

United Nations General Assembly- Special Session on Indigenous Affairs
Senegal
Indigenous Peoples, Healthcare, Mental Health, and Wellness

Lack of Access to Healthcare

Throughout the world there are over 370 million indigenous people apart of 5,000 different groups located within certain parts of numerous countries. Although located within the borders of specific countries, indigenous groups are continuously ignored and often have their varied culture unaccepted by the rest of society.ⁱ Due to the isolation the indigenous people constantly receive they often have many human rights disregarded and lack access to a suitable source of healthcare. Although some countries may treat these tribes differently, they are usually overlooked and sometimes not even seen as humans, explaining their lacks of rights they receive. Depending on the country, the population differs since some may be a small portion of the population compared to the rest of society while some may be a large part of the country's population. Since many of them lack the healthcare they need the death rate is extremely high and the life expectancy is mainly under the ages of 65 due to the many illnesses and diseases that quickly spreads around the tribal regions. Cardiovascular diseases as well as cancer are the main causes for death within the indigenous groups, however, this problem and diseases continues to take lives due to continuously not being able to receive the healthcare they need in order to cure any illnesses.ⁱⁱ Along with cardiovascular diseases, cancer, and other illnesses, suicides are also very common within tribes since they do not receive the psychological health they need. Without further help with therapy, the isolation the countries put on the indigenous people will continue to bring many deaths. By ignoring the problem of healthcare the indigenous people receive, will result in many more additional deaths due to the diseases progressing too far along making it impossible to cure any diseases that spread within the cultures.

Along with many other countries, the country of Senegal has been working to improve the rights as well as healthcare the indigenous tribes receive due to indigenous groups being a large population within Senegal's society. The Wolof tribe being the largest group of indigenous people within Senegal takes up over 43.3% of the population.ⁱⁱⁱ Within Senegal alone the life expectancy is around 57 years, which is extremely low mostly due to the lack of healthcare they receive and the many diseases that constantly spread within their regions.^{iv} Due to being considered a developing country, the country of Senegal has had trouble providing a type of healthcare to the many tribes of indigenous people. However, over time they have been working to improve their healthcare to their entire population. By distributing around 12% of their budget into healthcare has significantly increased the improvement and access to healthcare. Although they have been working on healthcare, it has been difficult to provide doctors; so many tribes have been working with traditional medicines and healings. Currently the diseases most popular within the country of Senegal are HIV/AIDS, malaria, as well as malnutrition, which the 12% of the country's budget goes to healing and preventing further spreading of these diseases.^v In order to prevent further spread of diseases and continuous numbers of death, the country of Senegal along with many other countries has been working to improve the healthcare the indigenous people receive within their own country as well around the additional tribes throughout the world. By increasing the access to healthcare, the number of deaths will decrease significantly due to the opportunity with receiving a reliable type of medicine or prescription to cure the current diseases within the cultures and tribes or indigenous people.

In order to fix the problem of lack of health with the indigenous tribes, the country of Senegal has been working with additional countries to create the most reasonable solutions to overall decrease the amount of deaths due to the progressing diseases and illnesses spreading within these isolating tribes. Due to the lack of rights indigenous people receive, we the country of Senegal believe that with the implementation of the three step plan, SSF, the rights, such as increase to an access to healthcare, for indigenous people will significantly improve and impact their lives. First the S standing for the Sixty-Four Years of Life plan focuses on the low life expectancy for indigenous people due to the extreme lack of any type of healthcare. The Sixty-Four Years of Life organization will provide monthly check-ups to specific locations where there is a large indigenous population. With these monthly appointments the amount of deaths will significantly decrease allowing the life expectancy to increase higher than the average 64 years of age. In order to also view their illnesses, just like mental and communicable diseases, which are the main causes of deaths, the Sixty-Years of Life organization will transport modern technology to take these tests to make sure everyone is tested early before the disease becomes too big and progresses too far along. Because it is difficult for the tribes to transport or the lack of doctors within their regions, having the doctors from other countries come to them will significantly impact their lives and increase the amount of rights they receive overall improving their health significantly. Next, the second S stands for Shots, which will provide an easy access to a source of medicine to cure many diseases that are popularly found within the many tribes of indigenous people. By dropping down boxes of shots as well as different types of prescriptions down from planes will give these tribes an opportunity to receive the care they need in order to heal and stop the constant spread of the main diseases. Since many of these tribes are not given the right access to medicine they are currently usually using traditional medicines or having local small doctors or midwives, which are not always fully trained and not know or understand many procedures. Lastly, the F stands for Fresh which focuses on providing an access to fresh food allowing the people to receive the nutrition they constantly ignore or not able to receive overall affecting their health causing a large problem of obesity and malnutrition. Fresh fruits and vegetables will be brought into the rural places monthly, most commonly where the indigenous people are located, which will prevent further malnutrition as well as increase the food supply to the families struggling financially to provide food within their tribes. With the Fresh plan put in place the indigenous people's health will significantly increase resulting in less of a need to health assistance and increasing the chances to live. With the implementation of the three-step plan, SSF, the increase to healthcare access will significantly increase overall improving the health within the indigenous tribes.

