



IFAD
INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Executive Board – Seventieth Session

Rome, 13 - 14 September 2000

STATUS OF THE RURAL POVERTY REPORT 2000/2001

1. In accordance with the request of the Executive Board at its Sixty-Sixth Session for regular reports on the progress of activities leading to the publication of IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2000/2001, information notes were presented to the Sixty-Seventh and Sixty-Ninth Sessions of the Executive Board and the Fourth Session of the Consultation to Review the Adequacy of the Resources Available to IFAD.
2. The attached document, which provides an updated status report, is presented to the current session of the Executive Board for information.



STATUS OF THE RURAL POVERTY REPORT 2000/2001

1. In approving, at its Sixty-Sixth Session in April 1999, a technical assistance (TA) grant for the programme of activities leading to the issuing of IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2000/2001, 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.

Activities Undertaken to Date

2. Since the report submitted to the Sixty-Ninth Session of the Executive Board on preparations for IFAD's Rural Poverty Report, substantial progress has been made in the chain of activities leading to its publication and launching.

3. A preliminary draft of IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2000/2001 has already been completed by the Poverty Research Unit of the University of Sussex (PRUS). Further work is under way on developing a fuller version of the draft, which is embargoed and available only for review and comment and has not been released for quotation and reference.

4. The draft version of the Rural Poverty Report 2000/2001 has been circulated for comment to all Professional staff members of IFAD. Copies have also been made available to a number of predesignated commentators, such as Professors Mellor, de Janvry and Khan and Messrs Mispelaar and Akbar, seeking their reaction. In addition to these formal reviewers, a large number of informal commentators from civil society and bilateral development agencies have been requested to review the draft, and an official request for comments from Executive Board Directors was also submitted to the List Convenors.

5. All comments from the different reviewers were discussed in a retreat held on 23 June 2000 and attended by the senior management and division directors of IFAD and a number of internal reviewers. With a view to assuring and strengthening the partnership aspect, IFAD requested the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) to be represented at the meeting. The comments raised have been consolidated and forwarded to PRUS to enable it to make the necessary revisions to the manuscript.

6. **Involvement of civil society.** Efforts have been made from the very start to ensure that civil society was involved in the process of preparing the report. Among many initiatives, a consolidated paper based on regional papers prepared by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has been prepared for integration into the main report. Five regional NGOs and civil-society networks were engaged to provide an analysis of the perspective of civil society on strategies that provide the most promise of successfully empowering the rural poor to establish sustainable livelihood systems, based on regional assessments prepared by IFAD.

7. During the Tenth IFAD/NGO Consultation held in Pune, India, from 30 May to 2 June 2000, an informal presentation was made on the scope and objective of the report. The NGO community present at the Consultation showed keen interest in reviewing the report and welcomed the change from reports which, in their view, failed to place adequate emphasis on participation and empowerment of the poor.



Collaboration with Other Agencies

8. The Executive Board has been informed of the Fund's work to forge closer links with similar efforts by other bilateral and multilateral agencies. On 7 April 2000, a presentation was made on IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2000/2001 to all the Executive Heads of the United Nations on the occasion of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) meeting in Rome, jointly hosted by WFP and IFAD.

9. A website on IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2000/2001 has been set up to inform a wider audience on the progress of the report, and to disseminate the findings of various studies undertaken within the programme. The website is also intended to be a forum for exchange of information and debate on issues and challenges regarding rural poverty eradication. The rural poverty website can be visited at the following address: www.ifad.org.

Publication of the Rural Poverty Report 2000/2001

10. Oxford University Press (OUP) Ltd. has agreed to publish IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2000/2001. In this way, many opportunities will be opened up for IFAD to reach a wider audience and thus create awareness on rural poverty issues.

Upcoming Events

11. IFAD has already initiated a series of public lectures to draw attention to rural poverty. The first such lecture was given by Senator Sartaj Aziz of Pakistan. Professor M. S. Swaminathan, former Director of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), is expected to deliver a lecture at WFP on 12 September 2000, and the third lecture in the series is scheduled to be given by Mr Harris Mule of Kenya in October 2000.

Discussion Forums on Rural Poverty Eradication

12. IFAD has been contacted by several bilateral partners regarding the hosting of discussion forums on its Rural Poverty Report 2000/2001, the objective which would be to increase awareness on issues related to rural poverty eradication and strengthen partnerships. Four discussion forums, to be coordinated jointly with bilateral organizations in Europe, Asia and the United States, are planned.

