
Update on implementation of the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility

Addendum

Management's response to Member States' comments

Document: EB 2022/136/R.21/Add.2

Agenda: 12(a)

Date: 28 September 2022

Distribution: Public

Original: English

FOR: INFORMATION

Comments from Sweden	Management response
<p>Sweden welcomes the update on the implementation of the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility (RPSF). As in the previous six progress reports, we appreciate the transparency in which IFAD are reporting on allocations of funds, challenges in certain contexts and overall progress.</p>	<p>Management would like to thank Sweden for their attention to the progress of the RPSF throughout its implementation. This facility has been an important part of responding to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the rural poor, as well as a significant learning experience for the Fund in its evolution to better respond to resilience-building and recovery from emergencies.</p> <p>These progress reports have served as useful mechanisms to debrief RPSF donors and Member States, along with IFAD’s regular internal stocktaking.</p>
<p>We note with appreciation that 100 per cent of the available resources have been approved and that the focus on low-income and lower-middle-income countries have remained. We also commend IFAD for mobilising US\$23.0 million in co-financing.</p>	<p>Ensuring the comprehensive allocations of funds and support to the most vulnerable populations has remained a key objective of the facility, and will continue to be in IFAD’s general portfolio of loans and grants, as well as other emergency responses.</p> <p>Additionally, RPSF projects have continued to mobilize efforts by other donors, and have been supplemented by additional funds, as is the case with the recent project in the Pacific. IFAD looks forward to providing further details of the results from RPSF funding and cofinancing in its final reporting.</p>
<p>We look forward to the completion report in June 2023. In the report, we would appreciate more information on lessons learned from IFAD’s experience implementing the RPSF. We would also like to understand how lessons learned have informed the ongoing portfolio and been integrated into similar emergency activities, such as the Crisis Response Initiative (CRI).</p>	<p>Management appreciates Sweden’s continued engagement and helpful direction to ensure the final report in June 2023 includes these lessons learned. It will be happy to include this information.</p> <p>Additionally, Management would like to highlight that an interim report will be shared with donors this month. This report will shed light on some of the emerging lessons from implementing the RPSF, and how it has been used to inform similar activities, including the Crisis Response Initiative.</p> <p>Examples of lessons that have been learned include: (i) the importance of ensuring adequate resources for projects to maximize effectiveness; (ii) the benefits of further streamlining internal processes while maintaining the necessary reviews of projects to ensure quality; (iii) the benefits of working through existing implementation structures and, on occasion, with local third-party entities, to increase efficiencies; and (iv) the effectiveness of the types of emergency and recovery response activities across the four RPSF pillars - which had positive impacts on helping farmers meet the needs of upcoming planting seasons and adapt to movement restrictions and supply chain interruptions, as well as continue to support households in the face of other shocks.</p>

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	<p>Examples include: (i) the use of digital advisory services expanded under the RPSF being leveraged to warn farmers of the floods in Pakistan and provide guidance on how farmers could mitigate their losses; (ii) the storage of wheat and other crops in food banks created under RPSF during the current global wheat shortage and price hikes; and (iii) the increased incomes from development of market gardens, which more generally help smallholders to increase resilience (in terms of financial stability and hunger).</p>
<p>As a RPSF donor, Sweden is supportive of the 12-month extension for the projects in Afghanistan and Yemen, given the country's unique circumstances and grave need.</p>	<p>Management is grateful for Sweden's flexibility. As iterated in the progress report, addendum to the progress report, and the extension request sent to Sweden, rural communities in Afghanistan and Yemen continue to be in extreme need of support, in light of the challenges posed by COVID-19 and other shocks. The 12-month extension of RPSF funds will permit IFAD to complete implementation in these two unique contexts, as most of the preparatory stages are already complete, while also providing adequate time and appropriate attention to monitoring.</p>