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Investing in rural people

President's report on a proposed grant under the global/regional grants window to the Centre for Development and Environment of the University of Bern, for Scaling up Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Practices by Smallholder Farmers: Working with Agricultural Extension Services to Identify, Assess and Disseminate SLM Practices

Note to Executive Board representatives

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For: Approval

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

CDE	Centre for Development and Environment
KM	knowledge management
NPC	national programme coordinator
NPCU	national programme coordination unit
PCU	programme coordination unit
SLM	sustainable land management
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
WOCAT	World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies

## Recommendation for approval

The Executive Board is invited to approve the recommendation for a proposed grant under the global/regional grants window to the Centre for Development and Environment of the University of Bern, for Scaling up Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Practices by Smallholder Farmers: Working with Agricultural Extension Services to Identify, Assess and Disseminate SLM Practices, as contained in paragraph 5.

President's report on a proposed grant under the global/regional grants window to the Centre for Development and Environment of the University of Bern, for Scaling up Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Practices by Smallholder Farmers: Working with Agricultural Extension Services to Identify, Assess and Disseminate SLM Practices

### Part I – Introduction

1. This report recommends the provision of an IFAD grant in the amount of US\$2,000,000 under the global/regional grants window to the Centre for Development and Environment of the University of Bern, hosting the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT) secretariat, for the programme on Scaling up Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Practices by Smallholder Farmers: Working with Agricultural Extension Services to Identify, Assess and Disseminate SLM Practices. The grant proposal document is contained in the annex to this report.
2. The goal of IFAD grants is to significantly broaden and add value to the support provided to smallholder farming and rural transformation, thereby contributing to rural poverty eradication, sustainable agricultural development, and global food security and nutrition. In order to achieve these goals, IFAD grants should adhere to three basic principles: (i) make a significant contribution to a global, regional or national public good related to IFAD's mandate; (ii) focus on interventions where grant financing has clear added value and a comparative advantage over regular loans; and (iii) not be used as a substitute for resources from IFAD's administrative budget.
3. The objectives of IFAD grant financing are to: (i) promote innovative, pro-poor approaches and technologies with the potential to be scaled up for greater impact; (ii) strengthen partners' institutional and policy capacities; (iii) enhance advocacy and policy engagement; and (iv) generate and share knowledge for development impact. Rural poor people and their organizations should be squarely positioned at the centre of each grant submission to fulfil IFAD's mandate to enable poor rural people to improve their food security and nutrition, raise their incomes and strengthen their resilience.
4. The proposed programme is in line with the goal and objectives of IFAD grant financing, as stated in the IFAD grant policy. The proposed programme contributes to IFAD's overarching goal of enabling poor rural people to improve their food security and nutrition, raise their incomes and strengthen their resilience (IFAD Strategic Framework 2011-2015) by supporting agricultural extension services to enhance the resilience of small-scale farmers through the adoption of sustainable land management (SLM) practices. It addresses strategic objectives 1 and 2 of the Strategic Framework, respectively, on strengthening natural resources and the economic base, and on enhanced access to services. The proposed programme also directly addresses strategic direction 4 of the Strategic Guidance for IFAD Grants

2015, of “leveraging the rural/urban nexus for development and promoting the resilience of poor households”. The proposal is also in line with IFAD’s rural transformation agenda and post-2015 positioning for promoting investment in the rural sector through building assets that help rural economies become not only more productive, but also more sustainable, inclusive and resilient, and through improving rural/urban connectivity with regard to shared ecosystems and ecosystem services provision.

