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IFAD

INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

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FIELD PRESENCE PILOT PROGRAMME

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AP/PMD	Assistant President/Programme Management Department
CPM	Country Portfolio Manager
CS	Common Services
FPPP	Field Presence Pilot Programme
IB	Initiative Brief
IFI	International Financial Institution
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OE	Office of Evaluation
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its Seventy-Ninth Session in September 2003, the Executive Board reviewed document EB 2003/79/R.3, IFAD's Field Presence and In-Country Capacity, and made the following recommendation:

"It is recommended that the Executive Board review the present document and authorize IFAD, supported by the Executive Board's Working Group on Field Presence, to:

- (a) Elaborate clear guidelines and criteria for selection of countries and instruments to enhance in-country presence and capacity under a three-year pilot programme and submit these in December 2003 for the Executive Board's consideration.*
- (b) Based on these guidelines and criteria, submit in December 2003 for the Executive Board's approval an implementation programme covering various types of instruments, including at least one (sub-) regional representative. The overall budget for a pilot programme of a maximum of 15 initiatives would be limited to USD 3 million.*
- (c) Each pilot proposal will be time-bound (within the three-year programme life) and will contain precise costs (direct and indirect) for its duration. It will also contain specific objectives, terms of reference for the scope of work, job descriptions and curricula for the recommended personnel. A description of the initiatives will be submitted to the Executive Board for information.*
- (d) The proposals will take into account the preliminary results of the corporate evaluation of supervision arrangements, IFAD's commitments within the framework of the Rome Declaration on Harmonization, and, in due course, the outcome of the ongoing reform of the United Nations system.*
- (e) The individual proposals will also contain evaluation criteria and IFAD's independent Office of Evaluation (OE) will evaluate all pilots against these criteria during the third year of programme implementation.*
- (f) At the end of three years and taking into account the OE evaluation, the Executive Board will decide whether to continue, expand, end or otherwise modify the Field Presence Programme."*

2. That decision was the final step in a long process of reflection and discussion on the question of whether and how IFAD should enhance its presence in the field. Unlike most other development agencies and international financial institutions (IFIs), the Fund has never had formal representations in the borrowing countries. Links between these countries and IFAD headquarters are maintained through staff and consultants' missions, cooperating institutions and, in more recent years, a variety of so-called 'proxy field-presence' instruments.¹ The Consultations on both the Fifth and Sixth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources questioned IFAD's lack of a permanent field presence, and, in December 2002, the Seventy-Seventh Session of the Executive Board instructed IFAD to "proceed with the rapid country analysis of 15 countries with pertinent activities in the different regions, ...".² The results of the 15 case studies³ supported earlier findings that while ongoing proxy field-presence

¹ See Document REPL.VI/3/R.6, Enhancing IFAD's Field Presence, Annex II, for a description and analysis of these "proxy field-presence" instruments.

² Document EB 2002/77/R.9/Rev.1.

³ See Document EB 2003/79/R.3, "IFAD's Field Presence and In-Country Capacity", Annex: The Case Studies – Summary.

instruments permit IFAD to facilitate project implementation, generally they were not suited to catalytic action related to policy dialogue and partnership building. The case studies identified a clear need at the level of governments and other in-country partners (including the donor community) for closer and more continuous involvement by IFAD in such action.

3. The above-mentioned Board recommendation (see paragraph 1) is based on the results of earlier studies, reflections and discussions, and on the findings and conclusions of the team that undertook the 15 case studies. In response to that recommendation, Section II of the present document identifies and discusses the criteria to be applied to the selection of countries/(sub-)regions and instruments to be included under the three-year field presence pilot programme (FPPP). Section III outlines a programme for its implementation.

II. GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA

4. **Goals and objectives of enhancing IFAD's field presence.** IFAD's vision is to "enable the rural poor to overcome their poverty". Any action launched by the Fund should contribute to realizing that vision and, by so doing, contribute to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). While not neglecting its catalytic role, IFAD has in the past placed emphasis on implementing its mandate through investment projects and programmes supported by limited⁴ grant resources. In recent years, and in line with the evolution of the development environment at the country and international levels, greater attention has been paid to the role that functions such as policy dialogue, partnership-building and knowledge management can play in enhancing IFAD's impact. Therefore, the Fund has been making strategic efforts to join governments and other development partners in elaborating policies related to poverty reduction and agricultural and rural development and in optimizing the use of its limited human, financial and knowledge resources through closer collaboration and partnership activities. IFAD has been able to contribute to the international debate on selected development issues (such as microfinance, rural institutions, etc.), and has increasingly accompanied its investment activities by catalytic action at the country level. With regard to the latter, an enhanced field presence would enable the Fund to play a more effective catalytic role and strengthen its impact.

