

Document: EB 2021/132/R.7  
Agenda: 6(a)  
Date: 19 April 2021  
Distribution: Public  
Original: English

**E**



## Summary of Project and Programme Proposals discussed at the Executive Board Consultation held on 14 April 2021

### Note to Executive Board representatives

#### Focal points:

#### Technical questions:

**Donal Brown**

Associate Vice-President  
Programme Management Department  
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2448  
e-mail: d.brown@ifad.org

**Edward Heinemann**

Lead Technical and Policy Adviser  
to the Associate Vice-President  
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2398  
e-mail: e.heinemann@ifad.org

**Tim Balint**

Senior Technical Adviser  
to the Associate Vice-President  
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2790  
e-mail: t.balint@ifad.org

#### Dispatch of documentation:

**Deirdre Mc Grenra**

Chief  
Institutional Governance and Member  
Relations  
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2374  
e-mail: gb@ifad.org

Executive Board — 132<sup>nd</sup> Session  
Rome, 19-21 April 2021

---

For: **Information**

## **I. Introduction**

1. An Executive Board consultation on project and programme proposals scheduled for submission to the Board at its 132<sup>nd</sup> session was held on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Two new investment project proposals – for India and South Sudan – were discussed. The deliberations of Board representatives are reflected in the present document.
2. Attending the consultation were Executive Board representatives for Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, Nigeria, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States. Participating as observers were representatives for Dominican Republic, Israel, Libya and South Sudan. The consultation was chaired by the Associate Vice-President, Programme Management Department, and attended by the Associate Vice-President, Strategy and Knowledge Department, directors of the relevant regional and technical divisions, the Secretary of IFAD and other IFAD staff.
3. The aim of the consultation was to provide Executive Board representatives with an opportunity to have an in-depth discussion on IFAD operations, and so allow for more time at the upcoming Board session to be dedicated to strategic matters.
4. The total value of the two project proposals is US\$257 million, with IFAD financing of US\$77 million leveraging cofinancing of US\$180 million – a cofinancing ratio of 1:2.3, well exceeding the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources (IFAD11) target of 1:1.4.
5. While the two projects are very different, they share the characteristic of being located in contexts of significant socio-economic challenges. Chhattisgarh has one of the lowest per capita incomes of all states in India – with poverty and malnutrition concentrated in tribal-majority areas; and much of the state is affected by left-wing extremism. South Sudan is one of the most fragile states in the world, and the youngest. It has seen a breakdown of governance, law and order, and disruption of the community institutions that supported livelihoods. Large numbers of displaced people returned to their homes in the project area following the 2018 peace settlement but they have limited assets and weak public and private service support. Localized intercommunity conflict is driven by competition for natural resources, adverse weather conditions and flooding.
6. IFAD Management appreciated the opportunity to discuss and collect inputs and guidance from the Board on the two projects. Representatives welcomed the opportunity to focus on projects and were supportive of the proposals and appreciative of the presentations and background information provided by Management and staff.
7. A number of themes common to both projects emerged during the discussion: project cofinancing, with different approaches adopted in the two projects; the management of risk, and the projects’ response to emergencies; targeting of beneficiaries, and particularly ensuring the inclusion of vulnerable women; the projects’ approaches to supporting climate adaptation; and the participatory and community-driven development approaches to planning of project activities. The discussions also gave IFAD staff the opportunity to offer clarification on other important aspects of the projects. IFAD took note of the need to ensure that these were properly elaborated in the design documents.

## **II. Project and programme proposals**

8. Participants discussed the proposals outlined below and expressed support for their approval by the Executive Board at its 132<sup>nd</sup> session.

