



New York City, NY, USA  
NY–A: 29 March–2 April 2026  
NY–B: 6–10 April 2026



# UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Background Guide 2026

Written by Anabel Kummer, Judith Beck, Nour Abd Eldayem, and Holiday O'Bryan



# NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS



# NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

THE WORLD'S LARGEST UNIVERSITY-LEVEL SIMULATION • SINCE 1927  
13570 Grove Dr., Suite 294 • Maple Grove, MN 55311  
www.nmun.org • info@nmun.org • 612.353.5649

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2026 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Your committee's work is facilitated by volunteer staffers. This year's committee staff are: Director Nour Abd Eldayem and Assistant Director Anabel Kummer (Conference A), and Director Holiday O'Bryan and Assistant Director Judith Beck (Conference B). Nour works as a Cybersecurity Consultant. She holds an M.Sc. in Advanced Cybersecurity from King's College London and a B.Sc. in Computer Science from the American University in Cairo. Anabel holds a master's degree in physics from the Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg and currently researches for her doctoral studies on the history of science and science diplomacy. Holiday is a first-year PhD student at the UT Austin Jackson School of Geosciences and holds a BA in Geology and Political Science from Macalester College. Judith holds a Bachelor's in Economics and Business from the University of Tübingen and pursues a Master's in General Management. She currently completes her exchange semester at Université Laval, Québec. The preparation of these materials was supported by Under-Secretaries-General Alliyah Edwards (Conference A) and Mariana G. Marañón Laguna (Conference B).

The topics on the agenda for this committee are:

1. Safeguarding Education in Conflict and Post-Disaster Contexts
2. Promoting Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the conference, each delegation should submit a Position Paper by 11:59 PM ET on 1 March 2026 in accordance with the guidelines in the [Position Paper Guide](#) and the [NMUN•NY Position Papers website](#).

Two resources, available to download from the NMUN website, serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions:

- The [NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide](#), which explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions.
- The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#), which includes the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory [NMUN Conduct Expectations](#) on the NMUN website. They include the conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. If you have any questions concerning your preparation for this committee, please contact the Deputy Secretaries-General at [dsg.ny@nmun.org](mailto:dsg.ny@nmun.org).

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Nour Abd Eldayem, Director  
Anabel Kummer, Assistant Director  
Conference A

Holiday O'Bryan, Director  
Judith Beck, Assistant Director  
Conference B



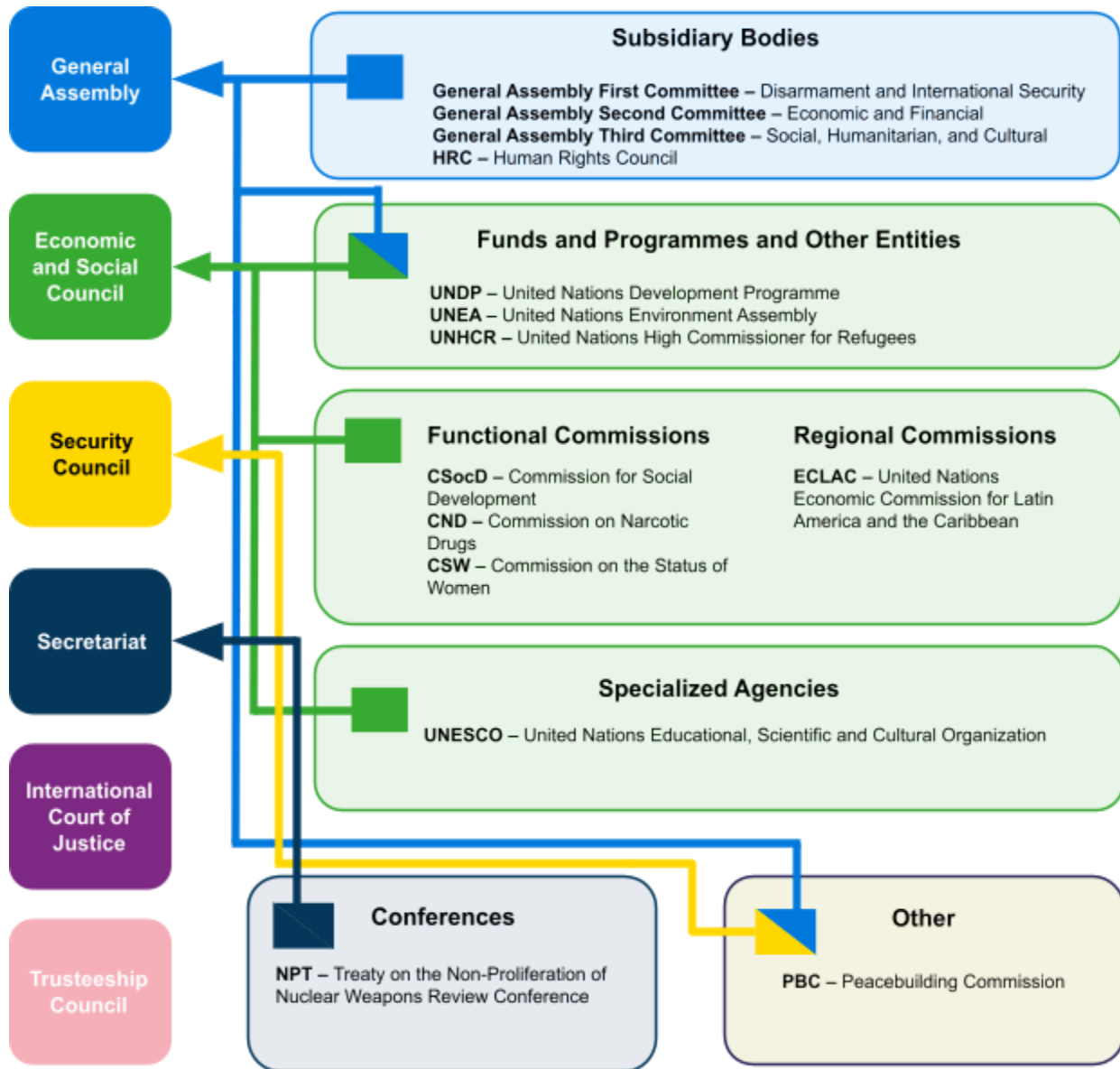
## Table of Contents

<b>United Nations System at NMUN·NY</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Committee Overview</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Introduction.....	2
Mandate, Functions, and Powers.....	2
Governance, Funding, and Structure.....	3
Bibliography.....	5
<b>1. Safeguarding Education in Conflict and Post-Disaster Contexts</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Introduction.....	7
International and Regional Framework.....	8
Role of the International System.....	11
The Role of Adult Education in Post-Crisis Recovery.....	13
Gender Responsiveness and Inclusive Education in Conflict and Post-Disaster Contexts.....	14
Conclusion.....	16
Further Research.....	17
Bibliography.....	18
<b>2. Promoting Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems</b> .....	<b>24</b>
Introduction.....	24
International and Regional Framework.....	25
Role of the International System.....	28
Preserving and Promoting the Use of LINKS.....	30
Combatting the Misappropriation of LINKS.....	32
Conclusion.....	34
Further Research.....	34
Bibliography.....	35



## United Nations System at NMUN•NY

This diagram illustrates the United Nations system simulated at NMUN•NY. It shows where each committee “sits” within the system to demonstrate the reportage and relationships between entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee’s position, purpose, and powers within the United Nations system.





## Committee Overview

### Introduction

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency that coordinates with the United Nations through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).<sup>1</sup> Although it is financially and structurally independent from the United Nations, UNESCO works closely with several United Nations entities to promote common goals, including peace and security, and social and economic development.<sup>2</sup> Per its mandate, UNESCO has coordinated and produced several international standards for the promotion of peace through collaboration in the fields of education, intercultural dialogue, and communication and information.<sup>3</sup> Among these are the *Convention Against Discrimination in Education* (1960), the *Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice* (1978), the *ICT Competency Framework for Teachers* (2018), the *Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education* (2019), and the *Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence* (2022).<sup>4</sup>

### Mandate, Functions, and Powers

UNESCO's mandate is derived from Article 1, paragraph 3 of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945), and is fully defined by the *UNESCO Constitution* (1945).<sup>5</sup> UNESCO is tasked to promote collaboration among Member States in the fields of education, science, and culture to develop and maintain peace, the rule of law, and mutual respect.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, UNESCO is responsible for coordinating and supporting the development of knowledge and culture for "economic stability, political security, and general well-being of the peoples of the world."<sup>7</sup> UNESCO plays a significant role in coordinating international conventions and setting standards in the areas of education, culture, and science.<sup>8</sup>

Whilst the following list is not exhaustive, the mandate of UNESCO can be summarized as:

- UNESCO **will generally**: make policy recommendations to other bodies and Member States in the fields within its mandate; hold international conferences to deliberate issues and set standards; provide expert research and consultation to the primary organs of the United Nations system and synergize its work with other United Nations bodies through ECOSOC; work with other entities and organizations to implement programs in matters related to education, science, culture, communication, and

---

<sup>1</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. *United Nations Handbook 2025-26*. 2025. p. 333.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Conference on International Organization. *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. art. 63.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Basic Texts: 2016 edition*. 2016.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO (ERI/2010/WS/2)*. 2010. p. 37; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence*. 2022; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Global Convention of Higher Education*. N.d.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Conference on International Organization. *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. Art. 1; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. 1945. p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. Art. V, Art. I, para. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Conference of Allied Ministers of Education. *Conference for the Establishment of UNESCO (ECO/CONF./29)*. 1945. p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Implementation of standard-setting instruments*. 2015.



information; maintain international standards and records of cultural, natural, and intangible heritage; provide support to Member States in protecting items of cultural significance, improving their education systems, and collaborating in scientific fields.<sup>9</sup>

- **UNESCO will not generally:** set norms and standards in fields other than education, science, and culture; demand action from Member States and other entities on policy development and implementation, typically encouraging and helping facilitate partnerships with organizations instead; request specific action from Member States and other entities on the promotion of access to education, cultural heritage, and scientific programs but instead provide frameworks and policy recommendations.<sup>10</sup>

Outlined in its *Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2029*, UNESCO further serves as: an international forum for ideas, innovation, and policy advice in education, science, culture, and communication and information; a global center for policy analysis, monitoring, benchmarking, and the development and analysis of data and statistics; a standard-setter that supports their implementation; a facilitator and catalyst for international and regional cooperation.<sup>11</sup> UNESCO also plays a significant strategic oversight role with respect to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (quality education) of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (Agenda 2030) (2015).<sup>12</sup>

### **Governance, Funding, and Structure**

UNESCO is a legally independent organization that entered a relationship with the United Nations in 1945.<sup>13</sup> UNESCO is governed by its own set of rules, including its organization structure, budget, and membership, being independent from the United Nations.<sup>14</sup> UNESCO currently has 194 Member States and 12 Associate Members.<sup>15</sup> Two major bodies, the General Conference and Executive Board, govern the work of UNESCO.<sup>16</sup>

The General Conference, consisting of all UNESCO Member States, meets every two years.<sup>17</sup> The General Conference is primarily responsible for: electing the 58 members of the Executive Board, who serve four-year terms; deliberating on and approving recommendations from the Executive Board; summoning international conferences; considering reports from Member States; and advising United Nations organizations on matters of education, science, and culture.<sup>18</sup> The General Conference may also establish special and technical committees, create subsidiary organs, and invite observers on the recommendation of the Executive Board.<sup>19</sup> Every two years, the Executive Board: prepares the biennial

---

<sup>9</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO (ERI/2010/WS/2)*. 2010. p. 32.

<sup>10</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO in brief*. N.d.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2029 (41 C/4)*. 2022.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Agreements with Specialized Agencies (A/RES/50(I))*. 1945.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Member States*. N.d.

<sup>16</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. *United Nations Handbook 2025-26*. 2025. p. 333.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. 1945. Arts. III-VI.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. Arts. III-VI.



agenda for, submits policy recommendations to, and implements decisions adopted by the General Conference; recommends the admission of new Members; nominates the Director-General; and reviews the budget.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, the Executive Board may advise the primary organs of the United Nations on issues relevant to its mandate, consult with representatives of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and independent experts, and request advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. 1945. Art. V; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Executive Board in Brief*. N.d.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. 1945. Art. V.



