

UNITED NATIONS



OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



OHCHR FACT SHEET

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, POVERTY AND THE MDGs

Human rights abuses and violations are both a cause and a consequence of poverty

Indigenous peoples Represent...

- 5 per cent
...of the world's population
- 15 per cent
...of the world's poor
- 1/3 of the world's 900 million
...extremely poor rural people

Indigenous Peoples are one of the groups more severely affected by poverty and human rights abuses.

The Challenge for policy-makers in the 21st century is to broaden choices -so that people need not to renounce their identities to have access to the full range of social and economic opportunities.

UNDP, Human Development Report 2004, p.27-28

About the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are the major framework for development achievements for all. They stem from the Millennium Declaration adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2000 and identify major focus for joint efforts of the international community in areas as poverty reduction, education, health, environment and development cooperation. The MDGs are presented in a set of 8 goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators. Most of the goals are to be achieved between 1990 and 2015 because the MDGs incorporate many goals and targets set at earlier global conferences and world summits.

The year 2015 marks the expected date for the realization of most of the targets set up to measure the achievement of the MDGs and the progressive realization of the political commitments made by governments in the Millennium Declaration. The year 2015 also marks the conclusion of the Second Decade for the World's Indigenous Peoples devoted to the further strengthening of international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in areas such as culture, education, health, human rights, the environment and social and economic development.

Indigenous peoples are one of the groups more severely affected by poverty and have not been granted enough attention in MDG-related processes. This is confirmed by several reports within and outside the UN framework.

In 2006, a summary review of 50 MDG country reports and selected PRSPs carried out within the framework of the OHCHR showed that only 19 reports mention ethnic or linguistic minorities and 10 additional mention only indigenous peoples without identifying any other minority groups. The degree to which these groups are mentioned varies widely, with some reports providing a good range of information under several MDGs and disaggregated data and others only mentioning them in the general background section.

Including indigenous peoples in MDGs processes means ...

- giving attention to indigenous peoples as groups suffering discrimination and disadvantaged situations
- integrating specific targets for addressing the situations of indigenous peoples
- being aware of indigenous peoples issues in implementing and reporting on the MDGs and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs)
- Incorporating benchmarks addressing the situation of indigenous peoples and persons belonging to minorities into strategies on data collection and data disaggregation
- Being sensitive to cultural identity issues when gathering data to ensure that minorities and indigenous peoples are able to participate confidently in data collections activities
- Translating into indigenous languages data on key economic and social indicators and making this information publicly and easily accessible to indigenous peoples
- Undertaking research on key issues in relation to the achievement of the MDGs by indigenous peoples such as analysis of appropriate policies in education, healthcare, employment, training and housing
- Ensuring that indigenous peoples can participate in decision-making and policy implementation processes in all development and poverty eradication efforts affecting them.

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