

Revised Operational Guidelines on **Targeting**

MAIN TEXT



Investing in rural people

Revised Operational Guidelines on Targeting

Main text¹

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Contents

Abbreviations and acronyms	ii
I. Introduction	1
II. IFAD's targeting principles and target groups	1
III. IFAD targeting in COSOPs and projects	2
A. Targeting in COSOPs	3
B. Targeting at project design	6
C. Targeting during implementation	11
D. Targeting at completion	13

Abbreviations and acronyms

AWP/B	annual workplan and budget
BSF	Belgian Survival Fund
CCD	community-driven development
COSOP	country strategic opportunities programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
IFAD11	Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources
IFI	international financial institution
LNOB	leaving no one behind
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MFI	microfinance institution
PDR	project design report
PGs	priority groups
PIM	programme implementation manual
PLA	participatory learning and action
PMU	project management unit
PRA	participatory rural appraisal
SACCOs	savings and credit cooperatives
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SECAP	Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures
ToC	theory of change
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VC	value chain
WEAI	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
WFP	World Food Programme

Revised Operational Guidelines on Targeting

I. Introduction

1. The 2019 Revised Operational Guidelines on Targeting operationalize the 2006 targeting policy while reflecting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the "leaving no one behind" (LNOB) principle² and the commitments of the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD11).
2. While IFAD recognizes that there may be a need to update its targeting policy, the current priority is to provide guidelines to help address emerging issues on targeting during IFAD11.
3. In the context of IFAD11, emphasis is placed on the LNOB principle, which is central to IFAD's mandate "to invest in rural people to enable them to overcome poverty and achieve food security through remunerative, sustainable and resilient livelihoods".³
4. IFAD is committed to engaging more fully in national policy processes in order to tailor country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs) and projects to the specific conditions and priorities of partner countries. In-country targeting will play an important role in its engagement as governments arrive at decisions regarding the most appropriate combination of targeted rural development and investment policies and social protection policies to foster an inclusive and sustainable rural transformation. Synergies between these two policy strands will be fostered whenever possible.

II. IFAD's targeting principles and target groups

5. IFAD's comparative advantage lies in its targeting of the poorest, the poor and the vulnerable peoples and those who are most likely to have little access to assets and opportunities due to social exclusion and marginalization, as outlined in annex I.
6. As for the relationship between poverty targeting and the choice of investment options, IFAD will continue to focus on rural people who are poor and vulnerable but who have the potential to take advantage of improved access to assets and opportunities for agricultural production and rural income-generating activities. For those who cannot take advantage immediately, who are often the poorest, the Fund will proactively promote a gradual approach to facilitate their access to resources and enable them to benefit from interventions in the future.
7. While IFAD targeting can be flexible enough to include relatively better-off groups, the theory of change (ToC) should be clearly set out to describes how the poorest would benefit from the inclusion of such groups and outline measures for ensuring that this occurs, along with their respective monitoring indicators.

² See interim draft of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group operational guide Leaving No One Behind (March 2019): <https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Interim-Draft-Operational-Guide-on-LNOB-for-UNCTs.pdf>.

³ See IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025. Enabling Inclusive and Sustainable Rural Transformation (EB 2015/116/R.4/Rev.1), p.iii.

