

Contribution to the 12th session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

31 January 2013

I. General overview of UNICEF's work on indigenous issues

UNICEF's work on indigenous issues continues to form part of its focus on equity, through which the organisation aims to understand and address the root causes of discrimination and marginalization. UNICEF aspires to ensure that children, particularly those who suffer the worst forms of deprivations in society – such as indigenous children – have equitable access to education, health care, sanitation, clean water, protection and other services necessary for their survival, growth and development.

This report is not exhaustive of UNICEF activities; it contains a selection of practices pertaining to UNICEF's interventions at global and field-level, including as they relate to the ways in which the organisation is responding to the recommendations of the Permanent Forum.

Global Evaluation of the Application of the Human Rights-Based Approach to UNICEF Programming

In 2012 UNICEF completed an external global evaluation of its implementation of the Human Rights Based Approach to Programming (HRBAP), which included findings and recommendations relevant to the organisation's work on indigenous issues. The Evaluation found that UNICEF displays strong global leadership in the conceptualization and application of HRBAP, noting that the organisation's work on indigenous issues provides good examples of its application of the principle of non-discrimination. However, among other things, the Evaluation identified important challenges in disaggregated data collection that tend to undermine UNICEF in fully identifying vulnerable groups - such as indigenous children and women - in its situation analyses, and therefore the planning of appropriate programmes.

UNICEF has finalized its management response to the Evaluation, which highlights the organisation's efforts to translate its commitment to the Convention on the Rights of the Child into concrete programme results for children, and provides direction for implementing the Evaluation's recommendations. As part of this management response, UNICEF plans to integrate into its new (2014-2017) Medium Term Strategic Plan measurable and verifiable results and indicators for the most disadvantaged children, including indigenous children. Linked to these efforts, UNICEF will also conduct a rapid assessment of opportunities to analyze issues of ethnicity through its Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), as well as Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and other data collection tools.

UNICEF will use guidance being developed as part of its new monitoring system, the Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES), to identify and share concrete strategies for programmes to specifically target indigenous children, adolescents and women as particularly vulnerable and marginalized groups (for related information, please see section below on ‘Principles and programme guidance on indigenous and minority children’). Finally, in response to the HRBAP Evaluation recommendations, the organisation will reinforce its strategy for engaging special procedures and other human rights mechanisms such as the Permanent Forum and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

II. Measures in relation to the recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Principles and programme guidance on indigenous and minority children¹

UNICEF continues to develop its principles and programme guidance on indigenous and minority children. The guidance is being developed within the framework of major on-going processes, most notably UNICEF’s new monitoring system, MoRES. This framing will ensure that the guidance is integrated into UNICEF programming rather than operating as a standalone document. As mentioned in UNICEF’s previous report to the Permanent Forum, an advisory team consisting of a group of internal and external experts (including indigenous youth, relevant caucuses of the Permanent Forum and other organisations, institutions and networks) will be reviewing the various drafts of the guidance.

Study on social, cultural, legal and spiritual institutions of indigenous peoples²

UNICEF, together with UNFPA and UNDP, completed the study on Socio-Cultural and Legal Institutions of Indigenous Peoples of the Republic of Congo and their Impact on Women and Children. The research aims to develop a deeper appreciation among the agencies, government representatives and indigenous peoples associations of the social, cultural, spiritual and legal institutions of indigenous peoples and how these impact on programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation affecting indigenous children. Set to be launched during the 12th session of the Permanent Forum, the study is already feeding into the planning of UNICEF’s new five-year country programme in the Republic of Congo.

Global analysis on indigenous and minority children³

Due to workload prioritization, UNICEF realigned the process, timeline and resources for the planned global analysis on the situation of indigenous and minority children. Although in its preliminary stages and yet to be confirmed after further consultations, UNICEF and partners are now in discussion about the possibility of undertaking research on the socio-economic situation

¹ See E/2011/43-E/C.19/2011/14, para. 63, para. 64, para. 71.

² See E/2011/43-E/C.19/2011/14, para. 65.

³ See E/2011/43-E/C.19/2011/14, para. 66.

of indigenous, minority and afro-descendant children. The group is considering a process that builds on existing robust research initiatives.

