aiwn

2015

Building Up from Our Gains

Letter from the Secretariat

The year 2015 marks the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) launched in 2000. The document that identifies the new targets is officially entitled "Transforming Our World – the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development."

The MDGs have, unfortunately, been assessed to have uneven progress, with shortfalls in many areas, despite some significant advances.

Referred to as the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs identify 17 goals with 169 targets that are supposed to guide universal actions in the next 15 years that are critical for a better planet, the well-being of the peoples, and prosperity.

According to the Agenda, these goals are integrated and indivisible and balance the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

With an ambitious commitment to "leave no one behind," the 2030 Agenda has six (6) references to indigenous peoples. These are the following: as one of the vulnerable sectors (para 23) subject to empowerment through the Agenda; as stakeholders (para 52), and therefore, are encouraged to contribute to the monitoring and review of its progress (para 79). Further, it explicitly mentions indigenous peoples in its general declaration of commitments on education (para 25), in goal 2 (target 2.3) on hunger and food security, and in goal 4 (target 4.5) on inclusive and equitable quality education.

Last year, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) committed to "...giv[e] due consideration to all the rights of indigenous peoples in the elaboration of the Post-2015 Development Agenda" after noting that "indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development" (para 37 WCIP Outcome Document, 22 September 2014). Moving further and building on before and beyond the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples or WCIP, indigenous peoples' representatives have consistently engaged the Post-2015 negotiations, focused on indigenous peoples' sustainable, self-determined development.

As the UNGA adopted this Agenda last September 25, 2015, for indigenous peoples, including indigenous women, it is business as usual. This means continuous vigil in defense and protection of land, life and resources.

Individual human and collective rights violations, exploitation and erosion of resources and culture characterize the general situation of indigenous peoples and their communities. In this prevailing situation, indigenous peoples have to double time to strengthen and build community resilience not only to climate change but to the expected development initiatives that may come under the SDG framework so that these do not undermine their rights and identities.

This issue presents further glimpses, in different forms, of the situation of indigenous women in varying degrees of access to rights and development or the lack thereof. AIWN underscores the significance and urgent need of empowering indigenous women so that they are active decision-makers and are able to fully benefit from a full and effective development that leaves no one behind.

We warmly welcome our own partners and members, Parboti Chakma, Ganga Thapa, Angeline Ortiz, and to Tebtebba staff Maribeth Bugtong-Biano, Helen Biangelen-Magata and Jamaica Marie Ona who have contributed to this year's magazine! We encourage everyone to contribute to our future issues.

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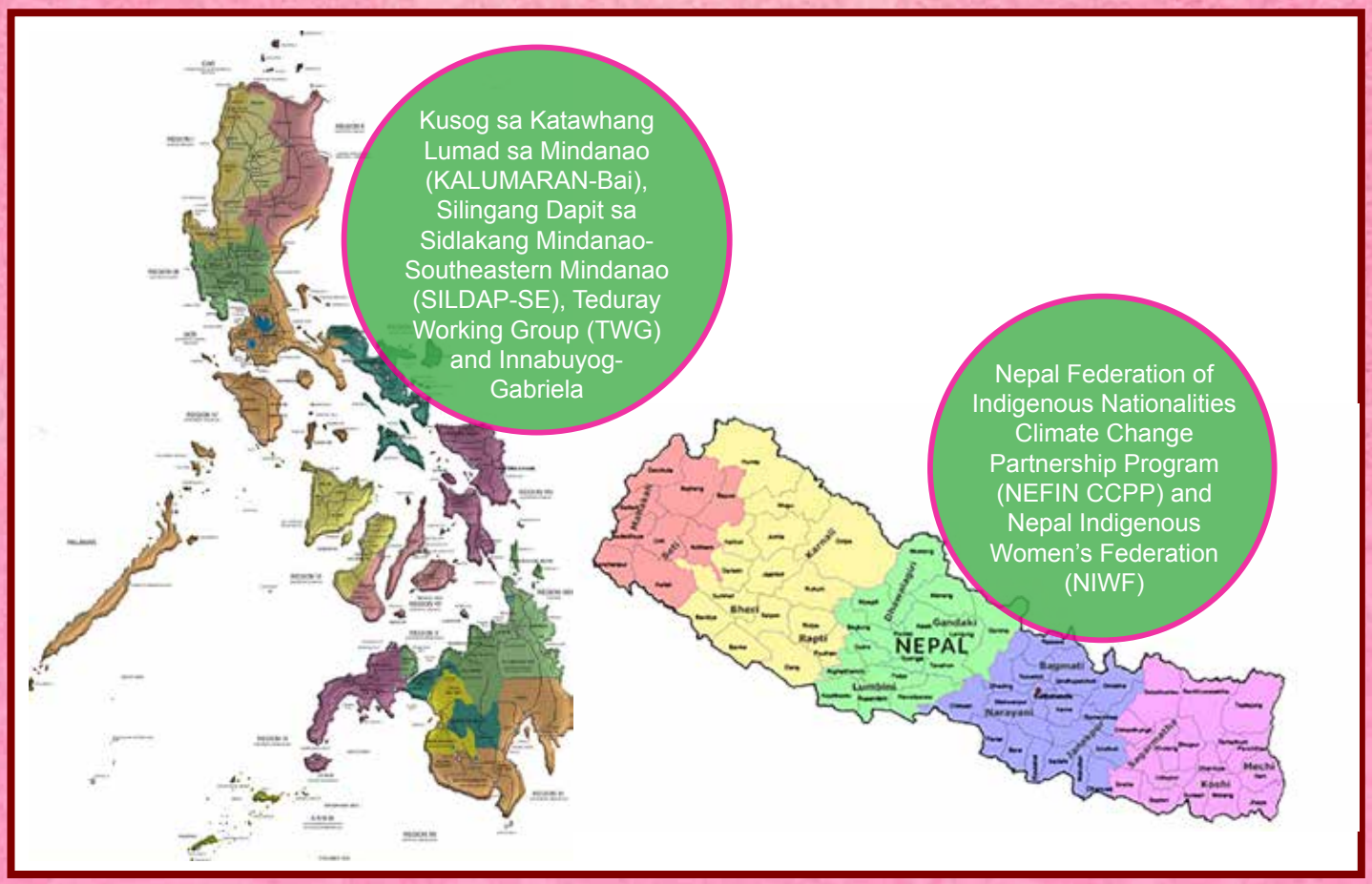
Highlights from the UNFGE Programme

By Maribeth Bugtong-Biano

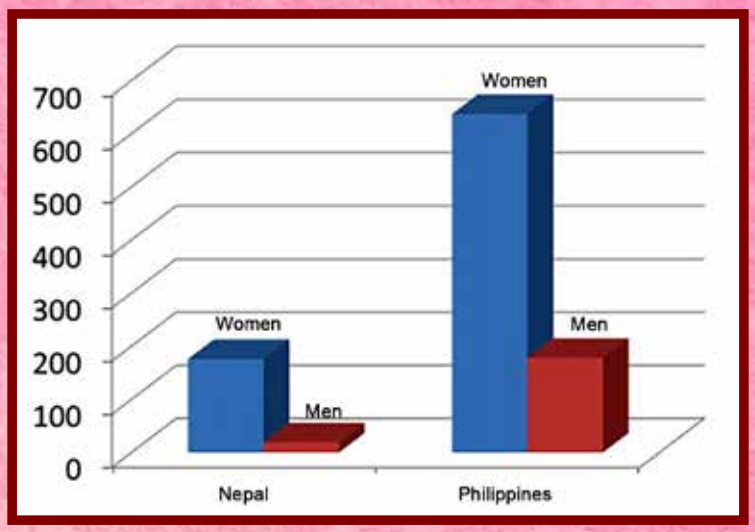
Program	*Indigenous Women's Global Leadership School: Capacity-Building and Political Empowerment in Asia*
Goal	Enhanced capacities of indigenous women and their organizations in Nepal and in the Philippines to promote and protect their rights as women and as indigenous peoples
Country	Philippines and Nepal
Lead Organization	Tebtebba
Implementer	Asian Indigenous Women's Network
Grant Source	UN Women Fund for Gender Equality



Components:

Training and mentoring indigenous women on knowing their rights and in applying their rights concretely

Of the 400 indigenous women (200 in each country) targeted to be reached through delivery of trainings in the local communities, 813 women and 197 men were trained. This is equivalent to 203.25% achievement of the total target of the Programme.



The trainings focused on instruments relevant to the indigenous women: CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women), the UNDRIP (UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples), and the ILO (International Labor Organization) Convention 169. In the Philippines, the training also emphasized on the importance and processes of documentation and on the national laws guaranteeing and protecting the human rights of women. These national laws include anti-trafficking in person, anti-violence against women and their children, anti-rape law, and others. Meanwhile, the discussions in Nepal included issues on indigenous peoples and climate change.

Documenting violence against indigenous women is also a part of the trainings. Most participants in these capacity building activities expressed appreciation for the better understanding of the rights of women in a significantly broader context.

CSW 60 (2016)

Dates: 14 to 24 March 2016 (tentative dates)

Venue: United Nations Headquarters in New York

Priority theme: Women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development

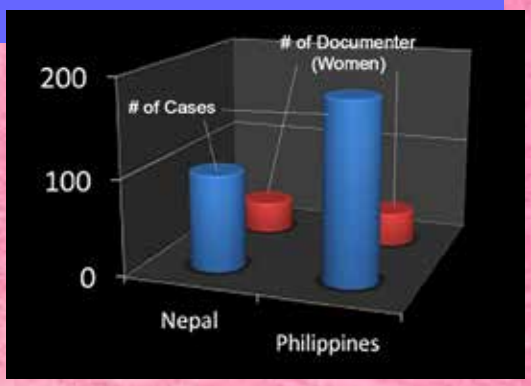
Review theme: The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls (agreed conclusions from the fifty-seventh session)

http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw60-2016

Ten from the partners in Nepal and in the Philippines participated in the Integrated and Holistic Approach Training on 17-19 December 2014 in Baguio City, Philippines.

The training emphasized that an integrated holistic framework includes human rights, territorial management, traditional knowledge, interculturality and intergenerational approaches and gender dimensions.

Documenting cases of violence against indigenous women and information on indigenous women's rights



A total of 276 cases of violence against indigenous women and girls have been documented in Nepal and in the Philippines from 2013 to early 2015.[1]

Advocating indigenous women's rights in various levels

Strengthened by their awareness of their human rights as women and as indigenous peoples and informed by their initial analyses of the documentation process, the partners took advantage of advocacy opportunities. They themselves have initiated means to advocate for their rights at the community up to the UN level. The following are some of the spaces of advocacy:

A total of five indigenous women were able to participate in the program-targeted international processes, i.e., the UNCSW (UN Commission on the Status of Women) and the UNPFII (UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues) sessions in 2014[2] and 2015.

Mila Singson of Innabuyog-Gabriela discussed the situation of indigenous women in the Philippines, including the initial results of documentation in the side event, "Don't Kill Our Future: Indigenous Women in Asia and Beijing+20," during the UNCSW 59th session in New York, US, on 12 March 2015. Kamala Thapa Magar of NEFIN CCPP and Eleanor Dictaan-Bang-oa spoke during the side event.

Organized by Tebtebba and AIWN, the event was attended by indigenous women from Latin America, Asia and Africa.Two from the partners in the Philippines (Angelina B. Ortiz, 2nd from left and Mila L. Singson, right) spoke during the side event "Indigenous Women Securing Life, Land and Culture" on 27 April 2015 at the UN Headquarters in New York during the UNPFII 14th Session. Eleanor Dictaan-Bang-oa, the programme coordinator, moderated the discussion. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, also spoke.

[1] For more details of the documentation, please see submission to the UNSRRIP ("Brief/Notes from the UNFGE Programme").

[2] *"Participating Effectively in the UNCSW58"* and *"Violence against Indigenous Women in Asia"* by Eleanor P. Dictaan-Bang-oa in the AIWN magazine 2014, pp. 34-36 and 22-25, respectively, give details on the advocacy initiatives during the UNCSW 58th and UNPFII 13th sessions.

On 19 December 2014, 10 representatives from the implementing partners in Nepal and in the Philippines had an informal consultation with the UNSRRIP Victoria Tauli-Corpuz in Baguio City, Philippines. The participants from the Philippines and Nepal informed the UNSRRIP of the human rights situations of indigenous women in their communities. On the other hand, Tauli-Corpuz elucidated what her mandate can do on the violations of human rights of indigenous women and girls.

