



Learn and Exercise your rights

*A simplified version of the United Nations Declaration
on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*

Published by
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Learn and Exercise Your Rights: A Simplified Version of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

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Published by:

Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)
108 Moo 5, Tambon Sanpranate, Amphur Sansai,
Chiang Mai 50210, Thailand
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This publication is supported by

- IWGIA – International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs
- Norad – Norwegian Agency for Development and Corporation
- Danida – Danish International Development Agency
- SDC – Swiss Agency for Development and Corporation
- SIDA – Swedish International Development Corporation Agency
- Tamalpais Trust

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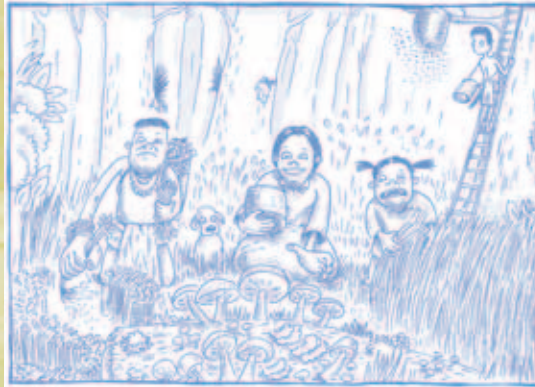
Printed by: AIPP Printing Press Co., Ltd.



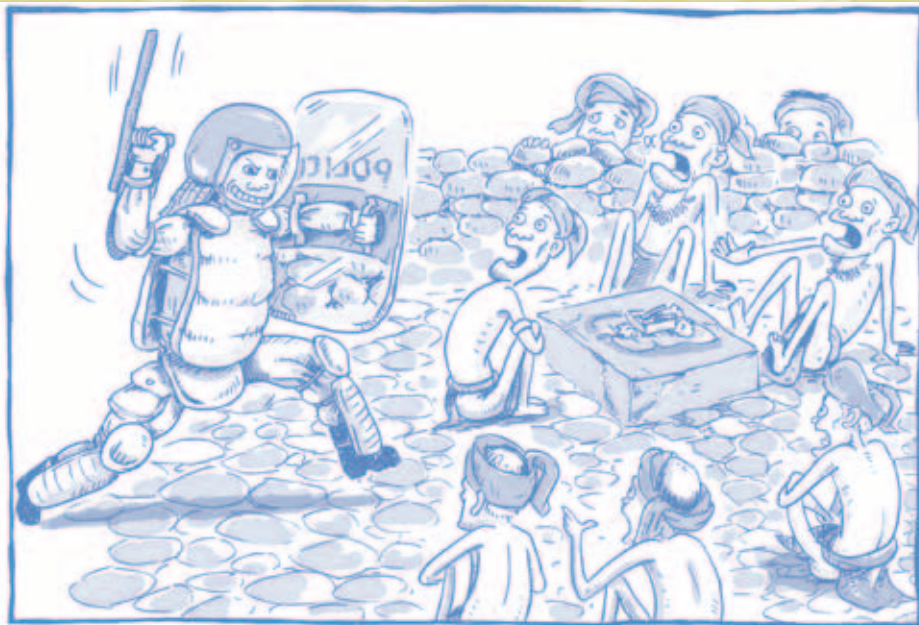
The printing press has been established with support from the European Union's European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights



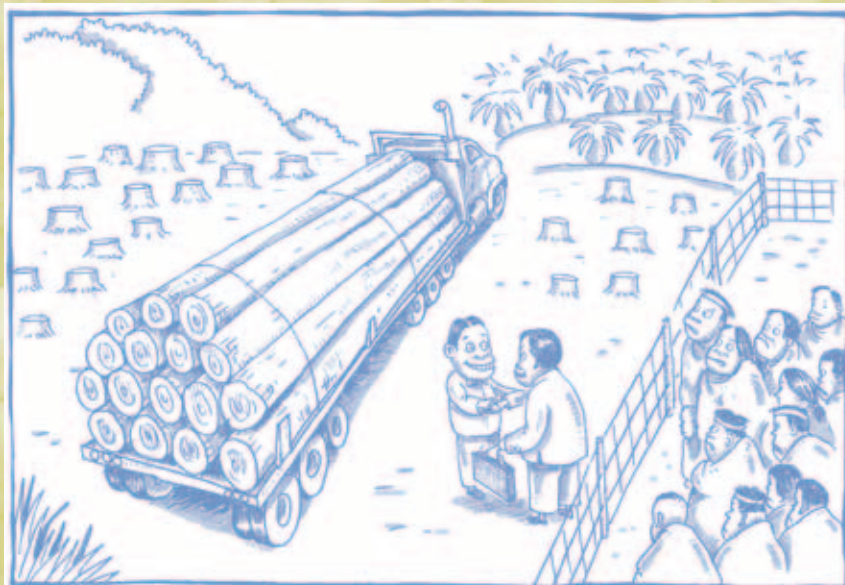
Indigenous Peoples and A Brief History of UNDRIP



