

**United Nations  
Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)  
Expert Group Meeting  
Achievements, gaps and challenges  
in linking the implementation  
of the Beijing Platform for Action and  
the Millennium Declaration and  
Millennium Development Goals  
Baku, Azerbaijan  
7 to 11 February 2005**

**Indigenous Women, the Millennium Development Goals and  
the Beijing Platform for Action**

**Prepared by  
Victoria Tauli Corpuz and Bernice Aquino See**

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**Indigenous Women, the Millennium Development Goals and the Beijing Platform for Action**

*“Here amidst the peaks of the Andes in Peru, the enormous contributions of indigenous peoples*

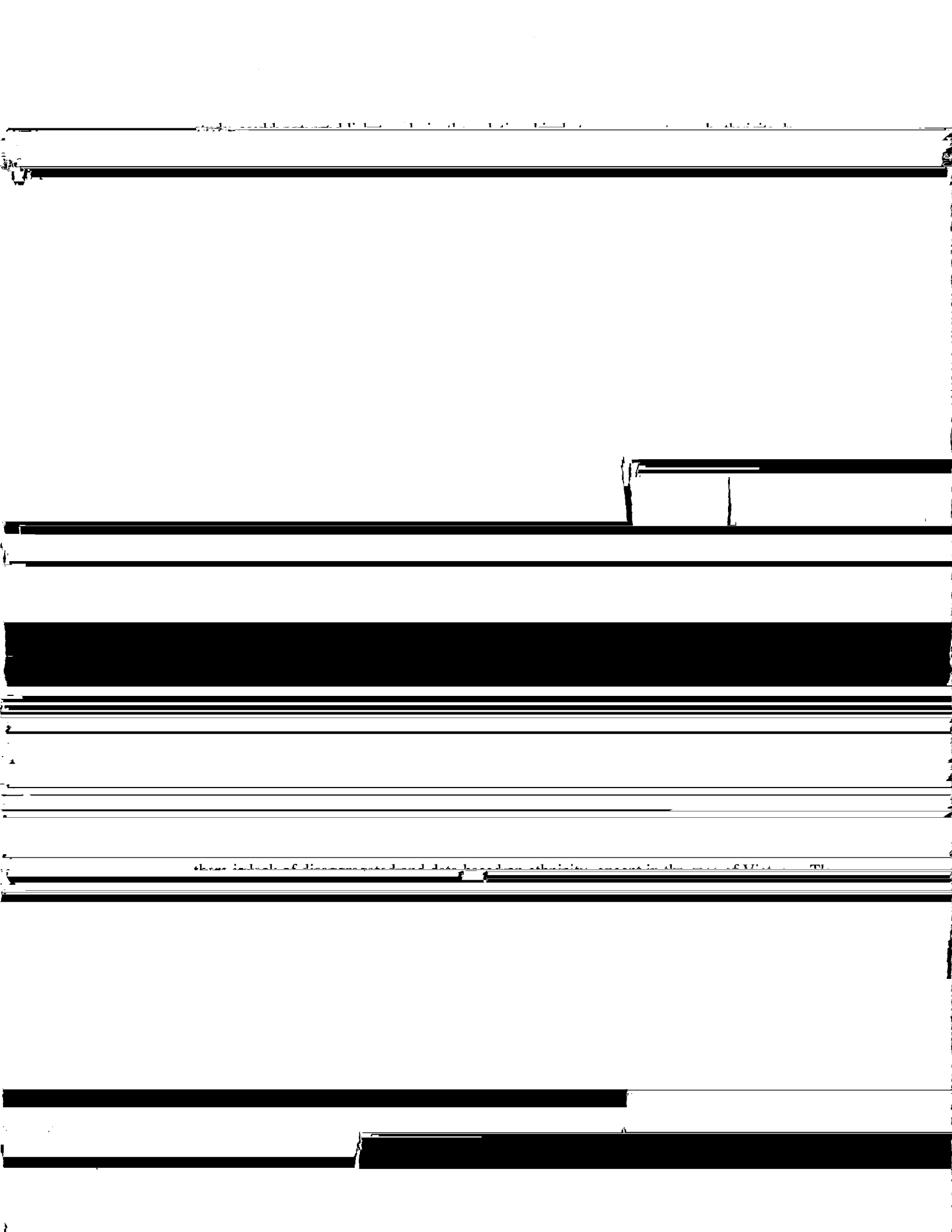
"Working ~~with~~ ~~the~~ ~~community~~ ~~in~~ ~~action~~" it specified that its primary goal was strengthening

