

## Farmers' Forum

The Farmers' Forum is an emerging, bottom-up process of consultation and dialogue between small farmers and rural producers' organizations, IFAD and governments, focused on rural development and poverty reduction. Fully aligned with IFAD's strategic objectives, the Forum is rooted in concrete partnership and collaboration at the country and regional level. Engagement with rural organizations at the field level and dialogue at the international level are articulated as mutually reinforcing processes. Following consultations at the national and regional level, the Farmers' Forum meets every two years for a global consultation, in conjunction with the Governing Council of IFAD.

The first meeting of the Farmers' Forum in Rome on 13 and 14 February 2006, brings together more than 50 leaders, representing millions of small farmers and rural producers, from Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Near East and Europe to interact with IFAD staff and selected partners. Participants are also invited to the Governing Council, where they will take part in three thematic round table discussions. Several farmer representatives will participate as panellists. The agenda of the 2006 Forum meeting includes discussions on IFAD's engagement with farmers' organizations, with a focus on how to institutionalize and enhance the scope of this engagement. In addition, thematic working groups will be set up to discuss:

- pro-poor access to land and land tenure security
- building capacity of grass-roots rural institutions
- regional market integration

A concluding statement by the Forum will be delivered to IFAD's Governing Council by a farmers' leader