THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND EDUCATION

TRIENNIAL REPORT 2004-2007
Although there is no internationally accepted official definition of “Indigenous Peoples”, this report will use the understanding developed by the United Nations system based on:

- Self-identification as Indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted as such by the Indigenous community;
- Historical continuity with pre-colonial and or pre-settler societies;
- Strong links with territories and surrounding natural resources;
- Distinct social, economic or political systems;
- Distinct languages, cultures and beliefs;
- Status as non-dominant groups in society; and
- Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities.

The term Indigenous includes tribes, first peoples/nations, aboriginal, ethnic groups. Occupational and geographical terms such as hunter-gatherers, nomads, peasants, and hill people also exist and for practical purposes are covered under the term “Indigenous peoples”.

1. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: PROBLEM OR SOLUTION?

Living in widely differing environments with distinct cultures and languages, Indigenous peoples, aboriginal peoples and first nations, with only a handful of exceptions, are struggling for survival. Their languages, traditions, wisdom and knowledge have disappeared or even forcibly eradicated. Of those that remain, many remain even now on the very verge of extinction. For Education International (EI), there can be no sustainable development for Indigenous Peoples without quality education for Indigenous peoples.

“While we know the answers are within us, part of the solution involves organisations like Education International helping Indigenous Peoples to work with those who control and manage the resources and policies”, said Bill Tehuia Hamilton of the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI) at the first Indigenous Caucus organized by EI Asia-Pacific Regional Conference (Malaysia, 1997).

Most Indigenous peoples see education as one of the tools used in the destruction of their culture. It has been part of the process of assimilation, a process that has denied them the right to be Indigenous. Around the world, children from Indigenous communities score at the bottom on indicators of educational achievement. For these reasons, educators and EI affiliates have a special responsibility to support Indigenous peoples in their determination to ensure the survival of their knowledge, languages and cultures, as well as the success of their children in their own world and in the world beyond their communities. Teachers’ Unions have a key role to play in the promotion of bilingual and cross-cultural programmes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Who are Indigenous peoples? 2

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1 Bill Tehuia Hamilton, Matua Takawaenga (Assistant Secretary Maori Education) of the NZEI
2 Source UN agencies: International Fund for Agricultural development (IFAD) and UNESCO
There are about 370 million Indigenous peoples living in over 70 countries. They account for less than 5% of the global population, and they comprise about 15% of all those living under the poverty line in the world. About 70% of them live in Asia and 11% of them in Latin America. There are about 5,000 different Indigenous peoples in the world, distinguished by linguistic, cultural and historical differences and geographical separation. 96% of the 6,000 languages used in the world are spoken by 4% of the world’s population. More than 50% of the existing 6,000 languages are in danger of dying out (about 3,000 Indigenous languages spoken in the world are endangered).

Areas where Indigenous populations lived are characterized by lack of public education, poor quality education or segregated educational programs that limit the opportunities of Indigenous school-age children to obtain higher education and/or employment as well as the ability to exercise their rights. Indigenous children are often consigned to environments that discourage real learning due to large distances to schools, differences in lifestyles between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, curricula that reinforce stereotypes, discrimination, violence, extreme poverty and exclusion. Indigenous children compose a large proportion of the 100 million children in the world who receive no education at all – and spend their childhood working.

Child labour

In 2005, EI affiliate Colegio de Profesores de Chile (CPC) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) carried out a joint study on child labour. The study involved almost 200 million children between 5 and 17 years of age, most of them Indigenous from rural areas populated by Aymaras and Mapuche people. The study results show that 86% of these children do daily work between four to six hours a day. Almost 10% of them needed to work due to the conditions of poverty that affected their families.

According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) (2005), child labour is twice as likely to occur in Indigenous communities than it is among non-Indigenous peers. In Ecuador, nine out of ten Indigenous children work, compared to one out of three non-Indigenous children. The high rates of child labour severely limit educational attainment among Indigenous children. In some countries girls enter domestic work at young ages, perhaps 12-14 years old. Furthermore, the physical and mental integrity and dignity of Indigenous children is threatened by corporal punishment, gender discrimination, sexual and domestic abuse and abandonment, and street violence associated with child labour and begging.

