



**IFAD**  
**INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**Governing Council – Twenty-Fifth Session**

Rome, 19-20 February 2002

**PROGRESS REPORT BY THE POPULAR COALITION TO ERADICATE HUNGER  
AND POVERTY**

**I. SUMMARY**

1. **Consolidation and growth.** The past year has marked an important transition period for the Popular Coalition to Eradicate Hunger and Poverty (henceforth Popular Coalition). The last progress report, presented to the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Governing Council (document GC 24/L.13), described the validation of the Popular Coalition model and its broad acceptance by a growing number of institutional stakeholders. This report describes the consolidation of a robust global programme that provides a strategic blueprint for the future development and expansion of the Popular Coalition. The elements of this new programme reflect the unique opportunities offered by the Popular Coalition model. Operational advances were made possible by the incorporation of lessons learned from the first five years of Popular Coalition activity and by the parallel emergence of new understandings of the way innovative partnerships can be used to empower the rural poor through increasing their access to land and other productive resources.

2. **Transforming vision into reality.** The formation of the Popular Coalition in 1996 was driven by the belief that governments, intergovernmental organizations and civil-society organizations (CSOs) could work together to empower the rural poor through increasing their access to land and other productive resources. The Popular Coalition was created to harness these collaborative energies and to provide a neutral institutional space for the emergence of new and innovative partnerships. Programme developments during 2001 have allowed this founding vision to become reality and – most importantly – have confirmed that the Popular Coalition can deliver a range of outputs and benefits efficiently and effectively, and that it possesses the potential to foster wholly new forms of collaboration and partnership among diverse stakeholder groups and institutions at very different points in the rural development matrix.

3. **Wide-ranging benefits.** New and expanded Popular Coalition activities at the community, national, regional and international levels have illustrated the concrete benefits that new and often innovative multi-stakeholder activities can deliver in terms of improved resource access for the rural



poor, strengthened capacities among CSOs, the dissemination of new forms of knowledge, and widening opportunities for multi-stakeholder dialogue.

4. **IFAD's continuing support.** IFAD's ongoing support through this period has continued to ensure the secure foundation necessary for these changes to take place. IFAD's support can be measured at many levels, including continuing grant support for special programmes, logistic and programme support, technical assistance and participation in key committees and processes. This involvement reflects IFAD's continuing dedication to innovation and its historical commitment to ensuring the participation of society's poorest and most marginalized groups in the development process in order that they can overcome their poverty.

5. **Broadening collaboration with IFAD programmes.** IFAD's growing involvement in the core activities of the Popular Coalition has also reflected the increasing importance the Fund has come to attach to issues relating to the rural poor's access to land and other productive resources. Collaboration has been across a wide range of fronts, including, *inter alia*: (i) continuing joint activities in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in Southern Africa; (ii) the preparation of a joint IFAD/Belgian Survival Fund Joint Programme (BSF.JP)/Popular Coalition collaborative programme for Africa; (iii) a key role in bringing the experience and lessons of Popular Coalition partners into the preparation of IFAD's *Rural Poverty Report 2001*; (iv) a number of linked activities in Latin America, including conflict resolution in Guatemala with regard to access to land under the peace accords; (v) collaboration on a range of gender-related resource-access issues in Asia, including India and Nepal; and (vi) participation in a number of regional and global events and initiatives with, and at times on behalf of, IFAD including the exchange of information and knowledge on country-specific situations, *inter alia*, in Ecuador, Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

## II. INTRODUCTION

6. The Popular Coalition was a direct outcome of the Conference on Hunger and Poverty held in Brussels in November 1995. Its creation at the start of 1996 produced a unique institutional space for the coming together of diverse stakeholders from government, civil society and intergovernmental organizations. Its aim was to identify new and innovative methods of working and to encourage new collaborative operations.

