

Message on the occasion of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
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Today, on this commemoration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, UNFPA pay tribute to all our indigenous sisters and brothers. We renew our commitment to empower indigenous women and adolescent girls around the world to reclaim their human rights, especially those dealing with the most intimate aspects of their lives.

Indigenous people tend to be less healthy, less educated and more impoverished than their counterparts in the dominant culture. Indigenous women and girls are often disenfranchised—on the basis of their gender, as well as their culture and low economic status. All too often their voices go unheard, not just in the halls of government, but also in the clinics and birthing rooms where they seek to be treated with dignity and respect.

However, things are changing, in part because of new opportunities for indigenous voices to be heard and new technologies that amplify their voices. Empowered indigenous women, adolescents and communities, are asserting their rights, including the right to access to quality and culturally acceptable, reproductive health services. We celebrate and support this transformation.

As UNFPA prepares its 20-year review of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, it will engage indigenous peoples in the process and listen to the voices of indigenous women and adolescent girls, so that their aspirations are included in the sustainable development agenda.

Today, as we celebrate the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, we call upon stronger actions by governments, international organizations, civil society organizations and indigenous peoples alike, to build a more just world, a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.