

Pilot: Flexible teleworking arrangements

Purpose

1. The ongoing transformation in working modalities that has been triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic provided an opportunity to review IFAD's current teleworking arrangements, adapt policies and integrate a more conducive approach in favour of remote work, while remaining in line with the new field-based structure of the Organization.
2. IFAD is committed to offer staff members a flexible and family-friendly work environment as part of its duty of care. As part of its commitment, IFAD will implement a pilot to provide additional flexibility to staff through a set of different working arrangements to best meet the needs of the organization and the individual, contributing to the enhancement of staff's work-life harmony.
3. Not all job profiles/roles or personal circumstances allow staff to avail of all flexible working and teleworking arrangements. For example, representational roles, managerial roles and/or highly technical roles, are typically linked to work/services delivered on site (on IFAD's Headquarters or IFAD Offices¹). These functions require close contact and coordination with different stakeholders, including government officials, Member States, other organizations, project personnel or beneficiaries on a continued basis, and may not be compatible with teleworking from outside commuting distance² of the assigned duty station in a regular manner.
4. IFAD takes a people-centric approach by (i) putting staff members' well-being, safety and security at its centre and (ii) strengthening the leadership role of its managers through accountability. The flexible teleworking arrangements provided in this pilot are based on mutual trust, which is key to a successful professional relationship between managers and their team members. In this respect, both managers' and staff members' commitment are essential to ensure the success of this pilot.

General principles

5. Staff members availing of any of the flexible working arrangements remain subject to IFAD rules and regulations, as well as administrative policies and procedures at all times, even if teleworking from a location outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station. Staff are required to uphold IFAD standards of conduct while teleworking and, as international civil servants, shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner befitting their status.
6. Staff members teleworking from a location outside commuting distance of their assigned duty station will continue to enjoy privileges and immunities as are necessary for the independent exercise of their function in connection with the Fund in the territory of an IFAD Member State, as established in Article 10 of the Agreement Establishing IFAD. When submitting a request to telework from outside the assigned duty station, staff members shall specify the country from which the teleworking is being proposed. The Organization has the discretion to approve or reject the teleworking request, on the basis of a review of the proposed teleworking location.³
7. Staff members' teleworking locations are expected to be secure, conducive to concentration and suitably supplied with the necessary business tools and equipment to carry out their assignments. It is the staff members' responsibility to protect and manage records and other sensitive information

¹ For the purposes of these Guidelines, IFAD Offices refers to IFAD Regional Offices, IFAD Multi-Country Offices, IFAD Country Offices and IFAD Liaison Offices.

² Commuting distance is defined as 150 km and/or 1.5 hours, whichever less, from the relevant IFAD Headquarters or Office.

³ Elements may include ratification/adherence to the 1947 Convention on the P&I of the Specialized Agencies, the existence of a Host Country Agreement, security classification and concerns, etc.

stored on teleworking devices and transmitted across external networks. Staff members are required to keep IFAD property and information safe and secure.

8. Any cost related to a request of teleworking arrangement - within or outside commuting distance of the staff member's assigned duty station - shall be covered exclusively by the staff member, including travel costs, which is considered personal travel. The Fund shall also not be liable for any operating costs involved in carrying out assignments from the teleworking location, including any incidental costs associated with the use of or damage to personal equipment or property. Management of IFAD equipment will continue to be governed by the provisions of Section 1121 of IFAD Property Policies and Procedures, as these may be amended from time to time.
9. Prior to the start of the agreed-upon teleworking arrangement, the staff member and his/her supervisor should agree on the modalities, duration, deliverables and other relevant elements of the arrangement.
10. Staff members teleworking from any location will remain covered by insurance related to compensation for death, injury or illness attributable to the performance of official duties on behalf of IFAD as specified in paragraphs 30 to 33 below.
11. Teleworking arrangements of any kind are not a right or entitlement. As such, the approval or not of any teleworking request cannot be challenged or appealed through IFAD internal grievance mechanisms. Likewise, the discontinuation of any approved teleworking arrangement by IFAD cannot be challenged or appealed through the internal grievance mechanisms.

