
**President's report on a proposed regional grant to
Light for the World International for the Scaling Up
Disability Inclusion Transformation in East and
Southern Africa (SPARK II-ESA)**

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Action: The Executive Board is invited to approve the recommendation contained in paragraph 15.

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President's report on a proposed regional grant to Light for the World International for the Scaling Up Disability Inclusion Transformation in East and Southern Africa (SPARK II-ESA)

I. Background and compliance with the IFAD Regular Grants Policy

1. Persons with disabilities living in rural areas face significant barriers that limit their ability to participate in – and benefit from – rural development. Despite growing commitments to disability inclusion, efforts frequently fail to address the specific needs of persons with disabilities, missing important opportunities to engage them as active contributors to community development. The proposed grant builds on the achievements and lessons learned from the Sparking Disability Inclusive Rural Transformation Programme (SPARK I – 2020–2024).
2. The proposed grant is in line with the goal and objectives of the IFAD Regular Grants Policy (2021)¹ since it contributes to its overarching goal of accelerating IFAD's mandate for sustainable and inclusive rural transformation. It also supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the commitment to leave no one behind. It is expected to contribute to strategic objective 1 (SO1) of the Regular Grants Policy by leveraging better impacts on the ground across IFAD's programme of work through strengthening the capacity of key stakeholders (project management units, government counterparts and local organizations of persons with disabilities). The grant will directly contribute to policy area 1 by disseminating approaches and solutions for promoting disability inclusion in rural settings. All grant-financed activities are fully aligned with IFAD's strategic objectives and policies, including the IFAD Poverty Targeting Policy and the Disability Inclusion Strategy. By promoting evidence generation and strengthening international and national partnerships on disability inclusion, the grant will also contribute to IFAD's commitment for the Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources, which calls for the design of at least five new projects that prioritize persons with disabilities.
3. The recipient, Light for the World International, a non-profit organization specialized in disability inclusion in low-income countries, was identified through direct selection. The direct selection was approved on 2 July 2025. Active in ten countries, the recipient was selected because of its unique expertise in disability inclusion, capacity strengthening of organizations for persons with disabilities (OPDs) and the successful implementation of the IFAD-funded SPARK I, for which it was selected through a competitive bidding process in 2020.

II. The proposed programme

4. The overall goal of the programme is: persons with disabilities, particularly women and youth, become drivers of rural development and participate actively in IFAD programmes and investments tailored to their specific needs, constraints and interests. The programme objective is to improve access by persons with disabilities to support services, income-generation and employment opportunities along agricultural value chains targeted through IFAD programmes.
5. The target group will be comprised of 7,500 persons with disabilities (45 per cent women and 25 per cent youth) in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, who will receive tailored support. This target group includes those planned to be reached by nine IFAD projects in the three countries. In addition, three national federations will be engaged and supported, cascading into at least 12 OPDs. Forty-five new disability inclusion facilitators will be selected and trained, and 40 staff from project

¹ See EB 2021/132/R.3.

management units (PMUs), implementing partners and decision makers will be trained in disability inclusion in the three countries.

6. The programme will be implemented over three years and will have the following components:
 - **Component 1. Improved socioeconomic environment for inclusion of persons with disabilities** will target activities related to: technical assistance and capacity-building of PMUs, governments and counterparts; awareness-raising at the community level; and strengthening the capacity of federations and OPDs.
 - **Component 2. Diversified livelihoods and decent employment opportunities** will focus on training and certification of disability inclusion facilitators, youth advocates, agri-labs and alternative, accessible livelihoods opportunities.
 - **Component 3. Effective project management, knowledge exchange and qualitative learning on disability inclusion** will focus on knowledge management through learning routes, knowledge products and project implementation support.

III. Expected outcomes/outputs

7. The programme is expected to have the following outputs and outcomes:
 - **Component 1** is expected to result in: output 1.1 – improved disability inclusion planning, implementation and monitoring; output 1.2 – awareness raised on the existing policies and legal frameworks; and output 1.3 – OPDs' capacity and self-sufficiency strengthened, ultimately leading to outcome 1 – environment for socioeconomic inclusion of people with disabilities improved.
 - **Component 2** will result in: output 2.1 – innovative disability-inclusive approaches more systematically adopted by IFAD and other organizations; and output 2.2 – improved livelihoods and income-generating opportunities promoted through direct support to persons with disabilities. These two outputs will lead to outcome 2 – livelihoods diversified and decent employment opportunities created.
 - **Component 3** includes: output 3.1 – knowledge management and learning on disability inclusion enhanced; and output 3.2 – effective project coordination and implementation support ensured. It is expected that both outputs will lead to outcome 3 – knowledge management and exchange, capacity development and learning on disability inclusion enhanced.

