



World Health Organization (WHO)

Contributions to the Report of the
UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Twenty-Second Session, 2023

Questionnaire to UN system

Prepared 15 November 2022

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 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 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

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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.

UNPFII recommendation	“The Permanent Forum calls on FAO and WHO to amend the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management to take into account the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples”.
Action taken	<p>In light of the recommendation issued to WHO from the 2022 Permanent Forum Session on Indigenous Issues, the FAO/WHO Panel of Experts on Pesticide Management (JMPM) has taken following actions on the amendment of the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management (Code) taking into account free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples in pesticide management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a virtual meeting convened by FAO, WHO engaged in the session, on the impact of toxics and pollutants on Indigenous Peoples on 23 September, 2022. The meeting concluded that a roadmap and process should be designed by the JMPM meeting in November 2022 to revise the Code with involvement of the indigenous peoples. • In view of the above said activities, a specific session has been included in the agenda of the 15th FAO/WHO JMPM meeting, Rome, 14-18 November 2022, to discuss amendment of the Code. In the session, a presentation on “protecting indigenous peoples from negative impacts of pesticides” will be given by the International Indian Treaty Council, followed by two presentations on human rights in the context of pesticide management by FAO and WHO representatives. The JMPM will then identify the key issues to be considered and define a road map for amending the Code.

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	<p>a) In addition, WHO produced the following article: Mbabazi PS, Del Pino S, Ducker C, Dean L, Broekkamp H, Prasetyanti W, Jacobson J, Krentel A, Seunik M, Bustinduy AL, Malecela M. (2021). Promoting gender, equity, human rights and ethnic equality in neglected tropical disease programmes.. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33440002/</p>
UNPFII Recommendation	UNPFII Recommendation: The Permanent Forum reiterates its recommendation made at its eighteenth session for the Pan American Health Organization to prepare a study on the advancements in indigenous maternal health, including with the participation of indigenous midwives (E/2019/43, para. 45). The Permanent Forum also recommends that WHO prepare similar studies in other regions".
Action taken by WHO	<p>Pursuant to this recommendation, WHO is organizing a side event on “indigenous women maternal health” during the twenty-second session (2023) of the UNPFII to raise awareness on this issue and feature national policies, strategies, plans and programming innovations in this area. PAHO/WHO Regional Office for the Americas has been asked to partner for this event, and experiences from at least 3 other WHO regions are now being identified for sharing at the event.</p> <p>In addition, following the recommendation of the UNPFII, WHO Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Ageing (MCA) has commenced the process of incorporating an indigenous approach into their work. MCA leads WHO’s work on the life course, aiming at ensuring that every pregnant woman, mother, newborn, child, adolescent, and older person will survive, thrive and enjoy health and well-being.</p>
UNPFII Recommendation	UNPFII Recommendation: The Permanent Forum invites WHO to contribute to the work of the Permanent Forum at its twenty-second session on the health of indigenous peoples.
Action taken by WHO	<p>Pursuant to this recommendation of the UNPFII:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHO has re-engaged with the Interagency Support Group on Indigenous Issues as April of 2022, and the Organization’s activities in this area are part of a new portfolio on Ethnicity and Health that WHO/HQ has been developing in the past 2 years. This is led by the Gender, Equity and Human Rights (GER) Department, Director General’s Office, WHO/HQ. • The GER department of WHO/HQ holds standing regular meetings with Members of the UNPFII who cover the health area, involving

