

Native problems

From developed countries like USA to the developing African nations, indigenous communities constitute the most poor and neglected sections. So it comes as little surprise that these communities have a shorter lifespan and suffer from a host of diseases, including mental stress and HIV/AIDS

Global scenario

370 million indigenous people reside in **90 countries**

5,000 the number of indigenous groups

5% of the world's population is constituted by indigenous peoples

15% of the world's poor are indigenous peoples




NORTH AMERICA
6.6 million indigenous people | **5** major groups

Major health issues

- High prevalence of **lifestyle diseases** such as diabetes
- **Suicide rate** in indigenous young (15-24 years) 3.5 times higher than the national average; High rate of violence
- **Alcohol abuse is 6.5 times more** in native Americans

Major reasons for poor health

- 50% Canadian and 60% American indigenous people live in cities and are among the poorest
- Government policy in the US and Canada to forcefully send indigenous kids to boarding schools to expunge their identities has pushed **suicide** rates and **mental distress**

 **Life expectancy**
Difference between life span of an indigenous person and the national average of the country

Note: Most countries do not maintain proper records of their indigenous population. Figures used are based on the most recent available data

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Analysis: Rajit Sengupta
Data sources: UN's State of the World's Indigenous Peoples report; Lancet's indigenous and tribal people's health: a population study

CENTRAL, SOUTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
50 million indigenous people | **600** major groups



Major health issues

- 60% higher **infant mortality** rate as compared to rest of the population
- In Bolivia, the Guarani tribe has a **prevalence of tuberculosis eight times higher** than that of the national average
- High rate of substance abuse, depression and HIV/AIDS

Major reasons for poor health

- Indigenous people live in the worst social conditions
- **Two centuries of colonial rule and migration of slaves** have had an adverse impact on the health of the indigenous people

 **Greenland**
-9.2 years

THE ARCTIC
2.75 million indigenous people | **2** major groups



Major health issues

- High rates of chronic diseases
- Suicide rate and tobacco-related diseases are high in Greenland

Major reasons for poor health

- Poor health facilities in the north where most indigenous groups live
- **Harsh climatic conditions** and pollution in the north
- **Colonisation** of Greenland by Denmark has affected the health of Sami people, who do not speak Danish, the common language of doctors

RUSSIA
50,000 indigenous people | **4** major groups



Major health issues

- High levels of genetic and psychological disorders, and stress
- New health problems include myopia, heart diseases and cancer
- The population of women exceeds that of men; Low-life expectancy in men

Major reasons for poor health

- **Migration** has reduced indigenous population which has reduced from 56% of the total population in 1926 to just 4.4% in 1989
- **Pollution** is degrading the habitat of indigenous people

 **Norway**
-1.6 years

 **Russia**
-15 years

ASIA
14.2 million indigenous people | **750** groups in South Asia



Major health issues

- Indigenous peoples in Asia die younger,
- They have high rates of malnutrition, child mortality, and carry the high burden of **"diseases of the poor"**, namely undernutrition and infectious diseases

Major reasons for poor health

- In the majority of Asian countries, the **language** spoken by indigenous population is not recognised by the state
- Health of the indigenous peoples is often **not a priority** for the national governments

 **China**
-2.2 years

 **India**
-3.1 years

 **Cameroon**
-21.5 years

 **Kenya**
-13.1 years

 **Australia**
-21 years

 **New Zealand**
-7 years

AFRICA
14.2 million indigenous people | **34** major groups



Major health issues

- Maternal, child health issues and high infant mortality
- **HIV/AIDS**, anaemia and tuberculosis

Major reasons for poor health

- Indigenous people live in remote areas
- Inadequate cultural adaptation to the delivery of health services. In sub-Saharan Africa, the **ratio of traditional healers to the population is 1:500**. For doctors trained in western medicine the ratio is **1:40,000**
- High cost of travel to health centres and drugs an impediment

THE PACIFIC
12 million indigenous people | data on the number of major groups unavailable



Major health issues

- High rates of avoidable deaths, non-communicable and infectious diseases
- Malnutrition and high maternal mortality deaths
- High **alcohol abuse**, smoking, mental stress and depression, HIV/AIDS

Major reasons for poor health

- **Colonialism** and **Christianity** destroyed traditional healthcare practices. It also introduced new diseases among indigenous people
- **Globalisation** has increased poverty and rate of unemployment