

Operationalizing the Strategic Framework for IFAD 2002-2006

MAINSTREAMING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN IFAD'S OPERATIONS

Plan of Action 2003-2006

Approved by the Seventy-Eighth Session of the Executive Board in April 2003

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AP	Assistant President
AWP/B	Annual Workplan and Budget
CI	Cooperating Institution
COSOP	Country Strategic Opportunities Paper
CPM	Country Portfolio Manager
ECP	Extended Cooperation Programme
GDI	Gender-Related Development Index
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OE	Office of Evaluation (IFAD)
OL	Office of the General Counsel (IFAD)
PDT	Project Development Team
PMD	Programme Management Department (IFAD)
PMU	Project Management Unit
POA	Plan of Action
PRPP	Progress Report on the Project Portfolio
PSR	Project Status Report
PT	Technical Advisory Division (IFAD)
PTGFP	Gender Focal Point, Technical Advisory Division
TAG	Technical Assistance Grant
TRC	Technical Review Committee
WGGPP	Working Group on Gender in Projects and Programmes

DEFINITIONS¹

GENDER

The term **gender** refers to culturally based expectations of the roles and behaviours of women and men. The term distinguishes the socially constructed from the biologically determined aspects of being male and female. Unlike the biology of sex, *gender roles* and behaviours and the relations between women and men (*gender relations*) can change over time, even if aspects of these roles originated in the biological differences between the sexes.

GENDER EQUALITY

In IFAD's terminology, **gender equality** means that women and men have equal opportunities, or life chances, to access and control socially valued goods and resources. This does not mean that the goal is for women and men to become the same, but it does mean that we will work towards equal life chances for both sexes. In order to achieve this, it is sometimes necessary to empower, or "build up" groups that have limited access to resources. For example, to undertake special actions, such as providing day care for children, to enable women to participate along with men in training workshops. Or to provide credit to rural women because their access to productive resources is restricted. Or to establish educational programmes for boys in Latin America, where their school attendance is weak compared to that of girls.

GENDER EQUITY

Gender equity means fair treatment for both women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but that is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. In the development context, a gender equity goal often requires built-in measures to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages of women.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

For *IFAD as an institution*, **gender mainstreaming** is the process by which reducing the gaps in development opportunities between women and men and working towards equality between them become an integral part of the organization's strategy, policies and operations, and the focus of continued efforts to achieve excellence. Thus gender mainstreaming is fully reflected, along with other core priorities, in the mindset of IFAD's leadership and staff, its values, resource allocations, operating norms and procedures, performance measurements, accountabilities, competencies, and its learning and improvement processes.

In IFAD's *development activities*, gender mainstreaming implies assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, and ensuring that their concerns and experiences are taken fully into account in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all development activities. The aim is to develop interventions that overcome barriers preventing women and men from having equal access to the resources and services they need to improve their livelihoods.

EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment is about people taking control of their lives. It is about people pursuing their own goals, living according to their own values, developing self-reliance, and being able to make choices and influence – both individually and collectively – the decisions that affect their lives. Empowerment is a process, which can be long and complex. For women and men to be empowered, conditions have to be created to enable them to acquire the necessary resources, knowledge, political voice and organizational capacity.

MAINSTREAMING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN IFAD'S OPERATIONS PLAN OF ACTION 2003-2006

Summary

During IFAD's 25 years of existence, gender equality and women's empowerment have gained increasing importance, both as objectives and as instruments for poverty reduction. In its operations, IFAD aims to: expand women's access to and control over fundamental assets – capital, land, knowledge and technologies; strengthen women's agency – their decision-making role in community affairs and representation in local institutions; and improve well-being and ease workloads by facilitating access to basic rural services and infrastructures. IFAD's action is guided by the principle that development initiatives should incorporate the priorities and needs of both women and men and give them equal opportunities to access benefits and services. In this way, IFAD seeks to address the structural inequalities that prevent women from realizing their potential as human beings, producers and agents of change in the fight against poverty.

The Plan of Action 2003-2006 is a first step towards operationalizing those principles and objectives of the Strategic Framework for IFAD 2002-2006 related to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. It aims to systematize and scale up ongoing efforts to mainstream a gender perspective in different aspects of IFAD's work and to comply with the many United Nations commitments, most recently with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution E/2002/L.14, Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in all Policies and Programmes of the United Nations.

With specific reference to IFAD's programmatic work, gender mainstreaming is defined as "the process by which reducing the gaps in development opportunities between women and men and working towards equality between them become an integral part of the organization's strategy, policies and operations, and the focus of continued efforts to achieve excellence. Thus gender mainstreaming is fully reflected, along with other core priorities, in the mindset of IFAD's leadership and staff, its values, resource allocations, operating norms and procedures, performance measurements, accountabilities, competencies, and its learning and improvement processes".

The Plan of Action (POA) was developed by the IFAD-wide Working Group on Gender in Projects and Programmes, coordinated by the Technical Advisory Division (PT). It builds on IFAD's experience to date, as well as on recommendations stemming from a two-day workshop held in June 2002 on Gender Equity and the Empowerment of Poor Rural Women – Operationalizing IFAD's Strategic Framework.

The POA establishes a common framework within which region- and country-specific strategies will be designed and implemented. In line with IFAD's increased emphasis on monitoring performance and impact, a set of time-bound and verifiable indicators is specified for monitoring implementation progress. The POA relates essentially to programmatic actions directly under IFAD's control. For the most part, actions identified do not entail additional tasks or resources. However, IFAD will be seeking incremental funds to accelerate the implementation process – and the consequent results in terms of field impact and accelerated learning.

