FIFTH GLOBAL MEETING OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES’ FORUM AT IFAD

2, 3, 4 and 15 February 2021
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FIFTH GLOBAL MEETING OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES’ FORUM AT IFAD

In conjunction with the forty-fourth session of the IFAD Governing Council

Theme: The value of indigenous food systems – resilience in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

2, 3, 4 and 15 February 2021
# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACCESOS</td>
<td>Economic Inclusion Programme for Families and Rural Communities in Bolivia</td>
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<td>ACUA</td>
<td>Foundation Afro Cultural Assets</td>
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<td>AIPP</td>
<td>Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact</td>
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<td>ASAP+</td>
<td>Enhanced Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme</td>
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<td>CADPI</td>
<td>Centro para la Autonomía y el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas</td>
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<td>CHRO</td>
<td>Chin Human Rights Organization</td>
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<td>CICA</td>
<td>Indigenous Council of Central America</td>
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<td>CIPO</td>
<td>Cambodia Indigenous Peoples Organization</td>
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<td>ECLAC</td>
<td>Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
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<td>FILAC</td>
<td>Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
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<td>FPIC</td>
<td>Free, prior and informed consent</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<td>FSS</td>
<td>Food Systems Summit</td>
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<td>GIYC</td>
<td>Global Indigenous Youth Caucus</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and communication technology</td>
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<td>IDIL</td>
<td>International Decade of Indigenous Languages</td>
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<td>ILC</td>
<td>International Land Coalition</td>
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<td>IPAF</td>
<td>Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility</td>
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<td>ITM</td>
<td>Indigenous Terra Madre</td>
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<td>IWGIA</td>
<td>International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs</td>
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<td>MPIDO</td>
<td>Mainyoto Pastoralist Integrated Development Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAAF</td>
<td>Native American Agriculture Fund</td>
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<td>NESFAS</td>
<td>North East Slow Food and Agrobiodiversity Society</td>
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<td>PCDF</td>
<td>Partners in Community Development Fiji</td>
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<td>PDTS-VRAEM</td>
<td>Rural development: Public services improvement for sustainable territorial development in the Apurímac, Ene and Mantaro river basin</td>
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<td>PROECOSOCIAL</td>
<td>Social Economy: Territory and Inclusion Project</td>
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<td>SC</td>
<td>Steering committee</td>
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<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goal</td>
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<td>Sida</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>UNPFII</td>
<td>United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues</td>
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<td>USAC</td>
<td>Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala</td>
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BACKGROUND

The Indigenous Peoples’ Forum at IFAD was established in 2011 as a permanent process of consultation and dialogue between representatives of indigenous peoples’ institutions and organizations, IFAD and governments.

The global meeting of the Forum convenes every second February in conjunction with the Governing Council of IFAD, the Fund’s main decision-making body. A series of regional consultations lead up to each global meeting, ensuring that the Forum reflects the diversity of perspectives and recommendations gathered from indigenous peoples around the world.

The overall process is guided by a steering committee (SC) composed of representatives of indigenous peoples’ organizations from the different regions, representatives of indigenous youth (one per region), the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (IPAF) Board, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and IFAD.

A unique process within the United Nations (UN) system, the Forum aims to improve IFAD’s accountability, enhance its development effectiveness and exercise its leadership among development organizations. It enables participants to assess IFAD’s engagement with indigenous peoples, consult on rural development and poverty reduction, and promote the participation of indigenous peoples’ organizations in IFAD’s operations at the country, regional and international levels. These activities help IFAD to implement its Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples and translate the policy’s principles into action on the ground.

Recommendations of the 2019 Forum

At the last global meeting of the Forum, held in 2019, indigenous peoples’ representatives called upon IFAD to support initiatives that: recognize and protect their rights through a holistic approach; value their knowledge; strengthen their participation in IFAD’s project cycles; integrate specific indicators of their well-being into monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems; and ensure that free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) is sought in IFAD-supported projects. During that global meeting, it was also recommended that IFAD prioritize support to indigenous peoples in securing their lands, territories and resources, address the gaps in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets for indigenous peoples, increase investments to support capacity-building of indigenous peoples’ organizations and communities, and facilitate policy dialogue at the national level. These recommendations are particularly relevant in the context of the implementation of the IFAD Strategic Framework 2016–2025, which – in line with the 2030 Agenda and its principle of leaving no one behind – reaffirms IFAD’s commitment to indigenous peoples’ self-driven development.

The challenges indigenous peoples continue to face today

After five years of SDG implementation, indigenous peoples across the globe have not just been left behind but have been pushed further behind. This is demonstrated
by the continuing widespread grabbing of indigenous peoples’ lands and resources, criminalization of indigenous peoples, increasing poverty and hunger, loss of livelihoods and cultural heritage, increased violence against indigenous women and girls, and rising inequality.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on indigenous peoples

The COVID-19 pandemic is further increasing existing vulnerabilities and exacerbating underlying structural inequalities and pervasive discrimination. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased existing hardships for indigenous peoples in terms of their access to food and safe water and has disrupted their local and traditional economies. As lockdowns continue in numerous countries, indigenous communities whose land rights are denied or who do not have self-determination on their territories are not able to exercise control over their food production, thus losing their livelihoods and reducing their ability to sustain themselves. The closure of local markets has further prevented the sale and purchase of food and the bartering of first-necessity items has deprived many indigenous families of disposable income.

Indigenous peoples are also facing the targeting of their leaders and activists under cover of the disarray or the scaling up of emergency measures. The lack of access to communication and information further increases the risk of human rights violations.

The lack of disaggregated data relative to indigenous peoples’ experiences with COVID-19, combined with the absence of adequate social services in indigenous communities, constitutes another challenge, resulting in indigenous peoples being left behind in prevention and protection measures as well as in care programmes in many countries.

Indigenous peoples as change agents

Nevertheless, indigenous peoples have applied their own solutions to cope with the pandemic. Their lifestyle, food systems, culture and connection to their lands have been a great source of resilience in the face of COVID-19. They have acted using their own traditional knowledge and practices, including voluntary isolation and sealing off their territories, as well as using preventive care measures in their own languages, in order to keep their communities alive.

As stated by the President of IFAD, indigenous peoples and their unique knowledge are essential to addressing the COVID-19 outbreak. In particular, indigenous peoples from all over the world have unique food systems connected to sustainable livelihood practices and adapted to the specific ecosystems of territories. Over generations, these livelihoods have ensured the food sovereignty and well-being of indigenous communities and contributed to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. Indigenous food systems offer a wealth of knowledge and experience that – if adequately supported – can contribute to the well-being of all humankind.

In 2021, a United Nations Food Systems Summit (FSS) was convened, providing a unique opportunity for global mobilization to transform the way the world produces and consumes food. It was also an opportunity to showcase the importance
of indigenous food systems, their value in terms of sustainability, equity and food security, and their connection with indigenous peoples’ culture, natural resources, energy, economy and politics.

It is in this particular context – presenting challenges but also opportunities for change – that the fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum explored new avenues for partnerships between IFAD and indigenous peoples.

PREPARATION OF THE 2021 GLOBAL MEETING OF THE FORUM: THE REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL CONSULTATION MEETINGS

In late 2020, regional and subregional consultation meetings were held in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pacific in preparation for the fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum at IFAD.

Being virtual, the meetings 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 UNPFII; partners of the IPAF and participants from IPAF-funded projects; IFAD staff; and development partners (as observers).

All consultation meetings were organized by indigenous organizations (see box 1) in cooperation with IFAD Country Offices and IFAD staff, and the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA).

Within the thematic focus of the Forum, the objectives of the meetings were to: (i) exchange knowledge, experiences and good practices related to the main theme of the Forum; (ii) identify challenges to and opportunities for supporting indigenous peoples and their livelihoods during the COVID-19 pandemic; (iii) formulate action-oriented recommendations to enhance the impact of IFAD’s support to indigenous peoples; and (iv) discuss and agree upon possible contributions from indigenous peoples to the FSS.

The meetings also provided an opportunity for participants to assess the progress in implementing the IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples, and to review the status of implementation of the recommendations of the fourth global meeting and the regional action plans agreed upon with IFAD regional divisions in 2019. Furthermore, they enabled the selection of the candidate proposals for the 2021 Indigenous Peoples Awards launched by IFAD to recognize the efforts and achievements of development projects that successfully engage with indigenous peoples or ethnic minorities living in rural areas.

Based on the discussions, the regional workshops provided suggestions and action-oriented recommendations in relation to the theme of the Forum, which they brought to the global meeting.
Box 1. The consultation meetings

**Africa** (organized by the Mainyoito Pastoralist Integrated Development Organization, MPIDO)
- Two regional meetings: two regional consultation 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.

The consolidated report of the regional consultation meetings is available here.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FIFTH GLOBAL MEETING OF THE FORUM

The fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum took place virtually on 2, 3, 4 and 15 February 2021, in conjunction with the forty-fourth session of the IFAD Governing Council.

The meeting brought together 150 indigenous peoples’ representatives from 73 indigenous groups. They came from Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean to exchange views on developments in their partnership with IFAD.

Representatives from partner organizations such as NGOs, foundations, international organizations, UN agencies, research institutes and universities joined the meeting as observers or as speakers during side events and the Indigenous Peoples’ Week.

Overall, the Forum saw the participation of 700 attendees, including over 370 live viewers through YouTube.

Figure 1. The Forum in numbers

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1 The full list of participants is available here.
OPENING OF THE FORUM

The Forum began with an indigenous spiritual ceremony conducted in Quechua by Mr Antonio Casilla, from the province of Bautista Saavedra in Bolivia.

Welcoming remarks were shared by Ms Marie Haga (Associate Vice-President, External Relations and Governance Department, IFAD). Ms Haga reminded participants of the consequences of the pandemic and how indigenous peoples have been disproportionately affected. She congratulated the SC of the Forum for turning the challenge of not being able to meet in person into an opportunity, enabling the Forum to be more inclusive, with five times more participants compared to the previous edition. As IFAD's Indigenous Peoples Champion for Senior Management, Ms Haga expressed her appreciation for what indigenous peoples and IFAD have achieved together and the strength, trust and mutual respect in the partnership. She further highlighted the roles of IFAD and indigenous peoples' representatives in the forthcoming FSS, with the members of the Forum’s SC playing a key role (i.e. Ms Myrna Cunningham being member of the Summit’s Advisory Committee and Ms Mai Thin Yu collaborating with IFAD on Action Track 4, where she is one of two Vice-Chairs).

