

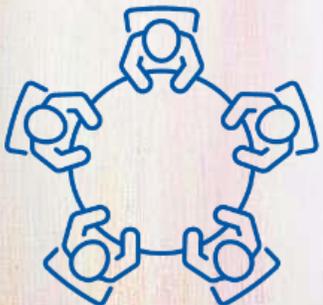
Including indigenous people in evaluations

Taipei Dlamini

UNEG Professional Development Seminar
Tokyo, 13 February 2025



unesco



**DIVISION OF
INTERNAL
OVERSIGHT
SERVICES**

Evaluation Office

Who are indigenous people?

“Indigenous Peoples are inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. They have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live.”

**Priority
group in
UNESCO**



What is
UNESCO
doing?

The promotion of
multilingualism &
diversity of
languages

The power of language (1)

"A language is not just words. It's a culture, a tradition, a **unification of a community**, a whole history that creates what a community is. It's all embodied in a language."

Noam Chomsky, American linguist

The power of language (2)

'Indigenous peoples have **the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages,** oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.'

2007 UN Declaration on Indigenous People's Rights , article 13.



7,000
languages
spoken
worldwide

UNESCO World Atlas of Languages

There are at least 2680

indigenous languages in danger

of disappearance.





2019 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
Indigenous Languages

Indigenous knowledge is an integral part

of the heritage of humanity.



2019 | INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
Indigenous Languages

Indigenous languages provide
cultural diversity &
empower people.

#IndigenousLanguages



2019 | INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
Indigenous Languages

#IndigenousLanguages

It's on us to safeguard and to
promote indigenous languages!

2019: International Year of Indigenous Languages

2020: Proclamation of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-32)

“Nothing about us without us”

EVALUATION OF UNESCO'S ACTION TO REVITALIZE AND PROMOTE INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

Within the framework of
the International Year of
Indigenous Languages

March 2021
IOS/EVS/PV/194



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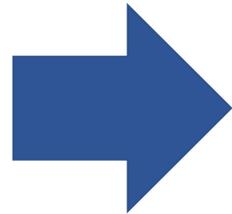
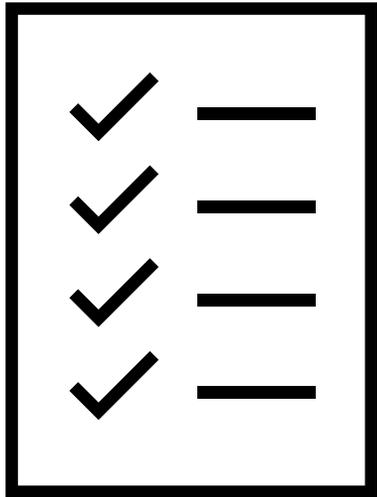
ka ho'oilo



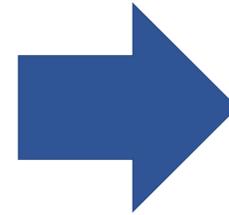
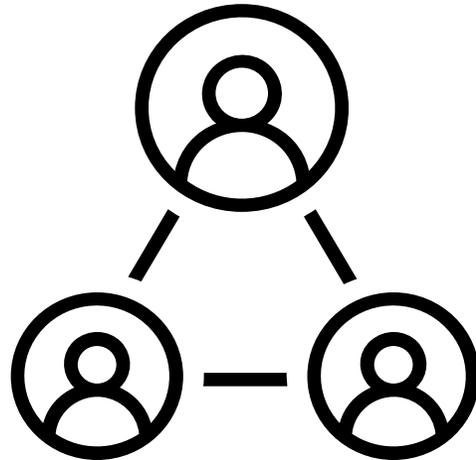


How did we
evaluate
UNESCO's
action?