Eligibility

12. With the exception of Working from Anywhere (WFA) arrangement as approved by the President (see paragraph 46 below), the new teleworking arrangements apply to IFAD staff members (including staff members on loan) who have returned and worked from their assigned duty station following the established return-to duty date of 15 July 2021, published through PB/2021/04 dated 18 May 2021.
13. Staff members requesting to telework from outside commuting distance of their assigned duty station must have returned and worked at their assigned duty station (at IFAD premises or within commuting distance) for a period of not less than two continuous months (with the exception of Working from Anywhere). Any period of teleworking outside commuting distance of the duty station after July 15 2021 will postpone the eligibility of the staff member by the same number of days of the teleworking period. Annual leave taken after 15 July 2021 will be counted against the two-month requirement.
14. These provisions shall not apply to individuals holding a non-staff contract, unless otherwise decided by the same approving authority as for staff's requests.

Responsibilities and conditions

15. Teleworking requires a high level of mutual commitment and trust between supervisors and staff.
16. Direct line supervisors and Division Directors/Heads of Unit⁴ or Head of IFAD Offices⁵ are responsible for ensuring there is adequate office presence at all times and that staff are able to comply with applicable provisions and conditions before approving teleworking requests, in particular they are responsible for:
 - (a) Effectively coordinating staff members' absence and/or teleworking period(s) as deemed most appropriate and effective to deliver the Divisional/Unit work programme, ensuring an office presence of at least 50 per cent of the allowed office occupancy in the specific IFAD premises at all times;

⁴ For the purposes of these Guidelines, Heads of Unit refer only to Heads of Unit at IFAD Headquarters.

⁵ For the purposes of these Guidelines, Heads of IFAD Offices refer to Regional Director for Regional Offices, Heads for Multi-country Offices, Country Director for Country Offices and Heads for Liaison Offices.

- (b) Applying the provisions in a consistent, transparent and fair manner;
 - (c) Promoting a balance between staff members' well-being and the business needs of the division, and encouraging a healthy separation between work and personal life;
 - (d) Ensuring that teleworking requests are properly recorded, monitored and compliant with the provisions in place; and
 - (e) Submitting to HRD any request of teleworking from outside the duty station for a period longer than 3 months for the necessary approvals.
17. Staff members are required to ensure that all applicable provisions and conditions are met before requesting to telework, in particular they are responsible for:
- (a) Working for the equivalent number of hours required by their respective office schedule;
 - (b) Respecting and being reachable at any time during core hours, in line with the relevant office schedule of the staff member's assigned duty station, or those hours agreed upon with their supervisor, by remote connection such as e-mail and videoconferencing;
 - (c) Complying with and being solely responsible for any potential tax implications, work permit, visa requirement and other accreditation implication connected with working outside their assigned duty station;
 - (d) Complying with travel restrictions and local quarantine, isolation, lockdown and COVID-19 testing requirements at the travel destination, and at their assigned duty station upon return; and
 - (e) Ensuring they are able to return to their assigned duty station at the end of the approved teleworking period or if/when requested to do so by the organization.
18. The Human Resources Division is responsible for:
- (a) Provide advice on the implementation and monitor the application of the teleworking arrangements during this pilot, reporting on a quarterly basis on the utilization;
 - (b) Review teleworking requests for periods longer than three months; and
 - (c) Take action on any remuneration changes by adjusting the staff members' benefits and entitlements, as applicable.

Teleworking arrangements

19. Teleworking will be allowed within or outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station. The following teleworking arrangements are established in a pilot modality of one calendar year:
- A. Hybrid Teleworking:
 - Teleworking up to three working days per week **OR** up to ten consecutive working days per calendar months, without justification;
 - Teleworking for more than ten consecutive days, with a duly substantiated request from the staff member.
 - B. Work from Anywhere (WFA): 100% teleworking.
20. Requests for teleworking are made through the Absence Management System (with the exception of WFA arrangements) and shall be approved as follows:

Teleworking Period	Approving authority
Up to 3 working days per week	Supervisor (without justification)
Up to 10 consecutive working days per calendar month (including consecutive days continuing into the next calendar month) Example: 24 May to 6 June 2021	Supervisor (without justification)
More than 10 consecutive working days per calendar month (including consecutive days continuing into the next months) up to three consecutive calendar months. Example: 24 May to 23 June 2021	Division Director/Head or Unit at Headquarters or Heads of IFAD Offices, after endorsement by the supervisor, based on a duly substantiated request from the staff member. Under this specific

	arrangement, staff members shall not exceed six cumulative months of teleworking during the pilot period.
More than 3 consecutive calendar months Staff members' entitlements and conditions of service will be adjusted as of the first day of the fourth month of teleworking from a location outside commuting distance of the staff members' assigned duty station.	Associate Vice-President and Director HRD, after endorsement by the supervisor and Division Director/Head of Unit at IFAD Headquarters or Head of IFAD Office, based on a duly substantiated request from the staff member. Under this specific arrangement, staff members shall not exceed six cumulative months of teleworking during the pilot period.
100% of time under the Work From Anywhere arrangement (for a limited number of positions)	President

21. In order to support the on-boarding of new staff members and facilitate their integration and rapport with their colleagues and team(s), newly appointed staff members joining IFAD are normally not eligible to telework outside commuting distance of their assigned duty station during the first three months after their entry-on-duty date.
22. Notwithstanding any approved teleworking arrangement as set forth in paragraph 20, including approved teleworking outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station, the teleworking arrangement may be discontinued at any time, should the interests of IFAD so warrant. As such, staff members on approved teleworking outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station may be recalled to their assigned duty station based on business exigencies. Where possible, the supervisor should give sufficient notice to the staff member, proportionate to the teleworking period and the travel time between the duty station and the teleworking location as applicable. In such circumstances, travel costs for the staff member may be borne by the Organization. Travel costs of spouses and/or dependents are not eligible for reimbursement.
23. In the event a staff member is granted approval to telework from a location outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station, the change of teleworking location will not count towards meeting mobility requirements. As per the Mobility Framework, the Standard Duration of Assignment (SDA) is defined as the number of years of assignment to a position on the basis of the ICSC hardship classification of the duty station the position is associated with.

Staff members with a representational, managerial and/or technical role requiring delivery on site

24. Given the strategic relevance of IFAD's Change Reform, including the on-going decentralization efforts, staff members holding a position that entails representational, managerial and/or highly technical activities, which are typically linked to work/services delivered on site and require close contact and coordination with different stakeholders on a continued basis, will normally not be suitable for teleworking on a regular manner from a location outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station. Such roles may include, but are not limited to, positions at senior management level; positions at Director level, including Regional Directors; Country Director positions; positions managing and/or supporting country programmes; and Technical Specialist positions. The determination of positions/roles that may not be suitable for teleworking on a regular manner from a location outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station rests with the relevant Associate Vice-President on the basis of business requirements.
25. Staff members with representational, managerial and/or highly technical duties may avail of teleworking outside commuting distance of their assigned duty station for up to 5 consecutive working days per calendar month (including consecutive days continuing into the next calendar month) or up to 15 consecutive days in a three-month period, without justification, to be approved by the direct line supervisor.

26. Direct line supervisors are expected to approve such requests, unless business exigencies do not allow for the particular request or when the requested arrangement would otherwise not be in IFAD's interest.
27. Any additional request to telework from a location outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station of staff members with a representational, managerial and/or highly technical role may be approved on an exceptional basis based on a duly substantiated request by the Associate Vice-President of the relevant Department.

Performance Management

28. It is important that the staff member's performance be monitored throughout the teleworking arrangement. The teleworking arrangement might be discontinued in case of performance shortcomings, as assessed by the supervisor and the relevant approving authority.

Recording of teleworking

29. Staff members are responsible for updating their teleworking record in the Absence Management System (AMS), selecting the absence type 'Telework Outside Duty Station', specifying in the field 'Teleworking Location' under 'Additional information' the name of the city and country they are teleworking from, indicating whether they are teleworking from their home station (HS) or a third location (TL) and providing the teleworking location address in the requestor comment box. Staff members must attach the approval of the relevant approving authority when different from the supervisor.

