

Questionnaire to UN system

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

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII) was established by the 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; to raise awareness and promote the integration and coordination of activities related to indigenous issues within 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 and programmes and other intergovernmental 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 a report for the 2023 session of the Permanent Forum. 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 to your response being made available on our website, please inform our office accordingly.

Please submit your completed questionnaire by **15 November 2022** 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
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 2023 session

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

OHCHR welcomes the recommendation of the Forum to evaluate the progress made, identify implementation gaps and make recommendations to advance the protection of indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation and initial contact and to guarantee their rights. The OHCHR technical mission, which has been deployed in Bolivia, will continue to closely monitor the situation of indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation, including through technical support to the authorities. In addition, the HRA in Paraguay will participate in a regional event, which will be organized by the International Working Group of Indigenous Peoples Living in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact (GTI-PIACI) in Asunción, Paraguay from 5 to 9 December 2022. The event will further discuss strategies to strengthen the protection of indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation and initial contact.

ii. The theme of the 2023 PFII session is “Indigenous peoples, human health, planetary and territorial health and climate change: a rights-based approach”¹. Please include information on any publications, projects, reports, or activities relevant to this theme.

The Human Rights Council, the human rights mechanisms and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights have sought to bring renewed attention to human rights and climate change through a series of resolutions², reports, and activities on the subject, and by advocating for a human rights-based approach to climate change. The High Commissioner for Human Rights regularly highlighted the concerns of indigenous peoples in relation to climate change, including in the context of the Human Rights Council. In her [opening statement](#) to the Human Rights Council’s panel discussion on the human rights of people in vulnerable situations in the context of climate change (Geneva, June 2022), the High Commissioner stressed that for many indigenous peoples, climate change is jeopardizing food security, traditional livelihoods, cultural practices and their effective right to self-determination. The risk is even greater for those with insecure land and resource rights.

The Office further contributed to the Secretary-General report on [The impacts of climate change on the human rights of people in vulnerable situations](#). The report examines the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights of indigenous peoples. It provides examples of good practices and concludes with concrete recommendations

¹ See Annex 1. Agenda of the twenty-second session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

² See Resolution 50/9. Human rights and climate change (7 July 2022), which makes specific references to the importance of indigenous knowledge.

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to States, including ensuring that all climate mitigation and adaptation measures that have an impact on the rights of indigenous peoples are implemented with their free, prior and informed consent.

In the lead up to the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference 27, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights advocated for a human right based approach to guide global policies and measures designed to address climate change and highlighted key priorities for rights-based climate action. In a [press release](#) and [open letter to Member States](#) issued prior to COP 27, the High Commissioner urged States to seize the opportunity of COP27 and take the following steps:

- Enhance climate ambition to protect human rights;
- Guarantee meaningful and effective participation;
- Address the human rights harms caused by climate change;
- Mobilize resources for rights-based climate action;
- and Ensure the centrality of human rights in climate decision-making.

OHCHR also developed a series of [information materials](#) to raise awareness of the human rights impacts of climate change and environmental harms. The materials highlight OHCHR's key messages and recommendations regarding human rights, climate change, the environment, and related issues, drawing attention to the specific situation of indigenous peoples. The Office also launched several other knowledge products, including the following:

- [Advancing a rights-based approach to climate change resilience and migration in the Sahel](#)
- [Integrating Human Rights in Nationally Determined Contributions \(NDCs\): A Toolkit for Practitioners](#)
- [Human rights implications of COVID-19 measures in the context of Climate Change](#)
- [Advancing a Human Rights-Based Approach to the Climate Negotiations: Key Messages of the UN Environment Management Group Issue Management Group on Human Rights and the Environment](#)

iii. Please provide information on efforts to ensure the participation of indigenous peoples in the international decades declared by the General Assembly, such as the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development,” the International Decade of Indigenous Languages and other relevant international decades and processes.

OHCHR supported the development of the Global Action Plan for the International Decade on Indigenous Languages (2022 – 2032) under the coordination of UNESCO, the lead UN Agency for its organization. The Office also contributed to meetings of the Global Task Force for Making a Decade of Indigenous Languages, including through financial support, to support the implementation of the Global Action Plan of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages.