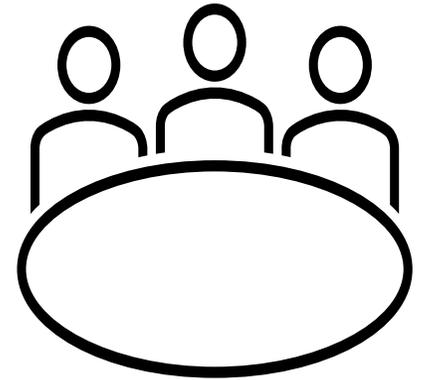
Planning



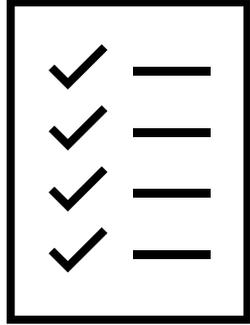
Implementation



Use



Planning



- Co-Chairs of the IYIL Steering Committee
 - Ecuador
 - Sami Parliament
- The UN three-party mechanism :

Evaluability study

Evaluation Reference Group



United Nations Permanent Forum
on Indigenous Issues



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

Expert Mechanism on the Rights
of Indigenous Peoples

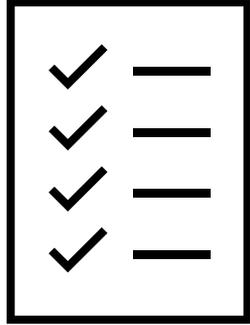


UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

Special Rapporteur on the Rights
of Indigenous Peoples

- Indigenous civil society organizations

Planning



Evaluability study

Evaluation

Reference Group

Terms of Reference

Relevance:

- To what extent and how did UNESCO involve indigenous peoples in the design and implementation of its activities within the framework of the IYIL2019?

Coherence

- To what extent did UNESCO adopt a coherent organization-wide human-rights based approach to the implementation of its activities on indigenous languages within the framework of the IYIL2019?

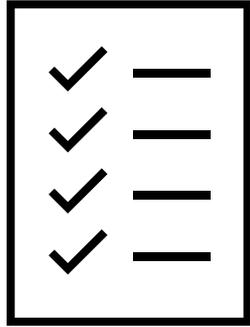
Effectiveness:

- How did UNESCO perform in its role as leading agency for the IYIL2019 (leadership, coordination, partnerships)? What lessons can be learned for the upcoming IDIL2022-2032?

Sustainability:

- How likely are initiatives started by UNESCO during the IYIL2019 to continue during the IDIL2022-2032?

Planning



Evaluability study

Evaluation

Reference Group

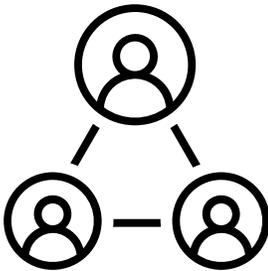
Terms of Reference

Evaluation Team

Methodology

- **Evaluation team: 2 technical experts** on indigenous languages (including an anthropologist)
- **International Advisory Group: 7** Regional experts of indigenous communities
 - Provided context on geographical area and specific IPs
 - Helped conduct interviews (sometimes in local languages)
 - Reviewed evaluation report