5. IFAD's strategic approach to enhancing its field presence also aims at supporting its vision and strategic framework⁵, by:

- strengthening the impact of its activities on the socio-economic situation of its target group; and
- building up local capacities.

An enhanced field presence would help the Fund to realize these objectives by strengthening and integrating four interrelated dimensions: **project implementation, policy dialogue, partnership-building and knowledge management**. A more permanent field presence would allow IFAD to increase the effectiveness of existing measures – ranging from project supervision to policy workshops, support to research and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), etc. – and leverage them more successfully in favour of the rural poor. A critical element here will be the Fund's greater ability to capture lessons learned from the rural poor at the project implementation level and to integrate this understanding into policy dialogue, partnership-building and, ultimately, knowledge management.

⁴ Up to now, this was 7.5 % of the Fund's total lending programme; it has been decided to increase this to 10%.

⁵ Document EB 2001/74/R.36.

6. Improvements in **project implementation** can and do lead directly to a stronger impact on the target group and contribute to reducing poverty levels. Past experience has shown (see paragraph 2) that various types of field presence can greatly facilitate implementation and strengthen the results and impact of IFAD's investments. **Policy dialogue** is the dimension where IFAD can play an important catalytic role by influencing policy decisions in favour of the rural poor. This is, however, a lengthy process calling for regular interaction with governments and other stakeholders as well as continuous follow-up. **Partnership-building** refers to IFAD's relations with all in-country stakeholders; in addition to the target group and government involved, this embraces other bilateral and multilateral development agencies, IFIs, NGOs, the private sector, etc. In times of limited resource availability, advantage must be taken of complementarities and synergies among donors. Coordinated interventions can improve resource-use, and therefore IFAD's active involvement with other country-level partners may help to increase the support provided to the development of poor rural populations. The dimension of **knowledge management** reinforces the other three dimensions and their impact on achieving IFAD's strategic objectives: "The fundamental cure for poverty is not money but knowledge."⁶ While two-way flows of knowledge between IFAD and stakeholders in a given country (the rural poor, governmental and non-governmental entities, donor agencies, etc.) may contribute to the effectiveness of development activities, they will need to be nurtured through a more continuous and strategic in-country presence than IFAD presently enjoys.

7. **Approach and priorities.** The three-year FPPP will provide an opportunity to complement the proxy field-presence instruments that have been tested in a number of countries and proved their worth; as such, they will be maintained and replicated with a view to facilitating and strengthening project implementation. In parallel, FPPP initiatives will use field presence to enhance IFAD's catalytic role and thus, as a matter of priority, will aim to develop and pilot instruments for policy dialogue, partnership-building and knowledge management. However, the identification and testing of new and innovative ways of supporting project implementation will not be excluded from the FPPP.

8. As a time-bound, geographically limited pilot programme, the FPPP must be both clearly focused and comprise a range of initiatives that make it possible to test different instruments and respond to various needs. It will therefore need to be based on a well-defined set of criteria that underlie the selection of countries/(sub-)regions and instruments. The following sub-sections identify and discuss such a set of strategic criteria.

A. Guidelines and Criteria for the Selection of Countries/(Sub-)Regions to Benefit from Field Presence Pilot Initiatives

9. In launching the FPPP in a limited number of its borrowing Member States, IFAD will be guided by its mandate and Lending Policies and Criteria⁷; by the needs of the rural poor; and by practical considerations of feasibility and regional distribution. On this basis, countries selected to participate in the FPPP will need to comply with the following criteria:

- high levels of poverty, particularly in rural areas;
- a sufficiently conducive environment at the level of government and other development partners;
- an identified need to strengthen the policy and institutional environment in favour of the target group;
- adequate prospective IFAD portfolio sizes; and
- adequate regional distribution.

⁶ Sir William Arthur Lewis.

⁷ Lending Policies and Criteria. IFAD, 1978, amended in 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997 and 1998.

10. **Poverty level.** According to IFAD's mandate as defined in the Agreement Establishing IFAD⁸ and further interpreted in the Lending Policies and Criteria⁹, the Fund aims to improve the living conditions of **poor populations in developing countries**. All developing countries with high levels of poverty in rural areas thus qualify in principle for inclusion in the FPPP.

