

# Former FAO and Other UN Staff Association

Associazione dei Pensionati della FAO e di altre Organizzazioni delle Nazioni Unite



**Newsbrief 116**  
**March 2022**

## **A Word from the President on Behalf of Your Executive Committee**

### **ALSO IN THIS ISSUE**

- A Word from the President
- News from FFOA Advisory Committees
- Medical Insurance
- Pension Matters
- Social Support and Recreational Activities
- Membership
- New Members
- In Memoriam
- News from UN Organizations
- News from Staff Associations
- Your Good Health
- News from the Membership

This is the first Newsbrief of 2022 and I take this opportunity to wish all our members and their families a healthy, happy and fulfilling 2022. The past year has been difficult and limiting for many of us and hopefully we are coming to the end of the pandemic and we will be able to achieve a new normalcy with enhanced freedom to travel and engage in all those activities we were deprived of over the past two years.

Your Committee has remained active over the past two years looking after the interests of our membership. We continued to monitor our Health Insurance plan performance and engaged in discussions with Cigna and the Agency administrations over performance and on premiums to be paid in 2022. We managed to hold a virtual General Assembly and reviewed pension issues with the Pension Fund and FAFICS. Whilst Executive Committee elections were postponed last year, we have started planning to hold elections later this year. Assuming that conditions will continually improve in coming months we hope to hold the 2022 General Assembly in October in WFP; this will be a hybrid Assembly with limited in person presence and Zoom streaming globally.

Your Executive Committee has agreed to implement changes in life membership conditions and besides allowing members to change from annual to life membership by paying for 'missing years' to upgrade their membership, while it has agreed that spouses of life members will be covered at no extra charge once the member 'passes on'. Additionally, the Committee took the decision to upgrade those members that had paid annual dues for 20 years to be automatically upgraded to life membership, thus ceasing to pay annual dues.

FFOA remains the principal interlocutor with the UN Italian Security team headed by FAO and took up the issue of COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters for UN retirees on behalf of its members in Italy; some 40 families were vaccinated and boosted under this programme, which FFOA coordinated with FAO. Hopefully, this activity will no longer be required.

I wish you all a peaceful, healthy and prosperous 2022 and we hope to be able to meet with many of you in person later this year. Our office in FAO still remains closed but services continue through email and phone.

**Edward Seidler**  
**FFOA President**

---

## FFOA Election of the Executive Committee

Angelika Wolf

The three-year term of the present Executive Committee was supposed to expire at the end of December 2021. However, due to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic it was not possible to organize the elections in view of the non-accessibility of the FFOA office and of the membership data. The situation was reported to the 51st session of the FFOA GA which decided to defer the elections to 2022 when hopefully it would be possible to reach out to all members and ensure that everyone would be able to vote. Following a review of the current epidemic situation, the Executive Committee considered it possible to start planning for the Election process to take place before the end of 2022.

The Executive Committee consists of eleven members of FFOA elected for a period of three years. Members of the Executive Committee may be elected for further consecutive terms of office. They should not yet have reached the age of seventy-two when first elected.

The purpose of the election process is to:

- i. identify members of the Association who meet the conditions for nomination and are willing to stand for election as a member of the Executive Committee that will hold office from 1 January 2023 until 31 December 2025;
- ii. include the qualified candidates in a list of official candidates which will be submitted to the members for casting their vote;
- iii. to provide members the tool to cast their vote (e-voting or ballot paper) and
- iv. to scrutinize the results for the production of the Election Report to the Executive Committee.

The new Executive Committee will be elected for the period 2023-2025. As we will again hold an electronic vote, please ensure that

you provide FFOA (ffoa@fao.org) with your current email address (if you have not already done so).

Please do think seriously about standing for election this year. A strong Executive Committee with members from all Rome-based Agencies - FAO, WFP, IFAD and ICCROM - is needed to help advance the interests of pensioners from the Rome-based Agencies, and to give effective support to the President as he/she carries out his/her duties. Fresh ideas and approaches are welcome. Your opinion(s) can make a great difference!