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 [system-wide action plan to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) 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 SWAP³.

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 2023 session. Please provide an analysis of actions taken by your agency, fund and/or programme on the six key elements of the SWAP, since your last update to the Forum⁴.

Executive summary: OHCHR, at Headquarters and in the field, carried out a number of activities to implement the six components of the System-Wide Action Plan on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The work of the Office focused on raising awareness of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, developing the capacities of States, indigenous peoples, and UN Country teams, including through support to national legislation and policies on indigenous peoples, and advancing the participation of indigenous peoples in United Nations processes. The Indigenous Fellowship Programme also makes an important contribution to building up community capacity to defend human rights and is a concrete means for promoting understanding of the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The programme, which has been redesigned in the context of the pandemic, has enabled the deployment of 19 Senior indigenous fellows in OHCHR Country and Regional Offices as well as UN Resident Coordinator Offices in 2022 – including in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nepal, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Kenya and Uganda. Senior fellows have contributed to advancing a number of priority issues in the respective regions, ranging from the integration of indigenous peoples' rights into national strategies, to engagement on climate change and the SDGs and the promotion of indigenous women's rights and indigenous knowledge. The participation of indigenous peoples in UN processes

³ Reporting on the activities to implement the CEB Call to Action is through task groups and should not be included in the responses to this questionnaire.

⁴ 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.

is further enhanced through the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples. In 2022, the Fund supported indigenous grantees to participate in the climate negotiations for the first time during the United Nations Climate Change Conference 27. OHCHR also plays an active role in efforts aimed at raising the profile of indigenous peoples in the context of the Human Rights Council, including by organizing, during the 51st session of the Human Rights Council in September 2022, a panel discussion on the rights of indigenous peoples, addressing the “Impact of social and economic recovery plans in the COVID-19 context on indigenous peoples, with a special focus on food security”; and an expert workshop in November 2022 on “possible ways to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples in the work of the Human Rights Council”.

OHCHR, at Headquarters and in the field, carried out a number of activities to implement the six components of the System-Wide Action Plan on the Rights of Rights of Indigenous Peoples⁵. Pursuant to resolution [48/11 of the Human Rights Council](#), OHCHR organized a four-day [expert workshop](#) from 21 to 24 November 2022 on possible ways to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples in the work of the Human Rights Council. The UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Chair of the UN Expert Mechanism on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, indigenous peoples and States’ representatives contributed to the meeting, which focused on the concrete steps, including the procedural ones, on the way forward. The UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples supported the participation of 25 indigenous representatives from 20 countries (13 men and 12 women) in the workshop. A summary report of the expert workshop on the discussion and the resulting recommendations will be submitted to the Council prior to its 53rd session.

The participation of indigenous peoples in UN processes is further enhanced through the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples. In 2022, the Fund supported indigenous grantees to participate in the climate negotiations for the first time. The Fund is the only one that provides support specifically to indigenous peoples’ representatives to participate in both the annual meeting of the Facilitative Working Group of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (FWG LCIPP) and the climate negotiations. The presence of the grantees of the Fund for 3 weeks during the LCIPP and COP27 amplified the role of OHCHR in COP and advanced human rights, including the rights of indigenous peoples’ rights in the climate change negotiations. The first cohort of indigenous grantees to participate in the COP numbered 11 people. With the support of OHCHR, they were able to make important contributions including as speakers in 70 + events, advocates and in some cases members of State delegations. The experience and coordination between the grantees, OHCHR and the UNFCCC Secretariat facilitated an agreement, in principle, for OHCHR and the UNFCCC to work together to include a climate change component of the OHCHR Indigenous Fellowship Programme to be held

⁵ Rights of indigenous peoples – [Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights](#), 6 July 2022.

