FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN IFAD's OPERATIONS

A. Purpose and Scope of the Gender Framework

1. IFAD's Plan of Action (PoA) 2003-2006 for *"Mainstreaming a gender perspective in IFAD's Operations"* was developed to operationalize the gender mainstreaming principles contained in IFAD's Strategic Framework 2002-06. It was conceived as a time-bound initiative aiming to bring greater consistency and upscale IFAD's efforts to integrate gender in its operations. Gender considerations have now largely been integrated into IFAD's business processes related to the project/programme cycle, including Action Plan deliverables (Quality Enhancement Procedures, Supervision Guidelines, etc.). Attention to gender mainstreaming/women's empowerment have been confirmed by IFAD's Targeting Policy, approved in September 2006, and the Strategic Framework 2007-10. This Framework reiterates core principles, definitions and key responsibilities contained in the previous Gender PoA, which remain valid to guide IFAD's action. It confirms attention to gender issues as a permanent feature in business processes related to IFAD's project-programme cycle, and establishes the basic parameters and indicators against which IFAD's performance in this area will be monitored within its regular reporting and monitoring systems.

2. The *Gender Framework* refers only to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in the context of IFAD's programmatic work and thus to actions that fall directly under the responsibility of the Programme Management Department. In processes linked to the project cycle, efforts will be pursued to ensure that there is accountability in addressing gender in design following the *Key features of gender sensitive design* in the context of the new quality enhancement and quality assurance systems. Attention to gender equality will be addressed in the departmental results framework and key performance indicators.

3. The Gender Framework is one of several instruments which are required to operationalize IFAD's commitment to MDG3, and which IFAD still needs to define. These include attention to gender issues in IFAD's policy work, in its learning and innovation efforts and in its human resource management and development policies, including training.

B. Guiding principles

4. For IFAD, gender equality and women's empowerment[1] have gained increasing importance both as objectives and as instruments for poverty reduction, and thus for reasons of both equity and efficiency. As part of its poverty focus, the Fund considers women as a target group deserving special attention[2]. In its operations, IFAD pursues a three-pronged strategy for gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment aiming to:

   (a) expand women's economic empowerment through access to and control over fundamental assets;

   (b) strengthen women's decision-making role in community affairs and representation in local institutions; and

   (c) improve the knowledge and well-being of women and ease women's workloads by facilitating women's access to basic rural services and infrastructures.

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[1] See Gender Plan of Action for definitions of gender, gender equality, gender equity, gender mainstreaming and empowerment: http://www.ifad.org/gender/policy/action.htm

[2] http://www.ifad.org/sf/strategic_e.pdf

5. In pursuing these objectives IFAD's approach combines gender mainstreaming with proactive measures and activities specifically directed at women. IFAD's action is guided by the principle that development initiatives should be based on an understanding of gender-differentiated roles and needs and provides equal opportunities for women and men to access benefits and services. This will require both attention to gender differences in all aspects of a project or programme, and the implementation of specific measures to enable women to acquire the means and ability to participate as equals in economic and social development, as well as in the decisions that affect their lives and those of their families.

6. In line with IFAD's Strategic Framework 2007-10, attention to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment will focus on key areas (natural resources, technologies, financial services, markets, rural off-farm employment and enterprise development, and local and national policy and programming processes). By establishing the Key features of gender-sensitive design and implementation of IFAD-supported projects and programmes, the Framework operationalizes the principles related to gender mainstreaming/women's empowerment contained in IFAD's Policy on Targeting and Strategic Framework 2007-2010.

Gender equality/women's empowerment — IFAD policy principles

"IFAD will, in all operational situations….. address gender differences and have a special focus on women within all identified target groups – for reasons of equity, effectiveness and impact" (IFAD's Policy on Targeting, 2006, http://www.ifad.org/pub/policy/target/targeting_e.pdf)

"For development efforts to be effective, differences in gender roles and responsibilities need to be taken into account; and across all these (target) groups IFAD will focus particularly on women, not only because they have significantly less access than do men to assets and services – and less voice in public decision-making, but also because addressing these inequalities and strengthening the capacity of rural women to perform their productive roles more effectively, has a major impact on poverty reduction and on household food security" (IFAD's Strategic Framework 2007-2010, http://www.ifad.org/sf/strategic_e.pdf)

C. Operational objectives

7. With the overall goal of contributing to the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment (MDG3) through its operations, to mainstream gender concern into the project/programme cycle IFAD sets the following operational objectives:

    (a) Results-based Country Strategic Opportunities Programmes (COSOP) integrate gender concerns;

    (b) Project and grant design fully integrates gender concerns according to the Key features of Gender-Sensitive Design and Implementation;

    (c) Project and grant implementation ensures gender-equitable participation in and benefit from project activities

    (d) Supervision/implementation support gives attention to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment

    (e) Project completion reports give attention to gender mainstreaming/women's empowerment

8. Table 1 lists the indicators and sources of verification for each of the above objectives mainly on the basis of IFAD's existing monitoring and reporting instruments. (See Section F Monitoring).