## Bibliography

Conference of Allied Ministers of Education. *Conference for the establishment of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ECO/CONF./29)*. 1945. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001176/117626e.pdf>

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. *United Nations Handbook 2025-26*. 2025. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Peace-Rights-and-Security/Our-work-with-the-UN/United-Nations-Handbook-2025-26.pdf>

United Nations Conference on International Organization. *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Executive Board in Brief*. N.d. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/executive-board/brief>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Global Convention of Higher Education*. N.d. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/education/higher-education/global-convention>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO in brief*. N.d. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/brief>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. 1945. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/constitution>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO (ERI/2010/WS/2)*. 2010. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001887/188700e.pdf>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Implementation of standard-setting instruments*. 2015. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000234055>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Basic Texts: 2016 edition*. 2016. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002439/243996e.pdf>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO moving forward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. 2017. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000247785>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Member States*. N.d. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/countries>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2029 (41 C/4)*. 2022. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000378083>



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence*. 2022. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381137>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO and Sustainable Development Goals*. 2022. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/sdgs>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO snapshots*. 2022. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381065/PDF/381065eng.pdf.multi>

United Nations, General Assembly. *Agreements with Specialized Agencies (A/RES/50(I))*. 1945. Retrieved 25 October 2025 from: [https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/50\(I\)](https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/50(I))



## 1. Safeguarding Education in Conflict and Post-Disaster Contexts

### Introduction

Conflict and disasters disrupt education systems and the communities they serve.<sup>22</sup> While disasters are defined as severe disruptions to communities or societies as a result of hazardous events, conflict in this context can refer to declared war, protracted armed confrontations, and civil unrest.<sup>23</sup> Both disasters and conflicts often lead to human, material, economic, and environmental losses and impacts.<sup>24</sup> While the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) does not formally recognize natural disasters, it defines hurricanes, earthquakes, or floods as natural hazards, which only become disasters when they impact vulnerable communities (those in high-risk areas or lacking preparedness measures).<sup>25</sup> Disaster and conflict cause similar outcomes and may damage school infrastructure, reduce teacher availability, harm mental and physical well-being, and exacerbate existing inequalities.<sup>26</sup> Disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies aim to prevent new disaster risks and to reduce existing risks, thereby contributing to resilience building and sustainable development.<sup>27</sup> Further, DRR in education seeks to strengthen response and recovery efforts directed towards education systems.<sup>28</sup> Crisis-sensitive education planning and DRR strategies can help to strengthen learner, teacher, and community resilience and ensure continuity of education.<sup>29</sup>

Education is a core part of a robust humanitarian response to conflict and disaster.<sup>30</sup> Education systems provide safety, psychosocial support, and access to food and healthcare in addition to learning spaces for children and adults.<sup>31</sup> These create structure and stability during and after a crisis, mitigating the physical and social effects of conflict.<sup>32</sup> Abilities developed in school, such as critical thinking and problem-solving skills, help both children and adults during times of crisis.<sup>33</sup> Specialized education on HIV/AIDS prevention, fire, water, and landmine safety, and peacebuilding offers life-saving information and a chance

---

<sup>22</sup> Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies. *EiE and Crisis-Sensitive Planning*. 2024.

<sup>23</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *The Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction*; International Armed Conflict. 2016; United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *The Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction*; Non-International Armed Conflict. 2008; United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *The Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction*; Civil Unrest. 2000; United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *The Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction*; Disaster. 2017.

<sup>24</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *The Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction*; Disaster. 2017.

<sup>25</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *No Natural Disasters*. N.d; World Health Organization. *Vulnerability and Vulnerable Populations; Community Disaster Risk Management*. N.d.

<sup>26</sup> Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies. *EiE and Crisis-Sensitive Planning*. 2024.

<sup>27</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *The Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction*; Disaster Risk Reduction. 2017.

<sup>28</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Office Bangkok and Regional Bureau for Education in Asia and the Pacific. *Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in education: an imperative for education policymakers*. 2011.

<sup>29</sup> Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies. *EiE and Crisis-Sensitive Planning*. 2024.

<sup>30</sup> Smith. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Education and Conflict*. 2011. p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* p. 1.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* p. 2.



to build disaster resilience.<sup>34</sup> Education can also promote political and social participation, active citizenship, and global awareness.<sup>35</sup> Per the Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies, 72 million children in crisis-affected Member States do not attend school, and an additional 127 million may attend school but never reach basic proficiency in reading and writing.<sup>36</sup> Further, according to the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), without access to education, children and adults are more vulnerable to future instability, poverty, and violence, and may lack the skills needed to contribute to resilience-building and redevelopment.<sup>37</sup> Investment in education systems is not only a humanitarian necessity, but a foundation for long-term peace and recovery.<sup>38</sup> Education empowers individuals to rebuild their lives and communities with agency and dignity.<sup>39</sup> Ensuring consistent and stable access to learning during times of crisis helps lay the groundwork for a more stable future.<sup>40</sup>

### **International and Regional Framework**

Education is recognized as a fundamental human right.<sup>41</sup> Education as a universal human right was codified in Article 26 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) and in Article 13 (I) of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (1966).<sup>42</sup> Both emphasize education's role in the development of the human personality, fostering respect for human rights, tolerance, and supporting the work of the United Nations in maintaining peace.<sup>43</sup> Education is a tool for breaking the cycle of poverty, reducing inequality, and achieving sustainable development.<sup>44</sup>

General Assembly resolution 64/290 (2010) on "The right to education in emergency situations" establishes an international framework for a safe and protective educational environment during conflict and in post-emergency situations.<sup>45</sup> This resolution guides Member States in aligning their policies with human rights obligations and calls on all Member States to criminalize attacks on schools by recognizing them as potential war crimes under international law.<sup>46</sup> It further highlights the need to ensure that education in emergency contexts addresses the gender-specific needs of girls, noting their heightened

---

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> Pillsbury. Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *Minimum educational standards for education in emergencies*. 2004. p. 1.

<sup>36</sup> Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies. *EiE and Crisis-Sensitive Planning*. 2024.

<sup>37</sup> Pillsbury. Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *Minimum educational standards for education in emergencies*. 2004. p. 1.

<sup>38</sup> Education Cannot Wait. *Delivering Quality Education to Children and Youth Left Furthest Behind In Crisis; A Case for Investment*. 2021. p. 2.

<sup>39</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Global citizenship and peace education*. N.d.

<sup>40</sup> Pillsbury, A. Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *Minimum educational standards for education in emergencies*. 2004. p. 1.

<sup>41</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217/A (XXVI))*. 1948.

<sup>42</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217/A (XXVI))*. 1948; United Nations, General Assembly. *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XIII))*. 1966.

<sup>43</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XIII))*. 1966.

<sup>44</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *The right to education*. N.d.

<sup>45</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *The right to education in emergency situations (A/RES/64/290)*. 2010. pp. 2-4.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. p. 2.



vulnerability to gender-based violence.<sup>47</sup> Safe education settings offer structured environments where girls are more likely to be protected.<sup>48</sup> The resolution further stresses the integration of disaster risk and safety measures into every stage of educational facility development by using the INEE Minimum Standards for Education.<sup>49</sup> Their purpose is to enhance the quality, accessibility, and accountability of education in crises by providing 19 standards with practical guidance for preparedness, response, and recovery across diverse emergency contexts.<sup>50</sup> For example, Standards 5, 8, and 9 emphasize the importance of trained teachers, safe and inclusive learning environments, and the protection and well-being of all learners and staff.<sup>51</sup>

The *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction* (Sendai Framework) (2015) promotes the integration of disaster risk reduction into education systems to make schools safer and more resilient in the face of conflict.<sup>52</sup> The Sendai Framework calls for strengthening educational infrastructure to ensure continued learning during and after disasters and to support the delivery of essential and life-saving services, including safe shelter, food, and non-food relief supplies.<sup>53</sup> The Framework further emphasizes the importance of protection systems, including early warning systems, for schools to build resilience and ensure sustainable recovery in post-disaster contexts for those disproportionately affected by disasters.<sup>54</sup> The Sendai Framework provides a practical framework that incorporates resilience within education systems, thereby linking education to disaster management and sustainable development.<sup>55</sup>

The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda) (2015) sets an action plan addressing education in conflict and post-disaster contexts.<sup>56</sup> With 251 million children out of school in 2024, displaying a decrease of 1% compared to 2015, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 (quality education) aims to achieve quality education by providing all with equal opportunities to receive quality and continued education.<sup>57</sup> In alignment with the principle of leaving no one behind, SDG 4 emphasizes the urgency of reaching crisis-affected populations, recognizing education as an immediate measure that offers life-saving knowledge, skills, and psychological support.<sup>58</sup> SDG 4 further advocates for flexible and adaptable learning pathways due to the disrupted and non-linear nature of education in emergency contexts.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, SDG 10 (reduced inequalities) and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions)

---

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. p. 4.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. p. 4.

<sup>49</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *The right to education in emergency situations (A/RES/64/290)*. 2010. p. 3; Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *INEE Minimum Standards*. 2024.

<sup>50</sup> Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *INEE Minimum Standards, 2024 Edition*. 2024.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*. 2015.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. p. 21.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. p. 11.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. p. 21.

<sup>56</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015. p. 17.

<sup>57</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015. p. 17; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Global Education Monitoring Report*. 2024. p. 6.

<sup>58</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *What you need to know about education in emergencies*. 2025. p. 17.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. p. 17.



highlight the importance of education in conflict and post-disaster settings.<sup>60</sup> SDG 10 aims to provide equal opportunities for all, irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, or other status.<sup>61</sup> In 2024, nearly 50,000 people lost their lives due to conflicts, underscoring the need to promote peaceful societies.<sup>62</sup> Advancing universal access to justice and strengthening effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels is essential to achieving sustainable development, in line with SDG 16.<sup>63</sup>

Security Council resolution 2601 (2021) on “Children and armed conflict” establishes an international framework for protecting education during armed conflicts and highlights the link between education and conflict.<sup>64</sup> In this resolution, the Security Council condemns attacks against schools and all civilians who are connected to schools, including students of all ages and teachers.<sup>65</sup> Further, the Security Council reaffirms the role of education in promoting peace and security in armed conflict and post-disaster contexts and underscores the importance of safeguarding access to education as a life-saving and stabilizing force for individuals, especially girls.<sup>66</sup> The resolution integrates education into the international peace and security agenda and reinforces its legally binding nature.<sup>67</sup>

Through its frameworks, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) promotes crisis-resilient education.<sup>68</sup> As the leading United Nations agency devoted to promoting and protecting education, UNESCO develops policy guidance, organizes and mobilizes international support, and promotes inclusive, quality education.<sup>69</sup> The *Convention against Discrimination in Education* (1960) highlights non-discrimination, equal opportunity, and inclusive education for all.<sup>70</sup> Further, UNESCO’s *Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development* (2023) serves as the only global standard-setting instrument that outlines how education can be leveraged to promote lasting peace and advance human development.<sup>71</sup> Additionally, UNESCO’s *Strategic Framework for Migration, Displacement, Emergencies and Education 2024-2029* (2024) aims to protect education during crises by bridging the humanitarian-development-peace nexus through immediate and long-term actions, including training teachers to ensure continuity of education during a crisis, establishing technology-based

---

<sup>60</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015. pp. 21, 25-26.

<sup>61</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015. p. 21; United Nations Office for Sustainable Development. *10 - Reduced Inequalities*. N.d.

<sup>62</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Goal 16*. N.d.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> United Nations, Security Council. *Children and armed conflict (S/RES/2601/(2021))*. 2021. pp. 3-4.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. pp. 3-4.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

<sup>67</sup> United Nations Conference on International Organization. *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945; United Nations, Security Council. *Children and armed conflict (S/RES/2601/(2021))*. 2021. pp. 3-4.

<sup>68</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *What you need to know about education in emergencies*. 2025.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Convention against Discrimination in Education*. 1960. p. 2.

