

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact
(AIPP)



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A Message from the Secretary General




The year 2023 saw AIPP find success by building from the robust foundations of past achievements and ongoing collective effort of members and partners. AIPP's current Strategic Plan (2021-2024) continued to guide our work in 2023, as we deepened and extended our networks, supported our members' work from the grassroots to UN conference rooms, and strengthened our own institutional capacity.

Indigenous self-government is the heart of our work, and all of AIPP's programmes in 2023 have been directed towards this common goal. In its third year, AIPP's course series on Self-governance and Democracy continues to be taught including by alumni in their own countries as part of a localisation process. In October 2023, AIPP recognised two communities, one in Malaysia and one in Thailand, as Centres of Excellence in Village Governance (COE-VG) for demonstrating in practice what indigenous self-governance looks like today. These COE-VG are set up as Centres with the aim for emulating and scaling through literal community processes of empowering one another.

On the ground, communities are asserting their rights over their lands, territories and resources with support from AIPP members, using existing, though limited, legal recognition of customary tenure and organising against land grabs, mining, and destructive infrastructure projects. The Platform for Asia Indigenous Peoples' Territorial Rights continued to form through a series of consultations and development of four priority country strategies.






Indigenous rights and human rights remain under attack across the region, with the deterioration of the political situation and democratic space making it increasingly difficult for indigenous movements to operate. AIPP and its members continue to document human rights violations each year, and to respond to specific cases with legal support, community mobilisation, release and endorsements of statements and appeals, legal support, sanctuary support, and enabling and facilitating dialogues and negotiations. AIPP and members in Bangladesh and the Philippines submitted reports to EMRIP on the impact of militarisation on Indigenous Peoples for its unfortunately topical study on that issue this year.

Media fellowships in six countries gave experienced journalists, community radio broadcasters, and early-career journalists the opportunity and training to bring grassroots voices to national attention and cover stories that are not reported in mainstream media. Having control of our own narratives through vibrant, independent indigenous media is another aspect of self-determination.

AIPP ensured that Indigenous representatives, particularly women, youths, and persons with disabilities, were heard at UN and other international platforms throughout the year on topics ranging from sustainable development, water governance, human rights and business, biodiversity, and climate. Preparatory meetings, caucuses, trainings, and consultations ensure that the indigenous representatives are prepared, strategic, and effective at these events. Women, youth, and persons with disabilities also strengthened their own networks during 2023.

Supporting Indigenous youths' movements and inter-generation leadership has been a strategic focus for AIPP during the current Strategic Plan, with the Asia Indigenous Youths Platform (AIYP) formalised in 2022. As a result of this focus, youth across the region are now better equipped with the knowledge, resources, networks, and organising skills to mobilise their communities and contribute to IP movements from local to international levels.

AIPP continues to deepen genuine solidarity and cooperation among its members. This year, AIPP organised three country processes and a Mekong sub-regional process to build cohesiveness in vision and strengthen AIPP's bottom-up approach as a members-based organisation. One of the main objectives for 2023 was to institutionalise this process to consolidate IP movements at the country and regional levels.



The implementation of the six programme areas and movement building processes over the years have resulted in the development or adoption of several outcome documents in 2023 which will guide AIPP's processes and interventions at different levels in the coming years. These outcome documents include Asian Framework on Indigenous Knowledge and Data Sovereignty, E-Sak Ka Ou Declaration (declaration on biodiversity and climate change), Mission and Purpose of Country Processes, Indigenous Community Protocol, and What is Centre of Excellence in Village Governance, etc.

The year 2024 will be a time to look forward and prepare for 2025, which will be a year of transition for AIPP. We will develop a new Strategic Plan for AIPP and prepare for the 2025 General Assembly, where AIPP's members will elect new leadership and chart AIPP's long-term strategic direction based on the vision of Indigenous Peoples in the 14 countries.

I am deeply appreciative for the ongoing support and commitment of the AIPP Board Members, my Executive Council colleagues, the AIPP Secretariat team, members, networks, our partners and those behind the scenes for putting in invaluable efforts for the success of AIPP and have achieved these accomplishments together. I am thankful for all our member organisations and networks for their solidarity and for continuing to be a source of inspiration in our collective struggle.

On behalf of AIPP, I would like to thank our donors for their invaluable support in partnership with our Indigenous Peoples' movements.

Gam A. Shimray
Secretary General
Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact
Chiang Mai, Thailand





Abbreviations



AHTEG	Ad hoc Technical Expert Group
AICHR	ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights
AIPP	Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation
AIYP	Asia Indigenous Youth Platform
AMAN	Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara (Indigenous Peoples Alliance of the Archipelago)
ANGNA	Adivasi Navjeevan Gathan Navjyoti Agua
APFSD	Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BHR	Business and Human Rights
BIPF	Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum
BIWN	Bangladesh- Bangladesh Indigenous Women’s Network
CBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIPO	Cambodian Indigenous Peoples’ Organization
CIPT	Council of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand
CIWA	Cambodia Indigenous Women’s Association
COE-VG	Centres of Excellence in Village Governance
CorDisRDS	The Cordillera Disaster Response & Development Services Inc
CSIPN	Centre for Support of Indigenous Peoples of the North
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations

DTP	Diplomacy Training Programme
EC	Executive Council
EMRIP	Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
FONIZ	Federation of Indigenous Journalists
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GDA	Laos- Gender Development Association
GGA	Global Goal on Adaptation
GST	Global Stocktake
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum
HRC	Human Rights Council
HRCPA	Human Rights Campaign and Policy Advocacy Programme
ICB	Indigenous Coordinating Body
IIPFCC	the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change
IKPA	Indigenous Knowledge Network of Asia
ILC	International Land Coalition
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMPECT	Inter Mountain Peoples Education and Culture in Thailand
IN	Indigenous Navigator
IPHRD	Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Defenders
IPHRDs	Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Defenders
IPOs	Indigenous Peoples Organisations
IPs	Indigenous Peoples
IPwDs	Indigenous Peoples with Disabilities
ISAWN	Inter State Adivasi Women's Network



IVAN	Indigenous Voices Asia Network
IWEHRDs	Indigenous Women Environmental Human Rights Defenders
IWFNEI	Indigenous Women’s Forum of North East India
IWGIA	The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs
IWNT	Thailand- Indigenous Women’s Network of Thailand
IWP	Indigenous Women Program
IWRAW	International Women’s Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific
IWsDs	Indigenous Women with Disabilities
IYwDs	Indigenous Youth with Disabilities
JJVS	Jashpur Jan Vikas Santha
JOAS	Indigenous Peoples Network of Malaysia
KF	Kapaeeng Foundation
LAHURNIP	Lawyers' Association for Human Rights of Nepalese Indigenous Peoples
LCIPP	Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform
LTR	Land, Territories and Resources
MOs	Member Organizations
NAPBHR	National Action Plan for Business and Human Rights
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NEFIN	Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
NGO-FONIN	NGO-Federation of Nepalese Indigenous Nationalities
NIDA	Nepal Indigenous Disabled Association (NIDA)
NIDWAN	National Indigenous Disabled Women Association of Nepal
NIDYA	National Indigenous Disabled Youth Association

NIPT	Network of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand
NIWA	Network of Indigenous Women in Asia
NIWF	National Indigenous Women's Federation
NIWF	National Indigenous Women Forum
OSMB	Organizational Strengthening and Movement Building
PINGO's Forum	Pastoralists Indigenous Non Governmental Organization's Forum
PWOAM	Malaysia- Pertubuhan Wanita Orang Asal Malaysia
RCB	Regional Capacity Building
RRI	Rights Resources Initiatives
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRIP	Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
SSNC	Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
UN	United Nations
UNCHR	United Nations Commission of Human Rights
UNCRPD	UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on Rights to Indigenous Peoples
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNPFII	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
UPR	Universal Periodic Review





Introduction



Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) is a regional network of Indigenous Peoples' organisations and movements that have come together to promote and defend the rights of Indigenous Peoples in Asia. AIPP was initiated in 1988 and the Secretariat was established in Chiang Mai in 1992. Since its establishment, AIPP has been committed to amplifying Indigenous Peoples' voices and strengthening solidarity and cooperation among Indigenous and non-Indigenous allies at the local, regional, and global levels. One of the key focuses of AIPP is building a collective movement for the realization of the right to self-determination of Indigenous Peoples in Asia.

AIPP's vision is that Indigenous Peoples in Asia are fully exercising their rights, distinct cultures and identities, and are living with dignity and enhancing their sustainable management systems of land territories and resources for their own future and development in an environment of peace, justice and equality.

AIPP has 46 member organisations across 14 countries from four sub-regions (South Asia, Mekong, Southeast Asia, and East Asia) in Asia, with 12 country-level formations and 34 local and sub-country level organisations. Of these members, 16 are ethnic-based organisations, six Indigenous women organisations, four Indigenous youths' organisations, and one organisation of Indigenous Persons with disability.

Further, AIPP works beyond member countries and organisations through Indigenous-led networks: Asia Indigenous Youth Platform (AIYP), Indigenous Women Network of Asia (NIWA), Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Defenders Network (IPHRD), Indigenous Voices in Asia Network (IVAN), and Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples in Asia (IKPA). AIPP serves as the regional Secretariat of these networks and works with them through its six programmes.



Vision

Indigenous Peoples' dignified voices and choices in Asia are recognised, empowered, and sustainably progressing with fully secured rights and dignity in an environment of justice, peace, and equality.

Mission

To secure the rights of and enable the progressive growth of the Indigenous Peoples of Asia through effective engagements, innovative partnerships, and inclusive actions to empower, uplift and secure the rights, dignity, and adaptive capacities of communities.

Core Values

AIPP's core values and principles provide grounding guidance for shaping the organization and its vision to steer AIPP in the right direction. AIPP including its EC, board and secretariat need to realise the mandate and vision of AIPP including its core values and principles which will guide to create the concrete political and strategic guide and support to the members. AIPP's core values are: Self-determination, co-responsibility, foundational leadership, volunteerism/voluntary transition, reconciliation, and federalism.





AIPP Organisational Structure



The General Assembly (GA), held by member organisations every 4 years, is AIPP's highest decision-making body. The GA adopts a four-year Strategic Plan, approves policies, guidelines, and resolutions, and elects a 12-member Executive Council (EC). The EC includes Indigenous women and youth representatives, sub-regional representatives, and a Chairperson and Secretary General. Members from South Asia, Mekong, Southeast Asia, and East Asia select their own sub-regional representatives. The Secretary General is directly accountable to the EC and to AIPP's members, and leads the Secretariat in Chiang Mai. The Secretariat, EC, member organizations, networks, partners, and other allies work together to implement AIPP's strategic plan.

The next General Assembly will be held in 2025, including the drafting and adoption of a new 4-year strategic plan and election of new positions within AIPP. This 2023 Annual Report covers the third year in the current strategic plan (2021-2024).


AIPP has six programmes and five regional networks directly under the regional secretariat. AIPP's members and partners jointly implement project interventions, advocacy and lobbying, capacity building, research documentation, and policy dialogues through these programmes and networks.

AIPP's strategic programs are the Human Rights Campaign and Policy Advocacy Programme (HRCPA), Environment Programme (ENV), Indigenous Women Programme (IWP), Regional Capacity Building Programme (RCB), Communication & Documentation Programme (CP), and Organisational Strengthening & Movement Building (OSMB). Each of these programmes are responsible for implementing work under their area of focus with different Secretariat staff, member organisations, networks, and partners.



Programmes	Networks
Indigenous Women Programme (IWP)	Indigenous Women Network of Asia (NIWA)
Human Rights Campaign and Policy Advocacy Programme (HRCPA)	Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Defenders Network (IPHRD)
Environment Programme (ENV)	Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples in Asia (IKPA)
Regional Capacity Building Programme (RCB)	Asia Indigenous Youth Platform (AIYP)
Organisational Strengthening & Movement Building (OSMB)	AIPP ECs, Members, and networks
Communication Programme (CP)	Indigenous Voices in Asia Network (IVAN)






Overview of AIPP in 2023



AIPP is guided by its Strategic Plan (2021-2024), which contains four main strategic goals:

- **Strategic Goal 1:** Increase AIPP's Impacts: strengthening governance and accountability of AIPP and member organisations (MOs), mobilizing and supporting IPs movements, revitalizing Indigenous values, practices, and leadership and knowledge systems, and supporting IPs community initiatives to increase AIPP's impacts in all levels.
- **Strategic Goal 2:** Expand AIPP's Outreach: strengthening AIPP-facilitated regional and country-level networks, capacity building on advocacy and lobbying, and strengthening and creating new partnerships to expand AIPP's outreach.
- **Strategic Goal 3:** Effective Engagement of Rights-Holders and Stakeholders: strengthening capacity of rights holders and Indigenous leadership, localization of good practices, and preparing and building capacity for effective engagement with mandate holders.
- **Strategic Goal 4:** Strengthen AIPP's Ability to Adapt: developing institutional capacity, research and innovation, human resources development, and learning.

Under Strategic Goal 1, AIPP continued to provide its course on self-governance, autonomy, and democracy and alumni organised trainings in their home countries. AIPP recognised two communities, one in Thailand and one in Malaysia, as Centres of Excellence in Village Governance for revitalising indigenous governance, knowledge, and institutions. AIPP organised three country processes to strengthen networks and develop shared strategies with EC members.



In Thailand, the draft IPs Rights Bill has been approved by the House of Representatives. Indigenous Peoples in Thailand, through the leadership of the Council of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand (CIPT) and Network of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand (NIPT) have been advocating for the bill to pass, and its progress in 2023 is a result of over a decade of IP movements in the country.

AIPP's partners in India organised and submitted claims to customary land under the Forest Rights Act. In Nepal, networks advocated for amendments to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, organised indigenous women legislators, and mobilised against renaming Province No. 1. AIPP and its partners and networks continued to document human rights violations across the region and organise responses, including legal support, community mobilisation, release and endorsements of statements and appeals, sanctuary support, and enabling and facilitating dialogues, negotiations and media campaigns. AIPP partners and networks produced research and documentation of indigenous knowledge, practices, and institutions.

