PROMOTING THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN AND WOMEN

A STOCKTAKING OF UNICEF'S APPROACH AND PRACTICE

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Patrizio Warren

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Executive Summary

Based on field experience spanning more than 20 years, UNICEF is a key actor in United Nations' processes related to indigenous peoples' issues. In particular, through its Gender, Rights and Civic Engagement (GRACE) Section, UNICEF has participated in every session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) since its creation in 2002 and has made significant contributions to ensure that UNPFII addresses the particular needs of indigenous children and women.

In August 2008, GRACE launched the present study with the objective of taking stock of UNICEF's current work on indigenous issues. The study covers three main subjects: (i) UNICEF's approach to working with indigenous children and women, as described in the reports submitted to UNPFII and other key sources; (ii) content and organizational arrangements of UNICEF's work in support of indigenous children and women at the regional and country levels; and (iii) implementation of the approach in two programme/project case study sites. Three different and complementary methods were used to collect relevant information: a desk review of selected UNICEF literature on indigenous issues; an email survey addressing a sample of UNICEF Country Offices implementing programmes and projects with indigenous children and women; and project ethnographies of two UNICEF field programmes, in Peru and the Congo.

Desk review findings suggest that field experience and interaction with UNPFII and other stakeholders have prompted UNICEF to develop a comprehensive approach to promoting and asserting the rights of indigenous children and women. This approach combines UNICEF's rights-based approach with interculturalism, a theory on the role of cultural diversity and ethnic distinctiveness in modern nation states. The approach is consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Moreover, it mirrors the five focus areas of UNICEF's Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) for 2006–2009: child survival; education and gender; HIV/AIDS; child protection; and advocacy of children's and women's rights.

Submissions to UNPFII include hundreds of 'good practice' narratives illustrating UNICEF's approach in the field. Content and quantitative analyses of these anecdotes highlight the richness of UNICEF's experience with indigenous children and women. Good practices were found to cover all the MTSP focus areas. They illustrate how specific education, health (including HIV/AIDS), children's and women's protection, and advocacy activities have been tailored to fit the situation of particular indigenous peoples. Quantitative analysis of good practice narratives shows a fair distribution of good practices by MTSP focus area, although about 80 per cent of good practices refer to Latin America. This reflects the distinctive conditions in Latin America, where UNICEF has been particularly active on indigenous issues since the early 1980s in response to the claim of a rapidly growing indigenous peoples' movement.

The survey of Country Offices provides an overview of UNICEF's implementation of its approach to working with indigenous children and women in 24 countries. In the majority of cases, the content of the Country Offices' work is consistent with the overall inspiration of the

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approach and includes most of the activities illustrated by the good practice narratives. Their work is often affected, however, by several constraints. In most surveyed countries, funds are very limited, coordination with UN sister agencies is weak, relationships with indigenous organizations are not as steady as desirable, and coverage of indigenous populations is relatively low. Consequently, the large majority of surveyed offices believe the relevance and effectiveness of their work for indigenous children and women must be improved.

The case studies describe in detail how UNICEF's approach is being implemented in complex, real-life, grass-roots contexts. The Peruvian case study focuses on a donor-assisted, multimillion-dollar project, implemented during 2001–2009 with the Wampis of the Santiago River District in the Amazon. The Congo case study has a broader scope, covering a series of local initiatives implemented with small funds in support of the Baka of the Likouala and Sangha Departments as well as a national plan for indigenous peoples, which is currently promoted and supported by the UNICEF Country Office.

Case study findings highlight the gap between the principles inspiring UNICEF's global approach to working with indigenous children and women and its day-by-day implementation at the project level. The studies show that the socio-economic, cultural and political environment may determine the viability of the approach. This is well captured by the different goals of the work pursued by the case study projects. In Peru, the project aims at *articulating* indigenous cultures and societies to a nation state that already recognizes its multiculturalism, as per current UN indigenous policies. In contrast, the Congo project focuses on *integrating* indigenous peoples in the mainstream of national society, as per the old-fashioned 'indigenist' policies.

Beyond these contextual differences, the two case study programmes/projects share a number of internal constraints that prevent a sound implementation of the UNICEF approach. These include a suboptimal use of the expertise and know-how existing within UNICEF on specific matters, e.g., growth monitoring, immunization, information systems and participatory methods; the limited understanding of indigenous peoples' cultures; weak needs assessment practices; and lack of a sound, collaborative, results-oriented monitoring and evaluation practice.

The general conclusion of this study is that UNICEF's approach to working with indigenous children and women is not sufficiently operational. Conditions for successful implementation need to be clarified. Processes, methods and tools for managing programmes and projects with indigenous peoples should be fine-tuned and staff trained in their adaptation and application to particular field settings. Continued and systematic assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of UNICEF's programmes and projects should be conducted. The preparation of flexible 'options-for-action' guidelines, illustrating how the approach could be implemented in different contexts, might be instrumental in this regard.

Specific recommendations elicited from the final discussion of stocktaking findings can be grouped in three domains:

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(i) Implementing the UNICEF approach to working with indigenous children and women

- Minimum operational requirements of UNICEF's approach regarding indigenous children and women should be clearly defined.

- UNICEF's approach to indigenous children and women should adapt to different subregional, national and local contexts.

- Livelihood issues and activities for indigenous children and women should be mainstreamed in UNICEF's approach.

(ii) Background knowledge and action research processes

- Understanding of indigenous cultures and societies addressed by UNICEF programmes and projects should be refined, taking advantage of existing ethnographic and ethno-historical knowledge.

- Indigenous peoples – particularly indigenous children and women – should be more actively involved in the identification of their needs and in assessing the relevance of activities implemented to meet these needs through action research methods.

- A collaborative, results-based monitoring and evaluation practice should be part of all UNICEF programmes and projects addressing indigenous children and women.

(iii) Institutional collaboration and partnerships

- UNICEF's collaborative links and synergies on indigenous issues with other UN agencies should be strengthened.

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ACRONYMS

ACIE	Área de Coordinación de Instituciones Educativas (Peru)
APSC	Association des Pères Spiritains au Congo (Association of Spiritain Fathers in Congo)
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CO	Country Office (UNICEF)
COICA	Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónic
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (UN)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FIPAC	Forum International des Peuples Autochtones d'Afrique Centrale (International Forum of Autochthonous Peoples of the Forests of Central Africa)
GRACE	Gender, Rights and Civic Engagement Section (UNICEF)
HQ	headquarters (UNICEF)
HRBA	human rights-based approach
IASG	Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues (UN)
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IRC	Innocenti Research Centre (UNICEF)
IWGIA	International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs
MASSAHF	Le Ministère des affaires sociales, de la solidarité, de l'action humanitaire et de la famille (Congo)
MTSP	Medium-Term Strategic Plan, 2006–2009 (UNICEF)
n.d.	no date
NGOs	non-governmental organizations
OCDH	Observatoire Centrafricaine des Droits de l'Homme
ORA	Observer, Réfléchir, Agir (Observe, Think, Act; Congo)
RENAPAC	Réseau National des Peuples Autochtones (Congo)
SPFII	Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UN)
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group

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UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNPFII	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCARO	West and Central Africa Regional Office (UNICEF)

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Introduction

Background, rationale and objective

UNICEF's work with indigenous children and women dates back to the 1980s. It began in the Andean/Amazon and Central American subregions, where pioneering field experiences were carried out. During the past 20 years, it expanded to other areas of Africa, Asia and Latin America, and to global policymaking.

UNICEF has been a key actor in UN processes related to indigenous issues.[1] In particular, UNICEF has participated in every session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) since its creation in 2002 and has made significant contributions to ensure that UNPFII addresses the particular needs of indigenous children and women.

At headquarters level, the Gender, Rights and Civic Engagement Section (GRACE) is responsible for ensuring that indigenous peoples' issues are mainstreamed across UNICEF's programmes and policies, reporting to UNPFII and following up the implementation of its recommendations. GRACE staff have participated in UNPFII technical workshops[2] by giving presentations and submitting papers on indigenous education, mother and child care, children and women's rights, juvenile justice, prior and informed consent, cultural diversity, socio-economic development and children's participation. It has also developed a proactive role in the formation and work of the UN Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues and in the formulation of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues (UNICEF 2007b, UNDG 2008).[3]

In August 2008, GRACE launched the present study with the objective of taking stock of current UNICEF work on indigenous issues, with a view towards improving future practice.

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[1] In 1982, the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (then called the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities) was established by a decision of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). This was a response to the emergence of a global indigenous movement and reflected a new development paradigm based on the principles of equity, sustainability, gender equality, protection of the environment, participation, promotion of human rights (including non-discrimination regarding ethnic minorities) and respect for cultural diversity.

[2] GRACE has also funded the participation of indigenous delegates to UNPFII events.

[3] In September 2005, UNICEF hosted the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (IASG) at The Americas and the Caribbean Regional Office (generally referred to as the 'Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean'), Panama City. The meeting contributed to pushing the agenda forward on the need to ensure that the work of the Permanent Forum has an impact at the field level. In July 2006, the UNDG Principals' meeting invited IASG to consider how to mainstream indigenous issues in UN activities at the country level. To that end, an inter-agency task team was established, co-chaired by the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum and UNICEF to develop guidelines for adoption by UNDG. The guidelines, issued in 2008, consist of a very short document that complements the Common Country Assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) guidelines and helps UN field staff understand the main issues at stake and specific approaches to programming with indigenous peoples. A plan of action for the implementation of the guidelines will subsequently be designed (UNICEF 2007b).

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The study covers three main subjects:

- UNICEF's approach to working with indigenous children and women, its relationship with relevant UN documents and its consistency with the Medium-Term Strategic Plan, 2006–2009 (UNICEF 2006b).

- Content and organizational arrangements of UNICEF's practice in support of indigenous children and women at the regional and country levels.

- Implementation of UNICEF's approach in two programme/project sites.

Methods

Three different and complementary methods were used in this stocktaking exercise: desk review, email survey and project ethnography.

UNICEF's reports to UNPFII and other selected sources were reviewed, with the aim of reconstructing the 'big picture' of the organization's approach to indigenous children and women.[4] The content of these documents was organized according to the five focus areas in UNICEF's Medium-Term Strategic Plan, 2006–2009 (hereinafter 'MTSP'): young child survival and development; basic education and gender equality; HIV/AIDS and children; child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse; and policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights.

In the review of UNICEF's submissions to UNPFII, 205 good practices illustrating UNICEF's fieldwork with indigenous children and women were identified. Content and quantitative analysis of good practice narratives was conducted to outline some global trends in the implementation of UNICEF's approach to indigenous children and women.

To take stock of Country Offices' work on indigenous peoples' issues, an email survey was launched. The survey included 19 questions covering length of experience, activities, human resources, budget allocation and partnerships. Questionnaires were sent to the 57 countries where UNICEF was expected to work with indigenous peoples and were answered by about half of the intended respondents.

Project ethnographies were carried out to explore UNICEF's work with indigenous peoples in the field. Two projects, in Peru and the Congo, were visited for two weeks each. Project documentation was reviewed, local stakeholders interviewed, and project fieldwork observed.

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[4] To set the background of this study, some recent anthropological publications on the indigenous question were also reviewed (Blaser et al. 2004; Eversole et al. 2005; Hughes 2003; Maybury-Lewis 2002) as well as relevant materials issued by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (Kalafatic et al. 2005), the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD 2003, 2004, 2006) and the International Labour Organization (ILO 2003, 2006a, 2006b, 2007).

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Definitional issues

As a preamble, research on UNICEF's work with indigenous children and women requires making sense of what terms mean in UNICEF and United Nations discourse.

Based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN 1989), the UN General Assembly has defined a child as "every human being below the age of 18 years," including adolescents (UN 2002). This definition expands the common meaning of the word 'child' to cover the whole developmental age, a period whose length may vary significantly from culture to culture but corresponds to the legal definition of 'underage' in most countries. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women takes an important place in bringing the female half of humanity into the focus of human rights concerns. In the spirit of the convention, the term 'women' thus includes any female person of any age (UN 1979). Historically, women have been and still are subjected to social discrimination and disempowerment in most societies (UNICEF 2007a). Because solid evidence shows that improving the economic, social and cultural roles of women is essential to advancing the welfare of children, women are part of UNICEF's core mandate (UNICEF 2007a).

The meaning of 'indigenous people' in United Nations and UNICEF discourse and practice is less straightforward. Since the 1980s, when the indigenous question was raised in the international arena, social science and human rights specialists have been trying to develop a working definition that could be consistently used for statistical, legal and policy purposes.

In 1981, the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination among Ethnic Minorities[5] requested José Martinez Cobo, Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Issues, to review and analyse discrimination against indigenous populations. In his study, Martinez Cobo proposed the following definition:

> Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems (Martinez Cobo 1982).

Based on this definition, he identified a number of attributes of indigenous peoples, including a common ancestry, symbolic culture, dress and material culture, livelihoods and individual self-identification.

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[5] This sub-commission was part of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

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A few years later, elements of Martinez Cobo's definition were incorporated in the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ILO 1989). Article 1 states that Convention 169 applies to:

- Tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations.

- Peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonisation or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.

According to the Convention, "self-identification as indigenous or tribal shall be regarded as a fundamental criterion for determining the groups to which the provisions of this Convention apply" (ILO 1989).

ILO Convention 169 has been the background of the 'definitional' discussion held in the 1990s by the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations. This debate sought to articulate the operational definition of indigenous peoples requested by jurists, policymakers and statisticians, with the indigenous organizations' claim that the collective (and subjective) feeling of belonging to a particular indigenous group is the only viable criteria to distinguish between the indigenous and the non-indigenous (IRC 2003).

In 1995, the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations asked its Special Rapporteur, Irene Daes, to prepare a working paper on the concept of 'indigenous people' (Daes 1996). The paper proposed a definition based on such distinctive attributes as:

- Priority in time with respect to the occupation and use of a specific territory.

- The voluntary perpetuation of cultural distinctiveness, which may include aspects of language, social organization, religion and spiritual values, modes of production, laws and institutions.

- Self-identification as well as recognition by other groups or by state authorities as a distinct collectivity.

- An experience of subjugation, marginalization, dispossession, exclusion or discrimination, whether or not these conditions persist.

According to Daes, indigenous representatives in the Working Group were not comfortable with this statement, and in general, with any definition developed by non-indigenous experts. As stated in her working paper:

Indigenous representatives on several occasions have expressed the view before the Working Group that a definition of the concept of 'indigenous people' is not

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necessary or desirable. They have stressed the importance of self-identification as an essential component of any definition which might be elaborated by the United Nations system.

The 'self-identification' approach has influenced the process leading to the formulation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN 2007), which replaces any normative definition of indigenous people with the following statement: "Indigenous peoples have the right to determine their own identity or membership in accordance with their customs and traditions" (article 33:1).

Based on UNICEF's research (López 2004, UNICEF 2005) and other sources (in particular, Maybury-Lewis 2002), this stocktaking exercise adopts a definition of indigenous peoples based on the following core attributes:

- Self-identification.
- Strong material and symbolic link with an ancestral territory.
- A history of oppression, exploitation or marginalization by external and internal colonialism.
- Adaptive perpetuation of cultural and linguistic distinctiveness.

In this report, this definition covers the different terms that are used in the political, legal and administrative language of different countries, such as *peuples autochthones* in Central Africa, *aborigens* in Australia, *tribal people* in Southern and South-Eastern Asia, or *ethnic minorities* in China and elsewhere. All these terms are used in this report as synonymous and, whenever appropriate, subsumed under the current and widely accepted term 'indigenous peoples'.

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Chapter 1

UNICEF's approach to working with indigenous peoples

An official, consolidated document presenting UNICEF's approach to working with indigenous peoples, children and women in particular, is still to be written. Nonetheless, this approach exists, and its content can be elicited from several UNICEF sources. Two major research and advocacy documents (IRC 2003 and López 2004) discuss the big picture and make recommendations for improving UNICEF's work with indigenous peoples. Official reports submitted by UNICEF to UNPFII and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people (hereinafter 'the Special Rapporteur') from 2002–2008 provide details and empirical evidence of how UNICEF is addressing indigenous children's and women's issues.[6] The following description of UNICEF's approach is based on the above-mentioned sources.

Indigenous peoples in UNICEF's mandate and approach

In its submission to the first UNPFII session, UNICEF described its mandate for indigenous children as follows:

> According to UNICEF's 1996 Mission Statement, UNICEF is guided by the Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC) and strives to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behaviour towards children. UNICEF is committed to ensuring special attention and protection for the most disadvantaged children … The principle of non-discrimination as articulated in article 2 of the CRC is at the core of UNICEF's work. UNICEF recognizes that children experience discrimination in various forms, based on language, ethnicity, gender, disability, economic status, etc. The particular rights of indigenous children to enjoy the culture, practise their religion and use their own language are also protected, under article 30 of the Convention (UNPFII 2002).[7]

This statement highlights three founding principles of UNICEF's work with all children, including indigenous children: universal rights, non-discrimination, and respect for cultural differences. A fourth founding principle is gender equality, as described in the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (UN 1979). When concerning indigenous women:

> UNICEF's Mission Statement declares that UNICEF aims, through its country programmes, to promote the equal rights of women and girls and to support their full participation in the political, social and economic development of their communities.

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[6] These reports were prepared by GRACE staff, based on inputs collected from the Regional and Country Offices.
[7] See also, UNICEF 2007a.

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Because indigenous women are most often discriminated and marginalized, as indigenous and as women, UNICEF pays special attention to indigenous women and girls, supporting a wide range of activities aiming to empower them and fulfil their rights (UNPFII 2005).

Because the condition of children and women depends largely on the surrounding socio-economic, cultural and political environment, UNICEF (2004) states that "social and economic development issues are fully part of UNICEF's mandate as a condition and consequence of the implementation of the CRC and an imperative for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals." This statement suggests that promoting the development of indigenous societies at large is an essential element of UNICEF's efforts to assert the rights of indigenous children and women. UNICEF's approach in this connection is inspired by ILO Convention 169, the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (UN General Assembly resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992) and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN 2007).

Since 1996, UNICEF has adopted a rights-based approach to children's and women's issues,[8] based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child – which covers an array of rights, including education, health care, protection against violence and abuse, and registration at birth. Article 30 of the CRC protects the rights of children belonging to indigenous or minority groups to enjoy their culture, practice their religion and use their language together with other members of their groups. This means the right of the children belonging to indigenous or minority groups to have his or her own culture preserved, to express their culture and participate in cultural life, and know other cultures[9] (UNICEF 2007a).

