



Policy development and dialogue



Ana Liliana Liguria sells her own surplus produce and that of other local farmers in her general store, in Andarapa, Peru. Liguria built her business with help from an IFAD-supported project that gave her access to financial services and training.

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Policy development

Policy Forum

The Policy Forum was established in 2004 to guide IFAD's policy processes. It provides a meeting place for the exchange of knowledge arising from policy discussions at the country or regional level, from implementation of the programme and project portfolio, and from positions expressed in global policy contexts or raised by IFAD's own Member States.

Two sessions of the Policy Forum were held during 2006.

- The first session was devoted to the topic of IFAD and Indigenous Peoples. It was a follow-up to the major 2005 workshop on the subject. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and Naomi Kipuri, of the Working Group on Indigenous Peoples and Communities of the African Union, attended the forum as guests. Participants agreed on the need for targeted IFAD strategies to better address the specific problems faced by indigenous populations, and also on the need for specific principles of engagement based on inclusiveness, specificity, flexibility and demand-driven approaches, rather than a normative policy.
- The second session of the Forum discussed IFAD's proposed Policy on Supervision and Implementation Support, which would strengthen project implementation to boost the impact and sustainability of the organization's work in the field. The Executive Board approved the policy in December (see page 55).

Policy seminars

Policy seminars help build awareness of the complexity of rural poverty and stimulate discussion about effective development initiatives. They are open to everyone in IFAD and others by invitation. Three seminars were held in 2006.

- Professor Jayati Ghosh, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi gave a seminar entitled *The Political Economy of Farmers' Suicide in India*, focusing on policies pursued in rural India over the past decade that have denied farmers basic protection and exposed them to unfair competition.
- Professor Aziz Khan, University of California, Riverside gave a seminar entitled *Alternative Employment Dynamics and Rural Poverty in some Contemporary Developing Countries* highlighting the findings and conclusions of country case studies on rural employment.
- Kevin Cleaver, Assistant President, of the Programme Management Department, IFAD gave a seminar entitled *Issues of Agriculture and Rural Development in Developing Countries and Implications for IFAD*.

Targeting Policy

The Executive Board approved IFAD's Targeting Policy in September. Over the past few years, the need for greater clarity and consistency in IFAD's targeting approach had emerged in the Independent External Evaluation, the annual report on results and impact, the Seventh Replenishment consultations and Executive Board sessions. A Policy Forum in 2005 captured the views of IFAD staff, and a policy reference group was subsequently established to deliver a targeting policy. The Executive Board took part in shaping the policy during an informal seminar in July 2006.

This is probably the first targeting policy adopted by an international financial institution. To impart greater consistency and rigour to targeting in different regions and at different stages of project cycles, it clarifies definitions and approaches. While always

mindful of regional, cultural and social diversity, IFAD's approach to targeting is guided by principles of inclusiveness, participation, partnership and empowerment.

Because IFAD always works with partners, another objective of the policy is to clearly communicate the organization's targeting approach to governments, implementing partners, cooperating institutions and poor rural people's organizations. This will ensure common understanding and establish a basis for smooth collaboration.

The policy also looks beyond programmes and projects at how IFAD can contribute to better targeted poverty reduction efforts within its broader engagement under the Paris Aid Effectiveness agenda, through policy dialogue and national multi-stakeholder programmes.

IFAD Policy on Supervision and Implementation Support

The Executive Board approved the IFAD Policy on Supervision and Implementation Support in December. It is one of the products, or deliverables, of the organization's Action Plan for Improving its Development Effectiveness (see page 44).

The policy will help IFAD strengthen the relevance, focus, quality and efficiency of its country programmes and realize the objectives of the Action Plan. Programme supervision and implementation support are IFAD's principal tools for effective rural poverty reduction.

In the new policy, IFAD defines supervision and implementation support as mutually reinforcing and operationally linked functions.

- Supervision ensures compliance with loan covenants, procurement, disbursement and the end use of funds, and it is an effective tool for promoting economy, efficiency and good governance.
- Implementation support focuses on development impact. It is based on assessment of progress against agreed indicators, on joint identification of problems with recipients and implementers, and on agreement of appropriate actions to achieve development objectives. Where necessary, implementation support draws on project-specific technical assistance, policy dialogue, innovations and programme or design adjustments to improve effectiveness. Implementation support gives special attention to social and environmental dimensions such as improved targeting and mainstreaming of gender issues.

