

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MAJOR GROUP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (IPMG) STATEMENT

Session 8: SDG 5 and interlinkages with other SDGs - Gender equality

At least 358 human rights defenders were killed in 2021 – 212 (59%) of which were defenders working on Indigenous Peoples' rights, land rights and environmental rights. Of the 212, 55 were Indigenous persons 18% of which are women. As in previous years, the majority of these killings occurred in the Americas, Asia and the Pacific regions, although this is hardly a full, global picture and many more cases go unreported;

From January 1, 2020 to June 24, 2021, there had been 22 incidents of harassment, abuse, and torture affecting 536 individuals within the Chitwan National Park in Nepal. 397 of these victims are indigenous women who all were just within the perimeters of the park collecting wild edibles.

These are just 2 among other facts in relation to the violence and aggression that indigenous women globally, are experiencing due to their intersecting identities as women and indigenous peoples – relentlessly, even at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a ground-level indicator of the alarming regression despite commitments to women's human rights and ensuring life with dignity for women through the SDGs.

The right to land and property is basic to the empowerment of women from poverty and is intricately linked to achieving the SDGs for women. The protection of Indigenous women's right to land is not only crucial in their physical, social and economic development but also unlocks indigenous women's potentials and strengthens their contributions to resilience against the current crises, including recovery from the pandemic.

There's been a consistent call for urgency, over the years. We call for action on the ground! Actions and investments grounded on the realities of indigenous women's marginalization and intersecting discrimination. Actions that respond to prevailing gender and identity gaps, knowledge and capacity building and institutional strengthening. Actions that leverage access to the fundamental freedom to decide and act on their development as indigenous women.