The qualifications of the FFOA members who are considering standing for election as members of the forthcoming Executive Committee **are set out in Article III, paragraph 2 (b) of the Articles of Association which stipulates:**

“Any FFOA member may be a candidate for membership of the Executive Committee provided he or she: (i) lives in the Rome area; (ii) affirms his or her determination to dedicate sufficient time to attending meetings and to accomplishing assigned tasks; (iii) is supported by at least five members who have paid all their membership fees; (iv) has paid all his or her own membership fees.”

---

## News from FFOA Advisory Committees

### Medical Insurance

Edward Seidler

FFOA has been involved in discussions with the three Agencies on the BMIP/MMBP Health Insurance plans and besides raising servicing and performance issues by the common Insurer (Cigna), we have been involved in discussions on premiums for 2022. The 2022 premiums have now been set; premiums in 2021 remained the same as in 2020 but will see a small increase in 2022 for FAO and IFAD participants. **No increase is seen in WFP participant premiums** as WFP negotiated a three-year fixed premium contract, so premiums in 2022 will be the same as 2021.

For **IFAD BMIP and MMBP** monthly premiums applicable in 2022 will **increase by 1.36%** as a result of the renewal formula foreseen in the contract with Cigna. Increased Cigna administrative fees based on the Eurostat labour cost index will be absorbed by IFAD through the use of the profit-sharing account from previous years.

**Euro scheme** premiums are as follows:

- Single member: Euro 124.12 (BMIP) + Euro 15.90 (MMBP)
- Member +1: Euro 248.38 (BMIP) + Euro 31.55 (MMBP)

**US\$ scheme** rates:

- Single member: \$153.32 (BMIP) + \$18.58 (MMBP)
- Member +1: \$306.80 (BMIP) + \$37.17 (MMBP)

For **FAO and ICCROM** the premium rates will be increased as of 1 March 2022 with FAO absorbing the premium and administrative fee increases for participants in the first two months through the use of the profit-sharing account from previous years. The BMIP monthly Euro premium will increase by **2.18%** and the monthly US\$ premium will increase by **2.26%**. The original increase computed was some **4.2%** but the FAO Joint Advisory Committee on Medical Coverage (JAC/MC) agreed to limit the BMIP increase by using the profit-sharing account to cover 2% of the premium increase. The MMBP premiums will have an average increase of **4.15%** for both EUR and US\$ schemes:

**Euro scheme**

- Single member: Euro 135.37 (BMIP) + Euro 17.03 (MMBP)
- Member +1: Euro 263.36 (BMIP) + Euro 33.78 (MMBP)

**US\$ scheme**

- Single member: US\$ 166.49 (BMIP) + US\$ 19.77 (MMBP)
- Member +1: US\$ 317.55 (BMIP) + US\$ 39.54 (MMBP)

All the Agencies share/subsidies premium rates equally (50-50) so premiums paid as shown above are half those paid to the insurer/claims processor. Retiree premium contributions are capped at a maximum of 4% of the full pension or 4 % of 46% of the Final Average Remuneration with the Organizations making up the difference.

Medical insurance costs are rising globally and participants are encouraged to contain medical costs by using preferred providers (in network) and using the Cigna virtual doctor consultation/telemedicine through the Cigna Telehealth service. Future premium increases can only be minimised if medical costs/claims can be contained.

FFOA is planning to invite Cigna to make a presentation to members on Health Insurance claim issues and to answer member questions and complaints regarding Cigna services. Members will be duly informed when this Zoom webinar will take place, which is likely to be in late April.

## Pension Matters

Alan Prien

The Pension Board has just held the first of its new format meetings, being a virtual session in February. That will be followed by another short virtual session in a couple of months, before its first in person session in July, where the main topic will be the review of this year's actuarial evaluation.

