

Indigenous Women's Rights

A SIMPLIFIED VERSION

Enshrined in

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)



Equality among all peoples and between women and men

Indigenous peoples are free and equal to all other peoples. Indigenous women are free and equal to all men and women. They have the right to be free from violence and any kind of discrimination in exercising their rights, in particular those based on their indigenous origin or identity. (UNDRIP Articles 2, 22) States must ensure that all women can enjoy the same human rights and fundamental freedoms as men in political, social, economic and cultural fields by passing laws to end discriminatory practices against women and ensuring those laws are enforced. (CEDAW Articles 1, 2, 3, 15)

Participation in decision making

Indigenous women have the right to participate in decision-making in matters that would affect their rights. (UNDRIP Article 18) States shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that women and men have equal rights to participate in politics and public affairs, and to represent their communities and countries. (CEDAW Articles 7, 8)



Right to identity and nationality

Every indigenous woman has the right to a nationality and the right to belong to an indigenous community or a nation, in accordance with their traditions and customs of the community or nation concerned. (UNDRIP Articles 6, 9) States shall grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their nationality. Women shall not be forced to change nationality nor rendered stateless due to marriage. (CEDAW Article 9)

Secure lives free from violence

Indigenous women have rights to life, physical and mental integrity, liberty and security of person. (UNDRIP Article 7) States shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to stop all forms of trafficking of women and exploitation of prostitution of the women. (CEDAW Article 6)



Access to education in own languages and culture

Indigenous women have rights to all levels and forms of state education without discrimination. They have the right to education in their own languages and culture. Indigenous women should be able to share with future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies and literatures. (UNDRIP Articles 13, 14) States shall ensure that all women regardless of their ethnic origin and where they live – in cities or in villages – have the same access to education as men. Stereotyped ideas of male and female roles should be removed from educational materials and programmes. (CEDAW Article 10)

Equality in work, property and law

Indigenous women should have equal employment opportunities and benefits, including social security and equal pay. States should act to eliminate discrimination so that indigenous women have all rights established under applicable international and domestic laws. Indigenous women have rights to property and to sign contracts. (CEDAW Articles 11, 15; UNDRIP Article 17)



Access to health care

Indigenous women have rights to all social and health services without discrimination. They should have equal standards of physical and mental health. They have rights to cultivate and use their traditional medicines. Indigenous women should be able to access adequate nutrition and healthcare services including family planning, pregnancy and birth care. States should take all necessary steps towards equality in health care. (CEDAW Article 12; UNDRIP Article 24)

Economic and social equality

States should take measures to improve the economic and social conditions of indigenous women. Indigenous women should have access to financial credit, social security and participation in cultural life. They should participate in decision-making about community development, especially housing and education. As well as indigenous women, states must consider the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, youth, children and people with disabilities. (CEDAW Articles 13, 14; UNDRIP Articles 21, 22)