Preventing the Indigenous People from Being Forced off their Land

Dating back to the Indian Removal Act during 1838 and 1839, inhabitants of land, normally called indigenous people, are constantly forced off their homeland due to an extreme change in climate or even because of the country's want for additional land for their own improvement.^{vi} The extreme change in climate has continuously pushed off many tribes from their traditional land they have owned for many generations. Differing on the region, the climate has caused numerous droughts, the melting of ice caps, and change in sea levels. Because of these changes in weather and the current environment, the food supply and living conditions change dramatically affecting how the tribes live usually causing the people to leave their lands since the begin struggling to find access to a food supply and a constant source of water. Along with climate change, countries have also forced indigenous people off their land because of the want for more land to add onto their country and add in more cities and towns. Deforestation has also been a problem for indigenous people because many of their daily resources within forests are taken away due to the destruction of their land. Along with humans destroying forests, there have also been an increase in bugs and insects within many regions where the indigenous people live that have also been destroying the resources coming from the forests resulting in them to eventually leave their homeland. However, due to constantly being pushed off land after land leaves them homeless stuck on the streets struggling to find access to a type of healthcare as well as a constant food supply. Without improving the human rights the indigenous people receive, they will continuously be ignored by the country's society and constantly receive mistreatment, such as the forcement off their homeland that they had inhabited for decades.

Due to indigenous groups taking up much of Senegal's population, they have been working on giving specific land to each tribe to prevent any land being taken away from them overall preserving their rights and prevent any from being disregarded. Having over ten separate tribes, Senegal works on disturbing the land and preventing any taking of their land. Since many people within the indigenous groups of Senegal are farmers, it is necessary for them to continue to control their land, however, in the past many of them have been forced off their land leading to many conflicts and wars.^{vii} Unlike many other countries however, the country of Senegal does not ignore their indigenous groups mainly because they take up such a large population. As shown when land was distributed to the Wolof's tribes, although it was taken away from farmers located in Casamance.^{viii} Rather taking lands from other groups of people, the country of Senegal along with many other countries believe that the indigenous people need to have an increase in rights. Along with the countries taking the land from the indigenous people in Senegal, they have also had to be forced to give up certain land due to the extreme change in climate. Due to the lack of rain and constant droughts seen throughout the country, many indigenous people have been struggling to continue their farming, which brings in their main source of cash crop of rice. With these droughts indigenous people in Senegal have no place to live and left with no more additional income. Without further attention, indigenous people will constantly be forced off their land with no one else to stay.

In order to increase the rights indigenous people receive, the country of Senegal along with other countries have been working to allow indigenous people to gain rights and prevent them from being forced off their land that they had inhabited for such a long period of time. Due

to the lack of rights indigenous people receive, we the country of Senegal believe that with the implementation of the three step plan, PSW, the rights, such as prevention of being forced off their land, for indigenous people will significantly improve and impact their lives. First, the P stands for Property, which focuses on preserving all the indigenous people's land due to constantly being forced off because of the destruction from climate change or the country want for more land for their own improvement. This plan will provide a permanent amount of land to different tribes as well as giving them and preventing any destruction of forests within a 30-mile radius to their land in order to provide them with resources to daily life. Next, the S stands for Shelter bringing attention to the homes many of the indigenous people lack due to constantly being pushed off their land making it unnecessary to build a permanent shelter. However, by countries giving them land will allow them to build a suitable shelter able to withstand the constant change in climate popular within the different regions. By providing leftover wood from near by construction or even mud with provide them with suitable structures overall impacting their lives significantly. Lastly, the W stands for Wells allowing for the construction of local wells in order to bring in a source of constant water into some tribe's lands. Because many droughts are popular within many regions where these indigenous people are located, the wells will prevent the soil from drying up resulting in the prevention of the tribes being forced to leave their lands due to droughts and lack of water. With a sustainable amount of water, the tribes are able to continue to farm bringing in a suitable source of a food supply. The country of Senegal believes that will the implementation of the three step plan, PSW, we can significantly increase the amount of rights the indigenous people receive especially prevent them from being forced off their own land.