In Thailand, more than 40% of Indigenous girls and women who migrate to cities work in the sex trade. The majority of females trafficked across state borders in Southeast Asia are from Indigenous communities (IFAD)

Indigenous peoples’ human rights

The human rights of Indigenous people and peoples are explicitly set out in many instruments and other widely subscribed-to international human rights treaties and declarations. In many countries, however, Indigenous peoples continue to be oppressed and marginalized; they have

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3 Informe “Trabajo infantil y pueblos originarios en Chile”, Colegio de Profesores y la Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT), 2005
4 Encuentro Iberoamericano sobre “Niñez y adolescencia Indígena”, Madrid 2005
little control over their resources and few opportunities to exercise their economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights.

In some Brazilian states in the Amazon region, less than 45% of Indigenous children are registered. In the Ecuadorian Amazon, only 21% of children under five have a birth certificate. In both countries, overall national birth registration rates vary between 70 to 89%.

The lack of protection of Indigenous peoples’ rights and their growing poverty and social exclusion are related to an increasing external demand on natural resources, claims on Indigenous land territories, and projects that affect the environments and natural resources of Indigenous communities. Climate change is also a crucial issue that may well affect Indigenous peoples’ chances of survival. Indigenous communities have lived in harmony with nature for centuries. In many countries traditional Indigenous knowledge of the environment and of medicine is in danger of being lost, at a time that such knowledge is desperately needed to restore balance to the environment after centuries of abuse at human hands.

Providing good bilingual and multicultural education is not only important for the human rights of Indigenous Peoples, but also for saving relevant knowledge to help our planet survive.

It is important to ensure development and plurality of society, and in this it is essential that Indigenous human rights are considered and respected.

2. SITUATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN TERMS OF THE MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs)

There are many good reasons to believe that Indigenous Peoples around the world tend to be the poorest, most marginalised and the ones who face many obstacles to have access to quality public education. They generally lag far behind non-Indigenous populations. However, it is difficult to find global figures on this, because the MDGs do not include a specific focus on Indigenous Peoples.

MDG 1: Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger

Some UN agencies have developed disaggregated information on Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups. According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Indigenous peoples make up one-third of the world’s 900 million extremely poor rural people.

There is a growing awareness that the measurement of poverty by universal indicators does not account for the ways Indigenous peoples evaluate their own well-being, whether the communities are traditional or urban. For example, poverty is commonly measured in terms of cash income, which does not apply to those Indigenous communities which do not take part in the cash economy. Furthermore, case study evidence suggests that globalisation is affecting Indigenous life in a negative way.

In Maasai communities in Kenya, for instance, commercialisation of cattle farming and increased tourism have blurred boundaries between the work children do as part of their traditional upbringing and exploitative work. Evidence suggests that the new pressures imposed by the globalised economy lead children to engage in much longer hours of herding than usual, making and selling artefacts to tourists and carrying baggage, but also in mining.

smuggling, domestic labour and prostitution. There is little choice for Indigenous peoples as they have often lost their traditional livelihoods due to loss of land, increased conflict and military presence.

**MDG 2: Universal Primary Education**

Indigenous children make up a large proportion of the 100 million children worldwide that do not attend school. The Dakar Education For All (EFA) goals draw attention to Indigenous problems by expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality; EFAs also aim to ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.

In Bolivia, where the Indigenous groups represent 50% of the population, almost 20% are illiterate, compared to 4.5% of the non-Indigenous population. Their average schooling is six years, three years less than among the non-Indigenous. A child or an adolescent who speaks an Indigenous language has twice the probability of repeating a year of school compared to a Spanish-speaking student. In Guatemala, 90% of Indigenous children in primary school repeat at least one school year. *(UNICEF, 2005)*

Despite some gains, aboriginal children in Australia are yet to achieve equitable outcomes. In 2006, 21% of 15 year old Indigenous people were not participating in school education. Only 5% of non-Indigenous 15-year-olds were not participating in school education. *(Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantages: Key Indicators 2007- Australian Government)*

In fact, some gradual progress has been made, but the reality described above shows a need for acceleration by setting priorities on Indigenous education agendas, taking in account their specific needs and integrate the rights of Indigenous peoples at all levels. For the success of these measures it is essential to include the effective participation of Indigenous peoples in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects that directly or indirectly affect them.

