



IFAD
INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
Executive Board — Sixty-Seventh Session

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INFORMATION NOTE ON IFAD RURAL POVERTY REPORT, 2000

1. In approving a technical assistance grant for the programme of activities leading to the publication of IFAD's Rural Poverty Report, 2000, at its Sixty-Sixth Session (April 1999) the Executive Board requested regular reports on the progress of activities envisaged under the grant. This information note provides an overview of the activities undertaken and the progress made to date.

Objective of IFAD's Rural Poverty Report, 2000 and the Programme of Activities

2. The objective of IFAD's Rural Poverty Report, 2000 is to present a statement on rural poverty issues from the perspective of a financing organization such as IFAD, focusing on the critical nature of rural poverty eradication in reducing global poverty, identifying relevant options and opportunities, building coalitions with a wide range of development agencies and civil-society organizations and increasing awareness on critical issues.

3. The activities envisaged include: (a) assessment and analysis of regional rural poverty trends to capture IFAD's experience in the field; (b) identification of broad themes on which further in-depth work will be initiated; (c) thematic studies; (d) preparation of the main report with annexes; (e) editing, printing and publication of the report; and (f) launching of the report.

Report on the Progress of Activities Undertaken

Regional Assessments

4. As envisaged in the programme of activities, five regional assessments have been completed since approval of the grant. The objectives were to: (a) capture the trends in rural poverty in the five IFAD regions; (b) identify regional variations in rural poverty eradication programmes; (c) synthesize operational and external knowledge; and (d) reach an understanding on the Fund's options and opportunities for rural poverty eradication in the near future.

5. Draft reports on all the five regions have been completed; the reports are being revised to include the comments and views received from IFAD staff and the lead scholar.



IFAD's Internal Workshop, 26-27 July 1999

6. A workshop was held at IFAD on 26 and 27 July 1999 to present the first results of the regional assessments to a wider audience within the organization. The objective of the workshop was to assess the findings of the assessments, provide feedback to the authors of the studies for revision, consider the main issues raised from the perspectives of the regions, synthesize the information contained therein, and derive specific themes for further in-depth studies. The workshop also considered the outline of the thematic studies, and the options and opportunities for rural poverty eradication obtaining in each of the regions.

7. The workshop, which was moderated by Mr Keller, Senior Adviser in the Rural Development Division of the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), was attended by Professor Michael Lipton of the Poverty Research Unit at the University of Sussex, Dr Saurabh Sinha, Research Fellow at the Poverty Research Unit at the University of Sussex, Professor Ragav Gaiha of the Delhi School of Economics and Dr Anthony Killick of the Overseas Development Institute, London. Together with the IFAD participants, the aforementioned persons gave more definition to the identified themes and elaborated on them further with a view to broadening their scope and coverage.

8. A wide variety of issues were discussed during the two-day workshop and four themes were identified:

- Access to assets (including human capital)
- Technology and agricultural transformation
- Institutions, with specific focus on rural financial institutions
- Access to markets in the context of globalization

9. Demographic trends, gender and empowerment, identified as cross-cutting issues, will be covered in all four themes.

Thematic Studies

10. Based on the suggestions made at the workshop, the scope of work on the identified themes and the draft terms of reference are being further elaborated by Professor Michael Lipton, the lead scholar of the study, in consultation with IFAD and potential theme leaders. Each theme will be assigned to a theme leader for further work. The latter have been invited to attend a workshop on 27 and 28 September 1999 for discussions on the outlines and the scope of the work involved, and to assess IFAD's specific knowledge on the themes. IFAD working groups will work closely with the theme leaders to ensure both that the Fund's experience is captured and that the theme papers focus on views on rural poverty.

11. The theme leaders will each prepare a report (of about 50 pages) by the end of December 1999, complete with data, tables and charts.

Involvement of Civil Society

12. A proposal has been prepared to ensure that civil-society organizations engaged in rural poverty eradication are involved in the study by: (a) submitting comments and views on the identified themes; (b) providing inputs from their own perspectives for integration into the study; and (c) creating a broader forum for awareness-building on rural poverty eradication. The proposal has been reviewed within IFAD, and action is being taken to solicit the support of non-governmental organizations in this respect.



Collaboration with Other Agencies

13. In order to forge closer links with other agencies, discussions have been held with the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme regarding their activities in related fields. A number of IFAD staff members attended a three-day summer workshop at the World Bank to learn about the focus and coverage of its World Development Report 2000/2001 and to hold discussions with relevant staff members. Further discussions are to be held in the autumn in order to appraise the World Bank of the focus of IFAD's work and of progress made to date.

14. Discussions have also been held with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and GTZ to ascertain their interest and potential role in disseminating the findings of the poverty report. Both organizations have shown keen interest; details of such collaboration will be worked out at a later date.

Website on Rural Poverty Eradication

15. An experimental website for exchanging information and posting the results of various technical papers has been developed and is to be placed on IFAD's Intranet. At a later date, the website will be posted on the Internet to facilitate exchanges of ideas and knowledge with other agencies, civil-society organizations and interested individuals. The website will be linked to that of the World Bank on poverty and other related websites.

Upcoming Events

16. The following workshops are planned:

- 27-28 September 1999: an internal workshop with theme leaders, IFAD staff and the working groups (IFAD) to define the scope and coverage of the thematic studies.
- December 1999/January 2000: A "Synthesis Workshop on Regional Assessments and Thematic Studies" to finalize the thematic studies and make a start on preparing the final report.