To address the special rights of indigenous children, UNICEF combines the rights-based approach advocated by the CRC with interculturalism, a discourse on the role of cultural and ethnic diversity and distinctiveness in modern nation states (López 2004).[10] Interculturalism is

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[8] The importance of the CRC in UNICEF's work was enriched and completed by the adoption of the 1998 Executive Directive 'Guidelines for Human Rights-Based Programming Approach', which strengthened UNICEF's commitment to help shape a human development agenda built on human rights principles. The approach focuses explicitly on discrimination and marginalization in the development process. In operational terms, this means confronting persistent patterns of inequality and discrimination, and formulating responses with an awareness of the structural causes that enabled a political and societal environment to foster exclusion and marginalization.

[9] Article 30 of the CRC states: "In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language."

[10] The concept of interculturalism and its practical implications for UNICEF's work is the core subject of a major review of UNICEF's work with indigenous peoples in Latin America (López 2004). According to López, interculturalism was developed in the 1990s in the education sector to describe the incorporation of indigenous culture content in official school curricula, i.e., intercultural/bilingual education). Intercultural/bilingual education was seen as a means to support an open dialogue between mainstream and indigenous cultures that could be instrumental to the liberation of indigenous peoples from oppression and marginality, and establish the foundation for indigenous peoples' 'ethno-development' (Bonfil Batalla 1987). According to López, Latin American indigenous movements have contributed to expanding the intercultural approach from education to other areas such as health, law and natural resource management. Furthermore, the concept of interculturalism was used as a means

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grounded in understanding and respecting indigenous knowledge, know-how and forms of social organization in the promotion of indigenous children's and women's rights, and the delivery of such relevant services as education, health and legal protection. As spelled out in the conclusion of the study 'Ensuring the Rights of Indigenous Children', published by UNICEF's Innocenti Research Centre (IRC):

> The most effective initiatives help to develop community autonomy and empowerment, promote local indigenous languages and customs, respect traditional social structures and recognise the important role of indigenous leaders in defending and promoting the rights of their communities' children. In this way, an intercultural approach enhances and reinforces human rights by taking into account how different peoples around the world strive to achieve the same goal: to live in freedom, peace and security, and to enjoy equity, mutual respect and understanding (IRC 2003).

Based on the above considerations, UNICEF's 2006–2009 Medium-Term Strategic Plan clearly recognizes that: "In some countries, the children of indigenous populations tend to be disproportionately deprived of basic services. UNICEF's cooperation will seek to benefit these children as a matter of priority, where needed" (UNICEF 2006b).

The MTSP intends to go beyond support to specific programmes and projects and tackle the root causes of discrimination and exclusion against indigenous children through the enhancement of relevant public policies. It identifies five focus areas that guide UNICEF's efforts for asserting the rights of children in general and indigenous children in particular:

- Young child survival and development.
- Basic education and gender equality.
- HIV/AIDS and children.
- Child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse.
- Policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights.

The following description of UNICEF's approach to working with indigenous children and women conforms to these focus areas.

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to argue against political exclusion from national politics and defend the right of their societies and cultures to be treated on an equal base.

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Young child survival and development[11]

Indigenous children suffer from higher mortality rates than other children in the same country. They are also more exposed to low birthweight, malnutrition and disease. Maternal mortality is also particularly high in indigenous areas. Poverty, malnutrition, lack of safe drinking water, and difficult access to health services are the root causes of the poor health status of indigenous children and people at large (UNPFII 2006).

Access of indigenous peoples to official health services is further complicated by language and cultural barriers because health-service personnel are seldom trained to work in an intercultural context (IRC 2003, UNPFII 2003, López 2004). Insufficient investment in indigenous peoples' health care and the cultural inadequacy of health services are forms of ethnic discrimination and, hence, contrary to the CRC, which identifies health services as a right for all children (UNICEF 2004).

The core element of UNICEF's approach to ensure child survival among indigenous peoples is to promote the right to access to quality health services for all indigenous children and their mothers. This right can only be fulfilled if health services are made accessible, affordable and culturally acceptable for indigenous peoples (UNPFII 2005). UNICEF, therefore, supports the development of primary health-care services in indigenous areas. Key services provided with UNICEF assistance include mother and child care, immunization, nutrition, water and sanitation, HIV and AIDS prevention, and mental health services (UNPFII 2003). UNICEF also ensures that epidemics threatening the existence of indigenous peoples are addressed through timely immunization campaigns (UNPFII 2003).

UNICEF assists the development of maternal and child health services that are culturally appropriate, based on culturally appropriate infrastructure and training of health staff to avoid discriminatory attitudes and practices that might deter indigenous peoples from using health services (UNICEF 2004). In particular, UNICEF supports governments and indigenous communities in developing and implementing maternal, antenatal and post-natal health-care services. Where health services are not readily available, UNICEF contributes to building the capacities of indigenous communities to adopt healthy behaviours, treat diseases and identify cases that require referral to health services (UNPFII 2005, 2006).

Decreasing maternal mortality and managing pregnancy or delivery complications are additional important objectives of UNICEF's approach to advancing indigenous children's survival. Indigenous health workers are taught the basics of proper care during pregnancy and childbirth, as well as how to recognize and refer cases involving obstetric and perinatal emergencies. Support is also given to ensure that health facilities are better equipped, and their transportation and communication capacities are enhanced. Services are tailored to local cultures and encourage community participation in maternal and newborn care (UNPFII 2005).

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[11] According to the 2006–2009 MTSP, this focus area refers to support in regular, emergency and transitional situations for essential health, nutrition, water and sanitation programmes, and for young child and maternal care at the family, community, service-provider and policy levels.

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Indigenous health workers and local leaders can also have a key role in early childhood care. UNICEF's approach to early childhood care in indigenous areas includes raising awareness of the importance of immunization and other measures to protect children from transmittable diseases. UNICEF recognizes that effective early childhood development should address and, whenever appropriate, include indigenous practices for childcare, feeding, personal and environmental hygiene, newborn stimulation and preschool education. Ad hoc studies supported by UNICEF indicate these practices are deeply rooted in local culture (Amodio 2005). This requires health workers to have strong capacities in working with an intercultural approach (IRC 2003).

UNICEF also supports healthy nutrition of indigenous children by promoting the production and consumption of traditional food and the distribution of micronutrient supplementation. This is complemented by nutritional surveillance and the dissemination of information on good feeding practices for children (IRC 2003).

Overall, UNICEF maintains that higher standards of health for indigenous children and their families are best achieved through initiatives founded upon a constructive dialogue that avoids polarization between 'traditional' and 'modern' medicine (IRC 2003). To support such an initiative, innovative service delivery methods are being developed, including training of indigenous leaders on health issues and supporting mobile health-care units staffed by doctors and nurses who comprehend indigenous medical knowledge and practices (UNPFII 2004).[12]

Basic education and gender equality[13]

UNICEF's work on bilingual education dates back to the late 1970s. It developed in Latin America in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders, including national ministries of education, UNESCO, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and indigenous peoples' organizations. During the 1990s, UNICEF contributed to the development of a new approach to bilingual education that includes incorporation of indigenous language and culture in primary school curricula, and indigenous teachers' training in managing both 'standard' and 'indigenous' elements of the curricula, active pedagogy and child participation.[14] This practice triggered a shift from the concept of 'bilingual education' to the concept of 'intercultural/bilingual education' (López 2004).

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[12] In Latin America, UNICEF collaborates with the Pan-American Health Organization and several medical-school faculties to develop primary health-care systems capable of articulating indigenous and modern medical know-how, and taking advantage of both (López 2004).

[13] Following the 2006–2009 MTSP, this focus area addresses improved developmental readiness for school; access, retention and completion, especially for girls; improved education quality; education in emergency situations; and continued leadership of the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI).

[14] Publications on intercultural/bilingual education and learning materials were also produced in most Latin American countries.

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The Innocenti Research Centre's publication on indigenous children defines intercultural/bilingual education as follows:

> Intercultural education refers to learning that is rooted in one's own culture but that is, at the same time, open to knowledge of other cultures. By promoting respect for and understanding of other cultures, intercultural education is a key element in eliminating discrimination and, as such, is equally relevant for indigenous and non-indigenous children. In this way, diversity becomes a pedagogical resource that contributes to better education for all children. Bilingual education offers children the opportunity to learn in their own community's language and to realize their full intellectual potential while, at the same time, progressively mastering their country's official language – an essential requirement if they are to fully exercise their citizenship. Where this approach is promoted, it tends to result in an increase in enrolment, retention and completion rates among indigenous children (IRC 2003).

UNICEF's work with indigenous peoples on education is highly gender sensitive. Evidence indicates that indigenous girls have fewer opportunities than boys to complete primary school because, more than boys, they are often expected to contribute to the care of younger children, housekeeping and livelihood activities such as tending animals, cultivating gardens and handicrafts. These expectations reinforce parents' preference for investing limited household resources in formal education of boys rather than girls (López 2004). With reference to Millennium Development Goal 2 (universal education), promotion of gender equality in education is a UNICEF priority.

Girls' education is expected to have a significant impact on gender relationships in indigenous societies (UNPFII 2006). According to UNICEF, girls' education is the most effective empowering tool for indigenous women (UNPFII 2005). Functional literacy programmes for indigenous women and 'second chance' schooling opportunities for adolescent girls are envisaged as empowering women and improving gender relationships (IRC 2003).

Based on the CRC, children's participation is an additional element of UNICEF's work in education and gender equality. Because it encourages indigenous children to become active citizens and gives visibility to their cause, participation in decision-making is an empowering practice and an essential expression of their rights (UNPFII 2006). UNICEF recognizes that indigenous children have specific needs, closely related to their culture and language, which must be addressed.

To fulfil indigenous children's right to participation, they should be listened to, provided with occasions to express their views, opinions, aspirations and concerns, and offered opportunities to develop their participatory skills. It is thus essential that sources of information be made available to children in their indigenous language and through channels that are culturally sensitive. All children should have a stake in dialogue and decisions that affect them. Their participation nurtures exchanges between generations within communities and prepares future adults to make free and informed decisions, and this is certainly true for indigenous children (SPFII 2005).

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Indigenous children and youth can also be involved with household decision-making processes on a daily basis. Indigenous children should be able to express their views within the family, through dialogue with their parents on all issues affecting their lives. They can also be directly involved in community affairs (SPFII 2005).

Moreover, indigenous children can make their voices heard by public institutions and authorities in the country where they live, so that their concerns and aspirations are taken into account by decision makers. Interesting initiatives have been carried out by UNICEF in this connection in Latin America and presented at global forums (SPFII 2005).

Attention should also be given to children with special needs or disabilities to ensure they are not excluded from participatory processes. Action must be taken to overcome gender barriers and ensure the equal participation of girls. Children's safety and the confidentiality of information about them should always be considered. It is also important to avoid raising unrealistic expectations in participatory processes (SPFII 2005).

HIV and AIDS and children[15]

The spread of HIV and AIDS is a pressing global concern for indigenous peoples. With the major exceptions of sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, relative isolation has offered some protection to indigenous peoples. But encroachment in their territories, migration and tourism are increasingly exposing indigenous youth to HIV infection (IRC 2003).

UNICEF pays attention to the spread of HIV and AIDS in indigenous communities (UNICEF 2006a). As part of its reproductive health programmes, UNICEF supports training for health-care staff and civil society organizations to prevent HIV transmission in indigenous communities (UNPFII 2007).

UNICEF maintains that health education is essential for preventing the transmission of HIV and that this information should be available in indigenous languages. Educational content and methods should take into account indigenous beliefs, practices and sensitivities about illness, sex and reproduction. The disruptive process of quickly changing cultures that is associated with HIV transmission among indigenous peoples should be carefully considered (IRC 2003, López 2004). Treatment, counselling and protection from discrimination of infected youth should be ensured (López 2004).

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[15] This focus area emphasizes increased care and services for children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS; the promotion of expanded access to treatment for children and women; prevention of HIV infection among children and adolescents; and continuation of strong participation in the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

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Child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse[16]

A significant proportion of indigenous children are not registered at birth, contrary to the relevant CRC provision. UNICEF maintains that non-registration at birth is a cause of child discrimination and a risk factor for child abuse, trafficking and exploitation, and leads to further exclusion of indigenous children. Birth registration is essential for ensuring that indigenous children's rights are fulfilled, particularly because registration often determines access to health and education services. UNICEF supports programmes aiming to promote birth registration in indigenous communities and national/international initiatives aimed towards sensitizing governments and administrations on the right to birth registration (UNICEF n.d. b).[17] It also supports an approach to birth registration that takes into account the cultural rights of indigenous peoples, for example, the right of indigenous parents to give traditional names to their children in their own language.

In response to domestic violence against indigenous children, UNICEF seeks to remove the causes of violent behaviour by indigenous parents and relatives. According to UNICEF's Innocenti Research Centre (IRC 2003):

> One of the best ways to guarantee that an indigenous child receives adequate protection from violence, abuse and exploitation is to support and build on the strengths of his or her family, kinship network and community. An indigenous community that lives in security (including land tenure security), free from discrimination and persecution, and with a sustainable economic base has a solid foundation for ensuring the protection and harmonious development of its children.

The same source asserts that when the indigenous family breaks down because of causes such as parents' alcoholism, treatment of psychological disorders by indigenous healers should be encouraged. It concludes that in addressing domestic violence it is important to "combine cultural components with other proven prevention strategies."

Child labour is prevalent in indigenous societies. Indigenous children are often involved in seasonal migration, dangerous cottage industries, occasional wage labour or maid-servant work, particularly girls (López 2004, UNICEF 2004).[18] This exploitative and illegal child labour must be distinguished from the contribution to a household's livelihood that most indigenous children are expected to make according to their culture – provided that such contributions are compatible

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[16] According to the 2006–2009 MTSP, this focus area aims to strengthen country environments, capacities and responses to prevent and protect children from violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect and the effects of conflict.

[17] One example of this support is the Latin American conference on birth registration organized by UNICEF in collaboration with the Organization of American States and Plan International and held in August 2007. The conference was an important event to increase awareness among civil registration institutions regarding the problems and obstacles affecting indigenous children and adolescents. It was also a great opportunity to sensitize indigenous representatives on the importance of birth registration.

[18] UNICEF and the ILO have recently agreed to work jointly on indigenous child labour issues by developing a concept paper focused on concepts of childhood, poverty and child labour among indigenous peoples, and the reality of child labour within and outside the indigenous community environment (UNPFII 2008).

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with international standards and respectful of the child's development and capacities. Education and family/community awareness are the most effective means to address child labour issues in indigenous communities.

As a result of economic and political trends, and armed conflict, migration and forced displacement are common among indigenous peoples. Migration and displacement can severely disrupt indigenous communities and affect children's development. UNICEF works to protect displaced and migrant children in order to minimize the effects on the fulfilment of their rights (UNPFII 2005). It also promotes research on the condition of indigenous migrant children (UNPFII 2008).

Justice is essential for protecting indigenous children from violence, exploitation and abuse. When indigenous children come in contact with the law, international standards such as those set forth by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (articles 37 and 40) should be respected. These include the right to treatment consistent with the child's age and special needs, the promotion of the child's sense of dignity and worth, and support for her or his reintegration into society. In this process, governments are encouraged to establish culturally appropriate services in the area of juvenile justice, such as to ensure the free assistance of an interpreter if the child cannot understand or speak the language used by the judicial institutions during proceedings (IRC 2003).

UNICEF is also concerned about the trafficking and sexual exploitation of indigenous children, to which some indigenous societies are particularly exposed. It maintains that the root causes of child trafficking and sexual exploitation – poverty and marginalization – should be addressed. Prevention may consist of promoting social mobilization against the exploitation and trafficking of children, and supporting awareness-raising campaigns among children and parents. It also implies strengthening legislation and law enforcement. Recovery of trafficking victims should also be considered (UNPFII 2004).

When armed conflict occurs, UNICEF works to ensure the protection of indigenous women and children living in conflict-affected areas. In emergency situations, UNICEF provides direct assistance and advocates for the protection of children and women, including prevention of recruitment of indigenous children by armed forces or groups. UNICEF also contributes to establishing peace agreements, as occurred in Guatemala during the 1990s (UNPFII 2005).

UNICEF seeks to prevent armed conflict and violence through 'peace education', defined as:

> A process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behaviour change that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an interpersonal, inter-group, national or international level (UNICEF 2007a).

In multi-ethnic societies and countries affected by conflict, UNICEF promotes the inclusion of peace and tolerance education in school curricula, and supports the production of relevant intercultural learning materials (UNICEF 2007a).

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Policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights[19]

UNICEF Country Offices support governments in monitoring the status of indigenous children's and women's rights, identifying the most vulnerable groups, and finding out the reasons for this vulnerability. Forms of discrimination are made visible, and observance of CRC norms and criteria is advocated. Awareness-raising campaigns addressing the public at large are conducted (UNPFII 2003). UNICEF also supports visits of government officials to indigenous areas with a view to sensitizing them to the situation of indigenous children and women (UNPFII 2007). To assert the rights of indigenous children and women, UNICEF builds and maintains synergies with sister UN organizations, governments and donors, including the European Union, the ILO, UNESCO, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Bank (UNPFII 2008).

UNICEF works with indigenous organizations to design and implement programmes and policies in support of children and women. These partnerships help elaborate programmes suited to the needs of indigenous peoples and respectful of indigenous cultures (UNICEF n.d. c). UNICEF also supports the participation of indigenous leaders in international meetings in order to enable them to share their experience and knowledge (UNPFII 2006).

UNICEF emphasizes that advocacy work is more convincing when the issues that are being raised are supported by valid and accurate information. As national information systems seldom disaggregate findings of censuses and surveys according to ethnicity, an important element of UNICEF's advocacy of indigenous rights is giving visibility to the indigenous condition in national statistics and other data sources (López 2004, UNPFII 2004).[20]

In countries where indigenous peoples live, special attention is given to determine the particular conditions affecting these groups (UNPFII 2004). UNICEF has conducted a number of studies on the condition of indigenous children in several countries.[21] These studies make visible the disparities and discrimination suffered by indigenous children, and the information they provide is used by UNICEF as an advocacy tool with a view to influencing public policies (UNPFII 2007). However, ongoing 'political sensitivities' regarding indigenous issues are identified as a constraint to UNICEF's advocacy efforts.

At a larger scale, UNICEF has included questions on mother tongue, religion and ethnic group of the head of the household in its 2005 Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (UNPFII 2008). Based on this experience, UNICEF and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean have organized a meeting to discuss how to identify indigenous peoples in the upcoming 2010 round of censuses. Indigenous experts will share lessons learned with

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[19] This focus area places children at the centre of policy, legislative and budgetary provisions by generating high-quality, gender-disaggregated data and analysis; using these data for advocacy in the best interests of children; supporting national emergency preparedness capacities; and leveraging resources through partnerships for investing in children.