The Expert Seminar on Indigenous Peoples and Education organized jointly by OHCHR and UNESCO (Paris, October 2004), amongst its many recommendations, states:

(k) The revival, strengthening and development of Indigenous languages constitute a major goal to be achieved with a view to providing culturally appropriate education for Indigenous peoples. In some countries, Indigenous languages are nearly facing extinction. The loss of Indigenous languages as vehicles of transmitting Indigenous values and cultures is an issue of great concern. These values and cultures hold benefit not only for Indigenous peoples but also for the rest of the societies where they live and for humanity in general;

(l) Culturally appropriate education is essential for Indigenous peoples since a good quality education that ignores diversity is not considered able to meet the needs of Indigenous peoples. Culturally appropriate education could be achieved through the participation of Indigenous communities in the planning process.

As the body of country-specific research grows (for instance, in Guatemala, the Philippines and Kenya) it becomes increasingly clear that Indigenous children are not only lacking education but are widely involved in the worst kinds of child labour out of pure necessity. At the same time, government delivery of social services in general, and of education in particular, is very poor or altogether absent. When educational service is provided it usually lacks a bilingual approach, let alone curricula that respect and include the history, values, oral traditions and spirituality of Indigenous peoples. This means that Indigenous children receive little or no quality education, and certainly not sufficient bilingual or intercultural education.
This problem was clearly recognized at the Fourth Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2005), on the “Millennium Development Goals and Indigenous Peoples with a focus on Goal 1 to Eradicate Poverty and Extreme Hunger, and Goal 2 to achieve universal primary education”. A UNESCO paper stated that “intercultural bilingual education faces many hurdles, from the small number of inadequately trained bilingual teachers to problems in developing appropriate teaching materials and methods, and the need to involve Indigenous communities in the designing and running of their own education centres at all levels. Therefore concerted efforts will be needed to ensure that Indigenous peoples fully benefit from the right to education and MDG 1”.

3. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

Indigenous Peoples continue to struggle so that their specific needs are addressed. Along the years they have achieved important victories. Many countries have ratified or acceded to an international treaty, amended their existing constitutional laws, and/or introduced new legislation. An important declaration such as the Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous People has been set up draft due to the growing consensus on Indigenous rights. The declaration does not have any legal power to enforce compliance, but relies purely on the moral weight it carries to influence attitudes and actions on Indigenous issues.

The challenges that remain relate to the lack of implementation of human rights standards at the national level. The Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People adopted by the Human Rights Council (HRC) in June 2006, after more than 20 years of discussion and exchange between Member States and Indigenous peoples. Unfortunately, at the UN General Assembly’s (GA) 61st session, the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee decided to defer any consideration and action on this matter and conclude its deliberations. (December 2006).

The ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (C169) is internationally recognized as the foremost instrument on the subject. It covers a wide range of issues, including land rights, access to natural resources, health, education, vocational training, conditions of employment and contact across borders. In 1995, ILO Convention (C169) had been ratified by eight countries and currently it has been ratified by 18 countries distributed among Latin America (13), Europe (3) and the Asia-Pacific region (one).

During International Decade of the World’s Indigenous Peoples 1995-2004, established by the UN General Assembly (1993), three key results of the program of activities were achieved:

- The adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action of the third UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) convened by the United Nations in 2001;
- The appointment of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of Indigenous peoples by the Commission of Human Rights (2001), in response to the growing international concern regarding the marginalization and discrimination against Indigenous people worldwide. Rodolfo Stavenhaguen from Mexico had a mandate for a three year period, which was renewed in April 2004;
- The establishment of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in May 2002, as an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights. The Forum is made up of 16

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independent experts of which 8 are nominated by governments and eight appointed by the President of ECOSOC.

