

**Turkey Country Programme Evaluation
National Roundtable Workshop
Ankara, 28 January 2016**

**Statement by Ms Lakshmi Menon, IFAD Associate Vice President,
Corporate Services Department**

- His Excellency, Dr Nihat Pakdil, Undersecretary, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock;
- His Excellency, Mr Emin Sadik Aydin, General Director, Ministry of Development;
- His Excellency, Dr Metin Turker, Acting General Director, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock;
- Distinguished representative of the United Nations organizations, and colleagues from multilateral and bi-lateral development agencies; and
- Ladies and gentleman;

I am pleased to welcome you all to the national roundtable workshop on the Turkey country programme evaluation (CPE), co-organized by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock, and IFAD's Independent Office of Evaluation (IOE). It is indeed a pleasure to have you all among us today, from different institutions and different parts of Turkey. I thank you immensely for the efforts you have kindly made to being here, and to contribute with your insights and experience to the dialogue on the IFAD-Turkey partnership. It is my first visit to Turkey and I am extremely delighted to being here with you, representing IFAD's senior management.

IFAD has worked in Turkey for more than 30 years. The partnership between IFAD and Turkey is extremely important for us, given also the country's centrality in the work of our Near East, North Africa and Europe

Regional Division. This partnership gains added significance given the size of the country, both in terms of its geographic coverage as well as large rural population, which is around 21 million. In fact, a significant proportion of the rural population derive their livelihood from smallholder agricultural activities, which as you know is at the core of IFAD's mandate. Though agriculture is no longer the main driver of economic growth in Turkey, it remains important to rural development, food security, rural employment and incomes, exports and the manufacturing sector. It is in fact the second most important source of employment in rural areas and the largest employer of women.

Historically, since IFAD started its operations in 1978, it has provided financing for 10 projects and programmes for a total cost of around US\$ 661 million in Turkey. The Fund has contributed in total around USD 190 million in loans and USD 830 000 in grants, for development projects in Turkey that have reached more than 1.3 million rural households. Currently, three projects are ongoing. IFAD operations have been focused in eastern and south-eastern Anatolia as well as central Anatolia and the Black Sea regions.

As you know, based on its Performance Based Allocation System (PBAS), IFAD allocates resources over a three-year period to its member states for financing development projects and programmes. I am pleased to inform you that, based on the most recent PBAS figures, Turkey's allocation has nearly doubled, from USD 19 million during the period 2013-2015, to USD 36 million during the period 2016-2018. This means IFAD will be able to channel a greater amount of financial resources to the country in the near future, as compared to the past.

On a related matter, I also take this opportunity to thank the Government of Turkey for pledging USD 5 million to the Tenth Replenishment of IFAD

resources in 2015, which is a substantial increase from the levels of the Ninth Replenishment in 2011. These actions, respectively, on the part of IFAD and the Government, are a reflection of the strategic importance of the Turkey-IFAD partnership to ensuring sustainable and inclusive rural transformation in the country.

Moving onto the Turkey CPE. First of all, I would like to express appreciation to IOE for its efforts and for an excellent evaluation. We take note of the CPE findings and recommendations, as we move forward together with the Government in preparing the next Turkey country strategy. As for all country strategies, the Turkey country strategy will be considered by the IFAD Executive Board later in the year.

I would now like to take this opportunity to share my thoughts on three specific issues raised by the country programme evaluation.

Firstly, I am pleased to note that project interventions have been relevant and effective. While rural infrastructure tended to generate broad-based benefits, IFAD-supported projects made importance advances in increasing incomes and assets, in agricultural productivity and in supporting commercialization. However, the evaluation also notes that project benefits remains a challenge for poorer farmers, women and youth, an issue of particular concern in a country experiencing growing income disparity. The current focus of targeting on an area basis is appropriate and needs to continue until poverty reduction is fully achieved in poor rural areas of the country, ensuring that poorer segments of the population are the prime beneficiaries of IFAD assistance.

Secondly, projects have created a development momentum at the grassroots level, involving local authorities and non-governmental organizations. However, moving forward, a wider participation of the private sector could be considered, so IFAD-supported projects can benefit from their capacity and knowledge, for instance, in promoting value-addition of agricultural produce that can generate greater incomes and livelihoods for the rural poor.

Thirdly, IFAD is fully cognizant that, while financing for investment projects is important, there is demand for IFAD to be a more active player in sharing its knowledge and experience as a way to provide additional value to the partnership, for example, by investing in South-South and Triangular Cooperation. I am pleased to note that the Near East, North Africa and Europe division of IFAD and TIKA (the Turkish Agency for International Development) successfully implemented the pilot phase of capacity building of project staff from IFAD-financed projects in Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen. The initiative was successful and the participants were very pleased with the quality of Turkish trainers and the technical content of the training. We would like to build on this success story, and expand the IFAD-TIKA cooperation to other countries.

There is one further issue I would like to touch upon, which I am personally very committed to. This relates to the establishment of an IFAD Country Office (ICO) in Turkey in the near future. As some of you may know, the IFAD Executive Board has already approved the opening of an IFAD Country Office in Turkey, and a draft Host Country Agreement is currently under negotiation. The early setting up of the ICO would be critical, and help further the common objectives that will be enshrined in the forthcoming IFAD-

Turkey country strategy. As head of IFAD's Corporate Services Department and with the collaboration of our dedicated Field Support Unit, we promise to work closely with colleagues in the Programme Management Department and the Government, to ensure the Turkey ICO has the required infrastructure and access to IFAD services and systems to enable it to discharge its functions effectively and efficiently.

In closing, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to share with you the immense satisfaction I have derived from my first visit to Turkey, and look forward to returning to this marvellous country in the near future. I wish you all a very fruitful and constructive dialogue and look forward to hearing your valuable views on the CPE and the priorities for the future IFAD-Turkey partnership.

Thank you.