

### **Questionnaire to the UN system agencies, funds and programmes and intergovernmental organizations**

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was established by Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 2000/22. The Permanent Forum is mandated to provide expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to ECOSOC and through the Council to United Nations agencies, funds and programmes; to raise awareness and promote the integration and coordination of activities related to indigenous issues with the UN system; and prepare and disseminate information on indigenous issues.

The Permanent Forum's report of the sixteenth session of 2017 includes a number of recommendations within its mandated areas, some of which are addressed to UN system agencies, funds and programmes (attached).

The report can be found at:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/news/2017/06/new-16th-session-report-unpfi/>

The secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues invites UN system agencies, funds and programmes and other inter-governmental organizations to complete the attached questionnaire on any action taken or planned in response to the Permanent Forum's recommendations and other relevant issues.

The responses will be compiled into two separate reports for the April 2018 session of the Permanent Forum: (a) Compilation of information received from the UN system and other entities on progress in implementation of PFII recommendations; and (b) Implementation of the System Wide Action Plan on Indigenous Peoples.

All responses will be placed on the DESA/DSPD website on Indigenous Peoples at:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples>

## Questionnaire

The theme of the Permanent Forum's session in 2018 will be:

**“Indigenous peoples’ collective rights to lands, territories and resources”**

**Please provide information on the following:**

### **A. Recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

With respect to the implementation of the recommendations of the Permanent Forum addressed specifically to your agency, fund and/or programme:<sup>1</sup>

- i.* Please provide information on measures taken or planned to implement the recommendations of the Permanent Forum addressed specifically to your organization.

In Gabon, Recommendation 62 implementation was made possible by generating data about dropout and preschool system with a sampling method that included indigenous people as a priority population of the study. Research results showed that in every province where indigenous settlements exist, they have the highest rates of dropout. Recommendation 69 has helped UNICEF work with FIDA and the ministry of agriculture to involve indigenous women in Manioc (cassava) growing and harvest in the province of Woleu Ntem. Based on these experiences, the 2018-2022 CPD and child protection strategic note emphasize on indigenous rights implementation in the villages targeted by the above research studies recommendations in line with PFII report on the 16th session of April-May 2017, and chiefly recommendations No. 46 to 55.

In Congo Brazzaville, Indigenous peoples (1.2% of the population), remain the most vulnerable social group, excluded, deprived of basic human rights and living in extreme poverty. Thus, their rates of access to basic social services are 2 to 3 times lower than the national average. Hence, improving the social status of this very disadvantaged group, has been recognized as a national priority. Because the needs of the indigenous populations encompass all areas (economic, political, cultural, health, school), they fit into the mandates of all agencies. Throughout 2017, as part of the key initiatives, UNICEF continued to play the lead agency technical role, supporting indigenous children's access to essential services at the decentralized level and consolidating strategic partnerships and multi-stakeholder coordination under the authority of the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Protection of Indigenous Peoples. Despite significant progress made by the country in recent years, the social inclusion of indigenous populations remains at the center of the in-depth and concerted dialogue with all national and international actors. The government was thus encouraged to set up a multisectoral reference framework, in particular through a national action plan to improve the living conditions of indigenous populations. Two national action plan were thus developed the first one for 2009-2013 and the second for 2014-2017. However, because of the highly-disturbed context, the planned National Joint Inter-Agency Plan for the acceleration of the improvement of the quality of life of indigenous people has not been developed yet. Nevertheless, an important advocacy and follow-up will be made in 2018 for the development of such plan.

- ii.* What are the enabling factors that facilitate your agency's implementation of the Forum's recommendations?

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<sup>1</sup> See attached document entitled 'Recommendations addressed to the UN Agencies' to facilitate your responses.

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In Gabon, the national child protection data base demonstrates that indigenous families are the most vulnerable among all vulnerable people in the country. A few interventions with local organizations helped find out that they no longer remain nomad nor reside only in the rainforest. However, their settlements are fixed and localized near the Bantu villages but still far from most of the basic social services such as schools and health centers.

