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Investing in rural people

**President's report on a proposed grant under
the global/regional grants window to a non-
CGIAR-supported international centre:**

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Note to Executive Board representatives

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For: Approval

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ILO	International Labour Organization
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MTP	Medium-term Plan
CoP	community of practice

Recommendation for approval

The Executive Board is invited to approve the recommendation for a grant under the global/regional grants window to a non-CGIAR-supported international centre, as contained in paragraph 8.

President's report on a proposed grant under the global/regional grants window to a non-CGIAR-supported international centre: International Labour Organization

I submit the following report and recommendation on a proposed grant for agricultural research and training to a non-Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)-supported international centre in the amount of US\$1.72 million.

Part I – Introduction

1. This report recommends the provision of IFAD support to a research and training programme of the following non-CGIAR-supported international centre: International Labour Organization (ILO).
2. The document of the grant for approval by the Executive Board is contained in the annex to this report:

International Labour Organization (ILO): Strengthening gender monitoring and evaluation in rural employment in the Near East and North Africa
3. The objectives and content of this applied research programme are in line with the evolving strategic objectives of IFAD and the Fund's policy for grant financing.
4. The overarching strategic goal that drives the Revised IFAD Policy for Grant Financing, which was approved by the Executive Board in December 2009, is to promote successful and/or innovative approaches and technologies, together with enabling policies and institutions, that will support agricultural and rural development, empowering poor rural women and men in developing countries to achieve higher incomes and improved food security.
5. The policy aims to achieve the following outputs: (a) innovative activities promoted and innovative technologies and approaches developed in support of IFAD's target group; (b) awareness, advocacy and policy dialogue on issues of importance to poor rural people promoted by, and on behalf of, this target group; (c) capacity of partner institutions strengthened to deliver a range of services in support of poor rural people; and (d) lesson learning, knowledge management and dissemination of information on issues related to rural poverty reduction promoted among stakeholders within and across regions.
6. The proposed programme is in line with the goal and outputs of the revised IFAD grant policy. This programme is designed to support IFAD's objectives for its grants, in particular its focus on innovation, awareness-raising around gender, capacity development for programme management and learning. Innovation will primarily focus on piloting new approaches to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for gender issues.
7. Awareness-raising will also be supported as a cross-cutting issue: with a more explicit focus on gender-disaggregated data in both M&E and during evaluations,

gender-specific challenges will get substantially more attention. Finally, capacity development will be a core ingredient and one main outcome of the programme.

Part II – Recommendation

8. I recommend that the Executive Board approve the proposed grant in terms of the following resolution:

RESOLVED: that the Fund, in order to finance, in part, the programme Strengthening gender monitoring and evaluation in rural employment in the Near East and North Africa, shall provide a grant not exceeding one million seven hundred twenty thousand United States dollars (US\$1,720,000) to the International Labour Organization for a three-year programme upon such terms and conditions as shall be substantially in accordance with the terms and conditions presented to the Executive Board herein.

Kanayo F. Nwanze
President

International Labour Organization (ILO): Strengthening gender monitoring and evaluation in rural employment in the Near East and North Africa

I. Background

1. For the Near East and North Africa (NENA) region, the gender gap in economic opportunities, a global measure of gender-based disparities, is the highest in the world. Women are on average 2.4 times more likely to be unemployed than their male counterparts. For young women, this figure translates into an unemployment rate of 21.7 and 21.2 percentage points in North Africa and the Near East, respectively. Young women's labour force participation in the region is the lowest in the world at about 16 per cent.
2. Poor employment outcomes for women in the region can be attributed to prevailing cultural backgrounds, discriminatory laws and weak support services. Women in the region are concentrated in low-productivity jobs. They work in small farms and run small firms. They are overrepresented among unpaid family workers and in the informal sector. And they rarely rise to positions of power in the labour market.
3. Without informed and increased gender-sensitive investments that ensure decent work opportunities while providing skills, education and access to finance, more and more women in the region will continue to be required to work in low-paid and vulnerable jobs and subsequently migrate to urban centres in search of opportunity.
4. While there is a large body of knowledge about achieving gender equality, rural development practitioners are often held back by a lack of data and rigorous evaluation of impact.
5. Part of the reason for this lack of evidence is the weak M&E capacity of many institutions, which in turn translates into a lack of expertise, tools and procedures to design and operate M&E systems that can accurately measure changes in outcomes while documenting the underlying mechanisms that trigger such changes.

