IFAD and Sweden share a vision of a world without poverty and hunger and a commitment to support small-scale farmers to improve their livelihoods through the establishment of inclusive, resilient and sustainable food systems. IFAD focuses exclusively on poverty reduction in rural areas, where 80 per cent of the world’s poorest people live. IFAD’s core resources are invested entirely in low-income and lower-middle-income countries to help rural women and men produce more food and start businesses, cope with climate change, sustainably manage natural resources and increase biodiversity, and participate actively in decisions that affect their lives.

Since IFAD was established, Sweden has contributed US$561 million to the Fund’s core budget. With this core support, IFAD empowers 120 million rural people every year, creating opportunities so that they can thrive in their own communities and are not forced to migrate. Through the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), Sweden supports IFAD’s crucial work on remittances, indigenous people’s empowerment and resilience-building.

Sweden is a founding member of IFAD and the Fund was led by a Swedish President from 2001 to 2009. Sweden is one of the 36 Members of IFAD’s Executive Board, through which it provides strong strategic leadership on setting an ambitious climate agenda and guiding innovative financial processes. During the IFAD12 replenishment campaign, Sweden played a key role and increased its contribution by 60 per cent compared with its initial pledge for IFAD11 (2019-2021), thus contributing to the most successful replenishment in the history of the Fund.
Every US$1 million Sweden contributes, combined with domestic and international cofinancing and reflows on IFAD’s portfolio, results in a US$6 million investment by IFAD that strengthens livelihoods and economic opportunities for poor rural people. During IFAD11, beneficiary incomes were 23 per cent higher than they would have been without IFAD projects.

HELPING SMALLHOLDERS ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND MANAGE CLIMATE RISKS

Sweden recognizes IFAD’s ability to channel climate finance to smallholder farmers to reduce their exposure to the effects of climate change and build their resilience. With contributions of US$21.6 million to the three phases of IFAD’s Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP); US$87.4 million core funding to IFAD12 – with 40 per cent invested in climate actions; US$13 million climate financing under IFAD11; and US$6 million in supplementary funds to support poor rural households to manage climate risks, Sweden has contributed to strengthening the climate resilience of more than 30 million rural people.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN

On average, women comprise 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries. Recognizing women’s central role in rural transformation, IFAD has increased its target for gender-transformative projects from 25 per cent in IFAD11 to 35 per cent in IFAD12. Women account for 51 per cent of total beneficiaries IFAD reaches through core resources.

Thanks to support from the Swedish International Development Agency, in 2014 the United Nations Rome-based agencies and UN Women launched the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women (JP RWEE). This initiative builds on each agency’s strengths to achieve lasting improvements for women in rural areas of Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda. To date, the JP RWEE has supported over 75,000 rural women and 400,000 households.

SUPPORTING THE LIVELIHOODS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Through support from the Swedish International Development Agency, Sweden has championed IFAD’s Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (IPAF). IPAF is an innovative funding instrument that indigenous peoples’ communities can access to find their own solutions to the challenges they face. It supports the aspirations of indigenous peoples by funding small projects that build on their culture, identity, knowledge, natural resources, intellectual property and human rights. Since 2007, indigenous peoples’ communities and their organizations in 90 countries have submitted more than 4,200 project proposals. Some 159 projects have been financed through IPAF in more than 45 countries.