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## IFAD's Statement

### UNPFII XIV SESSION

Outcome of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known  
as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples – Item 3

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Madam Chair,

Distinguished Members of the Permanent Forum, Indigenous Peoples' Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, let me first congratulate you for being nominated Chair of the UNPFII XIV Session.

Madam Chair,

IFAD takes the aspirations and rights of indigenous peoples very seriously. This is underscored by our Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples, which supports the participation and the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples' communities in programmes and projects that affect their livelihoods.

Today we wish to share with you IFAD's experience in establishing participation and consultation processes within our organization.

Participation of indigenous peoples at IFAD happens at several level: a) at the corporate level, through the Indigenous Peoples, Forum at IFAD and the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility; b) at the country level, through the Country Strategic Opportunity Papers (COSOPs) and IFAD-funded projects.

The **Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD** is a permanent platform of dialogue, whose objective is to support IFAD to implement its Policy. The second global meeting of the Forum at IFAD took place last February in Rome. It saw the participation of about 40 representatives of indigenous peoples' organizations and communities from developing countries. Half of them were women. This year's Forum built on the results of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, focusing on "*Indigenous Food Systems and Sustainable Livelihoods*". At the World Conference last September,

states recognized the importance of the role that indigenous peoples can play in economic, social and environmental development through traditional sustainable agricultural practices, including traditional seeds, access to credit, markets, secure land tenure and knowledge.

The February global meeting of the Forum at IFAD provided insightful recommendations and regional plans of actions to improve IFAD's work on indigenous food systems in the future.

The Forum at IFAD is held back-to-back with IFAD Governing Council, and its deliberations are delivered directly to the 173 IFAD Member States.

Last February, in addition, a panel of the Governing Council was dedicated to indigenous peoples. The Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Ms Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, was among the panellists, together with four representatives of indigenous peoples' organizations addressing IFAD's Member States.

Another IFAD instrument that sees indigenous peoples in the driving seat is the **Indigenous Peoples' Assistance Facility (IPAF)**.

The IPAF is governed by a board - formed in majority by indigenous leaders. They are responsible for providing strategic guidance and making final decision on grant awards. IPAF is co-managed at the regional level by three indigenous peoples' organizations who are responsible for monitoring, supervising and providing technical support to the small projects designed and implemented by indigenous peoples' communities and their organizations.

At the country level, following the approval of IFAD's Policy on indigenous peoples, participation and consultations on country strategies and project design has improved significantly.

Madam Chair,

We have learned by our experience on the ground that participation per se is not enough. Ticking a participants list with the names of indigenous leaders will not improve our work, nor will improve the livelihoods of indigenous peoples. Meaningful, effective, full, and equal participation can only happen if we also build the capacity of indigenous peoples' organizations and communities, as well as the capacity of our staff and project staff, to ensure that participation happens on an equal basis, as partners, in all matters that concern indigenous peoples.

Finally, Madam Chair, during the February Forum at IFAD, indigenous peoples called upon our organization to *"actively contribute to the realization of the outcomes of the WCIP"*. We think that IFAD has demonstrated its commitment to indigenous peoples' rights, including through the World Conference. An IFAD grant enabled indigenous peoples' representatives to participate in the World Conference processes. In the coming months, in cooperation with IWGIA and the Secretariat of the UNPFII, the same grant will also support the dissemination of the World Conference outcome document and foster dialogue on its implementation in six priority countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

As a member of the IASG, IFAD is also active in supporting the development of the System-Wide Action Plan.

In the months to come IFAD will be shaping its new strategic framework for 2016-2025, we will not miss the opportunity to see how the outcomes of the Conference are also enriching the strategic directions of IFAD.

We have walked together for more than a decade, strengthening our partnership with indigenous peoples every year, and learning by them what full, effective and equal participation is all about, and how free, prior, and informed consent can be implemented at all levels. We look forward to

continue our journey with the support and advice of this Forum and of indigenous peoples' organizations to provide guidance on the way ahead and by taking concrete actions on the ground for the survival, dignity and well-being of the world's indigenous peoples.

Thank you