## Part II – Recommendation

5. 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 on Scaling up Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Practices by Smallholder Farmers: Working with Agricultural Extension Services to Identify, Assess and Disseminate SLM Practices, shall provide a grant not exceeding two million United States dollars (US\$2,000,000) to the Centre for Development and Environment of the University of Bern 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

## Scaling up Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Practices by Smallholder Farmers: Working with Agricultural Extension Services to Identify, Assess and Disseminate SLM Practices

### I. Background

1. Rural environmental systems close to rapidly urbanizing centres are being pushed to destabilizing limits. Farmers are increasingly adopting commercial practices, intensifying inputs and overexploiting natural resources in an attempt to maximize short-term returns. The consequent erosion of the natural resource base, exacerbated by climate change, poses an extreme challenge to rural livelihoods.
2. One strategy to ensure sustainability and resilience of these systems is to scale up innovative sustainable land management (SLM) practices for smallholder farmers that are affordable and profitable for them to invest in their natural resource base. Many SLM innovations exist, often developed by smallholder farmers. However, only a limited number of these practices have been documented in a standardized way that allows comparisons between different practices in different contexts. Successful SLM scaling up requires the identification and evaluation of SLM solutions contextualized to specific agroecological conditions and acceptable and affordable to the local community adopting them. Agricultural extension services critical to the scaling up of SLM are often weak, and are seldom knowledgeable or equipped to promote sustainable agriculture and natural resource management.
3. The programme aims to build the capacity of extension services to identify, evaluate and continuously document SLM practices using the proven and globally accepted participatory tools and methods of the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT). It seeks to create a national SLM database, linked to the global WOCAT SLM approaches database, and to support the scaling up of SLM practices nationally and globally.

### II. Rationale and relevance to IFAD

4. The proposed programme contributes to IFAD's overarching goal of "enabling poor rural people to improve their food security and nutrition, raise their incomes and strengthen their resilience" (IFAD Strategic Framework 2011-2015), through capacitating agricultural extension services to enhance the adoption of adapted and affordable SLM practices.
5. The programme addresses Strategic Framework strategic objectives 1 and 2, respectively, on strengthening natural resources and the economic base, and on enhanced access to services. It also addresses strategic direction 4 of the Strategic Guidance for IFAD Grants 2015 of "leveraging the rural/urban nexus for development and promoting the resilience of poor rural households". The proposal is in line with IFAD's rural transformation agenda and post-2015 positioning, which promote investment in the rural sector by building assets that help rural economies become not only more productive, but also more sustainable, inclusive and resilient by improving rural/urban connectivity with regard to shared ecosystems and provision of ecosystem services.
6. The programme is linked to ongoing IFAD investment programmes in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) and Uganda to embed SLM tools and methodologies into extension systems. In Cambodia, the grant supports activities of the Agriculture Services Programme for Innovation, Resilience and Extension (ASPIRE); in the Lao PDR, the Smallholder Adaptation to Climate Change Component (SACCC) of the Southern Laos Food and Nutrition Security and Market Linkages Programme (FNML); and in Uganda, the Project for Restoration of Livelihoods in the Northern Region (PRELNOR).

### III. Proposed programme

7. The overall goal of the programme is to enhance the resilience of communities and smallholder farmers to climate change shocks, population growth, rapid urbanization and economic expansion. The objectives are to: (i) build the capacity of extension systems to identify and assess climate-resilient SLM practices for knowledge-based scaling up; and (ii) enhance policy and incentive frameworks to enable and enhance scaling up of SLM.
8. The direct target group comprises 450 extension workers and lead farmers, who will enhance their knowledge and capacity to identify, assess and document SLM and who will increase access to SLM practices for 20,000 smallholder households. At least 30 per cent of these will be headed by women, including from ethnic minorities and indigenous groups.
9. The three-year programme has three components:
 

Component 1. Operationalization of an SLM knowledge base and management system for agricultural extension services, building on existing knowledge
10. Existing knowledge on SLM in agricultural extension systems is often scattered, with no standardized/formalized system, which constrains the ability of extension workers to make knowledge-based decisions in selecting appropriate SLM. In the programme appraisal phase, existing knowledge management (KM) systems will be evaluated and gaps and training needs identified. Existing WOCAT tools and methods will be selected, based on and tailored to country-specific needs. The tools and methods include the WOCAT DESIRE decision-support framework (developed by Alterra's DESIRE project), WOCAT questionnaires on SLM practices (climate change, watershed management, land degradation and SLM mapping), its database on SLM technologies and approaches, the WOCAT/IFAD users' manual on production of instructional videos on SLM, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)/WOCAT guidelines for mainstreaming and scaling up SLM.
11. The capacities of public/private extension workers will be enhanced by building their skills as trainers of trainers and by continuous on-the-job backstopping.
12. Through a series of participatory field workshops, the main problems of land degradation and potential SLM solutions for specific agroecologies will be identified. This builds mutual learning and shared experiences; creates a common understanding of problems, potentials and opportunities in SLM; strengthens collaboration among stakeholders; and leads to the identification of the SLM practices of innovative farmers and other national or international programmes.
13. Trained extension workers will: conduct in-depth assessment and documentation of local/regional, climate-resilient SLM practices; compile a knowledge base on SLM; and describe and analyse practices in a standardized format. This information will be entered into the national database, which will be developed and linked to the global WOCAT database. SLM practices in the national database and other globally existing practices will be analysed and discussed, in a stakeholder workshop, to formulate context-specific, practical principles for SLM implementation.
 