We are indigenous peoples. We have distinct cultures and identities that are rooted with our sacred relation to our lands, territories and resource—the very source of our life. These lands were handed down to us from our ancestors. We have the obligation to nurture it for our future generations. We have our own languages and customary laws. We have our own ways of living that is different from the dominant groups or majority of the people in our own country. We have been self-governing even before states or governments were formed.



We have been historically colonized, assimilated, oppressed, exploited, and systematically discriminated by states, corporations and those in power in the countries where we live. We became marginalized and regarded as “savages”, “backward”, “ignorant” and “uncivilized”.



Governments decided to divide and put borders in our territories without our consent. Companies and business groups used our natural resources without our consent. Our Sacred places were destroyed. Many of us have been forced to leave our lands to give way to so-called development projects like hydro dams, mining and plantations.



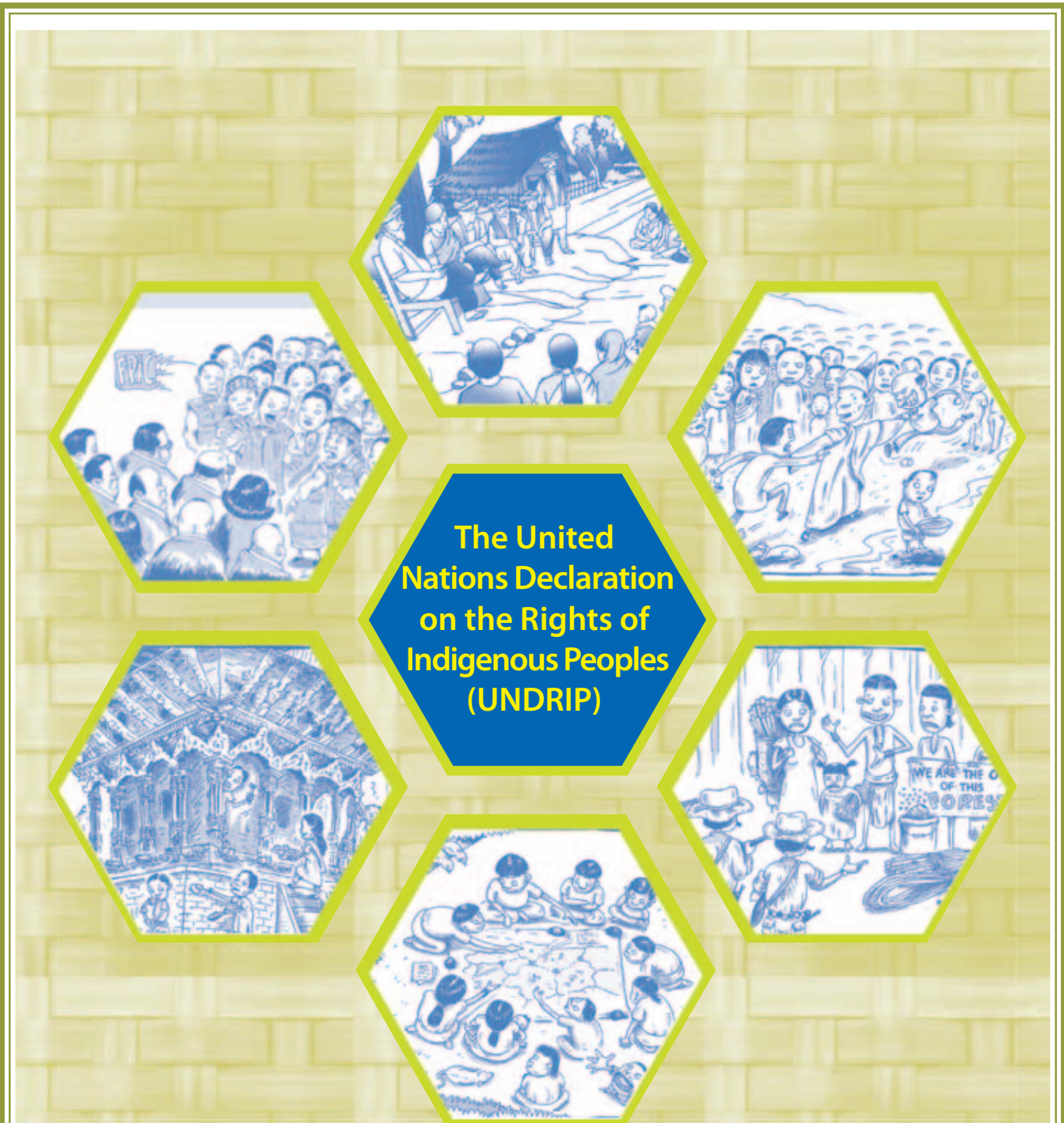
In order for us to collectively survive and live with dignity and peace as equal citizens with the dominant society, we have the right to remain in our lands. We have the right to continue with our sustainable livelihoods that are dependent on our natural resources. We have the right to our cultures and identities as different from the dominant societies. We have the right to practice our customary laws. These are our collective rights that we demanded states to respect and recognize in national laws to protect us from further discrimination and injustice. However, states/governments continue to deny our rights.



