



**Asamblea General**

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/HRC/4/9/Add.1  
2 de marzo de 2007

ESPAÑOL  
Original: INGLÉS

---

CONSEJO DE DERECHOS HUMANOS  
Cuarto período de sesiones  
Tema 2 del programa provisional

**APLICACIÓN DE LA RESOLUCIÓN 60/251 DE LA ASAMBLEA  
GENERAL, DE 15 DE MARZO DE 2006, TITULADA  
"CONSEJO DE DERECHOS HUMANOS"**

**Informe de la Experta independiente en cuestiones de las minorías,  
Sra. Gay McDougall**

**Adición**

**CONSECUCCIÓN DE LOS OBJETIVOS DE DESARROLLO DEL MILENIO  
PARA LAS MINORÍAS: EXAMEN DE LOS INFORMES NACIONALES  
SOBRE LOS OBJETIVOS DE DESARROLLO DEL MILENIO Y DE  
LAS ESTRATEGIAS DE REDUCCIÓN DE LA POBREZA\***

---

\* El resumen del presente informe se distribuye en todos los idiomas oficiales. El informe propiamente dicho figura en el anexo al resumen y se distribuye únicamente en el idioma en que se presentó.

## Resumen

En su informe de 2007 al Consejo de Derechos Humanos, titulado "Minorías, pobreza y objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio: evaluación de los problemas de alcance mundial" (A/HRC/4/9), la Experta independiente en cuestiones de las minorías, Sra. Gay McDougall, señala los altos y desproporcionados niveles de pobreza de las minorías. Existe un riesgo real de que las estrategias utilizadas para alcanzar los objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio (ODM) y reducir la pobreza sean menos beneficiosas para personas pertenecientes a grupos minoritarios marginados, e incluso de que esas estrategias puedan aumentar las desigualdades y ser perjudiciales. Hasta la fecha no se ha examinado ni se ha tenido en cuenta lo suficiente la relación entre la inclusión de las minorías, la protección de sus derechos y la consecución de los ODM. El presente informe contribuye a revelar y a tratar de resolver esas deficiencias. En él se examinan 50 informes nacionales sobre los ODM y algunos documentos de estrategia de lucha contra la pobreza (DELP) para determinar si en esos documentos se hace referencia, y en su caso de qué manera, a las minorías étnicas, religiosas y lingüísticas marginadas. Este oportuno examen destaca, cuando procede, las prácticas adecuadas sobre los ODM y la reducción de la pobreza y formula recomendaciones sobre la manera en que los Estados y la comunidad internacional podrían mejorar su labor.

Las conclusiones del presente informe son reveladoras. Tan sólo en 19 de los 50 informes examinados se hace mención a las minorías étnicas o lingüísticas. Las desigualdades de que son víctimas las minorías religiosas sólo se mencionan en dos informes. Otros diez informes mencionan únicamente a las poblaciones indígenas y no identifican a ningún otro grupo minoritario. La frecuencia con que se menciona a las minorías varía considerablemente. Por ejemplo, en algunos informes se proporciona una amplia gama de información en el marco de varios objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio y se facilitan datos desglosados. En otros las minorías sólo se mencionan en la sección sobre los antecedentes, en la que se describe la población nacional sin prestar especial atención a su situación en relación con los ODM. La referencia a las minorías es más frecuente en relación con el Objetivo 2 sobre la enseñanza primaria universal. En general, en todos los informes se presta más atención a las poblaciones indígenas que a las minorías marginadas no indígenas. La atención que en muchos informes nacionales sobre los ODM se concede a las cuestiones de género es positiva, pero el examen que se hace de la discriminación transversal de que son víctimas las mujeres pertenecientes a minorías o de las políticas dirigidas a mujeres pertenecientes a minorías marginadas es insuficiente. En los informes nacionales de países donantes sobre los ODM prácticamente no se hace referencia a las minorías. En ninguno de los informes nacionales sobre los ODM se presta atención a las minorías en todos y cada uno de los ocho objetivos.

La comprensión de las causas de la pobreza de las minorías y de sus manifestaciones en las esferas social, económica, cultural y política es insuficiente. En particular, incluso en los informes en que se menciona a las minorías, no se examina ni cómo ni por qué los niveles de pobreza de las minorías son desproporcionadamente elevados ni otras desigualdades graves en la mayoría de los países. La cuestión de la discriminación, tanto directa como indirecta, está perceptiblemente ausente en los análisis de la pobreza y en las respuestas de política para la reducción de la pobreza. En los informes sobre los ODM rara vez se analizan otros derechos de las minorías.

Esta falta de información en los informes nacionales sobre los ODM no es necesariamente indicativa de la situación real, pero hace pensar que la inclusión de las minorías en las estrategias para la consecución de los ODM y los DELP sigue siendo una prioridad menor para la mayoría de los gobiernos. Aunque los recursos y la capacidad son factores esenciales, el punto de partida para mejorar los efectos de la reducción de la pobreza en las minorías es la voluntad política. Los informes nacionales sobre los ODM y los DELP son aspectos determinantes de esa voluntad política, y un mejor análisis en esos documentos de la situación de las minorías, junto con las estrategias necesarias, pueden servir para que las minorías alcancen el desarrollo humano y ejerzan sus derechos humanos.

Aunque en general el análisis que los Estados hacen de las minorías y de las cuestiones de las minorías en los informes sobre los ODM y en los DELP sigue siendo sumamente deficiente, cabe destacar los siguientes aspectos positivos:

- a) **Presentación** de información básica sobre la existencia de grupos minoritarios en el país, en particular indicadores sobre la pobreza desglosados por pertenencia a un grupo étnico, religioso o lingüístico y por género;
- b) **Examen** con cierto detalle de las razones que hacen necesario adoptar medidas de reducción de la pobreza especialmente dirigidas a las minorías, basadas en un análisis de las desigualdades desproporcionadas y persistentes de que son víctimas a lo largo del tiempo determinados grupos minoritarios, así como de la inadecuación de enfoques anteriores para beneficiar a esos grupos;
- c) **Inclusión** de secciones dedicadas a señalar medidas para grupos minoritarios marginados, tanto enfoques con fines generales como información sobre programas específicos;
- d) **Concesión** de una atención concreta a la situación de las mujeres y niñas pertenecientes a minorías y adopción de medidas orientadas a superar las desigualdades de que son objeto;
- e) **Examen** de la importancia de la participación de las minorías en la elaboración y aplicación de programas y proyectos de desarrollo relacionados con los ODM y los DELP, especialmente en el plano local;
- f) **Incorporación** de objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio ampliados destinados a minorías marginadas e inclusión de indicadores desglosados por etnia para vigilar los progresos realizados en la consecución de los ODM y de los objetivos de los DELP;
- g) **Decisión** de mejorar el marco jurídico para que los ciudadanos puedan ejercer mejor sus derechos humanos;
- h) **Adopción** de un enfoque amplio para reducir la pobreza mediante la inclusión de medidas de incorporación orientadas a las minorías, no sólo en lo que respecta al aumento de los ingresos sino también en cuestiones fundamentales como la educación, la salud, la gobernanza y el acceso a la información.

Esos esfuerzos son alentadores en teoría, pero todavía queda mucho por hacer para llevarlos a la práctica. La Experta independiente alienta encarecidamente a los Estados a que faciliten más información sobre esta práctica prometedora, en particular sobre la manera en que las políticas se aplican y se evalúan sobre el terreno. Es difícil poner fin a desigualdades muy arraigadas, y con frecuencia no sólo son necesarios recursos adicionales y selectivos sino también la firme voluntad de abordar las causas fundamentales de esa desigualdad, en particular la de la discriminación directa e indirecta.

Los gobiernos desempeñan la función más importante en la consecución de los ODM para las minorías, pero también es esencial la contribución de las Naciones Unidas y de sus organismos y órganos. Los días 18 y 19 de octubre de 2006 el Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD), en cooperación con la Experta independiente en cuestiones de las minorías, organizó en Nueva York una consulta internacional sobre el compromiso del PNUD con las minorías en los procesos de desarrollo. Los participantes en esa reunión expresaron claramente que el PNUD puede integrar mejor la consideración de los derechos de las minorías en la orientación y el apoyo que ofrece a los gobiernos sobre los ODM. Los participantes estuvieron de acuerdo en que sería positivo elaborar una nota de orientación y política para la labor del PNUD en relación con las minorías. También se señalaron algunos otros puntos iniciales para mejorar la cooperación, entre ellos el mejoramiento de la recogida de datos desglosados sobre los ODM, el aumento de la participación de las minorías en los diálogos sobre los ODM y la planificación, y el suministro de capacitación a profesionales del desarrollo sobre la manera de cooperar mejor con minorías marginadas.

Es importante subrayar que el enfoque general para garantizar que las minorías puedan beneficiarse de los ODM y los DELP debe basarse en los derechos humanos. Las causas concretas de la pobreza y del reducido desarrollo humano de las minorías están a menudo relacionadas con otras violaciones de sus derechos. Para analizar la protección general de los derechos de las minorías la Experta independiente utiliza un enfoque que se basa en cuatro puntos: la protección de la existencia de una minoría, incluida su integridad física; la protección y promoción de la identidad cultural y social; la no discriminación y la igualdad, en particular la erradicación de la discriminación estructural o sistémica; y la participación efectiva de las minorías en la vida pública, especialmente en las decisiones que las afectan. Esos derechos deberían estar en la base de los esfuerzos nacionales e internacionales para alcanzar los objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio y reducir la pobreza en el mundo.

## Annex

### REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXPERT ON MINORITY ISSUES

### ACHIEVING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS) FOR MINORITIES: A REVIEW OF MDG COUNTRY REPORTS AND POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGIES

### CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction .....	1 - 11	7
I. MINORITY RIGHTS AND THE MDGS .....	12 - 21	10
II. MDG COUNTRY REPORTS REVIEW .....	22 - 35	14
<i>Disaggregated Data, Targets and Indicators</i> .....	36 - 42	17
<i>Goal 1: Poverty Reduction and Elimination of Hunger</i> .....	43 - 49	19
<i>Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education</i> .....	50 - 54	21
<i>Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women</i> .....	55 - 58	23
<i>Goal 4, 5, 6: Reduce child mortality. Improve maternal health. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases</i> .....	59 - 61	24
<i>Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability</i> .....	62 - 66	26
III. GLOBAL INITIATIVES ON MINORITIES AND THE MDGS .....	67 - 77	27
IV. POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPERS AND MINORITIES .....	78 - 110	30
<i>Promising Practice in the PRSPs</i> .....	111 - 112	38
V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	113 - 155	39
Annex 1: The Millennium Development Goals .....		44
Annex 2: List of MDG Country Reports Reviewed .....		46

**CONTENTS (*continued*)**

	<i>Page</i>
TABLES AND BOXES	
Table 1: Linking Minority Rights and MDGs Strategies .....	13
Box 1: Where are minorities? .....	14
Box 2: Minorities and the MDG Country Reports at a Glance .....	15
Box 3: Missing disaggregated data .....	17
Box 4: MDG Plus Targets and Indicators .....	19
Box 5: Good practice on poverty reduction .....	19
Box 6: Donors can do more for minorities .....	21
Box 7: Good practice on education .....	22
Box 8: Invisibility of minority women .....	24
Box 9: Good practice on health care .....	25

## **ACHIEVING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS) FOR MINORITIES: A REVIEW OF MDG COUNTRY REPORTS AND POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGIES\***

### **Introduction**

1. There are two key aid modalities that shape international development cooperation today - the set of targets contained in the universally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the nationally owned Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). The two modalities are intertwined: PRSPs are the vehicle for achieving the MDGs and the MDGs provide concrete targets for PRSPs.
2. All countries have committed to working towards achievement of the MDGs by 2015. The Goals (see Annex 1) - agreed as part of the Millennium Declaration - call for a reduction of poverty, hunger, and maternal and child mortality rates; increased access to education - in particular for girls; more safe drinking water; improvements in the lives of slum dwellers; more sustainable development; and a reversal in the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases. Overarching these aims is the commitment in Goal 8 to “develop a global partnership for development”, which foresees changes in the international trade and financial regimes, more debt relief, better access to drugs and technology, and special attention to landlocked and small island developing States.
3. Both donor countries and countries receiving development assistance produce periodic reports on the steps they are taking to reach the MDGs. A total of 143 States have submitted one or more MDG country reports.<sup>1</sup> Some 52 countries have produced PRSPs (or Interim PRSPs) and donors seek to assist such countries with the realization of the policies set forth in the PRSP to achieve the MDGs.
4. This paper seeks to review the MDG country reports and selected PRSPs to illustrate if and how marginalized ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities are reflected. The MDGs and PRSPs were selected for review because they offer a useful starting point for reflecting on cross-regional practice in integrating minorities positively into development processes.
5. Recognizing that both MDG country reports and PRSPs are intended to be summary documents of a much more complex set of actions and policies, they nevertheless serve as useful proxies to identify the priorities and processes of a given State in its efforts to eradicate poverty and promote human development. Within the pages of these reports can be found examples of good practice, innovations in participation of the poor, descriptions of progress made, and

---

\* Corinne Lennox, a freelance consultant on minority rights and development and trainer on human rights was commissioned by the independent expert as an expert consultant on this review

<sup>1</sup> As of 1 November 2006.

specific targets set for the future. They offer an analysis of the particular development challenges faced by a country and often detail how specific regions and/or sections of the population face additional hurdles.