NIWF joined the demonstration calling on members of the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to ensure indigenous peoples' rights in their agenda on the Association's meeting on 22-23 November 2014 in Kathmandu, Nepal. *Photo credit: Ganga Thapa, NIWF*

NIWF staged a demonstration on 16 November 2014 in Kathmandu, Nepal to call for justice on the sexual exploitation and murder of Susila Lama Tamang, a student and a househelp, by her employers. *Photo credit: Ganga Thapa, NIWF*

NIWF co-organized an interactive dialogue with the members of the Nepal Constituent Assembly during the SAARC meeting on 22 November 2015. Inclusion of indigenous peoples and the recognition of the distinct context of indigenous women in Nepal to be considered in the proposed new constitution was the focus of the dialogue. *Photo credit: Ganga Thapa, NIWF*

On 2 March 2015, participants of the National Indigenous Women's Conference in the Philippines went to the Batasan, the seat of the House of Representatives of the Philippines, to lobby with legislators.

Mila Singson of Innabuyog-Gabriela, right, together with indigenous women submitted the outcome documents of the national conference to the chief of staff of Congressman Manuel Agyao of Abra province in the northern Philippines. One document is a resolution reiterating the views of indigenous women on the "No Home Birthing" policy of the Department of Health. The other document is about the situation of indigenous women in the Philippines.

More than 30 indigenous men and women participated in the National Conference of Indigenous Women in the Philippines on 1-2 March 2015 in Quezon City. Implementing partners shared their lessons learned from the Programme. Other partners presented issues surrounding indigenous peoples, particularly indigenous women.

Participants of the National Level Sharing and Dialogue on Indigenous Women's Issues and Concerns on 24-26 February 2015 in Lalitpur, Nepal discussed the 16-point National Position Paper of Indigenous Women's 2015, which contains their demands to be included in the new constitution.

Shanti Jirel, front right, the chair-person of NIWF, handed the position paper of indigenous women to the Deputy Speaker of the Constituent Assembly (CA), Hon. Onsari Gharti Magar.

Lakpa Diki Sherpa presented the position paper of indigenous women and Shanti Jirel handed a copy of it to MOW-CSW Secretary Mr. Dhan Bahadur Tamang during the national roundtable dialogue with government representatives and other stakehodlers on 10 April 2015 in Kathmandu. Members of the Constituent Assembly (CA) and government agency officials were also present during the dialogue. *Photo credit: NEFIN CCP and NIWF*

Community Visit

Nuntana Tangwinit, right, UN Women Programme Officer, and Manggob Mansinaring, left, SILDAP staff, rode a *habal-habal** on their way to Calinogan, Casoon, Moncayo, Compostela Valley, Philippines for a community visit on 14 August 2014.

Implementing partners from Nepal and in the Philippines met with UN Women programme officer Nuntana Tangwinit, Tebtebba programme lead Eleanor Dictaan-Bang-oa and UN Women Philippines Coordinator Jean Manipon for project monitoring, evaluation and planning on 15-16 August 2014 in Davao City, Philippines.

Angelina B. Ortiz of SILDAP-SE discussed indigenous women's rights embodied in the CEDAW and in the UNDRIP to training participants in Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte, Philippines on 22 November 2014.
Photo credit: Angelina B. Ortiz

Workers of the Teduray Working Group (TWG) traversed the Tubwan River on 18 May 2014 from Bantek, North Upi, Maguindanao, Philippines where they conducted a training.
Photo credit: Elsie Mokudef

Men participated in the training conducted by the TWG in Barangay Bayabas, North Upi, Maguindanao, Philippines on 8 May 2014.
Photo credit: Elsie Mokudef

* Local innovation of the Philippine tricycle.

Women participated in the training workshop on indigenous women's rights and documentation of violence against women conducted by Innabuyog-Gabriela in Baguio City, Philippines last October 2014.
Photo credit: Iannbuyog-Gabriela

Lumad women participated in the documentation workshop on mining, militarization and indigenous women's rights violations held by KALUMARAN-Bai in April 2014 in General Santos City, Philippines.
Photo credit: KALUMARAN-Bai

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Addis Ababa Conference

The Third Conference on Financing for Development happened in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia last 13-16 July 2015 where political representatives, including heads of States and Governments, attended. Civil society organizations, including indigenous peoples' representatives, attended the high-level meeting on financing for sustainable development.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda [A/RES/69/313] was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 27 July 2015, which sets a global framework for financing development programs post-2015. Said agenda affirms the commitment of States and Governments to end poverty and hunger and achieve sustainable development. Further committing to respect human rights, they commit to ensure gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

For more information, please see http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/ffd3/conference.html

Brief/Notes from the UNFGE Programme[1]

Submitted to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,
Ms Victoria Tauli-Corpuz

19 August 2015

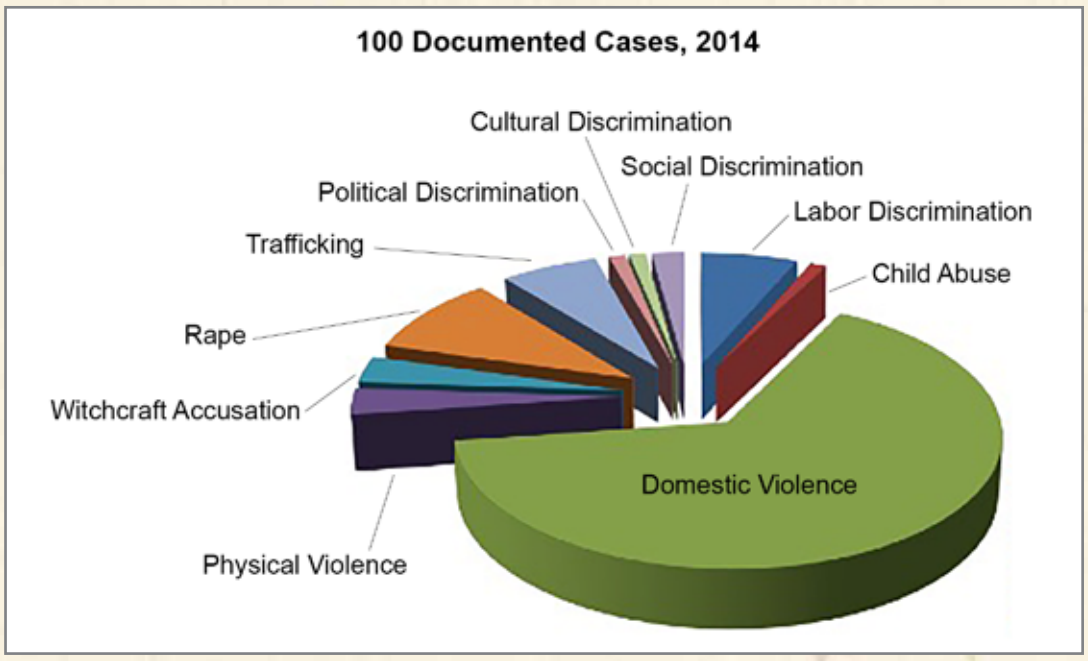
I. Introduction

The UNFGE (UN Fund for Gender Equality) programme is a 2-year capacity building project contracted between Tebtebba and the UN Women. This has been implemented by the Asian Indigenous Women's Network (AIWN). It involves strengthening some indigenous women's agencies in Nepal and the Philippines to be able to increase their knowledge and skills in the assertion and access of their rights as women and as indigenous peoples. Main activities include capacity building on indigenous peoples' rights and women's rights as provided in international laws/agreements, their national operationalization and mechanisms available for redress and how to utilize these for and by indigenous women, and documentation of violence experienced by indigenous women.

Here are some highlights from the results of the documentation:

A. Nepal

Figure 1: Forms of Violence against Indigenous Women in Nepal

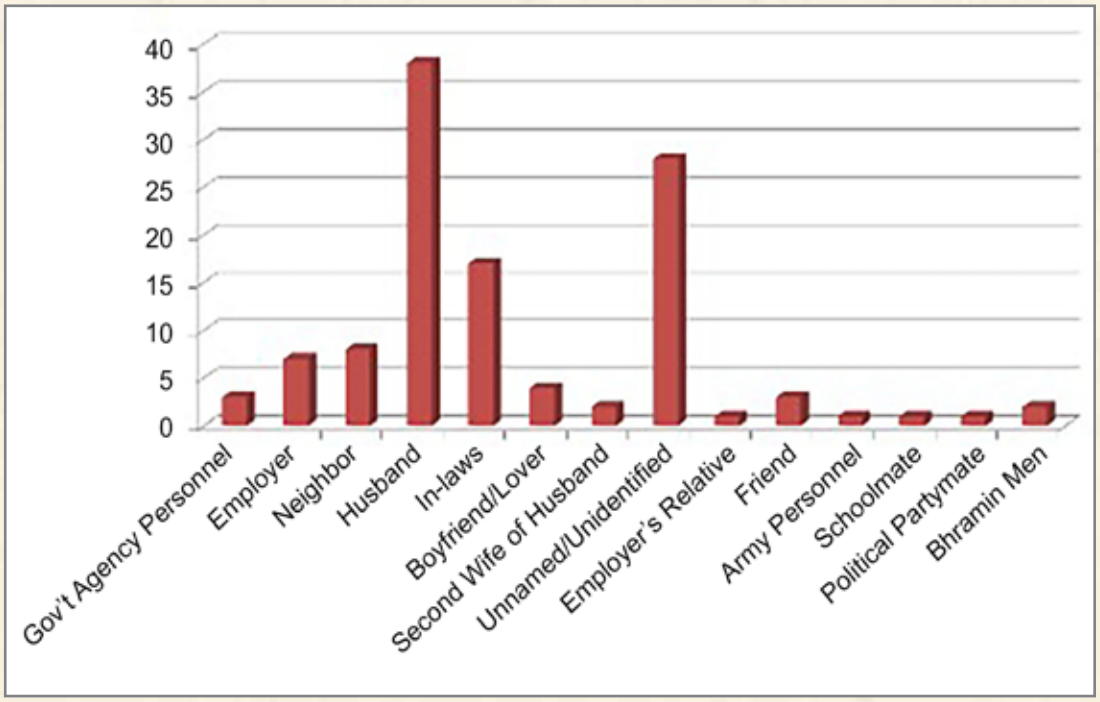


* Prepared by Eleanor Dictaan-Bang-oa, Programme lead coordinator, and Maribeth Bugtong-Biano, staff, Indigenous Women Programme, Tebtebba.

1. There are 100 documented cases: 6 labor-related violence (discrimination, exploitation, sexual abuse, and kamlari[2] cases) with one victim murdered; 60 domestic violence (mostly physical and mental/emotional abuse, abandonment, negligence, lack of support, deprivation from enjoying property rights) with one victim beaten to death and one victim who committed suicide from depression; 3 physical abuses; 3 witch craft accusations with one victim murdered; 9 rapes; 6 traffickings; 1 political discrimination; 1 cultural discrimination; and 2 social discrimination cases.

   There is one case where a poor widow cannot perform the last burial rites for her deceased husband due to lack of financial resources. A baby boy was injured by the abusive father in a fit of anger directed to the wife. There were victims whose citizenship were dependent upon the registration of their marriage by the family of the husband. In most cases of domestic violence, the culprits are often the husbands or the members of the family of the husband.

Figure 2: Immediate Perpetrators of VAW, Nepal

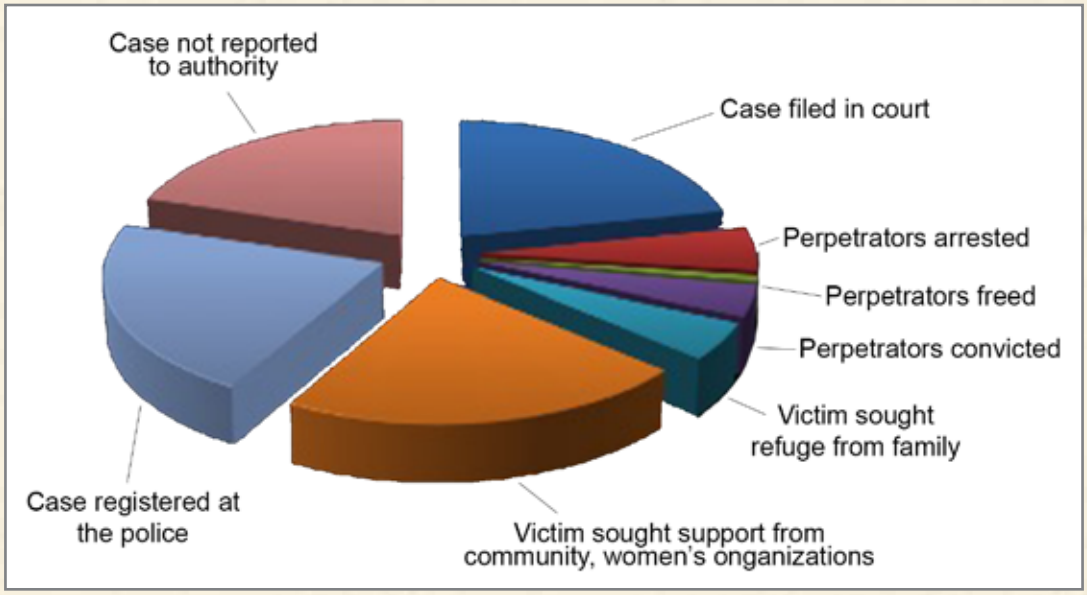


2. Victims' ages range from 4 to 65.

3. Most complaints or cases were lodged by the victims at the police stations. In some instances, the filing of cases at the police stations was not helpful to the victims due to the influence of the perpetrator's family. The courts were the other resort of victims for justice and their families and women's human rights organizations. (Fig. 3)

[2] Or indentured female servant who is usually from the Tharu community and serves in another family's house. A story of former kamlaris is available in AIWN Magazine 2014, pp. 36-37.