[20] Availability of disaggregated data is also important to assess the effects of policies and programmes on indigenous peoples. (Preston et al. 2007)

[21] See, for example, UNICEF Colombia n.d., UNICEF Costa Rica 2006 and UNICEF Ecuador 2007.

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representatives of national statistics-gathering institutions and advocate for better questions; other UN agencies have expressed interest in collaborating on this initiative.

UNICEF is aware that children's rights can best be realized in an environment where every child can grow and develop to her or his full potential, and where their families and communities have the capacity to protect their rights and provide for their needs (IRC 2003, UNPFII 2007). For this reason, UNICEF supports sustainable development programmes and projects at the community level (UNPFII 2003).

UNICEF shares with indigenous organizations an understanding that, for indigenous communities, land is both an essential economic asset to promote community sustainable development and a primary source of social and spiritual value. UNICEF's experience suggests that where land rights are denied through dispossession or forced removal, the consequent socio-economic marginalization and acculturation processes have a devastating impact on indigenous children and women (IRC 2003). Therefore, UNICEF supports securing tenure of land and other natural resources for indigenous peoples, according to national laws and regulation.

UNICEF also works with indigenous peoples affected by emergencies such as natural disaster. It is also increasingly concerned about the vulnerability of children to climate change and believes that it is vital to address its impact on the survival, growth and development of children (UNPFII 2008).

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Chapter 2

UNICEF's practice with indigenous peoples

While Chapter 1 describes UNICEF's approach to working with indigenous children and women, this chapter focuses on how UNICEF is putting this approach into effect. The first part of Chapter 2 is based on a sample of 205 good practices[22] presented in the official reports submitted by UNICEF to UNPFII from 2002 through 2008. The second part presents the content and organizational arrangements of UNICEF's work with indigenous peoples at the country level, based on findings of the Country Offices' survey carried out in the framework of this stocktaking exercise. A third section introduces the case studies that will be presented in the following chapters.

A review of good practices

UNICEF reports to UNPFII are illustrated by narratives documenting good practices implemented in particular programme/project settings.[23] A quantitative analysis of the distribution of these narratives by region, MTSP focus area and type of activity outlines some global trends of the implementation of UNICEF's approach in the field.

The distribution by region of the 205 cases quoted in the seven reports submitted by UNICEF to UNPFII is presented in Table 1 (page 18). The prevalence of Latin American cases, at 81 per cent, is overwhelming.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, good practices are fairly distributed between countries where indigenous peoples have a significant demographic and political weight and countries where they are small minorities. About 54 per cent of the 167 Latin American good practices were implemented in countries where indigenous peoples are the majority of the national population (Bolivia and Guatemala) or are an important constituency (Ecuador, Mexico and Peru), and where indigenous movements have strong political influence. The remaining 46 per cent of good practices refer to countries where the indigenous population is relatively small and indigenous peoples have a less powerful role in national politics (Argentina, Belize, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guyana, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Suriname).

The 18 good practices from Asia quoted in the reports are mostly drawn from programmes and projects ongoing in Malaysia (7 cases) and the Philippines (5), with occasional references to Bangladesh, Thailand and Viet Nam. Similarly, the majority of the 16 examples from Africa

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[22] This figure is net from repetitions of the same case in more than one report.
[23] As these short narratives are included in official documents submitted to UN policy bodies (UNPFII and ECOSOC), it must be assumed that they have been carefully screened for validity and accuracy.

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focuses on two countries – the Congo (5 cases) and Namibia (6) – with scattered references to Botswana, Cameroon, the Niger and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Table 1 – Good practices quoted in UNICEF's reports to UNPFII, by region

Region	Number of good practices quoted	%
Latin America	167	81%
Africa	16	8%
Asia	18	9%
Global	4	2%
Total	205	100%

Distribution of good practices according to the five MTSP focus area is displayed in Table 2. About one third of the reported experiences refer to advocacy of indigenous children's and women's rights in national and international forums. Good practices in child survival and education account for 25 per cent each. Child protection is less represented, at 15 per cent, and there are very few experiences addressing HIV/AIDS and children (2 per cent).[24]

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[24]This can be explained by the low prevalence of HIV and AIDS among the indigenous peoples of continental Latin America, who are over-represented in the sample. However, this situation is changing in Latin America. According to the 'PROINCLUSION' project proposal (UNICEF 2007c): "In Ecuador, the HIV/AIDS epidemic has been increasing in the provinces of Cotopaxi, Esmeraldas, El Oro, Pichincha and Guayas, where a high percentage of the population is indigenous and/or of African descent. Similarly, in Colombia, Santander and Quindio provinces in the coastal region have the highest rates of HIV infection." A seroprevalence study conducted in 2004 identified a cluster of HIV seroconversion and syphilis cases in one indigenous community of the Peruvian Amazon (Zavaleta et al. 2007). From a broader prospective, sexually transmitted diseases may represent a threat to the survival of semi-isolated, 'virgin soil' indigenous groups. This was the case, for example, during the hepatitis B epidemic, which affected the indigenous people settled in the area of Rimachi Lake, in the Peruvian Amazon.

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Table 2 – Good practices quoted in UNICEF's reports to UNPFII, by MTSP focus areas

MTSP focus areas	Number of good practices quoted	%
1. Young child survival and development	51	25%
2. Basic education and gender equality	52	25%
3. HIV/AIDS and children	4	2%
4. Child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse	31	15%
5. Policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights	67	33%
Total	205	100%

Based on content analysis, some major activity lines were identified for each of the MTSP focus areas. For example, Focus Area 1, young child survival and development, was broken down into the following activity lines: strengthening primary health-care systems (including maternal and child health care), early childhood development (growth monitoring, early stimulation, etc.), capacity building among indigenous birth attendants, immunization, mothers'/parents' health education, and water and sanitation. Table 3 shows the distribution of these activity lines in the sample.

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Table 3 – MTSP Focus Area 1: Young child survival and development, distribution of good practices by activity lines

Activity lines	Number of good practices quoted
Strengthening primary health-care systems	21
Early childhood development (growth monitoring, early stimulation, etc.)	12
Capacity building of indigenous birth attendants	8
Immunization	4
Water and sanitation	4
Mothers' and parents' health education	2
Total	51

Data suggest a fair distribution between good practices focusing on strengthening primary health-care services, including water and sanitation, in indigenous communities (25) and good practices focusing specifically on maternal and child health (26).

Fifty-two good practices refer to MTSP Focus Area 2, basic education and gender equality. Intercultural/bilingual education, including training of trainers and development of educational infrastructure, is the most frequent activity line, at 44 out of 52 cases. The remaining eight good practices refer to women's literacy. Considering UNICEF's commitment to gender issues and the key role a mother's education has in child survival, this activity line appears under-represented.

As previously mentioned, only a few good practices concern Focus Area 3, HIV/AIDS and children. These include health education for adolescents (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Malaysia and Panama), advocacy (Fiji) and a survey on indigenous adolescents' perceptions of HIV/AIDS (Congo).

Good practices related to MTSP Focus Area 4, child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse, are presented in Table 4. About half of these good practices (15) refer to the promotion of children's, women's and indigenous peoples' rights at large. Registration at birth, which is a critical issue in most indigenous areas, accounts for another 12 cases. Work on child labour is quoted in only one case, while activities aimed towards improving household livelihoods are mentioned in only three.

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Table 4 – MTSP Focus Area 4: Child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse, distribution of good practices by activity lines

Activity lines	Number of good practices quoted
Promotion of children's, women's and indigenous peoples' rights	15
Birth registration	12
Strengthening of household livelihoods	3
Eradication of child labour	1
Total	31

Sixty-seven good practices refer to advocacy (*see Table 5*), as per MTSP Focus Area 5, policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights. Three major activity lines can be identified in this connection: assistance to policymaking (27 cases), mass communication (19) and research (21).

Assistance to policymaking refers to mainstreaming indigenous children's and women's rights in policies and laws. This 'top level' activity line, addressing primarily decision makers, complements 'bottom level' mass communication, which addresses the public at large through the production and dissemination of booklets, videos and other materials, organization of awareness-rising events, and increased visibility in the media.

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Table 5 – MTSP Focus Area 5: Policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights, distribution of good practices by activity lines

Activity lines	Number of good practices quoted
Assistance to policymaking	27
Research	21
Mass communication	19
Total	67

Research activities (21 cases) include reviews, surveys, ethnographic studies, situation analyses and participatory appraisal exercises. Health, nutrition, education and legal issues are the most common subjects covered in these studies.[25]

In summary, findings of this good practice review indicate that most of UNICEF's initiatives with indigenous peoples are being carried out in the Latin American region. All the focus areas foreseen by MTSP strategies are fairly covered. A set of specific activity lines, some of which are particular to the condition and needs of indigenous children and women (e.g., intercultural/bilingual education, promotion of indigenous peoples' rights, birth registration) can be identified within each focus area. As for content, good practices presented to UNPFII illustrate the richness and comprehensiveness of UNICEF's fieldwork with indigenous peoples.

Findings of the Country Offices' survey

Additional information on UNICEF's practice in working with indigenous peoples was collected through the Country Offices' survey. The survey addressed 59 UNICEF Country Offices (COs), which were selected by the Gender, Rights and Civic Engagement Section (GRACE), based on the list of countries where the UN system has a field presence. The survey questionnaire was designed to collect information on length of experience, ongoing programmes and activities, partnerships, research and publications, human and financial resources, coverage, and (perceived) relevance and effectiveness of UNICEF's work for indigenous peoples.

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[25] Some of these studies were subsequently re-edited and distributed as awareness-raising tools.

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Questionnaires were sent to 59 Country Offices. The response rate was high in Latin America (17 questionnaires answered out of 21 sent), but it was very low in Africa (5 out of 21) and Asia and the Pacific (5 out of 15).[26] In addition, two African COs (Burkina Faso and Mali) and one in Asia (Sri Lanka) stated that UNICEF is not working on indigenous issues in the correspondent countries. Overall, only 24 complete questionnaires were collected (17 from Latin America, 3 from Africa and 4 from Asia and the Pacific).

The significant difference in the response rate between Latin America and other regions[27] reflects the higher social and political relevance that indigenous peoples' issues have acquired in Latin America (as compared to Africa and Asia and the Pacific). This is a result of the development throughout the region of indigenous movements and organizations at the country, subregional and regional levels during the 1980s and 1990s. This process accelerated in 1992 during international mobilization for the 'counter-celebration' marking the five centuries from the beginning of colonial conquest. It was also boosted by national decentralization reforms that enabled some indigenous peoples to take control over the districts and municipalities where they are settled.

The special concern for indigenous issues held by UNICEF's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean cannot be ascribed only to a supportive political environment. It is also the outcome of the political willingness to address indigenous children's and women's issues as a UNICEF policy priority. It must be stressed that bringing this willingness into effect was made possible by the funds for regional and subregional activities made available by several donors, in particular, the Government of Spain. During the 1990s, the Fondo Indígena Ibero-Américano (Indigenous Peoples' Spanish-American Fund) was established with the aim of promoting a round of negotiations between governments, indigenous organizations and donors on actions to be implemented for supporting the collective rights of indigenous peoples. More recently, the Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation) has been supporting a regional programme on indigenous children's rights covering 17 Latin American countries. In addition, the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean is the only UNICEF regional office that has a senior position on indigenous issues.[28]

The growing strength of indigenous movements, a supportive national policy environment and the regional office commitment and operational capacity explain the rapid expansion of UNICEF's activities with indigenous children and women throughout Latin America. According to survey findings, Bolivia and Ecuador began working with indigenous peoples during the 1980s or before.[29] Seven Country Offices – Brazil, Colombia, Panama, Peru, Guyana,

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[26] 'No response' from Africa includes: Algeria, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Sudan. 'No response' from Asia and the Pacific includes: Bangladesh, Fiji, India, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand.

[27] Odds ratio 2.91 (1.02-8.42); p 0.02.

[28] However, the official title of this post – Senior Advisor Education and Excluded Population does not include a direct and specific reference to indigenous peoples or issues.

[29] Because the large majority of disadvantaged children and women in Bolivia are indigenous, the Country Office claims 50 years of experience with indigenous issues. In practice, the CO has been working in indigenous areas and

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Guatemala and Venezuela – became involved with indigenous issues during the 1990s. The remaining eight COs – Argentina, Belize, Chile, Costa Rica, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and the Eastern Caribbean – joined during the 2000s.[30]

In Africa, the Country Offices in Cameroon and the Congo have been working with indigenous peoples since 1998 and 2001, respectively, while UNICEF's activities addressing indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of the Congo began in 2006. In Asia, long-term experience is reported by Viet Nam (1980s) and Papua (1990s); Cambodia and Malaysia began in 2006.

To summarize the content of Country Offices' work with indigenous peoples, respondents were asked to identify which activity lines identified through the analysis of good practices (*see previous section, 'A review of good practices'*) have been implemented in their countries, at inception and as part of the current national medium-term strategic plan.

Findings presented in Table 6 suggest that almost all the activity lines elicited from content analysis of good practices presented in UNPFII reports are represented in the sample. More than half of the COs are working on intercultural/bilingual education, mother and child care, child protection and rights advocacy. Distribution of other activity lines (HIV/AIDS, gender equality, socio-economic development and others) is more scattered. Lists of activity lines 'at inception' and 'as part of the current MTSP' are fairly similar, which suggests a substantial continuity of work, with a slightly increasing trend for HIV/AIDS, child protection and rights' advocacy.

Table 6 – Activity lines implemented by surveyed Country Offices

Current activities	At inception (number of COs)	Current MTSP (number of COs)
Intercultural/bilingual education	17	18
Mother and child care	19	19
HIV/AIDS	7	11
Child protection	12	16
Gender	6	8
Socio-economic development	3	4
Rights' advocacy	16	20
Others	12	10
No answer	0	0

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with indigenous peoples since its inception. Based on this broad criterion, the same is probably applicable to other Andean and Central American countries.

[30] Additional information on UNICEF's regional-level experience in Latin America is presented in the Annex 1.

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Concerning human resources, 20 out of the 24 respondent Country Offices have recruited a long-term consultant or (in a few cases) an officer as a focal point for indigenous issues. When needed, specialists in intercultural/bilingual education, intercultural health, intercultural communication for child protection and other subjects are hired in the framework of major donor-assisted programmes and projects.

Table 7 presents the estimated annual budget available to 24 COs to support initiatives addressing indigenous peoples. Only six rely on annual budgets of more than half-a-million dollars. The budgets of an additional eight COs range from US$100,000 to US$500,000; 10 offices spend less than US$100,000 per year. These figures indicate that the budget available for indigenous issues is less than US$500,000 for three quarters of surveyed COs, a sum allowing for some demonstrative projects and self-contained advocacy activities.[31]

Table 7 – Estimated annual budget allocated for implementing activities addressing indigenous issues in 23 Country Offices

Budget size (US$)	Number of Country Offices
1 million or more	3
Less than 1 million–500,000	3
Less than 500,000–250,000	3
Less than 250,000–100,000	5
Less than 100,000	10
Total	24

Consequently, coverage of indigenous national populations (as estimated by survey respondents) is generally low (*see Table 8*). Only nine 'affluent' COs are able to serve more than 25 per cent

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[31] Financial requirements depend, of course, on many factors, including size of national indigenous population, geographical area to be covered, human resources, logistics and availability of non-UNICEF funds.

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of their country's indigenous population. Four countries are able to cover 25–10 per cent; 11 countries cover less than 10 per cent of the indigenous population.

Table 8 – Estimated indigenous population covered by 24 Country Offices

Proportion of national indigenous population covered	Number of Country Offices
75%–50%	4
>50%–25%	5
>25%–10%	4
>10%–5%	7
Less than 5%	4
Total	24

Indigenous issues are, in most cases, multi-sectoral and require interdisciplinary know-how. Nevertheless, according to survey respondents, UNICEF's collaboration with UN sister agencies on indigenous issues is not widespread (*see Table 9, page 27*). Only six COs state that this collaboration has been established, at least for *some* projects and programmes. Twelve COs answer that collaboration with other UN agencies is still *incipient*. In six cases this collaboration has *not started* so far. The Inter-Agency Working Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues (recommended in 2008 by the UNDG Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues) has been established so far only in 4 out of the 24 surveyed countries.

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Table 9 – Collaboration on indigenous issues with other UN agencies

Collaboration with UN agencies	Number of Country Offices
Collaboration is ongoing in the context of some programmes or projects	6
Inter-agency collaboration is incipient	12
No collaboration has been established so far	6
Total	24

In addition, collaborative links with indigenous organizations are not as strong as recommended by United Nations policy (UN 2007; UNDG 2008). According to survey findings, two COs collaborate with indigenous organizations in *all* UNICEF promoted programmes and projects. Ten have established this collaboration in *most* programme and projects; 12 collaborate with indigenous organizations in *some* programmes and projects.

These findings suggest that, in most cases, UNICEF's work on indigenous issues at the country level is affected by insufficient financial resources, lack of coordination with other UN agencies and limited relationships with indigenous organizations. These constraints have an impact on the quality of the services delivered to indigenous children and women. Almost all respondents believe that the relevance and effectiveness of UNICEF's programmes and projects intended to reach indigenous peoples must be improved.

Introduction to the case studies

The respondents' statements raise a number of practical questions about UNICEF's work with indigenous peoples. Among others:

- To what extent are indigenous peoples' needs and priorities taken into consideration when identifying and developing UNICEF's programmes, projects and other initiatives?
- How are these programmes, projects and initiatives designed, managed and monitored?
- To what extent are the expertise and resources needed to ensure quality of implementation available?
- What on-site partnerships have been established? How do they work?

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- Is funding consistent with the objectives of the programme, project or initiative?

- To what extent do these programmes, projects and initiatives contribute to improving the welfare of indigenous children and women and promoting their rights?

- Are these achievements likely to be sustainable?

Answering these questions requires moving from the background of the approach described in Chapter 1 and the global trends described in this chapter to 'zooming in' on specific programmes and projects, carried out in particular historical, socio-economic and cultural settings.

To this end, two in-depth case studies in Peru and in the Congo were conducted as part of this stocktaking exercise. The Peruvian case study focuses on a donor-assisted, multimillion-dollar project implemented during 2001–2009 with the Wampis and the Awajún of the Santiago River District in the Amazon tropical rain forest and river basin. The Congo case study has a slightly broader focus and covers a series of local initiatives in support of the Baka of the Likouala and Sangha Departments – as well as a national plan for indigenous peoples that is currently promoted and supported by the UNICEF Country Office.