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in conjunction with the mid-year meeting of the subsidiary bodies to the UNFCCC and the FWG LCIPP. In addition, the Fund assisted representatives of indigenous communities to participate in the 21st session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (20 grantees); the 7th meeting of the FWG LCIPP and SBSTA meeting in Bonn (8 grantees); the 15th session of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (25 grantees); the 82nd Session of CEDAW (8 grantees); the 107th Session of CERD; the 51st session of Human Rights Council (3 grantees); the 41st Session of the UPR (10 grantees); the UN Expert workshop on possible ways to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples in the work of the Human Rights Council (24 grantees). The Fund will also fund the participation of indigenous representatives in the 11th Session of the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights.

The Indigenous Fellowship Programme also makes an important contribution to building up community capacity to defend human rights and is a concrete means for promoting understanding of the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The programme, which has been redesigned in the context of the pandemic, has enabled the deployment of 19 Senior indigenous fellows in OHCHR Country and Regional Offices as well as UN Resident Coordinator Offices in 2022 – including in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nepal, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Kenya and Uganda. Senior fellows have contributed to advancing a number of priority issues in the respective regions, ranging from the integration of indigenous peoples' rights into national strategies, to engagement on climate change and the SDGs and the promotion of indigenous women's rights and indigenous knowledge.

In light of the persistent lack of indigenous peoples' participation in decision making and increasing violence against indigenous human rights defenders worldwide, the Office has stepped up its efforts to facilitate dialogue between indigenous peoples and State authorities in a number of countries. In particular, OHCHR engaged with state authorities to address forced evictions of indigenous peoples from their traditional lands, including through support to implementation of national and regional court decisions on the topic. The Office further provides technical guidance to the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, notably for the development of national action plans on business and human rights, with particular attention to the rights of indigenous peoples affected by business activities and infrastructure projects. In the context of the 2030 Agenda, OHCHR continued to systematically, and at all levels, advocate for meaningful and inclusive participation of indigenous peoples in the implementation, reporting and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda providing support on the human rights based approach to data, which has significant implications for measuring progress (or lack thereof) in 2030 Agenda implementation for indigenous peoples –more information under Section C below.

C. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

i. Please describe any activities your entity has organized since the last reporting period to accelerate progress across a range of SDGs, demonstrating the interlinkages across goals and targets and if applicable, providing examples of translating global goals into local actions. In your response, please consider referring to SDGs relevant to the theme of the 2023 session of the Forum.

In the context of COVID-19 recoveries, OHCHR has stepped its work, in particular via its Surge Initiative, to place human rights at the center of the UN concerted efforts to support States and national stakeholders in addressing inequalities and achieving the SDGs. The initiative aims to help operationalize the Secretary-General’s call for a “renewed social contract anchored in human rights” by contributing to building societies that deliver on the 2030 Agenda and prioritize those most in need, including indigenous peoples.

Projects

OHCHR does so, first, by allocating funds and providing technical support to specific projects at the national level.

For examples:

- *In Paraguay, OHCHR carried out a human rights analysis of the social protection system that the UN Country team used to engage with the Social Cabinet and the Ministry of Social Development to promote the extension of the new Government program “Vamos!” to segments of society excluded from social protection, including indigenous peoples;*
- *In Kenya, OHCHR supported a project partnering with indigenous human rights defenders to document the human rights dimensions of the COVID-19 crisis in indigenous communities, with a focus on the situation of indigenous women who face multiple forms of discrimination. The [resulting analysis](#) built a compelling case to reinforce indigenous people’s inclusion in social protection programs and targeted responses to address inequalities in the rights to education and health, and increased gender-based violence (including harmful traditional practices);*
- *In Costa Rica, OHCHR set up a project in relation to recurring land disputes between indigenous and non-indigenous communities in four prioritized indigenous communities. The project focused on economic, social and cultural rights (in particular access to land) with the participation of indigenous leaders, including women and local and national authorities. It included a root-cause analysis of tensions, as well as a risk analysis, early warning system with preventive measures to protect indigenous rights defenders which at this date remains key to mapping persistent and emerging factors that generate inequalities, which disproportionately affect indigenous peoples;*
- *In Ecuador, a similar prevention-focused project was implemented, in particular in relation to land-related targets and indicators under SDG 11-sustainable communities (and also SDGs 1-no poverty, 2-zero hunger, 5-gender inequality, and 15-life on land). The analysis contributed to map the differentiated needs of the indigenous communities, in particular the impact on women rights and children, to access their land, including the lack of accurate information, language barriers and participation gaps.*