The results promise to be positive due to the outstanding investment returns (11.1%) in 2021. This year cannot possibly be as good, especially with roiling world markets particularly attributable to Russia's invasion of the Ukraine, which has already caused market volatility.

The Fund has introduced new simplified enrolment processes to sign up for digital Certificates of Entitlement (CE). Twenty-eight percent of retirees/beneficiaries used it in 2021, and already this year (up to Feb.) 20% of retirees/beneficiaries have sought enrolment in 2022, so the process is starting to work better. Try it!

## Social Support and Recreational Activities

Joan Smidt, Marius de Gaay Fortman, Bruno Pisani, Mohamed Saleheen, Sabatino Salvi, Alex Van Arkadie

The Travel Agencies with whom we collaborate have now finally started to work again after this long period. Many trips and outings were already sent to our members with an email address.

### Previous Activities

November 2021

Anello della Macchia Grande di Manziana  
Santa Fiora Seggiano e Giardino di  
Daniel Spoerri  
Napoli: MANN e Mercatini di Natale  
Terme di Rapolano, San Gimignano  
e Montepulciano  
Gita a Castel Gandolfo

Brahms at All Saints Anglican Church  
Concert by Maestro Camerini

December 2021

Gita a Firenze  
Roma Capitale  
Roma Passeggiata Rinascimentale  
Mercatini di Natale in Trentino Alto Adige  
e Lienz  
Mercatino di Natale ad Arezzo  
Albero di Natale più grande del mondo  
a Gubbio  
Luminarie di Salerno  
Capodanno a Palermo

Concert by Maestro Camerini

January 2022

Visita alla Cappella Sistina  
Visita Quartiere Coppedè, Roma

February 2022

Treno storico Transiberiana d'Italia e  
Sulmona e Pescocostanzo  
Museo dell'Ara Pacis e Mausoleo di

Augusto

Passeggiate Romane: "Sulle tracce di  
Caravaggio e di Artemisia Gentileschi"  
San Galgano e la Spada nella Roccia  
Carnevale di Venezia, Verona e Terme di  
Abano  
Assisi

Concert by Maestro Camerini  
Theater in English: The Memory of Water

March 2022

Spagna  
Klimt  
Ville Tuscolane  
Castel Sant'Angelo  
Borghi d'Italia: Amelia  
San Gimignano  
Pisa e il Museo delle Navi antiche

Theater in Ariccia: "Vita da Principi"

### Upcoming Activities

April 2022

Lucca e Volterra  
Giardini di Ninfa  
Pasqua al Lago Maggiore e Isole Borromee  
I colori della Puglia

## Membership Advisory Committee (MAC)

Marius de Gaay Fortman (convenor), Alessandro Bertini, Roberta Fenix, Gianni Monciotti, Pino Pace, Georgia Shaver, Angelika Wolf

The issue of life membership was once again placed on the agenda of the Membership Advisory Committee at its meeting in February. The issue at hand concerned the fairness of having loyal members paying an annual fee for all of their life. There was consensus that annual membership should be converted into life membership without any additional cost, after having been members for 20 years or more. This unanimous decision of the MAC was submitted

for approval to the Executive Committee, which adopted the regulation unanimously at its meeting of 15 February 2022, as a recognition of the loyalty of these members towards our Association. Hereunder is a summary of the rules governing lifetime membership of our Association as of this year, 2022:

1. Upon joining the Association, life membership can be obtained by paying 15 times the annual fee of €25;
2. During the first ten years of membership, a member can convert his/her annual membership into life membership by paying the difference between the years already paid and the fee for life membership, which is 15 times the annual fee;
3. As of the 11th year of membership, the fee to be paid for life membership is fixed at €125;
4. Once a member has paid annual fees for a period of 20 years his/her membership is automatically converted into life membership;
5. Surviving spouses and /or dependants of life members will be offered life

membership upon the demise of the life member.

