

---

## **IFAD13 priority replenishment commitments to be addressed through financing from the regular grants programme**

---

Document: EB 2024/143/R.24

Agenda: 7(b)

Date: 13 November 2024

Distribution: Public

Original: English

**FOR: APPROVAL**

**Useful references:** Regular Grants Policy ([EB 2021/132/R.3](#))

**Action:** The Executive Board is invited to approve the selection of the six priority replenishment commitments under the Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD13) identified in this paper for financing from the regular grants programme during the IFAD13 period (2025–2027).

---

---

**Technical questions:**

**Gérardine Mukeshimana**  
Vice-President of IFAD  
Office of the President and Vice-President  
e-mail: [g.mukeshimana@ifad.org](mailto:g.mukeshimana@ifad.org)

**Robson Mutandi**  
Chief a.i.  
Quality Assurance Group  
e-mail: [r.mutandi@ifad.org](mailto:r.mutandi@ifad.org)

---

# **IFAD13 priority replenishment commitments to be addressed through financing from the regular grants programme**

## **I. Background and rationale**

1. At its 132<sup>nd</sup> session in April 2021, IFAD's Executive Board approved the new Regular Grants Policy.<sup>1</sup> The policy establishes a new process for determining the thematic focus of the IFAD regular grants programme during each IFAD replenishment cycle. Under the 2015 Policy for Grant Financing,<sup>2</sup> the thematic focus was determined on an annual or three-year basis through a strategic guidance note approved by the Executive Management Committee.<sup>3</sup> Under the 2021 Regular Grants Policy, a summary of the priority replenishment commitments that could benefit from grant-funded activities is to be presented for approval at the last Executive Board session preceding the start of each replenishment cycle.
2. In line with this provision, this paper identifies the priority replenishment commitments under the Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD13) that could benefit from activities funded by the regular grants programme during the IFAD13 period (2025–2027).<sup>4</sup> These priority commitments will allow the Executive Board and Management to make informed decisions on the prioritization of activities to be funded through regular grant resources.

## **II. Strategic directions for IFAD regular grants**

3. The Regular Grants Policy stipulates that the overall goal of the regular grants programme is to contribute to furthering IFAD's mandate of sustainable and inclusive rural transformation and to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
4. The regular grants programme has two mutually reinforcing strategic objectives (SOs):
  - (i) SO1: Leverage better impact on the ground for IFAD's programme of work, including through improvement of in-country capacity for greater sustainability of benefits; and
  - (ii) SO2: Foster a more conducive policy and investment environment for smallholder agriculture and rural development, including at the regional and global level.
5. The theory of change of the regular grants programme states that the programme will fund catalytic interventions with leveraging potential to unlock broader opportunities for IFAD's engagement through the programme of loans and grants (PoLG) and other programmes and instruments.<sup>5</sup> Interventions will operate through the following pathways: (i) improving the policy and investment environment; (ii) leveraging strategic and operational partners' expertise and resources to deepen the impact of IFAD's programme of work; and (iii) improving the availability and uptake of relevant knowledge and innovation for enhanced impact and sustainability.

---

<sup>1</sup> EB 2021/132/R.3.

<sup>2</sup> EB 2015/114/R.2/Rev.1.

<sup>3</sup> The most recent strategic guidance note covered the IFAD11 period (2019-2021).

<sup>4</sup> The IFAD13 replenishment commitments are presented in annex I to the Report of the Consultation on the Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources: Investing in Rural Prosperity and Resilience for a Food-Secure Future (GC 47/L.5).

<sup>5</sup> EB 2021/132/R.3, section IV.B and annex III.

