

Questionnaire to UN system

Questionnaire to the UN system agencies, funds and programmes and intergovernmental organizations

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII) was established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 2000/22. The Permanent Forum is mandated to provide expert advice and recommendations on Indigenous issues to the ECOSOC and through the Council to United Nations agencies, funds and programmes; to raise awareness and promote the integration and coordination of activities related to Indigenous issues within the UN system; prepare and disseminate information on Indigenous issues; and promote respect for and full application of the provisions of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and follow up the effectiveness of the Declaration.

The Indigenous Peoples Development Branch/Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues invites UN system agencies, funds and programmes and other inter-governmental organizations to complete the attached questionnaire on any action taken or planned in response to the Permanent Forum's recommendations, the system-wide action plan on rights of Indigenous Peoples (SWAP) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The responses will be compiled into a report for the 2025 session of the Permanent Forum. In your responses, please, include information on progress and challenges related to Indigenous women, Indigenous persons with disabilities, Indigenous older persons, and Indigenous children and youth.¹

All responses will be placed on the DESA/DISD website on Indigenous Peoples at: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/>

If you have any objections to your response being made available on our website, please inform our office accordingly.

Please submit your completed questionnaire by **15 November 2024** to:

Indigenous Peoples and Development Branch
Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Division for Inclusive Social Development
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations Headquarters
New York, USA 10017
Email: indigenous_un@un.org

Subject: Response to SWAP questionnaire

¹ Indigenous should be capitalized when referring to cultures, communities, lands, languages, etc., of Indigenous Peoples, e.g.: Indigenous culture in Ecuador, Indigenous languages are dying out. If referring to flora or fauna, lower case should be used. See UN Editorial Manual for further guidance: <https://www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/editorial-manual/updates>

Questionnaire

Please also include an **executive summary** of your inputs to the 3 main questions below (strict **500-word limit**) which will be used for our compilation report submitted to the 2025 session of the PFII.

Please provide information on the following:

A. Recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and input to the 2025 session

- i. Please provide information on measures taken since your last update to the Forum on the implementation or planned implementation of the recommendations of the PFII.
 - Following the last update to the Permanent Forum, the World Food Programme undertook several initiatives in country offices and across the regional bureaus to push the organization's work with Indigenous Peoples.
 - WFP participates in the Inter-Agency Support Group (IASG) and supports the working group on the System-Wide Action Plan (SWAP) Indicators.
 - Since mid-May 2024 WFP holds the Secretariat role for the Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems Coalition made up of member states, UN agencies, Indigenous Peoples' organizations and civil society organizations.
 - WFP organized a side event *Towards a Rights-based Approach to School Meals: the role of Interculturalism and Food Sovereignty* at the 2024 Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues with Rome-based Agencies and Indigenous Peoples' organizations (IPOs). It explored through examples how Indigenous Peoples' foods and Indigenous Peoples' participation have been integrated into school meals programming across the globe. The side event also showcased the findings of the WFP and the InterAmerican Development Bank's Special Report titled *Towards an Intercultural Approach to School Meals in the Region* in the *State of School Feeding in Latin America and the Caribbean*.
 - WFP's Regional Bureau in Latin America and the Caribbean launched their regional strategy on engagement with Indigenous Peoples on 9 August 2024.
 - In Myanmar and Nepal, WFP is implementing a capacity strengthening and learning initiative to strengthen the capacity of their employees to better engage with Indigenous Peoples.
 - An internal Community of Practice on Indigenous Peoples encourages peer to peer knowledge sharing and learning across the organization.
 - On August 9th, WFP launched an Employee Resource Group for Indigenous Peoples as a dedicated platform to foster an inclusive and respectful workplace for employees who self-identify as Indigenous.
 - In Bolivia, the WFP Human Resources unit has developed more inclusive recruitment processes via radio spots with the intention to create a more representative workforce.
 - Two binational climate change adaptation projects funded by the UNFCCC Adaptation Fund are being undertaken in Honduras/El Salvador and India/Sri Lanka, and one in Nicaragua. The projects include traditional knowledge as a component to encourage innovation in addressing the impact of climate change.

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ii. The theme of the 2025 PFII session is "Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples within United Nations Member States and the United Nations system, including identifying good practices and addressing challenges." Please include information on any publications, projects, reports, or activities relevant to this theme.