Implementation



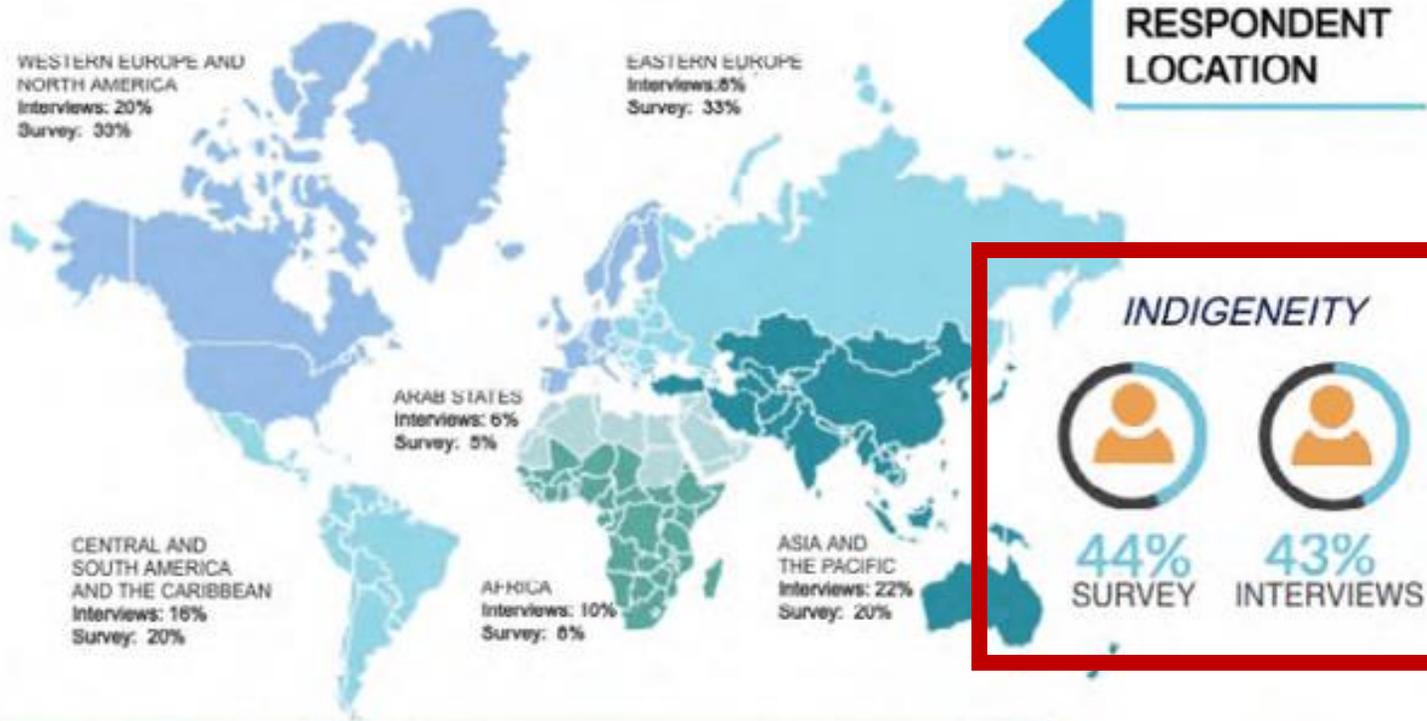
Data collection



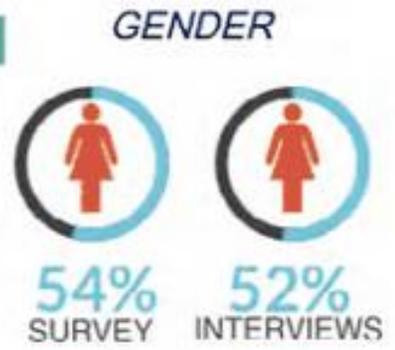
**Inclusive and broad
Klls & survey**



**Tailored evaluation
questionnaires**

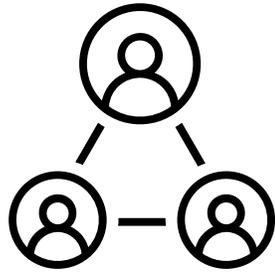


Stakeholders	SURVEY 702	INTERVIEWS 135
UNESCO	7%	19%
MS	11%	11%
UN	2%	11%
Academia	20%	12%
CSO	19%	12%
Other organisations	6%	5%



Source: Evaluation survey (n=702) and Key Informant Interviews (n=136, this excludes the 14 inception phase interviews). Note: "Other organizations" includes the private sector, the media, public institutions, other entities.