Box 1

**2021 Regular Grants Policy (paragraph 14)**

“The SOs will be achieved through the following **pathways**, with which both SOs will be equally aligned:

- **Improving the policy and investment environment.** At the country level, this will include analytical work supporting non-lending activities, including those identified in country strategies, and alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and the work of United Nations Country Teams. At the regional and global level, this pathway will include support to higher-level policies for inclusive and sustainable rural and food systems transformation, fostering an enabling environment for investing in smallholder agriculture.
- **Leveraging strategic and operational partners’ expertise and resources to deepen the impact of IFAD’s programme of work.** Partnerships supported by regular grants will seek to empower the most vulnerable while strengthening local food supply systems/chains and local economies to maximize sustainable results. Through this pathway, regular grants will also build the capacities of institutions and organizations in developing countries to improve ownership, efficiency and sustainability of IFAD-funded operations. IFAD will also leverage financial resources from relevant partners through regular grants under this pathway. Operational partnerships with development organizations that have a comparative advantage in emergency response can be established in situations of crisis or fragility, when rapid response is required. Complementing the efforts of partners such as the Rome-based agencies with IFAD’s own expertise with smallholder farmers can enhance the impact of post-emergency and longer-term development interventions.
- **Improving the availability and uptake of relevant knowledge and innovation for enhanced impact and sustainability.** Relevant knowledge will include innovative pro-poor research and technology, and will focus in particular on testing, piloting and adapting innovations targeting the poor, including for future scaling up by the concerned governments, through the IFAD programme of loans and grants (PoLG) or using resources from IFAD’s development partners.”

### III. Priority commitment areas for the regular grants programme during the IFAD13 period (2025–2027)

6. In addition to the above SOs and pathways, the Regular Grants Policy provides that “a summary of priority replenishment commitments that could benefit from grant-funded activities will be presented for approval at the last Executive Board session preceding the start of each replenishment cycle”.<sup>6</sup> The following six priority commitment areas are being proposed for the regular grants programme during IFAD13; they were selected from among all the IFAD13 replenishment commitments provided in document GC 47/L.5, annex I:
- (i) **Priority commitment area 1: Ensuring inclusion (IFAD13 replenishment commitment 1.1).** This area covers initiatives that will help better reflect social inclusion and mainstreaming priorities in IFAD-funded operations. Initiatives should focus on promoting an inclusive participatory approach in order to empower rural communities, especially women and youth, by focusing on the last mile and those most at risk of being left behind. Support will be provided in particular to farmers’ organizations, Indigenous Peoples’ organizations and rural youth organizations for activities aimed at strengthening their capacity to improve ownership of IFAD-funded operations, contributing to their efficiency and sustainability, as well as their participation in policy and decision-making processes related to them. Activities under this area will also support piloting innovative solutions to strengthen IFAD’s four mainstreaming themes, i.e. environment and climate, gender, youth and nutrition. IFAD will also support the inclusion of persons with disabilities.
  - (ii) **Priority commitment area 2: Enhancing focus on fragile contexts (IFAD13 replenishment commitment 1.2).** This area covers initiatives that will help IFAD achieve more effective operations, leverage resources and strengthen collaborations in fragile contexts, finding ways to counteract instability, conflict and displacement with a focus on local resilience. Activities under this area will include piloting innovative and tailored support to rural communities to empower them to create resilient and sustainable livelihoods and pathways for economic growth; and supporting small-scale farmers and

<sup>6</sup> EB 2021/132/R.3.

rural communities with testing or consolidating climate-resilient practices and sustainable natural resources management techniques, including disaster preparedness. Attention will also be given to supporting partnerships with relevant development partners to leverage resources, analyse drivers and implications of fragility relevant to IFAD's mandate and ensure that IFAD's investments complement the work of other actors to address drivers or impacts of fragility that fall outside IFAD's mandate – e.g. peacebuilding or humanitarian interventions.