6. For this reason, a review of the MDG country reports and PRSPs can give insight into the kinds of issues and interventions that governments have identified as important for national policy on social and economic development. This in turn can help reveal whether hurdles faced by particular regions or groups are being overcome through specially-considered programmes on the ground. A recent review of the gender components of selected MDG country reports conducted by the UNDP revealed important insights into how gender perspectives and practice were reflected unevenly across the set of eight Goals.<sup>2</sup> The report offered useful recommendations on how gender could be integrated better into MDG strategies and reporting. A similar desk study was conducted for the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, reviewing how several MDG country reports considered the situation of indigenous peoples.<sup>3</sup> The study concluded that very few of the reports examined had discussed indigenous peoples and none had provided disaggregated data on specific indigenous groups and their realization of the MDGs.

7. This review will focus primarily on persons belonging to ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in line with the mandate of the independent expert. The independent expert has established that in using the term “minorities,” the focus of her work is on distinct groups within societies that have faced long-term discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of a distinct national, ethnic, religious or linguistic identity. The independent expert highlights that under her mandate ‘minority’ status is not defined by numerical factors alone. This report focuses on groups that are disproportionately disadvantaged and who are otherwise denied the power to protect their rights. This review will also include discussion of indigenous peoples where these communities are mentioned in MDG country reports. The excellent work being undertaken to ensure that indigenous peoples can benefit from MDGs and PRSPs should be supported fully. The independent expert expresses concern, however, that non-indigenous marginalized minorities are more likely to be omitted from MDG country reports and policy dialogues on poverty reduction. This review will demonstrate this omission and seeks to encourage governments, international development actors and civil society to take further steps to include marginalized minorities in the MDGs.

#### *Methodology:*

8. The research in this report has been carried out by desk review of selected MDG country reports and PRSPs (see Annex II). As of 1 November 2006, 182 MDG country reports had been submitted; of these 50 were selected for review based on ensuring regional representation and representation of countries receiving development assistance and donor countries. Efforts were

---

<sup>2</sup> Kalyani Menon-Sen, *The Millennium Development Goals; National Reports: a Look Through a Gender Lens*, UNDP: New York, New York May 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Kelley Laird, *MDG Reports and Indigenous Peoples: A Desk Review*, New York, New York: Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, January 2006.



made also to include a number of countries where minority issues are on the public policy agenda and/or where minorities are marginalized, with the hope of highlighting positive practice. This gives a selection bias towards those States most likely to include discussion of minorities in their MDG country reports. In order to trace practice across policy documents, a small number of countries with PRSPs were also reviewed. Each report was examined to determine whether:

- minorities are mentioned and if so, which minorities are named;
- data disaggregated by ethnicity is included;
- reference is made to minorities under each of the eight Goals (or in the PRSP);
- programmes aimed specifically at minorities are discussed.

9. Given the time and resources available to prepare this report, sampling was necessary. It was also difficult to undertake a detailed country-specific social, political and economic analysis for each of the MDG country reports reviewed. Those with an in-depth knowledge of the countries considered here may be able to point to important information not captured in the analysis using the four-point criteria detailed above. For example, in some countries the terminology of ‘minority’, ‘indigenous peoples’, ‘ethnicity’ or similar terms may not be used; in other cases, certain ethnic groups may be strongly associated with distinct regions otherwise discussed in the MDG country report. Every effort has been made to draw out relevant information on minority groups for each country, including searching for discussion of specific groups (e.g. Roma, African-descendants, Muslims) and trying to discern proxy discussion of minorities by region; if any important information has been overlooked, however, the independent expert highlights that she would welcome further details on this.

10. There are limitations with using the MDG country reports and PRSPs, not least because developed countries do not record their domestic policy on poverty reduction via such reports. Nevertheless, in their capacity as partners in international development cooperation, donor States have an equal responsibility to ensure that marginalized minorities can benefit from progress towards the MDGs and poverty reduction. Marginalized minorities in developed countries also experience higher levels of poverty, less access to education, higher rates of child and maternal mortality and poorer health care. This relative deprivation demands equal attention by developed countries within their domestic policy and should be considered part of the international commitment to achieve the MDGs.

11. Further information on State practice vis-à-vis minorities in achieving the MDGs and within the PRSP processes would be greatly welcomed from States, including those reviewed in this analysis, and should be provided directly to the independent expert. Especially where promising practice for minorities has been identified in the MDG or PRSP report, States are encouraged to provide more information on this practice, including through a dialogue with the independent expert, in particular on how policies are being implemented and evaluated on the ground. It is hoped that this study will contribute to further research on the important issue of how to ensure that persons belonging to minorities benefit from and contribute to poverty reduction strategies globally.

## I. MINORITY RIGHTS AND THE MDGS

12. Ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities are more likely to be poor in all regions of the world. Human development indicators disaggregated by ethnicity or religion regularly show high and disproportionate levels of poverty and poor human development for persons belonging to minorities. Marginalized minorities should therefore benefit from progress towards the MDGs. Evidence suggests, however, that minorities are often left behind.

13. The particular causes of poverty and low human development for minorities are often linked to violations of their rights. The independent expert uses a four point framework for the general protection of minority rights: protecting a minority's existence, including their physical integrity; protecting and promoting cultural and social identity; ensuring non-discrimination and equality, including ending structural or systemic discrimination; and ensuring effective participation of minorities in public life, especially in decisions that affect them.

14. Each of these rights is important to development processes and the achievement of the MDGs. The right to existence is threatened when persons belonging to minorities have disproportionately higher rates of child and maternal mortality. The right to non-discrimination is violated, for example, when persons belonging to minorities cannot access employment opportunities because of their identity or when public policies intentionally or unintentionally exclude minorities. The right to participate in decision-making is violated when minorities do not have a say in consultations on PRSPs or MDGs-related strategies. The cultural identity of minorities is under threat when mainstream development plans make it impossible for them to pursue their traditional livelihoods or when education curricula are only available in majority languages. These human rights issues - existence, non-discrimination, cultural identity and participation - are little understood or inadequately addressed yet they can hold the key to improved development interventions. Table 1 provides some key examples of how minority rights translate into concrete practice for MDG country reports and MDG policies. Using a human rights-based approach to the MDGs can be a useful tool in ensuring that highly marginalized minorities can access and benefit from mainstream poverty reduction programmes.

15. At present, however, there is a genuine risk that the strategies used to achieve the MDGs will be less beneficial for minority groups, and might even increase inequalities and further harm some minority communities. To date, the link between inclusion of minorities, protection of minority rights and realization of the MDGs has not been widely considered by development actors.<sup>4</sup> This is in contrast with ongoing dialogues on gender and the MDGs<sup>5</sup> and the dialogue on the MDGs and indigenous peoples undertaken in recent sessions of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

---

<sup>4</sup> Minority Rights Group International, *The Millennium Development Goals: Helping or Harming Minorities?* (E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.5/2005/WP.4), 19 April 2005.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, The World Bank, Gender and Development Group, *Gender Equality and the Millennium Development Goals*, (April, 2003); UNDP, *The Millennium Development Goals. National Reports: A Look through a Gender Lens*, (May 2003); and UNIFEM, *Pathway to Gender Equality: CEDAW, Beijing and the MDGs*, (January 2005).

16. The Millennium Declaration, in which the MDGs are elaborated, recognises the importance of protecting minority rights. Therein States resolve to “strengthen the capacity of all our countries to implement the principles and practices of democracy and respect for human rights, *including minority rights*”.<sup>6</sup> All efforts to achieve the MDGs must not lose sight of this important aim. This point was noted in the *Human Development Report 2003. Millennium Development Goals: A compact among nations to end human poverty*:

In a number of countries the Goals could be met more easily simply by improving the circumstances of people already better off ... But while this approach may fit the letter of the Goals, it does not fit their spirit. Women, rural inhabitants, *ethnic minorities* and other poor people are typically progressing slower than national averages - or showing no progress - even where countries as a whole are moving towards the Goals.<sup>7</sup>

17. Greater effort is needed to ensure that minorities who are poor benefit fairly from the international commitment to reduce poverty and meet the MDGs by 2015. Governments play the most important role in this regard but it is important to also consider the vital contribution of the United Nations and its agencies. Several MDG initiatives have been supported under the direction of the United Nations Secretary-General and the lead United Nations agency, UNDP. The United Nations has committed to a human rights based approach to development in all of its work and the central place of protection of minorities must not be forgotten. The Millennium Project supports this view with the call to States to ensure that special attention is paid to groups like minorities in the elaboration of poverty reduction strategies, in a manner that is consistent with human rights:

National MDG-based poverty reduction strategies should be consistent with the principle of equality and non-discrimination laid down in applicable international human rights standards. This implies that strategies are designed to reach the entire underserved population, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, regional background or gender. It also implies taking steps to ensure that the most underprivileged and marginalized sections of society can exercise their rights.<sup>8</sup>

18. The Millennium Project can continue to promote this understanding through its own work on the MDGs, including in the pilot projects for the Millennium Villages that aim to apply

---

<sup>6</sup> *Millennium Declaration*, Section V on “Human rights, democracy and good governance”, General Assembly resolution 55/2, (8 September 2000): para. 25, emphasis added.

<sup>7</sup> UNDP, *Human Development Report 2003, Millennium Development Goals: A compact among nations to end human poverty*, New York: UNDP, 2003: p. 3 (emphasis added).

<sup>8</sup> Millennium Project, *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*, New York: 2005, p. 119.

good practice for achieving the MDGs. Similarly, the Millennium Campaign, that reaches out to civil society, can take steps to ensure that marginalized minorities are engaged in national campaigns on the MDGs.

19. The independent expert has commended the UNDP, which takes a lead role within United Nations Country Teams in supporting governments on the MDGs, for its leadership in trying to strengthen United Nations cooperation with minorities. A 2-day meeting was convened by the UNDP in cooperation with the independent expert in October 2006 for an “Initial Consultation on UNDP’s Engagement with Minorities in Development Processes”. The meeting brought together UNDP representatives from several Country Teams to review the UNDP’s cooperation with marginalized minority groups in the practice areas of poverty reduction/MDGs, good governance and crisis prevention and recovery. The lessons learned from existing cooperation with indigenous peoples were also considered. The participants at that meeting made clear that UNDP can better integrate consideration of minority rights into the guidance and support it offers to governments on the MDGs. They agreed that elaborating a Guidance/Policy Note for its work with minorities would be beneficial. Several other entry points for improved cooperation were also identified. For example, the *MDG Reporting Guidelines* can give more specific recommendations on the collection of data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender and social group. Minorities can be supported to participate in national dialogues on the MDGs. United Nations Country Teams can be offered additional training on how to ensure that minorities benefit from the MDGs.

20. The UNDP’s new Global Human Rights Programme includes a budget line for pilot initiatives with minorities, providing the baseline financial commitment to push forward this important work. In this regard, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) can also play a role. OHCHR staff have expertise on minorities and on human rights based approaches to development and they have recently established a specific unit to focus more of their work on the MDGs. These and other United Nations actors could more effectively pool their resources and expertise to ensure that marginalized minorities are able to achieve the MDGs by 2015.

21. The MDG country reports are one important vehicle for working towards this aim. Notwithstanding the concerns that the MDGs cannot be met at current rates of progress, national and international cooperation to reach the 2015 targets remains a high priority. The Reports offer a space for reflecting on progress to date and identifying priorities for future efforts on the MDGs. Given that many minorities are clearly lagging behind, the MDG country reports should reflect these concerns and translate them into national policy responses. Often this is not the case as evidenced by this review of a selection of MDG country reports below. Table 1 lists some of the positive practice that should be reflected in the MDG Reports and in MDG policies. The review will highlight the good practice where it exists and give recommendations on how States and the international community could be doing better.

