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Investing in rural people

## President's Report on a Proposed Grant Under the Global/Regional Grant Window to the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) for the Programme for Assessing the Gendered Impact of Rural Development Projects

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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 19.

### President's report on a proposed grant under the global/regional grant window to the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) for the Programme for Assessing the Gendered Impact of Rural Development Projects

#### I. Background and compliance with IFAD Policy on Grant Financing

1. In 2015 the United Nations adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as an overarching framework to "leave no one behind" in pursuit of development. SDG 5 focuses on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls, and recognizes these objectives as critical to delivering on all of the SDGs, including SDG 1 (no poverty) and SDG 2 (zero hunger).<sup>1</sup>
2. While gender equality and women's empowerment have advanced in recent decades, they remain a persistent challenge for countries worldwide. The lack of such equality and empowerment is a major obstacle to sustainable development, particularly in rural areas. Empowerment consists of individual choice, power, options, control, and agency. With regard to women's empowerment specifically, it is most often referred to "women's ability to make decisions and affect outcomes of importance to themselves and their families". Access by rural young women to productive assets, financing, natural resources and new skills is still very limited.
3. Targets and indicators have been identified to track progress on SDG 5, including one that aims to "undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws". What is still to be established are the indicators and methodologies to track rural women's access to productive assets, services, employment and market opportunities and voice in decision-making, and the equitable sharing of workload.
4. In recent years there have been attempts to strengthen monitoring systems and measurement tools for assessing women's empowerment and gender equality in the rural sector, and to generate rigorous evidence to inform policies, programmes and investments targeting rural women, including young women. However, existing methodologies often fall short in monitoring and tracking changes by age group (for example, in young women), including the lack of specific measures to assess access for women – and young women – to services, employment and market opportunities, their voice in decision-making and equitable sharing of workload.
5. Being able to effectively monitor progress towards SDG 1, SDG 2 and SDG 5 in rural areas, disaggregated by sex, requires: (a) exploring alternative and new methodologies to track the progress of development projects with regard to women and men separately, including women and men at different stages of the life cycle; (b) developing methodologies and tools to collect disaggregated data by sex and by

<sup>1</sup> UN, 2017. UN HLPF Thematic review of SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. United Nations; New York (July, 2017). <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/14383SDG5format-revOD.pdf>.

age group; (c) measuring and analysing differential results and impacts; and (d) summarizing the lessons learned from this exercise for future policies, projects, and investments, so as to ensure gender equality and the empowerment of women (in particular of young women). Strengthening of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) would constitute a significant contribution to the monitoring of SDG 5 in rural areas, and to the development and implementation of policies and programmes targeting rural women and young women, with the purpose of ensuring that they are not left behind.

6. The proposed programme is in line with the goal and objectives of the IFAD Policy for Grant Financing (2018).<sup>2</sup> In particular, it is in line with the Medium-Term Plan and its first thematic cluster for global/regional grants (rural inclusiveness).<sup>3</sup> It aims to foster access by rural women (with a particular emphasis on young women) to productive assets, financing, natural resources and new skills/capacities. In addition, the grant activities pay specific attention to gender and youth, both of which are cross-cutting issues involving IFAD's corporate commitments, particularly for the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD11) and beyond. Further, the grant is fully aligned with the IFAD11 commitments, namely, commitment 22 to analyse IFAD's gender-transformative approach through qualitative and quantitative approaches, as well as commitment 33 to increase the visibility of IFAD's work. Finally, the proposal will generate public goods, specifically a new methodological approach to measuring and tracking progress towards SDG 1, SDG 2 and SDG 5 by sex, plus additional evidence on the impact of rural development projects on women. Related knowledge emerging from this programme will be disseminated widely to governments, development partners and other stakeholders, to inform the design and implementation of future rural development projects and policies and to serve as an entry point for policy engagement with the gender agenda. Thus the programme will strengthen evidence-based decision-making and results-oriented operational management of rural development initiatives.

## II. The proposed programme

7. The overall goal of the programme is to generate tools, evidence and knowledge to contribute to the global effort to measure and monitor progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda in general - and SDGs 1, 2 and 5 in particular.

The objectives are to:

- (i) Develop and validate a methodology and tools for measuring and tracking the impact of rural development projects, disaggregated by sex and age group, that would generate data on rural youth (in particular rural girls);
- (ii) Assess the impact of agricultural development projects on women's empowerment and other development outcomes, including food and nutrition security, by using the methodology developed and validated; this methodology could come to be scaled up as a reporting measure for agencies funding agricultural development projects in general (including IFAD); and
- (iii) Generate rigorous evidence to inform policies, programmes and investments for better targeting of rural and young women, to be used by agencies funding agricultural development projects in general (including IFAD).