UNSDCF and the Agenda 2030

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Another form of engagement at country level of OHCHR via its Surge Initiative is the support given to UN Country Teams (UNCTs) regarding the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs) and Common Country Analyses (CCAs) which represent the UN Development System's collective offer to support countries in addressing key SDG priorities and gaps and imperative to Leave No One Behind (LNOB), meaning due attention should be placed in these documents to the situation of indigenous peoples.

- *The UNSDG Human Rights Focal Point Network conducted an inter-agency Review of CCAs/CFs, led by OHCHR in 2021-2022, which has identified – among other findings- that population groups insufficiently represented in CCAs include indigenous peoples, who also run the risk of becoming even more invisible in the CFs. Therefore, one of its recommendations to Resident-Coordination and UNCTs is “to improve focus on indigenous peoples as well as racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTIQ+ people, and other LNOB groups, in line with the 2030 Agenda's LNOB pledge”. Other recommendations are to directly address all the most marginalized, most disadvantaged and excluded groups identified in human rights mechanisms' recommendations; to capture existing systemic and other forms of discrimination and to tie them to programming recommendations; and, to not treat disadvantaged groups homogeneously but rather recognize the intersectional factors of discrimination as well as their root causes.*
- *To help address this gap and reinforce the operational integration of these Human Rights, LNOB, and Gender Equality principles in the design and review of CCAs and CFs, the Network -under OHCHR lead- is finalizing a practical tool, comprised of two checklists and an online interactive document. The Tool includes reference to a series of Reference documents on Indigenous Peoples⁷. The Tool also reminds RCOs and UNCTs to take into account indigenous peoples' rights with regard to traditional knowledge, lands, resources, and territories in relation to addressing environmental and climate change issues in CCAs. In a similar vein, it provides tips and guidance to ensure that the CF focuses on reducing inequalities and countering discrimination, including on the basis of indigenous origin, and on including interventions that address the situation of indigenous peoples. In addition, the Tool showcases promising practices of CCAs that have included specific analysis concerning indigenous peoples and/or have engaged indigenous peoples through consultations for the development of the analysis, in addition to CFs that include indigenous peoples in monitoring the implementation of the CF. [The Tool will be officially launched on 10 December 2022].*
- *OHCHR also actively contributed to the development of the new **Output Indicator Framework and Implementation Guide**, set up by the UNSDG in November 2022, that will reinforce the transparency and accountability of the UNCTs in a UN delivering together on the Agenda 2030 and its SDGs, leaving no one behind. OHCHR has in particular advocated for a human rights approach to be integrated in the definition and implementation of the SDG output indicators. The methodological notes for the new framework includes a list of 20*

⁶ Review of New Generation Common Country Analyses and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks : Assessing the Level of Integration of Human Rights, Leave No One Behind and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment – Establishing a Baseline; UNSDG Human Rights Focal Points Network, May 2022

⁷ The [UN SWAP on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), as well as the [CEB Call to Action on Building an Inclusive, Sustainable and Resilient Future with Indigenous Peoples](#), the [Country Advisory Notes of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the country reports of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples](#).

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Standard LNOB Groups, one of which is indigenous peoples. As such, the UNCTs are encouraged to more readily include this group if important or relevant in the country's context.

OHCHR had also developed a number of tools that could provide inspiration for similar tools aiming to address indigenous peoples being left out of national policy-making. It is the case of the [Tool for the Introduction of the "Leave No One Behind" principle into legislative and strategic acts of the Republic of Serbia](#), from Sept 2022. This practical tool provides clear guidelines to decision-makers in understanding and applying one of the major principles of the 2030 Agenda, thereby trying to ensure that the most marginalized and excluded groups will be better recognized and involved at all stages of legislative and strategic acts in Serbia, across sectors.

ii. Please describe any activities your entity organized in support of the 2022 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.