The global meeting was officially opened by IFAD’s President Mr Gilbert Houngbo. The President highlighted that the fifth global meeting represents a milestone in the partnership between IFAD and indigenous peoples as it marks 10 years since the first meeting of the Forum. He underscored the specificity of the Forum, being hosted by IFAD but led by indigenous peoples, and emphasized how the perspectives and development approaches of indigenous peoples discussed during the past editions of the Forum have enriched IFAD.

The President stressed IFAD’s commitment to contribute to a world without poverty and hunger by joining forces with indigenous peoples, who are partners in development and stewards of nature and of a vast reservoir of traditional knowledge around the world. At the same time, Mr Houngbo recognized that working with indigenous peoples requires a commitment to social justice and to leaving no one behind. While the COVID-19 pandemic has devastated the lives of millions of people across the globe, “it also drives us to find ways to live more harmoniously with nature,” he said. Bringing indigenous knowledge and practices into global food systems “can spur new and creative solutions to the challenges we face, especially climate change. And it can help put an end to bad practices that harm indigenous peoples and nature."

The President recalled that in this spirit of learning, in July 2020 IFAD launched the first call for nominations for the Indigenous Peoples Awards. These awards aim at promoting best practices of engagement with indigenous peoples in order to encourage knowledge-sharing and to identify opportunities to replicate and scale up results. According to the President, "Indigenous knowledge, sustainable farming practices, environmental stewardship and the leading role of indigenous women all have a vital place in the 2030 agenda."
He concluded by emphasizing that the ideas and insights to be shared during the global meeting are extremely relevant to shaping the partnership with IFAD over the next two years, making a valuable contribution to the FSS, and delivering the 2030 agenda.

The opening remarks from the members of the SC of the Forum further focused on the results achieved in the partnership between indigenous peoples and IFAD, and on expressing deep appreciation for IFAD’s commitment and support over the years.

In particular, Ms Mane Yun (Technical Advisor at Cambodia Indigenous Peoples Organization – CIPO, Cambodia) and Mr Jesus Amadeo Martinez Guzman (Board member of the Indigenous Council of Central America – CICA, El Salvador) expressed their gratitude to IFAD staff and management from headquarters to regional and country offices for their efforts in including indigenous peoples’ in IFAD-funded development projects, in facilitating dialogue with governments, as well as for their work and dedication in serving indigenous peoples. Ms Yun emphasized the uniqueness of the Forum as a critical space for dialogue and one of best existing models to ensure that indigenous peoples lead development processes based on their own vision and practices.

The interventions were echoed by Ms Margaret Lepore Tunda (Red Maasai Sheep Slow Food Presidium in Kenya and Indigenous Terra Madre (ITM) Advisory Board member for Africa, Kenya), who acknowledged the results achieved through the implementation of IFAD-funded grants in Africa and expressed the desire to further strengthen the partnership in 2021 and beyond. She particularly emphasized the need to support indigenous peoples in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, as it poses serious threats to indigenous economies that are already compromised.
by the challenges related to climate change and land tenure, among others. She stated that the pandemic “has made indigenous peoples even more vulnerable and marginalized than before.”

The effects of the pandemic on indigenous communities were further underlined by Mr Ulaiaasi Baya (Consultant, Customary Land Solutions, Fiji), who urged IFAD and development partners to reinforce the partnership with indigenous peoples and provide resources and technical expertise to empower them, and enable them to reduce poverty, increase food security, improve nutrition and strengthen their resilience to overcome the serious challenges they face in confronting the pandemic.

Mr Phoolman Chaudhary (member of UNPFII) emphasized the relevance of indigenous food systems, which are a key component of indigenous peoples’ traditional knowledge, inherently connected to the land, forest, natural resources and the traditional governance and practices of ecosystems. He further stressed the importance for governments to fulfil their international human rights obligations and to particularly respect the human rights of indigenous peoples, who are greatly affected by poverty, systematic discrimination and exclusion from political, social and economic decision-making in all the regions of the world.

Following the opening statements by the SC members, a message to the Forum participants was conveyed by His Holiness Pope Francis through a video-message delivered by Monsignor Fernando Chica Arellano (Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome: see box 2).

Box 2. Video-message from His Holiness Pope Francis (read by Monsignor Fernando Chica Arellano)

“Dear representatives of the indigenous peoples,

Be assured, once again, of my closeness to you and of the commitment of the Church to continue on our path together, expressing our shared conviction that globalization cannot mean a kind of uniformity that disregards diversity and imposes a new colonialism.

The challenge is, instead, to create alternatives from a place of solidarity so that no one feels left out – but without overwhelmingly imposing a single direction that is said to be the only right way. On the contrary, we are well aware that when diversities are articulated and enrich one another, communion among peoples revives and flourishes. In reality, this means promoting development without embracing consumption as both the means and the end; it means truly looking after the environment to listen, learn and dignify. This is an all-encompassing ecology, in which social justice goes hand in hand with protecting the planet. Only in this humility of spirit will we definitively overcome hunger and achieve a society based on enduring values that flow not from one-sided passing trends but rather from justice and goodness.

I am confident that your work here will bear abundant fruit, through our love for the world we wish to build together and leave to those who come after us – as a treasure and not an accumulation of waste and ruin. And to do so, let us pay attention to the things that benefit all of us, the things that will enable us to pass through this world leaving altruism and generosity in our wake – escaping the wounds of earthly immanence, the desolation of spiritual emptiness, the paralysis of self-centredness and the sadness of individualism.

With these sentiments, I ask God to bless your communities and all those working at IFAD to help people living in the most disadvantaged parts of our world, in the grace of the beauty that comes of respecting and living together with nature, the handiwork of our Lord.”
In her keynote address, Ms Janie Simms Hipp (a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation and Chief Executive Officer of the Native American Agriculture Fund - NAAF, USA) guided the Forum’s participants through the story of the Chickasaw Nation, removed from their original homelands in the late 1800s. She shared information on the NAAF, created after almost 20 years of litigation against the federal government to obtain working capital to purchase lands, equipment, farm animals and all the tools that go into successful agriculture development. The settlement created a spend-down trust fund with a US$270 million allocation to be spent by 2038 for financing agricultural education, business assistance, technical support and advocacy. Over 200 community projects were funded throughout the country, reaching more than 250 of the 574 federally recognized tribes in the United States, several state-recognized indigenous groups as well as native Hawaiians and Alaska native peoples.

Ms Hipp emphasized that when the COVID-19 pandemic struck, indigenous communities were hit the hardest, with basic sanitation and prevention supplies becoming unavailable, the few medical personnel who were available becoming overwhelmed, and business and government offices shutting down. Nonetheless, communities shifted into action immediately with NAAF support. For example, school-based food distribution sites were set up, native chefs turned their once-open restaurants into kitchens that fed those in the community, some farms and ranches were opened to allow safe on-farm food pick-up and services were set up to hand-deliver processed meat to people’s doorsteps.

She further emphasized that beyond differences, indigenous peoples share some core concerns, desires and hopes for the future. These include ensuring that communities are safe and thriving, that they continue building resilience against challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, that they are not subject to further racial or ethnic injustice, that they have access to capital, infrastructure, land and natural resources, and that they build strong sustainable and resilient indigenous food systems. She stressed the importance of connecting with other indigenous organizations and with organizations such as IFAD, and to find ways to work together as “we are stronger together than we will ever be alone.”

Following the review and approval of the agenda of the global meeting, the opening session was closed with the launch of a video on the 10th Anniversary of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum at IFAD.
TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN IFAD’S PARTNERSHIP WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Partnership in progress

As is the practice at the global meetings of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum, IFAD presented a report analysing the trends and developments in IFAD’s partnership with indigenous peoples in the biennium (2019-2020) and taking stock of IFAD’s various experiences in collaborating with indigenous peoples, while investigating the forms of the ongoing collaboration and highlighting success stories and achievements.

In particular, progress against recommendations formulated during the fourth global meeting was presented by Mr Mattia Prayer Galletti (Lead Technical Specialist, Indigenous Peoples and Tribal Issues, IFAD).

Twenty new investment projects were approved in the biennium by IFAD’s Executive Board for a total financing of about US$285 million to support the initiatives of indigenous organizations, institutions and communities. An additional US$9 million was mobilized to finance six grants at the country, regional and global levels that included indigenous peoples among the target group.

The design of these projects was made in full accordance with the nine principles of engagement stated in the IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples, which include the respect for self-driven development and the implementation of FPIC.

Several activities were also implemented to ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in the design, implementation and M&E of IFAD strategies and programmes in accordance with the Forum regional action plans 2019-2020. These include the participation of indigenous peoples during the preparation or review of IFAD country strategies, the consultation during project design or implementation, the engagement of indigenous peoples in country policy dialogue, the dissemination of the IFAD Policy.


The country level grants covered Indonesia, Nepal and Solomon Islands. One grant was global and a regional grant covered the Asia and the Pacific region.
the documentation of good practices, the involvement of indigenous persons as specialists in missions, and the collection of disaggregated data on indigenous peoples in M&E systems.

Furthermore, IFAD updated and improved the roster of indigenous experts to be hired in IFAD-supported initiatives at the country level and elaborated new Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures guidelines with specific standards on indigenous peoples and complaints procedures.

Concerning the IPAF, 159 projects worth US$5.1 million have been financed in more than 45 countries to support indigenous peoples’ self-driven development within the five global calls issued to date. Over 120,000 beneficiaries have been reached through the Facility. The sixth call, which will be launched in 2022, will benefit from supplementary funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

An effort was also made by IFAD to promote and facilitate knowledge-sharing among indigenous peoples, including the launch of the first call for nomination of the Indigenous Peoples Awards, the development of a publication on good practices from IFAD- and IPAF-funded projects, and the support provided to the Terra Madre network to enable indigenous peoples’ communities to participate actively in the global debate on food and culture.

