
Closing Statement by IFAD's President

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Excellencies, distinguished delegates, colleagues and friends,

The dialogue over these last two days has been substantive and very focused. I understand that we have a shared understanding in this room of what is actually at stake right now. There is also no ambiguity about the moment we are in, the existence of recurrent shocks that we are suffering, which are making rural communities – especially in the least developed countries – less able to absorb the consequences. That shared understanding is the foundation on which IFAD14 is built.

Through these two days of discussion, we have also clearly come to a shared conviction about what is IFAD's role. All Member States affirmed the importance and relevance of this institution – on the mandate, the reach, the model and the results. If IFAD does not invest in this first mile, the gap does not get filled.

I heard also broad support for the three priorities – rural markets, rural employment and resilience – and for the direction of travel on private sector engagement, innovation and the shift from mainstreaming to integration. There were also very specific questions on how sovereign and non-sovereign operations connect in practice and IFAD's ambition on NSOs, on what integration means at the country level, on IFAD's comparative advantage in fragile and conflict-affected situations, and also during the financial scenarios on concessionality, on the possibility of a lower scenario and on private sector ambition. The answers to these questions, as the Chairperson has said, hopefully will be reflected in the next draft, with the conversations that we are going to have with many of you, as well as with the Chair.

We came today to listen – to listen to what support there was for the direction of travel, which I think has been supported. We also have a clear picture of where there is convergence, where discussions are still needed, and where we have to be sharper in the report. We also need to do more background work on a number of the items that you raised.

The teams will be working on revising the draft report, sharpening the financial framework and developing the commitments and results architecture in response to what we have just heard on this last agenda item.

It's clear to me that nothing about this moment is simple. As I have said before, it is clear that the context is harder, the resources are more constrained, and the needs are greater than ever. And there will be real choices for all of us to make in terms of scale, depth and priorities, and also about what we can promise and what we can deliver. The alternative though – underinvesting in rural people and systems that anchor food security and stability – has a higher, higher cost. The scale of what we can achieve together in IFAD14 and what we can deliver depends on the shared commitment that we will be building over the next months. We look forward very much to working with all of you, and let me thank all of you for your commitment and the commitment of your countries. For those of you who are travelling back to your countries, I wish you a good flight.

Thank you.