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## **IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples: an update**

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**Action:** The Executive Board is invited to approve the document titled Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples: an update.

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## Executive summary

1. In 2009, the Executive Board adopted the [Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples](#) with the objective of enhancing IFAD's development effectiveness in its engagement with Indigenous Peoples.
2. Following more than a decade of implementation of the policy and in light of the experience and lessons learned on the ground, IFAD committed to updating it in the Report of the Consultation on the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD12). This commitment was driven by a number of important changes at IFAD and in the global context. In response to those changes, the policy has been updated with the objective of strengthening the Fund's role in championing Indigenous Peoples' issues.
3. The updated policy calls for a paradigm shift whereby IFAD now works with Indigenous Peoples as equal partners who contribute to co-creating strategies and who design and monitor investments to improve their livelihoods based on their own perspectives.
4. The Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD is proposed as the entry point for engagement with Indigenous Peoples at all levels, and the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility as the instrument to work directly with Indigenous Peoples' communities and their organizations, complementing IFAD's loan and grants investments.
5. In providing updated information on the situation of Indigenous Peoples and responses to their longstanding and newly emerging challenges through IFAD's instruments, the updated policy also builds on the Fund's comparative advantage in climate change related interventions.
6. The update has been developed in consultation with the Indigenous members of the Steering Committee of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD and takes into consideration the recommendations addressed to IFAD by the [United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues](#) (UNPFII).

## I. Introduction: why a policy update?

1. In the Report of the Consultation on the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD12), the Fund committed to updating its Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples. This commitment was driven by a number of important changes in the global context and at IFAD, as outlined below.
2. **IFAD's changing context.** Since IFAD started operations in 1978, Indigenous Peoples living in rural areas of developing countries have been among the explicit target groups of its investments, under the following [IFAD Policy on Targeting](#) guiding principle: "IFAD will, in all operational situations: include marginalized groups, such as minorities and indigenous peoples, and address their specific needs".
3. In 2009, IFAD's Executive Board adopted the [Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples](#) with the objective of enhancing IFAD's development effectiveness in its engagement with Indigenous Peoples' communities in rural areas.
4. In 2011, to convert IFAD's policy commitments into action, the [Indigenous Peoples' Forum](#) at IFAD (IPFI) was established with the aim of promoting dialogue among Indigenous Peoples, IFAD staff and Member States. Since its establishment, IPFI has helped monitor policy implementation and contributed to the strategic direction of IFAD's engagement with Indigenous Peoples. This has been repeatedly recognized as a good practice by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. IPFI has ensured Indigenous Peoples' engagement in IFAD's replenishment Consultations. Indigenous Peoples contributed input to the IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025 as well. IFAD is the sole international financial institution (IFI) to include commitments and targets on Indigenous Peoples in its corporate documents.
5. Since 2006, IFAD has implemented five cycles of the Indigenous Peoples' Assistance Facility (IPAF), an innovative funding instrument that Indigenous Peoples' communities can use to find solutions to the challenges they face. The experience that IFAD has gained through the implementation of IPAF has generated a number of lessons that are considered in this updated version of the policy.<sup>1</sup>
6. In 2021, IFAD updated its [Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures \(SECAP\)](#) that apply to all IFAD's investments and non-sovereign operations (NSOs), including technical assistance. These include standard 4 on Indigenous Peoples, and other relevant standards on biodiversity conservation, cultural heritage, physical and economic resettlement.
7. The IFAD strategic framework has evolved over the past decade. This policy update ensures consistency and coherence with the [IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025](#), the [IFAD Strategy and Action Plan on Environment and Climate Change 2019-2025](#), the [IFAD Strategy on Biodiversity 2022-2025](#), the [IFAD Action Plan Nutrition 2019-2025](#), the [IFAD Action Plan Rural Youth](#), the [IFAD Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment](#), the revised [Operational Guidelines on Targeting](#), the [Regular Grants Policy](#), the [IFAD Private Sector Engagement Strategy](#), the [IFAD Strategy on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#), the [IFAD Strategy for Engagement in Small Island Development States](#) and the IFAD Policy on Targeting (now being updated).
8. In applying the current policy, IFAD has learned that direct engagement of Indigenous Peoples at all levels improves impact, country ownership and sustainability of livelihoods based on Indigenous Peoples' perspectives, and reduces conflicts and risks. IFAD has also learned that: (i) greater attention is required in order to ensure full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in designing

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<sup>1</sup> See annex III and appendix III.

and implementing IFAD-funded projects; (ii) projects need to be supported by solid technical assistance and monitoring systems; (iii) the application of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) processes is key in order to improve IFAD's development effectiveness; and (iv) IFAD's role at the national level on country policy engagement can be highly successful when led directly by Indigenous Peoples and supported by IFAD and other United Nations organizations.

9. While much has been achieved so far, greater efforts are required to systematically engage Indigenous Peoples in country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs), apply the right methodologies and principles of engagement in a systematic way in IFAD-funded projects in areas that are home to Indigenous Peoples, and measure results and impact.<sup>2</sup>
10. One of the recommendations agreed upon during the fifth global meeting of IPFI in 2021 was to ensure that the updated IFAD policy is prepared in consultation and partnership with Indigenous Peoples. This update of the policy takes into consideration the findings that emerged from the [Synthesis Evaluation on the IFAD's engagement with Indigenous Peoples](#) conducted by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE), as well as recommendations addressed to IFAD by UNPFII.<sup>3</sup>
11. **At the global level:** The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development highlights the need to promote the rights of Indigenous Peoples to lands, territories and resources through an integrated approach to economic, environmental and social development within a human rights framework.
12. Global institutional mechanisms have been created to promote Indigenous Peoples' rights, such as the [United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues](#) (UNPFII, 2000), the [UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (UNSR, 2001) and the [Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (EMRIP, 2006). Over the past 20 years, Indigenous Peoples' rights have been increasingly recognized through the adoption of international instruments such as the [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP, 2007\)](#), which followed the [Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention No.169 \(1989\)](#), and more recent instruments such as the Escazú Agreement in 2021.<sup>4</sup>
13. Following the adoption of UNDRIP, formal recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples advanced significantly with the 2014 [high-level plenary session of the United Nations General Assembly – World Conference on Indigenous Peoples](#), the adoption by the General Assembly of the [System-Wide Action Plan on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(SWAP\)](#), the [2020 call to action on SWAP by the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination \(CEB\)](#),<sup>5</sup> the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the establishment of the [SDG Indigenous Peoples Major Group \(IPMG\)](#).
14. The Paris Agreement (2015), including the creation of the [International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change](#) and the [Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Platform \(LCIPP\)](#), and the attention paid to climate justice, underscore the indispensable role that Indigenous Peoples play in achieving the Agreement.
15. In 2021, the Food Systems Summit recognized the vital contribution of Indigenous Peoples' food systems with the establishment of a [Coalition on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems](#).

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<sup>2</sup> See annex III.

<sup>3</sup> See appendix V.

<sup>4</sup> See appendix VII.

<sup>5</sup> IFAD will respond to the SWAP call to action by ensuring: (i) more systematic participation of Indigenous Peoples in processes and initiatives that affect them; (ii) strengthening targeted actions at the country level to support the rights of Indigenous Peoples and learning from good practices; and (iii) strengthening its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system by means of the disaggregation of data on Indigenous Peoples.

16. In July 2022, [the United Nations General Assembly recognized the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right](#). These are just the most recent milestones at the global level,<sup>6</sup> whose realization this policy contributes to. Policies and guidelines on Indigenous Peoples among United Nations agencies have also evolved.<sup>7</sup>
17. **IFAD’s role as a champion of Indigenous Peoples’ rights.** The evolution of the global aid architecture, its diverse financing sources, including the private sector, and their fragmentation among different delivery mechanisms, make it even more necessary that IFAD ensures access to these resources by Indigenous Peoples.<sup>8</sup> IFAD has traditionally been viewed as a champion of Indigenous Peoples’ rights and this policy update strengthens that role.
18. This policy lays out the need for a narrative shift within IFAD, whereby IFAD works with Indigenous Peoples as horizontal partners. The policy provides updated data on Indigenous Peoples and recaps the challenges they face. While restating the nine principles of engagement of the previous policy, it strengthens links to IFAD mainstreaming priority areas, featuring a new principle of engagement on food sovereignty and nutrition security. This policy builds on the Fund’s comparative advantage in climate change and unique mandate to eradicate poverty in rural areas. It highlights that Indigenous Peoples’ knowledge provides possible judicious and equitable pathways for development in many developing countries. IPFI is proposed as the entry point for engagement at all levels. The policy recommends that IPFI is used to strengthen Indigenous Peoples’ representation in IFAD’s governance structure as well as at the country level. It proposes that IFAD works closely with Indigenous Peoples in co-creating investments to improve their livelihoods.

## II. Indigenous Peoples

19. The term “Indigenous Peoples” is a common denominator for more than [476 million persons, representing 6.2 percent of the world’s population](#). Indigenous Peoples live in more than 90 countries, with an estimated 70.5 per cent living in the Asia and the Pacific region. They speak approximately 4,000 of the 6,700 languages remaining worldwide. Indigenous Peoples and their livelihood systems - farming, pastoralism, shifting cultivation, rotational agriculture, fishing, and hunting and gathering, occupy about 25 per cent of the world's land surface, with about [40 per cent of all terrestrial protected areas and ecologically intact landscapes](#), where they have preserved [80 per cent of the remaining terrestrial biodiversity](#).
20. The UNDRIP does not include a universal definition of the term “Indigenous Peoples”.<sup>9</sup> Consistent with [international practice](#) and for the purposes of this policy, IFAD uses a working definition of Indigenous Peoples based on the [following](#):
- Priority in time, with respect to occupation and use of a specific territory;
  - The voluntary perpetuation of cultural distinctiveness, which may include aspects of language, social organization, religion and spiritual values, modes of production, laws and institutions;
  - Self-identification, as well as recognition by other groups, or by state authorities, as a distinct collectivity; and
  - An experience of subjugation, marginalization, dispossession, exclusion or discrimination.

<sup>6</sup> See appendix VII.

<sup>7</sup> See appendix VII.

<sup>8</sup> The pledge by the Twenty-sixth United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) to direct US\$1.7 billion to Indigenous Peoples and local communities is of great significance to IFAD’s work.

<sup>9</sup> Many terms are used to refer to Indigenous Peoples: Natives, First Nations, tribes, ethnic minorities, indigenous nationalities, aboriginals, pastoralists, hunters and gatherers, hill peoples, etc.

## Issues and challenges

21. Indigenous Peoples everywhere continue to fight discrimination and a lack of recognition of their collective rights, and suffer from land dispossession and from the consequences of climate change and conservation efforts. [The COVID19 pandemic has aggravated poverty and hunger for Indigenous Peoples](#), who are already vulnerable because of the exploitation of their lands and resources, which has severely affected their sustainable food systems, livelihoods and health conditions.
22. **Poverty and well-being.** Indigenous Peoples continue to live in poverty and extreme poverty. [They represent 18.7 per cent of people living in extreme poverty](#), defined as people living below US\$1.90 a day. Although the COVID-19 pandemic magnified the challenges and inequalities faced by Indigenous Peoples, it has also shown the world their incredible resilience in addressing the pandemic through their self-determined protection mechanisms, indigenous food and trade systems, and [ancestral medicine and governance systems](#).
23. **Territories, resources and indigenous rights defenders.** Ancestral lands are the source of Indigenous Peoples' cultural, spiritual, social and political identity and the foundation of traditional knowledge systems. Despite the fact that their rights to land, territories and resources are recognized in article 26 of the UNDRIP, they experience increasing challenges in the defence of this right, as they live on lands with some of the world's largest reserves of fossil fuels, minerals and forests and are confronted with the pressures of growing global demand for natural resources, increased deforestation, and green solutions to climate change and biodiversity loss. Indigenous Peoples are on the front lines of voicing opposition to extractive industries in their territories. Indigenous Peoples' human rights defenders have been killed, forcibly displaced and threatened. [In 2020, a third of the 227 activists murdered were indigenous leaders and activists](#). [The security of tenure rights and resources is essential to realize Indigenous Peoples' rights to peace and justice](#).
24. **Indigenous women** have strongly promoted their rights, using international human rights frameworks such as the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\)](#) to advance the recognition and protection of their individual and collective rights. However, [indigenous women are massively under-represented](#), are the victims of intersectional discrimination, and [experience disproportionate forms of violence](#), as compared to other women and girls.
25. **Indigenous youth** are often confronted with hard choices between maintaining their roots in their community or pursuing education and employment opportunities in cities far from home. They also experience much higher rates of suicide compared to other youth. [They face discrimination](#), lack of culturally appropriate education in their own languages, high illiteracy and drop-out rates, unemployment, incarceration and a lack of legal protection. While struggling with multiple challenges many indigenous youth are setting up their organizations and networks. At the global level, the [Global Indigenous Youth Caucus](#) serves as their platform to advocate for the key role indigenous youth can play in the context of identity, preservation of traditional knowledge and rights to land, territories and resources, and protection of their traditional food systems. [IFAD's partnership with Slow Food](#) has been effective in supporting indigenous youth to innovate, diversify production and improve the marketing of their products, use participatory guarantee systems to label their products, and reflect principles of quality, biodiversity and environmental conservation.
26. **Food sovereignty, food security and nutrition.** Lack of recognition and protection of Indigenous Peoples' rights to land, territories and resources is the single most important factor negatively affecting their food and nutrition security and the realization of their right to food and [food sovereignty](#). The Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in

the context of national food security [Voluntary Guidelines to the Right to Food](#) provide for special attention to Indigenous Peoples in access to land and genetic resources. At the 2021 Food Systems Summit, Indigenous Peoples stated that food sovereignty is necessary for sustainable food security. For them, food sovereignty means being able to manage their own cultivated or wild harvests in a way that meets their cultural, spiritual, economic and nutritional needs.

### III. IFAD's experience and lessons learned

27. Since its creation in 1978, IFAD has supported rural development programmes with Indigenous Peoples as major stakeholders and partners. Over the past 12 years, around 30 per cent of the lending programme has been supporting development initiatives with Indigenous Peoples. Thirty-seven per cent of IFAD's current portfolio supports initiatives in areas home to Indigenous Peoples, with 83 IFAD-funded projects reaching out to about 9 million Indigenous People in 46 countries with an estimated IFAD investment of around US\$1 billion and leveraging around US\$2 billion in cofinancing.<sup>10</sup>
28. IPAF<sup>11</sup> is a demand-driven facility whose approaches are broad, inclusive, multisectoral and integrated. The IPAF governance and implementation sets an example of best practice in self-driven development. IPAF has provided Indigenous Peoples' organizations at the regional level with a leading role in programme management, contributing to their growth as institutions. Over the years, IFAD has learned that capacity-building and self-determined development can be considerably improved by entrusting Indigenous Peoples' communities with the direct management of resources. Even small amounts can make a big difference to small communities.
29. The consultations undertaken through IPFI,<sup>12</sup> and the country and grassroots level engagement through loans and grants investments, constitute IFAD's strategic approach to improve the livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples.<sup>13</sup> IFAD has learned on the ground that when development projects build upon the distinctiveness of Indigenous Peoples' communities, development effectiveness is likely to be achieved.
30. Through the implementation of its policy IFAD has gained high credibility among many different national and international actors. As an IFI, IFAD has become a trusted and credible partner, not only for Indigenous Peoples, but also for multilateral institutions, international organizations and civil society organizations.
31. **The evaluation synthesis** on IFAD's engagement with Indigenous Peoples conducted by IOE<sup>14</sup> produced evidence that in IFAD investment projects, Indigenous Peoples are often "lumped together" with rural youth and women under the label "vulnerable and marginalized". The synthesis included a recommendation that IFAD pay greater attention to key project design elements and provide adequate

*At IFAD, you have adopted a Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples, set up institutional mechanisms for sustained dialogue with Indigenous Peoples, such as the Indigenous Peoples' Forum and related processes, and you have placed your work on Indigenous Peoples within your Operations Department. You have also established the Indigenous Peoples' Assistance Facility. No other United Nations agency or international financial institution has matched these accomplishments.*

*Victoria Tauli Corpuz, former Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

<sup>10</sup> Since 1979 IFAD-funded projects targeting 45 million indigenous people in 57 countries have been approved for an estimated IFAD investment of US\$3 billion, leveraging cofinancing for about US\$4 billion. Some US\$75 million has been invested in grants focusing on Indigenous Peoples. A database has been maintained since 2006 with data systematically validated by country directors. See annex II.

<sup>11</sup> See appendix III.

<sup>12</sup> See appendix II.

<sup>13</sup> The Permanent Forum recalls that, more than 10 years ago, the International Fund for Agricultural Development established an indigenous forum, which has been repeatedly recognized as a good practice that other United Nations entities should follow. UNPFII Report (April 2021).

<sup>14</sup> See appendix V.



implementation support, ensuring effective participation of Indigenous Peoples throughout.

32. Another important lesson relates to the **engagement of Indigenous Peoples in COSOPs and project designs** early on at the conception stage and throughout the project cycle. The role of Indigenous Peoples in identifying the challenges they face is crucial to co-design effective solutions that take into account their governance systems, ancestral knowledge and practices. This approach needs to be systematized.
33. The Fund has learned that **FPIC** is a tool to increase the agency of Indigenous Peoples and enhance community ownership of the investments, their results and sustainability. FPIC processes strengthen partnerships between local communities, government institutions and financing organizations, and enable dialogue and mutual recognition.<sup>15</sup>
34. Good practices emerged from the **country policy dialogues**<sup>16</sup> that IFAD financed in 10 countries to support Indigenous Peoples in determining their own priorities. In El Salvador the country policy dialogue resulted in the first national action plan for the implementation of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples outcome document, followed by the approval of a policy in 2019.
35. Enabling Indigenous Peoples to secure **rights to their land and territories and resources** is crucial. Over time, [IFAD has tested and improved its approaches and tools to work with Indigenous Peoples](#). Some of these tools have been extremely successful in securing the legal recognition of their customary land tenure rights, collective management of natural resources, and participation in decision-making processes. They include the FPIC implementation plans; participatory mapping, learning routes, and participatory project design and implementation processes. The Committee on World Food Security [Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security \(VGGT\)](#) is another important tool to advance Indigenous Peoples' rights.
36. A highly relevant area of engagement within IFAD-funded projects is **Indigenous Peoples' knowledge**, which provides important insights into the processes of observation, adaptation and mitigation of the consequences of climate change and biodiversity conservation.<sup>17</sup>
37. **The Indigenous Peoples' Place.** In 2017, IFAD dedicated a conference room to Indigenous Peoples at its headquarters to honour their rich cultures and identities. As a permanent space for Indigenous Peoples within IFAD it represents a tangible commitment to a solid partnership.

