

**Morocco Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation  
Final National workshop (Virtual)**

**03 February 2021**

**Introductory Statement by Mr Donal Brown, AVP PMD**

Excellency, Mr Mohamed Sadiki, Secretary General of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Rural development, Water and Forests;

Distinguished participants;

Dear colleagues;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

**I. Introductory remarks and overall context.**

1. It is my great pleasure to be with you today for this wrap up session of the Morocco Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation (CSPE). Let me thank above all the Moroccan Government, but also IFAD's Independent Office of Evaluation and the Near East, North Africa and Europe Division, for the successful implementation and conclusion of this CSPE – despite the challenges brought on by the COVID19 pandemic.
2. Over the past 41 years ago, IFAD has contributed to 15 rural development projects in the Kingdom of Morocco. The total value of these investments amounts to USD 1.6 billion, with IFAD's contribution amounting to USD 320 million, and this reflects both the Government of Morocco's substantial contribution to – and its ownership of – these projects, and IFAD's role as an assembler of financing.
3. Over the years, IFAD's country strategy in Morocco has focused on the poorer regions where rain-fed agriculture is the main

source of income for rural households. IFAD-supported projects have supported the Government of Morocco's national strategy for the rural space and mountain areas development, as well as its 2008 Plan Maroc Vert to revitalize the agricultural sector.

4. The most recent projects have had a distinctive focus on mountain areas, and in what are challenging development contexts some major results have been achieved, making a real contribution to the economic development of the rural areas.
5. IFAD's investments have contributed to modernised production systems. They have promoted soil and water conservation; increased the access of small-scale producers to irrigation; and helped farmers to increase their productivity – of olives, apples honey and meat – by as much as 50% in some cases. They have also promoted processing of smallholder production; supported farmer's organisation and their economic groups; and contributed to extending and rehabilitating the rural roads network. Projects have also adopted innovative solutions to re-engage youth in agriculture. South-South and Triangular Cooperation has become a flagship program of our partnership.
6. The establishment of the IFAD Country Office in 2016 in Rabat was another milestone in the partnership between IFAD and the Government of Morocco. The IFAD Office has strengthened our presence in the country and further strengthened our partnership with the Government, as well as with the UN family and the wider development community.

## **II. A timely Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation**

7. The CSPE recognised the positive achievement of the country programme in terms of innovations, and it highlighted the

satisfactory results in terms of environment and natural resource management among other aspects. We recognise the need for stronger focus on areas that the CSPE identified, such as sustainability, gender, scaling up and policy engagement. We concur with the assessment and the recommendations of the CSPE and we will certainly consider them, going forward.

### **III. CSPE Laying a ground for a successful COSOP design**

8. In fact, this CSPE comes at very right time where all these lessons will feed into the upcoming design of the new Country Strategy, or COSOP, for the period 2022-2027.
9. The Country Strategy will aim to effectively contribute to the Government objectives of establishing a rural middle class and modernizing Moroccan agriculture in all its dimensions – including human capital, productive and financial assets.
10. Starting at the beginning of the IFAD 12 cycle, the new COSOP will offer opportunities for engagement through the new menu of financial instruments that IFAD has developed for its member states. There will be opportunities to access loan funds through the new Borrowed Resources Access Mechanism; to work with the new private sector window; to access funding opportunities to increase climate resilience; and to test new modalities such as result-based lending. This range of instruments offers solid ground for strong alignment and partnerships opportunities over the next 6 years.

### **IV. The way forward for a renewed partnership**

**Mr. Secretary General, Honourable Participants,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

11. I cannot finish my remarks without recognising the commitment of the Government of Morocco to continue strengthening its partnership with IFAD.
12. We too look forward to strengthening that partnership. We also count on Morocco's support as an IFAD champion country for **the 12<sup>th</sup> replenishment, and we hope that the Government will be in a position to increase the level of its contribution to IFAD.** This will help the organization achieve the most ambitious replenishment scenario and so better serve its member countries worldwide.
13. Let me close by congratulating Government and my colleagues for the good results achieved to date. On our side, I look forward to us capturing the key lessons from this CSPE and reflecting on them for a renewed Country Programme that responds to Government's evolving priorities for the sector and helps it to achieve the objectives it has set.
14. Thank you.