

Strengthening IFAD's capacity  
to mainstream climate change  
adaptation in its operations

# IFAD's response to climate change through support to adaptation and related actions

A summary



Enabling poor rural people  
to overcome poverty

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# Introduction

There is international consensus that climate change is one of the most serious threats to sustainable development. Adverse impacts of climate change have already been observed on natural resources, food security, human health, the environment, economic activity and physical infrastructure. Warming of the climate system is unequivocal and accelerating, making both mitigation and adaptation actions essential. In recent years, addressing climate change has become a strategic priority for the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). A crucial concern for IFAD has been to build in-house capacity relative to climate change issues. One initiative designed to achieve this is entitled “Strengthening IFAD’s capacity to mainstream climate change adaptation in its operations”, which is supported under the Initiative for Mainstreaming Innovation (IMI). This report is a summary of a study conducted under this initiative. It explored and analysed the range of actions supported by IFAD that either deliberately or fortuitously contributes to strengthening responses to climate change. The study was undertaken in order to draw out lessons for mainstreaming adaptation in the operations of the organization. The study also reviewed the mainstreaming experiences of other development agencies. Mitigation was not a central focus of the study, but is included to a lesser extent. (The full study is available at [www.ifad.org/climate](http://www.ifad.org/climate).)

# Mainstreaming experiences by development agencies

The range of activities undertaken by development agencies to address adaptation to climate change varies considerably. These include conducting portfolio reviews, developing operational measures (tools and methodologies) to mainstream adaptation, raising awareness on the urgency of addressing climate change risks, developing high-level political commitment in the organization, and collaborating with partners in technology transfer and knowledge management. Portfolio reviews have tended to conclude that insufficient attention has been paid to addressing climate change and variability in operations at programme, planning and project levels.

Key operational measures developed to integrate climate change in development programmes and projects are:

- programmatic and project guidelines to take climate risk into account;
- response options to climate risks;
- strategic and operational entry points;
- climate-risk assessment tools; and
- priority ranking of sectors, regions or activities that are climate sensitive.

Generally, most of these initiatives are still in the early stages and much work is currently being commissioned, as is the case for IFAD.

# IFAD's development approach as a basis for addressing climate change

Key IFAD principles of engagement – namely participatory and holistic approaches to development, gender mainstreaming, and vulnerability assessment and pro-poor targeting – exemplify good development practice. They also provide a sound basis from which to expand the organization's response to climate change. To date, IFAD programmes and projects have not focused on integrating the socio-economic aspects of climate change into impact and vulnerability assessments. However, there are a number of areas of practice where socio-economic information is gathered and used in project design – for example, participatory rural appraisals and participatory mapping. Both of these can support minority and indigenous communities in gaining secure tenure over land and natural resources – a fundamental aspect of an integrated approach to adaptation. Use of the sustainable livelihoods approach, which focuses on strengths, vulnerabilities and livelihood strategies, potentially provides a platform for developing resilience-building strategies for adaptation to climate change. Given that climate change risks magnify existing inequalities between women and men and the differences in their capacity to cope, IFAD's significant focus on gender mainstreaming is a valuable platform for responding to climate change. A number of IFAD's investments have been designed to recognize and recover local knowledge and culture, and to highlight the value of indigenous environmental knowledge. This is likely to be critical in speeding up adaptation responses, as it can lead to adaptive blending of indigenous and scientific technology.

# Review of adaptation and mitigation activities in selected IFAD loans and grants

## General observations on selected IFAD loans and grants

A preliminary screening of IFAD project design documents approved between 2000 and 2006 indicated that most of the documents for the 181 loans and 718 grants reviewed do not explicitly refer to climate change, although many designs do address climate variability. However, project documentation does not indicate that climate risks were well assessed at the project level; and climate risks were rarely mentioned even for projects located in areas with high climate risks such as floods and cyclones. These broad findings are consistent with those of a number of portfolio reviews for international development organizations. However, this situation is beginning to change, with the language of climate change appearing more frequently in recent IFAD project documents. Results-based country strategic opportunities programmes (RB-COSOPs) more frequently make explicit reference to climate change as a factor that has an impact on the country's agricultural sector and rural poverty. Field actions are beginning to incorporate climate change considerations, even if the project design documents did not. Some IFAD projects now include a Global Environment Facility (GEF)-supported component that incorporates some considerations of climate change. In general, however, results of the study indicated a lack of specificity in distinguishing between climate-related risks and environmental risks, even where responses reflected a sound understanding of environmental issues. While this is not surprising, given that climate change has only recently gained more universal coverage and higher priority, it does point to the need for greater sensitization on climate change issues if IFAD investments are to be made more climate-resilient.