Implementation



Data collection



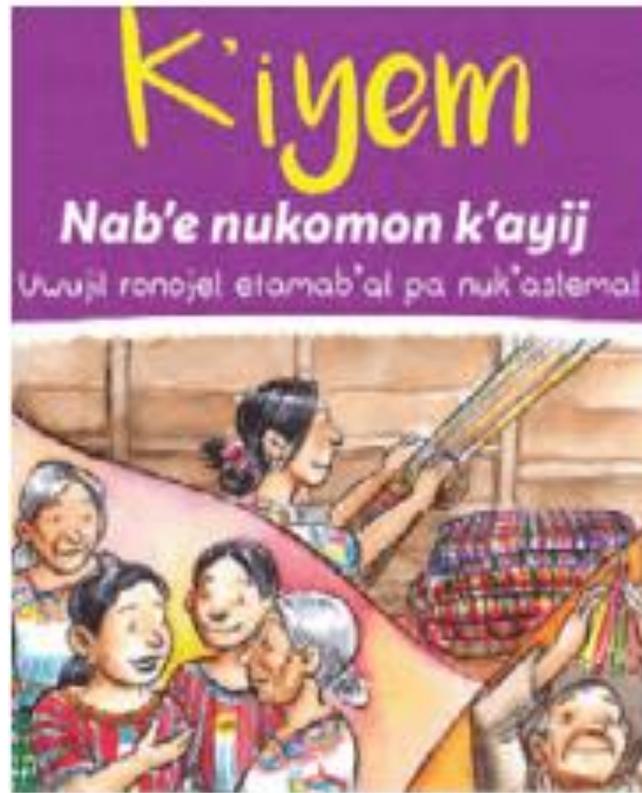
**Inclusive and broad
KIs & survey**



**Tailored evaluation
questionnaires**



**Case studies &
snapshots**



© UNESCO Guatermala Office



HELISÉT TFE SKÁL
Let the Languages Live

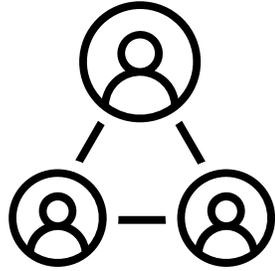
Conference • June 24–26, 2019 • Victoria, BC Canada

© First People4s Cultural Council



© POSSOSIA

Implementation



Data collection

Conclusions /
Recommendations

Quality assurance

Evaluation Report

SELECTED RECOMMENDATIONS TO UNESCO IN VIEW OF THE UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES 2022-2032

Ensure the meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples within UNESCO structures designing and implementing the Decade.

UNESCO is encouraged to engage its existing Indigenous staff and recruit staff with experience and expertise in revitalizing and supporting Indigenous languages for the planning and implementation of the Decade, in line with the "Nothing for us without us" principle. UNESCO should furthermore promote the presence of Indigenous artists on international platforms during the Decade.

Engage and support Indigenous language communities from the start of the Decade.

UNESCO should acknowledge Indigenous language champions working at the grassroots level. This includes promoting examples of successful community-level language revitalization practices, establishing a global collaborative platform for guidance on Indigenous language revitalization, supporting locally-designed and Indigenous-led projects, and organizing competitions or awards for Indigenous language champions worldwide to acknowledge Indigenous leadership.

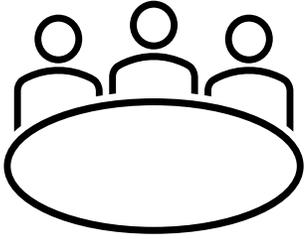
Actively involve UNESCO Member States to promote and revitalize Indigenous languages.

In particular, invite National Commissions for UNESCO to coordinate initiatives with Indigenous peoples and other stakeholders, including by disseminating key information about the Decade in Indigenous languages to ensure that relevant information reaches Indigenous peoples.

Adopt multilingual and multichannel approaches to reach more Indigenous Peoples.

UNESCO is encouraged to raise the visibility of Indigenous languages in its communication about the Decade, increase the number of languages on the official Decade website to all six official UN languages, and use other widely spoken languages in the Decade's social media channels.

Use



Consulted
stakeholders

Management Response

Action Plan

Dissemination



- IOS
- Evaluation team
- CI Sector
- IYIL
- IDIL



- **ERG**
- **UNESCO Intersectoral Task Team on Indigenous People**
- **UN Interagency Task Force on Indigenous Peoples**
- **IYIL Steering Committee**
- **UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues**



UNESCO EVALUATION INSIGHTS

IOS EVALUATION OFFICE

#37

April 2021

Evaluation of UNESCO's action to revitalize and promote Indigenous languages within the framework of the International Year of Indigenous Languages 2019



EVALUATION INSIGHTS provides a snapshot of UNESCO's work in evaluation. Its purpose is to share insights and ideas with all interested stakeholders and to feed into ongoing discussions about the contribution of evaluation to the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

UNESCO served as the lead UN agency for the **International Year of Indigenous Languages (IYL) 2019**, which was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in order to

1. Draw attention to the critical loss of Indigenous languages and the urgent need to preserve, revitalize and promote them
2. Take further urgent steps at the national and international levels.

Throughout 2019, over 800 initiatives were implemented worldwide by UNESCO, its Member States, Indigenous peoples' organisations, academia and other stakeholders in support of IYL. In December 2019, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 2022-2032 as the **International Decade of Indigenous Languages (IDIL2022-2032)** and once again invited UNESCO to serve as its leading agency. UNESCO's Communication and Information Sector led the coordination of the Year and the Intersectoral Working Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues met regularly to share information. UNESCO led the development of an Action Plan for the Year and set up a Steering Committee involving Indigenous representatives, Member States and UN entities working on indigenous peoples' issues.