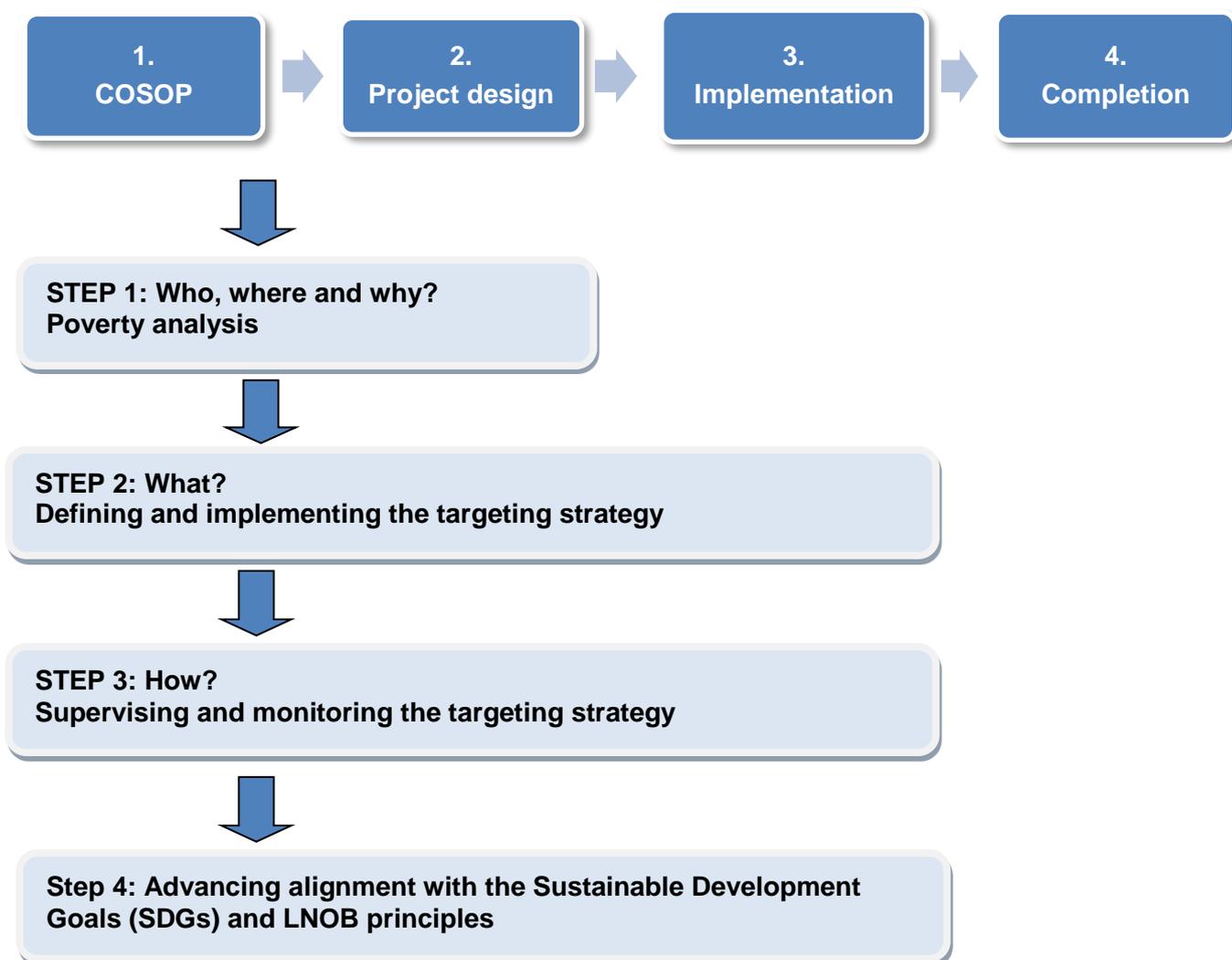
8. The IFAD targeting policy defines the Fund’s targeting approach based on the following methods and measures:
 - (i) **Geographic targeting** to select the poorest or most vulnerable areas within a country or region;
 - (ii) **Direct targeting** is linked to the choice of eligibility criteria when services and resources are to be channelled to specific individuals or households;
 - (iii) **Self-targeting measures** include the provision of goods and services that are aligned with the priorities, assets, capacities and livelihood strategies of the identified target groups, while at the same time being of little interest to other groups;
 - (iv) **Enabling measures** to promote a policy and institutional environment among stakeholders and partners that is favourable to poverty targeting;
 - (v) **Procedural measures** to facilitate transparency in administrative procedures and remove unintended obstacles that may hinder social inclusion and gender equality; and
 - (vi) **Empowering and capacity-building measures** to develop the capacity and self-confidence of those with less of a voice and less power so that they can articulate their needs and participate in planning, decision-making and project activities.
9. IFAD’s new targeting principles include:
 - (i) **Targeting** the poorest, the poor and the vulnerable rural people and those who are more likely to be left behind;
 - (ii) **Mainstreaming** gender, youth, nutrition and environmental and climate issues in the operationalization of the targeting process in COSOPs and projects;
 - (iii) **Recognizing** the dynamic nature of poverty and the importance of tackling the multiple forms of vulnerability;
 - (iv) **Aligning** targeting with government poverty reduction priorities, policies and strategies;
 - (v) **Ensuring** that working with relatively better-off stakeholders⁴ results in direct benefits for the poorest;
 - (vi) **Testing** innovative targeting approaches by strengthening existing partnerships and establishing new ones;
 - (vii) **Adopting** consultative and participatory approaches to targeting; and
 - (viii) **Empowering and building** the capacity of those who have less of a voice and fewer assets.

III. IFAD targeting in COSOPs and projects

10. The targeting process in the IFAD project cycle will involve the analysis and prioritization of target groups and a targeting strategy, both for COSOPs and for projects. COSOPs are developed jointly with national governments and local stakeholders and are based on each country’s goals and visions, their contribution to the 2030 Agenda, and IFAD’s mandate and comparative advantage.
11. Figure 1 shows a simplified version of the relevant LNOB steps for targeting. This process includes the identification of target groups using a variety of assessment tools, the definition of investments to support them and the monitoring of progress, evaluation and accountability.

⁴ Indirect targeting.