<sup>71</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *The Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development*. 2023.



learning, and rehabilitating infrastructure.<sup>72</sup> Monitoring and evaluation includes gathering data from individual programs to ensure accountability and annual, mid-term, and final evaluations.<sup>73</sup>

### **Role of the International System**

UNESCO safeguards education by recognizing the growing frequency and severity of crises, and promoting safe, inclusive, and equitable education as a cornerstone of resilience during and after conflicts.<sup>74</sup> Since 1950, UNESCO has committed to the right to education in emergencies, having implemented 320 initiatives across 133 Member States, and reaching 42.5 million people in emergencies.<sup>75</sup> Such initiatives include enhancing digital access, delivering mental health and psychological support, strengthening data systems, monitoring infrastructure damage, and promoting crisis-sensitive planning to build resilient education systems.<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, UNESCO participates in global, regional, and national mechanisms to enhance efforts in education in emergencies.<sup>77</sup> These mechanisms include, among others, the INEE, the Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies, and the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack.<sup>78</sup> The Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies fosters collaboration among governments, humanitarian, development, and academic actors to promote transformative action, dialogue, and partnerships. It further mobilizes political and financial commitments to ensure safe, quality education for crisis-affected children and youth.<sup>79</sup> In 2024, the Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies placed education in emergencies within and beyond the humanitarian ecosystem, mobilizing key partners, bridging the research-policy-practice gap, and producing evidence-based reports to strengthen the protection of education.<sup>80</sup>

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other international actors often collaborate to safeguard education.<sup>81</sup> UNICEF plays a key role in coordinating education in emergencies and crises, working to ensure inclusive learning opportunities for all children, especially those out of school.<sup>82</sup> Efforts by UNICEF include facilitating catch-up classes, delivering non-formal education, providing learning materials, and training teachers to help children continue learning despite disruptions following crises and disasters.<sup>83</sup> Non-formal education, in contrast to formal education, refers to learning provided outside the formal institutions, for example through workshops, to support lifelong learning, expand access to education for all age groups, and offer responses to evolving educational needs.<sup>84</sup> For example, following the crisis in western Libya, UNICEF, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, supported displaced children through catch-up classes, non-formal education in shelters, distribution of learning materials, and

---

<sup>72</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Strategic Framework for Migration, Displacement, Emergencies and Education 2024-2029*. 2024. pp. 3, 17.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. p. 29.

<sup>74</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Education in emergencies*. N.d.

<sup>75</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *What you need to know about education in emergencies*. 2025.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Genève internationale. *Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies – EIE*. 2025.

<sup>80</sup> Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies. *Annual Progress Report 2024*. 2024. pp. 7, 9.

<sup>81</sup> United Nations Children's Fund. *Education in emergencies and crises*. 2016.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *Non-formal education*. N.d; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Non-formal education*. 2011; The Council of Europe. *Formal, non-formal and informal learning*. 2025.



teacher training to ensure access to education despite conflict-related disruptions.<sup>85</sup> Administered under UNICEF's regulations, Education Cannot Wait (ECW) supports learning through a global fund for the education of children and youth in emergencies and crises.<sup>86</sup> Since ECW was founded in 2015, it has reached 11.4 million children through context-specific assistance, including the delivery of learning materials and school feeding, and has mobilized a total of \$1.661 billion for its trust fund.<sup>87</sup> ECW serves as the United Nations' global fund dedicated to supporting Education in Emergencies and crises to ensure that children and youth have access to quality learning.<sup>88</sup> In 2025, ECW ensured lifesaving education programs in Burkina-Faso, Ethiopia, and Nigeria with \$3.05 million in funding from Japan.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, through coordinated efforts among United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, youth groups, donors, and the private sector, the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES) supports child rights and resilience in the education sector worldwide.<sup>90</sup> Members of the GADRRRES include, among others, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDRR, INEE, and ECW.<sup>91</sup> In 2016, the UNDRR Office in Northeast Asia created the School Safety Programme, focusing on a child-centered DRR in the Republic of Korea by using child-friendly and fun-oriented educational materials.<sup>92</sup>

Regional organizations play an essential role in safeguarding education in conflict and post-disaster contexts.<sup>93</sup> As outlined in Security Council resolution 2601 (2021), Member States should take measures to prevent attacks on schools and protect students, teachers, and education facilities during and after conflict on a national and domestic level.<sup>94</sup> Through its Policy Framework on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, the African Union (AU) aims to rebuild education systems in post-conflict settings to ensure access to education as a fundamental right, considering the high proportion of youth among combatants and the increasing number of street children in post-disaster settings.<sup>95</sup> The Safe School Initiative (ASSI), launched in 2012 in coordination with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and civil society, promotes a regional approach to school safety by aiming to build disaster resilience and ensure secure learning environments for students in South-East Asia.<sup>96</sup> The three pillars through which the ASSI aims to achieve its goals include safe learning facilities, disaster management, including an educational continuity plan, and risk reduction and resilience education, including teacher training.<sup>97</sup> The application of these pillars is evident at a school in Cambodia, where, since 2014, hazard mapping, safety initiatives, and small-scale infrastructure improvements have enhanced preparedness and safety awareness, fostering a culture of risk reduction within the school.<sup>98</sup> In Myanmar, the third pillar

---

<sup>85</sup> United Nations Children's Fund. *Education in emergencies and crises*. 2016.

<sup>86</sup> Education Cannot Wait. *Who we are*. N.d.

<sup>87</sup> Education Cannot Wait. *Main Results Dashboard*. 2024.

<sup>88</sup> Education Cannot Wait. *News & Stories*. 2025.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector. *Who we are*. N.d.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *What you need to know about the Comprehensive School Safety Framework 2022-2030*. N.d.

<sup>92</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *School safety programme*. N.d.

<sup>93</sup> African Union. *Policy framework on post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD)*. 2006; Association of Southeast Asian Nations. *ASEAN Safe School Initiative: A compilation of case studies*. 2016.

<sup>94</sup> United Nations, Security Council. *Children and armed conflict (S/RES/2601/(2021))*. 2021. pp. 3-4.

<sup>95</sup> African Union. *Policy framework on post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD)*. 2006. p. 25.

<sup>96</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations. *ASEAN Safe School Initiative: A compilation of case studies*. 2016. p. 2.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. p. 6.



was further applied as DRR materials reached over 10,000 teachers and helped integrate DRR into school curricula by 2016.<sup>99</sup>

### ***The Role of Adult Education in Post-Crisis Recovery***

Adult learners include marginalized populations, chiefly women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.<sup>100</sup> As of 2025, there are at least 754 million adults who cannot read or write, with vulnerable groups, such as women, older persons, and persons with disabilities, disproportionately affected, a situation often worsened by conflict and disaster.<sup>101</sup> Vulnerable groups must have equal access to general and vocational training, as this is essential for strengthening resilience during conflicts and disasters, promoting independence, and enabling participation in society.<sup>102</sup> While UNESCO's Global Reports on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE) highlight progress, they also emphasize the need for women's involvement in education and the need for adult education to be accessible and gender-responsive during and post-conflict.<sup>103</sup> The strategies used for adult education must be extended to marginalized groups and must be maintained during and after conflict.<sup>104</sup>

Adult learning and education (ALE) is fundamental for lifelong formal and non-formal learning, regardless of legal age, to acquire and strengthen skills for active participation in society.<sup>105</sup> ALE is an integral part of Education in Emergencies, as access to quality learning opportunities for adults is necessary during and after crises.<sup>106</sup> ALE supports personal, community, and societal development through sustained learning opportunities that adapt to evolving definitions of adulthood across cultures.<sup>107</sup> ALE must become a force that promotes lifelong reskilling and flexible learning in a rapidly changing world to help adults obtain livelihoods.<sup>108</sup> Adult education, especially non-formal education and literacy programs, is underfunded, with most Member States allocating less than 3% of their national education budget to it.<sup>109</sup> The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of ALE during crises and the growing likelihood of future

---

<sup>99</sup> Ibid. p. 30.

<sup>100</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *5th global report on adult learning and education: citizenship education: empowering adults for change*. 2022. pp. 4, 8; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *The right to lifelong learning: Why adult education matters*. 2023.

<sup>101</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *5th global report on adult learning and education: citizenship education: empowering adults for change*. 2022. pp. 4, 8; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *The right to lifelong learning: Why adult education matters*. 2023; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *What you need to know about literacy*. 2025.

<sup>102</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *5th global report on adult learning and education: citizenship education: empowering adults for change*. 2022. pp. 4, 8; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *The right to lifelong learning: Why adult education matters*. 2023.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education*. 2015. pp. 3, 6-7.

<sup>106</sup> Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *Education in Emergencies*. N.d.

<sup>107</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education*. 2015. pp. 3, 6-7.

<sup>108</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *5th global report on adult learning and education: citizenship education: empowering adults for change*. 2022. p. 6.

<sup>109</sup> Right to Education. *Adult education and learning*. 2014.



emergencies.<sup>110</sup> Consequently, there is an urgent need to recognize ALE as a public health and disaster preparedness tool.<sup>111</sup> By equipping adults with literacy, numeracy, and digital skills, ALE enables access to critical information and fosters civic engagement, which is essential for social resilience after crises.<sup>112</sup> UNESCO's Recommendation on ALE sets principles aiming to allow adults to participate in society and the workforce to contribute to work opportunities.<sup>113</sup> Additionally, UNESCO's GRALE monitors Member States' implementation of ALE commitments by providing data-driven policy analyses to demonstrate how ALE is advancing SDGs.<sup>114</sup>

Adult education contributes to broader recovery efforts.<sup>115</sup> ALE plays a vital role in supporting individuals and societies before, during, and after conflicts and disasters by contributing to prevention, resilience, and long-term recovery.<sup>116</sup> The integration of disaster preparedness and conflict resolution skills into ALE is essential for economic and social recovery, while also increasing access to information related to health, safety, and legal rights.<sup>117</sup> The *Fifth global report on adult learning and education (2022)* highlights the strong synergy between global citizenship and sustainable development, as many ALE programs focus on the full scope of sustainable development in their curricula, including climate change and biodiversity, and increasing disaster preparedness.<sup>118</sup> For instance, Romania implemented a school-based program for adult learners that integrates environmental knowledge, covering biodiversity, pollution, and sustainable resource use to promote sustainability and active global citizenship.<sup>119</sup> This program enhances disaster preparedness by fostering environmental literacy, promoting sustainable resource use, and empowering communities to reduce their vulnerability to natural hazards.<sup>120</sup>

### **Gender Responsiveness and Inclusive Education in Conflict and Post-Disaster Contexts**

Conflict and disasters exacerbate gender disparities.<sup>121</sup> According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, crises and disasters often intensify existing inequalities and place

---

<sup>110</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE)*. N.d.

<sup>111</sup> Lopes et al. *Adult learning and education as a tool to contain pandemics: The COVID-19 experience*. 2020. p. 1.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid. p. 1.

<sup>113</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education*. 2016. pp. 3-4.

<sup>114</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE)*. N.d.

<sup>115</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *5th global report on adult learning and education: citizenship education: empowering adults for change*. 2022; Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association. *Adult Learning and Education in Times of War and Conflict*. 2023.

<sup>116</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *5th global report on adult learning and education: citizenship education: empowering adults for change*. 2022. p. 5; Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association. *Adult Learning and Education in Times of War and Conflict*. 2023. p. 1.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *5th global report on adult learning and education: citizenship education: empowering adults for change*. 2022. p. 3.

<sup>119</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Fifth Global Report on adult learning and education*. 2022.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls*. N.d.



women and girls at heightened risk of discrimination and limited access to humanitarian assistance, including education.<sup>122</sup> Women and girls in crisis face an increased risk of being burdened with caregiving roles.<sup>123</sup> To combat this, the Educational Technology (EdTech) Hub, partnering, among others, with the INEE, the World Bank, and UNICEF, develops distance learning tools like radio learning or digital self-study materials to ensure continuity of education in cases of conflict or natural disaster.<sup>124</sup> Working with UNICEF in Bangladesh and Indonesia, EdTech improves numeracy and learning outcomes for marginalized learners, especially girls.<sup>125</sup>

Girls and women face increased barriers to education, both vocational and general.<sup>126</sup> While the correlation between education and gender equality is well established, as of 2025, 122 million girls are still out of school worldwide.<sup>127</sup> When families face economic hardship and costs are associated with sending children to school, parents often prioritize boys' education, while girls are disproportionately excluded due to barriers such as early marriage.<sup>128</sup> Girls living in conflict- and disaster-affected areas are almost three times more likely to be out of school compared to girls in stable environments.<sup>129</sup> Moreover, the absence of essential services in schools, such as food, hygiene products, and social support, increases their isolation.<sup>130</sup> In addition, girls living in crisis-affected areas face heightened risks of gender-based violence, making them more vulnerable to dropping out of school and being targeted in attacks on education.<sup>131</sup> Gender equality is crucial for education during and post-emergencies as a consequence of increased barriers to education during these situations.<sup>132</sup> To counter this, ECW empowers women and girls in crisis-affected Member States by promoting equity and gender equality, expanding access to education, and creating safe learning environments, having reached more than 364,000 girls globally.<sup>133</sup> UNESCO further emphasizes the need to integrate equality across all aspects of the education system, including access, content, context, outcomes, and opportunities, and, through its *Strategy for Gender Equality in and through Education (2019–2025)*, focuses on strengthening data availability and promoting gender-responsive teaching and learning practices.<sup>134</sup>

Female literacy and education levels are positively correlated with improved health outcomes and lower child mortality rates, as well as with disaster preparedness and recovery.<sup>135</sup> Women's education is a force

---

<sup>122</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls*. N.d.