By adopting this new proposal on life membership, we feel that we have established a fair balance between making the choice for life membership attractive for those members who decide to do this at an early stage and recognizing the loyalty of those members who for various reasons could not take that decision upon joining or in the early years of their membership.

## New Members

The Secretariat

A hearty welcome to our members who have recently joined the FFOA:

Ms Pushpa ACHARYA KOILARA, WFP  
 Mr Alejandro ANGANUZZI, FAO  
 Mr Stephan BASS, FAO  
 Ms Manuela BODOLATO, FAO  
 Mr Marco CALAMANDREI, UNESCO/ICTP  
 Ms Paola CASTELGRANDE, FAO  
 Ms Fabienne DARDENGO, FAO  
 Ms Antonina DE FRANCESCO, FAO  
 Mr Oliver DUBOIS, FAO  
 Mr Pietro GROSSO, ILO  
 Mr Guanjun GU, FAO  
 Ms Sonia LEUZZI, WFP  
 Ms Elisabetta MASSARA, FAO  
 Mr Mark MCGUIRE, FAO  
 Ms Ofelia MEDRANO ROJAS, IFAD  
 Mr Marc MOENS, FAO  
 Ms Nadine MONNICHON, FAO  
 Ms Alessandra MORELLI, UNHCR  
 Ms Sheila MWANUNDU, IFAD  
 Ms Theresa PANUCCIO, UNDP  
 Ms Veronique PASSETCHNIK, IFAD  
 Ms Barbara PESCE, UNDP  
 Mr Enrico PONZIANI, IOM  
 Ms Patricia PRESIREN, UNESCO/ICTP  
 Ms Concepcion QUEVEDO ESCOBAR, FAO  
 Mr Dale RUTSTEIN, UNICEF  
 Mr Nicola SAKOFF, FAO  
 Mr Stefano SCATEGNI, FAO

### Renew Your Annual Membership

Renew your Annual Membership by paying €25 in the following ways:

- By bank transfer to the account of FFOA with Banca Intesa San Paolo at the FAO headquarters, IBAN: IT50 T030 6903 3560 0732 637 0137 (BIC: BCITITMM700)
- By bank transfer from your UNFCU account to the UNFCU account of FFOA N0. 10-17710700001  
Routing Number 226078609
- Instructing your bank to make the payment annually, through a standing order

\* Please clearly indicate Member's ID/Surname/First name and year



Ms Milena SCIUTO, FAO  
Mr Peter THOENES, FAO  
Ms Jessica THOMAS, IFAD  
Mr Willem WEFERS BETTINK, IFAD  
Ms Patrizia ZORI, ICGEB

**All retirees ought to join the Association to support its work representing the pensioners, and for their own interest, and should encourage their ex-colleagues to join!**

---

## In Memoriam

The Secretariat

**On behalf of all the members of the FFOA, we express heartfelt sympathy to the families and friends of all those members who have left us.**

Mr Hazim AL-JIBOURI, FAO  
06/07/2021  
Ms Wanda ARMSTRONG LAZZARICH, FAO  
13/10/2021  
Ms Jillian Margaret BABER, FAO  
17/01/2022  
Ms Rita BEHRAVESH, FAO  
20/10/2021  
Mr Gustavo BEST, FAO  
22/07/2021  
Mr Andrea FILIPPINI, FAO  
17/01/2022  
Ms Monique FORESTIER, WFP  
13/02/2022  
Ms Gaetana MARINO GANDINI, FAO  
25/12/2021  
Mr Venkitachalam GOPALAKRISHNAN, FAO  
28/08/2021  
Ms Angela GSELL, FAO  
12/01/2022  
Mr Siepko H. LOK, FAO  
07/01/2022  
Mr Pedro LOPEZ MORAL, FAO  
24/02/2021  
Ms Gloria MARTIN, FAO  
22/01/2021  
Mr Keith Henry RICHMOND, FAO  
01/12/2021  
Mr Leo RIJAVEC, FAO  
13/10/2021

