



Investing in rural people

Welcoming statement by Mr William Roos, outgoing Vice-Chairperson of the forty-seventh session of the Governing Council

Distinguished Governors,
Delegates and observers,
Mr President of IFAD,
Dear IFAD colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

This would have been the occasion for the Chairperson of the Governing Council, Alex Alonso Contreras Miranda, to open this session as Chairperson of the Governing Council. Unfortunately, he was unable to attend and delegated to me the honour and pleasure of welcoming you to the forty-seventh session of IFAD's Governing Council.

First of all, in what context are we gathering? A difficult one, marked by increasing inequalities. Multiple crises are exacerbating already fragile situations.

Conflicts, natural disasters, economic turmoil pose a threat to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. We are already very far behind in meeting those goals.

What must we do now? We need, transformative change, we need innovative actions, we need urgent investments, public investments, but also investments by the private sector and other stakeholders. We need to find triggers for change, but also and especially to act on the ground. And it is there that IFAD intervenes.

The message I wish to convey in the name of us all is a message of hope. We have the necessary tools, technologies and innovations, and IFAD, I would say, is our intermediary for mobilizing these technologies, these innovations and producing concrete results, thanks to its expertise – thanks to the expertise of its teams. Of course, for that to happen, we must have financing.

I began with a statement about the present, but we are looking to the future. The IFAD13 Report sets out the Fund's medium-term trajectory. It emphasizes the challenges posed by fragile contexts, the protection of biodiversity and the strengthening of private sector mobilization, the source of more significant financing for sustainable rural development. A common thread runs across the different segments of this session: we must continue to shape IFAD even further – to ensure that it is ever more future-ready, ready to address the challenges of an evolving global context, and to respond to the needs of beneficiary countries.

Distinguished Governors,

This final message is for you. We sincerely hope that all of us will do our part when the time comes to mould the IFAD of the future. It is our duty, as Governors, to empower IFAD, to advocate with our governments, to raise awareness, to play our part in ensuring that IFAD reaches its full potential – transforming rural areas and investing in a food-secure future for all.

On that note, I declare this forty-seventh session of IFAD's Governing Council open.

I suggest we now turn to the business of this session and adopt the agenda.