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**IFAD**  
**INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**Executive Board – Eighty-Sixth Session**  
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**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE PRESIDENT**

TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ON A PROPOSED GRANT UNDER THE GLOBAL/REGIONAL GRANTS WINDOW

TO THE

**INTERNATIONAL FARMING SYSTEMS RESEARCH METHODOLOGY NETWORK**

FOR THE

**FIDAMERICA NETWORK – PHASE IV:**

**LEARNING AND COMMUNICATION FOR IMPACT ON POVERTY REDUCTION IN**

**LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**



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**ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AWP/B	annual workplan and budget
PREVAL	Programme for Strengthening the Regional Capacity for Monitoring and Evaluation of Rural Poverty-Alleviation Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean
RIMISP	International Farming Systems Research Methodology Network
LKMC	Learning, Knowledge Management and Communication
M&E	monitoring and evaluation



**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE PRESIDENT TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ON A PROPOSED GRANT UNDER THE GLOBAL/REGIONAL GRANTS WINDOW TO THE INTERNATIONAL FARMING SYSTEMS RESEARCH METHODOLOGY NETWORK FOR THE FIDAMERICA NETWORK – PHASE IV: LEARNING AND COMMUNICATION FOR IMPACT ON POVERTY REDUCTION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

I submit the following report and recommendation on a proposed grant to the International Farming Systems Research Methodology Network (RIMISP) for the FIDAMERICA<sup>1</sup> Network – Phase IV: Learning and Communication for Impact on Poverty Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean in the amount of USD 1 320 000 for a three-year period.

**I. BACKGROUND**

1. The FIDAMERICA network has continuously evolved in an effort to improve its capacity to assist the rural poor, support IFAD-funded programmes and projects in Latin America and the Caribbean, and serve as a valuable resource for IFAD itself. Changes in FIDAMERICA have been driven by the evolving needs of its main partners and by new trends in rural development and poverty reduction in the region.
2. Between 1995 and 1998, FIDAMERICA contributed to establishing a system for exchange and dialogue systems among IFAD projects through Internet-based information and communication technologies. Between 1999 and 2001, FIDAMERICA strengthened the capacity of IFAD's projects to systematize their development experiences, and enhance the quality of processes for inter-project learning and knowledge sharing.
3. These learning and knowledge management processes have contributed to the design and implementation of many reforms in IFAD projects, and this has been documented by external evaluations. An independent external evaluation was undertaken in 2005, which reported that FIDAMERICA had accomplished the planned objectives. The evaluation details the issues, events, and project achievements that led to the accomplishment of FIDAMERICA's objectives and to its high level of performance.
4. The evaluation made several recommendations. These concern the importance of sharing knowledge, information and experiences; knowledge and information delivery; strategic partnerships; training; and the role of advisory committees. These recommendations will be taken into consideration in the implementation of the new phase.

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<sup>1</sup> Internet-based network of organizations and projects working with the rural poor in Latin America and the Caribbean

## II. RATIONALE/RELEVANCE TO IFAD

5. FIDAMERICA's work for the period 2005-2008 will build on four pillars:
- (a) Facilitating processes for organizational learning and communication for impact on poverty reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean, with a focus on innovations in strategies, approaches, methods and tools for poverty reduction and rural development. This will be the main line of work under Phase IV;
  - (b) Supporting IFAD's efforts in public policy dialogue to create a more conducive environment for pro-poor initiatives such as innovative strategies, approaches, methods and tools for poverty reduction and rural development;
  - (c) Improving the feedback from the previous two phases to all those engaged in the design, implementation and evaluation of IFAD policies and projects in the region;
  - (d) Contributing to IFAD's growth as a knowledge organization by proactively engaging in interregional sharing, dialogue and learning processes with IFAD's other regional networks (FIDAFRIQUE<sup>2</sup>, ENRAP<sup>3</sup> and KariaNet<sup>4</sup>).
6. FIDAMERICA's main task has been the critical analysis of specific development interventions carried out by IFAD projects, a process known as systematization. This work has been evaluated as very successful. IFAD projects have acquired and internalized a capacity to continue with this systematization for specific development interventions.
7. However, there is a need to *scale up* this work into processes for learning and communication for impact on poverty reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean, and also to sharpen the focus on innovations in strategies, approaches, methods and tools for poverty reduction and rural development. These two strands of action together will enhance the outcomes, impact and sustainability of projects and programmes in the region.
8. The analysis of new ideas and creative successful initiatives can provide IFAD projects with promising opportunities by engendering fresh approaches, strategies and methods to address problems and stimulate innovation for poverty reduction and rural development.
9. Substantial innovations are envisaged in at least three areas: pro-poor production transformation; institutional development to expand the ability of the rural poor to participate in development; and capacity-building to help poor people to take advantage of development processes to reach their goals.