<sup>2</sup> See EB 2015/114/R.2/Rev.1.

<sup>3</sup> See Strategic Guidance for IFAD Grants 2018, presented to EMC in June 2017.

8. The target group will be structured as described below.

Direct target group:

- (i) Governments and national/international development organizations will benefit from new methodologies to assess the impact of their rural development projects on women, particularly young women. At least 100 people will be trained on the impact assessment methodologies and gain hands-on experience through their participation in the impact assessment activities. They will also benefit from the evidence that will be generated from the impact assessments that will be conducted. Thus, countries will be better able to track progress and report on the SDG indicators in a disaggregated manner, which would allow them to measure the differential impacts of rural development projects based on sex and age group.

Indirect target groups:

- (ii) Development practitioners, technical specialists and researchers will benefit from new methodologies and additional evidence to be used to assess gender-transformative impacts. Development practitioners will be better equipped to design gender-transformative projects in the rural space and to enhance the mainstreaming of gender-related and youth-related issues in the design and implementation of projects.
- (iii) Rural women in general will benefit, as this programme aims to make them visible and track changes in their empowerment within the national and project reporting systems.
- (iv) Overall, the programme will also benefit the rural population in general, as the knowledge and lessons from this project will allow governments and development partners to mainstream gender and youth issues into rural development projects, which will allow projects to improve targeting and delivery of their interventions addressing women (in particular young women). In particular, results and lessons from this grant will constitute public goods, because they may help advocate for successful gender transformation strategies to be expanded to the national level, or to be replicated in other countries or regions. Specifically, the methodology, findings, and knowledge developed from this grant may be used to generate lessons learned for IFAD and for the rural development community in general – to inform project design and implementation, measure the impact of agricultural development projects and motivate policy discussions.

9. The programme will be implemented over three years (36 months) and will have the following main components:

- (i) Methodology development: This component entails the development of an empirical methodology and protocol to collect and analyse sex- and age-disaggregated primary data. These data are to be used for impact assessments of rural development projects that aim to impact the economic mobility, productive capacity, market access, empowerment, decision-making power and/or dietary diversity of women and young women;
- (ii) Evidence generation through impact assessments: At least six ex post impact assessments of rural development projects will be conducted, in which the methodology developed will be tested; and

- (iii) Development and knowledge sharing: Knowledge products will be developed to disseminate the methodology developed (and related technical recommendations), plus the findings from the different impact assessments conducted.

10. Expected outcomes/outputs.

The programme is expected to have the following outcomes/outputs:

- (i) Validated methodology and tools for use by governments and national/international development organizations to monitor and accurately measure the empowerment of women and girls;
- (ii) Rigorous empirical evidence on the impact of rural development projects on access by women and girls to productive and natural resources, and subsequent economic and development outcomes;
- (iii) Various knowledge products and platforms (e.g. technical reports, peer-reviewed publications, conference presentations, training materials, blog posts, webinars, policy seminars and a community of practice) to disseminate the validated methodology and tools, as well as project findings;
- (iv) Through point (iii), improved capacity by development professionals (project implementers, monitoring and evaluation [M&E] specialists, donors and researchers) to improve M&E systems and meet the growing demand to adequately incorporate women's empowerment and gender parity within the design, implementation and assessment of rural development projects;
- (v) Through points (i) through (iv), an enhanced ability to track the progress made towards achieving the 2030 Agenda, especially SDGs 1, 2 and 5.

### III. Implementation arrangements

11. The grant recipient will be the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in Washington, D.C., United States of America. Partner organizations include Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, United States and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) in Oxford, UK.
12. IFPRI has a qualified team of researchers with extensive experience conducting projects of mixed-methods research (quantitative and qualitative) on gender equality and women's empowerment. It has a substantial track record in managing and conducting research, learning and capacity-building initiatives related to rural development and agricultural projects.
13. The programme leader will be responsible for providing overall research leadership and timely delivery of research outputs, and will be advised by a group of technical experts on agricultural development, gender and rural youth and specialists on empirical surveys and impact assessment methodologies. The latter will have as their primary role to provide guidance on research methodologies, progress tracking, and reviewing the key research outputs, with recurrent in-person meetings and periodic programme updates at IFAD headquarters.
14. The Research and Impact Assessment Division (RIA) within IFAD, in conjunction with the Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division (ECG), will be responsible for reviewing progress, discussing implementation issues with the grant recipient and obtaining outputs from the collaboration. IFPRI will report back to IFAD as required, and will organize an annual presentation to IFAD at its Rome headquarters.

