

**GOODWILL MESSAGE DELIVERED BY THE PERMANENT
SECRETARY FEDERAL MINISTRY OF FINANCE DR. MAHMUD
ISA DUTSE AT THE IFAD - NIGERIA COUNTRY PROGRAMME
EVALUATION, NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE WORKSHOP HELD
ON THE 7TH APRIL, 2016**

Protocol

It is my honour and pleasure to present this goodwill message on the occasion of this Roundtable Workshop of IFAD Nigeria Country Programme Evaluation (CPE).

2. IFAD portfolio in Nigeria has grown steadily over the past few years and currently includes Rural Financial Institutions Building Programme (RUFIN), the Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP), the Climate Change Adaptation and Agribusiness Support Programme in the Savannah Belt (CASP) and the just concluded Community Based Natural Resource Management Programme – (CBNRMP). Regardless, there is still room for expanding the sphere of partnership between the Federal Government of Nigeria and IFAD.

3. The CPE is a welcome idea as it is conducted to assess the results and performance of the IFAD-Government partnership to reduce rural poverty and generate findings and recommendations for future engagement between IFAD and the Federal Republic of Nigeria. To this end, it is important to ensure that the lessons from this evaluation are properly applied to ongoing and future IFAD programmes in the country.

4. On the Occasion of this roundtable, I would like to state the need for various stakeholders here to critically review the CPE report with a view to addressing key issues confronting IFAD programmes in Nigeria such as

reducing multiple design adjustments and eliminating implementation delays due to agreement and effectiveness issues. Other issues include developing strategies for strengthening local sense of ownership by various States and Local Governments. Let me emphasize here that the Federal Ministry of Finance is concerned about the effect of counterpart funds on projects implementation. State representatives here should explore possible means of engagement with their principals to ensure that states which have not paid their counterpart funds meet up with their responsibilities in this regards. In the same vein, the Federal Government of Nigeria inspite of funds constraints will do the needful to meet its own obligations very soon.

5. The emerging themes from the CPE report which borders on Building strategic partnerships with Civil Society, developing Strategies for sustainable engagement at State level and Assessing Government Institutional mechanisms for development effectiveness if properly reviewed and discussed during this roundtable will shed more light on how IFAD programmes can deliver greater value to the rural dwellers and develop Agriculture as a major contributor to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Nigeria as a whole.

6. I wish all participants a very fruitful deliberation and look forward to far reaching conclusions that will improve the partnership between IFAD and the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

7. Thank you.