

## **Kyrgyzstan Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation Virtual National Workshop, 1 March 2023**

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

- Mr Nurdin Alisherov, First Deputy Minister of Agriculture,  
Ministry of Agriculture
- Representative of the Ministry of Finance
- Distinguished representatives of the Government of the Kyrgyz  
Republic, representatives of IFAD, partner institutions and  
international organizations,
- Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to be part of this virtual national workshop, organized by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD in collaboration with the Government of Kyrgyz Republic and the Near East, North Africa and Europe Division of IFAD. This workshop follows the finalization of the country strategy and programme evaluation, and provides an opportunity to share and discuss the main findings and recommendations with the Government, IFAD and other stakeholders and partners.

I would like to start by expressing my appreciation to the Government, in particular, to the Ministry of Agriculture, for their collaboration on this evaluation. Our appreciation goes to the Agricultural Projects Implementation Unit at the Ministry of Agriculture and partner organizations for sharing insights, supporting

field visits, and responding to numerous requests for data and information from the evaluation team.

I would also like to recognize the support of the IFAD Programme Management Department, in particular: Mr Donal Brown, Associate Vice-President; Ms Dina Saleh, Director of IFAD's Near East, North Africa and Europe Division; Mr Samir Bejaoui, IFAD country director for Kyrgyzstan. Unfortunately, Mr Brown, Associate Vice-President was not able to join us today but he is represented by Ms Saleh, the regional director.

Finally, I would like to thank the evaluation team, led by Ms Fumiko Nakai, Senior Evaluation Officer. Ms Antonella Sisti, Evaluation Assistant, provided efficient administrative support to the team and to the organization of today's event.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me first highlight the importance of the independent evaluation function. The Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD undertakes impartial and evidence-based evaluations of projects, country programmes and corporate policies, to assess the results achieved and to generate lessons to enhance the impact of IFAD-supported interventions in improving rural livelihoods and enabling rural transformation.

In Kyrgyzstan, since 1995, IFAD has financed seven projects with US\$129 million, for a total project cost of US\$254 million. IFAD has consistently supported the livestock sector. This was the first

independent country strategy and programme evaluation. The objectives of this evaluation were to: assess the results and performance of the IFAD-supported strategy and programme since 2009; and provide findings and recommendations to inform the next IFAD country strategy and the future partnership between IFAD and the Government.

Ladies and gentlemen,

My colleague Fumiko Nakai will deliver a more comprehensive presentation later, but I would like to highlight a few key findings from the evaluation.

The evaluation noted major achievements as a result of IFAD's strategic orientation and comprehensive interventions supporting pasture governance and veterinary services. Notable results on the ground included improved veterinary services, reduced incidence of animal and human diseases, and better access to remote pastures.

The impact on institutions and policies was far-reaching, such as the advancement of community-based pasture management and the enabling framework for private veterinary service provision. IFAD also fostered collaboration with other development partners, for example, to conduct analytical studies, or to jointly support the Government initiatives such as the updating of the Nationally Determined Contribution.

On the other hand, there are some areas that deserve attention.

Firstly, more needs to be done for sustainable management of pasture resources. The investment has tended to focus on the expansion of accessible pastures, while the number of grazing animals keeps increasing, adding more pressures on pasture resources.

Furthermore, the poverty and gender focus has been generally weak in the projects. The majority of rural households with livestock benefited from the projects in relation to community-based pasture management and veterinary services. At the same time, there was lack of targeted support for poorer households with a few animals, and therefore, they benefited less than wealthier households with a larger livestock ownership. Furthermore, although a joint grant-funded programme with other development partners successfully introduced an innovative approach to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, this experience was not incorporated into larger investment projects in a timely manner.

As evaluators, we have provided an impartial assessment of IFAD's programme in Kyrgyzstan. Now, with your support, we can gain a better understanding of future opportunities and ways to overcome constraints to promote inclusive, sustainable and resilient transformation of the rural economy.

I thank you for your attention.