As illustrated by Tables 10 and 11, the condition of indigenous peoples in the two project areas and the organizational arrangement of the two initiatives are very different and sometimes contrasting. Thus, the case studies do not illustrate the 'average' UNICEF project with indigenous peoples. Instead, they most likely capture two extremes. It is expected, however, that the comparison between findings – along with the desk review and survey findings – will generate lessons learned that might be relevant for more 'typical' programmes or projects. (*See Patton 1990 for more information on this method of evaluation.*)

The two case studies were identified by GRACE and the Regional Office (Peru) or the Country Office (Congo). Fieldwork was conducted during October and December 2008. Case study research included an overview of the relevant ethnographic, ethno-historical and 'indigenous peoples' rights' literature; a review of programme/project documentation; and field visits, during which quick project ethnographies were conducted. Fieldwork activities included interviews and focus group discussions with staff and local stakeholders; observation of staff and stakeholder interaction; discussions with leaders of indigenous organizations; attendance at meetings and project-promoted events; visits to projects; review of registers; observation of school classes; informal conversations; and participation in rituals and leisure events.

Findings of these two case studies are presented in Chapters 3 and 4. Comparative remarks will be presented in the framework of the general discussion of stocktaking findings in Chapter 5, 'Conclusions and recommendations'.

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Table 10 – Comparison of indigenous peoples' situation in the two case study locations

The Wampis (Santiago River, Peruvian Amazon)	The Baka (Likouala and Sangha Departments, Congo)
Indigenous peoples are the majority (>80%) of local population	Indigenous peoples are a small minority (<10%) of local population
Fair relationships with other ethnic groups in the area, including some Spanish-speaking settlers' enclaves	Indigenous peoples are economically, socially, and culturally subaltern to the dominant Bantu majority
Livelihoods based on self-employment and 'decent' wage labour	Livelihoods based on serfdom and client/patron relationship with Bantu 'masters'
Reasonable coverage of education, health and civil registration services	Very poor basic services coverage
A critical mass of educated indigenous peoples exists	All indigenous peoples, including indigenous organization leaders, suffer from lack of education
Empowered indigenous population, relying on a strong autonomous organization and controlling local administrative units	Subaltern indigenous population, with an incipient and weak organization, and still excluded from local politics
National laws supporting indigenous rights to land, health, education and livelihoods are in force	An indigenous peoples' law is still being considered by the parliament; indigenous peoples' rights are systematically neglected and violated throughout the country

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Table 11 – Comparison of the organizational arrangements of the two case study projects

Promotion of sustainable human development in the Santiago River	Improvement of access to basic services for the Baka minority and subsequent initiatives
Duration: 2002–2009	Duration: 2001–2009
Annual budget about US$800,000	Annual budget about US$72,000
Project was negotiated with local governments and indigenous organizations	Very weak involvement of indigenous organizations in the negotiation of projects (during the past couple of years, however, some leaders have attended some national and departmental planning events)
Field team of 5–6 persons covering different areas of expertise	A coordinator, based in Brazzaville, has been appointed, but there are no UNICEF staff in the field; activities are outsourced to missions and NGOs

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Chapter 3

Case study 1: Implementing interculturalism among the Wampis and Awajún of the Santiago River, Peru

The context[32]

The Santiago River flows for about 250 kilometres from the Ecuadorian Andes piedmont to the Marañón River, headwater of the Amazon River. Its watershed is delimited by the last slopes of the Andes and the escarpment dividing the High Amazon from the Amazonian plain. It features a typical Amazonian lowland landscape with a strip of fertile alluvial terraces on the banks of the river (covered by secondary forest) and inland clay hills, still harbouring primary rainforest. Four fifths of the Santiago's course flows through Peruvian territory, where the river is navigable by medium-size boats during all seasons. A shorter, non-navigable section of the river is located in Ecuadorian territory.[33]

The upper and middle Santiago watershed is the homeland of the Wampis, who are known as the Tsumu Shuar in Ecuador. The downstream path of the river corresponds to the southern fringe of the Awajún territory, most of which is located along the upper tributaries of the Marañón.[34] Although their locations are different, the Wampis and Awajún share with the Achuar and the Untsurí Shuar, their northern and western neighbours, a close linguistic and cultural affinity. In the past, their livelihoods were based on horticulture, mostly carried out by women; hunting and fishing, which were the primary tasks of men; and gathering, which was undertaken by all family members, including children. Today, a significant share of the male labour force is allocated to cash-crop growing and other income-generating activities.

Indigenous social structures build on marriage alliances, most of which occur within a territorial area controlled by a *júunt*, or 'big man'. Misinterpretation or deliberate manipulation of these structures is a major source of intra-ethnic conflict, expressed in the language of witchcraft accusations and counter-accusations. The four ethnic groups also share a common worldview that emphasizes the interconnectedness and proximity among humans, ancestors and spirits of the forest, river and garden.

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[32] This section is based on the author's ethnographic and ethno-historical research carried out during the 1980s and 1990s. Some sources on the Wampis (and other comparable 'jivaroan' groups) include: Brown 1984; Brown (editor) 1984; Descola 1983, 1986, 1993; García Renduelez 1996; Guallart 1990; Harner 1978; Karsten 1988 (originally published in 1935), Seymour-Smith 1988; Warren 1988, 1992, 2000. Observations and interviews carried out during the field visit have contributed to the update of this background information.

[33] As in other areas of the North-Eastern Amazon, the Santiago River watershed has been contended by Peru and Ecuador since the 19th century. According to the Rio de Janeiro Protocol, which followed the Ecuadorian defeat in the 1941 war, the border between the two countries coincides with the point where the Santiago begins to be navigable. Nevertheless, frontier clashes continued in the area until the 1995 war in the neighbouring Cordillera del Condor.

[34] A few mestizo colonists are settled nearby the mouth of the river.

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The Wampis and Awajún have been known as fierce warriors, as have their neighbours the Untsurí Shuar and Achuar. Armed resistance to the penetration of colonial and national societies into their territory has been conducted for almost five centuries. By the beginning of the 20th century, Ecuadorian and Peruvian armies established frontier posts along the river to protect the activities of elastic gum and timber extractors, and river traders. But the area was not fully 'pacified', and raids against neighbouring groups continued until the 1950s.

Inter-ethnic warfare is no longer practised. On the contrary, the four groups have established political alliances, aimed at defending their territory from the mounting pressure of non-indigenous settlers, timber extractors, and oil and mining companies. And, since 1977, the Wampis have federated with the Awajún and funded the bi-ethnic organization Consejo Aguaruna Huambiza.

The shift from inter-ethnic warfare to multi-ethnic alliances is just one aspect of the culture change process the Wampis and Awajún of the Santiago River have undergone during the past 50 years. Rooted in interactions with river traders, missionaries, and the Peruvian and Ecuadorian armies, this process has led the Wampis and the Awajún to abandon the traditional single extended-family settlement and concentrate in big riverside villages, hosting up to 2,000 people. The architecture and infrastructure of these villages are barely distinguishable from those of Spanish-speaking *ribereño* settlements of the lower Peruvian Amazon.

Men are increasingly involved in cash-crop cultivation or wage labour. Rice is complementing or replacing manioc and plantains as a staple food. Canned food, soft drinks, crackers and cookies are increasingly consumed. Motorboats provide transport to other communities and the frontier town of Santa María de Nieva and ensure a regular supply of 'imported' commodities. Formal education, modern health care and Christian religious services are available in most communities. Although some folkloric signs of ethnicity can be seen here and there, most people dress in cheap Western clothes sold in village stores or by river traders. Listening to the radio, playing soccer, and in some cases, the Internet and television have become the most popular pastimes. Wampis/Spanish and Awajún/Spanish pidgins are increasingly used in everyday social interactions.

At a first glance, ethnicity seems to be vanishing in Wampis and Awajún communities of the Santiago River, under the thrust of acculturation and modernization. Notwithstanding, one should not stick with this impression. Hidden from the sight of the 'foreign' visitor, many aspects of indigenous culture are still alive. During the field visit, for example, it became apparent that indigenous marriage rules – a burning issue in Wampis and Awajún culture – continue to be a major drive of both social cohesion and conflict. It was also observed that *anent*, or spells, aimed at facilitating the relationships between humans and spirits, are still performed in a ritual context.

As for many other groups of the Upper Amazon, it should be concluded that contemporary Wampis and Awajún cultures have two faces: the insiders' face inspired by the legacy of the ancestors; and the outsiders' face, which enables dealing with the challenges of modernity (Whitten 1976). Perhaps no element of contemporary Wampis and Awajún culture embodies this

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dualism better than the hybrid figure of the *apu,* or community leader. Like the traditional *júunt*, the *apu* is primarily the 'strong and wise speaker' who arbitrates internal conflicts. The *apu*, however, is also expected to serve as a 'modern' community leader. In this respect, he is responsible for representing and defending the community with the weapons of institutional politics. To deal with this responsibility, the *apu* must be fluent in Spanish, have a good understanding of the complex rules of bureaucracy, and be able to understand and translate the cryptic language of politicians.

As with the other indigenous groups of the Peruvian Amazon, the Wampis and the Awajún are increasingly involved in local and national politics. The decentralization reform of the late 1990s provided them with the opportunity to become involved with the Santiago River District and its municipalities, where they are the overwhelming majority of the constituency, and to elect indigenous representatives in the Condorcanqui Province council.

Participation in institutional politics has enabled the Wampis and the Awajún to achieve significant results, particularly in connection with land entitlement, the extension of basic services and public funding for community projects. But in some circumstances, decentralized governance is not enough to protect their collective rights, and the fierce warrior legacy of the Wampis and Awajún re-emerges. Under the banner of the Consejo Aguaruna Huambiza, participation in the tough strike that took place during August 2008 against the Peruvian Government decrees 1015 and 1073, which promoted the apportionment and privatization of communal land titles, is the most recent example of the continuing Wampis and Awajún struggle for land, social cohesion and cultural survival.

The project

The 'Promotion of Human Sustainable Development along the Santiago River' project was launched in 2002 and will conclude in 2009. It has developed in two phases: a start-up, exploratory phase (2002–2004), and a longer extension and exit phase (2005–2009). The project is being funded by the Government of Finland and implemented by UNICEF. It includes two national components, in Ecuador and Peru, and a small 'bi-national' component. The total budget of the second phase for the Peruvian component was about $4 million dollars, or a rough average of US$800,000 per year (UNICEF Peru 2002, 2005).

The project's Peruvian component covers selected Andean and Amazonian areas of Condorcanqui Province. The following text refers to work carried out with the Wampis and Awajún communities of the Santiago River; hereinafter, this local initiative will be referred to as 'the Project'.

The Project covers the whole Santiago River District, where 95 per cent of the approximately 13,000 inhabitants are either Wampis (37 communities in the middle and high sections of the river) or Awajún (19 communities settled in the lower section). The Santiago River District is a very remote and poorly accessible area. Travel from Santa María de Nieva (the frontier town where the project office and logistics storage are based) to Puerto Galilea (the community that

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hosts the administrative headquarters of the district) takes at least four hours by speedboat, or one day by ordinary motorboat. A three-day trip by plane, car and boat is needed to reach the project area from Lima.[35]

The Project's history suggests a progressive shift from a rather conventional approach based on the extension of basic maternal and child health services, strengthening primary education and developing infrastructure (which was prevalent during 2002–2004), to a more ambitious attempt to embed education, health and child protection services in Wampis and Awajún cultures through an intercultural approach that is being carried out during the second phase (2005–2009).[36]

Development of an intercultural approach, which has also been an intercultural experience, led to an operational reorganization of the Project. At the end of 2008, several major streams of activity were under implementation, including: improvement of quality standards in intercultural/bilingual education; maternal and child health care; early childhood care, including nutrition; HIV and AIDS; promotion of children's and women's rights at the community level; and strengthening of the managerial capacities of community leaders, local government representatives and social services decision makers. In addition, a small fish-farming sub-project was launched on request of leaders and communities. A review of these activity lines, which hereinafter will be referred to as sub-projects, will illustrate how the Project has been working to put interculturalism into effect.

Intercultural/bilingual education

In the Santiago River District there are 17 pre-primary education centres, 48 primary schools, five secondary schools and three vocational education centres. Teaching staff include six pre-primary teachers, 103 primary school teachers, 28 secondary education teachers and three vocational education teachers. In 2006, there were 4,650 children and adolescents enrolled in the different educational cycles, out of which 3,363 were attending primary schools. School attendance rates ranged from 90 per cent for primary schools to 37 per cent for secondary schools. The difference between girls' and boys' attendance at primary school was negligible, but a significant gender gap existed for secondary schooling, at 47 per cent of boys vs. 23 per cent of girls (UNICEF Peru 2006a, 2008).

The responsibility for delivering educational services in Santiago District is with the Área de Coordinación de Instituciones Educativas (ACIE), whose office is based in Puerto Galilea, the

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[35] Remoteness of Santiago River communities has required significant investments in transport. The harsh working and living conditions prevailing in the area have entailed rapid turnover of non-local staff during the life of the Project.

[36] Significantly, the first-phase project document (UNICEF Peru 2002) mentions interculturalism as a key feature of the Project's approach only in connection with the particular field of intercultural/bilingual education. The project document for the second phase (UNICEF Peru 2005) describes interculturalism as the core element of the overall project strategy, although little detail is given on how this approach would be implemented. Hence, the Project's intercultural practice has developed progressively as a result of field experience, interaction with local stakeholders, consultants' advice, exchange with other projects and consultation with indigenous leaders.

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district headquarters. ACIE is staffed by Wampis and Awajún mother-tongue professionals. Most of them have a solid background in bilingual/intercultural education or, at least, long-term experience as community teachers. The low quality of teaching and learning is a core concern for ACIE, as well as the low attendance at secondary schools – which is due to many factors, including cost, indigenous division of labour, marriage customs and the poor quality of educational services provided. Adaptation of official curricula and teaching-learning methods to Wampis and Awajún cultures is an additional challenge.

Project assistance to the ACIE was initially limited to supplying furniture and equipment for school buildings. Since the beginning of the second phase, however, the Project has developed a comprehensive strategy to strengthen intercultural/bilingual education in pre-primary and primary schools. Main elements of this strategy include:

- Upgrading of intercultural/bilingual primary school curricula to better fit the culture and social reality of the Wampis and Awajún of the Santiago River: Indigenous resource persons, mostly older men and women, have been involved in identifying culture-specific content for these curricula. An anthropologist has been recruited to collect oral tradition materials, which will be incorporated in intercultural curricula.

- Preparation of teaching-learning materials for intercultural/bilingual education: This has entailed an attempt to standardize spelling and grammar of the Wampis and Awajún languages.

- Organization of refresher courses for intercultural/bilingual primary school teachers: Training has been reinforced by classroom follow-up. Community leaders, parents, and indigenous older men and women have been invited to join the classroom to share culture-specific content with teachers and pupils.

- Adaptation of the official learning performance test to the intercultural/bilingual curriculum and the local culture: A version of this test in Wampis and Awajún languages has been developed to assess achievements in basic arithmetic, and reading and writing the indigenous language and Spanish. Notwithstanding this adaptation, results of these tests have been disappointing, highlighting the importance of improving the quality of intercultural/bilingual education.

- Promotion of community participation in monitoring how well schools function and in planning the development of education services in the district.

- Ongoing preparation of a series of ethno-ecological and ethno-historical maps of the Santiago River, expected to provide additional information to be included in the social and natural sciences components of the curricula.

- Support for the organizational and managerial development of the ACIE and the mainstreaming of intercultural/bilingual education within the provincial and regional education plans.

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These activities are expected to set the foundations of a three-year intercultural/bilingual educational plan for the Wampis and Awajún communities that should be implemented by the Santiago District ACIE, presumably with public sector funding.

Maternal and child health

Data on maternal, infant and child mortality along the Santiago River are scattered and unreliable. However, the large-based pyramid, demographic transition portrayed by the 2005 national census describes a population in which 67 per cent of the total population is under age 20 and no significant differences exist between fertile-age women (15–40) and the corresponding male age group. This indicates a major decrease of infant, child and maternal mortality (UNICEF Peru 2006a). The sparse population growth data currently available are impressive: In Yutupis, the biggest Wampis community along the river, the number of inhabitants has increased from about 800 in the 1990s to 2,000. In short, the Wampis and the Awajún are experiencing a demographic transition, which is most likely primarily the result of education, particularly women's education; increased income; and adaptation to 'imported' disease. Availability of official health services may have played a role in triggering demographic transition, although, due to low coverage and poor quality of services, it certainly has not been the main factor.

The district health-service delivery system, *micro-red de salud*, is comprised of one health centre located in Puerto Galilea, 18 health posts, and a number of community health workers and village birth attendants. At the beginning of the Project, use of primary health care was still very low. According to the Project's 2002 baseline survey, only 18 per cent of children under age one had received the third dose of DPT, only 56 per cent of mothers and children received antenatal care, and only 45 per cent of sick persons sought treatment at the health centre or health posts. Two major reasons were presented by the interviewees for non-use of official health services: difficult accessibility, including cost of displacement; and poor quality of the services delivered, including cultural unacceptability (UNICEF Peru 2004).

Improving the health-service delivery system of Santiago District has been taken as a priority by the Project. A comprehensive primary health-care sub-project was launched that included continuing education for health-post nurses, community health workers and village birth attendants; expanded immunization coverage, which required the establishment of a solar-energy-powered cold chain; strengthening of maternal and child health-care services, including antenatal care, safe delivery and growth monitoring; health education; malaria control; water and sanitation activities such as installation of rainwater harvesting systems in schools; and upgrading of existing premises, equipment and supplies.

Work done in connection with this health-care sub-project has increased the use of health facilities and access to antenatal care. According to the 2006 follow-up of the baseline survey (UNICEF Peru 2006a, 2008), use of official services by sick persons increased from 45 per cent to 60 per cent, and coverage of antenatal care increased from 56 per cent to 81 per cent. The increase in immunization coverage was still very low, from 18 per cent to 23 per cent for

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DPT3.[37] An improvement in communication between health-service users and staff – in particular, non-indigenous health-centre staff – has also taken place, thanks to training in intercultural health care provided by the sub-project.

Delivery has been the most interesting and successful aspect of the work done by the Project to develop an intercultural health-care system. Based on an ethnographic study of Wampis and Awajún beliefs and practices concerning pregnancy, delivery and puerperium (Medina and Mayca 2006), an intercultural delivery sub-project was launched with the aim of improving management of the complications of delivery, and controlling the risk of perinatal and maternal death. Health staff and traditional birth attendants have been trained in screening pregnancies and referring mothers at risk to the district obstetrician. After a counter-check by maternal and child health staff, mothers at risk as well as mothers who are willing to deliver with professional assistance are offered the opportunity to give birth to their child according to indigenous customs ('vertical' delivery, presence of the husband and other members of the family) in a medically safe environment.[38]

One indigenous 'waiting house', where mothers and their relatives are hosted before and after delivery, was built next door to the Puerto Galilea health centre, and a room inside the premise was equipped with furniture and tools for vertical delivery. In this environment, delivery is typically managed by the woman, her relatives and an indigenous birth attendant. The obstetrician, however, is on call during the delivery to handle unexpected complications and provide sterile post-natal care. According to findings of the 2006 survey, this practice has contributed to an increase in the proportion of clinically safe deliveries in the Santiago River district from 67 per cent to 93 per cent.