IV. Implementation arrangements

8. Under SPARK I, Light for the World International, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Procasur worked together as a consortium. Light for the World was responsible for overall coordination and leading implementation in Burkina Faso and Mozambique. ILO was responsible for leading activities in India and Malawi, and Procasur was responsible for leading on knowledge management and learning exchanges. SPARK II-ESA aims to consolidate and expand the results of SPARK I in Malawi and Mozambique, and replicate the experience in Zimbabwe. The implementation arrangements of SPARK I will be replicated by collaborating with ILO and Procasur, and allowing them to cofinance SPARK II-ESA with an in-kind contribution totalling US\$300,000.
9. The grant will be implemented by Light for the World International, based on an annual workplan and budget (AWPB) jointly prepared with ILO and Procasur, and submitted for approval by the IFAD grant manager. Implementation will be led by the recipient.

10. The recipient will be responsible for overseeing the planning and delivery of the AWPB, monitoring overall programme progress, and maintaining regular communication with the IFAD grant managers and stakeholders. As an employee of Light for the World International, the coordinator is accountable for project deliverables to the project steering committee (PSC) and reports directly to Light for the World International's head office.
11. The PSC will be comprised by the grant managers and representatives of the management units of selected IFAD-supported projects. Light for the World International, Procasur, and ILO officials will participate in the PSC as observers. This governance structure ensures alignment with IFAD's objectives and facilitates effective coordination among consortium members and other IFAD initiatives throughout the grant's life cycle.
12. Country implementation teams will be established in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The Malawi and Zimbabwe teams will be led by ILO, while in Mozambique, implementation will be led by Light for the World International, which will also be responsible for overall grant coordination. The country teams will ensure context-specific delivery, coordinate with local stakeholders and contribute to monitoring, learning, and adaptive management at the country level. Each country team will collaborate with implementing partners, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Mozambique, Leonard Cheshire Disability in Zimbabwe and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and UN-Women in Malawi. These organizations will contribute specialized expertise in raising awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities among policymakers, service providers and communities, through adapted knowledge products.
13. There are no deviations from the standard procedures for financial reporting and audits. Financial management will follow IFAD's established procedures, including transparent budgeting, expenditure tracking and regular financial reporting through the PSC and grant manager, Light for the World International. The AWPB will be reviewed and approved by IFAD to ensure adequate allocation of resources aligned with project priorities. Risk management will include regular risk assessments, timely identification of potential challenges and mitigation strategies developed jointly by consortium partners. This proactive approach will ensure financial accountability and minimize disruptions to project implementation.

V. Indicative programme costs and financing

14. The summary of the overall project costs, by components and expenditure categories is presented in tables below:

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

Components	IFAD	Light for the World International (cash/in kind)	ILO (cash/in kind)	Procasur (cash/in kind)	OHCHR (in kind)	Total
1. Improved socioeconomic environment for inclusion of persons with disabilities	123 582	20 444	21 635	-	7 500	173 161
2. Diversified livelihoods and decent employment opportunities	732 599	22 763	30 150	-	-	785 512
3. Effective project management, knowledge exchange and qualitative learning on disability inclusion	532 708	96 187	50 000	51 326	-	730 221
Indirect cost	111 111	-	-	-	-	111 111
Total	1 500 000	139 394	101 785	51 326	7 500	1 800 005

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

Expenditure category	IFAD	<i>Light for the World International</i> (cash/in kind)	ILO (cash/in kind)	Procasur (cash/in kind)	OHCHR (in kind)	Total
Training	195 908	22 621	8 445	9 190	-	236 164
Travel & allowances	521 971	12 092	20 190	30 970	-	585 223
Goods, services & inputs	137 637	12 494	11 200	1 326	-	162 657
Salary costs	466 073	57 587	61 950	9 840	7 500	602 950
Operating costs	67 300	34 600	-	-	-	101 900
Indirect costs	111 111	-	-	-	-	111 111
Total	1 500 000	139 394	101 785	51 326	7 500	1 800 005

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 Scaling Up Disability Inclusion Transformation in East and Southern Africa, shall provide a grant of one million, five hundred thousand United States dollars (US\$1,500,000) to Light for the World International for 36 months 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

