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**Indigenous Women, the Millennium Development Goals and
the Beijing Platform for Action**

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Indigenous Women, the Millennium Development Goals and the Beijing Platform for Action

“Here, amidst the peaks of the Andes in Peru, the enormous contributions of indigenous peoples to human civilization are everywhere on display....And, throughout Latin America, one sees the extraordinary diversity of indigenous cultures and the potential contribution their knowledge and values can make to poverty eradication, sustainable agriculture, and indeed to our concept of life. From here in Peru to the Philippines, and from the deserts of Australia to the ice-covered lands of the Arctic circle, indigenous peoples have much to teach to our world.

But come to the Andean region is also to appreciate how fragile the existence of many indigenous peoples is. In this region – and in many parts of the world, too – indigenous lands, waters, languages, health and cultures, long devastated by the legacy of colonial oppression, continue to be under grave threat. The environment is being destroyed and indigenous peoples are too often excluded from decisions that crucially affect the life of their communities. They suffer from prejudice, poverty, and disease. Some indigenous groups even face the terrible threat of extinction....

Indigenous peoples must play their full partners in efforts to protect their children, just as they must participate in all decisions that affect their communities and the countries of which they are citizens. Already, indigenous women are making a special contribution to these processes. They must be allowed and encouraged to do more.”¹

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan
12 November 2003
Macchu Picchu, Peru

This year’s review of the Beijing Platform for Action [the Platform] comes at a time that the International Decade for the World’s Indigenous Peoples has ended and that a new Decade has been declared. It coincides also with a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals five years after its formulation.

The BPFA is “*an agenda for women's empowerment. It aims at accelerating the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and at removing all the obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making. This means that the principle of shared power and responsibility should be established between women and men at home, in the workplace and in the wider national and international communities. Equality between women and men is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and is also a necessary and fundamental prerequisite for equality, development and peace.*”² The BPFA identified twelve critical areas of concern which governments, the international community and civil society must take action on in order to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women, to wit: *women and poverty eradication, education and training, health, eradication of violence; armed conflict; economy; power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms; human rights; media; environment, and the girl-child.*

When the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the International Decade of the World’s Indigenous People [the Decade] in its resolution 48/163 in 21 December 1993 with its theme

¹ UN Press Release SG/SM/9005, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2003>

² <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/index.html>

"Indigenous people, partnership in action", it specified that its primary goal was strengthening international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous peoples in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education and health.³ The following year, specific objectives were formulated.⁴

At the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000, 147 heads of state undertook commitment to combat extreme poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and gender inequality by 2015 and work towards the promotion of sustainable human development, peace and security, human rights, democracy and good governance. All these had been part of the agenda of several conferences and summits for a number of years since the 1990s and now put together as the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs).

The following table shows the linkages between the goals and actions called for in the Platform, the MDGs and the Decade.

Critical areas of concern Goals	Millennium Development Goals	UN Decade of IPs Goal
To achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women through actions in the following areas:	<i>GOAL 8: DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT</i>	<i>Strengthening international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous peoples in such areas as:</i>
	<i>GOAL 3: PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN</i>	
		<u>Development</u>
<u>Women and Poverty</u> <i>The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women</i>	<i>GOAL 1: ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER</i>	
<u>Education and Training of women</u> <i>Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to education and training</i>	<i>GOAL 2: ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION</i>	<u>Education</u>
<u>Women and Health</u> <i>Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to health care and related services</i>	<i>GOAL 1: ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER</i>	<u>Health</u>

³ <http://www.un.org/rights/indigenous/backgrounder1.htm>

⁴ These objectives are:

- (a) *Specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other international and national agencies, as well as communities and private enterprises, should devote special attention to development activities of benefit to indigenous people;*
- (b) *The education of indigenous and non-indigenous societies concerning the situation, cultures, languages, rights and aspirations of indigenous people, including, in particular, efforts in cooperation with the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education;*
- (c) *The promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous people and their empowerment to make choices that enable them to retain their cultural identity while participating in political, economic and social life, with full respect for their cultural values, languages, traditions and forms of social organization;*
- (d) *The further implementation of recommendations pertaining to indigenous people of all high-level international conferences and, in particular, consideration of the implementation of the recommendation by the World Conference on Human Rights to establish a permanent forum for indigenous people in the United Nations system;*
- (e) *The adoption of the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and the further development of international standards as well as national legislation for the protection and promotion of the human rights of indigenous people, including effective means of monitoring and guaranteeing those rights.*

	GOAL 5: IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH GOAL 6: COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES	
<u>Violence against women</u>		
<u>Women and armed conflict</u> <i>The effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women, including those living under foreign occupation</i>		
<u>Women and the economy</u> <i>Inequality in economic structures and policies, in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources</i>		
<u>Women in power and decision-making</u> <i>Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels</i>		
<u>Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women</u> <i>Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women</i>		
<u>Human rights of women</u> <i>Lack of respect for and inadequate promotion and protection of the human rights of women</i>		<u>Human rights</u>
<u>Women and media</u> <i>Stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to and participation in all communication systems, especially in the media</i>		
<u>Women and the environment</u> <i>Gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment</i>	GOAL 7: ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	<u>Environment</u>
<u>The Girl-child</u> <i>Persistent discrimination against and violation of the rights of the girl child</i>	GOAL 4: REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY	

The Platform contains a number of commitments for indigenous women but these are quite broad in scope and relate to poverty, health, violence against women, armed conflict, the economy, power and decision-making, human rights, the media and environment.

The Global Framework of the Platform, para.32, states: “ *The past decade has also witnessed a growing recognition of the distinct interests and concerns of indigenous women, whose identity, cultural traditions and forms of social organization enhance and strengthen the communities in which they live. Indigenous women often face barriers both as women and as members of indigenous communities*”

Para 46 under Strategic objectives and Actions further states that “ *The Platform for Action recognizes that women face barriers to full equality and advancement because of such factors as their race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability, because they are indigenous women or because of other status....*”

The Beijing NGO Forum brought together for the first time so many indigenous women from all over the world to talk about their situation, their actions, their analysis and their dreams which was synthesized in the Indigenous Women's Beijing Declaration, a document submitted to the official Conference. In 2002 during the Beijing+5 Review, the International Indigenous Women's Forum was formed to give a voice to indigenous women who were attending the NGO and official activities for which they issued their own statement.

Efforts to bring together indigenous peoples to talk about MDGs were done in the past two years. We, in Tebtebba⁵, organized a roundtable discussion on *Indigenous Peoples and the Millennium Development Goals* during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in 2002. We also participated in the *UNDP Forum on MDGs in Asia Pacific* which was held in Laos in October 2002 where we presented some views on where indigenous peoples are with MDGs. At the Second Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues last May 2003, the UNDP Civil Society Organization team also held a brief consultation with indigenous peoples on the MDGs. Some of the views in this paper emerged from these various processes together with other citations from other sources and fora.

While the MDGs are claimed to be the distillation of the many goals and targets set by the various multilateral conferences held in the 90s it is not clear who decided what the final MDGs should be. Indigenous peoples, in fact, have asked when, where, and who were involved in this distillation process? It is because of this non-involvement in MDG processes that there is a very low level of knowledge on MDGs among indigenous peoples. However, in spite of this, there is an agreement among some of us that it may be a worthwhile exercise to explore further how to make the MDGs speak to us. Some of the views in this paper emerged from these various processes.

Indigenous women had been active in the international advocacy work of indigenous peoples. Their numbers increased during the Decade and some have assumed important positions in bodies, processes and activities in all activities during the Decade. An indigenous woman has been appointed as the Chair of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for the Decade and others had been sitting as members of the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations.

There are many underlying systemic and policy challenges which need to be changed or to be put in place for the Platform, the goal of the Decade, and MDGs to make a difference in the daily lives of indigenous women. This paper will try to present some of these and discuss the particular contexts and perspectives of indigenous people in relation to the issues being addressed by the Platform and MDGs. The concentration though will be on poverty as this impacts on all the others. It will then make some general comments on the strong points and weaknesses of the Platform and MDGs as seen from the lens of indigenous peoples. The conclusion will present some recommendations on how to tackle the constraints and obstacles in

⁵ TEBTEBBA (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education) is an indigenous peoples' organization, based in Baguio City in the Philippines. We are mainly engaged in doing research, education, training and advocacy work to enhance indigenous peoples' capacities to assert their rights and articulate their perspectives on various issues and concerns.

order to achieve these goals and what possible roles indigenous peoples' organizations can play to enrich the debates, monitor progress, and make governments accountable.

SITUATION OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN

Establishing the demographic profile of indigenous peoples is a great challenge for all who intend to study indigenous concerns. In this paper, data on the population of indigenous peoples were culled from studies undertaken among indigenous peoples in some regions and countries in different time frames for different purposes. Effort has been made to give more weight to data given by indigenous sources.

The insufficiency of demographic data is itself a reflection of the invisibility of indigenous peoples, more so, indigenous women. There is a need to sensitise data gatherers, especially at the national level, to disaggregate data as to ethnicity and sex. On the other hand, this challenge is directed more to indigenous peoples to establish their numbers as part of their struggle. The invisibility, and minoritization of the indigenous peoples should push us to come up with our identity and numbers.

Because of the non-recognition of indigenous peoples by some nation-states, and the different terms and definitions used on them, reinforced by the neglect, discrimination, ethnocide and genocide that has been perpetuated against them, the population data presented here are mostly estimates. Where indigenous peoples have started work in getting their numbers, more details are available. When data is available only for indigenous peoples, it is assumed that 50% are women.

There are about 300 million people who belong to the world's indigenous groups, speaking some 4,000 languages in more than 70 countries.⁹ Latin America's 50 million indigenous people make up 11% of the region's population. Indigenous people are not always in the minority.¹⁰ In Bolivia and Guatemala indigenous people make up more than half the population.¹¹

POVERTY SITUATION OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN

Goal 1 of the MDGs is the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger which should address the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women. Poverty, however, is intricately related to education and health, both included in the Platform's Critical Areas of Concern.

Generally, indigenous peoples are disproportionately represented among the poorest in both developed and developing countries.

