

Reflections of the Evaluation Committee Chairperson at the Mozambique Country Programme Evaluation National Roundtable Workshop, 23-24 May 2010 Maputo

His Excellency, the Governor of the Central Bank of Mozambique,

His Excellency, the Vice Minister of Finance,

The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Planning and Development,

Her Excellency, the Ambassador of Mozambique to Italy,

Senhora e Senhores,

Antes de tudo, gostaria de agradecer - em nome do Comité da Avaliação - o governo de Moçambique para sua hospitalidade e tudo o que fizeram para organizar este importante seminário de avaliação. In particular, I would like to thank the Ministry of Development and Planning for their leading role in the organisation of this workshop and the Committee's country visit in general.

The Evaluation Committee has found it useful to be part of the Mozambique CPE process, and I am sure my colleagues join me in underlining our appreciation for the constructive and engaging contributions that the participants made during the past one and a half days. I trust that both the IFAD management and the Office of Evaluation have benefited from the inputs received, towards the preparation of the CPE's

Agreement at Completion Points, and towards the future partnership between the Government of Mozambique and IFAD.

Our Committee had pleasure to discuss the Mozambique country programme evaluation in its 59th session in October 2009 in Rome. Yesterday morning, before the beginning of the National Roundtable Workshop, the Committee had the privilege to have a bi-lateral meeting with the Honourable Minister of Fisheries, Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Honourable Vice Minister of Finance as well as the Governor of the Bank of Mozambique. These interactions with high level officials from the Government of Mozambique as well as the observations made by a wide range of stakeholders and partners at this workshop are illustrative of the importance of the IFAD-Government partnership in reducing rural poverty in Mozambique through sustainable agriculture and rural development.

Eu gostaria agora compartilhar com vocês alguns reflexões - do meu ponto de vista - sobre algumas principais questões discutidas durante o workshop. *{I will now like to share a few comments - from my own perspective - based on some of the main issues discussed during the workshop.}*

Firstly, I believe it is essential that in the future greater attention should be devoted by the IFAD-Government partnership to promoting innovation in agriculture and rural

development. Areas in which innovation could be useful in Mozambique include the development of new rural financial services and products, pioneering strategic partnership with the private sector, as well as developing low cost technologies for artisanal fisheries and small-scale farming. The Honourable Vice Minister of Finance also underlined the importance of innovation in agriculture through research in the comments he kindly shared with the participants during the workshop yesterday morning.

However, it is also equally important to think ahead at the time of preparing the next COSOP and in project design to scaling up successful innovations, so that a wider number of people can be reached and their incomes and livelihoods enhanced. Among other issues, scaling up will require more resources and efforts in policy dialogue, documenting and sharing successful innovations, and strengthening partnership with a range of institutions - including the private sector that can play a critical role in the scaling up process.

Secondly, the evaluation found that there are opportunities for promoting better gender equality and women's empowerment in the country. As you know, women play a far-reaching role in agriculture and rural development, like for instance in agro-processing, marketing, rural small enterprise development and livestock rearing. It is also known that they are more disciplined in managing rural finance, and therefore, it

is our collective responsibility to find ways and means to ensure women can truly play a part in decision-making, resource allocation and productive activities. As you might know, IFAD currently holds the MDG3 Gender Torch and has committed to “doing something special” in advancing the cause of women. I am sure you will agree that more can be achieved in Mozambique towards addressing gender equality and empowering women, such as for example by ensuring that women have more secure access to resources and services (for instance land, extension and rural finance) that would allow them to truly provide a far-reaching contribution to agriculture development in the country.

Thirdly, the issue of partnership is important and many of you underlined the role different actors can play in the development process, including the Government, civil society, the private sector, donors, NGOs and others. I would like to focus on partnership between donors and recall that, as some of you may know, IFAD and the African Development Bank recently concluded in 2009 a major joint evaluation on agriculture and rural development. The management in both organisations are committed to working more closely together on the ground, taking advantage of their specific roles, responsibilities and complementarities. I believe, given the overall opportunities and challenges as well as their focus, Mozambique is an ideal country where IFAD and the Bank can work even more closely together in the future, for example,

with the Bank focusing on larger scale infrastructure development and IFAD on smallholder farmers and women. Moreover, as stated in the management response to the joint evaluation, in 2010, IFAD and the Bank will jointly supervise all co-financed operations in Mozambique. This would be a step in the right direction.

Fourthly, I think it is important that IFAD further strengthen its country presence in Mozambique for better results on the ground. This was also highlighted by the Honourable Minister of Fisheries yesterday in the plenary discussions as an area that merits attention, as we move towards enhancing further the IFAD-Government partnership in the future. A strengthened country presence is especially important in Mozambique, where the dialogue between the Government and the donors is intensive on key issues concerning agriculture and rural development. I have had pleasure in interacting with the IFAD's capable country programme manager based in Rome and the dedicated staff in the Mozambique country office. Yet, I believe they are stretched as compared to the diversity of functions they are required to discharge. Hence, I invite IFAD to take a serious look at ways and means to further enhance the effectiveness of its country presence in Mozambique.

In addition to these points, I would also like to emphasise two notable issues that emerged during the plenary discussions that deserve attention in the future. The first one is related to

climate change. Climate change is a reality, and as an African myself, I know it has serious consequences on agriculture in general in the continent. I therefore very much concur with the distinguished Ambassador of Mozambique to Italy that addressing climate change concerns, such as for example severe droughts and floods, should be built into the new IFAD-Government of Mozambique country strategy (that is, the new COSOP). This will allow small farmers, fishermen and women to have access to the right adapted technology, inputs and services for their development under severe and unpredictable climatic and agro-ecological conditions.

The second issue relates to decentralisation, which was raised by various speakers yesterday. I also am in agreement that decentralisation is important, so that provincial and district authorities have the opportunity to be more widely involved in development planning, resource allocation, implementation, monitoring and supervision. However, at the same time, we should keep in mind the experiences from many other neighbouring countries, such as for example Tanzania and Uganda, which has revealed the centrality of ensuring that the required administrative systems and processes as well adequate human resources capacity are in place for decentralisation to be truly effective.

As you may know, the Evaluation Committee will have the opportunity later today to travel to the Sofala Province to three

IFAD-funded projects dealing with rural finance, agriculture extension and fisheries development. We are eagerly looking forward to meeting project beneficiaries and holding interactions with various partners in Sofala province. As the Governor of the Central Bank mentioned in our bi-lateral talks yesterday, the visit will give the Committee a concrete opportunity to see activities on the ground and the results being achieved in rural poverty reduction through the important partnership between IFAD and the Government.

I would like to keep you informed that, as per normal practice, the Evaluation Committee shall prepare a written report on its country visit to Mozambique and submit it for consideration by the IFAD Executive Board during its next session in September 2010. In this way, we shall also have the opportunity to share the highlights of our visit to Mozambique with other Board members. This report will be available to the public at large through the IFAD website.

Before concluding, once again, I deeply thank the Government of Mozambique for their hospitality, warmth and all the excellent arrangements made for the Committee's 2010 annual visit. In particular, I salute the Honourable Minister of Fisheries, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Vice-Minister of Finance and the Governor of the Central Bank of Mozambique for the time and interest they personally invested in ensuring the success of the Evaluation

Committee's 2010 annual country visit to this marvellous country.

Muito Obrigado.