

Human Development Reports and Indigenous Peoples

A Desk Review

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Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Analysis of 2008 HDR: Asia-Pacific Region	3
Analysis of 2007 HDR: Cambodia	6
Analysis of 2007 HDR: Ghana	9
Analysis of 2006 HDR: Kenya	13
Analysis of 2006 HDR: Nigeria	16
Analysis of 2007 HDR: Russian Federation	20
Analysis of 2007 HDR: Rwanda	24
Analysis of 2007 HDR: Tanzania	28
Analysis of 2007 HDR: Thailand	31
Analysis of 2007 HDR: Uganda	35
Conclusions & Recommendations	39

INTRODUCTION

Objective

The aim of the desk review is to analyze to what extent indigenous peoples' issues are addressed, included, and promoted within the context of selected national and regional Human Development Reports (HDRs). The HDRs reviewed are the most recent from the following countries, region, and sub-region: Asia-Pacific (2008), Cambodia (2007), Ghana (2007), Kenya (2006), the Niger Delta (2006), Russian Federation (2006/2007), Rwanda (2007), Tanzania (2007/2008), Thailand (2007), and Uganda (2007).¹

Methodology

Each HDR is addressed separately, following a standard format:

1. A brief introduction to the country's indigenous peoples and a summary of main observations relating to indigenous peoples' issues in the report.
2. Specific review of how each chapter of the report addresses or not indigenous peoples, including specific attention to the Millennium Development Goals.
3. Brief concluding remarks.

The desk review is guided by the following questions:

1. Are indigenous peoples taken into account in the context of the overall HDR? If so, to what extent are they discussed?
2. Are indigenous peoples addressed sectorally, meaning each chapter/topic in the report has specific data and/or analysis for addressing indigenous peoples, throughout the report?
3. Does the report discuss the participation of indigenous peoples in the process of designing, implementing and monitoring national and local development processes? Is there evidence of indigenous peoples' organizations participating or being consulted on the report's preparation process?
4. Are any proposals being made to address indigenous peoples while implementing policies to reach the MDGs and other development goals in each country? If so, what types of proposals are being discussed?

Background

Since 2006, the Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (SPFII) has undertaken an annual desk review of MDG reports from governments to ascertain whether indigenous peoples' issues are included and promoted within the framework of the MDGs. These desk reviews, carried out in 2006, 2007, and 2008 have covered 40 countries and have drawn several important conclusions, including the need

¹ These HDRs can be accessed from the UNDP HDR website at <http://hdr.undp.org/en>.

for improved disaggregation of data on indigenous peoples in order to effectively monitor progress towards MDG achievement and the inclusion of indigenous peoples in the MDG monitoring and reporting process.² The reviews have also highlighted the fact that indigenous peoples' free, prior and informed consent³ should be obtained when designing and implementing development initiatives that involve or affect them.

SPFII has also carried out desk reviews of selected CCA/UNDAFs and Resident Coordinator Reports.⁴

This year, the Secretariat has embarked on a review of selected country and regional HDRs. The outcome of these reviews will inform the UNPFII on recent achievements and challenges of indigenous peoples as well as their state of human development in the context of the MDGs. They will also be an advocacy tool within the UN system and with other intergovernmental organizations in regards to the promotion of MDGs and other development frameworks in country-specific, regional and international policies and programs. Further, they will be used by stakeholders to promote the incorporation of indigenous peoples' issues in national development frameworks for meeting the objectives of the MDGs. This output will be presented to the eighth session of the UNPFII.

² The MDG reviews are available at: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/mdgs.html>

³ Indigenous peoples' right to free, prior, and informed consent has been affirmed in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, (A/RES/61/295) esp. Article 19.

⁴ Available at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/publications.html>

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Indigenous Peoples of Asia and the Pacific and the 2008 Human Development Regional Report

The Asia and Pacific region is home to several indigenous peoples, many of whom experience extreme poverty and marginalization. Areas populated with indigenous peoples are often the remotest and least developed in the region, with inadequate access to goods and services for sustainable living. Indigenous peoples also suffer from all forms of discrimination and human rights abuses, and many groups are not officially recognized by their respective governments. Land rights issues remain one of the biggest concerns for indigenous peoples across the region.⁵

The 2008 Human Development Regional Report from Asia Pacific focuses on the issue of corruption and its impact on human development.⁶ The Report is broad-based, encompassing many sectors, particularly the political and judicial sectors. It provides very little disaggregated data, and instead cites specific examples of corruption, including efforts to address this growing problem, from various countries in the region. Indigenous peoples and their issues are not explicitly mentioned in the Report, and any references to the state of their human development would be integrated with the collective “poor and marginalized populations” in the region.

The following sectors are greatly impacted by corruption, which has detrimental effects to human development and achievement of MDGs in the Asia Pacific region:

Economy

According to the Report, extensive corruption is associated with lower levels of growth. Corruption is likely to hamper growth in the economic sector by weakening the social infrastructure and reducing the quality of investments in technology, communication, and transport infrastructure that are necessary for economic growth.

Corruption also undermines efforts at reducing poverty, which is the first goal of the MDGs, when public officials divert goods and services that are intended for the poor to wealthier households that can afford to bribe officials. The poor are the most vulnerable to corruption, as they lack neither social nor economic power to defend themselves against corrupt practices. In many cases, they fail to voice out abuses for fear of retribution. The poor also find themselves excluded from basic social services, such as health and education, due to widespread corruption in these sectors.

⁵ International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, *The Indigenous World*, 2008.

⁶ UNDP Human Development Report: Asia-Pacific Region, *Tackling Corruption, Transforming Lives*, 2008. Available at: <http://www.undprcc.lk/ext/crhdr/>.

The Report does not explicitly discuss the economic situation of indigenous peoples, but it does allude to their vulnerability to suffer from poverty as a result of illegal land grabbing as well as being denied access to key resources.

Education

According to the Report, corruption is widespread in education systems. Corrupt officials siphon off funds that are intended for improving school buildings and other educational resources, such as books and classroom supplies as well as teachers. This is especially true for public education systems, and the poor suffer from inadequate educational institutions. Access to quality education has been limited to those who have the economic means to afford private education.

The Report does not explicitly mention the education situation of indigenous people.

Health

According to the Report, corruption can occur at various levels in the health services sector, “from grand corruption, as funds are siphoned off during the construction of new hospitals or health centers, to petty corruption as health workers or administrators demand bribes just to perform their routine duties.”⁷ Corruption also results in poorer standards of health, particularly for those who do not have the economic means to pay for special health services.

The Report does not explicitly mention the health situation of indigenous people.

Environment

Many countries in the Asia and Pacific region are rich in natural resources; however, corruption has undermined efforts to turn natural environments into powerhouses for sustainable development. Wealth from overexploitation of natural resources is being drained away due to corrupt practices, and leads to the depletion of resources and environmental degradation. Private companies often bribe officials to get permits for grand-scale logging and fishing, which have detrimental effects to the environment as well as to those people who depend on these resources for subsistence and livelihood. Corruption in natural resource management is particularly damaging for poor rural communities. The Report states that “whole communities, particularly indigenous people, suffer from the exhaustion of many natural resources, notably primary forests and inshore fishing grounds.”⁸

The Report also mentions land grabbing as a sad reality throughout Asia, where the lands of poor and indigenous communities have been illegally seized for government or private developments. Corruption and bribery is all too often involved. Lands that traditionally

⁷ *Ibid*, pg. 57.

⁸ *Ibid*, pg. 7.

have been occupied by indigenous peoples are being exploited by commercial interests in collusion with governments. It is emphasized in the Report that this is “in stark contrast to Article 26 of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People adopted by the General Assembly in 2007, which recognizes indigenous peoples’ inalienable collective right to the ownership, development, use and control of lands, territories and resources.”⁹

On a more positive note, the Report states that Thailand, for example, is now taking a more local/regional approach rather than a top down attitude to combat corruption in natural resources management. The Phupan National Park, which was previously under the management of a Thai Community Forestry Division and is mentioned as having been a site of constant conflict, is now managed by Udon Thani Forestry Region Office, which works more closely with indigenous rights holders.

Conclusion

Overall, the goal of the 2008 HD Regional Report is to show how corruption undermines human development efforts in the Asia Pacific region. In terms of the development situation of indigenous peoples, the Report indicates how corruption is one of the major causes of prevailing challenges faced by indigenous peoples in this region, particularly in the context of natural resources management, as expropriation and exhaustion of resources such as forests and fishing grounds are most damaging to indigenous communities that depend on these resources.¹⁰ In order to combat corruption, the Report proposes a seven-point, action-oriented agenda to better human development conditions, including case studies of successful ongoing efforts from various countries to target corruption. The Report also states that decentralization is key to combating corruption and bribery, and recommends increased participation from the public in all aspects of decision making that affect their lives.

⁹ *Ibid*, pg. 98.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, pg. 111-112.

CAMBODIA

Indigenous Peoples of Cambodia and the 2007 Human Development Report

The indigenous peoples of Cambodia include the Brao, Chong or Khmer Daoem, Jarai, Kachak, Kanchruk, Kavet, Khaonh, Kraol, Kreung, Kui, Lun, Mil (Mel), Por (Poar, Pear), Phnong (Punong), Rhade (Ede), R'ong, S'och (Saoch), Stieng, Suoy, Thmon, and Tumpuon.¹¹ They constitute about 1 percent of the Cambodian population and are spread across the provinces of Kratie, Mondolkiri, Rattanakiri, Stueng Treng, Kampong Thom, Koh Kong, Pursat, Kampong Speu, and Sihanoukville. Indigenous peoples, particularly in the northeast, have different ways of living compared with the rest of the Cambodian population. They are forest dependent, practice shifting cultivation, and live on spread-out hamlets.