**Table 1. Linking Minority Rights and MDGs Strategies**

<b>Key Minority Rights</b>	<b>MDG country reports Response</b>	<b>MDG Policy Response</b>
<b>The right to exist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Description of different ethnic, religious and linguistic groups that live in the country, including by region</li> <li>• Disaggregated data on minorities living in the country, especially for each of the Goals</li> <li>• Additional targets to reduce inequalities experienced by minorities in the MDGs</li> <li>• Discussion of both mainstreamed and targeted policies for minorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved data collection on the situation of minority groups</li> <li>• Additional investment for minority-specific targets to reduce inequalities in the MDGs</li> <li>• Constitutional recognition and protection of minority identities</li> <li>• Investment in minority rights training for law enforcement officials and other public sector employees</li> </ul>
<b>The right to non-discrimination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of the inequalities faced by minorities in the country</li> <li>• Provide disaggregated data by gender and social group for each of the Goals</li> <li>• Discussion of the structural and social barriers faced by minorities due to discrimination</li> <li>• Discussion of national laws and policies in place to address discrimination against minorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of a National Action Plan on tackling all forms of discrimination</li> <li>• Disaggregation of data by gender and social group</li> <li>• Use of impact assessments for proposed MDGs strategies to evaluate benefits or harm to minorities</li> <li>• Review and strengthening of national laws on non-discrimination</li> </ul>
<b>The right to cultural identity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of different cultural views of development policy as may be held by minorities, especially in relation to livelihoods and use of land</li> <li>• Discussion of access to education policy for minorities (e.g. mother tongue education)</li> <li>• Translation of MDG country reports into minority languages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with minority representatives on cultural impacts of MDGs strategies</li> <li>• Government openness to alternative viewpoints on development priorities and processes</li> <li>• Adoption of culturally appropriate mechanisms for improving access to education and health for minorities and supporting livelihoods of minorities</li> <li>• Translation of MDGs information into minority languages and to minority media outlets</li> </ul>
<b>The right to participate in public life</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of consultation processes for MDG strategies, e.g. how minorities have been involved in these processes</li> <li>• Discussion of minority representation at national and local governance levels</li> <li>• Discussion of distribution of MDGs-related resources to local governance level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of national bodies on minority issues</li> <li>• Engagement of minority representatives in MDGs policy dialogue at national and local levels</li> <li>• Support to minority representatives to participate in national dialogues on MDGs-related strategies</li> <li>• Information and outreach plan to inform and involve minorities in the MDGs</li> <li>• Affirmative action policies to increase minority employment in public services and representation in local governance</li> </ul>

## II. MDG COUNTRY REPORTS REVIEW

22. Minorities exist in each of the countries examined and in many cases those minorities are economically, socially and/or politically marginalized. In the case of donor countries, minorities are present in countries with which they have development cooperation activities (as well as in their own countries). The imperative for considering the particular situation of minorities in MDG strategies is high for all of the countries considered here.

23. Ethnic or linguistic minorities are mentioned in only 19 of the 50 MDG country reports reviewed. Religious minorities are mentioned in only four of the MDG country reports and in only two of these Reports are

inequalities experienced by members of particular religious minorities noted (in Nepal and Thailand). An additional 10 reports mention only indigenous peoples without identifying any other minority groups. The degree to which minorities are mentioned varies widely, with some Reports providing a good range of information under several of the Goals and providing disaggregated data. In other cases, minorities are

mentioned only in the background section describing the national population but without particular attention to their situation in relation to the Goals.

### Box 1: Where are minorities?

- *Only 38 per cent of the MDG reports examined mentioned minorities or 'ethnic groups' at least once. In most cases, minorities were mentioned only briefly and without indicators on their progress towards the MDGs.*
- *Only 11 of the MDG Country Reports reviewed mention minorities under four or more of the Goals.*

24. Given the length of the MDG Reports, it is difficult for authors to go into great detail about any policies and programmes but some reports do make a good effort to give a broader and considered picture of the situation of marginalized minorities. This is the case in 11 of the 50 MDG country reports that discuss the situation of minorities under 4 or more of the Goals (these are: Brazil, Bulgaria, Ecuador, Laos, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, Peru, the Philippines, Venezuela and Vietnam). No Country Report discusses minorities under each of the 8 Goals; the most is under 6 Goals by Mexico (for indigenous peoples) and Vietnam (for ethnic minorities).

25. Brazil's MDG Report acknowledges that "inequality in Brazil is also related to race, affecting blacks and mulattos more intensely...86% of those in the most privileged class were white, while 65% of the poorest were blacks or mulattos" (Goal 1). The report goes on to highlight the particular challenges faced by Afro-Brazilians in accessing education (Goal 2), including for the girl child (Goal 3); accessing health care (Goal 6); and in securing adequate housing, where "The most affected social groups are the poor and the afro-descendant population, who live in areas with higher levels of inadequate housing and do not have access to credit for housing purposes" (Goal 7).

26. Bulgaria's MDG Report gives extensive attention to Roma and ethnic Turks, who are 10 times and 4 times respectively more likely to be poor than ethnic Bulgarians (Goal 1). The lower level of literacy and schooling of these groups are noted (Goal 2), as are the higher rates of child mortality (Goal 4) and higher rates of contraction of tuberculosis (Goal 6).

27. Ecuador's MDG Report provides many examples in relation to indigenous peoples but only briefly notes the Afro-Ecuadorian population (in respect of a programme entitled PRODEPINE that address poverty for these two groups) (Goal 1). The higher level of child mortality amongst indigenous peoples is described (Goal 4), along with higher rates of tuberculosis (Goal 6) and lower levels of education amongst indigenous girls (Goal 3). The important role of indigenous peoples in helping secure protection for the environment (Goal 7) is noted.

28. The MDG Report for Laos reports that "poverty is much more widespread in rural and mountainous area where most of the ethnic groups live" (Goal 1). The challenges of accessing education for ethnic minorities is also discussed, given that Lao is the language of instruction and the girl child often faces cultural practices that limit her educational opportunities (Goal 2 and 3). The poor accessibility for ethnic minorities to health facilities (Goal 5) and the higher rates of tuberculosis and malaria (Goal 6) that they experience is also cited as a priority area of concern.

### **Box 2: Minorities and the MDG Country Reports at a Glance**

- *19 out of 50 reports mention minorities or 'ethnic groups'; an additional 10 reports mention only indigenous peoples without identifying any other minority groups. Only 2 reports discuss the situation of marginalized religious minorities.*
- *17 reports mention minorities in connection with Goal 1 on poverty reduction. A further 4 reports do not mention minorities but do disaggregate poverty data by region which conceivably could be used as a proxy for specific territorially concentrated groups.*
- *19 reports mention minorities in connection with Goal 2 on universal primary education. Only 11 countries mention minorities under both Goals 1 and 2.*
- *7 reports give attention to the situation of minority girls/women under Goal 3.*
- *10 reports give attention to the situation of health and/or health care access for minorities under Goal 4.*
- *5 reports give attention to minorities and maternal health under Goal 5.*
- *14 reports give attention to minorities when discussing Goal 6.*
- *12 reports give attention to minorities when discussing Goal 7.*
- *Only one report mentions minorities under Goal 8, in this case (Sudan) in relation to youth employment and combating discrimination.*
- *Only 11 MDG Country Reports discuss the situation of minorities under 4 or more of the Goals (these are: Brazil, Bulgaria, Ecuador, Laos, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, Peru, the Philippines, Venezuela and Vietnam). No Country Report discusses minorities under each of the 8 Goals (the most is 6).*
- *12 reports provide at least one example of data disaggregated by ethnicity. Another 13 reports provide at least some data by region, which could be used as a proxy measure.*

29. The Malaysia MDG Report provided extensive disaggregation of data along Malaysia's three main ethnic communities: the Bumiputera (Malays and other indigenous groups), Chinese, and Indians. The report indicates that "Ethnic differences remain marked (poverty incidence in 2002 being 7.3 per cent for Bumiputera, 1.5 per cent for Chinese, and 1.9 per cent for Indians), but at a much lower level of incidence of poverty than previously. The vast majority of remaining poor households are Bumiputera, with a significant proportion of these being the Orang Asli and the indigenous communities of Sabah and Sarawak." (Goal 1). The report emphasizes the importance of reducing ethnic disparities in attainment of reduced child and maternal mortality (Goal 4 and 5); identifies ethnic differentials in incidence of HIV/AIDS (Goal 6); and gives details on the provision for minority language schools in Chinese and Tamil (Goal 2).

30. Mexico provides extensive information on the situation of indigenous peoples in the MDG Report. No other minority groups, such as Afro-Mexicans, are discussed. The higher rates of poverty of indigenous peoples are recognized and some programmes to address this are outlined (Goal 1). The report indicates that "40% of the indigenous population of 15 years old has not finished primary school", highlighting the gap in reaching universal primary education (Goal 2). The highest rates of maternal mortality are among the indigenous population (Goal 5) and child mortality for indigenous peoples can be three times higher than the national average in some municipalities (Goal 4). Lower human development is also caused by the use of firewood as fuel among indigenous populations (Goal 7). The government is undertaking specific actions towards indigenous peoples to help overcome high incidence of preventable disease (Goal 6).

31. Nepal's ethnic and social diversity is reflected in its MDG Report. Several groups are named in the report, including Dalits, Muslims, Magar, Newar, Rai, Gurung and Limbu, Janajatis, Tharu and the Tamang. On poverty, the report notes that "caste and ethnicity are important variables that reflect variation in the poverty rate. For instance, the lowest consumption levels are among low caste Dalits with poverty incidence of 46%, Muslims with 41% and hill Janajatis (ethnic communities) with 45%" (Goal 1). The diversity in educational attainment is also detailed, where some ethnic minorities obtain higher than average levels of education and others achieve significantly lower than average levels of education (Goal 2). Information on the levels of immunization are given disaggregated by ethnicity (Goal 4).

32. The MDG Report of Peru gives attention to the situation of indigenous peoples. The Afro-descendant population in Peru is not discussed. The economic exclusion of indigenous peoples is recognized (Goal 1). Indigenous peoples are also reported to have less access to health care in the rural areas where they live (Goal 5) and they are 30 per cent less likely to have access to a measles vaccine (Goal 6). Access to water is also a serious problem: "Access to water and plumbing is much more critical in the 1,450 indigenous forest communities, where only 12% have water supply and 10% have access to plumbing" (Goal 7).

33. The Philippines' MDG Report gives particular attention to education for indigenous peoples. No other ethnic or religious minorities are mentioned in the Report. Projects have been adopted to prioritize education provision in underserved indigenous communities (Goal 2). Literacy programmes for indigenous women and girls have also been adopted (Goal 3). Indigenous peoples are acknowledged to be at higher risk for HIV/AIDS (Goal 6). On sustainable development, "with the Community Based Forest Management Programme



(CBFMP), participation of local communities, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders are strengthened in the protection, management, development and conservation of forestlands and resources” (Goal 7).

34. Venezuela also focuses on indigenous peoples in its MDG Report. The lower levels of education attainment are a priority concern (Goals 2) as are the efforts to ensure housing programmes benefit indigenous children (Goal 4). Higher rates of hunger among indigenous populations are evidenced by the fact that indigenous peoples are over half those attending “popular and communitarian kitchens or canteens [of the 18,520 people attending, 10,845 are indigenous]” (Goal 1). Indigenous communities are also less likely to have access to water or plumbing (Goal 7).

35. The high rates of poverty of ethnic minorities get particular attention in Vietnam’s MDG Report. The report indicates that “Differences in income levels and living standards have increased between...the ethnic minorities and the Kinh people” (Goal 1). Educational enrolment is lower for ethnic minority children and “access to education and training for girls and women from ethnic minority groups in mountainous, remote and isolated regions is more difficult than for boys and men” (Goals 2 and 3). Access to maternal health care is poorest in the regions where minorities live (Goal 5). The need to improve land tenure security for ethnic minorities is a key target and a “number of essential infrastructure projects (transportation, irrigation, water, schools, health clinics) are build [sic] quickly to improve the productive activities and living conditions of ethnic minorities” (Goal 7). The additional Vietnam Development Goals included specific targets for culture of ethnic minorities to “preserve and develop the literacy of ethnic minority languages in areas where ethnic minority becomes the majority” and “increase radio and television broadcasting time and programs in ethnic languages”.

*Disaggregated Data, Targets and Indicators:*

36. The MDGs come with a set of 18 targets and 48 recommended indicators to measure progress towards the targets and Goals. There are five indicators that call for disaggregation of data by sex, mostly in relation to Goal 3. The disaggregation of data by ethnicity is *not* included among the recommended indicators. Without this kind of data, the impact of MDG strategies on different groups cannot be measured accurately. A marginalized ethnic or religious minority group may be experiencing increased levels of poverty as resources are diverted to meet the needs of the ‘less poor’; in the absence of disaggregated data, this negative impact may go unnoticed.

**Box 3: Missing disaggregated data**

- *Only 24 per cent of the MDG reports examined included any data disaggregated by ethnicity.*
- *Several reports did offer some data by region, but over half of the reports failed to provide any disaggregated data that could be used as a proxy for measuring the progress of minorities towards the MDGs.*
- *Several reports indicated plans for data collection reform, which could provide opportunities for the inclusion of ethno-cultural data in future MDG progress reports.*

37. The invisibility of the economic, social and political status of minorities is evidenced also in the MDG Reports reviewed. Only 12 of the reports provide at least one example of data disaggregated by ethnicity. Another 13 reports provide some data by region, which could be used as a proxy measure for minority groups that are territorially concentrated.