## Technologies for adaptation and community-based natural resource management

A significant number of technologies promoted in IFAD projects have direct relevance for adaptation to longer-term climate change, although they are initially focused on climate variability. These include technologies from the fields of agriculture, natural resource management, water conservation and management, and fisheries, as well as approaches that focus on community-based natural resource management and securing land tenure.

*Technologies for adaptation.* IFAD has funded projects to combat land degradation and conserve soil and water in the Sahel region for over three decades, and elsewhere, providing important support to farmers to adapt to drought and to climatic variability. Many of these projects include sustainable agricultural approaches that generally support retention of soil moisture and vegetation, which are likely to have positive effects on mitigation as well as adaptation to a changing climate. Practical water-related adaptations with multiple benefits from IFAD projects include rainwater harvesting, floodplain restoration, appropriate irrigation systems, improved water storage, and re-use of wastewater, all of which can build resilience for smallholder farmers, especially in drought-prone areas. IFAD has been one of the few agencies to support improvements in spate irrigation, which could play a significant role in enhancing adaptability to

climate change in some of the most fragile areas on Earth. Other technologies relevant for adaptation in IFAD's portfolio include sustainable fisheries management and interventions to address sea-level rise and flooding. Of particular importance is IFAD's support to agroforestry systems, which, if properly designed, are likely to have a higher ecological resilience to extreme climate events than annual cropping systems.

*Community-based natural resource management.* IFAD's experiences with community-based natural resource management, although not specifically implemented as an adaptation response, do have the potential to form part of local adaptation strategies. Through community-based natural resource management, local institutions for natural resource management and rural development are developed and their capacities are built. They are able to identify stronger connections between ecosystem services and poverty reduction and accommodate them in project planning. This is an important component of sustainable adaptation approaches that target poverty and vulnerability. Finally, the linkages between security of land tenure and the ability to adapt to climate change are becoming increasingly clear, especially in the context of indigenous peoples' access to land and natural resources – long a focus area for IFAD.

### **Pro-poor research and climate change**

IFAD has a long history of supporting research institutes and other bodies to test, adapt and disseminate technology in order to address climate variability, which is a source of valuable lessons for mainstreaming adaptation to climate change. Examples of IFAD-supported research that are especially relevant for adaptation to climate change include: developing stress-tolerant maize varieties in sub-Saharan Africa, improvements in 'neglected' food crops (for example, cassava) of poor rural people, formulation and testing of integrated strategies to domesticate and market high-value agroforestry tree species in West and Central Africa, and research and development for salt-tolerant forage crops and saltwater irrigation techniques in West Asia and North Africa. IFAD-supported research has also focused on finding synergies between indigenous/local knowledge and applied scientific research, and on promoting empowering action learning processes towards this end. Recently, IFAD has stepped up its efforts to build scientific capacity and influence policy and institutional reform to facilitate the adoption of improved responses to climate change threats, as well as help in the transition to improved land management practices.

### **Economic diversification**

Economic diversification is becoming increasingly important as an adaptation strategy, to increase economic resilience and decrease reliance on climate-vulnerable economic sectors. More diversified livelihood strategies can lead to enhanced incomes and can diminish the risk for poor people whose livelihoods are largely based on natural resources. IFAD has gained considerable experience in diversification approaches as well as rural finance and marketing interventions, which are critical components that can make or break diversification approaches. IFAD-supported examples include diversifying away from water-intensive crops like sugar in Mauritius; creating new value chains from tree products in arid zones in Southern Africa, in projects that largely target women; and promoting rural tourism in Latin America to reduce dependence on agricultural-based products and shift to off-farm activities.

### Extreme events and climate-related risk preparedness

An important area for adaptation is to understand the impacts of and vulnerability to current and future climate variability and extreme events and their implications for sustainable development. Scientific evidence points to human-induced climate change as the underlying cause of the rise in hydro-meteorological events over the past decade. Responding to environmental change, in the form of droughts and flooding, has been a feature of many IFAD projects since the organization's inception. More recent IFAD investments have included an explicit focus on aspects of disaster management, including development of an early warning system in Ethiopia, rehabilitation of ecosystems in Sri Lanka, and the establishment of a *dzud* (severe winter storm) emergency fund in Mongolia. Additional IFAD investments being prepared will address extreme events and climate-risk preparedness: for example, an index-based weather insurance project in China, and climate-resilient infrastructure, such as submersible roads in Bangladesh and cyclone-proof roads in Madagascar.

