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IFAD
INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
Governing Council – Twenty-Eighth Session
Rome, 16-17 February 2005

SCHEDULE OF BRIEFINGS

1. A series of information briefings will be held for delegates during the Twenty-Eighth Session of the Governing Council of IFAD. These briefings provide an opportunity for delegates to interact with IFAD staff and gain a better understanding of various initiatives, activities and undertakings. A short outline of the topics covered is attached.

2. The briefings, scheduled to take place in the Aula Magna during the afternoons of Wednesday and Thursday, 16 and 17 February 2005, will last from 15 to 30 minutes each. A tentative schedule for each afternoon is given below:

Wednesday, 16 February 2005

14.30-14.50 hours	IFAD's Response to the Tsunami
14.50-15.20 hours	In the Wake of War
15.20-15.30 hours	Work on IFAD's New Headquarters is Under Way
15.30-15.50 hours	The Rural Poverty Portal
15.50-16.10 hours	BSF and IFAD Partnership
16.10-16.40 hours	Organic Agriculture: An Attractive Alternative for Small Farmers? ¹
16.40-17.00 hours	Land and Governance ¹

Thursday, 17 February 2005

14.30-14.50 hours	IFAD's Response to the Tsunami
14.50-15.20 hours	In the Wake of War
15.20-15.40 hours	Land and Governance
15.40-16.00 hours	The Rural Poverty Portal
16.00-16.20 hours	BSF and IFAD Partnership
16.20-16.50 hours	Organic Agriculture: An Attractive Alternative for Small Farmers?
16.50-17.00 hours	Work on IFAD's New Headquarters is Under Way

¹ Due to possible time constraints on Wednesday afternoon, this briefing may be given only on Thursday afternoon.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF BRIEFINGS

IFAD's Response to the Tsunami

On 26 December 2004 an earthquake off the shore of Indonesia generated a tsunami in the Indian Ocean that affected countries across Asia and Africa, with Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Maldives, India and Thailand among those hardest hit. The response from the world community has been overwhelming. Humanitarian and emergency assistance has flowed in at unprecedented levels, and countries have made major commitments of official development assistance in support of tsunami recovery and long-term rehabilitation efforts.

IFAD has been an active player in the in-country recovery needs assessments being carried out by the governments of affected countries, and this information will allow it to complete the detailed design of activities that will be supported through loans and grants.

This briefing session is intended as a forum for the IFAD Country Programme Managers responsible for the respective countries to brief the audience on the state of poverty in the tsunami-affected areas and IFAD's emerging response to their needs. Their short presentations will be followed by question-and-answer sessions.

In the Wake of War

This IFAD-produced documentary film, originally broadcast on BBC World in October 2004, tells the stories of three people – Philippe, Cassien and Cassilde – who are trying to rebuild their lives in the wake of Burundi's 10-year civil war. Through their stories, the film explores the relationship between poverty and conflict, and the role that economic development plays in building lasting peace. In particular, the film looks at IFAD's role in establishing nearly 1 000 community development committees in poor rural communities across the country.

Work on IFAD's New Headquarters is Under Way

The renovation work for IFAD's new headquarters on via Paolo di Dono started on 14 January 2005. This is a major step forwards and a significant milestone in IFAD's 27 years of operations and it will make it possible to bring all IFAD staff together in a single workplace by the beginning of 2007.

Thanks to the Italian Government's continuing support and generosity, IFAD's new headquarters will be a reality. The commitment of the Italian Government to providing a new headquarters for IFAD was officially announced by the Governor for Italy on 18 February 2004 at the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Governing Council.

On 22 December 2004, IFAD signed the preliminary contract with Pirelli & C. Real Estate, which will be responsible for completing the renovation over the coming 22 months. EUR 25.4 million is the total estimated cost of renovating the 30 000 square-metre area: 18 000 square metres of office space and 12 000 square metres of common support areas.

The development of common areas is an opportunity to enhance the multicultural dimension of IFAD's environment and image. By making voluntary contributions to finance such highly visible components as meeting rooms, common areas and staff facilities, Member States will promote international understanding and help to build and affirm IFAD's role as a true global partnership of its Member States.

The Rural Poverty Portal

The goal of the Rural Poverty Portal project – an enhanced interactive, global web site – is to help eradicate rural poverty by fostering the sharing of information and knowledge and by making the fight to eradicate rural poverty a global priority.

The portal will connect communities of people to the information and knowledge they need to eradicate rural poverty. It will be the cornerstone of information and knowledge management at IFAD and will bring together a wealth of rural poverty eradication knowledge, information and resources from many other sources and providers.

The portal will help IFAD fulfil its catalytic role by enhancing the organization's ability to share its knowledge – a global public good – and become a rural poverty knowledge-broker and influencer of policies.

BSF and IFAD Partnership

For 20 years, BSF and IFAD have been working together to help rural poor people in sub-Saharan Africa become healthier and more productive. The partnership addresses the most basic needs of poor people: family nutrition and health. Once people are strong and healthy, they are in a better position to benefit from development projects funded by IFAD loans.

To date, BSF and IFAD have provided approximately USD 135 million in grants to 38 projects in Angola, Burkina Faso, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, the Niger, Rwanda, north-western Somalia, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

To commemorate the twentieth anniversary of its founding, BSF published the brochure *Learning by Doing*, highlighting the achievements of this unique partnership between BSF and IFAD and the lessons learned in 20 years of working together.

Organic Agriculture: An Attractive Alternative for Small Farmers?

In recent years, IFAD's Office of Evaluation has carried out two thematic evaluations on organic agriculture in Latin America (2002) and in China and India (2004). The evaluations looked at the role of organic agriculture in rural poverty reduction; in particular, they sought to understand in what cases, and under what circumstances, organics should be integrated into IFAD policy dialogue and development programmes. The studies, which looked both at IFAD-supported and independent organic farming development programmes, found that in most cases farmers who switched to organic agriculture enjoyed higher earnings, better health, a higher standard of living and enhanced quality of land, inasmuch as organic production – when applied correctly – is environmentally sound. In fact, the poorest, marginalized farmers of Asia who have not benefited from the Green Revolution stood to gain the most from organic agriculture.

However, small farmers often have to surmount many a number of constraints before they can become certified producers of organic food, not the least of which are the high certification costs, lack of technical and market knowledge, and increased labour-force requirements. Supportive policies are also needed to enable small farmers to take advantage of growing national and international markets, which are rapidly approaching USD 30 billion annually (internationally certified organic production only). As a result of these evaluations, IFAD is supporting pilot operations on organic farming in Central America; and it is reviewing its country strategic opportunities papers for China and India to include organic agriculture as an investment option geared towards poverty reduction.

ATTACHMENT

The results of these evaluations have raised the interest of a broad range of partners, including the Government of Italy, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, the Italian Association of Organic Agriculture Producers and the World Bank. A series of dissemination workshops have been held to share these evaluations' findings with specialized audiences. A further one is scheduled to take place in Washington, D.C., on 23 February.

Land and Governance

The Group of Eight leaders, who are now preparing for their July meeting at Gleneagles, Scotland, have identified land reform as an example of a difficult governance issue. With all the political courage this entails, many countries are in fact taking up the land agenda, acknowledging its central importance to reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The International Land Coalition is working with governments to help establish national round tables and participatory processes (known as LAND Partnerships) for formulating land policies and shared roles in implementation. Initial outcomes from the first four countries have prompted invitations for the programme to be expanded into other countries.