Figure 1
Operationalization guidelines applied to the IFAD project cycle



A. Targeting in COSOPs

12. The primary objective of a COSOP is to ensure that IFAD's investments promote inclusive and sustainable rural transformation while reducing poverty (SDG 1) and food insecurity (SDG 2). COSOPs require an analysis of the rural poverty situation that includes an assessment of the target group's livelihoods and opportunities so that the Fund can tailor its investments in line with the country's goals and priorities and the LNOB principle.

STEP 1: WHO, WHERE AND WHY? – POVERTY ANALYSIS

13. The COSOP should be based on an analysis of the national poverty situation and should indicate **which groups are being targeted and where**. The analysis of rural poverty and target groups, together with a specific analysis of the relevant mainstreaming issues, will inform the determination – in consultation with the government and stakeholders – of **which** types of projects and interventions should be included in the country programme and **why**.

A. Analysing national and rural poverty situations and rural livelihoods

14. These analyses should include a detailed description of **who** the rural poor are, **where** they live, **why** they are poor and **which** groups are **most likely to be left behind**. They should provide information, disaggregated by target group, on: (i) socio-economic status and livelihood profiles; (ii) food and nutrition insecurity; (iii) environmental degradation and climate vulnerability; (iv) vulnerability coping mechanisms; and (v) agricultural and income-generating activity potential. The multiple

causes of poverty and deprivation, including exclusion, should also be unpacked. These analyses should be summarized in the Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) background study in appendix IV of the COSOP and should be informed and validated by the following:

- (i) **Existing poverty reports and studies.** Rural poverty profiles based on national household surveys (e.g. living standards measurement surveys, household budget surveys, multiple indicator cluster surveys, and demographic and health surveys) and census data, including poverty maps; multidimensional poverty indicators and analysis; rural livelihood assessments and profiles; vulnerability assessments and mapping; and other relevant studies;
- (ii) **Primary research for the COSOP** in the absence of the relevant documents listed in (i) or to fill in relevant information gaps, subject to resource availability; and
- (iii) **Consultation and validation with the government and key national stakeholders** working on poverty eradication policies and programmes that represent the interests of those most likely to be left behind, the United Nations Country Team and other development partners. These consultations should be properly documented.

B. Defining the target groups

- 15. Based on the previous analysis, its disaggregation and the categorization system used in the country, priority target groups will be identified and analysed.

Figure 2

Target groups	Poverty level and characteristics	Drivers of poverty and marginalization	Livelihood strategies	Strategy (COSOP)
Who →		Why →		
What →				
Poorest Poor Vulnerable Cross-cutting: priority target groups	Monetary poverty level Food insecurity Nutritional status Average holding size Gender, ethnicity, age, disability	Social exclusion Geography (isolation) Poverty and socio-economic status Governance (exclusion and marginalization) Vulnerabilities to stresses and shocks	Farming, pastoralism and fisheries Marketing channels and opportunities Seasonal or permanent migration On/off-farm wage labour, etc.	Definition of priority target groups Priority geographic areas Menu of interventions Targeting approach

STEP 2: WHAT? - DEFINING THE TARGETING STRATEGY

A. Structuring the country programme and defining the ToC

- 16. A mix of targeting approaches, strategies and thematic investments should be used in line with the country’s priorities and IFAD’s comparative advantage to meet the needs of IFAD’s target group. Given the heterogeneity of the rural poor and the diversity of country contexts and priorities, the COSOP’s ToC, articulated in its Results Management Framework, should clearly describe the plans for outreach to different target groups and explain how the poorest would benefit from including relatively better-off groups in a project.

B. Alignment with national priorities and poverty reduction strategies and identification of partnership opportunities

17. Mechanisms should be established for policy engagement, coordination and scaling up with a view to generating synergies and complementarities with existing government programmes.
18. A review should be undertaken of national poverty reduction strategies, development plans, social protection policies and strategies, food security and nutrition policies, and other relevant policies and strategies.

C. Defining the targeting strategy and geographic targeting

19. **The criteria used for geographic targeting** should be clearly stated and should align IFAD's targeting criteria and priority levels (see table 1 in annex V) with government priorities. The criteria for geographic targeting, in order of priority, include:

Table 1

<i>Priority level</i>	<i>Criteria</i>
Highest	Incidence and intensity of poverty
High	Food and nutrition insecurity
Medium	Environmental degradation and climate vulnerability
Medium	Presence of indigenous, tribal peoples or ethnic minorities
Medium	Number of young people
Medium	Presence and number of specific marginalized or fragile groups
Medium to low	Productive and agroecological potential

20. The priority level may vary depending on the context. The country portfolio and its geographic distribution should reflect a compromise between government targeting priorities and IFAD's targeting criteria and priority levels. The criteria should also be balanced with existing opportunities in terms of complementarities with other interventions. When governments prioritize agricultural growth potential over poverty incidence or intensity when selecting target areas, COSOPs should select the poorest municipalities/districts. All COSOPs should indicate how the poorest sectors within the target areas will be reached, specifying the pathways to be used, the benefits to be provided and the relevant indicators.
21. **COSOP recommendations to target people and groups of peoples in project** should be based on:
 - Findings from the poverty analysis;
 - Targeting tools developed by the government to reach out to the poorest segments of the population, in combination with the IFAD targeting approach and measures;
 - Lessons and experience from previous IFAD-supported operations; and
 - Partnership arrangements with development partners and organizations working with IFAD priority groups.