#### IV. Principles of engagement

38. In line with its [strategic vision](#) of inclusive and sustainable rural transformation to eliminate poverty and generate improved and more resilient livelihoods for all rural people living in poverty, and consistent with the evolving international framework, IFAD aims to ensure that Indigenous Peoples' communities in rural areas are empowered to improve their rights, well-being, income, food sovereignty and nutrition security and climate resilience through self-driven development that builds on their identity, spirituality and knowledge. In order to do so, IFAD will be guided by the following principles:
  - **Recognizing cultural heritage and identity as assets.** IFAD will acknowledge and build upon the asset of cultural distinctiveness of Indigenous Peoples. It will assist Indigenous Peoples' communities in taking advantage of their traditional knowledge, culture, spirituality, governance systems,

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<sup>15</sup> See annex III.

<sup>16</sup> See appendix IV.

<sup>17</sup> Bolivia (Plurinational State of) 2000002284: ACCESOS RURAL Project Design Report October 2019.

territories and resources, all of which form part of their tangible and intangible heritage.

- **Free, prior and informed consent.** In working with Member States on projects targeting or affecting Indigenous Peoples, IFAD will support the participation of Indigenous Peoples' communities in determining priorities for their own development. When appraising such projects proposed by Member States, IFAD will examine whether the borrower or grant recipient consulted with the Indigenous Peoples to obtain their FPIC, and consider such consent as a criterion for project approval. In appraising such projects, the Fund will verify whether they include measures to: (i) avoid potentially adverse effects on the Indigenous Peoples' communities; or (ii) when avoidance is not feasible, minimize, mitigate or compensate for such effects.
- **Community-driven development** ensures ownership, commitment and sustainability of investments, and increases self-reliance and community empowerment. In working with Indigenous Peoples, IFAD will scale up community-driven development approaches that are particularly well suited to the holistic perspectives and cosmovision of Indigenous Peoples, whereby ecosystems, social and economic systems are intertwined.
- **Land, territories and resources.** Within the international legal frameworks and the policies of its borrowing countries, and in a manner consistent with its [Policy on Improving Access to Land and Tenure Security](#), IFAD will promote equitable access to land territories and resources by Indigenous Peoples and enhance their tenure security.<sup>18</sup> It will do so by strengthening their own capacity to manage their territories and resources in a sustainable way.
- **Indigenous Peoples' knowledge.** IFAD will value Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and practices in investment projects with particular attention to inter-generational transfer of knowledge between elders and youth.<sup>19</sup> It will also build on these assets by supporting Indigenous Peoples' research on the diversity of their resilience systems and capacities to adapt to climate change, thus complementing conventional science and providing a holistic understanding of the environment, natural resources and culture, and the human interrelation with them.
- **Environmental issues and climate change.** IFAD will support Indigenous Peoples in enhancing the resilience of the ecosystems in which they live and in developing adaptation measures. The Fund will also increasingly mobilize and channel environmental and climate finance to Indigenous Peoples both through its tested instruments, such as IPAF and the enhanced Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP+), and by enhancing their ability to participate in and benefit from climate change actions funded by the Global Environment Facility, Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund and possibly by the private sector. In its dialogue with governments, the Fund will support Indigenous Peoples' participation in defining and implementing policies and programmes and actions that promote territorial management and their economies, while preserving their habitat through conservation and adaptation strategies rooted in their ancestral knowledge and practices.

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<sup>18</sup> Central to the identity of Indigenous Peoples is their spiritual relationship to ancestral territories and resources, which form the basis of their cultures and livelihoods. Access to and management of these resources are regulated by complex customary laws, of which IFAD must have an adequate understanding.

<sup>19</sup> Indigenous Peoples are bearers of unique knowledge and custodians of biodiversity in many parts of the world. Their knowledge is increasingly recognized for providing important insights into the processes of observation, adaptation and mitigation of climate change, and sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity, as well as alternative medicinal practices and nutritional properties of species.

- **Access to markets.** IFAD will promote Indigenous Peoples' economies<sup>20</sup> and products and will support their community-based enterprises, economic initiatives and the recognition of [Participatory Guarantee Systems](#). It will pay particular attention to indigenous women and youth's economic empowerment. It will do so by improving market access for Indigenous Peoples' products (including seeds, crops, fruits, vegetables, meat, milk, livestock and fish products and non-farm products); market information, infrastructure and technology.
  - **Empowerment.** IFAD will support the empowerment of Indigenous Peoples by providing resources for capacity-building to empower them to effectively interact and negotiate with local and national governments, private companies and other parties to secure and manage their resources and lead their own development processes. Particular attention will be given to reducing inequality and empowering indigenous youth socially and economically through initiatives that take into account inter-generational relations, to ensure that their knowledge, identity and traditions are passed on to the next generation. Initiatives will be in line with the [IFAD youth approach and plan of action](#).
  - **Gender equality.** As part of its commitment to enhancing the impact of its programming on gender equality and women's empowerment, IFAD will pay particular attention to the empowerment of indigenous women<sup>21</sup> by: (i) expanding their access to and control over resources such as land, capital, traditional knowledge and technologies; (ii) strengthening their agency, decision-making role in community affairs, and representation in local institutions; and (iii) building on their untapped potential for sustainable development, by recognizing their role as stewards of natural resources and biodiversity, and as bearers of rich traditional knowledge systems.
  - **Food sovereignty, food security and nutrition.** In line with the recommendations of the Food Systems Summit, IFAD will contribute to ensuring the protection and preservation of [Indigenous Peoples' food systems](#), which are strongly interconnected with their secure access rights over their lands, territories and natural resources, as well as their cultural, social and spiritual well-being. In its investments, IFAD will promote: (i) diverse and indigenous food sources, and cultural and social practices linked to food gathering and production; (ii) agroecological and territorial management practices; and (iii) the availability, accessibility, affordability and consumption of diverse, nutritious foods, including [neglected and underutilized species \(NUS\)](#) and their genetic protection.
39. IFAD staff will adhere to these principles while formulating country strategies, in policy dialogues, and throughout the project cycle.

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<sup>20</sup> Balance with nature, social responsibility and reciprocity are key principles embedded in most Indigenous Peoples' cultures across the world. Ensuring the sustainability of resources is part of the spiritual system and the indigenous resource management system. Although this balance is now shifting with the growing demand for cash and an increasing number of Indigenous Peoples moving away from subsistence to commercial production, they continue to maintain their vision of "the Indigenous Peoples' economy", whereby the driving principle is distribution as opposed to the accumulation principle that governs the market economy. In their vision, distribution is based on the value of collective solidarity, accumulation on the value of individualism.  
(Economía Indígena <https://www.territorioindigenaygobernanza.com/web/economia-indigena/>).

<sup>21</sup> Indigenous women often experience triple discrimination: as women in their countries, as members of an Indigenous Peoples' community and as women within an Indigenous Peoples' community.

## V. Theory of change

<b>Development result</b>	By 2032, ensure that 11 million Indigenous Peoples in rural areas are empowered to improve their rights, well-being, income, food sovereignty and nutrition security, and climate resilience through self-driven development that builds on their identity, spirituality and knowledge.
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Indigenous Peoples empowered to effectively participate in IFAD policy and project formulation</li> <li>✓ Indigenous Peoples' organizations and IFAD systematically dialogue and jointly participate in global, regional and national processes</li> <li>✓ Increased financing for IPAF secured from diverse multilateral and bilateral sources</li> <li>✓ Increased environmental and climate finance resources directed to and managed by Indigenous Peoples' organizations</li> <li>✓ IFAD is recognized as a global model in its partnership with Indigenous Peoples and a leader in generating and applying appropriate knowledge and approaches</li> </ul>
<b>Action areas (interventions)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Engagement of Indigenous Peoples in relevant IFAD programmes through local and national consultative processes</li> <li>✓ Systematic implementation of FPIC in IFAD's investments</li> <li>✓ Enhanced IFAD contribution in global, regional and national level policy and advocacy through adequate financial and human resources</li> <li>✓ Capacity development of Indigenous Peoples' organizations</li> <li>✓ Resource mobilization</li> <li>✓ Knowledge generation and dissemination</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic directions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Deeper country level policy engagement on Indigenous Peoples' issues</li> <li>➤ Increased investments and channeling of environmental and climate finance to Indigenous Peoples</li> <li>➤ Knowledge management and learning</li> <li>➤ Strengthening partnerships with Indigenous Peoples' organizations and expand Indigenous Peoples' role as supportive partners for IFAD's resource mobilization</li> </ul>
<b>Challenge</b>	Indigenous Peoples are experiencing discrimination, exclusion and cultural disintegration. They lack recognition of their collective rights to territories and natural resources, which makes them more vulnerable to climate change, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss. Globally, in rural areas, Indigenous Peoples represent 20.8 per cent of the extremely poor and are more than twice as likely to be in extreme poverty compared to their non-indigenous counterparts, <sup>22</sup> and they face increasing food insecurity and malnutrition. Policies, investments and capacities need to be strengthened to meet this challenge.

## VI. Implementation of the policy

40. The updated policy will inform IFAD's overall engagement with Indigenous Peoples during the next decade (2022-2032). Annex I provides details on the six major instruments for policy implementation: (i) the Indigenous Peoples Forum at IFAD; (ii) country programmes; (iii) funding instruments; (iv) policy engagement and partnerships; (v) human resources; and (vi) knowledge management.

<sup>22</sup> ILO report, 2019 [Work for a brighter future – Global Commission on the Future of Work \(ilo.org\)](https://www.ilo.org/global/commission-on-the-future-of-work/publications-and-reports/WFBC-report-2019).

## Instruments for policy implementation

### A. The Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD (IPFI)

1. [IPFI](#) will be the main instrument for policy oversight and will continue providing strategic direction for IFAD's engagement with Indigenous Peoples.
2. The overall implementation and monitoring of the policy, with reference to operations, will be phased out through the biannual regional action plans agreed upon during the global meeting of IPFI every other year.
3. IPFI will be strengthened at the country level through country coordination groups that will be constituted by, inter alia, Indigenous Peoples' representatives who participate in the Forum and will work in consultation with IFAD country teams on relevant issues and investments.
4. IPFI will continue to advance IFAD's cause in resource mobilization, as it has during the past two replenishment Consultations.

### B. Country programmes

5. Indigenous Peoples' communities that are targeted or affected by an IFAD-supported project will be engaged in all stages of the project cycle. In working with Member States on projects designed to benefit Indigenous Peoples, IFAD will support their full and effective participation in determining their priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In this context, the IFAD policy lays out an ambition that by 2032, predicated on resources and capacities being made available, the following will clearly be demonstrated in relevant IFAD investments and operations:
  6. Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) apply to all IFAD's investments and non-sovereign operations (NSOs), including technical assistance. SECAP standard 4 sets out the mandatory requirements, including free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), that borrowers, recipients and partners must apply to all projects that target Indigenous Peoples or rural areas that are home to Indigenous Peoples. SECAP also includes a grievance mechanism.
  7. Country strategies. In 100 per cent of the country strategic opportunities programme (COSOP) preparatory studies, in countries<sup>23</sup> where Indigenous Peoples are vulnerable to rural poverty, nutrition and climate change, analysis will draw on data disaggregated by Indigenous Peoples, and country strategies will take these aspects into account in the country-specific dimensions of rural poverty. This will be done also in countries that do not recognize Indigenous Peoples, but where IFAD has an opportunity to provide differentiated support. In line with its frameworks and guidelines, IFAD will:
    - Hold consultations with Indigenous Peoples and invite Indigenous Peoples' representatives to the country strategy development teams to facilitate consultations with and contributions by Indigenous Peoples; and
    - Propose that its government counterparts invite Indigenous Peoples' representatives to the country strategy design workshop.
  8. **Project design.** Currently, 30 per cent of the operations in the IFAD lending programme include Indigenous Peoples in their target groups. The ambition for the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD12) is to gradually increase investments that prioritize Indigenous Peoples.<sup>24</sup> New project designs will improve the targeting of Indigenous Peoples while maximizing efficiency in administration

<sup>23</sup> Of the COSOPs approved in 2010 and 2021, 39 per cent have addressed Indigenous Peoples' issues.

<sup>24</sup> IFAD12 committed to at least 10 projects including Indigenous Peoples as a priority target group at design. The threshold set for these 10 projects is that at least 30 per cent of the project beneficiaries be Indigenous peoples. This policy aims at doubling that number by 2032.

and supervision of dedicated resources, on the basis of lessons learned and evidence gathered during implementation. An overall target of 11 million Indigenous Peoples are expected to be reached by 2032, through a phased increase in projects prioritizing Indigenous Peoples.<sup>25</sup>

9. **Monitoring and evaluation.** IFAD will strengthen its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to include outreach disaggregation by indigenous households and person-based data disaggregation of Indigenous Peoples by sex and age. Specific indicators at project level measuring well-being, poverty and sustainability, including Indigenous Peoples' rights to lands, territories and resources in a way that is relevant to them, based on ongoing work in other organizations, will be made available to project design teams to complement conventional project outcome and impact indicators.<sup>26</sup> By 2032, IFAD will show greater integration of feedback processes in project M&E systems and these will be strengthened in line with the Framework for Operational Feedback from Stakeholders.
10. Currently, IFAD uses multiple monitoring tools to report on projects targeting Indigenous Peoples. By 2032 IFAD will have a demonstrably improved the Operational Results Management System (ORMS) with enhanced data analytics on Indigenous Peoples, and staff will be able to use it for informed decision-making and as a corporate reporting tool.

### C. Funding instruments

11. Although IFAD has financed many projects targeting Indigenous Peoples through its regular loan programme, grant financing is especially important to increase national capacity to address Indigenous Peoples' issues at the policy levels, to fund innovative pilot programmes, and to support Indigenous Peoples' organizations directly with institutional strengthening and capacity-building. IFAD will continue funding regional and country-specific grants to build the capacities of Indigenous Peoples' organizations, to improve the policy and investment environment and to support innovations and knowledge management. In addition, IFAD will explore the use of recently adopted instruments such as reimbursable technical assistance and NSOs to support Indigenous Peoples' livelihoods.
12. **Climate finance.** Building on its experience with climate finance projects in areas home to Indigenous Peoples, and on the increasing global recognition of the role that Indigenous Peoples' knowledge plays in developing climate solutions,<sup>27</sup> IFAD will proactively work to channel climate finance to Indigenous Peoples through its country programmes while positioning itself as leader on engagement of Indigenous Peoples within climate funds.<sup>28</sup> In addition, IFAD will raise donors' and climate funds' awareness on the Indigenous Peoples' Assistance Facility (IPAF) as an opportunity to provide direct access to climate finance to Indigenous Peoples.
13. **The IPAF** is an important platform that can directly channel finance to Indigenous Peoples' communities. IFAD will continue strengthening the IPAF, in particular as a channel for climate finance associated with forest guardianship pledged in the Glasgow Climate Pact. The IPAF has provided critical support for strengthening the capacity of Indigenous Peoples' organizations, thus resulting in improved efficiency and scaling up potential. IFAD will mobilize resources for the IPAF, including through its regular grant resources, and will seek to mobilize donor resources in partnership with Indigenous Peoples.

<sup>25</sup> Indicatively as follows: 10 projects (IFAD12); 13 projects (IFAD13); 16 projects (IFAD14); 20 projects (IFAD15).

<sup>26</sup> See appendix VI.

<sup>27</sup> This recognition has resulted in the Glasgow Climate Pact, including the [pledge of \\$1.7 billion in support of indigenous peoples and local communities](#).

<sup>28</sup> See annex III.

## D. Policy engagement and partnerships

14. **Country-level policy engagement.** IFAD will proactively use its existing channels of communication with national governments and partners for advocacy on Indigenous Peoples' issues, in connection with its own portfolio of operations and predicated on available resources, for related topics. In its policy dialogue efforts<sup>29</sup> on nationally determined contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans and beyond, IFAD will aim to expand consultative processes involving diverse stakeholders and national institutions working with and for Indigenous Peoples.
15. **Partnerships with Indigenous Peoples' organizations.** IFAD will continue to promote systematic dialogue with Indigenous Peoples through IPFI<sup>30</sup> as a core vehicle for corporate and global strategic dialogue, advocacy and policy engagement and ensuring predictable financial support to IPFI. Indigenous Peoples' delegates participating in the global sessions of IPFI, which are held every other year in conjunction with sessions of the IFAD Governing Council, are observers to the Governing Council. Within IFAD's evolving engagement with rural civil society organizations, when items of relevance to Indigenous Peoples are on the agenda for consideration, selected representatives of the IPFI Steering Committee will be invited to participate in sessions of the Executive Board as observers, in line with IFAD Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board. Such representatives may also be invited to participate in informal meetings where items of relevance are being considered.<sup>31</sup> In addition, a member of the IPFI Steering Committee, as mandated by the IPFI constituency, will engage as a member in the Advisory Committees of the [Rural Resilience Programme](#) and the [Private Sector Financing Programme](#).
16. **Partnerships with other stakeholders.** IFAD will broaden its efforts to combine its own resources with those of other institutions, including international financial institutions (IFIs), in order to create synergies, achieve economies of scale, share learnings and further advocacy. In partnership with United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and IASG, IFAD will contribute to the implementation of the [SWAP](#) for ensuring a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In addition, IFAD will partner with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the implementation of selected actions (related for example to sustainable food systems, digital empowerment, biodiversity and climate) under the Global Action Plan of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages. As a member of the [International Land Coalition \(ILC\)](#), the Fund will take advantage of the expertise of the other ILC members and consult with them at local level for engagement in policy dialogue related to land, and territories. IFAD will reinforce its long-standing cooperation with the other Rome-based agencies (RBAs), including the [Coalition on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems](#), and in strengthening its engagement with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Unit on Indigenous Peoples, including the Friends of Indigenous Peoples group created at FAO in 2019. IFAD will also continue collaborating with the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) as a strategic partner for technical advisory support. IFAD will strengthen its partnerships in the biodiversity and climate change arena and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) processes, including with the [International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change](#) and the [Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform \(LCIPP\)](#), as well as with the [Alliance Bioversity International-CIAT](#), the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and other climate and environmental funds.