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|  | <i>GOAL 5: IMPROVE<br/>MATERNAL HEALTH<br/>GOAL 6: COMBAT<br/>HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND<br/>OTHER DISEASES</i> |  |
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Political Affairs last January 19, 2004 to follow-up on the United Nations Secretary-General's visit to Latin America, the issue of indigenous peoples was discussed. It was noted



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these include of [Redacted] and [Redacted] on [Redacted] in the [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted]

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The high incidence of illiteracy and ill health among indigenous peoples is directly related to their poverty, usually brought about by dislocation from or destruction of their ancestral territory..<sup>23</sup>

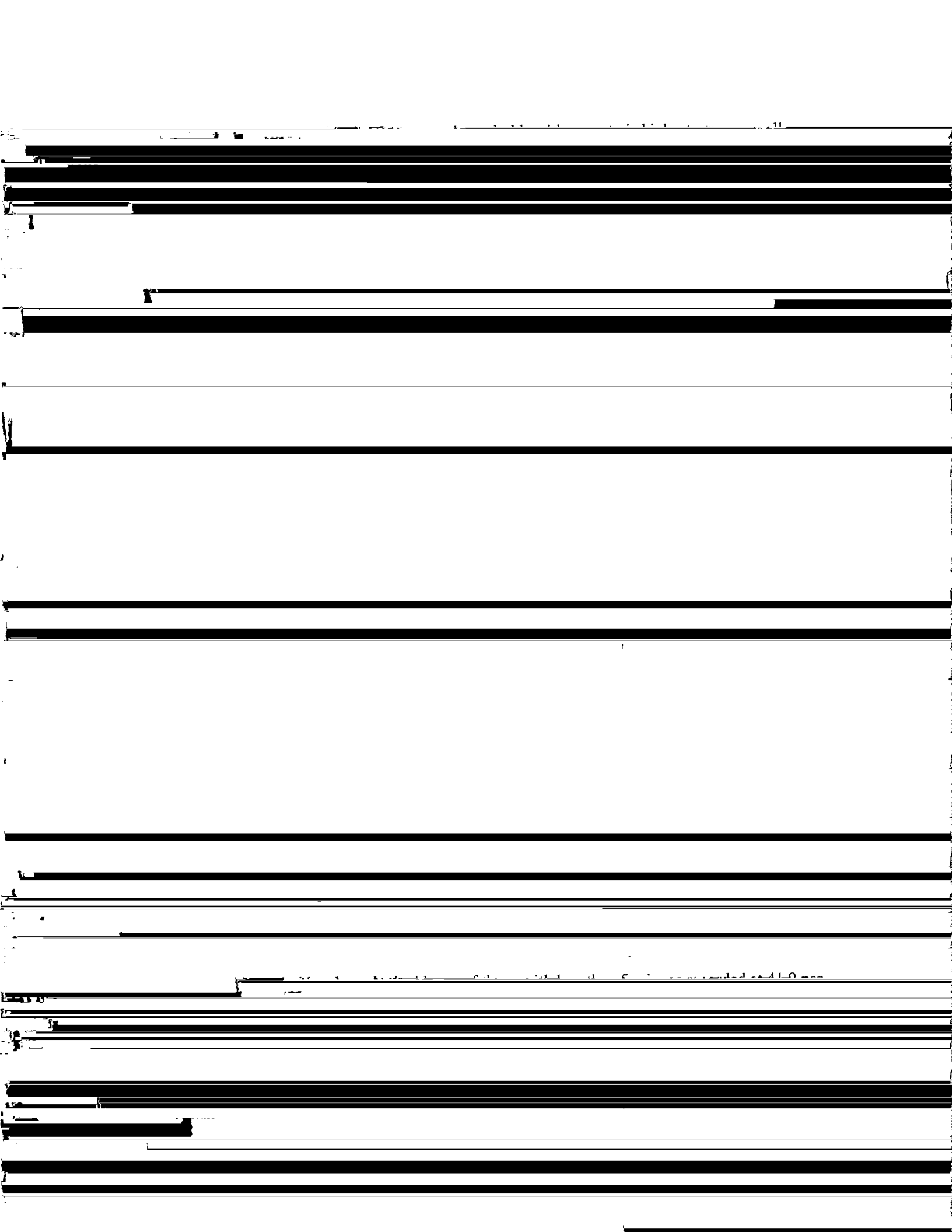
1. In Guatemala, the literacy rate among indigenous peoples is 60%.<sup>24</sup>
2. The Mbororos, or the cattle Fulanis, a pastoralist, semi-nomadic people dispersed all over west and central Africa, are generally underprivileged with accompanying high illiteracy and mortality