Early childhood care

According to the 2006 survey, chronic malnutrition (stunting) during the first three years of life affects half of the children living in Wampis and Awajún communities along the Santiago River (UNICEF Peru 2006a). Survey findings suggest the occurrence of malnutrition is associated with the size of the family, which determines scarcity of food, and to parents' education, which determines the capacity to recognize the early signs of malnutrition.

Based on these findings, during the Project's second phase, an early childhood development sub-project was launched, including growth monitoring, nutrition education, early stimulation

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[37] According to staff in-charge, significant improvement might have taken place during the past two years. However, due to erratic registration of immunized children and mothers, this perception is not supported by quantitative evidence.

[38] This approach was inspired by similar experiences carried out by UNICEF in the Andes (see Peruvian Ministry of Health, United Nations Children's Fund and United States Agency for International Development, *Tan cerca...tan lejos. Una mirada a las experiencias exitosas que incrementan el parto institucional en el Perú*, Ministry of Health, Lima, 2007).

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activities and provision of micronutrient supplements. A 'qualitative' (ethnographic) study on indigenous childcare practices was also planned, but it has not yet been conducted.

The early childhood development sub-project is strongly integrated with the maternal and child health component. It features an interactive methodology, based on mothers' and families' participation,[39] and includes training of health staff in anthropometric measurement and in maintaining growth charts. Growth monitoring findings are then plotted on a community chart and discussed with mothers, with the aim of prompting the group to figure out what could be done to improve children's nutritional status. Project sources describe this as a "cultural negotiation" process, leading to a new practice that integrates mainstream science and indigenous knowledge.

During the field visit, scepticism towards this activity was expressed by some indigenous informants. As expressed by a community leader, people feel that "the nutritionist should spend less time in measuring children and more time in the family kitchen" to show mothers of malnourished children what appropriate food can be prepared with the resources available in the household pantry.[40] Due to brief experience and delay of the foreseen ethnographic study on indigenous childcare practices, child nutrition is one of the areas in which a truly intercultural approach has yet to be developed.

Early stimulation activities were still incipient at the time of the field visit. Some health staff have been trained in using pictures portraying family interaction in an Amazonian context as a tool to generate discussion on children's early stimulation with and between parents. This material, however, was imported from a project carried out in the Amazon lowland with Cocama and *ribereño* communities. Its adaptation to Wampis and Awajún cultures has been planned but not implemented.

HIV/AIDS

Although HIV and AIDS are not yet a major threat to health and life along the Santiago River, rapid-results HIV tests were provided to health units to enable quick seroconversion detection in children and adults. The Project also began to promote behaviour change for the prevention of

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[39] In November 2008, one year before the end of the Project, growth monitoring activities were under implementation in seven Wampis communities, out of the 56 indigenous communities in the Project's area.
[40] Apparently, some cultural misunderstandings exist between the Project and participants in connection with nutrition education activities. Because of low caloric content, bulk and unhealthy preparation, staff in-charge consider the indigenous custom of giving children *chapo* (mashed sweet banana) and sweet *masato* (non-fermented manioc beer) inadequate as supplementary feeding and weaning foods. But mothers perceive *chapo* and sweet *masato* as foods that will accustom children to eating adult staple foods – plantains and manioc beer. These foods have important nutritional and symbolic value in indigenous culture. Moreover, whenever fish, meat or foods from gathering such as palmito, edible grubs and palm-tree fruits are available, *chapo* and *masato* are complemented by small, pre-chewed bites of these foods rich in proteins and micro-elements. Currently, this practice is constrained by limited availability of the hunting, fishing and gathering products that used to provide the 'qualitative' component of indigenous diets and the decreasing time available for men to practise these activities, due to their commitments to income-generating activities and other work.

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HIV infection among adolescents and youths. A research study was recently launched, aimed at assessing the risks for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases in the frontier towns where a few indigenous and mestizo girls and boys are exploited as prostitutes.

Promotion of children's and women's rights

Rights are a critical and sensitive issue in interculturalism. Elements of the 'universal' rights as spelled out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international agreements may not coincide with indigenous peoples' understanding of men's, women's and children's entitlements and duties. For example, the Wampis and Awajún marriage customs entitling a young man to marry the daughter, or daughters, of his father's sister (matrilateral cross-cousin), clearly clashes with a woman's right to avoid forced marriage. The custom to physically punish children – usually by hitting them with *ishanga* (stinging nettle), which is considered to drive away the bad spirits who are responsible for a child's defiant behaviour, is incompatible with a child's right to be protected from physical and psychological violence.

During the initial phase, the rights sub-project avoided these and others sensitive subjects by concentrating on providing on-site civil registration services that were in high demand among the Santiago River communities. Activities focused on birth registration. A network of community volunteers has been trained in registering children, keeping the registry, transmitting information to the district civil registry, and delivering copies of the birth certification on demand. This approach, which was strongly supported by district civil registry officers, has been reinforced by a number of registration campaigns. Overall, these activities have been quite successful: By 2006, registration at birth almost doubled, from 33 per cent to 60 per cent among children under age one (with a slightly lower increase for the other age groups). In addition, 3,200 adults received the national identification document. According to Project staff, end-of project figures will be higher.

Nonetheless, it is widely known in the villages that abuse of women and children happens in the community and in the household in several different forms. According to indigenous customs, husbands and wives should love each other and collaborate in livelihood tasks, and parents are expected to play with children and teach them their gender roles. But domestic conflicts sometimes lead to mistreatment of women and children. An additional problem is the presence of 'foreigners' in the community. Several cases have been reported of 'foreign' teachers beating pupils or harassing girl students. To give visibility to this problem, the Project has promoted a network of 30 *Defensorías Comunales* (community-based rights protection bodies), which coordinate with similar rights-protection institutions at the district and provincial levels.

The *Defensorías Comunales* have a consultative role and usually include the civil registration volunteer and a small group of aged and experienced men and women. The person who is subjected to abuse can submit her or his case to the commission and receive advice on how to deal with the situation. In most instances, the case is presented by the *Defensoría* to the *apu*, who is ultimately responsible for arranging an agreement between the affected parties. This may

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include sanctions, which range from monetary compensation to expulsion from the community. The case is then registered by the civil registry officer in a dedicated record book.

A review of one of these registries suggests that most cases dealt with by the *Defensorías* concern everyday conflicts in community life. Support for children and wives after divorce, accusations of adultery and issues related to the indigenous marriage system appear to be the most-discussed matters. Cases of violence or abuse against women and children are sporadic. By providing a forum where women and children can be listened to and their arguments defended, the *Defensorías* are contributing to the empowerment of the weakest parties of a society that is substantially ruled by mature men. It is likely, however, that this is just the façade seen by outsiders; the insider's view is that the *Defensoría* has been incorporated into the sophisticated conflict management and consensus-making process on which the social cohesion of Wampis and Awajún communities is based.

Fish farms

Although "welfare improvement" is mentioned in the Project's goal statement, the logical framework does not forecast any activity or results that focus on income generation and food security. Project staff view this as consistent with UNICEF's mandate.[41] But food security cannot be ignored in this situation: About half of the children suffer chronic malnutrition because excessive population pressure on hunting, fishing and gathering resources – the main source of protein and micronutrients in indigenous diets – makes food scarce for both children and adults.

Since inception, indigenous leaders and community members have been asking for support in enhancing household food supplies in the form of improved production for self-consumption or income to buy food on the local market. Action was not taken in this connection until 2007, when, to respond to the mounting demand, the Project established an agreement with the Instituto de Investigaciones de la Amazonía Peruana for implementing a small-scale fish-farming sub-project.

The small-scale fish-farming sub-project consists of household or community ponds where alevins (newly spawned salmon or trout) are grown after purchase from an industrial-scale fish-farm. Small fish are given special food until they are big enough to be harvested and consumed by the pond-holder family or sold within the community. Training and guidelines have been provided by experts to establish and manage fish farms. Implementation, however, proved to be more difficult than expected. Several failures occurred, decreasing the interest for this initiative, and careful control over the ponds' ecological niche was found to be indispensable for successful fish farming.

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[41] In connection with indigenous peoples, however, this is an arguable view. UNICEF's 'Programme of Action for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People' states that "social and economic development issues are fully part of UNICEF's mandate as a condition and consequence of the implementation of the Convention [on the Rights of the Child] and an imperative for the achievement of the MDGs [Millennium Development Goals]." (UNICEF 2004)

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An innovative and promising initiative in fish farming is being undertaken by teachers and students of the Yutupis school, which includes a vocational education branch. Indigenous knowledge of riverside pond ecology and the behaviour of fish (and fish-predators) species living in this ecological niche are being incorporated by teachers and students in fish-farm management. This practice is sustaining a collective reflection on mainstream scientific views as presented in experts' fish-farm management guidelines; ethno-scientific views as elicited from community know-how and older men's and women's expertise; and the possibility of combining both for improved fish-farm management. The intercultural dimension of this action research process, which may result in a significant contribution to the viability of fish farming in the area, is evident.[42]

Strengthening managerial capacities of indigenous leaders

The Project is collaborating with a large number of public institutions including regional, provincial and district governments, and the local offices of the ministries of education, health and women's and social development, as well as with the *Defensorías* system. It also coordinates with the Federación de Comunidades Huambizas del Alto Santiago, which is the local branch of the aforementioned Consejo Aguaruna-Huambiza.

Advocacy by the Project's stakeholders has led to the mainstreaming of some core UNICEF principles – including children's and women's rights and participation, human development and interculturalism – into the plans and work of these entities; it has also attracted funds to the Santiago District institutions. Most importantly, this stream of activity has been promoting a smoother articulation between indigenous society and national institutions. This has entailed making sure that indigenous rights are understood and considered at the provincial and regional levels, and that indigenous representatives are adequately equipped to understand the logistics of institutional politics.

One year before the end of the Project, it is recognized that maintaining and improving this network of relationships, which is essential for the sustainability of the Project, would require a substantial improvement in the management skills of indigenous leadership. Skills such as planning and monitoring, financial management, knowledge of laws and by-laws, and informatics are to be strengthened or acquired. Major efforts are being deployed to improve accountability and efficiency of district governance authorities through training, support in everyday work and discussion sessions. Exchanges between the community and the district, provincial and departmental levels are also being facilitated. Sustainability of project achievements largely depends on the success of these activities.

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[42] Although the Yutupis initiative is still experimental, it has allowed for a significant increase in fish-farm production. Harvested fish are used to feed students and teachers; surplus fish are sold at the community's internal market. These surplus sales ensure the sustainability of the initiative and contribute to the dietary improvements in the community.

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Lessons learned

Several lessons learned on the practice of interculturalism in a real-life setting can be drawn from this summary of the Project (which just begins to document its full complexity, difficulty and wealth of experience). Some of them are presented below.

- Under the heading 'human development', the Project has dealt with all of UNICEF's MTSP focus areas: child survival and protection, children's and mothers' rights, education, advocacy (at the local government level), and HIV and AIDS. In addition, the Project has addressed expressed needs that do not strictly correspond to the MTSP focus areas, including health care for adults, fish farming and adult civil registration services. Most stakeholders agree that insufficient support for sustainable livelihoods and income-generating activities has been a major gap in the Project's implementation.

- It took almost three years for the Project to develop a (partially) intercultural approach. The Project's history suggests that interculturalism cannot be taken as a starting point; rather, it is the outcome of a non-linear, trial-and-error process. One year before the end of the Project, staff and stakeholders are aware that the work done so far will most likely be left incomplete: More time would be needed to achieve sustainable results. Staff and stakeholders have learned that intercultural projects should be longer-term than conventional projects because culture change does not take place in a few years.

- The application of interculturalism can be facilitated by action research methods. The Yutupis school's fish farm suggests that a complementarity between ethno-science and mainstream science can be instrumental in solving practical problems.

- After the 'nominal' school extension of the 1980s and '90s, the current challenge of intercultural/bilingual education is developing proficient intercultural/bilingual primary and secondary schools. During phase two, the Project began to contribute to the quality of education through such activities as curriculum reform, teaching-learning material and training of teachers, while utilizing the support and decision-making capacities of the indigenous district team. This process, however, is far from complete.

- Indigenous peoples' empowerment is a precondition of interculturalism. And indigenous peoples' control over district and municipal institutions, as well as a strong community organization have been major assets for this project and a powerful drive towards implementation of the intercultural approach.

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Chapter 4

Case study 2: Improving the welfare of autochthonous children, women and peoples in the Congo

The context[43]

In the inland forests of Equatorial Africa, several hundred thousand indigenous peoples conduct a semi-nomadic life that, to some extent, recalls the life of humankind's Stone Age African ancestors. Their livelihoods are based on hunting and gathering, complemented by digging-stick horticulture. Society is organized in small patrilineal bands, settled in temporary 'villages' or camps that move or divide when surrounding forest resources become in short supply. Political institutions are virtually absent: Decisions concerning band activities and social life are taken by an informal council of elder 'wise men'. The world vision of these peoples emphasizes the unity between humans and the forest environment, and celebrates peacefulness and cohesion as the outstanding values of societal life.

These forest peoples, who belong to a dozen of the major ethno-linguistic groups, are frequently labelled as 'Pygmies'. This Greek term ($\pi\iota\gamma\mu\alpha\iota\sigma$, or 1 cubit tall) has been used by Western cultures for 2,500 years to denote any kind of 'primitive', short people, frequently categorized with anthropomorphic mythical beings such as trolls and gnomes. Twentieth-century anthropologists have inverted the connotation of this term: The Pygmies have been presented as 'noble savages' living in perfect homeostasis with a bountiful environment (Turnbull 1979). Their lifestyle was used to support evolutionary theories highlighting the affluence and well-being of pristine, hunters-gatherers' societies (Sahlins 1972).

The word 'Pygmies' is still used in everyday language to denote the forest people minorities of Equatorial Africa. However, because this title is considered to be offensive by some indigenous peoples, who refer to themselves by the relevant ethnic name, it has been replaced by the idiom *peuples autochtones* (hereinafter, autochthons) in international human rights terminology, and in the policy documents and political speech of the six countries in which forest peoples are living: Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Congo (Brazzaville), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa), Gabon and Rwanda (WCARO 2006).

The Congo, where this case-study took place, hosts seven different groups of autochthons: the Baka, the Mbedjele, the Mikaya, the Bagyeli, the Bakola, the Baluma and the Babi, in the North; the Twa in the Central Plateau; and the Babongo in the South-East. Autochthons' population is estimated at 300,000, or approximately one tenth of the national population. Due to obsolete and biased census data and poor registration at birth, little evidence exists about the validity of this figure. Moreover, no data are available concerning autochthons' distribution according to the two

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[43] This introductory section is based on Gami and Longo 2006; Gamneg 2005; Jackson 2006; Leclerc 2004; OCDH and Rainforest Foundation 2006; MASSAHF and UNICEF Congo 2007b; WCARO 2006; Sahlins 1972; and Turnbull 1979, 1981.

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major demographic and social strata: the semi-nomadic, relatively isolated and independent bands still living in the depth of the forest with limited contact with the outside world; and the highly acculturated groups settled in the Bantu villages and small towns located on the banks of the major rivers or along the forest roads.

Relationships of autochthonous peoples with hegemonic Bantu-speaking peoples are a key factor in understanding the indigenous question in the Congo. Historically, this relationship is a residual result of the process that led many sub-Saharan populations to shift from semi-nomadic hunting and foraging economies, based on Stone Age technology, to agriculture and metallurgy, which was brought in by expanding Bantu-speaking groups. In the Congo, this process dates back 3,500 years to 1500 BC, when Bantu 'pioneers' reached the great Central African rainforest and started colonizing the area.

By 1000 AD, the Kongo and Teké Bantu kingdoms developed on the coast and along the river banks of the Congo. But the impenetrable, deep forest remained the uncontested homeland of autochthonous hunters and gatherers. Little is known about the relationships between Bantu pre-colonial polities and autochthonous people. Commercial exchanges of iron tools, clothes and agricultural products for forest commodities such as ivory, bush-meat, resins and woven baskets have certainly taken place for centuries. At some points, Bantu polities may have imposed on forest peoples tributes in kind, labour and women, but full-fledged slavery is unlikely to have occurred.

The current condition of the Congo's autochthons is largely a collateral effect of Portuguese mercantilism and French and Belgian colonialism. Since the 16th century, demand for equatorial forest commodities such as ivory, furs, resins and spices on international markets led to an ever increasing encroachment of European trading companies and their Bantu outsourcers into inland forest territories. Knowledge of the forest ecosystem and the skills needed to survive in it made autochthonous peoples' labour essential to extractive enterprises and facilitated the emergence of the complex system of patron/client relationships, non-extinguishable indebtedness and serfdom, which characterizes today's Bantu-autochthon socio-economic relationships.

Decolonization has strengthened Bantu hegemony over autochthonous peoples. The emphasis of the new nation state on development and modernization disseminated a representation of the 'Pigmy' as a historical wreck who should disappear or integrate in a subaltern position in national economy and society.[44] Timbering operations and environmental legislation are undermining the livelihoods and relative independence of the autochthonous groups still living in the deep forest, pushing them to join the bands already settled in or close to Bantu villages and small towns.

These settled autochthons are undergoing a quick and violent acculturation process. Deprived of their livelihoods, they survive in small slums located at the periphery of Bantu settlements as clients, part-time serfs or labourers of Bantu patrons. Their livelihoods are integrated by periodic expeditions in the deep forest to hunt and gather bush-meat, honey and other wild food for self-

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[44] Under this assumption, serfdom is presented by some Bantu patrons as a kind of pedagogic process that would lead the 'Pigmies' out of the Stone Age.

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consumption, patrons' tributes and surplus selling on local markets. Health status is very poor due to autochthons' low immunological defences against infectious diseases, including HIV and AIDS; the emergence of socially connected conditions such as malnutrition and alcoholism; the lack of clean water and sanitation facilities; and the very low coverage by primary health-care services. Most autochthons fluently speak the Bantu vehicular language but are illiterate and know very little French, the official language of public administration. Poverty and discrimination as well as a family's periodic hunting-gathering expeditions prevent most settled autochthons from sending their sons and daughters to school on a regular basis.