Figure 3: Complaints and Access to Justice



4. There were some NGOs who provided financial and legal supports to the victims.

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GCF

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) was established during the 16th Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Cancun, Mexico in December 2010 as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention. The Fund is established to "support projects, programmes, policies and other activities in developing country Parties using thematic funding windows."

Hosted in Songdo, Incheon, South Korea, the GCF is governed by the GCF Board composed of 24 members. The Board provides urgent preparatory and readiness assistance to developing countries, particularly the least developed countries and the small island developing States and African States.

For effective participation, the Board allows participation of accredited observers in its meetings. Thus, there are two civil society representatives, one each from developed and developing countries; and two private sector representatives, one each from developed and developing countries, as active observers.

For more information about the GCF, please go to http://news.gcfund.org/

B. Philippines

In the Philippines, political and cultural rights violations, including violence ensuing from the denial of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) by indigenous communities have reportedly occurred most in the cases documented. These are occurring almost as much as domestic violence. There are a total of 185 cases documented from the Cordillera and Mindanao regions of the country. As may be inferred from the following Fig. 4, the number of occurrence of collective rights violations (cultural, political and FPIC-related violations) is very minimal as documented. This can be very deceiving if cases are simply noted as displacement or violation of FPIC where its intensity and magnitude are not really reflected. As can be seen in Figure 4, the number of victims is alarmingly high, reflecting the need for closer documentation of violations against collective and individual rights impacting women. In addition, the ages of the victims range from 5 to 70 years old. There are more victims, at 17 to 20 counts, from the ages 16 to 35 years old.

Figure 4: Cases and Victims/Survivors of VAW, Philippines

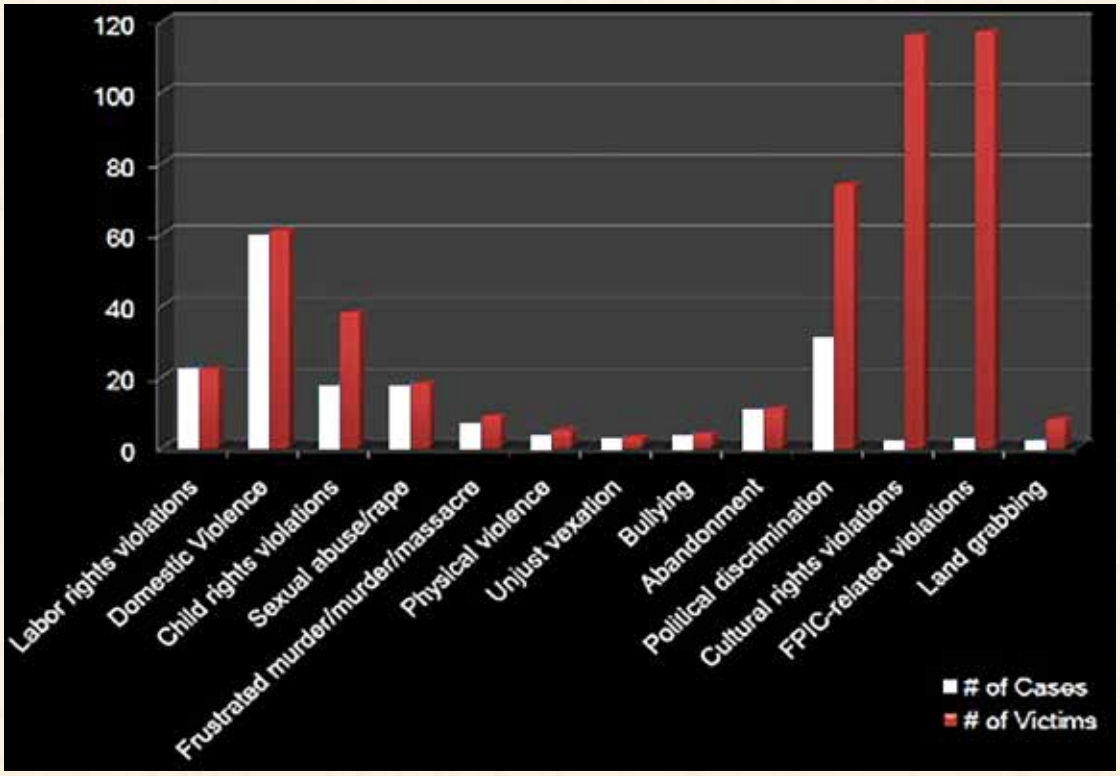


Figure 5: Immediate VAW Perpetrators

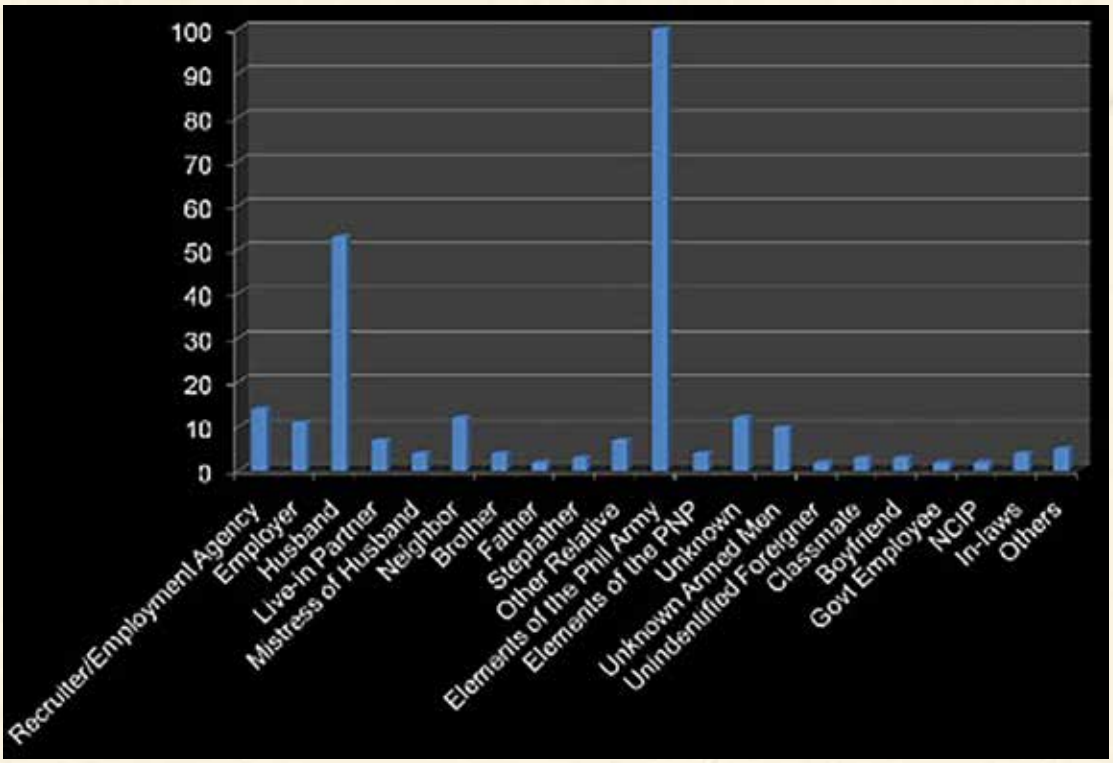
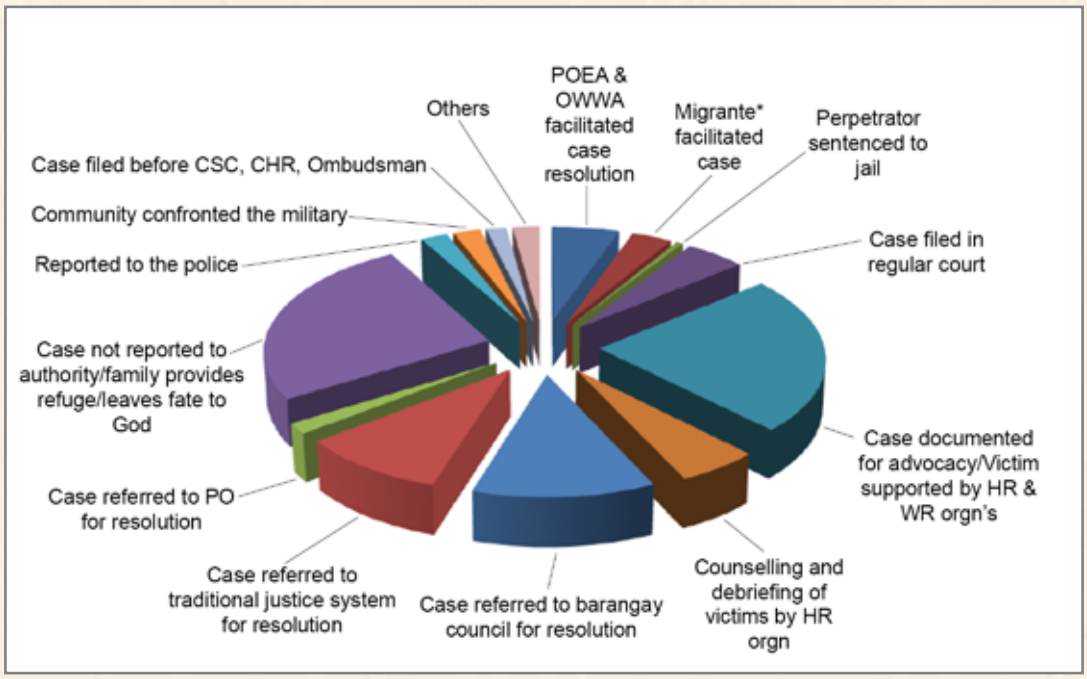


Figure 6: Complaints and Access to Justice



II. Observations

1. The documentation showed more cases of VAW (violence against women) in the Philippines than in Nepal. While the numbers are lower in Nepal, this may not automatically say that VAW is happening more often in the Philippines than in Nepal. There could be many factors contributing to these results; but one can generally assume the strong influence of patriarchy in the wider social system.

   Nonetheless, across countries, domestic violence is happening both in the urban and rural setting with a priority option for amicable settlement provided to the survivors when seeking redress. In Nepal, most survivors and/or their families generally resort to the police. In the Philippines (Fig. 6), there were several options documented, including reporting to government like the Commission on Human Rgiths and non-government mechanisms.

   Nonetheless, while women in both countries are seemingly using available mechanisms to address the violence they experience, there are still a remarkable number of cases which are not reported. Reasons for this vary from "leaving it to God" due to fear of reprisals and social stigma. Progress of reported cases are similarly challenged by survivor's backing out or giving up—usually due to the long process, the cost for litigation and the psycho-social stress that may eventually burn out support even from family members.

2. Collective rights violations that include aggression against individual rights and violence against women are pronounced in the conflict areas in the Philippines. Conflict here is generally associated to the presence of corporate interests over the land and resources traditionally owned by indigenous peoples. It is compounded by the presence of military and paramilitary forces in the guise of anti-insurgency campaigns by the government. It is also in this type of violations where government agencies and/or personnel are surfaced out as the immediate cause of violence.

* Migrante is an international NGO working to promote rights of migrant workers.

3. In Nepal, the most immediate mechanism is seemingly the formal structures of governance, i.e., the police and then the courts. In the Philippines, there is seemingly a wider option for complaints including resorting to traditional justice system. It is worth noting here that, generally, in indigenous communities in the Philippines, there is still a sense or presence of traditional justice systems despite the fact that these systems may be eroding. In the cases documented that were brought under traditional system, the decisions and implementation of sanctions were immediate and were abided by both parties.