## **A. Asia and the Pacific**

### **India: Chhattisgarh Inclusive Rural and Accelerated Agriculture Growth Project (EB 2021/132/R.24)**

9. This project – to be supported by IFAD with a loan of US\$67 million and by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) with a loan of US\$100 million – is the first in India to be cofinanced by IFAD and the World Bank. Its development objective is to improve income opportunities and the availability of nutritious foods in the targeted households of the tribal-dominated areas of Chhattisgarh. With 68 per cent of the IFAD loan (and the same share of the IBRD loan) being confirmed as climate-focused, the project will directly contribute to this mainstreaming commitment of IFAD.
10. Representatives commended the design of the project, particularly the proposed collaboration with the World Bank, the project participatory approach, and the focus on climate adaptation. Questions were raised on the partnership between IFAD and the World Bank: it was explained that there would be *pari passu* joint financing by the two institutions; that IFAD would contract the World Bank as its cooperating institution and thus that World Bank procedures would be followed for the project as a whole. IFAD's contribution to the design drew on its long experience in tribal areas, and has resulted in the project's focus on IFAD's mainstreaming themes. IFAD would actively participate in joint supervision missions, where it would ensure a specific attention to issues of importance to the Fund.
11. Management also responded to other questions raised. It explained the project's role in assisting the target group in identifying and accessing markets; strengthening capacity and providing grants for marketing plans and business start-up costs; and facilitating communities' access to finance. The Indian agriculture acts of 2020 are not considered to pose a risk for the target group; on the contrary, they are expected to open up new marketing opportunities for producers. On targeting and women's empowerment, Management explained that 12 of the 14 project districts have high concentrations of scheduled tribes and two had a high concentration of scheduled castes, and that specific activities would be differentiated according to their diverse needs. The approach to women's empowerment would be to seek to integrate the most disadvantaged women (from the scheduled castes and tribes) into grass-roots community structures, while building their capacity to play a more active role. Actions in support of climate adaptation and mitigation would be developed locally, as part of village development plans and according to a predefined approved menu of activities. Other points clarified related to: (a) risk management: the proposed project, like all new IFAD-supported projects, has a risk matrix (that also fed into regional and departmental programme risk matrices). This would be regularly updated and would inform project supervision missions; and (b) the contingency emergency response component, to which resources could be quickly reallocated to finance emergency activities, if and when needed, during the course of project implementation.

## **B. East and Southern Africa**

### **South Sudan: Livelihoods Resilience Programme (EB 2021/132/R.25)**

12. The South Sudan Livelihoods Resilience Programme (SSLRP) will support local rural groups and returning displaced populations to develop viable livelihood opportunities and build their resilience, using a community-driven development (CDD) approach that integrates the IFAD11 mainstreaming themes within a conflict-sensitive lens. IFAD's engagement will operationalize IFAD's fragility strategy, bridging the gap between humanitarian and development assistance, and supporting climate-smart agriculture recovery and income stabilization through short-term jobs in labour-intensive public works. The goal is to contribute to

improved and resilient livelihoods by empowering communities to participate in decision-making processes that will recover agriculture livelihoods, build household resilience and promote stability.

13. Following a statement on behalf of the Government of South Sudan made by Dr John Kanisio, Undersecretary for Food Security in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, representatives welcomed the programme in what was recognized to be a complex and challenging context.
14. In response to questions raised, it was explained that the CDD approach would enable local communities, including returnees, to identify their own development priorities, and that the facilitated process would also build the capacity of community institutions and ensure their inclusivity. This would be the approach used to define the specifics of the substantial infrastructure programme, and so ensure that the infrastructure developed would be of benefit to the target group; it would also serve to identify the climate adaptation activities and investments to be carried out.
15. The importance of learning from the experience of other projects in South Sudan and ensuring coordination among them was highlighted. It was confirmed that a key role played by the in-country project design team, led by the Undersecretary for Food Security, was precisely to prevent duplication of efforts and ensure effective coordination and synergies. Moreover, the design team held extensive discussions with key development partners and will follow up further in the light of representatives' suggestions. In addition, as part of the implementation planning process, the programme would develop county profiles: these would provide a stocktake of infrastructure and activities in the county; and help to identify local needs and contribute to ensuring coordination of efforts. On the specific issue of capacity-building, it was explained that IFAD was partnering with the World Bank, African Development Bank (AfDB) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to provide support to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, including for a programme management unit with the technical and management capacity to provide oversight. In addition, a needs assessment would inform the overall strategy for capacity development at the household, community and government levels. Finally, it was explained that the project was being financed in parallel, rather than jointly, with AfDB, principally because AfDB's design process was already well advanced when IFAD began work on its design. Nonetheless, there was close coordination between the two institutions in the design of the two interventions, and important synergies have been achieved that would facilitate access to business hubs, markets and aggregation centres by the SSLRP beneficiaries.
16. Geographic targeting of SSLRP took into account government strategy, major ongoing projects, relative stability and accessibility, food corridors, climate vulnerability, and the concentration of returnee populations. The focus would be on states where IFAD can effectively deliver support and services. The selection of the implementing agencies was in line with national procedures: the Government had shortlisted a number of NGOs that collectively responded to the expertise and experience criteria outlined in the terms of reference for implementing agencies, and encouraged them to establish a consortium to combine their experiences. SSLRP's exit strategy was premised on empowering households, communities and local governance actors to be able to manage the entire process of identifying, implementing, monitoring and sustaining CDD investments. Access to local and domestic markets supported by market infrastructure and entrepreneurship skills through the AfDB project would strengthen the overall financial sustainability of the interventions.