11. **A conducive environment.** The *“interrelated aims of IFAD – to increase food production, reduce rural poverty and improve nutrition in developing countries – cannot be achieved unless the countries themselves are prepared to evolve and implement a development strategy geared to these objectives. IFAD will be ready to contribute to the evolution of development strategies for the benefit of the rural poor by providing financial resources for specific development projects and programmes, and by assisting interested governments in identifying and implementing policies and institutional changes that will help to achieve the broader economic and social objectives of rural development.”*¹⁰ A government's commitment to define and adopt agricultural and rural policies that take into account the specific opportunities and constraints faced by poor populations is a *condicio sine qua non* of a conducive environment for successful policy dialogue. Working “within the framework of national priorities and strategies” (see footnote 8), IFAD relies on its Member States' commitment to rural poverty reduction. In launching the FPPP, the Fund will accord priority to countries whose governments demonstrate a commitment to putting the fight against rural poverty high on the policy agenda.

12. The second aspect of a “conducive environment” is related to the readiness of other development partners (bilateral/multilateral development agencies, IFIs, NGOs) to collaborate with IFAD in the interest of the rural poor. The building up of partnerships and coalitions, at both the policy and project levels, is an important instrument for reinforcing the impact of development efforts and related investments. In many countries where IFAD intervenes, the donor community has shown interest in a closer and more permanent relationship with IFAD, a fact that has been borne out by the majority of the case studies (see footnote 3). It may be expected that, in such countries, the FPPP will find fertile ground for successful collaboration; it should therefore be launched there as a matter of priority. The growing trend in the donor community to adopt and work through Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and other country strategic frameworks and sector-wide approaches provides additional opportunities for such cooperation.

13. **A need to strengthen the policy and institutional environment.** Agricultural and rural development policies are, in many countries, purely output-oriented, with little or no regard for the specific situation of small producers, landless farmers, rural women and the poor in general. Indeed, a number of PRSPs neglect the rural side of the poverty of the countries they relate to. This is mainly due to the fact that the rural poor rarely have the capacity and institutions to participate in, and contribute to, the policy discussions that concern them. The fact that a donor like IFAD, specialized in rural poverty reduction, is more often than not absent from this process, also contributes to this lacuna in the PRSPs. Therefore, in addition to activities that are being carried forward in many of its projects and aim at strengthening the target groups' capacity and institutions, IFAD will also endeavour to respond to the need for its direct involvement in related national policy discussions, both with governments and with the other development partners, and, where feasible, launch an FPPP initiative. This will also facilitate advocacy regarding budgetary decisions with the aim of ensuring that adequate budgetary means in favour of rural development and poverty reduction are included in countries' medium-term expenditure plans and annual budgets.

14. **An adequate prospective portfolio size.** As of October 2003, 22 of IFAD's 114 borrowing Member States have no ongoing projects; 30 have one; 23 have two; 18 have three; and 21 have four or more. These figures, must, however, be seen in the context of the general country situation, IFAD's

⁸ Agreement Establishing the International Fund for Agricultural Development, IFAD 1976, amended in 1986, 1995 and 1997.

⁹ Lending Policies and Criteria, op.cit. Chapter I.

¹⁰ Op.cit. I/5.

medium-term country strategy and the number of proposed pipeline projects. In cases where the internal politico-economic situation appears sufficiently stable and the medium-term outlook points towards maintaining or increasing an ongoing portfolio of two or more projects, inclusion of the country under the FPPP could be envisaged. On the other hand, a country with only one or two, or even no ongoing projects that has overcome a crisis situation, e.g. a prolonged civil war, and is returning to stability, may be earmarked for an FPPP intervention; frequently such countries will be in particular need of a permanent IFAD presence to support the development of new policies, strategies and programmes concerning the rural poor, the agricultural sector and the food security situation of the population. The criterion “portfolio size” may not therefore be related to the absolute number of projects per country, but its interpretation will depend on the above-mentioned overall context and medium-term outlook, as well as on whether the FPPP initiative concerned is intended to serve one or more countries.