D. Key Features of Gender-sensitive Design and Implementation

9. Through its direct involvement in project design and implementation, or in dialogue with co-financing partners, IFAD will seek to ensure that certain key features are reflected in the design and implementation of the initiatives it supports. These include: i) the understanding of gender differences in the activities or sectors concerned; ii) actions to empower women, economically and in decision-making; iii) operational measures to ensure gender-equitable participation and benefits; iv) provisions for monitoring and evaluation of gender differentiated impact and participation (se Box 1). The resulting gender strategy will be forward-looking while at the same time feasible given previous experience, and also ownership by key implementing partners. IFAD will engage in continued and active dialogue with its partners – at country-level and in its grants programme - to build a shared understanding of the importance of gender issues and women's empowerment in poverty reduction, and agreement on the best ways to achieve these goals. It is also committed to continued efforts to learn, share knowledge and pilot innovative approaches in this area.

BOX 1 - KEY FEATURES OF GENDER-SENSITIVE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

i) Gender analysis data

The project design document contains – and project implementation is based on – gender-disaggregated poverty data and analysis of gender differences in the activities or sectors concerned.

ii) Strategic focus

Based on the above, the project design report articulates – or the project implements – actions which aim to:

- Expand women's economic empowerment through access to and control over fundamental assets;
- Strengthen women's decision-making role in community affairs and representation in local institutions; and
- Improve women's knowledge and well-being and ease their workloads by facilitating their access to basic rural services and infrastructure.

iii) Operational measures

The design document describes (and the project/programme implements) operational measures to ensure gender-equitable participation in, and benefit from, project/programme activities. In addition to context-specific measures to be developed case-by-case, these will generally include:

- Allocating adequate resources to implement the gender strategy;
- Ensuring and supporting women's active participation in project-related decision-making bodies and committees;
- Ensuring that project/programme management arrangements (composition of the project management unit/programme coordination unit, project terms of reference, etc.) reflect attention to gender equality and women's empowerment concerns; and
- Ensuring direct project/programme outreach to women (for example through appropriate numbers and qualification of filed staff) , especially where women's mobility is limited.

iv) Monitoring and evaluation

The project's logical framework and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system specify in design – and project M&E units collect – gender-disaggregated performance and impact data.

E. Responsibilities for implementation

10. The overall responsibility for ensuring implementation of the *Gender Framework* lies with the Assistant President/PMD. Reporting on progress will be done through the

corporate Annual Portfolio Performance Report (PPR). Regional directors are responsible for ensuring that gender mainstreaming principles and measures are implemented and monitored in the context of the divisional portfolio. They will therefore ensure that such measures are incorporated into the divisional work plan and budget, and report on progress in divisional contributions to the annual PPR. The regional director will appoint a divisional gender focal point to assist her/him in this task. The director of the Technical Advisory Division is responsible for ensuring that gender issues are addressed in PT-managed QE processes, in line with the Key features of gender-sensitive design and implementation. This will include not only project review, but also development of tools and guidance for design. Through the Senior TA on Gender, PT will report annually via the PPR on gender in design.

11. At the operational level, responsibility for implementing project-related activities rests primarily with country programme managers and teams. Ultimately, the responsibility for ensuring that projects empower women and provide gender-equitable access to benefits rests with the borrowing country, and in particular with the project management team.

F.   Monitoring

12. IFAD's main instrument for reporting on performance against the Gender Framework will be the PPR, which draws on various data sources and on the divisional reports. PMD Divisions will be required to report against the indicators corresponding to the Objectives (section D) as listed below in Table 1. The score on gender-sensitivity in design – as per the Maturity Assessment Template (MAT) on the Key Success Factor (KSF) 2, sub-score on gender – will be included in the Departmental and Regional Division management plans. In the few cases of indicators for which data is not routinely collected, a rapid baseline will be undertaken after approval of this Bulletin to provide benchmarks that will be assessed on a bi-annual basis. The following table specifies the indicators against which IFAD will be reporting, with the related sources of verification.