Given its focus on programmatic activities, the POA does not address IFAD workplace-related gender issues. However, efforts to create gender balance within IFAD at all professional levels will be pursued in parallel.

By enabling a more equitable access by women and men to development opportunities, together with the design of more sustainable development responses, the POA will help IFAD perform better. In addition, enhanced learning on effective development approaches will contribute to strengthening IFAD's role in policy dialogue and advocacy. Implementation of the POA will be an important tool in improving the effectiveness of IFAD's investments and their contribution to poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals.

I. GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN IFAD

Guiding Principles

1. During IFAD's 25 years of existence, gender equality and women's empowerment have gained increasing importance, both as objectives and as instruments for poverty reduction.² As part of its poverty focus, the Fund recognizes women as a target group deserving special attention.³ In its operations, IFAD aims to: expand women's access to and control over fundamental assets – capital, land, knowledge and technologies; strengthen women's agency – their decision-making role in community affairs and representation in local institutions; and improve well-being and ease workloads by facilitating access to basic rural services and infrastructures. IFAD's action is guided by the principle that development initiatives should incorporate the priorities and needs of both women and men and give them equal opportunities to access benefits and services.⁴ In this way, IFAD seeks to address the structural inequalities that prevent women from realizing their potential as human beings, producers and agents of change in the fight against poverty.

Within IFAD's policy and programmatic focus on poverty targeting, the poverty group deserving more particular attention is poor rural women, who are the most significant suppliers of family labour and efficient managers of household food security.
IFAD, 1998a, p. 23

2. IFAD has also learned that when the different roles and needs of women and men are not taken into account in project design and implementation, development interventions are less effective. But above all, IFAD has increasingly come to recognize that women's social and economic advancement is critical to the reduction of poverty and food security. In all IFAD-financed operations, women have demonstrated their enormous potential for becoming agents of change. Working towards gender equality and women's empowerment means enabling women to express that potential, to the benefit of their households and their communities.

3. Based on analysis of the specific roles and needs of women and men in a given context, IFAD-supported projects and programmes are designed to include women and men both, giving them equal opportunities to access benefits and resources, and enabling them to realize their potential as human beings and economic agents. In parallel, project design and implementation-specific measures are undertaken to empower women to acquire the means and ability to participate in the mainstream of economic and social development, as well as in the decisions that affect their lives and those of their families.

II. POLICY ORIENTATION

4. IFAD's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment has been set out in a number of milestone documents: the 1992 policy paper on IFAD's Strategies for the Economic Advancement of Rural Women; IFAD's lending documents; the regional strategies prepared in 2001; and, for some regions, specific approach papers on gender.⁵ Its commitment is also highlighted in the recently formulated *Strategic Framework for IFAD 2002-2006*.

The Loan Parties and the Project Parties shall ensure that the resources and benefits of the Project, to the fullest extent practicable, are allocated among the target population using gender disaggregated methods.
IFAD, 1999a, section 7.13, p. 18

5. The framework builds on the Fund's experience in working with rural poor women and men and positions IFAD to contribute to the Millennium Development Goals. It recognizes that addressing gender inequalities and building women's capabilities are essential conditions for achieving impact on poverty and malnutrition worldwide.⁶ Thus gender inequality is viewed as both a root cause of poverty and an expression of social injustice. The framework states that attention to gender issues should continue to be an overarching concern in

pursuing IFAD's strategic objectives. The framework also emphasizes the need for better targeting and impact monitoring, and for basing project design on the needs and perceptions of the poor themselves. It recognizes that to achieve these objectives, efforts and resources should be significantly scaled up and new priorities established.

6. The framework also points to the importance of empowerment and institution-building, seen as integral components of poverty reduction. Change will only be sustainable if rural poor women and men acquire greater capacity to influence the decisions – public and private – that affect their lives. The framework links political empowerment to economic empowerment: the poor will only have the political power to influence the economic “rules of the game” in their favour when they have gained access to financial and productive assets (markets, natural resources and technology). Both principles are of special relevance to women, who have less voice than men in public affairs, and fewer assets and income-earning opportunities.

Achievements to Date

7. Over the years, IFAD-supported projects have achieved a great deal in terms of improving women's socio-economic status and well-being. The thematic review of gender mainstreaming undertaken for the Progress Report on the Project Portfolio for 2000, based on extensive regional reviews, documented both achievements and challenges at the field level.⁷

8. There has been improvement in the way gender issues and women's empowerment are addressed throughout the project cycle, starting with project design. A systematic review of all formulation reports from a gender perspective, the issuing of checklists and guidelines to design-mission members and greater awareness among IFAD staff have all contributed to this improvement.

9. The recent External Review of the Results and Impact of IFAD Operations noted successes in progress towards gender equality in IFAD-financed projects, as well as in policy dialogue and innovation. However, it highlighted the need to ensure greater continuity between design and implementation in order to integrate women more fully into mainstream development activities, and to promote women's access to productive resources and community management.⁸

10. Gender programmes financed through generous contributions from donor countries have greatly increased the capacity of project management teams and partner organizations to address gender concerns during project implementation. They have contributed to our learning with respect to development approaches to empowering women. They have also enabled IFAD to strengthen staff capacity at headquarters by acquiring additional gender expertise.⁹

11. In 2003-2004, IFAD's Office of Evaluation (OE) will undertake an evaluation of IFAD's approaches to and policy on gender equity and empowerment. This may lead to a new policy paper on gender that would build on lessons learned regarding the effectiveness of different perspectives, taking into account particularly the perspectives of rural poor women and men.