The 2007 Human Development Report for Cambodia¹² explicitly addresses the state of affairs of indigenous peoples in the country, particularly in the context of land issues, as it focuses on rural development and expanding opportunities for rural people in order to achieve human development and MDGs. Overall, the Report states that Cambodia is making moderate progress in meeting MDG targets. Access to education and health services has improved and poverty has declined. Primary school enrollment has risen significantly, and the gender gap in education is narrowing. These improvements in human development are due in part to Cambodia's steady growth in the economic sector. Most indicators of growth, however, have been urban-based and in volatile industries, including garment export, tourism, and construction.

Amidst Cambodia's increasing economic growth, inequality in income distribution exists and poverty is persistent in rural areas. Child and maternal mortality rates are still high and land issues pose a major challenge to the livelihoods of people, particularly in the more isolated rural areas. Although the Report does not provide disaggregated data specific to indigenous peoples, it shows that provinces in the northeast with the largest concentrations of indigenous inhabitants have the lowest Human Development Index values. Because agriculture employs most people who live in rural areas, low or uneven yields across the region greatly affect farmer's incomes, and hence human development. The following aspects of development are a major concern in rural areas:

Income distribution

The Report states that of the one-third of the population that live below the poverty line, 90 percent live and work in rural areas. A substantial percentage of the country's

¹¹ International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, Country Profile: Cambodia. Available at: <http://www.iwgia.org/graphics/offentlig/pdf/cambodia.pdf> [accessed 28 March 2009].

¹² UNDP Human Development Report: Cambodia, *Expanding Choices for Rural People*, 2007.

population remain food insecure and at risk for ill health, malnourishment, and diseases. Access to safe drinking water is also a major concern in rural areas.

Available data in the Report suggest that poverty has risen from 40 percent to 58 percent in the mountainous/plateau provinces inhabited by indigenous peoples. According to the Report, this is the only region in the country where poverty rates have increased during the past decade.

Health

Maternal mortality rates remain disproportionately high in rural areas, with more than 450 deaths per 100,000 live births. Infant mortality rates are also alarming, with 30,000 children dying each year from largely preventable causes, such as malaria, dengue, diarrhea, and water-borne diseases. Data disaggregated by region show that the northeastern provinces have the highest infant and maternal mortality rates, due in part to their remote location and inadequate access to basic health services. These areas have large populations of indigenous peoples.

Education

While primary school enrollments have significantly improved, retention is a major concern. The Report states that fewer than 50 percent of enrolled children complete the sixth grade, which implies that a large percentage of the future labor force may not be able to compete in the knowledge-based economies. According to the Report, real achievements in education remain elusive, and improving primary school enrollment rates, especially for girls, remains a challenge.

The Report does not specifically mention the education situation of indigenous children; however, disaggregated data show that the northeast provinces have some of the lowest primary school enrollment and literacy-to-population rates, particularly Rattanakiri and Stung Treng—both of which have large populations of indigenous people.

Natural resources

Land conflicts are rising due to land grabbing and the Economic Land Concessions (ELCs) policy, which allows the government to give several thousand hectares of land to private companies in order to boost commercial production of crops.¹³ ELCs, however, have been given out “without following the due legal process and with little transparency”¹⁴ and have resulted in pushing out the more vulnerable and less-informed rural people. Landlessness among rural households is increasing, and this is particularly true for indigenous peoples in the northeastern provinces who still lack community title to their ancestral lands despite provisions in the 2001 Land Law, which recognizes the collective land rights of indigenous peoples. According to the Report, not a single collective ownership title has yet been awarded, and lack of enforcement has rendered indigenous lands vulnerable to encroachment and exploitation. In addition, natural

¹³ *Ibid*, pg. 46-47.

¹⁴ *Ibid*.

resources, such as fish and forests, necessary for their subsistence and livelihood are being depleted due to encroachment and overexploitation. Data in the Report suggest that indigenous peoples have already lost 30 percent of their traditional forest lands.¹⁵

In response to these issues, the Report included a highlighted section where indigenous peoples voiced out their concerns and asked that their rights be recognized. The following is an excerpt:

*Indigenous peoples' livelihood depends on forest produce. It is not destructive to the forest because we think that the land and forest, preserved by our ancestors, are our lives. We speak different languages, depending on each particular indigenous people. The indigenous people are determined to retain this knowledge... We would like to request to the Government that land security is ensured, forest and natural resources are protected, some social services are provided such as health, language education is offered, and the rights of indigenous people are more broadly promoted in Cambodia.*¹⁶

Conclusion

The 2007 HDR from Cambodia states that in order to achieve Cambodia's MDGs and improve human development, the country will need to focus on improving rural livelihoods, targeting areas that are experiencing low income distribution and inadequate access to land, goods, and services that will allow them to live sustainable lives. Proposed reforms include increasing rural people's access to land and natural resources and making investments in rural infrastructure as well as human capital in order to improve the quality of life of people living in rural areas.

In terms of poverty and human development, indigenous peoples rank as poorer and have lower human development compared with the rest of the Cambodian populace. In addition, they face land alienation due to land grabbing and concessions. It is encouraging to see that the Human Development Report addresses these issues and proposes sound recommendations to improve the lives of indigenous Cambodians.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, pg. 11.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, pg. 54.

GHANA

Indigenous Peoples and the 2007 Human Development Report

According to the 2007 Human Development Report from Ghana, the Ghanaian society comprises five major ethnic groups: the Akan (49.1%), the Ewe (12.7%), Mole Dagbani (16.5%), the Guan, and the Ga-Adangbe (8.0%), as well as an estimated 63 other separate ethnic groups.¹⁷ The five major ethnic groups are further divided into several smaller groups. These various subdivisions as well as their geographic distribution “make understanding the intricacies of ethnicity in Ghana a complex affair.”¹⁸ Among the ethnic minorities who may be recognized as indigenous are the Kassena people in northern Ghana.¹⁹ Numbering about 30,000, they are a subset of the Gurunsi who inhabit the areas of southern Burkina Faso and northern Ghana. The majority of Kassena people practice sedentary farming.

The Ghana HDR focuses on the persistence of social exclusion in society and its impact on human development. Despite significant achievements in economic growth, there is a growing perception that there are groups of people who are not benefiting from this growth and are thus socially excluded.

According to the Report, social exclusion is multidimensional and results from differential access of social groups to goods and services based on cultural stratification, weak institutional support mechanisms, poverty and discrimination based on social and political biases, and inter-generational transfer of poverty. Persons identified as excluded include small-scale food producers, the unemployed or underemployed, disadvantaged women, unskilled youths, children in difficult circumstances, the elderly victims of abuse, people with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, displaced communities, isolated communities, and the extremely poor. The Report specifically mentions indigenous peoples on this list as those living in areas affected by relocation and decline of economic activities.

The Report attempts to measure exclusion from the economic, social, political, and legal processes through an analysis of the current state of human development in Ghana. Development challenges that drive social exclusion include poverty and insecure livelihoods, geographical disparity, gender disparity in education and employment, inadequate health services, environmental degradation, and cultural and political bias. They are discussed at length in the Report in the context of the MDGs. The following are the most pressing challenges:

Geographic disparity

¹⁷ UNDP Human Development Report: Ghana, *Towards A More Inclusive Society*, 2007, pg. 60.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Available at: <http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/people/Kassena.html> [accessed April 19, 2009].

Disparities between and within regions are important drivers of social exclusion in Ghana. People who inhabit remote areas experience spatial isolation due to lack of adequate access to goods and services, and suffer harsh economic environments. Inequitable distribution of infrastructure, such as transportation and communication lines, has stunted local economic growth and development in the more remote areas.

The Report does not specifically mention indigenous peoples; however, it does state that northern Ghana, which includes areas inhabited by the Kassena, is most likely to experience exclusion due to its harsh economic environment and isolation.

Poverty

Ghana has been experiencing a general decline in poverty, and disparities between regions in income distribution have been decreasing. If reduction rates are maintained, the Report states that Ghana will be able to achieve its MDG target of reducing the poverty rate by half in 2009. The highest poverty rates occur in the agriculture and the informal sectors, with food farmers the poorest and most afflicted with poverty. High unemployment rates among youths and women are also a concern. However, the gender gap in employment for men and women is decreasing due to women's increasing access to education.

Poor and inequitable income distribution is a driving force for social exclusion, and often measures to overcome poverty have enhanced marginalization. Although this section of the Report does not explicitly mention indigenous peoples, it states that those who practice semi-subsistence, small-scale food farming and those in the informal sectors have been identified as the most vulnerable to risk of food insecurity, unpredictable income flows, and social exclusion.

Education

Access to education has been improving in Ghana, particularly in meeting MDGs in increasing enrollment as well as achieving gender parity in schools. However, progress at all levels of education has been less than satisfactory. Regional disparities exist in terms of access, with the Northeast region having the poorest access due to geographic isolation, poverty, and social exclusion. Illiteracy rates are also highest in the Northern regions. These are areas inhabited by the Kassena people.