Preparations of the 2022 HLPF

OHCHR engaged in or supported the drafting of several background documents for the 2022 HLPF. First, it facilitated the submission of official inputs to the 2022 HLPF by UN Treaty Bodies (ie. Committee on the rights of the child, Committee on the rights of persons with disabilities, CEDAW Committee), the Human Rights Council 2022 inputs (i.e. overview of the HRC work on the 2030 Agenda and on COVID-19; recommendations from the UPR to the HLPF; input on the theme of the 2022 HLPF from a child rights perspective). Official inputs to the HLPF also include the conclusions and recommendations of the Human Rights Council's fourth intersessional [meeting](#) for dialogue and cooperation on Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, organized by OHCHR.

OHCHR also contributed to the Concept Notes of and Experts Group Meetings.

- On SDG4, OHCHR expressed the need to restress the States' commitments expressed in the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement to protect and preserve ocean ecosystems for the benefit of those persons that rely upon them since the negative impacts of oceanic degradation are particularly acute for, among others, indigenous peoples subsistence fishers, persons living in small-island developing States, threatening a wide array of their human rights including rights to food, water, life, health, housing, culture, work and a healthy environment. At its most extreme, degradation of marine ecosystems from rising sea levels, acidification and other human impacts, risks the continuing existence of entire ways of life, the self-determination of indigenous peoples, and the territorial integrity of nations.*
- On SDG15: OHCHR advised to reflect more on the important role of indigenous peoples in protecting biodiversity and the benefits of recognizing indigenous peoples' rights to their lands and territories; the responsibilities of businesses to respect human rights; and the protection of environmental human rights defenders -who are often indigenous peoples.*
- On SDG 4, OHCHR suggested experts and stressed out for the Concept Note that education for human rights, gender equality, global citizenship, and cultural diversity are integral components of quality education. [During the panel discussion, speakers*

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highlighted the need to consider marginalized groups, including girls, street children, and indigenous peoples, in education].

- On SDG 5, OHCHR reminded that gender discriminatory practices are a barrier to sustainable development, and that the goals, targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should be interpreted through the lenses of human rights obligations, not to dilute States' human rights obligations. Indigenous women are particularly concerned since they often face multiple intersectional discriminations.

Regional fora on sustainable development:

OHCHR also contributed to some of the HLPF preparatory work at the regional level focusing on Indigenous Peoples, in particular in the fora for Asia-Pacific and Africa regions.

▪ **ESCAP:**

- OHCHR co-organized with FAO and AIPP a side-event on “**Indigenous Peoples, Gender and Natural Resources Rights in the context of COVID-19: Trends and experiences from the field for building back better**” to raise awareness about the importance of protecting Indigenous Peoples land, territories and resource rights in Asia, as a pathway for sustainable and equitable social-economic development that leaves no one behind. This side-event illustrated trends and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Indigenous Peoples, especially women, elaborating on how challenges can be overcome. Inspiring experiences demonstrating Indigenous Peoples critical role mitigating the risks of future pandemics and building back better were presented and an interactive panel discussion helped generating a set of recommendations on areas for action - 30 March 2022.
- OHCHR partnered up with ESCAP SRO (Sub regional Office) Pacific, Governments of Fiji and of Tuvalu, PIFS (Pacific Island Forum Secretariat), IOM, ILO, and PDD (Platform on Disaster Displacement) on a side-event on “**Climate Mobility Framework Design Process in the Pacific**” to share the knowledge and perspectives gained after three years of the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Programme (PCCMHS) and begin a solid foundation for the design and development of a regional state-led response. The side-event also intended to highlight the UN partner collaboration in supporting member states address climate-related challenge in reference to SDG Goal 13 and Goal 17 - 29 March 2022.
- OHCHR participated to the session on “**Support to VNRs from the UN system**” by making a presentation on the numerous bridges that can be made between HR and SDG processes including use of data, recommendations and existing reports and analysis, as well as on the room for increased cooperation between NMIRFs and SDG reporting structure, to ensure a focus on vulnerable groups among other things, like indigenous peoples. To that extend, practical tools on the interlinkages between HR and SDGs were presented, like the HR database of TB recommendations and the UHRI - 25 March 2022.