Ms Semin SAYIT, FAO  
02/01/2022  
Mr Vickram Jayvaden SHAH, FAO  
26/02/2022  
Ms Maria Pia TADDEINI RENDELI, FAO  
04/03/ 2022  
Ms Amelia VALLEJO, FAO  
31/10/2021  
Mr Massimo VIETRI, FAO  
31/01/2022

## OBITUARY - Vikram Jayvaden Shah (1938-2022)

Vikram J. Shah passed away on February 26 in Tenero (Tessin, Switzerland). He joined the FAO in 1970. Born in Bombay on Jan. 15, 1938, he studied at St. Mary's Institute in that city before entering the Liceo Chateaubriand in Rome when his father was appointed to the Embassy of India in Italy in 1949. He subsequently followed his career diplomat father to Rio de Janeiro and England. He studied economics, international relations and philosophy at Oxford where he obtained a master's degree at the age of 21 and was hired as an economic analyst at the weekly "The Economist".

In 1964 he joined the United Nations in New York before moving, six years later, to the FAO in the Department of Fisheries. He was appointed to the Office of the Director General Saouma, where he became Director in the early 80's. In the nineties he held the position of Deputy Director General until 1995 when, for health reasons, he decided to retire, to his home in Cavriglia, Tuscany. A year earlier he had lost his American wife of German origin after a long illness. Twenty years later, he moved to Tessin, after losing his first-born daughter at the age of 46. Of his three remaining daughters, one lives in London and the other two in the United States of America. Vikram J. Shah spoke eight languages.

Dominique Alhéritière



---

## News from UN Organizations

### FAO

Edward Seidler

FAO continues to limit entrances by staff to Headquarters, only permitting a maximum fifty per cent presence with staff limited to in person attendance of 1 to 3 days per week as of March. Services remain limited with the Post Office still closed but the two Banks are operating (by appointment), although the Bancomats are available. If retirees need to go to one of the Banks, etc., entrance approval can be given by emailing FAO Security Services (csls-security-registration@fao.org). Entry can be requested for morning visits (9am. to 12.30pm) on a specific day. The Cigna enquiry office is still not in operation at FAO so enquires to Cigna should continue by phone or email. All visitors are required to have a valid Green Pass to enter FAO.

### IFAD

Alan Prien

The Director of Human Resources of IFAD, Pierre Moreau-Peron has retired and been replaced on an interim basis by a staff member with dual UK/Italy nationality, Candida Sansone, whom some of you may know if you recently retired, as she had worked elsewhere in IFAD.

Sino Tesfamariam and Alan Prien had consultations with IFAD management on the past years' experience with Cigna, during which it was announced that our medical premiums would increase for 2022 by 1.36%. They had agreed with IFAD HR to hold a quarterly meeting to discuss/evaluate Cigna's performance.

All of us should have subsequently received a message to that effect, with appropriate details. Reserve funds are being used to defray some of the administrative charges.

All in all, this is a not unreasonable result.

### WFP

Mohamed Saleheen

The Regular Session of the WFP Executive Board (EB) was held from 28 Feb. to 3 March 2022. Bangladesh, represented by Ambassador Shameem Ahsan was elected as the President of the EB for 2022. Ambassador Artur Andrzej Pollok of Poland was elected Vice President.

Executive Director David Beasley gave a passionate overview of crises in different regions of the world, highlighting the current emergency situation in Ukraine. WFP is seeking US\$570 million for an initial three-month emergency response. The organization is putting essential supplies in place as according to the UN, more than a million refugees have crossed into neighboring countries. Critical needs in other parts of the world remain equally important.

The EB approved WFP Corporate Results Framework (2022-2025); WFP Gender Policy (2022) and the WFP Evaluation Policy (2022) among other documents.

With the current Executive Director's term nearing completion, a decision is awaited for the next five-year term.

