

IFAD Indigenous Peoples Awards 2021



Investing in rural people

BEST PERFORMING IFAD-FUNDED PROJECT

Peru

Rural development: Public services improvement for sustainable territorial development in the Apurímac, Ene and Mantaro river basins (PDTS-VRAEM)

PDTS-VRAEM is empowering 2,035 indigenous families to improve their well-being, income and food security through self-driven development that builds on their identity and culture. The project has obtained the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples involved, which is a fundamental step in their empowerment.

More than 200 community territorial development plans and life plans have been elaborated to reflect priorities that were identified by indigenous peoples and their organizations in coordination with the Ministry of Culture, local governments and other strategic actors.



The *Plan de Vida comunal* draws on indigenous knowledge used in traditional medicine to develop gardens that grow medicinal plants.

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This approach is designed to secure the sustainability and legitimacy of the project. PDTS-VRAEM also makes use of “talking maps” to illustrate a journey through the past, the present and the future (representing the desired development of the community). The maps are a visual means of contributing to the self-driven development of indigenous peoples.

Through inter-family competitions, the project supports local income-generating activities and the development of sustainable rural enterprises, while promoting access to diverse and nutritious food. Priority is also given to the empowerment of indigenous women and

youth, for example in the establishment of schools where learning is based on the experience and knowledge shared by community members, and in building capacity to influence policy dialogue. In addition, indigenous women have an opportunity to increase their resilience to shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic thanks to improved access to saving accounts and microinsurance.

Indigenous knowledge is applied in the adoption of native species that contribute to biodiversity conservation and the introduction of communal gardens with medicinal plants that support the revitalization of traditional medicine.

Through the *Plan de Vida comunal*, native cocoa is managed productively, with pruning and effective pest control.

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Read more about the project: <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/operations/project/id/2000000897>





BEST PERFORMING IPAF-FUNDED PROJECT

Cameroon

Gender and climate change community-based adaptation, through conservation of the environment and drilling of a borehole equipped with a solar-powered pump

The project is implemented by the African Indigenous Women Organisation – Central African Network (AIWO-CAN). It was designed only after obtaining the free, prior and informed consent of the communities involved. The project adopts a unique multidimensional approach that links socio-economic and environmental aspects and is aimed at: (a) empowering young women and girls from Mbororo communities to be active participants in community development activities and environmental management; (b) training women's groups in climate adaptation and mitigation through energy-efficient conservation methods and techniques; (c) drilling of a borehole equipped with solar-powered pumps; and (d) developing a tree nursery in the villages to mitigate the effects of climate change and combat desertification.

In addition, the project specifically addresses gender-based discrimination against indigenous women and girls in climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, including the root causes of gender inequalities such as prevailing social norms. It achieves this by empowering women and girls through income-generating activities (microcredit), entrepreneurial skills (vocational training) and participation in decision-making processes (water management committee), while building on the inter-generational transfer of indigenous knowledge and skills.

Results achieved by the project include increased access to safe drinking water and an 80 per cent decrease in waterborne diseases. Household firewood consumption has decreased by 70 per cent, reducing pressure on local forests, and exposure to pulmonary infections has significantly reduced. Following the success of the project, the Mbororo women and girls involved are now being invited by neighbouring communities to share their knowledge on energy-efficient clay stoves and fireless cooking bags.



Indigenous women and girls with fireless cooking bags they produced at a training workshop.

©AIWO-CAN

Women of the Didango community draw on their indigenous knowledge to construct an improved, energy-efficient clay stove.

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Read more about IPAF-funded projects: <https://www.ifad.org/ipaf>

BEST PERFORMING NON-IFAD-FUNDED PROJECT

India

No one shall be left behind initiative: Biodiversity for food, nutrition and energy security for 3,000 households in Meghalaya and Nagaland

The goal of the project, implemented by the North East Slow Food and Agrobiodiversity Society (NESFAS), is to enhance indigenous food systems to improve the nutrition, food security and sustainable livelihoods of 130 remote indigenous communities in Meghalaya and Nagaland, with a special focus on youth, adolescent girls, women's groups and community elders.

Indigenous communities consider solidarity and their relationship with the land as important drivers of well-being. The project emphasizes such connections by encouraging and strengthening their indigenous food systems, which are based on community cooperation and ecological

approaches. In total, 365 micronutrient-rich and climate-resilient species were prioritized for cultivation through a participatory mapping exercise conducted in 32 indigenous communities.

Village food festivals are held to encourage consumption of locally available, diverse and nutrient-rich food, with recipes being developed jointly by chefs and community cooks. The government is running a midday meals programme that focuses on incorporating local agrobiodiversity into the diet of schoolchildren.

Farmers groups have been organized into 45 participatory guarantee groups

to collectively ensure sustainable agricultural practices and protect indigenous food systems. Participating communities have formed 24 agroecology learning centres to promote agroecological practices that contribute to biodiversity and nutritious food.

Indigenous women are strongly encouraged to take part in the project, given their role as custodians of indigenous food systems and agrobiodiversity. Specific initiatives support the empowerment of indigenous women, such as the 1,000 Days campaign for young indigenous mothers. Several initiatives are centred on young people, such as Youth for Indigenous Food Systems, which provides a platform for spreading the message about the importance of agrobiodiversity and indigenous food systems.

No Woman, No "Krai". Kong Bibiana Rane, a Khasi custodian farmer and local leader, rediscovered millet seeds at a food festival and helped revive traditional millet (Krai in Khasi) in neighbouring communities.

©Raisa Daimary, NESFAS

Read more about the project: www.nesfas.in



Genous Chef Joel Basumatari from Nagaland demonstrates to community cooks how local produce can be made tasty, nutritious and attractive as part of a nutrition campaign for mid-day meal schemes at government schools.






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The IFAD Indigenous Peoples Awards recognize the efforts and achievements of development projects that successfully engage with indigenous peoples living in rural areas. The awards are announced every two years during the global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD. The initiative contributes to promoting best practices in engagement, sharing knowledge and lessons learned, and identifying opportunities to replicate and scale up results.



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