



28-30 August 2018:
Inya Lake Hotel, Yangon, Myanmar:

Rights to Respect amidst the era of Climate Change:

Regional Learning workshop on IP Women and Customary Land Tenure

Myanmar is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change, with the threat of flooding, drought, cyclones, and changing rainfall patterns threatening lives and livelihoods.¹ Myanmar's National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (2017) outlines the major risks that Myanmar will face. Heavier rainfall and shorter monsoons increase the risk of landslides in the uplands and flooding along river basins. Changing rainfall patterns and drought threaten agriculture, most of which is rainfed. The risk of damage from more frequent and larger cyclones is compounded by mangrove deforestation across the coastline.

Across the world, all countries must make contributions to combating climate change. Every sector has a role to play in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, sequestering emissions, and adapting to the impacts of climate change. POINT has been working on climate change in Myanmar and internationally, with a focus on the role and contribution of Indigenous Peoples. This workshop is part of POINT's ongoing research on the role of Indigenous women specifically, who are vulnerable to climate change impacts but also have important contributions to make both within their own communities and for global and international efforts.

1__ Kreft S, D. Eckstein, L. Dorsch, and L. Fisher. 2017. Global Climate Risk Index 2017.

This workshop explores the role of Indigenous women and customary tenure in relation to climate change. Women and men from across Myanmar came together for three days to share their own experiences and to learn from IP groups and academics from 5 countries in Asia. Participants learned about IP women and customary tenure in Nepal, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, and discussed how Indigenous women in Myanmar can learn from these regional experiences. Day one focused on IP women's land rights in law and policy, the second day focused on IP women's roles in land management and in decision-making from their communities to the national level, and day three focused on the role and contribution of IP women to climate action.

Key lessons from the presentations and group discussions include:

- Previously colonized countries share a history of laws in which the government excludes indigenous people from ancestral land and forests

No women, no peace!

No land, no peace!

- There is growing recognition of customary tenure rights across the region and the world that has been brought about through advocacy, research, and political change
- Indigenous peoples have integral relationships with land and forests. For IPs land is not only an asset, it is tied to livelihoods, social relationships, religious life, and cultural identity
- Customary tenure systems are an integrated approach to the ecological, social, economic, and cultural life of communities. Communities use customary systems to manage land, forests, water, wildlife, and other natural resources, with institutions

and processes for decision-making and justice systems.

The many roles of indigenous women in Myanmar

Presentations about indigenous women in Myanmar and other countries in the region, and group discussions, discussed the role of indigenous women in society, politics, education, and culture.

Agriculture: Indigenous women are the caretakers of the wealth of agricultural biodiversity found in indigenous farming systems, especially rotational agriculture. Women select and save seeds each year, maintaining diverse species and varieties in their fields. Women farmers have their own roles in planting, weeding, and harvesting on their household land, and often sell crops in the market.

Forests: Indigenous women protect and sustainably manage forests. Indigenous women collect herbal medicines, honey, food, and other products from the forest. Two examples from Myanmar are a group of women researching and documenting endangered tree species and women negotiating with neighboring villages about forest management. Women in Myanmar also advocate to government for their land and forest rights and to design forest policy

Social welfare: Many communities have a women's committee that improves social welfare and cares for the sick and needy. These groups are often affiliated with religious organizations. Women also take care of their family members, husband, and children.

Culture: Indigenous women transfer cultural knowledge to the next generation as they care for children, including stories, music, dance, and traditional knowledge.

Economics: Women buy and sell products in the market, raise domestic livestock, farm, sew clothing, and manage household budgets. Women who run small and medium enterprises should be supported to develop their businesses.

Leadership: Indigenous women face structural and cultural barriers to achieving full and effective participation and leadership in decision-making. These barriers exist in both the government system and customary systems. Women hold seats in parliament, and women are peacemakers who can make essential contributions to peace. There are limited women in village administration positions. Women's roles vary significantly between different customary systems and cultures.