The WFP Alumni Network has elected a new Coordination Committee (CC) for the period 2022-2024. The CC has developed a Work Plan and pledged close collaboration with FFOA.

WFP will be hosting the 2022 FFOA Annual Assembly on 26 October at its auditorium. A combination physical presence of up to 48 members and others to be linked virtually will be arranged. A "headhunt" for a Presiding Officer is ongoing. Security protocol for entering into WFP premises consists in advance notice to the WFP Security Desk and furnishing the COVID-19 Green Pass.

### FAFICS

Marco Breschi

New Rules of Procedure for FAFICS governance were endorsed by the FAFICS Council in February.

This event signs a major landmark in the history of the Federation. All associations, including FFOA, will be able to look at improved FAFICS operations in the best interest of all members. The Federation will be able to provide a rapid and better response to its continuously evolving needs, including new communication technology. The changes entail, inter-alia, more transparent election processes for officers of the Federation and of the delegation to the Pension Board, while preserving a degree of latitude for the FAFICS President to choose his/her team.

The Special Council session in February was called to address the report of the Working Group covering years of thorough and intense work. The atmosphere was very friendly and cooperative and, as advocated by the President, the resolution on the new Rules was reached by consensus with no need to revert to voting. FFOA contributed significantly to this satisfactory outcome thanks to the support of its President Edward Seidler and to the very effective guidance by the Presiding Officer of the Council, former President Alan Prien.

---

## News from Staff Associations

Alex Van Arkadie

### AP-in-FAO

The Executive Secretariat of the AP-in-FAO (Association of Professional in FAO) has shared with FFOA its bulletins and concerns raised therein regarding the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the FAO Ombudsman, as well as their plea to FAO to reconsider the FICSA (Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations) cost-sharing issue. AP-in-FAO continues to strongly advocate to the Staff Management Consultative Committee to include staff representative bodies in all consultation process and take into account their views.

---

## Your Good Health

Sabatino Salvi



### Ageism Is Age-Related Prejudice Against Seniors

The World Health Organization (WHO) in 2019 reported that there were around 600 million seniors over age 60 all over the world. By 2025 this number will double and by 2050 the number of seniors in the world will reach two billion. While many seniors face health and financial problems, there is now also age-related prejudice (AGEISM). In many cases this leads to discrimination against the silver-haired population.

#### The WHO Defines Ageism:

“AGEISM” is the stereotyping and discrimination against individuals or groups on the basis of their age; AGEISM can take many forms, including prejudicial attitudes, discriminatory practices or institutional policies and practices that perpetuate stereotypical beliefs”.

#### Ageism Is Harmful for the Health of Seniors

According to the WHO, AGEISM poses a harmful effect on the health of seniors. Research has shown that older adults who have negative beliefs about ageing may see their lives shortened by as much as seven and a half years less than seniors who have positive attitudes about aging. AGEISM is especially detrimental for cardiovascular health. Cardiovascular stress can lead to heart attacks and strokes.

*(Extracted and adapted from  
Royal Suites Health Care Blog)*



## News from the Membership

(Collected pieces for you)

Gianna Paganelli, Mohamed Saleheen



**The church held a "Marriage Seminar" and the Priest asked Luigi,** as his 50th wedding anniversary approached, to share some insight into how he managed to stay married to the same woman all these years.

Luigi replied to his audience, "Well, I tried to treat her well and spend money on her. But the best thing I did was take her to Italy for our 20th anniversary."

The Priest said "Luigi, you are an inspiration to all husbands here today. Please tell the audience what you plan for your wife for your 50th anniversary."

Luigi proudly replied "I'm gonna go and get her."

**A guy is reading his paper when his wife walks up behind him and smacks him on the back of the head with a frying pan.** He asks, "What was that for?"

She says, "I found a piece of paper in your pocket with 'Betty Sue' written on it."

He says, "Jeez, honey, remember last week when I went to the track? 'Betty Sue' was the name of the horse I went there to bet on." She shrugs and walks away.