Why this evaluation?

The evaluation aimed to assess the higher-level results of IYL and UNESCO's contribution to them, but also to provide input for the planning of IDIL2022-2032. The findings and recommendations aim to help UNESCO strengthen its work during the Decade and provide insights to its partners on how they can engage. The evaluation methodology included a desk review, mapping of UNESCO's IYL portfolio, a global online survey which gathered 702 responses (of which 49 were from UNESCO staff and 44% overall were with indigenous persons) and 135 key informant interviews (40 with UNESCO staff and 43% overall with indigenous persons). A participatory workshop with staff was held in January 2021 with over 50 staff in attendance, including the DDG and ADG/CLT.

UNESCO contribution to IYL Action Plan



Source: Evaluation portfolio analysis

What we learned?

- UNESCO's leadership and coordination of the IYL2019 was very positive.
- The dedicated website (IYL2019.org) was well used and allowed for the wider participation of many stakeholders, including Indigenous peoples' organizations.
- UNESCO directly supported **80 IYL-related projects** on global, regional, sub-regional and national levels. Examples of successful UNESCO initiatives included global events such as the "Language Technologies for All" (LT4ALL) conference in Paris, regional events like the Hackathon on Promoting Indigenous Languages through Free and Open-Source Software in Singapore, and national initiatives such as operating bilingual (Spanish-K'iche') Malala Centres offering non-formal education for Indigenous adolescent girls and young women in Guatemala.
- While the IYL2019 succeeded in raising awareness of Indigenous languages on international and national levels, over half of UNESCO supported activities focused on **international meetings**, and in terms of results only 9% focused on policy development, thus only rarely leading to structural (e.g., legislative or policy) changes at the national level. The Decade will provide an opportunity to pursue this in more Member States.
- While global and regional projects predominated, 65% of non-global projects took place in **Latin America and the Caribbean**, followed by Asia and the Pacific with 23%. A key opportunity for the Decade is to achieve better geographic balance.
- The Action Plan for the IYL identified five intervention areas. The evaluation found that UNESCO's efforts concentrated on one of these, **increasing understanding, reconciliation and international cooperation, with the other areas receiving less attention.**



Source: Evaluation portfolio analysis

EVALUATION BRIEF FOCUS ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

April 2021



Evaluation of UNESCO's action to revitalize and promote Indigenous languages within the framework of the International Year of Indigenous Languages 2019



Revitalising Hawaiian language in an 'Aha (Phone Language) and Pūhaka (Reading and Poetry) LLC. Photo: Asia Kōkai. Lili Adams/Adamsphoto.com. Photo of Aha Phone Language.

UNESCO served as the lead UN agency for the International Year of Indigenous Languages 2019 (IYL), which was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2016 in order to

- Draw attention to the critical loss of Indigenous languages and the urgent need to preserve, revitalize and promote them.
- Take further urgent steps at the national and international levels.

Throughout 2019, over 800 initiatives were implemented worldwide by UNESCO, its Member States, UN entities, Indigenous peoples' organizations, academia and other stakeholders in support of the IYL. In December 2019, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 2022-2032 as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (IDIL2022-2032) and once again invited UNESCO to serve as its leading agency.

Why this evaluation?

The evaluation aimed to assess the higher-level results of the IYL and UNESCO's contribution to them, but also to provide input for the planning of the IDIL2022-2032. In addition to UNESCO staff, the evaluation may be useful to Indigenous peoples' organizations and other stakeholders that participated in the IYL and/or are planning to engage with the IDIL2022-2032.

The evaluation methodology included a desk review, mapping of UNESCO's IYL portfolio, a global online survey which gathered 702 responses (44% were from Indigenous persons) and 136 key informant interviews (41% with Indigenous persons).

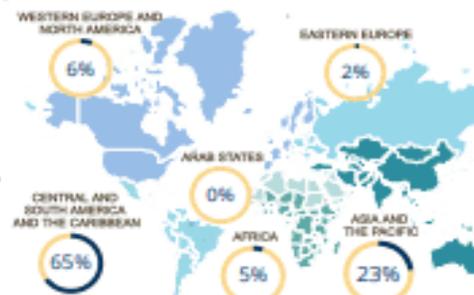
What we learned?