Component 2. Knowledge-based decision support for adoption and scaling up of climate-resilient SLM practices
14. Extension workers will undertake participatory stakeholder workshops involving farmers, local decision-makers and local SLM experts. They will select the most promising, innovative, climate-resilient SLM practices, specific to agroecological conditions, for promotion and implementation in demonstration sites. Participants will define objectives and criteria for scaling up SLM, considering existing opportunities and bottlenecks regarding the enabling environment, including

institutional, technical, financial and market aspects, land tenure/rights issues and driving forces for change. Diverse options for SLM practices in the national database will be scored and ranked by participants to make a final selection of those SLM practices to be implemented in demonstration sites selected by the participants.

15. Extension workers will deploy a set of activities for promoting SLM implementation and scaling out through existing structures such as farmer field schools, lead farmers and exchange visits – as well as dissemination of SLM knowledge through various communication channels. Using the baseline surveys of IFAD investment projects, and in close collaboration with the programme coordination unit (PCU), households will be identified for demonstrations of selected climate-resilient SLM practices.

Component 3. Enhancing policy frameworks and incentive structures for scaling up SLM

16. A national expert group of stakeholders (line ministries, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification [UNCCD] focal points, research organizations, non-governmental organizations [NGOs] and national extension bodies) will function as the core technical and policy advisory group and will: (i) validate the SLM practices selected for scaling up; (ii) identify policies, watershed strategies and planning processes, incentive frameworks and financing mechanisms for mainstreaming and promoting adoption of SLM practices; (iii) establish partnerships for scaling up SLM with national and subnational institutions, ongoing programmes of national/international agencies and NGOs; and (iv) formulate action plans for scaling up climate-resilient SLM and plan awareness campaigns.
17. National policy dialogue forums will be organized to share and disseminate SLM knowledge, lessons learned and results of the survey on policies and incentive frameworks. The forums will offer a platform for governmental, non-governmental and international institutions to discuss the scaling up of SLM and agree on financing mechanisms.
18. To promote SLM supportive policies beyond the national level, lessons learned and results will be shared with the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS), the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) and the Asia Pacific Island Network for Rural Advisory Services (APIRAS). The latter two are IFAD grantees representing regional extension services. National UNCCD focal points will be included in programme activities, enhancing their capacities in documentation, evaluation and selection of SLM practices and thus supporting them in implementing their national action plans and fulfilling UNCCD obligations.
19. Based on lessons learned and results in the three grant countries, national programme partners and the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE)/WOCAT secretariat will formulate a final methodology for scaling up SLM in national extension services. The methodology will be integrated into future government extension-related programmes, and will include options for potential policy and incentive frameworks for mainstreaming SLM.

#### IV. Expected outputs

20. The programme will have the following outputs:

Output 1. SLM KM system elaborated for strengthening extension curricula with SLM scaling-up methodology;

Output 2. Capacities enhanced of extension workers in agricultural extension systems for the identification, documentation and assessment of effective, climate-resilient SLM practices;

Output 3. National SLM database established in support of agricultural extension service systems and for scaling up promotion of SLM;

Output 4. Decision-support tools and dissemination pathways strengthened to support smallholder farmers in adoption and scaling up of climate-resilient SLM practices;

Output 5. National SLM policy dialogue forum and platform established for validating evidence from the field, and for conducting rigorous upstream analysis for enhancing policy and incentive frameworks for scaling up SLM;

Output 6. SLM scaling-up methodology for extension services consolidated and synthesized, based on experiences in the three pilot countries.

