



IFAD
INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
Executive Board - Sixty-Third Session

Rome, 22-23 April 1998

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE COMMEMORATION OF THE TWENTIETH
ANNIVERSARY OF IFAD**

1. Further to the information provided in documents EB 97/62/R.34 and GC 21/L.14, there follows a brief update on activities to be undertaken by IFAD and its Member States during 1998 to commemorate the Fund's Twentieth Anniversary.

2. The first Global Meeting and Formal Launching of the Knowledge Network on Civil Society Initiatives in Land Reform and Tenurial Security was held in Rome, Italy, on 9 and 10 February 1998, in conjunction with the Twenty-First Session of the Governing Council and celebrations for IFAD's Twentieth Anniversary. The Knowledge Network is one of the activities of the Popular Coalition to Eradicate Hunger and Poverty, with the objective of collecting, reviewing, assessing and disseminating information and data on civil-society initiatives to improve the rural poor's access to land and water resources, including common property resources. The event was attended by approximately 40 regional, national and local people's groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well as senior officials of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and World Bank.

3. An International Seminar on Rural Poverty and Development was held in Caracas, Venezuela, on 17 and 18 February 1998 with participants from Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Peru. A brief report on the seminar is attached in the annex to this document. The Government of Venezuela has advised IFAD that the Fund's logo will be stamped on all the country's official mail.

4. The Government of Burkina Faso celebrated the Twentieth Anniversary of IFAD on 12 March 1998. A special IFAD Day was held in Sibalo, Passore Province, with the participation of approximately 1 500 producers and representatives of local authorities and the Department of Agriculture. The programme included: (a) the awarding of 60 "best producer prizes"; (b) field visits; (c) planting of trees by local authorities and invitees; and (d) the projection of films highlighting the benefits of projects. The Government of Burkina Faso has issued stamps, brochures and tee-shirts bearing IFAD's logo and Twentieth Anniversary emblem.

5. In cooperation with the Department of Rural Development Studies (DRDS) of the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and the Nordic Africa Institute, the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs is planning to hold a seminar on poverty eradication in rural Africa on 11 and 12 May 1998, in recognition of IFAD's Twentieth Anniversary, the launching of Sweden's new policy on



partnerships with Africa, and the long-standing cooperation between the Nordic and African countries in the pursuit of poverty eradication. The seminar is expected to focus on politico-economic reforms in Africa and their impact on different groups of rural poor; and on the role that access to asset can play in addressing poverty issues. Specific aspects to be covered will be IFAD's twenty years of experience, new challenges and opportunities in smallholder development in East and southern Africa, and knowledge creation and dissemination in the context of strategic partnerships and alliances. The seminar will also pay tribute to IFAD as a small but effective United Nations organization that has pioneered the development of new approaches to poverty reduction in the rural areas. The occasion will provide a forum for linking IFAD's experience to the strategies and approaches of other international institutions and to current knowledge in the international research community. In addition to officials of the Swedish International Development Authority and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representatives of World Bank, other Scandinavian governments (Denmark, Norway and Finland) and Swedish NGOs are expected to attend.

6. On 4 June 1998, a workshop on Public and Private Partnerships in Combatting Rural Poverty will be held in Washington D.C., United States. Portions of IFAD's Expo "From Hope to Harvest" will be on display during the workshop.

7. The Dominican Republic is planning to commemorate IFAD's Twentieth Anniversary on the occasion of the IFAD/CIARA (Foundation for Training and Applied Research in Agrarian Reform) Workshop on Gender Implementation in IFAD Projects in Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Venezuela. The workshop is to be held in Santo Domingo from 8 to 13 June 1998.

8. The Government of Switzerland is planning to hold a workshop on the evaluation of the Special Programme for Africa, within the context of IFAD's Twentieth Anniversary. The workshop will take place in Bern on 25 June 1998.

9. The Government of Bangladesh has informed IFAD that it intends to issue a stamp bearing the Fund's Twentieth Anniversary logo on 17 October 1998, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. This is part of Bangladesh's programme of activities highlighting IFAD's role in the country's poverty alleviation and rural development efforts, with particular focus on collaboration with civil society, the private sector, the Government and NGOs.

10. During the course of 1998, the Government of Belgium will be organizing events relating to IFAD's collaboration with the Belgian Survival Fund.