38. The lack of disaggregated data by ethnicity is recognized as a weakness and a barrier to effective policy-making in a few reports. Laos' MDG Report admits "Data used in this report are national averages, which hide strong disparities between gender, ethnic minorities, poor and less poor, rural and remote areas". In Botswana, the MDG Report similarly notes:

Aggregate measures of success sometimes mask significant inequalities - geographical, intergenerational, *ethnic*, gender based, etc. Lack of disaggregated indicators of development may mask significant differences among constituencies. It thus makes for inefficient policymaking and disempowers decentralized institutions of governance.  
(emphasis added)

39. Several MDG Reports express a strong commitment on the part of the government to improve data collection in MDG monitoring. There is real scope, therefore, for integrating collection of data by ethnicity into these plans. Tanzania's MDG Report, for example, foresees a "Poverty Monitoring Master Plan [that] will detail a systematic approach for collecting a wide-range of poverty-related information, including: periodic surveys, routine administrative data, poverty research and participatory poverty assessments." According to its 2004 MDG Country Report, Sudan also seeks to overcome gaps in data: "This will mean defining indicators where needed and gathering data so as to assemble comparable and high-quality social indicators".

40. An important innovation in a few of the MDG Reports is the inclusion of minority-specific targets and indicators. Romania's MDG Report includes an additional target under Goal 2 to "reduce illiteracy among the Roma". Thailand has an MDG Plus framework, which strengthens the minimum requirements of the MDGs indicators. According to the MDG Report of Thailand:

The MDG Plus framework improves on the original MDG indicators in three important ways. First, it ensures that the indicators take into account quality information for more advanced monitoring that may be missing from the original MDG indicators. Second, it ensures that the scope of monitoring progress is expanded to measure the benefits to all members of Thai society. Third, it accounts for differences in geographic coverage, as aggregated national indicators may cover up serious regional and *ethnic disparities*.  
(emphasis added)

41. Thailand has MDG Plus indicators focused on regions with the highest proportion of ethnic minorities (i.e. "highland areas, northern provinces and the three southernmost provinces") for Goal 1 on poverty reduction and Goal 4 and 5 on child and maternal mortality.

42. In the Vietnam MDG Report, targets for ethnic minorities are included under the Vietnam Social Development and Poverty Reduction Goals, a set of additional goals outlining specific priorities for Vietnam. Of these, one is to "Develop culture and information to improve

spiritual life of people; preserve culture of ethnic minority groups”, including targets on provision of broadcasting and development of literacy in ethnic minority languages; support to greater participation of ethnic minorities in public administration; ensuring land rights for ethnic minorities; and improved provision of social services (e.g. health, information services) to ethnic minorities.

**Box 4: MDG Plus Targets and Indicators**

*Some States are adding to the existing list of 18 targets and 48 indicators for the MDGs through the adoption of ‘MDG Plus Indicators’. This can include new targets for marginalized minorities, such as:*

- *adding targets for regions in which the poorest minorities live;*
- *adding targets to close the inequality gap between minorities and other groups under specific Goals such as health or education;*
- *adding targets to address the particular challenges of marginalized minorities, e.g. increasing literacy.*

*Goal 1: Poverty Reduction and Elimination of Hunger*

- *Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day.*
- *Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.*

43. 17 of the reports give some consideration to the situation of minorities (or indigenous peoples) under Goal 1. A further four reports do not mention minorities but do disaggregate poverty data by region which could be used as a proxy for territorially concentrated minority groups.

**Box 5: Good practice on poverty reduction**

*Several reports recognized that minorities on average have higher rates of poverty. Some states are taking action, including:*

- *Publishing disaggregated data on poverty;*
- *Undertaking baseline studies on the experiences of poverty by minorities;*
- *Adopting national strategies to reduce poverty for the poorest minorities;*
- *Using affirmative action policies to increase public employment opportunities for minorities.*

44. Poverty, as discussed above, is commonly more acute for persons belonging to minorities than for other groups within a country. This may be due to unequal access to social services; living in remote regions with poor infrastructure; insecure land rights and less access to justice, putting minorities at higher risk of displacement and landlessness. The impact of discrimination is an overarching factor. Discrimination can decrease access to health, education, financial credit, housing and employment - each compounding the likelihood of living in poverty. Due to a lack of disaggregated data, the inequalities experienced by minorities usually are invisible in public policy discourses, where minorities also often lack a strong political voice.

45. About a third of the MDG Reports reviewed recognized that minorities (and/or indigenous peoples) within the country had higher rates of poverty. Kenya, for example, notes in its MDG Report that “Pastoralists are a major vulnerable group as they are always susceptible to droughts and have poor resource endowment”, but does not provide any corresponding data on poverty levels for pastoralists or other ethnic, religious, or linguistic groups. Only nine reports provided some disaggregated poverty data by ethnicity (Belize, Brazil, Bulgaria, Hungary, Malaysia, Namibia, Nepal, Romania, Vietnam). Malaysia stood out for providing a longer-view analysis of poverty reduction by ethnicity, supplying statistical trends since 1970. The Report also indicated that special monitoring is being commissioned to better understand the poverty of particularly marginalized groups; for example “A special Household Income Survey (HIS) to gather information on household income of Bumiputera minorities in Sabah and Sarawak was conducted in 2002”. Thailand also indicated that it has plans to improve its data collection processes on poverty: “A number of tools are required including a poverty map of all regions (with attention to the Northeast and the three southern- most provinces [these are regions with a high proportion of minority groups]) and a more thorough poverty profile of disadvantaged groups that will illustrate areas of most need in a systemic and continuous manner. The Government’s poverty registration will also help to establish and maintain a list of the poor in every province.”

46. The need for targeted poverty reduction programmes for marginalized minorities was also acknowledged in a small number of reports. China’s MDG Report sees that “Reducing the disproportionately high poverty rate among ethnic minorities” is a key challenge and for poverty reduction programmes, “The priority is given to remote mountainous regions, ethnic minorities and extremely poor areas”. Romania has adopted a “national strategy to improve the lives of the Roma population”. Hungary’s MDG Report similarly gives information on the “3 year plan to improve the situation of the Roma”. Vietnam’s MDG Report indicates “more jobs will be created and priority given to ethnic minorities in public employment” and “efforts will be made to continue policy development to support poor ethnic minority people in production, trade, and bringing their produce to market”. A program for loans with subsidized interest is being offered to ethnic minorities in the poorest regions. In Mexico, a special budget aimed at promoting development in indigenous communities has been included in the general budget since 2002.

47. Minorities are virtually absent from the MDG reports from donor countries. As part of its poverty reduction efforts through agriculture, Norway commits to support “Indigenous peoples’ efforts to preserve their culture, realize their rights and participate in development processes.” More generic terms are typically used, with policies targeting the ‘vulnerable’,

‘disadvantaged’ or ‘excluded’.

Switzerland’s “bilateral programmes [on poverty] place a strong focus on advocacy, participation, empowerment and capacity building targeted to disadvantaged and marginalized groups.” The UK Department for International Development (DFID) focuses on ‘social exclusion’ and vulnerable groups in its analysis; although minorities

are not mentioned explicitly, DFID has “established a Working Group on Inequality and Social Exclusion, to help understand the role of inequalities in slowing progress towards both the income and non-income MDGs.” Donor countries should ensure that in their country strategies for development cooperation that details on the situation of minorities, including in relation to the MDG-strategies supported, is provided in full.

**Box 6: Donors can do more for minorities**

*Minorities are not mentioned in-depth in any of the donor MDG reports reviewed. While these reports do note the importance of focusing on the most ‘vulnerable’ groups, none have adequately acknowledged that minorities may face particular barriers to achieving the MDGs.*

48. Only a few of the MDG Reports reviewed paid attention to minorities and hunger. Ecuador’s MDG Report notes “Malnutrition affects mainly rural and indigenous populations”. Although Rwanda’s MDG Report does not mention minorities, the report does recognize the need to “Include the development of adequate information systems to collect reliable data and identify food insecure and vulnerable groups. This could also provide useful information for targeted activities.”

49. The MDG on hunger should be sensitive to the integral links between many minority cultures and food production, devising strategies to ensure this is protected in the long-term. Food has certain cultural aspects, associated with how a community or people grows, prepares and eats it. Cultural acceptability is a core aspect of the right to adequate food.<sup>9</sup> When a community’s food-growing capacity is constrained or their ability to secure their traditional food is curtailed, elements of their cultures may also be threatened. Some cultural sensitivity was in evidence in the MDG Report for Belize. The Government of Belize is supporting “Programs to ensure that within the context of their cultural and personal preferences the Mayan diet is balanced to ensure adequate consumption of basic nutritional substances, particularly in the case of children.”

*Goal 2. Achieve universal primary education*

- *Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.*

50. Minorities are mentioned more under Goal 2 on education than under any other Goal. Nineteen MDG Reports mention minorities in connection with Goal 2. Persons belonging to minorities face several barriers in accessing education equally, including: lack of mother-tongue education; poor provision of schools and qualified teachers in regions where minorities live; prohibitive costs of school fees that disproportionately impact on minorities (as the poorest groups); curricula that do not reflect community priorities for learning; and discrimination by teachers and/or pupils.

---

<sup>9</sup> CESCR general comment No. 12 on the Right to Food (E/C.12/1999/5, para. 11).

51. Several MDG Reports recognise some of these difficulties. Botswana's MDG Report discusses that there are "groups in society - ethnic minorities, remote area dwellers, religious minorities etc. - that face particular access [to education] problems of the type that generate significant horizontal inequalities". The Report identifies increasing attendance in schools of children from Nomadic communities as a major challenge. Namibia's MDG Reports indicates "Although the policy framework is in place, greater effort is needed to provide quality education for children of marginalized groups such as the San, Ovahimba, farm workers, and those living under extreme poverty". In Brazil, the MDG Report indicates that "Young whites aged 15 to 17 in secondary education have almost double the attendance of young blacks and mulattos. In higher education, this difference increases fourfold"; in response, the "government's focus in the education area [seeks to] to address the lack of an education policy focusing on diversity and citizenship, particularly directed towards specific social segments, such as afro-descendants and indigenous populations." In Mexico, statistics show that "39% of the indigenous population between 5 and 24 years old do not go to school. Additionally, 40% of the indigenous population of 15 years old has not finished primary school". To help overcome these inequalities, the government has developed the "Programa de Cursos Comunitarios y el de Atención Educativa a Población Indígena". The serious problem of segregation of Roma in schooling is acknowledged in Hungary's MDG Report. In response:

The Ministry of Education has launched a programme that financially supports the preparation of Roma children for integrated education. The aim of the programme is to provide assistance to the schools to eliminate the separate classes, and to enable pupils, with the help of tutoring, to participate in integrated classes. The modification of the Law on Public Education will in turn review the present system of directing children to special education schools.

52. Romania is also focusing on Roma's access to education through the "Strategy for Stimulating the Participation in Education of Roma Children and Youth". Moreover, the MDG Report includes a separate target under Goal 2: "Target 7: Increase the literacy rate of the Roma population".

53. Several reports discuss minority language education. Kazakhstan has adopted the "Education for All" approach in its efforts to reach Goal 2. Ethnic minorities are identified as a vulnerable group in need of support to access education. The MDG Report indicates that Kazakhstan provides education in five languages (Kazakh, Russian, Uigur, Uzbek, and Tajik) and gives details on the number of children being taught using these languages and public expenditure on education by region (Table 2.D and Table 2.1). The MDG Report acknowledges, however, that "The provision of teacher training for teachers in ethnic minority schools (Uigur, Uzbek) is currently not meeting actual needs. The provision of textbooks is also still insufficient. To

#### **Box 7: Good practice on education**

Minorities are mentioned most frequently under Goal 2 on education. Some of the good practices noted include:

- *Offering education in minority languages;*
- *Providing disaggregated data on children able to access education in their mother tongue;*
- *Adopting additional MDG targets for minorities in relation to education;*
- *Reviewing national laws to help eliminate discrimination against minority children in access to education.*

sustain quality in minority schools, allocation of significant funding is required.” The MDG Report of Laos notes “Education is in the Lao language. This can be very difficult for children in non-Lao speaking ethnic minority groups”; indeed the ethnic disparities in education levels are acknowledged in the report, albeit without disaggregated data. One of the stated objectives under Goal 2 in Nepal is “Ensuring the rights of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to quality basic and primary education through their mother tongue”.

54. In Malaysia, the constitution recognizes the existence of “two types of primary schools in Malaysia, the national and national-type (Tamil and Chinese) schools. The medium of instruction in national schools is Bahasa Malaysia, while in national-type schools the medium of instruction is Tamil or Chinese, although Bahasa Malaysia is a compulsory subject.” The MDG Report indicates that this approach helps support “social unity” and integration. The Vietnam MDG Report notes, “for ethnic minority children, language as they start school is a challenge”. The report goes on to say, “ethnic language training is organized in 25 provinces and the Ministry of Training and Education publishes text books in eight ethnic languages”. Specific data on the number of minority children able to access some mother tongue language training is also provided.

*Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women*

- *Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and in all levels of education no later than 2015.*

55. Eliminating gender disparity in access to education will be much more difficult for minority girls and women than for others. This is because of “intersectional discrimination”, or the compound impact of discrimination based on gender and discrimination based on ethnic, religious or linguistic identity. Only seven of the MDG reports give any attention to the situation of minority girls/women under Goal 3. This is indicative of the high levels of ‘invisibility’ and marginalization of minority girls and women. Moreover, only two reports provide disaggregated data by ethnicity and gender for education: Brazil and Kosovo. The Kosovo MDG Report, for example, indicates: “While 97% of Albanian girls, 99% of Serb girls, and 69% of girls of other minorities attend primary schools, only 56% of Albanian and 40% of non-Serb minority girls attend secondary schools”. Minority girls may find it more difficult because of language barriers to integrate into schools and may have less familial support to their education because parents (especially mothers) similarly lack the necessary language skills to assist their children. There may also be particular cultural norms in relation to the role of women and girls in some minority communities that restrict their equal opportunities for education. This problem was highlighted in the MDG Report of Laos and of Ethiopia. The Ethiopian MDG Report goes on to say, “Lack of data does not allow for such an important issue to be dealt with in greater depth”. Opportunities for minority girls to access education are also closely linked to higher poverty rates of minorities, with minority girl children being more likely to remain at home to support the family’s welfare.

56. In the Philippines, the MDG Report indicates that some important steps have been taken to address these issues: “The government also expanded alternative non-formal education systems for indigenous communities such as Magbasa Kita (Let Us Read) that teaches women and girls and parents of working children to read. School-based child-minding centres were also set up in the cultural communities so older children, mostly girls of school age who take care of younger siblings, can attend classes despite baby-sitting chores.”

**Box 8: Invisibility of minority women**

*Only 4 per cent of reports reviewed provided any data disaggregated by gender and ethnicity. The invisibility of minority women is reinforced by this lack of information on their progress towards the Goals. Some good practice included:*

- *Establishing non-formal literacy programmes targeted for women;*
- *Adopting affirmative action programmes to increase representation of minority women in public service employment.*

57. Many MDG Reports take a wider view of gender equality measures beyond the narrow target on education under Goal 3. Of the reports reviewed a small number discussed gender equality policies that engage minority women. In Nepal, “a program of affirmative discrimination will be formulated and implemented to give due representation to women, Dalit and ethnic groups in the public administration”. Similarly, in May 2002, the Government of Brazil introduced the National Program for Affirmative Action under which “the agencies of the Federal Public Administration must establish participation quotas for blacks, women and people with disabilities in filling the DAS [high-level civil service] positions.” Also in Brazil the First National Conference on Women’s Policies was held in July 2004 and included participation of indigenous and black representatives.

58. It should be noted that gender inequality does not always relate to women. In Brazil, there are small inequalities in access to primary school by gender or race (3% difference by race) but it is black or mulatto *males* who are least likely to access secondary and higher education: “although women are present in higher education numbers regardless of race, among the black and mulatto population the ratio increases: it leaps to 125.9%, reaching 143.3% in higher education.” The MDG Report attributes this to “the even more increased dropout of black and mulatto men to enter the labour market, and to the phenomenon of discrimination, which affects blacks and mulattos of both genders and ends up moving them away from school.”

Goals 4, 5, 6. Reduce child mortality. Improve maternal health. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

- *Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.*
- *Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.*
- *Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.*
- *Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.*



59. Goals 4, 5 and 6 address various aspects of improving health and health care provision. Nine of the MDG Reports reviewed give attention to the situation of health and/or health care access for minorities under Goal 4; five reports give attention to minorities and maternal health under Goal 5; and 13 give attention to minorities when discussing Goal 6. The poor attention to minorities under these Goals is striking given that health and sanitation conditions are often worse in regions where minorities live. Existing infrastructure for medical services may be more limited in remote or impoverished areas where minorities are settled. In hospitals, persons belonging to minorities may face discrimination and a lack of medical professionals able to communicate in their languages. The cultural practices of minorities are also often unfamiliar to mainstream medicine, which may inhibit the effective prescription of, for example, pre- and post-natal care.

**Box 9: Good practice on health care**

*Several reports noted that minorities experience disproportionate rates of child and maternal mortality and of other diseases, including HIV/AIDS. In response, some states reported their efforts to address these inequalities, including:*

- *Establishing MDG Plus Indicators on health for the main regions in which marginalized minorities live;*
- *Creating a Community Health Mediator targeted for minority communities.*

60. Some of the MDG Reports recognize these factors. In Thailand, the MDG Report acknowledges that regions with a high proportion of minorities have less health care: “There are difficulties accessing primary health care in the North due to the mountainous terrain. In the southernmost provinces, complexities based on gender, culture, religion and language can make access to or use of primary health care difficult.” In response, the Government of Thailand has elaborated additional targets under Goals 4 and 5 to reduce by half, between 2005 and 2015, the under 5 mortality rate and the maternal mortality rate “in highland areas, selected northern provinces and three southernmost provinces”. Peru also seeks to prioritize health care assistance in areas where indigenous peoples live. In Romania, one measure adopted to help reduce ethnic disparities in health is the creation of the office of Roma Community Health Mediator. Malaysia’s MDG Report indicates success in reducing ethnic inequalities on child mortality and maternal mortality.

61. Several reports recorded that minorities (or indigenous peoples) have higher rates of contracting tuberculosis or HIV/AIDS. Malaysia’s MDG Report provides disaggregated data by ethnicity on HIV/AIDS, acknowledging that different ethnic groups face different risk factors and modes of contracting HIV/AIDS. In the Philippines, indigenous peoples are identified as a high risk group for HIV/AIDS and the MDG Report pledges to give priority attention, *inter alia*, to areas where indigenous peoples live. In Nicaragua, the programmes for tuberculosis control will consider “interculturality” and give particular attention to indigenous peoples.

*Goal 7. Ensure environmental sustainability*

- *Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and program and reverse the loss of environmental resources.*
- *Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water.*
- *Have achieved, by 2020, a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.*

62. The issues of water access, adequate housing and land rights attached to Goal 7 are all priority concerns for minorities. Persons belonging to minorities can make up a significant proportion of slum dwellers where they have been forcibly displaced or where they have migrated to cities in search of improved economic opportunities not available in their regions. Forced displacement has also been used as a means of improving access to social services for minorities; there is a risk that similar strategies will be used in the name of achieving the MDGs. Minorities also often lack legal entitlement to the land and houses they inhabit, making the individual or collective land/property rights of minorities particularly weak. Where governments have competing priorities for use of certain land, this can put minorities into conflict with the authorities. The MDG Report for Botswana describes such a conflict between the government and the minority indigenous Basawara people over land.

63. There are 12 MDG Reports reviewed that give attention to minorities when discussing some aspect of Goal 7. Several reports focused on land. The Vietnam MDG Report stipulates an additional ‘Vietnam Development Goal’ focused on minorities, which includes a target to “Ensure that land use rights are given to communities or individuals in ethnic mountainous areas”. One of the policies implemented to date is the allocation of land to ethnic minorities to help address food insecurity: “by 2003, about 10,500 households had received over 5,000 hectares”. In Belize, only 69% of the Maya have secure land tenure and the MDG Report indicates that “Security of tenure among the Mayan population requires aggressive action”. In Nicaragua, the government has adopted a “Law of Indigenous Territories Demarcation” to help address land security. In the Philippines, through the Community Based Forest Management Programme (CBFMP), the “participation of local communities, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders are strengthened in the protection, management, development and conservation of forestlands and resources.”

64. A couple of MDG Reports looked at housing access for minorities. In Brazil, “The most affected social groups are the poor and the afro-descendant population, who live in areas with higher levels of inadequate housing and do not have access to credit for housing purposes”. According to the MDG Report for Brazil, the federal government has responded to this issue through “several programs and actions directed towards the diversification of the forms of access to housing, such as:... building of houses for residents in land reform settlements, indigenous and *quilombola* (slave descendant) communities, in addition to the supply of direct subsidies to the poorer population”. The MDG Report of Kosovo notes that “The issue of living conditions of the Roma minority also must be monitored” and suggests that particular attention be given to “the desperate living conditions in Roma IDP camps in several locations across Kosovo”.

65. The issue of access to water was discussed by Peru, Venezuela and Vietnam. In Peru, there is a serious deficiency in “indigenous forest communities, where only 12% have water supply and 10% have access to plumbing”. Vietnam’s MDG Report makes a commitment to ensure continued “investment in essential infrastructure (...irrigation, water..)” for ethnic minority regions.

66. The fact that country reports do or do not mention minorities (or indigenous peoples) cannot be taken as indicative of the actual activities undertaken within that country or through development cooperation to help minorities reach the MDGs. The absence of information on minorities is, however, a weakness of MDG reporting and only perpetuates the invisibility of the situation of persons belonging to minorities. Where country reports do mention minorities, this gives representatives of those communities a greater opportunity to hold their governments to account for commitments made. The inclusion of minority-specific time-bound targets will strengthen the reports even further. Country reporting is therefore an important tool for minority groups. As the review here of selected reports indicates, there is much more that governments and the UNDP (as lead supporting agency) and other stakeholders can do to ensure the MDGs are a vehicle for inclusion of minorities and not a cause of further exclusion.

### III. GLOBAL INITIATIVES ON MINORITIES AND THE MDGS

67. The integration of minorities into the MDG country reports is weak but there are a number of MDG initiatives that aim to bring greater attention to the situation of minorities. A sample of global, regional and national initiatives is highlighted here.

68. Decade for Roma Inclusion: Under the Decade for Roma Inclusion initiative, participating States pledge to achieve stated goals for the improvement of the socio-economic status of the Roma by 2015 to coincide with progress towards the MDGs.<sup>10</sup> There are currently nine participating States: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia. Roma representatives have inputted into the process from the early stages and have been involved in the international Steering Committee of the Decade and preparation of country action plans. The capacity of Roma and governments to make this Decade a success still needs to be strengthened, and the supporting international agencies, including the World Bank, UNDP and the Open Society Institute are working to this end. A key component of the Decade is improving the collection of disaggregated data on the status of Roma to help monitor progress made towards the goals in each country strategy.

69. Inter-Agency Consultation on Race in Latin America (IAC): The IAC is a consultative group of seven international development institutions working together to address issues of racial discrimination, social exclusion, and related concerns of African-descendant populations in Latin America. The IAC has recently published a report on *Incorporating Race and Ethnicity into the Millennium Development Goals*,<sup>11</sup> which highlights the inequalities experienced by

---

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.romadecade.com>.

<sup>11</sup> Edward Telles, “Incorporating Race and Ethnicity into the UN Millennium Development Goals”, *Race Report*, (Washington, D.C.: Inter-American Dialogue, November 2006).

Afro-descendants in the application of strategies to achieve the MDGs in Latin America. One of the findings of the report was “The ability of Latin American States to monitor progress toward MDGs is generally greater for indigenous peoples than for blacks and mulattos because of greater data availability.” This issue is reflected in the regional *Brasilia Declaration: Proposal for Implementing the Millennium Development Goals*, the outcome of the *Brasilia International Conference on the MDGs in Latin America and the Caribbean*, in 2003. The conference was cosponsored by members of the IAC and called upon governments to adapt “the Millennium Development Goals to the specific local conditions of each country, including dimensions such as equity, *ethnicity*, gender and those arising from local diversity” (emphasis added).

70. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII): the PFII has made the MDGs a key focus of its programme of work in recent sessions. In 2006, for example, the special theme for the session was *The Millennium Development Goals and Indigenous Peoples: Redefining the Goals*, from which emerged an extensive number of substantive recommendations for United Nations agencies and governments. Several important consultations, reports and recommendations have emerged through the PFII’s efforts, such as the *International Expert Group Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals, Indigenous Participation and Good Governance* (New York, 11-13 January 2006), (E/C.19/2006/7); the *Meeting on Indigenous Peoples and Indicators of Well-being* (Ottawa, 22 and 23 March 2006) (E/CN.19/2006/CRP.3); and the *Workshop on Data Collection and Disaggregation for Indigenous Peoples* (19 to 21 January 2004) (E/C.19/2004/2). The PFII also co-organized a 2-day conference with the World Bank in May 2006 on *Poverty and Indigenous Peoples*.

71. The United Nations Working Group on Minorities has also made the MDGs a focus of recent discussions at its sessions in 2004 and 2005. The Working Group on Minorities, however, does not have the same resources or permanent secretariat at its disposal to organize events on the scale of the PFII.

72. World Health Organization (WHO): The regional body of the WHO, the Pan-American Health Organisation, organized an important workshop on health, ethnicity and the MDGs in Latin America and the Caribbean. The workshop sought in particular to raise awareness of the situation of Afro-descendants in attaining the MDGs related to health. The Government of Brazil’s Special Secretariat for Racial Equality (SEPPIR) and OHCHR were co-organisers. This workshop was held in Brasilia, Brazil from December 1-3, 2004. The participants, including senior health officials and civil society representatives, reminded governments of “the importance of carrying out actions that take into consideration the special cultural, socioeconomic, political, and religious characteristics of Afro-Latin American communities, indigenous peoples, and other ethnic groups as one of the fundamental steps to attaining the Millennium Goals.”<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> Gender, Ethnicity and Health Unit, Pan-American Health Organisation, *Working to Achieve Ethnic Equity in Health: Ensuring that the MDGs Include an Ethnic Perspective in Latin America and the Caribbean*, (Washington, DC: Pan American Health Organization, Regional Office of the World Health Organization, May 2005): p. 14.