1. The World Bank study on indigenous peoples and poverty in Latin America concluded that "*poverty among Latin America's indigenous population is pervasive and severe*".⁶ Another similar study in the region conducted by the Inter-American Development Bank⁷ came up

⁶ Psacharopoulos, Georgd and Harry Anthony Patrinos, eds. 1994. *Indigenous People and Poverty in Latin America: An Empirical Analysis*. Washington D.C. The World Bank. P.xviii

⁷ Plant,Roger. 1998. *Issues in Indigenous Poverty and Development*. Washington D.C. Inter-.American Development Bank.

with the same conclusions. In a recent meeting held by United Nations Department of Political Affairs last January 19, 2004 to follow-up on the United Nations Secretary-General's visit to Latin America, the issue of indigenous peoples was discussed. It was noted in this meeting that "*indigenous groups are at the bottom of the scale in the Latin American countries with regard the Millennium Development Goals – be it poverty, hunger and education*" and it was recommended that the "*linkage between indigenous issues and development work needs to be strengthened. ...a large number of the grievances from the indigenous peoples were linked to lack of access to land and natural resources. In this regard, corporate social responsibility issues as well as the Global compact were of importance. Several of the difficulties that pertained to indigenous groups could be framed within the context of the MDGs.*"⁸

The UNDP's Human Development Report 2004 succinctly concludes that indigenous people are more likely to be poor than non-indigenous people. Further, it says that in many countries public spending in basic social services "systematically discriminates against minorities and indigenous people."⁹

2. At the country level, a report done on Mexico says that the indigenous peoples live in "*alarming conditions of extreme poverty and marginality.*" This study observed that being poor and being indigenous are synonymous. "*Virtually all of the indigenous people living in municipalities with 90 percent or more indigenous people are catalogued as extremely poor.*"¹⁰ Further, "81% of indigenous people are reckoned to have incomes below the poverty line, compared with 18% for the general population."¹¹ The 11,237,196 people who make up the Guatemalan population belong to 22 different indigenous groups, and most of them live in poverty: 54.3% of the population are poor, and 22.8% are extremely poor.¹² Some 60% of homes in the country do not have the capacity to earn half the cost of their minimum food needs despite spending the greater part of their earnings on it.¹³ This is why Guatemala has the highest rates of chronic malnutrition in Latin America and one of the highest in the world.¹⁴ In Ecuador, of the rural population, "90 per cent is indigenous; almost all are living in extreme poverty. Eight of every ten indigenous children in Ecuador live in poverty, according to the indicators published by the United Nations and UNICEF in the 2001 Human Development Report. The poor account for 67 per cent of the total population, while the population in extreme poverty accounts for 35 per cent of the total, with greater poverty in the rural areas, where 90 per cent of the population is indigenous, indigenous women being the worst off."¹⁵
3. The Asian Development Bank made a study in 2002 on the poverty situation of indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities in Vietnam, the Philippines, Cambodia and Indonesia. This

⁸ Minutes of the Jan. 19, 2004 meeting held at the UN HQ in New York.

⁹ Human Development Report 2004, p66.

¹⁰ Luis Hernandez Navarro, 2001, "Indigenous Poverty and Social Mobilization", in *The Poverty of Rights: Human Rights and the Eradication of Poverty*, eds. Willem van Genugten and Camilo Perez-Bustillo. Zed Books. London. p. 116-117.

¹¹ Human Development Report 2004, p.20.

¹² <http://www.socialwatch.org/en/informesNacionales/365.html - ftm2>

¹³ <http://www.socialwatch.org/en/informesNacionales/365.html - ftm5>

¹⁴ <http://www.socialwatch.org/en/informesNacionales/365.html - ftm6>

¹⁵ International IDEA, 2002, Women in Parliament, Stockholm (<http://www.idea.int>). This is an English translation of Nina Pacari, "La participación política de la mujer en el Congreso ecuatoriano. Una tarea pendiente", in International IDEA *Mujeres en el Parlamento. Más allá de los números*, Stockholm, Sweden, 2002. P.

study could not establish trends in the relationship between poverty and ethnicity because there is lack of disaggregated and data based on ethnicity, except in the case of Vietnam. The worst poverty situation in Vietnam is among the ethnic minorities¹⁶ who are found in the Highland areas of Northern and Central Vietnam. For the Philippines, this report established that poverty is much higher in regions which are populated mainly by indigenous peoples. For example in 1997 in the Caraga region in southern Philippines, the average income of indigenous peoples was 42% lower than the national average.¹⁷ The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples cited this also in his Mission report.¹⁸ The Dayaks of Sabah are reported to have the “highest incidence of poverty, the largest number of poor households, the highest rate of unemployment, and the lowest in educational attainment.”¹⁹ In Taiwan, “1996 statistics showed only 150,000 of the total population of 370,000 indigenous peoples in Taiwan were employed, and half of those employed had only temporary jobs, such as seasonal manual labor.”²⁰

4. The social indicators of the disadvantaged position of Indigenous Australians are akin to that of the developing countries:

- Fewer than one third of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are finishing secondary school, compared with a national retention rate at around 70 per cent.
- Aboriginal people are over-represented in the criminal justice system by a factor of at least 15.
- Aboriginal people are far more likely to live in poor and overcrowded housing, without essential services. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander poverty is often described as ‘entrenched’. It is self-perpetuating through a number of interlocking factors.”²¹
- Indigenous Australians are more likely to be unemployed with unemployment rate among them estimated at 26% compared to the 8% for the general population, “and incomes are approximately two thirds of the Australian average.”²²

According to the HDR 2004 (p22), “many rich and democratic countries, for example, profess to treat all citizens equally, but are nonetheless home to minorities who lack proper representation in politics, and for whom harassment and difficulty in accessing public services are their daily fare.”

¹⁶ While ‘ethnic minorities’ is still a term used in Vietnam, China, Burma and other Asian and African countries, many of these peoples could fall within the UN working definition of indigenous peoples. These are usually those who successfully resisted colonization and have maintained their pre-colonial cultures and traditions and still are maintaining close harmonious relationships with their ancestral lands. In most cases they are highly discriminated against by the dominant society.

¹⁷ Rovillos and Morales, 2001, CARAGA is a region in Mindanao which has a big population of Lumad, the generic term for indigenous peoples in Mindanao.

¹⁸ The Special Rapporteur conducted an official mission in the Philippines in Dec. 2002. Tebtebba worked closely with him to organize his visits to the various indigenous communities and regional and national workshops with indigenous peoples. His report was officially presented at the 59th Session of the Commission of Human Rights in April 2003. This is document E/CN.4/2003/90/Add.3 February 2003.

¹⁹ <http://www.rengah.c2o.org/news/article.php?identifer=de0395t&subject=4>. Viewed January 8, 2004.

²⁰ “Women’s Rights in Taiwan”, http://www.womenweb.org.tw/English/Issue_Show.asp?Issue_ID=7. Downloaded 11/25/03

²¹ Commonwealth of Australia, p16.

²² Simrim Singh, “Migrant Workers Push Key Legal Test in Thailand,” Forum News August-September 2003 FN Vol. 16 No 2, pp16 –17.

The high incidence of illiteracy and ill health among indigenous peoples is directly related to their poverty, usually brought about by dislocation from or destruction of their ancestral territory..²³

1. In Guatemala, the literacy rate among indigenous peoples is 60%.²⁴
2. The Mbororos, or the cattle Fulanis, a pastoralist, semi-nomadic people dispersed all over west and central Africa, are generally underprivileged with accompanying high illiteracy and mortality rates.²⁵
3. Bagyeli Pygmies severely lack means for seeking care in hospitals, and have no access to safe water. The scarcity of game has caused major changes in diet. Insufficient schooling is chronic. Lack of financial means holds back those Pygmies who want to educate their children.²⁶
4. Government reports state that Maori women have a much lower life expectancy than women in other developed countries. This relatively poor health is related to several factors “but there is general agreement that it is mostly due to poorer social-economic status than non-Maoris.”²⁷
5. The literacy rate among indigenous peoples are low but still lower among indigenous women. In Mexico, indigenous women have a “high rate of illiteracy.”²⁸ In Vietnam, the literacy rate for ethnic women is 46% compared to that of their men which is 53%.²⁹ Among the 87% of rural children who do not have formal education, half of them are ethnic.
6. The Director of the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress reports that the life expectancy of Australian indigenous peoples is “considerably worse than for comparable Indigenous populations elsewhere. The life expectancy for Indigenous women in this country is almost 20 years less than for non-Indigenous women.”³⁰
7. Chiapas in Mexico is the main producer of gas and oil, “yet most indigenous women cut firewood for cooking. It is the extreme example of the eleven million indigenous people throughout Mexico, most of whom live in extreme poverty. There are high levels of malnutrition, illiteracy and death due to curable diseases in the indigenous communities, which constitute a quarter of Chiapas population.”³¹
8. Militarization and poverty has pushed over one million Burmese, mostly indigenous, to seek employment in Thailand where their working conditions are terrible, nor their labour rights enforced. The workers “live in sweatshop conditions and in hostile, insecure and often life-threatening environments, ... paid less than half [the mandated daily] wage, and made to work 15-hour shifts with inadequate overtime pay, ...no days off, [and] their living conditions cramped and miserable.”³² In its country assessment in 1999, UNDP has found that “whatever poverty lines are used, poverty in Thailand is still primarily a rural phenomenon.” The northeast region where the hill tribes are found has largest incidence of poverty, 23.2 per cent as against 12.9 per cent national average³³. It pointed to the fact that heads of poor households have much lower

²³ ADB as quoted by Rovillos and Morales, 2001.

²⁴ <http://www.socialwatch.org/en/informesNacionales/365.html> - ftn3

²⁵ Hawe, et.al., p.39

²⁶ Jeanne Noua, “Presentation of the Situation of Bagyeli Women”, *Out of the Shadows: The First African Indigenous Women's Conference*. NCIV. Amsterdam.p.42.

²⁷ <http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/web/nzstories.nsf/0/9f308cf88e8199dccc256b1800073871?OpenDocument>. Viewed January 5, 2004.

²⁸ <http://thelink.concordia.ca/women/02/03/12/0324211.shtml>

²⁹ Vietnam Women's Union, “National Report on Ethnic Minority Women in Vietnam”, (Hanoi, September 2003).

³⁰ Title: <http://www.caacongress.com.au/papers/obstretics.doc>. Viewed November 24, 2003.

³¹ Goetze, downloaded December 5, 2003.

³² Simrin Singh, “Migrant Workers Push Key Legal Test in Thailand”, *Forum News* August-September 2003 FN Vol. 16 No 2, pp.16 –17.

³³ http://www.undg.org/documents/47-Common_Country_Assessment_CCA_for_Thailand_-

levels of education than heads of non-poor households with poverty is highest among small agricultural households where the incidence of those with less than 5 rai was recorded at 41.9 per cent in 1998.

9. The indigenous peoples of Russia have a life expectancy of 41 – 49 years. Many parts of northern Russia are strewn with nuclear weapons that had not been disposed properly and the oil and gas industries are adversely affecting the health of people. Breast milk and the blood of pregnant women have been found to have “very high levels of environmental toxin.”³⁴
10. “Indigenous people often receive fewer health care inputs and have worse health outcomes than the average population.... Indigenous people may also be underserved because health infrastructure and medical personnel are concentrated in urban areas. The right to education is often also compromised for indigenous peoples.”³⁵

Structural Causes of Indigenous Peoples’/Women’s Poverty

The pervasive poverty among indigenous peoples finds its roots in the history of colonization and in the continuing systemic discrimination and non-recognition of indigenous peoples’ individual and collective rights. In the 1950s when ILO Convention 107 on Indigenous and Tribal Populations emerged, the prevailing view was that indigenous peoples had to be assimilated or integrated in the dominant society. Structural inequities and inequalities brought about by discriminatory and oppressive land laws, development aggression³⁶, paternalism and sheer government neglect to provide social services to remote areas, etc. are additional root causes of indigenous poverty.