Health

Increasing geographical and socio-cultural access to health care services is a major priority for the health sector in Ghana. Health indicators show that urban areas enjoy relatively good access to health care compared with rural areas, with the remote Northern areas having the worst access to health services. The spread of HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases also remains a major concern.

Although the Report does not explicitly mention the health situation of indigenous peoples, it states that the northern regions have the highest prevalence of infant and maternal mortality, despite improvements in reducing rates at the national level.

In response to meeting MDG targets in maternal mortality, the Government initiated the High Impact Rapid Delivery Approach in the northern region, with the aim of focusing on key interventions to reduce the incidence of mortality. Measures are also being taken across the country to improve access to health services and the quality of health facilities, as well as increase access to safe drinking water to minimize the impact of water-borne diseases.

Social structure

The Report includes a chapter on the cultural and ethnic structures of Ghanaian society and how certain cultural and religious practices, traditional systems, and kinship and group relations have contributed to social exclusion and have given rise to ethnocentrism. Ethnically motivated violence and crime as well as the disempowerment of the more vulnerable groups and other members of society (such as women, youths, and the elderly) have enhanced marginalization. Among the gender issues cited in the Report, it provides as an example the situation of Kassena women who “have to rely on their husbands or male children to obtain access to critical resources such as land, livestock and the labour of extended family members.”²⁰ Another major issue is the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM), which the Report cites as a serious health risk among the Kassena. In many cases, FGM leads to the spread of HIV/AIDS, different levels of disabilities, and deaths.

The Report recommends that inter-ethnic contact should be encouraged in order to increase tolerance between the different groups and improve their understanding of each other’s cultural practices and traditions. The Report also recommends that those practices that lead to exclusion should be abolished, but that culturally inclusive practices should be maintained and enhanced, such as the recognition of the languages of small ethno-linguistic groups.

Conclusion

The Report states that despite improvements in human development in Ghana, social exclusion persists and is particularly affecting women, the rural poor, and socially and culturally marginalized groups. For Ghana to maintain and continue to improve human development and achieve MDG targets, efforts need to be made to empower the socially excluded and encourage them to participate in decision making that affects their lives. Spatial and socio-cultural barriers to inclusion, such as geographic isolation and cultural discrimination, need to be further addressed.

The present Report lacks disaggregated data on the various ethnic and indigenous groups in Ghana, but it is encouraging to see that the Report is recommending that empirical studies be undertaken using disaggregated data to further explore the causes of regional

²⁰ UNDP Human Development Report: Ghana, *Towards A More Inclusive Society*, 2007, pg. 75.

disparities in human development and the persistence of exclusion of the more vulnerable groups in Ghana.

KENYA

Indigenous Peoples and the 2006 Human Development Report

Indigenous peoples of Kenya include the Awer, Boni, Borana, Burgi, Elmolo, Endorois, Ilchamus, Gaaljecel, Gabra, Maasai, Malakote, Munyayaya, Ogiek, Orma, Pokot, Rendille, Sabaot, Sakuye, Samburu, Sengwer, Somali, Talai, Turkana, Watta, and Yakuu.²¹ Many are pastoralists who inhabit the arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs) that make up more than 80 percent of Kenya's landmass and are home to 25 percent of the national population.²² Some practice small-scale agriculture, and small pockets of hunter-gatherer communities subsist in forested areas.²³

The 2006 Human Development Report from Kenya does not explicitly mention or present disaggregated data on indigenous peoples, despite the fact that ASALs have the highest levels of food poverty in Kenya due to persistent droughts, and people occupying these areas have the lowest access to health and social services.²⁴ For example, the three districts with the lowest Human Development Index are Turkana (0.172), Wajir (0.256), and Garissa (0.267). These are regions mainly populated by indigenous peoples. Although indigenous issues are invisible in the Report, the HDR does address issues in the ASALs in the context of the MDGs and in Kenya's effort to provide increased human security to its citizens in order to improve development and meet MDG targets. The following key areas in Kenya's MDGs are discussed in the context of human security:

Education

Performance indicators in the education sector show significant improvements, and Kenya has taken successful measures to meet its MDG targets in education. Overall school enrollment rate has increased substantially in the last two years (2004-2006) due to the implementation of the Free Primary Education program.

There are no disaggregated data available on the enrollment rates of indigenous children; however, in line with the encouraging process of striving toward the achievement of universal primary education in Kenya, mechanisms have been put in place to target children in marginalized areas, such as ASALs, which are heavily populated by indigenous peoples. Equal access has also been a major concern, which prompted the Ministry of Education in Kenya to take measures to address equal access to education, particularly targeting children from poor families.

²¹ Report of the Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, Mission to Kenya, (A/HRC/4/32/Add.3), 26 February 2007, pg. 7.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, *The Indigenous World*, 2008, pg. 415.

²⁴ UNDP Human Development Report: Kenya, *Human Security and Human Development: A Deliberate Choice*, 2006.

Health

Public health remains a major concern in Kenya. With communicable diseases still crippling large numbers of Kenya's population as well as high infant and maternal mortality, MDG targets are far from being met and huge efforts are required to improve health and to stop diseases from further eroding Kenya's fragile state of development. Infant and maternal mortality rates are highest in the poorer regions, and huge disparities exist between urban and rural areas. Under-five mortality rates are 26 percent higher in rural areas (including ASALs) than in urban areas.

There are no data specific to the health of indigenous peoples in the Report, but disaggregate data show that child mortality is highest in Nyanza and Northeastern provinces, where there are large populations of indigenous peoples. Except for neonatal mortality, all childhood mortality indicators are highest in Nyanza province and lowest in Central province. Huge efforts are needed to reduce infant mortality rates, particularly in ASALs, where HIV/ AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and other communicable diseases are rife and are a constant threat to young children with still developing immune systems living in abject poverty with little or no health care at their disposal.

Maternal mortality shows no improvement and is getting worse. The report does not break down maternal health by region, but one could hazard to guess that, following the pattern of child mortality, women in severely wealth-compromised regions, such as Nyanza and the Northeastern provinces (populated mostly by indigenous peoples), with their evident lack of proper health care and facilities, would be suffering a higher maternal mortality rate than those living in more affluent areas in Kenya. The Report acknowledges Kenya's poor and declining performance in maternal health, and it specifically mentions what changes are needed to reduce maternal mortality in order to achieve MDG targets.

Poverty

The Report indicates that Kenya, despite best intentions, still struggles to meet MDG targets, particularly in eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. Vulnerability to food insecurity has been persistent in Kenya, but the food problem is described as mainly transitory in nature—periodic droughts, institutional failures, and poor policies cause food crop and livestock production to decline, forcing the country to import substantial foodstuffs.

Poverty rates show considerable disparities between regions, with poverty levels and food insecurity highest in the ASALs, areas with large populations of indigenous peoples. The Report states that while food crisis in the ASAL areas has been attributed to climatic and environmental conditions, other important factors include limited alternative sources of income, exploitative cereal marketing channels, unavailability of drought and disease resistant crop varieties, low/limited crop diversification, poor storage methods, lack of credit services, illiteracy, and poverty.

The Report shows that measures have been put in place to deal with extreme poverty, particularly in those areas most affected. These include the establishment of the Arid Resource Management Programme (ALRMP), which monitors the food security situation in the arid areas. In collaboration with other institutions they provide early warnings of food shortages in the country. Sadly, however, these efforts are usually inadequate, according to the Early Warning System Network, which is the Government's response to food emergency situations. On a positive note, it is worth mentioning that Kenya has undertaken a school-feeding programme for primary schools in the ASALs to supplement dietary needs over the years. During a recent drought, the Government also extended the programme to secondary schools that were hard hit by the situation. This intervention has ensured that students remain in school as well as increase enrollment for those who have attained the school-going age.

Conclusion

The 2006 HDR from Kenya provides a thorough and in depth review of each of the key challenges the country faces in order to achieve human development goals and states that major efforts in increasing human security are required to combat extreme poverty and meet MDG targets. The Report stops short of making any direct mention of the current state of development of Kenya's indigenous peoples and communities. It does, however, provide disaggregated data by region in an effort to describe the level of development in different parts of the country. It is thus possible to derive a broad picture of the state of human development of indigenous peoples in Kenya. It is also encouraging to see that measures are being taken to address poverty, health, and security issues in those areas with large populations of indigenous peoples.

NIGERIA

Indigenous Peoples of Nigeria and the 2006 Human Development Report

The indigenous peoples of Nigeria include the Mbororo (also known as the Fulanis or Peul), a large group that occupy a number of countries in Central and West Africa, and the Ogoni, who inhabit the southeastern region of Nigeria—an area known as Ogoniland and located in the northeast plain terraces of the Niger Delta in Rivers State.²⁵ The Ogoni people occupied this area for nearly a thousand years before the British came in 1861. They subsist mainly on farming and fishing.²⁶

The 2006 Human Development Report from Nigeria is the first to focus on one of its six sub-national regions—the Niger Delta.²⁷ This region, with its lucrative oil operations, suffers from “administrative neglect, crumbling social infrastructure and services, high unemployment, social deprivation, abject poverty, filth and squalor, and endemic conflict.”²⁸ The Report addresses the unique social and economic needs and concerns of the various peoples of the Niger Delta. It also mentions the plight of the Ogoni people and other ethnic minorities living in the Delta in the context of land rights issues and the impacts of the oil industry on their livelihoods as well as the environmental resources that they depend on. Oil exploration in the Delta has seriously affected the lives of the indigenous communities in this region who have been denied rights to the rich oil resources found on their land, resulting in their livelihood insecurity. Protests from the Ogoni community led to massive abuses in human rights, including the execution of an Ogoni leader.²⁹ The Report includes a copy of the Ogoni Bill of Rights drafted in 1990, which lists the state of affairs of the Ogoni people in the Niger Delta and their demands for environmental and sociopolitical rights.

