Questionnaire to the UN system agencies, funds, programmes, and intergovernmental organizations

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII) was established by Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 2000/22. The Permanent Forum is mandated to provide expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to the ECOSOC and through the Council to United Nations agencies, funds, and programmes. The forum must also raise awareness and promote the integration and coordination of activities related to indigenous issues with the UN system; prepare and disseminate information on indigenous issues; and promote respect for and full application of the provisions of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and follow up the effectiveness of the Declaration.

The Indigenous Peoples Development Branch/Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues invites UN system agencies, funds, programmes, and other inter-governmental organizations to complete the attached questionnaire on any action taken or planned in response to the Permanent Forum's recommendations, the system-wide action plan on rights of indigenous peoples (SWAP), the 2030 Development Agenda, and COVID-19 recovery efforts.

The responses will be compiled into two separate reports for the 2022 session of the Permanent Forum: (a) System-Wide Action Plan on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Implementation by the United Nations System; and (b) Update on the Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda. In your responses, please include information on progress and challenges related to indigenous women, indigenous persons with disabilities, indigenous older persons, and indigenous children and youth.

All responses will be placed on the DESA/DISD website on Indigenous Peoples at: https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/

If you have any objections for your response to be made available on our website, please inform our office accordingly.

Please submit your completed questionnaire by **15 November 2021** to:

Indigenous Peoples and Development Branch
Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Division for Inclusive Social Development
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations Headquarters
New York. USA 10017
Telephone: +1-917-367-5100
Email: indigenous_un@un.org and requesens@un.org

Questionnaire

Please provide information on the following:

A.   Recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and input to the 2022 session

i.   Please provide information on the measures taken since your last update to the Forum on the implementation or planned implementation of the recommendations of the PFII.

As part of the efforts to contribute to the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032), ITU and UNESCO are planning to organise activities during the WSIS Forum 2022, that is scheduled to be held starting on March 15, 2022. The final week will be held on May 30 – June 3, 2022. To support indigenous languages and peoples:

- *ITU and UNESCO will jointly organise a **virtual Hackathon on ICTs for Indigenous Languages.** The Hackathon is calling on stakeholders to form teams to explore the use of ICTs in preventing, revitalising, and promoting the indigenous languages.*

- *ITU, UNESCO, and other interested stakeholders will coordinate a **special track on ICTs and Indigenous Peoples and Culture**, which will provide a space for dialogues on indigenous issues and showcase best practices of ICTs use for indigenous sustainable development. Stakeholders are invited to submit their request for workshops/exhibition spaces through the Open Consultation Form by 7 March 2022 at www.wsis.org/forum*

- *ITU and UNESCO will initiate **a WSIS Special Prize on ICTs for Preserving, Revitalizing and Promoting Indigenous Languages** to award stakeholders for their excellent efforts towards indigenous languages. Stakeholders are invited to submit their ICTs projects and initiatives on indigenous languages, literatures, and cultures through an online form. The prize, which consists of a cash award and a certificate, will be presented to the winners during the final week of the WSIS Forum 2022.*

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum is co-organised annually by ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD, and UNDP, in collaboration with more than 30 UN agencies to provide a multistakeholder platform for information exchange, knowledge creation, sharing of best practices on information and communication technologies (ICTs) and fostering partnerships.

During the World Summit on the Information Society in 2003 (WSIS Phase I), indigenous peoples called for their full and effective participation in the information society as outlined in the Geneva Declaration. In 2005, the WSIS Indigenous Planning Conference for Tunisia was held in Ottawa, Canada to explore opportunities for bridging the digital divide between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples; the effective use of ICTs by indigenous peoples for sustainable development, poverty reduction and other goals; and, for keeping the issue of Indigenous connectivity front and center on the international Indigenous agenda.[1] One of the outcomes of this meeting was the creation of WSIS International Indigenous Steering Committee to ensure a robust and inclusive agenda, and to ensure the continuation of international dialogue regarding indigenous peoples.

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[1] https://www.itu.int/net/wsis/docs2/thematic/canada/final-report-indigenous.doc

ITU and UNESCO are the co-facilitators of the <u>WSIS Action Line C8: Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity, and local content</u>. This Action Line highlights commitments in building information and knowledge societies through a cultural diversity aspect and underlines the needs and interests of indigenous peoples. As the lead facilitator, UNESCO has organized the WSIS Action Line Facilitation Meetings on Action Line C8.

