



A side event during the Twelfth Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Valuing Traditional Knowledge:

Sharing Intercultural Perspectives from the MDG Experience

Tuesday, 28 May, 2013, 1:15-2:45 pm

UN North Lawn Building, Conference Room 6

English and Spanish interpretation available

Member States and the international community agree that sustainable development requires the meaningful involvement and active participation of all stakeholders, including women, children, youth and Indigenous Peoples. The traditional knowledge and practices of Indigenous Peoples needs to be valued in the process for a sustainable and culturally appropriate post 2015 health and development agenda.

The region of the Americas comprises a rich diversity of more than 400 groups of Indigenous Peoples, who represent roughly 13% of the population. The UN System has committed to improving the health situation of Indigenous Peoples with their active participation; most recently demonstrated by a regional civil society consultation with Indigenous Peoples on health in the post 2015 development agenda. However, from its experience, the UN System recognizes that there is much to learn and much to do.

Achieving health requires actions and improvements outside of the health sector, such as for increasing access to education, water and sanitation and affordable nutritious food. Attention to these and the other social determinants of health are critical to an inclusive and sustainable human development agenda.

The MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F) supports projects that facilitate Indigenous Peoples access to areas relevant to the social determinants of health such as, nutrition, gender equality, culture, environment and water resources management. Through its work with Indigenous communities at the international, regional, national and community levels, it has identified best practices for ethnically and culturally appropriate approaches to advancing the MDGs. In addition, MDG-F has analyzed the deep inequalities which Indigenous Peoples face in achieving these Goals.

Not all the priority areas for development were included in the MDGs. One such area is disaster risk reduction, which is increasingly critical in light of the ever-increasing threats of more severe disasters from global climate change. In many countries, Indigenous Peoples have been relegated to living on land that is vulnerable to natural disasters. However, the availability of information on the real impact of disasters on Indigenous Peoples is limited,



especially in the area of health. Disaster risk reduction strategies must respect the traditional knowledge, which has contributed to the resilience of Indigenous Peoples.

You are invited to participate in an interactive dialogue with a panel of distinguished guests on the importance of the role of Indigenous Peoples and traditional knowledge in shaping the health and development agenda.

Panelists will include:



- ✓ **Dr. Myrna Cunningham**, Member, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
- ✓ **Ms. Sandra del Rocio Moya Herrera**, Head, Epidemiology Process, Ministry of Health, Otavalo Canton, Imbabura Province, Ecuador
- ✓ **Mr. John Scott**, President, Center for Public Service Communications and PAHO Consultant on Disaster Risk Reduction
- ✓ **Ms Paloma Duran**, Senior Advisor, MDG Fund