A workshop held in 2002 on “Indigenous Peoples and Poverty” which was organized by the International Workgroup on Indigenous Affairs in Copenhagen, affirmed this. The indigenous people who participated elaborated on the situation and notions of poverty. One of the views expressed was that “*they do not like to be labeled as poor because of its negative and discriminatory connotations*”.³⁷

They would rather talk of the process of impoverishment which they and their ancestors went through and which are still ongoing. These range from dispossession of their ancestral lands, loss of control over their natural resources and indigenous knowledge to their forced assimilation into the mainstream society and integration in the market economy. Those who do not have money but who are enjoying their freedoms and rights in their ancestral lands do not perceive themselves as poor. Even if they do not have the conveniences of a modern society they still believe that they have a better quality of life.

At the IWGIA workshop and during the roundtable discussion on *Indigenous Peoples and the*

Common Country Assessment.pdf, p.6.

³⁴ Pavel Sulyandziga, “RAIPON: National Representation, Advocacy, and Hope,” Cultural Survival Quarterly Issue 27.1, March 31, 2003 at www.culturalsurvival.org downloaded on 11/25/03.p.35.

³⁵ Human Development Report, http://www.undp.org.np/publications/hdr2004/hdr04_complete.pdf, p. 66.

³⁶ This concept was formulated in the Philippines by indigenous peoples in the 80s to capture the negative experiences we had in relation to development. In the report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples of his official Mission to the Philippines in December 2002 he said, “Many communities resist being forced or pressured into development projects that destroy their traditional economy, community structures, and cultural values, a process aptly described as “development aggression.”

³⁷ Vinding, Diana.2003. “Indigenous Poverty: An Issue of Rights and Needs”. *Indigenous Affairs 1/03*. Copenhagen. IWGIA.p.5.

MDGs, the concern around poverty indicators was raised. These are basically constructed around cash incomes and expenditures and framed within a market and cash-based economic setting. These are basically non-indigenous parameters and therefore cannot capture nor adequately reflect the realities of many indigenous peoples. The majority are still mainly engaged in subsistence production. Their engagement with the market is mostly with the local village markets where they sell their products and the when they hire themselves out as seasonal laborers in plantations. Thus, the \$1 indicator does not make much sense for people who do not sell their labor nor spend the bigger part of their time to produce for the market.

Notwithstanding these reservations on being called poor, however, it is a known fact that poverty among indigenous peoples is highest among those who have lost control over their lands and resources. There are an increasing number of indigenous people who go to the urban centers where they become casual laborers, housemaids, peddlers, or the urban poor who live in shanties.

In India, despite the many successes of the government to address hunger, starvation deaths still occur with “depressing regularity” in the same regions and districts, for instance, in Orissa and Maharashtra, one of India’s richest states. One factor cited for these deaths is “the acute vulnerability of groups such as tribal communities to loss of traditional rights in forest areas and to the consequences of other major development initiatives. These include, for instance, displacement caused by dams whose social and environmental consequences have a profound impact on the livelihoods of the affected populations.”³⁸ Children are particularly at risk as indicated by reports that between July and September 2003, 18 Ghasia children, between the ages of three and seven – died in a hamlet in eastern Uttar Pradesh. These tribals were displaced from a forest which they made their home decades ago after “fleeing their ancestral villages to escape the tyranny of the region’s feudal landlords.”³⁹ From where they settled, they were again driven out by the government as it was declared a forest. According to human rights activists, only land distribution can stave off further deaths.

The need for data desegregation to understand better the particular situations of indigenous peoples cannot be overemphasized. The Human Development Report (HDR) in its issues from 1994 to 1998 stressed that it is important to disaggregate the human development indicators on the basis of factors such as gender, race and ethnicity, and geography in order to portray more accurately and act appropriately in response to such indicators.⁴⁰

If the indigenous peoples’ situations are reflected in the HDR the ranking of countries with indigenous peoples in the Human Development Index (HDI) goes down. In the 1996 HDR for example, Mexico ranked forty-eighth amongst 120 countries. If the country’s indigenous populations, however, are excluded from the results it will end up ranking twenty-ninth. Bolivia and Guatemala, the countries with indigenous peoples composing 50 percent or more of the total population are found in the lowest ranks, Bolivia (111), Guatemala (112). Peru which has a big percentage of indigenous peoples also ended up in rank 91.

³⁸ Draft India Common Country Assessment, March 2000 Office of the UN Resident Coordinator, New Delhi, India, p.25.

³⁹ Activists Spotlight Hunger Deaths in Indian Children,” 07 November 2003, <http://www.oneworld.net/article/view/72270/1/>, by Kalyani , Downloaded 11/22/03.

⁴⁰ Camilo Perez-Bustillo, 2001. “Human Rights, Poverty and Indigenous Peoples’ Struggles in the Americas,” in *The Poverty of Rights*, eds. Willem van Genugten and Camilo Perez-Bustillo, Zed Books, London.p.90.

Conflict of paradigms

In countries where economic growth rates are increasing, the situation for indigenous peoples has not necessarily changed for the better. In fact, for many countries whose economic growth has been spurred by massive extraction of natural resources such as minerals, oil, gas, trees, aquatic resources, and infrastructure building of giant hydroelectric dams, the indigenous peoples became more impoverished. Since colonization, especially the 1950s up to the present, there are countless stories of indigenous peoples who lost their lands due to these so-called development projects. Many of them have not yet been justly compensated, resettled and even those who were, have been placed in the most hostile or infertile lands. This disenfranchisement has been exercised under Regalian Doctrine which allows the state to take control of the lands of colonized territories, dispensing it as it sees fit, completely obliterating prior rights of indigenous peoples.

- The introduction of land privatisation in Kenya by British colonizers led to the sell out of lands to other people as the Maasai had no idea of land as private property. Massive areas were also segregated as parks and plantations, for which to this day, compensation has not been resolved
- In Nepal, colonization by the The Gorkha Empire led to the loss of indigenous nationalities not only of their “independence and their rights to Kipat (communal lands), land, water, forests, mines, rivers and pastures, but also ... their language, religion, culture and indigenous knowledge system.”⁴¹
- “The most poignant indication of the extent of Ogoni’s deprivation, in spite of the enormous contribution to the Nigerian economy through oil, is the fact that Ogoni till date has no electricity, no pipe-borne water, and most communities remain barely accessible by road.”⁴² In the thirty years Shell sucked up oil from its womb, Ogoniland contributed over 30 billion dollars to the Nigerian government coffers in exchange for the desolation and devastation of its land and people.
- “In the early 1970s, seven hydroelectric dams went into operation on Manitoba’s Nelson and Churchill river systems. ... At least three-fourths of the food, and most income, had come from the land, but now people must buy food at prices often 10 times what they are in the South. At Mosse Lake, where two-thirds of the land was flooded and 634 people moved to a housing project, an estimated 90 percent of the adults suffer substance-abuse problems. As Jim Tobacco of the Moose Lake band explains, ‘Today, we are poor and Manitoba Hydro is rich.’”⁴³

Tebtebba has been working in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh with the indigenous people there since 2000 and some of those we relating with are those who have been displaced

⁴¹ Stella Tamang, “Situation of Indigenous Women in Nepal,” a paper prepared for the 2nd Asian Indigenous Women’s Conference to be held in Baguio City, Philippines on March 4 – 8, 2004.

⁴² Ben Naanen, “Oil-producing Minorities and the Restructuring of Nigerian Federalism: The Case of the Ogoni People”, *Indigenous Peoples, Environment and Development*, pp 83 – 99.

⁴³ Winona LaDuke, “Minobimaatisiw: The Good Life,” *Cultural Survival Weekly*, Issue 16.4, October 31, 1992, found at <http://www.culturalsurvival.org>. Downloaded on December 15, 2003.

by the Kaptai Dam Project built in the 1960s.⁴⁴ Around 100,000 people were displaced and became refugees in India. Some of them came back to the Hill Tracts a few years ago but they are still housed in a public school building up the present. This is exactly what happened with Ibaloi-Igorot people

The term ‘development’ has acquired a negative connotation for many of us even if this is called ‘sustainable’, because our histories are replete with traumatic experiences with development projects, policies and programs. In fact, we regard mainstream development as one of the root causes of our problems.

Under this present era of globalization where trade and investment liberalization, deregulation and privatization are the policies followed by most governments, the face of poverty for many indigenous peoples has changed for the worst. We just did a case study on how the dumping of cheap imported vegetables affected indigenous vegetable farmers in the Philippines between 2002 to 2003. This showed that the imported vegetables were priced 30 to 50 percent lower than the local produce. This led to the loss of profits and the destruction of the livelihoods of 250,000 farmers and 400 vegetable traders.⁴⁵ Up to the present, they are still trying to search for alternatives to this livelihood which they have been doing for almost a century. Because of this crisis, which seems to have no end in sight, some farmers shifted to the production of marijuana even if this is illegal and punishable by death penalty when caught. The cost of one kilo of marijuana can be 100 times more than the cost of one kilo of potatoes.

The conflict over different paradigms of development then becomes the central question. The key weakness of the MDGs is that it does not question the mainstream development paradigm nor does it address the economic, political, social and cultural structural causes of poverty. This is a problem for indigenous peoples. The farthest it got, in so far as addressing structural causes is concerned, is with an MDG 8 target which says “*deal comprehensively with developing countries’ debt problems*”. It is not clear how this is going to be dealt with, though.

The debt burden and indigenous peoples

The debt burden, undoubtedly, is a major factor for the exacerbation of indigenous peoples’ poverty. To be able to generate foreign exchange to pay for the foreign debt, what most governments do is to extract their natural resources for export even if these are clearly unsustainable. In many countries, the last remaining natural resources to be extracted are found in indigenous peoples’ territories. This is because many indigenous peoples protected their territories from being plundered by colonizers and even by post-colonial governments. Unfortunately, this well-preserved natural wealth is regarded as a source of foreign exchange to service the debts incurred by the governments.

If there are not much natural resources left, as in the case of the Philippines, then the

⁴⁴ This hydroelectric dam project was funded by the USAID when the Chittagong Hill Tracts was under Pakistan.

⁴⁵ These are the findings of a case study called, “Impact of Trade Liberalization on the Rural Poor: Philippine Case Study”, done for IFAD by Victoria Tauli Corpuz and Ruth Batani-Sidchogan. This is still unpublished but it was presented during the 27th IFAD Board of Governors Meeting in Rome on Feb. 18, 2004.

government's option is to export labor even if labor conditions abroad are oppressive and slavlike. There is a significant number of indigenous women who also join this the global labour market. Hongkong hosts the biggest number of Filipino overseas contract workers (OCWs). There are around 88,000 Filipino contract workers there as of 2003. It is estimated that around 10 percent of these come from the Cordillera region, most of whom are indigenous women. The remittances of these workers substantially added up to foreign exchange receipts which staved off a possible crisis like what Argentina went through. With the foreign debt burden, the government cuts back the budgets for basic social services which made these even more inaccessible to indigenous peoples.

