



Investing in rural people

## Executive Board

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### **President's report on a proposed grant under the regional grants window to Network of Farmers' Organizations and Agricultural Producers of West Africa for Farmer-driven Promotion of Quality Local Rice (FDP RIZ)**

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**FOR: APPROVAL**

**Action:** The Executive Board is invited to approve the recommendation contained in paragraph 18.

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#### **Technical questions:**

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*For more information on IFAD's partnership with farmers' organizations through the Farmers' Forum, please visit <https://www.ifad.org/en/farmers-forum>.*

# **President's report on a proposed grant under the regional grants window to Network of Farmers' Organizations and Agricultural Producers of West Africa for Farmer-driven Promotion of Quality Local Rice (FDP RIZ)**

## **I. Background and compliance with the IFAD Regular Grants Policy**

1. Rice is the second most consumed cereal in Africa, after maize. Rice consumption in West Africa has quadrupled over the past 30 years, rising from 5 million metric tons in the early 1990s to over 23 million metric tons in 2023, owing to numerous factors, including population growth, rapid urbanization and rising per capita incomes. Despite progress in local production, mainly as a result of the extension of rice-growing areas, West Africa must import massive amounts of rice – the equivalent of 45 per cent of its total rice consumption. Self-sufficiency in rice production has become a pillar of the effort to achieve food sovereignty and food security for several countries and an integral topic for policy discussion. The global shocks that have occurred in recent years, and their impacts on rice trade and supply, have further highlighted the importance of rice self-sufficiency in West Africa.
2. To date, however, many obstacles have stood in the way of achieving this self-sufficiency, including inadequate organization of the rice industry in the various countries and problematic collaboration between the various links in the value chain, from local to national levels. Additionally, there is a disconnect between rural and urban markets in most countries. Moreover, the local rice sector faces major challenges with regard to quality and pricing (local rice is more expensive than imported rice and the quality is not yet trusted by consumers). If domestic rice is to compete with imported rice, efforts must therefore be made not only in production and processing but also in packaging, promotion, branding and distribution.
3. The purpose of this project is to engage with a regional apex producers' organization with strong local roots that is already leading a regional network of small-scale farmers and food producers' organizations (POs) and championing their interests and experience to promote farmer-driven local rice production and marketing. The project will do this by investing in the capitalization of public-private-producer partnership (4P) models in the sector and identifying opportunities, supporting the piloting of labelling and certification initiatives for quality local rice and engaging in policy processes to promote the quality local rice sector.
4. The proposed project is in line with the goal and objectives of the IFAD Regular Grants Policy (2021).<sup>1</sup> It will contribute primarily to strategic objective 2: foster a more conducive policy and investment environment for smallholder agriculture and rural development. It will work through priority commitment area 3: strategic partnerships to enhance impact, leveraging the experience and networks of local farmers' organizations. It will also make secondary contributions to priority commitment area 5: sustainability and scaling up results, as IFAD will be strengthening ownership of high-value markets, regional partnerships and promoting capacity-building for local farmers' organizations to prepare them to formulate investments and policies to carry forward the benefits after the project completes.

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<sup>1</sup> See EB 2021/132/R.3 and EB 2021/134/R.13.

5. The grant recipient was identified through direct selection, which was approved by the Operational Strategy and Policy Guidance Committee on 6 December 2023. The project will be implemented by the Network of Farmers' Organizations and Agricultural Producers of West Africa (ROPPA), working specifically through its Regional Consultation Framework for Rice Producers' Organizations (CRCOPR). CRCOPR is an entity within ROPPA that brings together West African rice growers, including 14 federations, and networks of rice cooperatives and other national organizations across 14 countries. These organizations are gradually being structured into national platforms. ROPPA through CRCOPR is the only institution with the mandate and credibility to pilot a farmer-owned rice branding project in several countries in West Africa. ROPPA, as the lead regional farmers' organization supporting family farming, is a strategic partner of IFAD in the West and Central Africa region. It is leading the regional Farmers' Forum process and is a partner of IFAD in several regional and continental initiatives, such as the [Joint Sahel Programme in response to the challenges of COVID-19, conflicts and climate change \(SD3C\)](#), Support to Farmers' Organizations in Africa Programme (SFOAP), the [Farmers' Organizations for Africa, Caribbean and Pacific \(FO4ACP\) programme](#) and the Support African Farmers in 2020 Emergency (SAFE 2020) project funded by the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility.