7. The Popular Coalition was given a specific overall mission: empowering the rural poor through increasing access to land and other productive resources. This mission is served by the three related goals that drive its programme structure:

- (a) increasing civil society's participation in decision-making processes;
- (b) identifying new approaches to working together at the local, national and international levels; and
- (c) stressing the importance of the resource-access issue on international and national agendas.

8. As a specialized United Nations agency responsible for promoting the economic advancement of the rural poor, mainly by improving the productivity of on- and off-farm activities, IFAD has been at the forefront in supporting ways of improving poor people's access to productive assets as a means of enabling them to overcome poverty. IFAD was instrumental in creating the Popular Coalition as a collaborative mechanism based on a vision, at the time unique, of a new form of equal partnership among civil-society and intergovernmental organizations. IFAD was visionary in unifying a multi-stakeholder constituency around the importance of land reform and access to productive assets, and is credited with putting these issues back on national and international agendas with a priority level higher than they had previously held. These issues had become marginalized until the Brussels conference in 1995. Understandably, access to assets is an important pillar of IFAD's *Rural Poverty*



*Report 2001.* The Popular Coalition will be able to assist IFAD in building its knowledge base on access-to-asset issues by providing greater opportunities for collaboration with new and diverse stakeholders at the local, national and international levels.

### **III. CORE PROGRAMMES**

9. The Popular Coalition is built on the principle of multi-stakeholder partnership and collaboration. It is based on the belief that bringing diverse partners together can lead to outcomes that are either completely new or more efficient and effective than existing alternatives. For this reason, no Popular Coalition activities are carried out by single individuals, groups or institutions; instead, they are plural endeavours that strive to ensure optimal output through harnessing the comparative advantages and resource strengths of disparate partners. Successful outcomes increase the capacity of the rural poor to gain more secure access to resources and to ensure that their interests are provided for in the legislative and regulatory frameworks of their governments regarding the use of land and other productive resources. Successful outcomes should also result in Popular Coalition member organizations' changing their policies and practices to incorporate lessons learned from these joint activities.

#### **A. Community Empowerment Facility**

10. The Popular Coalition's Community Empowerment Facility (CEF) is a community-level programme aimed at increasing the rural poor's access to land and other productive resources. Its goals are: (i) to enhance the ability of the poor and their representative organizations at the local, national and regional levels to gain and maintain access to productive resources; and (ii) to increase their access to the tools and processes required to manage these resources, including knowledge, technology, institutional models and finance. The CEF aims to identify innovative ways of strengthening the capacity of the rural poor to negotiate their access to assets and resolve related conflicts. It gives priority to small innovative activities likely to lead to substantive and strategic impacts at the local level. CEF grants, to a maximum of USD 100 000, are made to community-based organizations and CSOs for activities that address local problems related to the areas of core CEF concern and focus.

11. The CEF is not a conventional small-grant mechanism for CSOs. Instead, it is a partnership-based tool for harnessing the knowledge and experience of diverse stakeholders – including communities, CSOs and international development organizations – in the search for innovative ways to overcome local constraints to resource access. The whole CEF process is based on collaboration and shared commitment among multiple partners. The richness and diversity of Popular Coalition membership has been marshalled in support of the identification, formulation, review, approval and implementation of community-based projects.

12. As noted in the previous progress report, the first CEF project was approved in 2000 as part of the development phase of the CEF. This project supported innovation in the provision of technical assistance and financial support to beneficiaries following land reform in Capiz Province in The Philippines. The project, completed in 2001, resulted in the development of technical, financial and market services managed by the land reform beneficiaries themselves. The Government of The Philippines considers that the lessons learned could have a wider application involving land reform beneficiaries in other areas of the country. The previous progress report also noted that in June 2000 the Sixth Interim Steering Committee of the Popular Coalition approved the CEF operating framework and guidelines developed by the Popular Coalition Secretariat. This approval signified the conclusion of the CEF development phase and the beginning of its operational phase.