In the 1980s the ratio of Philippines' external debt to its exports of goods and services stood at 232.6 percent. Now the total government debt is equal to 120.3 percent of the country's entire production as measured by the gross national product in 2002.⁴⁶ This tells us that just by servicing the internal and external debt alone, virtually nothing is left to be spent on basic social services.

The debt trap has condemned debtor countries to poverty. Unless there is a political will to have strong and effective solutions, such as debt forgiveness and debt arbitration, it is difficult to imagine how such countries can ever get out of poverty. The HIPC (Highly Indebted Poor Countries) initiative and the development of PRSPs (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers) are some of the international community's responses to the debt problem. While it is claimed that PRSPs are nationally-owned processes, indigenous peoples in most parts of the world can attest that they have never been involved in drawing up these nor were their concerns reflected in any satisfactory way. The PRSPs, in fact, are seen by some indigenous peoples and civil society organizations as recycled SAPs.

The MDG target is to "*halve the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day and those who suffer from hunger*" by the year 2015. The path taken by a country to achieve this will determine whether indigenous peoples' poverty will be alleviated or not, nor the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on indigenous women. The path of incurring more debts, engaging in more aggressive extraction of mineral resources, oil, or gas in indigenous peoples' territories, or further liberalizing imports to the detriment of traditional livelihoods, in all probability, would not alleviate poverty amongst indigenous peoples, but on the other hand, exacerbate their impoverished condition.

The issue of poverty reduction and economic development cannot be addressed separately from the issues of indigenous identity and indigenous peoples' rights. There is tension, no doubt, between maintaining indigenous identity on one hand and improving economic conditions on the other hand. In a world where improving economic conditions is equated with the growth of market institutions, nationally and globally, many indigenous peoples find themselves in a dilemma. If we participate fully in the market we have to give up our customary land tenure systems, our traditional practices of redistributing wealth and ensuring more equitable access to and sharing of resources, and our traditional resource management systems. So what we are fighting for basically is to ensure that these diverse indigenous economic, cultural, political and

⁴⁶ Philippine Inquirer, 7 Jan. 2004, Clarissa S. Batino "BSP Chief says RP better off than Argentina. P.B-1,B-2.

social systems and practices survive the onslaughts of the Bank-Fund-WTO model of development and globalization.

Recommendations

In the light of these observations, in order to alleviate the extreme poverty and hunger faced by indigenous peoples, women and children, and the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on them, indigenous peoples/women in various forums have presented some recommendations which can be summarized into the following:

1. The adoption of the rights-based framework and approach to poverty reduction strategies which starts with an indigenous perspective of poverty and wealth. The recognition of indigenous peoples' claims for individual and collective rights, as distinct peoples, is crucial for a just and sustainable solution to widespread poverty in their midst.
2. Disaggregated data should be collected in all countries, based on indigenous peoples' indicators of poverty, and the UNDP and World Bank should include disaggregated data on indigenous men and women's poverty situation in their regular human development and poverty reports.
3. Strategic issues such as land rights, agrarian land reform, and reform of the judicial system should be addressed in national poverty reduction strategies, with indigenous peoples' full and direct input.
4. Indigenous peoples' own institutions should be supported so that they have sufficient funding and capacity to provide contextualized empirical data and monitor their poverty situation; and to ensure they contribute to their own development proposals; and fully participate in the planning, design, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes.
5. Further, indigenous peoples must be enabled to fully participate in national and international gatherings where issues directly affecting them are being discussed - including environmental agreements and global trade negotiations.
6. Systematic training on indigenous peoples' rights should be undertaken by staff in donor agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
7. Governments should contribute to the ongoing process of discussing and defining indigenous rights in forums such as the Permanent Forum, OAS, the UNHCR, and ratify and adequately implement existing instruments for the recognition of indigenous peoples' rights, for example, ILO Convention 169.
8. Several pilot countries should be selected to explore the opportunities and risks for indigenous peoples in relation to the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) process.

9. Projects and programs, especially on health and education, should consider the spiritual dimensions of good health or incorporate their traditional medicine, based on herbs and other plants. These issues need to be addressed if the health of indigenous people is to improve.

Universal Primary Education and the Education and Training of women

Education, for most indigenous peoples, is seen as a way to get out of poverty. The Platform's goals are to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. Under the MDGs, this is seen to be achieved through meeting basic education needs. However, the rate of illiteracy among indigenous peoples is usually higher than the dominant groups. Even the number of indigenous children who go to primary school and finish is much lower. ONIC ⁴⁷ revealed that a 1985 census in Colombia showed that there is 44 percent illiteracy rate among the country's 64 indigenous ethno-linguistic groups, which is still higher than the 30.6 percent of illiteracy among the rural population.

A World Bank study also has shown that illiteracy remains as a problem for some states in Mexico with predominant indigenous populations. It says that in 1980 illiteracy in Oaxaca was 46 percent. This went down to 28 percent in 1990 but this is still more than twice the national average of 12 percent. In Chiapas the illiteracy rate in 1990 was 30 percent. ⁴⁸ This same study also did a survey on the effects of gender and ethnicity on educational attainment in Bolivia. One of the conclusions was "*that indigenous individuals were 30 percent more likely not to have completed primary school than their non-indigenous counterparts.*"

Ethnic disparities in terms of access to education were studied by Cultural Survival (1993) in Guatemala. What came out was that Mayan students represented 25 percent of all primary-level students, 10 percent of secondary level students, and 5 percent of university enrollment. Maya peoples represent almost 60 percent of the total population in Guatemala. ⁴⁹

In the Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in China, the overall level of schooling is below that of the national and provincial averages. "The region is characterized by higher rates of illiteracy, lower rates of completion, and poorer education quality than either the national or provincial average." ⁵⁰

In India, communities within classified as belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes lag behind in almost all aspects of human development. As per 1991 data, only 30% of the Scheduled Tribe population was literate compared to the national average of 52%. ⁵¹

In Thailand, children of the hill tribes, migrant children, and rural and urban poor have extremely limited or no access to primary education. ⁵² For example, only some children of minorities (such

⁴⁷ ONIC (Organizacion Nacional Indigena de Colombia) is a national federation of indigenous peoples' organizations in Colombia.

⁴⁸ George Psacharopoulos, et.al, 1994, p.140.

⁴⁹ Cultural Survival (1993) *State of the Peoples: A Global Human Rights Report on Societies in Danger*, Beacon Press, p.230.

⁵⁰ p. 177, Lu Aiguo, "Education in Yunnan Tibet Area: Issues and Development Approaches" [pp.176-182] in *China Reflected*, Asian Exchange, vol. 10 no.2, 2002/vol.19 no.1, 2003, Asian Regional Exchange for New Alternatives, HK, 2003

⁵¹ Draft India Common Country Assessment March 2000, Office of the UN Resident Coordinator, New Delhi, India, p19

as hill tribes), migrant children, and children of the rural and urban poor have access to education. However, it has tried to address this situation by targeting them for development in its Eighth National Development Plan. By having no access to education, some of these children are prone to become “children in need of special protection such as street children, child labour and child prostitutes.”⁵³

While education is very important, it can also lead towards more alienation from where one came from. There is no question that universal primary education is desirable for indigenous peoples. However, the quality of education has to be looked into. Does universal primary education make indigenous children value further their indigenous cultures and norms or does it make them deny their identity or despise their own cultures and tradition? In most cases, indigenous children who enter the school for the first time get traumatized because they do not understand the language used, they are teased and discriminated against because they speak a strange language or dialect, they are not dressed like the others, and they get very bad treatment from the teachers. This explains why there is a high-dropout rate in the first three grades.

Getting higher education is very difficult for many indigenous people mainly because they do not have the means to go to high-school or college. But if they did succeed to finish college or university then another set of problems crop up. The main complaint of indigenous elders is that when their children get educated in the modern school system they usually do not come back anymore to their ancestral lands. First of all, there is no chance that they will get jobs related to the courses they finished in their own communities. Secondly, the conveniences offered by the city cannot be found in their own communities, whether these are electricity, piped-water, telephones, or roads.

Access to education and training among indigenous peoples is not only logistical nor physical. In terms of pedagogical methods, is their due consideration given to indigenous teaching and learning approaches?

Indigenous worldviews, perspectives and history are invisible from textbooks and school curricula. In fact, what is generally seen are discriminatory references to indigenous peoples. A study done by Tebtebba with the Department of Education in the Philippines revealed that no active steps have been taken yet by the Department to review text books to rectify these of discriminatory contents.⁵⁴ A key demand by the indigenous peoples who participated is for the Department to allow for bilingual education in the first three grades in primary school. Another is to invite their elders to give lectures for even one or two hours a week in the school so that non-indigenous children can also learn about indigenous peoples’ cultures and worldviews. This

⁵² http://www.undg.org/documents/47-Common_Country_Assessment_CCA_for_Thailand_-_Common_Country_Assessment.pdf, p.6.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 26.

⁵⁴ This was a project called “Development of a Plan for the Development of Nonformal Education for Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines” which was done in 2002. This entailed field work in 10 indigenous communities in the whole country and a national workshop conference which was attended by those who were interviewed, officials of the Department of Education including the Secretary of the Department.

can lessen discrimination and tendency among indigenous children to be ashamed of who they are.

It is difficult for the indigenous children to adjust in a school which only uses the national language or the *lingua franca* in that particular region. They speak their own mother tongue at home and when they go to school they are discriminated against because they do not know the national language nor the *lingua franca*. They get traumatized and this is one reason why there is a huge dropout rate. When this was presented to the Department Secretary he understood the need but he had to say that there is no budget allotted for this and he doubts that the government will be in a position to allocate more for the Department.

Bilingual intercultural education is a popular demand by indigenous peoples in most countries. Unfortunately, the general response to this by governments, whether at the national or at the UN level, is the lack of resources. In some countries in Latin America like Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Guatemala educational reforms are being undertaken which includes, among others, bilingual intercultural education.

The importance of bilingual education was further affirmed by the World Bank Study referred to earlier. This cited another study done which showed that in Mexico ⁵⁵

“..only 1 percent of first graders in indigenous areas will successfully complete their sixth year of study. However, where a bilingual program has been put into effect in the first grade, substantially lower rates of desertion and grade repetition have been observed.”

This study likewise stressed that the main problem in implementing bilingual education, especially with regards the production of education materials, is the lack of funds. Thus, even if it is effective, it often remains under-funded and thus the service is of poor quality. Lack of learning facilities and a shortage of qualified and committed teachers exacerbates the situation. Low relevance of the content of education is also raised especially if teachers are not drawn from the indigenous communities.

The persistent issue of lack of budget for education goes back again to the prioritization of national budget. In most developing countries who are under SAPs and SAP-like conditionalities, debt payments are priority budget items. In the Philippines for example, the prevailing practice is that even before revenues are earned the government, as required by law, has to set aside 40 percent of the budget for debt servicing.⁵⁶ The budget which goes to the Department of Education is only 12%. Since most indigenous peoples' communities are in the remote areas and enrollment is low, these do not get prioritized in terms of services. As the Secretary of Education said, *“I will have to give priority to highly populated areas where there are many schoolchildren who even do not have classroom buildings”*.