Before we started baking we did not earn anything. We only did our household chores – which we still do now – and we helped out in the field, together with our children. Now we have our own money. For the first time, our husbands help us in the housework, because we also work just like them.
Maria Luisa López, Peru,
IFAD, 2001a

III. THE PLAN OF ACTION

Why a Plan of Action?

12. As stated in IFAD's strategic framework, in order to reduce poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals, governments and the donor community have been called upon to increase and focus efforts significantly to redress gender imbalances and empower rural poor women. In meeting this challenge, IFAD builds on the rich experience generated through its field operations and special programmes implemented by several divisions. What is needed now is to systematize efforts, generalize best practices across IFAD, fine-tune successful approaches, monitor performance on a regular basis, and be more effective in measuring impact.

13. *At the field level*, the challenge is to increase efforts – in collaboration with our partners – to test, implement and scale up effective and innovative approaches to redress gender imbalances and improve the social and economic status and representation of rural poor women. These approaches will, in many cases, be specific to a region or even a country.

14. *For IFAD as an institution*, the challenge is to make further progress in integrating gender concerns into the core work of all IFAD staff and specifically within its programme dimension. In this context, **gender mainstreaming** is defined as “the process by which reducing the gaps in development opportunities between women and men and working towards equality between them become an integral part of the organization's strategy, policies and operations, and the focus of continued efforts to achieve excellence. Thus gender mainstreaming is fully reflected, along with other core priorities, in the mindset of IFAD's leadership and staff, its values, resource allocations, operating norms and procedures, performance measurements, accountabilities, competencies, and its learning and improvement processes”.

15. The Plan of Action has been developed as an instrument for gender mainstreaming, the ultimate goal being to ensure gender-equitable access to project resources and benefits and to promote broader equality in rights and opportunities. More specifically, the plan aims to:

- translate the principles and objectives of the strategic framework into a set of concrete actions to be taken to mainstream gender, accompanied by specific, verifiable and time-bound indicators to monitor performance;
- fine-tune and generalize progress in design, while increasing emphasis on implementation, learning and innovation, policy and partnerships, by building on and generalizing IFAD best practices; and
- implement United Nations recommendations regarding the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the operations of the United Nations family.¹⁰

16. The plan was developed by the IFAD-wide Working Group on Gender in Projects and Programmes (WGGPP), coordinated by the Technical Advisory Division (PT) in consultation with other IFAD staff. It builds on IFAD's experience to date, as well as on recommendations stemming from a two-day

The full and equal participation of women in rural institutions and decision-making and specific measures to improve the status of women are still critical to any strategy aimed at the improvement of the situation of rural women.
United Nations, 1999

workshop held in June 2002 on Gender Equity and the Empowerment of Poor Rural Women – Operationalizing IFAD’s Strategic Framework.

17. Work leading up to the plan has been facilitated by gender initiatives funded principally by Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, Norway and IFAD itself through the gender-related technical assistance grant (TAG) programme.¹¹ These initiatives have expanded the core group of professionals – both within IFAD and in the regions – working on gender issues in IFAD’s operations and actively participating in the WGGPP, thus making an essential contribution to the development of the plan. The grant-funded programmes have generated – and continue to generate – knowledge, best practices, tools and guidelines. These programmes have also improved project outreach to women and enabled a more equitable impact on women’s and men’s livelihoods. When shared and adapted to other regional contexts, they can greatly contribute to the implementation of the actions envisaged in the plan.

18. The Programme to support Gender Mainstreaming in IFAD’s Projects and Programmes, cofinanced by Italy and IFAD and managed by PT (closing at the end of 2003), has provided the essential technical and financial support for the preparation of the plan.

Scope of the Plan of Action

19. *The plan focuses on improvements needed inside IFAD, as an institution, to enable impact outside, in the lives of poor women and men.* Gender-sensitive implementation will be facilitated by good design, a statement of the centrality of gender concerns in the loan agreement, discussion of gender in the start-up workshop, and greater emphasis by supervision on gender issues. More systematic coverage of gender issues in evaluation will yield important lessons for the design and implementation of new projects and for the adjustment of programmes in mid-course. Similarly, improved learning and information sharing will enable replication of best practices and cross-fertilization between regions and countries.

20. *The plan establishes a common framework within which region- and country-specific approaches will be designed and implemented.* There is no single recipe for all situations, nor is gender mainstreaming the only instrument for improving the well-being and status of women. This is reflected in IFAD’s regional strategies, developed in line with the framework, and which address gender and women’s empowerment issues with different approaches and entry points for the diverse regional and subregional contexts.¹² The plan sets minimum standards and establishes a common framework within which the divisions will develop specific strategies and approaches. Each division will need to determine how, with what resources, and within what time frame it will achieve the established targets, and incorporate these measures into its divisional workplan and budget. Timing and modalities will vary according to how advanced each division is in addressing gender dimensions in the various aspects of its work and the gender situation in the countries it covers.

21. *The plan does not deal with specific development approaches in working with women.* Sector-specific approaches that have either proved successful or represent special challenges have been identified by: the Thematic Portfolio Review, through research undertaken in the context of the regional programmes; the Thematic Reminders included in *Memory Checks for Project and Programme Design – Household Food Security and Gender*; the Gender Learning Notes on IFAD’s Web site; and numerous thematic and country studies.¹³ In the future,

Because the reasons for rural poverty are complex, proposed solutions need to be multifaceted and adapted to local contexts, taking gender, social and political issues into account.

