a corporate separation programme, women's representation in P-5 positions and above increased by a remarkable 13.3 per cent, from 37.5 per cent in 2022 to 42.5 per cent in 2023. In absolute terms, the number of female staff members in P-5 positions and above increased by 14.3 per cent, from 42 to 48 per cent, in the same period. Similarly, female representation in the EMC has increased by 13.6 per cent, from 33.0 per cent in 2022 to 37.5 per cent in 2023.

Figure 3
Female representation at senior level (percentage of women in IP staff positions – P-5 and above and EMC) 2022/2023 – IFAD



32. With regard to women’s representation at grade P-5 and above in HQ&LO and the field, figure 5 below highlights a promising baseline for HQ&LO, where 47.6 per cent of staff in senior positions are women. It also shows where most effort is needed to ensure diversity, namely in the field, where less than one in three professionals at grade P-5 and above are women (29.0 per cent).

Figure 4
Female representation at senior level (percentage of women in IP staff positions – P-5 and above) 2023 – HQ&LO



J. Capacity outcome indicators

33. As far as indicator 3 of the revised KPI scorecard is concerned, IFAD will continue all efforts to ensure the relevant indicator is maintained until 2023 and beyond (table 1).

Table 1
Key performance indicator 3 on capacity - 2022

Capacity outcome indicators	Targets	Baseline	Status	Timeline
3 Capacity assessment and development – percentage of supervisors trained in mandatory training on gender bias	100%	100%	Complete	2023

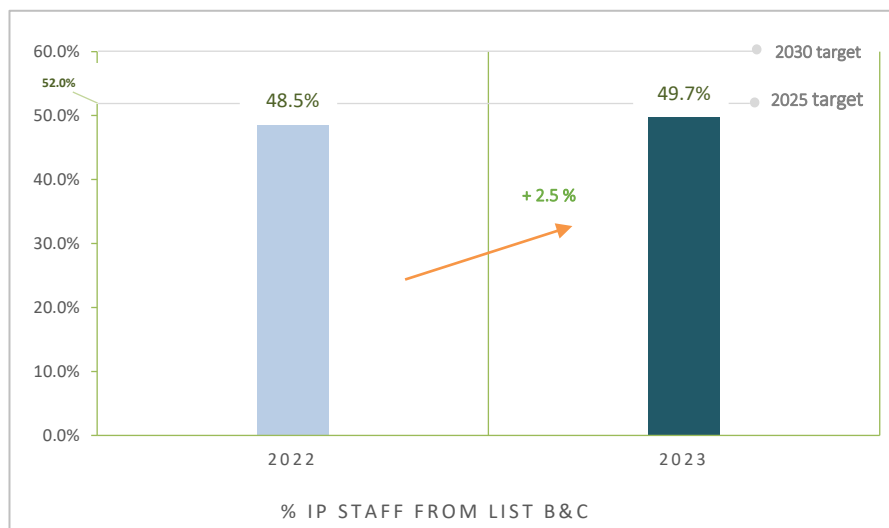
K. Geographical representation outcome indicators

34. To achieve more diversity in the workforce, IFAD uses targeted outreach initiatives. IFAD’s recruitment team ensures adherence to the Human Resources Implementing

Procedures, which require that at least one third of qualified candidates in the shortlists for vacant positions are from List B and List C countries (combined).

