

STATEMENT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MAJOR GROUP

Goal 3: Health and Wellbeing

My name is Daniel ole Sapit, of the Maasai Indigenous community in Kenya and am speaking on behalf of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group.

Distinguished Madam Moderator,

There is lack of data on indigenous peoples' health and social conditions as well as lack of information, analysis, and evaluation of programmes and services to address these. A report of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues noted that "Indigenous peoples face a myriad of obstacles when accessing public health systems. These include the lack of health facilities in indigenous communities and cultural differences with the health care providers such as differences in languages, illiteracy and lack of understanding of indigenous culture and traditional health care systems. There is also an absence of adequate health insurance or lack of economic capacity to pay for services if it is available." The health and wellbeing of indigenous peoples is also linked to the overall condition of their natural environment and condition of impoverishment.

As indigenous peoples, we have our traditional health practices that relates to our general wellbeing as Indigenous peoples, not only in relation to physical but also spiritual and mental health. This includes the use of traditional knowledge, healing practices among others which are also essential in sustaining our cultures.

The Indigenous Peoples Major Group recommends the following to the states;

1. Ensure data gathering and disaggregation by ethnicity in health monitoring and develop targeted programmes with full participation of Indigenous peoples, and allocate sufficient budget and appropriate personnel to ensure Indigenous peoples' access to appropriate and quality health services, including essential medicines and vaccines, in a non-discriminatory manner
2. Ensure non-discrimination on health services including universal health coverage, and recognize and support traditional health practices and healers of Indigenous peoples to protect their wellbeing
3. Design and implement specific measures in collaboration with Indigenous peoples to address mental health problems, including for youth who are vulnerable to self-harm.

Thank you Madam Moderator.