IFAD, 2002a

IFAD will intensify its efforts to capture, share and replicate best practices in key areas of concern in various sectors, from rural finance to agricultural extension and community development approaches.

22. *The plan refers exclusively to IFAD's role at the programme level. Although the plan does not address workplace-related gender issues, it is important that efforts to create a gender balance within IFAD at all professional levels be pursued in parallel.*

Action Areas and Objectives

23. The plan includes 25 actions in the following key areas (*presented in detail on pages 9-12*).

1. Impact achievement in the project cycle

- Country Strategic Opportunities Papers (COSOPs) articulate IFAD gender- and poverty-targeting strategies for a country.
- Project design fully integrates gender concerns.
- Loan agreement explicitly addresses gender equality concerns.
- Project implementation ensures gender-equitable participation in and benefit from project activities.
- Supervision supports gender mainstreaming.
- Efforts are expanded to ensure that implementation support for gender mainstreaming is available as needed.

2. IFAD as a catalyst: policy and partnerships, learning and innovation

- IFAD expands its capacities to generate, capture and share knowledge on gender and development.
- IFAD strengthens its advocacy role in favour of rural women.

3. Accountability and monitoring

- Institutional accountability for gender mainstreaming is improved.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of progress in gender mainstreaming is ensured.

24. To improve gender mainstreaming in **impact achievement in the project cycle**, COSOPs will articulate IFAD country gender- and poverty-targeting strategies and sector-specific constraints and opportunities more strongly. This will provide a basis for the design of gender-sensitive strategies in future IFAD investments. Gender equality and women's empowerment concerns will be fully integrated into project design, responding to the Prerequisites of Gender-Sensitive Design, which form an integral part of the plan (pages 13-14).¹⁴ In this way, outreach to women as well as to men and to young women and men, will be facilitated, and projects will become more effective. This will also be reflected in better legal covenants that support gender equality. To signal to the borrower the special importance that IFAD attaches to gender equality, the texts of loan agreements will reiterate the gender-related clauses contained in IFAD's *General Conditions for Agricultural Development Financing*. During implementation, IFAD will assist – in partnership with the cooperating institutions (CIs) – in ensuring that the project's gender strategy is addressed directly at project start-up. It will also provide for specific activities and allocate earmarked resources in the annual workplans and budgets to support gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. This will be coupled with increased efforts to make implementation support available where needed through partnerships and cofinancing arrangements. CIs will be explicitly requested – in the letters of

... all investment programmes will focus on building individual and community-level capabilities. To do so, they need to maximize the participation of poor women and men and other stakeholders in the planning, implementation and monitoring of activities.

IFAD, 2002a

agreement and of appointment – to address gender- and poverty-targeting issues specifically and to revise current reporting formats and tables in which gender is not addressed.

25. With respect to **IFAD’s catalytic role – through policy and partnerships, learning and innovation** – actions will be taken to expand IFAD’s capacity to generate, capture and share knowledge on gender and development. This will require increased internal and external networking and information sharing to improve cross-fertilization among IFAD’s departments and divisions. It will also require strengthened links and exchanges with external networks and knowledge resource centres. An active and regularly updated Gender and Household Food Security Web site¹⁵ will be both an instrument for dissemination and a reflection of progress in IFAD’s contribution to knowledge on effective development approaches. Projects will need to be viewed as a means to an end, rather than an end in themselves, in order to ensure sustainability and a ripple effect of the Fund’s investments, particularly in contexts where sociocultural resistance to changes in women’s roles is strong. The strengthening of IFAD’s External Affairs Department should make it possible for IFAD to engage more actively in policy dialogue and advocacy. The fairly frequent use of IFAD/non-governmental organization (NGO) Extended Cooperation Programme (ECP) grants in support of advocacy and women’s empowerment will be further expanded.

26. To ensure **accountability and monitoring**, several actions are proposed to improve institutional accountability for and monitoring of gender mainstreaming. This will entail including measures to implement the plan in departmental and divisional workplans and budgets, and making the monitoring of progress in this area a regular item in divisional and management meetings. Regular monitoring and evaluation of progress in gender mainstreaming will be ensured through the revision of all IFAD reporting formats – including the key files – to ensure that gender aspects are appropriately addressed. This information will be collated in the annual Progress Report on the Project Portfolio, the format of which will also be revised. A baseline for the plan will be conducted during 2003 to establish realistic targets and benchmarks against which to measure progress.

Responsibilities for Implementation

27. The plan focuses on a limited number of time-bound, specific responsibilities. Successful implementation will thus depend on the joint commitment and contribution of all IFAD staff. The table on pages 15-16 outlines the assignment of responsibilities for implementing the plan.

28. While the majority of the actions fall under the responsibility of the Programme Management Department (PMD), others relate to the Office of the General Counsel (OL), the Office of Evaluation (OE) and the External Affairs Department (EAD).

29. Overall responsibility for ensuring that gender issues are addressed lies with the President, Vice-President, Assistant Presidents and regional directors. Responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the President and the Executive Board on gender mainstreaming in IFAD’s programmatic work rests with the Assistant President/PMD, with the support of PT, as needed.

30. At the operational level, responsibility for implementing project-related activities rests primarily with country portfolio managers. PT is to provide

Reaffirming also the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which affirms that the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured, and calls for, inter alia, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable.
United Nations, 2002b

technical support, facilitate information and knowledge exchange, and assist in monitoring as required.