II. Rationale and relevance to IFAD

6. This programme is designed to support IFAD's objectives for its grants, in particular its focus on innovation, awareness-raising around gender, and capacity development for project management and learning.
7. The programme is also supporting IFAD's key strategic cross-cutting concern – gender mainstreaming – which will be promoted by building gender aspects into M&E systems and evaluations. Similarly, the programme will contribute to one of IFAD's important principles of engagement – promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. In this context, the programme will contribute to increased recognition of, and support for, women's multiple roles in agriculture and rural economies, which are crucial to food security and economic growth.
8. The programme will contribute to the Medium-term Plan 2013-2015 (MTP) as well as the divisional strategic workplan (DSWP) for grants. In relation to the MTP, the programme is fully aligned with the guiding principle of promoting knowledge-sharing and South-South cooperation. Knowledge-sharing is built into the programme with a robust focus on the production of high-integrity evidence from M&E systems and evaluations that will be disseminated through a communication strategy to all relevant stakeholders. This will optimize impact in terms of encouraging policy-making to become more gender-sensitive and change practices to make rural employment projects more empowering for women.
9. South-South cooperation is also a key institutional feature of the programme, with the Tajeem community of practice (CoP) as the core organizational framework. The

Taqeem CoP is a group of 15 organizations pioneering new approaches to develop capacity in the NENA region to measure and monitor the impact of national programmes. The CoP is key in catalysing peer-to-peer learning and cooperation among a rather diverse group of nationally anchored organizations. This will enhance sustainability prospects as well. The programme will also make a substantial contribution to the main service priorities in the MTP, in particular the one on improving impact monitoring and reporting. Through capacity development activities the programme will assist both ongoing and planned IFAD interventions to better monitor how gender equality and women's empowerment can contribute to rural poverty reduction.

10. The proposal positions the programme as a new gender-focused window within evaluation practices in the rural region. For Taqeem, the programme will thus constitute a separate M&E window on gender, an aspect that has hitherto not been specifically addressed due to budgetary constraints. This strategic decision aims to take advantage of and capitalize on a tested and recognized approach that can steer the programme towards its ultimate goal of gender equality in employment outcomes in rural areas of the NENA region.
11. The programme will also strengthen individual country programme strategies, both in the countries where the Taqeem CoP is active (Egypt, Gaza and West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon, Somalia and Yemen) and elsewhere.

III. The proposed programme

12. The overall goal of the programme is gender equality in rural employment outcomes in the NENA region. The programme's objectives are: (i) improved programme management and gender mainstreaming for organizations implementing development projects in rural areas of the NENA region through rigorous M&E; and (ii) improved employment policies and investments for governments through impact research.
13. The target group is 10,000 inactive, unemployed and underemployed rural women and men in the NENA region, to be reached by ongoing programme activities of 20 CoP members (~500 beneficiaries per CoP member). Activities will concentrate especially on the youth demographic (18-35 years), where unemployment rates are highest and political-economic risk more pervasive.
14. Moreover, the direct beneficiaries and related outputs are: 20 organizations and 40 programme managers or M&E officers, at least 300 researchers, practitioners and policymakers attend yearly evidence symposiums, 60 policymakers and social partners consulted at three high-level policy round tables, 8,000 rural women and men participate in eight gender impact studies, and over 300 researchers, practitioners and policymakers trained in basic and advanced evaluation techniques.
15. The programme will be of 36 months duration and will comprise three main components:
 - **Component 1: Capacity development:** Communities of practice (CoPs) will be set up at the regional level, composed of gender-focused programme teams. CoP members will receive technical assistance designed to improve their ability to measure and track results. A rigorous training module will be offered to create a critical mass of evaluation expertise in the region while promoting South-South learning on M&E. The CoP members are organizations implementing development projects that seek to promote employment and gender equality in the region.
 - **Component 2: Impact research:** The programme will support a series of rigorous studies to provide evidence on programmes and policies and how they enhance economic empowerment of rural women and men respectively. An annual call for proposals will be the vehicle to competitively select

projects, programmes and other development initiatives for an impact evaluation. Synergies will be actively sought with similar efforts by IFAD's Statistics and Studies for Development Division (SSD), especially as part of impact evaluations.