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	<p>other WHO Departments for mainstreaming indigenous peoples' perspective into their work. An example output of this type of meeting is that WHO is planning a side event to the next UNPFII dedicated to indigenous peoples and mental health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GER Department of WHO/HQ has also held briefings on the UNSWAP on Indigenous Peoples for the network of GER HQ focal persons across programmes, the Regional Office and all Country Offices in the South-East Asia Region, and the Regional Office for Africa (with a Country Office briefing now being planned). Linked to this and to lay the foundations to scale up future work, the GER department of WHO/HQ is actively expanding its network of indigenous experts on health in the African, European, Eastern Mediterranean, South-east Asian and Western Pacific regions, and coordinates with the Pan-American Health Organization/WHO Regional Office for the Americas. • The WHO Social Determinant of Health Department organized a side event during the 21st session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on "<u>Indigenous Peoples and Tackling Health Inequities</u>" for incorporating indigenous perspectives in the forthcoming WHO World Report on Social Determinants of Health Equity, which aims to outline an agenda for action through to 2030. A follow up to this, WHO will organize a side event during the 22nd Session on the Health of Indigenous Peoples in coordination with vice chair of the UNPFII to present the outcome of the report.
UNPFII Recommendation	The Permanent Forum recommends that the WHO incorporate indigenous peoples' cultures into the social determinants of health policies.
Action taken by WHO	The WHO Gender, Equity and Human Rights Department is developing its <i>Policy and Strategy for Achieving Health Equity, Gender Equality and Human Rights</i> . These documents will guide WHO's action to advance health equity, gender equality and human rights to achieve its vision of a world where all people attain the highest possible standard of health. Members of the UNPFII have taken part of the consultative group of experts for the development of the document for insuring indigenous peoples rights and perspectives are incorporated.

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UNPFII Recommendation	The Permanent Forum, bearing in mind the contributions of indigenous peoples' traditional medicines to the recovery from the pandemic, invites the World Health Assembly to declare an international year of indigenous peoples' traditional medicines by 2025".
	On April 2022 WHO launched the WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine (GCTM) . As part of WHO's overall traditional medicine strategy, it has a strategic focus on evidence and learning, data and analytics, sustainability and equity, and innovation and technology to optimize the contribution of traditional medicine to global health and sustainable development. At the same time, respect for local heritages, resources and rights is a guiding principle.

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.

Pursuant to the theme of the 2023 PFII session dedicated to "Indigenous peoples, human health, planetary and territorial health and climate change: a rights-based approach", WHO has contributed to the following publications, projects, reports and activities relevant to this theme:

a) Vector Control, Veterinary Public Health & Environment (publications):

- Sun N, Amon JJ. Addressing Inequity: Neglected Tropical Diseases and Human Rights. *Health Hum Rights*. 2018 Jun;20(1):11-25. PMID: 30008549; PMCID: PMC6039727. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30008549/>
- de Rijk, Simone, Katherine Klemperer, Delphine Depierreux, Ziruo Fu, and Kirsty Mackinlay. 2021. "Protecting the Neglected from Disease: The Role of Gender, Health Equity and Human Rights in the Fight Against Neglected Tropical Diseases." *SocArXiv*. March 4. <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/m7kpu>
- Bautista-Gomez, M.M., Doerfler, J. & del Mar Castro, M. Barriers to cutaneous leishmaniasis care faced by indigenous communities of rural areas in Colombia: a qualitative study. *BMC Infect Dis* 22, 302 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12879-022-07204-w>

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

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b) Environment, Climate Change and Health

- In 2022, WHO with inputs from the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, organized a Virtual indigenous peoples panel discussion: Inputs to the Report on Health and Nature-Based Solutions with indigenous peoples to inform this report.
- In 2023, WHO is producing a brief to feed into the UNDESA-led State of the World's Indigenous Peoples 2023, dedicated to climate change and indigenous women. The brief will explore the linkages between indigenous health, environment, biodiversity, and climate change, with gender considerations as a cross-cutting theme. In addition, as an outcome from this process, Indigenous peoples 'perspective will be also incorporated in:
 - The work of the "Expert working group on biodiversity, climate, One Health, and nature-based solutions" addressing indigenous and community health;
 - WHO support to Member States and development partners in the action areas set forth in the WHO report *The Health Argument for Climate Change*, and the *State of Knowledge Review on Biodiversity and Health* ;
 - WHO Regional Capacity building workshops on biodiversity and health, which will have an integrated indigenous health focus.

c) Primary health care to tackle racial discrimination, promote intercultural services and reduce health inequities

- In 2022, WHO released a publication entitled "Strengthening primary health care to tackle racial discrimination, promote intercultural services and reduce health inequities" (Including the commentary in scientific journal [LINK](#)). In this publication, WHO outlines 14 strategic and operational levers for policy-makers to strengthen PHC. Within each lever, there are multiple potential entry points for targeted actions to address racial discrimination, foster intercultural care, and reduce health inequities experienced by indigenous peoples as well as people of African descent, Roma and other ethnic minorities.

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.

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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.