Similarly, IFAD improved the documentation of indigenous peoples’ knowledge by regularly updating its databases and platforms with project-related content relevant to indigenous peoples.
Important progress over the biennium was also achieved in terms of policy dialogue between indigenous peoples, governments and the UN system at the national and regional levels to ensure the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples. IFAD provided support for the direct participation of indigenous delegates in the activities of relevant forums and institutions.4

Notwithstanding the progress made, some priority areas were identified that require additional effort, particularly in relation to the need to secure indigenous peoples’ land, territories and resources, the replication and scaling up of IFAD and IPAF good practices, the facilitation of policy dialogue at the national and regional levels, and the documentation of indigenous knowledge.

During 2020 the indigenous peoples’ team at IFAD developed an action plan focusing on four key action areas with corresponding deliverables. In addition, between 2021 and 2022, IFAD committed to undertake key steps to strengthen the inclusion of indigenous peoples in IFAD 12 (see figure 2 below).

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4 These include: UNPFII; UN High Level Political Forum; Indigenous Peoples Major Group for Sustainable Development; the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus; World Food Prize; Committee on World Food Security; and Barilla Center for Food and Nutrition.
Achievements of the IPAF-funded projects

IPAF regional co-managers Ms Yohanis Amador (International Indigenous Women’s Forum), Ms Jacqueline Macharia (Samburu Women Trust), and Ms Ruby Española (Tebtebba Foundation) presented the results achieved so far in the implementation of the IPAF projects in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa and Asia and the Pacific respectively.

The added value of the Facility was emphasized by all speakers as a unique instrument for supporting indigenous peoples’ self-driven development, empowering indigenous women and youth, and promoting the systematization and dissemination of indigenous knowledge and practices (see figure 3 below).

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<th>Region</th>
<th>Projects Selected</th>
<th>Direct Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Key Results Achieved</th>
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| AFRICA                        | 11 (Cameroon, Kenya, DRC, Ghana, Morocco, Republic of Congo, Tanzania and Uganda) | Over 1,100           | • US$210,000 mobilized to further finance IPAF projects  
• Over 21,600 hectares of land secured in Congo, DRC, Ghana and Tanzania  
• 3.5 tonnes of maize harvested by indigenous women in Congo used to improve households’ food security and nutrition  
• Reintroduction of farming of wild yams in Cameroon  
• 230 clear energy cooking stoves installed to prevent environmental degradation in Cameroon  
• Restoration of community forest in DRC  
• Set-up of a community cooperative in Kenya  
• Production and marketing of 220 litres of honey in DRC resulting in US$1,100 earnings invested to improve access to clean water  
• Improved technical skills (apiculture, poultry farming) and managerial skills (project management, resource mobilization, financial management) of indigenous communities |
| LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN | 11 (Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru) | Over 1,400           | • Training and capacity-building of indigenous organizations  
• Knowledge-sharing event organized in Mexico City in January 2020 with the participation of indigenous organizations from the region  
• Enhanced networking among indigenous organizations from the grassroots to the national and international levels  
• Generation of knowledge on self-driven development  
• Recovery of ancestral techniques for community economy  
• Women playing a key role in the implementation of projects and acting as drivers of social change and active agents of change  
• Enhanced linkages with other projects and initiatives at the country and international levels (e.g. in Argentina, Guatemala and Guyana) |
| ASIA AND PACIFIC              | 12 (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand and Vanuatu) | Over 15,900 indirect beneficiaries | • Successful engagement of indigenous women and youth through awareness-raising, capacity-building, and promotion of income-generating activities  
• Strengthened food systems through revitalized traditional livelihoods and integrated farming practices  
• Improved food security and nutrition through the promotion of natural food preservation and the consumption of indigenous food  
• Improved sustainable management of land, territories and resources through the development of community management plans and forest-use regulations  
• Improved climate change mitigation/adaptation and sustainable use of natural resources through awareness raising and capacity-building  
• Successful income-generating activities (e.g. ecotourism, farming and marketing of local products)  
• Collective empowerment of indigenous peoples through reinforced community institutions and partnerships  
• Response to emerging needs of communities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic through the distribution of food packs and vegetable seeds |
Open discussion

Following the presentations, a number of questions and observations by participants further enriched the discussion.

In particular, participants very much welcomed and praised the relevant and impressive results achieved in the implementation of IPAF projects and discussed what could be done to further improve the effectiveness of the Facility, such as: improving the collaboration with IFAD Country Offices in the field; increasing support to indigenous governance and leadership; enhancing the transmission of traditional knowledge between generations; and supporting initiatives that focus on food security.

Concerning other IFAD-funded projects and initiatives, IFAD was asked to provide more information on access to funds for indigenous peoples, particularly through the new Enhanced Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP+) as well as on opportunities for collaboration with indigenous peoples in the Sahel region. Participants also insisted on the need for IFAD projects to further support youth as well as the systematization and sharing of indigenous knowledge and best practices. In this regard, the successful experience of IFAD-funded projects in Guatemala was shared; these projects promoted the recovery of traditional foods and recipes in order to include them in school feeding programmes in rural areas.

The first Forum plenary session closed with a video illustrating the successful experience of indigenous communities participating in the IFAD-financed project Proecosocial in the Sierra Norte of Puebla (Mexico). The project supports indigenous peoples to maintain their traditional bee-keeping activities and techniques with native “pisilnekmej” bees in order to promote their economy with the full participation of indigenous youth and women.

The partnership between indigenous peoples and IFAD: The way forward

Summary presentations on the findings and recommendations from the regional consultation meetings held in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pacific in preparation of the Forum were made by the members of the Steering Committee: Mr Joseph Ole Simel (Executive Director of MPIDO, Kenya), Ms Mai Thin Yu Mon (Chin Human Rights Organization, CHRO, Myanmar), Ms Myrna Cunningham (Director of the Centro para la Autonomía y el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas - CADPI, Nicaragua) and Mr Ulaiasi Baya.

Overall, the indigenous peoples’ representatives and IFAD recognized the relevance of the preparatory consultation meetings within the Forum process. They are not only key for the preparation of the global meeting, but also contribute to improving mutual knowledge on IFAD and its modus operandi, and to enhancing the engagement and participation of indigenous peoples in IFAD’s operations at the national, regional and international levels. It was further pointed out that IFADs
decentralization process offered increased possibilities for dialogue and partnership at the country level.

The presentations served as an introduction to the discussions subsequently held within three regional parallel working group sessions (covering Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean) co-chaired by IFAD regional directors and indigenous peoples’ representatives. The participation of IFAD staff was substantial, including regional division directors, subregional hub directors, country programme managers, and country team staff.

Following intense and constructive dialogue, participants agreed upon regional action plans for the biennium 2021–2022.

Outcomes from the regional workshops were presented in plenary by members of the Steering Committee as follows: Ms Margaret Lepore Tunda for Africa; Ms Mai Thin Yu Mon for Asia and the Pacific; and Ms Rayanne Franca (Global Indigenous Youth Caucus - GIYC, Brazil) for Latin America and the Caribbean.

The session closed with a short video documenting the successful experience of the IFAD-financed Economic Inclusion Programme for Families and Rural Communities in Bolivia (ACCESOS).6 Through the programme, IFAD provided support to Yapuchiris, agriculturalists who tracks signs in the environment to predict the weather and plan for better harvests. Yapuchiris use ancestral knowledge to adapt to climate change and preserve and restore their farmland. Support from the programme is enabling more than 11,000 small-scale farmers to prepare for and adapt to climate change.

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6 From Spanish: Programa de inclusión económica para familias y comunidades rurales en el territorio del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia.
THE THEME OF THE FORUM:  
THE VALUE OF INDIGENOUS FOOD SYSTEMS – RESILIENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

A large number of interventions and presentations by indigenous peoples’ representatives, IFAD, and partners enriched the discussion and enabled participants in the Forum to engage in dialogue on issues of relevance to its theme, strengthen mutual knowledge, and assess opportunities for developing synergies and partnerships.

Ms Myrna Cunningham introduced the theme of the Forum and provided context to guide the discussion. She emphasized the relevance of indigenous food systems and knowledge and urged IFAD and development partners to consider indigenous peoples as “game changers” for healthier and more inclusive, sustainable and equitable food systems. She reminded participants that the 2021 FSS will provide a unique opportunity for the transformation of food systems and she welcomed the presence of Dr Agnes Kalibata (Special Envoy for the FSS) at the global meeting.

The consultation meetings held in preparation for the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum

Representatives of indigenous organizations and communities reported on the 14 consultation meetings conducted at the regional and subregional levels.

Overall, they strongly emphasized the linkages between the promotion of indigenous peoples’ food systems and indigenous peoples’ food security and sovereignty. They reiterated how indigenous peoples’ livelihoods – small-scale farming, pastoralism, shifting cultivation, fishing, hunting and gathering – have ensured the food sovereignty, and health and well-being of indigenous communities over generations and contributed to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development benefiting all humankind. They emphasized that their livelihoods and traditional practices should be adequately valued and supported.

Speakers unanimously emphasized that ensuring the exercise and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples,

7 The presentations were delivered as follows: (i) Africa: Mr Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, (UNPFII); Asia: Ms Mai Thin Yu Mon; (ii) Latin America and the Caribbean: Ms Jessica Vega (GIYC); and (iv) the Pacific: Mr Ulaiasi Baya.
including access to and management of land, territories and natural resources for indigenous peoples, is necessary to ensure the existence of indigenous peoples themselves and their self-determined development.

Another aspect considered vital is related to the need to value indigenous peoples’ knowledge and cultural heritage and to promote knowledge generation and sharing on indigenous food systems and traditional practices, with a particular focus on intergenerational learning and transmission.

Speakers highlighted the importance of recovering and strengthening the production of traditional medicines, seeds, crops and indigenous food with high nutritional potential, and of supporting access to markets for indigenous products through community-based social enterprises and economic initiatives of indigenous peoples, the recognition of Participatory Guarantee Systems, and improved access to market information and infrastructure facilities for indigenous communities.

Strong emphasis was also placed on improving youth and women’s participation and capacity-building and the need to enhance and ensure access to and use of information and communication technology (ICT) by indigenous peoples (e.g. for weather advisories, crop planning, pest and disease management, documentation and dissemination of best practices).