As governments continue to violate our rights, our communities continue to defend and assert our collective rights through different forms of struggles. Our leaders brought our concerns internationally to the United Nations (UN) as states refuse to listen to us in our own respective country. The United Nations is the umbrella organization of states/governments that have committed to uphold human rights, justice and equality for all.



After 20 years of negotiations, the UN finally adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in September 2007. UNDRIP is now the minimum standard for the respect of the human rights of indigenous peoples worldwide that states/governments and all other institutions shall recognize and uphold.



UNDRIP contains our collective rights as indigenous peoples. These include our right to our lands, territories and resources, right to self-determination, rights to customary laws, rights to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), rights to our distinct cultures, rights to determine our own path for development. It also declares that indigenous peoples have the same human rights as all other peoples, such as for health care and education.

Rights to Self-Determination

Rights to self-determination are about making our own decisions. This means we are free to choose how we govern ourselves. We are free to follow our customary laws. Our freedoms should be respected by other peoples. We are free to say "yes" or "no" to planned projects that affect our lands and lives. We can set conditions for our consent that come from our own collective decision-making. We can determine how we want to develop based on our culture and ways of life.

We have equal human rights as all other people. We can belong to indigenous communities as well as nations. We should not be discriminated against because we identify ourselves as indigenous peoples.





We have rights to our traditional ways of governance. We can choose our leaders in traditional ways. We can make collective decisions about our concerns. We can decide the responsibilities of individuals to our communities.

We can choose our livelihoods and use our natural resources to sustainably support our communities. We can seek for justice if these rights are taken away.



We can participate in political, social and economic activities of the state. We can choose our own representatives for making decisions with other peoples as a nation. Decisions about new laws of a nation that may impact our lives require our free, prior and informed consent.

Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)

Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) is our right as part of our self-determination. FPIC ensures our participation in decision-making about issues that impact us, including the use of our land, territories and natural resources.

The elements of free, prior and informed consent are:



Free means we decide freely without coercion, intimidation or manipulation by other peoples.



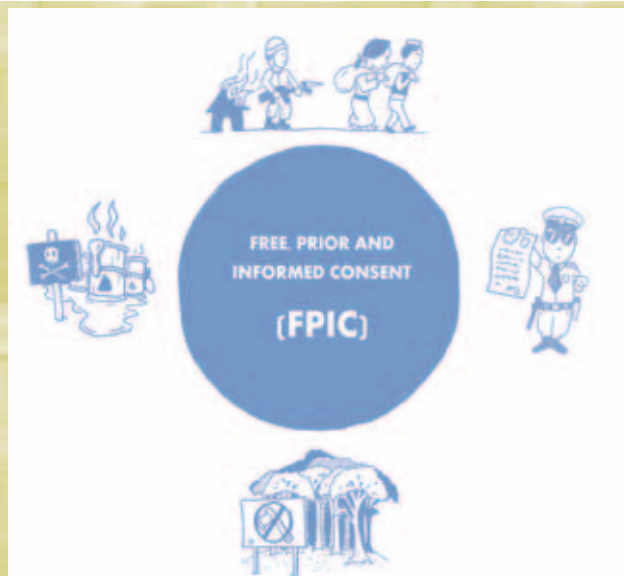
Prior means we are informed early so that our decision-making influences plans.