In Congo Brazzaville, emphasis has been placed on the development of a conducive environment: the existence of a political will at the highest level, materialized by the adoption of the law n°5-2011 for the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples, including national and decentralized action plans (2009-2013, 2014-2017) aiming at improving the living conditions of indigenous populations. They were developed in a very participative and consultative manner. This is an important step and a legal basis for social dialogue. The documentation of evidence on the indigenous situation facilitated visibility and provided a basis for a credible advocacy. The expression of interest and the growing commitment of the United Nations agencies under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator also allow broad-based strategic partnerships, which are key to success. At the local level, UNICEF is developing a decentralized and integrated approach to provide essential local services to indigenous children and women in the areas of health, HIV prevention, education and birth registration. In addition, the consistent and long-term financial support of the National Committee of Andorra to UNICEF helped build the foundations of the national process for the protection of the rights of indigenous people, including the establishment of concrete models of response at small scale.

- iii.* What are some of the obstacles your agency has encountered in implementing the recommendations of the Permanent Forum?

In Gabon, the main barrier is about funding source. Gabon remains an upper- middle-income country and this position makes it almost impossible to mobilize external funding in a context where the Government has done little to use its oil revenues for the development of indigenous people. Another obstacle is the macro policy of the government that does not jot down the specifics of indigenous people in its national plans. No particular Ministry is in charge of implementing or overseeing the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

In Congo Brazzaville, the realization of the rights of indigenous people are part of the process of social change, a daily and long-term commitment. Although indigenous issues are now recognized and included in the national development agenda, it is still difficult to mobilize all stakeholders to move forward together and provide concrete solutions in order to meet social expectations. Thus, coordination of interventions at the national level is still weak and unstructured despite clear administrative linkages with the line ministry "Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and the Promotion of Indigenous Peoples". The realization of the rights of indigenous peoples is a difficult task, as the challenges and areas to be covered are complex and beyond the competencies of isolated agencies. In addition, indigenous populations lack capacity in most areas. However, it is essential to effectively ensure greater involvement of indigenous people as key actors at all stages. This work process requires patience and takes time. UNICEF also deplores the lack of progress in the implementation of child protection laws and indigenous people. This is still an unfinished process despite our best collective efforts. The publication of implementing decrees has fallen far behind schedule. This gap slows down and weakens the evolution of the national process of social transformations. Most indigenous people live in remote and isolated areas. The approach of the mobile teams to reach them is very relevant but it is an expensive investment in terms of logistics (transport, duration of missions and human resources management).

### **B. System Wide Action Plan to achieve the ends of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

As requested in the Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (2014), a system-wide action plan (SWAP) to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted in November 2015, and launched by the Secretary General at the UN Permanent Forum in May 2016. The Permanent Forum will follow up on progress made in the implementation of the system-wide action plan during its 2018 session.<sup>2</sup> For ease of reference, the questions have been framed under the six key elements of the SWAP-Indigenous Peoples as follows:

#### **1. Raising awareness of the UN Declaration**

Please provide information on any activities that raise awareness of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including key messages, advocacy and other media and outreach initiatives. Please provide information on publications, films, audio material, maps, or other materials that feature or focus on the UN Declaration and on indigenous peoples. Please also provide links to the relevant websites and other sources.

In 2015, following the African Union Day of the Child, UNICEF Gabon and the Ministry of Human Rights launched in Makokou, Ogooue Ivindo province, an awareness campaign to end child marriage of indigenous adolescents. One Medical doctor at Makokou HIV/Aids care center developed a conference paper for indigenous families, lawyers and medical staff. The conference paper addressed the risks of early pregnancy, dropout risk, and the importance of family planning. In 2016, UNICEF and local radio stations of Makokou and Koulamoutou partnered in broadcasting messages prohibiting child labour and dropout in 4 indigenous languages. The 2018-2022 work plans will focus on indigenous rights implementation and take into account the SDG targets No. 4 as well as No. 16 about gender equality and violence.

In Congo Brazzaville, UNICEF continued to support broad information and awareness-raising activities on the indigenous issues, including through the organization of field media visits, extension of the law n° 5-2011 of February 25th, 2011 on the promotion and protection of the rights of the indigenous populations and the "evaluation report of the interventions aiming at the improvement of the quality of life of indigenous populations in the Republic of Congo (2015)", TV programs on the rights of indigenous people and advocacy meetings with national authorities (Parliament, Government) for inclusion in public development policies.

