

# Economic and Social Council

## Recommendations

### **Intergenerational holistic healing, Health of Mother Earth, Decolonizing and Re-Indigenizing Culture as Social Determinants of Health**

**Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

**Twenty-second session**

New York, 17–28 April 2023

Item 4 of the provisional agenda\*

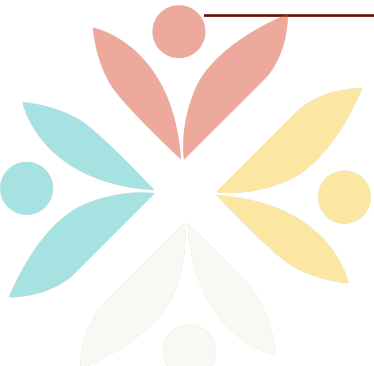
**Discussion on the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights), with reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**



---

This Slideshow highlights the recommendations from a study on Indigenous determinants of health in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This report was presented to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at its twenty-second session (2023).

---



A woman in traditional orange clothing with intricate silver jewelry is speaking to a group of children outdoors. She is standing next to a wooden table with a whiteboard and a water bottle. The children are sitting on the ground and listening attentively. The background shows a green tent structure and a wooden building.

# Intergenerational Holistic Healing (39)



# Intergenerational Holistic Healing

(a) Ensure intergenerational trauma training for Western medical, mental health professionals and public health workers. Training must be designed, curated, and implemented or co-led by local Indigenous practitioners;



# Intergenerational Holistic Healing

(b) Incorporate local Indigenous physical, mental and spiritual indicators in health assessments carried out in primary care and broader public health systems. Such indicators must be developed in partnership with local Indigenous Peoples and communities;





(c) Develop, in partnership with Indigenous leaders, a national plan to implement cultural safety in health-care systems by rooting out colonizing indoctrination in services and to eliminate social stigma;

# Intergenerational Holistic Healing



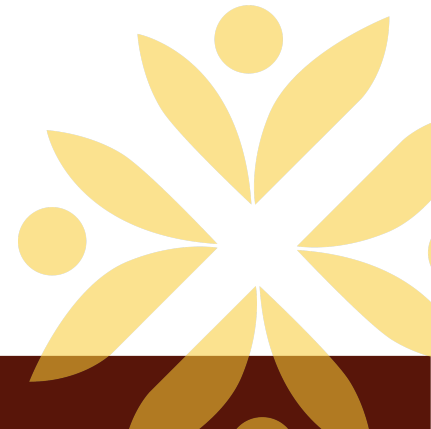
# Intergenerational Holistic Healing

(d) Ensure that all services and public media are available in local Indigenous languages;



# Intergenerational Holistic Healing

(e) Disseminate research demonstrating that cultural practices and Indigenous languages are protective against developing chronic diseases and are useful in preventing behavioral and mental health problems such as suicidality;





# Intergenerational Holistic Healing

(f) Ensure, through legislation, policy and regulations, that sacred Indigenous cultural practices are legally allowed and protected from any social discrimination or religious extremism;



# Intergenerational Holistic Healing

(g) Design and develop a curriculum on the role of Indigenous spirituality in health promotion for Western medical and mental health professionals so that health -related spiritual practices are respected in health assessments, healthcare and public health efforts;



# Intergenerational Holistic Healing

(h) Incorporate decolonized curricula in the Western education systems for medical, mental and public health practitioners, as well as for social work and other health systems-related personnel, to ensure that Indigenous practices are respected and included in the mainstream health systems in partnership with local Indigenous practitioners;



# Intergenerational Holistic Healing

(i) Conduct a national campaign to create awareness and educate practitioners and the public about misdiagnosing Indigenous health issues and how such misdiagnoses can be discriminatory and stigma-based practices;



# Intergenerational Holistic Healing



(j) Respect and incorporate partnerships to bridge Indigenous Peoples' traditional health with non-Indigenous health systems to fight institutionalized racism in the system and ensure equitable access to traditional medicines and healers, through cultural safety training and shared decision-making;



# Intergenerational Holistic Healing

(k) Work to educate the general population about pathologization of the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and drugs and alcohol and to respect the use of herbal and traditional medicines;



# Intergenerational Holistic Healing

(1) Develop a curriculum for public schools to properly educate the general population on the intrinsic socioeconomic value, uniqueness and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples in society;



# Intergenerational Holistic Healing

(m) Conduct a national campaign to create awareness of and educate practitioners about the multigenerational traumatic circumstances to which Indigenous Peoples have been exposed, the complex interlinked physical, mental and spiritual issues resulting therefrom, and how a failure to acknowledge these can constitute discriminatory and stigma-based practices;





# Intergenerational Holistic Healing

(n) Ensure the existence of – or adequately enforce – legislation that allows for a decolonized understanding of Indigenous Peoples’ rights and conduct a campaign about how Indigenous beliefs must be respected as valuable societies in the country in which they reside;



# Intergenerational Holistic Healing

(o) Educate non-Indigenous communities and allies on the current societal narratives promoting indoctrination; and use Indigenous knowledge to accomplish this initiative. For instance, the two-eyed seeing principle refers to Indigenous knowledge as a gift of multiple perspectives from each eye. This concept is helpful for integrative, translational, transdisciplinary and collaborative work such as in global health systems.