15. **An adequate regional distribution.** At the present time, IFAD has ongoing or pipeline activities in more than 100 developing Member States, spread over five geographic regions: West and Central Africa; Eastern and Southern Africa; Near East and North Africa; Asia and the Pacific; and Latin America and the Caribbean. The FPPP will need to be working in all five regions if it is to cover a broad range of situations, both regarding the needs to be covered and the field presence instruments put in place. Such an all-embracing regional approach will enrich the lessons to be drawn from the pilot programme and make it possible to formulate guidelines and directions for the future that can be applied under varying geographic, socio-economic and political situations.

B. Guidelines and Criteria for the Selection of Field Presence Instruments

16. The experience gained in piloting proxy-field presence instruments during the last few years (mostly documented in the case studies reported to the Seventy-Ninth Session of the Executive Board in September 2003) and the lessons learned by observing the field-presence practices of other development agencies and IFIs, provide IFAD with a long list of possible instruments to be applied within the framework of the FPPP. The selected instruments will support IFAD’s vision of “enabling the rural poor to overcome their poverty”, take account of the views of government and other development partners, and fit within the financial and time limits of the pilot programme. Instruments will be selected that comply with a maximum of the following criteria and thus:

- respond to identified needs and local conditions;
- take account of government policies and IFAD’s corporate goals;¹¹
- strengthen and rely to the maximum on local capacities and institutions;
- provide for adequate delegation of authority to the field;
- are cost effective, time-bound (initially up to three years) and sustainable;
- include innovative solutions;
- envisage collaboration with existing United Nations structures, IFIs, etc.; and
- take account of the 2003 Rome Declaration on Harmonization.

17. **Local needs and conditions.** That IFAD has not adopted a blueprint approach to enhancing its field presence illustrates that the Fund aims to respond, to the maximum extent possible, to identified local needs and the specific conditions of a given country or (sub-)region. Therefore, whether selecting tested instruments and/or developing new instruments, in each case special care will need to be taken to match the country situation and instrument, e.g. respond to capacity-building requirements or benefit from existing local specialized human resources, and to choose, from among the instruments available, those that may be expected to have the greatest impact on rural poverty reduction.

¹¹ Document EB 2001/74/R.36.

18. **Government policies and IFAD's corporate goals.** As mentioned in paragraph 11, IFAD works "within the framework of national priorities and strategies". It goes without saying that the Fund would not propose to establish its presence in the field in a manner that contradicts this framework. By the same token, any FPPP initiative would be designed with a view to supporting IFAD's corporate goals as defined in its Lending Policies and Criteria and the strategic framework 2002-2006¹².

19. The **strengthening of local capacities and institutions** is not only a selection criterion: it is in itself an objective of the FPPP, in line with IFAD's vision and strategic approach to poverty reduction. By supporting and complementing project-internal activities aimed at strengthening the capacities and institutions of the rural poor so that they, themselves, can become actively involved in the development of national policies and strategies (paragraph 11), FPPP initiatives should provide opportunities for nationals to learn and develop their professional capabilities, e.g. as understudies of senior professionals, through the organization of national workshops, etc., and for local institutions to place themselves in the policy arena, for example, by serving as forum/host to poverty-related policy discussions.

20. **Delegation of authority.** With the exception of the out-posted Country Portfolio Manager (CPM) in Peru, existing proxy field-presence personnel fulfil purely facilitating functions, in particular for project implementation. They have no mandate to represent IFAD as an institution, provide independent policy advice or take decisions in its name. To date, this can only be done by IFAD staff and, within the limitations of their mandate and terms of reference, by cooperating institutions and consultants. In order to be effective in the areas of policy dialogue and partnership relations, field presence instruments must be given a certain degree of authority, within the limits of IFAD's mandate, statutes and approach, accompanied by adequate systems of communication, information and accountability.

21. **Cost effectiveness.** It is imperative that a maximum of IFAD's limited resources continue to be allocated to loans and grants directly benefiting the organization's target group, the rural poor. By the same token, an enhanced IFAD field presence must be seen as a means to strengthen the impact of its loans and grants and therefore the necessary resources must be allocated to fulfil this function. The costs of each field-presence instrument will therefore need to be assessed in the light of its prospective results in terms of short- and medium-term impact on rural poverty reduction. While it has proved difficult to assess the benefits of an enhanced field presence in monetary terms, the results may be evaluated on the basis of a number of indicators that will need to be defined in relation to each FPPP initiative (paragraph 38).

22. **Time limitations.** In line with the recommendations of the Seventy-Ninth Session of the Executive Board (see paragraph 1), it is planned to implement the FPPP over a period of three years. The implementation period of any given instrument will be limited, therefore, to a maximum of 36 months. Initiatives may thus only be included in the FPPP if there are sound prospects that the intended and tangible results will be reached within the available implementation period and have reasonable prospects for continuing to make a strong impact.