<sup>29</sup> See appendix IV.

<sup>30</sup> See appendix II.

<sup>31</sup> E.g. agenda items pertaining to COSOPs, project and programme proposals, and grant proposals under consideration in areas home to Indigenous Peoples.

## E. Human resources

17. Compliance with the principles of engagement and the instruments, procedures and corporate issues related to this updated policy will require strengthening capacity among IFAD and project staff, including an increase in human resources. While funding for human resources will be sought during the IFAD13 and IFAD14 Consultations, as well as through supplementary funds, incremental responsibilities related to Indigenous Peoples will be merged into existing and new environment, climate and social inclusion positions. An indigenous youth internship programme will be also rolled out. At the same time, a pan-IFAD capacity-building approach to Indigenous Peoples' issues will be supported with training and e-learning activities (see section VI below).
18. **Indigenous youth internship.** Based on past positive experiences, IFAD will host two indigenous youth interns every year at headquarters under the IFAD Enhanced Internship Programme, and four indigenous youth interns in regional/country offices, with the aim of providing indigenous youth with the opportunity of a six-month learning experience.<sup>32</sup>

## F. Knowledge management

19. A necessary aspect of the implementation of this policy is strengthening the internal process of information dissemination, knowledge generation and management, capacity-building and peer support. In this regard, while a digital toolbox and an e-learning course have recently been developed, additional capacity-building activities targeted to staff with social inclusion responsibilities will be developed, as much as possible by joining hands with learning programmes of other organizations such as FAO, Inter-Agency Support Group (IASG), International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ITCILO) in Turin and regional Indigenous Peoples' organizations. In addition, existing information-sharing mechanisms such as learning notes, thematic groups, portfolio reviews and workshops will be used as vehicles for sharing information and knowledge with a broader network of staff, other organizations<sup>33</sup> and interested parties. IFAD will ensure that the institution's commitment to Indigenous Peoples is highly visible in its public communication and outreach activities. A list of existing knowledge products is available in appendix VIII.
20. The cross-departmental working group mobilized to update this policy document will be maintained to monitor the policy's implementation, to act as a peer-support mechanism, and to strengthen engagement with Indigenous Peoples throughout IFAD's work and at the international level, including the relationship with UNPFII and IASG, and management of IPAF in close cooperation with IPFI.
21. **Dissemination of the policy.** In order to ensure staff understanding of and commitment to the updated policy, seminars with IFAD and project staff will be conducted once it is approved. Capacity-building sessions on this policy and on the upcoming IFAD targeting strategy will be developed. The updated policy and related information material will be posted on the internet for wide distribution. The policy will be widely disseminated to UNPFII, IASG, ILC and Indigenous Peoples' networks and partner organizations. International, regional and country events, including project start-up and implementation workshops, will also provide opportunities for sharing the policy.
22. **Reporting on policy implementation.** IFAD will provide updates on the implementation of this policy through existing corporate reports, including the annual Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness (RIDE).

<sup>32</sup> IFAD will liaise with other training/internship initiatives in other United Nations institutions and universities, and will attempt to align the selection procedures of indigenous youth interns with those institutions.

<sup>33</sup> Including through the [Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network \(MOPAN\)](#).



23. Updates on the policy implementation will be systematically provided in the biannual progress reports on IFAD's engagement with Indigenous Peoples<sup>34</sup> that are prepared in advance of the global meetings of IPFI against regional action plans agreed between Indigenous Peoples and IFAD. The implementation of this updated policy will be evaluated by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD five years after its approval.

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<sup>34</sup> All reports are available on IFAD [Web page on the Indigenous peoples Forum at IFAD](#).

## Summary data on country strategies, IFAD-funded projects and the IPAF

Table 1  
Data on IFAD-funded projects targeting Indigenous and Tribal Peoples and ethnic minorities<sup>35</sup>

<i>Dataset</i>	<i>Number of projects</i>	<i>Estimated number of Indigenous Peoples targeted (Millions)</i>	<i>Estimated IFAD Indigenous Peoples financing (Billions of United States dollars)</i>	<i>Estimated Indigenous Peoples cofinancing (Billions of United States dollars)</i>	<i>Estimated total Indigenous Peoples financing (Billions of United States dollars)</i>
Overall data (1979–2022)	266	45	2.2	4.2	6.4
Current portfolio	83	8.7	0.851	1.7	2.6

<sup>35</sup> Methodological note: Since 2007, the Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division (ECG) has managed a database of projects targeting Indigenous Peoples based on project design reports information validated by country directors. Outreach data on Indigenous Peoples is retrieved from ORMS, when available, and from the ECG database. Data on country strategies is based on a desk review.

Figure 1  
**IFAD-funded projects targeting Indigenous and Tribal Peoples and ethnic minorities by number of projects per country and average percentage of Indigenous Peoples as a target group by project**

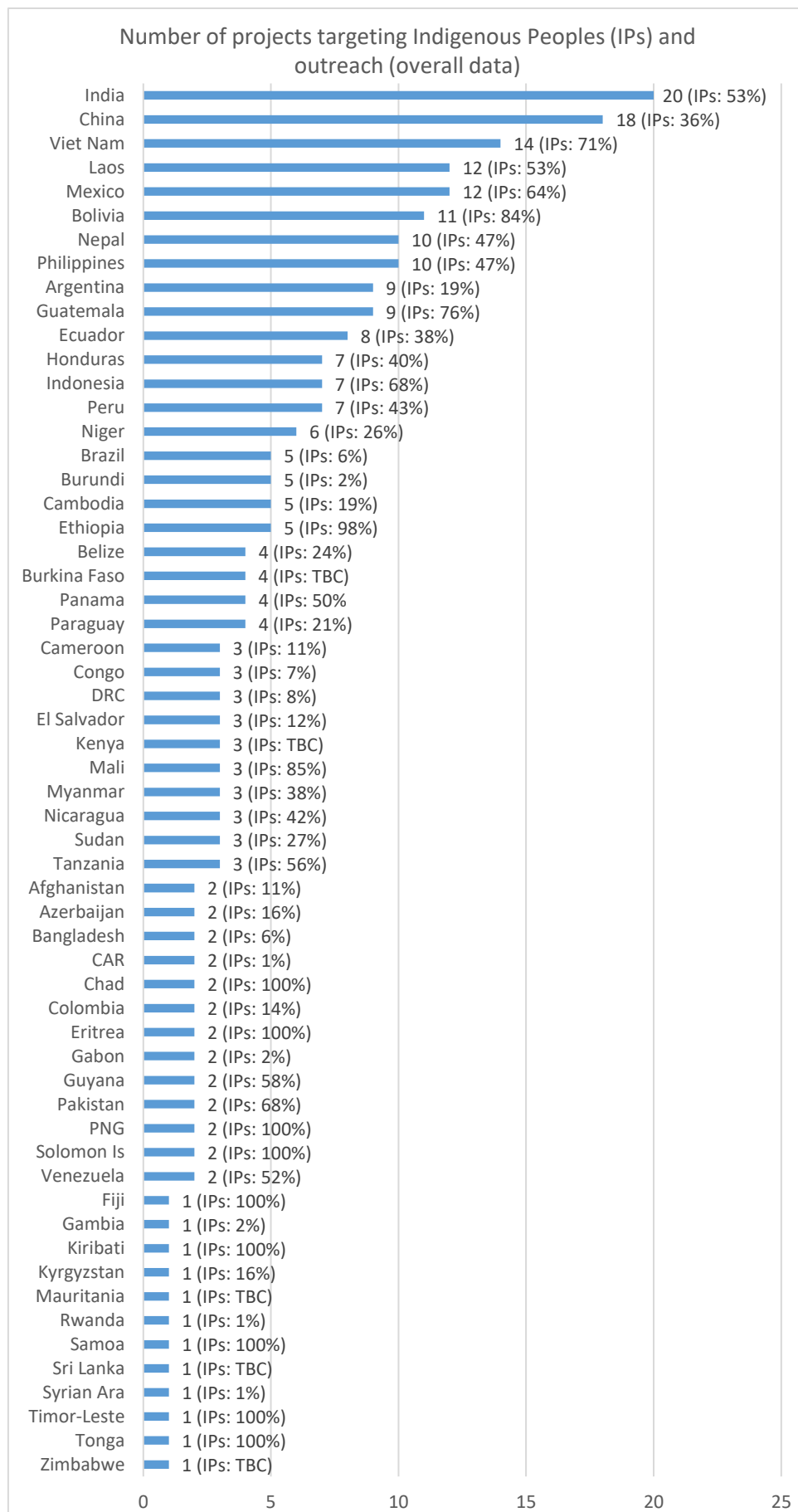


Chart 1  
**Indigenous and Tribal Peoples and ethnic minorities are targeted in around one third of IFAD-funded projects approved from 2010 to 2021**

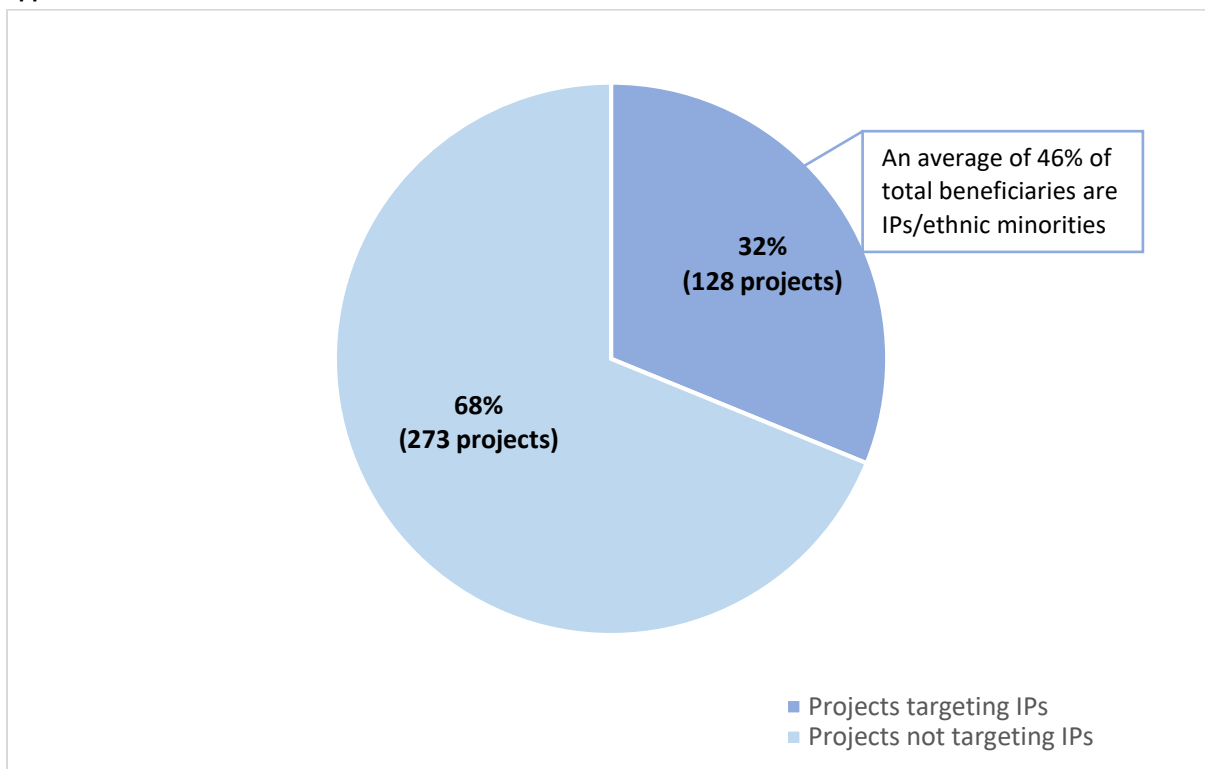


Chart 2  
**COSOPs and country strategy notes (CSNs).** Of the COSOPs and CSNs approved between 2010 and 2021, 39 per cent address Indigenous and Tribal Peoples and ethnic minorities' issues

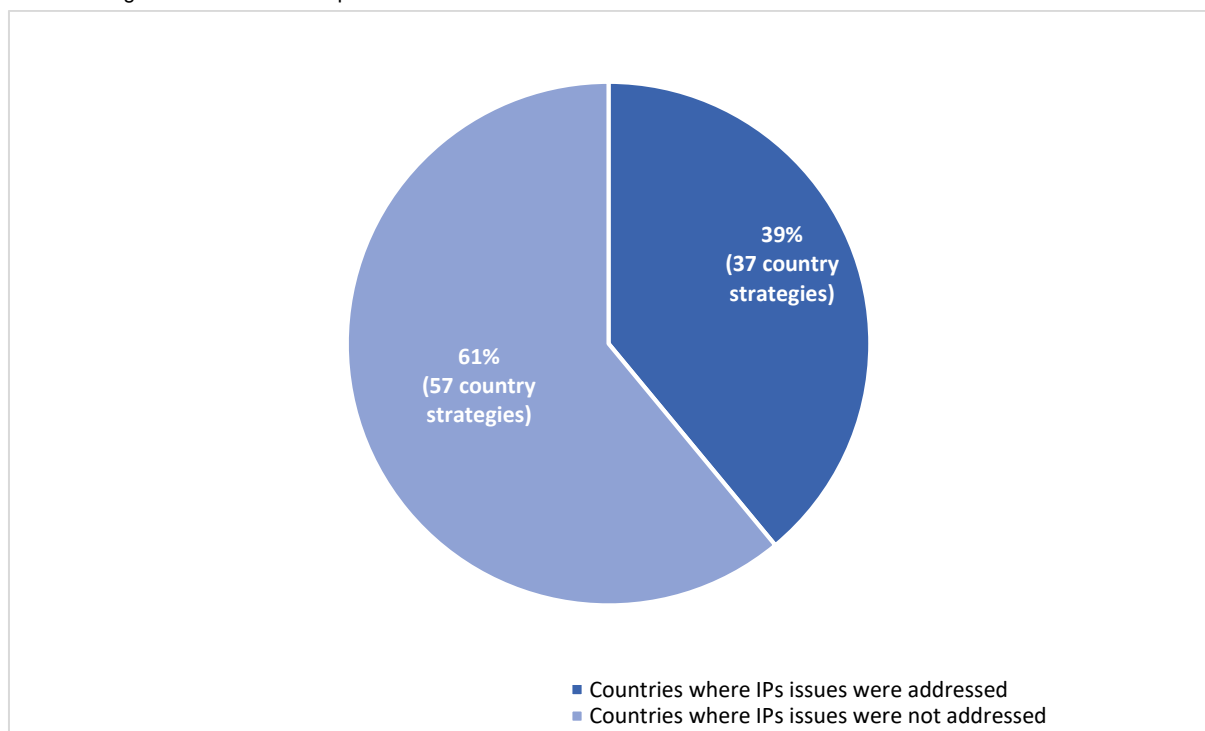


Figure 2  
**Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility funded grant projects (US\$20,000 to US\$50,000 each) over five cycles (2007–2018)**

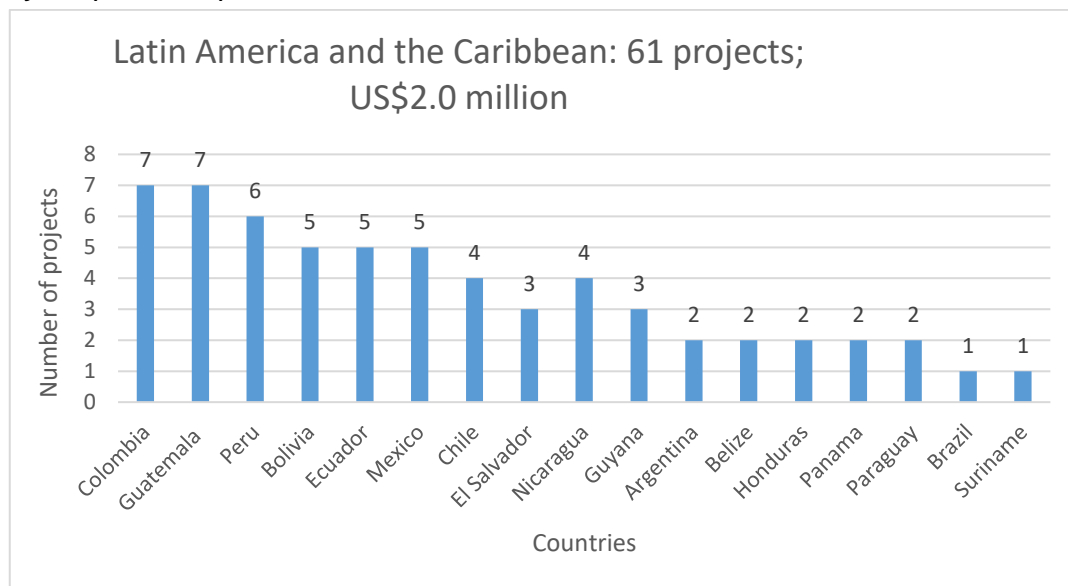


Figure 3  
**Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility funded grant projects (US\$20,000 to US\$50,000 each) over five cycles (2007–2018)**