rate.<sup>25</sup>

2. D. ... ..

water. The scarcity of game has caused major changes in diet. Insufficient schooling is chronic. Lack of financial means holds back those Pygmies who want to educate their children.<sup>26</sup>

4. Government reports state that Maori women have a much lower life expectancy than women in



MDGs, the concern around poverty indicators was raised. These are basically constructed around

These are basically non-indigenous parameters and therefore cannot capture nor adequately reflect the realities of many indigenous peoples. The majority are still mainly engaged in subsistence production. Their engagement with the market is mostly with the local village

markets where they sell their products and the when they hire themselves out as seasonal laborers in plantations. Thus, the \$1 indicator does not make much sense for people who do not sell their labor nor spend the bigger part of their time to produce for the market.

Notwithstanding these assumptions on being called poor, however, it is a known fact that poverty

## Conflict of paradigms

In countries where economic growth rates are increasing, the situation for indigenous peoples has

by the Kaptai Dam Project built in the 1960s.<sup>44</sup> Around 100,000 people were displaced and

became refugees in India. Some of them came back to the Hill Tracts a few years ago but they

...the action is to export labor when if labor conditions abroad are oppressive and

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social systems and practices survive the onslaughts of the Bank-Fund-WTO model of

development and globalization.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of these observations, in order to alleviate the extreme poverty and hunger faced by

9. Projects and programs, especially on health and education, should consider the spiritual dimensions of good health or incorporate their traditional medicine, based on herbs and

improve.

**Universal Primary Education and the Education and Training of women**



as hill tribes), migrant children, and children of the rural and urban poor have access to education. However, it has tried to address this situation by targeting them for development in its Eighth National Development Plan. By having no access to education, some of these children

can lessen discrimination and tendency among indigenous children to be ashamed of who they are.

It is difficult for the indigenous children to adjust in a school which only uses the national

A Tewa Indian educator-author sums up what may be true of state education vis-à-vis indigenous education needs not only in the United States but wherever indigenous peoples are found:

*“A pervasive problem affecting the contemporary vision of American Indian education is that its definition and evolution have always been dependent on American politics. Much of what characterizes Indian education policy is not the result of research predicted upon*

*American Indian philosophical orientations, but the result of Acts of Congress, the history of treaty rights interpretation through the courts, and the historic Indian/White relations unique in each Tribal group or geographic region. ... The basis of contemporary American education is the transfer of academic skills and content that prepares the student to compete in the infrastructure of American society as it had been*

*obstacle to cross-cultural communication revolves around significant differences in*

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In the "First National Workshop of Indigenous Women"<sup>60</sup> recently held in the Philippines the

A recently released document called "A *Guidato Indigenous Women's Rights*

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population makes up a large proportion of the total population. In Peru, the national infant mortality rate is 169 per 1,000 live births, as compared to 269 per 1,000 live births for the indigenous population (Masferrer 1983:600). The national under-5 mortality rate

per 1000 live births in Bolivia is 122 for Spanish language speakers, but 186 for

under-5 mortality per 1,000 live births is 120 for Ladinos and 142 for indigenous people (Institute for Resource Development 1987).