Under **Strategic Goal 2**, AIPP continued to build relationships with partners, networks, and institutions. AIPP's networks provided fellowships, trainings, and opportunities, particularly for youth and women, to expand and deepen their involvement with indigenous movements. Media outreach took the form of fellowships for Indigenous journalists and collaboration with television networks and journalists, including monthly television discussion programs dedicated to the topic of Indigenous women with disabilities in Nepal. AIPP also took a step to expanding its own membership when the Executive Committee approved the Cambodia Indigenous Peoples' Alliance (CIPA) as a candidate member of AIPP.

Under **Strategic Goal 3**, AIPP ensures that Indigenous positions are effectively represented at the United Nations (UN) and other international and regional platforms and processes. AIPP works to provide Indigenous women and youth specifically with the training, support, funding, and networks needed for them to effectively engage in UN mechanisms.

AIPP's annual Asia Preparatory Meeting is essential for IP representatives from across the region to strategically plan, coordinate, and develop common positions for the upcoming year. AIPP, its members, and its networks directly engage with international processes including the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNFPII), the Expert Mechanism



on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (SRIP), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the UNFCCC, and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UN Water Conference.

Strategic Goal 4 covers the research, position papers, and other publications created by AIPP in 2023. As part of its ongoing work on self-governance, AIPP published two books on the customary self-governance systems of the Ao Naga and the TaMhang (Thakali). IWP and partners produced a series of reports about different aspects of the roles of indigenous women in water governance. Photobooks on traditional rice varieties in swidden fields and forest management were published with communities in Northern Thailand. During the reporting period, JJVS documented about the Indigenous Way of Life and Livelihood Practices of Nagasia Indigenous community in Donjharna Village, Jashpur, Chhattisgarh and ANGNA documented about Indigenous Agricultural Practices of Indigenous communities from its project area in Sundargarh, Odisha, India. Research and knowledge were shared not only through publications but also during community events and celebrations, including international Mother Language Day and the 6th Tharu National Literature Festival. AIPP deepened its own organisational management with trainings on internal operations and management for its staff and supported partners and networks to strengthen their operations, processes, and strategy development.

Goal 1	Increase AIPP's impacts
Objective 1.1	Strengthen governance and build co-responsibility among AIPP's EC, MOs and networks for securing rights, including the right to self-determination, and to create impact especially at the local and country levels
Objective 1.2	Focus on Indigenous worldviews for revivification of customary institutions and re-building their organic governance systems, and for a sustained advocacy to create impact at all levels.
Objective 1.3	Focus on Indigenous Knowledge for co-creation of knowledge and documentation around bio-cultural landscapes including Indigenous foods systems, natural resource management, biodiversity and climate change with that of global best practices at the local, national, regional and global forum to create impacts



Goal 2	Expand AIPP's outreach
Objective 2.1	Expand and build the capacity of the networks of AIPP i.e. NIWA, IVAN, IPHRD, IKPA and AIYP for greater outreach and integrated leadership with necessary skills.
Objective 2.2	Create new channel of partnerships to expand networks of donors, knowledge/technical & advocacy partners at country, regional, and global levels.
Goal 3	Enhance Rights holders' and stakeholders' effective engagements
Objective 3.1	Support AIPP's Member Organizations (MOs) and networks in localizing SDGs, rights-based conservation, FPIC, and related capacity building modules in their respective contexts.
Objective 3.2	Expand and strengthen AIPP's foundational and integrated leadership in realizing its organizational mandate and vision.
Objective 3.3	Enhance Indigenous women, youth and IPwD's engagement in the country-level processes and actions and at decision-making level for building an integrated Indigenous movement and distributed leadership.
Goal 4	Strengthen AIPP's ability to adapt
Objective 4.1	Promote a culture of research and innovation to take new initiatives and approaches.
Objective 4.2	Build institutional/organisational, human capacity, and framework for catalysing actions, communication, monitoring results and measuring impacts.

AIPP Strategic Programmes

AIPP implements its work across six strategic programs with specific areas of focus, associated networks, and responsibilities. Together these programmes are designed to strengthen solidarity, cooperation and capacities of IPs in Asia to promote and defend their rights, cultures and identities, and their self-determination over their lands, territories, and resources. Across these six programs, AIPP's work can be characterised into four broad categories: capacity building and skill development, co-knowledge creation and knowledge management, building solidarity, and outreach to rights-holders, stakeholders, and allies.





Human Rights Campaign and Policy Advocacy Programme (HRCPA)

HRCPA, with the support of IPHRD focal partners, documented a total of 321 human rights violation cases against Indigenous Peoples from 9 focal countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines and Thailand) in Asia in 2023.

HRCPA responds to human rights violations with case support, community mobilisation, release and endorsements of statements and appeals, legal support, sanctuary support, and enabling and facilitating dialogues and negotiations.

HRCPA's work in 2023 included enhancing participation of Indigenous Peoples and institutions in the UN (including EMRIP, UPRs, and Business and Human Rights) and ASEAN mechanisms and not limited to the ASEAN Peoples Forum / ASEAN Civil Society Conference (APF/ACSC), supporting community and IP movements, and organising a new platform on rights to land, territories and resources. At the annual Asia Preparatory Meeting, Indigenous representatives from across the region coordinated strategic plans and developed common positions.



Indigenous Women Programme (IWP)

A total of over 1,739 Indigenous women benefited through IWP's initiatives in 2023, with 278 indigenous women with disabilities and 112 LGBTIQ+ individuals. In 2023, IWP supported enhancing the knowledge of indigenous women regarding CEDAW General Recommendation 39, advocated for increased participation of women in water governance management, and empowered diverse intersectional groups, namely Indigenous women, youth, and Indigenous individuals/women with disabilities, to safeguard their rights and actively engage in policy advocacy efforts.

IWP supported institutional strengthening and organising by Indigenous women's networks in Nepal, Thailand, India, and northeast India. IWP facilitated the participation of Indigenous women in international and regional platforms and events, including the Commission on the Status of Women, the UN 2023 Water Conference, the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development.





Environment Programme (EP)

The Environment Programme and partners worked directly with communities to assert their rights over their lands, resources, and territories and to sustainably manage them in 2023. In India, nine Gram Sabhas received resource management entitlements over their forestlands under the Forest Rights Act, and four more villages have produced and submitted maps and documentation to claim recognition of their forestland.

In 2023, a total of 212 women secured representation in the Gram Sabhas and Panchayats in AIPP's targeted project areas, where AIPP and partners; JJVS and ANGNA have been supporting Indigenous women's leadership in local governance.


In Thailand, Nepal, and India, as a result of AIPP and project partners training and support, communities have strengthened their income generation and livelihoods on sustainable agriculture, product development and marketing, and social enterprise. In the Philippines, communities are informed about land laws and their rights and on disaster risk management.

In advocacy, the Environment Programme ensured that Indigenous Peoples in Asia are represented at UN processes, regional fora, and national environmental policy processes including the UNFCCC, CBD, UN Water Conference, UNEP and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Preparatory meetings, caucuses, trainings, and consultations ensure that the Indigenous representatives are prepared, strategic, and effective at these events.

Organisational Strengthening & Movement Building (OSMB)

The Organisational Strength & Movement Building (OSMB) Programme deepens the democratic governance of AIPP and fosters unity and solidarity among members and others, including strengthening the organising capacity and management of AIPP and its members.

In 2023, the EC approved Cambodia Indigenous Peoples' Alliance (CIPA) as a new candidate member organisation; full membership is subject to approval by the General Assembly in 2025. OSMB organised three country processes (Malaysia, Nepal, and Cambodia) to deepen and



extend networks, develop common visions, and sharpen country and international strategies.

AIPP's course on self-determination, autonomy, and democracy continued in 2023 and alumni of the course organised trainings in Nepal and Bangladesh.

Regional Capacity Building Programme (RCB)

The Regional Capacity Building Program (RCB) in 2023 has focused on providing training and support to Indigenous youths and youth networks. As a result, youth across the region are better equipped with the knowledge, resources, networks, and organising skills to mobilise their communities and contribute to IP movements from local to international levels. Training topics included self-governance and democracy, community organising, and climate.

In 2023, AIYP members launched the Youth Mapping Report, strengthened Indigenous youth networks, and brought youth perspectives to the UNPFII and other international and regional events. Eleven members completed their own research projects and 18 completed fellowships.

Communication Programme (CP)

In 2023, media fellowships were given to indigenous journalists in six countries (Bangladesh, Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia, India, and the Philippines) which provided training and career opportunities for Indigenous and community journalists, supported indigenous-led media, and spread coverage of Indigenous issues that were not reported in mainstream media. The fellowships empower Indigenous journalists to tell their stories and amplify Indigenous voices. The programme also held a regional the Indigenous Voices of Asia Network (IVAN) exchange for journalists, provided communication support across programmes, and contributed to a Civil Society Manifesto for Ethical AI.



Indigenous Women Programme



Key achievements and highlights of the Indigenous Women Program

In 2023, the Indigenous Women Programme (IWP) successfully implemented programs aligning with all four goals outlined in the AIPP Strategic Plan, with a particular emphasis on Goals 1 and 3. Within Goal 1, the program focused on achieving Objectives 1.1 and 1.3, while under Goal 3, it focused on Objectives 3.1 and 3.3. Further, the program also contributed to Objective 2.1 under Goal 2 and Objective 4.1 under Goal 4.

The IWP made significant progress in enhancing the capacities of Indigenous women for advocacy and lobbying, awareness-raising, research and documentation, and networking among indigenous women-led organizations. IWP paid special attention to intersectional concerns, particularly through advocacy work with indigenous persons with disabilities.

In 2023, IWP supported enhancing the knowledge of Indigenous women regarding CEDAW General Recommendation 39, advocated for increased participation of women in water governance management, and empowered diverse intersectional groups, namely Indigenous women, youth, and Indigenous individuals/women with disabilities, to safeguard their rights and actively engage in policy advocacy efforts. Network of Indigenous Women in Asia (NIWA) planned for the future at its steering committee meeting and provided trainings on CEDAW.

A total of over 1,739 Indigenous women benefited through IWP's initiatives in 2023, with 278 indigenous women with disabilities and 112 LGBTIQ+ individuals. These efforts reflect a strong commitment to empowering Indigenous women and supporting their agency, strengthening the indigenous women's movement in grassroot levels and amplifying their voices at various levels of engagement and representation.



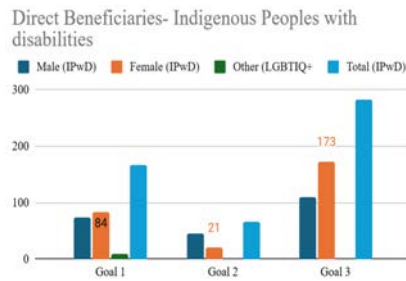
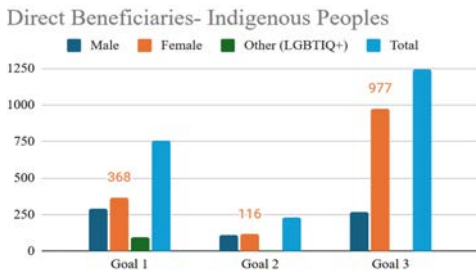


Figure 1: Direct beneficiaries of IWP in 2023

Strategic Goal 1: Increase AIPP's impacts

Under Goal 1, IWP, along with the partner organizations, focused on policy advocacy, capacity building, awareness-raising and co-creation of knowledge materials. A total of more than 412 indigenous women (IW) including 84 indigenous women with disabilities and 105 individuals identifying as LGBTIQ+ benefited from these efforts.

Supporting Indigenous women, youth, and persons with disabilities to secure their rights

In 2023, with the support from the Ford Foundation, IWP prioritised working with intersectional groups, focusing more on indigenous people's intersectional concerns. Nepal Indigenous Disabled Association (NIDA) and National Indigenous Disabled Youth Association (NIDYA) reviewed the Act Relating to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2074 (2017) in Nepal and drafted a white paper and advocacy briefs. Following that, NIDA organised interaction programs to propose amendments to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act of 2074 from an intersectional perspective. NIDWAN successfully compiled a case study of 10 Indigenous Peoples and Women with Disabilities at the local, provincial, and national levels in Nepal.

In Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Indigenous Women's Network (BIWN) developed an advocacy paper on gender and issue-based violence against indigenous women, girls, and IPwDs. In Thailand, Indigenous Women's Network of Thailand (IWNT) documented case studies to raise awareness about gender-based and issue-based violence against indigenous women, girls, and IPwDs. IWNT also produced video clips on the story of women with disabilities to lobby with the media and relevant government.





◀ CEDAW Shadow Reports


Malaysia: In Malaysia, AIPP worked with Pertubuhan Wanita Orang Asal Malaysia (PWOAM) organised both an online meeting and an in-person workshop to guide representatives from indigenous women's organizations and NGOs in drafting a shadow report. The CEDAW Shadow report of PWOAM will be the first one prepared and submitted by indigenous women in Malaysia.

Nepal: Nepal government submitted its 7th Periodic Report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) on July 5, 2023. However, the report fails to accurately represent the experiences of Indigenous women. Therefore, National Indigenous Women Federation (NIWF) collaborated with four Indigenous Women's Organizations, including the National Indigenous Women's Federation, Indigenous Women Legal Awareness Group (INWOLAG), National Indigenous Women's Forum, and National Indigenous Disabled Women Association (NIDWAN), to prepare the Shadow Report to present the reality of Indigenous Women in Nepal. 51 participants contributed to the joint consultation workshop to develop the CEDAW shadow report, including advisors, experts, indigenous activists, and leaders, as well as representatives from NIWF member organizations.

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◀ Capacity building

Nepal: The National Indigenous Women's Federation (NIWF) organised a two-day capacity-building workshop on self-determination on 4-5 November 2023 with 24 indigenous women representing member



organizations and various municipality, district, and province Coordination Councils. The workshop was organised in response to the need for a unified effort concerning the NO KOSHI movement. This movement is against the renaming of Province No. 1 to “Koshi Province” and to assert the territorial identity of IPs. AIPP member organisations and partners have been working with the Struggle Committee of the NO KOSHI movement in 2023. This movement resulted in negotiation with the Province Government, which is ongoing. In addition, it also resulted in a movement to revitalise IPs nationhood concepts, and new initiatives such as envisioning Limbu and Tamang Nations.