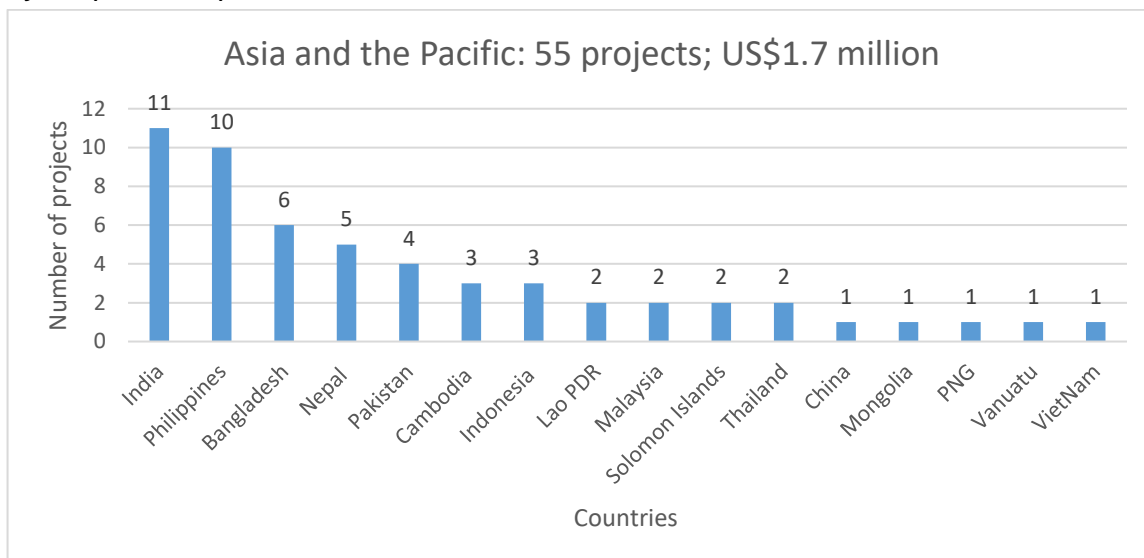
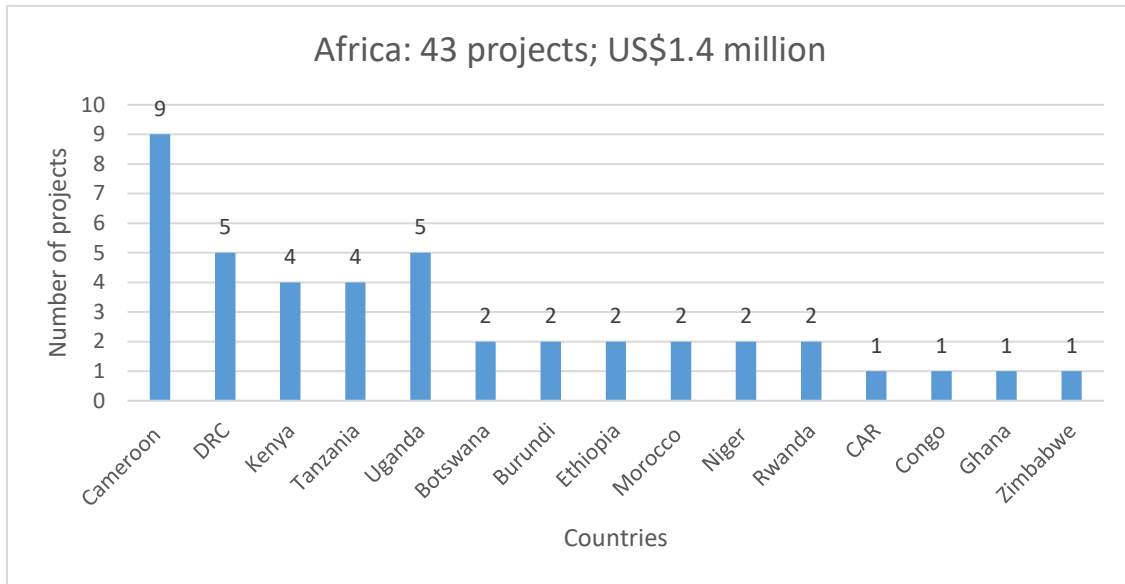


Figure 4  
**Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility funded grant projects (US\$20,000 to US\$50,000 each) over five cycles (2007–2018)**



## Good practices and lessons learned

### I. Indigenous Peoples' collective rights to lands, territories and natural resources in IFAD-funded projects

1. An analysis of IFAD's portfolio between 2012 and 2016 shows that 134 projects include tenure security measures, featuring 58 developing countries. These 134 projects are made up of 118 loans and 16 grant-financed projects – almost 30 per cent of all IFAD loans in the period under review. The financial investment in tenure security of these projects amounts to about US\$317 million, of which US\$177 million (56 per cent) is IFAD's direct financing. Out of these 134 projects, 57 (42 per cent) include Indigenous Peoples as part of their target groups. The analysis further shows that out of the 57 projects, about 30 (53 per cent) specifically support Indigenous Peoples' collective land rights, mainly in Asia and Latin America. This support is provided through multiple and complementary perspectives. For example, in India, the Orissa Tribal Development Project (OTDP) and the Odisha Tribal Empowerment and Livelihood Programme (OTELP) focused on securing land titles of tribal households through the regularization of tribal lands, revitalization of traditional tenancy systems and implementation of laws and regulations such as the Forest Rights Act. OTELP supported securing 74 community titles under this act. In the Philippines, the Second Cordillera Highland Agricultural Resource Management Project (CHARMP) implemented in 82 *barangays* secured collective land rights for Indigenous Peoples, who represented 90 per cent of the target population. For more information on case studies on the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Chad and Nepal, and IPAF-funded projects in Africa, see the [Indigenous Peoples' collective rights to lands, territories and natural resources](#) publication.
2. In addition to being a basic human right of the people living on those territories and relying on local resources for their livelihoods, secure collective land rights have proven to be key to economic development and a means to reduce financial risk to investments. However, major challenges persist. Although individual land titling has been promoted in many countries, most states have been reluctant to recognize collective forms of land ownership for Indigenous Peoples. Legally, the situation differs greatly from one country to another, even in the same region. Thus, approaches and actions aimed at securing Indigenous Peoples' collective rights over territories and resources need to be flexible, tailored to the specific contexts, and planned in close consultation with Indigenous Peoples and their institutions. Some of the major lessons learned are as follows:
  - The recognition of Indigenous Peoples' collective rights on lands, territories and resources is a pathway to poverty reduction and sustainable development.
  - The principle of FPIC (see part II below for details) must be embedded within every initiative to secure collective land rights. Securing access to and official titling of Indigenous Peoples' territories should be sustained by complementary actions, such as: collective land-use planning and management of natural resources; income generating opportunities; and capacity-building. Experiences in India and the Philippines have shown that these approaches are more likely to be sustainable when implemented as part of a long-term strategy.
  - Indigenous Peoples' collective land rights are inseparable from their right to food, as Indigenous Peoples rely on land and related resources for their food security and livelihoods. In this context, IFAD has put food and nutrition

security at the heart of all of its operations, promoting indigenous farming systems, encouraging an integrated approach to improving nutrition and fostering the resilience of indigenous food systems.

- Access to information and capacity-building on collective rights to land, territories and resources must be supported, in order for Indigenous Peoples to claim their rights. In fact, the challenge that they often face is limited access to information on their rights, and limited capacity to engage in legal processes to secure access to and titling of their traditional territories.
  - Indigenous Peoples' distinctive livelihoods and traditional ecological knowledge contribute significantly to low-carbon sustainable development, biodiversity conservation and genetic diversity. However, climate change projects may create barriers to indigenous land ownership if implemented on their territories without undertaking consultations to ensure FPIC of the communities. This is why the participation of Indigenous Peoples in decision-making is crucial to tackle climate change in a manner that is consistent with human rights obligations.
  - IFAD's approach to ensure equal participation of both women and men in project activities at the village level has greatly improved women's participation in decision-making processes related to collective use and management of land and resources. Experience has shown that women's active participation in community processes such as watershed and development plans, and community and biodiversity maps, have highly influenced the outcomes of these processes.
  - Similarly, it is important to ensure the inclusion of indigenous youth in the process of access to and protection of collective land rights. The use of intergenerational approaches at community level has demonstrated success in engaging different generations in the collective planning of their traditional territories, fostering community cohesion and the inter-generational exchange of knowledge between elders and youth, and promoting joint learning among different stakeholders.
3. IFAD will continue to provide technical and legal support to securing Indigenous Peoples' collective land rights, and to promote capacity-building, knowledge-sharing and the exchange of experiences and good practices. Direct funding to Indigenous Peoples' organizations through IPAF will continue to ensure support to Indigenous Peoples' own initiatives for collective land rights and sustainable development. At the policy level, IFAD will maintain close dialogue with national governments to facilitate the adoption of existing laws and regulations to secure the access of Indigenous Peoples to their rights regarding lands, territories and resources.

## **II. Free, prior and informed consent in IFAD funded projects**

4. **FPIC** is the right to self-determination of Indigenous Peoples as recognized in the UNDRIP. Article 23 of the UNDRIP states that Indigenous Peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, Indigenous Peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions. At IFAD, FPIC is applied as an operational instrument that empowers local and Indigenous Peoples' communities, ensuring mutual respect and full and effective participation in decision-making on proposed investments that may affect their rights, their access to lands, territories and resources, and their livelihoods. FPIC is implemented as an iterative process, solicited through consultations in good faith with the representative institutions endorsed by communities. IFAD is the first IFI to adopt FPIC as an operational



principle in its Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples (2009) and as a criterion for project approval. IFAD-funded projects and programmes are people-centred and rarely finance large-scale infrastructure. For IFAD, therefore, FPIC is not simply a safeguard principle; rather it is a proactive approach to identify development pathways with local communities.

5. IFAD has developed a [“How to do note: Seeking, free, prior and informed consent in IFAD investment projects”](#) guiding the design and implementation of projects with the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and following a people-centred approach.
6. The Fund has also established several instruments to ensure that Indigenous Peoples are part of the decision-making process. These include: (i) IPFI; (iii) consultations in the preparation of COSOPs; (ii) the strong participatory approach and community-driven development in IFAD-funded projects; and (iv) the IPAF.

### **Free, prior and informed consent in action**

7. Through Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) supplementary funds, IFAD is conducting a series of pilots whereby it supports incorporation of Indigenous Peoples’ priorities, perspectives and solutions by hiring indigenous experts to lead on the design of projects integrating climate finance and implementing the FPIC process. In the course of 2022 alone, seven new projects cofinanced by GCF and the Global Environment Facility in Belize, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico (2) and Viet Nam were designed in areas home to Indigenous Peoples requiring technical assistance, which was provided by indigenous experts who joined the design missions starting from the early design phase.
8. **Resilient Rural Belize (Be-Resilient) project.** As a small island developing state in the Caribbean hurricane belt, Belize is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. While the most extreme and visible effect is an increased intensity of tropical storms and hurricanes, climate change also manifests itself through increased droughts, flooding and significant rainfall pattern variations. Smallholder farmers and Indigenous Peoples are among the most vulnerable, as they suffer devastating losses, most dramatically in the occurrence of an extreme event, but similarly through the impacts of persistent and unpredictable seasonal variations.
9. The project has been designed to introduce climate-resilient agricultural practices that will enable smallholder farmers and Indigenous Peoples to engage in sustainable production and gain improved market access for their produce, even under the stress of climate change and extreme climatic events, thereby increasing their economic, social and environmental resilience. It proposes a comprehensive climate-resilient approach to reduce exposure to climate and economic shocks by promoting climate-resilient agricultural production, investing in climate-proof infrastructure, supporting producer associations and strengthening value chains to establish smallholder farmers as reliable and competitive suppliers of domestic produce in Belize for an expanding market for fruit and vegetables.
10. During the design phase of the Be-Resilient project, an Indigenous Peoples planning framework was prepared, taking into consideration how FPIC would be sought during implementation. During the implementation phase, FPIC is being sought before any activity is undertaken, on the basis of their own independent deliberations and based on full and effective participation of their communities in line with IFAD and GCF policies and safeguards.
11. The plans follow a series of consultations in which Indigenous Peoples’ communities detail actions related to the use of communal lands and resources. For instance, communities discuss elements of the construction of facilities on communal lands, including: specific location, plans for regulating the use of the site and the facility

during and after the life of the project, and measures to prevent or mitigate any potential adverse effects. The plans also identify actions to improve the livelihoods of the communities and support Indigenous Peoples' engagement in the conservation and sustainable management of the natural resources on which they depend.

12. **Second Cordillera Highland Agricultural Resource Management Project (CHAMP)**. In the Philippines, CHAMP and its scaling up phase applied a participatory and demand-driven approach in line with the UNDRIP. [The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples of the Philippines](#) had an active role in implementing the project and oversaw the revised guidelines on FPIC and related processes.
13. The aim of the project was to reduce poverty and improve the livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples living in farming communities in the mountainous project area. The project supported the delineation of ancestral domains and the facilitation of boundary conflict resolution, along with the issuance of formal land titles (certificates of ancestral domain and ancestral land titles), with the final aim of strengthening land-use planning and improving security of tenure. The project also introduced a number of new approaches to the Cordillera Administrative Region, such as the ancestral domain sustainable development and protection plan, the covenant approach to reforestation and agroforestry farmer field schools, and the participatory monitoring approach.
14. The activities implemented through the FPIC process helped reduce the poverty of almost 72,500 indigenous families, while improving their food security and nutrition, strengthening the resilience of their farming systems to climate change, and empowering indigenous women. More specifically:
  - Bonded to their land and natural resources through the sacred [Green Covenant](#) scheme, which builds on their traditions, Indigenous Peoples reforested almost 8,500 hectares of land and established about 5,500 hectares of agroforestry plots.
  - More than 28,000 people engaged in community-based co-learning processes through 176 agroforestry farmer field schools.
  - The commercialization of Indigenous Peoples' products was promoted through value chain development and market linkages supported by indigenous knowledge systems and practices. Access to markets increased through agroecological production, produce transformation, farm-to-market roads and community-based labelling of products as environmentally safe.
  - A payment for ecosystem services scheme in Mt. Kalatungan was initiated in 2014 in response to the flooding caused by Typhoon Sendong in 2011. The multi-stakeholder initiative was set up to reforest critical sub-watersheds of the Cagayan de Oro river basin. More than 1,600 hectares were allotted for reforestation. The Miarayon, Lapok, Lirongan, Tinaytayan Talaandig Tribal Association (MILALITTRA) from Talakag Bukidnon provides ecosystem services such as water, clean air, food supply, urban safety and beautiful landscapes by growing and maintaining native tree species in the forests of Mt. Kalatungan. Participatory policy dialogue mechanisms contributed to the institutionalization of multi-stakeholder governance approaches and recognition of the value of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and practices.

### Lessons learned

15. **Agency is key.** FPIC is a tool to increase the agency of Indigenous Peoples, leaving behind the “beneficiary” type of engagement and instead enhancing community ownership of the investments, its results and sustainability. It strengthens partnership between local communities, government institutions and financing organizations. Indigenous Peoples have their own unique organizations, traditions and ways of life. However, development projects can sometimes fail to take this into account. FPIC enables dialogue and mutual recognition between development agencies and Indigenous Peoples.
16. **Free, prior and informed consent improves development effectiveness, relevance and quality of investments.** FPIC minimizes operational and fiduciary risks for governments, companies or donors implementing projects in areas home to Indigenous Peoples. In recognizing land, resources, rights and livelihood of the local communities, FPIC minimizes or prevents conflicts while supporting Indigenous Peoples’ right to self-driven development.
17. **Free, prior and informed consent is a process for mutual learning and social inclusion.** Enabling dialogue to seek FPIC creates spaces where Indigenous Peoples can express their worldviews and define the type of development interventions they want to see in their communities. It helps recognize Indigenous Peoples’ knowledge and find solutions to the challenges they face.
18. **Free, prior and informed consent is relevant in climate financing.** Indigenous Peoples are agents of environmental conservation and climate action. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report in 2019, agricultural practices that include indigenous and local knowledge can contribute to overcoming the combined challenges of climate change, food security, biodiversity conservation, and combating desertification and land degradation.
19. With reference to experiences and lessons learned on land tenure and FPIC from other organizations, see appendix VII.

