



9 August 2017 – Indigenous peoples today [face even greater struggles](#) and rights violations than they did ten years ago. Racism, discrimination, and unequal access to basic services including healthcare and education are still common. Where statistical data is available, it shows clearly that they are left behind on all fronts, facing disproportionately higher levels of poverty, lower life expectancy and worse educational outcomes.



The theme of this year's [International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples](#), celebrated on 9 August, is the 10th Anniversary of the

[UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

. The Declaration is the most comprehensive international instrument on the rights of indigenous peoples. Over the last decade, the implementation of the Declaration has achieved some major successes at national, regional and international levels. However, we still have

[a long way to go](#)

before indigenous peoples have full enjoyment of their human rights as expressed in the Declaration, according to a joint

[statement](#)

by UN experts.

There are an estimated [370 million](#) indigenous people living across 90 countries. They speak the majority of the world's estimated 7,000 languages and represent 5,000 different cultures.

Indigenous people and the 2030 Agenda

In contrast to the Millennium Development Goals, in which indigenous peoples were largely left invisible, the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) include explicit consideration of indigenous peoples, with [six references](#) to

indigenous peoples in the 2030 Agenda, including

[Goal 2](#)

on agricultural output of indigenous small-scale farmers, and

[Goal 4](#)

on equal access to education for indigenous children. Notable minority indigenous populations in Europe include the Basque people of northern Spain and southern France and the the

[Sami](#)

, the indigenous people living across northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Kola Peninsula.

The Sami are included in the implementation of the Agenda 2030 through, for instance, Sami Parliaments that [participate](#) in the implementation and follow-up to the SDGs and that were [consulted](#)

in formulating the national voluntary reviews during the High Level Political Forum of 2017 at UN headquarters. However, land rights and language issues are still the top concerns of the Sami today. For example, Finland has still not ratified

[ILO Convention No. 169](#)

concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, which makes land rights

issue more challenging.

According to Anne Nuorgam, Expert of [UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues](#) and a member of the Sami Parliament of Finland, there is a constant challenge of collecting data in the Nordic countries: “When we look at the sustainable development goals, and then look at targets and then indicators to the targets, our challenge in the Nordic countries is the collection of data. Because in Nordic countries it’s not possible to collect data based on ethnicity. So unfortunately, there is very little data on the Sami people and our living conditions.”