Finally, all the speakers underlined the importance of the FSS as a unique opportunity for the sustainable transformation of food systems and the need for indigenous peoples to meaningfully engage in the discussion and ensure that their voice is heard and integrated in global commitments. They urged that the recommendations of the Forum be integrated in the Summit’s final deliberations and brought at the highest level of decision-making in order to ensure the achievement of the SDGs.

The Food Systems Summit

Dr Agnes Kalibata lauded the effort of indigenous peoples to propose relevant recommendations and sustainable solutions for the transformation of food systems and promised to ensure that their concerns and needs would be heard during the Summit.

She acknowledged the value of indigenous peoples’ food systems and the challenges faced by indigenous communities, which are strongly impacted by poverty and climate change and have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. She also recognized that beyond challenges, indigenous peoples are the largest custodians of the environment and biodiversity, and she emphasized the need to ensure that “the world benefits from indigenous knowledge, wisdom and values.”

Ms Kalibata stated that the 2030 Agenda and its commitments to ending poverty, food insecurity and inequalities cannot be achieved without addressing the injustices, prejudices and discrimination that indigenous people face. She underlined that the FSS represents an opportunity to tackle these issues and called upon indigenous peoples to engage not only in national-level dialogues being held
in preparation for the FFS, but also in independent dialogues. Finally, she confirmed her commitment to engaging with IFAD and ensuring that the voices of indigenous people are given equal space in the FSS.

Ms Christine Ciccone (IFAD Special Senior Advisor on the FSS) described her task to lead and coordinate IFAD’s support to the FFS Secretariat in the work of Action Track 4 “Advancing equitable livelihoods and Value Distribution”, and to provide strategic advice to IFAD’s leadership on the FSS.

She emphasized that IFAD is uniquely positioned to support the FSS. Since 1978, IFAD has provided over US$23 billion in grants and low-interest loans to over 518 million people, contributing to empowering rural people to reduce poverty, increase food security, improve nutrition and strengthen resilience.

Ms Ciccone provided an overview of the activities IFAD is conducting in partnership with CARE International to bring together a wide range of individuals and organizations to identify and develop game-changing solutions that will support rural smallholders in the food value chain to build equitable livelihoods.

She underscored that IFAD must ensure that the voices of rural small-scale landholders and farmers are heard and responded to throughout the entire Summit process and that success will be ensured only by partnering with indigenous peoples and local communities “to craft solutions that will work in real life for real people in rural areas.”

Participants offered comments, questions and recommendations in relation to the FFS process. In particular, they highlighted the need for IFAD and the Secretariat of the FFS to: further encourage governments to engage in the process of preparation of the FFS and include indigenous peoples in their planning and dialogue processes; make the FSS web platform available in different languages and address the digital gap faced by indigenous peoples as a precondition to ensure their full and effective participation in the Summit; provide additional information on how to engage in the different dialogue spaces; and earmark funds to enable indigenous peoples to meaningfully participate in the FSS process. In addition, participants emphasized
the need for the FSS to integrate the voices of youth and to address key issues related to access to and management of land and natural resources, including water.

**The Global-hub on Indigenous Peoples’ Food Systems**

**Mr Yon Fernandez-de-Larrinoa**, (Chief, Indigenous Peoples Unit, Food and Agriculture Organization - FAO) provided background information on the extensive work FAO has been undertaking on indigenous food systems since 2004, which culminated in 2020 with the creation of the Global-hub on Indigenous Peoples’ Food Systems. The Hub is a knowledge platform that brings together 18 members from universities, research centres, indigenous organizations and UN agencies working on indigenous food systems. By supporting the generation and sharing of knowledge, the Hub aims to inform the global debate on sustainable food systems, including the 2021 FSS and other policy discussions and initiatives that relate to sustainable food systems, such as the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition, the UN Decade on Restoration, the United Nations Decade of Family Farming, the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda.

The first task of the Hub has been to draft a white paper (Whiphala) on indigenous peoples’ food systems in response to the food systems’ concept developed by the scientific group of the FFS. The white paper provides elements of characterization of indigenous food systems and facts on what indigenous peoples can bring on the path towards more sustainable food systems worldwide. It also provides recommendations for the 5 Action Tracks of the FSS. Mr Fernandez-de-Larrinoa explained that the document will be widely circulated among indigenous organizations of the seven sociocultural regions for their inputs and contribution.

**Slow Food and the defence and promotion of indigenous food heritage**

A presentation on the results achieved in the implementation the IFAD grant-funded project *Empower indigenous youth and their communities to defend and promote their food heritage* implemented by Slow Food was made by **Ms Dalí Nolasco Cruz** (Advisory Board Member, Indigenous Terra Madre - ITM). The grant covered the period 2008-2020 and aimed at empowering indigenous youth and their communities to strengthening their livelihoods through the protection and promotion of their food heritage and the strengthening of the sustainability and resilience of their practices. The grant was articulated around three main components: (i) the promotion of the food heritage based on the Slow Food model of Presidia; (ii) strengthen the ITM network and the capacity of its members; and (iii) disseminate knowledge generated by the project.

Overall, the project supported over 800 indigenous producers (including over 470 women) to improve their livelihoods. In addition, nine Presidia were supported in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Kenya and Mexico, and indigenous youth were involved in their management. Indigenous products were promoted (e.g. Whichi Wild Honey in Argentina, Ogiek Honey in Kenya and Nahua Honey
in Mexico; waranà and manioc flour, and Providencia black crab in Colombia; Esmeraldas Blue Cran in Ecuador; Gran Chaco Wild Fruits in Argentina; Oaxaca Mixteca Agave in Mexico and Red Maasai Sheep in Kenya).

The speaker also shared with participants the successful promotion of Participatory Guarantee Systems, whereby a simple and adaptable model for the certification of indigenous products was developed and successfully piloted in two indigenous areas in Kenya, Mexico and Italy. This instrument proved to be effective in improving product quality and ensuring better market access for indigenous products. It was recommended that IFAD replicate the use of this instrument in the projects it supports to improve the engagement of family farming and indigenous communities in value chains.

The project also strengthened the ITM network, developed and disseminated knowledges products (including case studies, articles, press releases and videos) and organized a large number of events, exchanges among producers, and capacity-building initiatives for the benefit of over 490 indigenous youth. Finally, the ITM received recognition in 2020 from Food Tank as one of the 28 organizations promoting indigenous food sovereignty throughout the world.

The impact of COVID-19

Mr Victor Lopez Carmen (Co-chair of the GIYC) spoke on the impact of COVID-19 on indigenous peoples’ communities.

He emphasized that the way the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting indigenous communities demonstrates what indigenous peoples have been saying for a long time: The virus does not simply spread because it wants to impact certain people more than others, “it impacts indigenous peoples, black people and other minorities because there are pre-existing risks and those risks are due to faults in our society” that have been around for a long time, leaving indigenous peoples in poverty and with limited access to medical facilities and limited capabilities to combat the virus.

He further emphasized the need for leaders from indigenous communities to engage in policymaking and to sit at the tables where the response to the pandemic is being planned. Indigenous leaders and physicians and indigenous public health experts have a key role to play in building trust around COVID-19 vaccines and the public health response around the pandemic.

The session closed with a video documenting the experience of the Tejaswini Rural Women’s Empowerment Programme, which supports women (Tejaswini means “a woman who is radiant”) in the Indian State of Maharashtra. The IFAD-supported programme facilitated the creation of self-help groups, enabling women to access technical training, business development skills and finance. The groups were able to improve the lives of their members, gain representation in political institutions and engage in the business of mask-making for COVID-19 prevention, which is both a successful business venture and an essential service to the community.
THE 2021 IFAD INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AWARDS CEREMONY

The Indigenous Peoples Awards were launched for the first time by IFAD to recognize achievements of development projects that effectively engage with indigenous peoples. The award ceremony was conducted by Ms Margaret Tunda Lepore, who announced the winners among the candidate proposals.

The project Rural development: Public services improvement for sustainable territorial development in the Apurímac, Ene and Mantaro river basins (PDTS-VRAEM), implemented in Peru, received the award as best-performing IFAD-funded project. PDTS-VRAEM is empowering 2,035 indigenous families to improve their well-being, income and food security through self-driven development. The project obtained the FPIC of the indigenous peoples involved, and more than 200 community territorial development plans and life plans were elaborated reflecting the priorities identified by indigenous peoples and their organizations. Through inter-family competitions, the project is also supporting 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. 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 micro-insurance. 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.

The project Gender and climate change community-based adaptation, through conservation of the environment and drilling of a borehole equipped with a solar-powered pump was awarded as best-performing IPAF-funded project. The project is implemented in Cameroon by the African Indigenous Women Organisation – Central African Network (AIWO-CAN). Designed after obtaining the FPIC of the communities involved, it adopts a unique multidimensional approach that links socio-economic and environmental aspects. In particular, the project is aimed at empowering young women and girls from Mbororo communities, training women’s groups in climate adaptation and mitigation, drilling a borehole equipped with solar-powered pumps and developing a tree nursery to mitigate the effects of climate change and to combat desertification. In addition, the project addresses gender-based discrimination against indigenous women and girls, empowers women and girls through income-generating activities and participation in decision-making processes, and builds on the intergenerational
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 also decreased by 70 per cent, reducing pressure on local forests. 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.

Finally, the project No one shall be left behind initiative: Biodiversity for food, nutrition and energy security for 3,000 households in Meghalaya and Nagaland was awarded as best-performing non-IFAD-funded project.

Implemented in India by the North East Slow Food and Agrobiodiversity Society (NESFAS), the project aims to enhance indigenous food systems to improve the nutrition, food security and sustainable livelihoods of 130 indigenous communities in Meghalaya and Nagaland. 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 food systems, which are based on community cooperation and ecological approaches. In total, 365 micronutrient-rich and climate-resilient species were prioritized for cultivation. 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. Farmer groups have been organized into 45 participatory guarantee groups to ensure sustainable agricultural practices and protect indigenous food systems. Participating communities have formed 24 agroecology learning centres to promote agroecological practices. Specific initiatives support the empowerment of indigenous women and youth.
SYNTHESIS OF DELIBERATIONS

Based on the discussions and contributions from the debates, the Synthesis of Deliberations of the 2021 global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum at IFAD was adopted.