15. IFPRI will develop a knowledge management and dissemination strategy to communicate findings from the activities undertaken as part of this grant. The strategy will be designed to communicate research findings to programme staff, governments, development practitioners and other institutions.
16. IFPRI guarantees full access and ownership by IFAD of the data and relevant materials (e.g. survey questionnaires, interview topics, processing and analysis files, etc.). Further, any publications or knowledge products resulting from the activities implemented as part of this grant will receive clearance from IFAD before public dissemination.
17. There are no deviations from the standard procedures for financial reporting and audits.

#### IV. Indicative programme costs and financing

18. The total budget for the grant is US\$3,840,000, with IFAD financing amounting to US\$3,200,000 and cofinancing in kind coming to US\$640,000.

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

<i>Components</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>IFPRI</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Methodology development	399 000	217 000	616 000
2. Evidence generation through impact assessments	2 224 000	281 000	2 521 000
3. Development and knowledge sharing	198 000	122 000	320 000
4. Programme management	299 000	20 000	319 000
5. Cost sharing percentage 2% (CSP 2%)	64 000	-	64 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 200 000</b>	<b>640 000</b>	<b>3 840 000</b>

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

<i>Expenditure category</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>IFPRI</i>	<i>Total</i>
Salaries and allowances	698 000	465 000	1 163 000
Consultancies	604 000	-	604 000
Equipment and materials	80 000	-	80 000
Goods, services and inputs	312 000	-	312 000
Training	298 000	-	298 000
Travel and allowances	626 000	-	626 000
Operating costs	262 000	-	262 000
Overheads and management fees	256 000	175 000	431 000
CSP (2%)	64 000	-	64 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 200 000</b>	<b>640 000</b>	<b>3 840 000</b>

## V. Recommendation

19. 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, for the Programme for Assessing the Gendered Impact of Rural Development Projects, shall provide a grant of Three Million Two Hundred Thousand United States dollars (US\$3,200,000) to the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) 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.

Gilbert F. Hougbo  
President

## Results-based logical framework

	<b>Objectives hierarchy</b>	<b>Objectively verifiable indicators</b>	<b>Means of verification</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>
<b>Goal</b>	Generate tools, evidence, and knowledge to contribute to the global effort to measure and monitor progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda in general and SDG 5, 1, and 2 in particular	New evidence generated on the impact of rural development projects on the access of rural women and young rural women to productive assets, financing, natural resources, among others indicators disaggregated by sex and by age	Tracking of projects and countries adopting the validated methodology and tools; downloads of project generated data and supporting documentation; and citations as well as references	Generated evidence generalizable to agricultural development projects
<b>Objectives</b>	Develop and validate methodology and tools to measure and monitor gender- and age-disaggregated impact of rural development projects; using the validated method, estimate the impact of selected agricultural development projects on women empowerment and other development outcomes; generate rigorous evidence to inform policies, programs and investments for better targeting of rural and young women	Set of recommendations for project managers and government stakeholders on to collect data for impact assessments by sex and by age	Periodic internal and external reporting; monthly virtual meeting and biannual review and planning meetings; process evaluation	Alignment between the timeline of this initiative and that of the agricultural development projects to be evaluated ; the level of participation of the agricultural development projects to be evaluated; coverage level of the demographic groups of interest (women, esp. 15-24 years old) by the agricultural development projects to be evaluated; Sufficient buy-in from project staff, government officials, stakeholders; Knowledge products developed well-suited to targeted audience
<b>Outcomes/O utputs</b>	Validated methodology and tools; rigorous empirical evidence on the impact of rural development projects on women and girls' empowerment; various knowledge projects; improved capacity by development professionals to use the developed methodology and related concepts and tools to improve M&E systems; enhanced ability to track progress made towards achieving the 2030 Agenda (esp. SDGs 5, 1, and 2)	Number of people trained on the developed and validated methodology and tools; Number of knowledge products and dissemination seminars produced	Periodic internal and external reporting; monthly virtual meeting and biannual review and planning meetings; process evaluation	Section of agricultural development projects to be evaluated with a design and M&E system in place to allow for evidence generation and reasonably good quality impact assessment. Also, willingness to share information about their beneficiaries to allow us to follow-up with them.
<b>Key activities by component</b>	Methodology development: literature reviews, expert consultation, update domains of empowerment, add new indicators as necessary, change sample selection strategy; Evidence generation: data collection or processing from secondary sources), data analysis; Knowledge sharing: validation meetings, capacity building, online community of practice, data, reports, peer-reviewed publications, conference presentations, blogs, toolkit, webinar	Methodological approach developed, including survey tools and instruments; collected data using the developed tools; reports and knowledge products produced illustrating findings from collected data; dissemination workshops organized	Periodic internal and external reporting; monthly virtual meeting and biannual review and planning meetings; process evaluation	Timely selection of agricultural development projects to be evaluated with a capability and willingness to adopt the methodology and tools to be developed