<sup>123</sup> Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere. *Women and Girls in Emergencies*. 2018.

<sup>124</sup> Educational Technology Hub. *EdTech for Education in Emergencies*. 2025.

<sup>125</sup> Educational Technology Hub. *Girls' Education & Technology*. N.d.

<sup>126</sup> United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, Women Count, & United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2024*. 2024.

<sup>127</sup> United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, Women Count, & United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2024*. 2024; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, Women Count. *Fast facts: 30 years of uneven progress for adolescent girls*. 2025.

<sup>128</sup> Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere. *Women and Girls in Emergencies*. 2018.

<sup>129</sup> World Bank Group. *Girls' education in conflict is most at risk: Here's how to reach them*. 2024.

<sup>130</sup> Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere. *Women and Girls in Emergencies*. 2018.

<sup>131</sup> Education Cannot Wait. *Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls*. N.d.

<sup>132</sup> Education Cannot Wait. *If not now, when*. 2022.

<sup>133</sup> Education Cannot Wait. *Girls in Crisis – Orange the World*. 2018.

<sup>134</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Gender equality and education*. N.d.

<sup>135</sup> Kaffenberger et al. *Estimating the Impact of Women's Education on Fertility, Child Mortality, and Empowerment when Schooling Ain't Learning*. 2018. p. 1.



for improving health, with positive effects on child health and women's self-determination.<sup>136</sup> Mothers with more academic education tend to have higher child survival rates, indicating a causal link between maternal schooling and reduced child mortality.<sup>137</sup> Basic education, including formal and non-formal education that meet essential learning needs across all ages as outlined in the 1990 *World Declaration on Education for All*, has led to a reduction in child mortality by 68%.<sup>138</sup> It improves women's health knowledge and enables them to improve this knowledge beyond school, for example, through the ability to read medication labels.<sup>139</sup> Moreover, as women often are caretakers of households, their education is essential for disaster preparedness and navigating recovery expectations to make them agents of change during and after disasters.<sup>140</sup> Since 2015, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women has strengthened gender-responsive disaster risk reduction and resilience across 51 countries, reaching over 778 million people, by working with national governments, 1,407 women's organizations, and 50 United Nations entities to expand women's access to early warning systems, resilient infrastructure, services, and livelihoods.<sup>141</sup> For example, in 2020, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women supported the Women leaders and defenders from Chocó: Humanitarian Agents and Cartographers project in Colombia, which empowers women through capacity-building to lead disaster risk management and resilience-building efforts in post-crisis contexts.<sup>142</sup>

## Conclusion

Education must be safeguarded during times of crisis to ensure long-term stability, health, and safety for affected communities.<sup>143</sup> Education in emergency and post-crisis contexts is not only a fundamental human right but also a stabilizing mechanism for individuals and communities.<sup>144</sup> International and regional frameworks like the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the Sendai Framework, and the SDGs establish education as both a protective measure and a pathway to long-term recovery.<sup>145</sup> UNESCO and UNICEF, along with regional bodies such as the AU and ASEAN, demonstrate that safeguarding and rebuilding education systems requires coordinated, inclusive, and gender-responsive

---

<sup>136</sup> Ibid. p. 1.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid. p. 6.

<sup>138</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Basic Education*. N.d; Kaffenberger et al. *Estimating the Impact of Women's Education on Fertility, Child Mortality, and Empowerment when Schooling Ain't Learning*. 2018. p. 1.

<sup>139</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Basic Education*. N.d; Kaffenberger et al. *Estimating the Impact of Women's Education on Fertility, Child Mortality, and Empowerment when Schooling Ain't Learning*. 2018. p. 12.

<sup>140</sup> Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery. *Disaster Recovery Guidance Series - Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Disaster Recovery*. N.d.

<sup>141</sup> United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Report for the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster and Risk Reduction (2015-2030)*. 2022. p. 5.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

<sup>143</sup> Smith. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Education and Conflict*. 2011. p. 1.

<sup>144</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Office Bangkok and Regional Bureau for Education in Asia and the Pacific. *Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in education: an imperative for education policymakers*. 2011.

<sup>145</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217/A (XXVI))*. 1948; United Nations, General Assembly. *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*. 2015; United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.



efforts.<sup>146</sup> Addressing the needs of marginalized populations, including women, girls, and adult learners, is essential to achieve resilience and equity.<sup>147</sup> As global crises intensify in frequency and scale, education must be prioritized not only as a tool for survival but as a cornerstone of peacebuilding, sustainable development, and human dignity.<sup>148</sup>

### **Further Research**

As delegates continue their research and explore ways to address this topic, they may consider the following: To what extent has the fundamental right to education been realized globally? What role might education play in resolving politically-motivated conflicts? What funding opportunities are available to Member States during times of crisis? What role do cultural expectations concerning family and education play during times of crisis? How might extended conflict change or influence the role of UNESCO in promoting and protecting education? How might digital or remote learning solutions enhance access to education? What digital or remote learning solutions are available to conflict-affected communities? How can these solutions be made cost-effective and accessible to most communities?

---

<sup>146</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund. *Education in emergencies and crises*. 2016.

<sup>147</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls*. N.d; Right to Education. *Adult Education and Learning*. 2023.

<sup>148</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Gender equality and education*. N.d.



## Bibliography

African Union. *Policy framework on post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD)*. Peace and Security Department. 2006. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from:

<https://peaceau.org/uploads/pcrd-policy-framwovork-eng.pdf>

Association of Southeast Asian Nations. *ASEAN Safe School Initiative: A compilation of case studies*. 2016. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from:

[https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/asean\\_safe\\_schools\\_initiative\\_compilation\\_of\\_case\\_studies.pdf](https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/asean_safe_schools_initiative_compilation_of_case_studies.pdf)

Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere. *Women and Girls in Emergencies*. 2018. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from:

[https://care.at/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/CARE\\_Women-and-girls-in-emergencies\\_2018.pdf](https://care.at/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/CARE_Women-and-girls-in-emergencies_2018.pdf)

Education Cannot Wait. *Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls*. N.d. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from:

<https://educationcannotwait.org/our-investments/focus-areas/gender-equality-and-empowerment-women-and-girls>

Education Cannot Wait. *Who we are*. N.d. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from:

<https://educationcannotwait.org/about-us/who-we-are>

Education Cannot Wait. *Girls in Crisis – Orange the World*. 2018. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from:

<https://educationcannotwait.org/news-stories/featured-content/girls-in-crisis-orange-the-world>

Education Cannot Wait. *Delivering Quality Education to Children and Youth Left Furthest Behind In Crisis; A Case for Investment*. 2021. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from:

[https://www.educationcannotwait.org/cfi/images/ECW2021CFI\\_web.pdf](https://www.educationcannotwait.org/cfi/images/ECW2021CFI_web.pdf)

Education Cannot Wait. *If not now, when*. 2022. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from:

<https://educationcannotwait.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/ecwempowerher.pdf>

Education Cannot Wait. *Main Results Dashboard*. 2024. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from:

<https://educationcannotwait.org/impact-results/main-results-dashboard>

Education Cannot Wait. *News & Stories*. 2025. Retrieved 4 September 2025 from:

<https://www.educationcannotwait.org/news-stories>

Educational Technology Hub. *Girls' Education & Technology*. N.d. Retrieved 10 October 2025 from:

<https://edtechhub.org/our-topic-areas/girls-and-tech>

Educational Technology Hub. *EdTech for Education in Emergencies*. 2025. Retrieved 6 September 2025 from:

<https://edtechhub.org/our-topic-areas/edtech-for-emergencies>



Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies. *Annual Progress Report 2024*. 2024. Retrieved 4 September 2025 from:

<https://eiehub.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/EiE-Hub-2024-Annual-Progress-Report-LowRes.pdf>

Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies. *EiE and Crisis-Sensitive Planning*. 2024. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://eiehub.org/education-in-emergencies-and-crisis-sensitive-planning>

Genève internationale. *Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies – EiE*. 2025. Retrieved 4 September 2025 from:

<https://www.geneve-int.ch/whoswho/geneva-global-hub-education-emergencies-eie>

Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector. *Who we are*. N.d. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://gadrrres.net/what-is-gadrrres/who-we-are>

Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery. *Disaster Recovery Guidance Series - Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Disaster Recovery*. N.d. Retrieved 2 August 2025 from:

<https://gfdrr.org/sites/default/files/publication/gender-equality-disaster-recovery.PDF>

Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association. *Adult Learning and Education in Times of War and Conflict*. 2023. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from:

[https://dvv-international.de/fileadmin/files/Inhalte\\_Bilder\\_und\\_Dokumente/Materialien/Fach-\\_und\\_Positionspapiere/DVV\\_International\\_expert\\_paper\\_ALE\\_in\\_times\\_of\\_war\\_and\\_conflict.pdf](https://dvv-international.de/fileadmin/files/Inhalte_Bilder_und_Dokumente/Materialien/Fach-_und_Positionspapiere/DVV_International_expert_paper_ALE_in_times_of_war_and_conflict.pdf)

Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *Education in Emergencies*. N.d. Retrieved 6 September 2025 from: <https://inee.org/education-in-emergencies>

Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *Non-formal education*. N.d. Retrieved 4 September 2025 from: <https://inee.org/eie-glossary/non-formal-education>

Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *INEE Minimum Standards, 2024 Edition*. 2024. Retrieved 10 October 2025 from: <https://inee.org/minimum-standards>

Kaffenberger et al. *Estimating the Impact of Women's Education on Fertility, Child Mortality, and Empowerment when Schooling Ain't Learning*. 2018. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from:

<https://riseprogramme.org/sites/default/files/publications/Kaffenberger.pdf>

Lopes et al. *Adult learning and education as a tool to contain pandemics: The COVID-19 experience*. 2020. Retrieved 6 September 2025 from: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7302500>

Pillsbury. Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *Minimum educational standards for education in emergencies*. 2004. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from:

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000146618>

Right to Education. *Adult education and learning*. 2014. Retrieved 4 September 2025 from:

<https://www.right-to-education.org/issue-page/th-mes/adult-education-and-learning>



Smith. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Education and Conflict*. 2011.

Retrieved 1 August 2025 from:

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000191338?posInSet=1&queryId=ee1b7b65-f342-4f50-aff3-2e599aa22f06>

The Council of Europe. *Formal, non-formal and informal learning*. 2025. Retrieved 2 September 2025

from: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/lang-migrants/formal-non-formal-and-informal-learning>

United Nations Children's Fund. *Education in emergencies and crises*. 2016. Retrieved 31 June 2025

from: <https://unicef.org/mena/education-emergencies-and-crisis>

United Nations Conference on International Organization. *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. Retrieved

20 October 2025 from: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text>

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Goal 16*. N.d. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from:

<https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Basic Education*. N.d. Retrieved 5

September 2025 from: <https://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/basic-education>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Education in Emergencies*. N.d.

Retrieved 31 June 2025 from: <https://unesco.org/en/emergencies/education>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Gender equality and education*. N.d.

Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://unesco.org/en/gender-equality/education>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Global citizenship and peace education*.