- The UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions was adopted by the 33rd session of the General Conference (October 2005) and it entered into force on March 2007. The Convention has been ratified by more than 57 parties to date. The Convention aims to reinforce the links between culture and sustainable development and dialogue. It reaffirms respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, equal dignity of cultures, equitable access and openness of cultures to the world. It establishes the sovereign rights of States to elaborate cultural policies and recognizes the distinctive nature of cultural goods and services as vehicles of identity, values and meaning. The promotion of the Convention became important.

- At another level, the Organization of American States proposed the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 1997. A working group was established in 1999 and since then has been carrying out negotiations on the draft declaration.

4. OVERVIEW OF RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY IE

EI Congresses have adopted the following resolutions:

- The Rights of Indigenous Peoples (version amended and adopted by the EI Executive Board in April, 2002)

The issue of indigenous education has been discussed since the first (Zimbabwe, 1995), at each subsequent EI Congress. EI has adopted policies on the issue at each World Congress, always keeping the same backbone of human rights language, but shifting at each Congress in terms of the commitments EI makes to this issue. It is important to recognize that these shifts constitute progress made since the first’s resolutions on “Indigenous Education” and the “Rights of Indigenous Peoples” (1995). They also reflect the results of the indigenous peoples, EI’s members struggle to have their special needs and rights recognized and the gradual progress made over the years.

EI also committed to hold several Indigenous Regional Forums: as planned, three regional forums on indigenous education were held between the first Congress in 1995 and the second in 1998. However, only the EI Asia-Pacific Region has continued to hold an Indigenous Forum on a regular basis since its first time at the EI Asia Pacific Regional Conference (Malaysia, 1997).

The EI Second World Congress (USA, July 1998) adopted the resolution on “the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” that calls on EI and member organizations to establish a work programme for each region that includes the preparation of a triennial report to the EI Congress on the Status of Indigenous Education, including a gender-based analysis. It also calls for the preparation of information for EI affiliates about the importance of Indigenous education, and an analysis of the resources required in order to provide quality education for indigenous peoples.

The EI Third World Congress (Thailand, 2001) supported much of the 1998 resolution, and suggested some amendments that were approved by the Executive Board (2002). They
include the proposal that member organizations urge their governments to ratify ILO Convention 169. It also encourages indigenous people’s representation in membership delegations to EI regional and international fora on indigenous peoples’ issues. It also affirms the intellectual and cultural property rights of Indigenous peoples as collective rights and not just individual rights: EI shall promote understanding of these rights throughout its membership, among others organizations.

The EI Fourth World Congress (Brazil, July 2004) continued to strengthen the EI’s resolve to examine and act on indigenous issues in the face of further impacts of globalization. The resolution on “Education for Cultural Diversity” recognizes that cultural rights are fundamental rights and support the efforts of UNESCO to develop a legally-binding international instrument. The resolution invites EI members’ organizations to:

- **Encourage** governments and education systems to incorporate, where appropriate, traditional knowledge and teaching skills, and particularly those of indigenous peoples and Minority groups, within their curriculum;
- **Promote** teacher education and training in a culturally diversified perspective where appropriate and to foster, where possible, linguistic diversity within all levels of education and to promote multilingualism so that the linguistic heritage of humanity may be safeguarded;
- **Demand** that education in cultural diversity with respect for gender, race, traditional knowledge and religious cultures be incorporated into the training of education employees and in the curricula of pupils.

The overall conclusion of this overview of resolutions and decisions is that the understanding of indigenous issues within EI has moved from a human rights and diversity perspective to understanding the importance of indigenous education and languages as a broader cross-cutting issue which includes not only policy connections to human rights, gender and diversity issues but also to environmental, trade and other globalisation policies.

These changes have been affected by the growing recognition of the indigenous people longstanding struggles for recognition of their specificities needs. EI has supported these efforts but the challenges still remain. EI needs to redefine indigenous education strategies at all levels so that they are in keeping with their specificities needs, and then integrate these fresh strategies into the ongoing work plan 2008-2011. EI has key contributions to make to the Second Decade of the World’s Indigenous Peoples (2005-2015) and the Millennium Development Goals. EI can make them meaningful to Indigenous peoples.

5. **OVERVIEW OF EI TRIENNIAL SURVEY ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES 2007**

The EI triennial survey received 37 responses: Africa (4), Asia and the Pacific (10), Latin America (2), North America and the Caribbean (3) and Europe (18). See Annex No. 1.