Since 2009, the annual WSIS Forum events has held numerous sessions and workshops, showcasing ICTs work in making a social, economic and environmental impact for indigenous peoples, including the WSIS Forum 2010 <u>thematic session</u> on "Indigenous Peoples and the Information Society", co-organised by ITU and UNESCO, and several <u>WSIS Forum 2011-2014 facilitation meetings</u> on action line C8 "Indigenous Peoples, Education and ICTs", organized by UNESCO.

In 2015, the WSIS+10 review highlighted the issue of bridging the digital divide for everyone and emphasized the use of ICTs by all, including indigenous peoples.[2] References to indigenous peoples are also specified in the <u>WSIS+10 Statement on the Implementation of WSIS Outcomes</u> and <u>Geneva Plan of Action</u>.

Following this timeline, several sessions were organized at the annual WSIS Forum to encourage discourse on the important role that indigenous peoples and languages could play towards sustainable development, including the WSIS Forum 2019: ICT4ALL: Indigenous languages Matter for Peace, Innovation, and Development, organised by UNESCO. During the <u>WSIS Forum 2021, the session on Indigenous Peoples and Connectivity: Bridging the Digital Divide, was co-organised by ITU, Permanent Mission of Australia to the UN, and UN DESA</u>

In 2017, the WSIS Forum launched the WSIS Forum Photo Contest. It has since received photos depicting the power of ICTs for sustainable development. Some of the pictures received related to WSIS Action Line C8, feature indigenous subjects, for example:

- *<u>WSIS Forum 2018 Photo Contest: Nagaland Tribe Connecting the World</u>*

- *<u>WSIS Forum 2020 Photo Contest: Radio Naf</u>*

- *<u>WSIS Forum 2021 Photo Contest: The fascinations of villages' kids to the computer</u>*

ii.   The theme of the 2022 PFII session is "Indigenous peoples, business, autonomy and the human rights principles of due diligence, including free, prior and informed consent"[1]. Please include information on any publications, projects, reports, or activities relevant to this theme.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) promotes the appropriation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in sectors of society with specific needs. This objective includes the use, access, and knowledge of ICTs for the economic and social development of Indigenous peoples.

The 4th industrial revolution is characterized by rapidly expanding digitalisation in all aspects of people's lives. There is a critical need to ensure that everyone without any discrimination can equally and equitably benefit from and be empowered by technology.

In line with the 2022 PFII theme, ICT/digital technologies can assist indigenous peoples in learning new skills, facilitate their social interactions, ensure their social and economic

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[2] https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/news/2015/12/world-summit-on-information-society-important-for-indigenous-peoples/

participation in the digital economy, and improve the self-sustainability of Indigenous communities.

Therefore, ITU's work for Indigenous Peoples *focuses not only on empowering Indigenous peoples and communities by enhancing digital literacy, but also on supporting these communities to learn how to develop and maintain digital environments that respond to the needs and embrace the diversity of Indigenous peoples' aspirations.*

To support the achievement of this goal, ITU works through a capacity building programme created by the ITU Development Sector (ITU-D) tailored for Indigenous peoples. This programme aims to strengthen the capacity of Indigenous communities from the Americas region with digital literacy skills and knowledge applicable for their communities' needs and requirements. The ITU-D blended training program, developed in follow up to the last World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-17), is also in line with ITU Resolution 46 that calls for leveraging indigenous communities' knowledge of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

The ITU-D capacity building programme for Indigenous People *is also organized in close collaboration with Indigenous Organizations, experts in Indigenous issues, and Communities' representatives. The ITU has made available two certified training programmes:*

1. Capacity building programme to develop indigenous technicians knowledgeable on how to design, develop and maintain telecommunications and ICT networks. *It also promotes entrepreneurship by the participants helping to ensure the sustainability of the networks in these communities. The training encompasses five (5) independent modules and a training camp. Each of the modules and the curriculum structure were designed based on ITU previous training experiences on developing technical capacities of Indigenous People in their own villages. For those who successfully completed the whole program (5 modules), the training invites the successful Indigenous participants to also take part in a face-to-face training camp, which aims to be a space that facilitates mutual exchange of challenges and knowledge and overall generates a network of indigenous technical promoters in the Americas region.*

Even in the challenging context of Covid 19, the training program for technical promoters in telecommunications and broadcasting in indigenous communities 2020-2021 edition was successful. The training programme modules were held as follows:

- *Course 1. Communication, and community technologies was delivered from October 19 to November 22, 2020;*
- *Course 2. Electric power supply and electronic systems, from February 22th to March 21st 2021;*
- *Course 3. Radio frequency, telecommunications and community networks, from April 5th to May 2nd 2021;*
- *Course 4. Regulatory environment for telecommunications and broadcasting, from May 17 to 13 June 2021;*
- *Course 5. Sustainability in telecommunications and broadcasting projects, from June 28 to June 25 July 2021;*
- *The Training Camp was delivered from August 16th to September 3rd 2021*
  Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Camp was conducted online in an interactive format and included the following types of activities:
  - *Feedback and further work on the final projects of the participants.*
  - *Workshops on technical and social issues.*
  - *Conversations and seminars on social and economic issues.*
  - *Thematic presentations provided by the participants.*

See more on the Training Camp: https://nube.yanapak.org/index.php/s/F7X7MLZQZyn5G65

The results: This holistic training programme raised the capacity of 70 Indigenous participants throughout the Americas. 21 of the participants from Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, and Peru have completed the full programme. 30% of them were Indigenous women. The training, consisting of around 1 year of study, develops Indigenous professionals able to maintain Indigenous Networks from infrastructure to the delivery of the communication. As well as enhancing the professional capacity of Indigenous professionals themselves, it boosts their ability to contribute to their communities' socio-economic development and self-sustainability.

2. A second training programme on the topic <u>"Innovative Communication Tools on how to develop, manage and operate an Indigenous Radio Network"</u> was also made available to Indigenous people in 2021 in 2 editions:
  - *The First session was delivered from March 15th to May 21nd*
  - *The Second session was delivered from – June 14th to August 22nd*

This training program was composed of five independent units covering the following topics:
Unit 1: Development of web pages with content of interest to indigenous communities
Unit 2: Emergency information systems
Unit 3: Web tools for network development
Unit 4: Development of an indigenous radio network
Unit 5: Use of digital content on the indigenous radio network.

The results: The training course reached 141 Indigenous participants, 69 Indigenous participants in the first session and 72 participants from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela in the second session. Moreover, 30% of the participants completed all 5 units of the training course, of which 40.5% were indigenous women.

3. Both training courses detailed in points 1 and 2 above, are delivered through the ITU Academy. ITU Academy provides high-quality training to anyone, from government policymakers and regulators to operational and technical staff, students, entrepreneurs as well as any citizens interested in developing skills and abilities in the field of ICT and digital development.

*ITU-D also made available a **User Guide for our ITU Academy platform – tailored for Indigenous Peoples in the Spanish language** to attract more Indigenous peoples that will benefit from these courses and facilitate their understanding of how to access and make use of the training content from this platform. The guide offers a step-by-step explanation for every procedure in the platform to facilitate, incentivize and leverage the Indigenous People learning process.*

B.   System-Wide Action Plan to achieve the ends of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Background
As per the Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/69/2), a <u>system-wide action plan to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</u> was adopted in November 2015 and launched by the Secretary-General at the UN Permanent Forum in May 2016.

In August 2020, the United Nations Executive Committee agreed on the need for accelerated and collective action to strengthen the implementation of the SWAP on Indigenous Peoples. In November 2020, the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination issued a Call to Action: Building an Inclusive, Sustainable and Resilient Future with Indigenous Peoples. Its goal is to ensure collaborative and coherent UN system action to support the rights and well-being of Indigenous Peoples with a focus on furthering the implementation of the SWAP[2].

i.   The Permanent Forum will follow up on progress made on the SWAP implementation as part of its discussion on the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples during its 2022 session. Please provide analysis on actions taken by your agency, fund and/or programme on the six key elements of the SWAP, since your last update to the Forum[3]. Please also include an executive summary (600-word limit).

To date, ITU's work in support of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous communities has been focused on awareness raising and capacity development. During 2021, the awareness raising has primarily been achieved through side events for the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and activities held during the World Summit on Information Society - WSIS 2021 for the WSIS community seeking to build global understanding on Indigenous peoples needs and requirements related to ICTs and digital issues.

The forthcoming activities with UNESCO on indigenous languages and ICTs also seek to raise awareness of best practices leveraging ICTs as catalytic drivers to support indigenous languages preservation as well as Indigenous people cultural legacy and values.

ITU's capacity development efforts have been deployed on the Americas region and consisted of digital skills training programmes that focused on topics of interest and ICT/digital skills identified by Indigenous people and Indigenous representatives as important, to enable them contribute to the socio-economic development and self-sustainability of their communities.