N.d. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/global-citizenship-peace-education>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE)*. N.d. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from:

<https://uil.unesco.org/en/adult-education/global-report-gral>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *The right to education*. N.d. Retrieved 3

September 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/right-education>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *What you need to know about the Comprehensive School Safety Framework 2022-2030*. N.d. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from:

<https://unesco.org/en/articles/what-you-need-know-about-comprehensive-school-safety-framework-2022-2030>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Convention against Discrimination in Education*. 1960. Retrieved 25 June 2025 from:

<https://unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-against-discrimination-education>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Non-formal education*. 2011. Retrieved 3

September 2025 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000028920>



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education*. 2016. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000245179>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Fifth global report on adult learning and education*. 2022. Retrieved 5 September 2025 from: <https://www.uil.unesco.org/en/grale5>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *5th global report on adult learning and education: citizenship education: empowering adults for change*. 2022. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381669>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *The Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development*. 2023. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from: <https://unesco.org/en/articles/what-you-need-know-about-unescos-recommendation-education-peace-human-rights-and-sustainable?hub=87862>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *The right to lifelong learning: Why adult education matters*. 2023. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://unesco.org/en/articles/right-lifelong-learning-why-adult-education-matters>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Global Education Monitoring Report*. 2024. Retrieved 3 September 2025 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000391406>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Strategic Framework for Migration, Displacement, Emergencies and Education 2024-2029*. 2024. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000390649>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *What you need to know about education in emergencies*. 2025. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from: <https://unesco.org/en/emergencies/education/need-know?hub=84615>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *What you need to know about literacy*. 2025. Retrieved 4 September 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/literacy/need-know>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in education: an imperative for education policymakers*. 2011. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000213925>

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Report for the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster and Risk Reduction (2015-2030)*. 2022. Retrieved 6 September 2025 from: [https://wrd.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/MTRprocess-UN\\_Women\\_report\\_V4.pdf](https://wrd.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/MTRprocess-UN_Women_report_V4.pdf)

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, Women Count. *Fast facts: 30 years of uneven progress for adolescent girls*. 2025. Retrieved 5 September from:



<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2025/03/fast-facts-30-years-of-uneven-progress-for-adolescent-girls>

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, Women Count, & United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2024*. 2024. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2024-en.pdf>

United Nations, General Assembly. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217/A (XXVI))*. 1948. Retrieved 25 June 2025 from: <http://un.org/en/documents/udhr>

United Nations, General Assembly. *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XIII))*. 1966. Retrieved 23 June 2025 from: [http://undocs.org/en/A/RES/2200\(XXI\)](http://undocs.org/en/A/RES/2200(XXI))

United Nations, General Assembly. *The right to education in emergency situations (A/RES/64/290)*. 2010. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/64/290>

United Nations, General Assembly. *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*. 2015. Retrieved 30 June 2025 from: <http://undocs.org/en/A/RES/69/283>

United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015. Retrieved 23 June 2025 from: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/70/1>

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls*. N.d. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from: <https://unocha.org/gender-equality-and-empowerment-women-and-girls>

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *No Natural Disasters*. N.d. Retrieved 5 September 2025 from: <https://www.undrr.org/our-impact/campaigns/no-natural-disasters>

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *School safety programme*. N.d. Retrieved 4 September 2025 from: <https://www.undrr.org/about-undrr/where-we-work/incheon/schoolsafety>

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *The Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction; Non-International Armed Conflict*. 2008. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://www.undrr.org/understanding-disaster-risk/terminology/hips/so0002>

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *The Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction; Civil Unrest*. 2000. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://www.undrr.org/understanding-disaster-risk/terminology/hips/so0003>

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *The Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction; International Armed Conflict*. 2016. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://www.undrr.org/understanding-disaster-risk/terminology/hips/so0001>



United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *The Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction; Disaster*. 2017. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://www.undrr.org/terminology/disaster>

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *The Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction; Disaster Risk Reduction*. 2017. Retrieved 1 August 2025 from: <https://www.undrr.org/terminology/disaster-risk-reduction>

United Nations Office for Sustainable Development. *10 - Reduced Inequalities*. N.d. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from: <https://globalgoals.org/goals/10-reduced-inequalities>

United Nations, Security Council. *Children and armed conflict (S/RES/2601/(2021))*. 2021. Retrieved 30 June 2025 from: [https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2601\(2021\)](https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2601(2021))

World Bank Group. *Girls' education in conflict is most at risk: Here's how to reach them*. 2024. Retrieved 31 June 2025 from: <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/education/girls-education-conflict-most-risk-heres-how-reach-them>

World Health Organization. *Vulnerability and Vulnerable Populations; Community Disaster Risk Management*. N.d. Retrieved 10 October 2025 from: <https://wkc.who.int/our-work/health-emergencies/knowledge-hub/community-disaster-risk-management/vulnerability-and-vulnerable-populations>



## 2. Promoting Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems

### Introduction

Local and Indigenous knowledge systems (LINKS) play a key role in the achievement of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda) (2015).<sup>149</sup> With centuries of experience and compounded knowledge on nature and natural resources, Indigenous groups have developed LINKS, which refer to practices and skills that promote environmental sustainability and community welfare.<sup>150</sup> Although there is no official United Nations definition for Indigenous people, the term commonly refers to groups that self-identify as Indigenous Peoples, have predated colonial and settler societies, have distinct political, social, and economic systems, practice distinct cultures and languages, represent non-dominant groups in a society, and are committed to preserving their ancestral environments.<sup>151</sup> A related term to LINKS is traditional knowledge, which, according to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) refers to “the knowledge, innovations and practices of Indigenous Peoples.”<sup>152</sup> The importance of LINKS has been championed by the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which established the LINKS Programme in 2002 as an intersectoral initiative that aims to provide a platform for knowledge cooperation and exchange that promotes the use of local and Indigenous knowledge within scientific and environmental policy processes.<sup>153</sup>

There are multiple positive examples of how LINKS have promoted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) over the years.<sup>154</sup> Traditional food systems have taken a holistic approach to food production, which promotes both the preservation of biodiversity and cultural heritage in line with SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), SDG 13 (climate action), and SDG 15 (life on land), specifically in regard to developing agricultural methods to sustainably use and restore terrestrial lands to halt desertification, land degradation, and overall combat climate change and its impacts.<sup>155</sup> Traditional knowledge also offers techniques for controlling wildfires and conserving biodiversity that both protect culture and promote sustainable practices, such as the use of slow-burning to prevent large-scale wildfires and predicting cyclical changes in populations of endangered species to protect them from extinction.<sup>156</sup>

Although Indigenous practices offer significant contributions to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, many Indigenous groups are marginalized, even though they are disproportionately affected by climate change and biodiversity loss.<sup>157</sup> Indigenous populations represent only 6.2% of the global population, and

---

<sup>149</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015; ICCA Consortium. *Territories of Life: 2021 Report*. 2021.

<sup>150</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS): Mission*. 2024; SDG Research Centre. *Indigenous Knowledge*. 2025.

<sup>151</sup> United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. *Who are Indigenous Peoples?*. 2015.

<sup>152</sup> United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. *Traditional Knowledge Backgrounder*. 2019.

<sup>153</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Traditional knowledge - an answer to the most pressing global problems?*. 2019.

<sup>154</sup> United Nations Environment Programme. *Tapping into Indigenous knowledge to protect nature*. 2022.

<sup>155</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. *Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems*. 2025; SDG Research Centre. *Indigenous Knowledge*. 2025.

<sup>156</sup> United Nations Environment Programme. *Tapping into Indigenous knowledge to protect nature*. 2022.

<sup>157</sup> United Nations Environment Programme. *Indigenous Peoples and the nature they protect*. 2020.



yet they collectively manage around 21% of the global land mass.<sup>158</sup> This accounts for 40% of all ecologically intact landscapes.<sup>159</sup> Nevertheless, Indigenous groups are often excluded from consequential conversations on climate action and decision-making processes due to marginalization and disregard for Indigenous rights.<sup>160</sup>

Further, LINKS are at risk of loss and misappropriation even though the safeguarding of traditional knowledge is enshrined in many international legal instruments.<sup>161</sup> Many modern scientific and pharmaceutical advancements are based on ancestral practices; however, the Indigenous groups that developed these practices are often not compensated or recognized for their contributions.<sup>162</sup> Companies often leverage traditional knowledge at the expense of Indigenous groups, including loss and exploitation of Indigenous lands and the loss of access to natural resources they rely on.<sup>163</sup> Another threat affecting the preservation of Indigenous knowledge is loss of language: loss of traditional knowledge is tightly coupled to the loss of Indigenous languages and cultures, which continues to be an ongoing issue globally.<sup>164</sup> In light of the varied challenges threatening LINKS, including misuse and misappropriation, and to harness the power of Indigenous knowledge for the achievement of sustainable development, UNESCO and the international community continue to collaborate to further promote and protect LINKS globally.<sup>165</sup>

### ***International and Regional Framework***

The rights of local and Indigenous communities over their LINKS are anchored in several key international declarations, including the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948) and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) (2007).<sup>166</sup> While UDHR establishes the fundamentals of human rights, including Indigenous rights, UNDRIP specifically highlights aspects of Indigenous life largely unaddressed in UDHR.<sup>167</sup> For example, UNDRIP recognizes Indigenous communities' collective intellectual property rights over traditional resources and cultural heritage.<sup>168</sup>

---

<sup>158</sup> United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Indigenous Peoples*. N.d.; ICCA Consortium. *Territories of Life: 2021 Report*. 2021. p. 11.

<sup>159</sup> United Nations Environment Programme. *Tapping into Indigenous knowledge to protect nature*. 2022.

<sup>160</sup> United Nations Development Programme. *Indigenous knowledge is crucial in the fight against climate change - here's why*. 2024.

<sup>161</sup> United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. *Traditional Knowledge Backgrounder*. 2019.

<sup>162</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Traditional knowledge - an answer to the most pressing global problems?*. 2019.

<sup>163</sup> Lowe et al. *Indigenous washing: the exploitation of Indigenous people by the pharmaceutical industry*. 2022; United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Indigenous Peoples' Territories, Resources Still Being Seized, Exploited, Despite International Standards Guaranteeing Their Rights, Speakers Tell Permanent Forum*. 2022.

<sup>164</sup> United Nations, Department of Global Communications. 'Preserve, revitalize and promote' Indigenous languages, or lose a 'wealth of traditional knowledge', UN chief says. 2019; United Nations Trade and Development. *Ongoing Loss Of Traditional Knowledge Calls For Urgent Action, Says Unctad*. 2004.

<sup>165</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples*. 2018. pp. 7-10; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS)*. 2025.

<sup>166</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*. 1948; United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*. 2007. pp. 1-11.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*. 2007. p. 9.



Further, UNDRIP grants the right to maintain, control, protect, and develop LINKS, including the right to mandate free prior and informed consent before Member States may adopt any measures affecting Indigenous knowledge or resources.<sup>169</sup>

Several international United Nations frameworks highlight the significant role local and Indigenous communities play in issues such as protecting biological diversity and advancing climate action.<sup>170</sup> Recognizing LINKS as crucial for climate mitigation, the 1992 *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) aims to integrate Indigenous perspectives into national and international climate policies by establishing platforms such as the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) to achieve SDG 13.<sup>171</sup> Prior to UNDRIP, UNESCO's *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights* (2005) established ethical principles to protect cultural diversity, traditional knowledge, and the rights of Indigenous Peoples in the context of science, health, and technology.<sup>172</sup> In 2016, the United Nations Environment Programme adopted the *Convention on Biological Diversity* (CBD) to acknowledge LINKS as crucial to the protection of global biodiversity and thereby requiring its preservation.<sup>173</sup> Building on the momentum from the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, the *System-wide Action Plan (SWAP) on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2017) embeds the promotion of LINKS in every level of United Nations operations, from policy to implementation, by supporting the application of UNDRIP in United Nations programs and beyond.<sup>174</sup>

A key aspect of promoting LINKS and recognizing Indigenous rights is ensuring that LINKS are preserved as legal assets and protected as intellectual property.<sup>175</sup> As a supplementary agreement to the CBD, the 2011 *Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from the Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity* (Nagoya Protocol) acts as one of the strongest international legal mechanisms protecting LINKS.<sup>176</sup> The protocol recognizes LINKS as legal assets and mandates that benefits derived from LINKS by institutions, financial or otherwise, be shared

---

<sup>169</sup> Ibid. pp. 5-6, 8-9.

<sup>170</sup> United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. 1992. pp. 1-18; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights*. 2005; Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Biodiversity. *Convention of Biological Diversity*. 2011. pp. 2-30; United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *System-wide action plan (SWAP) on the rights of Indigenous Peoples*. 2017. p. 10.

<sup>171</sup> United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. 1992. pp. 1-18.

<sup>172</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights*. 2005.

<sup>173</sup> Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Biodiversity. *Convention of Biological Diversity*. 2011. pp. 2, 8, 13-14.

<sup>174</sup> United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *The World Conference on Indigenous Peoples*. 2014; United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *System-wide action plan (SWAP) on the rights of Indigenous Peoples*. 2017. p. 32.

<sup>175</sup> Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Biodiversity. *Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from the Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity*. 2011. p. 7; Indigenous Environmental Network. *Ethical Protocol for the Protection and Use of Traditional Indigenous Systems*. 2024. pp. 3-4; World Intellectual Property Organization. *WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge*. 2024. pp. 2-7.