## III. THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME

10. The goal of FIDAMERICA is to contribute to poverty reduction and to the development of rural societies in Latin America and the Caribbean, through strengthening the capacity of stakeholders to learn, manage knowledge and communicate about IFAD-supported projects and programmes and its strategies.
11. The purpose of FIDAMERICA for the period 2005-2008 is to facilitate the processes of learning and communication for impact on poverty reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean

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<sup>2</sup> Internet-based network of organizations and projects dedicated to fighting rural poverty in Western and Central Africa

<sup>3</sup> Knowledge Networking for Rural Development in Asia/Pacific Region

<sup>4</sup> Knowledge Access for Rural Interconnected Areas Network



within IFAD and in its projects and programmes in the region, with particular focus on innovations in strategies, methods and tools for rural development and poverty reduction.

12. The components of FIDAMERICA – Phase IV are:

- (a) Strengthening learning and communication systems on innovative rural development strategies, methods and tools promoted by IFAD by capitalizing on approaches and applying methods developed in previous phases of FIDAMERICA;
- (b) Improving the enabling environment for the innovations being implemented by IFAD in Latin America and the Caribbean, through multi-stakeholder regional dialogue, communication and exchange;
- (c) Strengthening the capacities of the technical teams that design, implement and evaluate policies, strategies, programmes and projects supported by IFAD in the region by providing them with feedback based on the results of the previous two components; and
- (d) Contributing to IFAD's development as a knowledge organization by exchanging methods, knowledge and experiences with IFAD's other regional networks and within the organization itself.

13. Under component (a), FIDAMERICA will establish a competitive fund for learning and communication for impact on poverty reduction projects in Latin America and the Caribbean. Competitions will be thematic, gender-sensitive and will focus on innovations. Projects and initiatives will include systematization activities; analysis, synthesis and documentation workshops; dialogue, consultation and national or subregional public dialogue; production of training materials; training plans; and other means of contributing to learning, knowledge management and communication (LKMC) activities.

14. A technical assistance fund (TAF) will be established to support organizational learning and communication. This will provide cofinancing for activities that are of specific interest to a project, a group of projects or a subregion. A TAF operation manual will be prepared by the International Farming Systems Research Methodology Network (RIMISP) and approved by IFAD before the TAF starts operating. The manual will include: (a) clear eligibility and selection criteria; (b) procedures for receiving, processing and approving applications; and (c) specification of the share of IFAD grant financing in the total cost of each LKMC activity approved through the TAF. The TAF operation manual will be published on the FIDAMERICA webpage.

15. The development of a more conducive environment for innovation processes in Latin America and the Caribbean will involve dialogue on two levels. At the project level there will be dialogue between project operators and IFAD officials and between project operators and public authorities and private agents whose policies and decisions affect the projects. Dialogue among project operators would include sharing interests and problems; exchanging information on results; communications to analyse new trends affecting the development of rural societies and poverty reduction. At the country and subregion level, the dialogue will involve project agents, specialists, producers, and the authorities of public and private institutions and will highlight how to improve conditions and deepen innovations to achieve greater results, and how to adjust project design and management to effectively reduce poverty.

16. Technical teams that design implement and evaluate policies, strategies, programmes and projects will benefit from information generated by field experience analyses, as will collaborating technical teams, project directors, consultants and operation managers. At least two in-depth dialogue workshops will be implemented for project directors and coordinators, IFAD's operation managers and senior consultants. Two meetings will be held on innovation and knowledge for rural poverty

eradication. Experience and knowledge exchanges, such as learning paths, internships and field visits will also be facilitated.

17. To strengthen IFAD's role as a knowledge organization, there will be exchange of experiences in learning and knowledge management with FIDAFRIQUE, ENRAP, and KariaNet and FIDAMERICA will make available methodologies and information gained from networking and knowledge management.

#### **IV. EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND BENEFITS**

18. The expected outputs of the components and activities are:

- (a) Detailed knowledge on innovations in strategies, methods, tools and gender approaches for rural development undertaken by IFAD-supported programmes and projects in the region.
- (b) Greater use of this knowledge by all those involved in IFAD operations across Latin America and the Caribbean and other regions, to improve design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.
- (c) Consolidated dialogue, communication and exchange processes within IFAD, between projects and donors, and within and among governments and the agencies responsible for rural development in each country and region, with a view to facilitating innovation.
- (d) Public dialogue processes with multiple actors at the national and regional levels to assist in improving public policymaking vis-à-vis poverty reduction and rural community development policies in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- (e) Capacity strengthening for technical teams responsible for designing, implementing and evaluating policies, strategies, programmes and projects supported by IFAD in Latin America and the Caribbean in order to organize LKMC activities based on a critical review of their own innovations in rural development strategies.

