

Questionnaire to the UN system and other intergovernmental organizations

The report of the 13th session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues provides a number of recommendations within its mandated areas, some of which are addressed to the UN system and other intergovernmental organizations.

The secretariat of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues invites the UN system and other intergovernmental organizations to complete the attached questionnaire on any action taken or planned in response to the Permanent Forum's recommendations. All questionnaire responses will be placed on the Permanent Forum's website and also compiled into one report for the Forum's fourteenth session.

Please submit your completed questionnaire by **1 January 2015** to:

Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Division for Social Policy and Development
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
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The full questionnaire can be downloaded from this site :

<http://undesadspd.org/IndigenousPeoples/UNPFIIISessions/Fourteenth/Questionnaire.aspx>

The provisional agenda for the Permanent Forum's fourteenth session in 2015 includes:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Follow-up on the recommendations of the Permanent Forum:
 - (a) Outcome of the high-level plenary meeting also known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples;
 - (b) Post-2015 development agenda;
 - (c) Youth, self-harm and suicide.
4. Half-day discussion on the Pacific region.
5. Half-day discussion on the expert group meeting on the theme "Dialogue on an optional protocol to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People".
6. Comprehensive dialogue with United Nations agencies and funds.
7. Human rights:
 - (a) Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
 - (b) Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Chair of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
8. Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues of the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues.
9. Draft agenda for the fifteenth session of the Permanent Forum.
10. Adoption of the report of the Permanent Forum on its fourteenth session.

Questionnaire

At its fourteenth session in 2015, the Permanent Forum will review the following: (a) Outcome of the high-level plenary also known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples; (b) Post-2015 Development Agenda; (c) Youth, self-harm and suicide.

1. Please provide information on how your agency is working with these important issues in the seven socio-cultural regions of the Permanent Forum¹. Where possible, please include information on the situation of indigenous women in your responses.

Viet Nam achieved middle income country status in 2010 and has done well on many of the ICPD and health-MDG indicators. However, the country continues to strive for a much needed balance between its rapid economic growth and sustainable human and social development. Like a number of MICs, Viet Nam faces the daunting challenge of inequity among population groups, including ethnic minorities, poor, vulnerable young and those in remote and mountainous regions. Equitable access to quality sexual and reproductive health (SRH) remains a challenge, as affirmed by the Government's recent response to the global ICPD beyond 2014 survey

In 2013, UNFPA Viet Nam took the leading role in supporting the Ministry of Health to analyze equity in universal access to health care services including SRH and maternal health and suggested practical strategies to address inequities. The analysis showed that the MMR among ethnic minorities is 4 times higher than that for the majority Kinh group, the lowest rates of births attended by trained health personnel are in the mountainous and rural areas, amongst ethnic minorities; adolescent birth rate is 10 times higher amongst ethnic minority women. The highest rate of unmet needs is amongst women aged 15-24, in the poorest quintile and from ethnic minorities.

UNFPA Viet Nam took the leading role to coordinate the support provided by H4+ including UNFPA, WHO, UNICEF, UN Women, UNAIDS and World Bank on policies and programmes on adolescent /youth sexual and reproductive health, maternal and neonatal/child health interventions including development of safe motherhood policies, institutionalizing an integrated intervention package on sexual and reproductive health, maternal, neonatal and child health; capacity building and development of human resource for maternal health care with focus on mountainous and difficult-to-reach areas.

UNFPA Viet Nam took also the leading role in supporting the government to development and implement the Government Resolution and Implementation Plan of Action toward achieving health-related MDGs by 2015. The approved Government's Resolution is a political reaffirmation by the Prime Minister to all provinces on the criticality of health-MDGs to the socio-economic development agenda and goals. In addition, UNFPA facilitated national discussions and policy dialogues on post 2015 priorities and youth participation in this process.

¹ UNPFII's seven socio-cultural regions are Africa; Asia; Central and South America and the Caribbean; the Arctic; Central and Eastern Europe, Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia; North America; and the Pacific.

UNFPA Vietnam supported MOH to develop a common framework for comprehensive reproductive commodity security to ensure national investment to meet an increasing demand and to avoid shortages of contraceptives, especially for adolescents and unmarried young people in the reproductive age and other disadvantaged groups including young migrants and ethnic minority young people. It also supported Vietnam to generate evidence for the development of national policies and guidelines for quality insurance of contraceptives in the free market.

2. With respect to the implementation of the recommendations of the Permanent Forum addressed specifically to your agency:

(i) What are some of the obstacles your agency has encountered in implementing the recommendations of the Permanent Forum, including those addressed specifically to your agency?

- *Lack of reliable evidence on health inequities amongst most vulnerable ethnic minorities.*
- *Geographic and cultural barriers limit the effectiveness of the interventions on SRH/maternal health*
- *Government tends to have one-size-fit-all policies and programmes on health care*

3. How to generate quality and timely data disseminate for policy dialogue and advice

(ii) What are some of the factors that facilitate your agency's implementation of the recommendations of the Permanent Forum, including those addressed specifically to your agency?