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Extreme Poverty of Indigenous People

Due to the lack of rights indigenous people receive as well as the isolation that results because of it, many of them suffer with poverty and ignorance from the rest of society within that specific country. By being 15% of the poverty population, indigenous people constantly struggle mainly due to their loss of human rights.^{ix} Indigenous people often find themselves forced off their land either because of climate change or the country's decision to gain more land, leaving them without a home and no place to provide a stable food supply to their families. Lack of financial assistance from the government, indigenous people continue to struggle having more and more tribes brought to poverty. Since the governments often ignore their needs, the extreme poverty of indigenous people results in a lower death rate as well due to the lack of health the people receive as well as the access to food and nutrition. Either living on the streets homeless or living on their land, these tribes are constantly mistreated from the rest of society within that country leading to no further development of acceptance and an understanding to their culture.^x The large gap between indigenous people and the rest of society results in this problem of poverty to continue throughout the world.^{xi} Because of the large poverty rate, many of the indigenous people turn to drugs and alcohol sometimes even resulting in high rates of suicide. Without specifics of the extreme situation of poverty for the indigenous people, this issue will continue to rise affecting more and more people and sometimes bringing a whole tribe to poverty and financial problems.

The country of Senegal has experienced a large increase of poverty within their country especially for the indigenous people who are constantly struggling to find a temporary shelter and supply of food. Being affected by the poverty in the past Senegal has been working with numerous organizations and assistance from other countries to help decrease the large poverty rate within their country and continue to provide help to other countries struggling through similar things. The Hunger Project, for example, has been a consistent partner in working to end poverty within Senegal by distributing food to people on the streets to help put an end to hunger and provide them with a food supply since many are struggling to find a little amount of food, especially to the many children homeless.^{xii} With the past few years; Senegal has been improving their poverty situation as well as the overall acceptance for indigenous people. In these years, Senegal's overall population has increased their education enrollment up to 86% emphasizing the rapid change in acceptance in the different cultures.^{xiii} The poverty for the indigenous people is a continuous problem that will continue not to be fixed unless many countries including Senegal come together to create strong solutions in order to prevent these tribes from living on the streets struggling to find food and a shelter to survive. With solutions, not only will indigenous people be given extra attention to prevent poverty, but they will also receive the many human rights they finally deserve and prevent mistreatment and any rights being disregarded.

In order to help poverty come to an end and increase further development for the indigenous people, the countries will have to come together to work on the tribes improvement to help increase their human rights. Due to the lack of rights indigenous people receive, we the country of Senegal believe that with the implementation of the three step plan, HUT, the rights and providing homes for indigenous people will significantly improve and impact their lives.

First, the H stands for Home bringing attention to the lack of shelter crisis extremely popular within the indigenous cultures. Due to countries ignoring the indigenous people within their borders, many tribes struggle with poverty because of the lack of food and access to healthcare. Since poverty is so popular, providing small shelters throughout small towns such as small huts or shacks will provide a temporary home for indigenous people who recently became homeless due to being forced off their land. Next, the U stands for UN debit cards allowing many people within the tribes who are struggling financially to provide a way to buy a source of food for their families. UN debit cards are prepaid cards with \$27 on it funded by the United Nations World Food Program. With these UN debit cards not only with the indigenous people struggling to survive receive a continuous food supply, but also significantly impact the country's economy providing a type of incentive to countries encouraging them to distribute the cards to the tribes.^{xiv} Lastly, the T stands for Travel, which focuses on the overall rights the indigenous people, receive. To preserve their rights we the country of Senegal strongly encourage the expansion of the whl.travel organization. This website organizes traveling for tourists to view the cultures of these indigenous groups allowing them to experience their daily life. By viewing their life many of the past tourists have accepted their culture and had an overall understanding of their way of life. Senegal believes that will the implementation of the three-step plan, HUT, the lives of the indigenous people will significantly improve due to the lack of poverty and additional support from countries around the world.

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- i <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/who-are-indigenous-peoples>
 - ii <http://www.aihw.gov.au/indigenous-observatory/reports/health-and-welfare-2015/life-expectancy-and-mortality/>
 - iii <http://www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/senegal-guide>
 - iv <http://minorityrights.org/country/senegal/>
 - v <http://www.our-africa.org/senegal/poverty-healthcare>
 - vi <https://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Indian.html>
 - vii <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/ourpublications/csq/article/losing-ground-indigenous-rights-and-recourse-across-africa>
 - viii <http://www.refworld.org/docid/49749cb332.html>
 - ix <http://www.ipsnews.net/2012/06/poverty-rates-strikingly-high-among-indigenous-populations/>
 - x http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/democratic-governance-and-peacebuilding/rule-of-law--justice-and-security/human-rights/empowering_indigenous_peoples1.html
 - xi <http://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/why-are-indigenous-peoples-more-likely-be-poor>
 - xii <http://www.thp.org/our-work/where-we-work/africa/senegal/>
 - xiii <http://borgenproject.org/poverty-in-senegal/>
 - xiv <http://mashable.com/2013/10/16/syrian-refugee-ecards/#9XvSCkiJPkq1>