23. **Sustainability.** As with its investment activities, IFAD also needs to consider field-presence initiatives in the light of their durability and replicability. The FPPP will be judged in this perspective. Priority will therefore be given to instruments that may be expected to remain functional over and above the pilot period and thus ensure a longer-term impact on rural development and poverty reduction. It goes without saying that this criterion is closely related both to the strengthening of local capacities and institutions and to cost-effectiveness.

¹² Op.cit.

24. **Innovative solutions.** IFAD has taken a clear decision not to follow the traditional path of establishing country representations with diplomatic functions and in need of significant budgetary means. The Fund has already gained experience in piloting more innovative tools such as (sub-) regional policy networks and the sharing of manpower and facilities with other United Nations agencies. Other innovative solutions are expected to be developed within the framework of the FPPP.

25. **Working with existing United Nations structures.** In 2001, the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) launched a pilot programme to “improve implementation and harmonization of common services at the country level”¹³. When the programme was evaluated in mid-2003, it was concluded that implementation of common services (CS) at the country level is not only hard work but takes time and calls for a considerable investment of resources to build up the institutions and processes needed for interagency cooperation. Due to the absence of baseline and cost data on CS, the evaluators were unable to establish whether or not there had been any tangible benefits, although most countries felt that there had been cost savings or improvements in the cost-effectiveness of service delivery. The major benefits of the CS programme, as identified during the pilot phase, are as follows: better interagency cooperation; greater transparency and trust; increased participation, leadership and focus; greater visibility and priority of CS; modernization of services management; consistency across countries; and increased awareness, understanding and performance accountability. The roles and functions of United Nations structures established in a given country can, moreover, guide the selection of IFAD’s field-presence instruments going beyond the CS and premises concept. Thus IFAD is able to count on the United Nations Resident Coordinator as representing the interests of specialized agencies that have no formal representation in the country concerned. By the same token, the sharing of premises, e.g. with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Food Programme (WFP) or the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), would, over and above possible cost savings, facilitate knowledge sharing, donor coordination and partnership-building activities. The not-fully-conclusive result of the CS pilot phase should not, therefore, discourage IFAD from aiming at pooling resources with United Nations (and other) agencies already present in selected countries. In any event, such collaboration will be considered as a favourable criterion in selecting field-presence instruments. Similarly, every effort will be made to collaborate with IFIs, NGOs and other development partners in order to arrive at the most suitable arrangement in each country concerned.

26. **The 2003 Rome Declaration on Harmonization**¹⁴. The main message expressed through the Declaration is that donor aid, however well-intentioned it may be, has come to levy a high toll on recipients in terms of transaction costs. Donors can alleviate this problem by doing more to coordinate their efforts, harmonize (and thus reduce) their multiple requirements, and assist partner countries to take charge of their own development process. This should be done through “a country-based approach that emphasises country ownership and government leadership, includes capacity-building, recognizes diverse aid modalities (projects, sector approaches, and budget or balance of payments support), and engages civil society, including the private sector”¹⁵. Efforts to harmonize IFAD’s activities with those of other donors may both facilitate and strengthen the organization’s field presence in a given country. It is therefore an important criterion in designing FPPP initiatives.

¹³ UNDG. Evaluation of the Common Services Pilot Programme. Discussion Draft, August 2003.

¹⁴ Signed on the occasion of the High-Level Forum on Harmonization held in Rome in February 2003 by the heads of multilateral and bilateral development institutions and representatives of the International Monetary Fund, other multilateral financial institutions and partner countries.

¹⁵ Op.cit. paragraph 3.

C. Conclusion

27. The above guidelines and criteria for the selection of countries and instruments for the FPPP have been developed in consultation among IFAD and its Member States and other stakeholders and are based on lessons learned by many stakeholders under varying geographic, economic and political conditions. Adapted to the specific mandate and approach that characterize IFAD, they are intended to provide a sound conceptual basis for the **design** of the three-year FPPP. The following section outlines a programme for its **implementation**.

III. PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME

A. Process and Time Plan

28. The FPPP is a three-year process that supports IFAD's corporate efforts to increase the direct and indirect impact of its activities. Implementation will be based on the strategic set of criteria explained above (Section II) and, in line with the pilot nature of the programme, will be needs-oriented and adapted to new requirements as they arise. In addition to aiming at quick results in terms of improved operations and enhanced catalytic actions, the 15 pilot initiatives are intended as learning tools. As such, their implementation will be monitored closely with a view to drawing lessons (a) to be shared with other participants in the FPPP and (b) to constitute the final evaluation of the programme and, if approved, facilitate the launching of future field-presence initiatives.

29. The main FPPP-implementation steps are as follows:

- **Fourth Quarter 2003 – Fourth Quarter 2004: Design of FPPP initiatives.** The development of a full proposal for implementing an FPPP initiative in a specific country/(sub-)region will require a detailed formulation process, including an assessment of the situation (needs and opportunities), consultations with in-country stakeholders, identification of the most suited instrument, costing of the initiative and preparation of the design document (initiative brief). A first set of initiative briefs (IBs) will be completed in 2003 and submitted for information to the Eightieth Session of the Executive Board in December 2003. The remaining initiatives will be developed during 2004 and the Board will be informed of them during the course of 2004.
- **First Quarter 2004 – Fourth Quarter 2004: Launching of FPPP initiatives in selected countries.** Once the design steps for an initiative have been completed successfully, launching activities (in particular identification and recruitment of staff, conclusion of employment and logistics contracts) may be envisaged. The FPPP will be considered effective once at least one initiative has been launched successfully in each geographic region, but not later than end-2004.
- **2004 – 2007: Implementation of FPPP initiatives.**
- **Fourth Quarter 2006: Start of FPPP evaluation by the OE.** The purpose of this independent evaluation will be to assess the FPPP in the light of its results and impact on the main objectives of the pilot programme, as illustrated through the experience of each initiative, and to put forward findings and recommendations regarding possible future field-presence programmes.
- **September 2007: Executive Board discussion on field presence.** Based on the findings and recommendations of the independent evaluation of the FPPP, IFAD management will present the Board with a document summarizing its reaction to the evaluation and its proposals for future field presence-related action. On that basis, the Board will “decide

whether to continue, expand, end or otherwise modify the Field Presence Programme” (see paragraph 1).

B. Design Specifications

30. Once a country/(sub-)region and the respective field-presence instrument have been agreed upon, the following details will be determined: objectives, scope of work, terms of reference and qualifications of professionals to be contracted; types of contracts; logistics arrangements; budget; and evaluation criteria. These details will be elaborated in consultation with in-country stakeholders concerned, approved by IFAD management, and shared with the Board. Initial examples are provided in Annex I.

31. **Types of instruments.** As discussed above (paragraph 16), the selection of instruments will be based on the experience gained by IFAD and other development partners and the strategic set of criteria discussed in Section II of the document. In line with the pilot character of the FPPP, efforts will be made to test a variety of instruments; initially the options will therefore range from networks to long-term professionals, programme officers, local or (sub-)regional institutions and others. However, the FPPP is also intended as an instrument to identify and develop new and innovative approaches to field presence. It may be expected that new ideas will result from the findings of the corporate evaluation of supervision arrangements and from contacts with governments and other development partners in selected countries. This should lead to the development of innovative solutions and design features. Such innovations will be described in detail in the respective IBs and shared with the Board in accordance with the procedure mentioned in paragraph 29.

32. **Specific objectives.** Within the general FPPP goals and objectives (paragraph 4), the detailed purpose and objectives of each initiative will be defined in response to the specific situation and opportunities of the country/(sub-)region concerned. These may range from the strengthening of civil-society processes for representing the interests of the rural poor to improved flows of knowledge among the target group and other stakeholders in the country involved; inclusion of rural poverty aspects in national policy papers; or increased collaboration and cofinancing with other donors – to name just a few examples. It should be borne in mind that the maximum duration of each pilot initiative will be 36 months. Therefore, only short-term objectives may be expected to be realized (and thus be evaluated (see paragraph 38)), although projections will be made on which medium- and long-term results of an extended field presence could be contemplated.

33. **Scope of work.** The functions of any FPPP initiative will depend on its objectives (paragraph 32) and the extent to which certain tasks may or may not already be covered under existing arrangements. In the areas of policy dialogue and partnership, regularly participating in relevant meetings and fora, reporting to headquarters and contributing to policy papers and workshops will be among the standard tasks to be undertaken. Direct contacts with ongoing IFAD projects will be essential in situations where no link to them (such as a project liaison office) exists. These contacts will serve both to identify policy-related project issues and to establish a two-way knowledge flow. The scope of work will also vary, depending on whether the initiative is of a (sub-)regional nature or limited to a single country.