III. Emerging Recommendations

1. Appropriate information on VAW prevails as a need for indigenous women. Along with this is the need to capacitate them to get a fuller understanding why VAW occurs, how the community as a whole can prevent it, and what mechanisms are present at their disposal to access justice. This includes a process of educating them and their communities on their rights as human beings, as women, and as indigenous peoples.

2. Understanding VAW from the perspectives of indigenous women involves broader lenses that capture the intersectionalities of their diverse identities and circumstances. Aside from gender sensitivity, service providers should be enabled to understood the socio-cultural milieu of indigenous communities and their situations in relation to their access to rights.

3. Political will to fulfill obligations to human/women's rights: Governments should muster their political will to recognize, protect and fulfill their obligations to human rights instruments including specifically those related to the historically marginalized - women and indigenous peoples. This includes capacitating the government, its agencies and personnel on its obligations and allocating appropriate logistical, technical and financial support to the full and effective implementation or operationalization of the CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women) and the UNDRIP (UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) in full consultation with indigenous women and indigenous peoples themselves.

   Legal pluralism provides options for access to justice in relation to violence against indigenous women. More often, however, the legal system is shunned because of the cost, length of process that does not even ensure achievement of justice, and freedom from stigma. More studies, however, should be undertaken to look deeper into the effectiveness and scope of these co-existing systems and how each should strengthen the other.

UNPFII 15 (2016)

Dates: 9-20 May 2016

Venue: United Nations Headquarters, New York

Theme: Indigenous peoples: conflict, peace and resolution

http://undesadspd.org/IndigenousPeoples.aspx

Indigenous women in Bangladesh: how are our indigenous sisters from the plains doing?

By Parboti Roy[1]

Bashanti Murmu on her land. *Photo credit: Manik Soren*

There are about 45 indigenous peoples' groups living in Bangladesh with distinctive cultures, traditions and rituals. The majority of them are living in different plain districts of Bangladesh and face multilayered discriminations and marginalization in the socio-economic aspects. For instance, a study by the Human Development Research Centre (2012) reveals that the indigenous peoples in the northern Bangladesh live under the absolute poverty line in contrast to 39.5% of the people living in the rural parts of Bangladesh.

Moreover, the indigenous peoples in the plains are deprived of their collective land rights, are victims of land dispossession by the non-indigenous people, and face racial discrimination from the mainstream Bengali society. It has been reported by indigenous peoples from the greater north Bengal that they face racial and ethnic discrimination especially in the mainstream educational institutions and in the rural hotels and restaurants. In addition, land is one of the major concerns for indigenous peoples living in the plains in which women are the most vulnerable.

Despite all challenging factors both within and the broader societal prospects, women are coming forth to raise their voices and build resistance against injustice through their individual and collective efforts.

This writing is based on my recent visit to Rajshahi located in the northern part of Bangladesh to give a training on gender and violence against indigenous women. I got a chance to meet a number of indigenous women from Mahato, Santal, Munda, Rabidash, Pahariya, Rajbongshi, Sing and Orao from different sub-districts and districts of the northern region. I came to know stories

[1] Parboti Roy is a member of Bangladesh Indigenous Women's Network and Lecturer at North South University Bangladesh.

of struggles and their endeavor to fight against socio-economic barriers.

One of the exemplary indigenous women I met there was Bichitra Tirki. She is an Oraon woman who is also a promising indigenous woman activist and an elected member of the local government body in Chapaynababgong, Dinajpur District. She was sexually abused while protesting against the non-indigenous land grabbers of her ancestral land. Unlike other women, she did not keep silent against such violence after the incident. She herself boldly filed a case against such violence. Although the main culprit of the incident was not punished, Bichitra said she will continue her fight against such injustice and violence. She got back her land and has developed a paddy field in it now.

Another indigenous woman figure in the northern Bangladesh is Bashanti Murmu, the General Secretary of Jatiya Adibashi Mahila Parishad or National Indigenous Women's Council in central Dinajpur, which is working for the promotion of indigenous women's rights and voices. She mobilizes women at the grassroots level to create awareness on their political rights and their children's education. She believes that if indigenous girls and women have right to education, they will be empowered in society. Moreover, she files cases on sexual and physical violence against indigenous women in her district despite facing adversity at the police station. She also believes that it is important to ensure indigenous women's right to land so that they will be economically empowered.

Some young indigenous women are coming forward for the welfare of their respective communities. One of the inspiring young indigenous female students I met is Sumita Rabidash. She is from the Rabidash indigenous community in Gaibandha District. She is currently at the last year of her Masters in Media and Journalism at Rajshahi University. It is remarkable that the area where Sumita came from is an area of *monga*, an area that remains under water around the year and as a result, people cannot cultivate crops. From my conversation with her, I came to know that there are nearly 200,000 Rabidash people in Bangladesh living in different plain districts and most of the families are very poor. Furthermore, in Rabidash community, early marriage is one of the barriers to a girl's education. The parents from the poor household intend to marry off the girls at early ages.

Sumita has been trying to raise awareness against child marriage and promote the importance of education among the youth in Rabidash community. She, along with her two elder sisters, assist several poor girls to continue their education. She said she will sustain her effort in the long run and as long as she can. Apart from this, she has been awarded a scholarship on media journalism for 6 months. Through this scholarship, she developed several reports on Rabidash community for the community radio channel named Radio Padma 99.2 FM.

It is clear from these stories on indigenous women in the plains that despite their enormous challenges, they are continuing their efforts to bring positive changes to their respective indigenous societies.

Sumita announcing on the radio. *Photo credit: Sumita Das*

Position Paper of the Indigenous Women in the Framework of Beijing+20

We, the indigenous women of the Americas, Asia, Africa, the Arctic, and the Pacific, recalling the Fourth World Conference on Women organized in Beijing by the United Nations, assemble once more to reaffirm the advancements we have achieved during the past 20 years in terms of political advocacy at an international level.[1]

Firstly, we highlight the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Outcome Document adopted at UN World Conference on Indigenous Peoples [A/RES/69/2].

We also highlight the two resolutions on indigenous women approved by the CSW: "Indigenous women: beyond the ten-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action," which urges the adoption of measures that ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous women in all aspects of society;[2] and "Indigenous women: key actors in poverty and hunger eradication,"[3] which urges States and agencies of the United Nations system to adopt measures aimed at promoting the empowerment of indigenous women and the realization of our rights.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned advancements, 20 years after Beijing, the rights of indigenous women continue to be infringed upon in the majority of our countries and territories.

Thus, we urge Member-States to include in the outcome document of the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women the following priorities:

1. To promote the generation of data disaggregated by ethnicity and gender; as well as to allocate budget to design and to monitor holistic indicators of indigenous peoples' well-being.[4]
2. To examine the distinctive features of violence against indigenous women, in consultation with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and other special procedures mandate holders within their respective mandates.[5]

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[1] E/C.19/2014/CRP.1.

[2] Resolution E/2005/27.

[3] Resolution E/CN.6/2012/L.6.

[4] A/RES/69/2, 10.

[5] A/RES/69/2, 19.

3. We invite the Commission on the Status of Women to consider the issue of the empowerment of indigenous women at a future period of sessions.[6]
4. We recommend advocacy in favor of the empowerment of indigenous women and the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes designed to promote capacity building and to strengthen their leadership, in collaboration with indigenous peoples, in particular indigenous women and their organizations. We urge states to honor their assumed commitments aimed at developing measures that ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous women in decision-making processes at all levels and in all areas, and to eliminate barriers to their participation in political, economic, social and cultural life.[7]
5. We recommend the formulation of policies for the economic empowerment of indigenous women, bearing their traditional knowledge in mind and improving their access to resources in equal condition, including allocation of specific budget for indigenous women.
6. We urge to consider all of the rights of indigenous peoples in the elaboration of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.[8]
7. We recommend the agencies created by virtue of international human rights treaties, specially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) to examine the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples within the frame of their respective mandates. We encourage Member-States to include, where appropriate, information on the situation of indigenous women, including measures adopted to attain the goals of the Declaration, in the reports that they present to those agencies and in the universal periodic review process.[9]

Further information:
info@iiwf.org / www.fimi-iiwf.org

[6] A/RES/69/2, 19.
[7] A/RES/69/2, 17.
[8] A/RES/69/2, 37.
[9] A/RES/69/2, 29.

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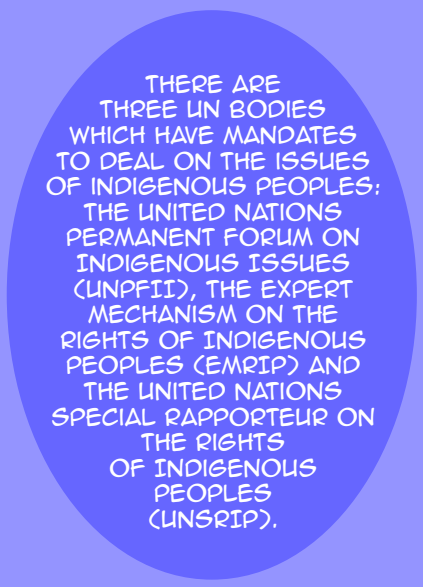


Sailing to Freedom

By Helen Biangalen-Magata

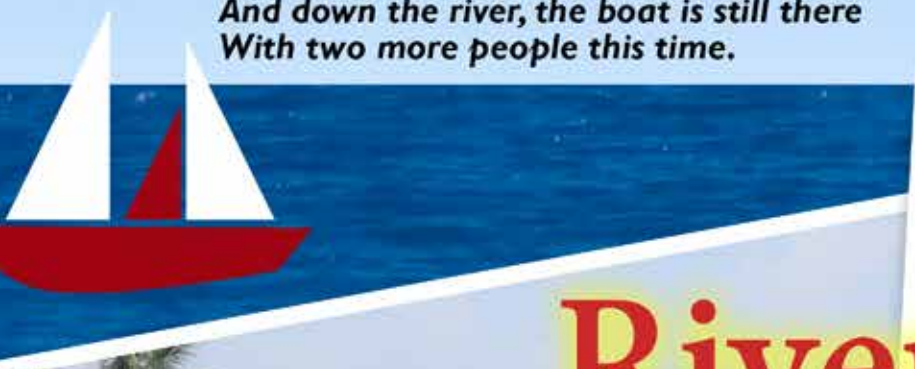
This is the first day
We are passing a bridge
It is long and wide
And there is a boat down the river.

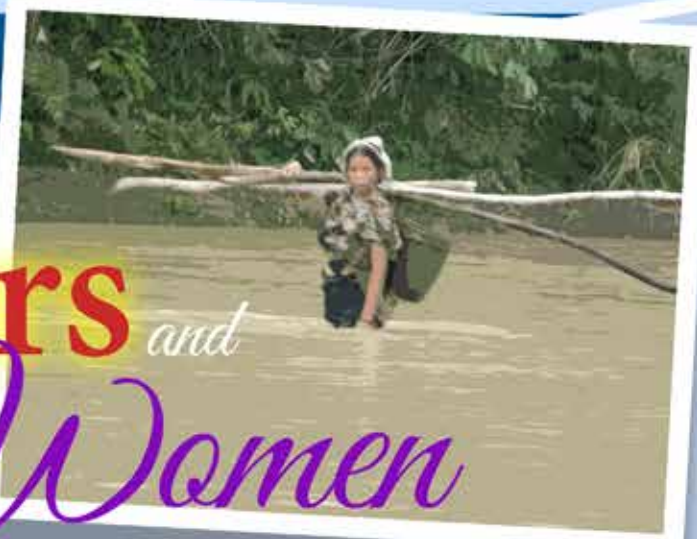
The sail is broken
The beam smashed
Water seeps through the bilge
And two men were mending it.

Now is our second day
We cross the bridge again
And down the river, the boat is still there
With two more people this time.

The one is hammering
The other doing the sail
The other pair was painting
The boat is now red and white.

Tomorrow will be the day
I will cross the bridge one last time
But the boat will not be down the river
Because it will be ready to sail again.





Rivers and Women

Fish, eel and shrimp swim in the rivers
where everyone is invited to dive;
Indeed, a need for everyone who strive.

Rivers bind everyone in the community
for water is a necessity;
River systems must be taken cared,
Irreplaceable thing we share.

Rivers are like women
whose nurture should be given.

Future generation, listen!
The rivers and the women
are important for the well-being;
Rivers must be protected
so as women must be respected.

I am MAYMAYAN

By Angelina Baltazar-Ortiz

My childhood and early education

I am Angelina B. Ortiz. I am a full blooded Mansaka, 54 years old, born on January 15, 1961 at Tigbao, Maragusan, Compostela Valley, southern Philippines. I am the third among seven brothers and sisters. My birth month is the season when native mushrooms grow.