Informed means we get all the information we need in ways we understand to make our free decision.



Consent means our collective agreement from our free, prior and informed decision-making process.



FPIC is needed for all decisions that may affect us. These include decisions about lands or laws that affect us. FPIC comes before any projects impacting our lands and territories, particularly development involving mineral, water or forest resources. It comes before anything is put on our lands, especially things that may be poisonous or dangerous.

CUSTOMARY LAWS

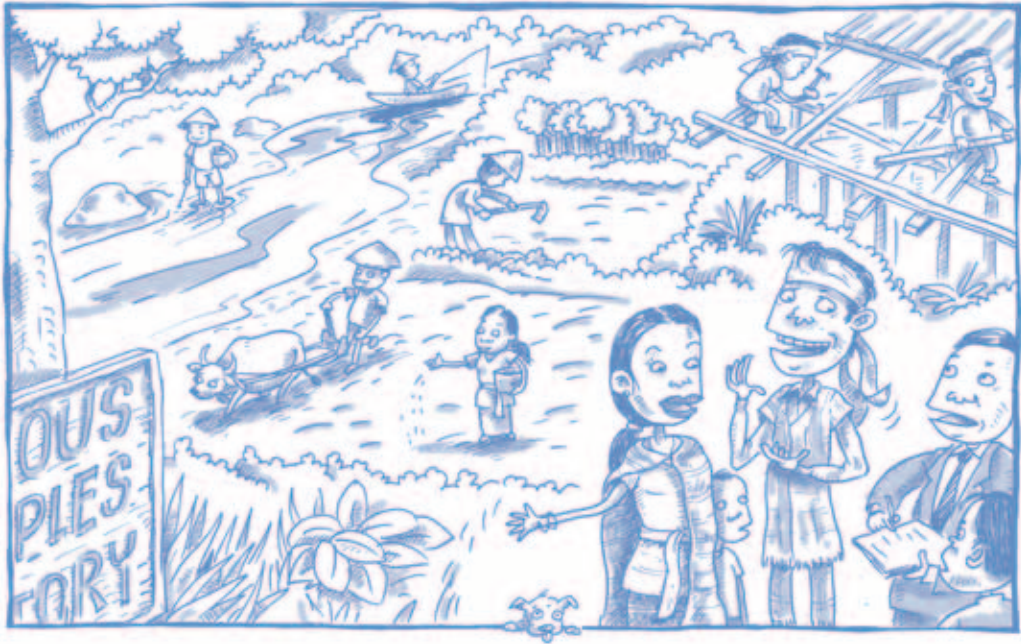
Customary laws are the rules we use to resolve conflict in our communities. Our laws are linked to our economic, political, spiritual and cultural traditions. Our laws continually evolve with consent from our community members. We pass these laws from generation to generation through oral traditions.



We can maintain, strengthen and promote our own rules as long as they support human rights. Governments must ensure our customary rules are respected within their legal system.



Governments must respect and recognize our laws and customs about our lands. If there are conflicts between us and other peoples about lands, governments must resolve the conflicts in fair ways that respect our laws.



Governments must work with us to protect our land, knowledge and traditions. If our land, knowledge or traditions were changed without our free, prior and informed consent, governments must help fix this.



We can practice and revitalize our spiritual and religious traditions. Governments must let us maintain our own spiritual beliefs. If this right was violated before, governments should help us revive our traditional ways now.

LAND, TERRITORIES AND RESOURCES

Through generations our ancestors evolved and adapted to our lands. Our relationship with our lands goes beyond economics. Peoples, plants, and animals and spirits inhabit in our lands. Holy and sacred places in our territories must be respected. Our ancestors handed down lands to us and we will hand these lands to our children. Our connections with ancestral lands mean losing them devastates our cultures.