- **Component 3: Policy influence:** The programme will leverage ILO's comparative advantage of collaboration with governments, employers and workers organizations in the region to facilitate dissemination of impact research findings and recommendations. Three countries will be targeted for the development and implementation of an in-depth policy influence plan. Selected countries will have impact research studies launched or finalized in order to maximize opportunities for evidence-based messages and recommendations. IFAD's visibility will also be promoted during such events.

IV. Expected outputs and benefits

16. These are the following:

- **Capacity development on evaluation** – the main output is the establishment of a critical mass of gender-sensitive evaluation expertise in the region. Evaluation expertise will be created through three activities: training, gender assessment and technical assistance. The Taqueem training model will be replicated to improve the targeting of women in rural communities. A basic course (Evaluation Clinic) will be held focusing on policymakers and practitioners. In the advanced course (Executive Clinic), the focus will be on researchers and academics.
- **Impact research** - on what works in rural gender and employment interventions through an annual call for proposals on impact evaluations (both experimental and quasi-experimental) in the context of the ILO Fund for Evaluation. Policymakers and investors will improve their decision-making processes because of the evidence built and the knowledge gaps filled on which types of interventions work, which do not, and how. Supported research methods will include not only experimental designs but also innovative retrospective studies, meta analyses and case studies.
- **Policy influence** - with respect to governments, employers and workers, donor institutions and investors. Based on policy influence plans tailored to the NENA region, findings and recommendations from evaluations will be used to influence and create evidence-based policies on gender mainstreaming. This will include advocacy and communication strategy with the goal of turning research into action. The programme will also feed into IFAD's portfolio in order to make ongoing and future interventions more gender-sensitive and capable of addressing the gender discrepancies. However, the programme will also aim at leveraging the IFAD portfolio to influence the wider policy framework at national and regional level, with a view to promoting changes that will enable women, in particular, to express their full productive potential and thus help reduce both gender imbalances and rural poverty. The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) can be viewed as an evidence-based foundation upon which such policy work can be built.

V. Implementation arrangements

17. ILO headquarters in Geneva will implement the programme and will be responsible for overall technical and financial coordination. The programme team will be housed in the Youth Employment Programme (YEP) of the Employment and Labour Market Policies Branch (EMPLAB) and will link to technical input from the Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch (GED) and the Small and Medium Enterprises Unit (SME). The

programme will be further supported by ILO field offices in Beirut and Cairo, with overall technical responsibility based in Geneva.

18. ILO will provide regular reports to IFAD, including six-month consolidated and programme-specific (reporting on ILO as well as other contributions) certified statements of expenditure. ILO will submit a copy of audited ILO financial statements, when they relate to any part of the grant proceeds, within six months following their official publication. Disbursements to ILO will be based on annual workplans and budgets (AWP/Bs).

VI. Indicative programme costs and financing

19. IFAD will provide the programme with US\$1.5 million from the Near East, North Africa and Europe Division (NEN) divisional allocation and US\$0.22 million from the Policy and Technical Advisory Division (PTA) gender desk. ILO will contribute US\$1.42 million. Total combined funding for the programme is US\$3.14 million.

Summary of budget and financing plan

(United States dollars)

<i>Number</i>	<i>Type of expenditure</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>Cofinancing</i>
1	Salaries and allowances	664 208	624 308
2	Consultancies	103 400	60 000
3	Travel and allowances	77 330	15 375
4	Goods and services	184 000	131 510
5	Workshops*	168 467	30 257
6	Operating costs	24 515	27 082
7	Grants	370 673	450 000
	Subtotal direct cost	1 592 593	1 341 532
8	Programme support cost (8%)	127 407	78 519
	Programme total	1 720 000	1 420 051

* Includes training.