One variety of mushroom is called *Maymayan*, which my parents took as my pet name. It is a part of our culture to give a name relevant to the condition at birth or based on the behavior of a child. When I was 6 years old, I was baptized in a Roman Catholic church and was christened Angelina.

The first influence in my life was my mother. She was a hardworking woman doing many household chores from dawn to dusk. Besides her daily routine at home, she managed to weave mats and baskets, sew and design dresses through stitching/cross stitching. She also helped my father work in the farm. I was always very close to my mother. At bed time, I would always ask her to tell us stories and we would be very happy listening to her. Her stories gave us moral lessons and it was the way we learned our traditional practices.

I was eight years old when the primary school was opened in our community. It was located two kilometers away from our home. My elder sister and I were enrolled in Grade I. Because there was no school building, the classes were held in our chapel with no

desk or any learning materials and facilities. A lone teacher held classes to more or less 30 pupils, including my sister and I.

We had in our neighborhood professionals who appeared more influential and moneyed since they were educated. My parents thought that earning Western education is necessary to escape poverty and that literacy and numeracy will make us more knowledgeable. So, we would not be fooled by outsiders. What's more, my parents' difficult experiences of processing documents and understanding their contents motivated them to send us to school. Being illiterates, my parents had no idea what effects this kind of education would bring to our culture. They only knew that education would bring light to their innocence and will teach them the right way to do things.

I was overjoyed and was very interested to attend class everyday -- not just to learn but also to escape work at home, like fetching water at the spring. Fetching water was hard work for me as the long bamboo pole with around 15- 20 liters was a heavy load for a kid like me. At times, I also escaped other tasks such as pounding upland rice, feeding pigs and chicken.

"Work selflessly for the recognition of indigenous peoples' rights to education."

Every 4:00 am, I would get up from bed to pasture the carabao or water buffalo to the nearby grassland. I always listened to the voice of the *Kalaw* bird because it signals that I have to finish my work fast before 7:00 am. This way, I know I won't be late for school. Upon hearing the bird sound, I would rush home to take my breakfast and prepare my things for school.

I was already in Grade V when I was 13 years old. Our school was located farther from our home. My sister and I had to walk for three hours everyday in the hilly, muddy and forested areas before reaching Mapawa Elementary School. So that our school uniforms would not get dirty, we put them inside a plastic bag with our pair of slippers. Most of the time, we walked barefoot to keep our slippers clean from mud. Then, we would only wear our uniforms when we were near the school.

At times, I would complain because of the difficulties, especially during rainy days when our notebooks get wet. The banana leaves we picked to cover ourselves were not enough to protect our school materials. During lean months, we had to bring boiled sweet potato (*kamote*) or taro (*gabi*) for our lunch. Our schoolmates, who were not indigenous, bullied us because of our "unusual" meal. They also called as untidy, which oftentimes resulted to differences and quarrelling among us.

To vent our anger in being bullied everytime, we, the Mansaka children, challenged other boys and girls to a fight: Mansaka against non-Mansaka. We fought on our way to our homes.

In 1960s to 1970s, when the practices of the Mansaka people in our village were still intact, very few children attended school due to fear of mingling with non-Mansaka children who had a different culture. The schools were considerably far from the houses and the parents feared for the security of the children who had to walk long distances. The daily-packed meals and school supplies were unaffordable for many families and this prohibited other children to enroll as well. Many of us did not want to bring *kamote* for meal as Visayan settlers or non-Lumads would bully us.

Most of the children who were studying then were supported by the Roman Catholic Church.

I did not follow our traditional practices

In my community, boys and girls had an equal opportunity to study. But in most cases, only few among the girls finished elementary because they were married off before reaching Grade VI. Back then, parents were already proud of having children who

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World Hunger

FAO's call to support indigenous women farmers to reduce hunger.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) recognizes the need for women farmers to have equal access to resources as to men in order to feed the world's hungry. According to FAO, in so doing, hunger will be reduced by 150 million. It also was mentioned the critical importance of land security, which applies also to tenure rights for indigenous women on their lands, gaining access to resources such as seeds, pesticides and tools for farming, and the supporting mechanisms such as creditors and market.

Furthermore, in a joint report presented on July 2015, it was found that "investment in agriculture is five times more effective in reducing poverty and hunger than investment in any other sector." According to Kanayo F. Nwanze of IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development), "We believe that we won't see gains in reducing poverty and hunger unless we seriously invest in rural people… Given the right kind of tools and resources, small-scale agricultural producers and rural entrepreneurs can transform struggling communities into thriving places."

Source: https://www.takepart.com/article/2015/08/07/ending-global-hunger

received an elementary education. The highest level reached by our relatives on my mother's side was high school. A niece of my father finished a bachelor's degree and others were high school graduates.

I always dreamt of finishing a college degree as I did not wish to become a second wife or *duway*. I have observed many young women who were powerless against the decision of their parents to become a *duway*. A *duway* is either the second or the third wife of a man who marries them for several reasons. The first or the original wife has social responsibilities, like being one of the community leaders, while the *duway*, who is her sister, fulfills the productive tasks. The third wife, who is also a *duway*, is usually for economic and domestic work. This practice, however, is now waning in the Mansaka community.

In my young mind, I was already against the *duway* practice because the woman is treated like a commodity that can be owned by anybody. A girl can even become a second wife without being consulted. All *duway* are powerless and so are their children. The children of the second wives can be given as dowry to newlyweds and even become servants of the first family.

Before, my parents and relatives were contented only with basic education for their children. They thought learning the basic literacy was enough as these children would only marry early. Schooling was often regarded as a hindrance to parental engagements. In other cases, some parents had no plans to send their children to higher education but they made sure that their children would marry someone the parents like most.

I pursued higher education

Despite the prevailing mindset about education in my time, I did not stop my schooling but proceeded to high school. I carried my vision in my heart. I enrolled at the Maragusan Barangay High School, located 6 km away from home. The road from Mapawa to Maragusan was better and the daily commute via a tricycle cost US$0.01 for students. However, I seldom had this amount and I preferred to walk everyday.

With the high school farther that time, we had to get up early and start walking at 4:00 am to catch the start of classes. After classes, we reached our house at 8:00 pm, tired and sleepy that we often forgot to read our notes. With this challenging daily set-up, my elder sister decided to quit school after two years in high school. My unfailing interest pushed me to pursue my studies alone as my sister got married at the age of 16.

I believed that possessing a bachelor's degree was the only solution to free myself and my fellow indigenous students from discrimination and bullying by my non-indigenous classmates and teachers. This kept my resolve and determination.

After high school, I enrolled in Bachelor of Elementary Education at Bukidnon State College located in our municipality. I supported myself by working as a waitress in a refreshment establishment with a monthly wage of $1.60. I spent my salary for my school fees, projects and personal needs. After a year, I stopped working due to personal differences with my manager. With the support of my family and friends, I finished my degree on March 26, 1985.

I have been discriminated

Racial discrimination was very obvious and strong during my college days. There was one instance when my non-Mansaka classmates were trained to perform a Mansaka dance during the *Linggo ng Wika* (National Language Week)[1]. According to our teachers, they danced better and were more graceful compared to us.

Oftentimes, my classmates laughed at the way we pronounce letters and words. I must admit, we, Mansaka people, have difficulties in pronouncing words with letter "h" correctly.

They treated us as ignorant, untidy and second-class citizen.

To protect myself from bullying, I tried my best to look different. I did not wear the traditional Mansaka dress or any indigenous paraphernalia. I spoke the Visayan or Cebuano[2] language so that other people would not suspect that I am a Mansaka.

Many of us (youth) stopped speaking our own dialect to avoid teasing and being made a fool by the non-Lumad. When I introduced myself, I did not mention my tribe. I also carefully practiced my words to be able to fluently talk in Cebuano, Filipino (the national language) or English.

But even if I tried hard to hide my identity, I could not run from it. When I met our elders at the town center of Maragusan (my home-

[1] It is a one week nationwide event usually held in schools which celebrates the national language of the Philippines which is Filipino. It is now a month-long celebration with various themes.

[2] Visayan and Cebuano languages are the regional languages spoken by the mainstream people in my region.

town), they talked to me in our local language. And they were also wearing our traditional dress. I almost fainted while answering them in the Mansaka language because they could not converse if I would talk to them in Cebuano. In most cases, I tried to evade them from seeing me at the town center so that nobody would talk to me in our own dialect.

But at the same time, I got insulted every time my non-indigenous close friends mimic our pronunciation. We were often their butt of jokes. I just kept silent and hid my hurt feelings. However, when I felt I needed to protect our identify, I used to brag and say:

"Even if we are just Mansaka, mind you, we have hectares of lands and there are no prostitutes in our community. Actually, you must be thankful to us because if not for our hospitality, you would not have a place to stay and land to till. You are just strangers here. In fact, you arrived to this place because you are poor in your own place and you are searching for a living. Am I correct?"

I remember that I openly expressed these lines many times in front of my classmates and neighbors.

As I grew up, I experienced more discrimination and unfairness due to my ethnicity. It was becoming worse everyday to the point that there was a time when I felt so bad I was born Mansaka because people regarded us so low and without dignity.

I have commitment to community work

I was hired in July 1987 as a community worker of Silingang Dapit sa Sidlakang Mindanao (SILDAP), an NGO based in the southern part of the Philippines, working towards identifying and articulating the Lumad's own development agenda and recognition of their ancestral domain. Through SILDAP, I attended awareness-building activities through trainings and seminars.

From the trainings and community development work, I started to feel the call to true commitment in working with the indigenous communities. Likewise, I learned many things, especially on the genuine Philippine history including the historical discrimination of indigenous peoples. I started to appreciate and value myself, my tribe, and my being an indigenous person. I felt contented working despite the meager pay I received.

My exposure to many indigenous communities taught me to assert and defend not only myself but the entire indigenous peoples' communities as peoples with rights similar to non-indigenous peoples. I understood that the colonial education given to us in school contributed very much to the discrimination happening against many tribes.

My job has opened a lot of doors for me. I did not only eat, stay and lived with the people - I also started to feel with them.

Mostly deprived from basic social services, poverty limits the quality of life of the Lumad in my community. Because our territories are rich, these are often targeted by mining, logging and other extractive companies. The pollution from the exploitation of the Lumad's resources exacerbated the already impoverished villages.

I also felt so sorry for the human rights violations against the communities I worked with. I saw how school campuses and government structures were occupied by the paramilitary groups who were being tapped by the government forces for their anti-insurgency campaigns. Classes were disrupted and teachers and children threatened by their presence. The violations are forcing them to find refuge in other community due to militarization.

The more I learned about the alleged atrocities committed by the armed forces of the government and by the multinational companies which are plundering our ancestral lands, the more encouraged I was to work selflessly for the indigenous communities. As a volunteer, I never gave up working in the militarized areas where the indigenous schools are situated.

The more I learned about the alleged atrocities committed by the armed forces of the government and by the multinational companies which are plundering our ancestral lands, the more encouraged I was to work selflessly for the indigenous communities.

Despite the challenges I had met, I remained passionate and determined to pursue my mission to contribute to changing the Western colonial education that alienated us from our own identity as distinct peoples.

The strength of the people pushed me to stay with them and help them learn the basics of education. As an educator, I commit myself to share my learning to them despite all odds. I dream that more children will be good in reading, writing and in mathematics for them to be capable of engaging outside their community.