#### **V. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

19. The RIMISP will be responsible for the overall management of the FIDAMERICA Network – Phase IV. The incumbent coordinator and assistant will be retained to coordinate activities. Should the RIMISP need to appoint a new coordinator and/or assistant during the implementation of this phase, the following procedure will be followed: (a) job descriptions and qualification requirements will be prepared by the RIMISP, on the basis of the job descriptions and qualification requirements approved by IFAD, and presented to the IFAD representative on the FIDAMERICA Executive Committee for approval; (b) the positions will be advertised through the FIDAMERICA webpage and through e-mailings to no less than 5 000 addresses of organizations and individuals in Latin America and the Caribbean and elsewhere, including all IFAD projects and programmes in the countries in which FIDAMERICA is active; (c) the selection will be based on evaluating and comparing qualifications of at least ten candidates for the coordinator's post and five candidates for the post of assistant; and (d) the final candidate will have to be approved by the IFAD representative in the FIDAMERICA Executive Committee. In the case of the coordinator, the final candidate will have an advanced degree relevant to rural development and poverty reduction and at least ten years of post-degree experience; will have worked in at least two of the subregions in Latin America and the Caribbean; will be familiar with IFAD and its projects; and will have proven capacity to manage learning networks and systems. The coordinator will be supported by a team of part-time consultants. The Coordinator and the team of consultants will meet once a year to review the progress of the programme.

20. As in the past, the strategic and programmatic management of FIDAMERICA will be the responsibility of an Executive Committee with representatives from the Latin America and the Caribbean Division (PL) and the RIMISP. The Executive Committee will oversee the grant programme and approve annual workplans and budgets (AWP/B). The Executive Committee will meet at least once a year. As recommended by the external evaluation, an advisory committee will be created. This committee will review the framework and methodological approaches, priority setting, competitive cofinancing mechanisms, public dialogue mechanisms and annual progress reports. The committee will be consulted on technical and procedural matters when needed. A senior country programme manager from PL will be responsible for programme supervision, and in that capacity will represent IFAD on the Executive Committee.

21. The AWP/B will be prepared by the coordinator in close consultation with the FIDAMERICA Advisory Committee, which in addition to providing inputs at an early stage in the preparation process, will have the opportunity to comment on the final draft. The proposed AWP/B will be submitted by the coordinator to the RIMISP Board of Directors for review and approval. It will then be presented, by 1 December of each year, to the FIDAMERICA Executive Committee for review and approval. The AWP/B will include a procurement plan, based on the RIMISP's and IFAD's Procurement Guidelines.

22. Initially, the RIMISP will use its current *permanent general services* providers for the internet and travel services required for implementing the programme. By July 2006, the RIMISP will request proposals from at least three leading firms to contract such services for a two-year period, starting 1 January 2007; thereafter, a similar bidding process will be undertaken every two years. The RIMISP will provide to IFAD for its prior review copies of the tender documents, bid evaluation reports and service contracts. Consultancy services will be awarded on the basis of consultant's qualifications for contracts estimated to cost less than USD 7 500 equivalent; consultancy services contracts costing USD 7 500 equivalent or more will be awarded through quality- and cost-based selection. All other services will be awarded through the least-cost selection method. Adoption of sole-source selection for consultancy services will be subject to IFAD's prior acceptance of the justification for its use and to IFAD's no objection prior to the awarding of the contract.

23. The RIMISP will maintain separate records and financial accounts in respect of the grant. A qualified audit firm acceptable to IFAD will undertake the annual audit of programme accounts. The audited accounts and related audit report, including a separate opinion on the certified statements of expenditure will be submitted to IFAD no later than six months after the end of each financial year.

24. The grant will be disbursed in instalments into an account in a bank acceptable to IFAD. The first instalment will be disbursed upon submission of an AWP/B for the first 12 months of implementation that is acceptable to IFAD. Subsequent instalments will be disbursed upon submission of an AWP/B, and of implementation and financial progress reports and statements of expenditure covering at least 75% of previous advances.

25. FIDAMERICA, with the assistance of the Programme for Strengthening the Regional Capacity for Monitoring and Evaluation of Rural Poverty Alleviation Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean (PREVAL) will design a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system. A regionally recognized institution will conduct the M&E and reports will be presented to the Executive Committee. Semi-annual implementation progress and financial reports will be presented by the RIMISP to the Advisory Committee and Executive Committee. A mid-term review will be undertaken before the end of the second year of implementation to evaluate implementation and financial progress, identify implementation issues and give guidance for the remaining implementation period. A grant programme completion report will be submitted to IFAD by the RIMISP at the latest, six months after programme completion.