### Integrated adaptation planning and implementation

IFAD has not yet developed a comprehensive approach to adaptation planning. However, many of the activities and approaches supported by IFAD are of direct relevance for developing a clear approach to adaptation planning. For example, a number of IFAD projects have adopted successful integrated approaches to agricultural development. These approaches are providing an appropriate vehicle for coping with complexity and change, and they will be of value for adaptation responses. The projects include a grant to support conservation-based agricultural approaches and techniques as a climate change adaptation measure; and a GEF-cofinanced project in Kenya to increase the resilience of the ecosystem to human and natural stress. Since successful adaptation strategies will need to promote broad social change, another relevant recent development is the transformation of some projects from technical interventions into social or process interventions. For example, the second phase of an indigenous trees programme in West and Central Africa will shift its focus from the technological aspects to socio-economic issues and capacity building. Given the growing possibilities for large-scale forced migration due to climate change, IFAD's experiences in addressing conflict also hold relevance for responding to climate change – particularly those actions to reduce conflict over scarce natural resources and to accommodate large numbers of internally displaced people and environmental refugees.

### Mitigation

A number of activities traditionally supported by IFAD are important for mitigation: afforestation and reforestation, better land management practices such as conservation tillage and agroforestry, rehabilitation of degraded crop and pasture land, rangeland rehabilitation to improve productivity, and livestock management practices. All of these activities can contribute significantly to improving soil cover and reducing carbon emissions as a mitigation strategy. IFAD's experience with smallholder farmers and rural communities constitutes a valuable basis for the design of financial and institutional mechanisms that will provide appropriate incentives to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. These mechanisms will be included in the post-Kyoto climate regime. IFAD is progressively gaining experience on payments for ecosystem services (PES) projects and clean energy projects. Recently it has been designing grants for integrated mitigation and adaptation approaches – for example, grants to the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) for scaling up innovative local strategies in the West African Sahel that can respond to and mitigate the negative effects of climate change on the livelihoods of poor rural communities.

# Lessons learned from the review

A number of lessons emerged from this review of IFAD activities that support climate change adaptation and mitigation, along with opportunities for mainstreaming climate change adaptation in its operations.

- *Principles of engagement are conducive to adaptation planning.* IFAD's principles of engagement such as participation, gender mainstreaming, vulnerability assessment and capacity building position the organization well to increase its focus on planning and implementation of activities that respond to climate change.
- *Activities that address climate risks and variability are supportive of adaptation to climate change.* Many IFAD projects have been designed to promote synergies between climate change and desertification through interventions such as soil and water conservation, agroforestry and economic diversification. These activities are strongly linked to climate change adaptation. There are also important synergies between responses to desertification and climate change adaptation. IFAD's significant experience with the former provides a good platform for enhancing its response to climate change.
- *Support to indigenous peoples can strengthen their adaptive capacity.* Such support includes strengthening the land titling process and access rights of indigenous peoples to their natural resources, and improvements to indigenous production systems adapted to climate stress through greater access to marketing, infrastructure, research and development, and technology transfer.
- *Rewards for ecosystem goods and services are key for pro-poor mitigation.* Promoting integrated ecosystem management and rewarding mechanisms for ecosystem services provided by poor rural people are key for pro-poor mitigation, especially in view of the post-Kyoto agreement and of the importance that innovative mechanisms such as the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD) Programme are gaining on the international scene.
- *Knowledge management to transform experience into knowledge and to share this with partners is a key element of improving development effectiveness for IFAD.* Systematic documentation and dissemination of best practices and lessons learned in the context of responding to climate change are important knowledge management approaches to be emphasized by the organization. Participatory research and design, and the merging of traditional with scientific knowledge, are strategies for building local knowledge and harnessing synergies between different types of knowledge to help poor rural people adapt to the adverse effects of climate change.
- *IFAD grants for climate change adaptation hold great potential for scaling up.* An important recent development for IFAD investments is the use of the grant mechanism to promote activities targeted at adaptation to climate change. In many cases, these are linked to implementation through an action learning approach, which holds value for scaling up adaptation to climate change, given the associated urgency for action and uncertainty regarding impacts and effects on resilience.