## **IFAD milestones related to Indigenous Peoples**

- 2022 The Updated IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples is approved by the IFAD Executive Board
- 2021 During COP26, in the IFAD pavilion, five events are organized addressing Indigenous Peoples' issues
- 2021 Fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum takes place at IFAD. Overall theme: "The value of indigenous food systems: resilience in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic"
- 2021 The first editions of the IFAD Indigenous Peoples' Awards and the Indigenous Peoples' week are held as part of the Fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD
- 2021 IFAD updates its Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) with a specific standard on Indigenous Peoples and the How To Do Note: Seeking Free, Prior and Informed Consent in IFAD investment projects.
- 2020 IFAD President appoints, for the first time, the Associate Vice-President of the External Relations and Governance Department as IFAD Champion on Indigenous Peoples
- 2020 IFAD organizes a side event on partnering with Indigenous Peoples during the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
- 2019 Fourth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD. Overall theme: "Promoting Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and innovation for climate resilience and sustainable development"
- 2019 IFAD Policy Brief "Partnering with Indigenous Peoples for the SDGs"
- 2018 Fifth IPAF call for proposals launched: 702 project proposals submitted by Indigenous Peoples' communities and their organizations
- 2017 Third global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples Forum at IFAD. Overall theme: "Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems and Sustainable Livelihoods"
- 2017 Inauguration of the Indigenous Peoples' Place at IFAD
- 2017 Revised IFAD's Results and Impact Management System (RIMS) framework includes data disaggregation in respect of Indigenous Peoples and specific indicators at output and outcome levels
- 2016 IFAD co-hosting with FAO and ILC the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues
- 2015 Second global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD. Overall theme: "Indigenous Peoples food systems and sustainable livelihoods"
- 2015 IFAD's support to policy engagement in six countries (Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Myanmar, Nepal, Paraguay and Tanzania)
- 2014 IFAD's President addressing the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

- 2013 First global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD in conjunction with IFAD Governing Council
- 2011 Establishment of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD
- 2009 Approval of IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples by IFAD Executive Board
- 2008 Preliminary consultation with Indigenous Peoples on IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples
- 2006 Recruitment of a Coordinator for Indigenous and Tribal Issues
- 2006 IFAD hosts the 2006 IASG meeting on Development with Identity
- 2006 Agreement between the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and IFAD on the transfer of the Grants Facility for Indigenous Peoples (Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility)
- 2006 Internal Policy Forum (with participation of UNPFII chair and indigenous experts) agreed to develop specific principles of engagement with Indigenous Peoples (stressing inclusiveness, specificity, flexibility and a demand-driven approach)
- 2005 IFAD's Assistant President, External Affairs Department, placed on special assignment for indigenous issues
- 2003 Round-table discussion on Indigenous Peoples and sustainable development on the occasion of the twenty-fifth Anniversary Session of IFAD's Governing Council
- 2002 Bali preparatory conference for the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development; marks the beginning of IFAD's partnership with a coalition of Indigenous Peoples worldwide
- 2004 First IFAD grant to UNPFII Secretariat
- 1992 Establishment of the Regional Programme in Support of Indigenous Peoples in the Amazon Basin (PRAIA) to support demand-driven small-scale Indigenous Peoples' initiatives in the Amazon (operating until 2007)
- 1984 First loan exclusively focused on Indigenous Peoples: Rural Development Programme for the Guaymi Communities in Panama
- 1979 First loan for Indigenous Peoples: Omasuyos-Los Andes Rural Development Project in Bolivia
- 1978 IFAD begins operations

## The Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD

IPFI was established in 2011 as a permanent process of consultation and dialogue between representatives of Indigenous Peoples' institutions and organizations, IFAD and governments. The global meeting of the Forum convenes every second February in conjunction with the Governing Council of IFAD, the Fund's main decision-making body. A series of regional consultations lead up to each global meeting, ensuring that the Forum reflects the diversity of perspectives and recommendations gathered from Indigenous Peoples around the world.

The overall process is guided by a steering committee composed of representatives of Indigenous Peoples' organizations from the different regions, representatives of indigenous youth (one per region), the IPAF board, the UNPFII indigenous youth representatives and IFAD. A unique process within the United Nations system, the Forum aims to improve IFAD's accountability, enhance its development effectiveness and exercise its leadership among development organizations. It enables participants to assess IFAD's engagement with Indigenous Peoples, consult on rural development and poverty reduction, and promote the participation of Indigenous Peoples' organizations in IFAD's operations at the country, regional and international levels. These activities help IFAD to implement its Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples and translate the Policy's principles into action on the ground.

After the **2011** Workshop Establishing an IPFI, Indigenous Peoples were engaged through the process of the forum in 29 regional and subregional consultations during preparations for the fifth global meeting of IPFI, which has been held every other year since 2013. In the regional consultations, about 800 participating Indigenous Peoples elected delegates to represent them at global meetings of IPFI, who numbered about 300 in the five global meetings. Overall IPFI has engaged representatives from more than 60 countries. In 2020, due to the pandemic, consultations were held virtually, which provided an opportunity to broaden the participation of Indigenous Peoples, bringing together over 540 representatives of Indigenous Peoples' organizations, institutions and communities; representatives from IFAD-funded projects; members of UNPFII; partners of IPAF and participants from IPAF-funded projects; IFAD staff; and development partners (as observers).

UNPFII has repeatedly recognized the establishment of an indigenous forum as a good practice and recommended that other United Nations entities should follow IFAD in its experience of establishing a genuine dialogue with Indigenous Peoples. Although IFAD has made substantive progress at the international and regional levels, dialogue with Indigenous Peoples at country level needs to be improved.

IPFI has been a key instrument to promote participation of Indigenous Peoples at different stages within IFAD's operations. Together with the synthesis of deliberations and its presentation to the Governing Council, representatives of Indigenous Peoples and IFAD staff and managers agree upon regional action plans for the next two years, which are reviewed at midterm of implementation to maintain the dialogue. At every global meeting of IPFI, a progress report of IFAD's engagement with Indigenous Peoples is prepared by an independent consultant to provide an update on IFAD's work with Indigenous Peoples in terms of the main trends observed, results achieved and activities implemented during the course of the biennium based on the agreed regional plan of actions.

### What have we learnt?

- Through the IPFI process, a strong and trusting relationship between IFAD and the Indigenous Peoples' global movement has flourished. This allows the promotion of inclusive, resilient and sustainable rural economies and food systems

within IFAD's mandate. An inclusive engagement approach whereby Indigenous Peoples are key partners of development and not mere beneficiaries has been championed.

- The IPFI network at global, regional, country and grass-roots level, including IPAF partners, has increased the direct participation of Indigenous Peoples at all levels. From the international arena to project level, the network has facilitated policy engagement, participatory designs and M&E systems, the dissemination of the IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples, the documentation of good practices and the involvement of Indigenous experts to support co-creation of development initiatives from the very outset of project design.
- The strengthened partnership with Indigenous Peoples through IPFI has led IFAD to understand and champion Indigenous Peoples' issues and include them in corporate processes such as replenishment Consultations and drafting of the Strategic Framework 2016-2025. During the 2021 Food Systems Summit and key events, IFAD, together with RBAs, played an important role in ensuring full and effective participation and contribution of Indigenous Peoples. During the COP26, IFAD supported the participation of Indigenous Peoples' representatives, and particularly youth, to make their voices heard in IFAD's pavilion and beyond. At the country level, the trusting partnership with Indigenous Peoples and organizations supporting Indigenous Peoples, such as IWGIA, and United Nations agencies, has resulted in successful country policy engagement financially supported by IFAD in 10 countries, for which details are provided in appendix II.

## The Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility

In June 2006, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) of the World Bank Group and IFAD signed a letter of agreement on the transfer of the Grants Facility for Indigenous Peoples (GFIP), renaming it the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (IPAF). The World Bank transferred resources remaining in the previous programme in the amount of US\$415,000, and a contribution of US\$625,000 was earmarked for the Facility by Norway.

In September 2006, IFAD's Executive Board approved the transfer of the Facility and its governance structure, as described below. In cooperation with the World Bank and the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), IFAD has since set up arrangements for the workings of the IPAF board, composed largely of Indigenous Peoples' leaders who provide strategic guidance and select the best proposals for funding.

The added value in having established the Facility at IFAD lies in the following strategic innovative elements:

- IPAF is a new financial instrument for IFAD whereby the Fund can build a direct partnership with Indigenous Peoples' communities and grass-roots organizations, who design and implement small development projects based on their own values and priorities; and
- IPAF is a listening and learning instrument on Indigenous Peoples' needs, proposed solutions and innovations. It can scout for innovations and pilot projects to open the way for larger projects to be funded through IFAD's loans and grants.

**Implementation.** The Facility supports the aspirations of Indigenous and Tribal peoples through small grants ranging from US\$20,000 to an initial maximum amount of US\$30,000 that has increased over the years to reach US\$70,000 for the sixth IPAF cycle (2022-2026). Designed and implemented by Indigenous Peoples' communities and their organizations, IPAF projects build on Indigenous Peoples' culture, identity, knowledge and natural resources to foster their self-driven development within the framework of UNDRIP.

**Governance.** At the global level, the Facility is currently managed by a senior technical specialist on Indigenous Peoples and Tribal issues in IFAD's Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division (ECG), and governed by a board responsible for operations and directions. The board, formed by a majority of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' leaders, reviews and makes final recommendations on grant awards.

The IPAF board comprises:

- Four Indigenous Peoples' leaders respectively from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia;
- A representative of UNPFII; and
- A representative of IFAD.

In 2011, IPAF was decentralized at the regional level and it is currently co-managed by three Indigenous Peoples' organizations: the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI), for Latin America and the Caribbean; the Samburu Women Trust (SWT), for Africa; and the Tebtebba Foundation, for Asia and the Pacific.<sup>36</sup>

Funds are allocated following a call for proposals. All eligible applications are reviewed and rated according to project relevance, feasibility, institutional capacity and

<sup>36</sup> FIMI and Tebtebba have been IPAF co-managers in their respective regions since 2011 while for the African region, the Mainyoto Pastoralists Development Organization (MPIDO), as IPAF co-manager during the third IPAF cycle (2011-2014), was replaced in 2014 by Kivulini Trust and by SWT in 2017.



institutional credibility. In its final decision, the IPAF board ensures a balance of allocation in terms of geographic distribution and gender.

**IPAF's resources.** Since 2007 IPAF has mobilized around US\$12.5 million from IFAD, the World Bank, Governments (Canada, Finland, Italy, Norway and Sweden), foundations (Packard Foundation, Tamalpais, Christensen Funds, Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean) and NGOs (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs).

In response to IFAD's five calls for proposals (2007, 2008, 2011, 2015 and 2018), Indigenous Peoples' communities and organizations in 90 countries submitted more than 4,200 applications. In all, in the first five cycles, 159 projects were financed in more than 45 countries worldwide, for a total of around US\$5.1 million. The sixth IPAF cycle (2022-2026) is financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The resources initially available for grant financing under this call for proposals total US\$2.1million. It is therefore expected that the 2022 IPAF cycle will initially finance around 30 projects in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

After 14 years of activities, IPAF has acquired a wealth of knowledge rooted in collective action and efforts. Outlined below are a few highlights of these learnings and good practices, recognizing that there is still a long path ahead and that their effectiveness lies in processes and people:

- Capacity-building and self-determined development can be considerably improved by entrusting indigenous communities with the direct management of resources and funds. Small amounts for small communities can make a big difference, particularly in building capacities and strengthening institutions and organizations
- IPAF project approaches are broad and inclusive, multisectoral and integrated. In fact, projects are guided by a holistic vision in which approaches encompass, combine and connect various issues and dimensions. For example, projects that promote livelihood opportunities, economic development and food security also aim to protect indigenous rights, biodiversity, natural resources, the environment and climate, as well as to facilitate participation in decision-making processes and social inclusion.
- IPAF-funded projects promote ancestral techniques and native assets in a community-based economy, enhancing the livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and offering sustainable solutions to biodiversity conservation and natural resource management.
- IPAF experiences enable IFAD to sharpen its sensitivity to the issues faced by Indigenous Peoples and to learn lessons on what works in other projects. As a matter of fact, in some cases IPAF-funded projects play an important role during the design of IFAD investments, with project staff participating in consultation and helping define the priorities and solutions proposed by the Indigenous Peoples communities.
- The microprojects financed under IPAF can contribute to an increased awareness of Indigenous Peoples' rights and cultural identity and strengthened Indigenous Peoples' institutions, and can create income-generating activities by building on their assets.
- The involvement and active participation of women in project activities contribute to reducing gender inequality in the communities and promote recognition of the traditional mechanisms of action that women implement for the life and well-being of their communities. Initiatives fostering production and access to markets through indigenous practices

can help improve living conditions in communities, especially in terms of food and nutrition security.

- IPAF has been a flexible instrument in its capacity to adapt to the needs of different institutions at varying stages of development and within different contexts. This flexibility means that the programme can respond to needs that are usually not addressed by other partners or programmes.

**IPAF 2022 call for proposals.** The 6<sup>th</sup> IPAF cycle (2022-2026) will focus on supporting Indigenous Peoples in enhancing the resilience of the ecosystems in which they live and depend upon for their livelihoods and in proposing innovative solutions for advancing Indigenous Peoples' conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity for adaptation and resilience to climate change.

While financing microprojects is IPAF's main objective, learning about needs and solutions as assessed by indigenous organizations and communities, and scouting for innovations, is another important pillar of the Facility.

Accordingly, researches on project proposals received by the different IPAF offer an overview of the solutions to rural poverty and sectors of intervention as proposed by Indigenous Peoples' communities and their organizations, these studies are then circulated among IFAD staff seeking for insights on engagement with Indigenous Peoples.

**The way forward.** Based on lessons learned during the assessments of 14 years of implementation of the Facility, and suggestions from regional co-managers and implementing organizations, for the 6th IPAF Cycle the IPAF board decided to increase the ceiling of the microgrants to US\$70,000 (previously US\$50,000) and extend the implementation period to three years from the previous two years. This would promote greater sustainability among microprojects, which would be better rooted in the communities.

As IPAF evolves, increasing emphasis will be put on capturing innovations and knowledge in order to scale up best practices through mainstreaming in IFAD's country programmes.

## Country policy dialogues

In 2014, IFAD supported the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly, known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) with a grant of USD 900,000. Half of the resources were required to sponsor the participation of Indigenous Peoples at the WCIP and the rest was used to support the implementation of the WCIP Outcome Document<sup>37</sup>. In partnership with the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), the UNPFII Secretariat, and the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues (IASG), IFAD supported policy engagement between Indigenous Peoples, governments and UN Country Teams in ten countries for developing national action plans to implement the outcome document of the WCIP and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Country policy dialogues held between 2016 and 2019 to follow up on commitments expressed by States in the Outcome Document were supported in **Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Myanmar, Nepal, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Tanzania, Uganda**<sup>38</sup> in partnership with UNDESA, IASG, FILAC, ILC and UN Country Teams.

The objective of the dialogues aimed at: a) enhancing the capacity of Indigenous Peoples in 10 countries to engage in constructive policy dialogues with States and UN Country Teams with a view to developing strategies and initiatives to improve their well-being, economic and social status, and b) enhancing the capacity of national governmental institutions on Indigenous Peoples rights and agree on possible actions and measures needed for ensuring the protection and the respect of Indigenous Peoples rights.

Countries were selected according to the following criteria:

- The significance of their indigenous population and interest of Indigenous Peoples organizations in engaging policy dialogues
- A demonstrated interest by governments in engaging in a policy dialogue with Indigenous Peoples on the implementation of the UNDRIP and outcome of the WCIP
- The UN Country Teams' openness to and interests in the idea of multi stakeholders policy dialogues on Indigenous Peoples.

Key features of the policy dialogues included:

- Leadership by Indigenous Peoples' organisations/networks in the country in cooperation with other relevant international & national institutions (UN Country Teams)
- Tailored to the specific national context
- Responded to the demands and aspirations expressed by Indigenous Peoples in the country
- Building on partnerships established among different institutions and organizations to advance implementation of IPs rights

All policy engagement processes identified and focused on regulatory, policy, or planning issues of common interest to States and Indigenous Peoples and sought to establish or

<sup>37</sup> World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/about-us/world-conference.html>

<sup>38</sup> Partner indigenous peoples' organizations at the country level: CADPI& CCNIS CADPI &FAPI COONAPIP DGPA NHRC OKANI LAHURNIP CHRO Pacto de Unidad UOBDU

advance in creating permanent mechanisms of consultation between Indigenous Peoples and relevant state institutions as well as other relevant stake holders (private sector).

Below is a short summary of the key results of the policy country dialogues:

The policy engagement processes have become important precedents in the three regions (LAC, Africa and Asia):

- Increased engagement: Indigenous Peoples and governments were able to engage in a dialogue on the operationalization of Indigenous Peoples' rights at the national level;
- Establishment of mechanisms of articulation in the countries between Indigenous Peoples & State institutions and among the Indigenous Peoples own organizations;
- Involvement of relevant ministries contributed to raising awareness among other relevant governmental departments on the issue of Indigenous Peoples;
- Strategic assessments of the situation and opportunities for participation of Indigenous Peoples in decision-making was carried out in collaboration with relevant governmental or UN institutions;
- Strengthened dialogue and cooperation between Indigenous Peoples and relevant institutions, National Human Rights Commissions, Civil Society Organizations, UN Country Teams;
- Involvement of other stakeholders such as the private sector and other non-states actors operating in some of the countries was promoted;
- The first national action plan was launched by the President of El Salvador, which was followed by the approval of a policy in 2019;
- Paraguay developed with Indigenous Peoples guidelines for public policy on Indigenous Peoples;
- In DRC, a global intervention framework on Indigenous Peoples was adopted which was the basis for the current policy submitted to the Senate;
- Strengthened cooperation between Indigenous Peoples and relevant ministries in the country. (Paraguay Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Myanmar: the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs/ Uganda: Ministry of Culture, ...);
- Entry points for Indigenous Peoples participation in decision making identified in Myanmar, Nepal, Tanzania, Cameroon and Uganda;
- Strengthened cooperation between Indigenous Peoples and relevant ministries in the country. (Paraguay Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Myanmar: the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs/ Uganda: Ministry of Culture;
- A follow-up and monitoring process of the agreements was set up in Tanzania, Nepal, Myanmar, Uganda, Cameroon;
- Benchmarks of national implementation of Indigenous Peoples' rights were identified.

### **Lessons Learned**

- In country policy engagements, Indigenous Peoples have to lead their processes with the support of UN and institutions;
- IFAD's resources were instrumental to leverage other organizations' resources. In some countries, it was the first time Indigenous Peoples had resources to conduct dialogues among themselves and with the government;
- IFAD can play a leading role support country policy engagement in partnering strategically with other UN organizations;

- Policy engagement requires long term commitment from donor institutions, Indigenous Peoples, UN Country Teams and IFIs;
- Results achieved are at different level according to the political context of the country, sustainability needs to be ensured;
- Knowledge sharing and experiences among Indigenous Peoples from different countries would help advance their processes.

**The synthesis deliberations of the fourth global meeting of the Indigenous peoples Forum at IFAD (2019) include a recommendation to IFAD to:** *Facilitate policy processes and dialogues at the national and regional levels between Indigenous peoples, governments and the United Nations system to develop action plans or other measures that ensure the promotion and protection of the rights of Indigenous peoples, in accordance with the IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous peoples, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples, the International Labour Organization Convention 169, and the Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous peoples.*

Country Policy Engagement were conducted as part of COSOPs preparation in Cameroon, Colombia, Honduras, Nepal, Peru, Philippines and Tanzania, through consultations with Indigenous Peoples and with the support of indigenous experts who led country dialogue consultations with Indigenous Peoples.