**Malnutrition** among indigenous children has been recorded at very high levels in many countries

esteem.”<sup>71</sup>

This relationship between the alienation of peoples from their ancestral territory and the destruction/erosion of their culture may very well be true among all displace/dispossessed indigenous peoples. Wilhelmina Leigh, in her report to the U.S. Public Health Services Offices on Women's Health states that “If the process of rapid and forced change from their original co-



Citing data from both developed and developing countries, the HDR 2004 itself has found that indigenous peoples expect to live shorter lives, on the average, by 10% and 16%, respectively.<sup>76</sup>

The situation of indigenous children is directly linked to their parents' context. For indigenous

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2. The revitalization of traditional health practices which include traditional midwifery

practices, use of traditional medicinal plants, etc. should be supported through policies and resources.

3. Governments should revive and support the setting up of community-based health programs which includes, among others, the training of local health workers, development of primary health education materials in languages understood by the

community. The full participation of indigenous peoples should be sought when

such programs are being developed.

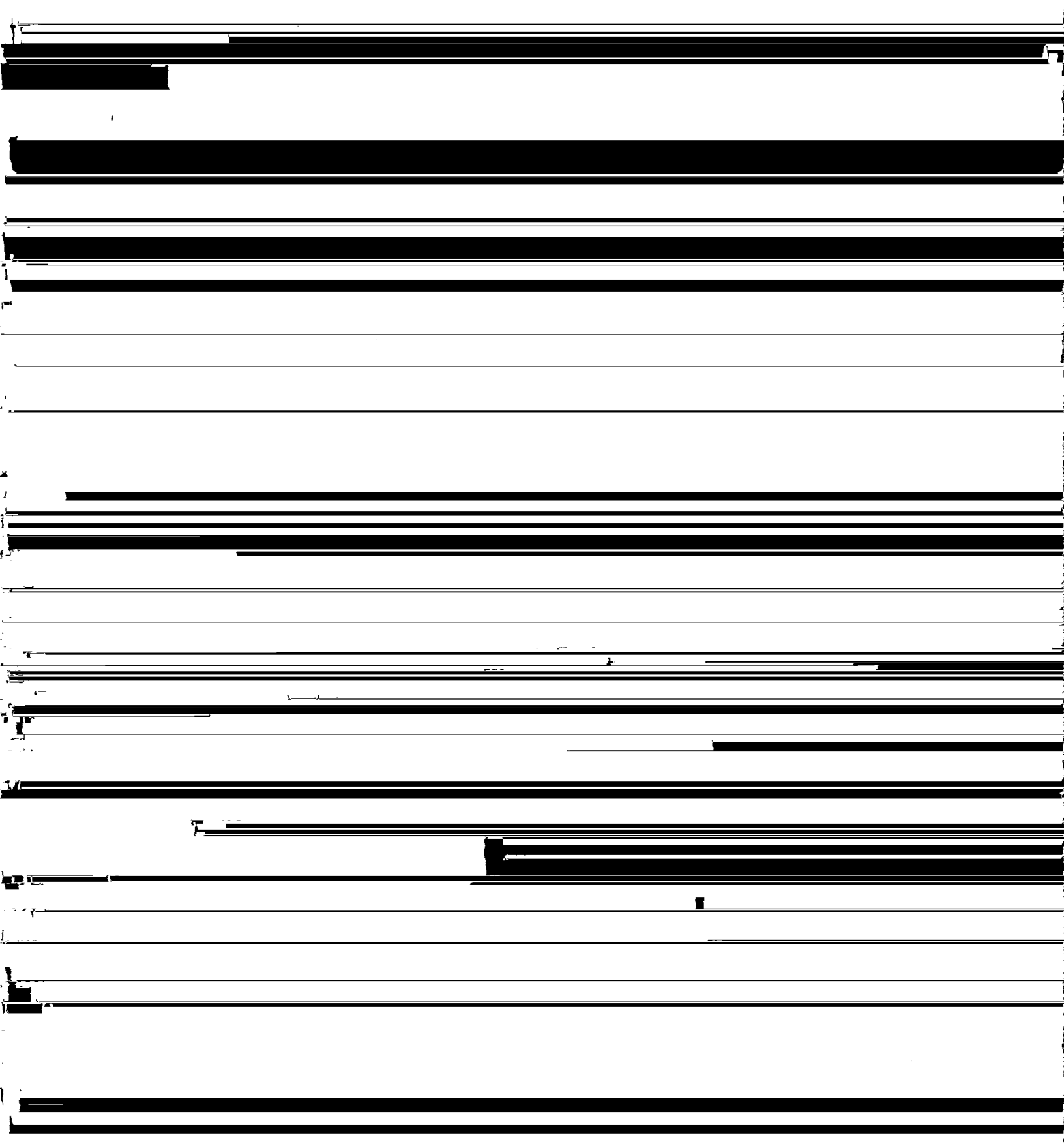
## Safe Water and Indigenous Peoples

We also participated in the Kyoto Third World Water Forum in 2003. The panel on “Cultural Diversity and Water” was co-organized by Tebtebba with the Indigenous Environment Network

the Water and Legal Indigenous Rights program of the University of Wageningen, and UNESCO. An indigenous peoples’ workshop on water was organized prior to the official conference and this came up with the *Indigenous Peoples’ Kyoto Declaration on Water*. In these

the same breath, they are also pushing for the finance liberalization which allows for more foreign companies to do more mining, build more plantations, and to invest in water services. They are also the ones who are in control of the international financial institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Asian Development Bank, among others. These continue to provide loans to extractive industries, developers of plantations, and water development corporations who are the ones leading to the privatization of water.

