



# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' FORUM AT IFAD

**10**  
years

Summary report from the regional consultation meetings held in preparation for the fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD

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**Introduction.** In late 2020, regional and subregional consultation meetings in preparation for the fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD were held in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pacific. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Steering Committee of the Forum decided to conduct all the meetings virtually.

The virtual format provided an opportunity to broaden the participation and engagement of indigenous peoples, bringing together over 540 representatives of indigenous peoples' organizations, institutions and communities; representatives from IFAD-funded projects; members of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues; partners of the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (IPAF) and participants from IPAF-funded projects; IFAD staff; and development partners (as observers);

All consultation meetings were organized by indigenous organizations (see box) in cooperation with IFAD Country Offices and IFAD staff, and the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.

The objectives of the meetings were to:

- exchange experiences and good practices on the overall theme of the Forum: “The value of indigenous food systems: resilience in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic”;
- identify the challenges that indigenous peoples and their livelihoods are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- review the progress made in implementing the recommendations and regional action plans agreed during the fourth global meeting of the Forum in 2019;
- identify opportunities to strengthen good practices as sustainable solutions;
- analyse and formulate action-oriented recommendations on the theme of the Forum and draft new regional action plans to be finalized during the global meeting of the Forum;
- identify possible contributions and key messages from indigenous peoples to the forthcoming United Nations Food Systems Summit.

### The consultation meetings

**Africa** (organized by the Mainyoto Pastoralist Integrated Development Organization, **MPIDO**)

- *Two regional meetings:* covering English- and French-speaking countries on 5 and 7 November 2020, respectively

**Asia** (organized by the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, **AIPP**)

- *One regional meeting:* 26 November 2020
- *Three subregional meetings:* South East Asia, South Asia, Mekong region (18-20 November 2020)
- *One IPAF-related meeting:* 17 November 2020

**Latin America and the Caribbean** (organized by the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, **FILAC**)

- *One regional meeting:* 22 October 2020
- *Five subregional meetings:* Caribbean, Central America, Andean region, Amazon region, Southern Cone (5-15 October 2020)

**Pacific** (organized by Partners in Community Development Fiji, **PCDF**)

- *One regional meeting:* 14-16 October 2020

Participants also prepared for the regional participation in the fifth global meeting of the Forum, scheduled to take place online in February 2021, in conjunction with the forty-fourth session of IFAD's Governing Council.

In addition, they reviewed the presentation of the candidate proposals for the Indigenous Peoples Awards launched by IFAD in 2020 to recognize the efforts and achievements of development projects that successfully engage with indigenous peoples or ethnic minorities living in rural areas.

**Common issues emerging from the meetings.** From their different perspectives, participants in the regional consultation meetings identified a series of issues and recommendations to be further discussed at the 2021 global meeting.

In particular, they shared the challenges faced by indigenous peoples during the COVID-19 pandemic and highlighted how it is dramatically affecting their livelihoods, disrupting their economy, causing loss of income for indigenous families, and endangering the food and nutrition security of their communities.

The importance of supporting indigenous farming, production practices and food systems was emphasized as key to contributing to the well-being of indigenous communities, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and overall sustainable development.

Concerning *IFAD strategies, policies and operations*, participants reiterated the need for IFAD to enhance the engagement of indigenous peoples at country level and to guarantee their systematic and active participation in the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of projects and strategies. Systematic consultations of indigenous peoples and their organizations, the full application of free, prior and informed consent, and the establishment of quotas to hire indigenous consultants with the appropriate knowledge to engage with indigenous communities were highlighted as key tools to strengthen the participation of indigenous peoples and their organizations in IFAD operations at all levels.

Requests were made to IFAD to reaffirm its commitment to indigenous peoples, including by increasing funding for the IPAF and supporting the integration of representatives from indigenous peoples' organizations into the advisory committee of the Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme.

Participants underscored the importance of enhancing knowledge generation and sharing on and among indigenous peoples (e.g. through South-South Cooperation and research) and of supporting policy processes and dialogue at the national level regarding issues of relevance to indigenous peoples, such as land and natural resources access and management.

In relation to the *overall theme of the 2021 Indigenous Peoples' Forum*, the main recommendations emerging from the regional meetings included the following:

- Promote organic production, artisanal fisheries and harvesting, and preserve indigenous peoples' traditional agricultural practices in order to ensure the food and nutrition security of their communities, including by mobilizing the necessary financial, human and technical resources. Particularly encourage the engagement and participation of women and youth in these activities as key sources of livelihoods and to prevent youth migration from communities.
- Facilitate the marketing of indigenous products by supporting community-based social enterprises and economic initiatives of indigenous peoples (including eco-tourism), and improving access to market information, infrastructure , and post-harvest technology.
- Rescue native seeds that are resistant to disease and climate change, and support the creation of local indigenous seeds banks.
- Recover and strengthen the production of traditional medicines, seeds, crops and indigenous foods with high nutritional potential (e.g. chaya, ghongi, izaño, quinoa, llama meat, moringa, wild honey) and facilitate the distribution of indigenous foods and products in school canteens, with the ultimate aim to strengthen the food and nutrition security of indigenous peoples based on their knowledge, traditional practices and expertise.
- Promote knowledge generation and sharing on indigenous food systems and traditional farming practices, with special attention to inter-generational exchange of knowledge and experiences through: studies and research; food/culinary fairs and festivals; the documentation of indigenous recipes and traditional medicines; and the creation of digital knowledge management platforms. Engage appropriate partner institutions/agencies to support these processes.
- Enhance and ensure the access to and use of ICT for indigenous peoples for weather advisories, crop planning, pest and disease management, and documentation and dissemination of best practices, in order to strengthen the resilience of indigenous food systems.
- Strengthen the technical and management capacities of indigenous organizations, institutions and communities, with a focus on youth and women.
- Support indigenous peoples to access and manage lands, water, territories and natural resources, including through policy dialogue and advocacy. In particular, promote the recovery of water management and administration systems for human consumption and irrigation in indigenous communities, the restoration of forests to preserve traditional practices, and the protection and management of community-based forests.
- Support and facilitate policy processes and dialogue at the national level between indigenous peoples, governments and the United Nations system on issues of relevance to indigenous peoples.

Recommendations specific to each region were formulated during the consultation meetings and can be found in the respective regional consultation meeting reports.