13. Overall guidance and strategic direction for the CEF is provided by the Project Approval Committee (PAC). The PAC is also responsible for the selection and approval of projects for grant funding. In 2001, PAC membership was drawn from three CSOs (the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers and Secours Populaire Française), and two intergovernmental organizations (the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and IFAD).

14. At meetings in Rome in April and October 2001, the PAC sought to: (i) ensure a common understanding of the CEF approval process; (ii) ensure that the CEF mechanism was workable and able to respond effectively to its intended objectives; and (iii) identify appropriate improvements and changes to the CEF process. Each of the meetings reviewed and refined the criteria, the strategy and management of the CEF. Proposals were evaluated, outstanding issues were identified for follow-up, and conditional approval was given to the Secretariat for those proposals deemed suitable. Finally, the PAC undertook a comprehensive review of the CEF, with a particular focus on the project review and approval process.

15. **Approved proposals.** The PAC meetings during 2001 recommended CEF grant funding for the following activities:

- Albania – support for direct community participation in obtaining access to state forest land, as provided under the recent land law;
- Bolivia – development of a plan to improve the livelihoods of indigenous people through the sustainable management of land and forests;
- Ecuador – regularization of communal land, and ensuring of equitable access to water and a rational plan for its use by indigenous people;
- Guatemala – support to land conflict resolution by indigenous people in the frame of the post-peace agreement;
- India, Uttar Pradesh – technical support to fishermen to secure their control over the fishing area, which they won after a difficult and long encounter with the state;
- Madagascar – assistance for conducting an information campaign on resource rights and community development strategies for sustainable management of local resources: water, land, technologies and markets;
- Malawi – strengthening of women’s opportunities through access to land and markets.
- Nicaragua – establishment of a revolving fund for land titling and legalization;
- The Philippines – support for a national campaign by citizen’s organizations to influence the future of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.
- The Philippines – support for community participation in local decision-making at the municipal level on people’s property rights;
- Southern Africa region – support to the start-up of the activities of the Southern African Natural Products Trade Association (SANProTA), which seeks to empower poor rural communities in Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe by creating opportunities for them to derive income from local natural products in national, regional and international markets;
- Uganda – support to land literacy to raise farmer leaders’ awareness of the Uganda land act of 1998;
- Zimbabwe – setting up of a series of pilot projects addressing key issues affecting agricultural productivity and environmental performance in resettlement schemes;

16. During the year, the Popular Coalition Secretariat assessed 92 preliminary concept papers resulting in 50 CSOs being invited to present full CEF proposals for final screening. Of these, 32 were submitted to the PAC for final consideration: nine from Africa and the Near East, 14 from Asia, eight from Latin America and the Caribbean and one from Eastern and Central Europe. The PAC recommended 13 for funding.



17. In addition, officers from the Secretariat visited several of the organizations that had presented CEF proposals during field missions to Ecuador, India, Nepal, Peru and Zimbabwe.

## **B. Knowledge Network on Agrarian Reform**

18. The Knowledge Network on Agrarian Reform (ARnet) is another core programme of the Popular Coalition. The first phase of eight regional and 23 national activities is now closed. In addition to allowing for the accumulation and sharing of knowledge among participating CSOs, these activities also constituted a rich opportunity for learning about the type and form of knowledge that can be shared usefully; the best ways of harnessing this knowledge; and, finally, the most effective means of sharing this knowledge among network members and within the wider development community.