In 2021, a country policy dialogue was conducted in the Philippines to discuss with Indigenous Peoples about successes and challenges on the ground to inform the next Country Strategic and Opportunities Programme (COSOP) on the role that IFAD can play in support of Indigenous Peoples in the country. The forum also sought to generate policy and programme recommendations for the Philippine Government, particularly the Office of the Cabinet Secretary and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP).

In June 2022, as part of its country-level policy engagement activities, IFAD has co-organised a mission to Burundi with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) at the invitation of the Ministry of National Solidarity, Social Affairs, Human Rights and Gender. The mission conducted a series of meetings with several actors at different levels to discuss the situation of the Batwa Indigenous Peoples in the country. The mission also carried out three field visits to Batwa communities in the Communes of Mpanda and Gitega and organized an information-sharing workshop on the involvement of Batwa in projects funded through climate finance. The UN mission delegation was made aware of a draft National Strategy for the Socio-economic Inclusion of the Batwa for sustainable development 2022-2027, developed by the Ministry of National Solidarity, Social Affairs, of Human Rights and Gender as a reference and orientation document for the socio-economic development of the Batwa people, and was invited to submit its contributions and comments on the Strategy to the Director General of the Ministry. In addition, the mission contributed inputs to the UNCT Common Country Assessment (CCA) draft section on Indigenous Peoples. A road map for country-level activities that can be supported by the Inter-Agency Support Group (IASG) on Indigenous Issues is being developed.

## Summary of the synthesis evaluation on IFAD's Engagement with Indigenous Peoples

In 2015, the Independent Office of Evaluation (IOE) conducted [a synthesis evaluation on IFAD's engagement with Indigenous Peoples](#) whose objectives were to: (i) identify lessons and good practices for IFAD's engagement with Indigenous Peoples at the project, country and global levels, with the aim of contributing to IFAD's knowledge base on the topic; and (ii) identify key issues for reflection and make recommendations for IFAD's future engagement with Indigenous Peoples.

The evaluation synthesis covered: (i) IOE evaluations (mostly project and country programme evaluations) conducted between 2002 and 2013 (19 project evaluations and eight country programme evaluations); (ii) selected country strategic opportunities programmes (for 14 countries before and after the development of the IFAD policy on Indigenous Peoples); (iii) project designs after the policy in nine out of the 14 countries for which country strategies are reviewed; and (iv) IFAD's activities at global level. Lessons from other development agencies were also reviewed to complement the findings emerging from the review of IFAD's operations and support.

A summary of the main findings on the IOE Synthesis Evaluation is provided below:

- ✓ IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples is considered to be in line with UNDRIP by UNPFII and by representatives of Indigenous Peoples' organizations;
- ✓ Positive aspects of the policy relate to: (i) its proactive nature rather than focus on safeguards; (ii) its holistic approach and comprehensiveness of the principles of engagement; and (iii) the inclusion of the principle of FPIC, considered to be a step beyond "consultation";
- ✓ The policy was found highly relevant to IFAD's overall corporate strategies and to Indigenous Peoples;
- ✓ The principles of engagement laid out in the policy are consistent with IFAD's emphasis on empowerment and various corporate policies;
- ✓ Investment projects have often taken a geographical targeting approach as a first step, and in most cases the population in project areas includes both indigenous and non-indigenous populations. Caution is necessary to ensure that a primary geographical focus does not diminish the focus on Indigenous Peoples' specific issues such as attachment to land and cultural issues.
- ✓ In investment projects, Indigenous Peoples are often "lumped together" with rural youth and women under the label "vulnerable and marginalized". It is also important that differences between women's roles and positions in the Indigenous Peoples' communities and non-indigenous population are addressed in a culturally sensitive manner.
- ✓ Even when a project was supposed to be based on a participatory and demand driven approach, often it was "menu based", with pre-determined activities that limited the project's capacity to identify and respond to the real priorities of Indigenous Peoples' communities.
- ✓ The available evaluation findings with regard to the extent of Indigenous Peoples' participation during project implementation are mixed.
- ✓ Beyond the project and country levels, the participation of Indigenous Peoples in IFAD's institutional platforms (Indigenous Peoples Forum) and initiatives (IPAF) has been exemplary.
- ✓ There have been good examples of investment projects for empowerment of Indigenous Peoples particularly those pursuing participatory approaches built on indigenous knowledge, skills, culture and traditional values.
- ✓ Through grant financed projects, IFAD's contribution to the empowerment of Indigenous Peoples and their organizations at different levels has been significant.

- ✓ IFAD has made a significant contribution to advocacy on Indigenous Peoples' issues at the global level.

The IOE synthesis evaluation made five recommendations for consideration by IFAD to further strengthen its engagement with Indigenous Peoples are presented below:

### **Strategic level**

- Recommendation 1: Revisit the main objectives and strategies of IPAF. If IFAD intends to continue supporting IPAF in the medium term, opportunities for increasing and stabilizing funding for IPAF need to be explored, including the possibility of mobilizing supplementary financing through IFAD or catalysing direct contributions to IPAF's regional partner organizations by other financiers.

### **Operational level**

- Recommendation 2: Pay greater attention to key project design elements and provide adequate implementation support (especially for investment projects), ensuring effective participation of Indigenous Peoples throughout, supported by a team member with an understanding of and skills in working with Indigenous Peoples' issues.
- Recommendation 3: Provide guidance on how FPIC can be best operationalized. Clarification is needed on implementation of the FPIC.

### **Staff awareness and understanding**

- Recommendation 4: Enhance staff understanding of Indigenous Peoples' issues.

### **Knowledge management**

- Recommendation 5: Strengthen knowledge management, taking advantage of IFAD's substantial experience, lessons and knowledge on engagement with Indigenous Peoples.

## Recommendations of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to IFAD<sup>39</sup>

### Recommendations of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to IFAD during its Twenty-First Session (2022)<sup>40</sup>

1. The Permanent Forum takes note of the sixth call for proposals of the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility of IFAD, which is focused on advancing indigenous peoples' biodiversity conservation and sustainable management for adaptation and resilience to climate change. The Permanent Forum urges IFAD to facilitate direct access to climate financing to indigenous peoples' communities and organizations through the Facility and the Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme, and encourages Governments and donors to support those initiatives.
2. The Permanent Forum encourages IFAD to continue its efforts in operationalizing the principle of free, prior and informed consent in its investments, including through the engagement of indigenous experts in project delivery teams.
3. The Permanent Forum requests the International Labour Organization, IFAD and the United Nations Development Programme to prepare a study, in collaboration with indigenous peoples, summarizing the experience of implementing programmes for indigenous peoples on socioeconomic development, focussing on best practices in entrepreneurship and creative industries, and to present it to the Permanent Forum at its twenty-third session, to be held in 2024.

### Previous recommendations of the UNPFII<sup>41</sup>

Paragraph Number	Addressee	Session	Area of Work	Status of Implementation
83	IFAD	17	indicators, data disaggregation	Partially implemented
<p><b>Full Text:</b> <i>The Permanent Forum congratulates the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for its ongoing work with indigenous peoples, including the operationalization of free, prior and informed consent in its funded projects, support for national policy dialogues among indigenous peoples, governments and United Nations country teams and adoption of data disaggregation for indigenous peoples in its revised Results and Impact Management System. The Forum encourages the Fund to develop specific indicators on the well-being of indigenous peoples, to be applied in its funded projects. The Forum urges IFAD to ensure that its high standards and safeguards are applied to its co-funded projects initiated by institutions that invest in large infrastructure.</i></p>				
28	Member States, United Nations agencies, Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, FAO, IFAD and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	14	Social development, Culture, Environment	Not accomplished yet
<p><b>Summary of Recommendation:</b> <i>The Forum encourages Member States to develop social policies that will enhance the production of indigenous peoples' traditional foods and promote the restoration or recovery of lost drought-resistant indigenous food varieties to ensure food security. The Forum recommends that Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, as well as UN agencies such as FAO, IFAD and OCHA, establish a committee aimed at preventing food crises in the sub-Saharan region where indigenous peoples reside.</i></p>				

<sup>39</sup> UNPFII Recommendations Database:

[https://esa.un.org/unpfiiidata/UNPFII\\_Recommendations\\_Database\\_list.asp](https://esa.un.org/unpfiiidata/UNPFII_Recommendations_Database_list.asp)

<sup>40</sup> Final Report of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2022):

<https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=E%2F2022%2F43&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>

<sup>41</sup> For detailed information on IFAD's implementation of UNPFII recommendations, please access:

[https://esa.un.org/unpfiiidata/UNPFII\\_Recommendations\\_Database\\_list.asp](https://esa.un.org/unpfiiidata/UNPFII_Recommendations_Database_list.asp)



<b>Full Text:</b> The Permanent Forum encourages Member States, in cooperation with United Nations agencies, to develop social policies that will enhance the production of indigenous peoples' traditional foods and promote the restoration or recovery of lost drought-resistant indigenous food varieties to ensure food security. In this context, the Forum recommends that Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, as well as United Nations agencies such as FAO, IFAD and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, establish a committee, in full consultation with and with the participation of indigenous peoples, aimed at preventing food crises in the sub Saharan region where indigenous peoples reside. The committee's objective should be to prevent humanitarian disasters and, in particular, to prevent starvation at the same level as the disaster that struck the region in 1973.				
26	IFAD	14	Education, Environment	Partially implemented (Ongoing)
<b>Summary of Recommendation:</b> <i>The Forum expects that IFAD will continue to strengthen its engagement with indigenous peoples in its future work by ensuring engagement at the country level through targeted programmes and capacity-building.</i>				
<b>Full Text:</b> <i>The Permanent Forum acknowledges IFAD for the implementation of its policy on indigenous peoples and for selecting "Indigenous peoples' food systems and sustainable livelihoods" as the theme of the second global meeting of the Indigenous peoples' Forum at IFAD. The Forum expects that IFAD will continue to strengthen its engagement with indigenous peoples in its future work by ensuring engagement at the country level through targeted programmes, capacity-building for indigenous peoples and project staff and the development of specific indicators on the well-being of indigenous peoples.</i>				
36	IFAD, Member States, UN System, and the Private Sector	13	Collaboration, Economic and Social Development	Not accomplished yet
<b>Summary of Recommendation:</b> <i>IFAD to convene platforms of dialogue with Member States, United Nations agencies and private sector actors to find solutions to improve the economic empowerment of indigenous peoples consistent with their cultural identity and diversity, as well as sustainable and equitable development. Also, specific indicators pertaining to the well-being of indigenous peoples be systematically adopted in IFAD-funded projects.</i>				
<b>Full Text:</b> The Permanent Forum recommends that the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) convene platforms of dialogue with countries, United Nations agencies and private sector actors to find solutions to improve the economic empowerment of indigenous peoples consistent with their cultural identity and diversity, as well as sustainable and equitable development. The Forum also recommends that specific indicators pertaining to the well-being of indigenous peoples be systematically adopted in IFAD-funded projects implemented in accordance with article 41 of the Declaration.				
33	UNDP, FAO, IFAD, CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC	12	Environment	Partially accomplished
<b>Summary of Recommendation:</b> <i>The Forum invites the addressee to convene a workshop on African pastoralism, indigenous peoples' rights and climate adaptation.</i>				
<b>Full Text:</b> The Permanent Forum invites the agencies of the United Nations system, including UNDP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), in cooperation with the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as well as other relevant stakeholders, to convene a workshop on African pastoralism, indigenous peoples' rights and climate adaptation.				
64	FAO, IFAD	11	Human Rights, Economic and social development	Accomplished through the Food System Summit supporting IPs

<b>Summary of Recommendation:</b> <i>The Forum recommends that IFAD and FAO support - through studies, participatory methodologies and technical-financial assistance - the food sovereignty and security concerns of indigenous peoples.</i>				
<b>Full Text:</b> The Permanent Forum recommends that FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) provide special attention and support to food sovereignty and security concerns of indigenous peoples through thematic studies, the adoption of participatory methodologies, and technical and financial assistance.				
67	FAO, IFAD, ILO, UNEP, UNESCO, UNITAR, UN Women, World Bank	11	Culture, Economic and social development	Ongoing
<b>Summary of Recommendation:</b> <i>The Forum urges relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, to recognize and support shifting cultivation.</i>				
<b>Full Text:</b> The Permanent Forum urges relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, including FAO, IFAD, ILO, UNEP, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, UN-Women and the World Bank, to recognize and support this form of cultivation.				
24	CBD, UNESCO, ILO, FAO, IFAD, International Land Coalition	10	Environment, Traditional Knowledge, Cooperation	Partially accomplished at IFAD
<b>Summary of Recommendation:</b> <i>The Permanent Forum welcomes the adoption by CBD on two additional indicators for traditional knowledge, one regarding land use and tenure, the second on the practice of traditional occupations, and urges CBD, UNESCO, ILO, FAO, IFAD and International Land Coalition to cooperate in view of fully operationalizing those indicators.</i>				
<b>Full Text:</b> The Permanent Forum welcomes the adoption by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity of two additional indicators for traditional knowledge: (a) status and trends in land use change and land tenure in the traditional territories of indigenous and local communities, and (b) status and trends in the practice of traditional occupations, to complement the adopted indicator on status and trends in traditional languages. The Forum urges the secretariat of the Convention and agencies working on these issues, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), ILO, FAO, IFAD and the International Land Coalition, to collaborate with a view to fully operationalizing those indicators.				
7	IFAD	10	Economic and Social Development, Cooperation	Partially accomplished Ongoing
<b>Summary of Recommendation:</b> <i>The Permanent Forum welcomes the establishment of an IFAD indigenous peoples' forum and encourages IFAD to promote the participation of indigenous peoples' organizations in country strategies and programme cycles, including in the assessment phase; to use specific indicators for indigenous peoples' well-being in IFAD-funded projects; to improve advocacy in the dissemination of its best practices in terms of development approaches with indigenous peoples at national, regional and international levels.</i>				
<b>Full Text:</b> The Permanent Forum congratulates the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) on the establishment of an indigenous peoples' forum on 18 February 2011. This is consistent with international standards and, in particular, with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples. It is also an example of good practice to be followed by other United Nations entities. The Forum encourages IFAD to: (a) actively promote the participation of indigenous peoples' organizations in country strategies and programme cycles; (b) improve the design, monitoring and evaluation of IFAD-funded projects by using specific indicators for the well-being of indigenous peoples and by promoting an independent assessment of such projects by indigenous peoples; and (c) improving its advocacy role in disseminating its best practices in terms of development approaches with indigenous peoples at the national, regional and international levels.				

## International frameworks on Indigenous Peoples and regional, national and institutional advances

Over the last 20 years, Indigenous Peoples' rights have been increasingly recognized through the adoption of international instruments such as the [Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean](#) (Escazú Agreement 2011), the [American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (2016), the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (UNDRIP 2007), which followed the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (No.169, 1989).

**Global institutional mechanisms** have been created to promote Indigenous Peoples rights such as the [United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues](#) (UNPFII) established in 2000, the [UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (UNSR) in 2001, and the [Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (EMRIP) in 2006. Following the adoption of the UNDRIP, formal recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples has significantly advanced with the 2015 High Level Plenary Session of the UNGA – World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) with the following adoption by GA of the System-Wide Action Plan on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (SWAP), the 2020 call to action on SWAP by the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), the adoption of the 2030 Development Agenda including the SDGs and the establishment of the [SDG Indigenous Peoples Major Group \(IPMG\)](#), the [Paris Agreement](#) (2015), including the creation of the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change and the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Platform (LCIPP) and its Facilitative Working Group (FWG). In 2021, the Food Systems Summit recognized the vital contribution of Indigenous Peoples' food systems with the emerging of a Coalition on Indigenous Peoples Food Systems, just to mention some of the important milestones at the global level<sup>42</sup>.

**At the regional level**, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights are leading the way on promoting recognition and respect of Indigenous Peoples' rights in Africa. They have made landmark decisions in relation to Indigenous Peoples' cultural rights and their rights to lands, territories and resources<sup>43</sup>. The African Commission's comprehensive report on Indigenous Peoples in Africa continues to be the major framework for the Commission and other African Institutions on the issue of Indigenous Peoples' rights in Africa<sup>44</sup>. In the ASEAN region, customary tenure and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) constitute key indicators for responsible investment in food agriculture and forestry and have been gaining recognition.<sup>45</sup>

**At the country level**, recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights has advanced in several countries across the globe. Recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights was included in country constitutions<sup>46</sup> and discussions on recognition of Indigenous Peoples and their

<sup>42</sup> A detailed evolution of the international legal framework is provided in Appendix I

<sup>43</sup> The inter-American human rights system has played a key role in the development of international law on Indigenous Peoples' rights, citing the Declaration, adding value, legal analysis and further legitimizing its contents. To promote respect and protection of Indigenous Peoples' rights by States, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights uses a variety of instruments: thematic studies and reports, petitions and cases, including friendly settlements, precautionary measures, thematic hearings, confidential requests for information from States, and press releases.

<sup>44</sup> The report of the African Commission's Working Group on Indigenous Populations and Communities can be download at:

[https://www.achpr.org/public/Document/file/Any/expert\\_report\\_on\\_indigenous\\_communities.pdf](https://www.achpr.org/public/Document/file/Any/expert_report_on_indigenous_communities.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> In 2020, the plan of action of the ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF) for the ASEAN Cooperation on Forestry identified two main activities under the theme of Enhancing Forest Management; first, a review of customary and statutory tenure arrangements at the national level, and second, the mainstreaming of the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) principle in forestry-related decision-making efforts

<sup>46</sup> Costa Rica, 2015

rights are ongoing in other countries<sup>47</sup>. The elaboration of legislation to operationalize the State duty to consult Indigenous Peoples and the implementation of the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is an ongoing process in several countries in Latin America such as Peru, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala<sup>48</sup> and Honduras. El Salvador has recently adopted a national policy on Indigenous Peoples, which considers the UNDRIP as its framework<sup>49</sup>. Dialogue processes with Indigenous Peoples on public policies are ongoing in Costa Rica and Paraguay<sup>50</sup>.

