

**Statement of MR Oscar A. Garcia,
DIRECTOR OF THE INDEPENDENT OFFICE OF
EVALUATION OF IFAD**

**Evaluation Capacity Development Workshop
Ethiopia**

6th November 2015

- 1. Hon. State Minister Agriculture and Natural Resources;**
- 2. Hon. State Minister Livestock and Fisheries**
- 3. Authorities and Officials of the Government of Ethiopia**
- 4. Representatives of Ethiopian and foreign Agencies and organisations concerned with evaluation and development;**
- 5. IFAD Colleagues**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be in Ethiopia and have the opportunity to welcome you to this important and unique Evaluation Capacity Development Workshop in Addis Ababa.

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the co-organisers: the Government of Ethiopia, in particular the Planning and Programming Directorate (PPD) working under both the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, and the Agriculture Transformation Agency (ATA) for their invaluable support and

collaboration throughout this Evaluation Capacity Development process. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation for their contribution to the implementation of some of our ECD projects.

A word of appreciation is also due to Mr Han Ulaç Demirag, the recently appointed Ethiopia Country Programme Manager, Mr Robson Mutandi, former Country Director for Ethiopia. All of them are here today with the IFAD Ethiopia Country Team.

I would like to thank Mr Pradeep Itty, Lead Evaluator of the Independent Office of Evaluation, who was responsible for this project and Ms Rosa Valeria Cerza, IOE Evaluation Analyst who has been out-posted in Addis Ababa since January 2015 for the implementation of this important project.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The topic that gathers us today is particularly close to my heart since I have been working and reflecting on Evaluation Capacity Development for a long time. I was responsible for organising the first international conference on National Evaluation Capacity with the UNDP Evaluation Office in Casablanca, Morocco in 2009. I have participated in various international efforts to strengthen evaluation capacities and I am delighted to bring that experience to Ethiopia today.

2015 has been a very dynamic year for the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) in Ethiopia. In addition to the Evaluation Capacity Development project, our office conducted the second Evaluation of IFAD's country programme in Ethiopia and a Project Performance Assessment of the Pastoral Community Development Project -II (PCDP II). Yesterday we had an excellent discussion with representatives from the Government, IFAD Management and staff (including IOE), and development partners on our conclusions and recommendations.

Before I say a few words on the ECD project in Ethiopia, I would like to share with you some background information on the rationale of the Evaluation Capacity Development pilot project implemented by IOE in 2015.

With resolution adopted on 19 December 2014, the United Nations General Assembly reiterated the importance of building evaluation capacity and the need for enhanced national evaluation capacity to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals; it also emphasized the importance to support, upon request, efforts to further strengthen the capacity of Member States for evaluation, in accordance with their national policies and priorities.

This is the first, stand-alone United Nations General Assembly Resolution on national evaluation capacity development which advocates for stronger evaluation functions at the UN and for enhanced national evaluation capacities.

With the same resolution, the General Assembly welcomed the initiative by the United Nations Evaluation Group and its partners to declare 2015 the International Year of Evaluation and encourages all partners to work together in 2015 and beyond to build and sustain national evaluation capacities. The aim of designating 2015 as the International Year of Evaluation is to advocate and promote evaluation and evidence-based policy making at international, regional, national and local levels.

I would also like to mention the technical seminar jointly organized by the evaluation offices of the three United Nations organisations based in Rome, namely IFAD, FAO and WFP plus the CGIAR. The technical seminar entitled “Enhancing the evaluability of Sustainable Development Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”, will take place on 17-18 November 2015 at IFAD Headquarters, in Rome and will ask important questions about the future evaluation of the SDG such as the need to have a clear theory of change, in addition to baselines and a good set of indicators.

In addition, I would like to mention the Fourth International Conference on National Evaluation Capacities (NEC) which took place in Bangkok last week (26-30 October 2015) and brought together governments, non-State actors and institutional organizations to discuss the importance of national evaluation capacities in the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The conference focused on how Governments can develop the necessary national evaluation capacities to evaluate sustainable human development, and participants will deliberate on inputs to a post-2015 global evaluation agenda to support the implementation of the SDGs.

Evaluation can make a major contribution to better planning and management of development initiatives to improve effectiveness and enhance national accountability systems in partner countries. The objective assessment of the performance of public policies and programmes is considered fundamental to foster accountability, good governance, and improve development effectiveness.

Against this backdrop and in line with IFAD's Evaluation Policy, the Independent Office of Evaluation (IOE) of IFAD implemented a pilot project to support evaluation capacity development (ECD) in Ethiopia in 2015.

In parallel, IOE is implementing a Statement of Intent of partnership on cooperation of the evaluation capacity building

with the Ministry of Finance of the Peoples Republic of China (2013-2015).

In Ethiopia, our main partners are the Planning and Programming Directorate (PPD) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources; the Ethiopian Agriculture Transformation Agency (ATA); and the Ethiopian Evaluation Association (EEvA).

This project has been implemented using an innovative approach: our office out-posted for the first time an Evaluation Analyst, Ms Rosa Valeria Cerza, in the IFAD Country Office in Addis Ababa to implement this pilot project and to engage with our Ethiopian Partners.

Based on the country context we worked at three different levels: Systemic, by considering the country as a whole; Institutional by looking at the country's institutions; and individual, working on individual evaluation capacity development initiatives. By doing so, we considered both demand and supply sides. We therefore implemented different activities, such as the provision of technical assistance to the Ethiopian Evaluation Association in developing evaluation standards. We also provided a sponsorship for Ato Zena Habtewold Birru, Director Planning and Programing Directorate of MOA to participate in the International Programme for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET) in Ottawa, Canada, last June, a training offered through a grant provided by the

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. As a “learning by doing” activity, IOE suggested to select one PPD/MoA staff to participate the review of the Ethiopian Agriculture Policy Investment Framework. And finally, as part of the programme, we organized this ECD workshop.

This learning event aims at enhancing the understanding of evaluation principles and approaches, and use of evidence-based evaluations through sharing concrete experiences in using evaluation for increased Government performance. In addition, the event provides a forum for discussion of lessons learned and challenges at the national level pertaining to the use of evaluation, by facilitating interaction between analysts engaged in evaluations and potential users of evaluation.

In closing, I would like to reiterate the commitment of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD to evaluation capacity development and thank you all for joining us today and I convey my best wishes to each of you for a successful outcome if the deliberations.

I thank you for your attention