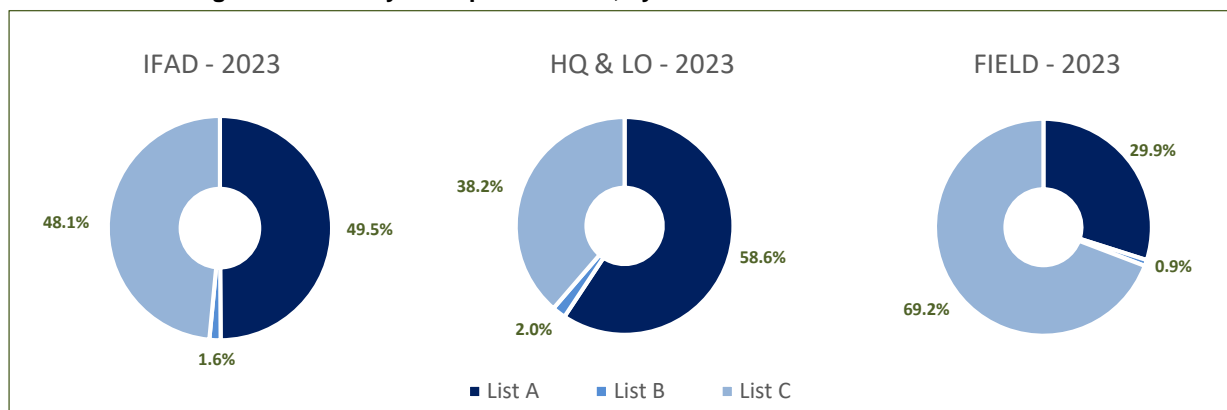
- 35. An upward trend has been maintained for representation of List B and C countries in the IP staff category. On top of the 17 per cent increase over the period 2017/2021 reported in the 2021 diversity update,¹² an increase of 2.5 per cent can be seen between 2022 and 2023, from 48.5 per cent in 2022 to 49.7 per cent in 2023 (figure 6).

Figure 5
International Professional and above categories, all IFAD IP staff, 2022/2023



- 36. In terms of representation of List A, B and C in the IP category across the different locations (figure 7 below), List A nationals represent the majority of all IFAD and HQ&LO IP staff (49.5 per cent and 58.6 per cent, respectively), while List C and List B nationals represent 70.1 per cent of IP staff in the field (69.2 per cent for List C and 0.9 per cent for List B). The first steps towards meeting the objective set for 2025 (i.e. 52 per cent representation of List B and List C countries, as per item 4 of the revised DEI KPI scorecard) will focus on increasing List B and C nationals in HQ&LO.

Figure 6
IP and above categories – country list representation, by location¹³ 2023



¹² EB 2021/132/R.4, appendix, p. 6.

¹³ Minor percentages of staff from non-member countries not included.

L. Equity and inclusion indicators

37. In 2022, IFAD launched the GSS to measure the staff engagement index (SEI). The survey included questions relating to the organizational culture of IFAD, including diversity.
38. The SEI, composed of seven questions, measures the intensity of employees' connection to the organization. While the 80 per cent target for 2023 has not yet been reached, the answers indicate an overall positive result in 2022 of 74 per cent. This exceeds the DEI Strategy baseline by 2 percentage points and implies that IFAD is on track.
39. For the first time, the survey also included two questions about DEI.¹⁴ The GSS 2022 results constitute an internal benchmark and will allow assessment of whether the actions within the DEI Strategy have had a positive impact, measured during the next GSS (2024). Core DEI questions will also be added to the next IFAD pulse survey in Q3/Q4 2023.

M. Conclusion

40. The results and analysis section highlights that IFAD is on track to achieving its targets on most indicators. The detailed breakdown also reveals critical areas for further DEI WG analysis and intervention, specifically, gender distribution per staff category and location. IFAD has put in place an action plan to improve gender parity (2022-2026) in order to continue delivering on corporate gender targets and to attract and retain a qualified workforce.
41. Going forward, while the core DEI agenda remains aligned to the broader United Nations guidelines, the Fund seeks to scale up impact on the ground by taking forward a holistic approach. IFAD's ability to attract and retain the best talent relies on positioning itself as an "employer of choice" on the current and future labour market. Organizational culture represents a core pillar of a sound employee value proposition. To this end, IFAD must adapt to external trends affecting the future of its workforce and continue to improve its workplace culture, ensuring an environment of dignity and respect for all.