- (iii) **Priority commitment area 3: Investing in climate resilience and biodiversity (IFAD13 replenishment commitment 1.3).** This area covers initiatives that will contribute to support climate-vulnerable countries, including small island developing states, with climate change adaptation and mitigation, promotion of climate-resilient and low-emission investments, environmental sustainability and biodiversity management, and mobilization of climate finance. Activities under this area will include piloting innovative solutions or tools to address climate change, such as investments for green infrastructure, ecosystem restoration, crop diversification, sustainable land management practices, reduction of food loss and waste; and supporting regional activities, including facilitating regional policy dialogue.
- (iv) **Priority commitment area 4: Increasing engagement with the private sector (IFAD13 replenishment commitment 1.4).** This area covers initiatives that will support engagement with the private sector to learn how to work more and better together to accelerate impact, create an enabling environment and catalyse investments. Activities under this area will include eligible grant-funded activities contributing to the operationalization of IFAD's Private Sector Operational Strategy 2025–2030. This may include exploring new ways to support local private sector development, in line with the first objective of the strategy, and/or to mobilize domestic and international private finance towards investments that benefit IFAD's target group, in line with the second objective.
- (v) **Priority commitment area 5: Promoting an integrated country programme approach (IFAD13 replenishment commitment 2.1).** This area covers activities that will support IFAD's integrated country programme approach. Activities under this area will aim at contributing to the achievement of national priorities as identified in country strategic opportunities programmes and country strategy notes, by supporting capacity-building of in-country stakeholders for improved portfolio delivery as well as critical non-lending activities that cannot be funded through IFAD's loan programme or other IFAD instruments, or by other partners; strengthening knowledge management and consolidation of IFAD project results at country and regional levels; and supporting agricultural research and behavioural science-driven approaches within the testing of innovations.
- (vi) **Priority commitment area 6: Enhancing the sustainability and scalability of investments (IFAD13 replenishment commitment 2.3).** This area covers eligible grant-funded activities that will support the sustainability action plan and the updated scaling up approach developed under IFAD12. While implementing these in IFAD13, the focus will be on three key areas: (i) country-level policy engagement to increase the generation and utilization of evidence for policy development and the capacity of governments to implement data and evidence-based policies; (ii) partnerships from the local to the global level that maximize results for IFAD's target group, building on the IFAD Partnership Framework approved under IFAD11; and (iii) testing innovations that can be integrated and scaled up within IFAD's investment portfolio.

7. The following table shows how the proposed IFAD13 commitments relate to IFAD’s grant programme SOs and pathways. It is important to clarify however that the proposed IFAD13 commitments may contribute different SOs and pathways.

Table 1

**Linkages between priority commitment areas, pathways and strategic objectives**

<i>IFAD13 commitments</i>	<i>Proposed commitments to be supported by the grant programme</i>	<i>Pathway</i>	<i>SOs</i>
<b>1. IFAD13: Building resilience in vulnerable communities</b>			
1.1 Ensuring Inclusion	✓	Strategic and operational partnership	Primarily SO1
1.2 Enhancing focus on fragile contexts	✓	Strategic and operational partnership	Primarily SO1
1.3 Investing in climate resilience and biodiversity	✓	Knowledge and innovation	Primarily SO1
1.4 Increasing engagement with the private sector	✓	Knowledge and innovation	Primarily SO1
<b>2. Delivering impact through integrated country programmes</b>			
2.1 Promoting an integrated country programme approach	✓	Policy and investment	Primarily SO2
2.2 Adaptive management			
2.3 Enhancing the sustainability and scalability of investments	✓	Policy and investment	Primarily SO2
<b>3. Strengthening organizational effectiveness and efficiency</b>			
3.1 Strengthening organizational effectiveness and efficiency			
<b>4. Assembling and leveraging development finance</b>			
4.1 Maximizing resources to those most in need			
4.2 Expanding financing to maximize impact			

## IV. Rationale for not prioritizing the remaining IFAD13 commitments

8. The following IFAD13 commitments are not being proposed as priority commitment areas for the regular grants programme:
- (i) Adaptive management (commitment 2.2);
  - (ii) Strengthening organizational effectiveness and efficiency (commitment 3.1);
  - (iii) Maximizing resources to those most in need (commitment 4.1);
  - (iv) Expanding financing to maximize impact (commitment 4.2).
9. These commitments have not been prioritized at this time; however, they remain under consideration for potential inclusion in case they are deemed more relevant over the course of the IFAD13 cycle.

