

Lives and Livelihoods Fund approves \$243 million for anti-poverty projects in support of eight countries

- *2nd meeting of the LLF Impact Committee in Riyadh approves major pipeline of \$242.6 million in development projects for 2017*
- *Representatives from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development, and the Islamic Development Bank agree on project pipeline to lift poorest OIC countries out of poverty*
- *Projects approved in Tajikistan, Sudan, Djibouti, Niger, Mauritania, Cameroon, Uganda, and Guinea*
- *LLF is the largest multilateral development initiative in the Middle East and North Africa – releasing \$2.5 billion in finance over five years*

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 01 April 2017 - Representatives from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development, and the Islamic Development Bank approved several development projects for 2017 under the \$2.5 billion Lives and Livelihoods Fund (LLF). The fund is the largest multilateral development initiative in the Middle East and North Africa for poverty alleviation in member countries of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

This second meeting of the Impact Committee of the LLF, which took place on Thursday 30 March, was inaugurated by His Excellency Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al-Rabiah, Advisor at the Saudi Royal Court and General Supervisor of King Salman Relief and Humanitarian Aid Center. In attendance were representatives of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the major donors to the LLF: the King Salman Relief and Humanitarian Aid Center (KS Relief), the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD). Representatives of the Turkish Red Crescent also attended the meeting as observers on behalf of the Republic of Turkey.

During the meeting, the Impact Committee approved \$242.6 million in financing for health, agriculture, and rural infrastructure development projects in eight member countries of the IsDB. The projects are scheduled to be implemented in Tajikistan, Sudan, Djibouti, Niger, Mauritania, Cameroon, Uganda, and Guinea.

Maher Al Hadhrawi, Assistant Supervisor General for Operations and Programs at KS Relief, and Chair of the LLF for its first year of operations, commented:

“The second meeting of the Lives and Livelihoods Fund Impact Committee marks an important milestone in the Fund’s progress. We successfully launched the first project - a malaria prevention and control project in partnership with the Government of Senegal in March. We are here today to prioritize more projects that will have the biggest impact across the Muslim world and lift the poorest people out of poverty.”

He added: “Over the next five years, the Lives and Livelihoods Fund will make \$2.5 billion available for anti-poverty projects in health, agriculture and rural infrastructure in Islamic Development Bank member countries. \$363 million has been approved for the Fund’s first operational year, and all the donors are working closely together to ensure that it is allocated most effectively.”

His Excellency Dr. Bandar Hajjar, President of the IsDB, commented:

“The Lives and Livelihoods Fund is now making progress in its mission to help the poorest people in the Muslim world live healthier, more productive lives through investments in health, agriculture, and rural infrastructure. By innovatively combining grants from donors with loans from the Islamic Development Bank, we are able to leverage more funding than grants can alone to fight disease and poverty across the Muslim world.”

Khalifa bin Jassim Al-Kuwari, Director General of QFFD, commented:

“The Lives and Livelihoods Fund is the first multilateral partnership of its kind in this region, and demonstrates the benefit of partnering with other donor organizations and regional governments. By pooling our resources together, and combining grants with finance from the Islamic Development Bank, we are able to increase our impact and ultimately save more lives. At Qatar Fund for Development, we are proud to contribute to an initiative that is going to have such a massive impact on the lives of millions of people across the Islamic world.”

His Excellency Mohammed Saif Al Suwaidi, Director General of ADFD, said:

“Today’s meeting demonstrates that the Lives and Livelihoods Fund is making steady progress in improving people’s live across the developing world. Our contribution to the Fund articulates the development agenda pursued by the UAE Government that aims to promote inclusive social and economic development through working with our partners from other development agencies to ensure the effectiveness of our aid programs. We are proud to be a founding member of the largest multilateral development initiative in the Middle East and look forward to devoting all our resources and expertise to ensuring improved livelihoods for the people of developing countries. This approach aligns well with Abu Dhabi Fund for Development’s aim to use innovative finance to support developing countries achieve their own development goals.”

Dr Waleed Alwohaib, Director General, ISFD, commented:

“I would like to thank KS Relief for hosting the second meeting of the LLF’s Impact Committee, and we are also grateful to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for being the largest contributor to the ISFD, the poverty reduction fund of the Islamic world. Through the grant contributions of the LLF, our aim is to protect communities from the risk of preventable diseases, improving reproductive, maternal and child health, increasing access to sanitation and primary healthcare, and supporting rural development, we are empowering some of the poorest people in the world, and giving them the chance to live healthy and productive lives.”

Hassan Al-Damluji, Head of Middle East Relations for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, commented:

“Of the more than one billion people in the world facing extreme poverty, 400 million are living in the Islamic Development Bank’s member countries. These countries urgently need access to finance for development projects that eradicate disease, provide basic healthcare, and invest in agriculture and critical infrastructure. The Lives and Livelihoods Fund was only established in late 2016, but already it is filling this gap by supporting projects that will enable people to lift themselves out of poverty.”