Low human development performance in the Niger Delta indicates a struggle to achieve MDG targets, and the HDR states that Nigeria is not likely to meet MDGs, except perhaps in primary school enrollment and gender parity in education. The Report, therefore, focuses on identifying major challenges in development in the Niger Delta and promoting strategies to achieve sustainable poverty reduction, to ensure effective use of natural resources, to strengthen local governance, and to build a solid social infrastructure that involves participatory planning and management. The following are the key challenges discussed in the HDR:

²⁵ African Commission on Human and People’s Rights, *Report of the African Commission’s Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities*, 2005, pg. 18

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ UNDP Human Development Report: Nigeria, *Niger Delta Human Development Report*, 2006.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pg. 9.

²⁹ ACHPR, *Report of the African Commission’s Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities*, 2005, pg. 28.

Poverty and inequality

According to the Report, the incidence of poverty in Nigeria is increasing, and conditions were described as deplorable. Huge disparities in development conditions exist between regions, with extremely low performance levels in the Niger Delta where, ironically, oil is produced and natural resources abound. Revenues from oil, the Niger Delta's main source of income, are not having an impact on persistent poverty in this region as well as the entire nation, due largely to the inequitable allocation of and access to resources. The ascendancy of the oil industry in the Delta also rendered the decline of traditional economies, particularly agriculture, fishery, and forestry. Poverty in the Niger Delta includes issues of discrimination, deprivation, inequality, lack of power and security, and lack of access to education, health care, natural resources, and basic amenities. It is a result of years of poor governance, administrative neglect, and the exclusion of particular social groups, such as women, youth, and ethnic minorities/indigenous peoples, from participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives.

To boost economic growth, the Report recommends developing a diversified economy that reduces dependence on existing non-renewable assets such as oil and gas. An investment on building new industries and improving sustainable livelihoods would help expand employment, productivity, and income, and developing initiatives to cultivate people's skills is necessary so that they may participate in productive, income-generating activities. Key to this process, however, is learning new and modern ways of doing business to prevent marginalization. This could mean alienating and further marginalizing groups, particularly indigenous peoples, who choose to retain their traditional means of subsistence and livelihood.

The Report does address the negative impacts of social exclusion and marginalization, stating that the Niger Delta has experienced isolation from the rest of the country's development process. Even within the Delta, some groups have been further marginalized, including women and youth. They experience few development opportunities and minimal health, education, and social benefits. The Report recommends that in order to remove barriers to social inclusion, it is necessary to improve equitable access to key resources, to empower socially marginalized groups (including indigenous peoples) by developing local capacities, and to adopt a participatory approach to planning and implementation of development initiatives.

Mismanagement of natural resources and infrastructure

Achieving environmental sustainability is one of the biggest challenges in the Niger Delta region. Environmental degradation has resulted from poor management of natural resources and is a major source of agitation for inhabitants in this region. In particular, pollution from the oil industry has destroyed key environmental resources such as land, water, and forests, and has crippled local livelihoods that depend on these resources. Data show that the largest oil spills have occurred in the Rivers state, where there are large populations of indigenous peoples, and have resulted in the devastation of major food sources. In addition, the general neglect of infrastructure has worsened people's access to

key resources for sustainable living, such as electricity, safe drinking water, and health care facilities.

The Report also indicates that poverty is both a major cause and a result of environmental degradation, and without proper environmental management initiatives the poor suffer from insufficient livelihoods, insecurity, and poor health. Interestingly enough, the correlation between poverty and environmental degradation was presented in the Report using a case study of indigenous peoples in Brazil and the non-indigenous peoples who are encroaching and degrading their native lands.

With the present rate and degree of degradation, the Report states that the Delta may be heading toward ecological disaster. To prevent further environmental and infrastructure degradation, the Report calls for the proper management of resources, raising environmental awareness, and enforcing environmental laws. Some believe that total resource control is the only solution. Here the Report mentions the plight of the Ogoni people, who “see the right to ownership and control of their lands and resources as the only way to protect their environment from further degradation and promote decent livelihoods on Ogoni land.”³⁰ It also includes a copy of the Kaiama Declaration,³¹ which is a declaration of the rights of the Ijaw peoples to their territories and a call for self-determination.

Health

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Nigeria impedes human development and remains the biggest obstacle in achieving MDGs, with the highest incidence rates in the Niger Delta. Nigeria also has one of the highest infant and maternal mortality rates in the world. Lack of access to basic health services and the poor quality of health care facilities are major contributors to the high incidences of child and maternal mortality. There is a lack of available longitudinal data for infant and maternal mortality rates in the Niger Delta region, and the Report does not provide disaggregated data that indicates the health situation of indigenous peoples, although low life expectancy in the Niger Delta is an indicator for high mortality rates.

Conflict

Challenges in sustainable human development include conflicts over resources among local communities, including indigenous communities, as well as between communities and oil companies. Of particular concern are the disillusioned youth who turn to gangs and engage in extortion and fast moneymaking schemes due to lack of education and opportunities. Conflicts also arise in response to poor human development as well as mismanagement and corruption in the local government.

³⁰ UNDP Human Development Report: Nigeria, *Niger Delta Human Development Report*, 2006, pg. 86.

³¹ *Ibid*, pg. 87.

A major issue in the Niger Delta region is access to land. Local people complain about having lost their lands to the oil industry. Displacement and alienation of people from their lands have led to conflicts in land rights as well as inefficient land use practices. Land disputes have also resulted in inter-ethnic conflicts, and some of the most noteworthy conflicts involved indigenous peoples.

Many have also lost their land through pollution and degradation resulting from quarrying activities. As a result, many people, including indigenous people, are calling for restitution for damages caused by oil operations. The Ogoni people, in particular, developed a Bill of Rights³² to list their grievances with the oil industry over environmental despoliation, demanding rights to and protection of their lands and environmental resources. However, the lack of avenues for redress against the big oil companies has also been a source of conflict in the Niger Delta region.

Conclusions

Despite efforts to boost economic growth, the Niger Delta struggles to achieve MDGs. Abject poverty, conflict, high mortality rates, and poor governance and management of infrastructure and natural resources have become major obstacles in meeting MDG targets and human development goals. The HDR calls for Nigeria to implement a people-centered—not income-centered—development agenda, particularly for the Niger Delta region, to overcome these hurdles, as well as to invest in efforts to revitalize traditional economic activities and promote sustainable livelihoods. The Report proposes a seven-point people-centered development agenda that involves targeted efforts to build the region’s human capital using oil wealth in order to facilitate development in other sectors. This includes (1) promoting peace as a foundation for development, which involves equitable distribution of resources and protection of land rights; (2) ensuring good governance; (3) improving and diversifying the economy, which involves identification of new enterprises; (4) promoting social inclusion, which involves empowering marginalized groups, women, and youths to take an active part in shaping policies that affect their lives; (5) promoting a sustainable environment; (6) developing an integrated approach to combating HIV/AIDS; and (7) developing partnerships for sustainable human development.

The HDR gives comprehensive analysis of the current state of development in the Niger Delta, and includes information on the social and economic situations of indigenous peoples in the region. It states that various entities were consulted and focus groups were conducted to gather information for the Report, and participants were selected to avoid bias. It is unclear, however, to what extent indigenous peoples were included or solicited to participate in these discussions.

³² *Ibid*, pg. 119.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Indigenous Peoples of Russia and the 2006/2007 Human Development Report

Officially recognized indigenous peoples in the Russian Federation are referred to as “numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East.”³³ To date, there are 44 recognized groups in Russia, numbering around 250,000 individuals. Group sizes range from 35-45 thousand individuals in the larger groups, such as the Evenk and Nenets, to a few dozen or few hundred individuals in the smaller groups, such as the Enets and Orok. The cultural, territorial, and political rights of indigenous peoples are protected under the Russian Constitution and national legislation.³⁴

The 2006/2007 Human Development Report from Russia focuses on the country’s human development goals, challenges, and achievements at the regional level.³⁵ The scope of the Report is very extensive due to the enormous size of the Russian Federation, with all its republics and autonomous nations. It does not specifically mention any indigenous peoples but rather infrequently refers to them in different contexts. One can, however, derive the development situation of indigenous peoples in the context of the MDGs, based on the geographical analyses and dissections the Report provides.

There are no national data provided in the Report; therefore, the state of the following key aspects of human development in Russia are disaggregated by region:

Income distribution and poverty

Official data suggests that 25.5 million people, or 17.6% of the total population, are in poverty. Disparities in income distribution also exist between and within regions. The Komi Republic and the neighboring Nenets Autonomous District have generally higher incomes due to oil operations. These income levels are unfortunately not extended to rural areas, where several indigenous peoples reside. Rural areas in the Nenets district are also home to indigenous peoples who, if employed at all, work in very low paid agricultural jobs. According to the Report, “autochthonous populations (Nenets and Komi) constitute most of the workforce in agriculture where wages are 2.5-3 times lower than the regional average—an inequality that creates a permanent layer of extreme poverty in the North.”³⁶

To combat poverty in the Komi region, the government has introduced a poverty reduction program that includes subsidizing interest rates. This program appears to be taking effect and has, together with the growth of salaries in this region, reduced the

³³ International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, *The Indigenous World*, 2008, pg. 39-49.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ UNDP Human Development Report: Russian Federation, *Russia’s Regions: Goals, Challenges, Achievements*, 2006/2007.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pg. 28.

number of people below the poverty line. Sadly, however, this upward trend does not affect the rural areas, and socio-economic indicators continue to decline. The Report further states that in Nenets district and Komi Republic, extreme poverty seems to be ethnically based.