#### **2. Supporting the implementation of the UN Declaration, particularly at the country level**

Please provide information on actions taken or planned by your agency, fund, programme, entity on the following:

- i.* Measures taken or planned to support national partners in reform and implementation of legal frameworks, policies, strategies and plans to implement the UN Declaration on the

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<sup>2</sup> See Report of the 15<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (E/2016/43) at para. 73.

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Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including any joint programming initiatives. Please also include information related to include indigenous women in your responses.

In the Philippines, UNICEF, with support from the Australian Government, is providing financial and technical assistance to the Philippine Government Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to improve the delivery of the Modified Conditional Cash Transfers for Indigenous Peoples in Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (MCCT-IP-GIDA). In 2017, the Demand and Supply Side Assessment on the MCCT was completed, which identified barriers experienced by indigenous children and their families in effectively accessing education and health services. DSWD is using the results to inform internal policy changes and program decisions. In 2018, UNICEF plans to work with DSWD to enhance gender outcomes of the MCCT through a project that aims to increase indigenous women's participation in community development and access to political and economic opportunities.

In Gabon, the Bill of Child Act suggested some entire chapters dedicated to the specific rights of indigenous children. Among the proposed articles are the penalties against citizens who discriminate, exploit or abuse indigenous children. UNICEF's advocacy to the Parliament may motivate parliamentarians on keeping the special provisions of the Child Act.

Congo Brazzaville has a relevant legal framework (Law No. 5-2011 of 25 February 2011 on the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous people), and advocacy continues with the Government for the publication of the implementation texts. UNICEF provides support to have the law translated into texts in order to be enforced and produce real effects of change for indigenous people.

- ii.* Support provided to Member States to mainstream the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in national development plans and in the UN Development Assistance Frameworks and Common Country Assessments (CCA/UNDAFs).

Since ILO does not have a permanent office in Gabon, in July 2017, UNICEF trained 40 labour inspectors about the enforcement of the conventions No.138, 182, and 169 to protect indigenous communities against economic exploitation in logging and mining areas. UNICEF and the Government disseminated 1,000 copies of the conventions with 3,000 booklets of the CRC to prevent the abuse of indigenous children.

- iii.* Promote the establishment or strengthening of consultative mechanisms and platforms of dialogue including under the leadership of the Resident Coordinators.

UNICEF Gabon and the Ministry of Education conducted three dialogs in the areas of Mataghematsengue, Mouila, Ikobey, and Makokou about dropout and the right to education. Both local government and indigenous peoples' representatives dialogued about the causes of dropout among their children. The national study about dropout demonstrated that 16% of children in Makokou who left elementary school very early were indigenous girls and boys. 11% of children

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drop out every year in Ikobey and its vicinity. The key factor remains the distance from indigenous villages to the nearest rural school. The nomadic customs (gathering and hunting) of the indigenous people does not always comply with the educational system that last nine months during the rainy season. The 2018-2022 UNICEF work plan will address these factors through advocacy and services in the target regions.

### **3. Supporting indigenous peoples' rights in the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues will continue to address indigenous issues in the follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- i.* Has your agency/organization taken any measures to incorporate indigenous issues into policy and programming to implement the 2030 Agenda in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

With Tebtebba, an Indigenous Peoples-focused NGO, UNICEF in the Philippines completed the study “Pagsasalinlahi: Asserting and Safeguarding Indigenous Peoples’ Rights for the Next Generation” which highlights the state of indigenous children’s rights in the Philippines. Using the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the national Indigenous Peoples Rights Act as analytical framework, the study shows that indigenous youth and children across all the communities know what they want for themselves and for their communities, as well as their role as members of the next generation. Specifically, the study identified that they want to have a quality and culturally relevant education that is rooted in their identity and culture as Indigenous peoples. They also desire to inherit a healthy ancestral domain, play a role in its governance, and to continually protect it the way their elders have done so.

In Gabon, the 2018-2022 CPD and child protection strategic note prioritized the psychosocial care of indigenous children and mainly girls in the following fields of interventions: child marriage, violence at school, right to education, and mainly birth registration. Also, the National Guidelines for Birth Registration has a component of indigenous families’ procedures of birth certificate issuance from health centers to the mayor’s office. The National Guidelines of OVC Caregivers have a specific scale of vulnerability for indigenous children based on 5 standards (education, wages, protection, nutrition, and health).