19. A comprehensive assessment of the ARnet programme was also undertaken during 2001 in collaboration with a number of ARnet partners at a series of workshops and other meetings. Most notably, a joint IFAD/BSF.JP/Popular Coalition workshop organized in Kenya in January 2001 provided the opportunity for bringing together all the ARnet participants from Africa and representatives from other ARnet regions. This meeting helped clarify many key knowledge-related questions and provided important inputs to the overall process of evaluation and programme revision that took place during 2001. As a result, the ARnet programme was transformed. The new strategic plan for future ARnet activities will help heighten its impact and ensure maximum quality and value. Future ARnet activities will involve a combination of relatively short-term activities (3-9 months) focusing on the production of knowledge outputs and a series of longer-term network-support activities (9-18 months). A new range of ARnet activities, to be undertaken during 2002 and beyond, is now being formulated on the basis of comprehensive collaboration with a wide range of partners, the effective incorporation of lessons learned from previous activities, and feedback from users on the value of original outputs. It is expected that the majority of these new ARnet activities will be formulated and approved by mid-2002.

20. **Knowledge outputs.** The overall goal of ARnet is to identify, document and share knowledge on the practical ways that CSOs can help increase the rural poor's access to land and other productive resources. This goal was based on the premise that throughout the world CSOs were actively – and successfully – undertaking activities that led to improved resource access, *but that information on these activities was not being shared*, and more importantly, that useful practical knowledge that would enable other CSOs to pursue similar activities elsewhere was not being made available. In addition, it was expected that this knowledge could contribute directly to international debates, and in particular, to a deeper understanding of the contribution CSOs can play in increasing the rural poor's access to land and other productive resources.

21. The richness and diversity of activities linked to the first wave of ARnet activities (begun mainly in 1999) confirmed the validity of these assumptions and helped to both identify the type of knowledge that should be shared and reveal vital lessons on how to capture and share this knowledge internationally. ARnet members shared practical knowledge, based on successful experiences at the community level and in terms of national policy dialogue, on a wide range of issues, including:

- Bangladesh, Bolivia and Ecuador – reinforcing the legal rights of marginal communities;
- Cameroon – building a national association to defend the land rights of small farmers;
- India and Mozambique – raising land literacy at the community level by educating marginalized groups on their land rights;
- Indonesia and Peru – developing databases and other Internet-based resources for strengthening community land claims;



- Nepal – developing methods for assessing the sustainability of community-based institutions;
- The Philippines – using the media to effectively draw attention to community land claims; and
- South Africa – organizing audits of the skills of civil-society network members.

A key point, however, is that in all instances these and the other knowledge issues identified by ARnet members were based on the concrete and successful experiences of CSOs.

22. ARnet knowledge outputs provide concise practical guides detailing some of the diverse ways CSOs around the world have been successful in increasing the rural poor's access to land and other productive resources. Their production has involved partnerships between communities and local, national or international partners. The underlying focus has been on helping other CSOs – and, indirectly, communities – to benefit from successful experiences elsewhere.

23. **Network support services.** A key part of the Popular Coalition's overall mission is to support the development and expansion of local, national, regional and global networks of CSOs that seek to increase the rural poor's access to land and other productive resources. Networks can perform multiple positive functions. They can, for example, help link otherwise disparate organizations around common goals and agendas. They can provide a framework for knowledge exchange and the sharing of experiences and strategies. They can help forge collective will and strengthen political voice. They can be a vehicle for learning and for technical growth. They are, then, an important example of the way that CSOs can contribute directly to empowering the rural poor.

24. Another key dimension of the ARnet programme has involved the provision of diverse forms of support to new and existing civil-society networks. Many lessons have been learned, including, most importantly, that effective and sustainable networks require continual support and nourishment. For example, they need a steady flow of individual commitment, valid leadership, technical renewal, financial support, effective management and oversight, and, often, measurable indicators of value and success. For this reason, ARnet has focused on targeted network support services that have sought to satisfy special network needs in order to ensure their sustainability and growth. This aspect of ARnet's activities emerged from extensive consultation with Popular Coalition members and, in particular, with the regional ARnet nodes, which in many instances were already members of large and successful civil-society networks. Future ARnet activities will continue to focus on small, targeted technical and logistical support that will help ensure the sustainability and long-term effectiveness of diverse civil-society networks operating at various geographical scales.

