



THE UNITED NATIONS PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

TOGETHER WE ACHIEVE

SUBSTANTIVE INPUTS

TO THE 2016 HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

Thematic review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



**THE UNITED NATIONS
PERMANENT FORUM ON
INDIGENOUS
ISSUES**

**"THE 2030 AGENDA FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
MUST REALIZE THE RIGHTS
OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
ACROSS ALL THE GOALS.
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
MUST NOT BE
LEFT BEHIND."**

BAN KI-MOON
UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

#WEAREINDIGENOUS #GLOBALGOALS

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Totonaca woman, Mexico. Photo: Broddi Sigurdarson





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Suggestions for the High Level Political Forum's consideration to ensure that Indigenous Peoples are not left behind in the 2030 Agenda

Indigenous peoples' rights and well-being need to be addressed across all Sustainable Development Goals. To ensure that Agenda 2030 will not leave indigenous peoples behind, the following is crucial:

- 1) Implement the 2030 Agenda with full respect for the rights of indigenous peoples**

The 2030 Agenda must be implemented in full accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other relevant international agreements (ILO Convention No. 169, World Conference on Indigenous Peoples Outcome Document and international human rights instruments). A human rights-based approach to the 2030 Agenda will contribute to safeguarding indigenous peoples against possible negative effects embedded in the 2030 Agenda, while it will also enhance the role and contributions of indigenous peoples to sustainable development. Thus, indigenous peoples shall be regarded as partners and rights-holders, rather than mere subjects for sustainable development.
- 2) Disaggregation of data according to indigenous identity across all goals**

Tracking progress for indigenous peoples across all the Sustainable Development Goals implies disaggregation of data according to indigenous status. This relies on the inclusion of an indigenous identifier in national census and other surveys. The Statistical Commission and its Inter Agency Expert Group on SDGs' working group on "data disaggregation" should cooperate with indigenous peoples' organisations to improve and share methodologies related to indigenous identification and ensure they are included in national, regional and global assessments of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 3) Ensure Indigenous peoples' participation at all levels**

The 2030 Agenda calls on indigenous peoples to walk with Member States and other stakeholders on the road towards 2030, including participating in follow-up and review (paragraph 79). This requires that indigenous peoples are given a real opportunity to participate and engage with local and national governments in developing national action plans, as well as with regional and global platforms for review and follow-up, including the High Level Political Forum.
- 4) Protect and enhance indigenous peoples' knowledge**

The traditional knowledge and cultural, social and environmental practices of indigenous peoples and, in particular of indigenous women, contribute to global efforts and initiatives to ensure sustainable livelihoods, consumption patterns and practices; and to food security. Indigenous peoples must be able to practice and enhance their knowledge and become part of the solution in the global search for agricultural systems and global consumption patterns that are just, healthy, and sustainable.





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An indigenous perspective on the 2030 Agenda

Indigenous peoples participated from the start in the global consultation process towards the 2030 Agenda to ensure that indigenous peoples would not be invisible, as they had largely been in the Millennium Development Goals. Their advocacy contributed to designing a framework that makes explicit references to indigenous peoples' rights and development concerns, and that is founded on principles of universality, human rights, equality and environmental sustainability – core priorities for indigenous peoples.

Many of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals are relevant for indigenous peoples. 73 out of the 169 SDG targets have substantial links to provisions in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and ILO Convention No. 169, while 92 % of the targets are related to international human rights instruments¹.

There are six specific references to indigenous peoples in the 2030 Agenda, including in Goal 2 concerning the agricultural productivity and incomes of indigenous small-scale farmers, and Goal 4 on equal access to education for indigenous children. There is also a call to indigenous peoples to engage actively in the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda on all levels to ensure that progress for indigenous peoples is reflected.

The global list of indicators developed by the United Nations Statistical Commission² to measure progress on the Sustainable Development Goals includes some indicators that respond to indigenous peoples' concerns. These include an indicator that will track income of small-scale food producers by indigenous status, and an indicator to track indigenous peoples' access to education compared to other groups. Furthermore, the indicator to measure secure access to land rights by type of tenure is an important recognition of indigenous peoples' collective rights to their lands, territories and resources. The suggested indicator on peoples' perception of discrimination based on prohibited grounds of discrimination in international human rights is crucial to assess advances made in the 2030 Agenda to address indigenous peoples' experience of marginalization and discrimination.