73. The Millennium Campaign: the Millennium Campaign aims to mobilize political support for the Millennium Declaration among developed and developing countries and to encourage civil society engagement with the MDGs.<sup>13</sup> One of their initiatives has been to work with religious groups, including religious minorities, to engage them further on the MDGs. In cooperation with the World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP), they have developed a toolkit to engage religious leaders and their communities around the MDGs. The multi-religious toolkit, “Faith in Action, Toward the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals,” introduces the MDGs and the key role of faith communities in advocacy and action to advance development.

74. Civil society initiatives: Many NGOs and networks of NGOs are mobilizing to raise awareness of the MDGs and to advocate for particular attention to minorities in this context. In Ethiopia, the Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia is one of the leading NGOs in the Poverty Action Network for Ethiopia (PANE), established in March 2004. The PANE has over 70 institutional members and aims to coordinate the involvement of civil society groups and to empower citizens for active participation in the design, implementation and monitoring of poverty reduction policies. They have elaborated a system of Citizen Report Cards to monitor and evaluate the government’s poverty reduction strategy, the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (SDPRP). The success of the initiative is recognized in the government’s invitation to PANE to comment on the draft SDPRP II.

75. An international consultation on caste-based discrimination resulted in the Kathmandu Declaration in December 2004.<sup>14</sup> The Declaration offers many recommendations for ensuring that governments and development agencies “Pay particular attention to the needs of Dalit and other outcaste communities in the devising and implementation of strategies and plans to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.” In particular, they recommend that actors “disaggregate the data on progress achieved on each and every MDG for Dalits.”

76. Global Rights, an international NGO, has been training young leaders from minority populations to use the MDGs to show how minority communities are disadvantaged in realizing rights integral to reducing poverty, specifically the right to education, and to advocate amongst international and local decision makers to implement policy reforms that will improve their ability to realize their rights. The program seeks to ensure that the benefits of poverty reduction strategies are not restricted to privileged and dominant communities, but are extended to the most marginalized populations around the world.

77. The international NGO, Minority Rights Group International has been advocating on the MDGs since 2001, and has advised the UNDP, the EU and the Swiss Agency for Development

---

<sup>13</sup> See <http://www.millenniumcampaign.org>.

<sup>14</sup> See <http://www.indianet.nl/kathmandudalitdeclaration.pdf>.

Cooperation on strategies for integrating minorities into the MDGs. MRG also produced a review report on the MDGs at the request of the United Nations Working Group on Minorities.<sup>15</sup>

#### IV. POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPERS (PRSPS) AND MINORITIES

78. The PRSPs are much more detailed documents than MDG country reports so they can give a more accurate picture of how governments are addressing poverty and inequality, including across groups. Some good baseline research has been completed on the inclusion of minorities and indigenous peoples in selected PRSPs. Notably, this research has not been undertaken by the World Bank or IMF, the two institutions with direct roles in the elaboration, monitoring, implementation and evaluation of the PRSPs. The two key studies, by the ILO and by the international NGO Minority Rights Group International, both conclude that minorities and indigenous peoples are inadequately reflected in PRSPs, including in the consultation processes to draft PRSPs.

79. In 2005, the ILO published *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples: An Ethnic Audit of Selected Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers*.<sup>16</sup> The report examined 14 PRSPs from various regions and found that PRSPs better reflected strategies to address the structural causes of indigenous and tribal peoples' poverty and exclusion where: "legal frameworks recognize indigenous peoples' group rights; institutions and policies respecting and accommodating cultural diversity have been developed; [and] indigenous peoples have organized and mobilized for political change."<sup>17</sup> There was a wide variety of practice across regions as well. In Africa, the report found that while increasing efforts were made to address the concerns of pastoralists, other groups, such as hunters and gathers, were neglected. In Asia, the PRSPs range from a total neglect of the issue (Sri Lanka) to passing references to it (Pakistan) to a clear concern about enhancing the living conditions and status of tribal peoples or ethnic indigenous minorities (Viet Nam and Cambodia)".<sup>18</sup> In Latin America, there was high priority given to indigenous peoples in many of the PRSPs (since the report did not examine afro-descendants the comparative attention to the two groups cannot be assessed). A particularly interesting finding is the diversity in the way that indigenous peoples' poverty is understood:

Some PRSPs consider societal discrimination and past and present ill-conceived development policies as responsible for indigenous [poverty and marginalization]. Other PRSPs ascribe the disadvantaged status of indigenous and tribal peoples to their

---

<sup>15</sup> See Minority Rights Group International, *The Millennium Development Goals: Helping or Harming Minorities?* (E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.5/2005/WP.4), 19 April 2005.

<sup>16</sup> Manuela Tomei, *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples: An Ethnic Audit of Selected Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers*, (Geneva: ILO, 2005).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. v.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

“backward” lifestyles and institutions, as well as to their physical remoteness, dispersion and/or non-sedentary lifestyles that make investments costly and inefficient.<sup>19</sup>

80. The starting point for understanding the causes of minorities’ poverty can influence greatly the policy response of government. Where the full range of structural, social, political and environmental causes can be identified, PRSPs will be better suited to effectively tackle poverty of minorities.

81. This was a clear message in the report published by Minority Rights Group International, *PRSPs, Minorities and Indigenous Peoples: An Issues Paper*. The paper found that minorities and indigenous peoples are rarely consulted in the elaboration of PRSPs: of the 37 PRSPs examined, only 21 mention minority groups. Moreover, “even when they are invited to participate, or are consulted, their input is often misinterpreted or manipulated in such a way that does not effectively address these groups’ needs or rights. Instead, the result of their engagement too often ends up addressing the government (or IFIs’) existing development plan.”<sup>20</sup> The emphasis on critiquing the quality of participation is key: it is not enough to tick the box on participation of civil society if that participation is not genuine and meaningful. For minorities this means ensuring that issues like “linguistic and cultural differences, as well as geographic remoteness and dispersion” as well as “active knowledge of their political rights” are integrated into PRSP participation strategies.<sup>21</sup>

82. The weakness of civil society participation in the PRSPs is not unique to minorities. Effective participation processes are costly, time-intensive and may not be able to reach consensus on priorities for poverty reduction. Including minorities may make this even more difficult. Nevertheless, minorities have been identified as key potential beneficiaries of the PRSPs. This is evidenced in the monitoring and evaluation guidelines for the World Bank and IMF staff when conducting the Joint Staff Assessment (JSA) of completed PRSPs. In the JSA, staff are to determine whether “ethnic minorities” have participated in the drafting process for the PRSP.<sup>22</sup> A quick glance at a few JSAs, however, reveals that this issue is commonly omitted from the evaluation. Even where PRSPs neglect to give any attention to ethnic minorities, the corresponding JSAs rarely raise this point.

83. Only a portion of the countries with MDG reports also have PRSPs. Of the good practice examples in MDG country reports highlighted in section III of this report, only Laos, Nepal and Vietnam have drafted PRSPs. These will be reviewed briefly to highlight some good practice in each and to offer some recommendations for strengthening the PRSPs from a minority rights

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>20</sup> Alexandra Hughes, *PRSPs, Minorities and Indigenous Peoples: An Issues Paper*, (London: Minority Rights Group International, 2005): p. 55.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., pp. 55-56.

<sup>22</sup> World Bank, *Guidelines for World Bank and IMF Staffs for Joint Staff Advisory Notes (JSAN) for Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers*, p. 5.

perspective. It is acknowledged however that much work remains to be done to assist marginalized minorities in each of the countries below and further dialogue is required with these and other States to ensure that PRSP commitments are translated into concrete, human rights-based progress for minorities.

84. The PRSP of Laos PDR, entitled the *National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy* (NGPES) (2004), is based upon the *thammasat* way of development, described as a harmonious “triangular” approach to development focusing on the balance of economic growth, social/cultural development, and conservation of natural resources. The PRSP from the outset emphasizes the importance of the “the spiritual and cultural life of the Lao multi-ethnic population” and the desire to safeguard “the country’s social, cultural, economic and political identity”. The PRSP notes that “poor people are primarily ethnic minority swidden cultivators” and recognizes that “Ethnicity and vulnerability are directly related, as certain ethnic groups have a limited range of assets and mechanisms to manage them.” The PRSP makes several references to the situation of ethnic minorities in relation to health, education and poverty reduction. It is surprising that inequality experienced by ethnic minorities is not named specifically as a cross-cutting issue, in contrast to gender inequality which is recognized as cross-cutting, particularly given that the PRSP notes, “Generally, ethnic disparities are greater than gender disparities”. Nevertheless, “cultural and spiritual enhancement; national identity and cultural heritage” are considered cross-sector concerns, albeit without clarifying precisely what this means for development practice.

85. Several important themes run through the PRSP, including the need for participatory development, strong rule of law systems and good governance. The government seeks to “ensure justice for the remote and disadvantaged peoples” as a top priority. It hopes to address the language barriers to the legal system and “is discussing the best means to provide legal assistance for the multi-cultural (and multi-lingual) population...The provision of translation services by the Ministry of Justice is necessary, even if the variety of different languages in our country makes the financial costs very high.” The recognition that realizing rights for the most marginalized is sometimes costly but nevertheless necessary is vital to the success of the PRSP. On the issue of good governance, the PRSP notes the need for “creating a productive and motivated professional civil service adhering to high ethical standards”; this could be supported, for example, through measures on non-discrimination.

86. Participation in planning, monitoring and evaluation is mentioned repeatedly throughout the document. It is never clear whether efforts have been made to ensure that ethnic minorities specifically have participated, (the only indication is that “various segments of the Lao multi-ethnic population” have been consulted) although “community-led decision-making” is emphasized. It may be useful to monitor how minorities are participating therein. The government’s pledge for “Improving communication with the people, especially in the remote areas” will be helpful for many ethnic minorities.

87. The document is weak on disaggregated data by ethnic or religious group but does disaggregate poverty data and school enrolment by province. Ethno-linguistic data on literacy rates are also provided.



88. For poverty reduction, the government is supporting “development funds” for the poorest districts, particularly village and district funds, for income generating activities; whether ethnic minorities will have guaranteed access to these funds according to need is not made clear but would be a useful additional safeguard to ensure the funds reach them without discrimination.

89. Special attention is paid to the situation of ethnic minority women in the document. It is noted that because of language barriers, ethnic minority women “have few opportunities and will be at greater risk of exploitation” and are limited in their ability “to engage with health care workers, extension workers, traders and others outside the village.” The high fertility rates of ethnic minority women and low access to health care means “there is very high risk of health complications or death for both mother and child.” While several commitments are made on gender issues, there does not appear to be any specific plans for addressing the unique situation of ethnic minority women.

90. The traditional livelihoods of minorities come under scrutiny in the discussion of reforms to the agriculture and forest development systems. Many ethnic minorities practice a system of swidden agriculture which the government seeks to limit or eradicate. The government does pledge to do so “while respecting the traditions of the Lao way of life and the rich diversity of its ethnic minorities” but it is clear from the document that the priority is to find alternative systems. The practice of resettlement of communities is not always effective: the PRSP notes “Resettled populations, even in larger villages, are more vulnerable.” It is important that the government recognize how much ethnic minority livelihoods are tied to cultural identity and survival; adherence to participatory principles must seek to balance ethnic minority rights with other development interests in a fair and transparent manner.

91. The PRSP outlines specific pledges to improve the access to education and health care for ethnic minorities. This includes “(a) measures to steer teachers to teach in remote areas; (b) measures to provide teacher training to persons from remote and ethnic minority communities who will return to their communities and teach; and (c) measures to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the teaching/learning processes in ethnic minority communities.” Similar measures will be used to strengthen district health systems “through incentives for health staff to occupy posts in remote areas, with a particular effort to attract female and ethnic minority health workers”; “establishing village health committees (VHC) in each village [with representation] ...reflecting the ethnic composition of the village.”; and establishing primary health care training centres in the Northern Region (populated mostly by ethnic minorities), including a “particular effort to attract trainees from ethnic minority groups”.

92. Nepal’s *Tenth Plan* (2002-2007) serves as its PRSP. The PRSP is based on four pillars: “broad based high and sustainable growth, social sector development with emphasis on human development, targeted programs with emphasis on social inclusion and improved governance”. The Plan recognizes the existence in Nepal of “about 60 recorded caste and ethnic groups (mostly Indo-Aryan and Mongol) and 70 languages and dialects (mostly Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman).” The Plan also recognizes the inequalities faced by many of these groups, in particular the “many indigenous ethnic (“Janajatis”) and caste (“Dalits”) groups who have been historically disadvantaged, and who continue to lag behind in their income and asset levels,

educational achievements and human development indicators, and to the extent to which they are represented in the power structure.” Detailed disaggregated data on poverty rates for different ethnic and caste groups are provided.

93. The document describes in some detail the series of consultation processes that led to the PRSP and indicates that among the participants were “representatives from socially backward classes”, “dalits” and “ethnic minorities”. The government has established consultative bodies to assist in addressing the inequalities faced by the most marginalized groups. During the *Ninth Plan* a Dalit Development Commission was created and a “National Janajati Development Committee was established in 1997 and recently restructured to a more powerful and independent Adibasi Janajati Utthan Pratisthan (Indigenous and Ethnic Groups Upliftment Academy) in 2002.”

