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Full Text

Owing to the cross-cutting nature of gender equality, it is also critical that gender perspectives be fully integrated into the implementation and monitoring of all the other objectives associated with the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals.

Comments

The ECLAC Women and Development Unit, in conjunction with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), organized an expert meeting entitled “Gender, poverty, race, ethnicity: the situation in Latin America”, which took place at ECLAC headquarters on 7 and 8 November 2006. The meeting, held within the framework of the poverty, gender and race project coordinated by UNIFEM, was held in order to follow up on the decision taken at the ninth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Mexico City from 10 to 12 June 2004, to promote and strengthen affirmative actions for empowering rural, indigenous, Afro-descendent, young and elderly women, and for increasing their access to resources by analysing the progress made in reviewing poverty reduction programmes and their intersection with the dimensions of gender, race and ethnicity. The meeting had four goals: (a) to analyse the situation of indigenous and Afro-descendent women in Latin America; (b) to analyse methodologies of poverty measurement; (c) to review poverty reduction programmes and policies in four countries of the region (Bolivia, Brazil,

Guatemala and Paraguay) to determine whether or not they included the gender, race and ethnicity dimensions; and (d) to present an overview of policies carried out in the countries from the perspective of gender, race and ethnicity. The following agenda items were discussed: (a) the situation of indigenous and Afro-descendent women: analysis of the social and economic status of indigenous and Afro-descendent women in comparison to that of men; (b) methodologies for measuring poverty: analysis of methodologies used to measure poverty and challenges for disaggregating the dimensions of gender, race and ethnicity; (c) UNIFEM studies and experiences in Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala and Paraguay; and (d) monitoring and assessment of national policies, programmes and experiences in relation to poverty reduction. UNICEF reports: "In line with its mission statement, UNICEF works to promote the rights of indigenous women and girls. As evidenced in its publication *State of the World's Children 2007: Executive Summary*, UNICEF believes that gender equality benefits women and children and has a tremendous positive impact on the development of society as a whole. In Guatemala, UNICEF has supported the strengthening of a municipal system of scholarship for indigenous girls from some of the poorest municipalities of the country. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, UNICEF strengthened and promoted a strategy for the care for women victims of violence in Zulia through the publication of awareness-raising material. In Bolivia, a gender-sensitive literacy programme for rural women's councils is being supported to help indigenous women leaders not only know how to read and write but also have more influence on municipal councils regarding legal and administrative procedures. In Colombia, in 2006, UNICEF provided technical assistance to local indigenous women's organizations in the department of Narino to include a gender focus into the strengthening of youth organizations. A total of 650 men and women were thereby engaged in a collective reflection on gender equity, which had a positive impact in reducing violence and increasing indigenous women's participation in managing local organizations."

Area of Work

Indigenous Women and Girls, MDGs