In September 2016, the Lives and Livelihoods Fund’s Impact Committee approved projects worth \$363m for the first of the five years that the fund will be operational.

The Lives and Livelihoods Fund will make \$2.5 billion available over the next five years on projects that help the poorest people in 30 of the poorest Muslim countries lead healthy and productive lives. Administered by the IsDB, the fund combines \$2 billion of IsDB financing with \$500 million in grants from donors. So far, \$400 million in grants have been committed by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (20% of the total up to \$100m), the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (\$100m), the Qatar Fund for Development (\$50m), the King Salman Relief and Humanitarian Aid Center (\$100m), and the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (\$50m).

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About the Islamic Development Bank

The Islamic Development Bank is a multilateral development institution, established in July 1975 with Headquarters in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The IsDB provides Shari'ah-compatible funding and technical assistance to its 57 member countries and in line with its overall objective of fostering economic development and social progress, it finances projects and programs in both public and private sectors in member countries by investing in economic and social infrastructure, providing technical assistance, and promoting foreign trade. The IsDB also assists Muslim communities in non-member countries and undertakes research studies in Islamic economics and banking. For more information, visit www.isdb.org.

About KSRelief

Historically, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has taken on a pioneering humanitarian role in serving the international community around the world. The Kingdom realizes the significance of this role in alleviating human suffering and ensuring that all people are given the opportunity to live healthy, dignified lives. To further emphasize their dedication to the service of all in need, the leadership of Saudi Arabia established King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre. The purpose of this important international organization is to provide humanitarian aid and relief to those in need outside of the Kingdom's borders. The activities of the center were inaugurated in May of 2015 under the high patronage and guidance of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, may God support him.

The center's activities are founded upon noble fundamental humanitarian goals and principles. Elements needed to carry out our programs include the detailed monitoring of all aid, the highly coordinated and advanced transportation of aid through highly trusted UN agencies and local and international non-profit organizations in the recipient countries.

Programs are chosen based upon the eligibility of targeted recipients in selected geographical areas. The aid includes all humanitarian and relief sectors (Relief Security, Camps Management, Shelter, Early Recovery, Protection, Education, Water and Sanitation, Nutrition, Health, Humanitarian and Emergency Relief Coordination, Logistics and Emergency Telecommunication.)

The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre aims to be an international model of excellence for the provision of humanitarian aid. Some of the fundamental principles upon which the center bases its operations are:

- Providing help to indigent and crisis-affected people throughout the world.
- Providing aid objectively and fairly to all in need.
- Coordinating and consulting with reliable and trustworthy international organizations and institutions.
- Following internationally-accepted criteria for the optimum selection and application of relief programs.
- Unifying the efforts of all parties concerned in the Kingdom's relief activities.
- Ensuring the professionalism and competence of the center's employees and volunteers.
- Accurate aid delivery to eligible recipients, ensuring that targeted aid is not diverted for other purposes.
- Aid must meet the highest quality standards.

About the Qatar fund For Development (QFFD)

The Qatar Fund for Development is a Qatari public organization that was established under the law number (19) of 2002. The organization is officially mandated to coordinate and implement foreign development assistance on behalf of the State of Qatar. The Qatar Fund for Development has provided foreign assistance to several countries worldwide targeting a variety of sector needs including education, health, and economic development. The Qatar Fund for Development is committed to providing foreign aid through bilateral and multilateral channels in compliance with best practices.

About Abu Dhabi Fund for Development –ADFD-

The Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD) was established by the government of Abu Dhabi on 15 July 1971 as a public autonomous institution to offer economic aid and technical assistance to fellow developing countries in support of their sustainable development. ADFD has since committed over AED 80 billion to development projects around the world, managing some 500 operations in 84 countries across the globe. To support sustainable development, ADFD has steadily diversified its financing operations to cover a wide spectrum of infrastructure needs and priorities identified by partner governments, such as power, water, health services, education, communication, and agriculture, among others. www.adfd.ae

About the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy and productive lives. Through collaboration and partnership, the foundation helps fund research and programs to benefit those living in poverty all around the globe. In the Middle East, the foundation is focused on addressing the needs of the most vulnerable people. An example is the Lives and Livelihoods Fund, a US\$2.5 billion fund partnership with the Islamic Development Bank that uses innovative financing mechanisms to support sustainable development projects in health, agriculture, and infrastructure. You can find out more at <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/Where-We-Work/Middle-East-Office>

For further information, please contact:

Dr Waleed Ahmad Addas

Head, Lives & Livelihoods Fund

WAddas@isdb.org

+966 12 646 6000