The new policy will make IFAD more responsive to country-specific needs for improved performance. As a result, the quality of country programmes, dialogue with key stakeholders, and learning and sharing of knowledge will be enhanced, both within IFAD and in the countries where it operates, to meet the Action Plan goals.

IFAD Policy on Crisis Prevention and Recovery

In April 2006, the Executive Board approved the IFAD Policy on Crisis Prevention and Recovery, which addresses crises originating from violent conflicts and natural disasters. The policy builds on the experience gained by IFAD and other national and international organizations since 1998, when IFAD approved the Framework for Bridging Post-crisis Recovery and Long-term Development. The new policy puts emphasis on assisting target groups to increase their resilience to external shocks, and on enabling them to restore their means of livelihood in both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors.

The policy has two key objectives.

- The objective of crisis prevention is to mitigate the risk of the occurrence of foreseeable human-made and natural crises, and to limit the negative impact of

such crises when they occur among IFAD's target population, by incorporating risk mitigation measures in country strategies and in project formulation.

- The objective of in-crisis support and post-crisis recovery is to strengthen the capacity of IFAD's target population, both individually and at the level of community organizations, to cope with shocks when they occur by maintaining agricultural and rural development activities.

The policy emphasizes the application of the do-no-harm principle and defines the scope of IFAD's engagement in a way that is in line with the organization's mandate and capabilities. IFAD does not engage in peacemaking or peace-enforcing operations, or humanitarian relief operations.

IFAD Policy on the Disclosure of Documents

In December the Executive Board approved IFAD's new Policy on the Disclosure of Documents, revising the disclosure policy that was approved in 1998. The new policy will increase the organization's accountability and transparency, and promote learning and knowledge-sharing. It will also help build awareness about IFAD's role in fostering sustainable development.

Under the new policy, IFAD will increase the number of documents that it discloses to include all loan and grant agreements. The policy also sets a time frame for disclosure of documents: all documents submitted to the Governing Council and the Executive Board will be disclosed to the public on the Internet at the same time as they are made available to the Executive Board Directors and Governors. Loan and grant agreements will be disclosed once they are signed and become effective. The policy also allows for previously undisclosed documents that are now eligible for disclosure to be made available on request or as necessary.

Innovation challenges for the rural poor

An IFAD issues paper entitled *Innovation challenges for the rural poor* was prepared as background material for the 2006 Governing Council panel discussion of the same name. The paper presented innovation as a system of social constructs made up of various interacting elements within a dynamic process. Innovation can be pro-poor, or it can further threaten the livelihoods of poor rural people.

Three interrelated dimensions are necessary for pro-poor innovation systems: the institutional dimension, the partnership dimension, and the empowerment or organizational dimension. Without institutions that address social and economic imbalances, risk and vulnerability, and high transaction costs, poor rural people have almost no chance to participate in innovation systems. Without effective platforms that bring together stakeholders with different assets, knowledge and experience, innovations cannot be developed. Innovation systems rarely emerge from the isolated actions of poor people with no framework of reference to others. And without empowering processes to strengthen poor rural people's organizations, innovation systems will always be managed by, and have the greatest benefit for, those who are not poor.

For IFAD, the most important innovations are those which bring about a positive change in the way small farmers and other poor rural people invest in, produce and market their products, and in the way they manage their assets, organize themselves, communicate and interact with their partners, and influence policies and institutions.

Policy dialogue

IFAD's work in 2006 with indigenous and tribal peoples

2006 was a significant year for indigenous peoples. After more than two decades of work by indigenous representatives, experts and governments, on 29 June the United Nations Human Rights Council approved the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. However, on 28 November 2006 the United Nations General Assembly's Third Committee deferred adoption of the Declaration.

During the year, IFAD intensified its work in support of the principle of development with identity for indigenous peoples, under the leadership of a senior manager with a special assignment for indigenous and tribal issues.

Since it was established, IFAD has provided about US\$1.1 billion in loans and about US\$14.1 million in grants in support of indigenous peoples, mainly in Latin America and Asia, working with their communities in more than 50 programmes and projects. IFAD has gradually developed an ability to address the issues of crucial importance to indigenous peoples.

In recognition of IFAD's expertise in the area, the World Bank Grants Facility for Indigenous Peoples was transferred to IFAD in 2006. It will be administered by IFAD as a time-bound facility. The Facility will provide small grants ranging from US\$10,000 to US\$30,000 to indigenous peoples' organizations and communities to support culturally appropriate development initiatives and small projects. It will be managed by a board with a majority of indigenous members.