<sup>176</sup> Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Biodiversity. *Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from the Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity*. 2011. p. 7.



with the local and Indigenous communities.<sup>177</sup> The *Ethical Protocol for the Protection and Use of Traditional Indigenous Knowledge Systems* (2023) was newly adopted through a collaborative effort between Indigenous communities and policymakers, establishing guidelines for the protection and use of LINKS in research and policy contexts.<sup>178</sup> By emphasizing ownership, informed consent, and benefit-sharing, the protocol ensures Indigenous voices remain central in decisions about the use of their LINKS.<sup>179</sup> The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) adopted the *WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge* (2024), which marks a major step forward in protecting LINKS within the global intellectual property system.<sup>180</sup> As the Treaty requires a mandatory patent disclosure, the Treaty closes a gap in international property rights set out by the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol by obliging applicants to indicate any sourced traditional knowledge.<sup>181</sup>

Apart from international frameworks, regional initiatives further promote LINKS and complement global efforts as they adapt international standards to regional contexts.<sup>182</sup> The *Asian Framework on Indigenous Knowledge and Data Sovereignty* (2023) affirms Indigenous Peoples' rights to govern their LINKS in accordance with their own customs and values.<sup>183</sup> However, while it reinforces community governance over LINKS, the framework fails to adopt regional practices and broader international standards.<sup>184</sup> In Latin America and the Caribbean, the 2018 *Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean* strengthens Indigenous environmental governance and knowledge-based activism in the region.<sup>185</sup> The *African Model Legislation for the Protection of the Rights of Local Communities, Farmers and Breeders, and for the Regulation of Access to Biological Resources* (2000) was drafted to recognize and protect LINKS regarding biodiversity, agriculture, and seed systems, while encouraging farmers' rights to use and sell seeds based on traditional practices.<sup>186</sup> Although the law did not take its desired effect due to its non-binding nature, conflicts with national policies, and resulting limited political support, it has inspired the adoption of multiple national legislations that include aspects on farmers' rights, recognition, and

---

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Indigenous Environmental Network. *Ethical Protocol for the Protection and Use of Traditional Indigenous Systems*. 2024. pp. 1-4.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> World Intellectual Property Organization. *WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge*. 2024. pp. 2-7.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid. pp. 2-10.

<sup>182</sup> Council of Europe. *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*. 1995. pp. 2-8; Organization of African Unity. *African Model Legislation for the Protection of the Rights of Local Communities, Farmers and Breeders, and for the Regulation of Access to Biological Resources*. 2000. pp. 2-25; Organization of American States. *American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. 2016. p. 44; United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. *Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean*. 2018. pp. 12, 20.

<sup>183</sup> Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact. *Asian Framework on Indigenous Knowledge and Data Sovereignty*. 2023. pp. 1-4.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid. pp. 4-10.

<sup>185</sup> United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. *Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean*. 2018. pp. 12, 20.

<sup>186</sup> Organization of African Unity. *African Model Legislation for the Protection of the Rights of Local Communities, Farmers and Breeders, and for the Regulation of Access to Biological Resources*. 2000. pp. 11, 13.



benefit-sharing.<sup>187</sup> In the polar region, the Arctic Council's *Ottawa Traditional Knowledge Principles* (2015) promotes LINKS by recognizing Indigenous knowledge as intellectual property and requiring its inclusion at all stages of Council work.<sup>188</sup>

### **Role of the International System**

By adopting multiple key resolutions on the promotion and preservation of LINKS, the General Assembly serves as one of the most prominent international actors on the intersection of LINKS with sustainable development, human rights, and cultural preservation.<sup>189</sup> General Assembly resolution 78/161 on "Culture and sustainable development" (2023) constitutes a paradigm shift by recognizing LINKS not only as enabling but also as actively driving sustainable development across social, economic, and environmental dimensions.<sup>190</sup> General Assembly resolution 79/159 on "Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (2024) lays the groundwork for Indigenous rights' global recognition, strengthens institutional support within the United Nations framework, and expands the mandate of the Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples, which supports the participation of Indigenous communities in UN mechanisms.<sup>191</sup> Further, the General Assembly established the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages as well as the 2022-2032 International Decade of Indigenous Languages to promote the preservation of Indigenous languages.<sup>192</sup>

As a principal actor in the promotion of LINKS, UNESCO connects local and Indigenous communities with science, environmental policy, and international standards by implementing initiatives such as the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme (1971) and the *UNESCO Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples* (2018).<sup>193</sup> As one of the pioneering initiatives on integrating LINKS into environmental conservation and sustainable development, the MAB Programme has fostered major strides in promoting sustainability by recognizing areas of terrestrial and marine ecosystems as Biosphere Regions, consequential for the formation of a global biosphere reserve network.<sup>194</sup> Yet, the Programme faces shortcomings such as inconsistent integration of local and Indigenous communities, limited resources, monitoring gaps, and uneven global coverage.<sup>195</sup> Across all its programs, UNESCO works with local and Indigenous communities as per the *UNESCO Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples*, which

---

<sup>187</sup> International Environmental Law Research Centre. *Community, Farmers' and Breeders' Rights in Africa*. 2003. p. 16.

<sup>188</sup> Arctic Council. *Ottawa Traditional Knowledge Principles*. 2015. p. 2.

<sup>189</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Culture and sustainable development (A/RES/78/161)*. 2023. pp. 5-11; United Nations, General Assembly. *Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/79/159)*. 2024. pp. 7-15.

<sup>190</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Culture and sustainable development (A/RES/78/161)*. 2023. pp. 5-11.

<sup>191</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/79/159)*. 2024. pp. 1-15; United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. *UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples*. 2025.

<sup>192</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/79/159)*. 2024. pp. 10, 12.

<sup>193</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples*. 2018. pp. 7-10; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS)*. 2025; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)*. 2025.

<sup>194</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)*. 2025.

<sup>195</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB): Strategy and roadmap*. 2024.



upholds Indigenous rights and ensures their perspectives are incorporated in all of UNESCO's work.<sup>196</sup> The policy marks a turning point by reframing UNESCO's priorities to center Indigenous self-determination, community leadership, and the protection of LINKS as integral to sustainable development.<sup>197</sup>

To further champion LINKS globally, UNESCO's LINKS Programme (2002) specifically addresses the promotion of cultural biodiversity, biocultural resilience, and knowledge equity.<sup>198</sup> Since its founding, the LINKS Programme has facilitated dialogue and collaboration between owners of LINKS and individuals in the fields of science and environmental policy, contributing to international norms, standards, and the development of transdisciplinary knowledge cooperation.<sup>199</sup> It carries out its mandate by hosting platforms for dialogue, organizing capacity-building workshops, producing policy guidance, and supporting Indigenous communities in documenting, preserving, and transmitting their LINKS.<sup>200</sup> In the Arctic, for instance, the LINKS Programme collaborated with the Aborigin Forum and Indigenous Leaders from Siberia on the United Nations Water Action Decade to establish the first Forum of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities on Water Action for Sustainable Development.<sup>201</sup> Despite the successes of the LINKS Programme, challenges remain in ensuring consistent recognition, safeguarding, and equitable participation of LINKS holders across different contexts.<sup>202</sup>

Various United Nations bodies aim to leverage LINKS to advance issues such as climate action and food security while addressing ethical and participatory challenges.<sup>203</sup> In their 2022 report on *Indigenous women and the development, application, preservation and transmission of scientific and technical knowledge*, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples highlights Indigenous women's key role in preserving LINKS and provides recommendations to strengthen their participation, such as ensuring their access to education and training and promoting their participation in leadership roles in research and policy.<sup>204</sup> In its capacities as a high-level advisory body to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on Indigenous issues, the UNPFII promotes the inclusion of Indigenous representatives and civil society in ECOSOC recommendations, and offers a direct connection between LINKS and effective

---

<sup>196</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO policy on engaging with Indigenous Peoples*. 2018. pp. 7-8.

<sup>197</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO policy on engaging with Indigenous Peoples*. 2018. p. 9.

<sup>198</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS)*. 2025.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS): North America and the Arctic*. 2024.

<sup>202</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO Brazil's Initiative for Indigenous Linguistic Diversity in Health Education*. 2024.

<sup>203</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *UNPFII Eighteenth Session: 22 April – 3 May 2019*. 2019; United Nations, Human Rights Council. *Indigenous women and the development, application, preservation and transmission of scientific and technical knowledge (A/HRC/51/28)*. 2022. pp. 7-12; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *IPBES technical support unit on Indigenous and local knowledge*. 2024; United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *United Nations Permanent Forum On Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)*. 2025.

<sup>204</sup> United Nations, Human Rights Council. *Indigenous women and the development, application, preservation and transmission of scientific and technical knowledge (A/HRC/51/28)*. 2022. pp. 7-12; United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights. *Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples*. 2025.



global policies on sustainable development.<sup>205</sup> The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) integrates LINKS in its global biodiversity assessment by involving Indigenous knowledge holders in production processes and by recognizing LINKS as a distinct knowledge system alongside science, thereby setting a precedent for leveraging LINKS in sustainable development.<sup>206</sup> However, due to LINKS' context-specific and traditionally orally transmitted nature, their use in quantitative methods continues to be a challenge.<sup>207</sup>

Regional organizations and civil society organizations equally contribute to promoting LINKS within policy-making circles and scientific communities.<sup>208</sup> The Indigenous Peoples Food System Coalition (2021) emerged from the United Nations Food Systems Summit to advance the preservation and sustainable use of LINKS in food systems in support of SDG 2.<sup>209</sup> By creating healthy, fair, and sustainable food systems, Member States, agencies, and other key actors unite to address target 2.3 on “doubling the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, Indigenous Peoples, and others by 2030.”<sup>210</sup> Aiming at decolonizing and transforming LINKS production in Africa, the African Institute in Indigenous Knowledge Systems was founded as UNESCO Category II Centre to promote African LINKS through research, policy advice, and capacity building.<sup>211</sup> As a non-profit organization advocating for the rights of Indigenous groups on issues such as genetic research, biotechnology, and the commercialization of LINKS, the Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism plays a key role in shaping the global discourse on Indigenous rights in science and bioethics.<sup>212</sup> To promote the achievement of SDG 13, the Arctic Council's Sustainable Development Working Group advances community-based climate adaptation strategies by incorporating LINKS in regional climate responses in cooperation with Arctic governments, Indigenous organizations, and scientific bodies such as the International Arctic Science Committee.<sup>213</sup>

### **Preserving and Promoting the Use of LINKS**

LINKS have been under threat of loss due to legacies of colonialism, discrimination, and structural inequalities that have marginalized local and Indigenous communities and devalued their LINKS, but many initiatives have been established to combat this loss and preserve LINKS globally.<sup>214</sup> National and international actors are working on preserving LINKS by recognizing Indigenous communities' rights

---

<sup>205</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *UNPFII Eighteenth Session: 22 April – 3 May 2019*. 2019; United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *United Nations Permanent Forum On Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)*. 2025.

<sup>206</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *IPBES technical support unit on Indigenous and local knowledge*. 2024.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact. *Network of Civil Society Organizations, Indigenous Peoples, Local Community representatives tackled climate, biodiversity, and tenure for its 10th annual meeting*. 2024.

<sup>209</sup> United Nations Food Systems Coordination Hub. *Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems Coalition*. 2025.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Terms of References: African Institute in Indigenous Knowledge Systems – AIKS – in the Republic of South Africa as a UNESCO Category II Centre*. 2025.

<sup>212</sup> Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism. *Resolutions by Indigenous Peoples*. N.d.

<sup>213</sup> Arctic Council. *International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)*. 2025; Arctic Council. *Sustainable Development Working Group*. 2025.