The situation of indigenous children in developed countries⁴

UNICEF Australia continues to co-chair together with the National Children's and Youth Law Centre, the Australian Child Rights Task Force, which compiled the 2011 'Listen to Children' report.⁵ The recommendations of this report were supported by the Committee on the Rights of the Child Concluding Observations to the Australian Government released in June 2012.⁶ Indigenous children continue to face significant discrimination in their community; access to basic services and in their engagement in the political process and decision making. Throughout 2012, UNICEF Australia focused on building awareness and understanding of indigenous issues, partnering with influential advocacy organisations in the area of indigenous disadvantage, reconciliation and promoting youth leadership. For example, partnering with an indigenous youth lead organisation that hosted a national conference with 50 young people, UNICEF Australia provided advocacy and leadership training, supporting skill development and opportunities so that young people are able to advocate for themselves. Further, UNICEF Australia's Young Ambassador 2012 programme included nine young people aged 15-25 years old promoting reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australia and engaging their youth networks in identifying how Australia's young people can achieve reconciliation in Australia.

UNICEF Canada, as a board member of Mamow-Sha-Way-Gi-Gay-Win (North-South Partnership for Children in Remote First Nation Communities), contributes to building capacity to foster respectful relationships between First Nations communities and the voluntary and corporate sectors. It has provided briefings to the government on the need to address equitable funding for indigenous children and to improve implementation of the 'Jordan's Principle' policy to enhance intergovernmental coordination of services for First Nations children as part of Canada's reviews under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 2011. UNICEF Canada published several opinion-editorials in national media emphasizing the need to improve policy for indigenous children. Moreover, it published child-friendly versions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in three indigenous languages, and collaborated with the Government of Nunavut on its legislation for a Representative for Children and Youth.

In 2009 the Self-government of Greenland and its former minister of social affairs invited UNICEF Denmark to join in a collaborative venture to improve children's life conditions and rights in Greenland. The result of the dialogue between Greenland and UNICEF Denmark became the five-year project 'NAKUUSA' (meaning "let us be strong together") running from

⁴ See E/2011/43-E/C.19/2011/14, para. 69.

⁵ http://www.childrights.org.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/14405/Listening-to-children-Report-2011-colour.pdf

⁶ http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/co/CRC_C_AUS_CO_4.pdf

2011-2015, and reflecting both the collaboration between the Greenlandic government and UNICEF and also a joint call to action for the Greenlandic society as a whole. Studies have shown that a focused effort is needed, since almost a third of all children in Greenland have serious welfare problems. The post-colonial society also has one of the highest suicide rates in the world and struggles with problems related to alcohol, sexual abuse and violence. In 2012 NAKUUSA launched a national campaign called ‘Suli anaanamik, suli ataatamik’ (“We want more mom and dad!”) focusing on the awareness and strengthening of children’s rights and parental responsibility. The campaign also seeks to empower indigenous children through the use of strong peer role models providing information on the fundamental rights of children. The campaign messages and expressions were created by children and have thereby given the children a strong platform for influence and participation.

UNICEF New Zealand continues its advocacy for the rights of Maori children, most recently having made a written and oral submission to the 2012 Select Committee Inquiry into the Status and Health of Maori Children. In its submissions the organisation referred to the Committee on the Rights of the Child’s 2011 Concluding Observations on New Zealand, highlighting that Maori children suffer hardship at a highly disproportionate rate compared to other population groups, and underlining the New Zealand Children’s Commissioner’s report to the Committee in 2010, which expressed particular concern about the disproportionate number of Maori and Pacific children who live in hardship and have poorer health and education outcomes. UNICEF urged the New Zealand government to prioritise work with Maori development specialists, spokespeople, leadership, child/*whānau* focussed organisations and Maori media to highlight the matters raised by many organisations and the Committee concerning Maori children in New Zealand.

Intercultural and bilingual education programmes⁷

In 2012, UNICEF’s Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean continued its efforts to prepare for a study on inter-cultural bilingual education methodologies. Unfortunately no proposals were received, and the study will, therefore, be re-advertised in 2013.

