



## TWENTY YEARS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ASSISTANCE FACILITY (IPAF)

### Lessons learned from Indigenous Peoples-led solutions

8 October 2026, 15:00-17:00 (Rome time)

Oval Conference Room in IFAD HQ (Virtual/Hybrid)

## Background

For more than 40 years, IFAD has supported programmes and projects in areas home to Indigenous Peoples through its targeted approach to rural development. Over the past decade, approximately 30 per cent of IFAD's lending programme has supported development initiatives involving Indigenous Peoples in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Much of this support has focused on strengthening livelihoods and institutions, while empowering Indigenous Peoples to influence the decisions that affect their lives. In September 2009, IFAD's Executive Board approved the [Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples](#), which was updated in 2022.

In 2006, IFAD's Executive Board approved the transfer to IFAD of a dedicated facility that had been established by the World Bank, recognizing IFAD's experience and expertise in Indigenous Peoples' issues. The objective of the [Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility \(IPAF\)](#) is to build direct partnerships with Indigenous Peoples and their communities, enabling them to design and implement grassroots development projects based on their own priorities and perspectives. IPAF-supported projects build on Indigenous Peoples' cultures, identities, knowledge systems and natural resources to foster self-determined development within the framework of the UN Declaration.

IPAF has demonstrated the value of Indigenous-led financing, supporting 212 projects across more than 48 countries through six funding cycles and delivering tangible results in community resilience, agroecological production, Indigenous women's empowerment, territorial governance, rights advocacy, and ecosystem conservation. These outcomes have been driven by IPAF's distinctive model, which places Indigenous Peoples at the centre of governance, decision-making and implementation, while combining Indigenous leadership with IFAD's fiduciary oversight and technical support to ensure transparency and direct access to resources. The seventh IPAF cycle will further strengthen this approach by exclusively supporting Indigenous Peoples' organizations. At the same time, the nearly 5,000 applications received from more than 90 countries since 2007, of which only 5 per cent could be funded, highlight the significant unmet demand for direct-access financing. This demand persists despite Indigenous Peoples' critical contributions to biodiversity conservation and climate resilience, as they continue to receive less than 1 per cent of global climate finance and face barriers posed by complex and often inaccessible funding mechanisms. In this context, IFAD13 reaffirmed its commitment to replenishing IPAF and expanding investments benefiting Indigenous Peoples, while IFAD14 continues to deepen support for Indigenous Peoples' leadership, resilience and inclusion across IFAD's portfolio.

## Agenda

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| <b>Moderator:</b> Mr Juan Carlos Mendoza, Director, Environment, Climate and Peoples Division, IFAD |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 15:00- 15:05<br>5 minutes                                                                           | <b>Welcome Remarks:</b><br><br>H.E. Francisco J.Ameglio S., Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Panama to IFAD                                                                                                                           |
| 15:05- 15:10<br>5 minutes                                                                           | <b>Opening Remarks:</b><br><br>Ms Pieterneel Boogaard, Managing Director, Office of Technical Delivery, IFAD                                                                                                                                                 |
| 15:10- 15:20<br>10 minutes                                                                          | <b>Overview of the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (IPAF):</b><br><br>IPAF Secretariat: Ms Ilaria Firmian, Senior Technical Specialist Indigenous Peoples, IFAD                                                                                       |
| 15:20- 15:30<br>10 minutes                                                                          | <b>The relevance of IPAF as a mechanism for direct financing to Indigenous Peoples' Organizations:</b><br><br>Ms Myrna Cunningham, former IPAF Board member                                                                                                  |
| 15:30 – 15:40<br>10 minutes                                                                         | <b>Video:</b><br><br><i>"IPAF - Putting Indigenous Peoples at the heart of our projects"</i>                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 15:40- 16:25<br>45 minutes                                                                          | <b>Panel session with:</b><br><br>Ms Jacqueline Macharia, Africa IPAF Coordinator, Samburu Women Trust<br><br>Mr Oliver Page, Country Director Grenada, Honduras, Panama and Nicaragua, IFAD and IPAF Board member<br><br>Representatives from IPAF projects |
| 16:25-16:50<br>25 minutes                                                                           | <b>Q&amp;A session</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 16:50- 17:00<br>10 minutes                                                                          | <b>Closing remarks:</b><br><br>Mr Tomas Duncan Jurado, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Panama to IFAD                                                                                                                                     |