In the Southern Federal District, Dagestan is home to 60 ethnic groups and indigenous peoples speaking over 30 different languages. The bulk of the population lives in the plains and foothills regions, while the Republic's highlands and northern regions are virtually uninhabited. Dagestan heavily relies on federal subsidies. As in Komi Republic and Nenets, indigenous peoples are found living mostly in rural areas. It is therefore worrying to see that the unemployment rate in rural areas (which accounts for about 84% of registered unemployment) is nearly six times the national average. Despite a massive, state-subsidized education program, Dagestan remains one of the least developed areas in the Russian Federation. Indigenous peoples living in the plains and foothills, especially, are bearing the brunt of Dagestan's developmental woes.

In the Far Eastern district, the Report mentions that the area suffers from stubbornly high rates of extreme poverty. While the overall poverty levels are declining, extreme poverty levels have remained the same due to large parts of the population having no steady source of income. The Report mentions that many people from indigenous ethnic groups form part of this population.

Siberia's autonomous regions are also home to many indigenous peoples. The report describes how Siberia is so far behind the rest of Russia in terms of development that it has, at least in certain parts "barely emerged from the 19th century."³⁷ Chronic poverty is rife, unemployment is higher than the national average, and housing issues continue to plague the region.

Education

On a more positive note, the Report states that Dagestan, which is home to many indigenous peoples "outranks many of Russia's major cities by numbers of young people in education," with 415,664 students enrolled in 1,664 educational institutions, due to the government-subsidized education program.³⁸ The Report, however, does not mention if the program benefits the several indigenous children living in this region.

Gender parity

In Komi there is a huge gap in salaries between women and men across various sectors. This trend does not seem to be abating. Women, for example, account for over 80% of low paid employees in the public sector. Many organizations have been set up in order to help women achieve gender equality, such as the Komi Republic Women's Union and the Women's Chamber of the Komi Republic. The Report also mentions that there is now an organization that addresses gender inequality among minority groups: the Komi Union of

³⁷ *Ibid.* pg. 83

³⁸ *Ibid.* pg. 66.

Women from Indigenous Ethnic Groups. Despite these encouraging development opportunities for women, gender equality in the Republic remains far from realization.

Health

The Report alarmingly states that over a third of children born in the Komi district are born ill, despite the fact that infant mortality indicators in the Republic are better than the national average. Furthermore, child mortality in the Nenets district is up to 1.8 times higher than the national average. These high mortality rates are attributed to harsh climatic conditions as well as “high child mortality among small indigenous ethnic groups.”³⁹ The report cites limited access to medical services in remote villages and alcoholism as reasons.

The Khanty-Mansi region has managed to reduce infant mortality to Western European levels. This astonishing achievement is based on an early diagnosis system as well as well-equipped health facilities. This is highly encouraging given the high density of indigenous populations living there, although no specific mention is made about them in this section of the Report.

The Komi region has implemented a series of new measures to improve maternal health. Women with medium- or high-risk pregnancies are sent to the Republic’s main hospitals, and consulting departments have been set up to provide monitoring and emergency treatment particularly for people from rural areas. This trend is very positive, as these are areas populated with indigenous peoples.

Environmental sustainability

According to the Report, Russia experiences very serious environmental issues across the country. These problems are largely due to the legacy of the Soviet industrialization “when cities were built around or near large plants and factories with little regard for the environment and without creating adequate buffer zones.”⁴⁰ Even today, environmental stability is still not seen as a major priority, as it takes its place behind economic development. Russia’s most pressing ecological problem is water pollution and water shortages, as well as lack of proper waste management. Another serious issue is severe metallurgic pollution from Soviet era industrial plants and mining areas. This contaminates ground water and pollutes the air.

Dagestan’s environmental state, for example, is poor, due to pollution by harmful toxic and biological waste. Traditional energy sources and raw materials are being depleted, and the natural balance in the environment has not been respected.

Depletion and degradation of natural resources especially affect indigenous peoples and others who depend on these resources for subsistence or livelihood. The indigenous peoples in Yakutia, for example, have always depended on hunting, fishing, and reindeer

³⁹ *Ibid*, pg. 28.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, pg. 102.

breeding. The period since the break-up of the USSR has brought a crisis, as captive reindeer herds and wild reindeer have been slaughtered and fisheries have been depleted.

The Report states that Russia is fully aware of the need for ecological sustainability. A draft program, which ensures environmental stability, has been prepared for 2007–2010.

Conclusion

Russia, with its vast landmass, is home to several indigenous peoples, many of whom are extremely marginalized. Huge distances to urban areas also lead to their partly isolated existence. The indigenous peoples of Russia are in need of programmes and policies to address extreme poverty, health problems, unemployment, and alcohol abuse on a massive scale. In addition, greater attention should be paid to environmental issues and respect and consideration shown for the lifestyles of indigenous peoples. Various support and aid structures are necessary to implement comprehensive strategies to assist indigenous peoples in their efforts to live sustainable lives and to see their rights respected and fulfilled, including their inclusion in decision making that may affect their future.

RWANDA

Indigenous Peoples of Rwanda and the 2007 Human Development Report

The former hunter-gathering and forest-dwelling Batwa (also known as Twa) are considered the first inhabitants of Rwanda.⁴¹ Numbering around 33,000, they represent about 0.4% of the population. Although widely recognized in Africa as indigenous peoples, the government of Rwanda does not recognize them as indigenous and instead has instituted policies for cultural assimilation.⁴² As in Uganda and Tanzania, the Batwa people are among the poorest and most marginalized in Rwanda. They have been dispossessed of their ancestral lands and forced to give up their hunter-gatherer lifestyle. They now subsist on the fringes of Rwandan society and suffer extreme poverty, marginalization, and increasing discrimination for their ethnic origins.⁴³

The 2007 Human Development Report from Rwanda does not explicitly mention indigenous peoples or any targeted efforts to address their situation.⁴⁴ There are no disaggregated data available on the social or economic situations of indigenous peoples; instead, they are included among “marginalized” or “vulnerable” groups. However, the Report does focus on these groups as it addresses the most pressing development concerns facing the country, calling for a targeted investment strategy in key sectors such as education, health, and agriculture to reach the poorest populations and to reduce the increasing inequality in income distribution.

As Rwanda refocuses its efforts from post-conflict recovery to long-term sustainable development, it has experienced substantial growth but has achieved modest progress in meeting MDG targets. The impact of foreign aid in reducing poverty and stimulating economic growth is also limited. The following are key areas and challenges in achieving MDGs and national development goals:

Agriculture

The Report states that Rwanda’s agricultural performance is not sufficient to meet the MDGs, particularly eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. Agriculture is also not likely to be a main source of economic growth and long-term sustainable development; however, a vast majority of the population depends on agriculture for their livelihoods, and therefore achieving the MDG target of reducing the percentage of people under the poverty line by half is dependent upon the growth of the agricultural sector. The Report states that Rwanda will need to transition from subsistence-based agriculture to a system

⁴¹ International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, *The Indigenous World*, 2008, pg. 442.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ African Commission on Human and People’s Rights, *Report of the African Commission’s Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities*, 2005, pg. 35

⁴⁴ UNDP Human Development Report: Rwanda, *Turning Vision 2020 Into Reality*, 2007.

that can create surpluses in capital and labor necessary to fuel economic growth as well as stimulate development in other sectors.

The HDR does not specifically address how agricultural growth can impact the lives of indigenous peoples, the majority of whom are landless and practice pottery making as a source of livelihood,⁴⁵ but growth in this sector can reduce the incidence of food shortages among the poorest populations.

Population growth

Rwanda has the highest population density in Africa, with more than 350 inhabitants per square km, and the population is growing at a rate of 3.5 percent per year. Even though poverty rates have been reduced, rapid population growth in Rwanda is outpacing the rate of poverty reduction. Population growth also contributes to further environmental degradation as well agricultural pressures caused by scarcity in land. The Report states that Rwanda needs to institute a comprehensive and integrated approach to managing its natural resources in the face of population growth, climate changes, and environmental degradation.

The HDR does not include disaggregated data on population growth by region or group.

Income distribution

Disparities in income distribution are high and undermine Rwanda's progress toward achieving MDG targets in education, health, and gender equality. Growth in the economic sector has bypassed the rural poor, and abject poverty remains for those at the bottom of the income distribution. The Report states that if the inequality in income distribution continues, economic growth alone may not be sufficient to reduce poverty rates.

The HDR does not include disaggregated data on income distribution, but mentions that women and marginalized groups are among the poorest.

Investing in people

The Report argues that MDGs can be achieved in Rwanda, despite the key challenges mentioned above. Rwanda has very limited land and natural resources to base its development strategy; therefore an investment in people—their health and education—is necessary to meet development goals. Investments in human capital are pro-poor, and a public investment strategy involves bold partnerships in development and mutual accountability among key stakeholders. The government of Rwanda, in turn, aligns its national policies with MDGs, such as Vision 2020, and ensures the strengthening of governance and effective utilization of resources. The following are key investments for development:

⁴⁵ International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, *The Indigenous World*, 2008, pg. 445.

