



IFAD
INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Executive Board – Seventy-First Session

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LAUNCHING OF THE RURAL POVERTY REPORT 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 an IFAD report on rural poverty, 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 and information on the forthcoming launch of the Rural Poverty Report 2001, is presented to the current session of the Executive Board for information.



LAUNCHING OF THE RURAL POVERTY REPORT 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 an IFAD report on rural poverty, 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. It also includes information on the activities planned in connection with the launch of the report, entitled Rural Poverty Report 2001.

Finalization of IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2001

2. Since the information submitted to the Sixty-Ninth Session of the Executive Board, substantial progress has been made in the chain of activities that will lead to the publication of the Rural Poverty Report 2001 and its launch in February 2001.

3. A series of drafts of the report have been circulated for comments to all professional staff members of IFAD and to a number of pre-designated commentators. In addition to these reviewers, many informal commentators from civil society and from multilateral and bilateral development agencies have been requested to review the draft. Moreover, an official request for comments from Executive Board Directors was also submitted to the List Convenors. The comments made have been reviewed and consolidated, and then shared with the Poverty Research Unit of the University of Sussex so that they could make the necessary revisions to the manuscript.

4. Designated IFAD staff members have reviewed the final manuscript, which was sent to IFAD on 25 September 2000, to make sure that it adequately reflects IFAD's key messages and experiences. The Publications Unit is now preparing the manuscript for submission to the Oxford University Press for publication.

Pre-launching activities

5. To reach as wide an audience as possible, including bilateral and multilateral partners and donor countries, as well as interested groups and individuals outside the development community, IFAD has organized a number of pre-launching activities aimed at raising awareness of the issues covered in the report.

6. The Fund has held a series of public lectures to draw attention to rural poverty. Senator Sartaj Aziz of Pakistan inaugurated the series. Professor M.S. Swaminathan, former Director of the International Rice Research Institute, delivered the second lecture at the World Food Programme (WFP) on 12 September 2000; and Mr Harris Mule, former Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, Government of Kenya, gave the third lecture in the series on 24 October 2000. Professor Ravi Kanbur, T. H. Lee Professor of World Affairs, Cornell University, has agreed to deliver the fourth lecture on 24 January 2001.

7. At the invitation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), IFAD gave a presentation on the preliminary results of Rural Poverty Report 2001 to the Committee on World Food Security on 18 September 2000 in Rome. The response to this presentation was positive. The report's findings were also presented during a roundtable discussion organized by the United Nations Development Programme on "Pro-Poor Growth: The Role of Inequality", held in New York on 21 September 2000.



8. Several bilateral partners have offered to host discussion fora on the report in order to increase awareness of issues related to rural poverty eradication and to strengthen partnerships.

9. The first such discussion forum was held in Japan on 16 November 2000 in cooperation with the Government of Japan, the United Nations Office for Project Services and the United Nations University in Tokyo. A number of distinguished academicians participated in the workshop as panelists. The Asian Development Bank, FAO, the Japan Bank of International Cooperation, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the World Bank and WFP also participated.

10. Within IFAD, an intensive process has begun in preparation for the report's launch. Its key messages have been identified and a communication strategy is being developed. The Publications and Communication Units are preparing press material, including press kits, media alerts, flyers and posters, for dissemination during the pre-launching and launching events.

Launching of the Rural Poverty Report 2001

11. The main launching event is expected to take place at United Nations headquarters in New York during the first two weeks of February 2001, and will be presided over by Mr Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations. The audience will include journalists from the United Nations (UN) press corps, experts on development issues, representatives attending the General Assembly, academicians, heads of UN agencies based in New York, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

12. Pre-launch events will take place in Rome and London two or three days before the official New York launch. In Rome, the support of the Government of Italy to IFAD and past collaboration with the City of Rome could well serve to launch the report. Rome's Mayor, Mr Francesco Rutelli, will be contacted to support the organization of the event, including a press conference. In addition, the United Nations Information Centre in Rome could also be involved to support the Italian launch. Invitees will include government officials, academicians, FAO and WFP representatives, NGOs and the media.

13. The United Kingdom Department for International Development, jointly with IFAD, will organize a launching seminar in London. It is expected that Ms Clare Short, Secretary of State for International Development, the United Kingdom, will represent the British Government at this event. Development practitioners, academicians, partners of bilateral and multilateral organizations, parliamentarians and journalists will attend the seminar.

14. Related to the launching in New York, IFAD will organize a workshop in Washington, together with the International Food Policy Research Institute and the Vision 20/20 initiative.

Post-launching events

15. A series of post-launching events in the IFAD regions are planned for 2001 and will allow IFAD to disseminate the report and its major findings to partners in developing countries. The regional workshops will be based on a summary of the Rural Poverty Report 2001 and the more specific regional poverty assessments. The workshops will create the opportunity for an in-depth discussion of poverty issues in the regional context and are expected to provide IFAD with useful suggestions for future collaboration in the region.

16. The pre-launching, launching and post-launching events will conclude with a workshop in November or December 2001 in Rome to take account of the experiences of these different events, thus ensuring that IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2001 is a living document.