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.

References to indigenous peoples in the 2030 Agenda resolution (A/RES/70/1)

- Empowerment, engagement and education of indigenous peoples (Preamble: paragraphs 23, 25 and 52)
- Ending hunger through sustainable agriculture (SDG2 , target 2.3)
- Ensuring access to education for indigenous peoples (SDG4, target 4.5)
- Indigenous peoples' participation in follow-up and review (Paragraph 79)

¹ Danish Institute for Human Rights 2016, see: <http://sdg.humanrights.dk>

² Global List of Indicators as adopted by the Statistical Commission in March 2016: E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1





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Baseline 2016: Situation of Indigenous Peoples today

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% of the world's population, but 15% of the poorest. They lag behind on virtually every social, economic or political indicator considered in the Millennium Development Goals as well as the Sustainable Development Goals. All the SDGs and targets are relevant to ensure indigenous peoples' rights and well-being. Some of the main areas where indigenous peoples struggle not to be left behind are:

Goal 1 and 2 – Indigenous Peoples' rights to lands, territories and resources: The root causes of the severe poverty and food insecurity that many indigenous peoples face lie in their lack of secure land rights. Indigenous peoples continue to experience displacement and dispossession from their lands and territories often due to large-scale development and extractive sector projects undertaken without their free, prior and informed consent. Land and environmental degradation due to over-exploitation of natural resources and climate change causes further stressful impacts on indigenous peoples' well-being and economies. The 2030 Agenda's inclusion of indicators that reflect secure and collective land rights is essential to address these concerns of poverty and food insecurity.

Goal 5 - Empowerment of Indigenous women: Indigenous women and girls continue to suffer from marginalization and violence, including specific problems of police brutality and systemic public discrimination. Compounding this condition is their lack of participation in decision-making at all levels including in indigenous institutions. The 2030 Agenda's goal on gender quality should support the empowerment of indigenous women, recognizing the great contributions they give to sustainable development, community well-being and revitalization of cultures and languages.

Goal 10 – Overcoming discrimination and inequality for indigenous peoples: Indigenous peoples continue to face multiple layers of discrimination and marginalization due to their identity, with indigenous women, youth, children and persons with disabilities suffering most. At the same time, indigenous cultures and languages are at risk of becoming extinct with one language estimated to die every second week³. Pervasive discrimination in the public sphere prevents indigenous peoples from equally accessing public education, health and social services and from effectively participating in public affairs. To overcome inequality for indigenous peoples in the 2030 Agenda, there is a need for cultural sensitivity, public service provision in indigenous languages and respect for indigenous peoples' right to development with identity.

Goals 13, 14, 15 – Indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge: Through centuries of practice, indigenous peoples have developed sophisticated knowledge systems about their natural environment with sustainable management systems that have retained the ecosystem and world's bio-diversity. These are important tools that will contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals.

³ "Indigenous children's education and indigenous languages. Expert paper prepared for the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Fourth Session 2005" (E/C.19/2005/7)





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TOGETHER WE ACHIEVE

Goal 16 - Indigenous peoples in time of conflict: Indigenous peoples increasingly experience conflicts on their lands, territories and resources, or related to their identities. During violent conflict, indigenous peoples are more vulnerable due to their conditions of poverty, political marginalization and systemic discrimination. Often, indigenous human rights defenders become victims of criminalization, persecution, violence, imprisonment and killings. The 2030 Agenda's aim to promote peaceful societies is essential to protect indigenous peoples in times of low or high-intensity conflicts and to ensure their access to justice and participation in peace processes.

Risks and challenges for Indigenous Peoples in the 2030 Agenda

Although indigenous peoples regard the 2030 Agenda as an advancement compared to the Millennium Development Goals, several of the SDGs and targets also involve risks for indigenous peoples. In particular, there are concerns with the lack of references in the 2030 Agenda to the following:

- **Collective rights** in terms of lands, territories and resources, but also health, education, identity and culture and ways of life;
- **The concept of self-determination**, as enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which is essential for indigenous peoples' right to define their own priorities for development;
- **Holistic development approaches** that include the right to development with identity and culture and are not solely focused on economic growth, industrialization and increased production;
- The principle of **free, prior and informed consent**, which is essential for indigenous peoples' rights to self-determination and control over their lands, territories and resources;
- **Cultural sensitivity** across all goals, particularly those related to health and education, including education in indigenous mother tongues.
- **Human rights based approach** to the 2030 Agenda, which implies additional efforts to ensure the recognition of the rights, empowerment, inclusion and equal participation of indigenous peoples - as well as keeping government, private sector and other stakeholders accountable towards the rights of indigenous peoples.