In African countries such as Uganda, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is developing an Affirmative Action Program for Indigenous Peoples; in the Republic of the Congo, the Parliament adopted a law for the promotion and protection of the rights of Indigenous Populations and has launched a national action plan for 2022-2025; and in Democratic Republic of Congo, a law on the promotion and protection of the rights of Indigenous Peoples has been adopted and is currently pending endorsement by the Senate. Burundi is in the process of preparing a national strategy for the socio-economic integration of the Batwa for sustainable development. In several African countries, ministries in charge of climate change programmes have taken on board key provisions of the UNDRIP, including on consultation<sup>51</sup>.

In Asia, only a limited number of States have adopted legal provisions that recognize Indigenous Peoples' lands, territories and resources and traditional tenure systems. Even where legal provisions exist<sup>52</sup> their implementation is delayed by complex administrative procedures, uncoordinated and understaffed authorities, and contradictory sectorial legislation on land use, such as conflicting provisions on forestry and mining. In Cambodia, a 2009 policy on the registration of the right to use the land of Indigenous Peoples' communities bolstered the 2001 Cambodian Land Law, which had laid the ground for community land titling among indigenous communities<sup>53</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> Chile Constitutional Convention, 2021, and Guatemala.

<sup>48</sup> In an historic resolution, a Guatemalan Appeals Court ruled that the government must take into account the right to free, prior and informed consent when granting mining licenses on the lands of indigenous communities.

<sup>49</sup> Política Pública para los Pueblos Indígenas de El Salvador (Public Policy for Indigenous peoples of EL Salvador) , 2017. For the references, the link to the policy is the following: <https://derechodelacultura.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Pol%C3%ADtica-para-Pueblos-Ind%C3%ADgenas-MICULTURA.pdf?view=download>

<sup>50</sup> Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous peoples to the UN General Assembly 2017: Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples and the work of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous peoples ( <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N17/224/61/PDF/N1722461.pdf?OpenElement> ) ; The Indigenous World 2020 -2021 and 2022 , IWGIA. <https://iwgia.org/en/resources/indigenous-world.html>

<sup>51</sup> Report of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous peoples to the Human Rights Council : Ten years of the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples: good practices and lessons learned — 2007-2017. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/233/33/PDF/G1723333.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>52</sup> In the Philippines the Indigenous peoples' Rights Act of 1997, in India, the Forest Rights Act of 2006, in Cambodia, specific provisions have been adopted on Indigenous peoples' rights over lands and natural resources (2009) , In Malaysia, customary law is recognized as a basis for granting land rights in Sabah and Sarawak. In Thailand, the vast majority of Indigenous peoples live in protected areas. Three national laws on natural resource management that entered into force in November 2019 could potentially play a role in addressing the persistent tensions between the authorities and communities living in or adjacent to forests in Thailand.

<sup>53</sup> Report of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous peoples to the Human Rights Council : Ten years of the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples: good practices and lessons learned — 2007-2017. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/233/33/PDF/G1723333.pdf?OpenElement> .

**The international legal framework**<sup>54</sup> on Indigenous Peoples has been evolving rapidly since the adoption in 1989 of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples. A historic milestone for Indigenous Peoples worldwide was the United Nations General Assembly's adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on 13 September 2007. The Declaration establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity, well-being and rights of the world's Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration addresses both individual and collective rights. It outlaws' discrimination against Indigenous Peoples and promotes their full and effective participation in all matters that concern them. It also ensures their right to remain distinct and to pursue their own priorities in economic, social and cultural development. Articles 41 and 42 of the Declaration call upon the specialized agencies of the United Nations system to "...contribute to the full realization of the provisions of this Declaration through the mobilization, inter alia, of financial cooperation and technical assistance...", and to "...promote respect for and full application of the provisions of this Declaration and follow up the effectiveness of this Declaration."<sup>55</sup>

The Declaration does not create new rights but rather elaborates on existing international human rights standards through an Indigenous lens. Many of its articles are an extension of binding standards found in various human rights treaties that have been widely ratified and certain provisions, such as those relating to the protection against racial discrimination, reflect customary international law<sup>56</sup>.

In addition to the development of international standards, the UN has established several institutional mandates aimed at promoting protection and respect of Indigenous Peoples Rights by Member States, UN Agencies and Funds and other relevant stakeholders, namely the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2000), the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2001) and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007).

The UN Permanent forum is an advisory body to the ECOSOC, mandated to discuss and advise the UN system on indigenous issues related to [economic and social development](#), [culture](#), [the environment](#), [education](#), [health](#) and [human rights](#). The UN special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which is part of the human rights Council system of thematic [Special Procedures](#) and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which provides the Human Rights Council with expertise and advice on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and assists Member States in achieving the goals of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

### **High Level Plenary Session of the UNGA – World Conference on Indigenous Peoples**

On 22 and 23 September 2014, United Nations Member States held a high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, to share perspectives and best practices on the realization of the rights of Indigenous Peoples, including to pursue the objectives of the Declaration. The conclusions of the meeting, reflected in its outcome document, reiterate the commitment of the United Nations system and its Member States towards achieving the ends of the Declaration.

The outcome document contains a series of commitments calling for multifaceted action by a range of actors, first and foremost Member States, but also the United Nations system. Among these is a request that the Secretary-General develop a system wide action plan to ensure a

<sup>54</sup> Annex I provides information on international normative framework on Indigenous peoples.

<sup>55</sup> United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples:  
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/declaration.html>.

<sup>56</sup> Report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the rights of Indigenous peoples on the Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples and the work of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous peoples ( 2017)  
<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N17/224/61/PDF/N1722461.pdf?OpenElement>

coherent approach to achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

**The System-wide action plan on the rights of Indigenous Peoples**<sup>57</sup>. Following months of consultation with Indigenous Peoples, Member States and within the UN system, the Secretary-General shared a finalized system-wide action plan with heads of UN system agencies at the United Nations Chief Executives Board meeting in November 2015, and encouraged concerted efforts to implement the action plan. The primary aim of this action plan is to increase UN system coherence in addressing the rights and well-being of Indigenous Peoples in its work, including in support of Member States, with the ultimate goal of implementing, with the effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at all levels.

In November 2020, the fifth anniversary of the System-Wide Action Plan on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) took the opportunity to revitalize the action plan and strengthen collective and coherent UN system efforts by **endorsing a call to action on building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future with Indigenous Peoples**. Developed through the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues and approved by the High-level Committee on Programmes, the call to action affirms the Executive Heads' commitment to supporting Member States in the promotion, protection and realization of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and redoubling efforts to ensure collaborative and coherent United Nations system action to support the rights and well-being of Indigenous Peoples. The Call to Action aims to:

- Ensure more systematic participation of Indigenous Peoples in United Nations processes and initiatives that affect them;
- Strengthen targeted actions at the country level to support the rights of Indigenous Peoples and learning from good practices;
- Ensure greater accountability and visibility for the action plan; and
- Strengthen the disaggregation of data on Indigenous Peoples to ensure greater visibility of Indigenous Peoples and their situation.

### **The 2030 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sets the global development agenda and impacts on the way the international community will work with Indigenous Peoples over the coming years. The 2030 Agenda has inequalities as its centerpiece. The overall aim of the new Agenda is "to leave no one behind" by "reaching the furthest behind first" and by ensuring that Sustainable Development Goals' DG targets are met "for all nationals and peoples and for all segments of society". As Indigenous Peoples across the world still lag behind on most social, economic and political indicators, they should be at the heart of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The agenda's overarching commitment to promote human rights combat inequalities and "leave no one behind" provides a very relevant framework for addressing Indigenous Peoples' needs in the context of development programming and implementation. To ensure a truly rights based and inclusive sustainable development it remains critical to empower Indigenous Peoples to participate in and monitor national implementation of the goals and targets in order to ensure that they are not being left behind once again and that their rights are respected and protected. At the same time, Indigenous Peoples with their profound knowledge of nature and sustainability have proved that they have a lot to contribute to the 2030 Agenda. Many of the 17 universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are relevant for Indigenous Peoples and have direct linkages to the human rights commitments outlined in the UNDRIP.

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<sup>57</sup> System Wide Action Plan on the Rights of Indigenous peoples  
[https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/2016/Docs-updates/SWAP\\_Indigenous\\_Peoples\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/2016/Docs-updates/SWAP_Indigenous_Peoples_WEB.pdf)

### **The Paris Agreement**

Indigenous Peoples are among the first to face the direct consequences of climate change, due to their dependence upon, and close relationship, with the environment and its resources. Climate change exacerbates the difficulties already faced by indigenous communities including political and economic marginalization, loss of land and resources, human rights violations, discrimination and unemployment. On December, 2015, after two decades of climate talks within the UN Framework on Climate Change (UNFCCC), world leaders came to a consensus on a legally binding agreement on climate change, with the aim of keeping global warming below 2°C and reducing carbon emissions across the globe.

Hailed as “historic” and as “a turning point for the world,” the deal reached its goal to achieve a legally binding and universal agreement on climate change, yet disappointed many Indigenous Peoples due to its ultimate failure to include legally binding references to protecting Indigenous Peoples rights and their sovereignty. However, the Paris Agreement recognizes the need to strengthen knowledge, technologies, practices and efforts of local communities and Indigenous Peoples related to addressing and responding to climate change, and establishes a platform for exchange of experiences and sharing of best practices on mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner. The establishment of the platform marks a critical milestone in the global endeavor to strengthen knowledge, technologies, practices, and efforts of local communities and Indigenous Peoples in addressing climate change.

### **The Escazu Agreement**

Among the most recent developments, it is important to mention the Escazu Agreement (Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, which is the region’s first environmental treaty as well as the world’s first agreement with provisions on human rights defenders in environmental matters, an issue of particular importance in the region due to risks for Indigenous rights defenders and other environmental activists. This Agreement is a giant step towards deepening socio-environmental democracy and achieving sustainable, participatory, and just development in the region and it provides a powerful tool to seek justice and redress for human rights violations against indigenous rights defenders. The Escazu Agreement is a giant step towards deepening socio-environmental democracy and achieving sustainable, participatory, and just development in the region. Not only is this the first regional environmental treaty to incorporate specific provisions protecting environmental human rights defenders, but it also includes concrete provisions for advancing rights to information, participation and justice in environmental matters.

In 2021, The UN General Assembly<sup>58</sup> proclaimed the period between 2022 and 2032 as the **International Decade of Indigenous Languages**, which aims at drawing global attention on the critical situation of many indigenous languages and at ensuring Indigenous Peoples’ right to preserve, revitalize and promote their languages under the leadership of UNESCO for its implementation and in cooperation with UNDESA<sup>59</sup>.

**Policies and guidelines on Indigenous Peoples in UN agencies, programs and funds and other intergovernmental bodies.** Following the approval of IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples in 2009, FAO adopted its policy on indigenous and tribal peoples in 2010<sup>60</sup> and in 2012 the World Committee on Food Security endorsed the *Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests*, whose section 9, refers to the importance of collective rights to land for Indigenous Peoples and pastoralists<sup>61</sup>. Also in 2012, *UNEP finalized its Policy guidelines on Indigenous Peoples* and GEF adopted its

<sup>58</sup> (Resolution A/RES/74/135)

<sup>59</sup> More Information about the International Decade on Indigenous Languages at: <https://en.unesco.org/idil2022-2032>

<sup>60</sup> FAO International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources (2001) and WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions (2001).

<sup>61</sup> Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security: <https://www.fao.org/3/i2801e/i2801e.pdf>

[Principles and guidelines for engagement with Indigenous Peoples](#). UNDP adopted the UNDP and Indigenous Peoples: A Policy of Engagement in 2012, and in 2017 UNESCO adopted its policy on engaging with Indigenous Peoples. Most recently, the Green Climate Fund adopted the Indigenous Peoples Policy (2018), which provides for full and effective engaging with Indigenous Peoples in the design, development and implementation of programmes to be financed by GCF, while respecting their rights.

Other instruments and mechanisms to protect and promote the rights of Indigenous Peoples over genetic resources, traditional knowledge and intellectual property rights have been adopted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)<sup>62</sup>. UNESCO has adopted two important conventions on Indigenous Peoples' education and culture<sup>63</sup>.

In recent years, international financial institutions, such as the World Bank<sup>64</sup>, the Inter-American Development Bank<sup>65</sup>, the African Development Bank<sup>66</sup> and the Asia Development Bank<sup>67</sup> have updated their safeguards to ensure that their funded projects respect Indigenous Peoples' rights while avoiding adverse impacts and minimizing risks.

In August 2022 the UN General Assembly (UNGA) passed a resolution recognizing the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment as a human right. While not directly referring to Indigenous Peoples, the resolution is very relevant to them.

### **Milestones in the International Framework on Indigenous Peoples**

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 2021 | The United Nations General Assembly proclaims the International Decade on Indigenous Languages (2022-2032)   |
| 2021 | At the UNFCCC COP 26 in Glasgow, UK, Norway, Germany, US, and the Netherlands, and 17 funders pledged to support Indigenous Peoples, local communities with 1,7 billion US\$ citing their proven role in preventing deforestation that fuels climate change      |
| 2021 | Adoption of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement)   |
| 2021 | The Food Systems Summit recognizes the vital contribution of Indigenous Peoples' food systems with the establishment of a Coalition on Indigenous Peoples Food Systems   |
| 2020 | The UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) endorses a call to action on building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future with Indigenous Peoples aimed at revitalizing the SWAP and strengthen collective and coherent UN system efforts |

<sup>62</sup> FAO International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources (2001) and WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions (2001).

<sup>63</sup> These include the Convention on the Promotion and Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (20 October 2005) and the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (October 2003).

<sup>64</sup>In 2016, the World Bank approved a new set of environmental and social safeguards which replaced its existing operational policy on Indigenous Peoples and which requires borrowing countries to ensure any World Bank-funded project does not harm Indigenous Peoples' rights and includes minimize and/or compensate the project's adverse impacts and risks, including respect free prior and informed consent.

<sup>65</sup> In 2021 the Inter-American Development Bank launched a new Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF), which establishes respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples and seeks to avoid, minimize and/or compensate the project's adverse impacts and risks. It also recognizes that Indigenous Peoples are particularly vulnerable if their lands and natural resources are affected, or if their culture is threatened.

<sup>66</sup> Currently the AfDB is undergoing a process aimed at updating the Bank's Integrated Safeguard System based on the study on Safeguards and Sustainability Series, Development and Indigenous Peoples in Africa, AfDB, 2016.

<sup>67</sup> The Asia Development bank has developed a Safeguard Policy Statement (SPS) aimed at ensuring that the design and implementation of projects foster full respect for Indigenous Peoples' identity, dignity, human rights, livelihood systems, and cultural uniqueness as defined by the Indigenous Peoples themselves so that they receive culturally appropriate social and economic benefits, are not harmed by the projects, and can participate actively in projects that affect them.



- 2019 The United Nations General Assembly proclaims the International Year of Indigenous Languages
- 2019 The Human Rights Council Resolution renewing the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples requests the Rapporteur to “participate in relevant international dialogues and policy forums on the consequences that climate change has on Indigenous Peoples” and to “undertake thematic research and to develop cooperation dialogue with States, intergovernmental organisations, civil society and other stakeholders on effective and sustainable practices”
- 2018 Establishment of the Facilitative Working Group of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform at UNFCCC COP 24 in Katowice (Poland)
- 2016 Adoption of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the Organization of American States (OAS).
- 2015 The UN General Assembly adopts the System Wide Action Plan
- 2015 21st Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC (COP 21) in Paris establishes a platform that allows ‘the exchange of experiences and sharing of best practices on mitigation and adaptation’ between Indigenous Peoples, local communities, countries and all other relevant stakeholders.
- 2014 High Level Plenary Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Indigenous Peoples/World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.
- 2014 The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs was designated for coordinating the preparation of the action plan after the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples raising awareness of the rights of Indigenous Peoples at the highest possible level, as well as increasing the coherence of the activities of the UN system in this regard.
- 2013 Global Indigenous Preparatory Conference for the High-Level Plenary Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Indigenous Peoples/World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in Alta, Norway.
- 2012 First session of the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights. The Forum is the world's largest annual gathering on business and human rights with participants from government, business, Indigenous Peoples, civil society, law firms, investor organisations, UN bodies, national human rights institutions, trade unions, academia and the media.
- 2012 The World Committee on Food Security endorsed the *Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests*, whose section 9, refers to the importance of collective rights to land for Indigenous Peoples and pastoralists.
- 2011 The UN Human Rights Council's adopts the Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights and establishes the UN Working Group and the Forum on business & human rights.
- 2009 Adoption of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits. The protocol is a significant step in mainstreaming indigenous rights as a cross-cutting issue in international negotiations.
- 2007 First session of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Created by the Human Rights Council, the Expert Mechanism is composed of five experts and provides thematic expertise on the rights of Indigenous Peoples to the Human Rights Council, the main human rights body of the United Nations.
- 2007 Adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, after a 20-year preparation and negotiation process.

- 2006 Adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at the inaugural session of the Human Rights Council.
- 2005 The United Nations General Assembly launches the second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People.
- 2004 Adoption by the CBD COP 7 of the Akwé: Kon Voluntary Guidelines for the Conduct of Cultural, Environmental and Social Impact Assessments Regarding Developments Proposed to Take Place on, or which are Likely to Impact on, Sacred Sites and on Lands and Waters Traditionally Occupied or Used by Indigenous and Local Communities
- 2003 Formal establishment of the Inter-Agency Support Group at the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.
- 2001 First annual meeting of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.
- 2001 Designation by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of Indigenous People.
- 2000 The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights adopts a resolution on the rights of Indigenous Populations/communities in Africa. The resolution provided for the establishment of a working group of experts on Indigenous Populations/communities.
- 1995 Establishment of an inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights on the draft declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- 1994 The United Nations General Assembly proclaims the first International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995- 2004)
- 1994 The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, in its articles 16(g) and 17(c), calls for the protection of indigenous traditional knowledge, technologies and practices.
- 1993 The World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action) explicitly addresses Indigenous Peoples' rights and calls for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995-2004), adoption of the declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the possible establishment of a permanent forum on indigenous issues.
- 1993 The United Nations General Assembly proclaims the first International Year of the World's Indigenous People.
- 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) results in the Rio Declaration (principle 22), Agenda 21 (chapter 26) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (Article 8(j) and related provisions), which recognize the role of Indigenous Peoples in environmental conservation and call for the protection of traditional knowledge, practice and innovation, as well as benefit sharing.
- 1990 Entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes an article on indigenous children (the first specific reference to Indigenous Peoples in international human rights law).
- 1989 ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, recognizing indigenous rights over land, identity, internal affairs and development, replacing the earlier Convention 107 (1957). It has been ratified and is in force in 20 countries.
- 1982 Establishment of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (a working group of experts), to promote international standards on Indigenous Peoples' rights.

