



IFAD
INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
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LAUNCHES OF THE REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS AND STRATEGIES

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In preparing the *Rural Poverty Report 2001* (RPR2001), IFAD developed six regional assessments of rural poverty. In the light of these and of RPR2001, at the end of 2001 the Fund formulated six regional strategies for implementing the Strategic Framework for IFAD (2002-06). This information note provides an overview of activities undertaken and planned for the launch of the regional assessments and strategies.

II. PREPARATION OF THE REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS AND STRATEGIES

2. **Preparation of the Regional Assessments of Rural Poverty.** The six regional assessments were prepared by the regional divisions of the Programme Management Department. They provide overviews of the characteristics and causes of poverty in the Fund's operating regions and examine opportunities for poverty reduction through strengthening the asset base of the rural poor.

3. Preparation started in April 1999. On 26-27 July 1999, a workshop was held at IFAD to present the first results of the assessments to staff. The workshop reviewed the findings and identified four themes for in-depth study: (i) access to assets; (ii) technology and agricultural transformation; (iii) institutions, with particular focus on rural finance institutions; and (iv) access to markets in the context of globalization.

4. The regional assessment report for Latin America and the Caribbean was published in November 2000, followed by reports for western and central Africa in December 2001, and eastern and southern Africa and Asia and the Pacific in January 2002. Two more reports, for the Near East and north Africa and for central and eastern Europe and the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union, are scheduled for publication in the coming months.

5. **Preparation of the Regional Strategies.** In mid-2001, IFAD management launched the process of shaping the strategic framework for 2002-06. This culminated in a document that was shared with the Executive Board at its Seventy-Fourth Session in December 2001. The regional strategies, the next tier of corporate strategy, were prepared in parallel with development of the strategic framework. The regional strategies, based on the regional assessments, sought to define



aspects such as the regional economic and poverty context, the groups of rural poor with whom IFAD should work and the lessons learned by IFAD from past experience. The main thrusts and elements of the regional strategies were developed on the basis of analysis of these aspects. Six draft regional strategies had been prepared by December 2001: (i) western and central Africa; (ii) eastern and southern Africa; (iii) Asia and the Pacific; (iv) Latin America and the Caribbean; (v) the Near East and north Africa; and (vi) central and eastern Europe and the newly independent states.

III. LAUNCHES OF THE REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS AND STRATEGIES

6. **Launches of the Regional Assessments.** By mid-January 2002, seven main events had been undertaken to launch the regional assessments; two draft regional strategies were validated as well. These events are listed below.

EVENTS	DATE	REMARKS
CHILE Santiago: Presentation of Regional Assessment, Latin America and the Caribbean	28 November 2000	Presentation at the Catholic University of Santiago during the 16 th Symposium of the International Farming Systems Association and the 4 th Latin American Farming Systems Research and Extension Symposium
INDIA Delhi: Discussion on Regional Assessment, Asia and the Pacific	23-24 August 2001	Workshop attended by government agencies, donor representatives, non-governmental organizations (NGOs)/civil-society organizations (CSOs) and academia from South Asia
ITALY and SENEGAL Dakar and Rome: Validation Workshop and Teleconference on Regional Assessment, Western and Central Africa	May and November 2001	Workshop held at IFAD; teleconference hosted in Dakar by the World Bank resident mission
NICARAGUA Managua: Discussion on Regional Assessment, Latin America and the Caribbean	24-27 September 2001	Workshop with IFAD partners in the Central America subregion, organized by regional programmes (FIDAMERICA ¹ , PREVAL II ² , PROMER ³ and RUTA ⁴)
ROMANIA Bucharest: Discussion on Regional Assessment and Strategic Opportunities, Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States	11-12 December 2001	Presentation of regional assessment and validation of draft regional strategy with high-level government representatives from eight IFAD borrowing countries in the subregion
SENEGAL Dakar: Presentation of Regional Assessment, Western and Central Africa	14-15 January 2002	Subregional launching of RPR2001 and regional assessment, validation of draft regional strategy

¹ FIDAMERICA – Network of IFAD-Supported Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean

² Programme for Strengthening the Regional Capacity for Monitoring and Evaluation of Rural Poverty- Alleviation Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean

³ Rural Microenterprise Support Programme in Latin America and the Caribbean

⁴ Regional Unit for Technical Assistance



7. **Launches of the Regional Strategies.** During the Twenty-Fifth Session of the Governing Council on 19-20 February 2002, the draft regional strategies were discussed at six simultaneous roundtables. These gave representatives of Member States the opportunity to review the draft regional strategies and offer comments before finalization. The regional strategies will be revised on the basis of the roundtable discussions and the final versions transmitted to Member States for information.

