

## IFAD – 138<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Board

(Rome, 10-11 May 2023)

### Agenda Item 5 - Corporate-level evaluation of IFAD's decentralization experience

#### Statement delivered on behalf of List A

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1. List A thanks IOE for the presentation of the corporate-level evaluation of IFAD's decentralization experience and Management for their responses.
2. In accordance with the deliberations of the 120th session of the Evaluation Committee, we reaffirm that the ongoing decentralization is fundamental to improve IFAD's ability to deliver on its mandate and maximize impact of its operations on the ground. In this regard, we agree with the IOE assessment that for decentralization to deliver on its intended objectives it must be fit for purpose. With this in mind, the Decentralization 2.0 must be a continuous process towards the targets set during the IFAD12 Replenishment, namely increasing the proportion of staff out posted to 45% by 2024 and ensuring the effectiveness of the decentralization, in order to maximize IFADs development effect on the ground.
3. We also recognize the need for adjustments and continuous learning over the course of this process, in particular regarding the type and the location of IFAD's regional and country presence, as well as funding needs for design and implementation of programmes. In this regard, we acknowledge that, within an overarching strategic corporate approach, there is no one-size-fits-all model and that the establishment of new offices, including regional and multi-country offices, should be based on a strong analysis of their relevance, value-added and cost-effectiveness for IFAD operations. We strongly believe that particular attention has to be paid to countries and regions where accumulated experience demonstrates that a stronger field presence is likely to make a difference, including in fragile contexts and where IFAD is able to achieve better results through collaboration with other RBAs and relevant actors.
4. Regarding the human resource management, we recognize the key importance of having sufficient staff in the field with the right skills and motivation to deliver on decentralized development-enhancing operations. In this respect, we welcome the efforts made by Management to reduce IFAD's vacancy rate while noting that it needs to go further down. It will also be key to retain a higher number of experienced staff to ensure proper operation of the ICOs if we want to make decentralization a success. We also wish to highlight the importance of establishing a clear, predictable and rational reassignment process, following an established and regular process and timeline, which will increase the predictability of staff's relocation and help to minimize disruption of IFAD operations. Going forward, we encourage IFAD to ensure staff inclusion and staff ownership of the decentralization process, noting that good communication and better sequencing of multiple reforms will already go a long way in strengthening staff support for decentralization.

5. We welcome Management's openness to discuss the results of the IOE report and to come up with a recalibration plan for discussion with the Board. We also welcome the willingness of Management to improve granularity and transparency in budget provisions and reporting on the costs of decentralization and to submit an annual progress report to the Executive Board at its December session. In order to ensure that Board discussions on decentralization are as strategic as possible, we invite Management to develop an information system that enable Members to continuously and thoroughly monitor the decentralization process and detect its potential challenges. This could take the form of a map or dashboard, available on the Member States Platform, providing all relevant up-to-date information for each field office, including the number of staff, their job title, the status of the host country agreement, etc.
  
6. In concluding, we want to reaffirm our strong support to a well-governed Decentralization process and thank IOE for its valuable contribution to the learning process needed for its success.

Thank you./.