The participants of NIWF’s November workshop showed solidarity in the NO KOSHI campaign in Itahari, Sunsari district, organised jointly by the struggle committee and NIWF, which attracted over 200 Indigenous Women. This engagement provided firsthand experience of the movement’s intensity for participants not previously involved. The workshop focused on the theoretical foundations of the NO KOSHI campaign, with an outline on the campaign’s significance, referencing international instruments such as UNDRIP and ILO Convention no. 169, as well as relevant national laws and policies recognizing Indigenous Peoples’ rights. The workshop motivated 24 participants to exercise their right to self-determination as Indigenous Women, particularly in asserting land and territorial rights within the context of the NO KOSHI movement.

Bangladesh: BIWN conducted a capacity building workshop on the role of indigenous women for self-determination in Dhaka in the presence of 80 participants, including 39 indigenous women. BIWN held two consultation meetings to reflect on the situation of Indigenous women issues in Sylhet and Rangpur, and also organised a solidarity human chain and a gathering demanding justice for the abduction of an indigenous woman.

Co-creation of knowledge products

IWP co-created knowledge products such as a briefing paper on Indigenous Women Resource Management and Governance systems with the Environment Program in March 2023, and a report on ‘Accelerating the recovery from the COVID 19 and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels.’ IWGIA drafted a research report to highlight the connections between climate change, environmental destruction, and violence against indigenous women in Indonesia and the Philippines.

Strategic Goal 2: Expand AIPP's outreach

Within Goal 2, IWP, along with the partner organizations, focused on advocacy efforts and media outreach. A total of over 137 indigenous women including 21 indigenous women with disabilities and 6 individuals identifying as LGBTIQ+ were benefited under this goal.

Network of Indigenous Women in Asia

Network of Indigenous Women in Asia (NIWA), established in 2019, is a member-based network of Indigenous Women's Organizations and Networks across Asia. It covers 14 Asian Countries with four sub-regions namely East Asia, Southeast Asia, Mekong and South Asia.

This year marked a period of reflection for both NIWA and AIPP. The Indigenous Women's Programme (IWP) successfully coordinated the NIWA Steering Committee (SC) meeting at the AIPP Secretariat Office in Chiang Mai in July 2023. During the meeting, there was a comprehensive review of NIWA's objectives, core values, and principles, with a particular focus on understanding the historical context that led to NIWA's establishment. Discussions also delved into AIPP's vision and stance concerning NIWA, along with defining NIWA's vision, mission, and objectives, strategizing for the future, and recognizing the relationship between various institutions within the network. Furthermore, discussion also focused on outlining the roles, responsibilities, and challenges faced by NIWA SC members and establishing a working modality for NIWA and AIPP.

In addition to NIWA, in 2023 IWP worked with the following partner organizations from nine different countries in Asia:

1. Nepal- Nepal Indigenous Disabled Association (NIDA), National Indigenous Disabled Women Association-Nepal (NIDWAN), National Indigenous Disabled Youth Association (NIDYA), National Indigenous Women's Federation (NIWF), and National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF)
2. Bangladesh- Bangladesh Indigenous Women's Network (BIWN)
3. Thailand- Indigenous Women's Network of Thailand (IWNT)
4. Mainland India- Inter State Adivasi Women's Network (ISAWN)
5. Northeast India- Indigenous Women's Forum of North East India (IWFNEI)



6. Indonesia- PEREMPUAN AMAN
7. Cambodia- Cambodia Indigenous Women's Association (CIWA)
8. Laos- Gender Development Association (GDA)
9. Malaysia- Pertubuhan Wanita Orang Asal Malaysia (PWOAM)

◀ Multi-stakeholder dialogues

In Nepal, NIDA has been at the forefront in advocating and addressing the issues of violence and discrimination against Indigenous Peoples with Disabilities (IPwDs), Indigenous Women with Disabilities (IWwDs), and Indigenous Youth with Disabilities (IYwDs). On 15 August 2023, NIDA organised multi-stakeholder dialogues with government representatives, UN agencies, civil society organizations, and media that focused on violence and discrimination against IPwDs, IWwDs, and IYwDs. This program was crucial in advocating for the integration of evidence and perspectives of persons with disabilities, particularly indigenous peoples with disabilities, into media and legal strategies.

◀ Media outreach

Moreover, recognizing the power of media in shaping public perceptions and driving social change, NIDA collaborated with Indigenous television networks to mainstream issues concerning indigenous peoples with disabilities in Nepali media. This collaboration involved airing monthly discussion programs dedicated to topics of indigenous women with disabilities and conducting media sensitization workshops at the national level. NIDA worked in partnership with the Federation of Indigenous Journalists (FONIZ) to increase the visibility of indigenous peoples with disabilities in the media and foster greater public and media awareness.

Similarly, BIWN also proactively raised awareness about addressing the needs of indigenous women with disabilities. On September 24, 2023, BIWN organised a discussion meeting in Dhaka, bringing together journalists from electronic and print media. This meeting provided a platform for discussions on the challenges faced by indigenous women with disabilities and highlighted the importance of media representation and coverage in addressing these issues effectively.

Strategic Goal 3: Enhance rights-holders' and stakeholders' effective engagements


Under Goal 3, IWP provided support to its member and partner organizations and networks for their institutional strengthening, network building, and carrying out country level activities. A total of 1,150 indigenous women, including 173 indigenous women with disabilities and one individual identifying as LGBTIQ+ were engaged through the programs within this goal.

Capacity building and network strengthening

Training for NIWA members on CEDAW and General Recommendation 39: AIPP and NIWA organised a joint training session on 2-4 August in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Sixteen women leaders attended, including trainers from Indigenous Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP-AP) and NIWA secretariat members, from 12 countries across South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Mekong region. Most participants were new to CEDAW and gained an enhanced understanding of CEDAW and GR39, while also developing advocacy strategies and creating a document highlighting women's rights.

Mekong exchange on IW and water governance: IWP and Oxfam organised a Mekong Exchange on Empowering and Strengthening Indigenous Women from the Mekong Region in Water Governance from 17-19 October 2023 in Chiang Mai, Thailand, with 16 participants from Indigenous organisations in the Mekong region. The event facilitated knowledge sharing and learning among participating countries, focusing on challenges and strategies for achieving effective engagement of women in water governance. The exchange further served as a networking platform for Indigenous Women's organizations, fostering solidarity and support in the Mekong Region. Participants in the exchange gained a deeper understanding of Indigenous Women's knowledge and issues regarding water governance in the Mekong region from various perspectives, including youth, media, and regional and global viewpoints.

Addressing gender-based violence in environmental contexts: In Indonesia, PEREMPUAN AMAN, under the IUCN-RISE project, has been actively working on addressing gender-based violence in the context of environmental issues. Perempuan Aman organised a workshop from 8-14



August 2023 focusing on this issue, with 45 indigenous participants (13 men and 32 women). Likewise, Perempuan Aman, from 17-19 November 2023, conducted a training session specifically for Indigenous Women Environmental Human Rights Defenders (IWEHRDs) on legal assistance related to gender-based violence in natural resource management. Sixteen indigenous women participated in this training, where indigenous women's rights were also introduced and discussed. Furthermore, Perempuan Aman facilitated focus group discussions (FGDs) to explore the impact of development projects on families, communities, and villages, particularly focusing on the challenges arising from the impact of IKN development.

Fellowships for indigenous women with disabilities: NIDWAN and NIDA in Nepal and BIWN in Bangladesh provided fellowships to Indigenous women with disabilities to enhance their leadership skills at the community level and contribute to the development of their communities.



Indigenous womens rights and leadership

In Nepal, the National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF) organised a two-day national conference focused on 'Indigenous Women's Rights and Leadership at Policy Level'. This conference, held with remarkable participation from **86 Indigenous women Members of Parliament from different legislative bodies including the House of Representatives, the National Assembly, and provincial constituencies**, aimed to address policy and implementation gaps concerning Indigenous rights. The conference served as a platform for activists, experts, and policymakers to engage in dialogue and discussions on key issues affecting Indigenous women in Nepal. The conference emphasised inclusivity, participation, and effectiveness, recognizing the diversity of Indigenous communities in Nepal in terms of geography, caste, ethnicity, language, and socio-economic factors. A significant outcome of the conference was the **collective statement of commitment from Indigenous women leaders** to advocate for Indigenous women's rights at the policymaking level. This commitment ensures accountability and lays the foundation for future advocacy efforts by NIWF and other Indigenous rights advocates in Nepal.

In Bangladesh, BIWN organised a community seminar in July 2023 at the Press Club in Dinajpur. This seminar focused on the issues of leadership, advocacy, and international human rights of indigenous women and youth.





◀ Awareness Raising on Issues of Indigenous Peoples with Disabilities

NIDA implemented various initiatives to address violence and discrimination against Indigenous Peoples with Disabilities (IPwDs), Indigenous Women with Disabilities (IWwDs), and Indigenous Youth with Disabilities (IYwDs). They organised a three-day workshop, bringing together stakeholders from Indigenous Peoples' Organizations (IPOs), Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), and government officials to deepen understanding of these issues. They conducted a **national-level capacity-building program** focusing on international frameworks such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), along with intersectional approaches, to enhance participants' knowledge. NIDWAN also conducted a **community-level interaction program** addressing violence and discrimination against indigenous peoples and women with disabilities.

To commemorate the 29th International Indigenous Day, NIDA hosted a national-level workshop titled "Youth Engagement and Leadership in the Campaign of Indigenous Peoples, Women, and Indigenous Peoples with Disabilities," highlighting the importance of youth in advocacy efforts.

◀ Capacity building on disability rights in Nepal

Furthermore, NIDA collaborated with the Nepal Indigenous Disabled Youth Association (NIDYA) on **national-level consultation workshops to review and amend The Act Relating to Rights of Persons with Disability-2074**, engaging legal experts, Indigenous Peoples' experts, and representatives of IPOs and IPwDs, including IWwDs. NIDA and NIDYA also provided training on the Rights of Disability Act, UNDRIP, and UNCRPD in Pokhara, alongside an awareness program on the Disability Act-2074, UNDRIP, and UNCRPD, with participation from 31 Indigenous Peoples with disabilities.

NIDWAN also organised training workshops covering topics such as UNDRIP, UNCRPD, intersectional approaches, leadership, and advocacy, with a focus on specific issues concerning indigenous women, girls, youth, and Indigenous Peoples with Disabilities (IPwDs).



Institutional strengthening


In Nepal, National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF) developed a comprehensive three-year strategic plan through a series of eight interaction programs involving board members, staff, AIPP EC members, NIWF partners, and stakeholders. This strategic planning process included analysing the national and international context, conducting a SWOT analysis, identifying stakeholders, reviewing core competencies and values, assessing resource mobilization, and determining key areas of involvement.

In Thailand, IWP supported IWNT to draft organizational structure policies and operational guidelines. IWNT conducted a meeting on 7–9 December 2023, with the participation of 18 indigenous women representing 10 IW groups from 5 regions: the Upper East, Central and West Regions, Northeastern Regions, and Southern Regions. During the meeting, the organizational structure and strategies of IWNT for 2021-2025 was reviewed, discussed, and revised to meet the needs of its members and network in five regions. The meeting also drafted and officially endorsed IWNT operational manual and guidelines. Additionally, IWNT organised workshops on urgent issues related to health services and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD). These workshops aimed to collect information, raise awareness, and empower marginalised groups, including indigenous women, elderly people, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and stateless people.

In Northeast India, AIPP supported IWFNEI in strengthening its alliances and revitalizing the women's groups, thereby empowering indigenous women in the region. IWFNEI is a forum representing indigenous women from the nine units of the northeastern region of India, including Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, and Tripura. IWFNEI visited units located in three districts of Assam: Karbi women of Karbi Anglong, Rabha women in Goalpara, and Tiwa women in Nagaon. These women's organizations were facing challenges in sustaining their activities and had become dormant over time.

In mainland India, Inter State Adivasi Women's Network (ISAWN), in collaboration with Samajik Seva Sadan, organised a three-day workshop for leadership capacity building and network strengthening of Adivasi Indigenous Women in India. This workshop, held from 24-26 November 2023, in Kerala, South India, brought together 16 IW state representatives





from 9 states across India. These representatives belonged to Indigenous communities, such as Varli, Oraon, Bhil, Khadia, Paniyar, Kurumba, Dhodia, and Adiya. The workshop provided a crucial platform for participants to share the challenges and issues faced by their respective Indigenous communities. It facilitated networking among Indigenous women from different states, thereby building a common understanding and sense of solidarity, which is essential for effective advocacy and collective action.

Emergency support


IWP also provided immediate assistance and support to Indigenous women and communities facing emergencies and crises. National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF) in Nepal has facilitated providing emergency relief packages to earthquake survivors of the Jajarkot earthquake in coordination with local organizations. This support directly benefited 123 Indigenous and marginalised women, who were disproportionately affected by such disasters. BIWN supported a rape survivor through an emergency fund.

Support the participation of Indigenous women leaders in global and regional events

Under Objective 3.3, IWP focused on supporting the participation of Indigenous women leaders in global and regional conferences to amplify their voices, foster networking and collaboration, and enhance their advocacy skills, empowering them to advocate for meaningful change at local, national, and international levels. Furthermore, their engagement is crucial for enhancing the visibility of Indigenous women and raising awareness among key stakeholders about their strengths and challenges.

In 2023, IWP facilitated the participation of Indigenous women in various advocacy platforms globally, including the 67th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the UN 2023 Water Conference, the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, World Water Week, the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights, and COP 28.

With support from IWGIA, two Indigenous women leaders representing AIPP and NIWA from Malaysia attended the 67th session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York in March 2023. They actively engaged



in coordination meetings for Indigenous women, dialogues with the EU delegation, discussions on General Recommendation 39 of CEDAW, and participated in various side events.

Additionally, the IWP team participated in regional advocacy and networking forums such as the UN women's regional conference on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies in Asia and the Pacific, the Asia Feminist Coalition Meeting, Women in Action on Mining in Asia (WAMA), and the Power-Up Conference.

Strategic Goal 4: Strengthen AIPP's ability to adapt

Under Goal 4, IWP partnered with its partner organizations to develop and publish four reports. These documents cover various aspects of indigenous women related to water management and gender issues in Southeast Asia. They include a report by International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) focusing on the connections between climate change-induced disasters, development aggression, and gender-based violence (GBV) in Indonesia and the Philippines; a study by GDA in Laos on strategies to engage ethnic women in water management social entrepreneurship; a report by CIWA in Cambodia exploring the role of indigenous women in water governance amidst climate change; and narratives of indigenous women's leadership in water governance collected by IWNT and published by Oxfam.

