



REGIONAL FACTS AND FIGURES LATIN AMERICA

“Pervasive and severe” poverty:

- ◆ Indigenous poverty rates are far higher than the rest of the population in several countries in Latin America: **Paraguay**, 7.9 times higher; **Panama**, 5.9 times higher; **Mexico**, 3.3 times higher; and **Guatemala**, 2.8 times higher.
- ◆ Indigenous workers’ earnings average only half non-indigenous workers,’ in large part due to factors such as discrimination and quality of schooling. The highest gap in earnings for each additional year of schooling between indigenous and non-indigenous people in Latin America exists in **Bolivia**.

Major gaps in education:

- ◆ In **Guatemala**, more than 50 per cent of indigenous youth aged 15-19 have not completed primary education, compared to around one-third of non-indigenous youth.
- ◆ A sizeable gap persists between the number of years of schooling attended by indigenous and non-indigenous children. The gap ranges from non-indigenous children in **Peru** receiving 2.3 years more education than their indigenous classmates, to a gap of nearly four years for **Bolivia**.

Shut out from lands and resources:

- ◆ In **Colombia** over the last three decades, thousands of indigenous peoples have been displaced due to State military activity and the presence of armed groups involved in drug cultivation and trafficking in indigenous areas. This further increases refugee populations in neighbouring countries **Brazil**, **Ecuador**, **Panama**, **Peru** and **Venezuela**.
- ◆ Ninety per cent of the timber being extracted in the **Peruvian Amazon** is illegal and originates from protected areas belonging to indigenous communities or set aside for indigenous peoples who live in voluntary isolation.

Alarming health statistics:

- ◆ Large life expectancy gaps persist between indigenous and non-indigenous people, including: **Guatemala** (13 years’ difference), **Panama** (10 years) and **Mexico** (6 years).
- ◆ Child mortality is still 70 per cent higher in indigenous communities, despite improvements across Latin America over the last 40 years.
- ◆ Malnutrition is twice as common among indigenous as in non-indigenous children. In **Honduras**, an estimated 95 per cent of indigenous children under age 14 suffer from malnutrition.
- ◆ In **Venezuela**, health indicators are significantly lower in Amazonas state, home to twenty distinct indigenous peoples, than in the rest of the country. The infant mortality rate in Amazonas state is 43.9 per 1,000 births, compared to the national average of 19 per 1,000 births. In 2004, the malaria incidence among indigenous peoples was 70 times higher than the national average.

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- ◆ In **Ecuador**, recent investigations indicate that cancer rates among indigenous communities living in oil-producing areas are significantly higher than the national average: the risk of throat cancer is thirty times greater; kidney and skin cancer fifteen times greater; and stomach cancer five times greater.

The State of the World's Indigenous Peoples was authored by seven independent experts and produced by the Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

For more information, see: www.un.org/indigenous