(Details on ITU work and related activities indicated in section A and C of this questionnaire)

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[1] See Annex 1. Agenda of the twenty-first session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

[2] Reporting on the activities to implement the CEB Call to Action will be through task groups and should not be included in the responses to this questionnaire.

[3] The six key elements of the SWAP are: 1) Raise awareness of the UNDRIP; 2) Support the implementation of the UNDRIP, particularly at the country level; 3) Support the realization of Indigenous Peoples' rights in the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; 4) Map existing standards and guidelines, capacity, training materials and resources within the UN system, international financial institutions and the members of the IASG for the effective implementation of the UNDRIP; 5) Develop the capacity of States, indigenous peoples, civil society, and UN personnel; and 6) Advance the participation of Indigenous Peoples in UN processes.

C.   2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

i.   Please provide information on the main gaps and challenges your entity has identified for Indigenous Peoples in achieving the 2030 Agenda.
ii.   What activities have your entity undertaken since the last reporting that addresses these gaps and challenges?
iii.   Please describe any activities that your entity organized in support of the 2021 UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and/or reports and activities that supported SDG reporting and monitoring or a VNR process at the national, regional, or global level.

During the 2021 Forum on Indigenous issues, ITU organized jointly with UN DESA, the Permanent Mission of Australia to the UN and WSIS a side event on the topic: Indigenous Peoples and Connectivity: Bridging the Digital Divide.
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2021/en/Agenda/Session/432.
The event highlighted the connectivity challenges faced by indigenous communities in different countries and focused on the work being done to bridge the digital divide. Solutions discussed included infrastructure, policy, and the critical need for digital skills. The ITU trainings aiming at strengthening Indigenous communities' digital skills were also presented. The event also stressed the importance of sustainability and indigenous ownership, calling for initiatives in the digital space for indigenous communities to be designed and implemented with or by those communities. ITU stressed that an integral part of ITU training development methodology is to ensure that our training programmes are developed and delivered by experts who work closely with these communities.

D.   COVID-19 pandemic

i.   Please provide information on action taken by your agency, fund and/or programme since your last update to the Forum, to address the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on indigenous peoples.

1.   *In response to the Covid 19 pandemic, the ITU online training course in Innovative Communication Tools, was updated and redesigned since last year to also include a dedicated module on emergency communications and pandemic situation, designed for indigenous communicators. In 2021, the module and related interactive session with indigenous communicators aimed at providing a platform to support indigenous communities' interchange on challenges and experiences during the pandemic.*

2.   *Since April 2020, the WSIS Stocktaking platform has been collecting projects and activities on how ICTs are assisting stakeholders in their everyday life, work, and combating challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Information and Knowledge Societies have emerged as one of the main lines of defense against a virus that is still inflicting immense loss of lives and livelihoods and hampering progress towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Never has this been more evident than during the COVID-19 pandemic where information and communication technologies (ICTs) have been essential to keeping societies and economies running everywhere. As a part of the World Summit on the Information Society Stocktaking, there have been ongoing efforts to promote the use of ICTs for social impact in order to provide useful, replicable and actionable information to all in the WSIS community and beyond, including indigenous communities.*

The aim of this repository is to help individuals and communities around the world to continue to partner, collaborate and implement in these exceptional pandemic circumstances using information and communication technologies. The submitted projects are reviewed and featured on the WSIS Stocktaking Platform and promoted through various channels, including the WSIS Flash newsletter, WSIS TalkX podcasts and social media channels. The expected impact is to witness the submitted good ICT practices being replicated elsewhere and thus join the collective effort in responding to COVID19 pandemic and advancing SDGs.
www.wsis.org/stocktaking

The special WSIS Stocktaking report on how ICTs respond to COVID-19 is a living document that continues to collect information on how WSIS stakeholders rose to the challenge, with more than 400 COVID-19 response case studies featuring ICT projects and initiatives from governments, private sector companies, academia, civil society, international organizations, and others. This form of cross-sector collaboration and best-practice sharing is the essence of the WSIS Stocktaking process, and it is exactly what is needed to defeat COVID-19 and advance the WSIS Action Lines in support of the SDGs.