The synthesis was read and discussed during the final plenary session of the Forum on 15 February 2021 by Ms Mane Yun, in the presence of the indigenous peoples’ delegates, IFAD Management and the representatives of a number of IFAD Member States.

Box 3. Fifth Global Meeting of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum at IFAD
Synthesis of Deliberations

The fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum at IFAD took place on 2, 3, 4 and 15 February 2021. It was preceded by 14 consultation meetings conducted at the regional and subregional levels in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The consultation meetings saw the involvement of over 540 participants, including representatives of indigenous peoples’ organizations, institutions and communities, representatives from IFAD and IFAD-funded projects, members of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and development partners.

The extensive, inclusive and rich dialogue held in the lead-up to and during the global meeting is summarized herein.

Preamble

We, Indigenous Peoples of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean participating in the fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum at IFAD, whose theme is “the value of indigenous food systems: resilience in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic”, recall that our peoples, who retain connection to long-evolved cultures and patterns of living in local ecosystems, have unique traditional food systems that are biodiverse, nutritious, climate-resilient and equitable, and anchored in sustainable livelihood practices.

Indigenous peoples’ farming, pastoralism, shifting cultivation, rotational agriculture, fishing, hunting and gathering have ensured the food sovereignty, health and well-being of indigenous communities over generations. These have also contributed to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development for the benefit of all humankind.

Nonetheless, our livelihoods and traditional food systems are still not well understood, valued and supported, and our traditional knowledge is fast disappearing.

Our holistic approach to resource management, including sustainable food systems, is directly linked to the exercise and protection of the rights to our lands, territories and resources and to self-determination. It is imperative that development actors fully respect and protect these collective rights in order for indigenous peoples to continue playing their invaluable role in, and contributing to, sustainable food systems and the protection of the planet.
We, indigenous peoples around the globe, remain highly marginalized and discriminated. Our collective survival is being threatened by: the widespread grabbing of our lands, territories and resources; forced displacement resulting from extensive extractive industries, infrastructure projects, industrial agriculture and agribusiness; development schemes without indigenous peoples’ vision; criminalization; increasing poverty and hunger; loss of livelihood and cultural heritage; increased violence against indigenous women and girls; and rising inequality, among others. Imposing the conversion to modern food systems is leading to health problems among indigenous peoples, and to malnutrition, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation. This is aggravated by the adverse impacts of climate change, which is contributing to the depletion of resources and the loss of our traditional food systems.

As a result, despite five years of working towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we, indigenous peoples across the globe, have not just been left behind but we have been pushed further behind and we are affected by major losses in terms of lives and cultures.

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased existing vulnerabilities and exacerbated underlying structural inequalities, socio-economic marginalization and pervasive discrimination. The pandemic is disproportionately affecting and impacting indigenous communities and posing enormous risks to our physical and cultural existence. However, we, indigenous peoples and governments, have a common challenge: to establish strategies and plans that integrate the concept of development from the perspective of indigenous peoples.

Among the factors reducing our ability to sustain ourselves and fuelling the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on our communities are: lack or limited access to land and natural resources, including clean and safe water; restrictions on the exercise of our sustainable practices; loss of livelihoods and the disruption of local economies; limited access to adequate health and social services; and lack of access to information in local languages on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The situation of indigenous women, who are often the main providers of food and nutrition to our families, is even more serious.

It is against this backdrop that we call on IFAD, governments, development partners and the private sector – including investors – to help change the narrative, and to recognize that indigenous food systems hold a treasure of knowledge, experience, values, traditions and development concepts that – if adequately supported – can contribute to the well-being and health of all humankind.

In September 2021 a United Nations Food Systems Summit will be convened, providing a unique opportunity for global public mobilization and commitments to make food systems inclusive, productive, resilient and sustainable.

Within this context, we urge IFAD, United Nations agencies, governments and development partners to look at us, indigenous peoples, as game changers for healthier and more inclusive, sustainable and equitable food systems that offer sustainable solutions for developing a more caring and equitable post-pandemic world, while preserving and safeguarding the health of our planet.
Recommendations

Indigenous peoples’ food and production systems and the United Nations Food Systems Summit

1. To recognize the value of indigenous peoples’ knowledge, traditional practices and food systems in ensuring the food and nutrition security and food sovereignty of our communities. To promote the systematization and dissemination of our knowledge and practices, with a focus on women and youth and inter-generational transfer, through: the creation of knowledge platforms and the use of ICT; research; exchange of knowledge and experience between indigenous peoples’ organizations, including food/culinary fairs; documentation of indigenous recipes and traditional medicine; and engagement of partners with the needed capacities to support these processes.

2. To support indigenous peoples’ full, meaningful and effective participation in the planning and organization of the United Nations Food Systems Summit, including in Member States, Independent and Global Summit Dialogues. To ensure that our voice, views, solutions and recommendations towards the sustainable transformation of food systems are taken to the Summit and integrated in action-oriented global commitments.

3. To support the full recognition and protection of indigenous peoples’ rights to our lands, territories and resources. This will include support to land demarcation and titling, water management and administration systems for human consumption and irrigation of productive lands of indigenous communities, and community-based forest protection and management systems.

4. To promote agroecology and organic farming and to recover and strengthen the production of traditional medicines, seeds, crops, livestock, wild food sources and indigenous food with high nutritional potential. These will strengthen the food and nutrition sovereignty of indigenous peoples based on our knowledge, traditional practices and expertise.

5. To rescue native seeds resistant to diseases and climate change, and to support seed-exchange programmes among indigenous peoples and the creation of local community-based indigenous seed banks.

6. To facilitate the marketing of indigenous products by supporting indigenous community-based enterprises, economic initiatives of indigenous peoples (including sustainable and community-centred ecotourism) and the formal recognition of Participatory Guarantee Systems, and by improving access to market information, infrastructure facilities and post-harvest technology.

We request IFAD to convey the above-mentioned recommendations to the Secretariat of the Food Systems Summit.
Recommendations to IFAD:

**IFAD country programmes**

7. **To ensure the involvement and meaningful, full and effective participation of indigenous peoples**, including indigenous women and youth and indigenous peoples’ organizations, in the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of IFAD strategies and operations, through:
   - Full and effective consultation with indigenous peoples;
   - Systematic engagement with indigenous experts in project design, supervision and evaluation through structured mechanisms for consultation and participation;
   - Effective targeting of indigenous peoples based on our own identified needs and priorities;
   - Capacity-building of indigenous peoples’ organizations and of our governance structures;
   - Translation of relevant IFAD documents into national and local indigenous languages; and
   - Promotion and facilitation of women and youth for social sustainable enterprises.

8. **To ensure that specific indicators on the well-being of indigenous peoples and disaggregated data** on indigenous peoples are systematically collected and monitored in the M&E systems of IFAD-supported projects and programmes and that the participation of indigenous peoples in IFAD’s initiatives is assessed through community and evidence-based information at the national and regional levels.

9. **To ensure that the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC)** is fully understood and systematically applied in IFAD-supported interventions, taking into account indigenous peoples’ visions, needs, practices and self-determined development. The FPIC process should also be properly documented.

10. **To improve the collaboration between IFAD and indigenous peoples’ representatives at the country level** through regular communication and exchange of information, including the regional action plans, with IFAD Country Offices, as this is not happening in the majority of countries.

**Knowledge generation and sharing on IFAD’s operations**

11. **To continuously document best practices and experiences** within IFAD- and the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility-supported interventions, with the objective of replicating and scaling up results and impact.

12. **To promote knowledge exchanges** among indigenous peoples.

13. **To update IFAD’s toolkit on “Engaging with pastoralists – a holistic development approach”** in order to better reflect the current situation and take into account the present challenges and key issues faced by indigenous peoples in pastoral areas.

14. **To prepare a toolkit** on the engagement with hunter-gatherer indigenous communities.
IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples

15. **To further disseminate the IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples** among IFAD staff, especially newly recruited staff in Country Offices, and implementing partners to ensure that it is well known, understood and fully applied in IFAD operations.

16. **To ensure that the updated IFAD policy** is submitted to IFAD’s Executive Board in 2022, is prepared in consultation and partnership with indigenous peoples and focuses on the operationalization of the existing policy.

17. **To translate and disseminate the policy** in national and local indigenous languages as a precondition to enable the effective understanding and participation of indigenous peoples in IFAD’s operations.

Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources

18. In line with the decisions taken during the Consultation on the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources, to reaffirm IFAD’s commitment to Indigenous Peoples, including by: (i) replenishing and mobilizing additional resources (for the IPAF); (ii) ensuring the presence of representatives from indigenous peoples’ organizations in the advisory committee of the enhanced Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP+) and facilitating access to resources for indigenous peoples under this instrument; (iii) ensuring that indigenous peoples can benefit from the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility to support our resilience and recovery in the context of the COVID-19 crisis; (iv) promoting indigenous peoples’ participation in projects involving financial intermediaries and the private sector.

The Indigenous Peoples’ Forum process and the dialogue with indigenous peoples

19. **To ensure that recommendations from the regional consultations held in 2020 are integrated and reflected in the regional action plans** agreed upon with IFAD’s regional divisions. The plans should be finalized and submitted to the Steering Committee by 15 March 2021, with financial resources earmarked by IFAD to support their implementation.

20. **To organize within the two-year period between the Forum’s global meetings at least two consultation meetings in each region**, with the participation of representatives from indigenous peoples’ organizations and IFAD, in order to monitor the implementation of the action plan, assess progress, identify obstacles and solutions, and revise priorities as needed. The first consultation meeting should also focus on the preparation of the updated IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples.

Joint recommendation to IFAD and governments:

21. **To advocate for enhanced engagement and full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in IFAD-funded projects and programmes**, particularly in those countries where indigenous peoples are not recognized by national governments.

22. **To support and facilitate policy dialogue** at all levels between indigenous peoples, governments and the United Nations system on issues of relevance to indigenous peoples, including:
   - Access to land, territories and natural resources;
   - Access to markets for indigenous products;
   - Sustainable production systems;
   - Conservation and safeguarding of indigenous seeds;
   - Technology transfer on agricultural production, transformation and conservation; and
   - Promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples.
Recommendations to governments:

23. To meaningfully engage in the preparatory activities of the Food Systems Summit and facilitate and ensure the effective participation of indigenous peoples in Member States Dialogues held in preparation for the Summit.

