

**Republic of Ghana**  
**Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation**  
**National (in-person) Workshop**  
**22 October 2024 – Labadi Beach Hotel – Accra (Ghana)**

**Introductory Statement by Mr Indran Naidoo, Director of the  
Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD**

- Distinguished representatives of the Government of Ghana,
- Representatives of IFAD’s partner institutions and international organizations,
- Dear colleagues
- Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to participate in this in-person national workshop, organized by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD in collaboration with the Government of Ghana and the IFAD Ghana Country Office. This workshop follows the finalization of the Ghana country strategy and programme evaluation, implemented in 2024. The workshop provides the opportunity to share the main findings and discuss the implications of recommendations with the Government and IFAD representatives, as well as other key stakeholders of the IFAD supported strategy and programme in Ghana.

I would like to start by expressing my appreciation to the Government officials and relevant stakeholders for their collaboration on this evaluation. Our appreciation goes to the project teams and partner organizations for sharing insights, contributing to gather information during the field mission, and responding to numerous requests for

data and information from the evaluation team.

I would also like to recognize the contribution of the IFAD Country Programme team: Ms Lakshmi Moola, IFAD Country Director; Mr Theophilus Otchere Larbi, Country Programme Officer, and Ms Barbara Wiredu, Country Programme Assistant. Finally, I would like to thank the evaluation team, led by Mr Hansdeep Khaira, IFAD Senior Evaluation Officer, and the team of national and international consultants, and Ms Cristina Spagnolo, Evaluation Analyst, who provided efficient administrative support to the team and to organizing today's event.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Let me first highlight the importance of the independent evaluation function. The Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD, or IOE, undertakes impartial and evidence-based evaluations of projects, country programmes, thematic and corporate matters, to assess the results achieved and to generate lessons to enhancing the impact of IFAD-supported operations.

The first IFAD-financed project in Ghana began in 1980, and since then, IFAD has approved grant and loan funded projects of a total cost of US\$ 954 million, of which IFAD has financed US\$ 360 million. This is IOE's third country programme evaluation of IFAD in Ghana. This evaluation covers the period 2013 to 2023 and the total estimated cost of the seven investment projects covered amounts to US\$ 628 million, of which one third, or US\$ 225 million, has been financed by IFAD.

During the evaluated period, the economy of Ghana witnessed both headwinds and tailwinds. The country attained an impressive GDP growth rate of 8.5 per cent in 2017, and then, a significant downturn by 2020, with growth receding to 0.5 per cent, predominantly influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic and fluctuations in global commodity prices. Agriculture continues to be important to Ghana's economy; the share of the sector in GDP in 2023 was 21 per cent.

The evaluation found that the country strategy and programme was very relevant and well aligned with the nation's strategic priorities and flagship programmes. The strong partnership with the Government of Ghana is reflected in IFAD being recognized as government's trusted partner in the work with smallholder farmers and rural enterprises. IFAD-financed projects have improved farm productivity and provided entrepreneurial opportunities to the poorer sections of society. Infrastructure has been built to improve market access. Women's participation has been significant in all projects, and the programme contributed to increased income generating opportunities and access to resources for women. IFAD has also enhanced capacities of smallholders to enabling them to overcome challenges posed by climate change and degradation of natural resources.

On the other hand, some areas still deserve attention, such as:

The IFAD supported programme has not applied a holistic value-chain approach to support agricultural development, with less than desired results obtained at downstream of the chain. The supported rural enterprises have tended to be stand-alone without clear prospects for value addition and growth. Issues such as staff turnover and inadequate staffing, implementation delays and financial

management shortcomings, have hampered efficiency. There are issues related to the sustainability of the institutions supporting rural enterprises and of market access-related infrastructure. The financial sustainability of rural financial institutions is also a challenge.

Ladies and gentlemen, as evaluators, we have provided an impartial assessment of IFAD's country strategy and programme in Ghana. With this event, and with your contributions, we can gain a better understanding of future opportunities and ways to overcome constraints preventing the achievement of remunerative, sustainable and resilient smallholder food and agricultural production systems in Ghana. This will feed into the preparation of IFAD's upcoming Country Strategic Opportunities Programme.

I thank you for your attention.