

The Member States of IFAD will appoint the organization's President in February 2021. In accordance with the Agreement Establishing IFAD,¹ the President of the Fund "shall be appointed for a term of four years and shall be eligible for reappointment for only one further term." The current President of IFAD, Mr Gilbert F. Houngbo, will conclude his first mandate on 31 March 2021. According to section 6.2 of the By-laws for the Conduct of the Business of IFAD, when the term of office of the President is due to expire, the appointment of a President shall be placed on the agenda of the annual session of the Governing Council immediately preceding the expiry of the term of office. The Governing Council will therefore consider the appointment of the President of IFAD at its forty-fourth session, to be held on 17 and 18 February 2021.

The President shall be appointed by the Governing Council² by at least two thirds of the total number of votes. In the case of only one nominee, the Council may use the method of acclamation to appoint the President.

1. Who is in charge of the appointment process?
2. What are the duties and responsibilities of the President of IFAD?
3. How is the campaign process conducted?
4. How are candidates nominated?
5. Can any Member State nominate candidates?
6. Can Member States nominate candidates who are nationals of another country?
7. How do Member States submit their nominations?
8. How is the integrity of the nominations ensured during the nomination process?
9. What is the role of IFAD staff in the appointment process?
10. When are the nominations communicated?
11. How will the evolving COVID-19 pandemic affect the conduct of the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council and the process related to the appointment of the President?
12. Who votes for the President?
13. Must a Member State cast all its votes for a single candidate?
14. How is a decision made on the appointment of the President of IFAD?
15. When will the President-elect take office?

Q1. Who is in charge of the appointment process?

- A.** The Office of the Secretary of IFAD manages the process and ensures its integrity. This includes ensuring that all Member States have equal access to comprehensive and transparent information regarding the process. The appointment process is conducted with input from and in close collaboration with the Office of the General Counsel.

¹ Article 6.8 of the Agreement Establishing IFAD.

² The Governing Council is IFAD's highest decision-making authority. It comprises all IFAD Member States (currently 177 countries) and meets annually. The Governing Council sessions are attended by official Member State representatives, i.e. Governors, Alternate Governors and any other designated advisers.

The Governing Council Bureau and the List Convenors³ play an important role throughout the process in providing guidance, approving the timeline and addressing other issues as needed, organizing the meetings of candidates with IFAD Membership, and supervising and validating the voting process itself during the Governing Council session through the tellers⁴ appointed by the Governing Council Chairperson.

Q2. What are the duties and responsibilities of the President of IFAD?

A. The duties and responsibilities of the President are mainly set out in IFAD's basic documents, including the Agreement Establishing IFAD, the Financial Regulations of IFAD, and the following documents available on the [IFAD website](#):

- By-laws for the Conduct of the Business of IFAD
- Policies and Criteria for IFAD Financing
- Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council
- Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board
- IFAD Handbook for Financial Reporting and Auditing of IFAD-financed Projects
- IFAD Guidelines on Dealing with De Facto Governments

Q3. How is the campaign process conducted?

A. The campaign leading up to the appointment of the President of IFAD should promote an open, fair, equitable and transparent electoral process among the candidates running for the office of the President of IFAD.

From the date on which nominations are announced and throughout the entire campaign process, Member States and candidates should:

- (i) Act in good faith and with mutual respect towards one another, bearing in mind the shared objectives of promoting equity, openness, transparency and fairness throughout the appointment process;
- (ii) Refrain from:
 - Disrupting or impeding the campaign activities of other candidates and generally campaigning in an improper manner against other candidates;
 - Making any oral or written statement or other representation that could be deemed slanderous or libellous;
 - Making promises or commitments (other than as considered generally acceptable in diplomatic and international negotiations) that could undermine, or be perceived as undermining, the integrity of the appointment process or the governance of IFAD;
 - Attempting to influence the appointment process in an improper manner.

³ The Fund's Member States are classified as follows: List A (Member States that are contributors to IFAD resources, declare themselves ineligible for IFAD financing and services, and are not eligible for official development assistance (ODA) according to OECD definitions); List B (Member States that are members of OPEC and are contributors to IFAD resources; some of these may also be eligible for IFAD financing and services); and List C (Member States that are "developing countries" and have not declared themselves ineligible for IFAD financing and services; many of these are also contributors to IFAD resources). List C is further divided into sub-List C1 (countries in Africa); sub-List C2 (countries in Europe, Asia and the Pacific); and sub-List C3 (countries in Latin America and the Caribbean). Convenors (including co-Convenors, if any) of the Lists are the Member States' focal points for liaising with IFAD Management with the primary purposes of enhancing the functioning of the Fund through coordination, transparency and effectiveness; facilitating the work and decisions to be taken by the Executive Board and other governing bodies; improving communications between IFAD Management and the Board; and enhancing consultation.

⁴ Tellers are appointed by the Chairperson of the Governing Council. Following past practice, three representatives of IFAD Member States, one from each List (List A, List B and List C) will be appointed by the Chairperson. Once the voting process at the Governing Council session is concluded, the tellers are responsible for counting the votes. They are supported in their task by IFAD staff members, under the supervision of the Secretary of IFAD. When the counting of the votes is complete, the totals received by each nominee are entered on a tally sheet, which is signed by each teller and transmitted to the Chairperson of the Governing Council. If an automated voting system is being used, the totals are generated by the system and displayed on a tally sheet, which is verified and confirmed by the tellers.