STEP 3 and STEP 4: HOW? – MONITORING PROGRESS AND ADVANCING ALIGNMENT WITH THE SDGs/LNOB PRINCIPLE

22. COSOPs should be aligned with national priorities and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (formerly known as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework) in order to ensure that IFAD plays its part in the United Nations effort to achieve the SDGs by 2030.
23. The targeting strategy should be monitored and evaluated through the annual and COSOP results review on the basis of the targets and indicators set out in the COSOP and its Results Management Framework, which should include outreach and milestone indicators.
24. **The COSOP completion review** assesses the COSOP's overall progress and results based on the Results Management Framework. Targeting is a key dimension of the assessment. The completion review fosters accountability in relation to the SDGs and the

LNOB principle. The results achieved in targeting the poorest, the poor and the vulnerable should be disseminated within relevant forums.

25. In summary, the **minimum requirements** for developing a sound poverty targeting strategy and establishing accountability in COSOPs are summarized in box 1.

Box 1

- The COSOP should be grounded in sound poverty and livelihood analysis and profiling, which should also cover environmental degradation, climate vulnerability and productive potential using national definitions. This analysis should be disaggregated by IFAD's priority target groups.
- **Consultations should be held with key national stakeholders.**
- The COSOP's **alignment with national priorities** and **poverty reduction strategies** should be demonstrated, and **partnership opportunities should be identified.**
- **Preliminary IFAD interventions should be identified** on the basis of the poverty analysis, the needs and potentials of the target groups, government priorities and strategies, and IFAD's comparative advantages.
- A **targeting strategy** should be developed based on the poverty analysis, studies and consultations, including:
 - A preliminary identification of project location based on the poverty analysis and geographic targeting.
 - Targeting approaches used by the various projects should be based on lessons from previous operations, should be in line with IFAD and government approaches and should take different target groups into account (see annexes IV and V).
- A **ToC** should be developed which outlines the pathways to achieve the desired poverty reduction impact. When relatively better-off beneficiaries are included, the ToC should demonstrate how the poorest will benefit; otherwise the investment will not be approved.
- The **Results Management Framework** should incorporate outreach indicators, disaggregated by poverty level or some proxy indicator, and should be aligned with the **Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework** in order to foster alignment with the SDGs.

B. Targeting at project design

26. The targeting process initiated during the design of a COSOP should be implemented in all IFAD-supported projects. The following steps should be taken to build in targeting accountability at the project design stage:

STEP 1: WHO, WHERE AND WHY? – POVERTY ANALYSIS AND DEFINING TARGET GROUPS

A. Conducting poverty and target group analyses in the project area

27. Within the geographic areas of intervention, a combination of the following elements should be employed:
- (i) **Rapid assessment surveys** can be undertaken that make use of available poverty data and studies for the target areas;
 - (ii) **Interviews and focus group discussions** in target areas to complement secondary information can be held using participatory tools (participatory rural appraisals/participatory learning and action)⁵ to improve disaggregation and profiling of target groups at the community level. The informants should be representative of the target population (sex, age, ethnicity, poverty level);
 - (iii) **Faster Implementation of Project Start-up instruments and grants** from partner organizations or domestic funding can be used to carry out ad hoc poverty studies when the project is in need of a more in-depth diagnostic study;
 - (iv) **Data and other information gathered by existing projects** can be drawn upon in areas where new projects will support the scaling up and scaling out of these projects; and
 - (v) **Results and data from impact assessments** that have been carried out by IFAD or other agencies can be used.

⁵ Participatory rural appraisals include participatory tools and approaches for rapidly analysing the situation in rural communities and for arriving at wealth rankings and livelihood profiles. Participatory learning and action schemes include tools and approaches for enabling and empowering poor people to analyse and enhance their knowledge about their lives and livelihoods.

B. Identifying the target groups

28. The prioritization of IFAD's target groups should be based on government priorities, the poverty characteristics of the project area and IFAD's mandate and comparative advantage.
29. Target group prioritization should reflect the COSOP analysis and be tailored to the characteristics of the project area and the project's thematic focus. Depending on the context, these groups should include:
 - (i) **The poorest, the poor and the vulnerable** (as per national definitions), on a **disaggregated basis**;
 - (ii) **Specific vulnerable groups, cutting across the typologies of rural poor**, can be identified on the basis of a combination of poverty, socio-economic and cultural characteristics, with a special focus on inequalities based on sex, age, ethnicity and disability;
 - (iii) **People living in fragile contexts** (e.g. refugees, pastoralists, etc.); and
 - (iv) **Feasible targets for the participation of each group** should be formulated in the logical framework. Targets should be ambitious and informed by the results of previous projects or activities conducted in similar contexts.