## VI. INDICATIVE PROGRAMME COSTS AND FINANCING

26. The total cost of this programme is USD 1 584 000. This amount will be financed by IFAD (USD 1 320 000 or 83% of total costs) and the RIMISP (USD 264 000 or 17%).

**Table 1. Summary of Programme Costs**

<b>Category of Expenses</b>	<b>IFAD</b>	<b>RIMISP</b>	<b>Total</b>
Salaries	120 000	90 000	210 000
Consultancy services travel and daily subsistence allowance	330 000	20 000	350 000
Workshops and regional meetings	200 000		200 000
Learning fund	350 000	70 000	420 000
Technical assistance fund	100 000	60 000	160 000
Internet and communication services	100 000	24 000	124 000
10% administration fee	120 000		120 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 320 000</b>	<b>264 000</b>	<b>1 584 000</b>

## VII. RECOMMENDATION

27. I recommend that the Executive Board approve the proposed grant in terms of the following resolution:

RESOLVED: that the Fund, in order to finance, in part, the FIDAMERICA Network – Phase IV: Learning and Communication for Impact on Poverty Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean for three years, commencing on 1 January 2006, shall make a grant not exceeding one million three hundred twenty thousand United States dollars (USD 1 320 000) to the International Farming Systems Research Methodology Network upon such terms and conditions as shall be substantially in accordance with the terms and conditions presented to the Executive Board in this report and recommendation of the President.

Lennart Båge  
President

**LOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

<b>Hierarchy of objectives</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Means of verification</b>	<b>Critical assumptions</b>
<p><b>Development objective (GOAL)</b> Poverty can be reduced and rural society development can be accelerated in LAC by strengthening the learning and knowledge management capacities in the field of rural development strategies sponsored by IFAD, its programs and projects.</p>			
<p><b>Purpose.</b> Facilitate learning, and communicating the knowledge to IFAD projects with a view to building on innovations identified focusing on innovations in rural development and poverty reduction strategies, contents, methods and tools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and types of innovations identified</li> <li>• Number and types of innovations communicated</li> <li>• Number and types of innovations adopted</li> <li>• Reduction in poverty because of innovations promoted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RDP project reports</li> <li>• FIDAMERICA's M&amp;E reports and regular publications</li> <li>• Final evaluation.</li> </ul>	<p>There are sufficient innovations in Projects that can be adopted in the various countries in the region.</p>
<p><b>Outputs</b></p> <p>Strengthening the Learning and Communication for Impact in Poverty Reduction in LatinAmerica through the competition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of rewards given for innovations identified                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- production transformation</li> <li>- Institutional development</li> <li>- Project management</li> <li>- Papers prepared for communication to RDP</li> <li>- Innovation posted on the website</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M&amp;E Reports</li> <li>• Adoption by other donor financed Projects</li> <li>• Adoption by IFAD projects</li> </ul>	
<p>Improving the context (enabling environment) of the innovations being implemented by IFAD in Latin America and the Caribbean, through multi-stakeholder regional public dialogue, communication and exchange.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Projects participating</li> <li>• Number of workshops</li> <li>• Number of projects adopting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M&amp;E Reports</li> <li>• RDP Reports</li> </ul>	

<p>Strengthening the capacities of the technical teams that design, implement and evaluate policies, strategies, through knowledge dissemination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro-poor number of project staff trained in innovation identified in areas of             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Policy Formulation and promotion</li> <li>- Project analysis</li> <li>- Implementation strategy</li> <li>- Gender integration;</li> <li>- M&amp;E systems</li> <li>- Involvement of poor in decision making and</li> <li>- other areas identified</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M&amp;E Reports</li> <li>• Formal and informal documents on final products produced</li> <li>• Reports on the dialogue workshops and Innovation and Knowledge for Poverty Elimination Meetings</li> <li>• Logs of experience and knowledge exchanges</li> </ul>	<p>Country decision and policy making instances offer space for dialogue and are willing to be involved in various feedback events and mechanisms.</p>
<p>To contribute to IFAD the exchange of experiences and development on learning and knowledge management exchange with FIDAFRIQUE, ENRAP and KARIANET.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Workshops held</li> <li>• Number of Meetings held</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M&amp;E Reports</li> <li>• Web Posting of finding</li> <li>• Records of attendance at experience exchange meetings within the regional networks</li> <li>• Formal and informal publications on final products.</li> </ul>	

