

PROPOSAL FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE UN IASG

November 20th, 2012

Proposal: Creation and Management of a Knowledge Repository or Portal for the UN Interagency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples Issues and relevant Stakeholders

I. Justification:

Since the IV Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples issues there has been a call of the Permanent Forum to the UN IASGⁱ¹ to document good practices for knowledge sharing. Of particular relevance is paragraph 144 of the Fifth Session, which recommends that “the Permanent Forum and the Inter- Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues continue to reflect on how to best ensure that the recommendations of the Forum are implemented by United Nations bodies and organizations, including proposals on *how the recommendations should be packaged and information that indigenous peoples can use to influence decisions within the United Nations system*”.ⁱⁱ In its Sixth Session, in paragraph 46 of the final report, the PFII requested that more case studies and good practices and lessons learned be captured and presented. Finally, in its Tenth Session another call to the UN IASG is made by the Permanent Forum recommending that this coordination mechanism *compile a database on case studies on youth rights in the implementation of the UNDRIP*.

All the above are expressions of interest of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples issues that the broad, diversified and strategic work being carried out by the United Nations Funds, Programmes and Specialized Agencies be captured, analyzed, shared and used by others, particularly, but not only, by Indigenous Peoples.

The need for a knowledge portal was also clearly stated by the Chair of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples Issues, Ms. Mirna Cunningham- Kain at the Opening Session of the 2011 UN IASG Annual Meeting held at the United Nations Population Fund, in New York City, between 21- 23rd November 2011, when she stated that: “*I can see the need to build a knowledge network/system that links your colleagues not only at the global level but also at the country level. I believe we can agree that there is a need of a platform that serves as a repository of documents and information about UN Agencies/IASG in the area of indigenous peoples*”ⁱⁱⁱ

¹ The IASG on Indigenous Issues is a mechanism for inter-agency cooperation on indigenous issues in support to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII)¹ and more widely. It is formed by focal points/units of the departments or organizations of the UN system whose work is relevant to indigenous issues and the promotion and safeguarding of their rights. As of 2008, the membership of the UN IASG includes thirty one members.

The 2011 Annual Meeting of the UN IASG in New York was an opportunity of enhancing collaboration among UN Agencies, in line with the Group's *raison d'être* and a space to recognize that there is need for increased collaboration among UN Agencies, particularly for the sharing of information on the important work that is being carried out with their support, on a very wide range of topics from data collection and dissemination, poverty reduction, sustainable development and environmental issues, health and education, to capacity development and monitoring on indigenous peoples human rights, among many others.

Given the wealth of information that has evolved from the work of the UN at global, regional and country level, throughout these years, including research studies, ongoing programmes and projects, trainings tools, methodologies, good and promising practices, indicators, evaluations, among others, it has become increasingly apparent that a once a year, on-site, Annual Meeting of the UN IASG, is insufficient for the exchange and analysis of existing initiatives and information and for decision making purposes regarding the best way that UN Agencies can work together and contribute to advance the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the identification of joint initiatives that would add value to the work of the UN System and its support role to the Permanent Forum.

Given the abovementioned scenario, a recommendation that came out from the 2011 UN IASG Annual Meeting held in New York was the need to develop a Knowledge Repository for the UN IASG in close coordination with the Secretariat of the PFII, which would allow all UN Agencies locate information, identify and distribute political statements and Declarations linked to key UN events and meetings; share valuable and tested tools and methodologies as well as meeting and project reports, and identify good and promising practices that would assist all UN Agencies, Indigenous Peoples and Governments accelerate their actions in favor of advancing the human rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The purpose of this Concept Note is to share with UN IASG members, the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum and with the MDG Spanish Fund the possibilities that have been explored to take this forward. The MDG Spanish Fund is being included in this Concept Note as a stakeholder, partner and funder that could be interested in supporting the funding of this "Knowledge Portal or Repository", as a means to support the UN IASG in presenting and sharing its work on Indigenous Peoples Issues and in support of the Permanent Forum, and as a means of storing the strategies, evaluation findings, good practices, ongoing projects and lessons learned from the 49 countries in which the MDG Spanish Fund has supported UN Agencies at country level in carrying out initiatives with and for indigenous peoples. In this manner, the Information Portal which could evolve throughout the years into a Knowledge and Programming Portal (KP) would be an optimum space for articulating the work of the UN Agencies at all levels of the organization, providing strategic information for advancing the implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples with efficiency and transparency.

I. Expected Results

Outcome: *To have created a UN wide platform that keeps content assets and processes together, multiplying the value of the knowledge that has been generated by the United Nations Funds, Programmes and Specialized Agencies, and other relevant non-UN partners including indigenous peoples and their organizations on Indigenous Peoples issues in a timely, accurate and relevant manner.*

Output: The development of the Knowledge Repository for the UN IASG, is being proposed in order to keep an overview of available assets and processes.

Its main aim is to inform each other of different products that the different UN Agencies have completed at global, regional and country level, as well as inform Indigenous Peoples and other stakeholders on the their work in a one stop shop.