13. The first such discussion forum will be held in Japan in early November 2000 in cooperation with the Government of Japan, the United Nations Office for Project Services and the United Nations University in Tokyo. IFAD has put forward the names of Professors Mellor, de Janvry and Khan as potential panelists and intends to contact Professor Amartya Sen with a view to ascertaining his availability to attend.

Launching of the Final Rural Poverty Report 2000/2001

14. The report is expected to be launched from London and New York in early 2001. Discussions are under way on the timing, venue, and nature of the launching and the substantive discussion activities. A full report of the programme for launching and post-launching activities will be presented to the Seventy-First Session of the Executive Board in December 2000.

15. A series of prelaunching activities are also envisaged, details of which are currently under preparation. The first such activity was held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 29 June 2000 during follow-up meetings to the Copenhagen Social Summit.



**ACTIVITIES COMPLETED UNDER THE PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES
LEADING TO THE PUBLICATION OF THE IFAD'S RURAL POVERTY REPORT
2000/2001**

| Activities | Date |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Brainstorming workshop on rural poverty | 20-21 October 1998 |
| 2. Regional assessments and IFAD's internal workshop | 26-27 July 1999 |
| 3. IFAD workshop on rural poverty 2000 | 24-25 January 2000 |
| 4. Presentation by the Vice President of IFAD to the NGO Community of the United States | 23 February 2000 |
| 5. Presentation by Professor Lipton to the meeting of the Heads of all United Nations agencies | 7 April 2000 |
| 6. Presentation to the Tenth IFAD/NGO Consultation in Pune, India | 30 May - 2 June 2000 |
| 7. Completion of the first draft of the report | 4 June 2000 |
| 8. IFAD retreat: comments on draft report | 23 June 2000 |
| 9. Review process | On-going |



OUTLINE OF IFAD'S RURAL POVERTY REPORT 2000/2001

1. IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2000/2001 proposes a framework for rural poverty reduction based on recent development experience and prospects for the coming decades. Based on the above-mentioned regional assessments and thematic studies, the report will highlight the following issues related to rural poverty eradication:

- ❖ technologies for turning inputs into outputs, and income into consumption and well-being;
- ❖ assets – physical, human and financial capital – available to individuals and communities;
- ❖ markets and market access – local, national and global – for labour, other inputs (including skills, credit and information) and outputs, and their availability to the rural poor; and
- ❖ institutions and forms of civil society that influence resource allocation, availability and use, especially through poor people's access to local and national governance.

2. IFAD sees three central issues through which the above-mentioned determinants will affect rural poverty in the next two decades: food staples, water and redistribution. The framework of staples, water and redistribution cuts across the more conventional sectoral framework of interventions; a matrix of these cross-cutting issues has been prepared to guide the preparation of the Rural Poverty Report. Each theme has both a supply side and a demand side. For instance, staples output and yields may be increased by the supply of technological input and the reduction of water stress through public provision and donor support. Whether or not the right type of technology is forthcoming – the poor normally gain most from robust, labour-intensive ways to grow more food staples – will depend, however, on the demand for crops, other farm and non-farm products, and labour and scientific skills. In both local and global markets, the type of technology requested (and hence in the long run supplied) depends on the distribution of land, income-based demand for agricultural products, and control and influence over institutions (including the private and public sources of agricultural technology and research) and forms of civil society. Technology alone is insufficient, however. IFAD and other multilateral donors will also need to improve market access (the recent processes of liberalization and globalization are relevant in this context), and increase the assets (physical, human and perhaps financial and social) of the rural poor. At the same time, the rural poor may be encouraged (through decentralization, empowerment and participation) to acquire 'political assets' in civil society, to make the state accountable and to relieve transport, information, education and other constraints on the poor's transactions and hence on their proper access to necessary inputs. International donors (such as IFAD) have a major role to play.

3. The cross-cutting issues for rural poverty reduction – staples, water and redistribution - will be analysed, in turn, using the above supply-demand framework in each of the four topic chapters (technology, assets, markets and institutions and civil society). In each case, the focus will be on what works and what does not work for raising the income (and its social counterparts, i.e. better health, education, social inclusion) of the poor in a sustainable fashion. Consistency of poverty reduction (via growth and/or redistribution) with sustainability will be addressed. It will include: the choice of water delivery and maintenance technology; water-related assets, e.g. wells vs. canals; systems of water markets and pricing, and the poor's access to them; institutions for water-sharing and management; and the role of civil society in sustaining community institutions of water systems management.

4. The first draft of the report was completed in early June 2000. The final report will be published towards the end of the year, following an intensive process of internal and external review.

5. A copy of the outline is also available upon request (e-mail: at.rahman@ifad.org) or it may be seen on IFAD's website: www.ifad.org.