Throughout the year, the office of the Assistant President with a special assignment on indigenous and tribal issues carried out activities to mainstream indigenous issues in IFAD's operations, providing advice and support to divisional and technical units. A session of the Policy Forum focused on indigenous peoples (see page 54). Through interdepartmental meetings, staff across the organization contributed to a draft of IFAD's plan for implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

Participation in workshops and meetings

As part of its advocacy work to support indigenous peoples, IFAD participated in meetings and workshops throughout the year on a wide range of issues. In January, it attended the eleventh session of the Working Group on the Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Geneva. This was a crucial meeting before the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in June.

Also in January, IFAD took part in the International Expert Group Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals, Indigenous Participation and Good Governance organized by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) Secretariat and held in New York.

In March, the organization participated in a workshop held in Chang Mai, Thailand that focused on the concept of 'indigeneness' in Asia. The workshop showed the need for IFAD to develop a deeper historical understanding of the concept of indigeneness as it has been used progressively by the international community, and to play a proactive role in resolving misunderstandings and dispelling the fears that the concept commonly kindles.

In May, together with the Inter-American Development Bank, UNPFII and the World Bank, IFAD organized the Conference on Indigenous Peoples and Poverty, held in New York. The conference highlighted the inadequacy of the current development approach to indigenous peoples' aspirations. Many participants called for adoption and application of a new development paradigm that recognized the principle of development with identity. IFAD contributed two papers to the conference. It subsequently participated in the fifth session of UNPFII on The Millennium Development Goals and Indigenous Peoples: Redefining the Millennium Development Goals. The meeting officially launched the Programme of Action for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

In July, IFAD took part in a two-day workshop in Geneva organized by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development. Participants discussed and agreed on a common research methodology to implement the IFAD grant designated Identity, Power and Rights: The State, International Institutions and Indigenous Peoples. In November IFAD participated in a workshop in Agadir, Morocco that brought representatives of French-speaking indigenous peoples from all over the world together for the first time.

During 2006, IFAD was Chair of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (IASG), and in this capacity hosted the 2006 IASG meeting on Development with Identity in Rome in September. The focal points on indigenous issues from 15 United Nations agencies, multilateral organizations and international financial institutions attended the meeting and shared their experiences in three important areas:

- indigenous land, territories and resources
- indigenous peoples' knowledge and technologies
- indigenous culture and development

An exhibition entitled An Unknown India – Arts and Living Tradition was organized by IFAD in connection with the meeting. It included displays of art and handicrafts of the *Adivasi*, the tribal peoples of India.

In cooperation with FAO, the UNPFII, the Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas de Bolivia (CIDOB) and several indigenous peoples' organizations, IFAD cosponsored a special session on indigenous peoples and communication for development at the World Congress on Communication for Development held in Rome in October. The organization also supported the participation at the congress of indigenous peoples' representatives from various regions.

Studies and sponsored research

In 2006, IFAD focused on three important studies on indigenous issues:

- *Scheduled tribes of India, development and deprivation*, a statistical study calculating the human development index (HDI) for selected tribal areas in India and comparing it with the national HDI and with the HDI of some sub-Saharan African countries; the study was presented at the May conference in New York
- *Improving the governance structure of local organizations and institutions*, a study in five states in India
- a desk review of IFAD grants that are relevant to technology development with and for indigenous peoples

Sharpening the rural focus of poverty reduction strategy processes

During 2006, work continued to internalize the poverty reduction strategy (PRS) alignment and harmonization agenda into IFAD's business processes and instruments.

The new format of the results-based country strategic opportunities paper and the new Strategic Framework 2007-2010 (see page 3) reflected these efforts. In addition, an interdepartmental group elaborated guiding principles and indicative entry points to strengthen IFAD's engagement in country-led approaches to poverty reduction.

During the year, IFAD pursued an active advocacy role in the international policy arena to sharpen the rural focus of PRS processes. In March, IFAD's Vice-President took part in the African Plenary on National Poverty Reduction Strategies and Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals held in Cairo and organized by the United Nations Commission for Africa and the African Union. Representatives of African governments, United Nations and multilateral and bilateral development agencies, and civil society organizations attended the meeting.

The plenary was part of ongoing debate on the second generation of PRSs as a mutual accountability framework for progress towards the Millennium Development Goal targets. Its recommendations focused on the importance of:

- inclusive growth to meet the Millennium Development Goal targets
- strengthened national ownership of policy and strategy processes, leadership and mutual accountability
- improved country implementation capacities, aid architecture and effectiveness
- sustained policy dialogue

IFAD underscored the need for increased attention to agriculture and rural development in the PRS context, calling for more attention and resources to be channelled to rural areas, where the majority of the world's poor people live.

