

Document: EB 2016/LOT/G.16
Date: 21 November 2016
Distribution: Public
Original: English

E



Investing in rural people

President's report on a proposed grant under
the global/regional grants window to the
Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
(AGRA) for the Improved Delivery of Seed and
Soil Fertility Technologies to Smallholder
Farmers Project

Note to Executive Board representatives

Focal points:

Technical questions:

Robert Delve
Senior Technical Specialist
Policy and Technical Advisory Division
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2843
e-mail: r.delve@ifad.org

Bernadette Mukonyora
Programme Analyst
East and Southern Africa Division
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2595
e-mail: b.mukonyora@ifad.org

Dispatch of documentation:

William Skinner
Chief
Governing Bodies Office
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2974
e-mail: gb_office@ifad.org

For: Approval

Recommendation for approval

The Executive Board is invited to approve the recommendation for the proposed grant as contained in paragraph 15.

President's report on a proposed grant under the global/regional grants window to the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) for the Improved Delivery of Seed and Soil Fertility Technologies to Smallholder Farmers Project

I. Background and compliance with IFAD Policy for Grant Financing

1. This report recommends the provision of an IFAD grant in the amount US\$1 million under the global and regional grants window to the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) for the Improved Delivery of Seed and Soil Fertility Technologies to Smallholder Farmers Project.
2. The proposed project is in line with the goal and objectives of IFAD's 2015 Policy for Grant Financing.¹ It will: promote and disseminate pro-poor, innovative and improved seed and soil fertility technologies through adaptive research; conduct demonstrations; and facilitate smallholder linkages to farm input suppliers. The grant-funded project will also seek to generate and share lessons learned on smallholders' adoption of new technologies, and facilitate critical linkages between agricultural research and extension.
3. Grantee selection. The direct selection of AGRA is in line with paragraph 15(iii) of IFAD's Policy for Grant Financing. AGRA has a high potential for collaboration and synergy with IFAD, and for achieving global impact through the development of knowledge and linkages between agricultural development research and extension. In Africa, AGRA has significant experience in:
 - (i) combining small grant programmes with technical backstopping to build national research and extension capacities; (ii) conducting and scaling up demand-driven research; and (iii) supporting the development of local agribusinesses.
4. With over 10 years' experience in the management of programmes involving seed, soils, markets, policies and farmer organizations, AGRA has developed partnerships with a wide range of international and national agricultural institutions and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research centres. These partnerships have brought new technologies to farmers and built national-level capacity in collaboration with local companies and agro-dealers, which distribute the new technologies to farmers. This has resulted in the commercialization of improved crop varieties, making them accessible to millions of smallholder farmers.
5. AGRA has broad in-house expertise across various fields, employing 12 PhD-level seed specialists and 5 PhD-level soil scientists with experience in the development of input-supply systems. AGRA's specialists also have experience in the downstream delivery systems that are essential to achieving impact at scale. With ongoing activities in 18 African countries, all of AGRA's regional experts bring experience gained in multiple countries and an ability to seek out solutions in a wide range of local contexts.

¹ See EB 2015/114/R.2/Rev.1.