Education

Investing in education is necessary in transforming Rwanda from a subsistence-based agricultural economy to a service- and knowledge-based economy. The Report states that performance indicators in the education sector has shown the best results, and that Rwanda is on track to achieve MDG targets for education.

There are no disaggregated data available to show enrollment and retention rates for indigenous children. According to an ACHPR report, as in Uganda and Burundi, the majority of Batwa in Rwanda do not go to school due to extreme poverty and prevailing prejudice—many in the prevailing society go so far as to consider the Batwa to be “backwards or mentally retarded.”⁴⁶

Health

Investing in health can reduce the risk of diseases, such as HIV/AIDS and malaria, increase labor productivity, and reduce population growth. Data in the Report show significant improvement in the rate of acute malnutrition for children under five, indicating a decrease in the incidence of severe food shortages. However, the number of under-five children who suffer from malnutrition remains high, and disparities exist between regions. Rwanda also has one of the highest infant and under-five mortality rates, and few expecting mothers have access to proper health care due to costs and geographic barriers, resulting in high maternal mortality.

There is no specific information on the health situation of indigenous peoples in the Report, but it does state that Rwanda could see improvements in its health-related MDG indicators if its investments in health is well-targeted to the main causes of mortality and is equally distributed to ensure that those who are most exposed to health risks, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable groups, can receive proper care.

Gender equality

Rwanda has the world’s highest rate of women representation in national government, and it has already achieved its MDG target in gender equality in primary and secondary school enrollment; however, inequalities still remain among men and women, especially in income distribution. Incidence of poverty among women is high, due to a stark increase in female-headed households post-conflict.

The Report does not provide any information on the school enrollment rates of Batwa girls, or whether Batwa women are represented in local and national government.

Conclusion

⁴⁶ ACHPR, *Report of the African Commission’s Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities*, 2005, pg. 56

The current HDR from Rwanda does not explicitly mention indigenous peoples, even though the Batwa are among the most marginalized and poorest groups in the country. However, it is encouraging that the Report focuses on addressing inequality and reducing the income distribution gap, as well as developing targeted strategies to help the poorest of the poor (including the Batwa) who have been left out of the development process. This includes increasing investment in social protection, such as reducing food insecurity and guaranteeing equal access to health care and education. Such investments in human capital are pro-poor. To achieve this, the Report recommends a public investment strategy that involves bold partnerships in development and mutual accountability among key stakeholders.

TANZANIA

Indigenous Peoples of Tanzania and the 2007 Human Development Report

Indigenous peoples of Tanzania include the Hadzabe (Hadza, singular), the Akie, the Barabaig, and the Maasai. Many are semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers and pastoralists, or practice small-scale agriculture.⁴⁷ Over the past years, several indigenous communities have been displaced and evicted from their lands and are now scattered across the country because of the creation of national parks and wildlife conservation laws, the institution of large-scale infrastructure projects, and the expansion of agricultural lands.⁴⁸

The 2007 Human Development Report from Tanzania,⁴⁹ which focuses on the development of a strategy for economic growth as part of the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA), does not directly address the social and economic situations of the country's indigenous peoples or offer any recommendations to address their situation. Available data are aggregated by region (urban versus rural) and are discussed in the context of the three development aspects of MKUKUTA:

Growth and reduction of income poverty

The development goals outlined in this section include ensuring sound economic management; promoting sustainable and broad-based growth; improving food availability and accessibility at the household level in urban and rural areas; reducing income poverty of both men and women; and providing reliable and affordable energy. Agriculture remains central to Tanzania's economic and overall growth; however, the 2007 HDR states that growth in this sector is not sufficient to meet MKUKUTA's goals for reducing poverty. Employment rates have improved and indicate a shift away from agriculture towards non-farm labor; however, gender disparities in the workforce persist, a high unemployment rate for 15-24 year olds is a major concern, and the unemployment rate in rural areas is significantly low compared with that in urban areas (7.5% versus 31.5%, respectively). There are no disaggregated data available on indigenous peoples.

Improvement of quality of life and social well-being

The development goals outlined in this section include equitable access to quality education; improved survival, health, and well-being of all children and women and especially vulnerable groups (which includes indigenous people); increased access to clean, affordable, and safe water, sanitation, decent shelter, and a safe and sustainable

⁴⁷ International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, *The Indigenous World*, 2008, pg. 432.

⁴⁸ African Commission on Human and People's Rights, *Report of the African Commission's Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities*, 2005, pgs. 17-33.

⁴⁹ UNDP Human Development Report: Tanzania, *Poverty and Human Development Report*, 2007.

environment; adequate social protection and provision of basic needs and services for the vulnerable and needy; and effective systems to ensure universal access to quality and affordable public services.

In education, Tanzania reports that enrollment rate in primary schools shows steady improvement and there are positive trends at all levels, but retention rate and quality of education remain a concern as well as achieving geographic equity in educational outcomes. There are no data available on the school enrollment rates of indigenous children.

In health, there are sharp reductions in infant and under-five mortality rates, and Tanzania reports that it is close to achieving its MKUKUTA goal, and the MDG may be achieved; however, disparities between regions persist due to low coverage of health care and vaccinations in certain parts of the country; maternal mortality shows no improvement; and neonatal mortality remains high and accounts for half of all infant deaths. Incidence of HIV/AIDS is reduced but still persists, especially in urban areas, and incidence of tuberculosis remains high. There are no data available on the health situation of indigenous peoples.

MKUKUTA and MDG targets in ensuring environmental sustainability are not likely to be met, particularly in the provision of safe water supply. Access to water supply is also a major issue for some indigenous pastoralists in Tanzania, and the Report briefly includes a case study of conflict over water supply in the Rufiji Basin, in which nomadic pastoralists were believed to be causing wetland degradation (even though livestock keepers make up the smallest percentage of consumptive water users) and were then relocated to reduce water stress. The government of Tanzania encourages community participation in natural resources management, but there is a lack of an evaluation and monitoring system for community participation.

Governance and accountability

The development goals outlined in this section include equitable allocation of public resources and corruption reduction; establishment of an effective public service framework; protection of the rights of the poor and vulnerable groups; reduction of social and political intolerance and exclusion; improvement of security; and promotion of national cultural identities. The HDR, however, did not go into much detail on how to achieve such goals, particularly in areas where indigenous peoples' issues could have been addressed, such as the protection of the rights of the poor and vulnerable groups and the reduction of social and political exclusion. The Report briefly mentions that the number of cases filed for violation of human rights has increased, but it is unclear how many of these are violations of indigenous peoples' rights.

People's survey

Five chapters in the 2007 HDR discuss findings from a survey of people's social and economic well-being in the context of the development goals, as well as their views on government policies. Representatives include men, women, children, adults, and elderly from urban and rural areas; those from rural areas include agriculturalists, pastoralists,

and fishers, but it is not clear whether indigenous peoples participated in the survey or whether they were solicited at all to participate.

Overall, few Tanzanians reported experiencing economic growth or improvement in their economic situation. Lack of transport and communication infrastructure, such as roads, is a major concern particularly in rural areas. Pastoralists complained about the lack of veterinary services for their livestock, and drought, diseases, and access to grazing areas were cited as problems. The majority of pastoralists, farmers, and fishers believe that the government is not doing anything to help them, and many are calling for strong government action to improve rural economy. Public investment in education shows marked improvement, but many called for an increase in the quality of education and school resources such as books and good teachers. The costs of medical treatment and drugs were cited as a major barrier to receiving proper health care, and many elderly reported difficulties accessing free health services. The unavailability of safe and clean water supply continues to be a pressing problem, particularly in rural areas. Lastly, while interest in politics is high, public participation in local government and community work is low, and many point to deteriorating trends in community collaboration.

Conclusion

Even though they are among the poorest, most marginalized populations in Tanzania, often the victims of inequality, discrimination, and social and political exclusion, indigenous peoples are not explicitly mentioned in the HDR, except in the case of the displaced pastoralists. There seems to be a bias in development policies, which favor farming over pastoralism and result in the eviction of pastoralists from their lands and their being denied access to resources upon which their survival depends.

The 2007 HDR from Tanzania focuses on formulating strategies to accelerate and sustain economic growth through the proper identification of growth drivers and the strengthening of public policy as well as initiatives that center on the improvement of transport and communication infrastructure. As in the past, such growth-centered development policies could further increase the marginalization of indigenous peoples through dispossession of land and resources vital to their subsistence and way of life as well as mass evictions with no plans of resettlement. Protection of rights and access to land and other natural resources are not addressed; instead the growth strategy calls for development in the private sector and tourist industries. Furthermore, possibly as an attempt at nation building, the promotion of a national culture and language may further increase discrimination of indigenous peoples.

