



THE UNITED NATIONS PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

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Backgrounder

Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda

Indigenous peoples make up 5 per cent of the world's population, but 15 per cent of the poorest. They continue to lag behind on most social and economic indicators. The 2030 Agenda, with its promise to “leave no one behind,” is of crucial importance to indigenous peoples. At the same time, indigenous peoples have much to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

As a result of indigenous peoples' active participation in processes leading to the 2030 Agenda, the framework makes explicit references to their development concerns and is founded on principles of universality, human rights, equality and environmental sustainability, core priorities for indigenous peoples. While challenges remain, the Sustainable Development Goals are regarded as a step forward compared to the Millennium Development Goals, where indigenous peoples were largely invisible.

Indigenous priorities

Each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and targets are relevant to indigenous peoples' rights and well-being: 156 of the 169 targets are closely linked to human rights while 73 targets have substantial links to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.¹

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. The 2030 Agenda also calls on indigenous peoples to actively engage in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, including in follow-up and review at the national level.

In the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets², important indicators for indigenous peoples have been included, in particular related to the collective dimension of land rights (target 1.4 and 5.a), small-scale farmers' income (target 2.3), indigenous children's access to education (target 4.5) and non-discrimination (target 10.3).

To make indigenous peoples visible and capture the inequalities they face across all the Sustainable Development Goals, indigenous peoples have been advocating for data disaggregation and the inclusion of an “indigenous identifier” and community-based data in official statistics.

Risks for indigenous peoples

The 2030 Agenda, however, also involves serious risks for indigenous peoples, such as clean energy projects that encroach on their lands and territories. To avoid negative impacts, the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals needs to take place in conformity with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration constitutes a framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity,

¹ Danish Institute for Human Rights (2016). Available at <http://sdg.humanrights.dk>.

² Report of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, E/CN.3/2017/2*





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well-being and rights of the world's indigenous peoples. It provides a foundation for dialogue between indigenous peoples and Member States. It is also important that programmes to implement the 2030 Agenda are culturally sensitive and respect indigenous peoples' self-determination as well as collective rights in terms of land, health, education, culture and ways of living.

The first year of 2030 Agenda implementation

In 2016, Member States took the first steps towards implementing the 2030 Agenda through the development of national action plans. National level implementation will continue to be a focus in the coming years. It is crucial that States include indigenous peoples in their planning, programmes and budgets as well as in their targets and indicators to review progress of the 2030 Agenda.

Indigenous peoples actively participated in the first year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda at all levels, including at the 2016 high-level political forum, the global UN platform for follow-up and review. Seven of the 22 countries that underwent national voluntary reviews at the high-level political forum mentioned indigenous peoples in their reports, either as a global priority or as a national concern. Main issues raised included the acknowledgement of indigenous peoples as a group at risk of being left behind, the importance of obtaining data on indigenous peoples, mechanisms of consultation with indigenous peoples in the 2030 Agenda and the socio-economic situation of indigenous peoples.

Suggestions for the way forward: Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda

As an advisory body of the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues provides substantive inputs to the thematic review of the high-level political forum. In its 2016 and 2017 reports, the Forum highlights, in particular, the following recommendations:

- **Implementing the 2030 Agenda with full respect for the rights of indigenous peoples:**
By protecting and promoting the rights of indigenous peoples, as reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, States will be able to address challenges faced by indigenous peoples and ensure that they are not left behind.
- **Making indigenous peoples visible in data and in the review of the 2030 Agenda:**
At the national level, relevant indicators for indigenous peoples should be identified and included in national indicator lists. Data-disaggregation and recognition of indigenous identity in national statistics as well as integration of community-based data from indigenous communities will allow for assessing progress for indigenous peoples.
- **Ensuring indigenous peoples' participation in implementation, follow-up and review:** Indigenous peoples can contribute to the development of national action plans, follow-up and review at all levels, including for the voluntary national reviews at the high-level political forum.

The Permanent Forum will continue its deliberations on the 2030 Agenda during its sixteenth session (24 April to 5 May). It will provide substantive inputs to the high-level political forum and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda to ensure that indigenous peoples are not left behind.

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