Q4. How are candidates nominated?

A. In accordance with the By-laws for the Conduct of the Business of IFAD and the Report of the Governing Council Bureau on the Review of the Established Practice for the Process Leading to the Appointment of the President of IFAD ([GC 41/L.9](#)), approved by the Governing Council in 2018, the Secretary of IFAD sends out a call for nominations to the Governors of all Member States following the approval of the agenda of the forthcoming Governing Council session by the Executive Board at its September session. The call for nominations is accompanied by a list of questions – prepared by the List Convenors in consultation with the Governing Council Bureau – which candidates are invited to answer in writing if they so wish. Nominations are then submitted to the Secretary of IFAD by Member States, along with a curriculum vitae and the responses to the questions provided with the call for nominations. Unless the Bureau of the Council should decide otherwise, all nominations shall be submitted no less than 60 days before the opening of the session at which the appointment of the President is to be decided.

Q5. Can any Member State nominate candidates?

A. Yes, any Member State can nominate a candidate.

Q6. Can Member States nominate candidates who are nationals of another country?

A. According to the By-laws, nominations for the office of the President may be submitted to the Secretary of IFAD by Members. There is no requirement in the By-laws restricting the nominees to nationals of the Member State making the nomination.

Q7. How do Member States submit their nominations?

A. Nominations are submitted by Members through recognized officials and/or their designated channel of communication to the Secretary of IFAD using the following e-mail address: elections@ifad.org.

Q8. How is the integrity of the nominations ensured during the nomination process?

A. The Office of the Secretary is the sole keeper of all official nominations and implements the required procedures to confirm the nominations and safeguard their confidentiality.

Q9. What is the role of IFAD staff in the appointment process?

A. All staff are bound by IFAD's Code of Conduct with respect to the disclosure of confidential information and must comply with the provisions on relations with external parties and involvement in political activities. Staff members must behave impartially with respect to all candidates for the Presidency of IFAD, and neither publicly express their views concerning any candidate nor work in support of any candidacy. In response to a recommendation by the Governing Council Bureau, in September 2020, the IFAD Code of Conduct was revised to advise staff on the behaviour expected of them in relation to the appointment process, and clearly provide that a staff member's assistance to a candidate be made an explicit case of misconduct. The Code of Conduct states: "Staff members shall remain impartial at all times in the performance of their duties and shall avoid providing any direct or indirect assistance in connection with a candidacy (presumptive or actual) for the Presidency of IFAD. Any failure to comply with these obligations may result in the imposition of corrective or disciplinary measures [...]."

Selected IFAD staff members are involved in the appointment process under the supervision of the Secretary of IFAD. In accordance with IFAD's Code of Conduct, all staff who become aware of confidential aspects of the appointment process (such as the identity of the candidates prior to their official public disclosure) are responsible for ensuring that such information is not disclosed.

Selected IFAD staff may be directly involved in the process by participating in specific task forces responsible for logistical and administrative arrangements necessary for the voting process, and/or assigned to provide support to the tellers appointed by the Governing Council Chairperson to oversee the tallying of votes cast during each round of voting. The Office of the Secretary will take the necessary steps to establish such task forces.

Q10. When are the nominations communicated?

- A. The nominations must be communicated to all Members and the Bureau no less than 40 days prior to the session of the Council at which the appointment of the President will be considered.

Q11. How will the evolving COVID-19 pandemic affect the conduct of the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council and the process related to the appointment of the President?

- A. In light of the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ability to hold IFAD's governing body meetings at the seat of the Fund and to allow for timely preparations for the appointment of the President, in October 2020, the Governing Council approved amendments to its Rules of Procedure through a vote by correspondence. These amendments address, inter alia, the possibility of conducting the election of the President by electronic means, the possibility of holding sessions by virtual means, and the codification of a vote by acclamation as a potential method of appointment in the case of only one nominee; and in general, mitigate risks and ensure business continuity and flexibility for the future.

In accordance with the revised Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council, the Chairperson of the Governing Council Bureau, after consultation with the other members of the Bureau and the President, determined that the 2021 Governing Council session would be held by virtual means. Additional information on the process for the appointment of the President will be communicated accordingly.

Q12. Who votes for the President?

- A. All Member States are entitled to vote, each one casting the number of votes they have been allocated in membership votes and/or contribution votes. Updated information on Member States voting rights is posted regularly on the public IFAD website at <https://www.ifad.org/en/governance>, and on the public IFAD Member States Interactive Platform at <https://webapps.ifad.org/members>.

Information on the voting rights of IFAD Member States, including the updated vote allocations, will be shared with Governors on the first day of the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council (Wednesday, 17 February 2021). In this respect, and to allow for timely preparation of the appointment procedures, Member States are kindly requested to make replenishment payments, for which contribution votes will be allocated, no later than 5 p.m. (Rome time), Friday, 12 February 2021.

