



Concept Note
Indigenous Peoples and Agenda 2030
UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Division of Social Policy and Development
22 and 23 October 2015

Purpose of the meeting

The Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) is organizing a two-day expert group meeting (EGM) on “Indigenous peoples and Agenda 2030” to develop strategic guidance and action-oriented recommendations to mobilize action and support to include indigenous issues in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Indigenous issues are a key area in which DESA provides support and leadership to the UN system as a whole.

The United Nations will adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at a summit in New York from 25 to 27 September 2015. The 2030 Agenda will be a broad and universal policy agenda, with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets which are integrated and indivisible. It is important that DESA/DSPD takes this opportunity to provide input to how the implementation of the new Agenda can impact on indigenous peoples, who are among the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in any given society.

Indigenous peoples participation in the process to define the 2030 Agenda

Indigenous peoples are one of the major groups of the ongoing process to define a post-2015 development agenda, which aspires to ‘leave no one behind’. They have been engaged in the process as an opportunity to not only remedy the shortcomings of the MDGs process - in which indigenous peoples were not mentioned in the goals and targets and seldom reflected in data collection and reporting on MDG achievement - but also for past and continuing historic injustices resulting from racism, discrimination and inequalities.

Indigenous peoples have been involved in the various discussions leading to the formulation of the 2030 Agenda. The text to be adopted in September 2015 contains references to indigenous peoples. However, it will be important to develop strategies for strengthening the visibility of indigenous peoples in the 2030 Agenda and its implementation, including the development of indicators for measuring progress and ensuring that their priorities are incorporated in policies and programmes aimed at reaching the SDGs.

It is important to bear in mind that Member States have made commitments in relation to the incorporation of indigenous peoples’ rights in the 2030 Agenda. In the “Outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples” (A/RES/69/2), the General Assembly notes “that indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising the right to development” and commit “to giving due consideration to all the rights of indigenous peoples in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda” (paragraph 37).

Indigenous peoples are specifically referenced in various parts of the 2030 Agenda, although not in all aspects that are relevant to them. In particular, they are referenced, along with various other groups, in two targets: target 2.3 on agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, and target 4.5 on eliminating gender disparities and increasing access to education. Also, indigenous peoples are referred as people to be empowered in paragraph 23; as well as in inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels in paragraph 25; in the call for action in paragraph 52 and in the follow up and review at national level paragraph 79.

The indicators that will correspond to the targets are still being developed and are expected to be finalized by March 2016 by the Inter Agency and Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goals. Indigenous representatives have called for the development of culturally-relevant indicators that measure development progress for indigenous peoples through data disaggregated by ethnicity/indigenous status. Priorities targets for the development of corresponding indicators include proposed targets 1.4 and 5.a (related to ownership and control over land and other forms of property); targets 2.3 and 4.5 (which are the only two targets that currently mention indigenous peoples); and 10.3 (on elimination of discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action).

Objectives

The overall objective of the expert group meeting is to mobilise attention and action to more fully integrate the distinct needs and priorities of indigenous peoples based on their diverse views of poverty, well-being and sustainable development in the 2030 Agenda.

The meeting aims to:

- a. Reflect on the goals and targets adopted as part of the 2030 Agenda at the September 2015 UN Summit and identify opportunities for application of these in the situations of indigenous peoples;
- b. Identify measures for ensuring that indigenous peoples are taken into account in data collected at the national, regional and international levels to measure development progress for indigenous peoples;
- c. Develop proposals for specific indicators to collect data for measuring development progress for indigenous peoples and strategies for engaging with the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDGs;
- d. Identify informal measures for data collection to measure development progress for indigenous peoples, including the formulation of indigenous-specific targets and indicators that could be used by States, indigenous peoples, NGOs and others on an informal basis (e.g. through tool kits for data collection, voluntary targets and indicators that could be adopted on an informal basis, etc.).
- e. Inform and provide input to the inter-governmental meeting on indicators in Bangkok from 26 to 28 October 2015.

Expected Outputs

- Strategic guidance on how to better incorporate indigenous peoples into the 2030 Agenda;
- A report summarizing the deliberations and presenting meeting outcomes; and
- Partnership on a way forward to 2030

Organizational aspects

Date and venue of the meeting

The expert group meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 22 and Friday 23 October 2015 in New York at UNHQ. The meeting will be organized by the Division for Social Policy and Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat.

Organizational set-up of the meeting

The 10-12 invited experts will have experience in issues related to development and the 2030 Agenda including the development of indicators, as well as knowledge of issues and priorities for indigenous peoples in the context of development. Member States and UN agencies will also participate to ensure greater awareness and input from a range of partners. The three indigenous-specific mechanisms will also participate to provide input on this issue and ensure synergies and linkages to their deliberations on indigenous peoples' rights and development.

The annual meeting of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues will take place on 26 and 27 October 2015, with DESA as the chair. The participation of relevant focal points from UN

agencies, programmes and funds will enrich and link the discussions of the expert group meeting with the ongoing work on the system wide action plan on indigenous peoples. The Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues will prepare an agenda of the expert group meeting.

The working language of the meeting will be English.