- ii.* Has your agency/organization/entity supported the participation of indigenous peoples in the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including at the national level? Please also include information on indigenous women, persons with disabilities, older persons and children and youth in your responses.

At the operational level, an increasing inclusive vision for access of populations to basic social services is promoted and significant progress has been made in Congo Brazzaville. Below are some examples:

- With regard to the education of indigenous children, specifically in the departments of Likouala and Sangha, in partnership with the Association of Spiritist Fathers in Congo

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(PHAC), progress has been maintained. Thus, more than 5,886 indigenous children among whom 2,714 girls were regularly supervised in the preparatory schools ORA (Observe, Think and Act).

- In the same dynamic, the high-level political commitment of the departmental authorities of Lékoumou (Prefect, President of the County Council and President of the Local Council of Sibiti) was materialized by the joint signature of the new action plan (2018-2022) for the improvement of the quality of life of the populations, particularly the indigenous populations. This plan, includes capacity building of multisector actors with the aim of building ownership and promoting decentralized planning tools and monitoring interventions. The department has made significant progress and is therefore a model department. Indeed, more than 66 newly appointed political and technical authorities (sub-prefects, mayors, general secretaries, departmental directors, prefecture officials and departmental and communal councils, heads of school districts, health districts and social electoral districts) have been trained. They have now an improved common understanding of decentralized planning processes and the monitoring of populations access, particularly indigenous people, to basic social services. It has also contributed to strengthening accountability and maintaining continuity of interventions. After the review of the previous departmental action plan (2013-2017), a new plan 2018-2022, was developed. This plan includes a strong focus on the child and spans across life cycle. It aimed at improving the quality of life of children and women, particularly indigenous people, in the department of Lékoumou. However, the next challenge will be such integration into departmental and communal development plans and ensure funding for activities.
- In the field of child protection, a network of 17 protection committees already in place is functional. These frameworks constitute a community alert and early detection mechanism and also help to find concerted and effective solutions to the various social risks and vulnerabilities of the child. As a result, more than 1,450 cases were identified and 650 cared for (children not declared in civil status, abandoned infants, survivors of sexual violence, etc.).
- Regarding education, monitoring data carried out in September 2017 indicated that 75.31% of children (69.28% of girls) had access to school, with an admission rate of 60.49% (58.65% of girls) and a completion rate of 93.75% (92.23% girls). However, many children do not have strong basic skills; only 12.66% of the students completed grade 10 or higher in French and mathematics. Specifically, about the education of indigenous children, the impact is compelling. In 2017, in the school districts of Sibiti and Zanaga, the total number of primary school children enrolled in primary school has increased to 1,512, including 654 girls. Before the implementation of the plan in 2013, Sibiti had only 69 indigenous children enrolled in school.
- There is also good ownership in the civil status sector. Birth certificates are regularly signed and given to parents. Throughout 2017, 699 identified newborns were declared at birth, of whom 685 (98%) received their birth certificate. However, the problem of late registration persists (more than 2,782 identified children) and requires an improvement of the coordination between the various actors involved (social affairs, court, county council, prefecture, civil status etc.).

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- Finally, in the health sector, coverage remains overall low and worrying: 62% at the Prenatal Consultation (compared to the national average of 79%); 40% Penta 3 vaccination (compared to 65% nationally); 28% for measles vaccine (65% nationally); 74% of HIV AIDS screening among pregnant women received at prenatal consultation. This calls for a systematic and regular organization of supervision and strengthened monitoring of access to health care and local health services including through mobile clinics.
  - In 2018, efforts will continue, particularly in terms of developing the joint program and supporting the implementation of the action plan 2018-2022, to improve the quality of life of indigenous populations in the Department of the Lékoumou, and the extension in the department of Plateaux.
- iii.* Please provide information on any reports or other documents in implementing the 2030 Agenda for indigenous peoples. Also include information on any measures taken or planned for the collection of statistical data on indigenous peoples, in particular as related to the SDG indicators for target 1.4 (secure tenure rights to land), target 2.3 (income of small-scale food producers), target 4.5 (parity in access to education) and target 10.3/16.b (experience of discrimination).

