**Concept Note for Grant Proposals**

**(Max 2000 words)**

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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **1. Grant Sponsoring Division: OPR** | **2. Co-sponsoring Division(s)[[1]](#footnote-1):** | | **3. Technical Grant Manager: Raphael Seiwald** | | | **4. Title of the grant:** RESOLVE: Results based management for rural transformation | | | **5. Value of IFAD grant:** (in US$) 2.0 million | **6. Co-financing: to be determined through competitive selection process at design stage** | | **7. Implementation period:** 36 *Months* | **8. GRIPS ID**: 2000003128 | | **9. Selected Strategic Priority[[2]](#footnote-2): 6. Strategic Priority Endorsed by EMC6. Strategic Priority Endorsed by EMC** | | | **10. Window:** Indicate Global/Regional Country | **11. Country/Countries:** Global – selected countries with IFAD projects | | **12. Recipient:** *Select one of the following options*   * Competitive selection at CN stage  and name of recipient * To be selected competitively at design stage * Direct selection  and name of recipient | | | **13. Rationale for recipient selection and recipient capacity:**  The recipient of this grant will be selected at the Grant Design stage. | | | **14. Background/relevance:**  IFAD's top priority for 2020 is improving the quality of our project portfolio in order to maximize the impact of our interventions, and ensure their sustainability. This prioritization follows on the IFAD11 consultations, which argued that 'business as usual' is not sufficient to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to the rural sector. The consultations agreed on an important work programme that set clear objectives for projects to improve their performance, effectiveness, efficiency and the sustainability of benefits. These messages have also been reinforced in the 2019 RIDE and ARRI – both recommend clearly the need to dedicate more resources to country programme delivery to achieve the improved quality to achieve IFAD’s aim to become bigger, better, smarter through tailored capacity building programmes at the project-level.  This grant proposal addresses recommendation number three of the 2019 ARRI report: to develop government capacities to implement country programmes and projects. Moreover, it is recommended that IFAD could utilize grant financing to work with other partners on strengthening the capacities of government institutions and project management units.  While IFAD is making some progress through a change in behaviour and more proactive management of the portfolio , which has resulted in reducing the number of actual problem projects to 13% in 2019, the underlying reasons for poor project performance are difficult to address through supervision and implementation support alone. They include weak planning & budgeting capacity, a lack of coherence between planning and implementation, as well as weak project management systems, including monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and knowledge management (KM). In addition, problem projects often face problems with a weak implementation readiness, and they therefore fail to meet disbursement conditions on time.  **Objective :** The key objective of this proposed grant is to improve IFAD project performance by strengthening the implementation capacities of Project Management Unit’s (PMUs) managing IFAD financed projects. The grant will provide tailored capacity building programme for the Heads of PMUs and/or project directors in techniques of results-based management (RBM). The grant also aims to provide on-the ground support to set up efficient and effective RBM systems.  RBM is a management strategy by which all actors, contributing directly or indirectly to achieving a set of results, ensure that their processes, products and services contribute to the achievement of desired results (outputs, outcomes and higher-level goals or impact). The actors in turn use information and evidence on actual results to inform decision making on the design, resourcing and delivery of programmes and activities as well as for accountability and reporting.[[3]](#footnote-3)  **Linkages to IFAD-11 commitments:** As mentioned above, this proposed grant is fully aligned with IFAD's development effectiveness framework (DEF), IFAD11’s business model, and the commitments taken for the eleventh replenishment of IFAD's resources. In particular, it is aligned with commitment number 4.1, which relates to strengthening capacity and systems to manage for better results. More broadly, many IFAD11 commitments rely on a strong partnership between IFAD and its Member countries, generating shared accountability and national ownership for project implementation. RBM is focused specifically on these areas: ownership and accountability to drive achievement of objectives and results. Thus, to achieve IFAD11 commitments, PMU’s require additional institutional support to set-up efficient and effective project management systems. The capacity of project directors in RBM is crucial to facilitate improvement project performance, as well as project efficiency and sustainability. | | | **15. Direct and indirect target group:**  Heads of PMU’s and Project Directors will benefit directly from capacity-building and training in RBM. In addition, in selected countries with recurrent issues in poor IFAD project performance, this grant envisages tailored support to increase project management capacity. The prioritization of countries / projects for training will be based on criteria including countries with chronic problem projects, and countries with problem projects driven strongly by project management issues. Specific attention will be provided to those countries who are developing new IFAD projects.  Beneficiaries of IFAD projects will benefit indirectly as IFAD's projects, under the leadership of well-trained PMU management, increase their impact, efficiency and sustainability of results. | | | **16. Goal, objectives and expected outcomes:**  **Goal**: Improving the delivery of results for rural transformation with the objective of contributing to the achievement of SDG 2.3 and 2.4.  **Objective:** Improving the performance of IFAD projects in key lagging indicators by strengthening institutional capacities of PMUs. Enable mid-level management to improve project performance by increasing capacities in planning and implementation for IFAD financed projects in selected countries.  **Outcomes:**   1. Enhanced skill-set on RBM through trainings to heads of PMUs and/or project directors from selected countries to help unlock bottlenecks related to a weak project status (APPs) and solve systemic and recurrent issues related to project management systems. 2. Strengthened project management systems through on-the ground support for countries with chronic problem projects. 3. Improved project performance and decreased number of actual problem and chronic problem projects driven by areas related to project management. | | | **17. Key activities by component:**  **Component 1: Curriculum development.**The curriculum for the Basics in RBM will focus on enhancing management skills of managers of PMU’s in Ministries of Agriculture or other Implementing Agencies. The topics of the curriculum would include principles of RBM across all stages of the project cycle: increasing project implementation readiness, ensuring stakeholder engagement, planning & budgeting, implementation and delivery across the results chain, managing operational risks, use of evidence for informed decision-making and increasing sustainability of benefits.  **Component 2: Delivery of training.** The first courses developed will be offered to a cohort of approximately 75 IFAD Project Directors and Heads of PMUs. The curricula will have a mixture of face-to-face with long-distance learning elements for follow-up. Project Directors and Heads of PMUs will be selected on a need’s basis in close collaboration with IFAD’s country directors.  **Component 3: On-the ground support.** For countries with new projects but with recurrent issues in project management, this component offers the possibility a tailored follow-up PMU-support to assist the project directors in applying acquired knowledge. Manuals for coaching and on-job-training should be developed to allow applicability to other countries and contexts.  **Component 4: Project and knowledge management, M&E and Communications.**The grantee will establish a core project management team that is responsible for the overall implementation of this grant. | | | **18. Project cost:**  **Component 1:** approx. 400,000 USD mainly for consultancy and staff to develop the curricula  **Component 2:** approx. 1,100,000 for the delivery of trainings. Includes workshops, goods, services and inputs, and travel and allowances for participants to trainings.  **Component 3:** approx.200,000 for follow-up support. Includes travel and allowances, and consultancy and/or staff expenses for deployed consultants  **Component 4:** approx.300,000 for project staff, overheads and goods, services and inputs.  The proposed degree of co-financing by the grantee will be considered as an evaluation criteria for the Competitive Selection Process at the Project Design Stage. | | | **19. Risks***:*  The main risks for this grant relate to:   1. Volatility of PMU staff. There is a risk that well-trained project directors leave early or after the completion of the IFAD-funded project, especially given their training in results based management. To mitigate this risk, the selection will be agreed between IFAD’s country director, the grantee and the sponsoring division. A focus in the selection for new project directors but also on long-serving project director which are likely to serve as project directors in other future IFAD funded projects. 2. Lack of buy-in for RBM from political actors. While project directors may incorporate RBM practices, to have an impact on systemic outcomes and policies, buy-in is also needed from political actors within line ministries and leadership. 3. Failure to translate shorter trainings into concrete results. While it is expected that introducing project managers to RBM principles will improve the performance of projects, there is not a one to one correlation between such trainings and outcomes. There are many additional variables which will have an impact on project performance. 4. Lack of follow-up support for the unique issues of countries. While it is expected that countries most in need will received priority attention, differing contexts among countries and projects may require higher levels of individual attention and support. | | | **20. M&E, KM and Learning:**  A primary expected outcome of this project to increase institutional capacities of PMU to implement efficient and effectively IFAD-funded projects. IFAD-funded projects are annually supervised (with more frequent supervision for problem projects). During supervision all projects will be rated on performance for different aspects of the project. Therefore it is expected that project status of the project which are under management of participating project directors will improve significantly (though see risk 3 above).  The grantee is also expected to set up an outcome survey to verify effects of trainings and follow-up support for improving project management capacities in PMU’s in ministries of agriculture.  The grantee management team’s responsibility will be to ensure smooth grant management including dedicated time for M&E and reporting, capturing lessons learned and communication. Additionally, the grantee management team will capitalize on experience made, building on best practices and lessons learned also from other initiatives, such as PRIME, AVANTI and DELIVER. | | | **21. Supervision modalities:**  OPR will supervise this grant, in close collaboration with regional divisions, in particular country directors. Additionally, regional divisions will supervise the ongoing activities in their regions, particularly making use of IFAD's country offices and regional & knowledge hubs to provide adequate support and oversight. | | | **22. Linkages**:  As the primary target group of this grant are Project Directors, this grant is linked closely to all related investment projects. In addition, IFAD already deployed under its Development Effectiveness Framework three interlinked grant initiatives addressing in-country gaps in results-based management capacity and systems. The first is the Program for Rural M&E (PRiME), developed in partnership with CLEAR to improve M&E capacities through a training and certification programme. The second is a three-year programme called AVANTI – Advancing Knowledge for Agricultural Impact implemented by the Swiss NGO HELVETAS which will conduct capacity assessments in 20 countries to identify gaps of national results management systems in the rural sector (Ag-Scans) and develop action-plans to fill these gaps. The DELIVER initiative complements and furthers these initiatives by establishing delivery units in 5 selected IFAD member countries. Lessons learned and knowledge generated from the implementation of the three preceding grant initiatives will feed into the development of the curricula, training materials and manuals of this grant. | | | **23. Scaling up:**  The grant envisions that after a successful delivery of this work programme, this training will be extended to Project Directors facing a deterioration of the project status as well as to all new Project Directors responsible for managing the implementation of new IFAD funded projects. | | | **24. Sustainability:**  This grant will build-up capacities in PMU’s through a set of trainings. The third component of this grant will focus to support the establishment of follow-up support to address emerging needs and project management systems on the ground and to ensure the application of newly acquired knowledge by the Project Directors. Practical manuals and guidelines on how to increase project performance will capture those new introduced routines and practices and will be available after termination of this grant. Lessons learned on scaling-up from PRIME initiative will be taken into the consideration, therefore this grants envisions to open trainings on a fee’s base also to external parties and other mid-level managers in ministries or project directors financed by other IFIs or other donors. | | | **25. Other aspects: N/A** | | |

1. Interdivisional and interdepartmental collaboration is strongly encouraged. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The indication of a strategic priority **only applies to Global/Regional grants**. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. United Nations Development Group (2011) Results-based Management Handbook. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)