In addition to the lessons learned, the study revealed a number of gaps in IFAD's response to climate change:

- *Data collection, sharing and use in planning processes.* Given its long-term collaboration with and support to farmers and resource users in rural areas, there is scope for IFAD to make a greater contribution to improving the collection, management, exchange, access to and use of observational data and other relevant information on climate variability and change.
- *Appropriate technologies.* While poor rural people are frequently aware of climate change-related trends such as increased rainfall variability and late onset of rain, IFAD projects have generally not included approaches to help local resource users better track climate trends, such as community monitoring of rainfall and temperature. Appropriate technologies for farmer-based or resource-user based systematic observation and monitoring of climate variability and climate change should be developed as an important way to make livelihoods more climate-resilient.
- *Research activities to support decision-making and mainstreaming.* IFAD has supported the testing, adaptation and dissemination of technology to address climate variability. This support could provide valuable lessons for mainstreaming adaptation to climate change. However, research has not been specifically focused on adaptation to climate change. Given the likely acceleration in climate impacts in the near future, research activities to support decision-making about climate change adaptation, environmental risk management and integration with sustainable development will be necessary to close this gap.
- *Emphasis on risk mitigation and management.* As IFAD recently recognized, it needs to increase its emphasis on risk preparedness and management work, with a particular focus on early warning systems and crop/livestock insurance guarantee schemes that have great potential to allow farmers (not landlords) to recover from their losses and stabilize their income.
- *Climate change linkages in vulnerability assessments.* Linking causes of vulnerability to climate variability and climate change has been carried out to a greater degree in regions where climatic extremes, droughts and flooding have long been the norm. There is scope for improvement in making the climate linkages in vulnerability assessments.
- *Integrating adaptation and mitigation measures for maximum impact.* There has been little experience in integrating adaptation and mitigation measures for maximized impact in strengthening the resilience of poor rural communities. IFAD's experience could be better exploited. IFAD provides substantial support to pro-poor research to increase resilience of smallholders to climate variability. This support is a further valuable element that should be increased in the organization's response to climate change.
- *Possibilities for maladaptation.* This study has highlighted potential adaptation opportunities, as well as possible risks, in IFAD's operations. A significant risk for the organization concerns the possibility for maladaptation through the activities it supports. It cannot be taken for granted that positive aspects of IFAD's existing response would automatically lead to the best options for adaptation, which will require a concerted focus in that regard.

# Strategic recommendations

In its analysis of IFAD project documents for 181 loans and 718 grants, the study provided a number of strategic recommendations for IFAD to strengthen its capacity to mainstream climate change adaptation in its operations:

**Ensure that the proposed climate change strategy, to be formulated as a follow-up to the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD, is linked to enhanced roll-out of the new environmental and social assessment procedures that were presented to the Board in April 2009.** While it is important for the organization to develop a climate change strategy, this needs to be linked to the updated environmental and social assessment (ESA) procedures. Attention needs to be given to ways to enhance the rolling out of the ESA procedures, how to effectively raise awareness on climate change, and to implement the strategy. Defining a clear adaptation strategy for IFAD would also enhance IFAD's access to financial resources, including the Least Developed Countries Fund, the Special Climate Change Fund and the Adaptation Fund. To this end, the following specific recommendations are made:

- *Develop an IFAD Guidance Note and supporting tool that provides simple information and a consistent approach for project development teams and other staff on climate change, including clear indications of countries and eco-regions most vulnerable to climate change.*
- *Allocate sufficient resources for undertaking selective strategic environmental assessment to inform the design of RB-COSOPs, with a strong emphasis on climate change considerations.*

**Sharpen the connection between project activities and climate variability and change.** As this review has revealed, many IFAD-funded activities support adaptation-related activities although these were not part of their objectives. Projects should be encouraged to improve their performance by anticipating connections between normal project activities and climate change or increased climate variability. Specific recommendations follow:

