



Young people: world shapers and leaders of the future

There are no better forecasters of resilience in the world than young people, who have been calling attention to critical sustainable development issues. They have become experts on adapting to an increasingly challenging global landscape, filled with images of conflicts, climate crisis impacts, and deepening inequalities. They experience the results of past unsustainable practices, facing present consequences and racing against the clock to curb a rising tide.

Yet we don't need to look far to see that young people are solving some of the biggest problems of our time. Their voices are calling for drastic climate action, spearheading the transition to a greener world. They are creating innovative solutions to overcome inequality, promote health access, improve social protection and the quality of work opportunities, as well as achieve food security. And they are advocating for their inclusion in decision-making, especially those who are underrepresented.

These perspectives will come together at the 2024 ECOSOC Youth Forum in New York, the largest UN gathering of young people, taking place from 16 to 18 April. Acting on the theme "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises:

the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions,” young people from around the world will share their vision for the future and a roadmap to achieve the ambitious targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They’ll also contribute their ideas and recommendations in preparation for the [Summit of the Future](#), to be held under the auspices of the UN General Assembly, in September 2024.

As advocates of today and champions of tomorrow, young people are striving to secure a more inclusive, just and sustainable future.

For more information: [2024 ECOSOC Youth Forum](#)



EXPERT VOICES



Urgent action needed to secure financing for our shared future

That the global community is seriously off track to achieve the global goals is nothing new. Neither is the fact that part of the reason lies in a lack of financing investments at the required scale. But what are the solutions? And what can we expect from the financing for

development events happening at the UN this month? To find out, we spoke with UN DESA’s Mariangela Parra-Lancourt.

This month, many events will be focusing on efforts to finance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Can you tell us what the status is when it comes to funding the SDGs?

“As we learned at last year’s SDG Summit, the world is severely off track on the SDGs. Based on current trajectories, we would be unlikely to achieve our global goals by mid-century, let alone 6 years from today. This is in good part because we have not invested in economic and societal transformation at nearly the required scale. Unfortunately, in the last few years, we have even moved backwards. Financing divides and gaps in the international financial architecture have severely constrained developing countries’ ability to withstand the global shocks we experienced since 2020. As a result, financing gaps have been growing rather than being closed. Today, financing gaps are estimated at \$4 trillion annually for developing countries.”

What is the role of the SDG Stimulus in helping to boost efforts and how are international actors responding to this plan?

“The SDG Stimulus is an ambitious plan to rapidly and significantly scale up long-term affordable financing for development. It calls for an additional \$500 billion annually to help close SDG financing gaps. World leaders welcomed the plan at last year’s SDG Summit, and there has been some real progress. The proposal is already reflected in countries’ priorities and commitments. Collectively, the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) have already taken steps that will provide an additional \$300-400 billion in financing over the next decade. But much more remains to be done.”

This year's *Financing for Sustainable Development Report* will be launched on 11 April. What can we expect from this edition; any new recommendations or solutions that can accelerate SDG progress?

"This year's report looks back all the way to 2002, when Member States first convened to discuss financing for development at the UN, adopting the historic [Monterrey Consensus](#). We have come a long way since then, with significant progress across financing policy areas. But of course, it is not enough. Today, enabling environments – both national and international – for financing transformations are clearly not in place.

The 2024 FSDR lays out a roadmap for all stakeholders to work toward enabling such change. It identifies a package of reforms to scale up of public and private investment in the SDGs and make the international financial architecture fit for purpose for today's world – and deliver it at the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4), which will take place in Spain at the end of June 2025. The launch on 11 April will be broadcast live via [UN Web TV](#) and readers will be able to access the report on [UN DESA's website](#)."

What can we anticipate from this year's ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum and the SDG Investment Fair? How can these events move the needle towards a better future for all?

"The 2024 ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum from 22-25 April is a key first step towards the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in 2025. It will offer UN Member States, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders the opportunity to share perspectives on how the international community can help update the existing set of international financial and monetary frameworks and rules, institutions and markets. These things need to reflect changes in the global economy and deliver enough financial resources for the countries that need them the most. Dynamic discussions will touch on all of the changes that need to happen to mobilize the financing necessary to achieve the SDGs and create a global financial system that benefits all countries.

