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Enabling poor rural people  
to overcome poverty

## **Progress in IFAD's implementation of the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review**

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## **Note to Executive Board Directors**

This document is submitted for the information of the Executive Board.

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## **Progress in IFAD's implementation of the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review**

### **I. Background**

1. On 19 December 2007, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted resolution 62/208 concerning the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review (TCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. The TCPR provides an overall framework for development cooperation activities within the United Nations system, offering detailed guidance on funding for operational activities, national capacity development and development effectiveness, and the improved functioning of the United Nations development system.
2. Paragraph 140 of the resolution invites the governing bodies of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system to take appropriate action for the full implementation of the resolution. It also requests heads of United Nations organizations to submit a yearly progress report to their governing bodies on implementation.
3. Paragraph 112 of the resolution further requests the governing bodies of the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to "assess the progress achieved, including cost and benefits, in the area of simplification and harmonization of the United Nations development system at the global, regional and country levels, analyze the potential impacts on development programming and report to the [United Nations] Economic and Social Council at its substantive session on an annual basis."

### **II. TCPR implementation process**

4. Implementation of the TCPR is undertaken through a system-wide process under the leadership of the Secretary-General and in consultation with all organizations of the United Nations development system. Specifically, paragraph 141 of the resolution requests "...the Secretary-General, after consultations with the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, to submit a report to the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 2008, on an appropriate management process for the full implementation of the resolution with clear guidelines, targets, benchmarks and time frames, that defines the results to be achieved ... in a format that will allow for adequate monitoring and evaluation of these results, and interdepartmental, and inter-agency measures that need to be set in motion, for the implementation of the present resolution."
5. Work is currently under way in establishing the above-mentioned management process for the full implementation of resolution 62/208. Implementation of the resolution will require action by the United Nations System Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB) and its three pillars – the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP), the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM), and the United Nations Development Group (UNDG).

### **III. IFAD's role in implementing the TCPR**

#### **A. CEB, HLCP, HLCM, UNDG**

6. A number of provisions in the TCPR resolution concern United Nations system organizations directly. These relate, among others, to the harmonization of capacity-building business practices, gender equality and women's empowerment, and support to countries in transition from relief to development.
7. IFAD is reviewing relevant sections of the TCPR resolution, assessing areas where progress has already been made and identifying areas requiring further work.

8. IFAD contributes substantively to the coordination processes undertaken in the context of HLCP, HLCM and UNDG. The President of IFAD, at the invitation of the Secretary-General, serves as the Chair of the HLCP. This committee plays a central role in coordinating system-level policy issues, especially global issues. For example, the HLCP helped develop a coordinated United Nations system approach on climate change for the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007 and continues to have a key role in this critical issue.
9. IFAD is an active participant in and contributor to the HLCM and its human resources, procurement, finance and budget, and information and communication technology networks. At the recent fifteenth session of the HLCM, IFAD was assigned as the lead agency for a feasibility study for putting in place common treasury services as part of the plan of action for the harmonization and reform of business practices in the United Nations system. IFAD was also appointed as member of the newly established Oversight Committee for the United Nations system-wide Senior Leadership Development Programme.
10. UNDG, which has recently been restructured and integrated into CEB, will play an important role in implementing TCPR provisions related to operational activities and development cooperation at the country level. IFAD has already responded to a request to nominate focal points for each of the five working groups tasked with, among others, relevant provisions of TCPR implementation.
11. Through its active membership in CEB, HLCP, HLCM and UNDG, IFAD will contribute towards the system-wide implementation of the relevant provisions of the TCPR resolution.

## **B. Collaboration among Rome-based United Nations agencies**

12. Collaboration among the Rome-based agencies is based on the recognition that reducing hunger and rural poverty requires a "twin track" strategy: (i) direct action to alleviate hunger immediately for the most vulnerable and (ii) longer-term agricultural, food security, nutrition and rural development programmes to eliminate the root causes of hunger. While IFAD's mandate focuses on the latter, the two tracks frequently need to be addressed together, and partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) is crucial.
13. IFAD, FAO and WFP are reviewing the various areas in which they collaborate and are developing a strategy to guide such collaboration more systematically in the future. During 2007, a mapping exercise was undertaken to compile and analyse collaborative activities between 1 January 2006 and 31 December 2007. The findings were reported to the respective governing bodies. In 2008, joint work has started on a strategic, forward-looking policy paper to guide future collaboration.
14. The three Rome-based agencies have already made considerable progress in coordinating procurement and administrative services and human resources management.

### **Procurement and administrative services**

15. The three agencies have already:
  - Issued joint tenders on major procurements
  - Held joint training courses on procurement
  - Loaned staff to share experience and provide support
  - Shared tender documents, technical specifications, tender results, contract templates and terms and conditions, with the objective of converging towards common standards

- Included clauses in tender documents to extend the validity of bids to all sister agencies.
16. The three agencies have also agreed to establish an inter-institution coordination committee to review, approve and prioritize the overall programme of harmonization of business practices and joint administrative activities.
  17. Areas for possible future joint action include joint initiatives on sustainable procurement and carbon footprint reduction; a global insurance policy for the three headquarters premises; a common staff compensation plan; and the merger of all buildings maintenance functions, records and archives functions, procurement functions and shipping services in a common shared service centre.

#### **Human resources management**

18. IFAD and WFP have delegated to FAO the management of the medical insurance contracts covering their staff and retirees. Staff and Management of FAO, WFP and IFAD are represented in the joint committees responsible for overseeing the provision of these services and for setting up the policies relating to their provision in the respective institutions.

### **C. One United Nations**

19. IFAD is part of – and fully supports – the common strategic framework for the operational activities of the United Nations system at the country level. This framework responds to national priorities and needs, and contributes to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.
20. Cooperation and harmonization in line with the One United Nations initiative take place mostly at the programmatic level. Complementarities and linkages are established through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), with the aim of improving the conditions and livelihoods of rural poor people.
21. IFAD is participating in all eight One United Nations pilots. In addition, in other countries where the United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) have adopted similar practices of harmonization, IFAD is part of the UNCT and is included in the UNDAF. In most pilot countries, IFAD is actively involved in the common analysis of development needs and in the formulation/revision of the UNDAF. In Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Uruguay and Viet Nam, IFAD is integrating or aligning its country programmes with the common programme. IFAD is also relocating its country programme managers for the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam from Rome to those countries, where they will share field offices with FAO. This is expected to ensure full participation in the pilots. Through these activities, IFAD is working to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and development impact of the United Nations system, consistent with IFAD's mandate: to enable poor rural people to overcome poverty.

### **D. Paris Declaration commitments**

22. Since signing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, IFAD has worked with other United Nations agencies, international financial institutions and partner countries to implement the partnership commitments aimed at making aid more effective and attaining the Millennium Development Goals. With the United Nations Development Programme, IFAD has supported the work of the Joint Venture on Managing for Development Results (MfDR) and subsequently co-sponsored the MfDR round table in Hanoi, Viet Nam, in 2007. IFAD has also developed and implemented a corporate management results framework, which now guides both strategic budgeting and reporting.
23. At the country level, the results-based country strategic opportunities programmes align the IFAD results framework with the results framework established at national level. This leverages the synergies of both multilateral and bilateral donors in the

agricultural sector and has resulted, for example, in the use of sector-wide approaches.

24. Together with donors and member countries in other forums, IFAD has also addressed the twin issues of harmonization and alignment. Working with the membership of the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (which includes many bilateral donors, the European Commission, the World Bank and FAO, and which IFAD co-chairs), the role of agriculture has been highlighted in the context of the forthcoming Accra High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness.