We can develop our lands, territories and resources in our own ways. Governments must legally recognize and protect our lands and respect our traditional land ownership systems.

Our spiritual relationship with our lands should be maintained.





We cannot be moved from our lands without our true consent. Our land will be passed to future generations. If our lands were taken or used without our free, prior and informed consent, governments should give it back or give us fair compensation.



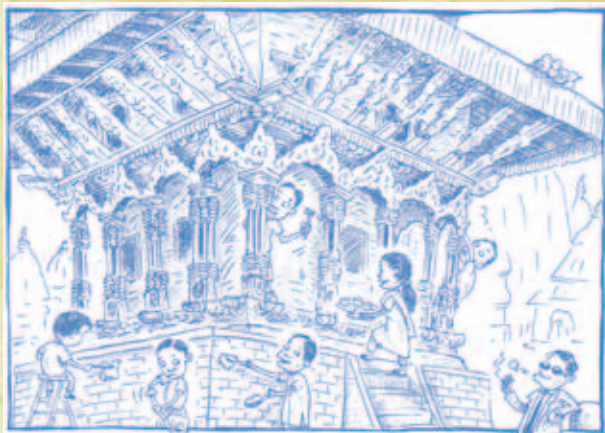
We should conserve and protect our environment. Our use of lands should be sustainable, like our traditional ways.

No dangerous things should be put on our lands without our free, prior and informed consent. If dangerous materials were put in our lands, governments must support our health.



Cultural Rights

Our culture shapes our identity. It distinguishes us as indigenous peoples. Our decision-making about how we use land, how we communicate and how our society works reflects our culture. If we lost our culture, our identity as indigenous peoples will be lost.



We can practice our culture, including spiritual ceremonies at cultural sites. We cannot be forced to change to others' culture or ways of life. If others made us change or destroyed our culture, it is our right to revive it.

We own our cultures including stories, songs, dance, designs, art, ceremonies, sacred sites and ancestral remains. We own our knowledge including what local plants we use to eat or heal. Outsiders wanting to use our traditional knowledge must ask for our free, prior and informed consent. If we say no, governments must help us to protect our knowledge.





We can share our histories, oral traditions, philosophies, writing and literature with future generations.

Governments should support indigenous children's education in their own culture and languages. Indigenous children have this right even if they live outside of their community.



Our culture and traditions must be fairly represented in education and public information. Government must educate non-indigenous peoples about our rights to promote national harmony.

Rights to Development

Indigenous peoples worldwide have suffered negative impacts from development by governments and companies. Some development projects destroy our forests, lands or spiritual sites. Some developments make us homeless or stop us from growing our own food.

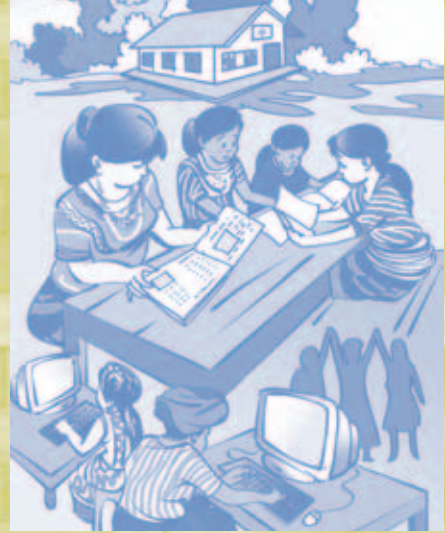
In some countries, governments blame environmental damages on our traditional practices while approving dams or mines that destroy life. Our sustainable environmental management has not been respected. For sustainable development we must lead environmental management of our lands. Governments should support our sustainable development, including access to health care and education. Our free, prior and informed consent contributes to sustainable development.



How we develop is our choice, including our participation in economic activities. If our rights were violated before, governments must act to protect us now.



We should lead or participate in any program for us. This includes programs about health, housing, education or agriculture.



States should take special measures to improve our economic and social conditions. In doing so, government must pay attentions to the needs of our indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities.



We can lead our education in our own languages and methods. Governments should support this. We also have the same rights to education as all other citizens.



We can use our traditional medicines and ways of healing. We also have rights to the same physical and mental health services as all citizens.

