

Document: EB 2018/LOT/G.6
Date: 1 November 2018
Distribution: Public
Original: English

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President's report on a proposed grant under
the global/regional grants window to McGill
University for Project-friendly Metrics and
Technologies for Better Results in
Nutrition-sensitive Projects

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 13.

President's report on a proposed grant under the global/regional grants window to McGill University for Project-friendly Metrics and Technologies for Better Results in Nutrition-sensitive Projects

I. Background and compliance with IFAD Policy on Grant Financing

1. As a specialized United Nations agency dedicated to eradicating rural poverty in developing countries, improving nutrition among the poorest populations is one of IFAD's principal objectives. IFAD addresses the need for improved nutrition through its investments, which target smallholder farmers and rural communities. In line with the Agreement Establishing IFAD, the Fund has strengthened its commitment to mainstreaming nutrition within its operations. A Nutrition Action Plan (2016-2018) has guided IFAD's efforts, providing a roadmap to mainstream nutrition in alignment with IFAD's mission and comparative advantage.
2. The proposed programme is in line with the goal and objectives of IFAD's Policy for Grant Financing (2015).¹ It is also directly aligned with IFAD's priorities and its outputs will contribute to IFAD's initiatives on nutrition-sensitive agriculture, including its ongoing work in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ethiopia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. In addition, it will promote innovation in monitoring and evaluation of nutrition-sensitive investments and has the potential to be scaled up for greater impact across the selected regions.
3. The programme aims to strengthen partners' institutional and policy capacities, and enhance advocacy and policy engagement. Collaboration with ongoing IFAD loan projects in selected countries will ensure that the knowledge generated and shared through this programme will result in greater impact of other projects and IFAD's investments overall. The inception workshop will be an opportunity to meet with IFAD country programme teams in order to forge linkages with ongoing IFAD loan projects in target countries. There will be regular interactions and information sharing between the proposed programme and in-country projects to leverage lesson learned for better project outcomes.
4. As recommended at the concept note stage, direct selection of the grant recipient was abandoned in favor of competitive selection. Six bids were received and McGill University was selected through a competitive process.

II. The proposed programme

5. The overall goal of this programme is to enhance evidence-based management decision-making on nutrition-sensitive programming through the development and implementation of project-friendly metrics and technologies. The grant objectives are to: (i) build the capacity of project designers and managers for identifying impact pathways and related metrics to improve the management and impact of nutrition-sensitive projects; (ii) develop project-friendly metrics along the identified impact pathways (including a whole-of-the-diet indicator); and (iii) provide new

¹ See EB 2015/114/R.2/Rev.1.

technologies for collecting and analysing information, and integrating it into project monitoring and evaluation systems.

6. This programme will directly target policy makers, designers, managers and implementers of nutrition-sensitive projects with the potential to impact smallholder farmers – in particular, women, who are at the nexus of agriculture, nutrition, and health. Women are also caretakers of children and decision makers regarding household food production and consumption. The programme will be linked with ongoing loan projects in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ethiopia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Zambia aimed at increasing household incomes and farm productivity, and improving household nutrition and health. Secondary beneficiaries will include members of farmer groups benefiting from the nutrition-sensitive value chain interventions. Extension workers, district and village-level staff will benefit from appropriate nutrition knowledge. In addition, the capacities of government nutrition officers, local NGOs, universities and national agricultural research institutes will be strengthened through training and the transfer of strategies and technologies. Policy makers will benefit from the dissemination of programme results.
7. Lessons learned from previous projects in Malawi and Zambia, particularly with respect to monitoring metrics, will inform the implementation of this programme. The scaling up strategy will include: (i) the use of the new metrics in other nutrition-sensitive initiatives across countries; (ii) a strong emphasis on policy engagement to create an enabling environment for scaling up at the national and regional levels, and attracting investment from other partners; and (iii) a focus on developing and disseminating knowledge created through implementation.
8. The programme will be implemented over four years and will have the following components: (1) define impact pathways and related sets of metrics; (2) carry out in-country fieldwork; (3) analyse data and report on results; (4) communicate outputs; and (5) build capacity. The first component will involve a rigorous, research-based approach to identify impact pathways, and comparable, project-friendly indicators across a range of nutrition-sensitive agriculture project types and contexts. Based on fieldwork in the selected countries, the second component will involve the selection of existing metrics and indicators, development of a new metric, field planning and data collection. Component 3 will involve analysis of the data collected through component 2. Programme output dissemination will be the focus of component 4, including the development of a dissemination strategy and dissemination materials, and deployment of the strategy. The final component will be dedicated to capacity-gap assessment and capacity-building of targeted stakeholders.
9. The metrics and indicators developed through this programme will be sustainable in the medium term since programme implementation agencies will continue to operate after the completion of this programme. More importantly, the availability of the metrics and their indicators, along with the data collection platform and food database for use by other projects will ensure the continued benefits of this programme beyond its countries of implementation.

III. Expected outputs

10. The programme is expected to generate an analysis of impact pathways for different types of investments and identify: (i) appropriate indicators for different investments; (ii) new metrics to be developed; and (iii) capacity gaps of staff in nutrition monitoring and evaluation. Additional outputs will include: (i) valid metrics developed to fill identified gaps, including a project friendly whole-of-the-diet outcome indicator for use in IFAD Results and Impact Management System (RIMS); (ii) guidance materials and tools for building capacity in nutrition monitoring and evaluation; and (iii) training of project staff to assess impact pathways of nutrition-sensitive projects and monitor their implementation.

