



IFAD's purpose

The goal of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is to enable poor rural women and men to improve their food and nutrition security, increase their incomes and strengthen their resilience. Our multilateral orientation provides a strong global platform for discussing rural policy issues and raising awareness of why investment in agriculture and rural development is critical to eliminating poverty and food insecurity. By advocating for poor rural people and mobilizing funding for projects that transform rural areas, our work contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Where we work¹

- West and Central Africa: 22 countries with 47 ongoing programmes and projects
- East and Southern Africa: 17 countries with 44 ongoing programmes and projects
- Asia and the Pacific: 21 countries with 66 ongoing programmes and projects
- Latin America and the Caribbean: 20 countries with 33 ongoing programmes and projects
- Near East, North Africa and Europe: 18 countries with 36 ongoing programmes and projects

How we work

Partnerships are central to IFAD. The Fund is a unique partnership of members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), other developing countries, and member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Collaboration at the global, regional, national and local levels is essential to our work. Our partners include IFAD Member States; civil society organizations, particularly those of smallholder farmers and rural people; United Nations agencies; bilateral and multilateral development agencies; agricultural research centres; NGOs and foundations; policy research institutes and universities; regional organizations; and the private sector. IFAD also brokers partnerships among the diverse parties working in development – particularly governments, producers' organizations and private-sector players – and for South-South and triangular cooperation.

¹ As at 31 December 2015.

Major achievements

Transforming agriculture and rural communities

Rural development is key to ending hunger and poverty, and crucial to meeting the new Sustainable Development Goals. IFAD-supported projects result in increased agricultural production and productivity, and better access to markets and services. But they do more than assist rural people in growing more and earning more. They also help transform rural communities socially and economically, promoting gender equality and inclusiveness.

Results reported in 2015 include:

- 114 million people reached by IFAD-supported projects; 49 per cent were women
- 2.5 million people trained in crop production practices and technologies; 51 per cent were women
- 2.3 million hectares of common-property-resource land under improved management
- 17,000 kilometres of roads constructed or repaired
- 23,000 marketing groups formed or strengthened
- 1.01 million people trained in business and entrepreneurship

Climate and environment

Smallholder farmers and other rural people bear the brunt of climate change. Rising sea levels and more intense droughts, storms and floods are putting pressure on the ecosystems they depend on. IFAD promotes agricultural growth that is integrated into ecosystems rather than



extractive, and helps farmers become more resilient to climate change. IFAD's Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme is the largest global climate adaptation programme for smallholder farmers.

Supporting inclusive rural finance

Most of the world's 900 million very poor people live without the security of reliable income, shelter or food. Saving or borrowing small amounts of money can make a big difference to their lives. IFAD is one of the world's largest lenders supporting inclusive rural finance. Projects we support help poor rural people gain access to financial services, including savings, payments, insurance and remittances. IFAD's Financing Facility for Remittances reduces the costs of remittances and promotes productive rural investment of migrants' capital.

Results reported in 2015 include:

- 20.8 million voluntary savers; 55 per cent were women
- 4.8 million active borrowers from IFAD-assisted microfinance institutions; 69 per cent were women
- 18 per cent of IFAD's portfolio is dedicated to rural finance

Women and nutrition

Women are major contributors to agriculture and rural economies, yet they have significantly less access than men to services, markets and assets, including land. Rural women often lack authority in their homes, organizations and communities. IFAD works to help rural women achieve greater equality with men and more control over their lives and assets. Women make up about half of all participants in projects we support.

Empowering women is also effective in reducing chronic child malnutrition. Women are more likely than men to spend their earnings on food and education. IFAD is increasing its support to nutrition-sensitive agriculture and other efforts to improve the diets and nutritional status of poor rural people.

Reaching the unreached

IFAD gives special attention to the most vulnerable groups in rural communities: young people, women and indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples account for about 5 per cent of the world's population but 15 per cent of those living in poverty. And 85 per cent of the world's young people (aged 15 to 24) live in developing countries, mainly in rural areas. IFAD's participatory, grass-roots approach and considerable in-country experience give the Fund a comparative advantage in working with vulnerable populations, especially in the most remote rural areas.

Building institutions

The programmes and projects we finance are tailored to reinforce and amplify the effectiveness of national policies. We work closely with agriculture and finance ministries and related institutions to ensure that their support extends to smallholder farmers and their organizations, and that public spending for agriculture reaches the poorest people.

IFAD is also increasing its country presence to promote country ownership, leadership and accountability. We work to strengthen national and local capacities – including those of rural communities and civil society organizations – to improve the design, management and impact of strategies and programmes.

Impact of IFAD's investments

IFAD has:

- mobilized around US\$25.3 billion in cofinancing and funding from domestic sources for rural development, and contributed an additional US\$17.6 billion in loans and grants
- supported 1,013 programmes and projects in partnership with 123 recipient governments
- empowered approximately 459 million people to grow more food, better manage their land and other natural resources, learn new skills, start small businesses, build strong organizations and gain a voice in the decisions that affect their lives.



What is IFAD?

IFAD is an international financial institution and a specialized United Nations agency. It is dedicated to eradicating poverty and hunger in rural areas of developing countries. IFAD provides low-interest loans and grants to developing countries to finance innovative agricultural and rural development programmes and projects. It is among the top multilateral institutions working in agriculture in Africa.

The decision to create IFAD was made in 1974 in the wake of the great droughts and famines that struck Africa and Asia in the preceding years. At the 1974 World Food Conference, world leaders agreed that “an international fund ... should be established immediately to finance agricultural development projects”.

We have a total membership of 176 countries from around the world, including OPEC and OECD members and developing and middle-income countries.

IFAD brings the point of view of smallholder farmers and rural entrepreneurs to bear on international policy deliberations. We also help them build their capacity so they themselves can engage in and influence relevant policy processes.

IFAD's headquarters is in Rome, Italy.



International Fund for Agricultural Development

Via Paolo di Dono, 44 - 00142 Rome, Italy

Tel: +39 06 54591 - Fax: +39 06 5043463

E-mail: ifad@ifad.org

www.ifad.org

www.ruralpovertyportal.org

 ifad-un.blogspot.com

 www.facebook.com/ifad

 instagram.com/ifadnews

 www.twitter.com/ifadnews

 www.youtube.com/user/ifadTV

February 2016