## V. Implementation arrangements

21. The programme will be implemented by the University of Bern, Switzerland, which hosts the WOCAT secretariat through the CDE. In each of the three beneficiary countries, a national institution will act as its national partner. The CDE/WOCAT secretariat will be responsible for: (i) overall coordination and implementation; (ii) capacity-building in WOCAT tools and methods; (iii) SLM implementation and impact assessment; and (iv) guidance of the national expert groups. It will also be responsible for technical and financial reporting to IFAD. A programme coordinator in the CDE/WOCAT secretariat will be directly responsible for providing overall management and coordination of grant activities, and timely financial and technical reporting to IFAD.
22. Each CDE/WOCAT national partner will implement programme activities in consultation with the secretariat and IFAD investment-project PCU staff in ASPIRE, SACCC/FNML and PRELNOR. The proposed national partners are: Uganda Landcare Network (ULN) in Uganda, Royal University of Agriculture (RUA) in Cambodia and the National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI) in the Lao PDR.
23. Programme coordination nationally will be undertaken by each national programme coordination unit (NPCU), comprising: one staff member of the CDE/WOCAT national partner, referred to as national programme coordinator (NPC) of the grant; a member of the IFAD investment project PCU; and, where necessary, a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture.
24. Each NPCU will prepare the grant annual workplan and budget (AWP/B), to be submitted to the PCUs of the IFAD investment projects and the CDE/WOCAT secretariat for approval, before its final consolidation within the AWP/B of the IFAD investment project.
25. NPCUs will ensure coherence among outcomes and facilitate coordination of activities between the IFAD investment projects in the countries and the CDE/WOCAT secretariat. Each NPC will be responsible for ensuring proper implementation of grant activities by the national partner and will be responsible for reporting to the CDE/WOCAT secretariat on a monthly basis.

## VI. Indicative programme costs and financing

26. Total programme costs are US\$2,404,000, of which US\$2,000,000 is requested from IFAD. US\$404,000 is cofinanced by the CDE/WOCAT secretariat.

Table 1  
**Programme costs by component and financier**  
 (United States dollars)

<i>Component</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>Cofinancier</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Operationalization of an SLM knowledge base and management system for agricultural extension services, building on existing knowledge	663 000	224 000	887 000
2. Knowledge-based decision support for adoption and scaling up of climate-resilient SLM practices	800 000	65 000	865 000
3. Enhancing policy frameworks and incentive structures for scaling up SLM	377 000	115 000	492 000
Overheads	160 000		160 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 000 000</b>	<b>404 000</b>	<b>2 404 000</b>

Table 2  
**Programme costs by expenditure category and financier**  
 (United States dollars)

<i>Expenditure category</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>Cofinancier</i>	<i>Total</i>
Salaries and allowances	240 000	275 000	515 000
Consultancies	415 000	50 000	465 000
Operating costs	60 000		60 000
Goods, services & inputs	300 000	50 000	350 000
Equipment & materials - SLM	320 000		320 000
Workshops	220 000		220 000
Training	185 000	29 000	214 000
Travel and allowances	100 000		100 000
Overhead/management fees	160 000		160 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 000 000</b>	<b>404 000</b>	<b>2 404 000</b>