31. Ultimately, the responsibility for ensuring that projects empower women and provide gender-equitable access to benefits rests primarily with the borrowing country, and in particular with the project management team. IFAD will work in partnership with the CIs to assist projects in addressing gender.

Time Frame

32. The time frame for the plan has been chosen to coincide with that of IFAD's strategic framework. As mentioned, in 2003-2004, OE will undertake an evaluation of IFAD's approaches to and policy on gender equity and empowerment. A review of the plan will take place in early 2005 to measure progress in relation to the benchmarks established through the baseline. Following these two activities, the plan will be revised as needed, and complemented with further actions necessary to complete the process. Many of the actions identified can be implemented in the short term and results can be expected to materialize soon. Others, such as those relating to IFAD's CIs and the Fund's advocacy efforts, will require a longer time frame and complementary actions in order to be effective.

Resource Implications and Follow-Up

33. The plan aims to ensure that attention to gender issues becomes a regular feature of IFAD's daily work. Thus most of the actions identified do not entail additional tasks or resources beyond IFAD's regular budget. Based on tested best practices in IFAD and in some IFAD CIs, the plan establishes standards that can realistically be achieved within the current zero-growth scenario. Nevertheless, it is evident that availability of additional resources, resulting either from an expansion of IFAD's budget or supplementary funding, could speed up the process of implementation, improve impact at field level, strengthen advocacy and accelerate learning.

34. The plan assumes that some portion of grant funds *already* secured from various donors and from the IFAD gender-related TAG programme, but still unspent, can be used to jump-start and support implementation of the plan, especially in the first year.

35. In particular, throughout 2003, the Programme to Support Gender Mainstreaming in IFAD's Projects and Programmes, cofinanced by Italy and IFAD and managed by PT, will support initial implementation of the plan. This will include establishing the monitoring system, conducting the baseline survey and revising IFAD's reporting formats to accommodate the plan's proposed actions. The programme will also publish and disseminate key gender-sensitive design features, issue guidelines for supervision and assist in revision of the letters of agreement with CIs. Another activity that will strengthen the impact of the plan and enable its fine tuning is the aforementioned OE evaluation.

36. Although the plan can be implemented with existing resources, IFAD will be seeking incremental resources to speed up the process of implementation – and the consequent results in terms of field impact. Increased efforts to mobilize and use grant funding to improve field-level impact is an activity of the plan itself (action 13, for example, supplementary funds/TAGs/ECP grants), and the increased availability in number and volume of grants will be an indicator. In particular, with additional resources more could be done in implementation

While some progress should be noted, gender perspectives are still not always addressed as a matter of routine, and the analysis of issues and the formulation of policy options are not always informed by a consideration of gender differences and inequalities. Thus, opportunities are not yet consistently identified to narrow gender gaps and support greater gender equality between women and men.

United Nations, 2002c

support and ensuring impact at the project level. For example, additional resources could support:

- tailor-made orientation/training in both general and sector-related gender issues for staff, consultants, CIs and project management, based on the regional experience gained by IFAD;
- focused technical-assistance support to projects in order to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment concerns into their work, complementing loan resources for technical assistance and training;
- production/refinement of toolkits and guidelines;
- strengthening of movements and associations effectively advocating for women on policy issues of critical concern;
- creation of gender-sensitive policies and procedures for procurement of services;
- collaboration with financial, research and extension partners on institutionalizing gender- and poverty-targeting issues in their operations;
- piloting and testing of innovative approaches;
- documentation and dissemination of best practices and practical lessons learned; and
- undertaking issue-focused reviews and cross-regional workshops to address critical areas of concern such as: gender mainstreaming and poverty impact, women and rural finance, organizational development, women and agricultural extension, and addressing gender issues among rural youth.

37. The plan is realistic in that it reflects IFAD's current limited involvement in implementation. However, it introduces some measures that could improve attention to gender issues in implementation (such as a more explicit focus on gender issues in the start-up workshop and orientation of CIs). Clearly, any expansion of IFAD's field presence would greatly facilitate follow-up on a number of impact-related concerns, such as gender, targeting and participation.

Expected Benefits

38. It is expected that by 2006 there will be significant improvement in the integration of gender concerns into the daily activities of all IFAD staff, not just those staff with designated gender responsibilities. Supervision and evaluation will be reporting regularly on gender-differentiated participation and impact. The plan will have enabled a more equitable access by women and men to development opportunities; design and implementation of development programmes will more effectively address women's specific needs and constraints; learning on effective development approaches will have improved; and a more active role will be played by IFAD in policy dialogue and advocacy. Ultimately this is expected to contribute to the improvement of the well-being and socio-economic status of rural poor women, and to progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Poverty reduction is about enabling poor women and men to transform their lives and livelihoods and supporting governments and civil society in creating and maintaining the conditions that allow them to do so.