Another development which has led to displacement of indigenous peoples is the creation of  
settlements through funding from bodies like the World Bank, the European Union or his



2. Indigenous Peoples' traditional resource management practices such as those in water management, forest management, biodiversity conservation, maintaining soil fertility and seed diversity, home gardens, etc. should be strengthened and integrated into national resource management policies and programmes.

Industries.

4. Free and prior informed consent of indigenous peoples should be obtained, in a manner which is acceptable to them, before any development program or

bodies like the World Trade Organization, they still have the leverage in terms of negotiations.



communities become militarized.

As far as the governments in the South are concerned, indigenous peoples, also have lost faith in many of them because their armies (whether regular or paramilitary forces) were and still are the ones mainly involved in committing human rights violations. Their partnership with corporations

is also more valuable to them than their duties towards their most marginalized populations, e.g.

Tebtebba held a "Workshop on Biodiversity, Traditional Knowledge and IPRs", last year for some indigenous peoples who have been following up this issue. We came up with some

The Secretary-General considers that further efforts are needed by the Member States concerned and the international community to ensure that all indigenous peoples everywhere enjoy full and sustainable and reasonable improvements in their living conditions

## COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) has undertaken several specific measures on

that they claim

Which part of this land do  
I claim  
Old god sticks chanting  
Carve out our names  
Rotting tree trunks  
Spare me the pain  
of shouldering them to  
their shallow graves

I claim  
Old god sticks worshipping  
their names  
Moonlit, in back to back  
days  
She eclipsed her day  
Old god sticks, like in shallow  
graves

in their names  
Know shadows to cast  
in back to back days

Which part of this land do