In developing AIPP's institutional capacity, the IWP, in collaboration with the Gender Action team, finalised the PSEAH (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment) policy that was endorsed at AIPP's Executive Council members' meeting on 27 February 2023.



Human Rights Campaign and Policy Advocacy Programme



Key achievements and highlights of HRCPA

All HRCPA efforts for 2023 converge towards the fundamental goal of self-determination. This work includes advocacy at all levels, enhancing participation of Indigenous Peoples and institutions in the UN (including EMRIP, UPRs, and Business and Human Rights), and ASEAN mechanisms including, but not limited to the engagement with the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), supporting community and IP movements, and organising a new platform on rights to land, territories and resources. As part of AIPP's ongoing work on indigenous self-governance, HRCPA recognised two communities, one in Thailand and one in Malaysia, as Centres of Excellence in Village Governance (COE-VG) for revitalising indigenous governance, knowledge, and institutions and based on indigenous principles. HRCPA's work also includes safety and security, tools and strategies to address human rights violations of Indigenous Peoples, strengthening the human rights violation database in the national and regional levels, and documentation and research.

Strengthening Indigenous Peoples human rights defenders and their organisations in responding to human rights violations in the region remains the core objective of the HRCPA programme and our responses include but are not limited to case support, community mobilisation, release and endorsements of statements and appeals, legal support, sanctuary support, enabling and facilitating dialogues and negotiations. Strengthening the focal organisations through module developments, capacity building initiatives, documentation and training on safety and security, video documentation, advocacy, submissions to human rights mechanisms, financial management capacities, advocacy, and networking also were core focus of the programme.



HRCPA, with the support of IPHRD focal partners, documented a total of 321 human rights violation cases against Indigenous Peoples from 9 focal countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines and Thailand) in Asia in 2023. There were 103 land, territories and resources, 36 violence against Indigenous women, 23 killing incidents, 51 attacks, 83 criminalization, red tagging and other violation cases that took place in 2023. More than 650 Indigenous Peoples have been killed in 2023 in around 23 incidents.

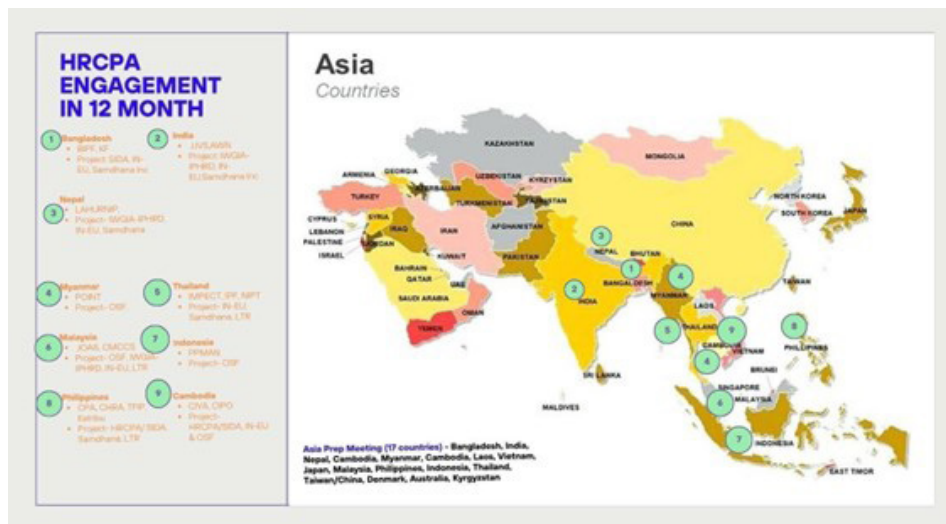


Figure 2: HRCPA engagement in 2023

Strategic Goal 1: Increase AIPP's impacts

Documentation of Human Rights Violations Cases

AIPP with the support of Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Defenders (IPHRDs) Network focal partner organizations documented a total of 321 human rights violation cases against IPs from nine countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, and Thailand) in 2023. These cases comprised of 103 cases related to land, territories and resources (LTR), 36 cases related to violence against Indigenous women, 23 cases related to killing incidents, 51 cases related to attack and intimidation, and 83 cases related to criminalization and red tagging. Ten IPs have been killed in 2023: 3 people (2 male, 1 female) in Bangladesh, 1 man in the Philippines, 1 man in Nepal, and 6 people (3

males, 3 females) in India. HRCPA and IPHRD provide legal and financial support and advocacy to victims of human rights abuses, including court cases and organising campaigns.

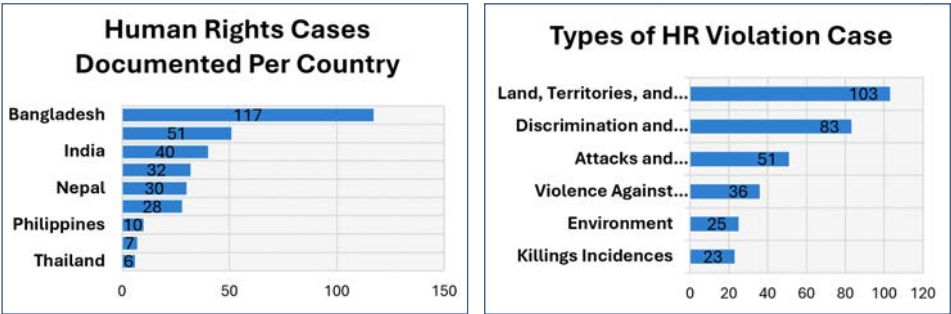


Figure 3: HR violation cases documented in 2023


Indigenous Navigator

AIPP is leading the Indigenous Navigator project in seven countries (Malaysia, Thailand, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Cambodia, and Myanmar) in Asia in collaboration with global partners. The Indigenous Navigator is a framework and set of tools for and by Indigenous Peoples to systematically monitor the level of recognition and implementation of their rights. By using the Indigenous Navigator, Indigenous organizations and communities, duty bearers, NGOs and journalists can access free tools and resources based on community-generated data.



Figure 4: Indigenous Navigator in 2023

In Asia, AIPP and 20 Indigenous communities from 7 countries (Malaysia, Thailand, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Cambodia, and Myanmar) have collected both local and national data to assess the recognition and overall situation of IPs. The data have been used as evidence-based data to constructively argue the government’s data which are often manipulated on the basis of the state’s interest. As a result, education related data were presented to the Deputy Education Minister to increase support. Subsequently, the Minister has assured to follow up supporting Indigenous Learning Center in Thailand, which is currently in discussion



between the ministry and IPOs from Thailand (AIPP's member). The data was also used to inform Universal Periodic Review (UPR) shadow reports in multiple countries.

Recognizing Centres of Defenders

The conceptualisation and vision for Centres of Excellence of Defenders have long been in discussion with the Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Defenders (IPHRD) network in Asia. AIPP will award the Lawyers' Association for Human Rights of Nepalese Indigenous Peoples (LAHURNIP) and Kapaeeng Foundation of Bangladesh as the first two Centres of Defenders at the 2024 Asia Preparatory Meeting on UN Mechanisms and Procedures relating to Indigenous Peoples in March 2024. This initiative will support IPHRD focal organisations to develop clear vision, goals and purposes for Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Defenders at the national level, where a strong safe and secure community space is created and nurtured and where IPHRDs can access, speak with openness, free will and learn from one another. This space is generating excellent documentation of evidence and addressing the root causes of criminalisation of defenders, environmental destruction, and other human rights abuses and bringing this to national and global attention to garner support, solidarity, and action.

Centres of Excellence in Village Governance (COE-VG)

AIPP launched a new initiative known as the Centres of Excellence in Village Governance (COE-VG) in October 2023, which recognises communities who are revitalising indigenous self-governance and knowledge and strengthening customary practices and institutions. These villages will serve as centres of learning and empowerment for other communities. In October 2023, AIPP awarded this recognition to the Pgakenyaw tribe of the Karen indigenous communities of Huay Hin Lad Nai of Thailand and Indigenous Dusun Kiau Nuluh in Sabah, Malaysia. This flagship initiative is part of the regionalisation process of AIPP's Indigenous Peoples' Self-Government and Democracy course, which commenced in 2021, and the Indigenous Community Protocols Initiative led by PACOS Trust which has been underway for the better part of a decade.



◀ Regional Platform on the right to Land, Territories, and Resources (LTR)

Indigenous Peoples' right to lands, territories, and resources (LTR) is the core of IPs self-determination. AIPP had launched the Regional Platform for Indigenous Peoples' Land Right with support of the International Land Coalition (ILC) in October 2022. The 34 organizations have endorsed the formation of the platform and pledged to work on Land Rights Issues of Indigenous Peoples. In 2023, most of the activities around the platform were consultations and development of charter and working principles for the formalization of the platform. In June 2023, AIPP held a regional workshop to review draft documents and share country strategies. The four priority countries, Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, continued to develop their country strategies. The platform is a unique in the sense that it is led by Indigenous movement-based organisations, who are supported by IP organisations, non-IP civil society, and international and regional organizations. The platform will be officially formalised in 2024.

◀ IPs rights bill in Thailand

Indigenous Peoples in Thailand through the leadership of Council of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand (CIPT) and Network of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand (NIPT) have been mobilizing IPOs in Thailand to advocate the approval of the draft IPs Rights bill in Thailand. The draft bill has been approved by the House of Representative and cabinet, and which is under the negotiation with the Government of Thailand, and IPOs led by CIPT/NIPT. Approval of the draft bill is a result of the struggle and movement of IPs over a decade, in which AIPP and its members played significant roles and is continuing to support to achieve the object of IPs in Thailand. The next step is for the five draft versions of the bill to be consolidated into one version. AIPP's roles and contribution have been recognised and trust continue to be strengthened from IPs in Thailand. This positive outcome is also inspiring for other states and IPOs as an example how the state and IPOs can collaborate in good faith to make positive impacts.



Controversial RM2b Kudat Silica Mining Project in Sabah, Malaysia

AIPP and IPHRD supported community mobilisation and legal aid for a case in Sabah, Malaysia, because of a controversial RM 2 billion sand mining project. The Silica Sand Mining project was signed between the Sabah State Government and Chinese Investor SBH Kibing Solar New Materials (M) Sdn. Bhd on January 18, 2022. The project has been ongoing since April 2022, however, the communities have not managed to get a copy of the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) report even though they have written an official letter for four times and one police report has been made. The case includes concerns about public health, loss of livelihoods, and a nearby marine park. During a protest against construction of a jetty, two indigenous women were arrested and later charged for criminal trespass; in Feb 2024, the complainant has withdrawn the case and the prosecutors decided to release the accused party with conditions.


Strategic Goal 2: Expand AIPP's outreach

Training and capacity building

AIPP, HRCPA, and Diplomacy Training Programme (DTP) conducted an online training on implementing the right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) for delegates of the European Commission in March 2023.

HRCPA also conducted a Regional IPHRD exchange learning and training in September 2023 in Kathmandu, Nepal. There were 48 participants from nine countries (26 males, 22 females, 2 persons with a disability, and 14 youths). The AIPP program was held with the local partner Lawyers Association for the Human Rights of Nepal's Indigenous Peoples (LAHURNIP) as well as regional and global partners. The collaboration takes forward the shared commitments to building the capacity of human rights defenders.

The program included knowledge and skill-building sessions among participants from Nepal, India, Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and the Philippines. There were opportunities to discuss shared challenges around issues of land grabbing, and the denial of recognition of identity, cultures, and traditional knowledge. The intersectionality of rights was emphasised by participants from Indigenous disability organisations. Militarisation of Indigenous Peoples lands and



territories was also highlighted as a growing challenge – from Bangladesh to the Philippines. Participants called for action against the practice of “red-tagging” in the Philippines – and the associated killing and enforced “disappearance” of Indigenous Peoples human rights defenders.

Sessions built knowledge of the UN standards and accountability mechanisms, tools for video advocacy and online security. There was a field visit to Newar communities at Kirtipur Municipality in the Kathmandu valley, where participants learnt more about the customary self-government mechanisms defending their land, territories, and resources and self-determination.


Under the Indigenous Navigator project, AIPP (HRCPA) organised three regional training workshops on Indigenous Peoples’ rights frameworks, the IN tools and the comparative matrix, and the use of the portal in 2023. One inception workshop (February 2023 in Chiang Mai) was held in person and the other two workshops (on 15th May and 3rd October 2023) were held online. A total of 69 (Female 35 and Male 34) participants from Bangladesh, Nepal, Cambodia, India, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand attended these three workshops

Moreover, at the country level, AIPP’s partners organised 10 workshops in four countries (Malaysia, Thailand, Bangladesh and Cambodia) to build the capacity of Indigenous communities and the human resources of national partners and other stakeholders on Indigenous Navigator.

Fellowships: Four fellows were supported under the Ground Zero Fellowship program, hosted by Jashpur Jan Vikas Sanstha (JJVS) in India. Four fellows and five volunteers have continued to support IPHRD focal organisations.

Indigenous Navigator programme expansion

The Indigenous Navigator (IN) programme, led by HRCPA, was expanded to seven Asian countries in 2023 under the AIPP consortium partner. Four new countries- India, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Thailand have been added under the Indigenous Navigator programme to the existing three countries-Bangladesh, Nepal and Cambodia. The programme is operating in 29 countries worldwide. HRCPA organised three regional trainings on IN, with a total of 69 participants (35 female, 34 male). AIPP’s partners organised 10 workshops in four countries (Malaysia, Thailand, Bangladesh and Cambodia) to build the capacity of Indigenous communities, human



resources of national partners and other stakeholders on Indigenous Navigator.

The national partners in Bangladesh, Nepal, Cambodia, India, Malaysia and Thailand, conducted around 60 community surveys among 30 Indigenous Peoples groups in 2023. Most of the data from those conducted surveys are available on the Indigenous Navigator portal.