In this social setting, the human and citizenship rights of the autochthons are systematically eluded. A study by the Observatoire Centrafricaine des Droits de l'Homme (OCDH and Rainforest Foundation 2006) has documented many substantiated violations of autochthonous' human rights occurring throughout the country. One year later, UNICEF's 'Situation Analysis of Autochthonous Children and Women' (MASSAHF and UNICEF Congo 2007b) concluded that the core rights of children and women – including non-discrimination, health, education and legal protection – are substantially disrespected for the autochthons. Following the example of other Central African countries, the Government of Congo is currently discussing a law that would ensure state protection and assistance to this ethnic minority, so that the constitutional ban against ethnic discrimination could also be implemented also for the autochthons. Approval of this law, however, is still pending.

UNICEF's work with autochthonous peoples in the Congo

Since the late 1990s, UNICEF's Country Office in the Congo has addressed the autochthon question through specific initiatives and interventions. Initially, this consisted of supplying drugs, vaccines, school materials and other consumables to missions, NGOs, and local line agencies such as education, health and welfare that were working with the 'Pygmies'. By late 2001, this 'humanitarian' phase evolved into an integrated project: 'Improvement of the Access to Basic Services for the Pygmy Ethnic Minority [Baka] in the Sangha department'[45] (UNICEF Congo 2004a, 2004b). The five-year project (first phase 2001–2004, second phase 2005–2006) was funded by the Government of France with a total budget of about US$290,000, or approximately US$72,000 per year. The governmental counterpart of the project was the ministry responsible for welfare, humanitarian action and families – Le Ministère des affaires sociales, de la solidarité, de l'action humanitaire et de la famille (MASSAHF).

The Project's general objective was "to collaborate to the improvement of the welfare of the Pygmies [i.e., the Baka] living in the Sangha department by means of strengthened access to productive activities, health care and education with the aim of making visible the condition of autochthonous peoples and satisfying their basic needs." Specific objectives included awareness

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[45] A new title – Consolidation of the Results Achieved in Improving Access to Basic Services among Pygmy Communities of the Sangha – was given to the second phase of this project.

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raising; organization of Baka communities; supporting preparatory school[46] for Baka children; promoting access to primary health-care services; assisting the Baka in developing income-generating activities; and advocacy of a new legal framework for the autochthons at the national level.

Considering the high cost of transportation and the size of the project area, there was a distinct disproportion between the budget and the objectives. Implementation of activities was outsourced to the non-governmental organization Association Éspoir Renaît and the Catholic missionaries, who have been working with the Baka for a long time. Thanks, primarily, to this collaboration, a number of punctual outputs were delivered, including the building of health posts in 10 villages; health campaigns for polio vaccination, yaws eradication[47] and vitamin A distribution; installation of hand pumps; construction and rehabilitation of schools; and distribution of school kits and agricultural tools in selected villages. According to knowledgeable informants interviewed during the field visit, the project was able to extend coverage of health and educational services in the Sangha but was unable to ensure continuity and sustainability.

During its second phase (2005–2006), the project sought to promote participation and empowerment of the Baka by establishing health, education and water committees in selected villages (UNICEF Congo 2005a, 2005b). In 2005, the preparatory schools established in the Sangha were recognized by the Ministry of Education and the Sangha Department Council committed to collaborate in training Baka teachers and community health workers. The project was partially extended to selected locations of the Likouala Department, and contacts were established with the United Nations Development Programme's Programme for Human Development. Additional funds were raised, and videos documenting the situation of the Baka were produced to be used as advocacy tools.

In 2007, UNICEF supported the first training course on the teaching method Observer, Réfléchir, Agir (Observe, Think, Act), or ORA, which was introduced by the Salesian missionaries working among the Baka of Cameroon, with UNICEF support.[48] This activity was promoted by the Association des Pères Spiritains au Congo (APSC) and continued in 2008, when a second training module was implemented in Ényelle, Likouala Department (APSC 2007, 2008).

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[46] The official language of the educational system in the Congo is French. A two-year preparatory course has been included in the education cycle to teach basic French to those children (the majority in rural areas) whose mother tongue is Bantu or autochthonous languages and who do not have the opportunity to learn French at home.

[47] Yaws (called *pian* in French) is a chronic infectious disease, primarily of childhood, caused by *Trephonema pertenue*. The disease is characterized by an initial skin lesion, followed by relapsing, non-destructive lesions of skin and bone. In the advanced stages, destructive lesions of skin and bones may occur. Yaws is widespread among autochthons. Their lifestyle and low immunological defences facilitate the propagation of this very contagious disease. Predisposition to yaws, a very serious illness, is part of the Bantu's stigmatization against the autochthons. Yaws can be easily treated through a single dose of slow-release penicillin. Since the 1990s, the Filles de la Charité sisters, based at the Impfondo parish, have carried out a yaws eradication programme in the area.

[48] The ORA method is being used in several African countries by the Catholic Mission since the late 1970s (Mission Salesienne au Cameroun 2004). ORA is a bilingual and intercultural education method, based on an active pedagogy.

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By the end of 2006, national-level advocacy and research activities became prominent. In 2006, UNICEF participated in the discussion on the new Autochthonous Peoples Law and attended the governmental conference on 'Rights and Duties of the Pygmies'. In April 2007, UNICEF co-sponsored the international Forum of African Autochthonous Peoples that was held in Impfondo, capital of the Likouala Department (FIPAC 2007). During the same year, two major studies were launched: the 'Situation Analysis of Autochthonous Children and Women' (MASSAHF and UNICEF Congo 2007b) and a survey on HIV/AIDS knowledge, attitudes and practices among autochthonous boys and girls (MASSAHF and UNICEF Congo 2007c).[49] Both studies contributed to a better understanding of the autochthonous question in the Congo and to the emergence of a new approach.

The basic tenet of this approach is that comprehensive change – legislative, socio-economic, educational – in the role and position of autochthon peoples in national society is a prerequisite for asserting the rights of autochthonous children and women, which strictly corresponds to UNICEF's mandate. Consequently, UNICEF should promote and facilitate this change while involving all affected stakeholders in discussion and negotiation – including the Government and its line agencies, other UN agencies and international organizations, indigenous organizations such as the Réseau National des Peuples Autochtones (RENAPAC), NGOs (including faith-based missions) and the private sector (e.g., the timber companies).

In December 2007, UNICEF promoted a national consultation workshop on 'Improving the Welfare of Autochthonous Peoples' (MASSAHF and UNICEF Congo 2007a). The workshop was attended by nearly 80 participants belonging to institutions involved in the autochthonous question in the Congo. Its objective was to negotiate a medium-term initiative, aimed at improving the welfare of autochthonous peoples through a comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach. Following exploratory communication,[50] five working groups were formed to develop a plan for (i) education; (ii) health, including HIV/AIDS and water and sanitation; (iii) laws and their application; (iv) cultural identity and access to the land; and (v) capacity building.

The main output of the consultation was a five-year plan (2008–2013) that was subsequently refined in a logical framework format by MASSAHF and UNICEF. This plan is very ambitious. It states, for example, that "by 2013, 50 per cent of the autochthon children[51] will be enrolled in primary school and follow steadily the complete curriculum." Considering the current very low enrolment and high drop-out rates, this is certainly a very optimistic expectation.

By the beginning of 2008, the initial plan was fine-tuned. A second national workshop co-sponsored by RENAPAC was carried out in Brazzaville in August 2008 to validate the plan prepared in December 2007. Its main result was an improved logical framework (MASSAHF

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[49] This study was the first output of a project titled 'Projet de prévention du VIH/SIDA en milieu des peuples autochtones (« Pygmées ») du Congo (2006–2010)', which was jointly implemented by MASSAHF, the National Council for Fighting HIV/AIDS and UNICEF and is expected to continue until 2010.

[50] These presentations addressed the condition of children and women among autochthons; autochthonous peoples' protection systems in Africa; autochthons' land titles and forest governance; education; and human and citizenship rights of autochthonous peoples.

[51] Due to a lack of reliable denominators, the use of a proportion for quantifying this and other elements of the logical framework will not offer much help in monitoring the progress of the plan's implementation.

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and UNICEF Congo 2008a) including budget estimates for each result and activity. The total amount of funding needed to implement this five-year plan was estimated at about $10.5 million.[52] It was foreseen that this sum would be collected from different stakeholders, including national ministries and their line agencies at the departmental level. By December 2008, one year after the first workshop, little progress was made in fund-raising.

Following the August 2008 national-level event, parallel planning workshops were carried out in three departments (Béné, Likouala and Sangha), covering a 15-month period (October 2008–December 2009). Like the national plan, the departmental plans appear to be very demanding and relatively expensive (MASSAHF and UNICEF Congo 2008b, 2008c, 2008d), as illustrated by the departmental plan for the Likouala.

Improving the welfare of autochthonous peoples: Decentralized planning in Likouala Department

Likouala Department is located in the extreme north of the Congo at the crossroads of the international borders with Cameroon to the west, the Central African Republic to the north and the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the western bank of the Oubangui, the most important river in the department. Most of the 66,000-square-kilometre area is still covered by primary forest. Population is estimated at 100,000, with a density of 1.5 inhabitants per square kilometre.

Impfondo, the capital of Likouala Department, and the other major administrative centres (including Bétou, Dongou and Ényelle) are located along the main tributaries of the Oubangui River and the roads leading to the Sangha and Couvette Departments. These small towns or large villages are inhabited by Bantu, Lingala-speaking farmers and fisherfolk. At their periphery or in the surrounding areas, there are micro-slums where acculturated Baka bands dwell. But the interfluvial forest continues to be the land of the autochthons. Although timbering operations, encroaching roads and Bantu settlers are shrinking the autochthonous territory, the Baka are the majority of the population in the inland district of Ényelle.

Following the International Forum of Autochthonous Peoples of the Forests of Central Africa (FIPAC 2007), UNICEF has progressively shifted its work with the Baka from Sangha Department to the Likouala. Several fact-finding missions were sent to the area. Timely activities were carried out in coordination with the Catholic Mission, including: a small educational and sanitation project in Gongonia, a mixed Bantu/Baka village, located 30 kilometres south of Impfondo; the aforementioned ORA training workshop in Ényelle; and the supply of equipment and drugs to the Filles de la Charité nurses in charge of primary health-care activities among the Baka.

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[52] This figure is 20 times higher than the investment made by UNICEF during 2001–2007 in the Sangha and Likouala Departments.

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In October 2008, following the publication of the second draft of the national plan for 'Improving the Welfare of Autochthonous Peoples', UNICEF, in collaboration with MASSAHF and RENAPAC, organized a decentralized planning workshop in Impfondo (MASSAHF and UNICEF Congo 2008c).[53] The workshop aimed to discuss and negotiate how to begin implementing the national plan in Likouala Department. It was attended by representatives of local line agencies' staff, the Catholic Mission and local RENAPAC leaders.[54] In this workshop, the Baka condition in the department was discussed, and a detailed work plan for the last months of 2008 and into 2009 was drafted. Short-term activities and targets were identified for each of the results expected from the five-year national plan. Indicators, means of verification, geographical areas of coverage, a timetable of implementation, a budget and partners to be involved were also identified. This very detailed plan was subsequently submitted to the UNICEF, MASSAHF and RENAPAC boards.

The Likouala short-term decentralized plan is as ambitious as the five-year national plan to which it is expected to contribute. Its educational component includes nine activities, for example, equipment of 14 ORA schools, training for 30 ORA facilitators, and parents' awareness-raising campaigns. The health component also incorporates nine activities, such as providing equipment and supplies for 14 health posts; quarterly malaria and yaws treatment campaigns; and training for 65 HIV/AIDS educators and counsellors. An additional 13 activities are included in the socio-economic development and rights promotion components of the plan, ranging from advocacy for land titles to vocational training for 2,000 young autochthons, from supplying gardening and apiculture (bee-keeping) kits to the civil registration of 2,000 children.

Relevance of the plan to autochthonous peoples' felt needs is an additional concern. Baka priorities are much more radical than those taken on board by the plan. For the RENAPAC leaders and ORA facilitators interviewed in the field, the most important issues are agricultural land titles, free access to the forest, derogation of conservation laws for autochthonous hunters and gatherers,[55] legal assistance to attain release from serfdom or indebtedness, justice administered by independent courts, and prevention and elimination of systematic violations of Baka women by Bantu men. Except for a generic reference to land title advocacy, none of these issues is included in the plan, which instead focuses on schools, health services, income-generating activities and civil registration (29 activities out of 31). RENAPAC leaders, who attended the consultation along with 19 Baka representatives, agree that these activities will

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[53] Similar workshops were also carried out in the Sangha and in the Bété Departments (MASSAHF and UNICEF Congo 2008b, 2008d).

[54] The American Baptist Mission – which is evangelizing in the Baka language, training pastors among autochthonous people, and operating a major hospital in Impfondo – did not participate in this meeting. The USAID-funded non-governmental organization Médecins d'Afrique was also absent, as well as the social affairs office of the Likouala Timber Corporation (an Italian enterprise that has a 50,000-hectare concession in the northern areas of the Department).

[55] In the Congo, autochthons are free to hunt using such 'traditional' technologies as locally made fibre nets and pitfalls. The catch must be used for self-consumption, which reflects the ancient hunting practice. In real life, however, indigenous technology has been largely replaced by steel wires and snares, and most of the bush-meat catch is given to Bantu patrons or, at best, sold to generate some income. Autochthonous hunters are prosecuted as poachers by *éco-gards* (rangers). There is a tragic irony in the fact that people who are part of the equatorial forest ecology and contribute to its homeostasis are prosecuted, blackmailed, robbed and sometimes tortured in the name of environmental conservation policies that are not strictly applied against timbering corporations.

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contribute to improving the welfare of the Baka. Nevertheless, they feel that the plan is not addressing the heart of the matter. It must be concluded that this is a plan *for* the Baka rather than a plan *with* the Baka – which it should be, according to statements by the United Nations and UNICEF on indigenous peoples' rights.[56]

A second coordination team meeting took place in December 2008, during the field visit. Its objective was to make operational decisions about plan management, including cost-sharing decisions. After a 'who's who' round, the UNICEF facilitator read and commented on the entire plan and, finally, introduced the first topic on the agenda: the formation of a steering committee. A long discussion followed between the representatives of the line agencies and the facilitator about the composition, functions and hierarchy of this committee. The opinion and advice of RENAPAC representatives were never prompted. A more participatory facilitation style and use of Lingala (understood by all participants) rather than French (poorly understood by Baka participants) might have helped in making Baka participants feeling more comfortable and actively involved.

The second item of the agenda – financing the plan – was postponed. In the meantime, representatives of line agencies were requested to estimate (not commit) the amount of money they would be able to invest in the activities foreseen by the plan. It was not possible to collect these estimates during the field visit. It was evident, however, that local financing of the plan would be very limited. All line agencies in Likouala suffer from serious budget shortages and in some cases (e.g., education) they are not in the position of regularly paying the salaries of civil servants or providing standard services to the Bantu population – the constituency to which local governments must be accountable. In addition, the Catholic Mission has very limited funds, and local NGOs are already striving to find donor support.

Lessons learned

In 2007, UNICEF's 'Situation Analysis of Autochthonous Children and Women' in the Congo identified five main lessons to be learned from the experience of field projects carried out in 2001–2006. These can be summarized as follows:

- Autochthonous peoples' ownership, based on participatory processes, is essential to the success of any project or initiative.

- Education, health and child protection services should be made available to autochthonous peoples as well as Bantu-speaking villagers (who also suffer illiteracy, high maternal and child mortality and morbidity rates, and violations of children's and women's rights).

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[56] This should be understood in the light of the existing power-sharing structure in the local communities. As the officers involved in developing the plans are without exception Bantu, they are resistant to upsetting existing social and economic relationships (Koenraad Vanormelingen, personal communication).

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▪ Any sustainable improvement in the welfare of the autochthons will take time. Long-term programmes and financing are needed.[57]

▪ A participatory learning process should accompany project implementation. This will strengthen knowledge and skills of autochthonous participants.

▪ Field projects can be instrumental to national-level advocacy, by providing substantiated information to decision makers, the media and the public at large.

This case study, particularly the findings of the field visit, substantially endorses situation analysis conclusions. More specific lessons learned concerning the five core MTSP areas can be elicited from case study findings with reference to ongoing work in the Likouala Department and at the national level.

Child survival

Mother and child care services are very weak in Likouala Department. Because this affects both Baka and Bantu communities, there are certainly possibilities for a programme addressing both ethnic groups. Training for local staff, provision of equipment such as solar-powered refrigerators, scales and computers, and a network of Bantu and Baka women community health workers and traditional birth attendants would contribute to extending maternal and child health services. Joint, inter-ethnic mother and child care services might contribute to relaxing inter-ethnic strain, particularly among women.

Education and capacity building

Introduction of the ORA method (with UNICEF support) has shown that a preparatory bilingual (Baka and French) education cycle can help autochthonous children in acquiring basic skills for interacting with national society. In the future, this might lead to improved enrolment in and completion of official primary schooling by autochthonous children. This experience has been capitalized by the 2009 decentralized action plan, which foresees a significant extension of the ORA school network. However, no reference is made to improving the quality of the teaching-learning process in ORA schools, nor to providing some form of continued assistance to teachers and facilitators. Although an adult literacy programme is planned, no substantial action is foreseen to build RENAPAC leaders' capacities, a critical issue if autochthons' ownership of the programme is to develop.[58]

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[57] According to UNICEF staff, incorporation of an autochthonous peoples' project in the UNICEF Congo action plan is insufficient. In light of the complexity of autochthonous issues, a longer-term commitment is needed. As pointed out by one staff member, "It will take one or more generations for social change to occur."

[58] On paper, a capacity-building component for indigenous leaders is included in the Likouala plan (Outcome 4.1. RENAPAC capacity to manage the programme strengthened). However, activities foreseen in this connection include equipment of RENAPAC's departmental office (4.1.1.), management of the plan in coordination with RENAPAC offices (4.1.2.) and joint monitoring and evaluation missions (4.1.3.). It is unlikely that these activities

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HIV/AIDS

The MASSAHF and UNICEF Congo study on knowledge, attitude and practices regarding HIV/AIDS (2007c) carried out among autochthonous teenage boys and girls living in several departments (including Likouala) identified a very limited knowledge of HIV transmission, the cause of AIDS, or symptoms, prevention and treatment – as well as a strong social stigma against those who are HIV-infected. No seroprevalence data are available for Likouala Department. However, sexual intercourse between Bantu men and Baka women has without doubt facilitated the spread of HIV among autochthonous communities. To address this problem, the 2009 decentralized action plan includes adult health education and condom distribution. UNICEF may also facilitate the inclusion of HIV/AIDS education in the curriculum of preparatory school and adult literacy courses. Due to widespread inter-ethnic sexual intercourse, relevant activities should address both the Baka and the Bantu.

