SECTION XVI

Template for Project Concept Note

Background

1. Each new RB-COSOP should include a specific Appendix outlining possible interventions(s) to be formulated during the life of the COSOP. These interventions/projects could be financed by either loans or grants. As it is acknowledged that there will be frequent shortage of detailed information on future project design, it is suggested that the description for each proposed project be limited to a maximum of 3 pages and that the following format be applied for each project.

As part of the new quality enhancement process for RB-COSOP and projects, the OSC would review Project Concept Notes as an opportunity for early feedback from Senior management on strategic orientation and design issues, as well as a basis for decision on access to budget for pipeline development.

2. The format of the Project Concept Note—which builds on previous guidelines with additional options for customisation to reflect specific categories of countries—will vary depending on whether it applies to a country with (or without) an RB-COSOP, and whether it is submitted to OSC concurrently with (or subsequent to) the RB-COSOP. More specifically:

   (a) If the Project Concept is included in the RB-COSOP for OSC review, then its format will be start directly with a section on “possible geographic area of intervention and target group” taking into account that the required background information is already contained in relevant sections of the RB-COSOP.

   (b) If the Project Concept is submitted for OSC consideration as a stand alone document subsequent to RB-COSOP approval (in situations where the previously approved project concepts are no longer relevant due to changing country circumstances and/or IFAD wishes to seize new opportunities for partnerships which did not exist at the time of RB-COSOP design), then the project concept note will start with an initial section on “strategic context and rationale for IFAD involvement, commitment and partnership (Cf. KSF1)” which corresponds to section 1 of the approved project design report. This will set the scene for review of the Concept Note as a self-contained document. The remaining sections are the same as in scenario a) above.

   (c) For countries where no RB-COSOP is required—as defined in the main text of the revised COSOP guidelines—the format of the Project Concept Note will contain an initial outline of some of the key information that would normally be part of an RB-COSOP, relative to country alignment, innovation and scaling up, knowledge management, policy dialogue, country presence and country programme management and monitoring, as well as the outline a preliminary project log frame. It is also understood that the subsequent project design document will contain a COSOP-type results management framework (in addition to the project specific project log frames) which would provide a full picture of the country programme, for which this and other projects would form building blocks.

Annotated Outline for Project Concept Notes

1. **Strategic context and rationale for IFAD involvement, commitment and partnership (KSF 1).** This section provides the required background information with special reference to:

   a. Poverty and rural development context
   b. Policy, governance and institutional issues, political and economic issues
c. The IFAD country programme.

Note: This section is not needed when the project concept is part of the RB-COSOP.

II. Possible geographic area of intervention and target groups. This describes the target group and targeting approach to be followed. In the case of project area, a preliminary identification of the project geographic and administrative location should be provided.

III. Justification and rationale. This section describes the justification and rationale for the project, in other words the key development opportunity that the project will achieve and why IFAD has the comparative advantage to respond to it.

IV. Key Project Objectives. This section summarizes the project objectives, and the link between these objectives and the quantified targets in the COSOP Results Management Framework. It also summarizes which COSOP policy objectives will be achieved by the proposed project.

V. Ownership, Harmonization and Alignment. This section explains how the project targets are aligned with targets in the PRSP (or alternative), and how the project is harmonized with the activities of other donors in the same sector of intervention. It should also be possible to identify potential partnerships and to determine if the project would be part of a SWAP arrangement or a contribution by IFAD to a larger sector umbrella project or program.

VI. Components and activities. Provide a preliminary description of components and activities based on the project objectives.

VII. Costs and financing. Include an indicative budget for the project (aligned with PBAS allocations). The total project costs for the COSOP period should not be more than the estimated total PBAS for the COSOP period (based roughly by extrapolating the PBAS Year 1 total over the number of foreseen years of the COSOP). Contribution by government and beneficiaries cannot be determined at this time, however an indication should be provided of the interest of other donors to contribute towards financing the initiatives outlined.

VIII. Organization and management. Identify the Government’s lead agency in the process of project formulation and the likely implementing agency. Determine if an independent implementing unit would be required or if the project would be part of an existing one, or other implementation modality.

IX. Monitoring and Evaluation indicators. Highlight the relevant quantified targets included in the COSOP, Results Management Framework, and should (a) identify indicators used by other organizations, and explore the possibility of making use of them for the project M&E system; (b) explain how the proposed project will contribute to achieving these targets, (c) how and when in the process baseline information is to be collected, (d) approach to standardization of information and reporting.

X. Risks. Identify some of the potential risks and explain how the ones described in the COSOP relate to the proposed project.

XI. Timing. Provide an indication on the timing for project preparation activities. Show how/if the schedule conforms with the Government’s investment strategy and timeframes.

XII. CPMT composition. Provide the names and organisational affiliation of in-house and country level members of the Country Programme management Team (CPMT)