Strategic Goal 3: Enhance rights-holders' and stakeholders' effective engagements

In relation to advocacy, HRCPA led coordination, facilitation and participation of Indigenous Peoples in Asia in the South Asia on the UN Business and Human Rights Forum, UN Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum, Asia-Pacific, 22nd session of United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 16th session of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 30 years of Vienna and Bangkok NGO Declaration Review and 12th United Nation Forum on Business and Human Rights. HRCPA also participated in the 5th ASEAN Human Rights Dialogue, the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples Forum (ACSC/APF), among other events.

Regional Asia Preparatory Meeting

The annual AIPP Regional Asia Preparatory Meeting on UN mechanisms and procedures relating to Indigenous Peoples remains one of the most important meetings of the year. It was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand in March 2023. This gathering allows participants to brainstorm key issues and concerns of the IPs in the region and strategize engagements at different UN mechanisms and procedures, as well as regional mechanisms like the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR). This meeting is where common positions are developed and collective strategies are consolidated.

The meeting resulted to develop a common advocacy plan for 2023, and identified focal lead organization/individual for each UN mechanisms. In addition, it was also agreed that AIPP will lead Indigenous Peoples' Asia Caucus for the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and COP 28 to facilitate preparation and consolidation of advocacy engagement plans.



United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)

The 22nd Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) was held from 17-28 April 2023, at the United Nations Headquarters, New York. AIPP led the Asia Indigenous Peoples Caucus to effectively participate in the Forum by leading the caucus in drafting and submitting statements, facilitating the Asia IP Caucus, organizing meetings with different offices in the UN and special procedures, and conducting side events on the UNPFII theme and other issues relevant to the Indigenous Peoples of Asia. AIPP also provided financial support for two Executive Council members to participate in the Forum.

Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP):

16th session of EMRIP, 17-21 July 2023: A total of 24 IP delegates participated in the 16th session of EMRIP (13 males 11 females), and AIPP provided financial support directly to 4 of them. AIPP delegates contributed at least 10 agenda items and delivered 20 statements. They also participated in the Global Indigenous Peoples Caucus and led the Asia IP Caucus.

Documentation on the Impact of the Militarization in Indigenous Territories in Asia: AIPP in collaboration with MOs in Bangladesh and Philippines documented the issues and impacts related to the militarization in Indigenous territories. Historically, the militarization in the Indigenous territories have triggered serious human rights violations and abuses such as armed conflicts and violences, systematic control and intimidation of IPs, suppression of freedom of speech, land grabbing, sexual harassment, and extrajudicial killings. Based on these reports, AIPP contributed to the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) study pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 33/25 on this topic. The study concluded with Expert Mechanism Advice No. 16 (2023) on the impact of militarization on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. EMRIP and AIPP are in discussion to further strengthen collaboration with the UN mandate holders and IPOs in Asia to take up the campaign against militarization in Asia at different levels.



UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of IPs (UNSRIP)

AIPP and IWGIA made a submission based on the call for inputs on tourism and the rights of IPs. The submission was based on inputs from Nepal, Bangladesh, Thailand and India. This input will contribute to the report of the UNSRIP to the 78th General Assembly Report. HRCPA also coordinated the online regional consultation of the UNSRIP for two reports, one on tourism and the second on green financing and a just transition, in May 2023.



Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Reporting

AIPP's member organizations from Bangladesh (Kapaeeng Foundation - KF), and the Cambodia Indigenous Peoples' Alliance (CIPA) from Cambodia collaborated and successfully submitted the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) shadow reports for Bangladesh and Cambodia. AIPP members contributed to the submitted UPR for Malaysia. These shadow reports were prepared based on the cases documented by IPHRDs focal organizations, and the outcomes of Indigenous Navigator project led by AIPP.

Business and Human Rights

HRCPA led coordination, facilitation and participation of regional and international events relevant to the Business and Human Rights Forum in 2023

1. 4th South Asia Forum on Business and Human Rights, titled "Workers and Business in a changing world" from 20-22 March 2023 in Kathmandu, Nepal

- (a) More than 35 Indigenous Peoples and IPHRD members participated in the events, three with AIPP funding, and organised a plenary session that highlighted the demand for the realization and implementation of the right to self-determination, autonomy, and mandatory human rights due diligence including FPIC.
- (b) This was the first time a plenary on indigenous issues was organised at this event. IP issues were given space through active interventions from the floor by IPs.



2. UN Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum, Asia-Pacific, titled “Commitment to Action” from 6-9 June 2023 at Bangkok, Thailand

- (a) Fifteen IP delegates and IPHRD members participated, three funded by AIPP, and participated by organising a side session and as panellists in plenary sessions.

3. 12th United Nation Forum on Business and Human Rights, November 2023, Geneva, Switzerland

- (a) AIPP had the opportunity to be a speaker with support from the Zero Tolerance Initiative. AIPP observed that this forum invited more interest from the private sector than in past years.

4. Country development of National Action Plan for Business and Human Rights (NAPBHR)

- (a) Nepal: IPHRD focal organisation of Nepal engaged in the development of the NAPBHR.
- (b) Indigenous Peoples of Malaysia engaged in the National Assessment Baseline on BHR and the ongoing NAPBHR development process. Thailand’s development process for its second NAPBHR also continued in 2023.



IP Enhanced participation at the UN

HRCPA led the coordination of the Enhanced Participation dialogue of the Indigenous Peoples in the UN, where currently AIPP is hosting the secretariat and acting as fiscal sponsor. The first strategic discussion of the Indigenous Coordinating Body (ICB) was held in Geneva during the June Human Rights Council (HRC) session. This meeting further crystallised the roadmap of the ICB on the status of the IPs in the UN.





Environment Programme



Key achievements and highlights of the Environment Programme

The Environment Programme (EP) focuses on various facets and issues of environment that affect and influence IPs, including climate change, biodiversity, indigenous knowledge, forest conservation, and also coordinates the work of the Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples of Asia (IKPA) network.

The EP and partners worked directly with communities to assert their rights over their lands, resources, and territories and to sustainably manage them. In Thailand, Nepal, and India, AIPP and project partners conducted trainings and support to communities on sustainable agriculture, product development and marketing, and social enterprise. In the Philippines, CorDisRDS conducted trainings on human rights and land laws and on disaster risk management. In northern Thailand, AIPP, IKPA, and partners produced photobooks documenting indigenous knowledge of forests and traditional rice varieties grown with rotational agriculture. Moreover, JJVS documented about the Indigenous Way of Life and Livelihood Practices of Nagasia Indigenous community in Donjharna Village, Jashpur, Chhattisgarh and ANGNA documented about Indigenous Agricultural Practices of Indigenous communities from its project area in Sundargarh, Odisha, India.



Recognition of resource rights under the Forest Rights Act in India

AIPP and JJVS have supported the establishment of Resource Management Committees in nine Gram Sabhas in Jashpur Chhattisgarh. These Gram Sabhas have received resource management entitlement according to the Forest Rights Act. The nine committees have a total of 135 committee members and 63 (46.6%) are women. In addition, 5 Gram Sabhas out of 9 have successfully opened bank accounts which strengthens the recognition of their rights to forests and resource management. In addition, AIPP with ANGNA have assisted 4 villages to develop community maps by demarcating their traditional territorial boundaries and generate resource maps through Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). The 4 villages have submitted the maps and documentation to claim community forestland in Odisha. All together the work by ANGNA and JJVS reached 9,174 (4,142 males and 5,032 females) Indigenous Peoples in 2023.

Indigenous Women Representation in the Gram Sabhas¹ and Panchayats²

AIPP in collaboration with member organizations JJVS and ANGNA has been supporting Indigenous women to strengthen their representation in the local governance (Gram Sabhas and Panchayats Systems). In 2023 marked a significant change in the representation of Indigenous women. A total of 212³ women have secured their representation in the Gram Sabhas and Panchayats in the AIPP's targeted project areas. Similarly, in the Kutra and Bargaon Block of Sundargarh District Odisha, there are 7 women Sarpanches in 7 Panchayats. This is a significant outcome of grassroots movement in India to strengthen local governance and supporting women leadership.

1_ *Gram Sabha is the customary institution (self-governance) of Indigenous Peoples recognised by the Constitution*

2_ *Panchayat is the local government institution of the state.*

3_ *152 women in Jashpur Chattisgarh, 60 women in Sundargarh, Odisha*



Advocacy

The Environment Programme ensures that Indigenous Peoples in Asia are represented at UN processes, regional fora, and national environmental policy processes about climate, biodiversity, and the environment, including the UNFCCC, CBD, UNEP, UN Water Conference, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). AIPP members are better able to influence these processes by organising preparatory meetings and consultations that develop key points, draft and publish statements, and facilitate coordination between IPOs and allies. Moreover, AIPP co-organised the Third Asia Pacific Environmental Human Rights Defenders Forum in September 2023 at UN Conference Center, Bangkok. AIPP has been co-organizing the forum since the First Forum in 2021 together with OHCHR, UNEP, UN ESCAP, Asia Pacific Network of Environmental Defenders (APNED), Asia Research Institute for Environmental Law (ARIEL), Diplomacy Training Programme (DTP), EarthRights International, Global Witness, Indigenous Peoples Rights International (IPRI), World Wide Fund (WWF) for Nature and the Youth Empowerment Climate Action Platform (YECAP).

Strategic Goal 1: Increase AIPP's impacts

Objective 1.1: Strengthen governance and build co-responsibility among AIPP's EC, MOs and networks for securing rights, including the right to self-determination, and to create impact especially at the local and country levels.

Collective forest rights in Chhattisgarh and Odisha

AIPP implemented the SSNC funded Project “Strengthening Collective Forest Rights, Self-Governance and Indigenous Knowledge of Indigenous Peoples in Chhattisgarh and Odisha” in Odisha and Chhattisgarh India through its implementing partners JJVS and ANGNA. The project reached 9,174 (4,142 males and 5,032 females) Indigenous Peoples in 2023. Nine Gram Sabhas In Jashpur Chhattisgarh received resource management entitlements according to the Forest Rights Act. The nine committees have a total of 135 committee members and 63 (46.6%) are women. ANGNA assisted 4 villages to demarcate their traditional territories and submit maps and documentation to claim their community forestland title in Odisha.





◀ Indigenous women in customary and local governance


AIPP in collaboration with member organizations, JJVS and ANGNA has been supporting Indigenous Peoples to strengthen their representation in customary and local governance (Gram Sabhas - customary, and Panchayats Systems - local). In 2023 marked a significant change in the representation of Indigenous women. A total of 212 women have secured their representation in the Gram Sabhas and Panchayats in the AIPP's targeted project areas. Similarly, in the Kutra and Bargaon Block of Sundargarh District Odisha, there are 7 women Sarpanches in seven Panchayats. This is a significant outcome of grassroots movement in India to strengthen customary and local governance and supporting women leadership.

Objective 1.2: Focus on revival of Indigenous values, practices, and principles of customary institutions and on re-building their organic governance systems, and for a sustained advocacy to create impact at the local, national and global levels.

◀ Documenting and sharing Indigenous Knowledge and Practices

EP produced two photo books together with indigenous communities in northern Thailand.

1. “The Classroom of Life: Indigenous Women set up forest for knowledge transmission” shares the indigenous knowledge of the women of Huay Ee Khang village.
2. “Rotational Agriculture Rice Diversity: Center of Indigenous Life and Culture” is based on a collaborative study of the Pga K’nyau Association for Sustainable Development (PASD), IKPA, and AIPP together with Pga K’nyau and Lua communities in Mae Hong Son Province. The study examines the rice varieties that still prevail in rotational farming fields in these communities. It presents the worldviews, perspectives, principles, key ideas, and philosophies of the Pga K’nyau and Lua people, in particular related to the importance of rice for nourishing both people’s lives and spirituality.



The Environment Programme has established a good practice to go back to the community whose stories have been featured in the publication and share the hard copies. The AIPP team visited Huay Ee-Khang village this year and shared the beautiful photo book “The Classroom of Life: Indigenous Women set up forest for knowledge transmission” which has been published in both Thai and English languages. The villagers’ response to the photo book has been immensely positive. The Indigenous women of Huay Ee Khang are happy to see their powerful stories and beautiful photos in Thai and English languages. They are very much looking forward to getting the Karen language edition of the photo book that is being finalised.

JJVS and ANGNA documented the indigenous knowledge and practices of Indigenous Peoples in their project communities in Odisha and Chhattisgarh, India.

3. JJVS documented the Indigenous Way of Life and Livelihood Practices of the Nagasia Indigenous community in Donjharna Village. It is available in Hindi language only.
4. ANGNA documented about Indigenous Agricultural Practices of Indigenous communities from its project area.

Capacity building for communities

The project activities in 2023 have strengthened the capacities of the community people on their collective forestland rights, resource management rights, rights to customary self-governance, political participation of Indigenous women and men, protection and promotion of their forest, land, resources, livelihoods and income generation, and their indigenous knowledge and best practices. They have learned technical skill and knowledge of community and resource mapping, bureaucratic procedures of filling up the claim forms and submission of it to the concerned government departments as well as doing advocacy for ascertaining their legal and constitutional rights.

1. In Nepal, NGO FONIN conducted 20 training related to sustainable agriculture for 610 people (189 male, 418 women, 206 youth) in 3 villages of Thami, Chepang and Tin Gual Takhali Indigenous groups.
2. IMPECT in Thailand provided support for environmentally friendly agriculture in 3 villages to 58 participants (39 female 19 male).

3. IMPECT in Thailand and FONIN in Nepal conducted capacity building for social enterprise. IMPECT and 3 communities analysed opportunities, learned about product development and social media advertising, including how to use Canva.
4. AIPP project partners conducted 13 trainings related to community enterprise and livelihood improvement in Thailand, India and Nepal. In Thailand the community has developed their product development plan in 3 communities, In Nepal, the community people started to sell their agricultural products in the local market and 5 households in Syang village have registered for a guest house after being trained on homestay management.
5. In India, project partners (ANGNA and JJVS) conducted 6 training related to Forest Rights Act, Indigenous Peoples Rights, and community mapping. There were 1401 people participating (758 female 643 male).
6. In India, the project partners organised the training on leadership and advocacy trainings for Indigenous women representation in Gram Sabha
7. In the Philippines, CorDisRDS conducted training related to the human rights orientation and land law to 35 Tanglag indigenous people. The participants expressed that they are now more confident and aware of their rights and understand how to deal with the local authority.
8. In the Philippines, CorDisRDS conducted community-based Based Disaster Risk Management training for staff and the provincial partner- Timputyog ti Mannalon ti Kalinga (TMK) in September 2023 in Kalinga Province. The training was identified to prepare staff and volunteers for dealing with various hazards. Additional hazards were added as a result of discussion, e.g. the rice tariffication law, anti-social activities causing tribal wars, and others. The discussion was also helpful in finding a legal basis for serving communities.