Summary of budget by component

(United States dollars)

<i>Component</i>	<i>Total</i>
Cross-cutting budget items	113 730
Component I: Capacity development	561 467
Component II: Impact research	603 768
Component III: Policy influence	313 628
Subtotal direct cost	1 592 593
Programme support cost (8%)	127 407
Programme total	1 720 000

Results-based logical framework

	Objectives-hierarchy	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
Goal	Gender equality in rural employment outcomes in the Near East and North Africa	Objectives contributing to overall goal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement in gender policy and investment for government and international organizations leads to better employment outcomes for rural women Improvement in project management and gender mainstreaming ensure that gender aspects are reflected in the design and implementation of rural economic opportunities projects 		
Objectives	1. Improved project management and gender mainstreaming by implementing organizations of rural development projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of implementing organizations which commit to using M&E knowledge and elements of WEAI in their results based measurement initiatives (Target: at least 60%) # of organizations participating in the CoPs established for learning and exchange among supported implementing organizations (Target: 20) # of organizations who receive "Gender Seal" through Participatory Gender Mainstreaming exercise (Target: 5) Percentage of implementing organizations which continue to access the online Taqueem CoP as a knowledge management tool for M&E after end of the project (Target: at least 60%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training courses pre-post tests WEAI training surveys Online portal Consultants' quarterly progress reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security situation in the Near East and North Africa allows organizations to participate and events to be held Freedom of expression and liberty of civil society to be promoted in the region Rural economic opportunities and impact evaluation continue to be in the policy makers' and donors' agenda Funding is obtained to finance impact evaluations
	2. Improved gender policy and investment for governments and international organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of meetings in which governments consult the Taqueem Evaluation Council for policy design and advice (Target: 3) # of improved national action plans on economic opportunities for women (Target: 3) # of replicated proof of economic opportunities concepts (Target: 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project records 	
Outputs	1.1 Capacity development: Improved ability of organizations to measure gender results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of basic and advanced/executive training courses in impact evaluation (Target: 6) # of courses that include training on Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (Target: 3) # of courses that include special module on measuring women's rural employment (target: 3) # of implementing organizations/projects receiving support and coaching for improved results measurement practices (Target: 20) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training courses Project records Consultants' quarterly progress reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Evaluation consultants (Taqueem Associates) will deal with most of the M&E support
	1.2 Evidence production: impact research on rural women's projects produced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of calls for proposals for impact evaluations prepared and launched (Target: 3) # of impact evaluation proposals received (Target: 300) # of impact evaluation studies for rural employment and gender receiving seed funding (Target: 8) # of impact evaluation studies that use WEAI in surveys (Target: 4) # of baseline studies completed (Target: 8) # of impact evaluations completed (Target : 4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project records 	

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizations implementing projects that are not suitable for impact evaluation, left out. evaluation consultants will be able to create their own reporting templates with the beneficiary organizations.
	<p>2.1 Influence policy/knowledge sharing: evidence to NENA gender community disseminated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take-up of evaluation recommendations in policy and project documents in select countries (Target: 3) # of evaluated projects that are replicated or scaled up (Target: 2) # of countries in which the evidence base was mapped (Target: 3) # of countries in which a context and stakeholder analysis was carried out (Target: 3) # of briefs covering “what works” and disseminated (Target: 8) # of high level policy roundtables and policy workshops (Target: 6) # of Evidence Symposiums (Target: 3) # of web and social media products developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key gender policy documents New project documents Project records 	
<p>Key Activities</p>	<p>1.1.1 Organize basic and advanced training courses in impact evaluation 1.1.2 Provide training on WEAI 1.1.3 Provide M&E technical assistance to at least 20 implementing organizations and projects</p>	<p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation experts to provide training and technical assistance Training logistic and workshop costs Funding for selected experts and participants to attend training 		
	<p>1.2.1 Prepare and launch call for proposals for impact evaluations 1.2.2 Provide seed funding for impact studies</p>	<p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation experts to screen and assess proposals Seed funding for rural employment and gender impact studies 		
	<p>2.1.1 Develop and implement policy influence plans for impact evaluations in 3 select countries 2.1.2 Map the evidence base 2.1.3 Carry out context and stakeholder analysis 2.1.4 Develop and disseminate policy briefs covering “what works” in rural economic opportunities 2.1.5 Organize high level policy roundtables and policy workshops 2.1.6 Prepare and hold annual Evidence Symposium 2.1.7 Develop web and social media products and implement communications strategy</p>	<p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication and policy specialists Meeting logistic and workshop costs Funding for selected experts and participants to attend workshops, roundtables and symposiums Funding for communications team to support development and implementation of policy influence plan 		