⁵⁵ Ibid. the study cited was done by Modiano.N. (1988) “Public Bilingual Education in Mexico.” In C.B. Paulston,ed. *Handbook of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*. New York, Greenwood Press.

⁵⁶ Rosario Bella Guzman, 2001, “ Financing Debt”, in *Financing Underdevelopment*, Asia Pacific Research Network, Manila. p. 114.

A Tewa Indian educator-author sums up what may be true of state education vis-à-vis indigenous education needs not only in the United States but wherever indigenous peoples are found:

“A pervasive problem affecting the contemporary vision of American Indian education is that its definition and evolution have always been dependent on American politics. Much of what characterizes Indian education policy is not the result of research predicted upon American Indian philosophical orientations, but the result of Acts of Congress, the history of treaty rights interpretation through the courts, and the historic Indian/White relations unique in each Tribal group or geographic region. ... The basis of contemporary American education is the transfer of academic skills and content that prepares the student to compete in the infrastructure of American society as it had been defined by the prevailing political, social, and economic order. ... A fundamental obstacle to cross-cultural communication revolves around significant differences in cultural orientations and the fact that Indian people have been forced to adapt to an educational process not of their own making.”⁵⁷

Some of the recommendations which Tebtebba made in for the Philippine study mentioned earlier, in addition to others, are the following:

1. Indigenous Peoples' education (formal or nonformal) must be based on indigenous peoples' worldviews. Bilingual education should be given at least for the first three grades of primary school.
2. Education materials must be purged of discriminatory contents and erroneous historical accounts which make indigenous peoples' invisible or misrepresents them should be rectified.
3. Curriculum development should be adapted to local contexts of indigenous peoples. It must be a tool which prepares them and gives them the choice to either enter the formal system and/or function effectively in their own communities. There should be opportunities given to indigenous elders to come and teach in the schools whether this is in the elementary or secondary levels.
4. Indigenous peoples' education must provide alternative learning paths which respect and utilize indigenous learning systems which meet basic needs, such as identity, resource control and self-determination.
5. Indigenous pedagogies which are informed by stories, values, practices and ways of knowing indigenous peoples should be developed and integrated into education programs.

Promote gender equality and empower women

The targets set for this MDG3 are to “*eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015.*” This goal is important for indigenous peoples as there is a trend, especially in the past, that boys are given preference in terms of

⁵⁷ Gregory Cajete, *Look to the Mountain: an ecology of indigenous education*, Kivaki Press, Colorado, U.S., 1994. p.9.

education. There are many indigenous communities where boys are given priority in terms of education. Girls are seen to carry out the traditional domestic roles so it is not important for them to get educated. Many studies done recently, however, show that the gender disparities in education between boys and girls have improved. In the Philippines, for instance, when we did the study on indigenous peoples' education we found out that there is more or less an equal number of boys and girls in school. Another study done in Mexico in 1993 has also shown that there was an equal representation of boys and girls in school.⁵⁸

However, there is also a diversity among communities in terms of gender considerations. There are matriarchal and matrilineal societies where women have more dominant positions. In such communities the target might be increasing the number of boys who go to primary and secondary education.

It is a pity that the targets set in the MDGs which have direct bearing on women were only for eliminating gender disparities in education and improving maternal health. No doubt these are important targets. However, there are several gender issues which merit equal attention like sexual violence against women and this is addressed in the Platform. Militarization and violence against indigenous women is a major concern not only in Asia but also in Latin America and even in Africa. There are many reports of indigenous women being raped and subjected to sexual harassment by military and paramilitary men. This is especially so in areas where protests against logging, mining, protected areas, dams, and militarization are strong. During the First Asian Indigenous Women's Conference which was held in the Philippines in 1993, violence against women brought about by militarization was a very prominent issue. In the Second Conference held March 2004, the same degree of concern was raised. The indigenous women of Burma who participated retold the story of their sisters in 1993.

In the Shadow Report submitted by women organizations of Burma to the 22nd Session of the CEDAW in time for the Beijing + 5 Review, they declare that

...the women of Burma suffer double burdens—and, in the case of women from the ethnic nationalities, triple—because of their gender. Since 1988, first SLORC and then the SPDC have waged an ongoing war on armed opposition groups, many of which are associated with minority ethnic nationalities (non-Burman peoples). Sexual violence toward women in Burma occurs with alarming frequency as a part of these hostilities.... Women are subjected to rape and other sexual assault in a variety of contexts: in their villages and fields; during flight; while they are serving as forced laborers or forced porters; and under assorted pretexts in which soldiers abuse their authority and claim to be checking women's documents. Women are raped by Burmese soldiers in their own homes, while they are internally displaced, and while they are on their way to seeking asylum in a third country. Reports by numerous credible human rights organizations indicate that this rape occurs not only as a form of "entertainment" for soldiers, but also as part of a strategy to demoralize and weaken ethnic nationality populations. Some evidence indicates that soldiers use rape to coerce women into marriage and to impregnate them so they will bear "Burman" babies.

Rape during armed hostilities is a frequent occurrence in the border regions of Burma. However, women also suffer sexual violence in urban settings; for example, the rape of women incarcerated or involved in peaceful protests in Burma's cities has been reported.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Palafox, et.al, "Primary School Quality in Mexico" 1994, cited in Psacharopoulos.G.

⁵⁹ For a detailed account of Burmese ethnic women's situation, please see "Burma: The Current State of Women in Conflict Areas" in <http://www.earthrights.org/women.htm>.

In the “First National Workshop of Indigenous Women”⁶⁰ recently held in the Philippines the delegates reported on militarization and its impacts on them. The representatives of the Central Luzon Aeta Association reported that 8 Aeta women were raped in Pampanga, Central Luzon a few months ago. The perpetrators were paramilitary men but for fear of these men, the women cannot come out in the open. There were other reports of sexual violence against Mangyan women in Mindoro and among the B’laan and Ata-Manobo women in Mindanao.

In January 2004 the Tebtebba was part of a stocktaking mission to the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh to look at the UNDP-Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility. The team had a chance to visit indigenous peoples’ communities in Mohalchari which were burned by Bengali settlers at the instigation of the military men in August 16, 2003. Reports on the cases of rape of indigenous women were shared. However, as expected, the women are scared to come out in the open and testify for fear of retaliation. In spite of the existing Peace Accord negotiated between the government of Bangladesh and the PCJSS⁶¹, there is still a lot of insecurity because of the heavy presence of military men all over the place.

In Guerrero, Mexico there were also accounts of indigenous women raped by the military. This was reported by Reuters last 23 January 2004. A 1996 Canadian government statistic shows that indigenous women “between the ages of 25 and 44, with status under the Indian Act, were five times more likely than other women of the same age to die as a result of violence.”⁶²

Another form of violence against indigenous women is sex-trafficking which is becoming more common among the hill-tribes of Thailand, the ethnic minority women in Burma and the tribals in Nepal. “In Chiang Rai,... ethnic groups from this region are more vulnerable to human trafficking partly due to a lack of skills and opportunities.”⁶³

Indigenous women participated in the various United Nations conferences on women like the Beijing Conference in 1995 and the Beijing Plus 5 in New York in 2000. Our participation in the Beijing conference resulted in the “Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women.” This contained many proposals which are still relevant up to now. This Declaration has been used by indigenous women as an education material to raise the gender awareness of indigenous women.

Indigenous women have been asserting that while they do have a lot in common with non-indigenous women, they also have their specificities which are not reflected in feminist theorizing nor addressed appropriately by women’s groups. For instance, on the issue of land, sometimes the general response is for land reform programs to give individual land titles to

⁶⁰ This was held in Baguio City in the Philippines from 24-25 Jan. 2004. It was organized by Tebtebba and the Asian Indigenous Women’s Network along the Cordillera Women’s Education Center and Innabuyog (federation of indigenous women’s organizations in the Cordillera).

⁶¹ PCJSS (Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samity). This is the political party of the Jummas which took up arms and fought with the Bangladesh government for almost 30 years. They finally negotiated the Peace Accord which was signed by the two parties in December 1997.

⁶² Stolen Sisters: <http://www.amnesty.ca/stolensisters/Summary-photos-Web.pdf>. Downloaded 25 January 2005.

⁶³ “Three Northern Provinces Join Forces Establishing Anti-Trafficking Data Centers and Assisting Victims of Trafficking”, ILO News, 17 January 2005. Downloaded from www.ilo.org.

women peasants. A recently released document called “A Guide to Indigenous Women’s Rights under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women”⁶⁴ spelled out the problems with the failure to reflect indigenous women’s experiences:

Indigenous women's loss of access to and control over land and natural resources often has little to do with their sex, but rather with assimilationist and other government policies which disregard the collective character of traditional indigenous land tenure. In the case of Suriname, for instance, issuing individual titles to indigenous women would force them into an alien system which eventually supports the objective of the Surinamese government to integrate indigenous peoples into mainstream society.⁶⁵ Introducing individual land titling systems also fails to take account of the demands of indigenous women themselves, who have emphasised the importance of collectively held indigenous territories for the preservation and development of their collective identity and the very survival of their peoples.

Reduce child mortality, improve maternal health and combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

Poverty is closely interlinked with the health situation of indigenous peoples in general, and indigenous women and children in particular, as has been stated earlier.

MDGs 4, 5 and 6 have set targets for 2015 which are “to reduce by two-thirds the mortality rate among children under Five; reduce by three-quarters the ratio of women dying in childbirth; and to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.” These cluster of goals around health are relevant for indigenous peoples. Accessibility of health services for indigenous peoples is bad to start with because indigenous peoples are usually found in the most remote areas which are hardly reached by health personnel and services. This situation, however, has worsened especially after structural adjustment policies were imposed as conditionalities for further loans. Aside from a decrease in budgets for health, SAPs also pushed for the privatization of health services and other social services like education and water. The serious state of impoverishment of indigenous peoples meant that they could not pay for more expensive private health services.

The World Bank Report cited studies done in Latin America which looked at the state of mortality rates among indigenous peoples in Peru, Bolivia and Guatemala and this was the result,⁶⁶

In general, indigenous people have much higher mortality rates than the national average in most countries. This is especially the case in countries where the indigenous

⁶⁴ This is unpublished and it just released January 2004 and it is authored by Dr. Ellen-Rose Kambel for the Forest Peoples’ Program.

⁶⁵ Kambel [2002], as quoted by Kambel, A Guide to Indigenous Women’s Rights under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, p.21.

⁶⁶ Harry Anthony Patrinos, 1994, “The Costs of Ethnicity”, in *Indigenous People and Poverty in Latin America*, eds. Psacharopoulos. G. and Patrinos, World Bank, Washington. D.C.

population makes up a large proportion of the total population. In Peru, the national infant mortality rate is 169 per 1,000 live births, as compared to 269 per 1,000 live births for the indigenous population (Masferrer 1983:600). The national under-5 mortality rate per 1000 live births in Bolivia is 122 for Spanish language speakers, but 186 for indigenous language speakers (Institute for Resource Development 1989). In Guatemala, under-5 mortality per 1,000 live births is 120 for Ladinos and 142 for indigenous people (Institute for Resource Development 1987).