To overcome these risks and avoid adverse effects on indigenous peoples, it is essential that implementation of the 2030 Agenda happens with full respect for the rights granted as minimum standards in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Furthermore, it is essential that indigenous peoples are given the opportunity for full participation and engagement in the Agenda's implementation, follow-up and review at all levels.





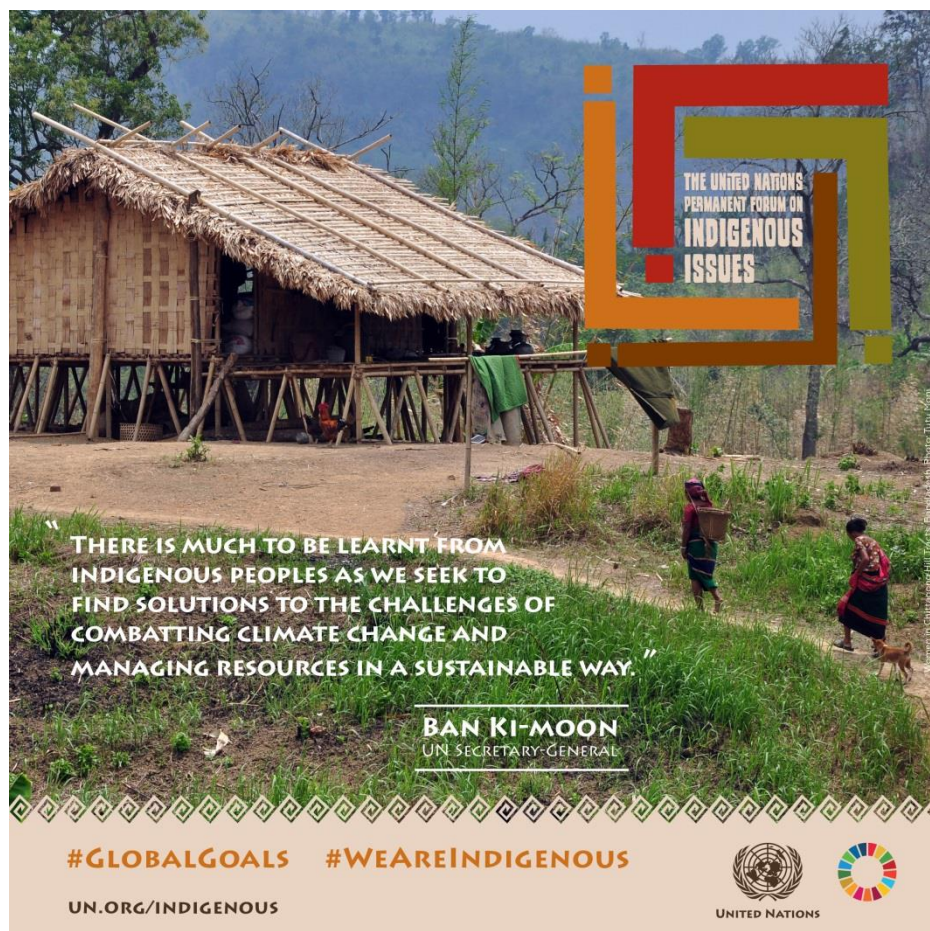
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Further Resources for the High Level Political Forum:

- [“The way forward: indigenous peoples and the 2030 Agenda” \(E/C.19/2016/2\).](#)
Report of the Expert Group Meeting 2015 on 22 and 23 October 2015.
- [Report of the 15th Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues \(E/C.19/2016/43\)](#)
Expected in June 2016
- [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(2007\)](#)
- [Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples \(2014\) \(A/RES/69/2\)](#)
- [United Nations Development Group \(2009\) Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples’ Issues](#)
- [The 2015 Third Committee Resolution on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(A/RES/70/232\)](#)

For more information on indigenous peoples and the 2030 Agenda
www.un.org/indigenous



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