34. **Terms of reference and qualifications.** The terms of reference of staff recruited within the framework of the FPPP will obviously depend on the scope of work of each initiative. With the exception of the option of out-posting CPMs, the FPPP does not foresee any international recruitment but rather the selection and placement of national/regional professionals. The qualifications required will be similar to those of a CPM inasmuch as they relate to academic background, work experience and language requirements. In addition, stress will be placed on ability to deal effectively with donor representatives and higher-level government officials so that IFAD can delegate the necessary authority to the field. Only under these circumstances can functions related to policy dialogue and partnership-building be performed effectively.

35. **Types of contracts and logistics arrangements.** The types of contracts for staff working on an FPPP initiative will be linked closely to the logistics arrangements foreseen. Whenever IFAD agrees with another agency, e.g. UNDP, to share office accommodation and services, the best solution may be to arrange for the recruitment of a local professional through that same organization. When this does not prove possible, a direct contract with IFAD may be envisaged. The situation will again differ when (sub-)regional initiatives are foreseen, either freestanding or linked to a regional organization or cooperating institution. In each case, the Office of the General Counsel (OL) will be requested to provide an opinion on, and/or assist in drafting, the proposed contract arrangements.

36. With regard to logistics, experience with proxy field-presence arrangements has shown that the situation varies from country to country and that, for each case, a ‘best fit’ has to be identified. This will be done in line with the criteria developed above (Section II), i.e. taking account of the cost-effectiveness of the arrangement, options for working with other agencies, and the need to find innovative solutions.

37. **Budget projections.** The IFAD budgetary resources earmarked by the Board for the FPPP amount to USD 3 million for a three-year pilot period, although the wide range of initiatives that can be foreseen does not allow for standard budget projections. Each proposal will therefore include a specific budget covering both personnel and logistics costs (office facilities, communications, travel within the country/region, briefing at IFAD headquarters, participation in workshops, and miscellaneous operating costs). It can be estimated that, on average, these costs to be borne by IFAD, not including possible contributions in-kind from host governments and partner agencies in the country, will not exceed USD 80 000 per initiative, per annum. In the specific case of an out-posted CPM, the indirect costs of his/her absence from headquarters would be included in the budget projections.

38. **Evaluation criteria.** Specific evaluation criteria will be elaborated for each initiative. These criteria will reflect the respective objectives and scope of work, depending both on the type and coverage of the instrument and on the duration of its implementation period and the objectives that can reasonably be expected to be attained (see paragraph 32). The criteria will relate to the main objectives of the overall pilot programme, based on a set of process and outcome indicators.¹⁶

C. Coordination and Management of the Field Presence Pilot Programme

39. In order to ensure that it can be used effectively as a tool both for impact enhancement and learning, the three-year pilot programme will be coordinated under the responsibility of the Assistant President of the Programme Management Department (AP/PMD), in accordance with the following principles:

- Each FPPP initiative will be designed by the regional division concerned, in consultation with other relevant organizational units, and submitted to the AP/PMD for approval, in consultation with senior management.
- Annual workplans and budgets relating to each initiative will be approved by the AP/PMD throughout the pilot phase.
- Throughout the implementation period of an initiative, a clear and direct reporting line from the field to the regional division will be maintained.
- Specific arrangements will be put in place for initiatives that relate to more than one country and/or regional division.

¹⁶ Appendix II.

- The CPM(s) concerned will function as direct supervisor(s) of all professionals recruited under the FPPP and will be responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the initiative(s).
- Regular monitoring of and reporting on the implementation of the FPPP will be the responsibility of the AP/PMD.

The Executive Board Working Group on Field Presence, established in February 2003, will continue to accompany the process.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

40. It is recommended that the Executive Board approve the above guidelines and criteria for the selection of countries and instruments for the three-year Field Presence Pilot Programme and authorize IFAD to implement the programme on that basis.