Celebration of the International Day for Biodiversity: The celebration of the International Day for Biodiversity successfully mobilised the voices of 21 Indigenous men, 19 Indigenous women and 10 Indigenous youth. By celebrating and amplifying these diverse perspectives, AIPP drew attention to the vital role that IPs play in the conservation of biodiversity, ultimately urging action and genuine partnerships to put human rights and the rights of IPs in all biodiversity actions at national and local levels.



Strategic Goal 2: Expand AIPP's outreach

Regional Assembly of Indigenous Peoples in Asia, 30 March-3 April 2023: AIPP in consultation with regional steering committee members secured financial resources to conduct a regional assembly of IPs in Asia in Bali, Indonesia. AMAN, a member organization of AIPP, hosted the regional assembly where 95 participants from 13 Asian countries including representatives of Indigenous Peoples' organizations, Indigenous Women, Youth, and Indigenous Persons with Disabilities, as well as some donors as observers, participated. The regional assembly resulted in the creation of the Indigenous Peoples of Asia Solidarity Fund (IPAS Fund) with the goal to enable direct funding to Indigenous Peoples Organizations on the ground, and to strengthen equal partnership with donors. The newly selected IPAS board members decided to establish its secretariat in Indonesia.

Strategic Goal 3: Enhance rights-holders' and stakeholders' effective engagements

Organising Regional Events

Regional Conference on Indigenous Peoples' Rights, Biodiversity and Climate Change, from 5th – 8th November 2023, Thailand. AIPP organised this event to update attendees on the newly adopted Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, highlighting 5 targets that specifically mention IPs and the need to engage at the national level to shape the new National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAPs). The conference gathered Indigenous Peoples including leaders, women, youths, Person with Disabilities, UN agencies, and donors from Asia region, with a total of 47 people attending (22 women, 11 youths), representing 32 indigenous communities from 11 countries. The participants had deep reflection on the outcomes of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and Sustainable Development Goals.

As a result of the conference, Indigenous Peoples' positions, the E-Sak Ka Ou Declaration was developed covering the CBD, climate change, carbon markets and biodiversity credits, loss and damage, monitoring, and the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights. This declaration has been translated into eight languages.

AIPP co-organised the Third Asia Pacific Environmental Human Rights Defenders Forum in September 2023 at UN Conference Center, Bangkok. AIPP has been co-organizing the forum since the First Forum in 2021 together with OHCHR, UNEP, UN ESCAP, Asia Pacific Network of Environmental Defenders (APNED), Asia Research Institute for Environmental Law (ARIEL), Diplomacy Training Programme (DTP), EarthRights International, Global Witness, Indigenous Peoples Rights International (IPRI), World Wide Fund (WWF) for Nature and the Youth Empowerment Climate Action Platform (YECAP).

Regional and International Advocacy and Processes

I. Advocacy on climate

1. UNFCCC COP28, 30 November -12 December 2023

- (a) AIPP hosted two side events at the Indigenous Pavilion, one on Indigenous Navigator and the second on Asia IPs, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), loss and damage, and a just transition.
- (b) AIPP EC, members, and secretariat were invited speakers at seven other side events on topics including ecosystem restoration, climate finance, human mobility, food systems, and gender.

2. Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP)

- (a) AIPP organised a preparatory consultation with its members from Thailand in May. 11 Participants (8 male and 3 female) had an interactive discussion on loss and damage, the global stocktake, and the LCIPP meeting agenda.
- (b) 9th meeting 31 May-3 June 2023 in Bonn, Germany. AIPP strongly advocated to put focus on the land tenure rights of Indigenous Peoples while formulating the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) and to centre the discussion of the Global Stocktake (GST) on how human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples are being implemented as part of the NDCs. In November, AIPP attended the 10th meeting of the LCIPP Facilitative Working Group and contributed to its work and the development of the new 3-years workplan of LCIPP.



3. Bonn Climate Conference 5-15 June in Bonn Germany

- (a) AIPP in the capacity of the focal point of the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) played crucial role in organizing a preparatory meeting of the global Indigenous Peoples caucus on 4 June which shaped the overall strategy of Indigenous Peoples' engagement on crucial issues such as the Loss and Damage, GST, and Indigenous Youth. AIPP spoke on behalf of Asia in the global press conference of the Indigenous Peoples
- (b) AIPP together with IWGIA, NEFIN, CSIPN, and PINGO's Forum co-organised a side event "Taking stock of Indigenous Peoples' rights in climate governance" on 7 June where they presented the key findings of AIPP's research on NDCs and linked them to the ongoing discussion of the GST.

II. Advocacy on the environment, biodiversity (CBD), and water governance

1. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

- (a) Meeting of the Ad hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on the New Programme of Work and Institutional Arrangements on Article 8 (j) and Other Provisions of the Convention Related to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities from 11-13 July 2023 in Manaus, Brazil. AIPP was selected to attend as an expert. Indigenous Peoples managed to include an application of a human rights-based approach as an additional principle of the new programme of work. Also, Indigenous Peoples succeeded in adding two new elements: namely, a human rights-based approach, and direct access to funding for biodiversity conservation. The expert group members unanimously gave their support to the establishment of a subsidiary body on Article 8 (j) and other provisions.
- (b) Working Group on Article 8(j) and related provisions, 12-16 November. AIPP collaborated on statements, organised side events and press conferences. The key demand of Indigenous Peoples is to establish a subsidiary body, embodying the same principles and characteristics of the Working Group on Article 8(j) and support the traditional knowledge indicator in the KMGBF.


2. UN 2023 Water Conference

- (a) AIPP co-organised the IP Pre-Summit with five other co-organisers.
 - i. The Pre-Summit has produced “Indigenous Peoples’ Declaration for the UN 2023 Water Conference” encompassing six recommendations along with Indigenous Peoples Commitment to the UN 2023 Water Conference.
 - ii. The declaration was signed and endorsed by 73 Indigenous Peoples’ Organizations plus 5 other supporting organizations
- (b) UN 2023 Water Conference on 22 - 24 March 2023 in New York
 - i. AIPP organised the side event “Indigenous Knowledge and practices on water resource management are key drivers for ‘Water for Sustainable Development’ that had over 100 delegates attend. AIPP also contributed as co-organisers or speakers to seven other side events.
 - ii. Indigenous Peoples, practices, and knowledge were included in the UN summary report of the Conference, and it separates Indigenous Peoples from local communities.
- (c) AIPP organised an online Asia regional consultation on Indigenous Water Management and Governance Systems in participation of the 33 (15 males and 18 females) Indigenous Peoples from 11 countries and prepared an advocacy paper on Indigenous Water Management and Governance Systems.

3. Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution (INC)

- (a) The second session to develop a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including marine environment, was held at UNESCO HQ, Paris on 29 May- 2 June 2023. AIPP delegates read out statements throughout the event. Indigenous groups organised a side event on how plastics impact them and sustainable solutions to plastic waste. The Indigenous Peoples representatives from the globe established the Indigenous Peoples Caucus during the INC 2.
- (b) Third session 11-19 November. AIPP organised a side event, and the zero draft of the agreement was discussed. During the INC 3, Indigenous Peoples’ Caucus prepared the written submission and submitted it to the INC.





(c) Indigenous Peoples' Caucus influenced the zero draft and revised zero draft has included the Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Knowledge 27 times across the revised zero draft. There is a need for continuous strong advocacy and lobby with the member states to secure the position and voice of the Indigenous Peoples in the treaty.

4. Sustainable Development Goals - APFSD and HLPF

(a) 10th Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD): AIPP organised two side events on the role of IPs in water resource governance, which was included in the event report. APFSD does not combine IP and LC into one term and keeps them separate.

(b) AIPP organised the virtual side event of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) on “Recognizing community leadership in water governance: towards equitable partnerships with Indigenous Peoples in ensuring control over and access to water resources and clean energy” on 9 July 2023 in participation of 48 people.

5. The final round of the intergovernmental consultations on nature-based solutions, 9-13 October 2023 at UNO, Nairobi, Kenya. The resolution 5/5 entitled “Nature-based solutions for supporting sustainable development” was adopted by the UN Environment Assembly 5.2 on 2nd March 2022. There were strong interventions on the six agendas from IPs and strong support from the major groups.

6. Regional dialogues and workshops: attended as a speaker, organised a side event, or otherwise attended various regional events including on indigenous women’s land rights, REDD+, and a forum on environmental human rights defenders.

7. AIPP attended the Third Asia Pacific Environmental Human Rights Defenders Forum in September 2023 at UN Conference Center, Bangkok as one of the co-organisers. Mr. Prem Singh Tharu from the Environment Programme led the role of co-organiser from AIPP where Ms. Pirawan, Mr. Shohel and Ms. Nina from AIPP were in the roles of speakers in different sessions of the forum.



Strategic Goal 4: Strengthen AIPP's ability to adapt

AIPP and its implementing partners ANGNA and JJVS organised internal workshops on self-determination, gender equality, organisational management training, and financial management during the SSNC funded project that trained 100 people (57 female 43 male).





Organisational Strengthening & Movement Building



Key achievements and highlights of Organisational Strengthening & Movement Building (OSMB)

The purpose of the Organisational Strength & Movement Building (OSMB) Programme is to deepen the democratic governance of AIPP and to strengthen the collective leadership of the EC in their engagement with member organisations. Further, it focuses on fostering unity and solidarity among members and others, including strengthening the organising capacity of members. Through dialogue, the OSMB Programme helps to identify priorities of member organisations at the country level. It also sharpens regional strategy and approaches to core issues such as indigenous women, land rights, self-determination, and self-government.

Strategic Goal 1: Increase AIPP's impacts

Objective 1.1: Strengthen governance and build co-responsibility among AIPP's EC, MOs and networks for securing rights, including the right to self-determination, and to create impact especially at the local and country levels.




Strengthening governance

The 12-member Executive Committee held two members meetings in 2023, the first in Chiang Mai, Thailand in February and the second in Siem Reap in September. The primary function of the EC is to supervise and guide the function of AIPP, including the implementation of strategic plan, annual budget and plan, programme activities, guidelines and policies, and reviewing annual audited financial reports.

AIPP members engagement in the country and sub-regional processes

AIPP organised three country (Malaysia, Nepal, and Cambodia) processes in 2023 under the leadership of AIPP Executive Council Members. The overall objective of the country process is to build cohesiveness in vision, and strengthen AIPP's bottom-up approach as a members-based network. One of the main objectives for 2023 was to institutionalise this process for consolidate IPs movement at the country and regional levels. With this understanding and commitment, the Executive Council Members of AIPP adopted a guiding document "The Statement of Goal and Purpose of Country-Level Process" in 2023. This document has been shared with AIPP members for further consultation and inputs so that the process can be endorsed at the General Assembly of AIPP in March 2025.

- i. **Malaysia country process:** In April 2023, AIPP member and non-member indigenous organisations decided to make Jaringan Organ Asal SeMalaysia (JOAS) the country focal organization to coordinate Indigenous Peoples Organisations (IPOs) and networks and to lead country strategy in Malaysia. The "Malaysia Land, Territories, and Resources (LTR) Strategy" was endorsed and supported by IPOs from all three regions, Sabah, Sarawak, and Malaysia Peninsula. Malaysia's country action plan and common agenda for 2023 was also collectively developed through this process.
- ii. **Nepal country process:** In June 2023, the country process was organised under the leadership of the National Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN). A total of 46 participants attended (19 women, 27 men, 6 youth, and 4 persons with disabilities). As an outcome, IPOs from Nepal agreed on a "common position" related to critical issues of the naming of Province-1 and AIPP's long-term



vision and new strategic plan development. Specially, IPOs agreed to generate a collective voice and support for the IPs movement in the Eastern Nepal. Further, IPOs and AIPP agreed to organise another process to concretise the agreements and common agenda.

- iii. **Cambodia country process:** The country process in November 2023 had 59 participants (14 youth, 15 women, 3 IPwDs, and 27 men) from 14 different Indigenous Groups. Kui, as the largest Indigenous group in Cambodia, agreed to support Kui Hai which has registered with the government as the second Kui-led organisation, based in Preah Vihear province. One of the participants reflected, “we [participants] gained a clearer and better understanding of the vision and mission building in the context of individuals and communities of different ethnicities at the country, regional, and international levels. 60% of participants understood larger issues and thought outside the box, whereas they had always approached issue-based thinking in the past. They took the first step in determining what and how to construct a cohesive vision and mission for their future as indigenous peoples, rather than just for an individual community or organization”.

As an outcome of the process, participants agreed to form three language-based networks:

- (a) Sa Ouch, Chong, Sui, and Por agreed to form a language-based network called “Kanayang”
 - (b) Brao, Kroeng, Kachok, and Lun agreed to form language-based network called “Krongyong”
 - (c) Bunong, Kraol, Steang, and Mhon agreed to form up a language-based network called “Ndrang Kon Noh”
- iv. **Mekong Sub-regional process:** The process was hosted by the Cambodia Indigenous Peoples’ Alliance (CIPA) in coordination with AIPP EC members in Siem Reap in September 2023. AIPP members from the Mekong sub-region (Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos DPR, and Vietnam) and 8 EC members identified common issues at the country and sub-regional level, and developed recommendations, activities plan, AIPP’s General Assembly preparation plan, and advocacy priorities for AIPP and MOs. Coordination mechanisms among MOs, the roles of AIPP EC members, and the roles of AIPP Secretariat were also reflected and clarified at the meeting. Reflecting on the role of AIPP, it was described as “a big home and roof of Indigenous Peoples in Asia that provides warmth, meaning of family, and love”.

Objective 1.2: Focus on revival of Indigenous values, practices, and principles of customary institutions and on re-building their organic governance systems, and for a sustained advocacy to create impact at the local, national and global levels.