IFAD is lead agency for a series of ongoing country case studies on PRS rural focus, launched in October under the aegis of the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (see page 75).

In November, IFAD hosted a seminar entitled Poverty and Social Impact Analysis and Agricultural Policy in a PRS Context, which was cosponsored by FAO and the World Bank. The seminar brought together representatives from 12 organizations, including United Nations agencies and Brettons Woods institutions, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) and bilateral agencies, as well as research and advocacy networks and NGOs. Issues of integration and mainstreaming of tools were discussed, as well as options for joint or coordinated analytical work.

Interaction with the United Nations system, and global and regional policy forums

United Nations system

This was an important year for deliberations and action on United Nations reform, responding to the international community's call for institutional change. IFAD is fully committed to the United Nations reform process. President Lennart Båge provided leadership in the drive for reform as chairman of the High-level Committee on Programmes of the Chief Executives Board and through his membership of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence, and his participation in the United Nations Development Group.

IFAD also took part in three United Nations high-level meetings focusing on employment, migration and least developed countries. The organization shared its operational expertise and knowledge based on its experience in promoting pro-poor policies and helping to achieve rural poverty reduction goals.

United Nations High-level Committee on Programmes

During 2006, IFAD's President continued to chair the United Nations High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP), which is the main coordinating body for policies within the United Nations system. In 2006, the committee focused on implementing the recommendations of the Chief Executives Board's *One United Nations* report – the United Nations system's response to the Millennium Declaration. In support of decisions taken by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC), the HLCP worked to increase the collective impact of the system in advancing employment and decent work.

The committee also assessed the implications of the General Assembly's High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, and identified steps to achieve greater policy coherence and programmatic and operational coordination in this area. The committee reviewed the outcome of the mid-term review of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, and highlighted the need to enhance the United Nations system's efforts to support implementation of the programme.

Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment

The Secretary General tasked the High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment with proposing ways to overcome the fragmentation that undermines the United Nations' effectiveness in responding to its member countries' needs. IFAD's President contributed to the panel's deliberations and its recommendations that United Nations operations be unified at the country level in four key areas: programme, budget, programme leader and integrated management systems. Following the submission of the panel's report, the President announced that IFAD would comply fully with its recommendations, starting in selected countries where the unified approach is to be piloted. IFAD supports the objective of a coherent United Nations system that delivers as "One" and is actively reviewing, in consultation with FAO, WFP and other United Nations organizations, how we can achieve this.

United Nations Development Group

This year, two areas of the work of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) were of particular relevance to IFAD. The first was a proposal for enhancing the participation of Non-resident Agencies in United Nations country-level development activities. The proposal coincides with IFAD's own efforts to improve collaboration and partnership with United Nations agencies and other development organizations. Many UNDG members have committed to adoption of the measures included in the proposal's implementation plan, beginning in 2007. The second area of relevance was the development of a new framework for the United Nations' country-level work to strengthen national capacity to set and achieve goals, solve problems, and carry out policies and programmes. The framework provides practical guidance for United Nations country teams and resident coordinators, and it includes background on the current state of the art, an initial set of tools and resources, and discussion of potential roles for country teams.

Other initiatives to improve the effectiveness of United Nations development work focused on implementing the provisions of the 2005 World Summit. With IFAD's active involvement, the UNDG issued an Action Plan that addresses three challenges:

- better targeting of investments, actions and results to close gaps in development outcomes and to reach excluded groups

- sustaining progress achieved through scaling up and additional investment targeting
- mitigating risks that could arrest or reverse development progress

Food security, hunger reduction and rural development are among the areas highlighted for priority action.

United Nations Economic and Social Council

IFAD participated jointly with FAO and WFP in the 2006 ECOSOC High-level Segment, held in Geneva in July. The session worked to advance policy dialogue and reach a consensus on the theme of employment and development.

The three Rome-based agencies underscored the rural dimension of employment. IFAD's President Lennart Båge delivered a statement and participated in a ministerial discussion on the topic of Expansion of Local Income-Generating Activities: Rural-urban Linkages, organized by the International Land Coalition.