Three days later he's reading his paper when she walks up behind him and smacks him on the back of the head again with the frying pan.

He asks, "What was that for?" She answers, "Your horse called."

Everyone asked a 100-year-old man for his health secrets.

The old man said: I'll tell you a secret.

I've been married for 75 years.

Promised my wife when we got married that When two people quarrel, the loser has to walk for 5 kilometers.

I've been walking 5 kilometers every day for 75 years!

Everyone asked again:

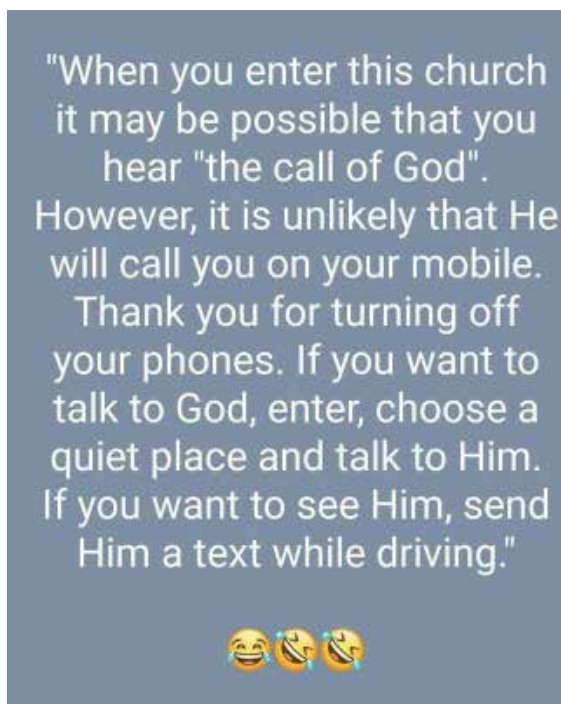
But how come your wife's very healthy as well?

The old man answered:

I'll tell you another secret.

She'd been following me to make sure I really finish the 5 kilometers!

Poster found in a church in France... (translated)



**Please share your personal experience or advice on retirement.** Everyone would love it. You may write in English or Italian, addressed to FFOA, attention: Newsbrief Coordinator, Mrs Gianna Paganelli Putt.



## Newsbrief 116

**March 2022**

Newsbrief, the FFOA official edition, is produced in English and Italian three times a year and is distributed electronically to those who have internet access, and in print to those who do not. Newsbrief (current and back issues) is also available on the FFOA website: [www.ffoa-web.org](http://www.ffoa-web.org). Suggestions or contributions from members are welcome. The cost of printing Newsbrief, as well as other FFOA documents is borne by the WFP. Costs associated with documentation for the General Assembly are borne by IFAD. FFOA is grateful for these contributions.

Communications Coordinator: **Mohamed Saleheen**  
 Newsbrief Coordinator: **Gianna Paganelli**  
 Editors: **Isabella Pontecorvo, Giuliano Pucci**

Designer: **Omar Bolbol**  
 Italian translation: **Maria Gattone**  
 Publishing/distribution: **Gabriella Sborchia, Alessandro Bertini**

---

## About FFOA

Since 1971, FFOA has worked to advance the interests of pensioners from United Nations Agencies based in Italy, regardless of where they spend their retirement. FFOA is based at FAO Headquarters in Rome and has a growing global membership numbering more than 2,300 pensioners from FAO, IFAD, WFP, ICCROM, etc. from all staff categories.

### Representation

FFOA officially represents retiree interests in formal relations with management of FAO, IFAD and WFP. We have a place at the table in all retiree-relevant discussions. FFOA is also active in the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS), which joins 63 associations like ours to represent pensioners at the UN System level.