IFAD, 2002a

MAINSTREAMING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN IFAD'S OPERATIONS
Plan of Action 2003-2006

Areas of Action	Actions	Indicator¹⁶	Object of Verification
1. Impact achievement in the project cycle			
1.1 COSOP			
COSOPs articulate IFAD country gender- and poverty-targeting strategies.	<p>1. COSOP:</p> <p>1.1 Includes gender-related information (including gender empowerment measurement (GEM) and gender-related development index (GDI) where available, along with gross domestic product (GDP) in poverty analysis);</p> <p>1.2 Identifies gender-related constraints and/or opportunities.</p>	<p>- X% new COSOPs including GDI and GEM figures, where available.</p> <p>- X% new COSOPs identifying gender-related constraints and opportunities.</p>	<p>- COSOPs</p> <p>- Minutes of Operational Strategy and Policy Guidance Committee (OSC)</p> <p>- Key files</p>
1.2 Design			
Project design fully integrates gender concerns.	<p>2. Project design complies with the prerequisites of gender-sensitive design (pages 13-14).</p>	<p>- X% newly designed projects complying with the prerequisites of gender-sensitive design.</p>	<p>- Technical Review Committee (TRC) lead adviser memo</p> <p>- PT review of appraisal reports</p> <p>- Final Project Development Team (PDT) minutes</p> <p>- Key files</p> <p>- Progress Report on the Project Portfolio (PRPP)</p> <p>- Loan agreement</p>
1.3 Loan agreement			
Loan agreement explicitly addresses gender equality concerns.	<p>3. Article 3 of the loan agreement recalls section 7.13 of the General Conditions as actions that are binding for the borrower.</p> <p>4. Schedule 3A, additional covenants, is fully utilized to describe actions for gender mainstreaming.</p>	<p>- X% loan agreements recalling section 7.13 of the General Conditions.</p> <p>- X% additional covenants in loan agreements describing actions for gender mainstreaming.</p>	<p>- Loan agreement</p> <p>- PRPP</p> <p>- Loan agreement</p> <p>- PRPP</p>
1.4 Implementation			
Project implementation ensures gender-equitable participation in and benefit from project activities.	<p>5. Start-up workshop:</p> <p>5.1. Discusses the project gender strategy;</p> <p>5.2 Ensures substantial participation of women.</p> <p>6. Annual workplan and budget (AWP/B) addresses gender as a cross-cutting concern.</p>	<p>- X% start-up workshops discussing project gender strategy.</p> <p>- X% women participants attending start-up workshops.</p> <p>- X% AWP/B allocating human and financial resources for gender mainstreaming.</p>	<p>- Workshop report</p> <p>- List of participants by gender</p> <p>- Supervision reports</p> <p>- PRPP</p> <p>- AWP/B</p> <p>- Project progress report</p> <p>- Supervision reports</p>

Areas of Action	Actions	Indicator ¹⁶	Object of Verification
	7. Project management unit monitors gender mainstreaming.	- Project status reports (PSRs) on gender-differentiated participation in and benefits from project activities.	- PSR - Mid-Term review (MTR) - Evaluation reports - PRPP
Supervision supports gender mainstreaming.	<p>8. Letters of agreement are revised to specify tasks related to supervision of gender issues.</p> <p>9. Letters of appointment specify tasks related to supervision of gender issues.</p> <p>10. Supervision report format is revised to cover gender issues.</p> <p>11. Supervision reports provide information on gender-differentiated participation in and benefits from the project.</p>	<p>- Letters of agreement revised and in place.</p> <p>- X% letters of appointment of new projects specifying gender-related tasks.</p> <p>- A revised supervision report format in place, clearly reflecting gender concerns.</p> <p>- X% of supervision reports contain information on gender-differentiated participation in and benefits from the project.</p>	<p>- Letters of agreement</p> <p>- Letters of appointment</p> <p>- Revised supervision report format - Supervision reports - PSR</p> <p>- Supervision reports</p>
Efforts are expanded to ensure that implementation support for gender mainstreaming is available as needed.	<p>12. Partnerships and cofinancing arrangements for gender are expanded as part of IFAD's major focus on improving implementation impact, and especially with regard to gender mainstreaming.</p> <p>13. Grant funding (supplementary funds/TAG/ECP) used to improve impact on gender equality and women's empowerment.</p>	<p>- Number of partnerships for gender equality and women's empowerment increased by X%.</p> <p>- Number and volume of grants increased by X%.</p>	<p>- Joint proposals - Partnership agreements - Cofinancing agreements - Memoranda of understanding</p> <p>- ECP grants - TAGs - Supplementary funds</p>

Objectives	Actions	Indicator	Object of Verification
2. IFAD as a catalyst: policy and partnerships, learning and innovation			
IFAD expands its capacities to generate, capture and share knowledge on gender and development.	<p>14. Working Group on Gender in Projects and Programmes (WGGPP) is officially recognized and performs functions as a forum for learning and information exchange.</p> <p>15. IFAD strengthens its gender knowledge exchange with external sources.</p> <p>16. Gender knowledge storing and dissemination systems are improved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WGGPP established as a thematic group. - Attendance and regional distribution of participation in WGGPP activities. - Regular meetings and email exchange among WGGPP members. - Number and type of external exchanges increased by X%. - Amount of information stored in the internal knowledge base increased by X%. - Use of information stored in the internal knowledge base increased by X%. - Amount of information stored on gender subsite increased by X%. - Number of hits on gender subsite increased by X%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual scorecards - Intranet - Records of meetings (action points and participants) - Electronic exchanges - Back-to-office reports - Conference papers - Record of visits - Reports to the United Nations - Intranet - Rural Poverty Portal - Intranet - Rural Poverty Portal - Gender subsite - Hit-counter
IFAD strengthens its advocacy role in favour of rural women.	<p>17. IFAD advocates gender and development issues in global and regional policy forums.</p> <p>18. IFAD expands and intensifies its partnerships for advocacy (at field level, with research institutions, NGOs, United Nations, etc.).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reference to gender mainstreaming and rural women is made in all IFAD policy/conference papers and presentations. - Number of partnerships for advocacy increased by X%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IFAD policy/position papers - Speeches - Presentations - Partnership agreements - ECP grants for advocacy