As part of the knowledge and evidence generation, UNICEF in Congo Brazzaville supported the production and publication of several strategic reports such as MICS Congo 2014-2015, the analysis of the situation of children and women, the national policy of social action. This basic documentation provided a better understanding of the challenges and deprivations of protection, especially for indigenous populations, and their inclusion in national development policies.

In Gabon, Target 4.5 of SDG will be part of the 2018-2022 work plan implementation in line with the recommendations of the 2016 research study about dropout in Gabon. Target 16.b has been a permanent output for UNICEF in its campaign to change policymakers and communities' perception of the right and status of indigenous existence and role in society.

#### **4. Mapping of existing standards and guidelines, capacities, training materials and resources for the effective implementation of the UNDRIP**

- i.* Please provide information on any specific standards and guidelines on indigenous peoples adopted or planned by your agency/organization.

No specific guideline recently developed.

- ii.* Please provide information on any training materials prepared or planned related to the implementation of the UN Declaration.

In Gabon, UNICEF contributed to the development of various relevant material, such as the Vulnerability Scale leaflet, the CRC Booklet, the booklet of the declaration for chiefs of indigenous communities, a detailed PowerPoint presentation on the dropout study results



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focusing on indigenous regions which is addressed to school administrators in the indigenous target regions.

- iii.* Please provide information on current resources and funds allocated to effectively implement the UN Declaration. Please also provide information on any joint initiatives with other UN agencies in the implementation of the UN Declaration.

Based on the 2018-2022 CPD and child protection strategic note of UNICEF Gabon, the country office foresees US\$ 26,000 for the advocacy and public commitment, US\$26,000 for the protection system development, and US\$ 25,000 on service delivery to back up change of perception and the quality of public services such as social institutions, preschools and elementary schools through staff training and supply of teaching material.

### **5. Developing the capacities of States, indigenous peoples, civil society and UN personnel**

Please provide information on any capacity development initiatives that your organization is conducting for indigenous peoples, government officials and UN staff. Also include information on the participation of indigenous women, children and youth as well as indigenous persons with disabilities in your response.

UNICEF in the Philippines in partnership with the Institute for Autonomy and Governance various indigenous peoples organizations is mainstream the issues of indigenous children and youth in indigenous political structures and local government planning and budgeting in 5 municipalities in the province of Maguindanao which have a high indigenous peoples population. The project will support the identification of self-determined development issues and priority agenda identified by indigenous children and youth; enhanced knowledge of the indigenous children and youth, indigenous peoples mandatory representatives (IPMR) and tribal leaders and elders on human rights, child rights and the UNDRIP; and advocate for the inclusion of the indigenous children and youth agenda in development plans of the municipality and the indigenous peoples structures of the Timuay Justice and Governance structure (TJG).

In Gabon, the 2016 research study about dropout as well as the 2015 mapping of preschool system revealed that indigenous children were the most at risk of remaining uneducated and excluded from the national system. Heads of schools and indigenous representatives of Ogooue Ivindo and Ngounie provinces received training on the Declaration of indigenous Rights in June 2017 to improve care standards and dropout prevention so the same project will go on in other regions.

At the national strategic level, thanks to sustained advocacy actions, the Government of Congo Brazzaville announced this year a series of specific measures to provide scholarships to particularly vulnerable students (indigenous, disabled). Nevertheless, this is not yet materialized, including the adoption of texts for the enforcement of child protection and indigenous people laws.

### **6. Advancing the participation of indigenous peoples in UN processes**

Please provide information on any support provided for the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples at relevant UN bodies, including at the country level. Please also provide

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information on any consultative mechanisms, tools and other measures to obtain free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples in processes that affect them.

In 2016, UNICEF Gabon advocated for the involvement of two indigenous NGOs in the draft of the CRC report. Finally, three NGOs attended the meetings of the national committee for the writing of CRC reports. One of them is “The national Association for Family Mediation” working for the rights of the Baka indigenous people in Minvoul (North of Gabon).