- *UNFPA Vietnam has strong technical capacity and good network with research institutions to conduct quantitative and qualitative research provide high quality evidence on policies and service delivery for ethnic minorities*
- *Due to the fact that UNFPA Vietnam has strong a network with international and local media and good partnership with Ministries, National Assembly, Party, CSOs and involved development partners, it can disseminate messages of Permanent Forum to interested partners widely and promptly. It also has strong experiences in advocating the government and involved stakeholders in development of policies and guidelines following international best practices.*

3. Given the Forum's recommendation for the adoption of policies on indigenous peoples' issues, please specify whether your agency has:

(i) A policy or other similar tool on indigenous peoples' issues

- *To enhance the access and utilization of reproductive and maternal health services and information among ethnic minorities, UNFPA supported MOH to develop a Government Decree on financial support to facilitate ethnic minorities to use services at Primary Health Care level (covering meals and transportation in addition to a free health care insurance). The draft Decree was submitted for appraisal and approval.*

(ii) Recent programmes on indigenous peoples' issues;

- *In the context of the One Plan 2012-2016, UNFPA Vietnam supports the Ministry of Health to develop appropriate health policies and programs*

targeting at reduction of maternal mortalities in ethnic minorities regions and to bridge the disparities in ethnic minority and difficult-to-reach regions. UNFPA Vietnam supports the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Population and Reproductive Health with focus on safe motherhood and newborn care (2011-2015) that determines affirmative actions targeted at reducing the gaps in maternal health indicators between regions and population groups, especially ethnic minority women taking into account socio-economic factors, local tradition, religion, culture and beliefs of the local communities.

To support the government to generate evidence on the human resource solutions in difficult-to-reach and ethnic minority regions, UNFPA supports MOH to pilot and document cost-effectiveness evidence of interventions that builds capacity of ethnic minority midwife network. Ethnic minority women, including women with low education levels, selected by their communities, are trained on midwifery skills at a clinical setting so that they can perform normal deliveries, detect early complications and refer complicated cases to higher levels. This culturally sensitive human resource strategy will be reviewed by the government for the national scale up. In addition, UNFPA conducted a number of advocacy events to call the attentions of the society and support of the leaders of line ministries, National Assembly, Party, provinces, development partners and CSOs to increase the national and sub-national investment to maintain and scale up the network in ethnic minority and difficult-to-reach regions. In addition, UNFPA support to implement cultural sensitive interventions to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity in two ethnic minority provinces, namely Ninh Thuan and Kon Tum.

(iii) Budgetary allocations for indigenous peoples' issues;

In 2014, USD 130,000 was allocated to support MOH to pilot ethnic minority midwife interventions. In addition, USD230,000 was allocated to gender sensitive interventions to reduce maternal mortality in an ethnic minority province taking into account local culture and tradition in Ninh Thuan and Kon Tum provinces.

(iv) Projects/activities on indigenous peoples' issues

At national level: UNFPA supports MOH on:

- 1. Develop policies on human resources for health in ethnic minority regions and polices that facilitate the utilization of health services at Primary Health Care level*
- 2. Support to pilot and document cost-effectiveness interventions on ethnic minority midwife network*

At sub national level: UNFPA supports Ninh Thuan and Kon Tum provinces on:

- 1. Policy advocacy for the development of local policies and programmes on maternal health and FP for ethnic minorities*

2. *Capacity building for local health providers on comprehensive emergency obstetric care, community- based referral systems, etc.*
3. *Culturally sensitive behavior change communication activities*

In order to facilitate the quantification of data by the Forum, please indicate the number of programmes and projects/activities devoted to indigenous peoples issues in the past year.

4. Does your agency have regular or ad hoc capacity-building programmes on indigenous peoples' issues for staff, or a plan for capacity-building activities in this area, at headquarters or in the field?

Yes, training on ethnographical approach to deal with ethnic minority issues to a focal point of ethnic minorities (organized in Vietnam)

5. Does your agency have a focal point on indigenous peoples' issues? If so, please provide the name and contact information of this person.

Yes

Name: Dr. Le thi Thanh Huyen (huyen@unfpa.org)

6. Please provide a list of conferences and other meetings organized or supported by your agency on indigenous peoples' issues for 2014 and 2015.

- ✓ *National Conference to launch the 2014 SOWMY report with emphasis on skilled birth attendants in ethnic minority regions and roles of ethnic minority midwives (June 2014).*
- ✓ *The second national sexual and reproductive health conference (Nov 2014) in which there is one concurrent section on skilled birth attendants where research on ethnic minority midwives and safe motherhood interventions in ethnic minority and difficult-to-reach regions were presented and discussed.*
- ✓ *Two joint UNFPA/government missions to monitor the skilled birth attendants and practice of ethnic minority midwives in two mountainous provinces namely Ninh Thuan and Kon Tum were organized. Findings of the missions and proposed solutions were discussed with local authorities and national discussion forums to advocate for increasing national and sub-national investment to enhance and maintain the skilled birth attendant network in ethnic minority and difficult-to-reach regions.*
- ✓ *Issues of ethnic minorities were raised by UNFPA staff in the discussion forums in Health Partnership Meetings, Joint Annual Health Review meetings and regular meetings of Reproductive Health Affinity Groups (forum for development and national partners on sexual and reproductive health) (2014-2015)*
- ✓ *Issues of reproductive health situation and human resource for health for ethnic minority regions will be discussed in the 5-year health plan 2016-2020 (in 2015).*
- ✓ *Advocacy workshops on reviewing lessons learned and scaling up of best practice of maternal health interventions for ethnic minorities has been discussing in Ninh Thuan and Kon Tum (2014-2015).*
- ✓ *National workshop on achievement of MDG targets in ethnic minority regions and post 2015 priorities (2015)*