11. The Government of Gabon has decided to organize an IFAD Day to commemorate the Fund's Twentieth Anniversary.

12. Italy intends to issue a new ITL 500 coin bearing IFAD's Twentieth Anniversary logo in addition to the 3 million telephone cards bearing IFAD's logo which have been issued by the Italian telephone company, TELECOM Italia Spa.

13. The Government of Japan has informed IFAD that it expects to hold a workshop within the context of the Fund's Twentieth Anniversary.

14. A special IFAD Day is to be organized by the Government of Tunisia focusing on the Fund's work in the country and presenting information on current projects.



15. The Government of Uganda has indicated that activities to commemorate IFAD's Twentieth Anniversary are under preparation. The President of the Fund has been invited to participate in these celebrations.

16. The International Islamic Charitable Organization, based in Kuwait, has informed the Fund that it has published a number of articles in its journal in recognition of IFAD on the occasion of its Twentieth Anniversary.

17. Further information on these and other events occurring during the course of 1998 will be provided at a future session of the Executive Board.



ANNEX

**INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON RURAL POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT
CARACAS, VENEZUELA, 17-18 FEBRUARY 1998**

1. I have the pleasure of informing you that the International Seminar on Rural Poverty and Development took place 17-18 February 1998 at CIARA headquarters. It was inaugurated by the President of the Investment Fund and was attended by the Minister of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE), Dr Raquel Peña-Montenegro of IFAD, the Director General of the Economy and International Cooperation Sector of MRE and senior officials of the organizations involved.

2. In his address, Dr Poletto emphasized the importance of having held the seminar, since Venezuela is one of the countries that has participated most actively in the activities of IFAD. He took the opportunity to recall that two prominent Venezuelans, Dr Juan Pablo Pérez Alfonzo and Dr Manuel Pérez Guerrero, contributed to the creation of the Fund.

3. In the same vein, he cited the importance for Latin America and the Caribbean of IFAD's proposals, programmes and projects, which aim to reduce rural poverty and improve the quality of life of population groups with few resources.

4. Dr Poletto thanked the National Committee in charge of the commemorative activities for IFAD's anniversary for making the seminar possible, and he issued a call to reflect on improved and new forms of realizing the objectives of eradicating poverty in the region and of involving its rural communities in development programmes.

5. Dr Raquel Peña-Montenegro discussed the Fund's activities in the region and the new challenges that must be met to eradicate poverty. She said that IFAD has demonstrated that poor producers are efficient and creditworthy economic agents who can actively contribute to overcoming their own poverty, participate harmoniously in more dynamic sectors of the economy and, in this way, overcome poverty through their own resources and the complementary resources that society allocates for this purpose.

6. Dr Alegrett, for his part, cited IFAD projects that are being implemented in the country and added that evaluation results should serve as the basis for correcting the flaws that are encountered in the implementation of projects. He stated further that in a globalized and uniform world, the human element is fundamental. He pointed out that information technology and electronic communications must be a key factor in every agricultural project one hopes to bring to completion.

7. Presentations were then made by the national institutions that are executing agricultural and rural programmes (the National Agricultural Institute and the Fund for Farm Credit) and the IFAD projects in Venezuela (IFAD-Sucre, PROSALAFSA and IFAD-CIARA).

8. The representatives of Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Peru presented the programmes that IFAD is implementing in their countries. There was an interesting dialogue among the participants and they came to some general conclusions among which the following are worth emphasizing the need to:

- Strengthen the relationship between IFAD and the projects, especially regarding the training and education of professional project staff.



- Adjust projects to the characteristics of the region, without violating the practices and customs of recipient population groups.
- Use evaluation results to improve project implementation and, in this way, overcome the obstacles that have been encountered in other projects.
- Exchange information via the Internet and, if possible, extend the projects to other regions.

9. The seminar was brought to a close by the Director General of the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Dr Arnaldo Badillo, who issued a call to continue the fight against poverty and invited all those present to meet again in order to continue exchanging ideas on these important themes. Dr Badillo explained that the country, despite financial difficulties, has the firm intention of continuing to collaborate with and support IFAD.

10. Finally, he invited all the participants to meet again to go more deeply into the debate on these interesting themes.