ELEMENTS OF FIELD PRESENCE INITIATIVES

A. Examples of Instruments

- Country Policy and Programme Coordinator (locally recruited)
- Regional Field Support Manager (recruited from the region concerned)
- Locally staffed Field Liaison Office at the country level
- Sub-regional (Liaison) Office (locally staffed)
- Local Resource Persons/Groups
- (Sub-)Regional Networks
- Out-posted CPM
- Expanded CPM missions
- Full or part-time facilitators

B. Example of the Objectives of an FPPP Initiative

- To enhance the quality and effectiveness of national and international efforts to reduce rural poverty through ensuring that the interests of the rural poor are better reflected and responded to in focused and coordinated policy development, institutional change, and material investment.
- Beyond “mainstreaming” IFAD’s perspectives and experience, seek to strengthen civil society processes for representing the interests of the rural poor, including mobilization of support through IFAD loans and grants.
- To enhance the quality of IFAD’s own input into these processes by better capturing of knowledge on key issues and options from IFAD-supported and other programmes under implementation in areas of strategic concern to IFAD.

C. Typical Activities to be Undertaken by an FPPP Professional in a Given Country

- Represent IFAD in key national planning and donor coordination activities related to national rural development strategy and investment programming.
- Represent IFAD during the national programme planning exercises of key United Nations agencies.
- Coordinate with and support civil-society processes for representing the interests of the poor in the rural sector.
- Act as IFAD focal point for IFAD-supported projects relative to key policy and institutional issues to be pursued by IFAD in its dialogue with governments.
- Act as facilitator in flows of information among development programmes with regard to key issues and lessons learned from implementation in areas of major strategic concern to IFAD.

D. Example of the Functions of an FPPP Initiative with a (Sub-)Regional Mandate

- Assist the CPM(s) in ensuring that greater synergies are created at the country level among IFAD projects in selected areas such as, for example, microfinance, microenterprise development, monitoring and evaluation, and development of communications strategies on project accomplishments and rural poverty in general.
- Represent IFAD in all multi-donor coordination meetings such as those linked to PRSPs, United Nations Development Assistance Framework/United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification monitoring, and national-level food security working groups .
- Participate in supervision missions of projects directly supervised by IFAD, attend project steering committee meetings, and participate in development of annual workplans and budgets in the countries covered, as appropriate.
- Assist the IFAD Regional Economist in monitoring the progress of regional programmes.

EVALUATION INDICATORS

A final set of indicators for each initiative will be selected from the following list, adapted to the specificities of the case and include, if appropriate, additional criteria.

A. Policy Dialogue

Process Indicators

- Number of policy fora that IFAD representative participated in and contributed to.
- Number of written/oral presentations to such fora within one year.
- Number of partnerships and linkages established/institutionalized at the policy level.

Outcome Indicators

- Increased overall knowledge about IFAD at the country/regional level.
- Visible progress in reducing perceived policy and institutional obstacles for rural poverty reduction.
- Increased attention given to addressing rural poverty issues in country-level/regional-level policy documents (e.g. PRSPs and other policy documents).
- Increased emphasis on rural poverty programmes in resources allocated to the agricultural sector in government budget.
- Increased institutional orientation to rural poverty reduction.

B. Partnership Building

Process Indicators

- Number of meetings held with national government institutions on issues related to IFAD's programme.
- Number of meetings held with NGOs, community-based organizations and civil-society organizations.
- Number of meetings held with donors.
- Relevance of meetings' outcomes (based on documents available) to IFAD's concerns and rural poverty issues.

Outcome Indicators

- Enhance alignment of IFAD programme with national mechanisms and objectives in relation to rural poverty reduction.
- Enhanced coordination with civil society.
- Enhanced cooperation and coordination with donors in rural poverty reduction programmes.
- More opportunities for cofinancing.

C. Knowledge Management

Process Indicators

- Regular substantive reporting to IFAD headquarters (number of reports).
- Participation in relevant country-level thematic groups and communities of practice (cops) (number of groups and cops).
- Regular knowledge sharing with in-country stakeholders, in particular IFAD projects (number of written/oral contacts).
- Briefing of visiting missions (number of meetings).

Outcome Indicators

- Improved IFAD headquarter knowledge base related to country/region.
- CPM's capacity for monitoring/participating in-country policy dialogue improved.
- Lesson sharing with and among projects enhanced.
- More replication and scaling-up of successful IFAD innovative approaches to rural poverty reduction.

D. Project Implementation

The criteria for assessing progress in this area will be aligned with the regular reporting processes already existing in IFAD (project status reporting) and include, for example, the following indicators:

- quality of accounts
- quality of audit
- timeliness of audit
- availability of counterpart funds
- overall disbursement by projects
- compliance with loan agreement
- compliance with procurement procedures
- preparation of progress reports
- preparation of monitoring reports.