THAILAND

Indigenous peoples of Thailand and the 2007 Human Development Report

The majority of indigenous peoples of Thailand, often referred to as “hill tribe peoples” or “highlanders,” live in the north and northwest of the country, with a few groups in the northeast as well as small populations of indigenous fisher and hunter-gatherer communities in the south.⁵⁰ According to a 2002 official survey, there are 923,257 “hill tribe peoples” living across the northern and northwestern provinces, with ten groups officially recognized: the Akha, Hmong, H’tin, Karen, Khmu, Lahu, Lisu, Lua, Mien, and Palaung.⁵¹ They subsist mainly on rice cultivation as well as a wide range of other crops. Many also rely on forest products while others began to grow cash crops through government-aided programs.⁵²

The 2007 Human Development Report from Thailand,⁵³ which focuses on the adoption of the idea of “Sufficiency Economy” in its development efforts, does very little to directly address the social and economic situations of Thailand’s indigenous peoples and to mention any targeted efforts to address their situation. Instead, the HDR uses a Human Achievement Index to assess development progress at the provincial level in order to capture regional disparities in the areas of health, education, employment, income, housing, family and community life, transportation and communication, and participation. Reference to indigenous peoples is minimal, and they are addressed as part of a collective—as “hill tribe peoples” or combined with other populations living in remote rural areas.

It is important to note that the Thai government rejects the term “indigenous peoples,” stating that the hill tribe peoples “are not considered to be minorities or indigenous peoples but as Thais who are able to enjoy fundamental rights and are protected by the laws of the Kingdom as any other Thai citizen.”⁵⁴ In addition, Thailand’s Constitution,

⁵⁰ International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, Country Profile: Thailand. Available at: <http://www.iwgia.org/graphics/offentlig/pdf/Thailand.pdf> [accessed 19 March 2009].

⁵¹ In the 2008 MDG Desk Review, only nine are mentioned, i.e., the Palaung are excluded; however, IWGIA includes them in the country profile but notes that their inclusion is considered problematic because of their late arrival.

⁵² International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, Country Profile: Thailand. Available at: <http://www.iwgia.org/graphics/offentlig/pdf/Thailand.pdf> [accessed 19 March 2009].

⁵³ UNDP Human Development Report: Thailand, *Sufficiency Economy and Human Development*, 2007.

⁵⁴ UNHCR, *Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities*. WGIP 10th session. E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/1992/4. Cited in IWGIA Country Profile: Thailand.

passed in 2007, does not explicitly recognize the identity of indigenous peoples nor does the country have laws protecting their rights.⁵⁵

Health

In general, the HDR states that Thai people enjoy relatively good health, with increasing life expectancy for men and women (68 and 75 years, respectively) as well as access to low-cost health care. However, it also reports that the “distribution of health services is uneven” and that “disadvantaged groups remain vulnerable.”⁵⁶ In particular, health infrastructure is worst in the Northeast and the incidence of health problems is highest in the North. These two areas have the highest concentrations of indigenous population in the country, but there are no disaggregated data available.

Referring to indigenous peoples, the HDR states that child malnutrition persists among the hill tribe peoples and that maternal mortality is worst in the remote mountains in the northern provinces and the far south.

Education

The 2004 MDG report from Thailand states that enrollment and retention rates will likely be achieved and that gender disparity in schools has been eliminated. The 2007 HDR echoes this, stating that more children enroll in school, with retention rates higher than in previous years, as a result of the nine-year compulsory education law. However, access to and quality of education is still variable across the country, with provinces in the northeast lagging behind. There are no disaggregated data available for indigenous children.

Employment

The HDR states that unemployment in Thailand dropped to 1.3 percent and underemployment to 1.7 percent in 2005, with female participation in the workforce dropping slightly but remaining relatively high. However, social security remains an issue for around 22-23 million people working in the informal sector, particularly farming, construction, and home-based workers. In addition, according to a 2002 report from the Department of Disease Control, 4.11 per 100,000 reported illness from exposure to agricultural pesticides. Although several indigenous communities in Thailand subsist mainly on farming and agriculture, there are no disaggregated data available on their social security.

Income, poverty and debt

According to the 2004 MDG report from Thailand, the goal to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty and suffering from hunger has been achieved. The 2007 HDR also reports that with the economic recovery, household incomes have increased.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ UNDP Human Development Report: Thailand, *Sufficiency Economy and Human Development*, 2007, pg. 5.

However, the overall distribution of income remains unequal and a significant number of people still live in absolute poverty (7 million people or 11.3 percent of the population in 2004). Farmers and farm workers in rural areas make up 87 percent of the poor, with poverty levels in the North and Northeast among the highest (16 and 17 percent, respectively). Specific information and data on the economic situation of indigenous peoples are not available in the Report; however, it is important to note that the North and Northeast regions have high concentrations of indigenous peoples who practice farming.

To reduce poverty and the economic vulnerability of the poor, the Report lists action points that are targeted to rural farming communities, including indigenous farmers, such as providing them with land from the government's extensive reserves of unused land, implementing community control over local resources, and ensuring development spending is equally distributed and targeting areas of real need. In addition, it encourages the practice of self-reliant farming—growing foods that local farmers can sell as well as consume—instead of cash cropping.

Housing and living environment

Thailand already achieved its MDG of decreasing by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, and according to the HDR, 99 percent of households live in sanitary conditions with electricity and safe drinking water, and 75 percent live in their own house on their own land. However, pollution, waste management, water quality, and natural disasters, such as the tsunami in 2004, are a growing problem, with dire consequences for the livelihoods of coastal and fishing communities. Data on the impact of environmental deterioration on indigenous peoples are not available, but at the regional level, those who live in the North, Northeast, and Bangkok vicinity are most affected. The HDR does include information on how the 2004 tsunami affected the more “vulnerable communities and groups,” stating that Muslim and “Sea Gypsy” fishing communities, which include indigenous fishers, were especially hit hard and are still having difficulties recovering from the disaster. The tsunami also worsen existing land rights disputes between local communities, private developers, local governments, and national park authorities, and Sea Gypsies living on what is considered to be “prime real estate” along the shoreline were especially affected.

As part of its efforts to achieve the MDGs, Thailand is integrating the principles of sustainable development into the country's policies and programmes to reverse the losses of environmental resources, including a participatory approach to resource management; however, it is unclear whether indigenous peoples are participating or are being solicited to participate in the management of land use, forests, and natural resources.

Family and community life

Some of the more pressing issues in family and community life, as reported in the 2007 HDR, include increasing numbers of single-headed or female-headed households, insecurity due to conflict, working children, violence and drug-related crimes. Although family and community life is best in the Northeast, where there are small pockets of indigenous groups, there are no specific mentions of the family and community life of indigenous peoples in the Report.

Transportation and communication

Overall, provision of transport and communication infrastructure, such as road access and conditions, televisions, mobile phones, and computers, are generally good across the country; however, there is a huge gap in the provision of transport and communication between Bangkok and the rest of the country, with the North and Northeast lagging slightly behind. There are no specific mentions of the provision of transport and communication infrastructure in indigenous communities.

Participation

The Report states that active political participation and the strengthening of community organizations have increased remarkably. In general, people have participated in political rallies, rights-based advocacy, and constitutional debates. Voter turnout is high across the country, though the Northeast is slightly lower than other regions. However, the number of community groups per population is highest in the Northeast, followed by the South and the North, but it is unclear how many of these community groups are indigenous peoples. Despite a general increase in political participation, the major issue seems to be the continued under-representation of women in national and local governments.

Conclusion

Overall, people who live in urban areas enjoy a higher level of development than those in remote rural areas, particularly in the Northern and Northeastern provinces as well as the deep South where there are large concentrations of indigenous peoples. The uneven distribution of public resources and inequality of access to goods such as education, health care, transportation and communication infrastructure, and social services is relatively high, but the Report does not include disaggregated data to determine the extent of inequality that indigenous peoples face. The HDR does state that the use of “Sufficiency Economy” can greatly benefit rural populations, which include indigenous peoples, as it focuses on rural development and the importance of agriculture to national economy. It also calls for less reliance on government and more on public participation and community partnerships. The recognition of the existence of indigenous peoples by the state would help in further addressing their situation with specific programmes.

UGANDA

Indigenous Peoples of Uganda and the 2007 Human Development Report

Indigenous peoples of Uganda include the Batwa, the Benet, and the Karamajong.⁵⁷ The Karamajong are nomadic pastoralists and there are around 955,245 members of this group inhabiting the northeastern region of Uganda. The Benet peoples are former hunter-gatherers who also live in the northeast, and they number around 20,000 people. The 6,700 Batwa people living primarily in the southwestern region of Uganda are former hunter-gatherers who subsisted on forest-based economy until they were dispossessed of their ancestral land in the forests of Bwindi, Mgahinga, and Echuya to make way for conservation zones and national parks.⁵⁸ It is important to note that these groups are not recognized as indigenous by the government of Uganda.

The 2007 Human Development Report from Uganda⁵⁹ mentions indigenous peoples, including their social and economic situations, as members of the poorest, most vulnerable groups in the country and as part of the internally displaced populations (IDPs) from conflict areas. Uganda has a large population of IDPs due to continued social unrest in the northern region. Data available on IDPs are by district; therefore, it is unclear what percentage of IDPs are displaced indigenous pastoralists or hunter-gatherers who inhabited this region. Insecurity in northern Uganda is cited as a major deterrent in the progress toward achieving human development and Millennium Development Goal targets, as the conflict areas have impeded economic activities, particularly farming, as a result of displacement and loss of cattle.