Malnutrition among indigenous children has been recorded at very high levels in many countries. A 1996 National Survey of Nutrition in Rural Mexico, for example, concluded that:⁶⁷

“malnutrition is most pronounced (58.3 percent of the total population under age 5) in the Mexican rural communities with the highest concentration (70 percent or more) of indigenous people, when measured by the ratio between height and weight. This compares with a still serious but less spectacular rate of 48 percent among children below age 5 in predominantly non-indigenous (less than 10 percent) communities and reaches a devastating 73.6 percent among all indigenous youth (ages 0-16).”

This study further revealed that in Guerrero, the poorest-ranking state in Mexico which is predominantly indigenous and rural, has a 71.3 percent malnutrition in children under 5.

The history of genocide of indigenous peoples would show that in some cases this was caused by biological warfare, where the colonizers brought in pathogens that led to uncontrolled epidemics. The smallpox virus, for instance was brought to American Indian communities in North America by the colonizers. Existing data also shows that the rates of child mortality, maternal mortality and the prevalence of infectious diseases, such as malaria, tuberculosis are disproportionately high in indigenous communities. In this context community-based health programs which use the primary health care approach are appropriate responses.

The state of health of the world's indigenous peoples is usually worse off than that of the general population. Indigenous Australians “die on the average 15-20 years earlier than other Australians, and are far more likely to suffer infectious diseases or chronic diseases such as diabetes, trachoma, ear disease and renal failure.”⁶⁸

Government reports state that Maori women have a much lower life expectancy than women in other developed countries. This relatively poor health is related to several factors “but there is general agreement that it is mostly due to poorer social-economic status than non-Maoris.”⁶⁹ The leading causes of death among Maori women are cancer and heart diseases.⁷⁰ Canadian aboriginal women are in the same situation. A study has shown that aboriginal women “are more likely than the rest of the population to suffer certain health problems, such as heart disease and

⁶⁷ Perez-Bustillo, 2001. p.99.

⁶⁸ Commonwealth of Australia, p16.

⁶⁹ <http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/web/nzstories.nsf/0/9f308cf88e8199dccc256b1800073871?openDocument>. Viewed January 5, 2004.

⁷⁰ http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/web/Prod_Serv.nsf/htmldocs/Maori. Viewed January 17, 2004.

diabetes. Younger aboriginal women are also prone to suffering depression and low self-esteem.”⁷¹

This relationship between the alienation of peoples from their ancestral territory and the destruction/erosion of their culture may very well be true among all displace/dispossessed indigenous peoples. Wilhelmina Leigh, in her report to the U.S. Public Health Services Offices on Women’s Health states that “[t]he process of rapid and forced change from their original co-operative, clan-based society to life in government reservations and in communities where they encounter racism and hostility, has influenced the health care and outcomes of American Indian/Alaska native women and men”⁷² From her own study of the 1991 and 1995 US Department and Human Health Services Reports, she states that “[the] combination of factors in conjunction with poverty which nearly a third of American Indians/Alaska Natives experience is reflected in behaviors with negative health consequences, such as being overweight, family violence, alcoholism, substance abuse, and teen pregnancy. “ American Natives/Alaska native women are the most overweight, most of them smoke, and have “high-death rates due to alcohol-related conditions and [have] high rates of infant births with fetal alcohol syndrome.”⁷³

Among the displaced Crees in Manitoba,

“suicide rates for young native women and men rose dramatically in those communities to around 15 times the national average. ... Elsewhere, domestic violence is on the rise. The stress on small communities, forced into development projects and the cash economy, is often taken out on those who are accessible – women and children. Native women face much higher levels of physical and sexual abuse than their non-Native counterparts. In a number of communities impacted by development schemes, they have faced rates of violence often four times more that of non-native women.”⁷⁴

In Thailand,

“the problem of HIV and AIDS among the Lisu is intricately linked with socio-economic changes occurring as a result of deliberate government policy and external circumstances. Many Lisu communities are facing disintegration of culture and traditional ways following their relocation from forested highland areas. Economic and living conditions are greatly influenced by the Lisu’s lack of citizenship rights, land tenure problems, the subsequent loss of traditional livelihood and way of life, and a general social, political and economic marginalisation from Thai society. ... Combined with the current loss of the traditional, forest way of life and culture, the AIDS pandemic could lead to the disappearance of many tribal communities.”⁷⁵

⁷¹ Wilhelmina A. Leigh, “The Health Of Women: Minority/Diversity Perspectives” at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/canusa/papers/usa/english/minority.htm>. p1. Downloaded December 15, 2003.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., p3.

⁷⁴ LaDuke, “Minobimaatisiwn: The Good Life,” Cultural Survival Weekly, Issue 16.4, October 31, 1992, found at <http://www.culturalsurvival.org>. Downloaded on December 15, 2003.

⁷⁵ IMPECT.

Citing data from both developed and developing countries, the HDR 2004 itself has found that indigenous peoples expect to live shorter lives, on the average, by 10% and 16%, respectively.⁷⁶ However, the data gathered for developed countries is for males. In reports made by governments and indigenous peoples themselves from these countries, the life expectancy for female indigenous is much lower than that of males. But the Director of the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress reports that the life expectancy of Australian indigenous peoples is “considerably worse than for comparable Indigenous populations elsewhere. The life expectancy for Indigenous women in this country is almost 20 years less than for non-Indigenous women.”⁷⁷

After the Alma Ata Declaration of 1978 which created a global strategy towards achieving “Health for All in the Year 2000” there was an upsurge of peoples’ movements around health. In like the Philippines, Community Based Health Programs (CBHPs) were set up in remote villages with organizing village health committees, training community health workers and research as empowering strategies.

Unfortunately, many of the programs were not sustained nor developed to the scale we wanted mainly because of heavy militarization and lack of resources to support such programs. This period was the height of martial rule in the Philippines (1972-1986). This experience of building community-based health programs and doing community organizing convinced us that addressing health issues cannot be separated from dealing with the issues of structural poverty, inequity and injustice at the national and global levels. The poor state of public health services is very much linked to the global process of liberalizing and privatizing health services pushed through debt conditionalities and global trade and investment rules. It is also linked to the fact that the national budget is very much skewed in favor of paying for debt servicing and maintaining a huge military budget.

Maternal health is just one aspect of the reproductive rights for women. The exclusion of the goal of achieving reproductive rights for women is seen by women’s groups as a serious weakness. To them this exclusion is proof of the powers of the religious right. The experiences of indigenous women in terms of how their reproductive rights have been violated are also unique. In countries where there are deliberate population programs to minoritize the indigenous peoples, coercive family planning programs were imposed on the women. Forced sterilization, pressure to use Depo-Provera and birth control pills, among others, were the methods done to decrease the population of indigenous peoples. Transmigration schemes where settlers from the plains were brought to indigenous lands accompanied these programs. With these, significant demographic shifts took place in indigenous peoples’ territories whereby they became the minorities.

The Jumma women of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh say that population programs are seriously carried out in their communities. So many of them usually have 2 to 3 children. However, with the settler population of Bengalis, the women say that they are encouraged to have as many children as they like. The view of many of the tribal people is that this is yet another way to deliberately make them a minority in their own land.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ HDR 2004, p.43.

⁷⁷ Title: <http://www.caacongress.com.au/papers/obstetrics.doc>. Viewed November 24, 2003.

⁷⁸ Interviews conducted by Victoria Tauli Corpuz during the UNDP Stocktaking Mission in the CHT in January 2003.

The situation of indigenous children is directly linked to their society's context. For indigenous peoples who have lost their territories, the impact on children can be devastating. Aside from losing their livelihood, some have lost their personhood. The stories shared by Native Americans and Australian Aborigines are too linked to their alienation from the ancestral territory. In a study among American Indian youth, it was noted that "adolescent pregnancy is a widespread problem and virtually all tribal groups report that the problem is growing.According to the last two census reports, American Indian females marry earlier, have children earlier, and have larger families than the general population."⁷⁹

The consequence of statelessness has dire consequences for indigenous children in Burma and Thailand. Because of state policies, children of Burmese indigenous peoples who fled to Thailand are not given citizenship nor refugee status. When they go back Burma, they are considered non-citizens there also. This exclusion from citizenship rights because of their ethnicity makes them vulnerable to human trafficking. "Without birth records, they become targets for traffickers and child sex exploiters because stateless children are often easier to hide and manipulate. They are recruited as street beggars, domestic servants in slave-like arrangements, or child soldiers. The situation is compounded by the thousands of indigenous people from the surrounding countries into Thailand, considered the regional hub for human trafficking."⁸⁰ According to the ILO Mekong Sub-Regional Project to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women, indigenous children in Northern Thailand and the Yunnan Province of China are

*"at particular risk of falling victims to trafficking. Their lack of nationality hinders their access to educational and employment opportunities.... They are easy prey for those who seek to make profit by exploiting their vulnerability.... There are many factors that increase the vulnerability of children. Among the most prevalent causes are: poverty and the desire of people to move out of poverty and deprived by any means; the attraction of the consumerist lifestyle; cultural discrimination that robs children and young people of opportunities for education and upward mobility."*⁸¹

The World Health Organization organized a conference a few years back on "Indigenous Peoples' Health". Indigenous peoples, both health professionals and activists participated and made various proposals on how the health issues of indigenous peoples can be addressed. For several years the WHO maintained a focal point for indigenous peoples.

Recommendations

1. There is a need to go back to the recommendations of indigenous peoples on health which evolved from the WHO consultation and see which of these should still be implemented.

⁷⁹ Ardy Sixkiller Clarke, *Sisters in the Blood: The Education of Women in Native America*, downloaded from <http://www.sixkiller.com> on November 19, 2003.

⁸⁰ "When Citizenship is Denied to Indigenous Children: The Hill Tribes of Southeast Asia", November 12, 2004, <http://topics.developmentgateway.org/indigenous/highlights/viewHighlights>.

⁸¹ Thetis Mangahas, "Hearing the Voices of Children: Poverty and the Attractions of a Consumerist Lifestyle Are Major Factors in Growing Sexual Exploitation of Children in Poor Countries", Nov. 12, 2004, <http://topics.developmentgateway.org/youth/sdm/previewDocument/>. Viewed January 25, 2005.

2. The revitalization of traditional health practices which include, traditional midwifery practices, use of traditional medicinal plants, etc. should be supported through policies and resources.
3. Governments should revive and support the setting up of community-based health programs which includes, among others, the training of local health workers, development of primary health education materials in languages understood by the communities. The full participation of indigenous peoples should be sought when such programs are being developed.
4. More research should be done on common infectious diseases, particularly malaria and tuberculosis.
5. Programs to address malnutrition of indigenous children should be undertaken. This can include a research into the extent and causes of malnutrition and recommendations on how to address this. The relationship of shifts from traditional foods to instant or junk food in so far as aggravating malnutrition should be looked into and policies which allow for the production and dumping of junk food in developing countries should be included.
6. There is a need to undertake a research on indigenous peoples and HIV/AIDS.
7. Recommendations or Declarations of indigenous women, like the Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women, and those which will emerge from the conferences held this year should be used for awareness raising and to inform programs on women within the MDG campaign.