If poisons or dangerous things were put in our territories before, states must support our health and healing now.



We can produce our own media in our own languages. We also have the right to access other media for all citizens. Government media should reflect cultural diversity including our own. Governments should encourage private media to represent us too.

Migration

In some places indigenous peoples were forced to leave their ancestral lands. Their lands were developed without their free, prior and informed consent. Governments were making indigenous peoples move to cities, to avoid supporting health and education services in remote areas. This migration was not fair.

Indigenous peoples should be free to choose where to live like all citizens. If we choose to migrate to study at university or for work, we should be free to do so.

In some places, government borders have split indigenous lands. In such places indigenous peoples should be free to cross borders to interact.



We cannot be forced to leave our lands. We will only leave our ancestral lands with our free, prior and informed consent. If we were forced to leave before, we should be able to return. If this is not possible, governments or companies who forced us must compensate us fairly.



Where government borders split our lands, we should be free to move across those borders for our indigenous culture and communities.



We can be part of our indigenous community as well as citizen of a nation. We have the right to citizenship and identity documents for the state our lands are in.

Human Rights and Militarization

Militarization is when people use guns, violence and force for controlling other people.. Some indigenous peoples have been forced to leave their ancestral lands because of militarization. Natural resources have been exploited after force against indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples requests for self-determination have been silenced through force.



We should be able to live without fear of violence. Our collective rights should not be threatened with weapons.

Our children should not be taken from us, nor should our women be abused. We should be allowed the same physical and mental health as all citizens. Governments must support our safety.



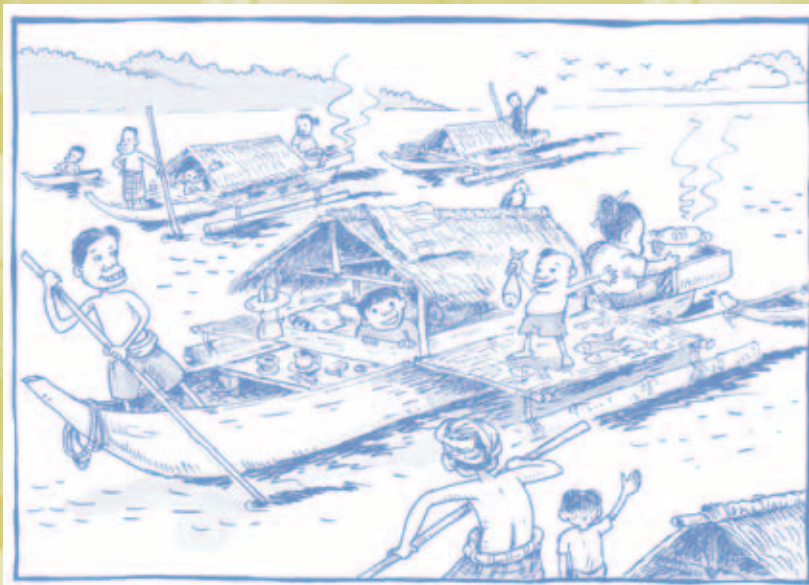


Military activities must not happen in our lands without our free, prior and informed consent.

Lands taken from us by force should be returned. If this is impossible, or if they are damaged, we must be fairly compensated.



Rights for Indigenous Women, Children, Elderly and the Disables



All indigenous peoples have rights to freedom and peace regardless of age, gender or ability.



Our children should have access to all forms and levels of government education as well as in their own language and culture.



Our children should not be exploited or made to work. Their physical, spiritual, moral and social growth should be supported.



Indigenous elders and those with disabilities should be supported to participate in plans for programmes about them.



Governments and indigenous peoples should work together to stop violence against women. Women should have all the rights and freedoms that indigenous men have.

What can Indigenous Peoples do with the UNDRIP

Information dissemination and awareness-raising

We can use UNDRIP to educate ourselves about our rights as well as raise awareness about our rights with non-indigenous peoples.



We can discuss about our rights enshrined in the UNDRIP in our community meetings. We can use posters, pictures, comic books, videos and other media about the UNDRIP as supportive materials for discussions.



We can encourage and train the indigenous youth to take the lead in conducting community seminars and activities to raise awareness on the UNDRIP.



We can share education materials on the UNDRIP with other communities, organizations and our local governments, and assist in organizing and holding community meetings and seminars.