94. The link between protection of minorities and prevention of conflict in Nepal was also noted: “there is little doubt that among others, the underlying causes include poverty and its manifestations, (in terms of regional, gender, ethnic and caste-related inequalities), as well as poor governance, and the failure to deliver adequate and essential social services and infrastructure to rural communities and marginalized groups”. The PRSP recognized that “To bring about a lasting solution to the present [conflict], the nexus of poverty, poor governance, and marginalization need to be carefully and urgently addressed.”

95. This is reflected well in the Tenth Plan, which includes a much more targeted approach to overcoming marginalization of minorities and other groups than previous Plans: “the Tenth Plan seeks, as an integral part of its poverty reduction strategy, to bring the marginalized sections of the population and backward regions into the mainstream of development, and to make visible progress in reducing existing inequalities”. The Plan recognizes that “Women and ethnic groups by and large are left out of the mainstream of development, because they lack voice, empowerment, representation and access to economic opportunities and resources.”

96. Participation of local communities in the implementation of poverty-related initiatives is stressed throughout the document: “Strong emphasis is also placed on decentralization and maximizing the involvement of local governments and community groups for identifying development activities and allocating resources for them in accordance with people’s needs ... and for ensuring better program management, accountability and transparency through people’s participation.” The Tenth Plan also states that “To ensure participation of the poorer and deprived groups in decision-making and management processes at the village level, affirmative action will be taken to ensure their participation”. Taking extra measures to support and monitor the participation of marginalized minorities will be important to ensuring their participation is meaningful and effective.

97. The Tenth Plan aims to balance mainstreaming with targeted policies for minorities: “the emphasis will be on ensuring social inclusion through normal sectoral programs and activities, supplemented by targeted initiatives”. For example, “with regard to service delivery and infrastructure development, (such as primary schools, health facilities, drinking water etc.), the respective line ministries will be required to give equal attention to deprived communities to ensure that they are served as well as others. They will also be required to monitor and report progress achieved annually”. Targeted approaches are also needed because “there will be specific groups of people who may either be unable to escape the poverty trap or take an

unacceptably long time to do so". The Plan foresees "Affirmative action in a number of important areas (such education, health, participation in public service, administration, political life and at the community level) [will] be taken to help achieve progressive results in this regard, until such time as these communities become sufficiently empowered to stand on their own, and fight for their rights." The specialized bodies for Dalits and indigenous ethnic minorities will play an important role in monitoring the targeted programmes in cooperation with the Ministry for Local Development. The Village Development Committees (VDCs) "will be required to include in their periodic Plans specific measures for meeting the needs of deprived communities, and report annually on their implementation." The Dalit Commission will play a role in devising training and guidelines for targeting programs for Dalits in the VDCs and District Development Committees.

98. The Plan foresees a strengthening of poverty monitoring data. The National Planning Commission "will undertake a Poverty Mapping exercise, to identify the poor and marginalized groups," and the 2003 Nepal Living Standards Survey intended to broaden its coverage to provide additional information required for poverty monitoring disaggregated by gender, social groups and regions.

99. On education, the government plans to offer targeted support to some minorities: there will be "education in mother languages (of communities) up to the primary level"; and "scholarships in private/boarding schools to students from 'oppressed and backward communities'". A Rural Education Development Fund will be created and will "be utilized for funding the education of marginalized communities". The Plan foresees affirmative action policies to increase the number of Dalits in teaching positions and public agencies.

100. The government admits in the Tenth Plan that "neither the civil society groups nor the government bodies have yet had much success in significantly improving the educational, economic or welfare status of the Dalit and disadvantaged Janajati population." Although the Plan is positive in its approach by committing to both mainstreaming and targeted programmes to assist these groups, there is a need for further dialogue on the root causes of their marginalization, in particular on the issue of discrimination. The Plan does mention reforms to anti-discrimination laws to assist women, but does not appear to discuss how the legal framework could be strengthened to support marginalized minorities. The annex notes that some investment will be made in human rights, including the adoption of a human rights Action Plan. It will be important that discrimination against minorities is addressed through the legal framework, both in terms of harmonizing laws with international human rights standards (as the Plan notes) but also in terms of firm implementation of those laws. The stated intention in the Plan to "strengthen the Dalit Commission" will also be an important step by giving such a body the authority it needs to help protect minorities.

101. Vietnam's PRSP is *The Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy* (CPRGS), adopted in 2002. Among the major objectives of the CPRGS is "improving the lives of ethnic peoples", which it seeks to do through, *inter alia*, "investment and other support to disadvantaged areas; reduc[ing] the development gap between regions, pay[ing] attention to the living conditions of ethnic minority peoples". The CPRGS will "Ensure that all ethnic minorities will benefit directly from the process of economic growth". Although the document does not name the ethnic minorities that exist in Vietnam, it does provide some basic information, such as: "The majority of ethnic minority people live in remote and isolated areas.

They are geographically and culturally isolated, and lack favourable conditions for developing infrastructure and basic social services”. The commitment to “Continue to consolidate and expand the education, health care, culture and information activities of ethnic minority peoples” is supported by many specific initiatives named in the CPRGS.

102. Disaggregated data on poverty is provided by region, along with a table showing the poverty gap between the ethnic majority Kinh people and ethnic minorities (in aggregate). The document recognizes that “While accounting for roughly 14 per cent of the total national population, the representation of ethnic minority groups among the poor is disproportionately high at approximately 29 per cent”. A disaggregated breakdown of poverty experienced by each ethnic or religious group would have made these inequalities clearer. The PRSP does, however, indicate intentions to “Establish a system of qualitative and quantitative socio-economic development and poverty reduction indicators (with breakdown by gender and ethnicity) to monitor and supervise the progress of implementing the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy”. The monitoring indicators as currently stated in Appendix 1 of the CPRGS could include many more indicators disaggregated by ethnicity (at present there is only one, for education, and those in relation to minority-specific targets).

103. The CPRGS includes some discussion of the importance of legal frameworks and rights. One of the aims of the government is to “Ensure that all citizens have access to information about the law and their legal rights and obligations, and that the poor have better access to the justice system”. This could be particularly important for ethnic minorities who may face discrimination by public officials or private actors. The document does not give sufficient information on what measures will be taken to enforce non-discrimination laws and practices. The Committee for Ethnic Minorities and Mountainous Areas may play some role, but no information is given on its mandate, composition or powers.

104. The issue of participation is given less elaboration than in other PRSPs, but the CPRGS does note that “In developing participatory mechanisms, attention must be given to vulnerable groups like elderly, women, disabled and ethnic minority people”. Specific details on how this commitment will be implemented would be helpful, both for minorities and for those that seek to support their participation.

105. The PRSP discusses briefly the situation of ethnic minority women and girls, admitting that policies on gender equality are failing them and others. Ethnic minority women and girls “are negatively affected by backward beliefs, customs and practices. In many areas, they are victims of female trafficking and family violence”.

106. The CPRGS notes there has been past success of “poverty reduction models for ethnic minorities” but does not seem to provide details on these models. Nevertheless, many specific targets for improving the lives of ethnic minorities are listed in the document, including:

- Increase the amount of programming and broadcasting hours in the languages of ethnic minority peoples.
- Raise the social consciousness, preserve and bring into play the traditional cultural values of ethnic minority peoples.

- Sustain and develop the reading and writing ability of ethnic languages in areas with high ethnic populations.
- Provide access to kindergarten education to every child from ethnic minority groups and opportunities for children from ethnic minority groups to complete the primary education program partly in Vietnamese and partly in their own language by 2010.
- Provide support to ethnic minority people to increase their representation in the total staff of public agencies. Increase the proportion of trained staff, workers and public servants who are from ethnic minorities in the total staff of public agencies.
- Ensure the entitlement of individual and collective land use rights to ethnic minorities and mountainous people; prevent buying and selling agricultural land that belongs to ethnic minorities.
- Continue to consolidate and expand health care, culture, information and related activities to reach ethnic minority peoples.

107. Land and agricultural development is discussed in relation to ethnic minorities. The overarching plans for rural development aim to “Implement well the task of fixed-cultivation and fixed-residence, restrict free migration, stabilize production and improve the living standards of mountainous and ethnic peoples in a manner suitable to their customs and practices based on a master plan for population distribution in the direction of establishing concentrated population clusters, commune clusters and townships”. It is positive that the government seeks to adopt plans that would be suitable to the existing “customs and practices” of ethnic minorities; the best way to achieve this would be to ensure that minorities have direct input into local development policies, some of which, like fixed-cultivation, may not be compatible with their traditional livelihoods. The allocation of land to ethnic households also is listed as a priority, including both “individual and collective land use rights”. Agricultural extension activities will be expanded and the government seeks to “ensure that poor and ethnic minority peoples will reap benefits from extension services”. They intend to achieve this in part by training “those who know the languages of ethnic minorities” to deliver extension services. Training for extension workers on the rights of ethnic minorities and their traditional livelihoods may also be beneficial.

108. Several measures are foreseen in the field of education, including for ethnic minority women and girls. Efforts will be made to ensure that women and girls from ethnic minorities can increase their school enrolment, including attracting ethnic minority girls to boarding schools. The government will also invest in raising the share of female teachers coming from ethnic minorities. Ethnic minority children will be enabled to become fluent in their own language alongside the national language. In training for skills, the government pledges to “Give priority to training cadre in extremely disadvantaged communes and provide training for targeted peoples”.

109. In health care, the government will be “Expanding training to develop local health staff, with priority given to on-site training of ethnic staff in mountainous, remote, and disadvantaged areas.” Special policies to attract more health care staff to work in remote regions where minorities live will be implemented.

110. Access to information for minorities also figures in the PRSP. The government pledges to “Disseminate information in both national and ethnic languages” and to “Provide information on poverty reduction programs in an accessible manner and in places where ethnic peoples can have easy access”. Among the measures foreseen is to “Increase the amount of [ethnic language] broadcasting and television time and publish ethnic language books and newspapers that are suitable for each locality”.

*Promising Practice in the PRSPs*

111. Each of the above PRSPs gives special attention to the situation of marginalized minorities. Their efforts suggest that it is often neither resources nor capacity that prevents attention to minorities but rather political will. These PRSPs commit to paper both mainstreaming and targeted measures to ensure that minorities are not left out of poverty reduction strategies. Further information is required on how these commitments are being realized in practice, given that in each country there remain serious concerns about the situation of marginalized minorities. There are a number of efforts made within the PRSPs that constitute promising practice, however, including:

- providing background information on the existence of minority groups within the country, including especially indicators on poverty, disaggregated by membership in an ethnic, religious or linguistic group and also by gender;
- discussing in some detail the rationale behind the need for specially targeted poverty reduction measures for minorities, based on an analysis of disproportionate and persistent inequalities experienced by certain minority groups over time and the failure of previous approaches to benefit these groups;
- including dedicated chapters to outline measures for marginalized minority groups, both in terms of mainstreamed approaches and also details on targeted programmes, by sector;
- giving specific attention to the situation of minority women and girls and providing targeted efforts to overcome the inequalities they experience;
- discussing the importance of participation of minorities, both in the elaboration of the PRSP itself and participation in the implementation of PRSP-related development programmes and projects, especially at the level of local governance;
- acknowledging the role in poverty reduction of specially appointed government bodies established to help protect the rights and legitimate interests of minorities;
- including ethnically disaggregated indicators for monitoring progress towards PRSP objectives;
- making commitments to improve the legal framework for enabling citizens to better access their human rights;

- taking a comprehensive approach to poverty reduction by including mainstreaming and targeted measures for minorities not only in the area of income growth but also key issues such as education, health, governance and access to information.

112. It is beyond the scope of this paper to give a detailed analysis of how the governments are managing to realize *in practice* their intended policies to support marginalized minorities. Overcoming long-entrenched inequalities is very difficult, often requiring not only additional and targeted resources but also a serious commitment to tackling underlying causes of this inequality, in particular that of direct and indirect discrimination. On this last point it is clear that each of the PRSPs reviewed here can do more to indicate how they intend to address discrimination at both the institutional and individual levels in the public and private spheres. Nevertheless, the PRSPs suggest that the governments recognize many of the challenges faced by minorities to overcoming poverty and genuinely seek to help minorities in their efforts to improve their lives.

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

113. There is an urgent need to take the situation of persons belonging to minorities fully into account in the efforts of the international community to achieve the MDGs and to implement the Millennium Declaration. This review of MDG country reports reveals a serious lack of attention to the situation of persons belonging to minorities, who disproportionately experience poverty and lower levels of human development. Only a third of Reports reviewed mentioned minorities one or more times and barely 20 per cent of the Reports discussed the situation of minorities under four or more of the Goals. In none of the Reports was the situation of minorities mentioned under each of the 8 Goals. Minorities are mentioned most often in relation to Goal 2 on access to primary education.