Key components of the portal would include the following information:

1. Existing UN IASG Members' Policies, Strategic Guidance Notes, and other relevant corporate positions regarding Indigenous Peoples and their organizations
2. Information on programmes and projects of the different UN Agencies and of other Members of the UN IASG, including joint programmes and their expected outcomes.
3. Promising and good practices that have been already vetted by the different UN Agencies at different levels of the organization; e.g. global, regional and country.
4. Information on training programmes being offered by UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes and relevant civil society organizations, including indigenous peoples organizations, Academia, research institutions and NGOs in a given year.
5. Events or Conferences taking place in a specific year, including their outcomes, eg: Declarations, Agreements, and similar type documents.
6. Tested strategies, tools and methodologies developed by the different UN Agencies in substantive areas; e.g.: development with culture and identity, poverty reduction, the environment, population and development, housing and urbanization, education, health, women empowerment, youth, adolescents and children.

II. Main Activities

If the UN IASG decides to take forward this venture, provided that the MDG Spanish Fund is able to fund its design and construct, the following elements would need to be in place:

1. **Management Arrangement:** Under the guidance of the Chair of the UN IASG a Task Force would be created among a group of volunteer UN Agencies in order to direct and monitor the development of the initiative and make decisions during critical moments of the development of the Knowledge Portal.
2. **Consultant:** An external consultant with experience on knowledge portals and/or indigenous peoples issues, at the P3 level, would need to be hired for the period between January- May 2013, in order to develop the initiative. TORs would be developed and approved by the Task Force and the consultant would need to be funded through the MDG Spanish Fund.
3. **Implementation:** Prior to the design, surveys will be conducted to determine priorities that are demand driven. This will involve outreach and solicitation of views etc. Whilst the design is ongoing there will have to be a mapping of IP resources completed with the UN partners etc.
4. **Design:** The Knowledge/Information Portal or Repository could follow an attractive and user friendly design similar to the one that the Brazilian Company LUCCACO, made for UN WOMEN's portal: "End Violence Against Women Now." Nonetheless, the more sophisticated, pedagogical and programmatic component of the UNWOMEN portal, would not be possible to apply at this initial stage, since its implementation and updating would require a minimum of two full time staff members. Also, additional costs of vetting information through external experts and institutions is a costly enterprise, estimated by UN-Women at \$50,000 or more per topic, depending on the size of the knowledge asset.
5. **Hosting the Portal:** While it would have been ideal that the KP would have been hosted by the UN Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples Issues/DESA, consultations made with the Secretariat have led us to discard this possibility, as the services needed for maintaining the portal are not available.

The possibility of linking this IASG members portal to the UN Practitioner's Portal on Human Rights Based Approaches to Programming (hereinafter, the UN HRBA Portal). The UN HRBA Portal pools together the body of knowledge and experience the UN has accumulated in mainstreaming human rights into its work, making it accessible to UN and the wider public through a single entry point. This is organized in various thematic areas and includes a section on Indigenous Peoples After discussion with the UNDG/UNDP staff responsible for the UN HRBA Portal, and in principle, they have agreed to host it, though details need to be further worked out.

Very valuable information already existent on the page of the HRBA portal could be incorporated into the KP, in coordination with the UNDG/UNDP staff members that manage the UN HRBA Portal. The UN IASG Knowledge Portal **would** have a direct link to the webpage of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples issues, and could be accessed through the section on: UN IASG.

All UN Agencies and Members of the UN IASG would be responsible for providing the information needed to populate the portal in a timely manner and providing further updates when new KPs or initiatives are relevant to be included. Depending on costs of upkeep of the portal it could be possible that a UN IASG members would need to pay a modest one-time fee in order to guarantee the existence of a small fund to be managed by the Task Force and administered by ... for contributing to the upkeep of the Knowledge Portal.

6. Costs of the Design of the Portal and timing (subject to availability of funds):
The project for the design of the project would be 9 months, from January to August 2013.

Estimated Budget includes the following:

1. Consultant at P3 level for 9 months: \$49,500 (\$5,500 per month)
2. Procurement of Services of an expert company: \$45,000.
3. Others, TBD: \$5,000

Total: US\$99,500.00

7. Existent webpages:

(<http://social.un.org/index/IndigenousPeoples/InterAgencySupportGroup.aspx>)

User friendly UN Women's Knowledge portal on Ending Violence Against women

(<http://www.endvawnow.org/en/>)

UN Practitioner's Portal on Human Rights Based Approaches to Programming (UN HRBA Portal) (<http://www.hrbaportal.org>)

III. Timeline

A timeline on the different steps to be carried out in order to conclude this proposal together with dates for their completion will be prepared after discussion of the proposal during the UN IASG meeting.

ⁱ The IASG on Indigenous Issues is a mechanism for inter-agency cooperation on indigenous issues in support to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII)¹ and more widely. It is formed by focal points/units of the departments or organizations of the UN system whose work is relevant to indigenous issues and the promotion and safeguarding of their rights. As of 2008, the membership of the UN IASG includes thirty one members

ⁱⁱ Paragraph 144, Report of the Fifth Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples Issues.

ⁱⁱⁱ. Opening Statement by the Chairperson of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Dra. Myrna Cunningham-Kain. 2011 Annual Meeting of the United Nations Interagency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples Issues, 23rd – 25th November, 2011

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