

**STATEMENT OF MR ASHWANI MUTHOO,
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OFFICE OF EVALUATION**

**NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE WORKSHOP
UGANDA COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATION**

12 June 2011

1. Hon. Prime Minister;
2. Hon. Ministers;
3. Authorities and Officials of the Government of Uganda;
4. Representatives of multilateral and bi-lateral aid organisations;
5. IFAD-supported project staff; and

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very delighted to be in Uganda once again, and have the opportunity to address the participants of this important National Round Table Workshop.

Let me start by saying that the focus of this workshop is very much on learning. It is based on the main issues that have emerged from the recently-completed Uganda Country Programme Evaluation (CPE), and its overall aim is to contribute towards improving the effectiveness of the future cooperation between the Government of Uganda and IFAD.

Allow me to say a few words on the expected outcome of this workshop. Today, we will be discussing the findings of the CPE. In particular, we will devote time to discussing in-depth three broad

themes that emerge from the CPE, which are: (1) Opportunities and challenges of developing public - private sector partnership for promoting sustainable small agriculture and rural development in the country; (2) Geographic and sub-sector options for the future IFAD-Government partnership, including IFAD's contribution to promoting regional integration; and (3) Strengthening results by developing a coherent and integrated country programme, where all activities financed by IFAD are mutually reinforcing to ensure deeper outcomes on the reduction of rural poverty.

The discussions during the workshop will contribute to the preparation of the Agreement at Completion Point for the Uganda CPE. For those of you who are not familiar with this, the Agreement at Completion Point is a document prepared after the workshop that will contain the main findings and recommendations from the evaluation, which both the Government of Uganda and the IFAD management agree to adopt and implement within specified timeframes, as they design and implement their future results based country strategic opportunities programmes, known as the COSOP in IFAD terminology.

This is the first CPE in Uganda done by IFAD's Independent Office of Evaluation. The evaluation builds on three main pillars, which includes: (i) an assessment of the performance of the project portfolio in Uganda; (ii) a review of the non-lending activities, namely achievements in policy dialogue, knowledge management and partnership building; and (iii) an evaluation of the country strategy in terms of its relevance and effectiveness. These three pillars allow

the CPE to generate an assessment of the overall achievement of the Government of Uganda and IFAD partnership.

I would now like to underline some main findings from the Uganda CPE, which, among other issues, in my view merit discussion and reflection during the day today.

IFAD has played an important role in supporting the Government in its efforts to reduce rural poverty in different parts of Uganda. The Fund is appreciated by the Government and other development partners for its focus on the rural poor and in having contributed to decentralised development processes and improving incomes among the target group, which is enabling them to have better lives and food security.

The evaluation indicates that IFAD-supported projects in Uganda have generally contributed to satisfactory impact on reducing rural poverty, especially in terms of better household incomes and assets, food security and agricultural productivity, as well as decentralized development. Moreover, the public – private sector partnership in the context of the Vegetable Oil Development Programme is truly innovative, with the potential for scaling up in the future for achieving better incomes and livelihoods amongst the rural poor. These are commendable results and achievement that we should collectively be proud of.

At the same time, there are some areas that merit added attention moving forward. These include, foremost, **the sustainability of benefits**. Of all the

evaluation criteria against which the performance of the IFAD-financed project portfolio in Uganda was assessed, sustainability was the only areas rated as moderately unsatisfactory. All other areas were rated by the CPE as moderately satisfactory or better. There are numerous reasons identified by the CPE that have constrained sustainability in the past, such as, for example, inadequate technical design of infrastructure activities, co-ordination challenges in some projects with multiple components and activities, as well as insufficient attention to developing exist strategies early on during the project life cycle. We believe that more collective attention will be needed in the future to ensuring better sustainability of benefits.

On another issue, the CPE finds that the IFAD-Government partnership is potentially affected by a *micro-macro* paradox. That is, there is little evidence that the useful benefits generated by individual projects – which are by and large performing satisfactorily – at the local level are making the required contribution to rural poverty reduction at a wider, national level. This is corroborated by the fact that the CPE finds effectiveness of the country strategy to be moderately unsatisfactory, due in part to unsystematic efforts in policy dialogue, knowledge management and scaling up over the entire period covered by the evaluation. This is of concern, given that the ultimate objective of IFAD is to make a meaningful contribution towards improving livelihoods beyond the isolated realms of individual projects it funds in diverse parts of Uganda.

In terms of recommendations, among other issues, the CPE notes the importance for IFAD to expand geographic coverage of its operations to the northern

region; explore avenues for promoting value chain development in specific commodity sub-sectors in Uganda; study opportunities for IFAD to contribute to regional integration as a vehicle for ensuring better incomes; and devote more time and resources to improving monitoring and evaluation activities to enable more accurate quantification of the impact of IFAD-operations on the lives of the rural poor.

I will refrain from giving you more details on the findings and recommendations from the Uganda CPE, as this will be covered in the power point presentation on the topic that will be delivered by my colleague Jakob Grosen later this morning.

Therefore, with that, let me proceed to conclude by saying how much I, and IFAD, deeply appreciate the collaboration and support shown by the Government of Uganda throughout the evaluation process, in particular for the generous and warm hospitality of the Government, and for all the arrangements which have been made for this national roundtable workshop and our field visits earlier this week. A special appreciation is due to the Ministry of Finance for their contributions and collaboration and support throughout the CPE and for the organization of this workshop. I would also like to express appreciation to the Ministries of Agriculture and Local Government, respectively, for providing all the data and information we needed, and for being ready to engage in a dialogue with the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD, at all stages of this evaluation. Last but not least, I thank you all for coming here and convey my best wishes to each of you for a successful outcome of the deliberations.