- *Raise awareness about climate change through effective dissemination mechanisms, such as learning platforms, training interventions and seminars (for example, the CLIMTRAIN training offered by IFAD's Global Environment and Climate Change Unit). Given that changes in the quality enhancement process mean that Country Programme Managers (CPMs) now have direct supervision responsibility for projects, the CPMs are an important target group. However, recent training experiences have highlighted the need for more effective means to increase their participation. This participation can be initiated through the development of a 'basket of options' that would be part of the training for CPMs, in addition to other means. It is also important to encourage in-country activities (e.g. training for project staff, consultations and awareness-raising activities with stakeholders) and to collaborate with other partners involved in addressing climate change capacity development to improve overall development effectiveness.*
- *Encourage projects to develop linkages with existing or planned climate change interventions in their areas. In order to build up a critical mass of organizations and actions for climate change adaptation, a starting point would be to look for synergies with any national adaptation programme of action (NAPA) pilot projects being implemented, or with activities being*

undertaken by international and national organizations with a climate change focus. It would be important to identify organizations carrying out awareness raising on climate change and to develop partnerships with them, and to sensitize project teams as a first step. This linkage mechanism could be part of a proposed package to be included in training interventions (for example with CPMs).

- *Strengthen the vulnerability assessment process for project design*, ensuring that they make specific links to increasing climate variability and highlight those groups most vulnerable to climate risks. This could be achieved by encouraging the use of sustainable livelihoods approaches, which focus on strengths, vulnerabilities and livelihood strategies in an integrated fashion and thus can provide a platform for developing resilience-building strategies for adaptation to climate change.
- *Integrate climate scenarios into programme operations*. Encourage existing projects that still have significant periods of time to run to do this at the mid-term review or next annual review, and provide discretionary funds to do so. New projects should be designed around the best available downscaled projections, and this should be specified in the IFAD climate change strategy.
- *Strengthen climate input into national policy and planning processes*. Many IFAD projects have valuable lessons about climate change for national policy and planning processes. However, since conscious connections have not been made between relevant activities and climate change, the necessary effective inputs have not been provided to integrate climate change considerations into processes such as poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) and NAPAs. IFAD and other partners need to search for innovative ways to develop national and local capacity. Project coordinators should be actively encouraged to make these links.
- *Pilot a focused climate change mainstreaming programme in a small set of countries*. This could be carried out, for example, in five countries, identified by CPMs on the basis of interest and relevance in terms of climate risks and vulnerability. After initial sensitization of the country programme development teams and a workshop on a basket of adaptation/mitigation options (including those recommended in this report), the pilot could be run as an action learning process, with opportunities for learning between countries and projects. Successful elements could be replicated more broadly. The process should be linked to additional financial resources that participating countries could access in order to implement climate change priorities identified during the initial stages of the pilot process.

**Enhance support for, and fine-tune, successful actions for adaptation and mitigation.** The study identified a number of approaches and sectoral interventions that are supportive of climate change adaptation and mitigation. These interventions need continued support and fine-tuning. Fine-tuning will need to include making stronger connections between poverty and ecosystem services, as well as better integrating climatic variability and downscaled climate projections. Specific recommendations in this regard are:

- *Develop pro-poor innovative financial mechanisms*. Conduct policy research to identify mitigation mechanisms adapted and dedicated to poor rural people – including specific mechanisms adapted to indigenous peoples – and that reward rural communities for the environmental services they do and could provide. The research should focus on how to support appropriate pro-poor policies to ensure flow of carbon funds, and technologies that enhance, measure and monitor carbon capture and storage.
- *Expand support to pro-poor adaptation research*. Continue and expand support to relevant research activities and fine-tune these so that they support decision-making about climate change adaptation, environmental risk management and integration of environmental risk management with sustainable development.

- *Continue support to economic diversification.* Continue support to activities on economic diversification as a key to enhancing livelihoods and relieving pressure on natural resources, as well as on markets and microfinance, as a crucial link to unlock these opportunities. Such support should have an explicit, rather than unconscious, link to adaptation.
- *Continue to support land tenure rights.* Strengthen the focus on securing territorial rights of indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups, as a key step for both adaptation and mitigation. Again, such support should have an explicit, rather than unconscious, link to adaptation and mitigation.
- *Increase the emphasis on risk preparedness and risk management work.* Such emphasis should focus on micro-insurance schemes, which have great potential for supporting sustainable livelihoods of poor rural people. Explore IFAD's loan and grant instruments as well as its partnership with different foundations to develop and expand micro-insurance schemes that support risk management. Improving incentives in the use of environmental goods and services will have different implications in different cases.

**Strengthen monitoring of and reporting on mainstreaming climate change.** To ensure the capacity to learn from field-based realities, IFAD should introduce a performance monitoring and reporting framework that will track IFAD's performance, and monitor and report regularly on progress at different levels.

