

10 April 2018

Dear Madam,

With respect to your request, please find below an assessment of the ways in which the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) takes into account the Declaration and the reports of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders.

IFAD's unique mandate is to promote inclusive and sustainable rural transformation, helping poor and rural people to overcome poverty and achieve food security through remunerative, sustainable and resilient livelihoods. IFAD recognises that for rural transformation to be sustainable it must integrate the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability and address climate challenges. For rural transformation to be inclusive, all rural people must be able to exercise their economic, social and political rights, develop their abilities and take advantage of the opportunities around them.

As both an international financial institution (IFI) and a Specialized Agency of the UN, IFAD provides financial assistance (mostly concessionary loans) for the investment projects of its member countries. It is not a normative institution and does not put policy conditionality to its lending program. It is within this IFI business model that IFAD uses its people-centred approach to acknowledge and respect the rights of its target constituency of poor rural people, in particular smallholder farmers, including women, youth, and indigenous peoples.

In practise this is achieved through its inclusive approach to the design and implementation of IFAD-funded projects and programmes. IFAD works to enable rural people to carve out their own space for voice, influence and participation by facilitating dialogue between governments, civil society organisations, and rural communities. In practise, the inclusiveness that IFAD achieves varies from country to country and depends upon individual government's interest in engaging with multiple stakeholders.

IFAD creates a unique space for direct consultation and dialogue with rural peoples' organizations and other civil society organizations, at the corporate level through the Farmers' Forum and the Indigenous People's Forum at IFAD, and through its support to the International Land Coalition (ILC) as a founding member and host. Through its financial and institutional support to the ILC, IFAD indirectly support land rights defenders.

Ms Peggy Hicks  
Director  
United Nations Human Rights  
Office of the High Commissioner  
Geneva

IFAD is committed to enhancing environmental sustainability and resilience in small-scale agriculture across its projects and programmes through its Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedure (SECAP). Through the SECAP, IFAD ensures effective stakeholder engagement, including creating a procedure for seeking the free, prior and informed consent of communities potentially affected by development projects and to ensure IFAD responds to complaints from project-affected individuals or communities.

Yours sincerely,



Ashwani K. Muthoo  
Director

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