The WFP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean's strategy on engagement with Indigenous Peoples (August 2024) is framed in accordance with the principles of the declaration. In addition, in the Latin American and Caribbean region an action plan based on the findings of a diagnostic study on barriers to Indigenous Peoples' inclusion in the workforce serves to guide the development of a more inclusive and representative workplace. A WFP and InterAmerican Development Bank, IADB's [Special Report titled *Towards an Intercultural Approach to School Meals in the Region* in the *State of School Feeding in Latin America and the Caribbean*](#) has been shared in various forums during 2024 including a side event during the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and the 10th Regional Forum on School Meals held in Mexico in August 2024 hosted by the Government of Mexico and WFP.

Nine case studies featuring WFP engagement with Indigenous Peoples across regions have been published internally. Multiple articles are available on WFP's website (wfp.org) to highlight the value of working with Indigenous Peoples to fulfill WFP's mandate. Examples include ['We did not cause the climate crisis... but our seasons have changed': Indigenous food systems are tested to the limit | World Food Programme \(wfp.org\)](#) and [How much do you know about Indigenous Peoples? | World Food Programme \(wfp.org\)](#)

Also available on WFP's website (<https://www.wfp.org/publications?text=Indigenous>) is an assessment from the Central African Republic on Indigenous Peoples' Livelihoods as well as one on Indigenous Persons with Disabilities in Two Provinces in Nepal.

Podcasts focusing on WFP's activities with tribal peoples in India and short videos shining a spotlight on WFP's work with school meals continue to raise visibility within the organization on the importance of ensuring Indigenous Peoples participation in WFP processes and the recognition of Indigenous Peoples knowledge systems.

iii. Please provide information on efforts to ensure the participation of Indigenous Peoples in the international decades declared by the General Assembly, such as the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030), the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development" (2018-2028), the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022 - 2032) and other relevant international decades and processes, including CEDAW General recommendation 39 on Indigenous women and girls.

Key to effective and meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples in international decades' initiatives declared by the General Assembly is ensuring information is available and transmitted in Indigenous languages. WFP has made considerable efforts to ensure the wide accessibility of documentation and information. WFP Guatemala for example works with locally based interpreters and translators to ensure their community feedback mechanisms are managed by Indigenous language speakers. WFP Bolivia is ensuring vacancy announcements

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are also available in Indigenous languages. In Nicaragua WFP is supporting the translation of national school feeding guidelines into Miskito and dialects of Mayangna.

In accordance with CEDAW General recommendation 39 on Indigenous women and girls, integration in 2024 of the WFP Indigenous Peoples Portfolio into the new Gender, Protection and Inclusion service ensures alignment and coherence in approaches to account for the needs of Indigenous women and girls.

iv. Has your entity responded to the 2022 UNPFII recommendation² paragraph 85... *The Permanent Forum urges all United Nations entities and States parties to treaties concerning the environment, biodiversity, and the climate to eliminate the use of the term “local communities” in conjunction with indigenous peoples, so that the term “indigenous peoples and local communities” would be abolished.*

If yes, please explain your response in further detail.

WFP does not use the term local communities in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples to address issues concerning biodiversity, climate, and the environment. WFP adheres to the recommendation and specifies communities by name to ensure clear, precise, and accurate communication in official documents and communication.

B. System-Wide Action Plan to achieve the ends of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Background

As per the Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/69/2), a [system-wide action plan to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) was adopted in November 2015 and launched by the Secretary-General at the UN Permanent Forum in May 2016.

In August 2020, the United Nations Executive Committee agreed on the need for accelerated and collective action to strengthen the implementation of the SWAP on Indigenous Peoples. In November 2020, the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination issued a [Call to Action: Building an Inclusive, Sustainable and Resilient Future with Indigenous Peoples](#). Its goal is to ensure collaborative and coherent UN system action to support the rights and well-being of Indigenous Peoples with a focus on furthering the implementation of the SWAP³.

i. The Permanent Forum will follow up on progress made on the SWAP implementation as part of its discussion on the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples during its 2025 session. Please provide an analysis of actions taken by your agency, fund and/or programme on the six key elements of the SWAP, since your last update to the Forum⁴.

² E/2022/43-E/C.19/2022/11

³ Reporting on the activities to implement the CEB Call to Action is through task groups and should not be included in the responses to this questionnaire.

