

Innovation talk 9 June

Topic: How to deliver agile sustainable procurement through innovative approaches?

Opening remarks: Thomas Eriksson

Thank you Gladys and thank you everyone for attending. Most of all, I would like to thank our panellists for accepting our invitation and I would like to thank Priscilla for organizing this discussion.

In IFAD we went through a wide-ranging reform of our project procurement framework. Literally no stone has been left unturned, we reworked everything from supervision to our policies and bidding documents into which we integrated our safeguards. Our policy on safeguards has also been reformed over the last year.

So we have been quite busy at IFAD in reforming our operational practises and introducing international best practise. We did this because procurement is the key process that links financing to the outputs and outcomes that a project achieves. Procurement therefore plays a key role to introduce and promote good standards in transparency, sustainability and safeguards in local markets.

While we want our projects to implement the best requirements possible in terms of safeguards, this will also lead to a quite rigid process as each additional requirement increases complexity – for the project and for the market. In the end you might achieve very little if your processes are unsuitable for the market or if innovations are not relevant for the local environment.

Therefore, we also need to be able to deploy flexible and agile procurement solutions that rapidly incorporate feedback and improve outputs in an iterative way. This is not always easy when you are following a strict and rigorous procurement framework – imposed by the national law or the donor.

This is exactly the tension that we want to explore today and I am already very much looking forward to the discussion and all the input that I will take away from it. With this, I would like to give the floor to Enzo for his keynote. Enzo, please go ahead!