▪ **ECA:**

- Like in ESCAP forum, OHCHR presented Practical tools on the interlinkages between HR and SDGs, like the HR database of TB recommendations and the UHRI,

at the session entitled “Partnerships for voluntary national reviews” – 1 March 2022.

Activities at the HLPF

During the [2022 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development \(HLPF\)](#), the Office supported the several human rights mandate-holders who contributed to week one discussions, including Francisco Cali Tzay, Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples [and also the Chairperson of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to development, the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, the Independent Expert on debt, the Chairperson of the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls, and the CEDAW vice-president].

OHCHR contributed to the following side event of direct interest for indigenous peoples:

- “Advancing gender equality and human rights to stop the biodiversity crisis”; Side event organized by Fundacion Ambiente y Recursos Nacionales (FARN) and Women4Biodiversity, with support from OHCHR, UNEP, WWF International, Cultural survival, IFIP, AIPP. The High Commissioner made a statement on how environmental harms also drive inequalities, disproportionately affecting women and girls and those in vulnerable situations, leaving countless people behind. She also made the link with environmental defenders -often indigenous persons trying to protect their resources and land- who should be heard and honoured, not threatened, shamed and sometimes even killed. The [Key Messages on human rights, the environment, and gender equality](#) (developed jointly by OHCHR with UNEP and UN Women) further clarify that States and businesses have specific human rights obligations related to the disproportionate and intersectional impacts of environmental degradation on women and girls -often indigenous- and persons with diverse gender identities - 7 July 2022.

Reporting - VNRs

Upon request, OHCHR provides technical assistance to the UN System and other stakeholders in the preparation of the VNR. It did so in 2022 for the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) presented by **Botswana, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Guinea-Bissau, El Salvador, Jordan, and Tuvalu**.

The yearly analysis of the VNRs by the Committee for Development Policy⁸ demonstrate that indigenous peoples continue to receive less attention than other more “usual” groups and that States’ actions still focus on targeted action rather than on transformational strategies which address the structural determinants of inequalities and exclusion.” To address these gaps identified in its yearly-analysis of VNRs, OHCHR pays a special attention to support States and UNCTs in their VNR process to adopt a HRBA as well as ensure the LNOB principle of the 2030 Agenda.

Thus, with the lead of OHCHR and UNDP, an **Operational Common Approach Guidance Note on “Human Rights and Voluntary National Reviews”** was developed by the UN System under the SG Call to Action for Human Rights, and was launched during the HLPF 2022, on 7 July. It has a strong emphasis on LNOB analysis (and intersectionality) and on stakeholders’ participation in the process, suggesting to use promising practices like open-writing report, engaging with

⁸ Further information is available in the Committee for Development Policy documents ‘Communique on further improving the voluntary national review process’ and ‘The 2020 VNRs: points for reflection in preparation for the 2021 reviews’ available from <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/voluntary-national-reviews.html>

human rights defenders and holding consultations. The Guidance Note can be used by indigenous peoples and their representative organizations to advocate for better inclusion in the VNR process, including drafting of the report as well as its follow up, with the view to highlight the key challenges they face and help co-create solutions in accordance with their own needs and interests and the right to determine/develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.

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 building back better from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of Agenda 2030 for indigenous peoples.

Projects

Following the covid-19 crisis, OHCHR supported several projects all over the five regions of the world to help assess the impact of the crisis over economic and social rights of vulnerable groups in particular and to help “build back better”. For example, OHCHR worked on women’s economic security and COVID-19 responses on women in nine countries in the Western and Central Africa region, via a rapid regional survey conducted jointly with UN Women and UNICEF. Other Covid-19 related projects have also been implemented in Bangladesh, Maldives (Asia-Pacific), Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Liberia, Niger, South Africa, Uganda (Africa), Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay (LAC), Tunisia (MENA) and Moldova (ECA).

