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Investing in rural people

President's report on a proposed grant
under the global/regional grants window
to the World Agroforestry Centre
(a CGIAR institution) for the
Strengthening Landscape-level Baseline
Assessment and Impact-Monitoring in
East and Southern Africa Project

Note to Executive Board representatives

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For: Approval

Recommendation for approval

The Executive Board is invited to approve the recommendation for the proposed grant as contained in paragraph 12.

President's report on a proposed grant under the global/regional grants window to the World Agroforestry Centre (a CGIAR institution) for the Strengthening Landscape-level Baseline Assessment and Impact-Monitoring in East and Southern Africa 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\$2 million, under the global/regional grants window to the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), a CGIAR institution, for the Strengthening Landscape-level Baseline Assessment and Impact-Monitoring in East and Southern Africa Project.
2. The proposed project is in line with the goal and objectives of the IFAD Policy for Grant Financing (2015).¹ It will promote innovative, pro-poor approaches and technologies, through the use of earth observation (EO)-assisted tools. These EO tools will be used to assess natural resources and soil health and to perform climate risk mapping to inform IFAD investments for improved crop, livestock, rangeland and natural resource management, as well as to provide baseline and validation data for crop/livestock insurance schemes. This is a pilot approach with potential to be scaled up for greater impact. It will provide monitoring and evaluation (M&E) data to improve project implementation support and generate evidence-based impact assessments. The grant will improve the quality of future country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs), the targeting of new investments, reporting under IFAD's Results and Impact Management System (RIMS), the contributions of IFAD's programmes to the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and reporting under the Rio Conventions.
3. The grant recipient was selected through a competitive process that invited 13 organizations to bid based on the concept note approved by IFAD's Operational Strategy and Policy Guidance Committee. Four organizations submitted bids, three of which satisfied the bidding criteria. The selection panel – comprising four technical reviewers with experience in the evaluation of grant proposals and/or practical experience in the use and development of EO and geographical information system (GIS) approaches – evaluated the three bids according to criteria based on: (i) technical content; (ii) value for money; and (iii) implementation capacity. ICRAF was selected on the basis of the following considerations: (i) it has more than 15 years' experience in EO and spatial analysis for mapping soil and ecosystem health properties; (ii) it runs the leading laboratory in Africa for the analysis of soil samples and development of EO maps; (iii) it has a well-balanced partnership structure, including international, regional and national partners; (iv) it supports many national programmes and has developed field guides, documented approaches and published protocols; (v) it has completed work based on unique soil and vegetation sampling, linked to social and economic analysis of sites across Africa; and (vi) it has an established geoportals system that allows partners to access data sets.

¹ See EB 2015/114/R.2/Rev.1.

II. The proposed project

4. The overall project goal is to enhance the public good contribution of available EO approaches to improving the food security and resilience of smallholder farming and agropastoral systems in Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland and Uganda. The primary objectives are: to enhance access to high-quality data and diagnostic evidence on ecosystem health and household resilience for national stakeholders and their development partners; and to develop the capacity to use such data and evidence to strengthen the design, monitoring and ongoing refinement of development programme interventions and investments.
5. Direct beneficiaries. The project will support six IFAD programmes, national stakeholders (primarily the Rio Convention National Focal Points) and other development donors in the five target countries to access, analyse and use EO data to improve decision-making and the targeting of agricultural technologies. At least 30 national stakeholders and project staff will be trained by ICRAF staff to implement the Ecosystem Health Surveillance System (EcoHSS) at the project and national levels, to interpret soil health hotspots, to identify and evaluate interventions to overcome these hotspots and to use the dashboards for M&E. Linkages to baseline assessment and use of EO data analysis will be key to improving the timeliness, accuracy and use of data for M&E and impact assessment. At least 15 IFAD country staff will benefit from the use of EcoHSS in supporting COSOP development through the use of EO to identify long-term trends to be addressed through future activities. The grant will also target the information and reporting needs of the five national agricultural research systems and of policymakers, including focal points for the three Rio Conventions and climate finance entities such as the Green Climate Fund.
6. Indirect beneficiaries. The indirect target groups of this grant are small-scale farmers, especially women and members of marginalized groups, targeted by the investment programmes in the five countries. They will gain increased access to appropriate and affordable options to improve their crop production and input market linkages. The six selected projects target a total of almost 800,000 households.
7. The project will be implemented over four years and comprise the following two components:

