



Addressee: States, UN agencies, IPOs

Paragraph #4 Session #5 (2006)

Full Text

During the dialogue with indigenous peoples on the Millennium Development Goals, many indigenous organizations made statements about the urgent need to redefine the Goals. While the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues appreciates that it may not be possible to redefine the Goals, it also recognizes that there is a clear need to redefine approaches to the implementation of the Goals so as to include the perspectives, concerns, experiences and world views of indigenous peoples. Statements also confirmed that there was a need for indigenous peoples to provide their own definitions of poverty and development and that there should be full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in the implementation of the Goals.

Comments

The Government of Switzerland supports the observations contained in paragraph 4 as they are in conformity with the rights-based approach adopted by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation for its development work. Switzerland states: "Although redefining the Millennium Development Goals at the present time would not be a useful exercise, States should consistently ensure the inclusion and participation of indigenous groups in order to facilitate more effective implementation of the goals. Similarly, in large-scale development projects that affect indigenous communities or that are undertaken on land that historically belongs to indigenous communities, there must be effective

participation, consultation and prior agreement (namely, free and informed prior consent) by those communities before such projects can be implemented.”

The Russian Federation reports that its federal target programme “Economic and Social Development of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the North”, planned till 2011, is being implemented in 29 regions of the country. In 2006, the funding for the programme was increased from 103 mln to 205.6 mln roubles. Currently the Ministry of Regional Development of the Russian Federation is developing another federal target programme, “Economic and Social Development of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia, and Far East” (2009-2015). This programme will fund projects and research in the field of economic and social development of numeriacally small indigenous peoples of the North. The main tasks of the national policy in the North are to improve the demographic situation and to decrease mortality, especially among children and participants in the labor force, through a system of health services.

The Government of Spain reports: “(a) Spain is becoming ever more aware of the need to focus specifically on indigenous peoples. Thus, for the first time, the Master Plan for Spanish Cooperation for 2005-2008 explicitly includes cooperation with indigenous peoples among its sectoral priorities. This commitment has increased both the quantity and quality of cooperation assistance in this area, and many of the Permanent Forum’s recommendations are included in the new policy’s principles. The overall objective of this new policy is to promote the recognition and effective exercise of the right of indigenous peoples to coordinate their own social, economic, political and cultural development processes. (b)AECI provided 200,000 euros in support of a project in Guatemala entitled “Coordination of the United Nations Millennium goals and objectives, peace agreements and national development priorities within the framework of the Mayan people’s Bactun”. Through this support, it sought to foster a new participatory development for Guatemala, inspired by the provisions of the peace agreements and the Millennium Development Goals. One of the project’s activities is to encourage indigenous communities, social sectors and peoples to contribute to and assume ownership of the discussion, design, endorsement and promotion of economic, social and political processes that are directly related to peacebuilding and the Millennium Development Goals, in order to enrich the social and institutional aspects of a new development based on Guatemala’s multicultural reality.”

UNICEF believes that the focus efforts aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals should be redefined, taking in consideration the perspectives,

experience and world view of indigenous people. In that regard, the UNICEF Americas and Caribbean Regional Office discussed its medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2009 as the Fund's contribution to the Millennium Development Goals with indigenous leaders, who shared their views and orientation regarding the specific key result areas for indigenous children. One of the decisions adopted at the UNICEF Consultative Group of indigenous leaders was to publish those views in a document in 2007.

World Food Programme reports: "Even though the World Food Programme (WFP) is not mentioned in the recommendations identified by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in its report on its fifth session, WFP fully understands the importance of indigenous peoples' issues. Although WFP does not have specific programmes for indigenous people unless they are food-insecure, as the Programme's assistance is based on food insecurity and not strictly on the social status of an individual, some WFP programmes have included indigenous people based on their food security status."

IOM supports efforts to integrate indigenous issues into development frameworks and supports partnerships built to ensure the protection of and respect for indigenous peoples' rights and the realization of their visions of development with respect for culture and identity.

The UNITAR training programme to enhance conflict prevention and peacebuilding capacities of indigenous peoples' representatives focuses on strengthening negotiation skills so that indigenous peoples may more effectively negotiate in development and other processes that affect them. The programme is designed to increase the effectiveness of indigenous representatives in engaging in dialogue on decisions that affect them and contributing to the constructive resolution of problems facing their communities in partnership with other concerned parties. The programme also examines mechanisms and processes that promote participation of diverse groups in order to counter marginalization and exclusion. Indigenous experts and former participants are consulted in the design and planning of each programme to ensure that it is addressing key concerns and evolving issues faced by indigenous peoples. They advise on what cases should be included from each region, and make recommendations on top resource persons as well as on participants and organizations that could best benefit from and contribute to the programme. Special Rapporteurs and a World Bank staff member are also invited to address the group on a range of development issues, policies and programmes relating to land and resources. MDGs and reports thereon, as well as UN reports on dialogue

processes over natural resources, are provided to each participant as reference materials in his or her handbook for the training.

UNDP reports: "National human development reports (HDRs) analyse the development challenges facing indigenous peoples at the country level. The Guatemala HDR (2005), 'Ethnic-cultural diversion: citizenry in a plural State,' provides important disaggregated data related to human development which sparked a national debate on government response to racism, discrimination and consistent exclusion. A follow-up to the report was elaborated during 2006 by a group of Mayan professionals and spiritual guides in an effort to clarify the concept of human development within the Mayan world view, examined in the book Raxalaj Mayab' K'aslemalil (2007)."

Area of Work

MDGs