



Date
11 February 2026

Time
10.15–13.30

Info
Italian Conference Room, open to all Governors/Heads of Delegation

Moderator
Corinne Woods
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GOVERNORS' ROUNDTABLE

IFAD14: Investing in Rural People for Food Security, Economic Growth and Stability

Rural transformation is a powerful engine for economic growth and global stability. Rural communities – the “first mile” of food systems – are home to nearly 80 per cent of the world’s poorest people and live at the frontline of food insecurity, climate shocks and migration pressures. While these communities face persistent challenges linked to market volatility, fragility and limited access to finance and services, they also hold immense, often untapped, potential. With the right investments, small-scale producers and rural enterprises can drive inclusive economic growth, generate employment, strengthen food security and build resilience in their communities; benefits that extend well beyond rural areas and contribute to national and global stability.

To unlock this economic potential, official development assistance is critical, but is not available at sufficient scale. While blended finance approaches offer promise, existing models remain slow, complex and limited in reach. Mobilizing private investment at scale is essential but investors continue to face barriers in rural markets, such as high perceived risk, fragmentation and lack of investable pipelines. Addressing these structural constraints is critical to unlock capital and empower rural producers and small and medium-sized enterprises as engines of inclusive transformation.

As the world’s only international financial institution (IFI) dedicated exclusively to agriculture and rural development, IFAD is uniquely positioned to address these constraints, working in locations often unreach ed by other forms of development finance. With its focus on rural areas and long-term engagement – including in low-income and fragile contexts – IFAD provides a vehicle for mobilizing, leveraging and directing capital towards rural economic transformation.

By bringing together governments, financial institutions, the private sector and rural communities, IFAD aligns financing with partnerships to extend reach and scale, strengthen local institutions, and ensure that resources flow to those who need them most.

The Fourteenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD14) represents a strategic opportunity to build on this role. Through an integrated investment framework centred on rural people, IFAD14 will remain rooted in IFAD's mission of improving agriculture and rural livelihoods, while adapting to country contexts and global challenges. It is proposed that IFAD14 focus on three priority areas:

- **Markets:** Unlocking rural potential by investing in small-scale producers to boost their production and connect to markets for better incomes.
- **Rural employment:** Empowering youth by investing in decent work for young rural people to build sustainable futures through farming and rural enterprise.
- **Resilience:** Building peaceful, adaptable rural communities by enabling communities to withstand shocks and fostering long-term stability.

Event Highlights

The Governing Council will consider the resolution on the establishment of the Fourteenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources, initiating a year-long consultation process among Member States and Management to set IFAD's strategic and operational directions for the 2028 to 2030 period.

This dialogue provides an important opportunity for Governors to shape the direction, ambition and focus of IFAD14 from the outset of the Consultation process. Governors are invited to reflect on how, under IFAD14, IFAD can most effectively drive the transformation of rural areas and communities, strengthen food security, and invest in inclusive economic growth and stability. Governors' perspectives will help inform the IFAD14 Consultation process and the future strategy of IFAD.

Discussion Questions

The IFAD14 Consultation comes at a time of heightened demand for development finance and ever greater pressure on public resources. This context calls for clarity, focus and strategic choices.

Governors are invited to share their reflections on the questions **below to inform the focus for IFAD14** and to maximize impact:

- Transforming food systems and rural economies is increasingly central to growth, jobs and stability. Which interventions have shown the strongest results in unlocking markets, generating employment and building resilience in rural communities?
- As new technologies and financing tools emerge, how can development finance better unlock private and domestic investment in rural markets and value chains at scale?
- How can governments, development finance institutions, the private sector and other actors work together more effectively to mobilize resources and deliver food security, inclusive growth and stability?