Component 1: Development of an EO-assisted knowledge system

- (i) Development of an indicator framework based on EcoHSS and existing protocols for socio-economic assessments, using a combination of:
 - (a) standardized indicators that will be measured in all countries (i.e. universal indicators); and (b) indicators specific to each country, selected through workshops with stakeholders.
 - This component will engage with IFAD country programmes to identify indicators already being measured and by what methodology in order to compile an inventory of available data.
 - A final list of indicators will be prioritized through participatory workshops with stakeholders, including IFAD projects and beneficiaries.
- (ii) Development and piloting of improved data-collection tools in collaboration with IFAD country programmes and national partners, including mobile data collection.
 - Capacity in data collection will be built through the direct involvement of IFAD country programmes and beneficiaries in the piloting of data-collection tools in each of the five target countries.

- (iii) Development of monitoring protocols for both biophysical and socio-economic indicators in the five target countries, including incorporation of the existing data (evidence) identified in (a) above.
 - IFAD projects will provide feedback on the monitoring protocols.
- (iv) Stakeholder workshops to assess the demand for landscape-level information in the five target countries, as well as to assess the level of locally available information in these countries through a critical review of existing national data.
 - IFAD projects and beneficiaries will be engaged in the stakeholder workshops.
- (v) Design of technical specifications for the EO-assisted knowledge system, including specific tools and dashboards, based on stakeholder inputs gathered as part of these workshops.
 - Technical specifications will be shared with IFAD projects and beneficiaries for their feedback.

Component 2: Deployment of EO-assisted system

- (i) Integration of satellite EO data and platforms such as Thematic Exploitation Platforms (TEPs) with EcoHSS analytics.
- (ii) Development of a user-friendly dashboard interface for the EO-assisted system.
- (iii) Capacity-building for project staff on the EO-assisted knowledge system for results-based management.
 - IFAD projects and beneficiaries will be introduced to the EO-assisted system and trained in its use.
- (iv) Testing/piloting of the EO-assisted system by stakeholders, including for servicing COSOP and project design by providing EO-informed evidence and strategy products.
 - IFAD projects and beneficiaries will be engaged in the testing/piloting of the EO-assisted system, providing feedback to developers.
- (v) Final deployment of the EO-assisted system for assessing and monitoring ecosystem health, including user-friendly dashboard interfaces.

III. Expected outcomes/outputs

- 8. The expected project outcomes are as follows:
 - (i) A robust indicator framework (i.e. a gold standard) for the operational assessment of ecosystem health, including social and ecological systems alike, in the target countries, building on existing frameworks for ecosystem health assessment;
 - (ii) Landscape-level analyses of biophysical indicators of ecosystem health and socioeconomic drivers thereof (using data from Multidimensional Poverty Assessment Tool (MPAT) and other sources) for inclusion in the EO-assisted knowledge platform, including spatial predictions of the key indicators identified;
 - (iii) Capacity developed among international and national stakeholders through training workshops and other capacity-development support to engage with and maintain the EO-assisted platform; and

- (iv) An EO-assisted knowledge platform, including interactive, user-friendly tools, for assessing and monitoring ecosystem health and household resilience, tailored to stakeholder priorities and needs in the target countries and used to inform COSOP design.

IV. Implementation arrangements

9. ICRAF will be responsible for overall project management and the coordination of inputs from the European Space Agency and other specialized EO analytics sector institutions and enterprises involved in the components relating to data analytics, the development of the EO platform and system dashboard, training and capacity-building. A steering committee will be established to supervise project activities, consisting of an EO specialist, a soil and land health scientist, a social scientist and representatives of the national partners. The precise composition of the steering committee will be determined at project launch. The project will be closely coordinated with IFAD country offices in the target countries as well as ICRAF's country offices in Kenya, Malawi and Uganda, in addition to its regional offices in East and Southern Africa. ICRAF will also be responsible for financial and technical reporting.
10. There are no deviations from the standard procedures for financial reporting and audits.