On the margins of the Forum, the 9th edition of the SDG Investment Fair, which will take place on 23-25 April, will connect multiple countries and private investors to discuss concrete projects that significantly contribute to the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will feature substantive discussions on accelerating SDG investment, sovereign SDG bonds, investment in LLDCs and SIDS, as well as country investment presentations in sectors that support the energy, food systems, climate, and digitalization transition agenda."

For more information:

[Financing for Sustainable Development Reports](#)

[2024 ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development Follow-up](#)

[SDG Investment Fair](#)





3 things you need to know about this year's UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) is one of three UN bodies addressing Indigenous Peoples' issues, focusing on economic and social development, culture, education, environment, health, and human rights. It also works to ensure that the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is implemented and respected worldwide. Ahead of the Forum on 15-26 April, learn 3 things unique to this year's session:

1. The Forum is emphasizing Indigenous youth voices

The theme of this year's session revolves around enhancing Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination, with a special focus on the voices of Indigenous youth. This underscores their crucial role in safeguarding the conditions, capacities and values that present generations will bestow upon futures ones.

2. Investing in Indigenous Peoples is at the top of the agenda

Thematic discussions on **financing for Indigenous Peoples** will support their work championing biodiversity, climate action, and the protection of Mother Earth. The discussions will address the lack of direct financing towards Indigenous Peoples and the inability to track financing through intermediaries. It will also propose recommendations for changes and solutions to ensure that bilateral and multilateral funding can reach Indigenous Peoples directly.

3. We're commemorating a 10-year milestone

It has been 10 years since the landmark adoption of the outcome document of the **World Conference on Indigenous Peoples**. To honour this achievement, the Forum will adjourn during the afternoon of 17 April, allowing participants to attend a high-level event convened by the President of the UN General Assembly. This presents a valuable opportunity to reflect on progress made since the conference and reaffirm commitments to Indigenous Peoples' rights and well-being globally.

For more information: [UNPFII Twenty-third Session: 15-26 April 2024 | Division for Inclusive Social Development \(DISD\)](#)

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57th
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SDG BLOG



Dario José Mejía Montalvo, Chair
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Photo: UN DESA / Rebecca Rapp

A sustainable future must respect Indigenous Peoples' worldviews, ways of life and rights

By Dario José Mejía Montalvo, Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The recent sessions of the [United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues \(UNPFII\)](#) have addressed crucial issues and persistent and emerging challenges for the realization of Indigenous Peoples' rights. For example, during the 2022 session, amidst the pandemic, the main theme was "Indigenous Peoples, business, autonomy and the human rights principles of due diligence including free, prior and informed consent".

It was evident that many of the institutions and achievements obtained through decades of Indigenous Peoples' struggles have been weakened or set aside in favor of measures for economic recovery, often justified under the language of energy transition or to develop adaptation or mitigation measures against the effects of climate change. During the 2022 session, I presented a study on [Indigenous Peoples' rights in the context of the global energy matrix transition](#), where we identified several risks and made recommendations.

In an endeavor to delve deeper into these issues, the Permanent Forum opted to center the 2023 session around the theme "Indigenous Peoples, human health, planetary and territorial health, and climate change: a rights-based approach." During the session, the Permanent Forum heard insights from representatives from States, United Nations bodies and Indigenous Peoples from the seven socio-cultural regions of the world. A consensus emerged among participants, acknowledging that the solutions pursued by States to tackle the effects of climate change predominantly stem from market dynamics and models of resource extraction projects.

Furthermore, it was observed that these solutions often employ language closely aligned with environmental conservationism and other frameworks that are not inherently aligned with Indigenous Peoples' worldviews, ways of life, and rights. These strategies, largely semantic in nature – change of words and language – have inadvertently exacerbated the pre-existing vulnerabilities faced by Indigenous Peoples. This situation is exacerbated by the disproportionate impact of climate change on Indigenous Peoples, despite their minimal contribution to pollution or environmental degradation.

Taking note of these realities, the Permanent Forum recommended to ECOSOC the development of an international expert meeting on "Indigenous Peoples in a Greening Economy".

Simultaneously, to provide an opportunity to expand on the multiple statements of Indigenous Peoples that highlighted the increasing vulnerabilities to Indigenous Peoples' rights in the context of transitioning economies, particularly the right to self-determination, the Forum agreed that the 2024 session would address the theme "Enhancing Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination in the context of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: emphasizing the voices of Indigenous youth".