Environmental Sustainability Goals

Indigenous peoples actively participated during the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992 and since then have taken part in the follow up activities in the Commission on Sustainable Development. Ten years after UNCED, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, we were there again in our numbers. Tebtebba was part of the International Coordinating Committee which put together the Kimberly Summit and organized indigenous peoples' participation in the WSSD, itself. We came up with comprehensive declarations starting from the *Kari-oca Declaration and the Indigenous Peoples' Earth Charter in 1992* and now the *Kimberly Declaration and the Indigenous Peoples' Implementation Plan of Action*. These documents now serve as the framework for our participation in activities around sustainable development. These declarations and programs of action are informing our campaigns around sustainable development which includes influencing country policies and programmes.

In the past CSD (Commission on Sustainable Development) sessions, Tebtebba has been one of the co-convenors for the Indigenous Peoples' Caucus. With this responsibility we helped develop Dialogue Papers for the PrepComs of the WSSD. We also actively participated in the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues which were held during the sessions. For CSD 12, which will be held in April 2004, Tebtebba together with the Indigenous Environment Network (IEN) developed the Dialogue Paper on "Indigenous Peoples' Perspectives on Water, Sanitation and Human Settlements" which will be published by the CSD as an Indigenous Peoples' Major Group Dialogue Paper.

Safe Water and Indigenous Peoples

We also participated in the Kyoto Third World Water Forum in 2003. The panel on “Cultural Diversity and Water” was co-organized by Tebtebba with the Indigenous Environment Network, the Water and Legal Indigenous Rights program of the University of Wageningen, and UNESCO. An indigenous peoples’ workshop on water was organized prior to the official conference and this came up with the *Indigenous Peoples’ Kyoto Declaration on Water*. In these events we discussed the relationship of our spirituality and our diverse cultures with water. Many of our traditional rituals are closely linked with what we perceive as our roles to protect water sources and the quality of the water whether this is used for drinking or irrigation purposes.

The issues of indigenous peoples around water are multifaceted. We discussed our perspectives on water and shared the various indigenous water management practices which we inherited from our ancestors. Most of us can attest that we and our communities have not benefited from exploitation of our water bodies by governments and corporations. These range from dam building, to diversion of rivers, the privatization of water, the pollution of our waters because of toxic tailings from mining operations, or the destruction and pollution of groundwater sources because of underground mining and of the unregulated use of toxic chemical fertilizers and pesticides in plantations. The flooding or erosion of our homes and lands have increased because of indiscriminate logging operations which are done in our ancestral forests.

With these developments which are not decreasing, it is difficult to imagine how safe drinking water can be provided for half of those who do not have access to it by the year 2015. In many countries priority is given to activities such as mineral, gas and oil extraction, chemical intensive agriculture, monocrop plantations and logging. These are the major causes of the destruction of water aquifers and watersheds, including the pollution of water in most indigenous peoples’ communities. Some governments think that the way to reduce poverty is to achieve economic growth through these activities which may then lessen the chances of achieving the goal for safe water.

Many of our struggles have been around the issue of water. The victorious general strike against the privatization of water in the City of Cochabamba in Bolivia in 2001 was a mass action with the significant leadership and participation of indigenous peoples in coalition with other sectors of society. This led to a state of siege and the subsequent expulsion of an international consortium led by the U.S. firm Bechtel. This company is now suing the Bolivian government for \$ 25 million for breach of contract. Such massive mobilization around the water issues is also an expression of a growing resentment against neoliberal policies and globalization.

In Africa, the scarcity of water is a major problem. This is partly due to the increasing desertification of the continent. An indigenous representative from Niger in Kyoto talked about their problems with water. He said that even if they have taps they do not dare to open these because of the prohibitive cost of water. They would rather go and fetch contaminated water which is free. He said that while most people are talking of safe, potable water, they are just talking of getting their hands on water, even if this is dirty and polluted.

There are a lot of inconsistencies on the positions of powerful governments who avow that they

will contribute to the goal of providing safe water and achieving poverty reduction. However, in the same breath, they are also pushing for the finance liberalization which allows for more foreign companies to do more mining, build more plantations, and to invest in water services. They are also the ones who are in control of the international financial institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Asian Development Bank, among others. These continue to provide loans to extractive industries, developers of plantations, and water development corporations who are the ones leading to the privatization of water.

Increasing Number of Indigenous Peoples Becoming Slumdweller, Displaced People and Refugees

As far as the goal of improving the lives of 100 million slumdweller is concerned, it is important to note that there are a significant number of indigenous peoples who have become slumdweller, displaced peoples or refugees who are put in the most inhuman living conditions. This is observed in cities such as Manila, Guatemala City, Sao Paulo, Bangkok, Mumbai, etc. In the Philippines, some indigenous peoples have been displaced from their ancestral lands by military operations, logging concessions and plantation owners, dam-building and eco-industrial zone development.

Testimonies on these were presented by indigenous peoples in a recent workshop which we co-organized, the “National Workshop on the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples”⁸². 27 families belonging to the Mamanwa tribe have been living under a bridge in Taganito, Claver, Surigao del Norte, for several years because they were driven away from their ancestral lands by a mining corporation owned by a local politician.⁸³ After sustained protests, they were offered another place to go. However, most of them refused to move because this is not part of their ancestral land claim. If they leave the bridge which is near their claim, it is tantamount to surrendering this claim to the company.

The number of indigenous families who are forced to go to the slums or who have become refugees will continue to increase as long as our right to our ancestral lands and resources is not recognized and respected. Conflict situations in many indigenous peoples’ territories have come about because of the resistance of indigenous peoples to the entry of logging and mining operations or other projects which will lead to their displacement from their traditional territories. The liberalization of investments which has been facilitated through Structural Adjustment Policies of the WB and the IMF has contributed to the increasing incursions of state and private corporations into our lands which could hasten our displacement. The Philippine Mining Act of 1995 is a classic example of this. This law allows foreign mining corporations to own 100 percent equity in mining investments and guarantees them ownership of mineral lands up to 50 years.⁸⁴ Several indigenous communities are staunchly resisting the entry of the mining companies into their communities.

⁸² This was held in Manila from 25 to 27 February 2004. It was participated in by around 100 indigenous peoples from all over the country.

⁸³ Personal testimony of a Mamanwa during the workshop whom I shall not name because of security considerations.

⁸⁴ This law has been challenged by NGOs and indigenous peoples as unconstitutional in the Supreme Court. Last month the Supreme Court ruled that the Financial and Technical Agreement (FTAA) provision of the Mining Act which allows for this, is indeed unconstitutional.

Another development which has led to displacement of indigenous peoples is the creation of protected areas through funding from bodies like the World Bank, the European Union or big conservations organizations. In the recent World Parks Congress which was held in Durban, South Africa in September 2003, a big group of indigenous peoples took part. Most of those who came were victims of protected areas. They were displaced from their ancestral lands and most of them are living in places where there are no infrastructures and social services. One of the many examples is what happened in India in September 23, 2000. Forest Department personnel forcefully displaced 30 tribal families of the Kolengere Tribe who are living in the Nagarahole National Park, now known as the Rajiv Ghandi National Park. Their houses were demolished and women and men were beaten by the armed officers and brought to a 'rehabilitation site' at the fringes of the park. Nagarahole is one of the seven Protected Areas receiving US\$68 million from the World Bank under a project called Eco-Development Project.⁸⁵

At the recent 7th Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, indigenous peoples came together for a preparatory meeting under the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity. This meeting was held in Sabah, Malaysia and the group moved to Kuala Lumpur to attend the COPs. Active lobbying was done and we managed to bring in very important paragraphs into the final documents. The right of indigenous peoples in protected areas was included and so was the need to acquire free and prior informed consent of indigenous peoples before a protected area is created. In area of Access and Benefit-Sharing it was also recognized that one of the benefits for indigenous peoples is the recognition of their rights to land and resources.

The goal of "integrating the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes to reverse the loss of environmental resources" has a long way to go for many countries. While most countries have developed sustainable development laws and policies, in most cases this remain in paper only. What indigenous peoples see is that some programmes come into being if there are funds that come from donor agencies but many of these cannot be sustained as they are donor-driven. What is worst is that indigenous peoples' rights are violated and sacrificed especially if they want to show results in terms of the increase in the number of square meters for protected areas.

Recommendations

Various recommendations have been presented in several multilateral processes and other processes like the World Water Forum, the World Parks Congress, the World Forestry Congress, among others. Some of these recommendations are the following:

1. The Kimberley Declaration and the Indigenous Peoples' Plan for Sustainable Development should be used as a reference for governments and multilateral bodies when they are formulating and assessing their sustainable development plans, policies and programmes.

⁸⁵ WRM International Secretariat, (Jan. 2004). Protected Areas: Protected Against Whom? P.90-93

2. Indigenous Peoples' traditional resource management practices such as those in water management, forest management, biodiversity conservation, maintaining soil fertility and seed diversity, home gardens, etc. should be strengthened and integrated into national resource management policies and programmes.
3. There should be a moratorium on the funding of the World Bank for Extractive Industries.
4. Free and prior informed consent of indigenous peoples should be obtained, in a manner which is acceptable to them, before any development program or research is done in their communities. Licenses and permits for projects and programmes which are in place even without the FPIC of indigenous peoples directly and indirectly affected should be cancelled or withdrawn. Those which have FPIC which were obtained fraudulently should likewise be cancelled.
5. Redress and justice for indigenous peoples who are victims of displacement due to militarization, land-grabbing schemes, mining, protected areas, etc. should be provided by the state and the entities involved in committing these injustices.
6. Support to allow indigenous peoples to participate in multilateral processes on sustainable development should be sustained.
7. Advocate for the ratify ILO Convention 182 which categorizes child trafficking as the worst form of child labour among all nation-states. The Committee on the Rights of the Child monitor and assess countries' compliance to the CRC and other conventions with respect to the protection and promotion of the rights of indigenous children, especially those vulnerable to trafficking.

Global Partnership for Development

MDG 8 is about developing a global partnership for development. It is the goal which tries to address some of the structural causes of the problems. It coincides with the Platform's universal goal of achieving gender equality and empowerment of women through concerted actions among partners, and the Decade's goal of strengthening international cooperation for the solution or problems faced by indigenous peoples. It stressed that the debt problem should be dealt with in a comprehensive manner. Partnership is a very abused word. It can mean everything and nothing. Even the targets set for this goal can be interpreted in various ways. For us, indigenous peoples we do have our own interpretation of what global partnership for development should be.