24. To ensure the access to and use of ICT for indigenous peoples to promote our economic activities, including farming, artisanal fisheries and harvesting, as key to strengthening the resilience of indigenous food systems.

As indigenous peoples, we commit to:

25. Promoting the coordination of indigenous peoples’ organizations so as to effectively engage at the country and regional levels with IFAD, governments, the United Nations Country Teams and other relevant development actors in order to promote and defend our rights, well-being and self-determined development with a unified voice.

26. Ensuring stronger networking and communication among indigenous peoples at all levels in order to propose, promote and advocate for sustainable solutions to food insecurity.

27. Strengthening partnership with organizations of Afro-descendants, and to support the inclusion of Afro-descendants in the Latin America and the Caribbean regional action plan.

28. Promoting and facilitating the participation, engagement and representation of indigenous youth, women and persons with disabilities at all levels, including in the decision-making and steering bodies and structures that are relevant for our organizations.

IFAD Management’s response to the Synthesis of Deliberations

In response to the outcomes of the Forum and the Synthesis of Deliberations, Mr Donal Brown (Associate Vice-President, IFAD) affirmed that the synthesis will be a helpful accountability tool to move forward.

He emphasized that the 2021 Forum has been as inclusive as ever, with strong participation from both indigenous peoples’ representatives and IFAD during the global meeting, and a significant number of IFAD staff – regional directors, country directors and country programme officers – participating in both the preparatory regional consultations and the regional workshops of the Forum. He said, “This level of participation suggests the partnership is in good health.”

He underlined the importance of the partnership by citing the statement of IFAD’s President during a meeting held with a delegation of the SC of the Forum: “Whatever it takes, no matter what the funding source is, I am committed to increase IFAD resources in support of indigenous peoples’ activities.” Mr Brown also highlighted that where indigenous communities are particularly marginalized, they must be the principal beneficiaries of IFAD-financed projects.

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8 For the full response, see Box 3.
Concerning the FFS, Mr Brown stated that IFAD will certainly do what it can to bring the recommendations from the Forum to the organizers and to ensure that indigenous representatives are also able to do so.

With regard to the recommendations made to IFAD, Mr Brown acknowledged that they were reasonable and realistic. He provided a positive response to those focusing on the participation of indigenous peoples in the design, implementation and M&E of IFAD strategies and operations, on the collection of disaggregated data on the impact of IFAD’s projects on indigenous people, on the systematic application of FPIC, and on the improvement of communication between IFAD Country Offices and Indigenous peoples’ representatives.

He concluded by stating, “IFAD will be looking to respond to the recommendations to the best of our ability, and we hope that from your side, you will be advocates for our partnership and for IFAD.”

**Box 4. IFAD Management’s reaction to the Synthesis of Deliberations**

“Chair and members of the Steering Committee of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum at IFAD,

Representatives of Indigenous Peoples’ Organizations and Communities,

Friends, colleagues,

Let me start by saying that it’s a great pleasure to offer IFAD Management’s response to the Synthesis of Deliberations from this fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum at IFAD. I’d also like to thank you all for having put together this Synthesis document: it will be a helpful accountability tool for us all moving forward.

This year the Forum has been as inclusive as ever, with really strong participation from both sides. As we heard, as many as 540 indigenous peoples’ representatives participated in 14 regional consultations. There was also a significant number of IFAD staff – regional directors, country directors and country programme officers – who participated in both the regional consultations and during the regional meetings of Day 2 of the Forum.

This level of participation suggests the partnership is in good health. Indeed, as the representative of the Permanent Forum put it, all UN agencies are looking at the IFAD partnership with indigenous peoples as a model.

Let me also confirm the importance of this partnership to IFAD. The President made this clear last week in his meeting with the delegation of the Steering Committee, when he said, ‘Wherever I go, I receive praise for IFAD’s work with indigenous peoples.’ He also made clear his personal commitment when he said, ‘Whatever it takes, no matter what the funding source, I am committed to increase IFAD resources in support of indigenous peoples’ activities.’

It is through the Programme Management Department, which I head, that our partnership with indigenous peoples is operationalized at the country level. So I want to highlight the point that in many countries indigenous peoples are key players – active players – in our country programmes; and that where their communities are particularly marginalized, they must be the principal beneficiaries of the projects we co-finance with the governments of our Member States.
Given that starting point, I am particularly pleased that during this Forum so much work has gone into developing the regional action plans, and to identifying activities that IFAD can commit to and deliver against. I look forward to these being finalized and shared in the next month or so.

The Synthesis of Deliberations that was just presented makes a series of recommendations. There are a number relating to the United Nations Food Systems Summit; there are some specific to IFAD; there are some for IFAD and governments; and some are specific to governments. We welcome all of them.

Let me kick off by acknowledging your recommendations on the Food Systems Summit. We are actively participating in the preparations for the Summit, and we will certainly do all we can to bring your recommendations to the organizers and, better, to ensure that your representatives are able to do so.

Turning to the recommendations to IFAD and to IFAD-plus-governments, while I cannot today speak on behalf of my colleagues in IFAD’s senior management team, my initial impression is that these all look to be considered, reasonable and realistic. We will of course need to look closely at each of them, assess whether we can fully respond, and assign responsibilities within the house for following them up.

However, I would like to respond briefly on those recommendations focused specifically on IFAD’s country programmes. In principle I support all of the four recommendations.

• So yes to the participation of indigenous peoples in the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of IFAD strategies and operations.
• Yes to better, disaggregated data on the impact of our projects on indigenous peoples.
• Yes to ensuring that our policy on free, prior and informed consent is fully understood and systematically applied.
• And yes to more regular communication between IFAD Country Offices and indigenous peoples’ representatives. As you know, we are establishing Country Offices in more and more countries, and this will make this a real possibility.

The task now will be for us to discuss internally just how we take them forward.

I do want to make one important qualification, however. As you know, IFAD’s principal product for supporting sustainable and inclusive rural transformation is the loans it provides to governments for their programmes and projects.

An important part of our role is to engage those governments in a dialogue as to their policy priorities; but ultimately, we are partners with governments and we work primarily to serve them. This of course determines to some extent what we are able to do in support of indigenous peoples and where we are able to do it.

However, what I can say is that in those countries where indigenous peoples are among the most marginalized in the rural communities, we will look to engage with the government as to the opportunities for supporting them, and – as your recommendation states – involving them in the design, implementation and M&E of our strategy and operations.

Finally, let me reiterate that IFAD’s partnership with indigenous peoples really is one that we take seriously and we are genuine about. We want it to be about actions, as well as about words. We will be looking to respond to the recommendations to the best of our ability, and we hope that from your side, you will be advocates for our partnership and for IFAD.”

Thank you."
Remarks from the floor

Government representatives and indigenous leaders expressed their appreciation for the work of the Forum and its deliberations.

In particular, Her Excellency Ambassador Alexandra Bugailiskis (Ambassador of Canada to the Italian Republic and Permanent Representative to the food and agriculture agencies of the United Nations) very much welcomed IFAD’s commitment to further engage and target indigenous peoples as a priority group, particularly taking into account the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the effects of climate change, as these are having a disproportionate impact on indigenous communities.

She mentioned that the Government of Canada is supporting indigenous communities to face the current crisis through different instruments, including short-term essential measures such as the provision of new virtual educational programmes on nutrition. She explained that Canada’s first ever food policy recognizes and affirms the unique rights and interests of the First Nations and takes a holistic approach that acknowledges that food is more than a commodity.

Her Excellency Ambassador Bugailiskis emphasized that with the FSS approaching, it is essential to find better ways to both promote and preserve indigenous knowledge as it can greatly contribute to building more sustainable food systems. Ensuring that indigenous peoples are actively engaged in the FSS is thus essential.

Mr Mats Åberg (Senior Programme Manager, Department for International Organisations and Policy Support at Sida) echoed the intervention of Her Excellency Ambassador Bugailiskis by emphasizing the importance of ensuring the participation of indigenous peoples in the dialogue set at various levels in preparation for the FSS. He further expressed appreciation for the Forum and particularly the discussions around the IPAF. He explained that Sweden, through Sida, has provided financial support to the Facility, with a particular focus on climate change-related interventions.

Mr Benito Santiago Jiménez Sauma (Alternate Representative of Mexico) welcomed the recommendations from the Forum and asked for feedback from the Forum’s participants regarding the level of dialogue and quality of discussion, since the global meeting was held virtually for the first time. In response, Ms Myrna Cunningham and Ms Joan Carling (member of the SC of Forum, former member of UNPFII, and co-convenor of the Indigenous Peoples’ Major Group for Sustainable Development, Philippines) mentioned that the present
edition of the Forum has been much more inclusive compared to the previous ones, with a larger number of participants and organizations represented. At the same time, the limited access to technology for some communities is an issue that will need to be taken into account. Ms Carling suggested that in the future it would be important to combine both virtual and face-to-face meetings in order to ensure a very large and effective participation in the Forum.

**Ms Satu Lassila** (Permanent Representative of Finland to the Rome-based UN agencies) emphasized that promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples and enhancing their participation in UN forums have been longstanding priorities for Finland. She underlined that the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples are vital for achieving the SDGs and protecting the planet. In relation to the FSS, she stressed that in order to make the Summit a success, indigenous peoples should be actively participating in it and their concerns should be well reflected in the agenda. Further, she emphasized that mainstreaming gender equality is also crucial and she called attention especially to the rights of indigenous women and girls.

**CLOSING OF THE FORUM**

The Forum was closed by **Mr Dominik Ziller** (Vice-President of IFAD). In his speech, Mr Ziller emphasized the privilege for him to witness this incredible platform for open dialogue 10 years after its inception, showing the partnership is still “bearing fruit and flourishing.” He mentioned that the Forum was notable for the intense, lively and enriching discussions and he recalled a few of the highlights, including the introduction by IFAD’s President, who clearly recognized the central role that indigenous knowledge and indigenous people must play to achieve the 2030 Agenda, the powerful message of His Holiness Pope Francis as well as the participation of Ms Agnes Kalibata, who shared her commitment to ensuring that the world benefits from indigenous knowledge, wisdom and values. He emphasized the important exchanges of knowledge and experience during the regional meetings, and that these discussions “will surely help shape IFAD’s interventions and advocacy.”