**Background Information – Education in the Country**

There is insufficient data to draw accurate regional pictures of the situation of indigenous peoples in education. However, some conclusions can be drawn.

In pre-primary school, indigenous people generally represent a definitely small minority of the total teaching force worldwide - with the exception of Zimbabwe, where teachers are said to be all indigenous, and Australia, where indigenous peoples represent the 12.7% of the total number of teachers in the country.
In primary school, Indigenous people represent a very small percentage of the total number of teachers, at worldwide level – around 1% in Australia (even if they are much more present in the non-teaching staff), only 0.12% in India, 0.03% in Sweden.

There is little data on secondary school, but the picture emerging is not too different. Indigenous teachers are the 0.05% of the total number of teachers in India, the 0.1% in Malaysia, the 0.86% in the United States. They represent 11.2% in New Zealand.

There is some data concerning the management level. Here, again, indigenous people are either very poorly represented or not represented at all: 0.36% for New Zealand and 0.79% for the US, the only two countries for which data is available. For India and the United States there is also data on non-teaching staff. Indigenous people represent the 22.28% of non-teaching staff in India. In the United States, 30.2% of the non-teaching staff is composed by people coming from ethnic minorities.

In higher education the scarce data available confirms a very low presence of indigenous people amongst academics – 0.7% in India, 0.2% in Korea, 0.2% in the United States.

As far as the management level is concerned, indigenous people represent the 22.16% of the total management staff in India and only 0.9% of the staff in the US. Indigenous people represent a bigger percentage of the non-teaching staff; 18% in India, 1.76% in the United States. In the US, almost the 64% of the non-teaching staff is composed of people coming from ethnic minorities. 11.8% of the total number of is composed by indigenous people in India personnel of the Departments of Education (the only country with such data available in this survey).

**Background Information – union**

Indigenous people and people coming from ethnic minorities usually do represent a relatively small percentage of the highest decision making bodies of the union – the main exception being New Zealand, where actually the two member unions report that 15.6% in one case, and 20% respectively of their organisation’s highest decision making bodies are composed of indigenous people, and similar proportions exist for the Executive Board/Representative Assembly. Also of interest is the figure from the US, where 25.5% of the highest decision making body within the National Education Association (NEA) is composed of people coming from ethnic minorities. The picture in Europe is far more complex, as member unions report that indigenous peoples represent the majority of the members of their Congress/Convention/General Assembly. This is a clear misunderstanding of the terminology – hence of the concept - used within the survey: ‘indigenous peoples’ was understood as ‘native peoples’, ‘locals’, i.e. autochthones white Europeans. It is important to get a more precise understanding of the concept.

Indigenous peoples are poorly represented in Financial or Collective Bargaining Committees as well – again with the exception of New Zealand, where around one third and one fourth of these committees are composed of indigenous people. The most interesting data from Europe, comes from United Kingdom, where two member organisations report the presence, respectively, of 1 indigenous member out of 10, and 2 out of 42, on the their Financial Committee.

**Indigenous’ Committees:** The majority of them are mainly composed of both indigenous peoples and/or people from ethnic minorities. This is true not only for Australia and New Zealand, but also for Canada.

Only in Zimbabwe and in some countries in Europe (Ireland, the Netherlands, and Croatia) the main elected officers (Presidents, Vice-Presidents, or General Secretary) are Indigenous
but this figure for Europe likely arises from the confusion on the terminology referred to above.

**Regional issues:**

In **Africa**, half of respondents declared that relevant issues, in terms of indigenous peoples and education, are mainly the lower completion rates among indigenous peoples at all levels of education. There are some barriers to indigenous peoples’ full participation to education, and these are mainly to do with their traditional cultures and practices as well as social exclusion and poverty. The level of concern is higher in relation to discrimination against Indigenous peoples in society, mainly caused by stereotypes, and violence against them.

Apparently, Indigenous peoples do not face formal barriers in the teaching profession, but other barriers – such as cultural, traditional, religious, political and social barriers, or the lack of skills and confidence and lower levels of qualification – seem to be quite relevant.

