

## SUMMARY

Working closely with the poor for 20 years, IFAD has been compelled to re-evaluate its own and others' perceptions and assumptions about gender, and to question stereotypes and myths adhered to by both men and women. All of the Fund's experience confirms that women contribute substantially to the rural economy and put a priority on household food security. Projects are increasingly recognizing this central role of women in HFS.

IFAD is ensuring that both men's and women's perceptions and priorities are reflected in its projects and that women have equitable access to project services and resources. Its experience, however, indicates that such gender mainstreaming may increase the costs and time required at each stage of the project cycle. The Fund recognizes that more resources and greater efforts have to be applied in baseline surveys, formulation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation so that gender-specific data is collected, men's and women's roles and responsibilities within the household are analysed, project planning is genuinely participatory, and the differential impact on men and women is identified and understood. IFAD is nevertheless firmly committed to its gender and HFS strategies and accepts all that these imply. The Fund has recently made gender responsiveness part of its corporate strategy. This requires it to allocate its project resources so as to have a positive impact on gender and HFS, and to measure that impact. IFAD believes that this will increase the sustainability of project-induced incremental production in all sectors. It will also increase the extent to which the poorest of the poor, many of whom are women, contribute to and benefit from project impact.

**“As part of the Fund's strategic thrust to support projects and programmes driven by beneficiary participation in both design and implementation, IFAD will ensure women's interest and participation in projects and programmes through a balanced gender focus.”**

Meeting Challenges in a Changing World - IFAD's Strategic Framework for 1998-2000

IFAD's approach has evolved over its first twenty years and, while the Fund recognizes that there are still lessons to be learned, there have been notable successes, some of which are highlighted in the loose-leaf sheets on Women in the Rural Economy included with this booklet. The examples illustrate that a project's point of entry varies with location and subsector and there are differences in the way in which constraints are addressed. Yet these concrete results of its operations on the ground demonstrate that the Fund's lending programme is a viable instrument for rural development that includes the poorest women. By affirming that a gender perspective is the key to poverty alleviation and nutritional improvement, IFAD has institutionalized a commitment to gender mainstreaming by all those involved in project design and implementation. In 1995, the Executive Board approved the Fund's Core Evaluation Guidelines on Gender Issues<sup>4</sup>, which enable evaluators in different development agencies to assess intended and unintended impacts on men and women. For its corporate strategy objective on gender, an accountability mechanism is being defined so that each project and each responsible staff member can address gender issues in order to ensure both a qualitative and quantitative impact on rural women. IFAD is thus setting the required standards, preparing guidelines, establishing quality-control processes and putting a monitoring system in place.

<sup>4</sup> Prepared by IFAD for the Panel on Monitoring and Evaluation of the UN Interagency Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Sub-Committee on Rural Development.

## SUMMARY

### ▶ IFAD's Corporate Scorecard — A Tool for Project

*Within its thrust to secure clients' ownership of projects, the Fund's long-term objectives require that all projects:*

- ▶ **be driven by their beneficiaries' participation;**
- ▶ **be gender responsive;**
- ▶ **have flexibility built into their design and implementation;**
- ▶ **build local capacity; and**
- ▶ **secure greater involvement of NGOs and other grass-roots organizations.**



*The Fund is setting targets and indicators and is developing a corporate scorecard to measure its progress in achieving these objectives. The 1998 gender target is that all project planning includes gender analysis, follow-up provisions and measures to ensure women's participation and membership in decision-making bodies.*

IFAD is committed to ensuring that both men and women are able to benefit from all of its investment activities.

It will continue to :

- ▶ create the conditions and means for women to participate in project activities;
- ▶ emphasize research into appropriate technologies for women;
- ▶ facilitate and improve women's access to land and water;
- ▶ direct skills, literacy, health and nutrition training, and extension services to women; and
- ▶ encourage women's involvement in decision-making at community and higher levels of civil society.

Wherever the Fund is working in partnership with national governments, other donors, NGOs and local communities, rural development will become synonymous with the economic advancement of rural women and their households.

IFAD is facilitating the equitable economic advancement of the rural poor by targeting subsectors, which are of particular economic importance to both men and women. This booklet includes a set of loose-leaf sheets on these different subsectors, which describe the Fund's approach to women and some of the effects achieved through IFAD's projects. The sheets illustrate the Fund's work with women in crop production, in small business (microenterprise), in savings and credit, in livestock production and in environmental management. Two additional sheets describe IFAD's initiatives for women regarding tools and technology, and household food security.



**INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR  
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Via del Serafico, 107 · 00142 Rome, Italy

Tel: +39-6-54591 · Fax: +39-6-5043463

Telex: 620330 IFAD-I · E-mail IFAD@IFAD.ORG

---

## PHOTOGRAPHIC CREDITS

---

IFAD/Bangladesh - A. Hossain	<i>cover</i>	IFAD/Yemen - M. Zaugg	<i>page</i>	13	
IFAD/Mauritania - S. Nimeh	<i>inside cover</i>	IFAD/Yemen - unknown	<i>page</i>	13	
IFAD/Bangladesh - A. Hossain	<i>contents</i>	IFAD/Venezuela - H. Wagner	<i>page</i>	14	
IFAD/Lesotho - G. Bizzarri	<i>page</i>	4	IFAD/Kenya - F. McDougall	<i>page</i>	14
IFAD/Mexico - L. Dematteis	<i>page</i>	4	IFAD/Paraguay - G. Bizzarri	<i>page</i>	16
IFAD/Kenya - F. McDougall	<i>page</i>	6	IFAD/Senegal - R. Faidutti	<i>page</i>	16
IFAD/India - A. Hossain	<i>page</i>	7	IFAD/Sri Lanka - G. Bizzarri	<i>page</i>	17
IFAD/India - A. Hossain	<i>page</i>	7	IFAD/Zimbabwe - H. Wagner	<i>page</i>	18
IFAD/Egypt - G. Bizzarri	<i>page</i>	8	<b>LOOSE-LEAF SHEETS</b>		
IFAD/Ghana - R. Grossman	<i>page</i>	9	IFAD/Mauritania - H. Wagner	<i>Sheet No</i>	2
IFAD/Ghana - R. Grossman	<i>page</i>	9	IFAD/India - A. Hossain	<i>Sheet No</i>	3
IFAD/Uganda - R. Chalasani	<i>page</i>	10	IFAD/Nepal - A. Hossain	<i>Sheet No</i>	4
IFAD/India - A. Hossain	<i>page</i>	10	IFAD/Nigeria - P. Tartagni	<i>Sheet No</i>	5
IFAD/Uruguay - G. Bizzarri	<i>page</i>	11	IFAD/Burkina Faso - R. Faidutti	<i>Sheet No</i>	5
IFAD/Mali - H. Wagner	<i>page</i>	12	IFAD/Buthan - A. Hossain	<i>Sheet No</i>	5
IFAD/Nepal - A. Hossain	<i>page</i>	12	IFAD/Lesotho - G. Bizzarri	<i>Sheet No</i>	6
IFAD/Dominican Rep. - H. Wagner	<i>page</i>	12	IFAD/Nigeria - P. Tartagni	<i>Sheet No</i>	7

---

**Prepared by:**

The Technical Advisory Division of IFAD with the assistance of Louise Bevan

**Produced by:**

The Publications and Desktop Publishing Team

**Design by:**

Silvia Persi

**Cover design by:**

Lorella Candido

**Printed in Italy by**

Paolombi s.n.c

Rome - January 1998