### **C. Women's Resource Access Programme**

25. The Women's Resource Access Programme (WRAP) is a new and specialized programme of the Popular Coalition, developed in 2001. Its overall goal is to raise international understanding of the need to improve women's access to land and other productive resources. WRAP draws directly on the views, experiences and knowledge of poor rural women in order to demonstrate the importance of land and other productive resources to their livelihoods and food security.

26. WRAP is built on a methodology that draws directly on the unique opportunities offered by the Popular Coalition. It combines the skills, knowledge and resources of international partners, national partners, local partners and poor rural communities to share knowledge in a way that is not otherwise possible. It involves visits to poor rural communities to learn from rural women directly, and provides an exciting, new and efficient way to help key decision-makers understand the views and opinions of poor rural women and to increase their direct participation in processes such as policy formulation, project design and international advocacy. The key point is that the process is built on partnership and



shared commitment in which the specific capacities, resources and skills of diverse partners, ranging from intergovernmental organizations and governments to local community-based organizations and rural households, work together as equals in search of new knowledge and understanding.

27. WRAP has been supported by IFAD through a grant from the Japanese Supplementary Fund. WRAP community workshops were organized in Nepal (June 2001), India (September 2001) and Indonesia (scheduled for February 2002). The women highlighted the many benefits associated with resource access, many of which, it seems, are often under-stressed or even ignored in conventional development literature. In Nepal, the community workshop was held with women beneficiaries of IFAD's *Hills Leasehold Forestry and Forage Development Project*. The women pointed to the large number of benefits stemming directly from the improved access to land and forestry that resulted from the project. Many spoke about positive changes in gender relations at the intra-household level. Others emphasized the importance of time savings associated with predictable access to forage and fodder supplies. The time saved was used to increase vegetable food production, which in turn increased household food security. In India, community workshops were held with tribal women in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. The women explained that improved access to land and forest resources had reduced the extent of their dependency on highly unequal sharecropping arrangements with local landlords. Improved access to forest resources had increased their control over the key decisions that determine their livelihoods and helped provide a more secure foundation enabling them to overcome their poverty. The first set of WRAP outputs, containing the main findings from the different community workshops and methodological guidelines, will be finalized at the end of 2001. They will be distributed to a wide range of governmental, intergovernmental and civil-society stakeholders identified in consultation with appropriate Popular Coalition partners.

#### **IV. NEW MODELS FOR ADVANCING TOGETHER**

28. The concept of advancing together is central to the work of the Popular Coalition, and in fact the phrase itself can function as a shorthand definition of the Coalition's concept. At the founding conference in 1995, it was determined that success in strengthening the resource tenure of the rural poor would require a coalition of equals. The coalition would have to be rooted in the needs and experiences of community-based and civil-society organizations; engage governments in creating the enabling political and legislative environment; and foster coherence by the international and bilateral community in its roles and support.

29. The Popular Coalition has been involved in a wide range of partnership-based activities at various levels, and a growing number of multi-stakeholder alliances have been created. These networks and partnerships constitute a core part of the Popular Coalition's strategy, and provide benefits such as enhanced coherence, increased efficiency and effectiveness and a greater ability to build on the lessons learned. Beyond providing the field-based benefits of working together, these alliances afford valuable opportunities to increase awareness and understanding of the sectoral connections and complexities involved in increasing the rural poor's access to land and other productive resources. Some of the important activities in 2001 are listed below.

##### **Asia and Pacific Forum on Poverty**

30. The Popular Coalition was asked to present two papers to the first Forum on Poverty (held in Manila, The Philippines, in February 2001) by the Asian Development Bank (AsDB). The importance of access to assets and the building of stakeholder coalitions were seen to be two strengths that the Popular Coalition could share with the delegates. The two papers, soon to be published by AsDB, shared the knowledge being assembled through the knowledge network of the Popular Coalition and elucidated the lessons learned in the process of building the Coalition into a participatory multi-stakeholder forum for joint policy and programme development.