STEP 2: WHAT? – DEVELOPING THE TARGETING STRATEGIES

30. **Differentiated targeting strategies, approaches and measures should be used to ensure outreach to the different target groups.** The project design report (PDR) should describe the targeting criteria and processes, in line with government and IFAD policies.⁶

A. Defining the criteria for geographic targeting at the project level

31. Criteria for geographic targeting should be specified and should refer to the COSOP commitments at the following levels:
 - (i) Region/departments/provinces
 - (ii) Municipalities/districts
 - (iii) Communities/villages

B. Defining the targeting criteria to target people and groups of people

32. Ideally, one or a mix of the following approaches should be used, depending on the activities involved:
 - (i) **Community-based targeting.** This kind of targeting should be conducted in consultation with the relevant communities and other local stakeholders and can include wealth-ranking as an output of community-based targeting and/or community validation of government tools.
 - (ii) **Direct targeting.** This form of targeting can be based on government social registries and the categorization of eligibility for targeted programmes using asset-based indicators or an asset index, quality-of-life index, membership in organizations of the rural poor and/or easily verifiable demographic poverty markers or proxies (e.g. woman-headed households, household dependency ratio).
 - (iii) **A mix of self-targeting, enabling and menu-based measures.** In this case the target group is not identified on the basis of eligibility criteria but instead by creating pro-poor incentives, services and conditions for self-selection and participation.

C. Defining the rationale for the intervention and the "pathway out of poverty"

⁶ See the targeting policy, the IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples, and IFAD Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

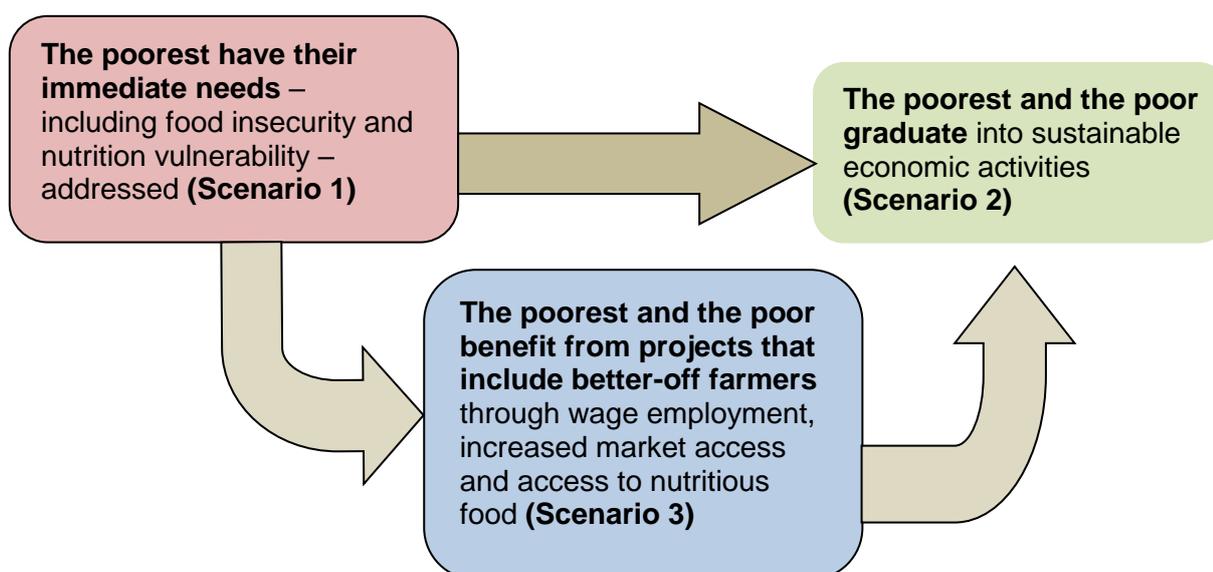
33. The definition of project interventions should be based on the needs of the target groups. The rationale for the intervention should also set out the specific **pathway out of poverty** to be promoted and informed by the **project's ToC**.
34. **Measures to empower the poor and socially excluded are a key pillar of IFAD's targeting approach.** IFAD implements a **gradual approach** in which the sequencing of interventions facilitates the strengthening of resilience and the building of the productive and organizational capacity of the rural poor, enabling them to engage with markets and participate in rural institutions. Community-driven development projects can leverage efforts to achieve these objectives.
35. Three simplified scenarios can be envisaged for project interventions:

Table 2

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
Target population	The poorest and/or most food-insecure rural dwellers with limited or no access to basic services , land or markets	The poorest and poor rural dwellers	The poorest and poor rural dwellers and relatively better-off actors
Objectives	Address immediate needs of the poorest by fostering food and nutrition security, resilience and income generation through dedicated (sub)components	Direct targeting of the poorest and the poor to support their engagement in mainstream economic activities	Ensure that the poorest and the poor benefit from value chain, infrastructure and market access investments targeting the better-off actors
Examples of activities and measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nutrition education packages, school feeding programmes, vegetable gardens Cash/food-for-assets schemes, usually in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP) Graduation packages Small livestock components Household mentoring schemes Vocational training for women and youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures to ensure participation of the poor and poorest in development activities (e.g. selecting sectors and crops where these groups are overrepresented; removing barriers to participation such as excessive private contribution requirements)⁷ Implementation of pro-poor services and approaches to extension initiatives and capacity development, including household mentoring and/or the Gender Action Learning System, and building a community-based peer-to-peer coaching and extension system Empowerment and capacity development measures for building skills and strengthening participation in key decision-making bodies Fostering a gradual approach that enables the poorest groups being supported under scenario 1 to transition into development components and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening up access to both on- and off-farm employment, often by providing skills development and vocational training and by fostering an enabling environment for generating decent jobs Access to infrastructure and services (e.g. roads that lower the transportation costs for businesses, health centres and schools) Improved supply of nutritious food and a diversified diet (e.g. nutrition-sensitive value chains)
Risk mitigation	Ensure actions are not isolated and aim to support a transition to scenario 2 (avoid tokenism)	Ensure that the targeting approach is appropriate and effective, which may require phasing through a sequence of projects	Ensure mechanisms are in place to facilitate direct benefits to the poorest and the poor and carefully monitor the results and impact

⁷ Excessive private contribution requirements block the participation of the poorest households. Special windows should be created that target the poorest, and the private contribution should be affordable for the poor and the poorest.

Figure 3
Potential synergies among scenarios 1, 2 and 3



D. Defining partnerships as a means of engaging with the most vulnerable

36. Partners should be identified and the partnership arrangements and the types of targeting activities that will be co-implemented should be described. This may include:
- (i) Line ministries, specialized government agencies dealing with social protection and other poverty eradication programmes;
 - (ii) NGOs and United Nations agencies (e.g. WFP, the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Children’s Fund) or international financial institutions working with the most vulnerable segments of the population; and
 - (iii) Local civil society organizations that represent the interests of the poorest/most vulnerable (e.g. women’s and indigenous peoples’ organizations).

E. Fostering an enabling institutional and policy environment for poverty targeting

37. Proposed activities could include the following:
- (i) Provision of technical support to the government to improve poverty information systems and foster policy dialogue involving the most vulnerable social groups;
 - (ii) Mechanisms and procedures for enhancing community participation and ensuring that target groups are covered in the programme implementation manual (PIM);
 - (iii) Based on the principle of citizen engagement, the project management unit (PMU) operates in a transparent and participatory way in close consultation with project participants; and
 - (iv) Sensitization and capacity development activities with local institutions, leaders and implementing partners, including the private sector, to equip them to reach out to project target groups.

F. Costab computations and the project budget are informed by poverty considerations

38. The share of investments reaching different target groups can be monitored by specifying:
- (i) The overall cost of specific activities/subcomponents targeting the most vulnerable;
 - (ii) Dedicated staff (human resources); and
 - (iii) The percentage of matching grants earmarked for specific groups.

G. Drafting the PIM and defining implementation arrangements

39. In order for the PIM to properly cover the issues related to project-level targeting, it is necessary to:
- (i) Envisage the appointment of a social inclusion and targeting officer;
 - (ii) Describe the partners that will implement the targeting strategy (e.g. local NGOs, other development agencies, sector ministries, social protection programmes);
 - (iii) Specify the targeting process (community-based targeting; poverty criteria; decision-making processes, including the composition of selection committees); and
 - (iv) Provide a more detailed description of implementation arrangements in the **PIM** and an accurate definition of the targeting process and tools, as shown in box 2.

