



**REPORT TO THE UN PERMANENT FORUM ON
INDIGENOUS ISSUES
22ND SESSION, 2023**

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.

As a follow up to the UNPF Recommendation 45 of the 18th session, PAHO is elaborating a report on the advancements in indigenous maternal health, including best practices of indigenous midwives. This report will include advances from countries on the application of the tool for promoting culturally safe childbirth. PAHO has conducted extensively work in the field of maternal health, promoting an intercultural approach.

PAHO is involved in the discussions with FAO regarding the recommendation of the PF to amend the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management to take into account the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples.

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.

Political context

PAHO has relevant resolutions addressing the health needs of indigenous peoples. The Policy on Ethnicity and Health (2017) has been a referent worldwide. This is the first policy where representatives of ministries of health, indigenous peoples as well as other groups, discussed and agreed upon health priorities. As a follow up, the first Strategy and Plan of Action on Ethnicity and Health (2019-2025) was approved in 2019 by all PAHO Member States. In the framework of universal health, countries have prioritized actions to ensure that all people and communities have access, without any kind of discrimination, to comprehensive, appropriate, timely, and quality health services. The Strategy contains 3 impact indicators and 19 process indicators to measure the advancements in the countries to improve the health outcomes of indigenous peoples as well as other groups. Information is being collected from Member States to compile a progress report that will be presented in 2023.

-Strategy and Plan of Action on Ethnicity and Health:

<https://iris.paho.org/handle/10665.2/51744>

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

Questionnaire to UN system

-Estrategia y plan de acción sobre etnicidad y salud (indicadores de impacto y de proceso):

<https://iris.paho.org/handle/10665.2/54920?locale-attribute=en>

Technical cooperation on health priority topics

Since the declaration of the outbreak of COVID-19 by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020, PAHO has been working closely with indigenous peoples as well as other groups, to address their health priorities in the context of the pandemic. It is relevant to mention that PAHO led the first effort to address considerations of indigenous peoples and other groups during the COVID-19 pandemic. For such effort, information and issues of concern raised by indigenous peoples were addressed:

-Considerations on Indigenous Peoples, Afro-Descendants, and Other Ethnic Groups during the COVID-19 Pandemic:

<https://iris.paho.org/handle/10665.2/52251>

Since 2017, PAHO has collected the experiences and lessons learned on the work of prevention and control of Tuberculosis among indigenous populations for the region of the Americas. In 2020, PAHO published the *Lineamientos para la prevención y el control de la TB en los pueblos indígenas de la región de las Américas*. Since then, country visits have been conducted to implement these guidelines in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Suriname. It is expected to continue supporting the countries that started the process through knowledge dialogues, and to expand this work to other countries in the region:

- Lineamientos para la prevención y el control de la TB en los pueblos indígenas de la región de las Américas: <https://iris.paho.org/handle/10665.2/53308>

PAHO staff have met with members of the UNPF in 2022 to discuss some health priorities for the region, as well as best ways to continue strengthening collaboration with the UNPF. As a follow up, a meeting between WHO TB program and the UNPFII Chair was arranged. PAHO oversees participation of indigenous organizations in the review of the multisectoral accountability framework and presentation of results in the 2023 UN Side High level meeting on TB: <https://www.stoptb.org/advocate-to-entdb/united-nations-high-level-meeting-tb>

Considering mental health and suicide prevention a priority topic, PAHO is working with indigenous communities in some countries from the region to culturally adequate and adapt the mhGap guide on mental health. Important efforts have been conducted in Colombia, Argentina, Chile, and Ecuador. Throughout the project, nature and spiritual diseases must be addressed from traditional medicine.

PAHO has had a strong focus on maternal mortality reduction among indigenous women prior to the pandemic. Currently one of the indicators of the PAHO Strategy and Plan of Action on Ethnicity and Health (2019-2025) monitors maternal mortality reduction among indigenous women (and women from other groups).

The **tool for promoting culturally safe childbirth** was recently published in PAHO. It is built mainly on consensus around good maternal and neonatal practices, as well as quality of

Questionnaire to UN system

care criteria for health service delivery. This tool promotes indigenous women's empowerment, autonomy, and decision-making on any issue related to their sexual and reproductive health (with an emphasis on childbirth care). It was developed with the participation of indigenous women and midwives.

PAHO is working with indigenous midwives in the region to exchange knowledge in the field of maternal health. Relevant activities are being conducted in Bolivia, Colombia and Ecuador.

Manual básico para la aplicación de la herramienta que promueve el parto culturalmente seguro: <https://iris.paho.org/handle/10665.2/56225> (English version is coming shortly).

PAHO is working closely with indigenous peoples in promoting knowledge dialogues. Extensive capacity building activities are being conducted addressing many health priorities. In collaboration with ORAS Conhu (the Health Andean Mechanism), more than 80 people have been trained in 2022 as facilitators of knowledge dialogues. Capacity building activities include providing training to health personnel, indigenous leaders and staff working with indigenous peoples to promote an intercultural approach to health. Also, PAHO is working closely with indigenous peoples to adapt the methodology to each specific context and different communities.

-The knowledge dialogues methodology:

<https://iris.paho.org/handle/10665.2/55863>

-Methodology of knowledge dialogues: Facilitator's manual:

<https://iris.paho.org/handle/10665.2/55896>

The tool proposed by PAHO to promote knowledge dialogues has brought the interest of different agencies, including at the global level. Currengly, the methodology has been adapted to different contexts, including the situation of indigenous peoples living as migrants. It is also relevant to mention that in North America, work is being conducted to complement and adapt the methodology to the Gathering of Native Americans (GONA) Framework and expand the work with the use of knowledge dialogues.