Child protection

Autochthonous children's rights are not asserted in the Likouala. Very few children are registered at birth. Because their families do not have the means to pay for school fees and learning materials, many children are denied educational opportunities or forced into hard labour for a Bantu patron. Children are beaten by drunken fathers and young Bantu bullies. Girls are often raped. Strengthening of civil registration in Baka communities, training of autochthonous civil registration auxiliaries, and awareness-raising events in Baka and Bantu communities would contribute to strengthening respect for children's and women's rights in the Likouala, but these activities are unlikely to affect the root causes of the problem.

Advocacy

Improvements in the condition of the autochthonous children and women of the Congo require a comprehensive and steady effort to assert indigenous peoples' rights. This point is clearly made by the national plan (MASSAHF and UNICEF Congo 2008a), which includes such specific results such as transferring forest surveillance and management responsibilities to the autochthons; improving and enforcing national legislation on securing land ownership and eliminating forced labour and discriminatory behaviour; fighting poverty; and sensitizing public opinion on the value of smooth and respectful inter-ethnic relationships within the nation.[59]

A comprehensive approach to autochthonous peoples' rights is clearly consistent with the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Yet many building blocks of the national plan are not part of UNICEF's mandate and technical expertise. Collaboration with other UN agencies – including the ILO, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Fund for

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alone will substantially strengthen local RENAPAC leaders' knowledge and skills. Moreover, only 7 per cent of the total budget of the plan is allocated to this 'capacity-building' component.

[59] None of these results will be truly attainable if the new autochthonous peoples' law, which covers most of these topics, will be kept pending, or rejected.

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Agricultural Development[60] – and specialized NGOs such as Cultural Survival, the International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs and the Rainforest Foundation may provide a steady and competent back-up to the implementation of the plan as well as advice and orientation on intercultural working methods. Creation of a thematic working group on indigenous peoples within the UN Country Team (as recommended by UNDG Guidelines) may be instrumental in preventing the overburdening of a single facilitating agency.

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[60] No representative of these three UN agencies, which are increasingly involved in indigenous issues at the international level, is included in the list of participants to the 2007 National Consultation Meeting during which the plan was drafted. Representatives of Cultural Survival and the Rainforest Foundation attended the meeting.

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Chapter 5

Conclusions and recommendations

At the end of this journey from the centre of global policymaking on indigenous issues (the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues) to the peripheries of the world, where indigenous peoples live, what can be concluded about UNICEF's work with indigenous peoples? What policies need to be brought into effect? What are the lessons learned? And what recommendations can be made to improve UNICEF's work with indigenous children and women? The purpose of this concluding chapter is to answer these questions, with reference to three main subjects: implementing the approach; background knowledge requirements and action research processes; and institutional collaboration and partnerships. To that end, this chapter also presents seven recommendations for refining and supporting UNICEF's approach.

Implementing UNICEF's approach to working with indigenous children and women

Operational requirements

Desk review findings show that between 2002 and 2008, UNICEF developed a comprehensive approach to working with indigenous children and women. This approach is based on more than 30 years of country field experience (particularly in Latin America) and on interaction with UNPFII and other international forums and agencies that are working on indigenous issues. The approach is supported by many good practice examples, drawn from UNICEF programmes and field projects.

UNICEF's approach is inspired by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It also mirrors the five focus areas – child survival, education, HIV and AIDS, child protection, and advocacy – outlined in UNICEF's Medium-Term Strategic Plan for 2006–2009, and it is fully consistent with relevant UN policies.

To date, the content of this approach is scattered in a number of documents. Preparation and distribution of a comprehensive strategy paper would without doubt be useful. The summary presented in Chapter 1 might be taken as a first step towards the compilation of such a document.

The proposed strategy paper should be accompanied by sound and flexible guidelines for implementation. The background knowledge, working methods and processes, staff profiles and time frame necessary to compile the document – then put the approach into effect – should be identified and described, based on field experience.

A recommendation for defining overall operational requirements follows:

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Recommendation 1

Operational requirements for implementing UNICEF's strategy for working with indigenous children and women should be clearly defined.

UNICEF's strategy should provide sound and concrete operational indications about the conditions to be met for successful implementation. This should include:

(i) The identification of the knowledge and know-how required to design and implement programmes with or for indigenous children and women.

(ii) An outline of the methods to be used for participatory needs assessment and collaborative monitoring and evaluation.

(iii) A list of indicators and means of verification to assess effectiveness (and cost-effectiveness) of programmes and projects addressing indigenous peoples.

(iv) The professional profile of required staff, highlighting the particular knowledge and skills needed to work in indigenous areas.

Adapting the approach to different regional and subregional contexts

For both historical reasons and current contingencies, UNICEF's approach towards indigenous issues is based primarily on Latin American experiences. Some key concepts of the approach, for example, interculturalism, were initially developed in Latin America, and about 80 per cent of the good practices presented in UNPFII reports refer to Latin American experiences. It must be concluded that as of today, UNICEF's practice basically reflects a 'Latin American' approach. Substantial adaptations are needed to apply the approach to other areas of the world where the terms of the indigenous question are very different. This is illustrated by the different inspirations and goals of the work with indigenous peoples carried out in the two case study countries: articulating distinct indigenous cultures and societies to a nation that already recognizes its multiculturalism, in Peru; and integrating indigenous peoples in the mainstream of national society, in the Congo.

If UNICEF's work with indigenous issues is to extend outside Latin America, regional or subregional differences as well as national historical and local culture-specific difference should be considered and incorporated into the strategy document. The applicable recommendation is:

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Recommendation 2

**UNICEF's strategy for working with indigenous children and women
should be adapted to particular national and subregional contexts.**

Working towards the strategy document, the Latin American experience, on
which the current approach is based, can be taken as a reference but not as a
model for other regions and subregions.

A critical adjustment to national and local conditions, or even a re-formulation,
of the strategy should take place, taking into account the status and power
indigenous peoples have achieved in each regional or subregional scenario and
the existing policy frameworks.

Livelihood issues in UNICEF's approach to working with indigenous children and women

Following UNICEF's MTSP, the approach focuses on education, health (including HIV/AIDS),
citizenship and policies. Case study findings suggest this delimitation may not always be
attainable, or recommendable, especially in the field. In Peru, food insecurity was found to be the
major determinant of child malnutrition, and household food security activities had to be
included in the project. In the Congo, insufficient income was identified as a major constraint to
school attendance, utilization of maternal and child health facilities and registration at birth. In
both countries, it was found that assertion of children's and women's rights largely depends on
household livelihoods.

Based on the Convention on the Right of the Child, UNICEF (2004) has claimed that "social and
economic development issues are fully part of UNICEF's mandate." Nevertheless, only 4 of the
24 surveyed Country Offices are implementing activities aimed at strengthening the socio-
economic status of indigenous peoples. A recommendation to correct this trend follows:

Recommendation 3

**Livelihood issues and activities should be mainstreamed in UNICEF's
strategy for working with indigenous children and women.**

UNICEF should consider including in its fivefold strategy for working with
indigenous children and women a sixth branch focusing on the improvement of
household food security and income generation.

A sustainable livelihoods component should be included in all UNICEF major
programmes and projects addressing indigenous peoples.

Collaboration with partners owning a specialized expertise on livelihoods'
issues in indigenous areas should be sought.

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Background knowledge and action research processes

Understanding indigenous cultures and societies

A fair understanding of indigenous culture and society is an obvious prerequisite for working with indigenous people. Field observations suggest that in Peru and the Congo this has not been fully met. In both countries, most staff are not very familiar with the ethnography and the history of the people they are working with. Their knowledge of indigenous culture and society is based on advocacy literature and non-systematic field observations. Anthropological sources on local culture are generally overlooked. In both countries, staff have received little or no inductive training on the culture of the people with whom they have been asked to work.

Specific aspects of Wampis culture and society have been investigated (or are under investigation) in Peru, but the usefulness of these studies is hampered by a limited understanding of the general ethnography. In the Congo, a situation analysis of autochthon children and women was conducted, which includes some information on the culture of the 'Pygmies'. This information, however, is insufficient to make sense of Baka culture and of the cultures of the other autochthon groups addressed by the new national plan.

Insufficient understanding of indigenous culture and society makes intercultural communication difficult, prevents the tailoring of services to indigenous users' needs, and leads to missed opportunities to tap into valuable indigenous cultural resources. In Peru, ignoring the symbolic implications of indigenous young child feeding and weaning practices is slowing down the development of nutritional education messages compatible with indigenous views of early childhood care. In the Congo, stakeholders involved in education may have neglected adapting the standard school calendar to fit Baka culture, which expects children to periodically take part in lengthy hunting and gathering expeditions with their families. The fish-farming project in Peru could have been more successful if the sophisticated knowledge of riverbanks' ecology owned by the Wampis was taken into consideration since inception. Actions that might contribute to strengthening the knowledge and understanding of indigenous cultures and societies by UNICEF field programmes and projects are presented in the following recommendation:

> *Recommendation 4*
>
> **Understanding of local cultures and societies should be refined.**
>
> A reasonable understanding of the culture, society and history of the indigenous peoples addressed by UNICEF's programmes and projects should be shared by management and staff.
>
> In addition, while understanding the cultural dimensions of indigenous peoples' culture is highly desirable, the requirements for any office embarking on an initiative or already working with indigenous peoples include understanding the national, regional and international dimensions of the indigenous peoples'

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movement – as well as a thorough understanding of the national, regional and international human rights framework, including the key issues of debate around the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

UNICEF's strategy should strongly recommend that the advisory services of a professional anthropologist who has first-hand knowledge of the indigenous peoples addressed by the programme/project should be made available to programmes or projects taking place in indigenous areas.

A basic description of contemporary indigenous culture and society and the ongoing culture change process should be prepared at project inception and used as a reference for planning and monitoring.

Anthropological research on specific issues should be carried out during the lifetime of the project on an 'as needed' basis.

Programme and project monitoring and evaluation procedures should include data collection and analysis methods allowing for capturing the indigenous point of view on the programme's or project's work.

Participatory needs assessment

The large majority of the Country Offices survey respondents feel that the relevance of UNICEF's work with indigenous peoples needs to be improved. Indigenous organizations' representatives, met in Peru and the Congo, recognize the importance and usefulness of the children's and women's services delivered by UNICEF. But they also remarked that related issues – in particular, household livelihoods – have not been addressed.

In both case study projects, participatory assessments of indigenous peoples' needs have not been carried out at the project's inception. In Peru, and to a much lesser extent in the Congo, indigenous leaders were consulted when the project was first being formulated. Some of their suggestions were taken on board, but limited opportunities were given to the end-beneficiaries of the project to let their voices be heard. This suggests that UNICEF should make sure that sound, participatory needs assessments are implemented in programmes and projects addressing indigenous peoples, as outlined in the following recommendation:

Recommendation 5

Indigenous peoples should be involved in the identification of their needs and in assessing the relevance of the activities implemented to meet these needs.

At project inception, a thorough needs assessment, based on participatory action research methods, should be carried out at the grass-roots level.

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The initial needs assessment should facilitate negotiation with indigenous stakeholders regarding priority activities to be included in short-term plans. Mechanisms should be put in place to ensure participation of indigenous children in assessment exercises.

Periodical assessment of the extent to which programme or project activities are contributing to meet the identified needs should be conducted during the life of the project with different groups of indigenous participants. This would best be done by comparing the indigenous perception of change, as expressed by participants, with 'hard' monitoring information.

Facilitation of needs assessment and monitoring exercises should be entrusted to an expert in participatory action research methods.

Collaborative, results-based monitoring and evaluation

All the surveyed Country Offices believe that the effectiveness of UNICEF's work with indigenous peoples needs to be improved. Case study findings suggest that in both Peru and the Congo the available monitoring and evaluation information is insufficient to make sense of the changes generated by the project.

In Peru, a baseline and a mid-term survey were implemented. The surveys' design focused on education, health care and rights assertion indicators. A comparison between baseline and mid-term survey findings shows some positive changes in service utilization and highlights a number of areas in need of improvement. There are questions, however, regarding the validity and reliability of those data.

In the Congo, achievements of the different field projects for the Baka have been reported in terms of number of goods supplied, services delivered and children benefited – which describes delivery rather than effectiveness. No source was found that could be useful to assess effectiveness of these projects.

Major gaps in basic information exist in both countries. To mention just two examples, the project in Peru does not have a reliable estimate of the under-five mortality rate among the Wampis, and the Congo project does not even know the size of the Baka population that it is expected to cover. Moreover, in both countries, collection and periodic consolidation of registration data is not as steady as it should be. Limited efforts have been made to explore how indigenous recipients perceive the changes the project has introduced or is seeking to promote. The point of view of local partners and promoters is also not fully considered. A recommendation to address this situation follows:

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Recommendation 6

A collaborative, results-focused monitoring and evaluation practice should be part of all UNICEF programme and projects addressing indigenous children and women.

As for any kind of project, projects addressing indigenous peoples must provide evidence that their work is leading to beneficial change. Mechanisms and processes must be established and implemented, allowing stakeholders to identify and discuss what changes are taking place, who is benefiting from them, and what role the project has actually taken in supporting these changes.

Background knowledge of the demographic, socio-economic, epidemiological and educational situation of the population served by the project is essential and should be undertaken as a priority task at the beginning of the project. Simple and low-cost survey methods should be used. The baseline survey might be repeated when there are enough elements for considering that the background situation has changed.

Day-by-day monitoring carried out by project staff and promoters is the best way to collect data about service utilization and user satisfaction. When needed, the latter could be explored more in depth through qualitative research methods. Both quantitative and qualitative information should be processed at regular intervals and discussed with staff, indigenous organizations' representatives and user groups, with a view towards identifying short-term, fine-tuning measures.

Broader, collaborative evaluation processes, involving all programme/project stakeholders should be launched as soon as the project has started showing tangible results. Existing background and monitoring findings should be consolidated and presented in a format understandable to the different audiences.

Evaluation should culminate in a consensus statement about changes induced by the project and actions for improvement. A 're-planning' of project activities should also take place, based on evaluation findings.

Institutional collaboration and partnerships

Indigenous children's and women's rights, and indigenous peoples' rights

The two case studies also suggest that the *rights of indigenous children and women* cannot be fully asserted if the overarching *rights of indigenous peoples* are not asserted as well. Land tenure, access to natural resources, culturally sound socio-economic development, legal protection of indigenous peoples (men and women) against violence and exploitation, reproduction of indigenous knowledge and forms of expression, and protection of intellectual

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property are unavoidable conditions for making sure that children's and women's issues are successfully dealt with.

UNICEF has neither the mandate nor the expertise to cover all the above aspects of the indigenous question. Its work is part of the UN system's commitment to put into effect the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In this connection, inter-agency collaborative links are expected to be established, in particular at the country level.

Although UNICEF, as member of the United Nations Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues, has been able to advocate for indigenous children and influence debates and recommendations in favour of indigenous children at the global level, the Country Offices' survey findings indicate that inter-agency collaboration on indigenous issues is weak in most of the surveyed countries. In addition, other UN agencies have a marginal role in implementation of the Peru project and the Congo programme. Consequently, the final recommendation of this stocktaking report relates to strengthening inter-agency cooperation:

> *Recommendation 7*
>
> **UNICEF's collaborative links and synergies on indigenous issues with other United Nations agencies should be strengthened.**
>
> At the country level, in particular, partnerships should be established with other agencies, especially when UNICEF programmes and projects are called to address issues for which UNICEF has limited expertise.
>
> Conversely, UNICEF should be ready to bring its special expertise on indigenous children's and women's rights to UN programmes assisting indigenous peoples in other areas.
>
> The establishment of working groups on indigenous issues, within the United Nations Country Team recommended by the UNDG Guidelines, might contribute significantly to strengthening these inter-agency linkages.

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Annex 1: The experience of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean[61]

UNICEF's work in Latin America dates back at least to the 1960s and perhaps even earlier. It has focused on high-poverty areas, most of which were, and still are, indigenous areas. This applies in particular to the four countries in which indigenous peoples are a major portion of the national population: Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala and Peru.

Until the late 1980s, UNICEF addressed indigenous children through an 'integrationist' approach. The aim of UNICEF's action was facilitating the incorporation of indigenous children into the socio-economic and cultural mainstream of national society. Cultural specificities experienced by these children were generally not taken into account. On the contrary, they were often considered to be a barrier to child health and education.

By the end of the 1980s, following the emergence of indigenous movements in many of the region's countries, 'integrationism' was reconsidered. Based on ILO Convention 169, the search for a new approach was promoted by the Fondo Indígena Ibero-Américano (Ibero-American Indigenous Fund) supported by several Latin American and European governments. A round of negotiations took place between governments, indigenous organizations and donors on actions to be implemented in support of the collective rights of indigenous peoples. This process was boosted by the counter-celebrations marking 500 years from the Conquest, which gave regional and global visibility to indigenous peoples' conditions and aspirations, and prompted international agencies to engage in the indigenous cause.

During the 1990s, interculturalism[62] emerged as the core element of UNICEF's strategy towards working with indigenous peoples in Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru – particularly in connection with intercultural/bilingual education. Subsequently, the intercultural approach was also adopted in countries where UNICEF had not previously worked with indigenous peoples or where indigenous peoples represent a small share of the total population, such as Brazil, Chile and Costa Rica.

The development, validation and fine-tuning of the intercultural approach to working with indigenous children and women was strongly grounded in field work. Examples of major subregional or national projects implemented by UNICEF during the 1990s and the 2000s include**:**

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[61] The study design of this stocktaking exercise foresaw a comparative review of UNICEF's work with indigenous issues in the African, Asian and Latin American regions, through phone interviews with regional focal points or experts. Unfortunately, notwithstanding several attempts made with GRACE assistance, it was not possible to collect information from Africa and Asia. Relevant information was collected only for Latin America, which hampered the possibility of conducting an inter-regional comparison. This failure mirrors both the low prevalence of non-Latin American good practices and the low response rate of the surveyed African and Asian COs (*see Chapter 2, 'UNICEF's practice with indigenous peoples'*). Findings on the work with indigenous issues carried out by The Americas and the Caribbean Regional Office, generally referred to as the 'Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean', are summarized in this annex.

[62] See Chapter 1, 'UNICEF's approach to working with indigenous peoples'.