AIPPs Regional course on IPs rights to self-determination, autonomy and democracy

Indigenous values and principles are the life-sustaining, fundamental elements of the IPs movement in Asia. Understanding this, the AIPP EC decided to launch a regional course on IPs self-determination, autonomy, and democracy in 2021. Subsequently, regional conferences were organised in Chiang Mai, Thailand and Sabah in Malaysia. In addition, the country and regional processes also provide venues to reflect and revitalise IPs values, principles, and worldview which are crucial for IPs movement building. As a result, the country processes, initiatives of regional conferences on IPs Self-Determination, Autonomy, and Self-Government, and AIPP's emphasis on movement building have led to consolidation of Indigenous Peoples movements and leaders in Cambodia, Eastern Nepal, Malaysia, and Thailand. The consolidation process had led to establishment of the Centre of Excellence in Village Governance, and generating AIPP's LTR and Self-Determination vision documents. A series of books on self-governance practices is also being published, with two books published in 2023.

Localisation of the course

- i. **Nepal:** As part of localization, the alumni of the Regional Course on IPs Self-Government, Autonomy and Democracy from Nepal initiated a training course on the "Indigeneity in Nepal". This course has been offered to youths, elders, activities, and academics in Nepal.
- ii. **Bangladesh:** The Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum (BIPF) and Northeast India Country Team organised a training of trainers (ToT) on the course in December 2023 in their respective countries, with 28 participants including youths and elders. The trainers were the alumni of the regional course.
- iii. **Planned launch of the AIPP School of Participation:** the AIPP School of Participation is planned to launch in 2024 as the next step in this initiative. The School will be the space to provide a basic course

on Indigenous Self-government and Democracy as well as focus on specialised topics such as on indigenous knowledge, discourse on the meaning of institutions and sovereignty, customary law and judiciary, and other topics. It will also be a space for gathering of scholar-activists and grassroots leaders for exchanges and co-learning.

Strategic Goal 2: Expand AIPP's outreach

Objective 2.1: Create new channels of partnerships to expand networks of donors, knowledge/technical and advocacy partners at the local, country, regional, and global levels.

Expanding AIPP membership

According to the general resolution of AIPP's General Assembly 2022, AIPP membership is now limited to movement-based organizations having strong IPs representation. The application of the **Cambodia Indigenous Peoples' Alliance (CIPA)** was reviewed and approved by EC members as a candidate member on 1st September 2023. Full membership status of CIPA is subject to approval of AIPP's General Assembly in March 2025.

Strategic Goal 3: Enhance Rights holders' and stakeholders' effective engagements

Objective 3.1: Support AIPP's Member Organizations (MOs) and networks in localizing SDGs, rights-based conservation, FPIC, and related capacity building modules in their respective contexts.

Malaysian National Strategy for Indigenous Land, Territory, and Resources

In Malaysia, member organisations JOAS and PACOS TRUST developed a strategic document outlining a comprehensive framework to enhance the rights, sovereignty, and stewardship of Malaysia's indigenous populations—collectively known as Orang Asal—over their ancestral lands, territories, and resources. To address the complex challenges IPs have been facing due to partial legal recognition and gaps in implementation, the strategy will advocate for a unified approach across Sabah, Sarawak, and Peninsular

Malaysia. This strategic document aims to consolidate diverse regional strategies to uphold the cultural, legal, and environmental rights of all Orang Asal, ensuring their meaningful participation in governance and development processes.

Strategic Goal 4: Strengthen AIPP's ability to adapt

Objective 4.2 Build institutional/organisational, human capacity, and framework for catalysing actions, communication, monitoring results and measuring impacts.

Policy development

PSEAH policy: AIPP's Executive Council endorsed a PSEAH (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment) policy in February 2023 that was developed by IWP and the Gender Action team. It is expected that this policy will be adopted in the next General Assembly that will be held in 2025.

Capacity building and training

In 2023, AIPP Secretariat and Programme Committee members received training and orientation on the following topics and areas to improve internal control system operations and management:

- i. **Internal Control System Audit:** AIPP improved internal operational systems through systematizing data management, risk register, due diligence assessment, and financial management
- ii. **Results-based management system review:** Reflection on AIPP's M&E system focused on leadership and also on gender
- iii. Grant management, sub-granting, partnership management, risk management systems, and team building
- iv. Building clarity on the concept of Indigenous Peoples rights to self-determination, and land and territorial rights



Regional Capacity Building Programme




Key achievements and highlights of the Regional Capacity Building Programme

Supporting Indigenous youths' movements and inter-generational leadership building has been one of AIPP core focuses of the current Strategic Plan (2021-2024). Asia Indigenous Youths Platform (AIYP) was formed in 2019 and formalised in 2022, and the participation and engagement of Indigenous youths in IPs movements has significantly increased over the years.

The Regional Capacity Building Program (RCB) in 2023 has focused on providing training and support to Indigenous youths and youth networks. As a result, youth across the region are better equipped with the knowledge, resources, networks, and organising skills to mobilise their communities and contribute to IP movements from local to international levels.

In 2023, AIYP and its partners launched "Youth Mapping Report" which attracted donors, UN agencies, and other partners attentions to collaborate with AIYP, including an agreement between AIPP, RRI and the Christensen Fund (TCF) to raise for the Indigenous Youth Guardianship Summit in August 2024. AIYP members in 2023 conducted their own research projects, completed fellowships, and received trainings on climate, community organising, and self-governance and democracy, among other topics.

RCB also provided training, institutional strengthening, 18 fellowships, and other support to IP youths at the country level across the region, providing them the knowledge and skills to mobilise their own communities. Training topics included leadership, community organising, indigenous self-governance, climate, and environmental issues.



Indigenous youths actively participated in national, regional, and global events, including UN mechanisms. Indigenous youth represented youth voices at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, building relationships with international agencies and other stakeholders.

RCB also contributed to the revival of indigenous self-governance (Objective 1.2 in the strategic plan) by providing trainings to 25 workshop participants and by publishing a book *Self-governance Democracy among the Ao Naga of Nagaland*. Two case studies on self-governance systems (The self-governance of the Chakma and Customary Self-government Systems of the Tamhang (Thakali) nation) have been conducted and at the end of 2023 were being prepared for publication.

Strategic Goal 1: Increase AIPP's impacts

Objective 1.2: Focus on Indigenous worldviews for the revivification of customary institutions and re-building their organic governance systems, and for sustained advocacy to create impact at all levels.

Publications on IP Self-Government Systems

AIPP started a publication collection on “IPs Self-Government Systems” in 2022. The books in this series promote, reflect on, and revitalise IPs values and principles in self-government and contribute to revitalizing indigenous systems for indigenous self-determination. In 2023, two additional publications were completed and added to the collection.

1. The book “Self-governance and Democracy Among the Ao Naga of Nagaland” was published.
2. The book “The Customary Self-government System of the Tamhang (THAKALI) Nation” was published.
3. The case study of the book on “The Self-governance of the Chakma” was conducted in 2023 and was being prepared for publication.



Capacity Building

25 Indigenous youths (10 female and male 15) from 8 countries (Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia Philippines), three interns, and a volunteer enhanced their knowledge of IP self-governance and democracy from a training course.

Strategic Goal 2: Expand AIPP's outreach

Objective 2.1: Expand and build the capacity of AIPP networks



Expand AIYPs network

AIYP members are Indigenous youth organizations and networks in AIPP's member countries. Since AIYP was formalised in 2022, Myanmar and India have been represented by individuals, since there were no national-level indigenous youth organizations to join as members. In 2023, after a series of consultations with indigenous youth organisations, the Myanmar Indigenous Youth Alliance (MIYA) was established. This alliance selected their representative and alternate representative to AIYP, and these were approved at the AIYP Council Meeting in 2023.



Research Programme with AIYP

AIPP and UNDP collaborated to build the research capacity of Indigenous youths in Asia through the “Youth-led Research Program” in 2023. Eleven Indigenous Youths from AIYP have participated and completed research on the following topics:

1. The loss of the traditional culture of the Dusun Tinagas in Malaysia
2. Indigenous Youths and “Gerakan Rulang Kampung” in Indonesia
3. Traditional sustainable ways of cultivation of the Kisan community through storytelling in Mainland India.
4. Contribution of Thangmi Traditional Occupation for Sustainability in Nepal



5. The mixed-cultural marriages in Lao PDR to the Lao of the Khmu Indigenous Culture (Traditional Wedding Ceremony) and language in Lao PDR
6. Analyzing the role of community-based conflict resolution mechanism among the Bodos during the 2012 Conflict in Northeast India
7. The Khmer women's stories to enhance the community's awareness in terms of sustainably using and protecting groundwater in Vietnam
8. The Importance of beach and shoreline changes over the years according to indigenous fishers in South India.
9. Storytelling as a form of indigenous knowledge transmission among the Chakma community in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh
10. The role of land in the preservation of indigenous cultural beliefs, customs, and knowledge in Malaysia
11. The land right of Tamang Indigenous Peoples in Nepal in Nepal

Strategic Goal 3: Enhance rights holders' and stakeholders' effective engagements

I. Capacity building and training

- i. **Community organising in Malaysia:** A total of 9 Indigenous youths (6 male and 3 female) improved their community organizing skills at a training in Malaysia, and they are now mobilizing their respective communities on issues related to land, forests, and resources. Five villages in Malaysia have been mobilised by these trained community organisers so far.
- ii. **Community organising training:** Three youths from Bangladesh and Thailand were trained on community organising in Malaysia
- iii. **Foundational Leadership in Bangladesh:** 60 indigenous youth and elders strengthened foundational leadership through community organising and leadership training in Bangladesh; they are applying their learning to movement building.




- iv. At a **youth conference in Bangladesh**, 100 indigenous youths strengthened their knowledge of climate issues, indigenous knowledge, and leadership.
- v. Indigenous youths from Malaysia and Thailand learned about **digital safety, security, and video documentation** at a 3-day training.

II. Fellowships and internships

- i. AIPP supported three fellowships (1 male 2 female) in 2023. One fellow in Nepal now works for NIDWAN after completing their fellowship. The second fellow was placed with NIPT and is now involved with the Hmong Indigenous Youth Network. The third completed their fellowship with KF in Bangladesh and has continued their involvement in human rights.
- ii. YCEAP Fellowships: 15 Indigenous youths from AIYP received YECAP Fellowships. Through this fellowship, the received opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and understanding on climate and environment issues.
- iii. CMU interns: Three students from Chiang Mai University joined AIPP as interns for two weeks, contributing to the second workshop on IP self-governance and democracy.

III. Network strengthening


- i. **4th International Youth Conference:** 138 Indigenous youths in Asia from AIYP and AIPN strengthened their capacity on Indigenous issues and solidarity through the 4th International Youth Conference; a youth declaration was affirmed during the conference.
- ii. **Bangladesh Youth Platform:** A new committee of the Bangladesh Youth Platform was formed through the 2nd general assembly.
- iii. **Hmong Youth Association strategic planning workshop:** The Hmong Youth Association strengthened their institutional organisation by holding a workshop for strategic planning.

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- iv. AIYP's Executive Council held three meetings during the year.
 - v. Partnerships and collaboration: Meetings to discuss opportunities for future collaboration or partnership were held with organisations including RECOFT, RRI, UNESCO, and UNDP. A youth representative from AIYP attended meetings with donors and potential future partners.

IV. Indigenous youth representation at UN, national, and regional events

- i. Indigenous Youths from AIYP shared their knowledge and understanding about biodiversity for the day of Biological Diversity.
- ii. Indigenous youth marked Youth Day 2023 with deep discussion about their lives and futures, and they identified critical issues.
- iii. Steering committee election: AIPP Youth EC Member & AIYP Council Member was elected as a steering committee member of Global Indigenous Youth Caucus and International Land Coalition Youth Council.
- iv. Indigenous youth representation ensured at UNPFII: Two AIYP leaders attended AIPP's Asia Preparatory meeting and brought youth issues to the 23rd session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII).
- v. AIPP Youth EC Member attended the UNPFII and built networks and relationships with international agencies and stakeholders; she also shared a video produced during the youth conference.
- vi. Tonkla youth attended Climate Week: RCPB ensured funding for an indigenous youth of Tonkla with the Stockholm Environment Institution to join Climate Week events in Malaysia.





Indigenous youth participated in events around the world to share the perspectives of Indigenous youth, including at:

- i. UNPFII
- ii. Global Indigenous Youth Forum in Rome, Italy (5 AIYP members)
- iii. A water governance meeting in DC
- iv. Youth from Hin Lad Nai attended the Mekong women's exchange in Chiang Mai
- v. An RRI meeting in Congo

Strategic Goal 4: Strengthen AIPP's ability to adapt

Objective 4.1: Promote a culture of research, innovation & willingness to take new initiatives and approaches



Culture and language promotion

- i. **Indigenous youth celebrated International Mother Language Day** in collaboration with the human rights programme at AIPP in Chiang Mai. A total of 45 indigenous peoples including youths and women attended the event. Artists and activists from different Indigenous groups in Thailand were invited to perform their indigenous culture like dancing, songs and reciting Indigenous poems.
- ii. **The 6th Tharu National Literature Festival** was organised in Nepal. A total of 300 Indigenous men, women, children, and Indigenous persons with disabilities attended the festival where Tharu's cultures, language, traditions, indigenous knowledge, skills, and literature were promoted.





Challenges and lessons learned

Indigenous youths are the future leaders and guardians of indigenous knowledge and wisdom. In some countries, the voices of Indigenous youths are not heard, and in some situations, they are intimidated and humiliated. It is urgently needed to build the capacity of Indigenous youth with knowledge and wisdom so that they can lead and preserve indigenous values and practices.

Support from interns and AIYP member organisations is helpful in accomplishing the work under this programme. AIYP has also been a very effective platform for reaching out and strengthening collaboration.





Communication Programme



The Communication Programme works across AIPP's programmes and networks to platform and amplify the voices of Indigenous Peoples. The aim of the Communications Programme is to ensure a continued critique of colonization, not only through study and writing but also in shaping the decolonial discourse among AIPP's member organizations and strategic allies.

Communications for social change goes beyond the understanding of complex power dynamics against the backdrop of continuing historical and present-day harms exacerbated by disinformation campaigns, red-tagging, media trials all continued and ongoing attacks on freedom of speech and expression; it is ensuring timely campaign creation and management through collaborations with experts, indigenous media practitioners with the expected outcomes of changed behaviours and a holistic connect-the-dots approach to decision making by all stakeholders.