<sup>214</sup> United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. *Traditional Knowledge Backgrounder*. 2019. p. 1.



through instruments like UNDRIP and CBD.<sup>215</sup> Efforts include preserving Indigenous languages, integrating local and Indigenous communities into decision-making and LINKS into sustainable development and environmental management, and promoting education that sustains cultural heritage and biodiversity through a multitude of programs.<sup>216</sup>

To prevent the loss of LINKS, whether intentional or accidental, different methods have been adopted, including physical archives and museums as well as digital libraries and knowledge management systems.<sup>217</sup> Traditional museums and physical archives play a vital role in protecting LINKS as they not only safeguard world heritage but also combat illicit trafficking of cultural property through preservation, research, education, and public engagement.<sup>218</sup> By extension, initiatives such as the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library in India and the National Indigenous Knowledge Management System in South Africa aim to digitalize LINKS to streamline the collection, use, and distribution of LINKS by providing a platform that secures collection and controls distribution of LINKS, recognizes community ownership, and avails translations of LINKS.<sup>219</sup> These databases are crucial as they assist patent examiners in identifying fraud by ensuring that patent claims are verified against documented LINKS before patents are granted.<sup>220</sup> To save their tangible and intangible cultural heritage from rapidly-rising sea levels, Tuvalu leveraged virtual reality to create an online repository that functions as a living archive of its LINKS, including oral histories, serving as a new preservation technique that goes beyond physical archives and traditional digital libraries.<sup>221</sup>

Although many initiatives have achieved progress in preserving and promoting the use of LINKS globally, the potential loss of Indigenous languages continues to pose a material threat to the preservation of LINKS.<sup>222</sup> Indigenous languages are essential to the preservation of LINKS as they provide the means through which LINKS are recorded and sustained.<sup>223</sup> In Mexico, the UNESCO World Atlas of Languages classified 16 Indigenous languages as critically endangered.<sup>224</sup> To help reverse this trend, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassadors promote the use of Indigenous languages in daily life and literature by organizing events at international book fairs.<sup>225</sup> The 2019 Year of Indigenous Languages and the 2022-2032 International Decade of Indigenous Languages constitute initiatives designed to safeguard and promote Indigenous languages by focusing the related action plan on language revitalization and increasing

---

<sup>215</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*. 2007. pp. 1-11; Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Biodiversity. *Convention of Biological Diversity*. 2011. pp. 2-30; United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. *Traditional Knowledge Backgrounder*. 2019. p. 2.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Culture and sustainable development (A/RES/78/161)*. 2023. pp. 5-11.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid. pp. 1-5.

<sup>219</sup> National Indigenous Knowledge Systems Office. *The National Indigenous Knowledge Management System*. 2022; World Intellectual Property Organization. *About the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library*. 2025.

<sup>220</sup> World Intellectual Property Organization. *About the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library*. 2025; National Indigenous Knowledge Systems Office. *The National Indigenous Knowledge Management System*. 2022.

<sup>221</sup> Global Forum in Migration and Development. *An online repository for the cultural heritage of Tuvalu*. 2024.

<sup>222</sup> United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. *Traditional Knowledge Backgrounder*. 2019. p. 2.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid. p. 1.

<sup>224</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Daily use of Indigenous languages boosts social justice*. 2025.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.



access to education and information in Indigenous languages.<sup>226</sup> However, while the Year proved successful and the Decade continues to advance action, the need for more global awareness and coordinated preservation efforts is ongoing.<sup>227</sup>

Disregarding Indigenous perspectives in decision-making further marginalizes communities and accelerates the erosion of LINKS, while undermining their potential to contribute to climate adaptation and peacebuilding.<sup>228</sup> 80% of armed conflicts between 1950 and 2000 occurred in biodiversity hotspots.<sup>229</sup> These regions are rich in species and ecosystems, and are often attributed as Indigenous lands, which have shown lower anthropogenic and environmental impacts, suggesting that Indigenous stewardship fosters land resilience.<sup>230</sup> Consequently, integrating Indigenous peace and reconciliation practices into peacebuilding efforts proves essential to enhance their effectiveness.<sup>231</sup> This sentiment is echoed in the General Assembly resolution 79/159 on “Rights of Indigenous Peoples” which emphasizes integrating Indigenous perspectives by upholding their rights, including free, prior, and informed consent and ensuring their active participation in decision-making processes.<sup>232</sup>

### **Combatting the Misappropriation of LINKS**

Instances of misappropriation of LINKS, specifically involving their unauthorized use, continue to occur across the globe.<sup>233</sup> The misappropriation of LINKS refers to the unauthorized use, reproduction, commercialization, or exploitation of LINKS, cultural expressions, or intellectual property such as sacred symbols and rituals by individuals or external entities.<sup>234</sup> Examples include the incorporation of a sacred sun symbol originating from the Indigenous Zia Peoples in the New Mexican flag in the USA without permission, and the reproduction of the Wajãpi Indigenous communities’ body art on wallpaper by a Brazilian home decor company without authorization.<sup>235</sup> While the Zia not only lost ownership but were also forced to tolerate the misappropriation of their LINKS with the flag remaining the same until today, the Wajãpi demanded production to be halted, existing stocks to be destroyed, and contributions toward a community project to be made, to which the company complied.<sup>236</sup> These examples highlight the importance of adopting policies that strengthen Indigenous voices and protect their rights.<sup>237</sup> LINKS

---

<sup>226</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *The International Year of Indigenous Languages*. 2021. p. 9; United Nations, General Assembly. *Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/79/159)*. 2024. pp. 3, 6, 13.

<sup>227</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/79/159)*. 2024. pp. 3, 6, 13.

<sup>228</sup> United Nations, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. *Spotlighting the Role of Indigenous Peoples’ Peacebuilding for Climate, Peace and Security*. 2025.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/79/159)*. 2024. pp. 3, 6, 13.

<sup>233</sup> Saez. Intellectual Property Watch. *Indigenous Knowledge Misappropriation: The Case Of The Zia Sun Symbol Explained At WIPO*. 2018; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Expert meeting on economic dimensions of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding, Analysis of issues and trends*. 2023. p. 2.

<sup>234</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Traditional knowledge - an answer to the most pressing global problems?*. 2019.

<sup>235</sup> Saez. Intellectual Property Watch. *Indigenous Knowledge Misappropriation: The Case Of The Zia Sun Symbol Explained At WIPO*. 2018; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Expert meeting on economic dimensions of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding, Analysis of issues and trends*. 2023. p. 2.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.



extend beyond symbols and art to include religious rituals, which can suffer even greater harm, as illustrated by private businesses and local authorities commercializing the Traditional Feast of January in Chiapa de Corzo, Mexico.<sup>238</sup> Not only were LINKS misappropriated, but their historical traditional ritual cycle was disrupted, which affected community cohesion.<sup>239</sup> Misappropriation of LINKS not only denies Indigenous communities' ownership over their LINKS but also undermines cultural continuity, erodes social structures, and hinders the intergenerational transmission of LINKS.<sup>240</sup>

Defined as the domination and exploitation of LINKS by external colonial powers without consent, biocolonialism further undermines Indigenous sovereignty by enabling biopiracy.<sup>241</sup> Representing one mechanism of misappropriation, biopiracy involves the appropriation, patenting, or commercialization of biological materials from LINKS without proper acknowledgment or fair benefit-sharing.<sup>242</sup> Multiple examples of biopiracy of LINKS by pharmaceutical companies without consent or fair compensation have been recorded, such as in the case of the commercialization of San people's knowledge of the Hoodia plant's appetite suppressant properties by the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).<sup>243</sup> Following disputes, CSIR acknowledged the San's contribution and established one of the first benefit-sharing agreements, granting the San people a share of the profit from the resulting patent and products.<sup>244</sup> This case exposes the harms of biopiracy and sets a precedent for protecting LINKS and Indigenous rights through authorization and benefit-sharing agreements.<sup>245</sup>

Together, international frameworks and local civil society initiatives demonstrate effective strategies for protecting and promoting LINKS.<sup>246</sup> In partnership with WIPO, the Maasai people of Kenya digitally recorded artifacts such as traditional songs, and stories to enable the community to claim copyright over

---

<sup>238</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Expert meeting on economic dimensions of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding, Analysis of issues and trends*. 2023. p. 2.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Saez. Intellectual Property Watch. *Indigenous Knowledge Misappropriation: The Case Of The Zia Sun Symbol Explained At WIPO*. 2018; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Expert meeting on economic dimensions of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding, Analysis of issues and trends*. 2023. p. 2.

<sup>241</sup> Breske. *Biocolonialism: Examining Biopiracy, Inequality, and Power*. N.d. pp. 1-8; Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism. *Resolutions by Indigenous Peoples*. N.d.; Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism. *The Convention on Biological Diversity's International Regime on Access and Benefit Sharing: Background and Considerations for Indigenous Peoples*. 2006. p. 4; Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism. *Declaration on Indigenous Peoples' Rights to Genetic Resources and Indigenous Knowledge*. 2007; Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Biodiversity. *Convention of Biological Diversity*. 2011. pp. 2, 8, 13-14.

<sup>242</sup> Breske. *Biocolonialism: Examining Biopiracy, Inequality, and Power*. N.d. pp. 1-8; Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism. *The Convention on Biological Diversity's International Regime on Access and Benefit Sharing: Background and Considerations for Indigenous Peoples*. 2006. p. 4.

<sup>243</sup> Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing. *The Commercial Development of Hoodia*. N.d.; World Intellectual Property Organization. *Leveraging Economic Growth through Benefit Sharing*. 2010; United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Traditional knowledge - an answer to the most pressing global problems?*. 2019.

<sup>244</sup> Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing. *The Commercial Development of Hoodia*. N.d.; World Intellectual Property Organization. *Leveraging Economic Growth through Benefit Sharing*. 2010.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> World Intellectual Property Organization. *Leveraging Economic Growth through Benefit Sharing*. 2010.



these cultural expressions and control their distribution.<sup>247</sup> Through community-led initiatives, in Thailand, the Karen Indigenous community works to revitalize traditional rotational farming and forest management practices by documenting their traditional knowledge, strengthening local land management systems, and connecting customary practices with education and policy to foster long-term ecological and cultural sustainability.<sup>248</sup>

## Conclusion

The promotion and preservation of LINKS is a key factor in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and consequential for achieving elements of sustainable development such as the conservation of biodiversity and responsible consumption and production.<sup>249</sup> Many efforts have been established to promote and protect the use of traditional knowledge and leverage it alongside modern knowledge, including international frameworks and mechanisms such as UNDRIP and SWAP, as well as regional and local initiatives by both Member States and civil society.<sup>250</sup> UNESCO itself has championed efforts to protect and promote LINKS through its LINKS Programme, which continues to work with local and Indigenous communities, the scientific community, and policy makers to establish platforms for knowledge sharing and cooperation.<sup>251</sup> Although many efforts have been established, multiple challenges continue to hinder the effective use and protection of traditional knowledge, including disregard for Indigenous rights, exclusion of Indigenous groups from decision-making processes, theft of Indigenous resources and exploitation of Indigenous knowledge, and loss and neglect of cultural heritage.<sup>252</sup>

## Further Research

What challenges hinder the integration of traditional knowledge within current policies? How are LINKS affected by the loss of languages and intangible cultural heritage? In what ways can Member States integrate LINKS with modern knowledge systems? How can UNESCO work with other United Nations entities and intergovernmental organizations to promote and preserve the use of LINKS? How can efforts be localized to integrate regional differences and particularities?

---

<sup>247</sup> Wendland. World Intellectual Property Organization Magazine. *Managing rights in digitized indigenous music*. 2016.

<sup>248</sup> The International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative. *Promoting and Enhancing the Karen Indigenous Sustainable Socio-ecological Production System in Northern Thailand*. 2019.

<sup>249</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015; ICCA Consortium. *Territories of Life: 2021 Report*. 2021.

<sup>250</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*. 2007. pp. 1-11; United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *System-wide action plan (SWAP) on the rights of Indigenous Peoples*. 2017.

<sup>251</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS)*. 2025.

<sup>252</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Traditional knowledge - an answer to the most pressing global problems?*. 2019; United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. *Traditional Knowledge Backgrounder*. 2019; United Nations Environment Programme. *Indigenous Peoples and the nature they protect*. 2020.



## Bibliography

Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing. *The Commercial Development of Hoodia*. N.d. Retrieved 29 June 2025 from:

<https://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/abs/abswg-06/other/abswg-06-cs-07-en.pdf>

Arctic Council. *Ottawa Traditional Knowledge Principles*. 2015. Retrieved 18 July 2025 from:

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58b6de9e414fb54d6c50134e/t/5dd4097576d4226b2a894337/1574177142813/Ottawa\\_TK\\_Principles.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58b6de9e414fb54d6c50134e/t/5dd4097576d4226b2a894337/1574177142813/Ottawa_TK_Principles.pdf)

Arctic Council. *International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)*. 2025. Retrieved 27 August 2025 from:

<https://arctic-council.org/about/observers/iasc/>

Arctic Council. *Sustainable Development Working Group*. 2025. Retrieved 20 July 2025 from:

<https://sdwg.org/>

Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact. *Asian Framework on Indigenous Knowledge and Data Sovereignty*. 2023. Retrieved 18 July 2025 from:

[https://aippnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/22-Aug-2023-\\_Final-IKDS-Framework.pdf](https://aippnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/22-Aug-2023-_Final-IKDS-Framework.pdf)

Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact. *Network of Civil Society Organizations, Indigenous Peoples, Local Community representatives tackled climate, biodiversity, and tenure for its 10th annual meeting*. 2024. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from:

<https://aippnet.org/network-civil-society-organizations-Indigenous-Peoples-local-community-representatives-tackled-climate-biodiversity-tenure-10th-annual-meeting/>

Breske. *Biocolonialism: Examining Biopiracy, Inequality, and Power*. N.d. Retrieved 22 July 2025 from:

<https://spectrajournal.org/articles/116/files/submission/proof/116-1-212-2-10-20180901.pdf>

Council of Europe. *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*. 1995. Retrieved 18 July 2025 from: <https://rm.coe.int/168007cdac>

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. *Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems*. 2025. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from:

<https://www.fao.org/Indigenous-Peoples/pillars-of-work/food-and-knowledge-systems/en>

Global Forum in Migration and Development. *An online repository for the cultural heritage of Tuvalu*.