V. Indicative project costs and financing

11. The total project costs are US\$2.5 million over four years, covered by an IFAD grant in the amount of US\$2.0 million and ICRAF cofinancing of USD\$500,000. ICRAF will leverage its partnership with the European Space Agency.

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

<i>Component</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>ICRAF</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Development of EO-assisted knowledge system	1 193	382	1 575
2. Deployment of EO-assisted system	807	118	925
Total	2 000	500	2 500

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

<i>Expenditure category</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>ICRAF</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Salaries and allowances	598	251	849
2. Workshops	60	-	60
3. Goods, services and inputs	561	118	679
4. Travel and allowances	130	-	130
5. Consultancies	513	131	644
6. Indirect costs	138	-	138
Total	2 000	500	2 500

VI. Recommendation

12. 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 Strengthening Landscape-level Baseline Assessment and Impact-Monitoring in East and Southern Africa Project shall provide a grant of two million United States dollars (US\$2,000,000) to the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) for a four-year period and 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

	Objectives-hierarchy	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
Primary Outcome	The wide-spread use and uptake of the EO-assisted system in six IFAD Programmes and amongst National Stakeholders and the broader development community, to improve Programme design, as well as monitoring and evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of IFAD country programs and National stakeholders; including Rio conventions focal points; that adopt the Dashboard to assist reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of IFAD project data for indicators to examine the extent to which the EO-based platform is being used in the design and implementation of projects. The extent to which IFAD country program intervention design was influenced by the EO-assisted platform. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IFAD country programme and national stakeholders are interested in engaging with evidence and using the diagnostic tools for project design and monitoring and evaluation. Decision-maker confidence in the quality and utility in EO-based data and evidence
Objectives	To enhance access to high quality data and diagnostic evidence on ecosystem health for National Stakeholders and their development partners, as well as the capacity to use such data and evidence to strengthen the design, monitoring, and ongoing refinement of programme interventions and investments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of IFAD Country Programmes and National Stakeholders; including Rio conventions focal points; with access to the EO-assisted system. # of Stakeholders trained in the use of the EO-assisted system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of access to the EO-assisted system, using usage statistics and logs. Evaluation to examine the extent to which IFAD country program intervention design was influenced by the EO-assisted platform. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EO-based platform is user-friendly and decision-makers possess requisite capacity to engage with it.

Component 1: Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A robust indicator framework (i.e. a gold standard) for operational assessment of ecosystem health, including both social and ecological systems, in the target countries. • Landscape-level analyses of both biophysical indicators of ecosystem health, as well as socioeconomic drivers (using available data from MPAT and other data sources) for inclusion into the EO-assisted knowledge platform, including spatial predictions of the key indicators identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator framework is designed frameworks and designs applied. • # of mapping outputs and analytical results from the landscape-level analysis. 	Project performance tracking system	Target country interest, willingness and ability to provide information to support the development of and receive the EO-based platform.
Component 2: Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity developed among international and national stakeholders through training workshops and other capacity development support to engage with and maintain the EO-assisted platform. • An EO-assisted knowledge platform, including interactive, user friendly tools, for assessing and monitoring ecosystem health and household resilience, tailored to stakeholder priorities and needs in the target countries and used to inform the design of COSOPs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of targeted IFAD Programme staff and National Stakeholders (RIMS 1.6.1) trained and provided with targeted capacity development support² • # of knowledge events and staff participation • # of target countries where EO-assisted platform has been applied and the dashboard adopted 	Project performance tracking system	Targeted stakeholders are willing/able to participate in the capacity develop initiatives and possess the “base capacity” to absorb the new knowledge & skills

² Disaggregated by gender and age.