Staff Compensation Plan

30. Staff members holding an indefinite or fixed-term contract covered under the staff compensation plan as provided for in accordance with their terms of service and/or as expressly stated in their contract and who are teleworking from any location will remain covered by the staff compensation plan related to compensation for death, injury or illness attributable to the performance of official duties on behalf of IFAD.
31. If an accident occurs away from IFAD Headquarters or IFAD Offices during teleworking, the resulting injury, illness or death may be considered as service-incurred if it occurs at the duty station home address officially recorded with IFAD or another approved working location/address formally communicated in the AMS for the teleworking arrangement at the time of request. In addition, for the accident to be considered service-incurred, it must:
 - (a) Have occurred during official working hours (8.30-17.00 or any other approved working hours of the assigned duty station), unless at the time of the incident the staff member was engaged in an activity outside the scope of the staff member's official duties (see non-exhaustive list of exclusions below); or
 - (b) Have occurred outside working hours, if the staff member can demonstrate that he/she was engaged in activities clearly within the scope of his/her official duties.
32. In view of the above, incidents occurring in the following circumstances would typically be excluded:
 - (a) teleworking in locations other than the official duty station home address recorded with IFAD or approved teleworking location/address recorded in the AMS at the time of the teleworking request (eg. internet points or other public spaces);
 - (b) during breaks in the performance of official duties (eg. meals, rest, etc.), even if occurring at the staff member's official teleworking duty station home address recorded with IFAD or temporary teleworking address recorded in the AMS at the time of the request;
 - (c) during breaks occurring in locations that are not the staff member's official teleworking duty station home address recorded with IFAD or temporary teleworking address recorded in the AMS at the time of the request (eg. walk around the neighbourhood);
 - (d) while performing activities outside the scope of the staff member's official duties, such as physical exercise/work-out/running.

33. If a staff member is availing of teleworking, no commuting to IFAD Headquarters or IFAD Office is required. As such, there shall be no “commuting incident” during teleworking periods recognized/considered as service-incurred incident.

A. Hybrid teleworking

34. The new hybrid teleworking arrangement allows staff members to alternate between reporting to the staff member’s work place at IFAD Headquarters or IFAD Offices and teleworking from another location, which can be within our outside commuting distance of their assigned duty station.

Teleworking up to three working days per week OR up to ten consecutive working days per calendar months

35. Requests for three days of teleworking in a week or ten consecutive days in a calendar month shall be submitted on a monthly basis (during the first week of the month) and cannot be combined.
36. Direct line supervisors are expected to approve this kind of hybrid teleworking requests, unless business exigencies do not allow for the particular request or when the requested arrangement would otherwise not be in IFAD’s best interest. Direct line supervisors shall inform the staff member if his/her request for this hybrid working arrangement is not approved, providing the reasons.
37. Authorized hybrid teleworking from any location during the pilot year will have no impact on the conditions of service of staff.

Periods of more than ten consecutive days per calendar month

38. Any request to telework for a period of more than ten consecutive days per calendar month from a location within or outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station shall be accompanied by a duly substantiated justification submitted by the staff member.
39. Such requests may be approved by the authorities indicated in paragraph 20 above and will take into consideration the business needs of the Division/Department and/or the best interest of IFAD. Under this specific arrangement, staff members shall not exceed six cumulative months of teleworking during the pilot period.
40. Authorized teleworking from a location within or outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station of more than ten consecutive calendar days and up to three months, as well as authorized teleworking from a location within commuting distance of the assigned duty station for a period longer than three consecutive months have no impact on the conditions of service of staff.

Impact on conditions of service of staff

41. Teleworking arrangements from a location outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station shall affect a staff member’s conditions of service if the period of teleworking is longer than three consecutive months. Staff members’ remuneration, entitlements and benefits shall be adjusted as of the first day of the fourth month of teleworking from a location other than the staff members’ assigned duty station.
42. Staff members requesting to telework from a location outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station for a period longer than three consecutive months must be legally authorized to live and work in the country of teleworking. The staff member is solely and exclusively responsible to comply with any potential tax implications, work permit, visa requirement and other accreditation implication connected with working in the selected location.
43. For the purpose of counting the period of teleworking outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station for the adjustment of conditions of service, the continuity of the teleworking period will

be broken only if the staff member returns to the duty station for a period of three continuous months or longer while in active service. Any period of leave, duty travel or temporary return to the duty stations for less than three continuous months does not break the continuity of the teleworking period for the purpose of adjustments set out in paragraph 44 below.