- *Strengthen monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of climate-related outcomes.* Within overall operational M&E systems, specify that programmes and projects should develop indicators that monitor outcomes related to climate change. This may need to be taken up in the revised Quality Enhancement system. The system should include participatory M&E, which feeds back into an action learning approach at different levels – sub-nationally, nationally and at the global institutional level.
- *Strengthen reporting and dissemination of results and outcomes related to climate change.* Reporting on climate-related outcomes of loans and grants should be compiled on a regular basis and disseminated to help provide input from poor rural people and developing countries into global discussions and negotiations, including the development of socio-economic scenarios and integrated assessment modelling.

**Strengthen support to policy and institutional reform interventions related to climate change.** A further shift in focus for IFAD in recent years has been its greater emphasis on policy-level interventions, in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Having an impact on policy is key to ensuring that interventions have a long-term impact.

- *Encourage greater country-level policy input on climate change.* Consider providing incentives and developing a support programme (along with appropriate resources) for country-based staff to expand and deepen in-country capacity for policy advocacy on climate change. Ensure that lessons learned are recorded, synthesized regionally and globally, and fed into global discussions and negotiations. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) would serve as a useful tool to identify areas for policy dialogue.

Climate change adaptation provides a compelling opportunity to accelerate progress towards a goal often stated but little realized to date – that of sustainable development – and to meet IFAD's goal as set out in its 2007-2010 Strategic Framework: Poor rural women and men in developing countries are empowered to achieve higher incomes and improved food security. IFAD has a comparative advantage in working on rural sustainable development, integrating natural resource management and combating land degradation. The effects of climate are a challenge to IFAD operations, as they pose additional risks to projects, and will also increase the vulnerability of beneficiary communities and the ecosystems upon which they depend. What is clear is that IFAD's approach to climate change must be firmly rooted in its core competencies, embedded in its operational processes and linked tightly to its main products.

# Conclusions

This study has explored many activities supported by IFAD, in order to identify those which build the capacity of rural people, especially the most vulnerable, to adapt to climate change. The portfolio screening and analysis indicates that long-term climate change risks have rarely been mentioned explicitly in IFAD's project documents. However, many of IFAD's investments do address climate variability and include sustainable land management activities that will enhance coping strategies to reduce vulnerability to climate-related risks. These activities may be technology-oriented or of an institutional and social development nature, may involve research and include innovative methodologies, and may also support mitigation. While an increasing number of IFAD-supported projects include elements that address climate change adaptation issues, a key challenge lies in optimizing all IFAD activities at the country level so that programmes and projects are designed systematically to build on an understanding of the potential effects of climate change and to take them into account.

An internal review of IFAD-supported projects defined four types of adaptation-related activities: (a) improving agricultural techniques and technologies; (b) promoting community-based natural resource management; (c) strengthening coping mechanisms and risk-preparedness to mitigate disaster impact; and (d) diversifying livelihoods to reduce risk (IFAD, 2008h). This study supports and expands on these four areas, and highlights more specific areas of IFAD's comparative advantage that go beyond the broad categories of land degradation, sustainable rural development and integrated natural resource management.

While all of the above do provide an important basis for addressing climate change, key additional specific areas in IFAD's experience as identified by this study include:

- IFAD's mode of engagement, based on its principles of engagement and its emphasis on indigenous and local knowledge, local empowerment and capacity building;
- support to interventions that blend traditional and scientific knowledge;
- increasing adoption of action research and action learning approaches;
- funding agricultural research of high relevance for climate change; and
- a number of relevant integrated planning and implementation modes, such as promoting integrated agricultural approaches, addressing conflict and supporting displaced people.

The latter will be important in areas where migration is the most important coping strategy, or becomes unavoidable due to, for example, sea-level rise. IFAD's approaches to capacity building and institutional strengthening, such as extension and advisory services, also form part of its comparative advantage and should be maximized in a comprehensive approach to adaptation.

While delivering on adaptation, it is critical to build adaptive capacity at local, national and regional levels, at the same time recognizing the low levels of capacity that many developing countries have to absorb additional funding for tackling climate change adaptation. What is important is for the organization to prioritize and support the implementation of practical, effective and high-priority adaptation actions. Furthermore, the extent to which the organization is able to mainstream environmental and sustainable natural resource management practices is important for creating a strong platform from which to launch a climate change mainstreaming process. In this regard, it will be important for IFAD to bring its climate change-related work to a deliberate and systematic level, without which mainstreaming is impossible.

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