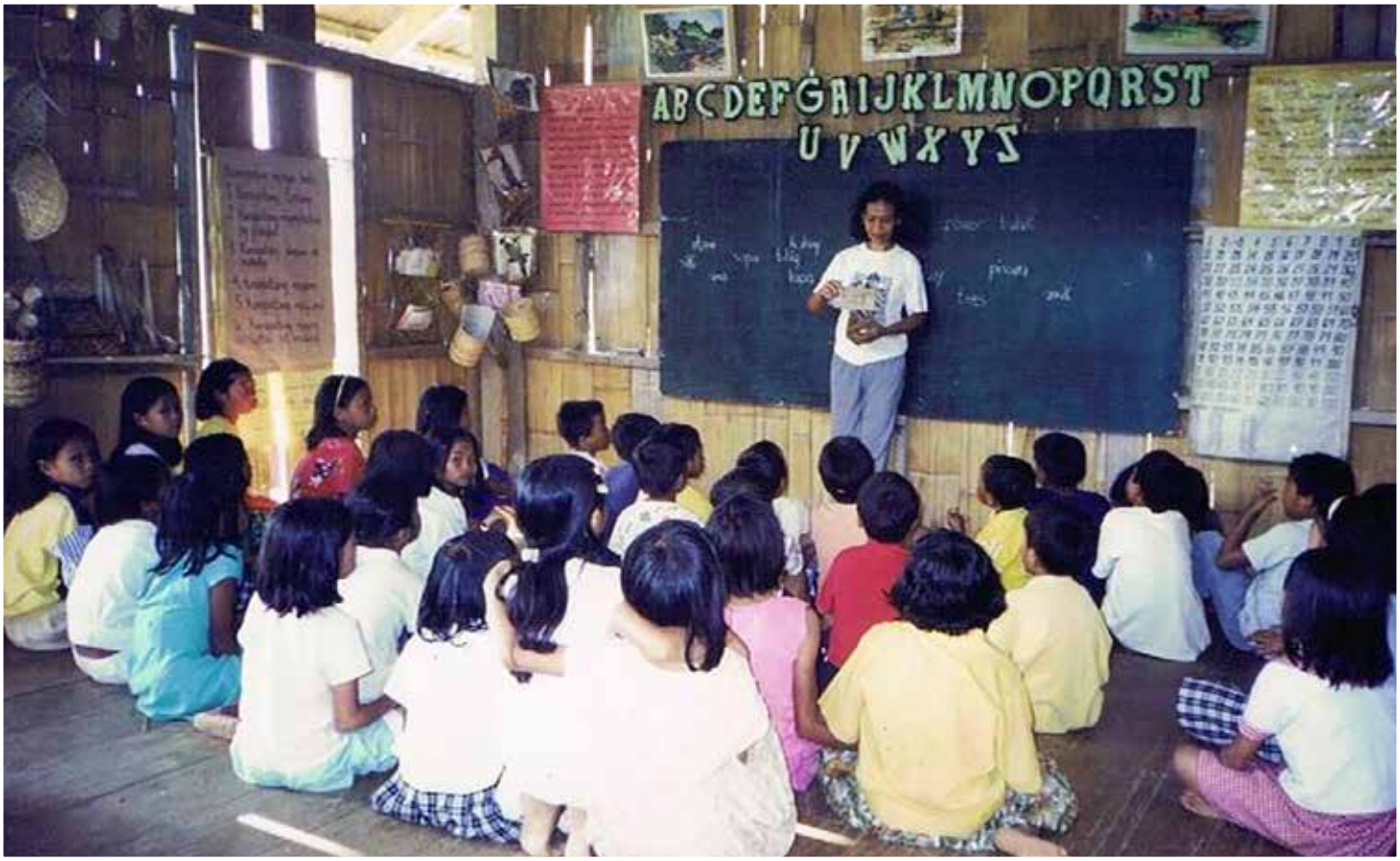
I learned the value of sharing the abundance of the environment as a source of life and concept the of *"walang iwanan"* ("not leaving one behind") from my own people in the communities.

Teaching at Kimataan

In 1988, I was re-assigned to a teaching job at the primary grade school of Dibabawon Elementary School at Kimataan, Gupitan, Kapalong, Davao del Norte. I managed a multi-grade class handling Grades 1-5 classes. That was a very tough job but a very rewarding one.

Kimataan is located far from Tagum City. It can be reached by jeepney, which plied that route once a day, in four hours. The jeepney leaves at the drop off point by 4 o'clock in the morning. Thus, my colleagues and I leave the community at 2 o'clock in the morning to catch the ride. The distance of drop off area to Kimataan village is 10 kilometers or equivalent to 2 hours walk through hilly and rugged terrain. With this considerable distance, we only walked down to town once a month to attend meetings and to get our salary or to buy our basic needs. During rainy days, we opted to stay at the community due to risky trail and flooding along the way.

I had a terrible experience in September 1989. The community was heavily militarized. There was a time when high-powered guns of the military were installed in the school grounds. I managed to orient the children and parents to stay calm and prepare everything for our evacuation anytime. The following day, we left the community and walked for five hours to reach the nearest and safest community. I stayed at the evacuation area with them and continued teaching my learners.



Report of the UNSRRIP on Indigenous Women

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, submitted her report [A/HRC/30/41] on the situation of indigenous women and girls globally to the Human Rights Council last August 2015.

Below are the conclusions and recommendations from the report.

A. Conclusions

73. Indigenous women and girls experience complex, multidimensional and mutually reinforcing human rights violations. Abuses of indigenous women's collective; economic, social and cultural; and civil and political rights are varied and severe. Those violations are alarming infractions on their own, but constitute a form of structural violence against indigenous women whereby they are victimized by the realities of the circumstances of their everyday life and routinely excluded from enjoying the rights and resources otherwise guaranteed to citizens. Indigenous women also suffer from other forms of violence, including traditional practices, sexual violence, trafficking, domestic violence and gender-based killings.

74. Despite the severity and regularity of violations of the rights of indigenous women, the attention of much of the United Nations human rights and development policy architecture has been limited. Gaps and weaknesses in analysis include a lack of geographical balance, limited inclusion of collective rights, little exploration of intersectionality in relation to the vulnerability of indigenous women and a lack of exploration of the gender implications to rights issues affecting indigenous communities. There are, however, promising signs that the gap in monitoring indigenous women's rights is closing.

75. To protect the rights of indigenous women, both a paradigm shift and the development of a multidimensional approach is needed. States must find a way to strike a delicate balance between protection of indigenous women and respect for self-determination and autonomy of indigenous peoples. Engagement and consultation with indigenous women and girls are central to finding that balance.

76. The United Nations system must support Member States in striking that balance, as well as contribute to the paradigm shift needed through increasing attention to the needs of indigenous women and re-conceptualizing rights issues to include the nexus between individual and collective rights, as well as the intersectionality between different forms of inequality and discrimination.

B. Recommendations

Recommendations to Member States

77. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, Member States should:

(a) Improve access by indigenous peoples to education, with interventions targeted towards understanding and overcoming the specific barriers faced by girls;

(b) Improve access by indigenous peoples, including women and girls, to culturally sensitive health-care services; learn from and build on existing examples of the good practices promoted by the United Nations Population Fund and the Pan American Health Organization to develop an intercultural approach to health; and support reinforcement of traditional healing and health practices of indigenous peoples that have been proven to be effective;

(c) Pay particular attention to providing a range of sexual and reproductive health services to indigenous women and girls, with their free, prior and informed consent;

(d) Review and improve poverty-reduction programmes, such as conditional cash transfers, to ensure cultural and gender sensitivity;

(e) Invest in research that supports understanding of food insecurity among indigenous communities and develop programmes to ensure the rights of indigenous peoples to food;

(f) Develop educational materials that sensitize non-indigenous populations to the cultural realities of indigenous communities and women. Those materials should be integrated into school curricula and in human rights training for Government officials providing services to indigenous peoples, including the police, border guards and the judiciary, as well as health and education professionals.

(g) When developing initiatives to improve the economic, social and cultural rights, pro-actively engage with indigenous women and girls and other members of indigenous communities on how best to meet their needs; apply the principle of free, prior and informed consent to the development of all laws, policies and programmes;

78. With regard to civil and political rights, Member States should:

(a) Ensure that the birth of every indigenous child is formally registered in national systems;

(b) Develop interventions to increase the number of indigenous women in national and local political and public processes and explore the feasibility of implementing quota systems for indigenous women's representation in local and national politics;

(c) Explore ways to invest in the leadership capacity of indigenous women so that they can play more active roles in indigenous decision-making structures to protect women and girls within their communities;

(d) Ensure protection of the activities of all female human rights defenders;

(e) Consider the development of the special tribunals to ensure access to justice for indigenous women following abuses of their human rights. Such special provisions would allow for the individual needs of indigenous women to be met, the development of focal points to establish effective links with indigenous justice systems, greater recognition of specific cultural needs, as well as the accumulation of a systemic view of rights violations;

(f) Provide legal aid, interpretation and translation services, and culturally sensitive information about their rights and available remedies to all indigenous women and girls;

(g) Within the context of the implementation of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human

Rights and the development of national action plans on human rights and business, ensure that judicial mechanisms are the primary means by which corporate violations of the rights of women and girls are remedied; and avoid legitimizing voluntary, private forms of remedy that do not provide effective access to justice for violations of the rights of women;

(h) Ensure that due process is undertaken in relation to all indigenous women who enter the criminal justice system;

(i) In relation to the overrepresentation of indigenous women in national criminal justice systems, invest in country-specific research into the root causes; develop targeted prevention programmes based on such research; and, where possible, consider alternatives to detention. When indigenous women are detained they must still be afforded protection based on their human rights.

79. With regard to violence against indigenous women and girls, Member States should:

(a) As recommended by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences in her 2011 report (A/HRC/17/26), develop a holistic approach to violence against women, based on the indivisibility and universality of all human rights, which recognizes the multiple interconnections between different forms of violence against women, its causes and consequences, and addresses multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination;

(b) In the context of affording indigenous people legal jurisdiction that is compatible with their rights to self-determination, develop mechanisms that allow indigenous women and girls to pursue other means of recourse against violence if they are unable to obtain support and access to justice within indigenous communities;

(c) Balance respect for the right to self-determination of indigenous communities with their responsibility to protect indigenous women and girls in their capacity as national citizens and rights bearers;

(d) Ensure that all forms of violence against women, including female genital mutilation and child marriage, are included as violations within criminal law;

(e) Ensure clarity with regard to the relationship between indigenous, national and local jurisdictions in relation to violence against women; and ensure that the justice process is accessible and sensitive to the needs of indigenous women;

(f) In engagement with indigenous women and girls and building on existing good practice, develop more comprehensive anti-violence and recovery programmes within indigenous communities;

(g) Build the capacity of female indigenous leaders to advocate for the rights of women and girls to freedom from violence within indigenous communities;

(h) Invest in research into the root causes of domestic violence against women in indigenous communities and design preventive and recovery programmes;

(i) Refrain from any forms of violence against women, particularly in situations of conflict, and prosecute all allegations of violence carried out by Government officials, such as border guards, the military and police.

80. With regard to monitoring and accountability, Member States should:

(a) Consider developing national action plans on indigenous women's rights, which are strongly linked with clear monitoring and accountability systems;

(b) Invest in research and data collection systems to collect data disaggregated by gender, ethnicity or race, religion, language and territory or geographical area. Such data collection

and research should include information on human rights violations, with particular focus on the situation of women and girls;

(c) Ensure that the targets and indicators agreed to monitor the sustainable development goals include ways to measure and incentivize progress in relation to indigenous communities and women in a meaningful way;

(d) Work with the United Nations to ensure that a more consistent and robust analysis of indigenous women's rights is included in the monitoring of all international human rights mechanisms;

(e) Monitor the full implementation of the recommendations made by the treaty bodies, special procedures mechanisms and universal periodic review.

Recommendations to United Nations organizations and mechanisms

81. While the Special Rapporteur appreciates the attention given to the rights of indigenous peoples within the work of other United Nations mechanisms, more consistent and geographically comprehensive analysis of the fulfilment of human rights among indigenous women and girls is urgently needed. United Nations human rights mechanisms should direct additional attention to the nexus between individual and collective rights and how that impacts indigenous women and girls, as well as how intersecting forms of discrimination and vulnerability impact human rights violations.

82. In the context of this increasing attention to indigenous peoples, the Special Rapporteur recommends that the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women develop a general comment on the rights on indigenous women and girls.

83. In addition, as invited to in the outcome document of the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, the Commission on the Status of Women should consider the issue of the empowerment of indigenous women at a session.

84. The Human Rights Council should, as it was also invited to do in the outcome document of the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, consider examining the causes and consequences of violence against indigenous women and girls, in consultation with the Special Rapporteur and other special procedures mandate holders.

85. United Nations organizations and mechanisms should:

(a) Ensure effective follow-up to all the relevant recommendations made by treaty bodies, special procedures mechanisms and the universal periodic review;

(b) Work with Member States to develop research into underdeveloped areas which particularly impact the rights of indigenous women and girls. Research should be developed on intersecting discrimination and vulnerability and the relationship between individual and collective rights;

(c) Recognize the agency of indigenous communities, women and girls as development actors within the sustainable development goal for development partnerships;

(d) Ensure that the concerns of indigenous women and girls are included within the post-2015 framework;

(e) Work with indigenous women to strengthen analysis of both collective and individual indigenous rights within the monitoring of the Beijing Platform of Action.

You can read the full report at http://unsr.vtaulicorpuz.org/site/index.php/en/documents/annual-reports/83-report-hrc-2015

NEPAL EARTHQUAKE and Its Effects on Indigenous Women

By Ganga Thapa

The Earthquake on April 25

Nepal was hit by a 7.8 magnitude earthquake in the Richter Scale on April 25, 2015 with the epicenter near Barpak village of Gorkha district. This was the most powerful earthquake that hit Nepal after January 14, 1934, which was measured at 8.2 magnitude in the Richter Scale. After the first tremor, two major aftershocks of 6.9 magnitude on April 26, and 6.8 magnitude on May 12, have been felt. Around 400 aftershocks were counted, ranging above 4.0 magnitude in the Richter Scale.