Regarding the theme of the Forum, Mr Ziller stated that it could not be more critical. He explained that the pandemic has exacerbated inequalities and discrimination. It has caused disproportionate suffering among indigenous peoples and there is a real and growing danger that the pandemic may further aggravate the scarcity of resources and the indigenous communities’ vulnerability to climate change. Also, the conditions that held indigenous peoples back before the pandemic persist, including limited access to land, to clean water and to proper sanitation and health care.

Mr Ziller stated that IFAD is not blind to the situation of indigenous peoples and is aware that indigenous communities are more than twice as likely as the
Mr Ziller recognized the critical role of indigenous peoples to achieving the SDGs as they hold invaluable knowledge and can help shape the solutions to climate resilience and promoting food systems that provide healthy nutrition for all. He underscored that indigenous peoples’ territories are home to 80 per cent of the world’s biodiversity, placing them at the centre of sustainable management of the world’s lands and ecosystems. In this regard, they are uniquely positioned to support the transformation of food systems to make them sustainable, inclusive and equitable for all.

Mr Ziller concluded by affirming IFAD’s commitment to keep the momentum going, to make every effort to translate the Forum’s deliberations into meaningful, timely and concrete actions, to ensure that the key messages of the Forum are brought to the FSS, and to actively support the implementation of the regional action plans and the enhancement of the IPAF.

The global meeting was closed with the projection of a video on the criminalization of indigenous peoples based on a report prepared by Ms Victoria Tauli-Corpuz (former UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) which was followed by the final indigenous closing ceremony.
THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES’ WEEK

The Indigenous Peoples’ Week took place from 8-12 February 2021. It hosted thematic and cultural events to enrich the dialogue between indigenous peoples, IFAD and development partners on a wide range of themes including: indigenous food systems, languages and cultural diversity; indigenous peoples’ rights to land, territories and resources; best practices in the application of FPIC; and biodiversity conservation and agroecology.

Chefs’ Storytelling: The value of indigenous and Afro-descendant food systems, organized by IFAD in collaboration with the GIYC

The event shared indigenous and Afro-descendant cultural food practices, highlighting the value of indigenous knowledge. Food, flavours and resilience were the connecting dots that contributed to refine the importance of indigenous peoples’ food systems during the COVID-19 pandemic. The event was chaired by Mr Mohamad Bilal El Najjar (Digital Content Editor at IFAD) and benefited from the participation of Chef Bela Gil (expert in nutrition and food science, natural cuisine chef and master in slow food gastronomic sciences), Dr Sonia Peter (Slow Food Network in Barbados), Chef Dane Saddler (founder and owner of Caribbean Villa Chefs, Slow Food Network in Barbados), Chef Mariah Gladstone (founder of Indigikitchen and member of the Blackfeet Cherokee people) and Chef Sean Sherman (Founder of the Sioux Chef).

The webcast of the event is available here.

Indigenous Peoples’ Assistance Facility on resilient food systems: solutions from indigenous youth in the times of the COVID-19 pandemic, organized by IFAD in collaboration with IPAF implementing partners

The IPAF is an innovative funding instrument that indigenous communities can use to find solutions to the challenges they face. The objective of the Facility is to strengthen indigenous peoples’ communities and their organizations. It finances small projects that foster self-driven development. In particular, the IPAF supports projects designed and implemented by indigenous peoples’ communities and their organizations through small grants ranging from US$20,000 up to US$50,000 for a maximum duration of two years. Supported projects build on indigenous peoples’ culture, identity, knowledge and natural resources. The event was an opportunity to share experiences emerging from the IPAF in relation to indigenous food systems, discuss challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic and highlight proposed solutions to address issues as well as results achieved. Ms Ailin Uribe (young indigenous Mapuche from Argentina and member of the Mapuche Cayun group) shared the experience of the IPAF-funded project: Diversification of family nutrition through self-production of food by the Agrupación Mapuche Cayun in Argentina. Dr Luna Panda (Executive Director of PRAGATI) showcased the Empowering Tribal
Youth for Nutritional Food Security and Income Enhancement in Koraput District of South Odisha project. Also, Ms Jacqueline Macharia (IPAF coordinator for Africa, Samburu Women Trust) provided a regional overview on IPAF achievements in Africa. The discussion showed how local traditional knowledge and practices have supported indigenous peoples throughout the pandemic. The side event was attended by Mr Mats Åberg, who confirmed Sweden's appreciation for the IPAF, which led to the decision of providing Sida providing support.

The webcast of the event is available here.

Indigenous languages for eradication of hunger and support of indigenous food systems, organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

The 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages (IDIL) was concluded with several important recommendations for the upcoming IDIL (2022-2032). One of the strategic recommendations outlined in the Strategic Outcome Document of the 2019 Los Pinos Declaration (Chapoltepek) emphasized the role of language as a cross-cutting phenomenon that encompasses and transcends all spheres of life, including agriculture and indigenous food systems. The right to food is one of the fundamental human rights which protects all human beings to live in dignity, free of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. Over the centuries, indigenous peoples have cultivated their lands and territories, passing their traditional knowledge about the maintenance, preservation and restoration of their local ecosystems from one generation to another through their languages. There are intricate connections between health, land, knowledge of plants, foods, healing herbs, cosmology, mental, spiritual, cultural and social wellbeing, and indigenous language users are the custodians of this knowledge. The event provided a space for dialogue and reflection on the development of the Global Action Plan for IDIL. An introduction on the IDIL was shared by Dr Irmgarda Kasinskaite-Buddeberg (Advisor for Communication and Information, Universal Access to Information Section, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO). Speakers in the event included Mr Bipin Kumar Jojo (Professor, Centre for Social Justice and Governance, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India), Mr Carlos De la Torre Postigo (Expert in rural development in the Andes, technical extension appropriate to native cultures, rural businesses and adaptation to climate change in high Andean area, Peru), Mr Neelam Kerketta (Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India), Mr Yon Fernández-de-Larrinoa (Chief, Indigenous Peoples Unit, FAO), and Ms Antonella Cordone (Senior Technical Specialist in Nutrition, IFAD). The side event enabled participants to share good practices and to establish strategic linkages to other ongoing global initiatives such as the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025).

The webcast of the event is available here.
Advancing indigenous peoples’ land and territorial rights, organized by the International Land Coalition (ILC) and IWGIA

Indigenous peoples were already disproportionately affected by structural inequalities before the COVID-19 pandemic. Environmental degradation, conflicts over resources, expropriation of land and human rights violations continue to detrimentally impact their lives. The pandemic has now added another layer of threats that have compounded the challenges indigenous peoples face today. Against this background, the event enabled indigenous representatives from different parts of the world to share and discuss strategies to advance support to indigenous peoples in their struggle to defend their lands, territories and resources. The session was particularly oriented towards understanding current trends and what needs to be done to scale up political and financial support for this cause. The event was moderated by Ms Lola García-Alix (Programme Coordinator International Human Rights Advocacy, IWGIA). Panellists included Ms Joan Carling (Indigenous Peoples’ Rights International), Mr Daniel Kobei (Ogiek Peoples’ Development Programme), Mr Gam Shimray (Asian Indigenous Peoples’ Pact) and Ms Antonia Benito (Red Jóvenes Indígenas).

Making beneficiaries the lead characters – working with free, prior and informed consent, organized by IFAD

The event provided an opportunity for participants to learn from the findings of a knowledge harvest exercise conducted by IFAD on the implementation of FPIC within the context of IFAD-funded projects in Latin America and the Caribbean. The session was facilitated by Mr Claus Reiner (IFAD Country Director and head of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation and Knowledge Centre, Brasilia).

Ms Maria Elfving, (IFAD Technical Analyst, IFAD) provided a short presentation on IFAD’s Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples and how it translates in project operations. Mr Juan Diego Ruiz Cumplido (IFAD Hub Head and Country Director, Nicaragua) presented an example of best practice from the IFAD-funded project Nicaraguan Dry Corridor Rural Family Sustainable Development Project. Lessons learned and recommendations from the Background Study on FPIC in IFAD projects in Latin America were presented by Lead author Mr Dennis Mairena. The webcast of the event is available here.

The voice of Afro-descendants: A discussion with director Jhonny Hendrix Hinestroza (Chocó, 2012), organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the foundation Afro Cultural Assets (ACUA)

Afro-descendant groups in Latin America are, along with indigenous communities, the most affected by inequality and poverty, but they also enrich their territories through their ancestral cultures and knowledge that are key for sustainable development. The event, moderated by Ms Ángela María Arango (ACUA Foundation), was organized to give visibility to Afro-descendant issues in Latin America during the Indigenous Peoples’ Week. Participants had the opportunity to
discuss the movie *Chocó* (2012) with the producer **Mr Jhonny Hendrix Hinestroza**, which tells the story of an Afro-Colombian woman who faces exclusion and inequality in different contexts. The findings from two ECLAC studies – Afro-descendants and the matrix of social inequality in Latin America and The indigenous peoples of Latin America; and Abya Yala and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: tensions and challenges from a territorial perspective – were also shared by **Ms Fabiana Del Popolo** (Head of the Area of Demography and Population Information at CELADE - Population Division of ECLAC). The event also benefited from the presence of **Ms Teófila Betancourt** (Representative of the Chiyangua Foundation, Colombia). Cinema, research and cultural projects were the key areas around which participants engaged in a multidisciplinary dialogue, giving a holistic perspective to the challenges faced by Afro-descendant communities. *The webcast of the event is available here.*

**Biodiversity conservation and agroecological transition: A dialogue with indigenous peoples**, organized by IFAD

Traditional indigenous territories encompass 22 per cent of the world’s land surface and account for 80 per cent of the planet’s biodiversity. Agroecology, as a set of practices, a science and a social movement, has received increasing attention as an approach to achieving sustainable production and food systems. The event provided an opportunity to engage in dialogue with indigenous partners about their vision and concerns regarding biodiversity and agroecology, to understand how agroecology is relevant to them, to learn from their own practices and to identify areas of collaboration. It also provided an opportunity for indigenous peoples’ representatives to share their inputs and perspectives on the forthcoming preparation of IFAD’s Biodiversity Strategy based on their holistic approach to sustainable development. On IFAD’s side, the event saw the participation of **Ms Rikke Grand Olivera** (Senior Global Technical Specialist, Natural Resources Management), **Ms Doina Popusoi** (Agroecology and Natural Resources Management Consultant), **Ms Mena Grossmann** (Junior Professional Officer, Environment and Climate Change/ Agroecology) and **Ms Renée Ankarfjard** (Senior Global Technical Specialist, Environmental Management). Indigenous perspectives on agroecology transition and biodiversity were shared by **Ms Melissa K. Nelson** (Professor of indigenous sustainability in the School of Sustainability, Arizona State University) and **Mr Tuntiak Katan** (indigenous leader from Shuar People, activist and General Coordinator of the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities).

