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Special theme: Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples: redefining Goals

Information received from the United Nations system

I. UNIFEM*

II. UNCTAD*

* The present document was submitted late in order to ensure the inclusion of the most recent information.

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UNIFEM

Summary

Since 1994, UNIFEM has been developing projects and programmes that respond to the need to incorporate gendered indigenous issues to the forefront of our agenda. Integrating indigenous women's rights is fundamental to UNIFEM and it seeks to more fully develop and expand its existing projects while eliciting the cooperation and support of other UN agencies.

UNIFEM's programme focuses on advocacy for indigenous women's rights and eliminating discrimination. UNIFEM's approach rests on mainstreaming gender and women's human rights in its programme by engaging indigenous groups, particularly women, boys and girls, and enhancing civic engagement through strategic partnerships between associations and advocate groups.

Mainstreaming gender within the larger context of indigenous rights is at the core of UNIFEM's project implementation strategy and UNIFEM recognizes that incorporation of indigenous women's issues and distinct interests is an ongoing process which UNIFEM seeks to support.

A. Response to recommendation addressed exclusively to the particular agency

Recommendation 119:

1. Within the framework of inter-agency work in Central America, UNIFEM with the cooperation of ECLAC, UNDP, PNUMA, UNFPA, UNICEF, ACNUR, IOM and PAHO held

the Regional Meeting of Indigenous Women and UN System Organizations in Panama in 2005, where a regional Inter-agency Support Group for indigenous peoples was established. Jointly with academic research institutions and civil society organizations, UNIFEM developed a follow-up strategy with indigenous women's organizations in Central America and Mexico to promote respect for indigenous women's rights. The proposal has been developed within the Inter-agency work framework and is part of UNIFEM's participation in the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues. UNIFEM has been part of the creation of a working group in Mexico that will contribute to the CCA/UNDAF process with the indigenous women's perspective (UNFPA, ECLAC and the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights).

2. Also in the framework of the inter-agency work in Ecuador, UNIFEM - under a Memorandum of Understanding between UNHCR and UNFPA - supports displaced indigenous women in the northern border of Ecuador in issues of sexual and reproductive health, gender based violence and HIV/AIDS. Additionally, UNIFEM supported a national survey that included violence against women with ethnic perspective, and has been participating in the interagency multicultural thematic group, ensuring that gender mainstreaming is included, and particular attention has been given to the preparations for the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

3. UNIFEM is a active member of the Task Force on Indigenous Women of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANGWE) and contributed to the Task Force's

publication: “Indigenous Women and the United Nations System; Good Practices and Lessons Learned” with two cases on UNIFEM’s work with indigenous women in Bolivia and Ecuador.

Recommendation 120

4. UNIFEM has been in close consultation with indigenous women organizations involved in the first-world fair of indigenous women art makers, to be held in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico, in April 2006, with a view to supporting the participation of indigenous women in this manifestation.

B. Response to recommendations addressed to one or more agencies or to the United Nations system in general under one or more items of the Permanent Forum's mandate,

5. UNIFEM strengthened its partnership with indigenous women and leaders of Latin America and the Caribbean, ensured their active participation and facilitated sub-regional meetings to identify priorities and make recommendations for agency support. UNIFEM has organized an interagency dialogue to listen to the demands and priorities of indigenous women which led to the development of a three-year regional programme for Mexico and Central America and the leveraging of resources from UN agencies to support said programme.

6. UNIFEM has stressed the agenda of Indigenous Women in two projects in the Central American region, especially related to economic rights and political participation of Indigenous Women in Guatemala.

7. Addressing the need for special indicators for indigenous groups, indigenous women issues were incorporated as part of the 6th Annual International Meeting on Gender Statistics in Aguascalientes – Mexico, organized by UNIFEM, the Mexican National Women’s Machinery and the National Statistics Office, representatives from 14 countries attended this meeting. As result, a working group on gender statistics for indigenous populations was set up to follow up the meeting. In, Ecuador, UNIFEM supported a capacity-building workshop on mainstreaming of indigenous and ethnic issues in the production of statistics.

8. Regarding the work with indigenous women’s organizations and participation, UNIFEM’s Office and the Andean Region has supported a consultation with indigenous women in the five Andean countries on their priorities on political participation, to construct an indigenous women agenda to be launched in Quito. UNIFEM Southern Cone, supported the Paraguayan national indigenous women’s network to organize the 2nd National Meeting of Indigenous Women and contribute to the strengthening of CONAMURI, the Paraguayan indigenous women’s group. Finally, UNIFEM supported indigenous women’s network and advocacy for the Beijing +10 follow up which contributed in the approval of a resolution sponsored by Bolivia on indigenous women’s rights.

II. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Summary

One of UNCTAD's mandate is to research ways to protect traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities. The research is intended to make an in-depth, practical and substantive contribution to policy dialogue and consensus-building on the topic. It will be available as an information document for the March 2006 CBD COP 8 in Curitiba, Brazil.

9. The mandate adopted at UNCTAD X (Bangkok, 2000) to study ways to protect traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of local and indigenous communities and enhance cooperation on research and development on technologies associated with the sustainable use of biological resources was renewed at UNCTAD's eleventh session, in June 2004.

10. The protection of traditional knowledge (TK) is an important issue for indigenous groups, yet many feel that the intellectual property (IP) system fails to adequately safeguard TK. A number of actions have been proposed by developing countries and others in order to redress the imbalances in the IP system at the international level. One key proposal is to require the disclosure of origin/source of genetic resources and associated TK in relevant patent

applications. This would help countries keep track of how their genetic resources are being used and patented abroad. Such a requirement could also include evidence of prior informed consent (PIC) and benefit sharing.

11. In response to an invitation by the Seventh Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 2004, UNCTAD commissioned a research paper entitled 'Analysis of Options for Implementing Disclosure of Origin Requirements in Intellectual Property Applications' (UNCTAD/DITC/TED/2005/14). The paper argues that there is a need for an international system of mandatory disclosure of origin requirements, and sets out the outline for such a system. It is intended to make an in-depth, practical and substantive contribution to policy dialogue and consensus-building on the topic. It will be available as an information document for the March 2006 CBD COP 8 in Curitiba, Brazil.

12. UNCTAD is also carrying out research into further possible measures connected with the protection of TK, such as an international regime for the recognition of national regulations on access and benefit-sharing.