## Results-based logical framework

	Objectives-hierarchy	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
<b>Goal</b>	to enhance the resilience of communities and their smallholder farmers to climate change shocks as well as pressures exerted by population growth, rapid urbanisation, and economic expansion	- 20,000 households with improved access to climate-resilient SLM (minimum 30% female headed-households)	- Impact study report - IFAD investment project reports - Ministry of Agriculture reports	- Governments continued interest in promoting SLM scaling up
<b>Objectives</b>	1) to build the capacity of agricultural extension systems in the pilot countries to identify and assess climate-resilient SLM practices for knowledge-based scaling up of SLM 2) to enhance the necessary policy and incentive frameworks in the pilot countries to enable and enhance scaling up of SLM	- 300 extension workers actively using tools and methods  - SLM strategies and action plans developed by institutions at local and national level	- Agricultural extension KM system incl. nat. SLM database - Impact study report - Institutional documents	- Political stability in three project countries - Agricultural extension services continue to operate and support rural development
<b>Outputs and Activities</b>	<p><u>Output 1: SLM KM system elaborated for strengthening extension curricula with SLM scale up methodology</u> <i>Act. 1.1: Appraisal phase</i> <i>Act. 1.2: Tailoring of WOCAT tools and methods</i></p> <p><u>Output 2: Capacities enhanced of extension workers in agricultural extension systems for the identification, documentation and assessment of effective, climate-resilient SLM practices</u> <i>Act. 2.1: ToTs for extension workers</i> <i>Act. 2.2: Stakeholder workshops on definition of LD and SLM solutions</i> <i>Act. 2.3: Documentation of SLM practices, entry in nat. database</i> <i>Act. 2.4: Workshop on principles for SLM implementation</i> <i>Act. 2.5: Creation of knowledge products</i></p> <p><u>Output 3: National SLM database established in support of agricultural extension service systems and for wider promotion of SLM</u> <i>Act. 3.1: Establishment of nat. SLM database</i></p> <p><u>Output 4: DS tools and dissemination pathways strengthened to support smallholder farmers with adoption and scale up of climate-resilient SLM practices</u> <i>Act. 4.1: Stakeholder workshops for selection of SLM practices</i> <i>Act. 4.2: SLM promotion, implementation, monitoring and assessment</i></p> <p><u>Output 5: National SLM policy dialogue forum and platform for validating evidence from the field, and conducting rigorous upstream analysis for enhancing policy and incentive frameworks for scaling up SLM established</u> <i>Act. 5.1: Nat. expert group validates practices, carries out desk study &amp; survey, establishes partnerships, develops action plan for scaling up</i> <i>Act. 5.2: National policy dialogue fora and workshops</i> <i>Act. 5.3: Methodology shared with AFAAS, APIRAS, GFRAS</i></p> <p><u>Output 6: Consolidation and synthesis of SLM scale up methodology for extension services based on experiences from three pilot countries</u> <i>Act. 6.1: Formulation of final SLM scaling up methodology</i></p>	<p>- WOCAT tools and methods tailored to country and extension context and needs</p> <p>- 450 extension workers and lead farmers trained - At least 60 SLM practices documented and entered into national SLM database</p> <p>- 3 national SLM databases established and functioning</p> <p>- At least 60 trained extension workers conducted stakeholder workshops - At least 30 SLM demonstration plots set up and promotion activities implemented - At least 600 households directly supported in scaling up climate-resilient SLM practices through access to SLM knowledge and DS<sup>1</sup></p> <p>- Nat. expert group set up and functioning - Desk study &amp; survey on policy frameworks and incentive structures, policy dialogue fora, national workshops implemented</p> <p>- SLM scale up methodology formulated</p>	<p>- AWPB for 3 countries for year 1 - WOCAT tools and methods</p> <p>- Training reports - National SLM database - Stakeholder workshops conducted by trained extension workers - knowledge products produced and applied in different events</p> <p>- national SLM databases</p> <p>- Workshop reports - Progress reports - Photo reports</p> <p>- Minutes of Meetings - National expert group reports - desk study and survey report - Workshop reports</p> <p>- SLM scale up methodology document</p>	<p>- Agricultural extension systems are in place and willing to cooperate</p> <p>- Suitable, innovative, climate-resilient SLM practices are available - Extension workers have the need and willingness to enhance their capacities</p> <p>- IT capacities available</p> <p>- All areas accessible for field workshops and implementation - Farmers and local-level decision-makers have capacity and willingness to participate in workshops - Households have capacity and willingness to implement climate-resilient SLM practices</p> <p>- National expert group members have capacity to carry out planned tasks - Policy makers and government institutions are willing to participate in nat. SLM dialogue and promote SLM</p>

<sup>1</sup> These households are a sub-set of the IFAD investment project target beneficiaries.