We can work for the inclusion of the UNDRIP and our history in a non-discriminatory way in our school curriculum.



We can encourage educational institutions such as schools, colleges, and university and religious institutions to organize seminars to talk about UNDRIP.



We can talk to mainstream media, social media community, radios and newspapers about UNDRIP and how it relates to our daily lives and wellbeing.



We can organize photo-exhibits, film screenings, community theatre and plays, and radio interviews about our issues and rights relating to UNDRIP.



We can work with the academic and research institutions for the conduct of studies and researches on our conditions, issues and concerns relating to the exercise, violation and respect to our rights under the UNDRIP.

Building and strengthening indigenous institutions and capacity building

We can use the UNDRIP to revitalize and strengthen our institutions of self-governance and accountable leadership.



We can revitalize and strengthen our indigenous systems and our customary laws, which enhance our unity, cooperation, values and principles for community cohesion, solidarity and upholding the common good.



We can strengthen our customary laws and practices by promoting the positive laws and reforming the negative laws – particularly the laws that are discriminatory against women.



We can develop new leaders including indigenous women and youth that shall be accountable to us and shall engage with government and other entities to promote and protect our rights and interest.



We can strengthen the full and effective participation of indigenous women and youth through formation of their organizations and or designating their equitable representatives in decision making bodies.





We can strengthen our decision making processes by ensuring transparency and democratic participation of community members.



We can map our lands and territories and document our traditional knowledge and biodiversity. We can use our maps and documented knowledge to tell governments and others to respect our rights to our lands, resources and territories



We can make our own plans for developing our land and natural resources in ways that will support our future generations, respect our culture and strengthens our cooperation and unity.



We can demand governments to recognize our self-governance systems and our right to fully participate in planning programs for our development, and to fully implement the requirement for our Free Prior and Informed Consent—FPIC on matters that affects us.



We can request for support and assistance from indigenous organizations and support groups for trainings and capacity building activities for advocacy and engagements with governments, UN agencies, donors, private companies and others



Networking and advocacy

We can use UNDRIP to enhance solidarity and cooperation between and among indigenous peoples.



We can invite indigenous peoples from different organizations and communities together to share and learn about ways to promote, assert and defend our rights.



We can work together on common issues such as the protection of our land from destructive projects and identify joint strategies and actions to promote and defend our rights.



We can work with other indigenous organizations and communities to plan and hold rallies and demonstrations, submit petition letters or statements about how our rights have been violated.



We can organize parades during our festivals and display posters and banners with messages about our rights.



We can build alliances with indigenous authorities and officials to influence the laws, policies and programmes they make.

We can use the UNDRIP to conduct policy dialogues with governments and other relevant institutions



We can call for dialogues with government officials (local government bodies, government agencies) on the recognition and protection of our rights including our full and effective participation in decision-making on matters that affects us such as development projects.



We can lobby with the governments to use the UNDRIP as the framework for any policies, projects and legislations relating to our rights and welfare and effective implementation of laws and policies that respect our collective rights.

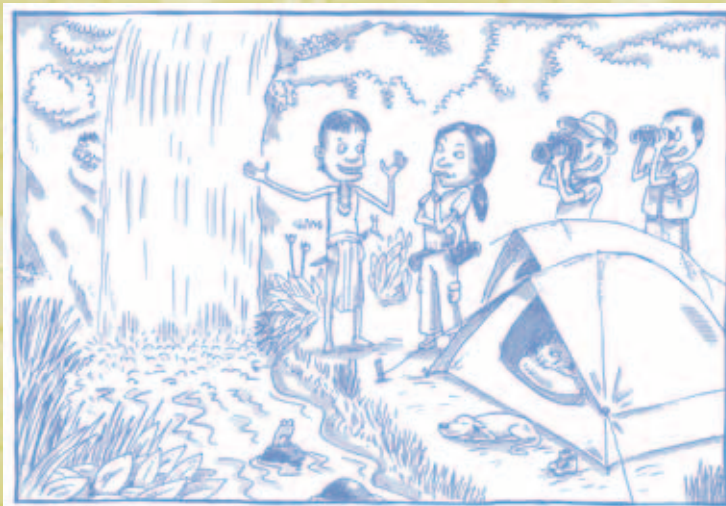


We can conduct advocacy activities and roundtable dialogues with corporations and international financial institutions to use the UNDRIP as a framework on their policies on indigenous peoples.