1957 ILO Convention 107 on Indigenous and Tribal Populations called for the protection and integration of tribal and Indigenous Populations into mainstream society. It has been ratified by 27 countries, and is still in force in 18 countries.

### List of Policies on Indigenous Peoples in UN Agencies, Programmes and Funds and International Financial Institutions'

<i>International financial institution</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Policy instrument</i>	<i>Mandatory</i>	<i>Promote</i>	<i>Safeguard</i>	<i>Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC)</i>
<b>AfDB</b>	2022	Africa Development Bank (AfDB) is currently revising its <a href="#">Integrated Safeguard System (ISS)</a> , which was first adopted by the Bank in 2014				The current review process seeks to harmonize the ISS with current international standards and peer institutions. As such, the AfDB has <a href="#">invited</a> stakeholders including Indigenous Peoples to provide comments on the <a href="#">proposed draft ISS</a> .
<b>AsDB</b>	2009	Policy Paper Safeguard Policy Statement: – Safeguard requirements 3: Indigenous Peoples	yes		yes	The safeguard policy requires that the consent of affected Indigenous Peoples' communities be obtained through meaningful consultation for the following project activities: (i) commercial development of the cultural resources or knowledge of Indigenous Peoples; (ii) physical displacement from traditional or customary lands; and (iii) commercial development of natural resources within customary lands under use that would impact the livelihoods or the cultural, ceremonial or spiritual uses that define the identity and community of Indigenous Peoples.
<b>EBRD</b>	2019	Environmental and Social Policy: EBRD Performance Requirement 7: Indigenous Peoples	yes		yes	The policy outlines the responsibilities of the client to assess the potential for a project to impact Indigenous Peoples, to engage meaningfully with affected Indigenous Peoples and, under certain circumstances outlined in this PR, to obtain their free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). Additionally the policy lays out client obligations to collaborate with affected Indigenous Peoples in the planning and implementation of measures to avoid, minimise, mitigate and compensate for adverse effects and share project benefits. FPIC of affected Indigenous Peoples is required in circumstances where a project: (i) affects their customary lands or resources; (ii) relocates them from their traditional or customary lands; or (iii) affects or proposes to use their cultural resources.
<b>EIB</b>	2022	The EIB Group Environmental and Social Policy: Standard 7: Vulnerable groups, Indigenous Peoples and Gender	yes	yes	yes	The FPIC process is required where a project: (i) Affects the lands, territories or resources that Indigenous Peoples customarily own, occupy or otherwise use; or (ii) Relocates them from land and natural resources subject to traditional ownership or under customary use or occupation; or (iii) Affects or exploits their cultural resources, whether tangible or intangible, or their ways of life.
<b>FAO</b>	2015	Policy on indigenous and tribal peoples. Second Edition		yes		For projects that involve or affect Indigenous Peoples, FAO will facilitate the inclusion of representatives of Indigenous Peoples in its consultations and programming cycles, in accordance with the principle of FPIC.
<b>GCF</b>	2018	Indigenous Peoples Policy	yes	yes	yes	GCF will ensure and require evidence of the effective consultation and application of free, prior and informed consent through appropriate procedures and in particular through their representative institutions whenever consideration is being given to GCF-financed activities that will affect Indigenous Peoples' lands, territories, resources, livelihoods and cultures or require their relocation.
	2018					

		The Environmental and Social Policy				The design and implementation of activities will be guided by the rights and responsibilities set forth in the UNDRIP including, of particular importance, the right to free, prior and informed consent, which will be required by GCF in applicable circumstances.
<b>GEF</b>	2012	Principles and guidelines for engagement with Indigenous Peoples	Yes	Yes	yes	The GEF adopts a standard of free, prior and informed consent for GEF-financed projects. GEF Partner Agencies will ensure that project executors document: (i) the mutually accepted consultation process between the project proponent and affected indigenous communities and (ii) evidence of agreement between the parties as the outcome of the consultations. FPIC does not necessarily require unanimity and may be achieved even when individuals or groups within the community explicitly disagree. For other projects, GEF Partner Agencies are required to rely on their systems for consultation with Indigenous Peoples and will ensure that such consultations result in broad community support for the GEF-financed operations being proposed
<b>IDB</b>	2020	Environmental and Social Policy Framework: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL PERFORMANCE STANDARD 7 Indigenous Peoples	Yes	Yes	yes	FPIC of the Project-Affected Communities of Indigenous Peoples in the circumstances described in the policy, is required by the borrower of the IDB. FPIC applies to project design, implementation, and expected outcomes related to impacts affecting the communities of Indigenous Peoples.
<b>IFC</b>	2012	IFC Performance Standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability:  Performance Standard 7: Indigenous Peoples	yes			For projects with adverse impacts to Indigenous Peoples, the IFC client is required to engage with Indigenous Peoples and in certain circumstances the client is required to obtain their Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). The client will document: (i) the mutually accepted process between the client and Affected Communities of Indigenous Peoples, and (ii) evidence of agreement between the parties as the outcome of the negotiations.
<b>UNDP</b>	2015	UNDP and Indigenous Peoples: A Policy Of Engagement		Yes		Consistent with the ILO Convention 169, UNDP promotes and supports the right of Indigenous Peoples to Free Prior and Informed Consultation with regard to development planning and programming that may affect them.
<b>UNEP</b>	2012	UNEP and Indigenous Peoples: A Partnership in Caring for the Environment Policy Guidance November 2012		yes		Stakeholder involvement takes into account the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Principle. This includes not only the lands which are owned by Indigenous Peoples but also those which are and were traditionally occupied and used by Indigenous Peoples.
<b>UNESCO</b>	2018	Policy on engaging with Indigenous Peoples		yes		UNESCO reaffirms its commitment to implement the UNDRIP, and to ensure adequate consultations, the FPIC and equitable and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples where nomination, management and policy measures of international designations affect their territories, lands, resources and ways of life.
	2021	Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention				In the case of sites affecting the lands, territories or resources of Indigenous Peoples, States Parties shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous Peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before including the sites on their Tentative List. States shall demonstrate, as appropriate, that the FPIC of Indigenous Peoples has been obtained, through, inter alia, making the nominations publicly available in appropriate languages and public consultations and hearings.
<b>UN-Habitat</b>	2021	Environmental and Social Safeguards System. Version 3. 6.1.6. Principle 6: Indigenous Peoples		yes		The objectives are to provide minimum requirements to achieve Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of Indigenous Peoples where their rights, lands, resources, territories, traditional livelihoods may be affected. Consent refers to the collective support of affected Indigenous Peoples communities for the

					project/programme activities that affect them, reached through a culturally appropriate process. FPIC must be obtained when Indigenous Peoples will be relocating from land or natural resources that they have traditionally occupied, or when their cultural heritage will be significantly impacted.
<b>WIPO</b>	2018	A Guide to Intellectual Property Issues in Access and Benefit-sharing Agreements			Access and benefit-sharing is based on prior informed consent (PIC) being granted by a provider of genetic resources to a user of such resources, and on negotiations between both parties to develop mutually agreed terms, in order to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of the resources
	2020	Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions			According to the principle of prior informed consent (FPIC), holders should be fully consulted before their knowledge/ expression/genetic resource is accessed or used by third parties and an agreement should be reached on appropriate terms; they should also be fully informed about the consequences of the intended use. The agreed scope of use may be set out in contracts, licenses or agreements, which may specify how benefits arising from the exploitation should be shared.
<b>World Bank</b>	2016	Environmental and Social Policy for Investment Project Financing	yes	yes	The Bank will require the Borrower to obtain the FPIC of the affected Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities when specific circumstances (described in ESS7) are present. In the policy, FPIC does not require unanimity and may be achieved even when individuals or groups within or among affected Indigenous Peoples explicitly disagree. Consent refers to the collective support of affected Indigenous Peoples communities for the project activities that affect them, reached through a culturally appropriate process. It may exist even if some individuals or groups object to such project activities.

## Experiences and good practices by other organisations on land tenure and Free Prior and Informed Consent

### Land tenure

Lessons from the [World Bank](#) currently supporting Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Lao PDR with the registration of land rights in rural areas, including various forms of technical assistance on indigenous rights to land evidence that:

- **Consideration of the social, cultural and legal contexts of the host country is critical when advocating tenure rights of Indigenous Peoples.** The diversity across the region, including of local indigenous systems of land tenure, is so vast that a one-size-fits-all approach to address and advocate for IPs' rights is difficult. In many countries, the concept of indigenous communities remains sensitive Adopting the culturally and legally accepted terms is critical when advocating rights, both when communicating with governments and communities on the ground.
- **Indigenous Peoples' tenure security can be enhanced even when indigenous land rights are yet to be fully recognized by national laws.** The legal recognition of IPs and their land rights – as well as the extent of such recognition – varies widely

among countries. From advanced, such as in the case of the Philippines, to early stage of developing regulations recognizing customary land rights, such as in Lao PDR, to countries where extensive regulatory framework on customary land rights are in place but are yet to be systematically implemented such as in the case of Indonesia. Still organizations can support governments in the process, as the WB is doing in these countries.

- **CSOs need more support as they play an essential role in legal awareness raising and local-level efforts to secure rights.** Even in countries where indigenous land rights are recognized by law, communities are sometimes unaware of their rights or tend to struggle with the administrative processes to secure them. CSOs can help navigate through administrative hurdles, and assist with access to legal remedies. Interventions should therefore focus on local organization capacity building, while community representatives should be given voice in advocacy campaigns and technical assistance programs.
- **Inter-institutional coordination between national government agencies is often a prerequisite to secure IPs' tenure.** Ultimately, indigenous land rights can only be secured when tenure is simultaneously secured for all stakeholders, including both public and private land holders. Boundaries between indigenous areas, state land, and forest areas are often unclear and need to be clarified in order to protect the remaining indigenous and communal territories while minimizing the chance of land disputes. Conflicting mandates between government agencies, particularly forestry and land registration agencies, hamper this process. WB support to Indonesia and the Philippines to achieve a unified land register and clarify tenure rights in forest landscapes has shown that governments welcome external support to facilitate inter-institutional dialogue and promote an integrated land administration.
- **\$1.7 billion could go a long way in protecting the land rights of IPs around the globe.** Current engagements and analytics in the East Asia and Pacific region indicate that significant progress can be made in a variety of country contexts with varying degrees of legal recognition of indigenous land rights. Interventions will only be effective if they cater to national and local legal, social and political contexts, prioritize the agency of local organizations and community representatives, and stimulate inter-agency dialogue and coordination at both national and local levels.

### **Free Prior and Informed Consent**

[FAO](#) experience in implementing FPIC in Panama shows that the correct application of the FPIC process facilitates the creation of an intercultural environment conducive to the adoption of innovative agricultural techniques and the valorisation of ancestral agricultural practices, including the rapid increase and diversify their production. Success factors resulted in: i) the use of culturally sensitive methodologies which helped to develop a process of dialogue and implement the project in a horizontal and participatory way based on the priorities and interests of the communities; ii) the creation of a trained inter-agency and multidisciplinary team in charge of FPIC implementation contributed significantly to ensuring the quality of the process; and iii) the broad and permanent participation during the project cycle of all community members ensured that all the demands and needs present within the community were addressed. Finally, FPIC process supported the sustainability of the project that has been ensured by: i) the empowerment of the communities as the result of FPIC; and ii) the presence of resources and skills in the territories, thanks to the strengthening of institutional coordination. Lessons learned from this project generated the following six recommendations for FPIC processes:

- Protect the cultural and ancestral wealth of indigenous peoples and promote the adoption of innovative practices through interculturality;

- Incorporate cultural sensitivity as a basic principle for the implementation of any collaboration with and for indigenous peoples;
- Use a participatory and horizontal approach. The implementation of FPIC must be continuous during all stages of the project, allowing permanent feedback and adjustment of the support actions;
- Incorporate a gender and intergenerational approach. The participation of women and youth in the dialogue process and in the support actions of the project generates greater inclusion and should accelerate the process of change;
- Promote coordination between public institutions and the traditional authorities of indigenous peoples. The formation of public-indigenous bodies allows the dialogue and co-design processes to be sustained beyond the project;
- The empowerment of communities contributes to giving continuity to processes and actions beyond changes in governments.

Lessons on [adapting Free, Prior, and Informed Consent \(FPIC\) to Local Contexts in REDD+ in three experiments in Vietnam](#) evidenced that FPIC has evolved gradually, and is the result of both hard and soft legal norms at international and national levels. Yet, there is a gap between international norms and national practice, due to specific political and economic conditions in each country. How FPIC is translated on the ground depends on political views, government interests, and the local governments' understanding of FPIC. The experience in Vietnam has shown that integrating REDD+ with human rights obligations would avoid duplicating efforts and exploit the consensus that already underpins existing human rights instruments. The findings show that framing FPIC within the human rights and grassroots regulations will provide the added benefit of institutional support to better implement and enforce FPIC. One important lesson emerging from this assessment is that political regimes (e.g., Vietnam's command and control system) may undermine the implementation of FPIC on the ground if interpretations of the elements "free", "prior", and "informed consent" do not adhere to the intentions of FPIC. The unwillingness of the political elite to transfer decision-making power from state to non-state actors has strong implications for access to and control over resources and the understanding of what FPIC means. FPIC should also be treated as a learning process; the information provided should be useful for participants and the ways information is provided should be accommodated with adequate venues and accountable and independent facilitators. Sufficient timing and budget is also required for careful implementation. Consultations take place within a highly dynamic and complex political and socioeconomic context. The assessment of different cases in Vietnam, also shows that no single approach will fit all situations. Informing local communities about REDD+ is a complex and challenging task because of the nature and impacts of REDD+ itself, the range of knowledge needed to respond to it, and the ability of facilitators to ensure that learning processes are both dynamic and accountable. Given the diversity of local socioeconomic settings, FPIC guidelines need to be flexible enough to be adaptable to national and local contexts, where legislation must acknowledge that FPIC is an adaptive learning process focused on enhancing stakeholders' engagement in REDD+.

## List of knowledge resources developed by IFAD

- [Digital toolbox: Sustainable and resilient Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems for improved nutrition](#) (2022)
- [Policy brief: Free, Prior and Informed Consent \(FPIC\) - Indigenous peoples-driven development pathways](#) (2022)
- [How to do note: Seeking, free, prior and informed consent in IFAD investment projects](#) (update, 2021)
- [IFAD and Slow Food](#) (2021, 2016)
- [Good practices in IFAD's engagement with indigenous peoples](#) (2021)
- [Participatory Guarantee System case study report](#) (2020)
- [Policy brief: Partnering with indigenous peoples for the SDGs](#) (2019)
- [The Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility \(IPAF\) - Assessment of the performance of the Fourth IPAF cycle](#) (2019)
- [Supporting nutrition-sensitive agriculture through neglected and underutilized species](#) (2019)
- [Glossary for Indigenous People](#) (2nd edition, 2019)
- [Indigenous peoples' collective rights to lands, territories and natural resources](#) (2018)
- [Toolkit: Engaging with pastoralists – a holistic development approach](#) (2018)
- [A decade of IFAD's engagement with indigenous peoples](#) (2017)
- [The Traditional Knowledge Advantage Indigenous peoples' knowledge in climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies](#) (2016)
- [Performance of IPAF small projects Desk review](#) (2015)
- [Seeds of innovation: Tapping into the knowledge of indigenous peoples](#) (2015)
- [Managing forests, sustaining lives, improving livelihoods of indigenous peoples and ethnic groups in the Mekong region, Asia](#) (2013)
- [Findings of four case studies conducted by indigenous people on IFAD-funded projects in Asia and the Pacific - a Regional Overview](#) (2013)
- [Indigenous peoples - valuing, respecting and supporting diversity](#) (2012)
- [Performance of IPAF small projects: Desk review](#) (2011)
- [Learning by working together - Microprojects financed through the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility \(IPAF\)](#) (2010)
- [Custodians of culture and biodiversity: Indigenous peoples take charge of their challenges and opportunities](#) (2008)

### Proceedings of the global meetings of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD

- [Fifth global meeting](#) (2021)
- [Fourth global meeting](#) (2019)
- [Third global meeting](#) (2017)
- [Second global meeting](#) (2015)
- [First global meeting](#) (2013)

### Country Technical Notes on Indigenous Peoples' Issues

Asia and the Pacific

[Bangladesh](#) | [Cambodia](#) | [India](#) | [Indonesia](#) | [Lao](#) | [Nepal](#) | [Pakistan](#) | [Philippines](#) | [Viet Nam](#)

East and Southern Africa

[Burundi](#) | [Kenya](#) | [Tanzania](#)

Latin America and the Caribbean

[Argentina](#) (Spanish) | [Belize](#) (English) | [Bolivia](#) (Spanish) | [Brazil](#) (Spanish) | [Chile](#) (Spanish) | [Colombia](#) (Spanish) | [Costa Rica](#) (Spanish) | [Ecuador](#) (Spanish) | [El Salvador](#) (Spanish) | [Guatemala](#) (Spanish) | [Guyana](#) (English) | [Honduras](#) (Spanish) | [Mexico](#) (Spanish) | [Nicaragua](#) (Spanish) | [Panama](#) (Spanish) | [Paraguay](#) (Spanish) | [Peru](#) (Spanish) | [Venezuela](#) (Spanish)

West and Central Africa

[Democratic Republic of the Congo](#) | [Niger](#) (French) | [Republic of Congo](#)



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