Equality policies appear to be in place widely throughout the various levels, from the level of the unions up to government implementation. This is particularly true as far as pay equity tools and training are concerned, and less for what regards the reservation of leadership positions to indigenous peoples.

Measures to encourage the participation of indigenous peoples into the union’s activity are in place too, and mainly concern training and the existence of committee/network/designated staff.

Two responding unions out of four declare that they have specific research policies for data gathering on indigenous peoples’ issues.

All respondents declare that they support various pro-Indigenous initiatives and activities, in particular, the establishment of local/regional/national programmes, and of specific activities to increase cultural understanding of indigenous issues.

In terms of needs, the survey indicates that African EI members are keen to receive more information, skills and materials for stimulating increased understanding of indigenous groups, including information about harmful beliefs and practices (especially towards girls). There is a wish to be better empower groups, and to include indigenous issues in general campaigns and advocacy on education.

In **Asia and the Pacific**, the majority of respondents say that indigenous peoples do not face any particularly relevant barrier in accessing education. However, issues of tradition and culture, coupled with social exclusion and poverty and, very often, issues of safety, are likely to constitute a barrier to education. Within schools, the lack of multicultural education programmes does not encourage the full participation of indigenous or ethnic minority students in education.

Pervasive societal violence coupled with socio-economic as well as political exclusion constitutes a key issue contributing to discrimination against indigenous people in society.

In general, respondents from the region do not report specific problems in terms of barrier to indigenous peoples in attempting to enter the teaching profession or in performing teaching duties.

Equality provisions exist at all levels, especially when it comes to pay equity and participation in training. Less frequent is the provision of reserving leadership and other positions to indigenous peoples.
At the union level, all of them seem to have provisions for increasing the participation of indigenous peoples into the union’s activities. Particularly in training on equality issues, as well as the establishment of specific committees/networks/staff on these issues and the guarantee of specific budget allocation for indigenous people’s issues.

All unions support even outside their own activities specific initiatives on indigenous issues, in particular to improve the cultural understanding of indigenous culture, history and tradition.

EI members from the Asia-Pacific region are asking in particular for a stronger engagement of the whole EI membership in awareness-raising, general training, leadership training, campaign and advocacy work on indigenous issues – not only within the education systems, but within the wider union movement, towards governments and the United Nations. The unions which responded from this region show a real ambition in achieving results in the area of indigenous education and the wider indigenous issues.

In Latin America, the replies show that entering schools and fully enjoying education are relevant. These issues are mainly related to lower completion rates as well as socio-economic exclusion. Indigenous peoples also face stereotypes and violence, and, in general, all sorts of socio-economic and political exclusion in society.

There is no particular mention of issues related to indigenous people in the teaching profession. The body of data is too small for developing a clear picture on equality provisions for indigenous in the region.

There is however particular interest in more debate and awareness on indigenous issues, and some requests for empowerment and leadership training for the indigenous groups themselves.

In North America and the Caribbean, lower completion rates appear to represent a relevant and barrier to the full participation of indigenous people in education. Other, less relevant, barriers to education are cultural and traditional attitudes, and socio-economic exclusion.

Discrimination in society can represent a problem, and what contributes to it is mainly violence and widespread stereotypes on indigenous peoples. Socio-economic exclusion, as well as discrimination against women, is relevant too.

One respondent out of three declares that the lack of equal opportunities for promotion, as well as the pay gap and discrimination in employment status constitute a very relevant formal barrier to indigenous in the teaching profession.

The main provision for equality is certainly pay equity, implemented at all levels. Unions also greatly encourage the participation of indigenous people into their activities, specifically through training on the key issues and by organizing specific meetings on the relevant topics. Apparently, many unions have specific research policies for gathering data on indigenous peoples’ issues.

Unions also support various initiatives such as local, regional and national programmes or other activities to raise the awareness and understanding of indigenous peoples’ issues in society.