II. The proposed project

6. The overall goal of the project is to increase smallholder farmers' productivity in Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique. The main objective is to improve national capacity for the delivery of improved seed and soil fertility technologies to smallholder farmers.
7. Direct beneficiaries. The project will support technical teams from national agricultural research institutes (NARI) in Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique, enabling them to assist farmers in accessing improved technologies. At least 45 NARI staff members will be trained by AGRA to support the promotion of improved crop varieties and soil fertility technologies. At least five small-scale rural agro-dealers will benefit through product training and stronger linkages to seed and fertilizer companies, which will work with smallholder farmers to promote use of improved seed and fertilizers. At least 60 extension officers from the public and private sectors will be trained to support the transfer of good agronomic practices to smallholder farmers. At least 50 demonstrations will be held each year to raise awareness of improved varieties among smallholder farmers.
8. Indirect beneficiaries. The project will indirectly impact beneficiaries of the three IFAD country programmes, who will have increased access to affordable options for improving their crop production and linking to input markets. The three country programmes work with more than 500,000 smallholder households.
9. The project will be implemented over three years and will comprise the following two components:
 - (a) Component 1: Increased access to improved seed and soil fertility technologies.
 - (i) Subcomponent 1.1: Conduct country-level stakeholder meetings to revise and validate initial priorities. The first activity will be a series of country-level stakeholder meetings to revise and validate the initial priorities identified in section II. This will allow for a more detailed discussion to identify and agree upon topics for the sub-grants.
 - (ii) Subcomponent 1.2: Provide sub-grants of up to US\$150,000 to NARI, and up to US\$75,000 for small agro-dealers to demonstrate and market new seed and soil fertility improving technologies. A call for proposals for sub-grants will be jointly undertaken by project coordination units, IFAD country teams and AGRA. There will also be a joint review of the proposals, management of sub-grants and supervision. The targeted sub-grantees will include NARI and agro-dealers in Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique.
 - (b) Component 2: Knowledge management and documentation of lessons learned.
 - (i) Subcomponent 2.1: Document and publish the outcomes of the sub-grants. At project start-up, a three-day workshop will be held to develop a knowledge management framework in collaboration with IFAD country teams, NARI and project stakeholders. The participants will provide guidance regarding: lessons learned to be documented from the sub-grant process; outputs and outcomes of the sub-grants; and how lessons learned will be captured, analysed and disseminated.
 - (ii) Subcomponent 2.2: Organize a stakeholder "writeshop" to consolidate lessons learned and document them in an edited book. This will involve a five-day event in each country to brainstorm, discuss and consolidate lessons learned from the field. These writeshops will include project staff from IFAD and AGRA as well as government officials, implementing agencies, farmers' organization representatives and other stakeholders.

- (iii) Subcomponent 2.3: A stakeholder meeting will synthesize results and lessons from the sub-grants into a report highlighting the global implications of the results. Country-based reports will be generated in order to include information that is unique to each country as well as: country-based findings; feasibility study findings; impact stories; and successful case studies that provide information to enhance learning, impact and scale from these projects.

III. Expected outcomes

10. The project is expected to have the following outcomes:
 - (a) Strengthened capacities of NARIs and rural agro-dealers to support IFAD-loan programmes. AGRA will support IFAD country teams and project coordination units in working with NARI from Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique on adaptive research for improved crop varieties, soil technologies and crop-management demonstrations. This will improve the performance of NARI staff and rural agro-dealers in supporting IFAD's loan programme, increasing the adoption of new seed and soil fertility technologies, and disseminating lessons learned and recommended solutions.
 - (b) Increased adoption of improved seed and soil fertility technologies by smallholder farmers. Extension services will be strengthened to promote improved inputs, good agronomy and appropriate soil fertility technologies such as the use of blended fertilizers, lime in acid soils, integrated soil fertility management practices, conservation agriculture and water-harvesting techniques. AGRA will build working partnerships among researchers, extension agents, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, traders and agro-dealers.
 - (c) Documented and disseminated lessons learned and recommended solutions for scaling up farmers' adoption of new technologies promoted through the sub-grants. Writeshops will consolidate the outcomes and lessons learned in policy research briefs, scaling up and technical notes, in line with the Policy and Technical Advisory Division toolkit series, farmer video clips, extension leaflets and other best-practice guidance. The project will also document and disseminate the lessons learned from AGRA's small grant-making and management process in the form of an edited book.

IV. Implementation arrangements

11. The project will be directly implemented by AGRA, working closely with IFAD country teams, project coordination units and NARI from Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique. The sub-grants will be managed in accordance with AGRA's grant-making policy. Sub-grantees will be required to conduct baseline surveys during the first three months of project implementation to establish baselines for key indicators, which will be tracked using the indicator performance tracking table (IPTT). Sub-grantees will submit project implementation plans annually and financial and technical reports (including the IPTT) biannually throughout the project implementation period. In addition, AGRA will provide regular capacity-building and technical backstopping to NARI in order to disseminate new technology and create linkages with seed companies and agro-dealers.
12. In the three target countries NARI will lead the implementation of the sub-grants, evaluations and reporting. AGRA will involve other stakeholders in supporting the sub-grantees, including the Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the International Plant Names Index and the Africa Soil Information Service, which will provide technical support in developing fertilizer recommendations in the three countries.