## V. Guiding principles, assessment of proposals and reporting

10. All the provisions and key principles established in the Regular Grants Policy to prioritize the allocation of resources within the regular grants programme will apply, and will be used to assess the eligibility of proposals and to competitively prioritize them.<sup>7</sup> In line with the Regular Grants Policy, individual grant proposals will not be approved on a first-come, first-served basis, but will be assessed by means of IFAD’s rigorous arm’s length quality assurance processes to determine their suitability for funding.
11. Grant concept notes will be required to indicate the SOs, pathways and priority areas to which they intend to contribute and provide a justification. This will allow

<sup>7</sup> The key principles are defined in section C of the 2021 Regular Grants Policy (EB 2021/132/R.3, paras. 18 to 28).

for better monitoring of the number of grants and resources allocated to each SO, pathway and priority area.

12. The Regular Grants Policy stipulates that SO1 will receive a significantly larger amount of regular grant funding in any replenishment period. Therefore, a higher share of resources will be allocated to initiatives under the priority commitment areas contributing primarily to SO1 and to initiatives under other priority commitment areas when it is clear that these initiatives will substantially contribute to SO1. To help the Operational Strategy and Policy Guidance Committee (OSC) make informed decisions on new grants proposals, a table reporting the breakdown of the resources already allocated and committed to each SO and priority commitment area will be included in each regular grants OSC cover memo.
13. **Results framework and reporting.** The Regular Grants Policy indicative results framework includes an indicator related to the alignment of each proposal to strategic priority commitments. This indicator provides the number and percentage of new grant projects aligned to each SO and priority replenishment commitment identified by the Executive Board.
14. Data for this indicator will be collected at the design stage by the Quality Assurance Group, with specific reference to the priority commitment areas identified in this paper, and will be reported upon in the dedicated progress report submitted to the Executive Board each year at its December session. The report will comprehensively cover other aspects related to the grant programme's effective and efficient implementation and will regularly inform the Board on how grant resources are being allocated across priority areas.

## Thematic priority areas (PAs) for global/regional grants in the past years

### For grants approved in 2022 to 2024:

- PA1 Increased ambition on mainstreaming and other priority issues, and enhanced targeting of the most vulnerable rural people
- PA2 Strategic focus on fragility, conflict and building resilience
- PA3 Strategic partnerships to enhance impact
- PA4 Enhancing performance and efficiency
- PA5 Sustainability and scaling up results

### For grants approved in 2019 and 2021 (strategic guidance note 2019–2021):

- PA1 Production for food security, nutrition and income generation
- PA2 Climate change, resilience and environmental sustainability
- PA3 Gender equality and women's empowerment
- PA4 Opportunities for youth
- PA5 Business opportunities and partnership with private sector
- PA6 Strategic priority endorsed by the Executive Management Committee

### For grants approved in 2018 (strategic guidance note 2018):

- PA1 Access of rural youth and vulnerable rural populations to productive assets, financing, natural resources and new skills/capacities
- PA2 Advisory and agricultural extension services for small-scale rural producers and their organizations
- PA3 Information technology and applications
- PA4 Agricultural research for development (AR4D) to sustainably increase production and productivity for food security, nutrition and income generation

### For grants approved in 2017 (strategic guidance note 2017):

- PA1 Rights and access of most vulnerable populations to resources
- PA2.1 Innovative information and communications technology for smallholder farmers
- PA2.2 Food losses along value chains
- PA3 Improved data collection and better results management
- PA4 AR4D

### For grants approved in 2016 (strategic guidance note 2016):

- PA1 Rural youth and unemployment
- PA2 Rural financial inclusion
- PA3 Improved data collection and better results measurements
- PA4 AR4D

### For grants approved in 2015 (strategic guidance note 2015):

- PA1 Pro-poor AR4D programmes
- PA2 Stronger linkages between smallholder farmers/rural producers with value chains
- PA3 Empowerment of farmers' and Indigenous Peoples' organizations
- PA4 Leveraging the rural-urban nexus for development
- PA5 Better accountability for results and closing the data gaps on issues of high relevance to IFAD