⁴ The six key elements of the SWAP are: 1) Raise awareness of the UNDRIP; 2) Support the implementation of the UNDRIP, particularly at the country level; 3) Support the realization of indigenous peoples' rights in the

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- In partnership with FILAC (the Fund for Development of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean) WFP's Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean rolled out 23 capacity strengthening workshops across countries in the region from October to December 2023. These workshops served to raise awareness of the UN normative framework vis-a-vis Indigenous Peoples and strengthen understanding and engagement with Indigenous Peoples.
- WFP's agreement with Trinity College Dublin on disability inclusion has also enriched the Indigenous Peoples portfolio's work. Collaboration between the two areas of work raises awareness of the importance of addressing the impact multiple identities can have on a person's food security.
- In 2024 greater attention has been given to efforts in workplace culture and Diversity Equity and Inclusion. WFP held an interactive, online panel discussion to mark International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples to showcase the benefits of inclusive programming and policies from both the programme side and a Human Resources perspective. The event brought together Indigenous leaders, WFP and UN employees who self-identify as Indigenous to discuss opportunities and challenges for ensuring workforce diversity.
- WFP's senior leadership sent messages of support during International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.
- WFP's Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean released a strategic framework for WFP's engagement with Indigenous Peoples to inform actions at the country and regional levels.
- WFP's internal Indigenous Peoples webpage is regularly updated with resources, tools, guidance, and news stories. WFP's Community of Practice on Indigenous Peoples made up of interested employees meets bi-monthly to exchange practices and activities with Indigenous Peoples.
- WFP's case study collection highlights projects with Indigenous Peoples across regions.
- Throughout the year, news articles on the significance of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and food systems and WFP engagement are shared externally via WFP's public pages.
- WFP holds the Secretariat of the Indigenous Peoples Food Systems Coalition. The coalition's two main goals are to: 1) *strengthen, increase recognition of, and promote respect for Indigenous Peoples' food systems across the world, and 2) disseminate and scale up traditional knowledge and best practices from Indigenous Peoples' food systems with the potential to transform global food systems at large.* Actions to reach these goals are being implemented in partnership with coalition members focusing on school meals and Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems.
- On International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples 2024, WFP Bolivia organized the First Plurinational Summit: *Food Systems, Indigenous Peoples, Ancestral Knowledge and Natural Flavors* which brought together Indigenous representatives from over 30

implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; 4) Map existing standards and guidelines, capacity, training materials and resources within the UN system, international financial institutions and the members of the IASG for the effective implementation of the UNDRIP; 5) Develop the capacity of States, indigenous peoples, civil society and UN personnel; and 6) Advance the participation of indigenous peoples in UN processes.

Indigenous nations across Bolivia. The summit created a platform for Indigenous Peoples to: 1) express their needs and capacities; 2) highlight the challenges they face in maintaining their traditions in a fast-changing world, and 3) the role ancestral practices can play in building resilience to climate change. WFP Bolivia strengthened relations with the Government of Bolivia and other international actors and communities to align efforts on food security and Indigenous Peoples' rights.

C. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

i. Please describe any activities your entity has organized since the last reporting period to accelerate progress across a range of SDGs, demonstrating the interlinkages across goals and targets and if applicable, providing examples of translating global goals into local actions. In your response, please consider referring to SDGs relevant to the theme of the 2025 session of the Forum, including SDGs 5, 7, 10, 13 and 16.

A people-centered approach guides WFP's work to ensure no one is left behind. Following an internal re-organization, WFP has created a new Service within the Programme Division to coordinate work on cross-cutting issues (Gender, Protection, and Inclusion), which places corporate attention on ensuring social inclusion is front and center in our actions. Our work across countries focuses on gathering data on Indigenous Peoples' livelihoods and food insecurity. This information is used to inform our guidance, tools, and approaches. Advocacy and awareness raising of the food security needs of Indigenous Peoples at the corporate level are also key factors in addressing these gaps. Strengthening capacity of our employees to better engage is yet another key component as is fostering partnerships with Indigenous Peoples' organizations, other UN agencies and member states. In October 2024, the Indigenous Peoples Food Systems Coalition, WFP, the Rome-based Agencies and The Indigenous Peoples Partnership on Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty (TIP) partnered together on an event highlighting the findings and results of a multi-country assessment led by TIP and its partner organizations across India, Kenya, Thailand, and Mexico demonstrating Indigenous Peoples' food systems' positive impact on people, nature, and climate.

ii. Please describe any activities your entity organized in support of the 2024 UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and/or reports and activities that supported SDG reporting and monitoring or a VNR process at the national, regional, or global level.