13. There are no deviations from the standard procedures for financial reporting and audits.

V. Indicative programme costs and financing

14. The project cost is US\$2 million for a three year period. IFAD will provide US\$1 million and AGRA has committed to a one-to-one cofinancing ratio, thus contributing US\$1 million of its own funds (in cash) to support the partnership. The financing will follow the *pari passu* modality.

Table 1
Costs by component and financier
(Thousands of United States dollars)

<i>Components</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>AGRA</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Component 1: Increased access to improved seed and soil fertility technologies	837	882	1 719
2. Component 2: Knowledge management and documentation of lessons learned	88	118	206
3. Indirect costs (8 per cent)	75	-	75
Total	1 000	1 000	2 000

Table 2
Costs by expenditure category and financier
(Thousands of United States dollars)

<i>Expenditure category</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>AGRA</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Salaries and allowances	98	147	245
2. Workshops	66	98	164
3. Goods, services and inputs	37	59	96
4. Equipment and materials	-	-	-
5. Grants and subsidies	687	641	1 328
6. Travel and allowances	13	19	32
7. Consultancies	24	36	60
8. Indirect costs	75	-	75
Total	1 000	1 000	2 000

VI. Recommendation

15. 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 Improved Delivery of Seed and Soil Fertility Technologies to Smallholder Farmers Project, shall provide a grant of one million United States dollars (US\$1,000,000) to the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) for a 36-month period, 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

Results-based logical framework

Results	Objectives-hierarchy	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
Goal	To increase smallholder farmer crop productivity in Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average yields of target crops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project baseline survey Final evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural policies will favour staple crop production Favorable climatic conditions
Objectives	To improve delivery of improved seed and soil fertility technologies in the project target area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of produced certified seed sold in the project target area Average volume of fertilizer sold by trained agro-dealers in the project target area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project baseline survey Grantee progress report Final evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers willing to adopt improved farm inputs
Outcomes	a) Improved performance of NARIs staff and rural agro-dealers to support IFAD-loan programme b) Improved adoption of new seed & soil fertility technologies c) Successful dissemination of lessons learned and recommended solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of trained NARI staff reporting improvements in their performance Proportion of trained staff reporting satisfaction with training received Proportion of trained staff applying skills gained in the application of their functions Percentage change in volume of agro-dealer operations from IFAD loan support program Average volume (kg) of fertilizer used in the target countries. Proportion of target farmers using improved seed and fertilizer in the target countries Number of innovations taken to scale among target beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project baseline survey Grantee progress report Training report Training perception survey Final evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers have access to improved farm inputs Farmers will have access to technical services
Outputs	a) NARIs staff trained b) New crop varieties promoted c) Breeder & foundation seed produced d) Certified seed produced e) Agro-dealers trained & contracted to disseminate seed f) Laboratory equipped g) Community meetings held h) Policy Research Briefs produced i) Knowledge products produced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of varieties promoted Quantity of breeder and foundation seed produced Volume of certified seed produced Number of cassava cuttings produced Number of shows organized to promote ISFM, CA practices and new varieties Number of seed company personnel trained on promotion of improved varieties Number of agro-dealers trained to improve access to inputs and strengthen distribution networks Number of NARI technicians trained to support the promotion of resilient varieties Number of extension officers trained from public and private sector to support the delivery of good agronomic practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grantee progress report Training report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension agents will work closely with farmers Grantees will work with complementary AGRA projects to build synergy & strengthen results
Key Activities by component	<u>Component 1: Provision of solutions on improved seed and soil fertility technologies</u> a) Breeding improved varieties b) Certified seed production c) Training of key actors d) Conduct on and off farm demonstrations e) Hold field days f) Equip laboratory g) Pack seed in small packs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstration sites identified Farmers identified Foundation seed procured by seed companies Outgrowers identified and trained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grantee progress report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seed companies take up the released varieties and multiply Foundation seed made available to seed companies Farmers attend awareness creation activities
	<u>Component 2: Knowledge management and documentation of lessons learned</u> a) Produce synthesized report b) Prepare policy research briefs c) Publish articles d) Organize lesson learned workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of communication materials produced Number of policy briefs drafted Number of farmer video clips distributed Number of case studies documented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grantee progress report 	