44. When an International Professional staff member teleworks for more than three consecutive months from a location outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station, his/her remuneration, entitlements and benefits shall be adjusted as follows:
- (a) base salary – no adjustment;
 - (b) post adjustment: the post adjustment multiplier will be adjusted to the lower between the teleworking location and the staff member's duty station (where there are multiple post adjustments within the country of teleworking location, the post adjustment multiplier of the capital city will be applied, regardless of the actual teleworking location within the country);
 - (c) mobility incentive: suspended.
 - (d) rental subsidy: suspended.
 - (e) hardship allowance, non-family service allowance and rest and recuperation travel: suspended.
 - (f) Relocation, if and where applicable, adjusted to pay the lower between the teleworking location and the staff member's duty station.
 - (g) education grant (with the exception of special education grant), home leave travel and accrual of home leave points: suspended.
 - (h) accrual towards repatriation grant: suspended.
45. When a locally recruited staff member teleworks for more than three consecutive months from a location outside commuting distance of the assigned duty station, the staff member shall continue to be entitled to salary and other family- or language-related allowances applicable at the duty station the staff member was recruited in and the position is associated with. The staff member will continue to be considered as locally recruited and no relocation benefit applies.

B. Work from anywhere arrangement

46. The Work From Anywhere (WFA) is a new teleworking arrangement which will be implemented during the one year pilot and foresees staff teleworking 100% of the time from a location of their choice, in accordance with paragraph 6. WFA will be considered and granted in exceptional cases as outlined in paragraphs 48 and 49 below.
47. Staff members approved to work under WFA must be legally authorized to live and work in the country of teleworking. The staff member is solely and exclusively responsible to comply with any potential tax implications, work permit, visa requirement and other accreditation implication connected with working in the selected location.

Determination of the positions

48. The WFA arrangement is not suitable for all positions in the organization. The applicable criteria to determine whether a position can be performed fully remotely includes but is not limited to the following elements:
- (a) Requirement for 'in-person' delivery of services;
 - (b) Strategic factors which require duty station presence from a representational perspective;
 - (c) Delivery of services is required in a similar time zone of the client;
 - (d) Requirement of an office equipment and/or technical equipment beyond standard.
49. In accordance with the above-mentioned paragraph, the President, in consultation with the relevant Associate Vice-President and the Director HRD, will approve the position(s) that may be worked under WFA.

Impact on conditions of service of staff

50. WFA arrangements shall affect a staff member's conditions of service. Staff members' remuneration, entitlements and benefits shall be adjusted as of the first day of the approved WFA arrangement.
51. International Professional staff members on a WFA arrangement shall be entitled to the following:
- (a) base salary;
 - (b) post adjustment: the post adjustment multiplier will be the lower between the confirmed teleworking location and the position's associated duty station (where there are multiple post adjustment within the country of teleworking location, the post adjustment multiplier of the capital city will be considered, regardless of the actual location of teleworking within the country);
 - (c) family-related allowances (e.g. spouse allowance, single parent allowance, child allowance, etc. as applicable)
52. The following entitlements or accrual thereof will not apply in case of international professional staff on WFA arrangement:
- (a) Relocation and expatriate benefits (such as settling-in, relocation travel and shipment, accrual towards repatriation grant, education grant, home leave travel and accrual of home leave points);
 - (b) Duty station-related benefits (such as rental subsidy, hardship allowance, mobility incentive, danger pay, R&R, etc.).
53. For locally-recruited staff members who avail of WFA arrangements, no change is envisaged in the remuneration package. The staff member shall continue to be entitled to salary and other family- or language-related allowances applicable at the duty station the staff member was recruited in and the position is associated with. The staff member will continue to be considered as locally recruited and no relocation benefit applies.
54. A change of teleworking location of staff members upon approval of the WFA working arrangement will not count towards meeting mobility requirements. As per the Mobility Framework, the Standard Duration of Assignment (SDA) is defined as the number of years of assignment to a position on the basis of the ICSC hardship classification of the duty station the position is associated with.