Following the focus of the 2024 High Level Political Forum on SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17, WFP has concentrated its efforts in SDGS 2 and 17. Through its MoU with FILAC in Latin America and its role as Secretariat of the Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems Coalition WFP understands partnerships are key to achieving the SDGs. WFP continues to work alongside the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) and UN agencies to achieve the SDGs while guarding UN Normative Frameworks and improving engagement with Indigenous Peoples.

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Reminder: Please also include an executive summary of your inputs to the 3 main questions above (strict 500-word limit) which will be used for our compilation report submitted to the 2025 session of the PFII.

The World Food Programme (WFP) has advanced its engagement with Indigenous Peoples through strategic initiatives across its regional bureaus and country offices, focusing on food security, cultural inclusion, and capacity development. The Latin America and Caribbean Regional Bureau (LAC) Strategy for Engaging with Indigenous Peoples, serves as guidance for the country offices of the region but also as a model for other regions. Additionally, WFP's Memorandum of Understanding with the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC), continues to inform plans moving forward. WFP's agreement with Trinity College Dublin on disability inclusion has also enriched the Indigenous Peoples portfolio's work. Collaboration between the two areas of work raises awareness of the importance of addressing the impact multiple identities can have on a person's food security, nutrition and livelihood.

WFP has taken steps to implement recommendations from the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII). Notably, WFP holds the seat of the Secretariat for the Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems Coalition, fostering collaboration and advocacy within the UN system, and among member states and Indigenous Peoples' organizations and beyond. Coordination efforts extend to working with other key coalitions, such as the School Meals Coalition and the Agroecology Coalition, to ensure a holistic approach to advancing Indigenous Peoples' food systems. Efforts in Myanmar and Nepal have introduced learning initiatives and employee sensitization activities, while Bolivia's innovative recruitment practices are poised for regional scaling.

The organization's commitment to amplifying the voices of Indigenous Peoples is evident through various platforms, including interactive discussions during the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, and its participation in key forums and summits, such as Bolivia's Plurinational Summit on Indigenous food systems. The LAC Bureau's Regional Strategic Framework further guides country offices in aligning local work with broader organizational objectives and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) principles.

The Indigenous Peoples' team now operates under the Gender, Protection, and Inclusion Service, which enables more integrated approaches, centralized tools, and streamlined processes to better address issues of social inclusion and gender equality corporately. Additionally, WFP's capacity development efforts focus on adapting programming for Indigenous Peoples and enhancing internal and external collaboration.

WFP's regional efforts are complemented by global activities, such as hosting the side event at the 2024 PFII session, which highlighted intercultural approaches to school feeding in Latin America. Evidence-based assessments and the expansion of a case study collection have further informed strategic responses to challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples' communities, including exclusion from decision-making processes.

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As a response to recommendations on terminology, WFP has maintained a commitment to using precise language, ensuring respect for Indigenous identities and cultural practices. WFP also continues to raise awareness on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and supports the integration of Indigenous perspectives across Sustainable Development Goals, especially in regions where partnerships with Indigenous Peoples' organizations are essential.

Through these efforts, WFP reaffirms its commitment to enhancing the well-being of Indigenous Peoples' communities by addressing their unique challenges while fostering an inclusive, sustainable, and resilient future.

ANNEX 1

Agenda of the twenty-fourth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The Twentieth-fourth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is scheduled to take place from **21 April – 2 May 2025**.

Provisional Agenda

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Discussion on the theme “Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples within United Nations Member States and the United Nations system, including identifying good practices and addressing challenges”.
4. Discussion on the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights), with reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
5. Dialogues:
 - (a) Dialogue with Indigenous Peoples;
 - (b) Dialogue with Member States;
 - (c) Dialogue with the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes;
 - (d) Human rights dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; annual review of progress on the implementation of general recommendation No. 39 (2022);
 - (e) Interregional, intergenerational and global dialogue;
 - (f) Dialogue on Indigenous platforms established within United Nations entities;
 - (g) Thematic dialogue on the financing of Indigenous Peoples’ work and participation across the multilateral and regional system.
6. Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues considered by the Economic and Social Council, the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and emerging issues.
7. Provisional agenda of the twenty-fifth session of the Permanent Forum.
8. Adoption of the report of the Permanent Forum on its twenty-fourth session.