31. AsDB indicated its interest in becoming an active member of the Popular Coalition as a way to follow up on the Poverty Forum and strengthen work on resource-access issues in the region.

### **Land Policy Working Group**

32. Following its launching at the World Bank Rural Week in 2000, this multi-donor and civil-society working group affirmed common interest in elevating global commitments to land rights as a precondition of reducing rural poverty. The Popular Coalition was reconfirmed as the mechanism most suited to provide the framework for the activities of this group, which includes, among others, FAO, IFAD, the World Bank, the Department for International Development (United Kingdom), the German Agency for Technical Cooperation, the United States Agency for International Development and various non-governmental organization (NGO) partners of the Popular Coalition. The near-term goal is to work towards heightened global consensus on land-rights and resource-access issues in the interests of elevating policy dialogue on and commitment to this subject at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (or Rio + 10) to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2002.

### **Land, Livelihoods and Food Security**

33. The Popular Coalition has become actively engaged in the multi-stakeholder dialogue process being used by various United Nations institutions to involve their diverse partners. Largely in relation to the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development and the FAO processes (including the Committee on World Food Security, Committee on Agriculture, and the World Food Summit and its follow-up), the Popular Coalition has been working in support of progressive debate and input from farmer organizations, trade unions, the private sector and the NGO/CSO community. This work furthers the mission of the Popular Coalition regarding widening the opportunities for civil-society and community-based organizations to enter debates by the international community on the strategies, policies and practices that will be most effective in reaching the Millennium Development Goals, endorsed at the September 2000 United Nations Millennium General Assembly in New York.

### **Assets and Rural Poverty**

34. The Popular Coalition was proud to work with its host organization, IFAD, in the development of the *Rural Poverty Report 2001* by bringing the views, experience and lessons of Coalition partners into the chapter on 'Access to Assets'.

35. The Popular Coalition has worked in support of various initiatives of governments to elevate the subject of access to land within their policies and practices. In the North, the Popular Coalition worked with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to develop a report on access to assets to assist CIDA in its consideration of how to strengthen its aid effectiveness. In the South, the Popular Coalition joined the IFAD-fostered Zimbabwe initiative, the Community-Based Resettlement Approaches and Technologies Project (CREATE), to strengthen community involvement in resettlement. While the challenges in Zimbabwe will take time, the CREATE project has resulted in a methodology that can help to shape a way forward in both that country and elsewhere.

### **Land and Democracy**

36. The Popular Coalition was invited to assist the Parliamentary Centre of Canada and the World Bank Institute in developing the curriculum for a course to be offered to politicians in emerging democracies to foster effective governance/parliamentary policies and practices through training in the role of parliament, using various subjects as the focus of study. Access to land will be a feature of the course, given its critical role in many developing countries and the economies of Central and Eastern Europe. This initiative will be a significant means by which the mission and experience of the





Popular Coalition will be brought into a position of political influence and parliamentary development in as many as 30 countries.

### **Lessons from Civil Society**

37. The founding partners established that a central role of the Popular Coalition would be to place CSOs' experiences regarding access to assets on national and international agendas. In 2001, the Popular Coalition launched its first major book publication, *Whose Land? Civil Society Perspectives on Land Reform and Rural Poverty Reduction*, which provides voice and visibility to the experience of civil society in gaining access to resources, citing experiences from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

### **Bringing Civil Society into Farming Systems Approaches**

38. The Popular Coalition was invited to participate in an FAO regional workshop in Venezuela (18-23 June 2001). The meeting brought together a wide range of researchers, academics and representatives of NGOs and bilateral and multilateral development organizations to identify ways of heightening the representation of poor people's views and knowledge in agrarian systems-based approaches to programme design and formulation. The Popular Coalition sponsored the participation of two of its members, from Ecuador and Honduras, who provided a valuable contribution to the workshop and demonstrated once again the potential for the Popular Coalition to provide an effective bridge between diverse governmental, civil-society and international stakeholders and to ensure that the views and knowledge of the rural poor are incorporated directly into the broader discussion process.