## II. The proposed project

6. The goal of the project is to contribute to food sovereignty in West Africa by supporting the development of the local rice sector. The project's development objective is to strengthen the livelihoods and resilience of family farmers who are active in rice value chains in West Africa through improved access to remunerative domestic markets. The objectives are to:
  - (i) Learn from 4P models currently being applied in the rice industry and from existing public policies to promote local rice, including through POs.
  - (ii) Support pilot labelling and certification initiatives initiated by producers, involving all players in the value chain.
  - (iii) Promote the quality local rice sector among political decision makers and consumers.
7. The direct target group includes: (i) small-scale rice producers in the countries where the pilot operations will be implemented; (ii) professional agricultural organizations with various levels of structuring and territorial positioning (POs, federations), national consultation platforms and national inter-professional organizations; and (iii) downstream players in the value chain, such as processors, traders, distributors and supermarkets structured as small and medium-sized enterprises or cooperatives. Indirect target groups are: (i) national governments; and (ii) consumers. The project will use the national platforms of rice producers in the target countries as an entry point for delivering its support to grassroots organizations and cooperatives. Targeting through POs will follow certain criteria, including significant integration of women and young people, as well as the poorest producers among PO members. Women and young people (aged 15–40) will account for 40 per cent and 30 per cent of beneficiaries, respectively.

8. The project will be implemented over three years and will have the following components:
- (i) **Component 1:** Capitalize on experience in promoting and adding value to local rice in West Africa, in particular through 4P models
    - The aim of this component is to identify, capitalize on and disseminate successful experiences of partnerships between producers and other players in the rice value chain (4P model), with particular emphasis on brand-building and the promotion of quality local rice. These experiences will include initiatives by ROPPA members, IFAD-funded projects and projects funded by other development partners in the selected countries. Priority will be given to initiatives promoting better integration between production, processing, marketing and distribution links, while ensuring that producers and their POs play a leading role in the process.
  - (ii) **Component 2:** Support for pilot labelling and certification initiatives in the local rice sector
    - The aim of this component is to promote the creation of local brands by rice grower organizations. The goal is to support or introduce brands owned by producers, in partnership with other stakeholders (such as processors and traders) to enhance the value of local rice and improve local producers' access to rural and urban markets.
  - (iii) **Component 3:** Advocacy and policy dialogue
    - The aim is to strengthen the effectiveness of dialogue between POs and political decision makers to encourage the adoption, implementation and/or consolidation of sectoral policy instruments (agricultural, commercial, etc.), favouring the transformation of rice sectors and improved marketing of local rice.
  - (iv) **Component 4:** Project management

### III. Expected outcomes/outputs

9. The project is expected to have the following outcomes:
- (i) An increase in partnership initiatives between rice producers and other players in West African rice value chains and capitalization of the most relevant players, with equitably shared benefits;
  - (ii) An increase in farmers' brands of quality rice in the region and an improvement in rice producers' incomes;
  - (iii) An increase in action by decision makers to promote quality local rice at both national and regional levels.
10. The project will have the following expected outputs by component:
- (i) **Outputs related to component 1** include: (i) an inventory of experiences already documented within the framework of ROPPA and IFAD programmes and projects; (ii) the launching of a call for submissions of the best 4P initiatives and experiences of POs and partners by ROPPA for further capitalization; (iii) provision of support for compilation and dissemination of lessons learned; and (iv) organization of three experience-sharing webinars.
  - (ii) **Outputs related to component 2** include: (i) a study of the institutional environment and a cost/benefit analysis of producer-owned brands in target countries; (ii) identification of players and their support needs; (iii) provision of support for players in the certification/labelling process; and (iv) promotion of local rice.

- (iii) **Outputs related to component 3** include: (i) production and dissemination of advocacy notes based on capitalization products; and (ii) development and implementation of an advocacy strategy based on experience in target countries.

#### **IV. Implementation arrangements**

11. ROPPA/CRCOPR will be the recipient of the grant. Implementation of the project will be the responsibility of the ROPPA Board of Directors, which sets the network's priorities and the procedures for allocating resources to national clusters. It will also oversee the processes to be undertaken to achieve the changes that the project is expected to bring about. At the national and regional levels, steering committees will be set up to share information and support decision-making and orientation by farmer leaders. Technical sessions of a technical committee comprising the heads of the platforms involved, their monitoring and evaluation managers and their financiers will be organized prior to each steering committee meeting.
12. Day-to-day operational implementation of the project will be handled by the ROPPA/CRCOPR regional coordination team and the ROPPA executive secretariat. The two entities will co-develop and monitor the annual workplans and budgets, which will be submitted to IFAD for no objection within 60 days before the start of the relevant financial year. Field implementation will be coordinated by CRCOPR in tandem with members of the national rice PO platforms. The national organizations in the countries participating in the initiative will be subrecipients. They will participate in the direct implementation of activities in the field and act as liaisons with other players in the proposed value chains.
13. No personnel will be recruited for the implementation of the project. Rather, ROPPA and the national platforms of rice producers in the project's target countries will utilize their technical staff. The regional project team will consist of a coordinator, an accountant, a monitoring and evaluation manager and a communications and knowledge manager. At the national level, there will be a dedicated monitoring and evaluation officer in each country.
14. The Lead Regional Economist and Regional Specialist in the IFAD West and Central Africa Division and the Senior Regional Technical Specialist, Rural Institutions, in the IFAD Sustainable Production, Markets and Institutions Division will be responsible for ensuring effective management of the grant agreement.
15. There will be no deviations from the standard requirements for financial reporting and audits.
16. For each fiscal year, financial statements of project operations, resources and project expenditures will be prepared by the ROPPA finance team. Auditing of the project accounts will be carried out annually by a qualified independent accounting firm, recruited by the ROPPA/CRCOPR regional coordination team and deemed acceptable to IFAD on the basis of terms of reference previously approved by IFAD. The audit reports will be transmitted to IFAD no later than six months following the close of each fiscal year. In addition to the institutional audited financial statements, ROPPA will conduct a yearly audit and provide to IFAD an audit opinion on the statement of expenditure.