¹⁴ "IFAD is committed to diversity and inclusion and values the different perspectives, experiences, backgrounds knowledge and approaches of all its personnel" and "People here are treated equally irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, age, language, sexual orientation, abilities and disabilities, culture, religion, profession, education, marital status, workplace experience, role, staff position (national/international) and contract modality".

Revised DEI KPIs Scorecard and Disaggregated Indicators

Table B Revised DEI KPIs Scorecard

	Indicators	Targets	Baseline 2022	2023	Status	Timeline
Gender outcome indicators						
1	Women representation at senior level (percentage of women at grade P-5 and above) ¹⁵	40%	37.5%	42.5%	On track	2025
		50%		2030		
2	Gender parity in all grades (percentage of male and female staff in all grades)	50%	57.9%	58.3%	Decrease	2030
Capacity outcome indicators						
3	Capacity assessment and development – percentage of supervisors trained in mandatory training on gender bias	100%	100%	100%	Complete (sustain)	2023
Geographical representation outcome indicators						
4	Increased representation of List B & C countries (International Professional staff)	52%	48.5%	49.7%	On track	2025
		60%		2030		
Equity and inclusion outcome indicators						
5	Staff engagement index (Global Staff Survey – GSS) with DEI-specific indicators, e.g. agreement with the statement: “All IFAD employees are treated with respect”	80%	72% (2018)	74%	On track	2023
*Subject to periodic review during DEI Strategy implementation						

¹⁵ Indicators 1, 2 and 4 are calculated on staff on fixed-term, continuing and indefinite appointments encumbering regular budget positions. Exclusions are those listed in footnote 9.

DEI Implementation plan

DEI Implementation Plan – Phases I, II & III – Q4 2021, 2022 & 2023

ACTION ITEMS		Activities	2021	2022				2023 & beyond			
			Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1	CONSOLIDATE CURRENT DEI ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOP NEW INITIATIVES; IDENTIFY KPIS (BENCHMARK WITH IFIS & UN)	First benchmarking meeting.									
		Review vacancy notices to identify and address bias in language (deliverable within the UNDIS).									
2	APPROVE DEI ADVOCATES TORs	Share updated DEI advocate ToRs with DEI WG and seek approval.									
		Identification and nomination of DEI advocates.									
		Share the ToRs with nominated DEI advocates.									
		DEI advocates to revise PES to include “corporate initiative” item for their role starting from the 2022 cycle.									
		Plan and roll out orientation session for DEI advocates.									
3	THE DEI WORKING GROUP WILL REVISE THE KPI SCORECARD AND IDENTIFY DESIRED OUTCOMES	Address Member States comments and revise KPis.									
		Revised KPis.									
4	MANAGEMENT WILL PRESENT AN ANNUAL REPORT AND UPDATE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD IN APRIL 2022	Draft April EB update, addressing Member States comments from 134 EB and presenting baseline / target KPis.									
		Presentation of Annual Report at the April Executive Board.									
5	ESTABLISHMENT OF A MECHANISM BY THE DEI WG FOR COORDINATION AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE ACROSS IFAD (HQ & ICOS)	Institute a DEI Network consisting of DEI WG members and DEI advocates for knowledge exchange through quarterly working group meetings.									
6	MANAGEMENT COMPACTS	Senior Management compacts countersigned.									
7	UPDATE GSS 2022 SURVEY QUESTIONS	Include new questions in forthcoming GSS 2022 (specifically, Staff Engagement Index) to evaluate inclusion and equity dimensions.									
8	AWARENESS TRAINING READY FOR ROLL OUT IN 2023 AS A MANDATORY REQUIREMENT	Identify and roll out awareness training (e.g. inclusive language in the workplace, addressing unconscious bias, etc.).									
9	CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REPORTING	Continue exchanging experiences and best practices with other United Nations entities and IFIs, including in relation to developing KPis.									
		Continue to strengthen and expand efforts and actions in areas that need further improvement, including a continued focus on ongoing and new initiatives, and maximum integration of diversity, equity and inclusion in the Fund’s culture, leadership and workforce.									