In Ecuador, UNICEF is working together with the Bilingual Education Departments of Esmeraldas and Sucumbíos, the *Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progressio*, Plan Ecuador, and the Canton Councils for Children and Adolescents to conduct territorial tracing activities in indigenous communities to identify out-of-school children, followed by a causality analysis and efforts to ensure that their right to education is not violated. In 2012 a large number of identified vulnerable indigenous children and adolescents returned to school as a result of the territorial tracking process.

UNICEF Guatemala supported the systematization of educational models for indigenous children in preschool, kindergarten and elementary school. This was conducted in 61

⁷ See E/2011/43-E/C.19/2011/14, para. 75.

municipalities prioritized by the State of Guatemala because of poverty and inequities in access to quality and relevant education. Local education offices successfully adopted these models and extended the use of the methodology to other school districts.

UNICEF Argentina continued to provide support to the provincial education ministries of Salta, Jujuy, Misiones and Chaco to improve the quality of intercultural bilingual education, incorporating new technologies in 2012 to promote the return to school of about 1,500 indigenous teenagers.

UNICEF Venezuela supported post-graduate bilingual education for indigenous school teachers, and also initiated training of civil servants in results based management to improve the implementation of bilingual education policies.

In Vietnam UNICEF conducted two workshops for education officials from the Ministry of Education and Training and eight provincial Departments of Education and Training, resulting in national and provincial communication for development (C4D) plans addressing stigma and discrimination facing vulnerable and marginalized children, social exclusion and school dropout among ethnic minority children due to language and other barriers.

UNICEF Congo Brazzaville intervenes directly to promote equitable availability of services, including education. Jointly with other UN agencies it, for example, supports the construction/restoration of schools and the provision of equipment for vulnerable children (such as indigenous children). Most notably it is supporting the construction of the Bene school, which is a symbol of integration between Bantu and indigenous children.

Report on the situation of indigenous children in Latin America and the Caribbean⁸

UNICEF is conducting a study on the situation of indigenous children in Latin America and the Caribbean. The study will highlight the issues faced by indigenous children in education, health, nutrition and child protection. It will include an analysis of demographic and socio-economic trends through gender and inter-cultural perspectives, as well as the legal and policy-related measures taken by States to guarantee the fulfillment of the rights of indigenous children. The obstacles to the realization of indigenous children's rights, as well actions undertaken by indigenous civil society organisations and their impact, will also be described.

It should also be noted that, jointly with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean published the 14th edition of *Challenges*, a bi-annual joint publication focusing on child rights. Published in September 2012, this edition focused on the rights of indigenous children, and included data on deprivations suffered by indigenous children related to housing, drinking water and education.

⁸ See E/2011/43-E/C.19/2011/14, para. 77.

Various studies on the situation of indigenous children are being carried out at country-level in Latin America and the Caribbean (including as part of the EIBAMAZ project mentioned below). UNICEF Honduras produced a study on indigenous and afro-Honduran children, which is the first study to reveal the critical inequality and rights violations of children belonging to these groups in this country. UNICEF Bolivia carried out a study on the Socio-metric Perception of Bolivian Children and Adolescents which examined their perceived situation in terms of well-being and life expectations. UNICEF Guyana commissioned a needs assessment of first language education for indigenous children, and a situation analysis on indigenous and maroon education is underway in Suriname.

Climate change and the environment⁹

In the framework of the Finland supported EIBAMAZ (Regional Andean Project of Bilingual Intercultural Education for the Amazon Region), UNICEF Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru conducted a study on the availability of vocational technical training and education services to indigenous peoples in the Amazon, contrasting this with their concept of development, environment, land use and management, forest and energy sources. The study aims to recommend policies for educational inclusion in high school and technical education which include vocational training that has a strong focus on environmental sustainability. The study thus contributes to generating knowledge about the Amazon region's environmental priorities in the global context of climate change.

UNICEF Malaysia has started discussions with NGOs and indigenous peoples' organisations and networks (JOAS – The Indigenous Peoples Network of Malaysia) and the Centre for Orang Asli Concerns (COAC) on addressing environmental issues affecting children and the impact of climate change.