A brief reflection on this matter underscores that the recognition of Indigenous Peoples within international legal frameworks not only entails acknowledging their distinctiveness, but also involves recognizing them as collective rights holders; a category that adds to the categories of individual subjects and collective rights that had already been gradually incorporated.

The right to self-determination lies at the core of Indigenous Peoples' collective nature and is indispensable in safeguarding their present and future existence. For this reason, the Permanent Forum has given emphasis to the voices of Indigenous youth, because the right to self-determination is closely related to the conditions, capacities, and values that present generations will transmit to future ones.

In preparation for the Permanent Forum, we participated in the [International Expert Group Meeting on "Indigenous Peoples in a Greening Economy"](#). The event took place from January 23 to 25 at the University of Colorado, Boulder, USA.

Among several conclusions, I could highlight that it was reaffirmed that Indigenous Peoples from all regions of the world have their own perspectives on the economy. Consequently, terms like green economy, circular economy, nature-based solutions, or other expressions are actually adaptations of prevailing economic paradigms rooted in market-driven models. Thus, it's crucial to recognize that these terms do not belong to Indigenous Peoples and cannot be interpreted as their own views.

As a corollary of this conclusion, for example, the ways in which Indigenous Peoples relate to Mother Earth have enabled them to maintain diverse forms of life within their territories - which science calls biodiversity. Consequently, these ancestral knowledge systems represent one of humanity's primary assets in addressing the challenges posed by climate change. For this same reason, it cannot be interpreted that Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and ways of life are equivalent or can be attributed to the commitments and goals that States have agreed upon in climate and biodiversity conferences.

With this accumulation of reflections and concrete working experiences gleaned from engaging with diverse Indigenous Peoples around the world, there is no doubt that Indigenous Peoples not only have the right to be heard in global decision-making forums

discussing possible paths to address various challenges, including climate change and peace. They are also prepared and ready to contribute at levels of rigor and creativity commensurate with the task at hand.

Indigenous Peoples contribute to the purpose of caring for the various forms of life on the planet, yet States still face enormous challenges in recognizing the capacities and contributions of Indigenous Peoples, beyond mere declarations of goodwill. Rather than capitalizing on the potential represented by having Indigenous Peoples within their national borders, many governments refuse to recognize their right to self-determination, including the right to self-identification.

To hinder recognition of Indigenous Peoples, some governments argue a supposed intention to undermine sovereignty or territorial integrity. This argument does not correspond to reality and has already been overcome in international debate when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

As the upcoming session of the Permanent Forum draws near, we eagerly anticipate the valuable contributions that will be offered by various observers. Our foremost aspiration is for the dialogues to be marked by openness and humility, acknowledging the pressing challenges that demand attention. When Indigenous Peoples gather at the UN headquarters, they do so not only with the expectation of being heard, particularly given the constraints they often face in their own countries, but also with a sense of joy and purpose. They seek to honor the legacy passed down by their ancestors, aspiring to pave the way for their own and other culture's future generations to live in peace, prosperity, harmony, and balance with Mother Earth.

Each session presents an invaluable opportunity to review the meaning and purpose of the different actors. UN entities play a very important role in realizing human rights, regardless of the stances some States may occasionally take. Meanwhile, States can always find in UN forums, particularly during the Permanent Forum' session, an opportunity to review their own progress, engage in dialogue with others who have learned replicable lessons, and establish mechanisms for productive dialogue with Indigenous Peoples. All parties are aware that it is not about masking our realities but being creative in facing challenges from diversity.

As clearly stipulated in one of the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples establishes, States should not miss the opportunity to promote harmonious and cooperative relationships with Indigenous Peoples based on principles of justice, democracy, respect for human rights, non-discrimination, and good faith.

** The views expressed in this blog are the author's and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of UN DESA.*



SDG 4 IN NUMBERS



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84 MILLION CHILDREN
WILL BE OUT OF SCHOOL **BY 2030**

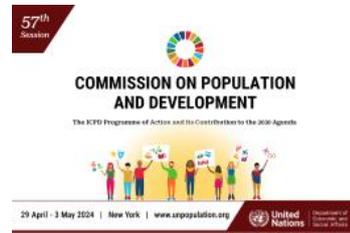


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