Some of the collected projects which are directly linked to indigenous issues are the following:
- *Evaluating Medicine Delivery System during COVID-19 in Sri Lanka using Mobile Phone Technology by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, United States of America - https://www.cdc.gov*

"To contain the COVID-19 outbreak in Sri Lanka, an all-island, a curfew was imposed, causing most of the routine patient care services to be interrupted. Currently, there are access limitations to non-communicable diseases-related services such as medicine, as the health system is struggling to prevent this pandemic. Therefore, the Ministry of Health and Indigenous Medical Services introduced a novel mechanism to deliver medicines to the doorstep of patients with NCDs to ensure continuous supply of medicine. A mobile phone survey was launched to assess the utilization and performance of the medicine delivery system for patients with noncommunicable diseases implemented by the Ministry of Health of Sri Lanka."
- *C-DERP (Covid 19 - Digital Emergency Relief Program) by Digital Empowerment Foundation, India - https://defindia.org/ https://www.defindia.org/about-the-programme/*

"Our beneficiaries and primary target groups are low-income groups, daily wagers, the poor and vulnerable, widow women, the elderly, the differently-abled, farmers, students, police officers, labors and frontline health workers. DEF is helping avail benefits of entitlements and services. The lives of migrant laborers who are stuck, daily wagers, and auto-rickshaw drivers have come to a still. They eat what they earn and since there's a financial crunch, such people are the ones adversely affected. Our digital foot soldiers have provided ration and have helped them. The weavers' community is badly affected with no work. The payments to previous orders have not been made. To support them, a new set of order to weave Indigo Saris has been made by our ground team."
- *TLAYOLCHIKAWALIS (ACTIONS TO PROTECT THE HEARTS) CAMPAIGN by Redes por la Diversidad Equidad y Sustentabilidad AC, Mexico – https://www.redesac.org.mx/ http://tayolchikawalis.org/*

"The TLAYOLCHIKAWALIS (ACTIONS TO PROTECT THE HEARTS) CAMPAIGN is aimed at making information more accessible to the masehual people of Cuetzalan, for them to help each other. With very scarce access to infrastructure, services and information in their own language, there has been a worrisome trend of misleading information and fake news, and the need for a campaign which not only provides reliable information but enables the community to organize themselves to help and see for each other, In order to mobilize and organize community members for the provision of supplies and other economic relief in this economic crisis in Cuetzalan, the campaign is absolutely necessary. The campaign is being led by a long established local "Union of Cooperatives Tosepan" that brings together 395 Indigenous

communities of the Sierra Norte of Puebla, but we need help to cover the campaign costs in Cuetzalan del Progreso and surrounding communities. Currently, TOSEPAN is being accompanied by the Mexican NGO Redes por la Diversidad, Equidad y Sustentabilidad A.C. in a very important indigenous telecommunications network project together with Telecomunicaciones Indígenas Comunitarias A.C. and Rhizomatica."

This report also helps us better understand the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines, particularly the role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development through the multi-stakeholder portals for Indigenous Peoples, and Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content and its many segments including: Cultural diversity • Cultural exchange and information • Cultural heritage • Cultural industry • Cultural policy • Digital archive • Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups • Indigenous peoples • Internationalized domain names • Language-related ICT tools • Linguistic diversity • Local languages, and • Traditional knowledge.

For more information on ITU work on Indigenous Issues
please see*:*

ITU website on Indigenous Issues: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Indigenous-Peoples/Pages/default.aspx

please contact the ITU Focal Points:

ITU-HQ-Geneva Roxana WIDMER-ILIESCU roxana.widmer-iliescu@itu.int
ITU- Americas Region Mr. Randall Trevino randall.trevino@itu.int
ITU-NY Ms. Ursula Wynhoven ursula.wynhoven@itu.int

Thank you very much

ANNEX 1

Agenda of the twenty-first session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The Twentieth-First session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is scheduled to take place from **25 April to 6 May 2022**

Provisional Agenda

3.   Election of officers.

4.   Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.

5.   Discussion on the theme "Indigenous Peoples business, autonomy and the human rights principles of due diligence, including free, prior and informed consent".

6.   Discussion on the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health, and human rights), with reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

7.   Dialogues:

        (a) Dialogue with Indigenous Peoples;

        (b) Dialogue with Member States;

        (c) Dialogue with the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes;

        (d) Human rights dialogue with the Special Rapporteur and Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

        (e)) Regional dialogues: Indigenous peoples and pandemic recovery;

        (f) Thematic dialogues: International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022–2032.

8. Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues considered by the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues.

9. Provisional agenda of the twenty-second session of the Permanent Forum.

10.   Adoption of the report of the Permanent Forum on its twenty-first session.