Relevant work is also being conducted with the indigenous youth network and FILAC to implement the Indigenous Youth Health Plan through the knowledge dialogues methodology. In this regard, capacity building activities are being planned with indigenous youth to train young facilitators of knowledge dialogues and implement the Health Plan at local levels in different countries in the region.

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.

PAHO's Policy on Ethnicity and Health (2017) includes *social participation and strategic partnerships* as one of its strategic lines of action. This area of intervention seeks to promote effective participation, joint efforts, commitment, and strategic partnerships among health authorities, other state institutions, local organizations, and the general population to foster action to increase inclusion, equity, and equality. The policy urges PAHO's Member States, as appropriate, to increase, promote, and ensure the social participation of all indigenous peoples, as well as other groups in the development and implementation of health policies,

considering gender differences and life course perspective. PAHO staff promote the effective participation of indigenous peoples in any activity related to their health and wellbeing.

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 SWAP².

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 Forum³.

Please also include an executive summary (500-word limit).

PAHO/WHO conducted several activities to implement the SWAP to achieve the ends of the UNDRIP, as summarized below.

The approval of the first Policy on Ethnicity and Health by PAHO Member States during the 29th Pan American Sanitary Conference is a critical contribution for achieving the ends of the UNDRIP. This Policy constitutes a framework for Member States when addressing the health of indigenous peoples and incorporates five lines of action: 1) production of evidence; 2) promotion of policy action; 3) social participation and strategic partnerships; 4) recognition of ancestral knowledge and traditional and complementary medicine; 5) capacity development at all levels. UNDRIP is referred to and highlighted in the Policy on Ethnicity and Health. It is

² 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.

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.

Questionnaire to UN system

also available on the Cultural Diversity and Health website and promoted via regional PAHO/WHO social media accounts on relevant advocacy days recognized by PAHO/WHO.

In 2019, the Strategy and Plan of Action on Ethnicity and Health (2019-2025), aligned with the UNDRIP, was approved by PAHO Member States. This is another critical contribution for achieving the ends of the UNDRIP in the Latin American region. The process of elaboration of the Strategy included a large process of consultation with indigenous peoples and other groups at country, sub-regional and regional levels. Currently countries are providing information on the advancements made. A report will be presented in 2023 with the summary of such advances.

Important work is being conducted by PAHO/WHO at country level on a variety of health topics related to the health of indigenous peoples ensuring their participation. These areas include maternal health, communicable diseases (TB, HIV, neglected diseases) and non-communicable diseases and disaster risk reduction. PAHO has provided technical cooperation in the review of laws and plans addressing the health of indigenous peoples with their participation. In the field of maternal health, for instance, knowledge dialogues between indigenous peoples and health personnel have been conducted in several countries of the region to address maternal health priorities.

The Strategy and Plan of Action on Ethnicity and Health builds upon the global commitment to sustainable development made in the 2030 Agenda, to leave no one behind and to reach the furthest behind first. It is particularly relevant to highlight the regional commitments reflected in the PAHO's Strategy for Universal Access to Health and Universal Health Coverage, and the Plan of Action on Health in All Policies. These instruments are in line with Goal 3, ensuring healthy lives for all at all ages, and make universal health coverage a central issue and an essential dimension in achieving this goal, based on the principles of equity, equality, and nondiscrimination.

PAHO/WHO has also been prioritizing technical cooperation to build the capacity of health systems to address ethnicity in harmony with SDGs and international and regional human rights instruments.

The Virtual Health Library on Traditional, Complementary and Integrative Medicine for the Americas brings together those responsible for public policies, academia, professional associations, health service providers and indigenous organizations with the common goal of collaboratively develop a virtual space which allows us to better comprehend the panorama of traditional and complementary medicine in the Region of the Americas.

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.

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.

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.

PAHO is working closely with health personnel and representatives of indigenous peoples to address their needs in the current COVID-19 context. In this regard, it is important to mention that the knowledge dialogues methodology proposed by PAHO is being used as a key tool to promote an intercultural approach to the COVID-19 context. This includes exchange and action plans to address concerns from the perspectives of indigenous peoples regarding COVID-19 and immunization.

Knowledge dialogues make it possible to understand cultural differences among diverse groups. If implemented with a methodology adjusted to the realities and contexts on the ground, thus enabling greater participation by countries and communities, they can be a tool for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the commitment to leaving no one behind.

PAHO has been working with 17 countries in a project aiming to improve equitable and timely access to COVID-19 vaccination services to populations in situation of vulnerability in the Americas. Through this project, Latin American and Caribbean countries have developed interventions and actions that aim to increase culturally appropriate and gender sensitive communications and engagement regarding the introduction of COVID-19 vaccines. An important component of the interventions prioritizes working with indigenous peoples to address barriers they may face when accessing COVID-19 vaccines.

In a joint statement in 2020, PAHO and the Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon River Basin (COICA) agreed to work together to step up the fight against COVID-19 in indigenous areas of the Amazon. As a follow up, PAHO is currently coordinating efforts with representatives of COICA to address the health situation of indigenous peoples living in the COICA region and work together in the current post-pandemic context.

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