



IFAD
INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
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STATUS REPORT ON THE RURAL POVERTY REPORT 2000

1. In accordance with the request of the Executive Board at its Sixty-Sixth Session to receive regular reports on the progress of activities leading to the publication of IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2000, information notes were presented to the Sixty-Seventh Session of the Executive Board and the Fourth Session of the Consultation to Review the Adequacy of the Resources Available to IFAD.
2. The attached document, providing an updated status report, is now presented to the Governing Council for its information.



STATUS REPORT ON THE RURAL POVERTY REPORT 2000

1. In approving a technical assistance grant for the programme of activities leading to the issuing of IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2000 at its Sixty-Sixth Session (April 1999), the Executive Board requested regular reports on the progress of activities envisaged under the grant. This information note provides an overview of the activities undertaken and the progress made to date.

Objective of IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2000 and the Programme of Activities

2. The objective of IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2000 is to present a statement on rural poverty issues from the perspective of a financing organization such as IFAD. It will focus on the critical nature of rural poverty eradication in reducing global poverty, identify relevant options and opportunities, build coalitions with a wide range of development agencies and civil-society organizations, and increase awareness on critical issues.

3. The activities envisaged include: (a) assessment and analysis of regional rural poverty trends based on IFAD's experience in the field; (b) identification of broad themes on which further in-depth work will be initiated; (c) thematic studies; (d) preparation of the main report with annexes; (e) editing, printing and issuance of the report; and (f) launching of the report.

Report on the Progress of Activities Undertaken

Regional Assessments

4. As foreseen in the programme of activities, five regional assessments have been completed since approval of the grant. The objectives were to: (a) capture the trends in rural poverty in the five IFAD regions; (b) identify regional variations in rural poverty-eradication programmes; (c) synthesize operational and external knowledge; and (d) reach an understanding on the Fund's options and opportunities for rural poverty eradication in the near future.

5. Draft reports on all the five regions have been completed; the reports are being revised to include the comments and views received from IFAD staff and Professor Michael Lipton, the study's lead scholar.

IFAD's Internal Workshop, 26-27 July 1999

6. A workshop was held at IFAD on 26 and 27 July 1999 to present the first results of the regional assessments to a wider audience within the organization. The objective of the workshop was to assess the findings, provide feedback to the authors of the studies for revision, consider the main issues raised from the perspectives of the regions, synthesize the information contained therein, and derive specific themes for further in-depth studies. The workshop also considered the outline of the thematic studies and the options and opportunities for rural poverty eradication in each of the regions.

7. Mr Peter Keller, Senior Adviser in the Rural Development Division of the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) moderated the workshop, which was attended by the following persons: Professor Michael Lipton of the Poverty Research Unit at the University of Sussex; Dr Saurabh Sinha; Research Fellow at the Poverty Research Unit at the University of Sussex; Professor Ragav Gaiha of the Delhi School of Economics; and Dr Anthony Killick of the Overseas Development Institute, London. Together with the IFAD participants, the aforementioned persons further elaborated the identified themes with a view to broadening their scope and coverage.



8. In discussing a wide variety of issues during the two-day workshop, four themes were identified:

- Access to assets (including human capital)
- Technology and agricultural transformation
- Institutions, with a specific focus on rural financial institutions
- Access to markets in the context of globalization.

9. Those cross-cutting issues that were identified - demographic trends, gender and empowerment - will be covered in all four themes.

Thematic Studies

10. Based on suggestions made at the workshop, the study's lead scholar further elaborated the scope of work on the identified themes and the draft terms of reference, in consultation with IFAD and the theme leaders.

11. The following theme leaders were chosen to work on the selected themes:

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| • Access to assets | Lawrence Haddad, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) |
| • Technology and agricultural transformation | Peter Hazell, IFPRI |
| • Institutions | Siddiqur Osmani, University of Ulster (United Kingdom) |
| • Access to markets in the context of globalization | Anthony Killick, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), United Kingdom |

12. The aforementioned theme leaders (Dr Hazell, Professor Osmani and Dr Hoddinott (representing Dr Lawrence Haddad)) participated in a workshop, which was organized on 27-28 September 1999. There the themes' terms of reference were examined and the preliminary outlines of the thematic studies discussed. The workshop provided an opportunity to the theme leaders to exchange views among themselves and with the lead scholar, and more importantly to hold extensive discussions with IFAD staff on the Fund's operational experience, lessons learned and constraints faced in its rural poverty eradication efforts. The theme leader for "Access to markets in the context of globalization", was Dr Anthony Killick, who discussed his outline with IFAD on 12 and 13 October 1999. Corresponding to the themes, internal working groups at IFAD were established to ensure that the Fund's experience is captured and that the theme papers focus on rural poverty from IFAD's perspective.

13. Each theme leader will prepare a report (of about 50 pages) by the end of December 1999, complete with data, tables and charts. The overall report, entitled Rural Poverty Report 2000, will be completed by the end of March 2000, and will be published after internal review in September 2000.

Involvement of Civil Society

14. Two initiatives are underway that together will strengthen the civil-society perspective of the Rural Poverty Report. First, the lead scholar is preparing a paper on emerging trends in the roles, responsibilities and relationships of civil-society organizations to the challenge of rural poverty, the links to other stakeholders and the effects of globalization on rural communities. This paper will



examine the roles of civil society in relationship to the study's four themes. Second, five regional non-governmental organizations and civil-society networks were engaged to provide an analysis of the perspective of civil society on the strategies that provide the most promise of successfully empowering the rural poor to establish sustainable livelihood systems, against the background of regional assessments prepared by IFAD. These reports will be completed by mid-December in order to be integrated into the overall report.

Collaboration with Other Agencies

15. In order to forge closer links with other agencies, discussions were held with the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) regarding their activities in related fields. A number of IFAD staff members attended a three-day summer workshop at the World Bank to learn about the focus and coverage of its World Development Report 2000/2001 and to hold discussions with relevant staff members.

16. Discussions have also been held with IFPRI and GTZ to ascertain their interest and potential role in disseminating the findings of the poverty report. Both organizations showed keen interest; details of such collaboration will be worked out at a later date.

17. The Informal Network on Poverty Eradication of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OECD was contacted to exchange information on poverty-alleviation issues. It will elaborate a programme in collaboration with UNDP for discussing issues with other United Nations organizations in relation to their preparation of "guidelines for development cooperation in support of poverty reduction".

18. Discussions also were held with some Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) centres to receive in-depth information on technical possibilities for meeting the food gap in the future.

Website on Rural Poverty Eradication

19. A website on IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2000 was set up to inform a wider audience on the progress of the report, and to disseminate the findings of various studies undertaken within the programme. The website is also intended to be a forum for exchange of information and debate on issues and challenges regarding rural poverty eradication.

Upcoming Events

20. The following workshop is planned under the programme: "A Synthesis Workshop on Regional Assessments and Thematic Studies" for 24-25 January 2000, which will finalize thematic studies and make a start on preparing the final report.

21. IFAD will organize a series of public lectures of opinion leaders and academicians on poverty issues in 2000. Professor Amartya Sen and Professor M. S. Swaminathan were contacted to present two lectures in early 2000.