WHO re-joined the Inter-Agency Support Group in 2022 for expanding the work on indigenous peoples and health across the three level of the organization and for advancing the implementation of the elements of the SWAP on Indigenous issues.

WHO has advance the work in this area in 2021 and 2022, which covers leadership, awareness raising and partnerships; normative activities; capacity building; and country work. It includes integrating human rights, equity, gender-responsive and intercultural approaches to guide public health policies and ensure that communities experiencing racial discrimination have access to comprehensive, culturally appropriate and quality health services and the platform to engage in decision-making on health that affects their lives.

Key Element of the UN SWAP- Develop the capacities of States, indigenous peoples, civil society and United Nations personnel.

1. Under the umbrella of the Pillar LNOB of the UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, WHO have anchored the following capacity building initiatives for UN Country Teams for tackling racial discrimination in 2022:

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.

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- a) WHO anchored the systematization of training material in online e-learning format of a one month course produced in 2021 on "[Addressing Racial and Ethnicity-based Discrimination and Strengthening the Protection of Minorities, Indigenous Peoples and other Population Groups in UN Programming Processes](#)". The online training overarching coordination of the 2021 training was done by WHO, in collaboration with the members of this pillar, including ILO, OHCHR, OSAPG, UNDESA, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, and UNPFA. A total of 41 technical staff from 13 UN Country Teams participated. The course materials are now available at [link](#).
- b) WHO has led Community of Practice Sessions for UNCTs on Tackling Racial Discrimination and strengthening the protection of minorities (COPs). These sessions were produced for the participants from the 13 UNCTs who participated in the October 2021 UNCT Course, offering a platform for follow-up and reporting back progress. This included “deep dives”, organized jointly with UNESCO, OHCHR and OSAPG from May to June 2022 on thematic areas, including: a) the International Decade of indigenous languages, and b) implementation of the Hate Speech Strategy. Links to the “deep dives” thematic presentations follow here:
- COP1 - Special session on the Racial discrimination and the International Decade of Indigenous Languages by UNESCO
Meeting Recording:
https://who.zoom.us/rec/share/WGuYxfn3y_TjRg5T- jDAOnShgS9CAEfJwYFr3MyaHeVuX5LvOohjNnec_FQjP3Op.hZrQC9UZTwZ_Z6K0
Access Passcode: LAB+0111
 - COP2 - Special session on the Implementation of the Hate Speech Strategy by OSAPG
Meeting Recording:
<https://who.zoom.us/rec/share/JU6G1oVKHrsXG-tP2BrHLftLp32Pp9u6rGcAFiwNbg5LGlod1dD4-zMAeOj-R56.QeZfm-fSzbpVRWOW>
Access Passcode: CG^=6x&r
- c) WHO convened a “**Sensitization Session on Training Approaches for Tackling Racial Discrimination and Strengthening the Protection of Minorities - Round table on Health and Ethnicity**” on 2nd November 2022. The session included a round table with UNAIDS, UNICEF, and WHO presentations on health and ethnicity methodologies, approaches and tools for use at the country level for tracking racial discrimination and promoting intercultural health, with an integrated focus on indigenous peoples and rights.

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Key Element of the UN SWAP - Advance the participation of indigenous peoples in United Nations processes.

- WHO is developing the *Policy and Strategy on Achieving Health Equity, Gender Equality and Human Rights*, which will include among others, provisions on the implementation and reporting of the UN SWAP on Indigenous Peoples across the 3 level of the organization (national, regional and globally). For the development of the Policy and Strategy WHO has ensured the participation of members of the UNPFII.
- WHO organized a Webinar Series on “[tackling rural health inequities](#)” from July 2021 to March 2022, convened as part of the World Health Day 2021 campaign on “Health Equity”. Indigenous peoples representatives participated as speakers in different webinars and also the findings from quantitative analysis of barriers to health services experienced by indigenous populations was shared..
- For the first time in a decade, on the occasion of the International Day of the Worlds Indigenous Peoples 2021, WHO convened a webinar on 9 August on “[Social participation and community engagement approaches for the health of the Indigenous populations in rural and remote areas](#)” with the purpose of sharing knowledge, resources, and promising practices to promote social participation and community engagement among indigenous peoples relevant to strengthening primary health care in rural and remote areas.
- In 2022, the DG participated as a speaker on the occasion of the [International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples](#) on the event to mark this day organized by UNDESA on 9th August 2022, focusing on this year’s theme: “The Role of Indigenous Women in the Preservation and Transmission of Traditional Knowledge.