Securing the tenure rights of indigenous women

Presentations and discussions included securing land tenure rights, and indigenous women's roles in decision-making and leadership. Recommendations from group discussions and presentations included:

- Revise the law to reflect the National Land Use Policy, which recognizes the land rights of women (Part IX) and customary tenure rights of ethnic nationalities (Part VIII)
- Recognize customary land tenure systems in the law and government administration
- Laws and policies should specifically include women's rights
- Implement international conventions that recognize women's rights, including UNDRIP and CEDAW
- Recognize indigenous women's tenure rights
 - Including for land ownership and transfer, decision-making, agriculture, forests, ICCAs, and community forestry
- Ensure the full and effective participation of women in decision-making and governance
 - Ensure the full participation of men and women in policy-making at all levels
 - Men should support women's participation in decision-making and women's tenure rights
- In every culture and customary system, promote women's rights
 - Conduct research and assessments on the role, rights, and contributions of women within customary systems
 - Document and research IP women role and rights in customary law
- Promote women's leadership within communities, and at the local, state, national level.
- Strengthen women's networks, provide trainings for women on policy, advocacy, land, and gender
- Some presenters highlighted the importance of reserving a set number of seats for women, and specifically IP women, in governing bodies, to ensure representation
- Empower women to address the cultural and structural barriers to tenure security
- Strengthen women's networks, capacity building, awareness raising, access to education, provide information in appropriate languages
- Conduct research to better understand women's roles, challenges, and perspectives and address barriers to tenure security and decision-making
- Conduct research on gender, tenure, and indigenous women
- The government should ensure universal access to education
- The government should incorporate other cultures language, culture and history into educational curriculum, and provide educational materials

Additional Recommended Actions to secure indigenous women's tenure rights

- Provide trainings on gender, land, and law and policy, and how to advocate for tenure rights and women's rights
- Conduct awareness raising for government, NGOs, the media, and communities about gender. Involve both women and men.
- Meet with ethnic ministers and the state and national level and advocate for IP women's rights
- Engage MPs that are interested in this issue and will advocate for IP women
- Strengthen women's networks for advocacy
- Conduct consultations and workshops at regional levels for advocacy and policy development
- Organize exchanges to other countries to share experiences and learn from each other

Research methods

Including the perspectives of indigenous women in research, and conducting research with a gender perspective, is one important step for strengthening indigenous women's rights. Suggestions for conducting research included:

- Use both qualitative and quantitative research methods
- Conduct interviews and focus group discussions with both men and women, and hold discussions with women only
- Research and document women's roles and women's work to make it visible
- Research the different responsibilities and needs of men and women in the household
- Use a gender perspective and diverse views

when researching customary land tenure systems

- Conduct comparative research between cases where women's land rights are secure and where they are not, to understand underlying causes and solutions
- Use research to understand what are the weakness, strength, challenges, and opportunities for securing women's land rights

The role of indigenous women in climate change action

Actions taken by indigenous women and their communities to adapt to and mitigate climate change include:

- Women are responsible for cooking and can switch to fuel-efficient cookstoves to reduce their fuelwood use
- Women in communities set up a seed bank to save and exchange seeds. They have changed some of the types of seeds they plant to adapt to climate change
- Women and their communities protect and sustainably manage forests
- Women farmers are adapting their agricultural practices
 - Planting later in the year because of climate change
 - Planting different varieties of crops, including switching from oranges to coffee and green tea orchards, and from rice to bananas
- Water management:
 - In Magwe, communities built water storage tanks to adapt to water shortages
 - Communities have increased protection for watershed forests when they experienced water shortages
 - Building small irrigation dams for community water supply

Participants also discussed the roles of communities, CSOs, and government for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Recommendations included protecting forests, promoting renewable energy, adapting agricultural practices, and strong and effective collaboration between communities, government, and civil society. Recommendations included the following:

Communities

Mitigation

- Forest conservation and restoration
- Monitoring illegal logging and deforestation
- Reduce fuel-wood use

Adaptation

- Adapt farming practices to a changing climate
- Pass down traditional knowledge about forest management and farming to future generations

CSOs and NGOs

Mitigation

- Indigenous women's networks should raise awareness of climate change and conduct advocacy
- Provide advocacy tools and training
- Conduct research about indigenous women

Adaptation

- Act as a bridge between communities and government to develop, implement, and monitor climate change adaptation actions
- Help communities to document and pass down traditional knowledge to future generations

Government

Mitigation

- Laws and policies should reflect international standards and conventions like UNDRIP and CEDAW
- Ensure full and effective indigenous women role in policymaking, at all levels and including decision-making
- Recognize community conserved areas (ICCAs) in law and policy
- Promote renewable energy
- Do not give business concessions on community land

Adaptation

- Develop action plans for adaptation with strong and effective communication and collaboration between government and indigenous communities
- Establish a government fund for climate change action and related issues