In his statement on behalf of the three Rome agencies, President Båge highlighted the importance of:

- agriculture and rural development policies to reduce the vulnerability of agricultural labourers, secure their access to land and other resources, including markets and business development services, and enhance their access to employment
- support to poor rural people's institutions so they can play vital roles in increasing access to productive employment and ensuring decent working conditions
- a greater share of investments by donors, governments, civil society organizations and the private sector in land and labour productivity

The Secretary-General's report on the High-level Segment includes a chapter on rural employment, largely based on IFAD's submission to the report.

High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development

IFAD's work on remittances and development and its innovative partnership with the European Commission to establish a Funding Facility on Remittances provided insights for its participation in the September High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development held in New York. In a roundtable discussion with government ministers and others, IFAD underscored the challenges of making remittances work for poor rural people by developing services that are easily accessed, cost-effective and linked to other financial services such as savings, loans and insurance. These points were well received, and the chairperson's summary of the meeting called for increased competition among money-transfer companies and banks to reduce transfer fees, improving the access of migrants and their families to credit and other banking services and expanding financial literacy in the migrants' countries of origin.

United Nations General Assembly

At the sixty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly, IFAD contributed to debates on issues of which it has particular knowledge and experience. The organization made statements on the situation of indigenous peoples, emphasizing the social and economic disadvantages faced by these peoples worldwide and stressing the need to increase international efforts to redress their poverty and exclusion.

Together with the Global Mechanism, IFAD also took part in the debate on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and it was the only United Nations agency to do so. IFAD underscored the many links between poverty and land degradation and called for more concerted efforts by the international community to support implementation of the Convention. At the International Forum on the Eradication of Poverty, IFAD, FAO, WFP and UN-HABITAT emphasized the interlinkages of poverty and hunger and the role of the agricultural sector in ensuring sustainable livelihoods in rural and urban areas. Held during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, the two-day forum was organized to mark the end of the First United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, and it served as a venue for maintaining momentum for global poverty eradication.

Global and regional policy forums

Africa Fertilizer Summit

IFAD supported and took part in the Africa Fertilizer Summit, held in Abuja, Nigeria in June 2006. It was organized by the African Union, NEPAD and the Government of Nigeria, with support from IFAD and other partners, with the objective of boosting fertilizer use and agricultural productivity in Africa. The summit developed an Africa Fertilizer Action Plan to increase the use of fertilizers and other complementary agricultural inputs across the continent.

In his statement to the Summit, IFAD's President spoke of the importance of strengthening demand for fertilizers by poor farmers, and increasing their supply. Above all, it is necessary to empower small farmers to establish their own organizations so they can negotiate effectively with fertilizer suppliers, access credit more easily, and conduct their own field trials.

The Summit Declaration called on African countries to:

- eliminate taxes and tariffs on fertilizers to lower their cost and make them more affordable for poor farmers
- expand the outreach of fertilizer dealers
- improve infrastructure
- establish a fertilizer financing facility at the African Development Bank
- reinforce continent-wide fertilizer production, procurement and distribution to expand demand and supply for fertilizers in Africa

Tokyo International Conference on African Development – Consolidation of Peace

In February, IFAD took part in the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) on Consolidation of Peace, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It was co-organized by the Government of Japan, the United Nations, the Global Coalition for Africa and the World Bank.

Peace consolidation is the process of rebuilding a society that has experienced violent conflict, so that the process leads to durable peace and sustainable development. The conference provided a platform for African countries and the international community to define the concept of peace consolidation, the roles of all those involved and the types of support needed.

IFAD shared its experience of working in post-conflict countries in Africa, and emphasized the importance of Africa's ownership of peace consolidation work at all levels – regional, subregional and local.

Partnership with FAO and the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development

IFAD supported FAO in preparing and organizing the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD) hosted by the Brazilian Government in March in Porto Alegre, Brazil. The conference focused on the crucial issues of secure access to land and other natural resources, and reforms in agrarian structure and rural development for the sustainable reduction of poverty. Delegations from 92 countries and more than 150 farmers' and civil society organizations, for a total of some 1,400 people, took part in the conference and the parallel special forum.

During the inaugural session, IFAD's President renewed the organization's commitment to ensuring equitable, efficient and sustainable access to and use of land and other natural resources. He underscored the importance of working with civil society to identify and formulate policies to remove structural and institutional causes of rural poverty. IFAD also organized a parallel special event entitled Empowering the Rural Poor through Access to Land.

During the year IFAD began work to develop a policy on access to land and land tenure security. This builds on its involvement in ICARRD follow-up, as well as its response to the recommendations of the Farmers' Forum (see page 76), the findings of a desk review on its operational engagement with land issues, and its evolving relationship with the International Land Coalition.