Case studies were presented by the beneficiaries of IFAD-supported projects: **Mr George Austodillo** (from the Kankanae ethnonilingualistic group of Mountain Province in Philippines, Coordinator of the IFAD-funded project Cordillera Highland Agricultural Resource Management); and **Ms Iris Tavares** (Project Coordinator of the Paulo Freire Project).

*The webcast of the event is available here.*
Implementation of drones, static sensors, big data and the Association of Crops for Indigenous Peoples, organized by FILAC

The COVID-19 pandemic is having a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable populations, including indigenous peoples. The event enabled participants to learn from the experience of the DDASO project of the Poaquil 502 team, winner of the “Leave No One Behind” challenge of the Hackaton ActInSpace, co-organized by CANESU, FILAC, and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. The project was developed by indigenous youth using technological development as a tool to face food insecurity during the pandemic. DDASO uses drones and satellite technology for data collection in agriculture for the sustainable development of indigenous communities. The DDASO experience was shared by the Poaquil 502 team, composed of four university students and indigenous Mayan Kaqchikel, originally from San José Poaquil (Chimaltenango, Guatemala) as follows: Ms Alicia Simón Sisimit (National Coordinator for Women of the World Network of Young Politicians in Guatemala); Ms Lidia Paola Son Santelel (Faculty of Humanities, Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala - USAC); Mr Angel Oswaldo Pichiya Chacach (Galileo University); and Mr Jose Aníbal Tzaj Telón (Faculty of Agronomy, USAC).

The webcast of the event is available here.

Celebrating food and cultural diversity with pastoralist communities, organized by Slow Food

The event provided an opportunity for indigenous peoples from different countries to meet among themselves and with development partners to share and celebrate their food and cultural diversity. In addition, participants in the side event had the opportunity to learn about the nomadic pastoralist situation in Iran, particularly relating to the COVID-19 context and climate change issues. The session blended pastoralist songs and dance videos from Africa, with a presentation regarding nomadic pastoralism in Iran by Senior Researcher Mr Nahid Naghizadeh, followed by a knowledge-sharing session. Panellists included Ms Margaret Tunda Lepore, Mr Carson Kiburo (youth Endorois from Kenya, member of Slow Food network and GIYC) and Mr Ochen Umar Bashir (indigenous youth pastoralist from Karamajong Community from Uganda, agronomist and member of Slow Food).

The webcast of the event is available here.
THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES’ FILM FESTIVAL

The Indigenous Peoples’ Week was accompanied and complemented by the Indigenous Peoples’ Film Festival.

Thanks to the indigenous peoples’ organizations and to filmmakers, documentaries and films were made available to the public from 8 to 12 February 2021.

**Gente de mar y viento**
*Mexico, 2016, by Ingrid Eunice Fabián González*

This feature-length film is a spin-off of the short documentary *People of the Sea and the Wind* that looks deeper into the story of the Zapotec communities in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, following the arrival of the wind-energy transnational corporations.

**Berta Vive**
*Honduras, 2016, by Katia Lara*

In March 2016, the assassination of Berta Cáceres shook the world. Gustavo Castro, a Mexican environmental activist, witnessed the crime and survived the horror of that night. The defence against the construction of a dam at the Gualcarque River is the preface to this story.
**In a different light: The Karen rotational farming story**  
*Thailand, 2020, by Jon Robin Bustamante*

Rotational farming, also called “shifting cultivation” or “swidden agriculture,” is one of the most misunderstood systems of land use. Many countries have laws criminalizing or banning the practice, but for indigenous peoples, rotational farming is a sustainable practice closely interlinked with their lives and culture. The short film narrates how the Karen indigenous peoples in northern Thailand practice rotational farming. It explores how rotational farming has helped them provide for their food security while also contributing to the sustainable management of their forest ecosystems.

**Restoring Ogiek land rights. A story of unity and resilience**  
*Kenya, 2018, by Jason Taylor/ILC*

Winner of the ILC Award 2018, the movie features the Ogiek indigenous peoples’ court battle against the Kenyan Government. The Mau Forest has always been a source of livelihoods for the Ogiek. However, conservation and environmental laws and policies prohibited them from living and hunting in the forest. The Ogiek have been evicted and marginalized and their forest devastated. The Ogiek are asking for the full implementation of the court’s ruling recognize their rights to their ancestral lands in the Mau Forest to, including compensation and reparations.

**Chocó**  
*Colombia, 2014, by Johnny Hendrix Hinestroza*

Chocó is a 27-year-old black woman, displaced from her land by violence. She maintains a family of two young children and her husband, a musician who only plays marimba, drinks viche and plays dominoes. Chocó is a strong, fighting woman. In the morning she looks for gold in the San Juan River, and in the evenings she washes other families’ clothes. It is the birthday of the young Candelaria, and for the first time Chocó promises her a cake. However, things get complicated, triggering unexpected consequences for Chocó and her family.

**Time Is Water**  
*Peru, 2017, Gobierno Territorial Autónomo de la Nación Wampis, IWGIA, Ore-media and Canejo Productions*

The film explores the relationship between Peru’s indigenous peoples and water. Indigenous peoples living in any part of the world have inseparable ties with water, land and forest. Peru is no exception. In this South American nation, indigenous peoples have been denied their rights in the constitution. Yet, they have exercised their rights to self-determination to establish their autonomous government. *Time Is Water* shows the Peruvian indigenous communities’ long struggle for autonomy.
Message from the heart of the world
Colombia, 2018, by IWGIA and Ore-media
The Arhuaco peoples live in a remote area in the north of Colombia, the mountains of Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta. However, their livelihoods are under threat. This documentary explores how indigenous communities have organized themselves and are fighting to prevent mining concessions in their ancestral territory.

Martyrdom/Martirio
Brazil, 2016, by Vincent Carelli with Ernesto de Carvalho and Tita
This documentary tells the story of the Guarani Kaiowá massacres that followed a peaceful and persistent insurgency by the dispossessed Guarani Kaiowá against the powerful apparatus of agribusiness.
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AT IFAD’S GOVERNING COUNCIL

On 17 February 2021, the Synthesis of Deliberations of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum was delivered to the forty-fourth session of the IFAD Governing Council by Ms Rayanne Franca (SC Member of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum, GIYC, Brazil). Following the reading, the President of IFAD took the floor to recognize all the indigenous representatives who had brought the voices of their peoples to the Forum and to reiterate IFAD’s commitment to further strengthen the partnership with indigenous peoples and to support the effective participation of indigenous peoples in the planning and organization of the FFS. The President also called upon partners to support the next IPAF cycle.

Box 5. Remarks by the President of IFAD after the reading of the Synthesis of Deliberations of the Fifth Global Meeting of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum to the Governing Council

“Distinguished Governors,

I would like to take a moment to recognize all the indigenous representatives who have brought the voices of their peoples to this unique forum. In particular, we are grateful to the more than 500 indigenous representatives who took part in the regional consultations and the 150 delegates from 73 different indigenous peoples who contributed to the meaningful and diverse exchange during the Fifth Global Meeting of the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum. The Forum concluded two days ago, after two weeks of rich programming that included discussions, meetings and an indigenous film festival. We also celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Forum, which is now looked upon as a model of partnership within the UN system. The Indigenous Peoples’ Forum is hosted by IFAD and its direction is set by a Steering Committee of indigenous leaders.

We at IFAD are very happy to partner with indigenous peoples. Our commitment to learn and value indigenous livelihoods, traditional food systems and knowledge is stronger today than ever. Development is not static, we know that. Indigenous leaders have called on IFAD to recognize that indigenous food systems hold a wealth of knowledge, values, traditions and concepts that can contribute to more sustainable practices and improve the well-being of all humankind. We are also called upon to recognize that indigenous peoples can help guide the transition to healthier and more sustainable, resilient and equitable food systems in a post-pandemic world.

We are well aware that indigenous peoples have historically suffered, and in many places still suffer, from systematic discrimination and marginalization, and that many of them face constant threats to their lands, territories and resources and ultimately their livelihoods. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased existing vulnerabilities and exacerbated underlying inequalities. Meanwhile, the climate crisis has brought home the understanding that older models of development are not only flawed, but in some contexts pose a threat to humanity. With their traditional knowledge and connection with nature, indigenous peoples can help steer us towards better practices to preserve Earth’s ecosystems and protect biodiversity so that the way we grow food today does not threaten our food and water tomorrow.”
Dear colleagues,

Currently, IFAD’s portfolio includes 63 ongoing projects providing financial support to over 6.7 million indigenous people. IFAD also runs the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (IPAF), a unique programme which fosters self-driven development through small-scale projects that are directly implemented by indigenous organizations themselves. So far, 159 projects have been financed in more than 45 countries.

We are asking our partners to support the next IPAF cycle. For example, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency has already committed support and we really welcome this, and discussions are ongoing with other Member States as I’m speaking.

All our operations in indigenous peoples’ territories should be based on full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in IFAD projects and programmes and implemented only with their free, prior and informed consent.

IFAD will also do its best to support the effective participation of indigenous peoples in the planning and organization of the United Nations Food Systems Summit so that indigenous voices are integrated into global commitments, and that these recognize the need for social justice for all of us. We are determined to continue along this path with you and to further strengthen our partnership.

Thank you!”
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