
Opening Statement by IFAD's President

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Excellencies, Governors, Distinguished delegates, Colleagues and Friends,

Thank you for being here at the opening of the IFAD14 consultation.

In a fragmented world, stability is built in economies, in communities, and very often in rural places, where opportunity may be scarce, but potential is immense.

This is why our discussion today matters.

We meet at a moment shaped by converging pressures: geopolitical division, constrained public finance, rising climate shocks, and persistent fragility across food systems and rural livelihoods.

Investing in rural transformation today is more than a development priority, it becomes a practical and constructive response to social cohesion, creating jobs, reinforcing resilience and supporting the economic foundations of national stability.

This is the space where IFAD works. And it is the reason this Consultation carries real importance.

Over recent years, together, we have been preparing IFAD for a moment like this one.

We have strengthened our financial foundations, expanded cofinancing, diversified funding sources, and reinforced our ability to translate Member contributions into larger and longer-lasting investments in rural economies.

Today, IFAD brings together concessional finance, borrowed resources and partnerships to connect rural producers and enterprises to markets, services and technology. At the same time, we preserve concessionality for those who need it most and maintain the universal character that defines this institution.

These reforms were undertaken because we understood that a time would come when public resources would be tighter and expectations for impact higher. Every dollar must demonstrate clear, measurable value — in results, in resilience, and in the lives of people.

That time is now.

IFAD14 is not simply another replenishment cycle. It is a test of our collective capacity to act with realism, unity and purpose in a more uncertain world.

Looking ahead, our direction is clear.

We must deepen market integration and expand rural employment, especially for young people whose opportunities will shape the stability of entire regions.

We must strengthen resilience to climate shocks and fragility, protecting livelihoods and productive systems in the face of growing uncertainty.

And we must mobilize finance at scale while safeguarding concessionality, maintaining IFAD's universality, and ensuring that ambition and financial discipline advance together.

Our task is to remain ambitious in our purpose, and to ensure that our programme of work remain relevant to the scale of the challenges before us.

There is no lasting national stability without shared global stability. And there is no shared stability without vibrant rural economies.

In that sense, investing together in rural transformation is one of the most direct ways to secure national interest.

Dear colleagues,

This Consultation is an exercise in collective stewardship. It brings together Member States with diverse perspectives and different constraints.

IFAD will not solve every global challenge. We are clear about our mandate. We have the experience, partnerships and financial model to deliver meaningful and lasting change.

And in a time of fragmentation, institutions that still enable cooperation and deliver results are more valuable than ever.

IFAD is more than a source of finance. It is also an institution where shared governance sustains trust, and where collective action remains possible even when the wider environment is uncertain.

That spirit of shared ownership is the foundation of this institution's strength.

The year ahead offers a genuine opportunity: to ensure that this institution remains a pragmatic force for stability, opportunity and hope for rural communities.

Thank you for your attention.