Q13. Must a Member State cast all its votes for a single candidate?

- A. Yes. Governors or, in their absence, Alternate Governors or, in the absence of both, members of delegations (hereinafter referred to as "voting representatives") shall cast the votes of the Member she/he represents in favour of a single person, in accordance with rule 41(2) of the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council.

Q14. How is a decision made on the appointment of the President of IFAD?

A. The election of the President of IFAD is conducted in accordance with rules 35(3), 38(1) and 41 of the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council.⁵

(i) By secret ballot

Voting takes place by secret ballot. The recent amendments to the Rules of Procedure introduce the possibility of using an automated voting system in addition to the use of paper ballots for in-presence sessions. In both cases, voting is carried out in such a way as to protect the integrity and secrecy of the process. Three tellers – one from each List and appointed by the Governing Council Chairperson – are responsible for overseeing the process and the counting of votes.

When voting is by paper ballot, the counting takes place in a dedicated room and the tellers are assisted by IFAD staff members designated for that purpose. When the counting of votes is completed, a tally sheet is prepared and signed by the three tellers. Once the voting process has been completed, the Governing Council session is reconvened. The Secretary of IFAD accompanies the tellers to the plenary where they hand over the results of the voting to the Chairperson to announce them to the plenary.

When voting is by electronic means, the tellers have a central oversight role and are given a portion of the electronic secret key⁶ required to unlock the counting of votes in the automated voting system. The votes cast can be counted only when the segments of the key are entered together into the system. When the counting of the votes is complete, the totals received by each nominee are generated by the automated voting system and displayed on a tally sheet, which is verified and confirmed by the tellers. The tellers give the tally sheet to the Chairperson, who announces the results of the vote. Should the results be final, the meeting will reconvene in open session and the Chairperson will announce the results to the Council.

(ii) By acclamation

In accordance with rule 41.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council, "In the case of only one nominee, the Council may use the method of acclamation to appoint the President."

Q15. When will the President-elect take office?

A. The President-elect of IFAD will be appointed by the Governing Council at its forty-fourth session in February 2021 and take office on 1 April 2021.

⁵ **Rule 35 Method of Taking Decisions, subparagraph 3:** "Secret ballots shall be taken by the casting of paper ballots* or, if available, through an electronic voting system, in such a way as to safeguard the secrecy and integrity of the secret ballot. Each Member shall have access to and the ability to cast, the specific number of votes to which they are entitled."

*In the case of paper ballots, each Governor shall be provided with one or more ballot papers each indicating a specific number of votes, which shall be so distributed that: (i) papers specifying any particular number of votes shall be received by at least four Governors, and (ii) the total number of votes specified on the papers received by any Governor shall equal the number of votes he is entitled to cast; each Governor may indicate his vote on all the papers he receives and deposit them in ballot boxes from which they shall be taken and counted by tellers appointed by the Chairman."

Rule 38 Elections, subparagraph 1: "Except as provided otherwise in respect of elections pursuant to Rule 40, all elections shall be held by secret ballot unless the Governing Council decides otherwise in an election where the number of candidates does not exceed the number of elective places to be filled."

Rule 41 President: "1. The appointment of the President shall be considered by the Governing Council at a private meeting, and voting shall be in accordance with Rule 38.1, unless otherwise decided by the Governing Council after considering a report of the Bureau thereon. 2. The Governing Council shall appoint the President by at least two-thirds of the total number of votes. In the case of only one nominee, the Council may use the method of acclamation to appoint the President. In the case of more than one nominee, if no nominee receives the required number of votes on the first ballot, a second ballot shall be taken in which the nominee who received the fewest votes shall not participate. This procedure shall be repeated until one nominee receives at least two thirds of the total number of votes or the Council decides that such balloting be discontinued and decision be taken on another date. Each Governor casting the votes of the Member he represents shall cast them in favour of a single person."

⁶ The system uses the Shamir key share scheme.

Timeline for the appointment process

Date	Activity
17 September 2020	The Secretary of IFAD sends out a call for nominations for the Presidency of IFAD to the Governors of all Member States.
17 September 2020	The announcement for the appointment of the President is posted on the IFAD website along with a press release.
	The Office of the Secretary issues a communication to all Governors forwarding the announcement and press release.
	A communication is sent to other United Nations agencies, organizations and international financial institutions, together with copies of the announcement and the press release.
23 November 2020 (midnight, Rome time)	Deadline for Member States to submit nominations to the Secretary of IFAD, and for receiving responses of candidates who choose to respond to the questions.
No later than 15 December 2020	A communication on the nominations is sent to Member States and the Bureau of the Governing Council, together with the candidates' curricula vitae and their written responses to the questions provided.
20 January, and, if needed, 21 January 2021	IFAD Member States meet with Presidential candidates (restricted participation).
17-18 February 2021	Voting and appointment of the President take place at the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council.
1 April 2021	President-elect begins term of office.

For more comprehensive and updated information on the appointment process, please visit:

- The Member States Interactive Platform: <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/president/>;
- The IFAD Mango Application, which can be downloaded from Apple App Store or Google Play;
- The IFAD website <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/news-detail/asset/42076183>.