

High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) 2019

STATEMENT OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MAJOR GROUP (IPMG)

GOAL 4: Quality Education for all

The Indigenous peoples wish to acknowledge the efforts of states and other development actors in providing access to education to indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups including narrowing the gap on education between boys and girls. While there is a significant progress on Goal 4, majority of indigenous peoples in rural areas continue to face discrimination in terms of access to quality and appropriate education. At the primary level, mother tongue education for indigenous children is not given the needed support, particularly the widespread initiatives of indigenous institutions and organizations. The inter-generational transfer of indigenous knowledge to the younger generation is not valued and even criminalized in many cases as this knowledge is intertwined with the livelihood activities of indigenous peoples which are prohibited or restricted. Likewise, educational curricula and programmes are not gender and culture-sensitive and thus reinforcing discriminatory views and attitude to indigenous peoples. Access to higher education remains a major challenge to indigenous peoples due to high cost, proximity and prevailing discriminatory practices including in provision of scholarships.

Further, the widespread conflicts in indigenous territories such as in Africa, Latin America and Asia are disrupting and undermining the education of indigenous children and youth, and are increasing their vulnerabilities to violence and abuse including sexual abuse to indigenous women and girls. The interlinkages of poverty, conflicts, discrimination and lack of access to appropriate education are major obstacles in developing the skills, capacities, and potential of indigenous children and youth as the future leaders of indigenous peoples.

In order to further advance the implementation of Goal 4 under the pledge of leaving no one behind, the Indigenous Peoples' Major Group thereby recommends the following

1. States to develop targeted plans and programmes to reach those furthest behind in relation to access to education, and ensure the inclusion of indigenous peoples; and to develop and implement culture-sensitive curriculum including the use of indigenous languages at the primary level in collaboration with indigenous educators and leaders.
2. States to prioritize effective access to quality education of marginalized groups including indigenous children and youth in both urban and rural areas through allocation of sufficient resources, development of appropriate infrastructure and services, and training of teachers among others.
3. States and other actors to Immediately resolve conflicts in indigenous territories in line with respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and provide security to indigenous children and youth.

4. States and development actors to develop and strengthen partnerships with indigenous institutions and organizations support their efforts and initiatives for mother-tongue education, intergenerational transfer of indigenous knowledge and appropriate life-skills development for indigenous children and youth