We can demand the establishment of effective grievance and or accountability mechanisms at the local, national, regional and international levels in relation to the violations of our rights under the UNDRIP.

We can use UNDRIP to build and strengthen networks with non-indigenous peoples for support to our cause



We can work with media professionals who care about indigenous peoples rights. We can bring media to our communities to learn about and document our cultures, our struggles and our contributions to society.



We can develop good relations with media to cover and report on human rights violations as they happen or as soon as quickly as possible to draw public attention



We can launch campaigns through social media networks to generate greater support and solidarity for the protection of our rights. We can work with Indigenous Vocies in Asia Network (www.iva.aippnet.org) to draw attention to our issues.



We can work with lawyers, teachers, doctors, religious leaders and other professionals to help us with their expertise and services to strengthen the recognition and protection of our rights.



We can work with human rights and environmental organizations and institutions for the protection of human rights violations and environment.

We can use UNDRIP to monitor, document and communicate violations of our rights, and then seek justice for abuse.



We can document human rights violations through taking photos, videos, notes, testimonies and affidavits of victims and witnesses and gather the facts in how, when, where and who are those involved in the cases of human rights violations.



We can work with the families of victims on how to seek justice and take legitimate actions to generate attention and support



We can share our documentation and calls for justice with our networks of media, NGOs and other indigenous communities for their supports. We can contact Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Defenders Network (www.iphrdefebdners.net) for support.



We can mobilize our community members to take action through legitimate public demonstrations as well as to have dialogues with government officials, armed forces, corporations and others



We can prepare and submit our report and recommendations relating to human rights violations and related issues to the National Human Rights Institutions and to UN bodies and agencies by working with indigenous organizations relating with these institutions.

AIPP at a glance

The Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) is a regional organization founded in 1988 by indigenous peoples' movements as a platform for solidarity and cooperation. AIPP is actively promoting and defending indigenous peoples' rights and human rights; sustainable development and management of resources and environment protection. Through the years, AIPP has developed its expertise on grassroots capacity building, advocacy and networking from local to global levels and strengthening partnerships with indigenous organizations, support NGOs, UN agencies and other institutions. At present, AIPP has 47 members from 14 countries in Asia with 7 indigenous peoples' national alliances/networks and 35 local and sub-national organizations including 16 are ethnic-based organizations, five (5) indigenous women and four (4) are indigenous youth organizations.

Our Vision

Indigenous peoples in Asia are living with dignity and fully exercising their rights, distinct cultures and identity, and enhancing their sustainable management systems on lands, territories and resources for their own future and development in an environment of peace, justice and equality.

Our Mission

AIPP strengthen the solidarity, cooperation and capacities of indigenous peoples in Asia to promote and protect their rights, cultures and identities, and their sustainable resource management system for their development and self-determination.

Our Programmes.

Our main areas of work among the different programmes are information dissemination, awareness raising, capacity building, advocacy and networking from local to global. Our programmes are:

- Human Rights Campaign and Policy Advocacy
- Regional Capacity Building
- Environment
- Indigenous Women
- Research and Communication Development
- (Indigenous Youth.)

AIPP is accredited as an NGO in special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and as observer organization with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Green Climate Fund (GCF), Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). AIPP is a member of the International Land Coalition (ILC).

While Indigenous peoples are five percent of the global population, they comprise fifteen percent of the poorest of the poor. Throughout centuries, indigenous peoples have been asserting and defending their lands, territories and resources as the source of their distinct identities, cultures and ways of life. They continue to voice out and demand the recognition of their collective rights as a matter of attaining equality and dignity for all.

This booklet presents in a simple and illustrative manner, the collective rights of indigenous peoples as contained in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). It is intended as an educational tool for communities to understand indigenous peoples rights and to know what they can do to promote and protect their rights.

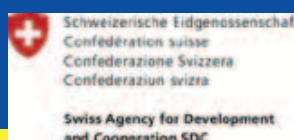
For more information about indigenous peoples issues, visit:

www.aippnet.org, www.ccm.in.aippnet.org,
www.iva.aippnet.org, www.iphrdefenders.net

Published by:



With support from :



Tamalpais Trust