Box 2

- **Provide clear tools, procedures and processes** for selecting communities on the basis of poverty and economic potential criteria
- **Include approaches that focus on the poorest, poor and vulnerable people**
- **Provide examples of targeting best practices** that illustrate how targeting should be operationalized
- **Define procedures for enhancing transparency, community participation and ownership, including:**
 - Information and outreach regarding criteria and procedures for the participation of all intended target groups should be made available
 - All information concerning the project, including the prioritization of selected participants, should be transparent and made accessible to all
 - Complaints and grievances of local communities and other local stakeholders should be described
 - Information on the number and types of consultations and outreach activities, including the number and social characteristics of the participants, should be recorded as part of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system
- **Specify monitoring indicators for targeting** based on the socio-economic classification of the target group used in the PDR
- **Include targeting in the annual workplan and budget (AWP/B)**
- **Develop the terms of reference** for:
 - Targeting and social inclusion officer
 - Relevant service providers
- **Draft the targeting implementation plan**, including social outreach activities and pre-identification of participants at start-up:
 - (i) **Start-up phase (pre-investment – usually four to six months)**
 - Information and communication activities in the project area to ensure that target segments are informed about the project's activities
 - Social mobilization to identify local demands and pre-select target groups
 - (ii) **Investment phase**
 - Capacity development and sensitization to build the capacity of service providers and stakeholders in poverty targeting
 - Definition of activities targeted at the poorest and other target groups, along with clear milestones
 - Workshops and policy dialogue

STEP 3 and STEP 4: HOW? - MONITORING PROGRESS AND ADVANCING ALIGNMENT WITH THE SDGs AND THE LNOB PRINCIPLE

A. Integrating into IFAD's Operational Results Management System – indicators for outreach outcome and outputs disaggregated by target groups

40. The M&E system should include clear poverty and/or socio-economic classifications. For example, in the absence of monetary and/or multidimensional poverty indicators, socio-economic classifications or government poverty-ranking tools can be used to classify target groups according to their poverty level.

B. Designing mechanisms for participatory and learning-oriented monitoring

41. This should also be regarded as a specific output of the project. Participatory and learning-oriented monitoring provides a space for the poor to voice their needs and concerns during implementation.

C. Monitoring the risks associated with poverty targeting

42. Specific risks associated with targeting should be identified during SECAP preparation, and mitigation measures should be included in the SECAP review note:
- (i) **Risk of undercoverage.** Self-targeting and enabling measures are put in place to incentivise target groups to participate in the interventions.
 - (ii) **Leakage and excessive elite capture.** A strong monitoring system should enable the PMU to detect excessive elite capture and introduce more stringent criteria to ensure a more equitable distribution of project benefits.
 - (iii) **Social exclusion and conflicts.** The targeting approach needs to be tailored to the target groups in order to avoid social tensions.
43. The **minimum requirements** for developing a sound poverty targeting strategy and accountability scheme in design documents are summarized below:

Box 3

- **Poverty and target group analyses** should be included in the PDR in order to leverage the analysis done in the COSOPs in consultation with local stakeholders, including poor rural communities
- The **target group should be analysed along poverty and social-cultural lines** on the basis of national definitions of poverty and vulnerability
- The project's ToC should set out clear pathways for reaching and benefiting the poorest, the poor and the vulnerable.
- A **targeting strategy** should be developed which includes:
 - Poverty-focused criteria and cross-cutting priorities for the selection of target areas;
 - A clear definition of activities, approaches and subcomponents for reaching and benefiting specific poverty segments; and
 - Mechanisms for the implementation of the targeting strategy
- The **financial and human resources** needed to deliver activities for poverty targeting should be reflected in the Costab computations and the AWP/B
- **Partnerships** for poverty targeting should be clearly described
- **Measures for fostering an enabling policy environment should be set out**
- The results-based framework should incorporate outreach indicators, disaggregated by poverty level, and a participatory monitoring system

C. Targeting during implementation

44. The implementation of the project's targeting strategy should be based on the activities and processes previously identified in the **PDR** and the implementation arrangements and procedures defined in the **PIM**.
45. Two activities are critical in this phase of the programme cycle:
- (i) **Project start-up** (including the start-up mission and the start-up phase); and
 - (ii) **Direct supervision** (including the midterm review) and implementation support missions.

STEP 2: WHAT? – SUPPORTING THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE TARGETING STRATEGY

A. Reviewing and consolidating the implementation plan and arrangements defined in the PIM

46. This should be done in close consultation with PMU staff, including the programme coordinator, the M&E specialist and the social inclusion and targeting officer.
47. The targeting implementation plan should be reviewed and validated. It should include a well-designed **project implementation schedule**, complete with project deliverables and the corresponding timing.

B. Raising awareness of the poverty targeting strategy and project targeting tools

48. The start-up phase begins with the start-up workshop and usually lasts from four to six months. During that period, awareness of project activities should be raised with a view to mobilizing local demand and encouraging people to participate in project activities.

49. Appropriate channels should be used to disseminate information within the community about the forthcoming investment, the menu of activities that is envisaged and the eligibility criteria and procedures for accessing the project. These channels may include local radio stations, community-based organizations, women's groups, youth football clubs, churches, etc.
50. The process should be documented.

STEP 3 and STEP 4: HOW? - MONITORING PROGRESS AND ADVANCING ALIGNMENT WITH THE SDGs AND LNOB PRINCIPLE

51. Direct supervision, midterm review and implementation support missions provide a uniquely effective instrument for monitoring progress in the implementation of the targeting strategy, detecting challenges, learning from mistakes and proposing changes to foster poverty outreach and impact.