8. Two events have been organized in the **Western and Central Africa** region: one for west Africa and another for central Africa. The west Africa seminar took place on 14-15 January in Dakar, with the following objectives: (i) subregional launch of IFAD's Assessment of Rural Poverty in Western and Central Africa; (ii) subregional presentation of RPR2001; and (iii) discussion and validation of the draft Strategy for Rural Poverty Alleviation in Western and Central Africa. The seminar was opened by the President of the Republic of Senegal, H.E. Abdoulaye Wade, and the President of IFAD. Participants included a wide range of subregional stakeholders from government, regional organizations, civil society and farmers' organizations, NGOs, academia and research institutes, the media, IFAD-supported projects and donor agencies. A similar central African seminar will take place in early May 2002 in Yaoundé.

9. In the **Eastern and Southern Africa** region, two events will take place in May 2002 to launch the regional assessment and strategy. These events are part of IFAD's efforts to improve its support for policy and institutional dialogue in the region. The first will be the Civil-Society Workshop on Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation, in Nairobi on 6-9 May 2002; the second will be the Regional Workshop on Rural Growth and Poverty Reduction, in Dar-es-Salaam on 23-24 May 2002. The Nairobi launch will be organized for civil-society stakeholders from across the region; the Dar-es-Salaam workshop will focus on government representatives and donors. The regional assessment and strategy will be presented to a meeting of Southern African Development Community (SADC) ministers of agriculture later in the year. A launch for francophone countries in the region will be held in Rwanda during the third quarter of 2002.

10. In **Asia and the Pacific**, two events have been planned for the launch of the regional strategy. The first, scheduled for June 2002 for South East Asia, will be organized in collaboration with the Government of Indonesia. The second, scheduled for October 2002 for East and South Asia, will be organized in collaboration with the Government of China, the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and the German Foundation for International Development (DSE). In view of the priority accorded to mountain areas in the regional strategy, this launch will be held in conjunction with the International Conference on Mountain Development, to be held in China in October 2002 as part of the global activities for the International Year of the Mountains 2002. Both events will be attended by senior policy-makers, NGOs, academics and other stakeholders.

11. A two-day event in Peru is planned for the second half of 2002 to launch the regional strategy for **Latin America and the Caribbean**. About 100 representatives of stakeholder groups will take part. The event will be organized by PREVAL and FIDAMERICA, two regional programmes in Peru funded by IFAD under the grant programme.

12. A launch workshop for the strategy for the **Near East and North Africa** subregion will take place on 6-7 May 2002 in Beirut. The workshop will be attended by government and non-government participants from the Fund's borrowing and non-borrowing countries in the region.

13. The strategy for the **Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States** subregion was discussed and validated in Bucharest on 11-12 December 2001 at a workshop attended by high-level government representatives from the eight IFAD borrowing countries in the subregion. Participants stressed the importance of partnership and the expected role of IFAD in addressing priorities such as building the capacity of local institutions that empower the rural poor, promoting adoption of enabling policies, fostering market links with the private sector and focusing on



disadvantaged areas of extreme poverty such as mountainous zones and isolated communities. IFAD was requested to undertake a regional thematic study of agricultural marketing and related policies as a follow-up activity.

IV. A FINAL REMARK

14. The challenges and opportunities for IFAD in the coming years are to make a sustainable contribution to reducing poverty to meet the Millennium Development Goals and to create innovations through its projects and programmes. While country-level programmes continue to be the major thrust of IFAD activities, greater attention will be paid to eliminating institutional obstacles facing the rural poor, to developing partnerships and to sharing knowledge. The Fund must work for consensus on the centrality of rural poverty in poverty-reduction efforts. RPR2001 and the regional assessments have provided a platform for debate on issues relevant to rural poverty reduction and served as a stimulus for the Fund to refine its regional strategies. These strategies will constitute the first level of implementation of the strategic framework and provide the basis for the second generation of country strategies, the country strategic opportunities papers.