

THE UNITED NATIONS PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

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Backgrounder

Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda

The world's estimated 370 million persons belonging to indigenous peoples are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda, with its promise to "leave no one behind." Indigenous peoples make up 5 per cent of the world's population, but 15 per cent of the poorest. They lag behind on virtually every social and economic indicator.

Indigenous peoples participated from the start in the global consultation process towards the 2030 Agenda, and their advocacy resulted in a framework that makes explicit references to indigenous peoples' development concerns and is founded on principles of universality, human rights, equality and environmental sustainability – core priorities for indigenous peoples.

Indigenous priorities

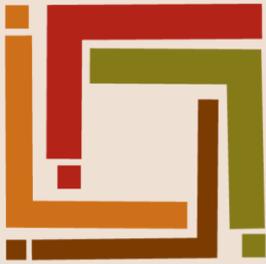
Many of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and targets are relevant to indigenous peoples and have direct linkages to the human rights commitments in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples or the ILO Convention 169 on indigenous and tribal peoples' rights.

There are six direct references to indigenous peoples in the 2030 Agenda, including in Goal 2 related to agricultural output of indigenous small-scale farmers, and Goal 4 on equal access to education for indigenous children. Furthermore, the framework calls on indigenous peoples to engage actively in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, including in the follow-up and review on the national level to ensure that progress for indigenous peoples is reflected.

The global list of indicators developed by the United Nations Statistical Commission to measure progress on the Goals includes some indicators that respond to indigenous peoples' concerns, such as an indicator that will track income of small-scale food producers by indigenous status and one to track indigenous peoples' access to education compared to other groups. Furthermore, an indicator to measure secure land rights makes an important reference to collective land rights, which is central to indigenous peoples' collective relationship to their lands, territories and resources.

Indigenous peoples have been advocating for data disaggregation and the inclusion of an "indigenous identifier" in official statistics, to capture the inequalities indigenous peoples face across all the Sustainable Development Goals.





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Risks for indigenous peoples

Despite the above advances, the SDGs also involve risks for indigenous peoples. Disappointment has been expressed by indigenous peoples with the general lack of references in the 2030 Agenda to the following:

- Collective rights in terms of land, but also health, education, culture and ways of living;
- The concept of self-determination, as enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- Holistic development approaches not too focused on GDP growth, industrialization and increased production;
- The principle of free, prior and informed consent, which is essential for self-determination;
- Cultural sensitivity across several goals, such as on health and education, including for instance education in indigenous mother tongues.

Suggestions for the Way Forward: Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda

An expert group meeting held at United Nations Headquarters on 22 and 23 October 2015 on “The way forward: indigenous peoples and the 2030 Agenda,” made the following suggestions (in report E/C.19/2016/2) to ensure that indigenous peoples’ rights are respected in the implementation of the Agenda:

- Indicators that reflect indigenous peoples’ situation, including collective land indicators and data disaggregation, should be included in the global and national monitoring frameworks for the Sustainable Development Goals;
- Review of the 2030 Agenda should become a recurrent agenda item at the Permanent Forum session, and the role of the Permanent Forum in providing thematic follow-up to the Agenda through the High-level Political Forum should be identified;
- Indigenous peoples, as one of the major groups, should be supported in reporting on their contribution to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals;
- Member States should facilitate indigenous peoples’ participation in national-level processes to plan, implement and monitor national frameworks for the 2030 Agenda, including their capacity building;
- Partnerships should be built between indigenous peoples and relevant stakeholders for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the national level;
- National-level data collection and sharing of disaggregated data should be improved to highlight the progress made on indigenous peoples’ priorities;
- UN agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system could assist in collecting disaggregated data, where possible, and in compiling and disseminating such data, where available;
- Indigenous-specific indicators should be developed to measure progress on indigenous peoples’ own development priorities as well as in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

For more information on the UN and indigenous peoples, please see www.un.org/indigenous.