As with people's movements globally, speaking truth to power is the lodestar that guides all communications work through both institutional communications and network building to ensure indigenous media (international, national, and community level) are integrated into programme management. As with all tools of nation-building, continued peer to peer learnings of ideas and insights between independent indigenous media and indigenous and non-indigenous civil society organisations is crucial. Like all in all social justice movements, radically aimed at self-determination through the recognition of rights including land rights which is intrinsic Indigenous Peoples rights, communications for development too are based on grassroots to global system to ensure the unheard and unseen are regularly covered in the media whether that is legacy media, independent media and/or indigenous media by indigenous journalists. Therefore, it is also the goal of the programme to ensure continued facts-based reportage of Indigenous Peoples struggles on the ground through an intersectional lens.



To this end, the programme has successfully launched the AIPP media fellowships for three years running in order to provide paid opportunities to indigenous journalists and artists in covering indigenous issues that lead to not only their greater outreach and amplification but also act as tools for advocacy in all global, regional and national level advocacy campaigns. To date the programme has helped more than 60 media fellows who have covered topics ranging from Indigenous Peoples land rights, infrastructure projects, gender, climate and youth. The programme has also collaborated with independent media, a crucial ally who prioritise indigenous issues and encourage inclusivity by creating space for indigenous journalists in their newsrooms.

Establishing free tribal media is a crucial step to the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples while upholding the fundamental rights of free speech and freedom of the Press while shifting power through narratives. While we wait to be meaningfully included in legacy newsrooms and policy, we must be supported in forming independent and free indigenous media at the grassroots and national levels to generate public interest media and indigenous data sovereignty especially as disinformation campaigns are rife to undermine our collective rights

Strategic Goal 1: Increase AIPP's impacts

Indigenous-led Independent Media

Establishing free tribal media is a crucial step to the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples to shift power through narratives while upholding the fundamental rights of free speech and freedom of the Press. The media fellows program enabled indigenous journalists to work with indigenous-led media, including IP NEWS in Bangladesh, to conduct investigative journalism and produce articles and videos that bring grassroots voices to mainstream attention. The program also provided opportunities, training, and technical support to community journalists, including the community radio Radyo Sagada in the Philippines.





Media Fellowships

The AIPP Media Fellowships under the Communications Programme are awarded annually to indigenous journalists and storytellers in Asia. Media fellows worked in six countries: Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, and Philippines. The overall objective of the media fellowship is to empower Indigenous journalists to tell their stories and amplify Indigenous voices. As a result, this has contributed to increased representation and diversity of media narratives while challenging negative stereotypes and promoting a more accurate and nuanced understanding of Indigenous communities.


These fellowships play a crucial role in supporting and empowering indigenous journalists, fostering media diversity, and enriching the broader media landscape and visibility of indigenous journalists within the media industry and beyond. In 2023, media fellows produced impactful stories that attracted attention, developed their own skills, contributed to indigenous-led media, and strengthened connections with communities at the grassroots level.

Thailand: Indigenous Media Network (IMN), founded in 2014, is a volunteer-based online media platform that combats stereotypes and disinformation in mainstream media. IMN has trained nearly 400 Indigenous youth, monitors media, and engages with media outlets including by producing a guidebook for how to work with Indigenous communities. Work with IMN had seven direct beneficiaries (1 female 6 male) and over 300 indirect beneficiaries. Participants created infographics, posters, photo stories and videos. The posters were shared among CIPT members, donors, networks, and on social media for IP Day. Media produced by the fellows were widely shared and accessed by the public with approximately 200,000 visitors.

Cambodia: Conserve Indigenous Peoples Languages Organization (CIPL) is an indigenous-led organisation that works with the Cambodian Indigenous Youth Media Network, including on producing videos with two media fellows.

Videos: The fellows produced four videos, in both their Indigenous languages and in Khmer language with English subtitles, on the following topics: IP youth participation in natural resources, right to access information, boys and girls have the same rights to access information, and what the fellows learned from the project.





Capacity building: The fellows and other Indigenous youths (27 participants) learned about digital rights, gender, international and national law, and digital security, among other topics at trainings.

Nepal: Indigenous Television, Nepal mentored three experienced journalists as media fellows (2 female, 1 male). The media fellowship created opportunities for Indigenous journalists to give special coverage to themes concerning Indigenous Peoples issues and rights on topics that do not make headlines or even get any coverage in mainstream media, government publications, or private publications.

The fellows produced 14 stories on IP issues under the fellowship program. Each of these articles (12 in Nepali and 2 in English) were shared by more than 200 readers. Topics include the Tamang IPs' movement against militarisation, use of force against protestors, human rights violations of hydropower projects, Indigenous languages and the government, and how theatre and drama helps IPs to fight against the state's domination.


Bangladesh: Indigenous People's News (IP NEWS BD) is a Dhaka-based online news portal established in 2016 that works to promote and protect the rights of the Indigenous peoples of Bangladesh. Three media fellows (1 female, 2 male) and a project focal person produced nine reports that were published by IP NEWS.

The fellows focused their reporting on IP youths and their role in the movement of IPs for self-determination. Other topics included IP women violations, IP rights on their land, territories and natural resources, and IP day celebration in Bangladesh.

Results of the project include:

- i. Published nine multimedia reports on three different contemporary Indigenous issues on IP NEWS.
- ii. Audience reach: These reports reached over 100,000 viewers and sensitised them to the covered IP issues. The reports also attracted attention from politicians, policymakers, NGOs, CSOs, human rights activists, students, and youth leaders in Bangladesh.
- iii. Indigenous media strengthening: IP NEWS BD had the 3 media fellows as regular staff of the organisation.





iv. Community journalist network-building: While conducting this project, many indigenous youths of grassroots level got engaged with the activities and agreed to work as community journalists with IPNEWS, which is an extraordinary achievement of this project. These community journalists are a constant source of stories from the grassroots level.


Malaysia: With PACOS Trust, three media fellows (2 female, 1 male) from the Sabah Native Youth Council (MBOAS) produced a video documenting the current challenges confronting the Kadazandusun language and explore measures to prevent its extinction. For indigenous communities, languages serve not only as markers of their origin and community membership but also embody the ethical values and ancestral knowledge systems that bind them to their land and are vital for their survival and the aspirations of their youth.

On another topic, SEEDS students produced three videos on the role of Indigenous youth in agriculture. They learned the importance of engaging the local community in video documentation since their perspective offers a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

India: Media fellows in southern India (2 female, 2 male) focused on developing stories on the coastal Indigenous Peoples of Trivandrum, Kerala, in particular artisanal fishers. They worked with Sea Tribes, a media initiative that focuses on ground reporting from the region, and 26 people participated (12 female, 14 male) in this initiative.

Community Radio in the Philippines

Radyo Sagada is an Indigenous community radio station powered by committed volunteer broadcasters and technicians. For over a decade, it has served listeners in the Cordillera, Region 1, and Region 2 in North Luzon. Programs produced by community members cover legal issues, culture, language, agriculture, religious programs, environment, and climate change adaptation. The challenges it faces include aging equipment, limited time for volunteer activities in the face of economic hardship brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, budgetary restrictions, and red tagging.



The media fellowship program from July 2023 to October 2023 provided six target volunteer broadcasters and other community volunteers the opportunity to develop their capabilities for journalism, radio broadcasting, and social media streaming. The project involved 40 participants (32 female, 8 male).


- i. Equipment maintenance and troubleshooting: Training was conducted on how to maintain aging equipment, how to troubleshoot problems, and safety improvements. Storms misalign transmitter antennas, interrupt power, and destroy equipment with lightning strikes; since the training, there has been improved delivery and regularity of broadcasts even during seasons of thunderstorms.
- ii. Capacity building for broadcasters: Capacity building on basic journalism, radio broadcasting, and audio-video production.
- iii. FPIC: During training, participants produced and broadcast content including 10 audio plugs on FPIC and 75 riddles and trivia questions.
- iv. Expanded audience with social media live streaming: Venturing into social media broadcasts provides Radyo Sagada a wider audience outside of its transmission range. With social media, Indigenous peoples from the Cordillera currently residing abroad and other parts of the Philippines have a source of verified and relevant information from Radyo Sagada.

Strategic Goal 2: Expand AIPP's outreach

Objective 2.1: Expand and build the capacity of the networks of AIPP i.e., NIWA, IVAN, IPHRD, IKPA and AIYP for greater outreach and integrated leadership with necessary skills.

Indigenous Voices of Asia Network (IVAN)

AIPP established IVAN in July 2013 to serve as a platform for promoting solidarity and cooperation among indigenous journalists, non-indigenous journalists and indigenous rights activists in advancing and defending media freedom, freedom of information, Indigenous Peoples' rights and democracy in Asia.



Regional Learning Exchange of IVAN: This regional learning exchange was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand in August 2023. The exchange was a critical space devoted to decolonised indigenous perspectives in news coverage by indigenous journalists from seven Asian countries. The theme “Beyond the News Cycle” was aimed at critically visiting what it means to be indigenous and a journalist in an era when both identities are under threat in political economies globally as alarming trends of State reprisal against journalists has become the norm, indigenous journalists who form the most marginalised group among journalists must be protected at all costs as the recordkeepers and storytellers of Indigenous Peoples.

Strategic Goal 3: Enhance rights-holders’ and stakeholders’ effective engagements

The programme has prioritised digital rights and security of Indigenous Peoples, a factor overlooked in the past. With rapid advancements in both existing and emerging technology, Indigenous Peoples’ digital footprints are heavily surveilled by governments given that many Indigenous communities live in “disturbed areas”, a categorization that enables and justifies gross human rights violations of IPs both offline and online. In the absence of adequate safe spaces, Indigenous People continue to face the negative impact of policy in the global tech arena, in governance and content moderation.

AIPP took part in developing the Civil Society Manifesto for Ethical AI, as part of a global coalition coordinated by Forus across over 30 countries. The initiative aims to steer AI policies towards safeguarding rights and decolonising AI discourse, drawing attention to the ways AI is inherently ridden with algorithm bias and poisoned data, threatening Indigenous data sovereignty, livelihoods, widens the Digital Divide, and reproduces discriminatory narratives.

Objective 3.2 Expand and strengthen AIPP’s foundational and distributive leadership in realizing its organizational mandate and vision

In 2023, the IVAN focal point in Nepal translated the AIPP communication toolkit from English to Nepali.

Strategic Goal 4: Strengthen AIPP’s ability to adapt

Objective 4.1: Promote a culture of research and innovation to take new initiatives and approaches

AIPP produced publications across its programmes and in collaboration with members and partners. Some of the titles published in 2023 are listed below.

#	Title of Publication	Produced By
1	The Customary Self-Government System of the Tamhang (THAKALI) Nation	AIPP
2	AIPP Annual Report 2022	AIPP
3	Annual Human Rights Report 2023 (Bangladesh)	Kapaeeng Foundation
4	Nationally Determined Contribution in Asia: Are Governments Recognizing the Rights, Roles and Contributions of Indigenous Peoples?	AIPP
5	Booklet: Feasibility Study on the participation of Indigenous Women in Entrepreneurship on Water Governance	GDA
6	Indigenous Women’s Customary Land Tenure: A study of Three Communities in Northern Thailand	AIPP
7	Self-Governance and Democracy Among the Ao Naga of Nagaland	AIPP
8	Flowing against the current: The role and impact of Indigenous women in water governance amidst climate change in Phi Village in Ratanakiri, Cambodia	CIWA
9	Free, Prior, and Informed Consent of the Tamang Indigenous Peoples of Nepal – An Independent Assessment on Compliance with the IFC Performance Standard in the Upper Trishuli-1 Hydroelectric Project	AIPP, LAHURNIP, IWGIA



#	Title of Publication	Produced By
10	White Paper on the Issue of Person with Disabilities	NIDA
11	Asian Framework on Indigenous Knowledge and Data Sovereignty	AIPP
12	Organizational Policy on the Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuses and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy	AIPP
13	Briefing 2: Tidal waves of aggressive development and the struggles of Balik and Paser Indigenous women	AIPP & IWGIA
14	Manual for Practitioners: Lesson Learnt from Indigenous' Biocentric Restoration Project	AIPP, FAOs, NESFAS, CINDES, INBAR
15	An Intersectionality Guidebook for Social Movements Organisations in Asia and the Pacific	Co-developed FIFF Consortium
16	Situation of the Rights of Indigenous Women and Indigenous Women with Disabilities in Nepal (CEDAW Shadow Report)	NIWF
17	Study on intersectional approaches focusing on gender-based and issue-based violence against indigenous women, girls and IPwDs - Bangladesh	BIWN
18	Call to Action for Disability-Inclusive Climate Change: A Collective Voice from Indigenous Women and Girls with Disabilities	NIDWAN

Financial Statement



Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation
Statement of Activities
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

	Baht
Revenues	
Grant received for project activities	76,462,711.70
Other income	349,376.75
<hr/>	
Total Revenues	76,812,088.45
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Expenses	
Project activities expense	79,798,666.30
Administration expense	1,478,982.28
Depreciation and assets written-off	626,882.00
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Total Expenses	81,904,530.58
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Revenues Over (Under) Expenses	(5,092,442.13)



Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation
Statement of Financial Position
As of December 31, 2023

Assets

	Baht
Current Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents	30,750,149.99
Advance to partners	14,370,554.99
Accrued grant received	-
Other receivables	705,862.62
Other current assets	3,841,241.00
<hr/>	
Total Current Assets	49,667,808.60
Non-Current Asset	
Property, plant and equipment-net	8,972,411.88
Total Non-Current Asset	8,972,411.88
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Total Assets	58,640,220.48





Liabilities and Fund Balance

Current Liabilities

Payable to partners	1,500,554.42
Accrued program expenses	271,496.57
Other payables and accrued expenses	995,339.92
Employee benefit obligations	3,212,505.90
Other current liabilities	1,149,481.43
<hr/>	
Total Current Liabilities	7,129,378.24

Fund Balance

Initial fund	200,000.00
Fund balance	3,911,636.60
Reserve fund	47,399,205.64
Fund balance - ending	51,510,842.24
<hr/>	
Total Fund Balance	58,640,220.48



Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)

Annual Report

2023



Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)

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