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IFAD

INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Executive Board – Eighty-eighth Session

Rome, 13-14 September 2006

ENHANCED ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONAL OFFICER PROGRAMME

For: Approval

Note to Executive Board Directors

This document is submitted for approval by the Executive Board.

To make the best use of time available at Executive Board sessions, Directors are invited to contact the following focal point with any technical questions about this document before the session.

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RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL

The Executive Board is invited to consider the funding for the development of the enhanced Associate Professional Officer Programme during 2007 as set forth in paragraphs 6 through 9.

ENHANCED ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONAL OFFICER PROGRAMME

I. INTRODUCTION

1. During the discussion of the paper on the geographic distribution of IFAD staff at the third session of the Consultation on the Seventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (document REPL.VII/3/R.4), it was noted that the current Associate Professional Officer (APO) Programme has drawn its participants exclusively from IFAD Member States that are member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which fund their participation. In this regard, the members of the Consultation requested proposals to address the current imbalance in the representation of non-OECD countries in the APO Programme.

2. At the fourth session of the Consultation (document REPL.VII/4/R.9), two options were presented: (a) continue with the current APO Programme and enhance it by recruiting APOs from non-OECD countries; and (b) replace the existing APO Programme with a young professionals programme similar to the one administered by the World Bank.

3. At its fifth session, the Consultation – recognizing both that the APO Programme is important for IFAD's operations and that equitable distribution of staff posts is an important principle for the functioning of the Fund – expressed support for the concept of an enhanced APO Programme offering broader opportunities for candidates from all Member States. At the same time, the Consultation recognized that a proposal along these lines would have significant financial implications, and in this context it requested the Executive Board to review in September 2006 the scale and financial implications of an enhanced APO Programme, and explore ways that would enable it to be implemented during the Seventh Replenishment period, including through voluntary contributions.

II. BACKGROUND

4. IFAD's current APO Programme dates back to 1978 and operates as stipulated in the Human Resources Procedures Manual. As at 31 December 2005, IFAD had hosted a total of 127 APOs. Of these, it has retained 24 (19%) as staff members (after normal competitive procedures), 14 (11%) as consultants, and 19 (15%) as temporary professional staff. Other APOs have gone on to work at other United Nations agencies, NGOs, in the private sector and with national governments.

5. Under the existing arrangement, the salaries and benefits of APOs are funded by their home governments. Currently, all APOs are from OECD member countries. OECD countries have on occasion financed a few candidates from developing countries on a one-off basis, although this has not occurred for some time. In terms of gender, in 2004, 13 of the 21 APOs were women (62%). In 2005, 15 of the 22 APOs were women (68%). As of June 2006, 12 of the 15 APOs were women (80%) and the recruitment of five other APOs is in process.

III. ENHANCED APO PROGRAMME

6. In order to strengthen the representation of participants from non-OECD countries in the programme, IFAD could expand its APO Programme to ensure representation by non-OECD member countries. The details of a possible programme are described below:

- (a) The current APO Programme of OECD nationals funded by their governments would continue. In addition, a new component would be developed to sponsor young, university-trained nationals of IFAD Member States that are not OECD member countries

for a two-year period of capacity-building at IFAD (with the possibility of an extension for a third year) at the professional grade (P-1/P-2) level.

- (b) IFAD would identify areas for APO assignments and prepare position descriptions for transmittal to sponsoring Member States (in the case of candidates from OECD countries) or for direct IFAD recruitment (in the case of candidates from non-OECD countries). APO recruitment and selection of a shortlist of candidates would be conducted on a competitive basis by the Member State (for OECD candidates) or by IFAD (for non-OECD candidates). The final selection from among the shortlisted candidates in both cases would be done by IFAD.
- (c) The eligibility requirements would be as follows:
 - (i) candidates must be under 32 years of age;
 - (ii) candidates must possess a first university degree in a relevant discipline;
 - (iii) two years of relevant experience would be desirable; and
 - (iv) a working knowledge of English would be essential; knowledge of another official IFAD language – Arabic, French or Spanish – would be desirable and may be necessary, depending on the region of assignment.
- (d) Shortlisted candidates displaying the same merit level would be selected on the basis of gender in the case of OECD nationals, and on the basis of geographical representation and then gender in the case of non-OECD nationals.

7. APOs who are OECD nationals would still be funded by the respective Member State government, while non-OECD nationals would be funded through IFAD's regular budget.

8. The estimated costs of implementing the enhanced APO Programme are very tentative and are predicated on recruits from non-OECD countries enjoying entitlements at the P1/P2 level. The average annual cost of an APO is currently about US\$130,000, bearing in mind that virtually all these recruits come from European OECD member countries. The estimated average cost per year of an APO from a non-OECD country would be approximately US\$156,000; this amount includes the costs entailed in recruitment and travel for candidates from different parts of the world.

IV. CONCLUSION

9. IFAD has identified the size of the enhanced APO Programme for APOs from non-OECD member countries on the basis of the following considerations:

- (a) For 2006, IFAD has a total of 15 APOs from OECD member countries. The proposed enhanced programme to include participants from non-OECD member countries would be set up initially as an initiative involving six APOs.
- (b) The enhanced APO Programme would run parallel to the current APO Programme for a period of four years. A total of six APOs would be recruited for two-year periods: two in year 1; two in year 2; and two in year 3, concluding the programme in year four.
- (c) The estimated cost of such an enhanced APO Programme as from 2007 would be US\$2,029,286 for four years. For 2007, a total cost of US\$361,559 is estimated (see table below).

Cost of Funding Six APOs from Non-OECD Member Countries
(in United States dollars)

Year	1	2	3	4
Number of APOs being hosted by IFAD	2	4	4	2
Recruitment costs	75 174	77 429	79 752	-
Salary and benefits	204 398	421 061	433 693	223 352
One-time move/transfer to Rome	57 459	59 183	60 958	-
Service charge (calculated at 12% of annual costs)	24 528	50 527	52 043	26 802
One-time repatriation – return to home country	-	59 183	60 958	62 787
Total costs	361 559	667 382	687 404	312 941
Gross estimated total costs				2 029 286