The physical damage done by the earthquake is huge. The psychological damage inflicted by the earthquake to the people, who lost their family members, houses, and businesses is immeasurable. According to the data given by the Government of Nepal, the summary of some major physical damages brought by the earthquake are as follows.

	Number
People died	8,691
People injured	22,054
Foreigners died/injured	94/50
Foreigners missing	111
Government buildings fully destroyed	768
Houses fully destroyed	591,647
Houses partially destroyed	276,395
Schools fully destroyed	14,192
Schools partially damaged	8,431
Health post and hospital destroyed	269

(Source: Nepal Government website http://drrportal.gov.np/incidentreport)

Aftermath of the Earthquake

The earthquake-affected districts are indigenous-populated areas. The data shows that a high percentage of indigenous women, children and persons with disabilities lost their lives in this disaster. Out of 5,890 deaths recorded, 3,838 or 65.32% were from indigenous community. Out of that, 2,085

were indigenous women that makes 35.4% of total death. More than 7,000 indigenous peoples were injured and suffered from severe spinal cord injury and other problems.

Aside from loss of lives, the earthquake has also brought destruction of cultural heritage of indigenous peoples, like monasteries, *stupas* (religious monuments), and ancient community places/sacred places. The earthquake has caused tremendous damage to properties and ravaged homes, schools and water resources, to name a few.

The communities also face severe lack of food, health and sanitation materials for the elderly, pregnant women, the children and the people with disabilities. The makeshift evacuation areas where they are staying are very vulnerable to threats from monsoon rains, floods, diseases, violence against women and children, physical and psychological trauma, and trafficking.

We organized a distribution of dignity kits to indigenous women in the remote area that were badly affected by the earthquakes. When we got there, we observed the following:

- There is problem of accessibility. The areas are in a remote, hilly region, and inaccessible by roads. These conditions prevent timely rescue and response efforts to the communities;
- Male migration is high. Most of the male family members migrated for income generation and were not present at home during the disaster. The children, along with elderlies, are usually left alone with lone female caretaker;
- There is lack of and insufficient budget allocation from government, which is equal to delayed and uncoordinated rescue efforts for the affected population. Where there are allocations, they do not reach the communities on time;
- Lack of awareness of the support mechanisms of government also created additional problem for indigenous women to access available facilities and programs. Moreover, their children and elderly care responsibilities exacerbate their already difficult situation;
- After the earthquake, the threats of gender-based violence are high. The risk of being trafficked is also high due to unavailability of sufficient resources;
- There are obvious problems on health and hygiene;
- The problems of communication or language barrier limit access to

services and involvement. Illiteracy and underprivileged situation of indigenous women make them more vulnerable during disasters like earthquakes;

- As the monsoon session is approaching, the threats of flood and landslides increase. This also increases the risks for indigenous women. It does not help that many women are still staying in temporary shelters after the loss of their permanent houses. In addition, the continuous aftershocks prevent them from doing their agricultural work and normal household chores;
- The destruction of health facilities in the area created more problems for indigenous women who have to confront insufficient health services and medicines.

Meanwhile, in disaster response, the government and other non-governmental organizations that provided relief and support were not friendly and sensitive to the needs of the indigenous peoples, specifically of the women. On top of the already vulnerable situation of indigenous women, the inaccessible roads, remoteness, language barrier, unfamiliarity with the procedures to access services, and communication gap with the local leaders and governmental official complicate their problems and issues.

Conclusion

As I have had the opportunity to meet indigenous women in this situation, my interaction with them has also made me more convinced that indigenous knowledge and ways of life hold answers to many of the world's problems. There is, thus, the urgency of preserving indigenous traditions and cultures in the face of ongoing erosion.

My involvement in the relief efforts for communities affected by the devastating earthquake in Nepal showed me that the majority of the victims of the disaster

belonged to indigenous ethnic groups. But the government did not publicly acknowledge this fact or its implications.

Travelling to the affected areas, I met many indigenous women survivors from these communities whose disaster vulnerability was largely a result of poverty and systematic exclusion. They have been dispossessed of their lands and ways of life. Extractive industries, often in collusion with governments, have flagrantly violated their rights, as have many carelessly planned infrastructure development, tourism, and conservation projects.

Now, more than ever, we need concerted efforts to protect and promote the rights of indigenous peoples. Particularly, we seek to ensure the rights of indigenous women, including their customary rights not only in the disaster responses after the earthquake, but mostly in the long term, sustainable development plans of the country.

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IPBES

The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) was established in April 2012 with the task to assess the status of Earth's biodiversity, its ecosystems and services the ecosystems provide to humankind. The Platform has four functions which are knowledge generation, assessments, policy support tools and capacity-building, and deliverables are expected from the Platform on each function.

Specifically in its work programme, the IPBES will "assess the potential of the sustainable use of biodiversity for the enhancement of livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities, including the role of traditional governance and institutions. It will identify guidelines, methods and tools and promote best practices, including both modern technologies and indigenous and local knowledge, for sustainable management and harvesting. The assessment will contribute to identification of related knowledge gaps and better technologies, including in respect of indigenous and local knowledge" (Deliverable 3(b)(iii)).

There had been three sessions held, which indigenous peoples representatives actively participated, to ensure perspectives of indigenous peoples are taken into consideration and are given full and effective participation in the implementation of the work programme of the Platform.

A REVIEW OF THE CONDITIONAL CASH TRANSFER (CCT) PROGRAM IN THE PHILIPPINES[1]

Submitted to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
Ms. Victoria Tauli-Copuz

August 19, 2015

Introduction

In 2008, the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), also known as the Conditional Cash Transfer program (CCT), was launched by the Philippine government as its national poverty alleviation program. This was lodged in the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) for implementation. The 4Ps is patterned after Latin American countries' CCTs, which gained popularity due to its positive results—at least on the basis of statistical records.

The CCT in the Philippines (as well as in Latin America) targets the poorest of the poor households with children aged 0-18 years old as beneficiaries of the program. The 4Ps claims to invest on the human capital and is geared for social development. The program gives merit-based rewards or "cash grants" to beneficiaries.

The beneficiaries are women, pregnant women, children and young adults who are given cash grants to support improvement of their health, provision of ample nutrition, and acquiring education in compliance with the five Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that the 4Ps aim to achieve. These goals are: eradicating extreme poverty and

[1] Prepared by Jamaica Marie Ona and Eleanor Dictaan-Bang-oa, Indigenous Women Programme, Tebtebba.

hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality; reducing child mortality; and improving maternal health care.

The 4Ps is the Philippine government's solution to poverty and poverty-induced crises such as maternal and child mortality, and lack of education that contribute to overall poverty of its citizens, including some indigenous peoples. On a bigger scale, this is the government's means to achieve the MDGs by 2015.

CCT Implementation and Indigenous Peoples

There are a number of benefits that indigenous peoples haves gained from the program such as being provided with cash that are helpful for the household. As a result, they have some means to use other income that they have earned to other expenses since the grant can cover part of the costs for education and health. Also without the 4Ps, the beneficiaries, including those non-beneficiaries in communities, would not have realized that they can avail of certain basic social services. Moreover they are also made aware of the presence of the government as it reached out to them.

Despite the good intentions of the program to ease the sufferings of the poor, however, problems surfaced. These are affecting the program's success and its beneficiaries, including indigenous peoples. In 2014, the indigenous peoples unit of the DSWD had an assessment on their own program through consultations with the indigenous peoples themselves. The assessment cited the following "bottlenecks and barriers" in relation to indigenous peoples:

1. **Targetting failure:** The enumerators' failed to identify and validate the rightful beneficiaries of the program. Geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDA) where some indigenous peoples reside were not fully surveyed by the enumerators. There was also limited time for the survey, as well as other factors such as failure to promptly inform indigenous peoples on the enumerators' and validators' visit. While the program offers a grievance mechanism for the excluded rightful recipients of the program, the process of filing a grievance can be time consuming and frustrating for those who want to be included as beneficiaries.
2. **Ineffective communication between implementers and beneficiaries:** There were confusion on the list of beneficiaries, in the provision of cash grants, schedules of activities, etc. There were *barangays*[2] which were not given any copies of the list of beneficiaries, and if there are, they had only a limited number of copies, add to the misspelled names of beneficiaries, etc. For the cash grants, there are beneficiaries who were not informed on the amount they should receive and sometimes found no balance on their ATM (Automated Teller Machines) cards, which are used to dispense the grants. The confusion led to inconvenience and waste of time, effort and money of the beneficiaries.
3. **Additional burden to women:** The program automatically names the mother of the household as the principal beneficiary. The aim is to empower women in terms of decision-making in the household because the women are the ones receiving the cash grants. However, this also means that the mothers as principal grantees have to make sure that they comply with the conditions of ensuring that the children go to school and health centers for regular check up and they have to attend the regular Family Devel-

[2] A barangay (village or community) is the smallest unit of local governance in the Philippines.

SDGs

The UN General Assembly adopted the Agenda 2030, also known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on 25 September 2015 during the UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York. This plan of action has 17 goals and 169 targets. Of these goals and targets, there are six references to ***indigenous peoples*** in the following paragraphs:

23. People who are vulnerable must be empowered. Those whose needs are reflected in the Agenda include all children, youth, persons with disabilities (of whom more than 80% live in poverty), people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees and internally displaced persons and migrants. We resolve to take further effective measures and actions, in conformity with international law, to remove obstacles and constraints, strengthen support and meet the special needs of people living in areas affected by complex humanitarian emergencies and in areas affected by terrorism.

25. We commit to providing inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels – early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary, technical and vocational training. All people, irrespective of sex, age, race, ethnicity, and persons with disabilities, migrants, indigenous peoples, children and youth, especially those in vulnerable situations, should have access to life-long learning opportunities that help them acquire the knowledge and skills needed to exploit opportunities and to participate fully in society. We will strive to provide children and youth with a nurturing environment for the full realization of their rights and capabilities, helping our countries to reap the demographic dividend including through safe schools and cohesive communities and families.

52. "We the Peoples" are the celebrated opening words of the UN Charter. It is "We the Peoples" who are embarking today on the road to 2030. Our journey will involve Governments as well as Parliaments, the UN system and other international institutions, local authorities, indigenous peoples, civil society, business and the private sector, the scientific and academic community – and all people. Millions have already engaged with, and will own, this Agenda. It is an Agenda of the people, by the people, and for the people – and this, we believe, will ensure its success.

Goal 2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment

Goal 4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

79. We also encourage member states to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels which are country-led and country-driven. Such reviews should draw on contributions from indigenous peoples, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders, in line with national circumstances, policies and priorities. National parliaments as well as other institutions can also support these processes.

You can access the SDGs and the targets at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics

opment Sessions (FDS) every month. While these conditions aim to improve the quality of family care, they also further the stereotype roles of women versus their male counterpart. Likewise, these add to the already heavy burden of women as primary caregivers.

4. **Lack of assistance to indigenous peoples**: Programs were not fully understood by indigenous peoples who also felt the processes were done in haste. Some indigenous peoples cannot read or write, or understand other languages. Others have no formal identification documents, and adding to the difficulties were the poor condition of the venues where enrolments and other program-related activities are held. It was relayed that enrolment of beneficiaries, which are mainly women and children, were held in crowded areas, especially since the process was given limited time and which, in most cases, were held far from the communities.
5. **Lack of adjustment and considerations for indigenous peoples**: The implementation of the program did not consider the language differences, the distance of the beneficiaries' residences to the centers, as well as the socio-cultural limitations and livelihood activities, among others. Indigenous peoples' livelihoods reflect co-dependency of indigenous peoples with their culture and the environment. The livelihood provision of the 4Ps, however, (as relayed by some indigenous women beneficiaries) provides them job as bread makers, manicure/pedicure workers, etc. which are menial jobs that do not serve to strengthen traditional economies.
6. **Exclusion of indigenous leaders**: Indigenous leaders were excluded in the processes of the program's planning and implementation, even on resolution of conflicts related to the program. This is opposed to the customary practice of indigenous peoples.
7. **Misappropriation of the program by elected officials to gain political leverage**: While the program has a system in place to insulate this from the control and influence of local government units, many politicians are using the program to threaten people to support them in exchange for votes.

