

22nd Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)

Statement of the International Fund for Agricultural Development ([IFAD](#))

Agenda Item 4

Discussion on the theme “Discussion on the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights), with reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

Delivered by:

**Ilaria Firmian, Senior Technical Specialist, Indigenous Peoples and Tribal Issues
Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division
Strategy and Knowledge Department**

20 April 2023

UHHQ, NY

Distinguished Members of the Permanent Forum, Representatives of Indigenous Peoples, Colleagues

On behalf of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), I wish to thank this Forum for acknowledging IFAD's progress in its partnership with Indigenous Peoples.

- For over two decades, IFAD has been working closely with Indigenous Peoples and their organizations to build trustful partnership. IFAD recognizes and celebrates the contribution of Indigenous Peoples to sustainable development and supports their well-being and the use of traditional knowledge and practices, as well as the conservation of cultural heritage, biodiversity, and natural resources.
- In 2022, the Forum exhorted IFAD to “*continue its efforts in operationalizing the principle of free, prior and informed consent*” and we are pleased to inform that IFAD, with financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), is **operationalizing FPIC in its projects**, particularly through the involvement of indigenous consultants in project design.
- Specifically, through this initiative, IFAD has hired indigenous experts to facilitate the FPIC process and develop Indigenous Peoples plans and planning frameworks to comply with IFAD's

Safeguard requirements, as well as with the requirements of the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility. This process aims at ensuring that FPIC is implemented and that indigenous visions, aspirations and knowledge are embedded in IFAD projects implemented in areas home to Indigenous Peoples.

- The Fund has learned that FPIC is a tool to enhance community ownership, results and sustainability and remains committed to working with Indigenous Peoples to promote their right to self-determination, and their equitable access to land territories and resources, and to value their knowledge and practice as critical components of sustainable development.
- In 2022, through a participatory mechanism led by the members of the steering committee of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD, IFAD has also updated its [Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples](#).
- The updated Policy brings a paradigm shift through which IFAD works with Indigenous Peoples as equal partners who contribute to co-creating strategies and designing and monitoring investments to improve their livelihoods based on their own perspectives. At the core of the Policy lies IFAD's commitment to finance programmes and projects that build on the identity, culture and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples.

- IFAD is also facilitating direct access to funding for Indigenous Peoples' communities and organizations through the [Indigenous Peoples' Assistance Facility](#) which, over the past 16 years, has proven its capacity to foster self-driven development.

IFAD will continue to prioritize Indigenous Peoples in its programming and investments, and to support their participation in decision-making processes in order to achieve the SDGs and build a more just and sustainable future for all.

Thank you very much for your attention.