11. There are no deviations from IFAD's standard procedures for financial reporting and audits.

IV. Indicative programme costs and financing

12. The total programme budget is US\$1.37 million, including an IFAD grant of US\$1.05 million for 48 months. McGill University will cofinance the project up to US\$324,000.

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

<i>Components</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>McGill</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Defining impact pathways and related metrics	33	10	43
2. In-country fieldwork	534	126	660
3. Data analysis and results reporting	71	20	91
4. Programme output dissemination	155	50	205
5. Capacity-building	179	94	273
Overheads	78	24	102
Total	1 050	324	1 374

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

<i>Expenditure category</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>McGill</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Consultancies	64	-	64
2. Equipment and material	58	10	68
3. Goods, services and inputs	122	20	142
4. Operating costs	79	20	99
5. Salaries and allowances	261	250	511
6. Workshops	52	-	52
7. Training and capacity-building	174	-	174
8. Travel and allowances	162	-	162
9. Management fees/overhead	78	24	102
Total	1 050	324	1 374

V. Recommendation

13. 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 Project-friendly Metrics and Technologies for Better Results in Nutrition-sensitive Projects, shall provide a grant of one million fifty thousand United States dollars (US\$1,050,000) to McGill University for a four-year period 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

	Objectives hierarchy	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
Goal	<p>a. The overall goal of the project is to enhance evidence based management decision making on Nutrition Sensitive programming through the development and implementation of project friendly metrics and technologies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friendly and simple tools for diet quality and nutrition monitoring are developed. At least 50% of NSA projects are equipped with tools and training to monitor nutrition for different investments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of new friendly metrics and technologies. Project implementation report. 	<p>Communities are willing to participate in surveys and commit to provide detailed data on a regular basis.</p>
Objectives	<p>b. To build capacity of project designers and managers on impact pathways and appropriate metrics to improve management and impact of Nutrition Sensitive projects;</p> <p>c. To develop a project friendly metrics along the impact pathways (inclusive of a whole of the diet indicator);</p> <p>d. To provide new, appropriate technologies for collecting and analysing that information and integrating it into project M&E systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New tools and metrics are developed for improved data collection and nutrition monitoring. The new metric and indicators are tested on at least four ongoing IFAD NSA projects. A comparative study on various metrics is conducted. At least 500 stakeholders across four countries in three continents are trained on the use of new metrics. At least 75% of project designers and managers in the four countries are trained on applications of the new metrics and technologies. At least 75% of new nutrition sensitive projects in the four countries have incorporated improved metrics and technologies in their nutrition M&E". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review report on impact pathways and metrics. Report on dissemination and capacity building workshops. Availability of a new friendly metric for nutrition project monitoring and evaluation Availability of a tablet-based data collection and M&E system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders are effectively engaged in knowledge sharing.
Outcomes/ Outputs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of impact pathways for different types of investments and identification of (i) appropriate indicators for different investments (ii) new metrics to be developed (iii) capacity gaps of staff on nutrition M&E. Valid metrics developed to fill identified gaps, including a project friendly "Whole of the diet" outcome indicator for use in RIMs. Guidance materials and tools for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate metrics and indicators are identified for comparative study. New metrics developed is simple, easy to use, cheap and able to provide data on whole diet. New materials for training on nutrition monitoring and evaluation are developed. At least 50% of staff on ongoing NSA projects linked with this project are trained to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review report Peer review publications New metric evaluation report Dissemination and capacity building materials Training workshop reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of metrics and indicators Project staff are willing to effectively engage in the training sessions

	<p>building capacity of nutrition M&E.</p> <p>4. Project staff trained to assess impact pathways of Nutrition Sensitive projects and effectively monitor implementation of nutrition sensitive projects.</p>	<p>impact pathways and monitor nutrition improvement in their current projects.</p>		
<p>Key activities by component</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component 1: Defining impact pathways and related sets of metrics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the impact pathways, appropriate, and potentially comparable, project-friendly indicators across a range of nutrition-sensitive agriculture projects • Component 2: In country fieldwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metrics selection and planning • Survey question bank development • Available Food and their nutrient composition organization • New metric development • Fieldwork planning • Round one data collection • Round two data collection • Component 3: Data Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of round one data collected • Expert review and feedback • Analysis of round two data collection • Component 4: Knowledge Management and communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a dissemination strategy; • Development of products to promote the use of the new metric and • Deployment of the dissemination strategy • Component 5: Capacity Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of capacity gaps of staff on impact pathways for nutrition sensitive projects and related project monitoring and evaluation • Capacity building training workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question bank with metrics and indicator specific selection option created. • A new country specific food and nutrient composition database created. • Specific NSA investment related metric and indicators are selected • Comparative metric and indicator evaluation study conducted. • Impact of different metrics and indicators which were field tested are evaluated. • At least two national dissemination workshops conducted in each of the participating countries. • At least 50% of project staff are assessing new metrics and improved technologies for nutrition monitoring. • Up to 100 stakeholders are trained on impact pathways and new metrics for nutrition monitoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of a new food and nutrient database • Availability of new data collection platform • Project implementation report • Comparative study report • Peer review publication • Project reports • Expert review workshop report • Dissemination materials • Dissemination strategy report • Project implementation report • Implementation progress report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active participation of community members and local partners. • Government policy support. • Stakeholders are willing to participate in workshops. • Target groups are effectively engaged in knowledge sharing.