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AGENDA

Time	Description/Topic	Presenter & Facilitator
Day 1	Rights of Indigenous Women on Law and Policy	Chairperson: Pyae Phyo Maung
8:30-9:00	Registration	Zel Daung, Su Lelt Naing
9:30-10:00	Introduction and sharing of Expectations and ground rules for the workshop	Myo Ko Ko, POINT
10:00-10:45	Presentation on “IP women rights in Law and policies of Philippines related to land, territories and natural resources and Forest” followed by Q & A (30 mins presentation and 15 mins Q&A)	Atty. Edna Maguigad, Regional policy and governance adviser, NTFP Asia Philippines
10:45-11:00	Tea Break	
11:00-11:45	Presentation on “ IP women Land rights & Customary Land Tenure in Myanmar Law and Policy” followed by Q & A (30 mins presentation and 15 mins Q&A)	Sayama Ku Ku Ju, LIOH
11:45-12:30	Presentation on “Research experience from the perspectives of indigenous women on customary land and forest tenure. followed by Q & A	Dr. Pasang Sherpa, the chairperson of CIPRED, Nepal
12:30-1:30	Lunch	
1:30-2:00	Speech from Member of Parliament & Photo Session	Sayama Susana Hla Hla Soe, Secetary, Women and Child rights Committee of Amyotha Hluttaw
2:00-3:00	Plenary on “ The rights of Indigenous Women in Customary Land Tenure: Opportunities and Challenges” (Speakers of the day & Sayarma Kamoon from ECDF & Naw Ei Ei Min, POINT)	Ling Hung, POINT
3:00-3:15	Tea Break	

3:15-4:15	Group Reflection and Recommendation on “ The rights of Indigenous Women in Customary Land Tenure”	Naw Khin Moe Aye, POINT
4:15-5:00	Group Presentation	Naw Khin Moe Aye, POINT
Time	Description/Topic	Presenter & Facilitator
Day 2	Roles of Indigenous Women at All Levels	Chairperson: Naw Khin Moe Aye, POINT
9:00-9:30	Recap of Day 1	Pyae Pyo Maung, Nura, POINT
9:30-10:15	Presentation on “Malaysia experience on IP woman land rights & customary Land tenure” ” followed by Q & A(30 mins presentation and 15 mins Q&A)	Maslah Rompado, Malaysia
10:15-10:30	Tea Break	
10:30-11:15	Presentation on “ IP women role in Customary Land Tenure of Chin State, Myanmar” followed by Q & A(30 mins presentation and 15 mins Q&A)	Thian Nei Cung, Project Manager NiNu (Women in Action Group)
11:15-12:00	Presentation on “IP women advocacy & movement in Thailand ” followed by Q & A	Ms.Katima Leeja, Indigenous women Network Thailand
12:00-1:00	Lunch	
1:00-2:00	Plenary on “IP women role at all levels: Opportunities and Challenges” Speakers of the Day & Lakpa, Nepal.	Naw Ei Ei Min POINT
2:00-3:30	Group Reflection & Recommendation on “ Promotion of IP women role and engagement at all levels”	Nura, Myo Ko Ko,POINT
3:30-3:45	Tea Break	
3:45-5:00	Group Presentation	Nura, Myo Ko Ko, POINT
Time	Description/Topic	Presenter & Facilitator
Day 3	Linkage between IP women rights and Climate Change Response	Chairperson: Ms. Hafi Tei, POINT

9:00-9:30	Recap of Day 2	Naw Khin Moe Aye (POINT)
9:30-10:15	Presentation on “Indigenous Women’s Role and Rights in Climate Change Response: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Paris Agreement in context of Indigenous Women” followed by Q & A (30 mins presentation and 15 mins Q&A)	Tunga Bhadra Rai. National Coordinator. NEFIN Climate Change Program
10:15-10:30	Tea Break	
10:30-11:15	Presentation on “IP women contribution to Climate Change Response”	Devi Anggraini, Indonesia
11:15-12:00	Presentation on “ Community experience on IP women role in Climate change response” followed by Q & A	CHRO (Mai Thin Yu Mon)
12:00-1:00	Plenary on “ Assessment on IP women role in Climate Change response: followed by Q & A Ma Lwin Mar Aye (Green Right Organization), Mu Htet Myat Win (PNO), research team and speakers of the day, Naw Khin Moe Aye)	Modertor Myo Ko Ko (POINT)
	Tea Break	
2:45-3:45	Group Reflection and recommendation on (IP Women Engagement in Climate Change Responses)	Hla Doi(POINT)
3:45-4:30	Group Presentation	
4:30- 5:00	Wrap Up and Evaluation	

POINT (Promotion Of Indigenous and Nature Together)

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