

# IFAD strategic framework 2011-2015

## **The world we work in**

IFAD's mandate – improving rural food security and nutrition, and enabling rural women and men to overcome poverty – has never been more relevant. Nearly a billion rural people are living on less than US\$1.25 a day. Across the globe there are about 500 million smallholder farms supporting approximately 2 billion people. In some countries agriculture is the main source of income for 70 per cent of the rural population.

But the context of our work is a dynamic one and includes increasingly diverse rural livelihoods; degradation of natural resources and accelerating climate change; rising demand for food, biofuels and other agricultural goods and services; and higher food prices. Since the price spike of 2007-2008, the international community has launched a number of initiatives supporting nutrition and food security, many of which aid small-scale agriculture. Also, numerous developing countries have begun to give higher priority to food security and nutrition, and some are raising their agriculture budgets. At the same time, there is growing private-sector investment in agriculture. And there are improved prospects for South-South cooperation and for investments to support women's crucial role in agriculture and food security.

New challenges and changes have required shifts in how IFAD does business. The new needs and the dynamic evolution in rural sectors across the world have called for us to sharpen our focus on small-scale agriculture as a driver of economic growth and a crucial source of income and nutrition for many poor rural households.

## **Strategic objectives**

IFAD's overarching goal is to enable poor rural people to improve their food security and nutrition, raise their incomes and strengthen their resilience. Despite the challenges, new opportunities are emerging both on and off farm, and our role is to help people prepare themselves to exploit them. Rural areas are becoming more dynamic places. Our projects help rural people to:

- become more resilient to climate change, environmental degradation and changing markets
- access services that will help them improve their nutrition and raise their incomes
- take advantage of opportunities for decent work or entrepreneurship both on and off farm
- influence the policies and institutions that govern their livelihoods.

## **Principles of engagement**

Above all, IFAD aims to tailor strategies to each country's context to better target our assistance and support the empowerment of poor rural people. Gender equality and women's empowerment are promoted and genuine opportunities are created for young people. Innovation and learning are fostered and the scaling up of successful initiatives is promoted. We work closely with partners. Most importantly, we aim to ensure that the results of our assistance are sustainable and continue to benefit communities after projects are closed – making lasting changes in communities and in people's lives.

See Strategic Framework 2011-2015:  
[http://www.ifad.org/sf/strategic\\_e.pdf](http://www.ifad.org/sf/strategic_e.pdf).