Table 1

RESULTS FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN IFAD OPERATIONS		
Narrative Summary	**Results Indicators**	**Data source**
Goal: Improve gender equality/women's empowerment	Percentage of projects rated 4 or better for (projected) impact on gender equality (IFAD Results Management Framework 2007-2010, Result Indicator 4, sub-indicator 4)	Annual Portfolio Performance Report (PPR)
Objectives		
Results-based Country Strategic Opportunities Programmes (COSOP) integrate gender concerns	Percentage of COSOPs rated 4 or better on gender under Results Based Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (RB-COSOP) MAT KSF 2	COSOP MAT KSF 2 - question on gender 2.4[3]
Project design fully integrates gender concerns according to the Key features of gender sensitive design and implementation	Percentage of project design reports rated 4 and above on gender as per 'Pre-Key features of gender-sensitive design and implementation" Maturity Assessment Template (MAT), Key Success Factor (KSF) 2 sub-score at QE	KSF 2 Sub-scores on gender as per QE Panel report Summary Assessment Sheet) summarized in PPR[4][7] Departmental Management Plan, Programme Management Department (as a key performance indicators KPI). from 2009
Grant design fully integrates gender concerns according to the Key features of gender sensitive design and implementation	Percentage of grant design documents scored 4 and above and for gender focus	Gender-sensitivity score in grants assessment template following grants TRC
Project implementation ensures gender-equitable participation in and benefit from project activities	Percentage of projects scoring 4 and above on gender focus in implementation[5]	Annual Portfolio Performance Report (PPR)
Grant implementation ensures gender-equitable participation in and benefit from project activities	Percentage of grants scoring 4 and above on gender focus[6]	Annual Portfolio Performance Report (PPR)
Supervision/implementation support gives attention to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment	Percentage of supervision reports reflecting Guidelines for supervision and implementation support of projects and programmes funded from IFAD loans and grants (2007)", Annexe 4, (http://www.ifad.org/operations/projects/supervision/guidelines.pdf)	Baseline to set benchmarks (2008) Bi-annual reviews
Project completion reports give attention to gender mainstreaming/women's empowerment	Project completion reports (PCRs) ratings factor in attention to gender equality/women's empowerment[7]	Rating by PMD Front Office

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3 A question will be added under KSF 2 "Poverty, Social Development and Targeting" of the COSOP MAT. "to what extent does the COSOP promote gender equality and empowerment of women"; in responding to the question reference is to be made to the RB-COSOP policy and RB-COSOP Guidelines which make reference to http://www.ifad.org/operations/policy/cosop.htm)and Guidelines http://www.ifad.org/operations/policy/cosop/guidelines/index.htm)Inclusion of gender sensitive Baseline Poverty Analysis in Preparatory studies (Para. 35), gender balance in participation (Para. 40), inclusion of a section on gender issues with GEM and GDI data, gender disaggregated data and indicator (Para. 43).

4 Project design ratings (as per QE or QA) will be modified in line with the PPR. QE scores are expected to be used in PPR 2008, and QA scores for the following years. Pending revision of TRC Panel Report Template, QE project scores against the Key features will be derived from RRN gender checklist scores.

5 PPR Guidelines for 2009 will update guidance for scoring on "gender focus" in line with the "Key features".

6 As above

7 Revision of PCR Guidelines will detail scoring criteria for ge/we

Glossary

Key success factors (KSF)
The Key Success Factors (KSFs) provide the guiding principle of 'clear and explicit quality standards' and are the basis for guiding in-country work, peer advice, management review, and decisions to enhance and assure the quality of projects. They will be updated annually based on the feedback obtained from stakeholders (CPMs, directors, TRC panel members and internal/external reviewers) and analysis by PT of major quality issues raised at TRC, and on recommendations for improvement presented in the Annual Portfolio Review Report, prepared by PMD and from recommendations presented by the Vice-President in the Annual Quality Assurance Note.

Maturity assessment template (MAT)
The Maturity Assessment Template (MAT) **is a self-assessment tool**, centred on the six KSF domains and the respective guidance questions. The MAT is to be used by a CPM:

- **During project design** as a pre-requisite for submission to the TRC

- **at completion of project design** as a pre-requisite for submission to the QA

It responds to three specific needs: to guide a design team to the critical tasks to be undertaken during the design process, to achieve the right quality for implementation; to allow a CPM to assess progress towards achieving maturity of design quality, identifying gaps and design issues on which advice is sought; and to clearly put the accountability for delivering quality with a CPM, the CPMT and the IFAD regional director through a process of review and discussion and sign off.

RB-COSOP
A COSOP is a framework for making strategic choices about IFAD operations in a country, identifying opportunities for IFAD financing, and for facilitating management for results.
The central objective of a COSOP is to ensure that IFAD country operations produce a positive impact on poverty. The document reviews the specific rural poverty situation as the basis for determining geographic sites and related thematic areas where IFAD would operate and highlights the innovation it intends to promote in the country programme.
The COSOP discusses policy and institutional aspects that affect the outcome of IFAD operations and their impact on the poor including, *inter alia*, local governance and the participation/empowerment of the poor as main determinants of an enabling environment for the success of pro-poor projects. The COSOP also includes an overview of IFAD's previous operations and the lessons learned, particularly from evaluation studies, and integrates these lessons into future operational directions.
To ensure strong country ownership, the COSOP design and implementation process is characterized by wide stakeholder consultation. It is also designed to be aligned with the country's poverty reduction strategy and planning framework

PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE REPORT
The PPR has two purposes: (i) to provide the Executive Board with an overview of the performance of the loans and grant portfolio in delivering results to the Fund's target group; and (ii) to complement and, where necessary, amplify Management's response to the Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations evaluated.

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT
The PCR's objectives are promote self-assessment, by IFAD and the borrower, regarding the quality of project design and implementation in the achievement of project development objectives; provide feedback from implementation experience to improve country lending strategies and the design of future operations; stimulate sustained development outcome in the post IFAD-assistance period based on the feedback from (i) and (ii) above.