Adolescent suicide¹⁰

In collaboration with the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), UNICEF completed a study on teenage suicide among indigenous peoples in Latin America. The research consists of three case studies providing comparative descriptions and analysis of suicide among young indigenous Awajún (Peru), Guarani (Brazil) and Embera (Colombia) peoples. The research, which was coordinated by IWGIA, focused on working directly with indigenous adolescents at the community-level, and represents a starting point for future research to be conducted by indigenous peoples themselves on this painful issue.

⁹ See E/2008/43, para. 100.

¹⁰ See E/2007/43, para. 65.

Promoting, disseminating and implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples¹¹

As mentioned in previous reports to the Permanent Forum, in order to make indigenous adolescents knowledgeable on issues important to them and to support their active participation in decision-making processes to secure their rights, UNICEF – in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum and the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus – developed an adolescent-friendly version of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) targeting 13-18 year olds. Set to be launched in spring 2013, this publication is written for a global adolescent audience. It provides background information on the indigenous peoples' movement, the importance of the Declaration and summarizes its articles to highlight their essence. Initially available in English, it is hoped that this adolescent-friendly version will soon be translated into indigenous and other UN languages.

Birth registration¹²

UNICEF continues to support programmes aiming to promote birth registration in indigenous communities and national/international initiatives aimed towards sensitizing communities, governments and administrations on the right to birth registration. For example UNICEF Mexico, through implementing partners in the field, is providing technical and financial support for birth registration awareness through a major campaign for birth registration in Guerrero State, to be launched in January 2013. Products include radio spots, posters, and other materials translated into relevant indigenous languages.

Violence against indigenous women and children¹³

UNICEF is about to complete, in collaboration with UN Women, UNFPA, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, WHO and ILO a joint study on violence against indigenous girls, adolescents and young women. The study is based on three country studies of Kenya, Guatemala and the Philippines, and is complimented by regional overviews for Africa, Latin America and the Asia Pacific, as well as an overview of the overarching global context. The information gathered is expected to inform and improve UN agency programming for the specified indigenous groups.

Incorporating a cultural perspective into health policies, programmes and reproductive health services¹⁴

UNICEF Costa Rica – in light of the high infant mortality among indigenous peoples, and indigenous migrant populations in particular – directly supported the 'Stop-light Bags' strategy, which was developed with the Ngöbe indigenous population in the La Casona indigenous territory. This strategy, which seeks to encourage pregnant women to complete periodic prenatal care check-ups, provides women with prenatal care kits every three months and a

¹¹ See E/2007/43, para. 34.

¹² See E/2007/43, para. 66.

¹³ See E/2006/43, para. 47.

¹⁴ See E/2006/43, para. 48.

delivery kit. The final bag is provided after delivery and contains early postpartum care supplies for both the woman and new-born.

UNICEF Argentina continues to train indigenous community health workers and published a guide on ‘Safe Motherhood and Family Centered Approach to Intercultural (MSCFI)’, which is being implemented in 95 maternity hospitals in nine provinces that serve indigenous populations. In Ethiopia UNICEF supported the training of 850 nurses in emergency obstetric and neonatal care from pastoralist and other areas.

UNICEF Congo Brazzaville continues to give special attention to ethnic disparities with a focus on indigenous peoples, implementing for example mobile strategies in order to ensure that services (health, information, birth registration) reach these groups. Through a partnership with Andorra’s National Committee for UNICEF, it was also able to fund activities to fight HIV among indigenous peoples.

Data collection and disaggregation¹⁵

UNICEF is increasing its efforts to improve the availability of disaggregated data on indigenous children and adolescents in the Latin American and Caribbean region and beyond. UNICEF Nicaragua, for example, worked with the government on the implementation of a Lot Quality Assurance Sampling (LQAS) with indigenous children and women to collect data on the most vulnerable for policy-making. The data is currently being processed and will be used as the foundation for an innovative approach to policy design.