A. Assessing the effectiveness of the targeting strategy in reaching and benefiting the intended target group

52. The supervision mission will assess the extent to which the project is reaching the intended target groups, particularly the poorest and the "hard to reach". Targeting performance should be assessed against:
 - (i) Available M&E derived from both quantitative and qualitative tools and metrics that combine the two;
 - (ii) The views of local stakeholders as expressed through focus group discussions and participatory rural appraisals; and
 - (iii) The views of key informants, including the PMU, service providers and partner organizations.
53. The analysis and subsequent score (from 1 to 6) should be based on the following:
 - (i) **Outreach to different target groups.** The assessment should explore the extent to which different target groups, as identified at design and in the PIM, are participating in and benefiting from project activities. Verification methods include M&E information and consultations with local stakeholders. Targeting challenges and mistakes, including undercoverage and elite capture, should be discussed with PMU staff and service providers in order to reach agreement on potential corrections. A specific performance rating on targeting and outreach needs to be attributed during supervision missions.
 - (ii) **Implementation (readiness or effectiveness).** The implementation of the targeting strategy should reflect the implementation plan prepared at start-up and should follow the criteria, processes and budgetary provisions established in the PIM. If the project is in its first year of implementation, the actual readiness of implementers and PMU staff should be assessed by inquiring about their level of awareness of the targeting strategy. Similarly, knowledge about the project's initiatives, conditions for participation and procedures for the different groups of potential beneficiaries should be evaluated.
 - (iii) **Validity of targeting tools and methods.** The effectiveness of the targeting approach should be assessed. If required, recommendations for improvements, in consultation with local stakeholders, should be provided.
 - (iv) **Effectiveness of the M&E system in assessing targeting performance.** The M&E system should be assessed on the basis of its effectiveness in capturing both quantitative and qualitative information on targeting performance.

B. Proposing practical changes and tools for improving targeting performance

54. Recommendations should be made regarding ways of improving the targeting process, targeting tools and overall performance.

Table 3

<i>Minimum standards for addressing targeting in supervision and midterm review missions</i>
(i) The services of a social inclusion (gender, youth, indigenous peoples) targeting expert is required at the time that the midterm review mission is carried out, and the presence of an expert on cross-cutting issues is desirable.
(ii) Poverty profiling of the target population should be conducted if it is not already available in the PDR or if no adequate baseline survey exists.
(iii) The project's targeting strategy should be assessed in close consultation with project participants, staff and implementing partners as a basis for identifying the adjustments needed to improve outreach to the poorest, poor and vulnerable people in rural areas.
(iv) In the absence of targeting performance monitoring tools, technical support should be provided to assist project staff to incorporate targeting and social inclusion components into M&E and knowledge management activities.
(v) Best practices and lessons learned should be identified and disseminated.

D. Targeting at completion

55. With respect to targeting and outreach, the project completion report should include a critical analysis of the project's targeting strategy and an assessment of how well it performed with a view to informing both project scaling-up efforts and future projects and country strategies.

STEP 3 and 4: HOW? – MONITORING PROGRESS AND RESULTS AND ADVANCING ALIGNMENT WITH THE SDGs AND LNOB PRINCIPLES

56. The monitoring assessment of targeting and outreach should cover the following aspects: implementation arrangements, the project targeting strategy, the contribution of the targeting approach to project outcomes and the potential for using the targeting approach in scaling-up activities under new programmes.

A. Lessons learned

57. The assessment provides an opportunity to consider and document lessons learned on targeting. Lessons learned should be systematized and shared with national stakeholders and beyond.

Table 4

<i>Minimum standards for assessing targeting during project completion missions</i>
(i) The services of a social inclusion and targeting expert are required at completion. Expertise on cross-cutting issues (nutrition, etc.) is recommended.
(ii) The thematic assessment of targeting should start with a review of the project M&E system as its main source of information.
(iii) Surveys and data-gathering activities should be planned during the early stages of the completion process.
(iv) Participatory evaluation methodologies, in which the various target groups are actively involved, should be used to supplement or validate the survey findings.
(v) A stakeholder workshop involving beneficiary groups, civil society and participating donors should be organized to discuss targeting issues. Supplementary workshops can be organized to facilitate the participation of particular segments of the population.
(vi) Best practices and lessons learned on targeting should be systematized, and appropriate channels should be identified for the dissemination of the knowledge generated during the mission.



International Fund for Agricultural Development
Via Paolo di Dono, 44 - 00142 Rome, Italy
Tel: +39 06 54591 - Fax: +39 06 5043463
Email: ifad@ifad.org
www.ifad.org

-  facebook.com/ifad
-  instagram.com/ifadnews
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