

Consultation on the Thirteenth Replenishment
of IFAD's Resources
Second Session

Opening Statement by
President Alvaro Lario

IFAD headquarters,
Rome
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Distinguished representatives, a very warm welcome.

As we gather today, we are faced with a stark reality. More than 700 million people are suffering from hunger. Global temperatures on the rise. And catastrophic events such as droughts, floods, wildfires, and record heat waves are devastating communities around the globe. The urgency of the situation cannot be overstated.

Now, imagine what the world will look like 10 or 20 years from now.

This is the timeline we at IFAD must consider. This is the timeframe farmers look at when planting new trees, or building irrigation systems. And it is the timeline governments must keep in mind when designing public investment programmes.

During the IFAD13 period, the global temperature rise is projected to reach the critical 1.5 degree threshold. In fact, it may well go higher.

For each degree of warming, global wheat production will decline by 6 per cent; maize by 7.4 per cent. Not to mention the devastating impact on fisheries and other climate-sensitive sectors.

Now, ask yourselves, what does this mean for the countries and people that you represent? What does it mean for the rural populations that IFAD serves? What does it mean for global hunger?

Unfortunately, without urgent investments to adapt and build resilience, we will face a future marked by crisis, conflict, hunger, instability and forced migration.

Dear Delegates,

As IFAD's Member States, we have committed to eliminating poverty and hunger by 2030 and transforming food systems. To succeed in such challenging times, the status quo is simply not good enough. There is no escaping the fact that higher funding for agriculture and food systems is needed – for IFAD, and across the whole system.

When we last met, I emphasized the need to significantly increase investment in resilience to break the vicious circle that keeps us trapped in a cycle of crisis. This is precisely what IFAD excels at.

Hunger and poverty, unrest and instability, displacement and migration, are all inter-connected. This is why three quarters of the world's poorest people live in fragile situations.

IFAD is the world's foremost fund for investing in resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems. Our commitment to this cause was recently recognized in the G7's Hiroshima Action Statement.

There is clear evidence that investing in agriculture and rural development is one the most effective ways to combat hunger, poverty, fragility, migration, and the loss of precious ecosystems and biodiversity.

At IFAD, we prioritize climate change adaptation in our investments. We place special emphasis on empowering women, youth, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups. Year after year we deliver tangible results, improving the livelihoods, incomes and resilience of tens of millions of rural people. Simultaneously, we contribute to increased food production, job creation, and the economic growth of their nations.

While we acknowledge that we are not perfect, and constantly strive to improve, I am proud to say that IFAD is one of the most highly rated development organizations globally. We offer a unique value proposition that no other international development organization can match. IFAD provides extensive reach, outstanding results, an exceptional return on investment, all packaged in a clear, highly focused approach.

Despite all of this, our replenishment targets have remained in the US\$1.2 to US\$1.5 billion range since IFAD8.

And though we have introduced new funding sources and increased cofinancing and supplementary resources, our core funding has stagnated around US\$1 billion per year for a decade.

We have maximized the impact of every dollar you have provided, even while granting billions to countries in debt distress. This demonstrates our ability to deliver more and achieve remarkable results with the resources at our disposal.

Consider all the promises made over time – the SDGs, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Food Systems Summit, and the pledge to build back better from COVID. It is disheartening to think that we are still considering targets for IFAD13 that are effectively the same as those for IFAD8.

Over the next two days, my priority is to ensure that we maintain a high ambition and work towards a comprehensive package that guarantees the fulfilment of our aspirations.

Since assuming the IFAD Presidency, I have had the privilege of meeting political leaders from around the world. We have engaged in discussions about the impact of food crisis, climate crises, conflicts and migration, in their respective countries and globally. This is now a global truth for G7, G20, and List A, B and C countries alike.

IFAD13 provides a global framework for scaling up our collective response, with a specific focus on small-scale farmers and impoverished rural women and men who play a pivotal role in local and national food systems both today, and in the years to come.

We must invest today in transforming our food systems and improving the livelihoods of the world's poorest people. IFAD13 is an opportunity the global community cannot afford to miss.

By working together and investing now, we can enhance the resilience of small-scale farmers and food systems so they can withstand future shocks – and even prevent them. We can increase food production and quality, create more and better jobs, empower rural communities, and ensure inclusivity and sustainability.

Above all, we can honour our commitment to a world without poverty and hunger.

Thank you.