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.

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WHO published a road map **Ending the neglect to attain the Sustainable Development Goals: a road map for neglected tropical diseases 2021–2030** which was prepared through an extensive global consultation pursuant to decision EB146(9) of the WHO Executive Board at its 146th session in February 2020 that culminated in the endorsement of the road map document by the Seventy-third World Health Assembly in November 2020. The road map sets global targets and milestones to prevent, control, eliminate or eradicate 20 NTD diseases and disease groups as well as cross-cutting targets aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. The road map is supported by several companion documents notably on WASH, One Health and Sustainability which will be impactful to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues agenda.

WHO instigated the production of and co-led with FAO and IFAD the following report, issued in December 2021 and publicized in 2022, which includes an integrated focus on indigenous peoples who live in rural and remote areas:

- UN (2021). Tackling inequalities in public service coverage to “build forward better” for the rural poor. Report produced by the UN HLCP Task Team on Inequalities. New York. <https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/HLCP%20ITT%20Policy%20Brief%20Rural%20Inequalities%202021.pdf>

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.

WHO Health Equity Assessment Toolkit (HEAT and HEAT Plus) is a software application that facilitates the assessment of health inequalities.

Inequalities can be assessed through disaggregated data, including ethnicity, and summary measures of health inequality, visualized in interactive graphs, maps and tables. Results can be exported and saved in different formats. This Toolkit can be used on national databases for quantitative analysis and unpacking inequalities in health, including for indigenous peoples.

WHO reported annual progress trends for indicator used as a tracer for equity in the SDG monitoring framework’s indicators 3.3, 3.8, and 6.1/1.2, namely, the number of people requiring treatment as a tracer for interventions against any one of the Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) targeted by WHO, including 11 NTDs targeted for eradication or elimination by World Health Assembly resolutions. Positive measures on

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this indicator ensures that the world's poorest and most marginalized people are prioritized at every step on the path towards SDG targets. Subsequent efforts and reporting will present progress reports with disaggregation to reflect impact on vulnerable subpopulations, including children, women and indigenous groups.

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.

- 1) **UN global Frontier Dialogue.** In 2020, under the umbrella of the SDG Task Team on LNOB, Human Rights and the Normative Agenda, WHO, together with UNESCO, co-led a consultative process that culminated with the “United Nations Frontier Dialogue on addressing structural racial and ethnicity-based discrimination through COVID-19 Recovery Plans” on 20 January 2021, bringing together senior UN officials, including Resident Coordinators, global experts and civil society, including indigenous peoples networks. As an outcome of this process, a report on “Addressing structural racial and ethnicity-based discrimination: Key action areas for COVID-19 recovery plans” was produced and proposes a set of key entry points for COVID-19 recovery plans (including a commentary in a scientific journal [HERE](#)). This report is available in English, [Spanish](#) and [French](#).
- 2) **STAG for NTDs.** The Strategic and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) for Neglected Tropical Diseases has made 17 recommendations for the attention of WHO’s work on NTDs as it works to accelerate recovery from the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. A compendium of lessons learnt from COVID-19, detailing both things that worked and things that did not work is to be created. Through the department’s work on gender, equity and rights, progress on addressing NTDs among indigenous populations will be incorporated in this compendium, and reflected in global reporting.
- 3) **Webinar on COVID-19 inequities and ethnicity.** On 25 March 2021, WHO organized a Webinar on “Health inequities and racial and ethnicity-based discrimination: what COVID-19 is teaching us” as part of the WHO's Global Webinars on the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on Equity and the Social Determinants of Health, as well as part of the knowledge exchange events convened for World Health Day 2021. The webinar included the perspectives of indigenous peoples and the impact of racial discrimination on health and health inequities, as well as what can be done to address inequities now and in building back better.

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- 4) WHO also reviewed emerging evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on indigenous peoples to help guide the Organization's response. These included a rapid review of COVID-19 risk factors in indigenous peoples, a HQ situation report on indigenous peoples and media backgrounders/press notes for senior management.