114. In all cases, very few examples of specific policies for minorities were noted and disaggregated data on progress towards the MDGs was rarely included. The result is that the likelihood of persons belonging to minorities achieving the MDGs (where they have not done so already) remains obscured. This lack of information is not necessarily conclusive of practice on the ground, but it does suggest that ensuring strategies for the MDGs include attention to minorities, is still a low priority for most governments.

115. There is an absence of a comprehensive understanding of the poverty of minorities and its manifestations in the social, economic, cultural and political spheres. In particular, even in those Reports where minorities are mentioned, there is a lack of discussion on how and, crucially, why, minorities are experiencing disproportionately high levels of poverty and other serious inequalities. Ignoring the root causes of poverty and low human development only serves to weaken the effectiveness of MDG policies and PRSPs. The issue of discrimination, both direct and indirect, is noticeably absent in the poverty analyses and also in policy responses for poverty reduction. Discussion of other rights of minorities is rarely evidenced in the Reports.

116. Women belonging to minority groups remain invisible in poverty reduction efforts. The compound effects of intersectional discrimination on the basis of gender and a national, ethnic, religious or linguistic identity means minority women continue to be among the most excluded.

While attention to gender issues in many MDG country reports is positive, this does not extend to consideration of intersectional discrimination nor targeted policies for marginalized minority women.

117. It is clear in many of the Reports that reforms to poverty data collection is a high priority. Given that most Reports omit disaggregated data on the basis of membership in a national, ethnic, religious or linguistic group, efforts to improve poverty data can mainstream ethno-cultural data collection. This represents one of the more effective uses of resources in the short to medium term for helping to improve the monitoring and evaluation of existing MDG policies. Corresponding MDGs Plus targets and indicators disaggregated by social group will be supported by these efforts.

118. The three PRSPs reviewed here demonstrate that attention to marginalized minorities can be integrated into broader poverty reduction strategies. While resources and capacity are vital factors, the starting point for improving the impact of poverty reduction on minorities is political will. MDG country reports and PRSPs are flagships for this political will and if the situation of minorities is analyzed better in these documents, accompanied by requisite strategies, this can serve to empower minorities to realize their human rights.

119. The participation of minorities in the elaboration of PRSPs and MDG related strategies risks being tokenistic. The purpose of their participation is not to satisfy external donors or political interests: it both fulfils their right to participate and their role in determining their own future. If poverty reduction and the MDGs are to make a difference in the lives of the most marginalized, they must be given the opportunity to help decide how this will happen.

120. Each country will need to consider the particular challenges faced by persons within their territory for achieving the MDGs. There are many factors that make realization of the MDGs a challenge, including the need for increased development assistance, better transparency in governance and economic, social and political stability. It is important to recall, however, the objective of the Millennium Declaration, to “strengthen the capacity of all our countries to implement the principles and practices of democracy and respect for human rights, *including minority rights*”.<sup>23</sup> This objective must not be forgotten when it comes to devising strategies for the MDGs, so that when we reach 2015, marginalized minorities are not left further behind.

121. The independent expert on minority issues has made recommendations in the field of poverty alleviation and the MDGs in her Annual Report to the Human Rights Council in March 2007 (A/HRC/4/9). Taking into account these recommendations and based on consultations, the independent expert makes the following further general recommendations to States, the United Nations and its agencies, international development agencies, human rights institutions and civil society, including representatives of minorities, on practical steps that can be taken in the following key areas:

---

<sup>23</sup> *Millennium Declaration*, Section V on “Human rights, democracy and good governance”, General Assembly resolution 55/2, (8 September 2000): para. 25, emphasis added.



**Data collection:**

122. Integrate indicators on the situation of persons belonging to minorities into national strategies on data collection. The United Nations Inter-Agency and Expert Group (IAEG) on MDG Indicators should support States in this effort.
123. Add a specific indicator under each of the Goals to assess horizontal inequalities in progress towards the Goals.
124. Review national census questionnaires to ensure that ethno-cultural data is being collected.
125. Use sampling surveys or participatory impact assessments to gather information on how persons belonging to minorities are benefiting (or not) from MDG-related programmes.
126. Publish and distribute data on key economic and social indicators for persons belonging to minorities as a baseline to enable the elaboration and monitoring of MDG strategies.
127. Translate into minority languages data on key economic and social indicators and make this information publicly and easily accessible to persons belonging to minorities.
128. Be sensitive to cultural identity issues when gathering data to ensure that minorities are able to participate confidently in data collection activities; ensure that privacy laws are not breached in data collection.
129. Undertake research on key issues in relation to the achievement of the MDGs by persons belonging to minorities, such as analysis of appropriate policies in education, healthcare and housing.
130. Invest in national statistics offices, to provide training (including to persons belonging to minorities) on how to collect data on minorities and to enable the distribution of this data.

**Consultative bodies:**

131. Cooperate with existing national consultative bodies on minorities to improve the participation of minorities in MDG-related strategies.
132. Establish consultative bodies at the local and national level that enable minorities to engage in planning for MDG-related strategies.
133. Ensure that minorities are informed about and represented in any thematic-specific consultative processes on the MDGs, e.g. on the gender equality MDGs.
134. Ensure that marginalized groups within minority communities, in particular minority women, are able to participate fully in consultations on the MDGs.
135. Facilitate local, national and regional civil society dialogues on the MDGs to enable networking and the elaboration of proposals to government on the MDGs.

136. Engage parliamentarians and the media in dialogues on the situation of minorities and the achievement of the MDGs.

**National action plans:**

137. Draft national action plans in cooperation with persons belonging to minorities on how to ensure that minorities benefit equally from progress towards the MDGs.

138. Devise country-specific MDG Plus indicators pertaining to minorities.

139. Ensure that MDG-related strategies are accompanied by measures to strengthen the legal and regulatory framework necessary for the protection of human rights, including minority rights.

140. Adopt affirmative action policies where the gaps in achieving the MDGs are severe for minorities, e.g. in relation to access to primary education.

141. Civil society should undertake advocacy campaigns pertaining to the MDGs to raise public awareness about the situation of persons belonging to minorities. The media should be used as a partner to raise awareness of timely issues of concern to minorities.

142. Civil society should consider using legal mechanisms to secure human rights in relation to the MDGs, for example, taking legal cases on involuntary displacement of minorities.

**Capacity building:**

143. Disseminate information on the MDGs and MDG-related strategies to minority communities, including through publishing public information in minority languages, through local radio and traditional meeting processes.

144. Provide training for representatives of minorities on monitoring progress towards the MDGs, in particular on themes such as budget monitoring.

145. Provide training for development professionals and parliamentarians working on MDG-related strategies on the situation of minorities and minority rights. Such training may be particularly useful for UNDP Country Teams who play a key role in supporting such strategies.

146. Toolkits and guidelines published on the MDGs should integrate consideration of the situation of minorities.

147. The UNDP should take the lead in establishing an Inter-Agency Task Force on Minorities and the MDGs to mobilise United Nations agencies and United Nations Country Teams to take further steps to support the integration of minorities into MDG-related strategies.

148. Civil society participation in MDG-related strategies should be facilitated through specially designated funding lines for this aim.

149. The UNDP should proceed with the elaboration and adoption of a specific Policy Note on Minorities to assist governments and UNDP Country Teams, *inter alia*, with the integration of minorities into MDG strategies.

**MDG country reports:**

150. All MDG country reports should include consideration of the situation of minorities in relation to each of the Goals. Disaggregated data on the progress of minorities towards the Goals should be included.

151. MDG country reports should aim to include MDG Plus indicators for minorities where appropriate.

152. MDG country reports should reflect an analysis of the intersection of discrimination on the basis of gender and membership in a national, ethnic, religious or linguistic social group.

153. The UNDP's *Guidance Note on Country Reporting for MDGs* (2003) should be revised to include more in-depth analysis and recommendations on how Country Reports and strategies for the MDGs can better support marginalized minorities.

154. MDG country reports should be published in minority languages as appropriate and made publicly and easily accessible to persons belonging to minorities.

155. Civil society should consider drafting MDG Shadow Country Reports as one means of highlighting issues omitted from the official MDG country reports, such as those issues of concern to minorities.

## **Annex 1**

### **The Millennium Development Goals**

#### **Goal 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger**

- *Target 1: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day.*
- *Target 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.*

#### **Goal 2. Achieve universal primary education**

- *Target 3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.*

#### **Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women**

- *Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and in all levels of education no later than 2015.*

#### **Goal 4. Reduce child mortality**

- *Target 5: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.*

#### **Goal 5. Improve maternal health**

- *Target 6: Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.*

#### **Goal 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases**

- *Target 7: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.*
- *Target 8: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.*

#### **Goal 7. Ensure environmental sustainability**

- *Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and program and reverse the loss of environmental resources.*
- *Target 10: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water.*
- *Target 11: Have achieved, by 2020, a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.*

**Goal 8. Develop a global partnership for development**

- *Target 12: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system. This includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction - both nationally and internationally.*
- *Target 13: Address the special needs of the least developed countries. This includes tariff-and quota-free access for exports enhanced program of debt relief for HIPC and cancellation of official bilateral debt, and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction.*
- *Target 14: Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing States.*
- *Target 15: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term.*
- *Target 16: In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth.*
- *Target 17: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries.*
- *Target 18: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.*

## Annex 2

### List of MDG Country Reports Reviewed

COUNTRY	MDG COUNTRY REPORT TITLE
AFGHANISTAN	Millennium Development Goals. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Country Report 2005. Vision 2020.
BANGLADESH	Bangladesh Millennium Development Goals (200%)
BELIZE	First Millennium Development Goals Report, Belize 2004
BHUTAN	Millennium Development Goals. Progress Report 2005
BOLIVIA	Metas de Desarrollo de la Cumbre del Milenio 2000
BOTSWANA	Botswana Millennium Development Goal Status Report 2004: Achievements, Future Challenges and Choices
BRAZIL	Brazilian Monitoring Report on the Millennium Development Goals 2004
BULGARIA	Millennium Development Goals Report for Bulgaria 2003
CHINA	China Progress Towards the Millennium Development Goals 2005
DENMARK	Millennium Development Goals Progress Report by Denmark 2005
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio. República Dominicana 2004
ECUADOR	Presentación del Informe Nacional 2005
ETHIOPIA	Millennium Development Goals Report. Challenges and Prospects for Ethiopia 2004
FINLAND	Finland's Report on the Millennium Development Goals 2004
HONDURAS	Informe sobre las metas del milenio Honduras 2003
HUNGARY	MDG Report Hungary. Millennium Development Goals: Reducing Poverty and Social Exclusion
INDONESIA	Indonesia Progress Report on the Millennium Development Goals, 2004
IRAN	The First Millennium Development Goals Report Islamic Republic of Iran. November 2004
KAZAKHSTAN	Millennium Development Goals in Kazakhstan. 2005
KENYA	MDGs Status Report for Kenya 2005
KOSOVO	Where will we be in 2015? MDGs base line report for Kosovo. 2004
LAO	MDG Progress Report Lao PDR. 2004
LEBANON	MDGs Lebanon Report. September 2003
MALAYSIA	Malaysia: Achieving the Millennium Development Goals: Successes and Challenges 2005
MEXICO	Los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio en México: Informe De Avance 2005
NAMIBIA	Namibia 2004, Millennium Development Goals
NEPAL	Nepal MDGs Progress Report 2005
NETHERLANDS	Millennium Development Goal 8: Developing a Global Partnership for Development. Progress Report by the Netherlands, 2004.
NICARAGUA	Seguimiento a la Cumbre del Milenio Metas de Desarrollo Nicaragua Primer Informe 2003

COUNTRY	MDG COUNTRY REPORT TITLE
NIGERIA	MDGs Report Nigeria 2004
NORWAY	Global Partnerships for Development Millennium Development Goal No 8; Progress Report by Norway 2004
OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF PALESTINE	The Millennium Development Goals Progress Report 2002
PAKISTAN	Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report 2004
PERU	Hacia el Cumplimiento de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio en el Perú 2004
PHILIPPINES	Philippine Progress Report on the MDGs 2003
ROMANIA	Millennium Development Goals Report 2003
RWANDA	MDGs Status Report for Rwanda 2003
SENEGAL	Suivi des Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement 2003
SOUTH AFRICA	South Africa Millennium Development Goals Country Report 2005
SUDAN	Sudan Millennium Development Goals Interim Unified Report 2004
SWEDEN	Sweden's Report on the Millennium Development Goals 2004
SWITZERLAND	Millennium Development Goals Progress Report of Switzerland 2005
TANZANIA	IDT/MDG Progress: Tanzania 2001
THAILAND	Thailand MDGs Report 2004
TURKEY	MDG Report Turkey 2005
UGANDA	Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Progress Report for Uganda.
UNITED KINGDOM	The UK's Contribution to Achieving the MDGs. 2005
URUGUAY	Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio en Uruguay. Documento Base para la Discusión Nacional. 2003
VENEZUELA	Cumpliendo las Metas del Milenio 2004
VIETNAM	The Millennium Development Goals and Viet Nam's Socio-Economic Development Plan 2006-2010

-----