### Support

FFOA works to improve retirement benefits – particularly pensions and medical insurance – and to protect the interests of the membership as a whole. We also respond to individual requests from members for assistance, guidance or referral on issues associated with retirement and ageing in general (all services are provided by members on a voluntary basis). Members are informed of developments in areas of concern by our Newsbrief, by our website and direct contact by post (including e-mail).

### Camaraderie

FFOA promotes contact and social and intellectual exchange among its members, through a web-based discussion forum, and a wide range of cultural and social activities. Colleagues and friends in the Rome area gather at FAO on the first Wednesday of each month

for “Coffee Morning” – drop in if you’re in the neighbourhood!

### Helping those in need

Being a pensioner can be difficult and lonely. Volunteers from FFOA are available to support members in distress over the phone, or to organize home visits. FFOA also offers small no-interest loans (maximum 1,500 Euro) to meet short-term emergency requirements.

### Service

Even after a career of service, UN pensioners remain interested in and committed to development issues, and continue to support the objectives of their former employer. FFOA attends key meetings and events at Rome headquarters, shares updates with members on key activities and achievements in the UN System, and provides direct support as well.

### Keep up with FFOA and retiree colleagues

Stay informed on the latest developments on important issues for retirees via the FFOA website: [www.ffoa-web.org](http://www.ffoa-web.org). Register on the website to ensure you always receive the latest information, and stay in touch with distant friends and former colleagues.

### Join FFOA!

Adding your voice helps make the Association stronger and more impactful. Annual FFOA membership is 25 Euro; a life membership is 375 Euro. There is one-time registration fee of 10 Euro. Follow the link to download a membership application: [www.ffoa-web.org/eligibility-for-membership](http://www.ffoa-web.org/eligibility-for-membership), write to [ffoa@fao.org](mailto:ffoa@fao.org), or phone the FFOA desk at (+39) 06-5705 5623 / 5705 6016.

## **Establishment of a Membership Defence Fund (MDF-FFOA)**

### **1. Purpose**

The FFOA Executive Committee has decided to create a fund to be established through voluntary contributions from its membership. As UN agencies endeavour to reduce costs, the possibilities of their infringing on the acquired rights of staff and former staff members is a real possibility. Retired staff could especially be targeted in cost cutting exercises. Potential issues that might affect members in the future could be the adequacy of Social Security provisions (health, life insurance) by their former employing Agencies.

In order for FFOA to be in a position to obtain professional legal advice on matters materially affecting its membership, the FFOA seeks to establish a Membership Defence Fund (MDF) to provide the necessary resources to access specialist professional services when required. The Funds would be used:

- i. To obtain legal opinions and advice on specific issues and
- ii. To advise on appropriate courses of action such as legal appeals through various bodies e.g. ILO Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT) and possibly the FAO Appeals Committee.

The FFOA would also consider joining cases with FICSA or the FAO/WFP/IFAD staff bodies which seek to challenge adverse developments/administrative decisions that affect or might affect FFOA members.

The MDF would not be used to finance individual, personal cases per se but only those cases/issues that have a direct bearing on the FFOA membership as a whole (Class actions).

### **2. Funding**

It is proposed that funding of the MDF would be on a voluntary basis with variable contributions (suggested to be from Euro/USD 50 -200) depending on what members are able to contribute. The Funds would be accounted for separately within the FFOA accounts.

### **3. Fund utilization**

The FFOA Executive Committee would agree by majority vote on what cases/issues would receive funding under the MDF and agree on the amounts to be provided and for what purpose, taking account of the funds available.

### **4. Payment possibilities – Indicate Purpose (MDF – FFOA)**

- i. Bank transfer to the account of the FFOA with the Banca Intesa at FAO HQ No. 732637/01/37 (Euro):  
CAB: 03356, ABI: 03069, BIC: BCITITMM700  
IBAN: IT50T0306903356007326370137.
- ii. Transfer from UNFCU account to the FFOA UNFCU USD account  
No. 10-17710700001.
- iii. In cash or by cheque in the name of “FFOA” at the FFOA office.