2024. Retrieved 27 June 2025 from: <https://www.gfmd.org/pfp/ppd/19201>

High-Level Expert Seminar on Indigenous Food Systems. *Indigenous Food Systems Summary Experts Seminar Report*. 2018. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/IndigenousPeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2019/01/LAST-FINAL-REPORT-HLESIFS-2018.pdf>

ICCA Consortium. *Territories of Life: 2021 Report*. 2021. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from:

<https://report.territoriesoflife.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/ICCA-Territories-of-Life-2021-Report-FULL-150dpi-ENG.pdf>



Indigenous Environmental Network. *Ethical Protocol for the Protection and Use of Traditional Indigenous Systems*. 2024. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from:

[https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2024-03/IEN\\_Submission\\_LCIPP\\_FWG\\_review.pdf](https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2024-03/IEN_Submission_LCIPP_FWG_review.pdf)

Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism. *Resolutions by Indigenous Peoples*. N.d. Retrieved 22 July 2025 from: <http://www.ipcb.org/resolutions/index.html>

Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism. *The Convention on Biological Diversity's International Regime on Access and Benefit Sharing: Background and Considerations for Indigenous Peoples*. 2006. Retrieved 22 July 2025 from: [http://www.ipcb.org/pdf\\_files/absbriefcop8.pdf](http://www.ipcb.org/pdf_files/absbriefcop8.pdf)

Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism. *Declaration on Indigenous Peoples' Rights to Genetic Resources and Indigenous Knowledge*. 2007. Retrieved 22 July 2025 from: [http://www.ipcb.org/resolutions/htmls/Decl\\_GR&IK.html](http://www.ipcb.org/resolutions/htmls/Decl_GR&IK.html)

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. *IACHR welcomes decree strengthening Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination in Colombia*. 2025. Retrieved 28 August 2025 from: [https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/jsForm/?File=/en/iachr/media\\_center/preleases/2025/142.asp&utm\\_content=country-col&utm\\_term=class-mon](https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/jsForm/?File=/en/iachr/media_center/preleases/2025/142.asp&utm_content=country-col&utm_term=class-mon)

International Environmental Law Research Centre. *Community, Farmers' and Breeders' Rights in Africa*. 2003. Retrieved 28 August 2025 from: <https://www.farmersrights.org/getfile.php/132192-1663248567/Dokumenter/a0302.pdf>

Lowe et al. *Indigenous washing: the exploitation of Indigenous people by the pharmaceutical industry*. 2022. Retrieved 28 July 2025 from: <https://www.drugscience.org.uk/Indigenous-washing-the-exploitation-of-Indigenous-people-by-the-pharmaceutical-industry>

National Indigenous Knowledge Systems Office. *The National Indigenous Knowledge Management System*. 2022. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://nikrs.dst.gov.za/>

Organization of African Unity. *African Model Legislation for the Protection of the Rights of Local Communities, Farmers and Breeders, and for the Regulation of Access to Biological Resources*. 2000. Retrieved 18 July 2025 from: <https://www.resakss.org/sites/default/files/OAU%202000%20African%20Model%20Legislation%20for%20the%20Protection%20of%20the%20Rights%20of%20Local%20Communities.pdf>

Organization of American States. *American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. 2016. Retrieved 20 July 2025 from: <https://www.oas.org/en/sare/documents/decaminid.pdf>

Saez. Intellectual Property Watch. *Indigenous Knowledge Misappropriation: The Case Of The Zia Sun Symbol Explained At WIPO*. 2018. Retrieved 20 July 2025 from: <https://www.ip-watch.org/2018/12/11/Indigenous-knowledge-misappropriation-case-zia-sun-symbol-explained-wipo/>



SDG Research Centre. *Indigenous Knowledge*. 2025. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from:  
<https://sdgresources.relx.com/Indigenous-knowledge>

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Biodiversity. *Convention of Biological Diversity*. 2011.  
Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-en.pdf>

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Biodiversity. *Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from the Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity*. 2011. Retrieved 17 July 2025 from:  
<https://www.cbd.int/abs/doc/protocol/nagoya-protocol-en.pdf>

The International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative. *Promoting and Enhancing the Karen Indigenous Sustainable Socio-ecological Production System in Northern Thailand*. 2019. Retrieved 2 October 2025 from:  
<https://satoyamainitiative.org/activities/ipsi-collaborative-activities/promoting-and-enhancing-the-karen-indigenous-sustainable-socio-ecological-production-system-in-northern-thailand/>

United Nations Climate Change. *Functions of the LCIPP*. 2024. Retrieved 20 July 2025 from:  
<https://lcipp.unfccc.int/about-lcipp/functions-lcipp>

United Nations Climate Change. *LCIPP Annual Dialogue among Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities, Parties and other Stakeholders*. 2025. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from:  
[https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2025-06/LCIPP%20Annual%20Dialogue\\_SB62\\_DRAFT\\_2605\\_0.pdf](https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2025-06/LCIPP%20Annual%20Dialogue_SB62_DRAFT_2605_0.pdf)

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. 1992. Retrieved 27 August 2025 from:  
[https://unfccc.int/files/essential\\_background/background\\_publications\\_htmlpdf/application/pdf/conveng.pdf](https://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/background_publications_htmlpdf/application/pdf/conveng.pdf)

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *System-wide action plan (SWAP) on the rights of Indigenous Peoples*. 2017. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from:  
<https://desapublications.un.org/publications/system-wide-action-plan-swap-rights-Indigenous-Peoples>

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Traditional knowledge - an answer to the most pressing global problems?*. 2019. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from:  
<https://www.un.org/uk/desa/traditional-knowledge-%E2%80%93-answer-most-pressing-global-problems>

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *UNPFII Eighteenth Session: 22 April – 3 May 2019*. 2019. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from:  
<https://social.desa.un.org/issues/Indigenous-Peoples/unpfii/unpfii-eighteenth-session-22-april-3-may-2019>

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *United Nations Permanent Forum On Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)*. 2025. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from:  
<https://social.desa.un.org/issues/Indigenous-Peoples/unpfii>



United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Indigenous Peoples*. N.d. Retrieved 24 August 2025 from: <https://www.un.org/en/fight-racism/vulnerable-groups/indigenous-peoples>

United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *The World Conference on Indigenous Peoples*. 2014. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://www.un.org/en/ga/69/meetings/Indigenous/#&panel1-1>

United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *'Preserve, revitalize and promote' Indigenous languages, or lose a 'wealth of traditional knowledge', UN chief says*. 2019. Retrieved 29 June 2025 from: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/08/1044071>

United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Indigenous Peoples' Territories, Resources Still Being Seized, Exploited, Despite International Standards Guaranteeing Their Rights, Speakers Tell Permanent Forum*. 2022. Retrieved 28 July 2025 from: <https://press.un.org/en/2022/hr5468.doc.htm>

United Nations, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. *Spotlighting the Role of Indigenous Peoples' Peacebuilding for Climate, Peace and Security*. 2025. Retrieved 28 August 2025 from: <https://dppa.un.org/en/spotlighting-role-of-indigenous-peoples-peacebuilding-climate-peace-and-security>

United Nations Development Programme. *Indigenous knowledge is crucial in the fight against climate change - here's why*. 2024. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://climatepromise.undp.org/news-and-stories/Indigenous-knowledge-crucial-fight-against-climate-change-heres-why>

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. *Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean*. 2018. Retrieved 18 July 2025 from: <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/2018/03/20180312%2003-04%20PM/CTC-XXVII-18.pdf>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights*. 2005. Retrieved 28 June 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/universal-declaration-bioethics-and-human-rights?hub=387>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO policy on engaging with Indigenous Peoples*. 2018. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000262748>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *The International Year of Indigenous Languages*. 2021. Retrieved 23 July 2025 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379771>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Expert meeting on economic dimensions of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding, Analysis of issues and trends*. 2023. Retrieved 20 July 2025 from: [https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-23-EXP\\_THEMA-ECO-5\\_en.docx](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-23-EXP_THEMA-ECO-5_en.docx)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *IPBES technical support unit on Indigenous and local knowledge*. 2024. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/links/ipbes?hub=408>



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS): Mission*. 2024. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/links/mission?hub=408>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS): North America and the Arctic*. 2024. Retrieved 07 Sep 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/links/arctic?hub=408>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB): Strategy and roadmap*. 2024. Retrieved 27 August 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/node/133044?hub=66369>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO Brazil's Initiative for Indigenous Linguistic Diversity in Health Education*. 2024. Retrieved 20 July 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-brazils-initiative-Indigenous-linguistic-diversity-health-education>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Daily use of Indigenous languages boosts social justice*. 2025. Retrieved 28 August 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/daily-use-indigenous-languages-boosts-social-justice>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS)*. 2025. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/links>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)*. 2025. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/mab?hub=405>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Terms of References: African Institute in Indigenous Knowledge Systems – AIKS – in the Republic of South Africa as a UNESCO Category II Centre*. 2025. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/terms-references-african-institute-Indigenous-knowledge-systems-aiiks-republic-south-africa-unesco>

United Nations Environment Programme. *Indigenous Peoples and the nature they protect*. 2020. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/Indigenous-Peoples-and-nature-they-protect>

United Nations Environment Programme. *Tapping into Indigenous knowledge to protect nature*. 2022. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/tapping-Indigenous-knowledge-protect-nature>

United Nations Food Systems Coordination Hub. *Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems Coalition*. 2025. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://www.unfoodsystemshub.org/food-systems-coalitions/Indigenous-Peoples%27-food-systems-coalition/en>



United Nations, General Assembly. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*. 1948. Retrieved 17 July 2025 from: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr>

United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*. 2007. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <http://undocs.org/en/A/RES/61/295>

United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/70/1>

United Nations, General Assembly. *Culture and sustainable development (A/RES/78/161)*. 2023. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/78/161>

United Nations, General Assembly. *Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/79/159)*. 2024. Retrieved 28 August 2025 from: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/79/159>

United Nations, Human Rights Council. *Indigenous women and the development, application, preservation and transmission of scientific and technical knowledge (A/HRC/51/28)*. 2022. Retrieved 27 August 2025 from: <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/51/28>

United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights. *Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples*. 2025. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-Indigenous-Peoples>

United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. *UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples*. 2025. Retrieved 2 October 2025 from: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/about-us/funding-budget/indigenous-peoples-fund>

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. *Who are Indigenous Peoples?*. 2015. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: [https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session\\_factsheet1.pdf](https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf)

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. *Traditional Knowledge Backgrounder*. 2019. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/IndigenousPeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2019/04/Traditional-Knowledge-backgrounder-FINAL.pdf>

United Nations Trade and Development. *Ongoing Loss Of Traditional Knowledge Calls For Urgent Action, Says Unctad*. 2004. Retrieved 29 June 2025 from: <https://unctad.org/press-material/ongoing-loss-traditional-knowledge-calls-urgent-action-says-unctad>

Wendland. World Intellectual Property Organization Magazine. *Managing rights in digitized indigenous music*. 2016. Retrieved 09 Sep 2025 from: <https://www.wipo.int/web/wipo-magazine/articles/managing-rights-in-digitized-indigenous-music-39719>

World Intellectual Property Organization. *Leveraging Economic Growth through Benefit Sharing*. 2010. Retrieved 23 July 2025 from: <https://www.wipo.int/en/web/ip-advantage/w/stories/leveraging-economic-growth-through-benefit-sharing>



World Intellectual Property Organization. *WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge*. 2024. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: <https://www.wipo.int/treaties/en/ip/gratk/>

World Intellectual Property Organization. *About the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library*. 2025. Retrieved 26 June 2025 from: [https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/2011/wipo\\_tkdl\\_del\\_11/about\\_tkdl.html](https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/2011/wipo_tkdl_del_11/about_tkdl.html)