

National Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation (CSPE) Workshop for Ghana

22 October 2024

Remarks Lakshmi Moola, CD Ghana

Honourable Minister; Excellencies; the United Nations Resident Coordinator; Distinguished participants; Fellow Colleagues; Ladies and Gentlemen. All protocols observed.

1. In echoing the sentiments of the Honourable Minister for Food and Agriculture; and the Regional Director for the West and Central Africa Region, the Ghana Country team welcomes you.
2. I want to take this opportunity to thank the Government of Ghana for supporting the CSPE exercise, and for their 4-decade partnership with IFAD, in investing in the lives and livelihoods of rural people. I also take this opportunity to thank the international financial institutions, and UN agencies for the continued strong collaboration, in either co-financing and/or the sharing of knowledge.
3. We thank the Independent Office of Evaluation, for prioritizing this exercise in 2024, and are especially thankful for the collaborative process through the evaluation, which has facilitated the development of a new country strategy which will commence in 2025.
4. We have had the opportunity to review the Country Strategic Programme Evaluation (CSPE) of IFAD's engagement with the Republic of Ghana over a ten-year period, between 2013 and 2023, and agree with the findings and emerging recommendations.
5. As you have heard from the Regional Director for WCA, the IFAD13 lending cycle commences in 2025. The key framework focuses on **(i) Integrated country programmes; (ii) Assembling and leveraging**

development finance; and (iii) Organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

6. We have also heard from the Honourable Minister for Food and Agriculture regarding the direction that he would want to see emerge as we commence the design of the new Country Strategy for Ghana in early 2025, which broadly includes the following, and Honourable Minister I am taking the liberty to summarize: **(i) Moving the investments towards building of rural infrastructure as the basis for ensuring profitability for all in the agriculture sector; (ii) the expansion of our strategy to include larger players like medium and large scale farmers; (iii) focused geographical scope using a cluster based approach; and (iv) nature and size of our blending sources of financing, including a directed orientation towards tangible and measurable results.**
7. I see a strong convergence in the recommendations of the CSPE, to the recommendations of the Government for the next Country Strategy, and to the IFAD13 core principles of engagement and investment.
8. The Country Strategy remains the guiding framework for IFAD's engagement in Ghana, ensuring alignment with Ghana's vision for the Agriculture sector, and IFAD's mandate and comparative advantage. While the new Country Strategy for Ghana, will commence preparation in early 2025, significant steps have already been taken to move the portfolio towards an emerging strategic direction.
9. Let me take this opportunity to address about five key areas in which we have done significant work, and within which we hope establish our strategic and operational directions.

- i. Integrated country programmes with investments in rural infrastructure development focussing on market access and ensuring the impact pathways through tangible and measurable results.** In early 2023, when I commenced management of this portfolio, we had 5 approved projects, a wide geographical spread, and scattered interventions. To ensure integration, consolidation and alignment, and in the quest of finding tangible and measurable results we have undertaken 4 restructurings in the last 18 months. Several of these restructurings, which addressed the challenges mentioned by the Honourable Minister, have already yielded results, therefore this pathway lends itself to a vision where the consolidation will bring us to no more than two investments in the portfolio, of significantly larger financial envelopes, towards the end of 2025. This direction for the portfolio is being substantiated by a value for money analysis that we will share within the next month. The end results are expected to be two-fold: (i) enhance the effectiveness of the IFAD portfolio in Ghana; and (ii) ensure these larger amounts are directed towards hard investments, which are essential for building the base on which agriculture can become more market oriented, especially for smallholder farmers. We are already validating good results of community and local government level buy-in, through financing of the operations and maintenance of recently completed infrastructure.
- ii. We believe that financing of value chain actors and investments along the value chain are a basis for value chain development.** As the agriculture sector is “under” financed, and/or the lending comes at a high cost to value chain actors, especially smallholder farmers, the IFAD investment in the Affordable Agricultural Financing and Resilient Rural Development Project

(AAFORD) has commenced on the establishment of a Blended Finance Facility. This facility, which is expected to continue in perpetuity through each new IFAD investment, will work with all value chain actors and participating financial institutions to make agriculture a viable investment. Additionally, it is hoped that the experiences garnered in facility will contribute to policy development toward increasing credit to the agricultural sector.

- iii. **Dove tailed into the infrastructure and the financing of value chains, is the inclusion and participation of the private sector through our sovereign and non-sovereign lending:** IFAD affirms that the medium and large enterprises, are integral to the successful development of the value chains. As we enhance our investments in public, market supportive infrastructure such as feeder roads; farm tracks; storage units; we expect to facilitate the involvement of the larger private sector players in making their investments in agro-processing; private extension services; and building of strong farmer based organizations. IFAD believes in a win-win situation and in this regard, IFAD's strategic role as a partner to both, Government and smallholders, and our vast experience in Public Private Producer Partnerships or the 4Ps will ensure inclusion of larger private sector actors on the principles of knowledge sharing, trust and transparency. This would amplify the effect on the 3Ps - People; Planet; and Profit, especially on smallholder farmers of Ghana.
- iv. **Climate; Social Inclusion; and Nutrition:** The portfolio currently includes co-financing from the Green Climate Fund, which is expected to commence implementation early next year; again, through the restructurings, we have ensured that women make up at least 40% of the people that receive benefits from IFAD investments; through our partnerships we are also learning new

ways of integrating nutrition and youth within our current investments. The learnings from these on-going interventions, along with three critical assessments which have either been completed or are underway – one in nutrition; one in targeting and gender; and one in climate; will feed into the new Country Strategy and build future investments with an approach that holistically integrates climate adaptation and mitigation, women, youth, and nutrition.

v. **Monitoring; measurement; and building an evidence-based portfolio:** The country team has recognized the shortfalls, in this regard. We have recently completed a joint ICT4D assessment with the World Food Programme. The assessment will provide the pathways to enhance the strategic use of ICT4D in the new Country Strategy. It is expected that the use of ICT4D will substantiate the evidence-based direction in the portfolio, as well as facilitate an era of efficiency.

10. In line with the Programme for Food and Jobs 2.0, IFAD investments will continue to contribute to the *vision of modernised agriculture culminating in a structurally transformed economy and evident in food security, employment opportunities and reduced poverty*.

11. I take this opportunity to confirm that the Ghana Country Team is committed to continuously improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the IFAD Ghana portfolio through the implementation of the recommendations of this CSPE.

12. As next steps after today, the IFAD country team will continue our engagement, with the Government, on the Agreement at Completion Point of this CSPE and commence our discussions in early 2025, to design with the Government of Ghana and present the new Country Strategy to IFAD's Executive Board at the September 2025 session.

13. In conclusion, the Ghana Country Team reiterates its appreciation of the Government of Ghana and the Independent Office of Evaluation.

THANK YOU

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