# Health of Mother Earth (40)



# Health of Mother Earth

(a) Ensure Indigenous food system sources, including access to locally harvested traditional foods and access to existing Indigenous food systems knowledge, and foster intergenerational and cross-communities knowledge transfer for Indigenous food systems;



# Health of Mother Earth

(b) Ensure the protection of the lands, waters and foods of Indigenous Peoples locally and globally;



# Health of Mother Earth

(c) Design and properly fund initiatives for local Indigenous Peoples and communities to find viable and sustainable alternatives for their communities to recover access and resources to strengthen food practices based on their food knowledge;



# Health of Mother Earth

- (d) Develop an initiative for Indigenous leaders to provide education at the national and international levels on Indigenous approaches to protect the world's biodiversity;



# Health of Mother Earth

(e) Support the sustainable and restorative traditional practices of food system cultivation for rural and urban Indigenous Peoples;





# Health of Mother Earth

(f) Ensure culturally safe services and infrastructure fostering a balanced lifestyle for urban and immigrant Indigenous Peoples and communities;



# Health of Mother Earth

(g) Develop national programmes led by Indigenous leaders to design a critical route for Indigenous communities to reconnect with their knowledge -based systems in a sustainable and viable manner;



# Health of Mother Earth



(h) Provide Indigenous Peoples with equity-based platforms so that they themselves can advocate for the water sources that they need and the right to protect them;



# Health of Mother Earth

(i) Ensure the existence or enforcement of legislation that allows for a decolonized understanding of Indigenous Peoples' use of traditional plants and herbal remedies;



# Health of Mother Earth

(j) Support the restoration of traditional practices through educational campaigns, legislation and policies;



# Health of Mother Earth

(k) Develop an initiative for Indigenous leaders to provide education at the national and international levels on the value and importance of Indigenous traditional medicine and the need to incorporate Indigenous-based mental health support in primary and specialized care settings;



# Health of Mother Earth

(1) Foster access to culture-informed health practices and healing systems, that is, access to services that are not integrated into the overall health-care system and thus have limited funding and accessibility for Indigenous Peoples;



# Health of Mother Earth

(m) Develop a curriculum for public schools to properly educate the general population on the intrinsic socioeconomic value of Indigenous Peoples' traditional lifeways in society;





# Health of Mother Earth

(n) Develop policies protecting Indigenous Peoples' intellectual property regarding health practices, and work with Indigenous leaders on the implementation and enforcement of the protections.



A photograph of three women in traditional clothing. The woman on the right is spinning yarn with a spinning wheel. The woman on the left is wearing a bright pink dress. The woman in the middle is wearing a dark red dress and glasses. They are sitting on a patterned rug. In the background, another person is lying down on a bed.

**Decolonizing and Re-  
Indigenizing Culture as Social  
Determinants of Health (41)**



# Decolonizing and Re-Indigenizing Culture as Social Determinants of Health

(a) Work with Indigenous Peoples and communities to design and implement a national plan to: (i) foster elements that reinforce Indigenous communities based on their uniqueness, history and knowledge; and (ii) ensure proper incorporation of the Indigenous communities in the national identity construction so that discrimination is avoided and eliminated;



# Decolonizing and Re-Indigenizing Culture as Social Determinants of Health

(b) Consider that language is key to cultural understanding and identity, ensuring that Indigenous Peoples, educational systems and policymakers are all working towards promoting the survival of Indigenous languages, which promote healthy Indigenous Peoples;





c. Develop, in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and communities, a national assessment of the areas that need the most attention in terms of Indigenous rights and discrimination against belief systems. Design and implement practical solutions to address these issues in the short and long terms



**Decolonizing and Re-Indigenizing Culture as Social Determinants of Health**



# Decolonizing and Re-Indigenizing Culture as Social Determinants of Health

(d) Advance cultural models and practices as a part of the overall health-care delivery and educational system for Indigenous People. This process requires partnerships both with Indigenous representatives, healers, scholars and elders and with youth, developing initiatives to involve them at every level of assessment, awareness and implementation;



# Decolonizing and Re-Indigenizing Culture as Social Determinants of Health

(e) Carry out a national study on how the past and current systems are contributing to replicating and extending practices that lead to the destruction or obliteration of local Indigenous cultures. Define strategies based on the results;



# Decolonizing and Re-Indigenizing Culture as Social Determinants of Health

(f) Implement a national campaign to create national awareness and educate all sectors of society on the contributions and importance of Indigenous Peoples at the national level and the need to correct current unjust practices stemming from ignorance, oblivion and value-extracting capitalistic practices;





# Decolonizing and Re-Indigenizing Culture as Social Determinants of Health

(g) Ensure that Indigenous cultural systems' definitions of health are expressed and determined locally by Indigenous Peoples;



# Decolonizing and Re-Indigenizing Culture as Social Determinants of Health

(h) Conduct community-based focus groups using Indigenous frameworks and methodology to address the needs of populations.



# Concluding Remarks (47)

- Recommendations listed in this document should be discussed and explored with local Indigenous leaders to ensure cultural and contextual appropriateness.
- Many of these recommendations are interlinked and may be appropriate to solve multiple circumstances given the multigenerational and multifaceted nature of Indigenous health.



# Acknowledgements

- ★ Mr. Alejandro Bermudez-del-Villar – PhD student – Chicago School of Professional Psychology
- ★ Jami Bartgis – One Fire Associates
- ★ Donald Warne – Johns Hopkins University
- ★ Allison Kelliher – University of North Dakota
- ★ Hannah Neufeld – University of Waterloo
- ★ Jared Ellsworth – Graduate student – Johns Hopkins University
- ★ Loretta Grey Cloud – Johns Hopkins University
- ★ Amina Amharech – Amazigh Indigenous leader and activist
- ★ Papaarangi Reid – University of Auckland
- ★ Mariam Wallet Aboubakrine – University of Alberta
- ★ Nicole Redvers – University of Western Ontario
- ★ Stacy Bohlen – National Indian Health Board
- ★ Paul Stewart – The Lowitja Institute
- ★ Toni Lodge – NATIVE Project
- ★ Jackie Mercer – Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest
  - Myra Parker – University of Washington
- ★ Dave Panana – Indigenous Pact