The HDR states that because Uganda is an agrarian country, the growth in the economic and social sectors, including those that contribute to human development, is heavily dependent on agricultural and rural development, which means that its poor performance in agriculture would lead to low development outcomes. The Report, therefore, focuses on the promotion of agriculture to combat poverty and to achieve sustainable development. Since 2001 government policy has been directed toward intensifying agricultural production to raise household incomes of the poor in the rural areas through provision of public goods and services that facilitate agricultural growth and increased non-farm employment. The Report discusses the importance of agriculture and rural development in the context of the following MDG targets:

Poverty

⁵⁷ International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, *The Indigenous World*, 2008, pg. 426.

⁵⁸ African Commission on Human and People's Rights, *Report of the African Commission's Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities*, 2005, pg. 22

⁵⁹ UNDP Human Development Report: Uganda, *Rediscovering Agriculture for Human Development*, 2007.

The Report states that eradicating poverty remains a major challenge in the achievement of MDGs. Uganda has one of the highest population growth rates in the world, which undermines efforts to achieve development goals. The 2007 population of Uganda was projected to be 28.2 million, of which 87 percent live in rural areas and 73 percent practice agriculture. According to the Report, Uganda has made some progress in reducing income poverty, and rural areas show steeper decline than in urban areas, but poverty level remains higher in rural areas. The majority of the rural poor depend on agriculture for most of their livelihoods, and they live in regions where arable land is scarce, agricultural potential is low, and drought, floods, and environmental degradation are common. Access to basic human needs – education, portable water, health care, and sanitation – is far less available. The poorest people include many female-headed households, widows with labor constraints and uneducated/unemployed youth who have insufficient food and cannot pay school fees. Pastoralists—many of who are indigenous peoples—lack cattle and land, and experience food shortages, drought and insecurity. In the fishing communities, they lack fishing equipment, have no alternative employment and are food-insecure.

As a recommendation, the Report states that linking the human development framework to agricultural and rural development implies enhancing rural farmers' capital assets. This could be of great benefit to indigenous pastoralists as well; however, there appears to be some bias that favors farming over other forms of agriculture. In one section of the Report, it briefly mentions the indigenous pastoralists of Karamoja (the Karamajong), in the context of pastoralism, which is described as “an extensive, low input-low output subsistence-oriented production system whereby livestock owners have to move far away from their homes in search of pasture and water.”⁶⁰ The Karamoja region's semi-arid climate is not conducive to sedentary farming. Therefore, the Report states that there needs to be a deliberate focus on stimulating production and marketing in the north, including the sub-region of Karamoja, “to move agriculture from being largely subsistence to medium-scale farming, thus benefiting larger communities.”⁶¹

Education

The government of Uganda has prioritized investments toward basic education as well as adult literacy, and reducing inequalities in primary education has improved as the proportion of girls enrolled increased. However, gender inequalities in secondary education are still high but are expected to decline. Despite the increase in school enrollment, the Report states that Uganda's MDG targets in the education sector, including the completion of primary education and the achievement of gender equality, are not likely to be met.

There are no explicit mentions in the Report on the education and literacy of indigenous children, particularly among the Batwa, whose education and literacy rates are among the lowest in the country.⁶² According to an ACHPR report, like Rwanda and Burundi, the

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, pg. 108.

⁶¹ *Ibid*.

⁶² IWGIA, *The Indigenous World*, 2008, pg. 426.

majority of Batwa in Uganda do not go to school due to extreme poverty and prevailing prejudice.⁶³

Health

The Report states that Uganda has made a steady albeit slow progress in meeting MDG targets in health. Progress has been made in reducing incidence of HIV/AIDS, but areas of slow progress include reducing infant, under-five, and maternal mortality rates, and reducing the incidence of malaria. These are linked with the improvement of environmental sanitation, living standards, and access to safe water, which also are areas of slow progress. Access to safe water has increased, but disparities persist between regions.

Indigenous peoples who live in remote areas, particularly the Batwa, greatly suffer from lack of access to safe drinking water. However, there are no specific mentions or disaggregated data available in the Report on the health issues of indigenous peoples, despite the fact that they experience extremely high infant mortality and maternal mortality rates.⁶⁴ Batwa children suffer from chronic malnutrition, malaria, and other deadly diseases due to lack of access to health care and vaccinations; expecting mothers do not go to health centers and do not receive proper care, and because of unsanitary conditions and illnesses, many die at childbirth.⁶⁵

Environment and natural resources

The Report states that reversing the loss of environmental resources is a major concern. Access to land, forest, and water resources are especially important for agricultural and rural development. As a result, the government has instituted a Land Sector Strategy Plan (LSSP) to increase land utilization, to address inequality, to strengthen land rights of women and vulnerable groups, to empower communities to make decisions for their land, and to provide a supportive framework for sound management of environmental resources. LSSP addresses the need for land use policy, and among the key issues is how to deal with internally displaced persons, as limited access to land or land shortage is one of the most significant causes of poverty in Uganda. Unequal access also results in land disputes, particularly among IDPs.

The Report does not specifically mention land rights issues of indigenous peoples or include disaggregated data on the percentage of IDPs who are indigenous. A recent IWGIA publication reported that the Batwa's rights to their ancestral lands remain unrecognized,⁶⁶ and with neither land nor other resources to sustain themselves, they are among the first to suffer poverty and marginalization.

⁶³ African Commission on Human and People's Rights, *Report of the African Commission's Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities*, 2005, pg. 56.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pg. 53.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ IWGIA, *The Indigenous World*, 2008, pg. 426.

Conclusions

The 2007 HDR states that Uganda is likely to achieve some but not all of the MDGs. Targets that are not likely to be met include the completion of primary education, achievement of gender equality, and the reduction of infant and maternal mortality. When comparing the human development performance at the regional and district levels, districts with the lowest human development performance (as measured against the national HDI) were mainly in the northern region, especially in Karamoja area, where there are large concentrations of indigenous pastoralists. The northern region also has the highest human poverty index. It also has the highest level of illiteracy and the highest percentage of children who are underweight. Prolonged drought, cattle rustling, and armed conflict are some of the factors that contribute to the increase in income poverty in the north.

Despite discussion of regional disparities, there is a general lack of disaggregated information on the education, health, and poverty of indigenous peoples, beyond those of IDPs, in the Uganda HDR, and there are no specific mentions of the Batwa's land rights issue or government efforts to address or recognize this.

2009 DESK REVIEW CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the United Nations Development Program, human development involves the process of widening people's choices and the platform for making such choices by building human capabilities and enabling the development of their full potential in order to lead productive and creative lives, in accordance with their needs and interests.⁶⁷

The 2009 Desk Review of Human Development Reports examines to what extent indigenous peoples' issues are included in HDRs from eight countries (Cambodia, Ghana, Kenya, Russia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda), one region (Asia Pacific), and one sub-region (Niger Delta), and includes analyses of their development status in the context of the Millennium Development Goals. The following are some general conclusions:

- Except for Cambodia, the Reports that were reviewed have very little information on the state of human development of indigenous peoples, despite the fact that many face serious challenges in terms of development and human rights. None provided disaggregated data in the context of the MDGs.
- In the case of the African countries and Thailand, indigenous peoples were not explicitly mentioned in the Reports, except as part of the collective poor and marginalized groups. This is due in part to the lack of official recognition of indigenous peoples.
- In the context of the MDGs, extreme poverty and high incidences of infant and maternal mortality seem to be the most pressing problems in indigenous communities. These are due to a number of factors, with inadequate access to land, health services, safe drinking water, and natural resources being the most common cause of poverty and mortality among indigenous peoples.
- Land rights issues and disputes over ownership of land are a major concern for many indigenous peoples in the countries and regions reviewed. References to indigenous peoples were made when the Reports address land issues, particularly in the Cambodia and Nigeria HDRs.
- Marginalization, discrimination, and exclusion of indigenous peoples, although vaguely addressed except in the 2007 Ghana HDR, are the most persistent social issues in all the countries reviewed.

⁶⁷ United Nations Development Program, "The Human Development concept", available at: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/humandev> [accessed April 7, 2009].

- None of the HDRs that were reviewed clearly indicate whether indigenous peoples participated, or were solicited to participate, in the creation of the reports.

The Human Development Reports have presented sound policy recommendations and delineated action-oriented efforts to combat major hurdles in human development and to achieve the MDGs. Several of these recommendations have the potential to significantly benefit indigenous peoples. However, targeted measures to specifically improve the quality of life of indigenous peoples, and the recognition and protection of their rights, have not been fully addressed in the Reports. The following are recommendations for future HDRs:

- HDRs should highlight and include the plight of indigenous peoples, who are among the most marginalized groups in society and often the victims of development, as exemplified in the 2007 Cambodia HDR.
- In order to properly identify the development challenges that indigenous peoples face, as well as the role they can play in the achievement of the MDGs, their inclusion and participation in the creation of HDRs is imperative.
- Future country reports should include a comprehensive section on the poorest performing provinces or sub-regions and present disaggregated data in order to identify the specific populations that are clear outliers of progress in human development.
- As a matter of urgency, major efforts are required in all the countries reviewed to properly implement poverty eradication plans targeted to benefit the poorest populations, including indigenous peoples. Those that are already in place may need revision, as the scale of the problem is clearly larger than current measures provide for.
- Huge efforts are needed to bring down child and maternal mortality rates, particularly in the African countries where HIV/ AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and other communicable diseases are rife and are a constant threat to indigenous peoples living in abject poverty, with little or no health care at their disposal.
- For the countries reviewed, strong development partnerships that include national governments, NGOs, bilateral and multilateral agencies, and other key stakeholders are necessary to help achieve MDG targets and human development goals.