Through local and national dialogues with different indigenous communities and other relevant stakeholders, the DSWD has come up with an Indigenous Peoples Participatory Framework and the Modified Conditional Cash Transfer for IPs (MCCT-IPs) aimed at addressing the "bottlenecks and barriers" that hinder the optimal benefits that indigenous peoples can receive from the program. The MCCT-IPs targets some 367,493 indigenous households in what it calls as the geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs). As of January 2015, there are reportedly 163,950 registered beneficiaries under the MCCT-IP in GIDA, 84 percent (138,602) of which are women.

Aside from the implementation challenges and errors, narratives of the indigenous beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, media and academic reviews and critiques on the 4Ps further confirm and elaborate on these issues affecting the program, thus diminishing its overall beneficial impact to indigenous peoples:

1. **Non-recognition of indigenous peoples' rights and social disempowerment.** The pigeonhole approach isolates indigenous beneficiaries from their social milieu, i.e., from traditional communal activities like reciprocal labor when they are required to attend CCT/4Ps activities. The conditionalities tie the beneficiaries to small cash benefit vs. the right to

choose, impacting on their self-determination and collective decision-making;
The program, being by nature "dole-out," neglected to take into consideration the broader socio-cultural and policy context, particularly, the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act.[2] This resulted to imposition of the program on indigenous communities without benefit of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) as provided for by the IPRA. In this regard, it has defiled the integrity of existing socio-cultural structures of community harmony and decision-making as it encouraged individualism.
Further, a very specific impact observed is the disenfranchisement of traditional health service providers, which put at the risk of extinction a rich collective experience, knowledge and spirituality especially that which surrounds childbearing, birthing and parenthood.

2. The blind concept of "poverty" and definition of "poor," being monetary-based and leaving out the fact that there are indigenous peoples who survive outside the dominant market economy. This viewpoint thus obscures the core environmental, social and cultural, and economic problems of indigenous peoples that perpetuates their current underprivileged state. Transfer of income does not address the roots of poverty but only creates temporary respite from lack of cash. Observations from indigenous communities cite increasing dependency and the creation of other needs among beneficiaries because of the ready cash they receive.
3. Disregard of indigenous peoples' rights as provided by the IPRA result to the unethical/inappropriate approaches and implementation systems which negatively impact indigenous peoples' customary laws, political and social structures and overall harmonious community relations.

Recommendations

Based on this brief study, a full review of the CCT program in relation to the IPRA and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) should be undertaken. The review should be based on a holistic perspective that integrates the social, economic, cultural, gender and spiritual concerns of indigenous peoples underpinned by the principle of full and effective participation and the right to self-determinatin. In this regard, the following specific recommendations based on experiences/approaches influencing a relatively successful implementation of this same program in Latin America may be a starting point. It also includes insights from the studies done in relation to its implementation in Latin America.

a. Clear and well-thought fiscal policies that address inequality and poverty and investments to effect appropriate social services:
Addressing inequality and poverty requires more than the transfer of income. The government should allocate budget on the provision of quality services, including the provision of appropriate public infrastructure and facilities to ensure delivery of and/or access to goods and services to the remote villages in the country. A strong government mechanism with political will is needed.

"Latin America has substantially more experience in leveraging fiscal policy to tackle inequality and poverty. This is evident in Latin America's high level of public spending on programs that can help promote more inclusive growth. For example, Latin American governments spend more on education, which directly improves the well-being of the poor and augments their productive capacity, than the governments of developing Asia. They also spend more on health, which also

[2] The IPRA is the Philippine law on indigenous peoples in the Philippines and is based on the draft version of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

improves both the welfare and human capital of disadvantaged groups. The beneficial effects of public spending on educational and health are likely to be disproportionately greater for the poor who lack access to private education and health" (Lee and Park 2014).

b. Strong monitoring on the program: The government, especially those at the local level, should be mobilized to be more proactive in its aim to address poverty and inequality. Local government units, in partnership with the traditional indigenous councils and other stakeholders, can be capacitated to take on critical monitoring roles in this program. In Brazil, the Bolsa Familia Program took an intersectoral approach that includes a "complex administrative structure" with the municipalities given critical roles. It also designed a rigid monitoring system, including the formation of a Social Control Council--which includes members of the civil society--to look into program implementation and processes.
Lee and Park (2015) in their study of the CCT infer that:"A complex administrative structure to monitor a large-scale program does not exist in many developing Asian countries. On the other hand, the role of the community could be greater in Asia than in Latin America, so a simple pilot program that emphasizes the role of the community in implementing the programs could work in Asia" (Lee and Park 2014).

c. Intercultural health and education: The program prohibits women from resorting to traditional birth attendants. Among indigenous women and their communities, this is an affront to their skills and culture passed and renewed for generations. Instead of ensuring effective implementation of its RA 8423 of 1997, which is on "Creating the Philippine Institute of Traditional and

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WCIP

The high-level plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) held on 22-23 September 2014 adopted an outcome document (A/RES/69/2). The WCIP Outcome Document reaffirms the commitments of States and Governments to respect, promote and advance the rights of indigenous peoples.

All relevant to indigenous women, the document has spoken specifically on empowerment of indigenous women and their full and effective participation, including the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against indigenous women and girls in the following paragraphs:

> *17. We commit ourselves to supporting the empowerment of indigenous women and to formulating and implementing, in collaboration with indigenous peoples, in particular indigenous women and their organizations, policies and programmes designed to promote capacity-building and strengthen their leadership. We support measures that will ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous women in decision-making processes at all levels and in all areas and eliminate barriers to their participation in political, economic, social and cultural life.*
>
> *18. We commit ourselves to intensifying our efforts, in cooperation with indigenous peoples, to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against indigenous peoples and individuals, in particular women, children, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities, by strengthening legal, policy and institutional frameworks.*
>
> *19. We invite the Human Rights Council to consider examining the causes and consequences of violence against indigenous women and girls, in consultation with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and other special procedures mandate holders within their respective mandates. We also invite the Commission on the Status of Women to consider the issue of the empowerment of indigenous women at a future session.*

Read the Programme and the Outcome Document of the WCIP at http://undesadspd.org/IndigenousPeoples/WorldConference/ProgrammeofWCIP.aspx

Alternative Health Care to accelerate the development of traditional and alternative health care in the Philippines and providing funds," the health department has issued its "No Home-Birthing Policy" (Department of Health Administrative Order 2008-29), which denies indigenous women options for themselves, while disenfranchizing traditional health service providers. In Latin America, one factor that seems contributory to the success of this program is the adoption by government of the concept of intercultural health where health personnel and traditional practitioners were willing to learn from each other to identify sensitive yet effective ways of addressing community health needs.

The Philippine government should review its past efforts in recognizing promising alternative/traditional health systems and practitioners, including policies and its obligations to international instruments. It should also enhance its sensitivity to be able to deliver appropriate health and education services.

d. Creation of livelihood activities relevant to indigenous communities and their concept of development:

According to the Brazilian Minister of the Secretariat of Strategic Affairs of the Presidency of the Republic (SAE/PR) Marcelo Neri, the increase in labor formalization in the country has been a positive aspect when designing the agenda. "One feature that sets Brazil and Latin America apart from regions such as South Africa is the drop in unemployment. This October, we had the lowest unemployment rate in history. In addition to that, the rate of formalization in the country has been rising by two percent every year. This shows that Brazil has taken the middle path, where growth and income distribution walk hand in hand. There is no shortage of obstacles, but I believe we are on the right path" (Neri 2014).

Provision of jobs, however, is just one aspect where opportunities may be nil in indigenous communities. Along with the CCT, which will undoubtedly facilitate development of human resources among its beneficiaries, if well implemented, beneficiaries should be assisted and capacitated towards sustainable livelihoods consistent with their concepts of well-being – a process that requires sensitivity to the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples and reiterative and appropriate information and consultation.

e. Capacity building and sensitization among program implementors anchored on government's obligations to recognize, protect and fulfill indigenous peoples' rights and how this can be effectively operationalized with empowering results in the CCT program.

f. Partnership with communities and local institutions including providing necessary logistical and technical support for effective capacity enhancement programs and community participation.

g. Data disaggregation and public access to program documents and reports should be ensured.

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Women & Indigenous Instruments

By Angelina B. Ortiz

Indigenous instruments
a number can be seen before;
takol, *kudlong*, and *kubing* were used by the ancestors,
for the tribe, it holds an important role.

Crafted to be used
by women, men and the young to enjoy;
Played in rituals and celebrations,
or to awaken the night.

Songs are sung during weddings;
Or praise is given to *Magbabaya*,
when accepting visitors and inviting friends and kins,
these instruments are played.

Many already wonder
where these instruments wandered;
Raw materials have vanished,
indigenous knowledge also slowly perished.

Women yearn to revive
the traditions the youth must know;
Strum the *kudlong* and *takol*,
traditional knowledge to be taught.

Forgotten skills need to be learned;
Entrusted to women and the community
to strengthen cultural identity.

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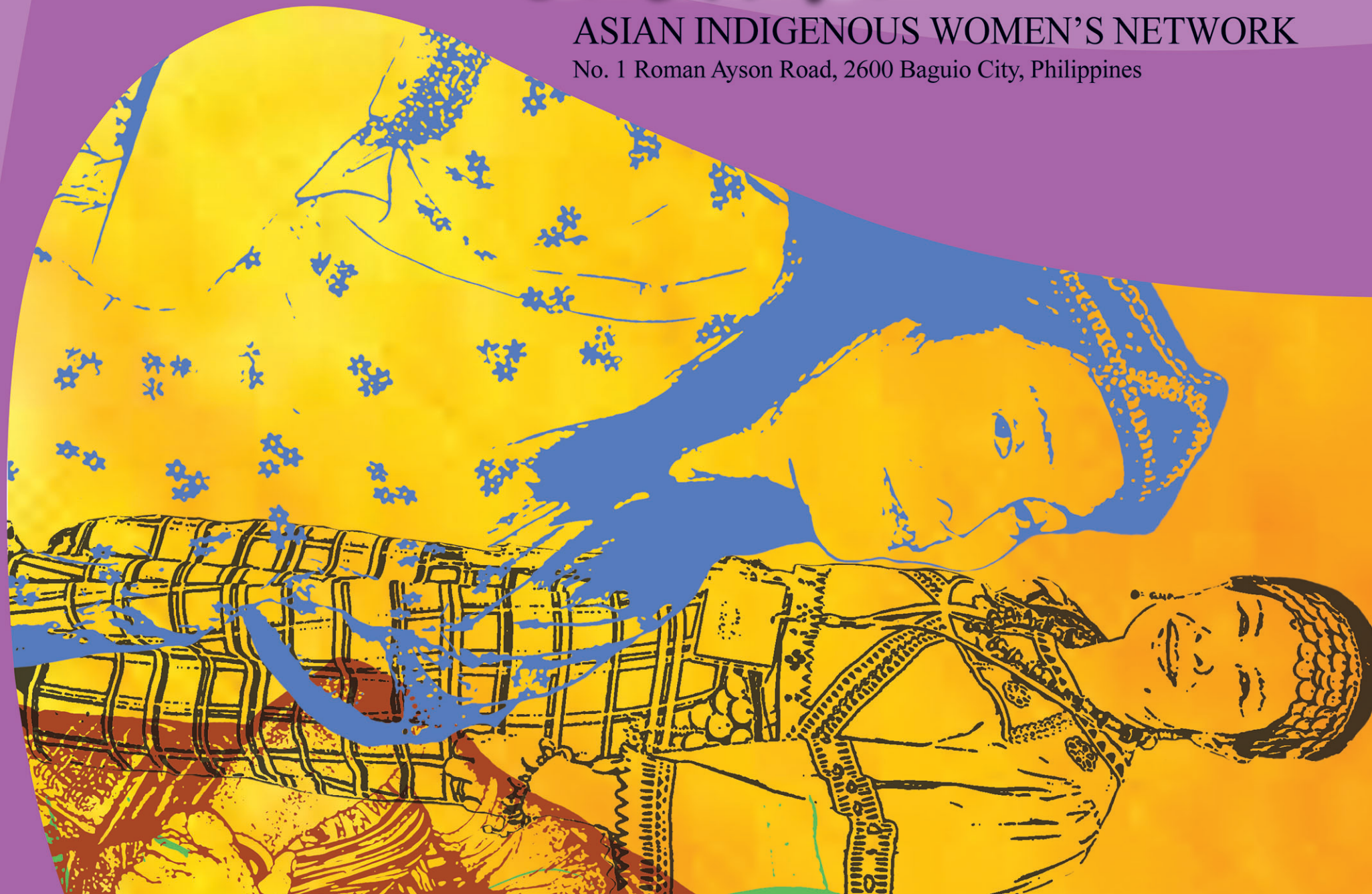
ASIAN INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S NETWORK

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