- UNESCO directly supported **80 IYL-related projects** on global, regional, sub-regional and national levels, 66% of which included some level of Indigenous participation. For the Decade, UNESCO could aim for not only higher but also more central and meaningful Indigenous participation.
- The **Action Plan** for the IYL identified five intervention areas. The evaluation found that UNESCO's efforts mainly concentrated on one of these: **increasing understanding, reconciliation and international cooperation**, with the other areas receiving less attention.

While global and regional projects predominated, 65% of UNESCO-supported non-global projects took place in **Central and South America and the Caribbean**, followed by Asia and the Pacific with 23%. A key opportunity for the Decade is for UNESCO to reach more regions.

While the IYL succeeded in raising awareness of Indigenous languages on international and national levels, over half of UNESCO-supported activities focused on **international meetings**, and in terms of results only 9% focused on policy development, thus only rarely leading to structural (e.g. legislative or policy) changes at the national level. The Decade will provide an opportunity to pursue this in more Member States.

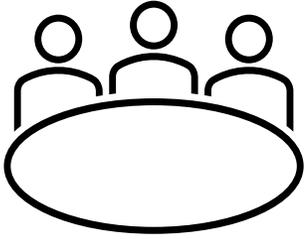
UNESCO SUPPORTED INITIATIVES ACROSS REGIONS AND BY SCOPE



UNESCO SUPPORTED INITIATIVES BY RESULT TYPE



Use



Management Response

Action Plan

Dissemination

Follow-up

What happened next?

- Integration of recommendations in the results framework & action plan for the Decade (2022-29)
- New staff with specific indigenous expertise recruited in Secretariat
- IDIL website is in 4 languages
- UNESCO supporting countries develop National Actions Plans for the Decade
- Targeted action to support national policy initiatives for ind. languages



**What did
we learn?**

Opportunities (1)

Inclusive processes enable:

- more solid and relevant findings
- fit-for purpose recommendations
- stronger stakeholder buy-in (including the communities)

It is feasible if :

- planned from the onset
- you conduct a thorough stakeholder mapping exercise.
- Indigenous peoples are prioritized throughout the process
- Multilingual evaluation team with contacts with indigenous networks

Opportunities (2)

For future evaluations:

- Determine whether indigenous peoples live/work in the area covered by the evaluation.
- Publish the RFP on EvalIndigenous
- Have indigenous peoples/experts on the evaluation team or establish an advisory group
- Consult the communities proactively
- Integrate IP's approaches/perspective in your analysis
- Assess the extent of interaction with IP in the programming itself

Challenges (1)

Identifying stakeholders:

- Difficulties around the definition: not all countries / communities accept this terminology (e.g. Africa). This can lead to information gaps.
- Distrust between certain indigenous peoples and their local governments... limited channels for UNESCO to reach the grassroots level

Resource intensive process:

- lack of time and money for translations....

Challenges (2)

Accessing stakeholders:

- Difficulty in identifying indigenous experts with evaluation experience
- Remote location of indigenous peoples - not always easily accessible even when undertaking field missions.
- Difficult to close the feedback loop and share evaluation insights with the concerned communities.



**Want to learn
more?**

Evaluation Manager



Ekaterina (Katia)
SEDI AKINA-RIVIERE

UNESCO

Principal Evaluation
Specialist

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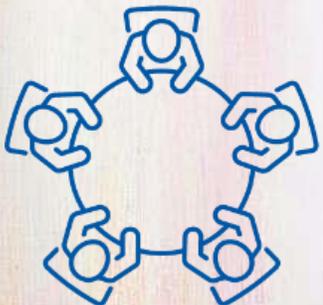
Useful websites

- [International Year of Indigenous Languages](#)
- [International Decade of Indigenous languages](#)
- [UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples' Rights](#)
- [UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues](#)
- [Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)
- [Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)
- [UNESCO World Atlas of Indigenous Languages](#)
- [UNESCO IOS website](#) to access the evaluation report and briefs
- [Minority Rights Group website](#)

Thank you for your attention



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