First of all we are looking for sincerity on the part of the governments, both from the north and the south to really implement the MDGs. This is very hard to find as developed countries of the north, who were also the colonial powers in the past, have cozy partnerships with the world's most powerful corporations. They are also the key decision makers in international financial institutions like the World Bank or the IMF as they are the major shareholders. Even in trading

bodies like the World Trade Organization, they still have the leverage in terms of negotiations. The imposition of SAPs in the 1980s substantially diminished the role of governments in development as these are being surrendered to the private sector. The entry of extractive industries into our ancestral lands has been facilitated due to these conditionalities.

In addition to the points discussed in the section on poverty in relation to the HIPC initiative and PRSPs, this section will present some experiences indigenous peoples have with the World Bank. The Bretton Woods institutions are among those who have the most far-reaching negative impacts on indigenous peoples and yet these are the bodies we could hardly influence. Because of our past struggles against the dam and forestry projects supported by the World Bank, they have been pushed to develop their Indigenous Peoples' Policy. However, in the past three years they went through a revision process which, to indigenous peoples, is basically undermining the original policy. The revised version does not recognize our land rights, our right to free, prior and informed consent, and our right not to be forcibly displaced from our lands due to WB projects. Many of us who took part in the consultations for this process reject the final draft of the revised version. We still have to see what the Executive Board will do with this.

We also participated in the review of the Extractive Industries Review (EIR) process of the World Bank. Tebtebba, together with the Forest Peoples' Programme, facilitated the making of case studies of indigenous peoples affected by extractive industries and policies for liberalizing laws on mining, gas and oil extraction. The final results of this case studies done were presented to the World Bank and the Eminent Person of the EIR last year. We also took part in the final meeting held in November 2003. We are pleased with the final report of the Eminent Person as it recognizes that the present World Bank policies on indigenous peoples do not provide adequate safeguards and are inconsistent with our internationally guaranteed rights.

Dr. Emil Salim, the EIR Eminent Person, in his letter to Mr. Wolfensohn which accompanied the final EIR Report stated, "*the revision of the safeguard policy on indigenous peoples is a fundamental test of the World Bank's commitment to poverty alleviation through sustainable development.*" Unfortunately, the Bank Management has rejected the EIR recommendation⁸⁶ which says, "*The WB should ensure that borrowers and clients engage in consent processes with indigenous peoples and local communities directly affected by oil, gas, and mining projects, to obtain their free, prior, and informed consent. For indigenous peoples this is an internationally guaranteed right; for local communities it is an essential part of obtaining social license and demonstrable public acceptance for the project.*" The Bank Management draft response also failed to deal with indigenous peoples' issues on land tenure and territorial rights, compensatory offsets, involuntary relocation, submarine tailings disposal, and guarantees to indigenous peoples' rights in relation to small-scale mining.

The WB projects implemented in indigenous peoples' territories form a big bulk of the loans obtained by the developing countries; these loans to be obtained for the purpose of poverty, alleviation and economic development. Most of these have not alleviated poverty for us nor brought in economic development. In fact, the opposite has been achieved. We have become more impoverished because we are either thrown out of our ancestral territories or our

⁸⁶ Draft Management Response, para 41.

communities become militarized.

As far as the governments in the South are concerned, indigenous peoples, also have lost faith in many of them because their armies (whether regular or paramilitary forces) were and still are the ones mainly involved in committing human rights violations. Their partnership with corporations is also more valuable to them than their duties towards their most marginalized populations, e.g. indigenous peoples. While there is now a growing resistance from them to the dictates and conditionalities imposed by multilateral financial and trading institutions there is still a long way to go in terms of getting what they want.

Indigenous peoples do not exactly understand what the target “*developing further an open trading and financial system that includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction –nationally and internationally*” means. If this means strengthening a financial system which operating within the same framework designed and used by the World Bank and the IMF, we are not sure that we favor this. If commitment to good governance means an end to the one-dollar,one-vote system, and opening up more possibilities for the recommendations of affected peoples, like us, to be taken into consideration, then this can be good. However, just basing on the past and recent experiences we had with the World Bank, alone, we do not have reasons to be optimistic.

Official development assistance (ODA) and loans were the most important sources of external financing for developing countries until the early 1970s. Now this has significantly declined and private capital inflows expanded but only to a few developing countries. ODA is a very controversial issue for indigenous peoples. While the demand is to increase the ODA is reasonable, we feel that is also important to discuss in more depth how the ODA is used. In some of the projects implemented in our communities, which are ODA funded, we observed that big portions of the money are used to pay foreign consultants and to buy vehicles or equipments from the donor countries. The big bulk of the balance goes to paying government bureaucrats and to infrastructure projects which are of little use to indigenous peoples. In the end, there are very little benefits for us from these ODA projects. It is important, therefore, not just to ask for more ODA but to also ensure that more benefits go to the communities for which this ODA is meant for.

The target of making essential pharmaceutical drugs accessible to developing countries is important for indigenous peoples. Common, infectious diseases are the more common causes of morbidity among indigenous peoples. However, to ensure that this happens the intellectual property rights claims of pharmaceuticals should be regulated. Compulsory licensing and generic drug laws should be allowed and not curtailed by rich countries who are hosts to these companies. The victory gained by developing countries with the Doha Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health is a first step in ensuring this. However, we are aware of the many moves of the rich countries to limit possibilities of developing countries to use the flexibilities allowed in TRIPS. Furthermore, the issue of rights of indigenous peoples to their traditional knowledge on medicinal plants remains unresolved within the WTO and also the World Intellectual Property Organization. Biopiracy is still taking place and negotiations on access and benefit sharing on the CBD has been very tough.

Tebtebba held a “Workshop on Biodiversity, Traditional Knowledge and IPRs”, last year for some indigenous peoples who have been following up this issue. We came up with some recommendations on these issues which we have used to guide us in our lobbying within the CBD, WIPO and the WTO.

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE WORLD’S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

In the assessment⁸⁷ of indigenous peoples regarding the Decade, some of its objectives have been achieved. Gains have also been made in policy-making and legislation at the national levels, foremost of which is the Philippines the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act of 1997. Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Argentina, among others, also passed national laws and policies on indigenous peoples. Some intergovernmental bodies, like the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, have passed policies on indigenous peoples, so with donor governments like the EU, Denmark and the Netherlands. The Decade has also afforded an increased participation of indigenous peoples, including women, in international advocacy, allowing them to speak out and be heard. It has afforded them direct and active participation in the evolution of the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Now we have the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues which met the objective of establishing a permanent forum for indigenous peoples in the United Nations system. The report ends with the caution that indigenous peoples should not rest on their laurels

“(b)ecause of globalization and increasing unilateralism within the UN, indigenous peoples’ problems are compounding.... Development aggression is increasing all over the world. The last frontiers of primary resources are found in indigenous peoples’ lands and corporations cannot wait to get their hands on these, even if they have to violate the rights of indigenous peoples.”

The United Nations Secretary-General echoed the same sentiments. In his report on the preliminary review of the Decade, he noted the

“advances in the area of inter-agency cooperation on indigenous issues, the establishment of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the position of Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people and the implementation of the activities contained in the programme of activities adopted by the General Assembly. However, despite the important institutional developments that have taken place in the framework of the Decade, the report acknowledges that indigenous peoples in many countries continue to be among the poorest and most marginalized. It also notes that the adoption of a declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, one of the main objectives of the Decade, has not been achieved.”⁸⁸

⁸⁷“Review of activities undertaken under the International Decade of the World’s Indigenous Peoples”, Victoria Tauli Corpuz, intervention under Agenda Item 6c during the twenty-second session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights of the Commission on Human Rights, 19-23 July 2004.

⁸⁸ Summary of Report of the Secretary-General on the preliminary review by the Coordinator of the International Decade of the World’s Indigenous People on the activities of the United Nations system in relation to the Decade, <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/405/51/PDF/N0440551.pdf?OpenElement>, E/2004/82, Substantive session of 2004, New York, 28 June-23 July 2004, Agenda item 14 (h), Social and human rights questions: Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

The Secretary-General considers that further efforts are needed by the Member States concerned and the international community to ensure that all indigenous peoples everywhere enjoy full human rights and enjoy real and measurable improvements in their living conditions.

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) has undertaken several specific measures on behalf of indigenous women. At its forty-fifth session (6-16 March and 9-11 May 2001) (E/2001/27), the Commission on the Status of Women adopted Agreed Conclusions on gender and all forms of discrimination, in particular racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, which stated that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action indicated that many women face additional barriers to the enjoyment of their human rights because, inter alia, they are indigenous people; that the Platform for Action recognized that women face barriers to full equality and advancement because, inter alia, they are indigenous women; and recommended that Governments, the United Nations and civil society take measures to promote and strengthen policies and programmes for indigenous women with their full participation and respect for their cultural diversity, to combat discrimination based on gender and race, to ensure their full enjoyment of all human rights.

COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

On the part of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), it has taken note or actions on the promotion of the rights of indigenous women in several of its sessions since 1994. It has consistently asked for information on the situation of indigenous women especially in countries where discrimination against indigenous women is continuing. Specifically, it has asked various countries to report on data on indigenous women and children on violence, poverty, life expectancy, unemployment and the health situation, access to rights, opportunities and resources, situations of armed conflict, and others, and asked nation-states to work towards eliminating discrimination against them, and encouraged actions, including legislation to promote the rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous women and children, and particularly, it called upon States to remove obstacles to the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session.

CLAIMS

Which part of this land do
I claim
Old god sticks strutting in the
rain
Resolved so they say
That they are holy
Begat by the sun
Begat by the moon
That part of my beginnings

that they claim

Which part of this land do
I claim
Old god sticks chanting
Carve out our names
Rotting tree trunks
Spare me the pain
of shouldering them to
their shallow graves

So which part of this land do
I claim
Old god sticks worshipping
their names
Moonlit, in back to back
days
She eclipsed her day
Old god sticks, like in shallow
graves
Know tree trunks, to carve
in their names
Know shadows to cast
in back to back days

Which part of this land do
I claim

The earth is my name.

Rangitūnoa Black
Maori

project:

ILO Mekong Sub-Regional Project to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women (TICW Project), Mekong Sub-Region (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam, and Yunnan Province of China). The TWIC Project aims to reduce trafficking in women and children within the Greater Mekong Sub-Region, through capacity building, awareness raising, advocacy, and direct assistance. The TICW Project fits within the Agenda for Action of the first World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (Stockholm, 1996), and is a response to two of the ILO's core conventions: the 1973 Minimum Age for Employment Convention (No.138), and the 1999 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No.182). The project also serves the objectives of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. All countries in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region have ratified at least one of these conventions, and have, to varying degrees, translated them into national legislation. [A process-based Approach to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women: Sharing preliminary Experiences of an ILO-Project in the Mekong Sub-region, SHARING PRELIMINARY EXPERIENCES FROM AN ILO-PROJECT IN THE MEKONG SUB-REGION A project by the International Labour Organization Funded by DFID-SEA, By Hans van de Glind (Written in July 2001), Copyright © International Labour Organization 2002, www.ilo.org/asia/child/trafficking]