In Congo Brazzaville, the existence of the National Network of Indigenous People of Congo (RENAPAC) since August 2007, a platform bringing together indigenous associations and NGOs working for the protection and promotion of the rights of indigenous people, is a major asset as it allows key community members, to seat at the negotiations table and make decisions that affect them. Unfortunately, RENAPAC was weakened by internal governance issues. In order to reduce these weaknesses, UNICEF has supported the organization of outreach meetings with indigenous organizations on the importance of choosing credible, representative and legitimate indigenous leaders. The National Network of Indigenous Peoples has finally held its General Assembly, which has been postponed for more than seven years. This Assembly has made it possible to update the organic texts (statutes and rules of procedure). New leaders were elected to revitalize RENAPAC and strengthen its governance capacity. In short, indigenous leadership is yet to be built.

### Addendum (provided 16 February 2018)

#### Explicit references to indigenous peoples rights in Country Annual Reports of UNICEF (2017)

**Main focus: right to education/preservation of languages and culture, right to health, protection, nutrition, adolescent's participation, fighting discrimination.**

- **UNICEF Argentina** promoted initiatives to guarantee indigenous children rights (access to secondary school for adolescents from remote rural areas, through the ICT-based education modality and access to bilingual intercultural initial education in vulnerable areas of Chaco). In Salta and Chaco the SFCM initiative included an intercultural focus with the active participation of indigenous communities, and in Salta, an innovative initiative reached 200 indigenous adolescents to enhance nutrition competences.
- The promotion of indigenous rights is at the core of **UNICEF Bolivia's** work and is mainstreamed throughout the CP. Most progress has been achieved within the education sector through the implementation of inter-, intra- and multilingual education and community participation for the integration of indigenous languages, cultures and practices in the curricula. Within the new UNDAF for 2018-2022, a specific results area has been formulated to support the promotion of the rights of vulnerable groups such as indigenous people, women and children.
- **UNICEF Brazil** mobilised adolescents from the poorest communities, indigenous groups, LGBT youth, and Afro-descendants through online consultations and meetings on civic and political participation and Secondary Education. As a result, adolescents' demands were considered by public policy managers.
- **UNICEF Costa Rica** led the situation analysis of indigenous populations: starting as a pilot model in the highly vulnerable Cabécar community, a participatory situation analysis is being developed to provide evidence to define effective policy and programmatic actions for the fulfilment of indigenous children's rights.
- **UNICEF Guatemala** launched the study entitled "Look at me, I am indigenous and I am also Guatemalan," reflecting the situation of indigenous children, highlighting the continued stark disparities and exclusion facing indigenous people in Guatemala, and stressing the urgent need to address underlying and structural causes. UNICEF Guatemala will work with the Presidential Commission Against Discrimination and Racism Against Indigenous Peoples (CODISRA) to conduct provincial level launches of the report in 2018.

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- **UNICEF CONGO** The social inclusion of indigenous people remained at the center of the CO policy dialogue within the UN and with the Government. Such collaboration resulted in important progress during 2017 towards the realisation of the indigenous children's rights in health, education and protection at both strategic and operational levels. Eg. Through concerted advocacy, the Government has announced a series of specific measures to award scholarships to particularly vulnerable students (indigenous, disabled). Nevertheless, there was no progress in enacting child protection and indigenous people laws whose process has remained unfinished with lack of enforcement texts. The realisation of the rights of indigenous people is part of a process of social change and will remain a daily and long-term commitment of the CO.
  
- The Minister of Education tasked **UNICEF Malaysia** to convene a national taskforce to mainstream the rights of indigenous children and communities for the preservation of their mother tongue, through education. UNICEF Malaysia was also invited to provide technical inputs on operationalizing the 'National Indigenous Education Transformation Plan 2017-2025'.

The adoption of the recommendations arising out of out of the 2nd Malaysian Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education held in 2016, acknowledged the rights of indigenous children and communities to the preservation of their mother tongue through education and other programmes. Their incorporation into the 'National Indigenous Education Transformation Plan 2017-2025', will ensure their realization.

- **UNICEF Philippines** worked with the DepEd and partners towards equity for marginalized children by providing greater access to quality basic education services especially for indigenous children, children in conflict areas in Mindanao and those in multi-grade systems – a setup wherein several grade levels are handled by one teacher in a classroom.