#### **V. Indicative project costs and financing**

17. The total costs for this project will amount to US\$777,000. IFAD will provide financing totalling US\$750,000 over three years, and ROPPA and its members will mobilize cash cofinancing in the amount of US\$27,000.

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

<i>Components</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>ROPPA</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Capitalize on experience in promoting and adding value to local rice in West Africa, in particular through 4P models	311	17	328
2. Support for pilot labelling and certification initiatives in the local rice sector	227	8	235
3. Advocacy and policy dialogue	77	–	77
4. Project management	135	2	137
<b>Total</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>777</b>

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

<i>Expenditure category</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>ROPPA</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Salaries and allowances	55	–	55
2. Goods, services and inputs	97	8	105
3. Travel and allowances	340	17	357
4. Consultancies	202	–	202
5. Overhead	56	2	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>777</b>

## VI. Recommendation

18. 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 Farmer-driven Promotion of Quality Local Rice (FDP RIZ) project, shall provide a grant of seven hundred and fifty thousand United States dollars (US\$750,000) to the Network of Farmers' Organizations and Agricultural Producers of West Africa for three years and upon such terms and conditions as shall be substantially in accordance with the terms and conditions presented to the Executive Board herein.

Alvaro Lario  
 President

## Results-based logical framework

	Objectives hierarchy	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
<b>Goal</b>	To strengthen the livelihoods and resilience of family farmers active in the rice value chains in West Africa, through improved access to remunerative, high-quality domestic markets.	Volume of high-quality local rice sold  # of organizations supported	Statistical data on the volume of high-quality local rice sold on the market (national platforms/ROPPA)  Supervision, Data collection and Annual reporting (national platforms/ROPPA)	Measures to regulate rice imports are being maintained.  The strengthening of the local rice sector is ongoing
<b>Outcomes</b>	<p><b>Component 1:</b> An increase in potential partnership initiatives between rice producers and other players in the value chain in the West African region are identified, and the most relevant are capitalized on and shared</p> <p><b>Component 2:</b> An increase of farmers' brands of quality rice in the region aimed at improving rice producers' incomes</p> <p><b>Component 2:</b> Increased action by decision-makers to promote quality local rice at both national and regional levels</p>	<p><b>Component 1:</b> # of new partnerships facilitated</p> <p><b>Component 2:</b> Number of people reached by related services (watch/alert and digital innovations and support for veterinary care)</p> <p><b>Component 2:</b> # actions taken by decisions makers to promote local rice</p>	Supervision, Data collection and Annual reporting (national platforms/ROPPA)	The 4P model corresponds to national guidelines
<b>Outputs</b>	<p><b>Component 1:</b> Inventory taken of experiences already documented in the framework of ROPPA and IFAD programmes</p> <p>Launch of a call for experience capitalization by ROPPA</p> <p>Support provided to POs and partners for writing, collating and dissemination of lessons learned</p> <p>Organization of experience-sharing webinars</p>	<p><b>Component 1:</b> 6 online meetings  20 capitalized experiences</p> <p>2 workshops</p> <p>3 webinars</p>	Supervision, Data collection and Annual reporting (national platforms/ROPPA)	

Objectives hierarchy	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
<p><b>Component 2:</b> Carry out a study of the institutional environment and benefits/costs of producer-owned brands in target countries</p> <p>Identifying stakeholders and their support needs</p> <p>Support for players in the certification/labelling process</p> <p>Promotion of local rice and competitiveness enhancement</p> <p><b>Component 3:</b> Production and dissemination of advocacy notes based on capitalization products</p> <p>Develop and implement an advocacy strategy based on experience in target countries</p>	<p><b>Component 2 :</b> 1 study</p> <p>3 workshops</p> <p>3 support kits provided</p> <p>12 fairs for promotion of local rice</p> <p><b>Component 3:</b> # of guidance notes provided</p> <p>1 Advocacy strategy</p>		