

IFAD Executive Board 138

Agenda item 3: Strategic discussion with the President of IFAD

Statement from Sweden

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Thank you, Mr. President.

The topic of today's strategic discussion is well chosen. We have benefitted, as a Board collective, from our deliberations during the retreat the last days, and the issue of fragility was present directly or indirectly in many of the conversations we had. It is also a problem that obviously impacts IFAD's work, and ability to work, in so many contexts around the world. Fragility has many reasons. No country is immune to conflict, such as the war of aggression Russia is waging against Ukraine and that we condemn in the strongest way. The same goes for climate change, which as well affects all our countries in different ways. The global economic problems can also drive fragility. I could go on, but I think the point is made.

Thus, we welcome the opportunity to discuss, and the paper you have presented to us. We agree that drivers of fragility such as weak governance structures and low institutional capacity are within IFAD's mandate. In this, we see the need to strengthen work within the HDP and climate nexuses to achieve sustainable collective outcomes, and investments, on the ground. Because this is the key – to maximize development effects on the ground. We trust in that regard that decentralization can lead to sustainable impact also in fragile situations.

IFAD's main comparative advantage and strength lies in the ability of the Fund to channel core financing to those most in need, in line with the mandate and mission and in close cooperation with other actors and organizations, the private sector and civil society. The overarching direction of the paper, i.e., that IFAD should focus on crisis prevention and resilience-building, is sound. In particular, IFAD should focus on climate adaptation efforts to ensure small holder farmers can recover from and fight the next climate chock. Taking early action on early warnings is crucial to prevent humanitarian needs from occurring or increasing and to secure the survival and sustainability of development investments and results. It is therefore important for Sweden that IFAD sticks to its mandate by focusing on these comparative advantages also in fragile contexts and areas. IFAD can also, through its engagement with governments, contribute to building institutional resilience and capacity.

In this work, Sweden understands the need to respond to acute shocks and emerging situations, but IFAD should be mindful that such work does not go beyond IFAD's clear niche. Where possible, IFAD can develop its anticipatory approach.

Sweden agrees with IFAD's proposal to deepen and expanding work in fragile states in IFAD13. IFAD must, however, balance such engagement with commitments to ensure financial sustainability.

We would like to hear more from you, Mr. President, on how IFAD plans to ensure sufficient resources for work in fragile and conflict-affected countries? How will IFAD work to crowd in supplementary resources for these purposes?

Furthermore, FAO and WFP are soon presenting a common strategy on anticipatory action, and it would be interesting to hear how IFAD will link to their work in this regard.

Lastly, since this theme is closely related to how IFAD fits into a wider UN system, we would like to hear more about how IFAD as a member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group

(UNDSG) contributes to the ongoing repositioning of the UN Development System? I believe there will be thinking around this at the moment, given the check list recently distributed to UNDSG members by DSG Mohammed.

Thank you, Mr. President.