III. Addressing issues of special interest to the Permanent Forum

Humanitarian and Emergency Contexts

UNICEF Colombia has, within the framework of humanitarian and emergency actions, directed its efforts to promote comprehensive care for children and adolescents, especially to indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, affected by violence, displacement and natural disasters. In 2012 this included – in terms of humanitarian assistance – the delivery of housing kits, educational and recreational kits, school meals supply and psychosocial counseling to 9,600 children or 38% of the children in the department of Putumayo, who are mostly indigenous and must remain in boarding schools due to the threat of recruitment by illegal armed groups and lack of schools in their communities. UNICEF has also supplied micronutrients, oral rehydration salts and treated bednets, and guidance and support to improve water quality, breastfeeding practices and complementary food to 7,050 children under five and 2,500 pregnant and breastfeeding women from indigenous communities in the departments of Chocó, Putumayo, Cauca and La Guajira. Additionally, 340 children detected with acute, severe and moderated malnutrition, received community based therapeutic treatment, provided by staff of the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare and trained community leaders.

¹⁵ See E/2003/43, para. 5 (b).

UNICEF Colombia also supported Amazonian indigenous authorities in the development and implementation of a community strategy to prevent and protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation. The strategy has provided multicultural tools, regulations and practices that, from the indigenous peoples' worldviews, strengthen their social and cultural practices and their intercultural relations, and promote community responsibility.

Within the humanitarian context in Kenya, UNICEF provided emergency education supplies to 14,480 vulnerable nomadic children in Turkana, including refugee children in Kakuma. UNICEF Kenya has also been a strong voice, along with civil society partners, in ensuring that human capital development and appropriate social service delivery for pastoral populations have a prominent place in the country's resilience agenda.

UN General Assembly Third Committee Resolution on “Rights of the Child”

As per General Assembly resolution 66/141, indigenous children were the main focus of the annual Secretary General's Report on the Rights of the Child (2012) and of the annual General Assembly Resolution on the Rights of the Child (2012). UNICEF provided technical inputs to both the drafting of the resolution and the report. Further, in October 2012 it co-sponsored a panel discussion on the situation of indigenous children together with the Permanent Mission of Uruguay to the UN, the Delegation of the European Union to the UN, and in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum, World Vision International and Plan International. Panelists included Grand Chief Edward John, Marlene Caín (indigenous youth community leader from Ecuador), Nathalie Trejo (Regional Advisor on Excluded Populations, Plan International, Latin America Regional Office), Marta Santos Pais (Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children) and Susana Sottoli (Deputy Director, Programme Division, UNICEF).

Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues

UNICEF remains an active member of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues, participating in the annual meeting of the Group in November 2012. The organisation looks forward to chairing the group for the 2013/2014 period, and will be hosting the 2013 annual meeting at its headquarters in New York. UNICEF is also actively involved in strengthening the Inter-Agency Working Group on Indigenous Peoples in Latin America.

United Nations Indigenous Peoples' Partnership

UNICEF continues to participate in the United Nations Indigenous Peoples' Partnership (UNIPP) it joined together with ILO, OHCHR, UNDP and UNFPA in May 2011. The Partnership has begun progressive implementation of its six joint country programmes and one regional programme in Southeast Asia with the active participation of indigenous peoples, governments and UN country teams. In the Republic of Congo UNICEF is the lead partner (in collaboration with ILO, UNDP, UNFPA, and OHCHR) in the implementation of a project that aims to support implementation of the national law on indigenous peoples along with advocacy

for ratification of ILO Convention No. 169. UNICEF is also participating in a project in Bolivia (under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, and in partnership with OHCHR, UNDP, UNFPA, and ILO) to support legislative development and implementation of the right to consultation and participation of indigenous peoples with an emphasis on highly vulnerable indigenous peoples.

Extractive Industries

In follow up to the release in March 2012 of the Children's Rights and Business Principles (the Principles), the development of which UNICEF co-lead with the United Nations Global Compact and Save the Children, UNICEF's Division of Private Fundraising and Partnerships is currently finalizing a Guidance Note on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Engagement with the Extractive Industries. The Note will include information on the negative effects extractive industrial work has on indigenous peoples. It will include recommendations on how to prepare for an initial dialogue with a company in the extractive industries, with a focus on identifying the interlinkages between a company's business operations and children's rights. It will provide guidance on three different types of engagement: a) promotion of the Principles, with a focus on children as stakeholders; b) addressing a company's impact on children's rights, including through use of UNICEF's CSR tools; and c) promoting children's rights with other actors, including governments, business partners and peers.