

**STATEMENT BY INDIA AT THE 41<sup>st</sup> SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF IFAD, 13-14 FEBRUARY 2018, ROME, ITALY**

Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Governors,  
Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am extremely happy to represent India at this 41<sup>st</sup> session of the Governing Council of IFAD.

I must congratulate Mr. Gilbert Hounbo, the new President of Executive Board of IFAD who has assumed the charge of the President on 1 April, 2017. Mr Hounbo has vast experience of working with UN agencies like ILO and UNDP. Mr. Hounbo's persuasive and collaborative approach would lead the IFAD to the new heights of success. My best wishes to Mr. Hounbo.

I would like to thank President Hounbo and his staff for organizing this session and for the opportunity it provides to us all to deliberate on the theme of “**From fragility to long-term resilience: Investing in sustainable rural economies**”.

I appreciate the contribution of IFAD towards elimination of rural poverty and hunger across the world.

IFAD intends now to enhance its Programme of Loans and Grants (PoLG) from US\$ 3.2 billion in IFAD-10 (2016-18) to US\$ 3.5 billion in IFAD-11 (2019-21). This increased programme, in the face of challenges being faced all around for development partner resources, is a good size of programme and which would certainly contribute its share in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals set out in the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development.

We know that millions people around the world are still living in a vulnerable and fragile situations of low institutional capacities, social and political instability, as well as incidence of violent conflict which are undermining the prospects for sustainable development and threatening the livelihoods of the rural people with whom IFAD works.

IFAD is making good efforts to address the challenges faced by women and girls in vulnerable and conflict situations and in the area of empowerment of rural women's

Unemployment among youths is a major cause of many social evils. IFAD must come forward to invest in the sectors which addresses the problems of youths especially the rural youths. IFAD has an important role to play in taking the rural populace out of poverty and hunger. I am happy to say that IFAD is taking many steps to enhance rural people's productive capacities, link them to the markets, and strengthen the environmental sustainability and climate resilience of their economic enterprise.

Agriculture is the means of main livelihood of a majority of populations in the rural areas across the developing world, therefore IFAD's interventions should also result in improved agricultural productivity, food security, off-farm income and rural employment, environmentally sustainable technologies, and efficient use of water resources.

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Almost 75% of the world's population lives in rural areas. IFAD must focus on the rural area to achieve the SDGs, particularly SDG 1 (no poverty) and SDG 2 (zero hunger). IFAD has a key role to play in ending rural poverty and hunger, addressing climate change, improving nutrition, empowering rural women and girls, creating opportunities for rural youth, and addressing the challenges of fragility and migration from rural areas.

Our Government's national priorities are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. Inclusive Growth (Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas) has been given the topmost priority by the Government of India. Rural Connectivity has been considered as the core of the development by the Government of India.

India stand committed to extend all possible support to IFAD.

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