

31 October 2023

Open letter from Farmers' Organizations, Indigenous Peoples and Youth on IFAD13

Excellencies,

We, the representatives of the Steering Committee of the Indigenous Peoples Forum at IFAD, the Global Steering Committee of the Farmers' Forum and IFAD's Youth Grassroots Approach, are writing to express our unwavering support for IFAD and its pledge to leave no one behind. As stakeholders who are deeply committed to rural development, poverty eradication and sustainable food systems, we recognize the crucial role that IFAD plays in advancing these objectives. We therefore call upon all governments and partners to step up efforts in 2023 and increase their funding to IFAD to support a successful outcome of the Consultation on the Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD13).

IFAD's dedication to investing in rural development and supporting farmers in the world's poorest countries has yielded commendable results. We have witnessed first-hand how IFAD's work positively impacts the lives of millions of rural communities and family farmers. Through effective collaboration with farmers' organizations and engagement with Indigenous Peoples and youth, IFAD has facilitated transformative change, empowered rural people to take charge of their own development and enhanced the livelihoods of the most marginalized communities.

During the IFAD13 Consultation, IFAD has been engaging closely with us to ensure that our priorities are heard and that the collaboration between IFAD and Indigenous Peoples, farmers' organizations and youth can grow even tighter in the years to come. We appreciate IFAD's efforts to involve us actively in the Consultation processes and value the opportunity to contribute our perspectives and expertise. We wholeheartedly support IFAD's call to continue its core mission during IFAD13 – i.e. to equip rural people and small-scale producers with the necessary tools, resources and knowledge to realize lasting solutions and transform local food systems for sustainable change. IFAD's focus on empowering the most marginalized communities is aligned with our shared vision of inclusive and equitable development.

Furthermore, we commend IFAD's ambition to expand its work with the private sector, and we welcome the Fund's unique approach to considering our members as part of this invaluable cluster, which can unlock innovative solutions, mobilize additional resources and create sustainable market opportunities for small-scale producers. In the face of the ongoing climate crisis and biodiversity loss, we praise IFAD's leadership for channelling increasing financing to climate- and biodiversity-related projects. Rural communities, especially Indigenous Peoples' and farming communities, are among the most affected by environmental degradation and changing climatic patterns. It is imperative to invest in climate-resilient agriculture, sustainable natural resource management and ecosystem restoration to secure the livelihoods and food security of our communities globally. Moreover, we recognize the crucial role that IFAD can play in addressing drivers and impacts of fragility. Rural communities in such contexts face immense challenges, including food insecurity, displacement and limited access to basic services.

We, as Indigenous Peoples, firmly believe in the preservation and recognition of our food systems and traditional knowledge. IFAD has been a trusted partner of Indigenous Peoples for over 40 years, promoting sustainable self-driven development and supporting the aspirations of Indigenous Peoples to strengthen our culture, identity, knowledge, natural resources, and intellectual property and human rights. During the IFAD13 period, we will work with IFAD to implement its updated Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples, including by increasing investments to benefit 11 million Indigenous People by 2032.

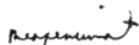
As farmers' organizations, we recognize that farmers, including fishers and pastoralists, are essential solution-providers in achieving IFAD's mission. We call upon Member States to reinforce the farmer-driven approach advocated by IFAD. This entails integrating the specific needs and priorities of farmers' organizations into IFAD's country programmes, engaging with farmers' organizations throughout the programme cycle to support family farming, climate-resilient agriculture and the empowerment of women and young farmers.

We, as the rural youth, value IFAD's commitment to engaging and partnering with young people as active participants in shaping the future. By prioritizing investments in human capital, enterprise acceleration, green jobs within rural landscapes and targeted interventions for youth affected by fragility and conflicts, Member States can unleash the potential of young people as catalysts for sustainable development. We look forward to working ever more closely with IFAD through its Youth Grassroots Approach to strengthen skills and capacity, ensure our active involvement in IFAD projects and decision-making processes and foster youth-led initiatives. IFAD's support for such youth-led networks, associations and collectives is crucial to enable us to take charge of our future.

We strongly believe that by supporting IFAD and its Thirteenth Replenishment, Member States can contribute to the realization of inclusive, sustainable and resilient food systems. We Indigenous Peoples, farmers' organizations and youth stand ready to collaborate closely with IFAD and Member States to ensure that our collective efforts lead to tangible and transformative outcomes for the most marginalized communities.

We applaud the announcements already made by some of the world's poorest countries, including Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Niger and South Sudan, that have maintained or increased their contributions, in recognition of the importance of their partnership with IFAD in achieving their development ambitions. We urge all IFAD Member States to follow their example and to increase their contributions to support a programme of work of at least US\$10 billion, while ensuring a strong focus on the world's farmers and small-scale producers, Indigenous Peoples and rural young people.

We look forward to your continued support and commitment to IFAD's important work!



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