### **Exploring Innovative Models for CSO Support to Land Reform Communities**

39. In 1999, an IFAD grant using the resources of the Norwegian Trust Fund provided support to some of the 'complementary approaches' envisaged in the second phase of the Government of Zimbabwe's Land Reform and Resettlement Programme. One outcome was CREATE, which aimed to establish a practical framework for NGO support to poor rural communities in the context of land resettlement. The Popular Coalition supported both the conceptual and practical strength of the CREATE model and collaborated extensively with IFAD during 2000 and 2001 on a number of related activities.

40. Indeed, even though the prevailing situation in Zimbabwe during 2000 and 2001 meant that the CREATE initiative was unable to meet its full objectives, IFAD and the Popular Coalition continue to believe that CREATE has succeeded in establishing an innovative institutional model for delivering vital technical assistance to households as part of so-called community-based resettlement, and that it has helped forge agreement among a wide array of stakeholders. At the same time, it has demonstrated the potential for this type of approach to make a far wider contribution to the development process. In particular, the CREATE experience helped define an institutional model that could direct support from a wide range of external stakeholders to poor rural communities through an NGO-driven institutional framework. Experiences from Zimbabwe demonstrate that this approach can serve both short and long-term goals and can lead to multiple benefits for beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

41. The Popular Coalition and IFAD felt strongly that the lessons of CREATE – in particular its broad definition of community, its processes for finding common ground among a range of actors and seeming adversaries, its contribution to policy development, and its practical tools for implementing community-based land reform – should not be lost. For this reason, they collaborated in the preparation of a report that sought both to 'tell the story' of CREATE and to draw out what seemed the most pertinent lessons of its experience. This report will provide a useful model for similar



initiatives elsewhere and will be widely shared among Popular Coalition members and the broader international development community, in Southern Africa and elsewhere.

## V. THE POPULAR COALITION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO IFAD

42. The foundation of the Popular Coalition is recognized by all its partners to have grown out of the vision of IFAD along with IFAD's steadfast commitment to and investment in the building of the Coalition. These same partners accept responsibility for building the Popular Coalition and generating the resources needed for its operations. Accordingly, while housed inside of IFAD, the Popular Coalition and its Secretariat function under the direction of the Coalition Executive Council, currently involving IFAD along with the European Commission, FAO, the World Bank, the World Food Programme and seven regionally based CSOs.

43. The President's Bulletin of March 2001 (PB No. 01/03) establishes *The Basic Framework Regarding the Modalities for and Administrative Operations of the Popular Coalition and Its Relationship to IFAD*. This bulletin provides a clear basis for conducting policy, programme and administrative matters in a way that addresses the operating circumstances now known as a result of examining the Coalition's formative years.

44. During 2001 the range of joint activities with IFAD has expanded, in particular through IFAD's participation in the global meeting of ARnet partners in Nairobi, Kenya, in the CREATE activities in Zimbabwe, and in several projects under the CEF.

## VI. CONCLUSION

45. Within the Popular Coalition, IFAD can accurately be described as the 'first among equals'. The other partners recognize and respect that IFAD has provided the framework and capacity for the Popular Coalition to flourish, without constantly looking for recognition. By creating the Popular Coalition, IFAD has rallied widespread alliances with others who have joined the initial call by IFAD to empower the rural poor through land reform and access to productive resources.

46. The strength of the Popular Coalition is that it is evolving a wide ownership base of diverse partners. The benefit is the rising importance being attached to the asset needs of the rural poor. In this regard, the Popular Coalition is advancing the advocacy and programmatic goals of IFAD. The Coalition's partners see IFAD as a source of inspiration and a pre-eminent partner of the rural poor.