Results hierarchy	Indicators			Means of verification			Assumptions
	Name	Baseline	End target	Source	Freq.	Respons.	
Goal Persons with Disabilities, particularly women and youth, become drivers of rural development and participate actively in IFAD programmes and investments tailored to their specific needs, constraints, and interests	# of Persons with Disabilities receiving services (in synergy with the 9 targeted IFAD projects (CI 1)		7,500 (45% women and 25% youth)	Grant annual reports	Once a year	Grant Recipient	Budget availability Political and social stability in the targeted countries
Development objective To improve Persons with Disabilities' access to support services, income-generating and employment opportunities along the agricultural value chains targeted by selected IFAD's programmes	# of IFAD-supported projects allocating resources to DI work and monitoring and reporting on their outreach to Persons with Disabilities		6	Grant annual reports	Once a year	Grant Recipient, IFAD project managements units	Collaboration of the PMUs of the targeted IFAD-supported projects
	% of IFAD projects' participants who are persons with disabilities (disaggregated by type of disability, gender, youth)		2%	IFAD projects M&E systems; IFAD supervision and completion reports	Once a year	Grant Coordinator	Budget availability Collaboration of the PMUs of the targeted IFAD-supported projects
Outcome 1 Improved Environment for the Socioeconomic Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities	% of OPDs supported and capacitated to work with disability-inclusive approaches		80%	Grant annual reports	Once a year	Grant Coordinator	Budget availability OPDs' commitment
	% of PMUs, implementing partners, practitioners and decision-makers trained who show increased awareness and understanding of DI		70%	Final evaluation	At completion	Grant Coordinator	Budget availability Collaboration with PMUs and government counterparts
Outputs 1.1 Improved Disability-Inclusive Planning and Programming	% of AWPB developed by IFAD projects including clear DI activities with resources and indicators properly identified		70%	Project AWPBs	Once a year	Grant Coordinator, IFAD project managements units	PMUs' commitment to implement recommendations
	# of IFAD projects showing an improved rating based on adopted DI self-assessment tools (e.g. DISC)		6	Grant annual reports	Once a year	Grant Coordinator	PMUs' commitment to implement recommendations
Output 1.2 Awareness Raised on the Existing Policy and Legal Framework	# of communication and awareness raising materials produced (brochures, posters, etc.) to translate and disseminate the content of relevant policy frameworks		18	Grant annual reports	Once a year	Grant Coordinator	Budget availability Availability of local partners with relevant expertise to support translation and adaptation of legal content OPDs' commitment
	# of events organized for sensitisation and communication on the rights of Persons with Disabilities		6	Grant annual reports	Once a year	Grant Coordinator	Budget availability Government commitment Stability of local context
Output 1.3 OPDs Capacity Strengthened	# of Federations of OPDs engaged and supported		3	Grant annual reports	Once a year	Grant Coordinator	Budget availability OPDs' commitment

Results hierarchy	Indicators	Means of verification			Assumptions		
	Name	Baseline	End target	Source	Freq.	Respons.	
	% of supported OPDs reporting improved awareness and capacities on disability-inclusive approaches		80%	Grant annual reports	Once a year	Grant Coordinator	Budget availability OPDs' commitment
	% OPDs providing DI services to projects/organizations		30%	Grant annual reports	Once a year	Grant Coordinator	Budget availability OPDs' commitment
Outcome 2 Diversified livelihood and decent employment opportunities created for Persons with Disabilities	% of Persons with Disabilities reporting an improved access to training, services, and opportunities as a result of their participation in the grant		60%	Final evaluation	At completion	Grant Coordinator	Budget availability Collaboration with PMUs
Output 2.1 Innovative Disability Inclusion Tools Promoted	# of new DIF trained and certified		45 (25 women and 25 youth)	Grant annual reports	Once a year	Grant Coordinator	Budget availability
Output 2.2 Alternative and accessible livelihoods opportunities promoted for Persons with Disabilities	# of persons with disabilities who have participated in vocational/skills development initiatives promoted by the projects		650	IFAD project's M&E systems	Once a year	PMUs, Grant Coordinator	Budget availability Joint planning capacities PMUs collaboration and commitment
	# of persons with disabilities who have Rural Finance Services (LoC, Matching Grants, Social Cash transfers, etc.) promoted by the projects		2050	IFAD project's M&E systems	Once a year	PMUs, Grant Coordinator	Budget availability Joint planning capacities PMUs collaboration and commitment
	# of persons with disabilities who have received Agro-Livestock inputs promoted by the projects		3100	IFAD project's M&E systems	Once a year	PMUs, Grant Coordinator	Budget availability Joint planning capacities PMUs collaboration and commitment
	# of Local Disaster Risk Reduction Committees with membership of persons with disabilities		180	IFAD project's M&E systems	Once a year	PMUs, Grant Coordinator	Budget availability Joint planning capacities PMUs collaboration and commitment
OUTCOME 3 Project Management, Knowledge Exchange and Learning on DI	% of reports and audits delivered in time		90	Grant annual reports	Once a year	Grant Coordinator	
	% of participants national and regional LRs showing increased awareness, capacities on DI		80%	Grant annual reports	Once a year	Grant Coordinator	Budget availability
Output 3.1 Knowledge Management and Learning Enhanced	# of case studies, briefs and communication materials developed		4	Grant annual reports	Once a year	Grant Coordinator	Budget availability Compliance with IFAD's publication standards