The Turkey Country Programme Evaluation assessed four IFAD-financed projects – two had ended by the time of the evaluation and the other two were ongoing. Using national socio-economic data, IFAD and the Government of Turkey selected the nine provinces to be covered by the projects from among the 38 provinces found to be relatively poor (under-developed) or the poorest (severely under-developed). Within these provinces, they assigned priority to the poorest counties, using the same data (and, in one project, carefully selected micro-catchments), and also developed criteria for selecting villages.

The projects channelled resources effectively to poorer villages and selected households in the villages. A large part of the resources were allocated to public goods such as access roads, irrigation and sewerage systems, and livestock watering facilities. These interventions offer broad-based benefits to rural communities aimed at ensuring sustainable long-term social and economic welfare. A substantial amount was also invested in household and individual activities, such as agricultural demonstrations, training, cattle barns and supply chain investments. Both types of interventions – public goods and household/individual assistance – can be designed to include a target group. However, these projects focused primarily on more capable and better-resourced farmers, to the exclusion of the poorer farmers, and without broad-based participation by women and youth.

Identifying interventions specific to the target groups

In order to ensure inclusiveness and sustainability, a project must have activities (interventions) and corresponding resources for specific target groups, such as poorer farmers, women and youth. Interventions should be selected based on what is needed and feasible in an area, and on what the intended beneficiaries consider important and feasible. Therefore, it is important to consult each target group to identify its priorities (within the sectors allocated to the project), discuss opportunities and constraints, propose options specific to the group, and let them decide what they can do best. This is useful during project design as well as implementation, when there may be a need to adjust the technical, financial and other aspects of what was envisaged during the design stage.

Agricultural technology, in particular, requires that careful attention be given to the differences between farmers with large holdings and farmers who are resource-poor. Extension agents prefer to demonstrate new technology to farmers with large holdings because they are considered to be progressive; that is, more amenable to accepting expert recommendations. It follows that the technical recommendations they demonstrate usually entail costs and risks that are too high for smallholder farmers. What is needed is a differentiated – or
inclusive – approach, one in which recommendations differentiate between the priorities and resources of the two
types of farmers. One such approach, illustrated below, is based on the idea of recommendation domains.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECOMMENDATION DOMAIN (WITHIN THE SAME AGRO-ECOLOGICAL ZONE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRIORITY AND CONSTRAINTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household priority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of labour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFF-SEASON CROPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of demonstration area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenhouse design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrigation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Including target households through informal platforms

It is often difficult for outsiders, project staff among
them, to decide who within a rural community is poor
and deserving of project assistance. Approaches
for identifying the poor include participatory wealth
ranking, the poverty score card (used in World Bank-
assisted projects), analysis of government data, and
asking the village leader or another official. Another
approach, which can be used on its own or to validate
other information, is to ask the community itself to
identify households (or individuals, as the case may
be) that fulfil the criteria for beneficiary selection. The
criteria must include relevant poverty indicators but
can otherwise vary across interventions – for example,
between livestock and horticulture interventions, and
between interventions for women and men.

Identifying beneficiaries with the community’s help is a
cost-effective approach and requires that community
members be brought together on a common platform.
The best platform is an informal assembly (or
assemblies) made up of household representatives
drawn from a geographical unit and consisting of
men, women and youth. They can meet separately or
together. In some settings, local customs may require
men and women to meet separately, and distances may
require that households assemble within their hamlets,
rather than in the village centre, or it may be convenient
for the hamlets to send one or two representatives to
meet in the village centre. It is important to respect such
considerations, and to take village elders and leaders
into confidence before starting any group activity.

Informal platforms can also enhance the participation of
the target group in planning, implementing, monitoring
and sustaining project activities at the village level.
Every grass-roots sub-project, whether it relates to
infrastructure, agriculture, livestock, forestry or value
chains, goes through a project cycle that typically
starts with project identification, followed by project
preparation and appraisal, and then implementation,
after which it needs to be sustained, often through
local involvement. A participatory approach is one
in which project staff, including technical experts,
make decisions in consultation with the beneficiaries
throughout the project cycle.

Supporting sustainability
and inclusion through
appropriate institutions

The government and non-government institutions
engaged in development include some that have a
technical orientation and others that have a
comparative advantage in engaging communities;
some specialize in agriculture and natural resources
management, and others in youth and women’s affairs.
Within agriculture and natural resource management,
some experts specialize in the agricultural or
environmental sciences and some in agricultural or
resource economics. Generally, it is not possible
for people in one area of expertise to substitute for
another. In order to pursue inclusive and sustainable
development effectively, it is important for a project that
seeks to assist poorer farmers, women and youth to
select appropriate partners from among the relevant
institutions and individuals.

Further information:
Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD, Via Paolo di Dono, 44, 00142, Rome, Italy. The evaluation Profile, Insights and infographic are available online: www.ifad.org/evaluation; email: evaluation@ifad.org.