Objectives	Actions	Indicator	Object of Verification
3. Accountability and monitoring			
Institutional accountability for gender mainstreaming is improved.	<p>19. All staff at all levels take on responsibilities for Plan of Action (POA).</p> <p>20. Progress in implementation of POA is regularly followed up by management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - X% departmental/divisional workplans and budgets reflecting activities to implement POA. - X% individual scorecards reflecting activities to implement POA. - Progress in complying with POA included as agenda item in meetings of divisions (as needed); PMD (twice a year); and senior management (twice a year). - Proportion of administrative budget and IFAD-generated grant resources dedicated to POA implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Departmental/divisional workplans and budgets - Individual scorecards - Minutes of meetings
Regular monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of progress in gender mainstreaming is ensured.	<p>21. Existing IFAD reporting formats are revised to ensure adequate and consistent reporting on gender mainstreaming.¹⁷</p> <p>22. A baseline survey is undertaken to establish benchmarks for monitoring POA implementation progress.</p> <p>23. An MTR to assess progress in POA.</p> <p>24. New methodological framework for evaluation disaggregates information by gender in each impact domain.</p> <p>25. Evaluations disaggregate impact information and analysis by gender.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - X% of reporting formats revised. - Revised key files. - Benchmarks established. - MTR undertaken in January 2005. - Additional category (column) included in impact matrix to capture gender-differentiated impact and participation in each domain. - Evaluation reports contain a section synthesizing information on gender for all domains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New reporting formats - Key files - PPSR - Baseline report - MTR - New evaluation methodology - Evaluation report

PREREQUISITES OF GENDER-SENSITIVE DESIGN

Overall goal: IFAD's projects and programmes aim to: "expand women's access to and control over fundamental assets – capital, land, knowledge and technologies; strengthen women's agency – their decision-making role in community affairs and representation in local institutions; and improve well-being and ease workloads by facilitating access to basic rural services and infrastructures. IFAD's action is guided by the principle that development initiatives should incorporate the priorities and needs of both women and men and give them equal opportunities to access benefits and services. In this way IFAD seeks to address the structural inequalities that prevent women from realizing their potential as human beings, producers and agents of change in the fight against poverty". (See Guiding Principles, page 1.)

1. Project document contains poverty and gender analysis data.

2. Based on the above, the project articulates a gender strategy that:

- identifies operational measures to ensure gender-equitable participation in, and benefit from, planned activities;
- aims specifically to improve economic and social status of poorer women and their families;
- sets specific targets in terms of proportion of women participants in different project activities and components;
- ensures women's participation in project-related decision-making bodies; and
- clearly reflects actions identified in the gender strategy in the cost tables.

3. Project logframe and suggested monitoring system specify sex-disaggregated performance and impact indicators.

Explanatory note

Includes:

- *division of roles and responsibilities*
- *access to resources and benefits*
- *participation in community affairs and decision-making*
- *perceived needs and constraints; by gender and socio-economic categories*

Examples include:

- *extension focus on women's crops/livestock; day-care centres to facilitate women's participation in training; measures to decrease women's workload, etc.*
- *facilitation of poor women's and men's access to land and credit; strengthening women's representation in community-based organizations (CBOs), advocacy, adult literacy, etc.*
- *reservation of places for women on community management committees (CMCs); proportion of loans for poorer women; proportion of community development funds (CDFs) for activities of poorer women.*
- *participation in water users' associations; village development council, etc.*
- *earmarking technical assistance and training, incremental costs for training, etc.*

4. **Terms of reference of project coordinating unit or project management unit (PMU) include responsibilities for gender mainstreaming, especially at level of project director, M&E officer, extension officer and microfinance officer.**
5. **Project explicitly addresses issue of present and likely availability of field staff to ensure outreach to women, and designs activities accordingly.**
 - *assessing whether numbers, gender and qualifications of field staff are appropriate to ensure outreach, taking account of social and practical constraints.*
6. **Experience working with women and marginalized groups and willingness to work with these groups are included as criteria for NGO selection.**
7. **Project provides opportunities for policy dialogue on issues related to gender equality and empowerment of women.**
 - *inviting government officials to exposure visits and workshops.*