Included in the membership responses is interest in exchange and mutual learning on issues of multi-culturalism, bilingual practices, and skills to combat discrimination. More information and training materials and ‘clearinghouse’ practices for various campaigns and advocacy are requested. There is a wish to have an EI indigenous forum, which can meet at Congresses, but also work between congresses.
In Europe, the majority of replies do not signal any particular issue in terms of indigenous education. Some responses report that socio-economic exclusion, together with safety issues, represent a problem. These replies should bear in mind that these responses, probably refer to ethnic minorities, rather than ‘indigenous peoples’ sensu stricto, as explained earlier in this analysis.

The unions reported neither barriers to the formal access of indigenous individuals in the teaching profession, nor other types of barriers.

**Union policies**

Training and pay equity remain a key equality provision, implemented at all levels and at large across the continent. Less frequent here, as in other regions, those provisions that relate to reserving specific positions to indigenous peoples.

Participation in the unions is greatly encouraged, especially through training and the creation of specific committees and budget allocations.

Only one respondent out of 18 declares a specific research policy allowing for gathering data on indigenous peoples.

The support of activities and initiatives to raise awareness on indigenous peoples/minorities’ issues is common but not very widespread (4 unions out of 18).

In these responses the connection with other ethnic minorities is more apparent, and from that position stems the need for more work done to be done around diversity, multiculturalism and developing values, concepts, and training material which sees this as positive, enriching learning and cultural integration.

**Overall conclusion:**

Awareness of indigenous issues in terms of empowerment and identity seems to be more strongly developed in the Asian and Pacific region where about 70% of them live. In Latin America, where about 11% of them live, the awareness and work on indigenous issues is a challenge. In the other regions these issues are strongly linked to questions of diversity and discrimination. The need for bilingual education does not appear to be a high priority in these responses.

6. MOVING FOREWARD WITHIN EI, AT DIFFERENT LEVELS: NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

In general, it has been a challenge to implement policies and activities on a regular basis. Coordination and communication need to be improved in the areas of policy implementation, training, mainstreaming efforts and monitoring progress. It will be helpful to set up specific campaigns, where is relevant, to make the issues related to indigenous rights more visible.

EI Triennial Survey 2007 included specific questions on feedback to EI.
- In your opinion, what should EI do to promote a better understanding of indigenous issues?
- Please list what you see as major priorities for EI working plan for the period 2007-2010.

Much feedback refers to existing policies therefore is not included in this document. But information is available upon request.
Feedback that could generate new policy and program activities is listed below. EI members organizations might consider to include them in the future of EI advocacy work on indigenous education.

Information

- Create a data bank of information on interesting actions and campaigns run by EI members in relation to indigenous education (and national minorities).

Lobby and advocacy

- With reference to financing education issues, put emphasis on the need for funding indigenous education materials.

Networking and building alliances

- Provide opportunities for unions to share resources and expertise to assist other unions to promote the rights of indigenous peoples.
- Encourage EI member organizations to attend the 2008 World Indigenous Conference in Education to be held in Melbourne, Australia (7-11 December, 2008).
- Promote cooperation with global unions working on indigenous issues
- Promote cooperation, where appropriate, with indigenous organizations and key non governmental organizations working in the field of indigenous education.

Campaign

- Contribute to achieve the Education for All (EFA 2015) and the right of indigenous children to quality education by advocating for successful policies and programs more grounded in values and cultures held by Indigenous communities.
- Promote campaigns that raise awareness of the contributions of indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities in enriching our culture.

Research

- Organize fact finding missions in key priority countries.
- Encourage research on educational theories and practice that are developed and controlled by indigenous peoples.

Organizing Indigenous Peoples work

- Consider creating a task group at the regional levels, with indigenous representatives from regional caucuses.
- Consider creating a global task group, with indigenous representatives from selected member unions to advance the EI work plan.
- Organize an international symposium on indigenous education (Secretariat).

Solidarity and capacity building

- Organize training on diversity and cultural competence and multicultural education strategies, particularly in teacher education.
Development cooperation

- Mobilize bilateral and multilateral unions in cooperation programmes to allocate funds to help promote indigenous education for indigenous children, especially girls.

EI Secretariat

- To develop strategies to increased priority to this work.
- The secretariats (international and regional) role is critical to making progress on indigenous issues. It requires, as well as foster opportunities for cooperation and exchange.
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