Regarding indigenous peoples specifically,

- *In **Kenya**, OHCHR supported a project which partnered with indigenous human rights defenders to document the human rights dimensions of the COVID-19 crisis in indigenous communities, with a focus on the situation of indigenous women who face multiple forms of discrimination [see answers under Section C for more details].*
- *In **Ecuador, Guatemala and Paraguay** in particular [see answers under Section C], OHCHR supported assessments on the human rights impact of the pandemic on indigenous peoples, provided recommendations for action, and facilitated spaces for dialogue to address the crisis and that free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples is obtained on all matters affecting them.*

Tools

OHCHR issued several policy guidance to assist Member States in their recovery responses to COVID-19:

- *The [Tool for the Introduction of the “Leave No One Behind” principle into legislative and strategic acts of the Republic of Serbia](#), from September 2022 [mentioned in part B] could also provide inspiration for similar tools that could aim to address indigenous peoples being left out of national policy-making on Covid-19 recoveries.*
- *OHCHR contributed to the **SG report**⁹ that **highlights the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on the realization of economic, social and cultural rights** and which includes several references to indigenous peoples. See para.21 for the many of the disparities revealed during the COVID-19 pandemic*

⁹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/Issues/ESCR/Pages/ImpactofCOVID19onESCR.aspx>

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that have stemmed from or been exacerbated by entrenched, structural discrimination against racial, ethnic and religious minorities and indigenous peoples; para. 26 for the recommendation to mobilization of maximum available resources to take special, targeted measures to protect and mitigate the impact of the pandemic on such populations, and protect the health and livelihoods of specific groups, including indigenous peoples. In para. 28, the report also recommends that gender-sensitive measures should incorporate an intersectional approach to be able to reach all women in their full diversity, and mentions indigenous women to that regard.

In addition, OHCHR organized the Human Rights Council's half-day panel discussion on the rights of indigenous peoples addressing the impact of social and economic recovery plans in the COVID-19 context on indigenous peoples, with a special focus on food security, pursuant to resolution [48/11](#) of the Human Rights Council. The panel, which was organized on 28 September 2022, brought together the following panellists: Mr. José Francisco Calí Tzay, Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples; Ms. Myrna Cunningham, First Vice-President of the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC); Mr. Binota Moy Dhamai, Chair of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and Mr. Yon Fernández-de-Larrinoa, Head of the Indigenous Peoples Unit, Partnerships and United Nations Collaboration Division, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

In her opening statement, Ms. Ilze Brands Kehris, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, stated that since the outbreak of COVID-19, numerous reports had attested that the gains of many indigenous peoples around the globe had been reversed. Indigenous peoples were key partners in the process of achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and their meaningful participation, including of indigenous women, needed to be an overarching principle. Participants further stressed that the protection of indigenous territories was vital to recovery, as it promotes sustainable livelihoods, increasing resilience in the face of future pandemics. It was further noted that the food and knowledge systems of indigenous peoples needed to be protected in order to protect the remaining biodiversity, with specific relevance given to indigenous women. The panellists stressed that COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated the entrenched problems suffered by indigenous peoples and posed grave challenges to their health and food security. The disproportionate impact that the pandemic had on indigenous peoples was recognised, with speakers stating that the involvement of indigenous peoples in the recovery plans was paramount. A summary report of the discussion will be submitted to the Council prior to its 53rd session.

Thank you very much

ANNEX 1

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

The Twentieth-second session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is scheduled to take place from **17 to 28 April 2023**

Provisional Agenda

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Discussion on the theme “Indigenous peoples, human health, planetary and territorial health and climate change: a rights-based approach”.
4. 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.
5. 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 on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
 - (e) Regional dialogues;
 - (f) Dialogue on indigenous platforms established within United Nations entities;
 - (g) Thematic dialogues;
6. Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues considered by the Economic and Social Council, the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and emerging issues.
7. Provisional agenda of the twenty-third session of the Permanent Forum.

Questionnaire to UN system

8. Adoption of the report of the Permanent Forum on its twenty-second session.