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN OF ACTION

Unit/Position	Implementation Responsibilities
Senior management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures POA is implemented <i>and</i> monitored by allocating necessary human and financial resources. • Includes progress in gender mainstreaming as agenda item in senior management meetings twice a year.
Office of Evaluation (OE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes gender equality as impact domain in new evaluation methodology. • Requires evaluations to disaggregate impact information and analysis by gender.
Office of the General Counsel (OL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully utilizes Schedule 3A (additional covenants) to describe actions for gender mainstreaming within the limitations of project appraisal report. • Recalls section 7.13 as actions binding for borrower under Article 3 of loan agreement. • Ensures that letters of agreement and appointment with CIs specify tasks related to gender issues. • Monitors POA with reference to above.
External Affairs Department (EAD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catalyses partnerships with other donors and civil-society groups for advocacy and policy dialogue of gender issues and women's empowerment. • Advocates gender and development issues and women's empowerment in global and regional policy forums. • Contributes to strengthening dissemination of gender-related knowledge. • Maintains and expands gender subsite, with technical support of Gender Focal Point, Technical Advisory Division (PTGFP) and WGGPP. • Mobilizes external resources to support implementation of POA.
Assistant President (AP)/PMD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that POA is implemented <i>and</i> monitored by allocating mentioned responsibilities, and necessary human and financial resources. • Ensures that divisional workplans and budgets incorporate gender-mainstreaming responsibilities. • Includes progress in implementing POA as agenda item in PMD meetings every six months. • Recognizes WGGPP as thematic group. • Allocates responsibility to PT to review existing IFAD reporting formats (including supervision and key files) to ensure adequate and consistent reporting on gender mainstreaming. • Ensures that letters of agreement with CIs specify tasks related to supervision of gender issues.
Regional division directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that POA is implemented and monitored by allocating the mentioned responsibilities, and necessary human and financial resources. • Incorporate gender-mainstreaming objectives and activities into divisional workplans and budgets and individual staff scorecards. • Increase efforts to ensure implementation support is available where needed. • Include progress in gender mainstreaming as agenda item in divisional meetings every three months. • Ensure, in collaboration with OL, that letters of agreement with CIs specify tasks related to supervision of gender issues. • Nominate staff members to participate in WGGPP.
Country Portfolio Managers (CPMs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that COSOPs include GEM and GDI information (where available). • Ensure that COSOPs identify gender-related constraints and opportunities. • Ensure that project design complies with standard design features. • Ensure that start-up workshop discusses gender strategy and is substantially attended by women. • Ensure that AWP/Bs address gender as cross-cutting concern. • Ensure that PMU monitors gender mainstreaming. • Ensure, in collaboration with OL, that letters of appointment specify tasks related to the supervision of gender issues.

Unit/Position	Implementation Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand on partnerships and cofinancing arrangements to ensure implementation support for gender. • Ensure grant funding is used as a catalyst to improve gender-related field impact.
Regional gender focal points¹⁸/regional economists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide guidance, advice and assistance on policy-related issues in gender mainstreaming to regional directors and CPMs.</i> • <i>Strengthen knowledge exchange with external sources on gender and development.</i> • <i>Participate in WGGPP and in external events.</i> • <i>Manage time-bound activities in support of gender mainstreaming.</i> • <i>Assist in integration of gender issues into regional activities.</i> • <i>Represent IFAD on gender issues to external audiences.</i>
Technical Advisory Division (PT) Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that gender concerns are taken into account in all aspects of division's work, specifically TRC, PDT and review of grant proposals. • Includes progress in gender mainstreaming as agenda item in division's meetings every three months. • Ensures that key files are revised to address gender as cross-cutting concern. • Incorporates gender-mainstreaming objectives and activities into divisional workplan and budget.
PT Gender Focal Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advises senior management on issues related to POA implementation. • Ensures that project design meets gender-sensitive design prerequisites. • Undertakes baseline survey to identify benchmarks for POA. • Assists in monitoring POA, as requested by AP/PMD. • Assists in revision of letters of agreement to specify tasks related to supervision of gender issues. • Assists in revision of supervision report format to cover gender issues. • Establishes, maintains and expands internal and external gender networks, including gender subsite. • Strengthens its knowledge exchange with external sources on gender and development. • Chairs WGGPP. • Advocates gender and development issues in global and regional policy forums. • Represents IFAD on gender issues to external audiences.
Working Group on Gender in Projects and Programmes (WGGPP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides policy advice related to gender mainstreaming. • Maintains and expands internal and external gender networks. • Meets regularly for learning and information exchange on gender and development. • Contributes to gender subsite through collection and dissemination of "best practices" across regions and sectors.

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ENDNOTES

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- ¹ Definitions have been adapted from various sources (IFAD, Canadian International Development Agency [CIDA], World Bank and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO]).
- ² IFAD, 1998b.
- ³ IFAD, 1999a.
- ⁴ IFAD, 1998a, p. 23.
- ⁵ IFAD, 1992; 2000b,c,d,e; 2001c,d.
- ⁶ IFAD, 2002a, p. 5.
- ⁷ IFAD, 2000a,d; 2001d.
- ⁸ IFAD, 2002b.
- ⁹ Since 1998, donors have contributed USD 6 644 490 and IFAD TAGs an additional USD 1 960 000 to implement regional gender programmes and strengthen the gender-mainstreaming functions of the Technical Advisory Division (PT). These programmes are currently at different stages of implementation. Support has been provided by Italy, Japan, The Netherlands and Norway, and more recently by Germany.
- ¹⁰ The list of United Nations mandates and commitments can be found at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/>.
- ¹¹ Germany will also finance the programmes.
- ¹² IFAD, 2000b,c,d,e; 2001c,d. Information on regional gender programmes can be found at <http://procasur.org>; and on the Web site of IFAD's regional network in Asia, ENRAP, <http://www.enrap.org>.
- ¹³ These documents can be found on IFAD's gender Web site, <http://www.ifad.org/gender/>.
- ¹⁴ These measures are not new: a recent survey of appraisal reports undertaken by PT found that 70 per cent of design documents contained at least some of these features. These best practices need to be consolidated and extended.
- ¹⁵ See www.ifad.org/gender/.
- ¹⁶ Time-bound targets will be set following the baseline.
- ¹⁷ To include MTR; PRPP; project completion report; COSOP; inception, formulation and appraisal reports; key files; PSR; supervision and evaluation reports; President's report; and annual report.
- ¹⁸ Currently, regional gender focal point responsibilities are assigned to a CPM (one division), a regional economist (one division) and externally funded gender specialists (three divisions). It is expected that by 2006, regional gender focal point duties will be performed by a senior staff member in the context of an overall increase in PMD staff numbers.