Policy coherence on child labour in agriculture

Following a first Consultation on the Development of Policy Coherence on Elimination of Child Labour in Agriculture, held in Geneva in May, FAO and IFAD jointly hosted a second consultation in Rome in September. The International Labour Office, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers and the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations took part in the consultations.

Over 70 per cent of the children who are involved in hazardous labour worldwide work in the agricultural sector. The consultations explored how elimination of child labour can be mainstreamed into ongoing initiatives supported by agricultural organizations. Participants also discussed preparations for the World Day Against Child Labour in 2007, which will focus on agriculture. IFAD presented a short paper highlighting its activities related to child labour. The organization's response to the issue of child labour includes the economic empowerment of women, reduction in children's workloads, and skills training.

FAO Committee on World Food Security

IFAD took part in the thirty-second session of the FAO Committee on World Food Security, held in Rome in November. The organization was involved in two main agenda items: an assessment of progress made by the International Alliance Against Hunger (IAAH) towards the first target of the Millennium Development Goals, and a review of follow-up to the International Conference for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (see above).

Through a grant to the International NGO/CSO Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC), IFAD supported the participation of civil society in a multi-stakeholder special forum on progress towards cutting the number of hungry people by half by 2015. Representatives of national alliances against hunger, NGOs and private sector associations took part in the special forum. Forty-nine national-level alliances operate under the aegis of the IAAH.

IFAD also played an active role in the committee's discussions with representation on both the Panel on Aid and Investment and the Panel on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development.

World Congress on Communication for Development

IFAD took part in the World Congress on Communication for Development, which was organized by the World Bank, FAO and the Communication Initiative and held at FAO in October. The purpose of the Congress was to demonstrate that communication for development is essential to meeting today's development challenges and should be more fully integrated into development policy and practice.

IFAD led the organization of a session on how communication can contribute to food security, rural development and livelihood strategies, presenting lessons and good practice emerging from the First Mile Project in the United Republic of Tanzania. The organization also contributed to the development of a final consensus document that includes a set of recommendations for policymakers.

Outreach activities in 2006

IFAD worked with many of its Member States to expand awareness of rural poverty issues and explore innovative approaches. In 2006 collaboration was particularly intense with Japan.

At the University of Tokyo IFAD co-organized a roundtable on natural resource management entitled Combating Desertification and Agricultural Development. Students, academics, parliamentarians, civil society representatives and government officials took part.

During the sixty-first United Nations General Assembly, together with the Government of Japan, the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS), IFAD organized a roundtable discussion on Women's Role in Combating Desertification. The Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho was keynote speaker.

In October, IFAD took part in the International Cooperation Festival organized by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There, at a workshop on the International Year on Deserts and Desertification, IFAD released its report on *Gender and desertification*.

Other policy arenas

The United States Millennium Challenge Corporation recognized IFAD's experience in identifying and assessing key policies for rural poverty reduction, and included IFAD's Access to Land indicator as one of its two eligibility indicators for measuring natural resource management. The indicator is part of the rural sector assessment of IFAD's performance-based allocation system (PBAS) (see page 34). It measures a number of key factors, including land tenure and access to land for poor rural households and for women, indigenous populations and other vulnerable groups.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation also agreed to provide parallel financing for a new IFAD project in the Menabe and Melaky regions of Madagascar (see page 98). This is the first financial collaboration between IFAD and this new development institution.

Through IFAD's sponsorship, Dr Makanjuola Olaseinde Arigbede, national coordinator of the Union of Small and Medium Scale Farmers of Nigeria, was able to represent the concerns and perspectives of small and medium-scale farmers in the

United States World Food Day teleconference. The theme of this year's teleconference, which was broadcast to some 270 sites and networks in the United States of America and Canada, was Power of the People: Bottom-up Solutions to Hunger.

In 2006, IFAD's North American Liaison Office worked with NGO leaders from the United States to revitalize the United States' NGO Working Group on IFAD and Rural Poverty. The group explored priority issues for smallholder farmers and poor rural entrepreneurs and identified methods for sharing learning and exchanging information. The group also held a meeting with representatives of African farmers and producers who were in Washington for discussions on the United States programme for bilateral trade preferences for Africa. The African representatives confirmed their interest in collaborating with United States NGOs in information exchange and policy advocacy. In a letter to the United States Congress signed by 27 organizations, the working group expressed its support for IFAD and urged greater investment in agriculture and rural development programmes, including full funding for the first United States contribution to IFAD's Seventh Replenishment.