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- *The Intercultural/Bilingual Education Project, carried out in the Andean and lowland areas of Bolivia from 1989–1995.* This project enabled expanded human resources capacities through training in intercultural/bilingual education and mainstreaming the relevant experience and know-how into the education reform implemented by several governments.[63]

- *PROANDES, a subregional programme carried out from 1988–2006 in several municipalities of the five Andean countries: the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.* This was an integrated, area-based programme, with interventions in early childhood development, nutrition, primary education and literacy, and water and sanitation. The programme achieved tangible results in extending access to basic services and empowerment of community organizations, particularly women's groups. Despite its achievements at the local and national levels, PROANDES was unable to consolidate an approach that could be shared by the five countries.

- *The Amazon Regional Programme implemented in the Amazon Basin from 1994 until 2006 and involving the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru and Suriname.* As with PROANDES, despite its achievement at the local level, this programme was not able to successfully implement interventions with indigenous peoples living across international borders.

- *The EIBAMAZ (Intercultural/Bilingual Education in the Amazon, according to the Spanish acronym) programme is being implemented in three Amazonian countries – Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru – with funding from the Government of Finland.* The project has been carried out since 2006. It contributed to establishing a network of ministries of education, municipal authorities, universities and indigenous organizations, and to developing collaborative action to support intercultural/bilingual education in the subregion.

- *The Regional Programme on the Rights of Indigenous and Adolescent Children (PRDNAI, according to the Spanish acronym) being implemented in 17 countries,[64] thanks to a generous grant from the Government of Spain.* The first phase of the programme began in 2006 and ended in 2008. It has contributed to strengthening policymakers' attention to the particular issues faced by indigenous children and women, and facilitated the inclusion of child rights in the agenda of indigenous organizations. A second phase is expected to begin soon.

According to the Senior Advisor working on indigenous issues, during the past 10 years, UNICEF's programmes and projects have significantly contributed to mainstreaming the intercultural approach throughout the region. Intercultural/bilingual education and intercultural health services (e.g., culturally adapted, professionally assisted vertical delivery during childbirth) have been promoted and delivered. In addition, indigenous children's and adolescents' participation has been promoted at all levels. Several

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[63] Recently, the Government of Bolivia has proposed a new reform for the education sector. Key elements of the education reform, supported by the Intercultural/Bilingual Education Project are still part of the national education policy, including the role of indigenous languages in education and the functions of the Consejo Educativo de Pueblos Originarios (Educational Council of Originary Peoples).

[64] Argentina, Belize, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Peru.

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networks have been established, and in some countries, indigenous peoples' representatives have been invited to participate in social auditing of public expenditure. National institutions working with indigenous issues have been strengthened.

Issues related to working with indigenous peoples such as disaggregation of statistical data by ethnicity, decrease of social disparities and protection of cultural diversity have been included in UNICEF's regional management meeting agendas. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and its implications for UNICEF's work were analysed in some detail during the meeting held in October 2007. Nevertheless, this process is slowed down by the difficulties met in coordinating initiatives among regional Country Offices, which according to the informant, mirrors UNICEF's decentralized structure and the high level of autonomy among the offices.

Since 2002, UNICEF Latin America has established a consultative group on indigenous issues made up of selected indigenous opinion leaders and intellectuals (who are not necessarily elected representatives of their people), with the aim of incorporating the indigenous point of view in its policy and strategy. According to members of the consultative group, this body has facilitated the interchange of views and experience among indigenous persons from different countries. They complain, however, of not having been involved in negotiations with donors so far. They are also worried about the insufficient turnover of consultative group members, which in their opinion entails the risk of being co-opted by UNICEF.

UNICEF has played a leading role in mainstreaming indigenous issues in the work of other United Nations agencies, both at the regional level and within UN Country Teams. Partnerships have been established with the International Labour Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the United Nations Population Fund. UNICEF also promoted the inclusion of indigenous peoples' rights in the agenda of the latest UN Regional Directors Meeting (November 2007), which was also attended by one member of UNICEF's consultative group on indigenous issues. During this meeting, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was presented and analysed. Possible inter-agency linkages were identified and, based on UNICEF's experience, it was agreed to establish a consultative group of indigenous leaders for the whole UN system in the region.

In addition, UNICEF has established a number of collaborative relationship with non-UN organizations such as the Fondo Indígena, a multi-donor fund that advocates for indigenous peoples' rights; the Andean Community; the Inter-American Development Bank and the Organization of American States (on civil registry issues); several regional and subregional indigenous organizations, including the Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónic (Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin; COICA) and the Parlamento Indígena de América, a network of indigenous congress members of the Americas); and a number of regional and national NGOs and academic institutions.

According to the Senior Adviser, the outstanding strength of UNICEF's work with indigenous peoples in Latin America is founded on the organization's abilities to work both at the field and the policy level. Field activities give credibility to UNICEF's advocacy on indigenous children's and women's rights. Moreover, the focus on children and women allows UNICEF to convey messages on indigenous peoples' rights that are more easily shared with governments than discourses on such politically and economically sensitive issues as land ownership, access to natural resources and labour rights.

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The informant believes that longer-term planning at both the national and programme/project level would be needed to ensure continuity of work with particular indigenous peoples or in particular sectoral areas, e.g., education, health, child protection. Understanding of the indigenous question should be strengthened among UNICEF managers and staff. Work at the country level should be less dependent on individuals' sensitivities to indigenous issues and based more on strong and steady institutional commitment. Special strategies should be developed for particular geographical and cultural-ecological areas of the region (e.g. Central America, the Andes, the Amazon, the Chaco, the Southern Cone), and cross-border initiatives addressing indigenous groups settled in two or more countries should be strengthened. A stronger integration of indigenous issues in UNICEF's global policy would be instrumental to achieving these improvements in Latin America and elsewhere.

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Annex 2: The experience of UNICEF at the headquarters level

I. UNICEF at the global level

At the global level, the establishment of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) prompted UNICEF's involvement with indigenous issues. The reference to the importance of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in UNICEF's Mission Statement coupled with the adoption of the 1998 UNICEF Executive Directive on the human rights-based approach (HRBA) underlies UNICEF's commitment to shaping a human development agenda built on human rights principles and has provided the overall framework for its work with indigenous issues at the global level.

In addition, in the context of its Medium-Term Strategic Plan (extended to 2012), UNICEF has used the human rights-based approach to go beyond support to specific projects and adopt a comprehensive and holistic approach that focuses on tackling the root causes of discrimination and exclusion against indigenous children through public policies.

At the headquarters (HQ) level, the Gender, Rights and Civic Engagement Section (GRACE) is responsible for the integration of indigenous peoples' issues into UNICEF's strategies and operational activities. GRACE contributes to policy analysis and the development of standards that will help fulfil UNICEF's mission and MTSP. The MTSP document clearly recognizes that: "In some countries, the children of indigenous populations tend to be disproportionately deprived of basic services. UNICEF's cooperation will seek to benefit these children as a matter of priority, where needed."

At the HQ level, GRACE has a particular role with respect to supporting the organization's efforts to meet this challenge.

Against this background, at the global level, UNICEF has been promoting three key actions:

1. Engagement with international human rights bodies and promotion of international instruments on the rights of indigenous peoples
    a. Engagement in international human rights mechanisms and bodies, in particular UNPFII
    b. Support to the Committee on the Rights of the Child
    c. Promotion of the rights of indigenous peoples and support to the implementation of human rights instruments addressing indigenous peoples' rights

2. Partnerships and collaboration with the UN system on indigenous peoples' issues
    a. Collaboration and support to the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
    b. Partnership in and support to the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues

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    c.   Participation and engagement in the Management Committee on Indigenous Issues, which replaced the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Task Force on Indigenous Issues

  3. Support to Country Offices and development of guidance and programming tools
      a.   Promotion of the application and implementation of a human rights-based and culturally sensitive approach to development for and with indigenous peoples
      b.   Collaboration and technical support to Regional and Country Offices, including support to the implementation of UNPFII's recommendations addressed to UNICEF

II. Strategic areas of intervention

Engagement with international human rights mechanisms and bodies

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

For several years, UNICEF has been a key actor in UN processes related to indigenous issues at the global level. It was present at the first session of UNPFII, held in 2002, and made significant contributions with a view towards ensuring that the forum address the particular needs of indigenous children. Since then, UNICEF has been very much involved in all UNPFII sessions by producing high-level statements, organization of and/or participation in side events, submission of annual reports, discussions with indigenous representatives and sharing of experiences from the field, among other activities.

Engagement with UNPFII includes:

- Providing technical expertise on issues relevant to indigenous children.
- Participating in UNPFII's technical workshops through presentations.
- Submitting and/or contributing to technical papers on specific issues.
- Participating in expert workshops on technical and political issues to give visibility to sensitive topics such as data disaggregation, traditional knowledge, free prior and informed consent, governance and indigenous participation, and indigenous languages.
- Advocacy and raising awareness on UNICEF's work, particularly programmes and activities at the regional and country levels.
- Influencing recommendations and policies in favour of indigenous children.
- Raising awareness on the work of the permanent forum within UNICEF by advocating for integration of UNPFII recommendations into UNICEF's activities.

The momentum generated by UNPFII has resulted in several important initiatives, including the launch by the General Assembly of a Second Decade of the World's Indigenous People, the creation of an active Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues (IASG) and a decision by the UNDG Principals' meeting in July 2006 to promote the mainstreaming and integration of indigenous issues in UN operational activities.

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Treaty bodies: Committee on the Rights of the Child

UNICEF has been fully engaged in supporting the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, particularly the reporting process and the follow-up to the committee's concluding observations. UNICEF (at both HQ and regional levels) has provided technical support for the development of a General Comment on the Rights of Indigenous children, which gives an overview of all the issues faced by indigenous children, and provides guidance to States Parties on the meaning and implementation of all the articles of the CRC for indigenous children.

Partnership and collaboration

Engagement and support to inter-agency initiatives

Strategic partnerships with UN agencies and other partners have been instrumental in advancing the rights of indigenous children. UNICEF is an active member of IASG, whose main mission is to promote work related to indigenous peoples within the UN system. GRACE has actively participated in inter-agency efforts aimed at promoting indigenous issues. IASG, which began as an informal group of agencies, has evolved into a more formalized structure with terms of reference, a chair rotating every year and annual meetings. The group has been instrumental in supporting UNPFII. It speaks with one voice with UNPFII, elaborates technical papers, and has already issued a series of joint statements on issues raised by the forum (e.g., the Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples; climate change).

In 2005–2006, UNICEF chaired IASG and promoted coordination among UN agencies at the regional and country levels, leading to the UNDG's endorsement of the importance of integrating indigenous issues into the work of the UN Country Teams. Through its participation in the Inter-Agency Support Group, UNICEF has contributed to the elaboration of common documents, for example, the development of the 'Resource Kit on Indigenous Peoples' Issues',[65] which is a useful tool for UN Country Team staff. It provides guidance on advocacy strategies to ensure that indigenous peoples' issues are included in national development priorities and is intended to serve as background reading prior to the preparation of the Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF).

Participation in IASG in the context of UN system-wide coherence and the move towards 'One United Nations' also provides UNICEF with opportunities to ensure that all agencies, through their support to UNPFII, advocate for the rights of indigenous children. In that context, UNICEF supported the decision to have a 'Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People' (2005–2014) proclaimed by the General Assembly. The second decade provides an additional framework for strengthened engagement with indigenous issues at the country level.

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[65] UN, 2008 (prepared by UNPFII et al.), see
www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/resource_kit_indigenous_2008.pdf.

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Management Committee on Indigenous Peoples' Issues

At its principals' meeting of July 2006, UNDG recommended that "IASG, in consultation with the UNDG Programme Group, provide support and guidance for mainstreaming and integrating indigenous issues in UN operational activities, working through existing mechanisms and procedures." To assist the UN system in mainstreaming and integrating indigenous peoples' issues in processes for operational activities and programmes at the country level, UNICEF and the Secretariat chaired the UNDG Task Force on Indigenous Issues – which elaborated the UNDG Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues. UNICEF is also an active member of the Management Committee on Indigenous Peoples' Issues, which replaced the UNDG Task Force on Indigenous Issues.

Support to Country Offices and development of tools

Promotion and application of a human rights-based approach to development programming

The promotion and protection of human rights and the application of the human rights-based approach to development programming has been an important feature of UNICEF's work for many years. This approach has led UNICEF to go beyond the utilitarian principle of 'the greatest good for the greatest number of children', to give attention to those children and vulnerable members of society living at the margins of the mainstream, and to push for services to 'reach the unreached'. As a corollary, applying the HRBA pushed UNICEF to direct the attention and resources of national governments to marginalized and excluded children.

During the past few years, UNICEF has been very active in providing technical support and leadership in the implementation of the 'Action 2 – Programme of action', which represented the system-wide commitment to contribute towards the realization of human rights. Through its participation in the 'Action 2 – Programme of action', UNICEF helped developed a Common Learning Package on HRBA. This package, which is aimed at providing guidance on the integration and application of the human rights-based approach in CCA/UNDAF processes and throughout the programme cycle, emphasizes the need to ensure that the development process does not deepen inequality and discrimination.

GRACE is currently using the Common Learning Package to ensure UNICEF staff in all regions are better equipped to further support and advocate for priorities in national development frameworks in favour of marginalized and excluded children. UNICEF is committed to continue working with the mechanism that will replace the 'Action 2 –Programme of action'.

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III. Challenges at the global level

The need to build on UNICEF's strengths

Although UNICEF has also been active for many years in debates related to marginalized children, at the global level, UNICEF's work with marginalized and excluded children has primarily focused on indigenous children. However, at regional and country levels, particularly in Latin America, UNICEF has gained a great deal of expertise on addressing the rights of indigenous and maroon children.

At the global level, UNICEF needs to strengthen its capacities to adequately fulfil its leadership role, and generate, document and disseminate knowledge. To enable the development and sharing of experience and knowledge on indigenous issues, excluded populations and minorities in all regions, existing experiences need to be systematized.

More specifically, GRACE needs to better support UNICEF staff and their partners working in this area at the country level. For that, there is the need to build on the expertise of UNICEF Country Offices in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as their strategic partnerships with community and civil society organizations to stimulate interventions and policies in other regions of the world.

Promotion and application of the HRBA at the HQ level: Indigenous issues

Increasingly, successes in the practical application of the human rights-based approach have been observed at the regional and country levels.

At the HQ level, although UNICEF's work concentrates on marginalized children, initiatives and strategies on UNICEF's MTSP focus areas have concentrated on vulnerable children, including children affected by HIV and AIDS, children in conflict with the law, child victims of sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking and children without parental care. Experiences to date have shown that issues related to indigenous children have not been an integral part of the work of all sectors and are not always seen as a priority. To address this situation, GRACE needs to improve its capacities for networking and outreach between the different sectors in headquarters, Regional and Country Offices. Integrating HRBA and a culturally sensitive approach into action will enhance advocacy for indigenous children, and children belonging to ethnic and racial groups suffering discrimination.

Strengthening UNICEF's commitment

In May 2006, UNPFII stated: "The Permanent Forum urges UNICEF as the United Nations central agency on children to speed up the recommendations made by the Permanent Forum at its previous sessions that so far have not been addressed, including its recommendation to adopt a policy relating to indigenous youth and children."

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In spite of its efforts in favour of indigenous children, UNICEF's action – as stated previously – is not supported by a clear organizational policy, defining the organization's position with respect to indigenous issues, the nature of its commitment and the specific processes that guide its work. As a result, UNICEF's work with indigenous peoples lacks visibility and global coherence, and inadequate attention to indigenous populations in UNICEF programming in some countries. Similar concerns have prompted several other UN agencies – the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank – to adopt instruments stating their role and position in this area. A policy on indigenous children will help convey UNICEF's commitment to working with indigenous peoples, afford its work the importance it deserves, and give visibility to its activities.

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Interview with Maria Elena Ugaz, Mother and Child Health Officer, UNICEF Peru, Lima.

Interview with Fabiola Quiroz, Logistics and Supply Officer, UNICEF Peru, Lima.

Interview with Josephina Vásquez Awad, Communication Officer, UNICEF Peru, Lima.

Interview with Dr. Neptalí Cuevas, Director del Centro Nacional de Salud Intercultural (Ministerio de Salud), Lima.

Interview with Mario Tavera, Project Coordinator, Lima.

Interview with Juan Quezada Escobedo, project's Mother and Child Health Officer.

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Interview with Betsy Cartagena Huamán, project's Rights Protection consultant, Santa María de Nieva.

Interview with Amaya López de Vicuna, United Nations Volunteer, in-charge for intercultural/bilingual education, Santa María De Nieva.

Interview with Evaristo Nugkuag, President of the Consejo Agauaruna-Huambiza.

Interview with Ricardo Navarro Rojas y Javier Santa Nanco, ACIE coordination unit, Puerto Galilea, Santiago River.

Interview with Segundo Flores, Santiago District Major, Puerto Galilea, Santiago River.

Interview with Marcial López, community volunteer in charge of civil registry (of births, marriages and deaths) and rights protection (*Defensoría*), Soledad, Santiago River.

Interview with Fernando Flores, Coordinator of the Santiago River office of the Consejo Agaruna-Huambisa and the Federación de Comunidades Huambisas del Río Santiago (FECORSHA), Santiago River.

Visits to Puerto Galilea health centre and discussion on 'vertical and intercultural delivery' with health centre staff.

Visit to Yutupis school fish farm and interview with Prof. Rogelio Sunka.

Participant observation of a women's human development workshop in Puerto Galilea.

Participant observation of a group discussion in Nauta.

Primary sources for the Congo case study

Focus group with RENAPAC national coordination members: Ngounimba Toto Bernard, Nganga Jean, Ngouélé Ibara Luis.

Interview with Père Lucien Fèvre, responsible for social and pastoral activities among the Baka of the Dioces of Limpfondo.

Conversation and observation with Bantu and Baka inhabitants of the Gongonia village.

Interview with M. Gilbert Dgombo Bomodjo, Prefect of the Likouala department.

Focus group with Likouala Department line-agency staff: Joseph Ngouama, family and social action; Mr. Anaclet Madzemou, education; Mr. Nungasaey, health.

Focus groups with Filles de la Charité sisters, in charge of education, health and sanitation in Gorgonia village.

Interview with Sister Ancilla, nurse in charge for health activities among the Baka.

Focus group with RENAPAC departmental representatives: Clement Mangué, Roger Botengue and Honoré Momdomga.

Interview with Jean Baptist Ruzidaza (ORA teacher and trainer of trainers).

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Interview with the woman facilitator of the preparatory school of Dongou (not ORA).

Participant observation of an ORA session in the Baka village of Wongo.

Interview with Lucia Tomassini, Likouala Timber Corporation officer in charge for relationships with the local community.

Interview with Mary Grace C. Agcaoili (UNICEF Philippines) and Cliff Meyers (UNICEF EAPRO).

Participant observation of the second departmental planning session of the plan for improving the welfare of autochthonous peoples in Likouala.

Debriefing session notes.

For more information, please contact: