



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact



# A Message from the Secretary General

The year 2024 marked a defining chapter for the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)—a year of resilience, renewal, and forward movement grounded in the vision that gave birth to our movement over three decades ago.

In 1988, Indigenous leaders affirmed a foundational political truth through the landmark report **Indigenous Peoples in Asia: Towards Self-Determination**. This historic report laid down the fundamental truth that self-determination is the framework through which our struggles must be understood and advanced. The formation of the AIPP that followed was deliberate—Pact signified unity, shared values, mutual accountability, and collective strength through consensus and solidarity. These principles continue to guide us, shaping both our moral compass and our political direction in 2024.

Yet, this year also reminded us of the enduring reality confronting Indigenous Peoples in Asia; Systemic repression remains widespread and deeply entrenched. From 2019 to 2024, AIPP documented 1,126 human rights violations across nine countries, a number that reflects only a fraction of lived experiences. Militarisation, land dispossession, criminalisation, development aggression, and shrinking civic space continue to define the political landscape faced by our communities.

Indigenous struggles are often mischaracterised as cultural appeals for recognition. At their core, they are movements for democratisation, demanding more inclusion, autonomy, and legitimacy for diverse political communities and ways of life. This is not a plea to be accommodated by democracy. It is a call to deepen it.

Responding to this context, 2024 became a landmark year for strengthening AIPP from within. We institutionalised Country Focal Organisations and adopted a collective Statement of Goal and Purpose, reinforcing our values-based governance, regional cohesion, and shared accountability.

We also made strategic investments in future leadership. The Course on Democracy and Self-Determination and the AIPP School of Participation are cultivating a new generation of leaders, with a strong and inspiring presence of young women. This year, graduates of these initiatives moved into key leadership



roles across the region, demonstrating that renewal is already underway. The continued strengthening of the Indigenous Women’s Network of Asia and the Asia Indigenous Youth Platform further affirmed that the future of democratic transformation in Asia will be shaped by women and youth leadership.

One major strategic platform was launched in 2024. The Platform for Asia Indigenous Peoples’ Territorial Rights-co-established with the International Land Coalition-Asia-expanded alliances beyond Indigenous constituencies to build broader democratic movements for territorial justice. At the community level, the Centres of Excellence in Village Governance (COE-VG) in Malaysia and Thailand expanded, advancing living systems of customary governance; and the Centres of Defenders (COD) were recognized in Nepal and Bangladesh, strengthening collective protection for Indigenous human rights defenders. Notably, COE-VG signals an institutional shift from top-down localisation to bottom-up regionalisation, creating horizontal networks at the country and regional levels, where communities lead and institutions support.

Global advocacy in 2024 also reached historic milestones. The UN Convention on Biological Diversity elevated the Article 8(j) Working Group to a permanent subsidiary body, strengthening the place of Indigenous knowledge in global environmental governance. In another breakthrough, Indigenous representatives participated in the UN Human Rights Council without NGO status for the first time, advancing the long-standing pursuit of permanent Indigenous observer status at the UN.

Amid these advances, AIPP completed the draft Strategic Direction and Strategic Plan 2025–2029, charting the path for the next phase of our movement. It carries a collective commitment:

“While we honour the diverse priorities of our members, we unite under one sacred vision: a world where Indigenous sovereignty breathes life into every community, every system, and every generation to come.”

AIPP stands today as living proof of what solidarity can achieve when rooted in shared history, collective responsibility, and moral conviction. As we move forward, may we continue with courage, clarity, and unwavering faith in our peoples and our future.

With solidarity,

**Gam A. Shimray**

Secretary General

Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact



# Abbreviations

<b>AIPP</b>	Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact
<b>AIYP</b>	Asia Indigenous Youth Platform
<b>APFSD</b>	Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>BHR</b>	Business and Human Rights
<b>CBD</b>	Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women
<b>CERD</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
<b>CIPA</b>	Cambodia Indigenous Peoples' Alliance
<b>CoD</b>	Centres of Defenders
<b>COE-VG</b>	Centres of Excellence in Village Governance
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organizations
<b>CSW</b>	Commission on the Status of Women
<b>CWEARC</b>	Cordillera Women's Education, Action Research Center
<b>DTP</b>	Diplomacy Training Programme
<b>EC</b>	Executive Council
<b>EMRIP</b>	Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
<b>ENV</b>	Environment Programme
<b>ESCR-NET</b>	International Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
<b>FPIC</b>	Free Prior and Informed Consent
<b>GAT</b>	Gender Action Team
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence
<b>HRCPA</b>	Human Rights Campaign and Policy Advocacy
<b>IIFB</b>	International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity
<b>IKPA</b>	Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples of Asia
<b>ILC</b>	International Land Coalition



<b>IPHRD</b>	Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Defenders
<b>IPP</b>	Indigenous Peoples Partnership
<b>IVAN</b>	Indigenous Voices in Asia Network
<b>IWGIA</b>	International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs
<b>IWNT</b>	Indigenous Women Network in Thailand
<b>IWP</b>	Indigenous Women Programme
<b>JOAS</b>	Jaringan Orang Asal SeMalaysia
<b>LTR</b>	Land, Territories and Resources
<b>MIYA</b>	Myanmar Indigenous Youth Alliance
<b>MO</b>	Member Organisation
<b>NBSAPs</b>	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan
<b>NCIP</b>	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
<b>NIWA</b>	Network of Indigenous Women in Asia
<b>OSMB</b>	Organizational Strengthening and Movement Building Programme
<b>PAIPT</b>	Platform for Asia Indigenous Peoples' Territorial Rights
<b>PSEAH</b>	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment
<b>RCB</b>	Regional Capacity Building Programme
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>TKN</b>	Ton-Kla Indigenous Youth and Children Network
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNDRIP</b>	Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UNPFII</b>	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
<b>UNSRIP</b>	United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
<b>UPR</b>	Universal Periodic Review





# CONTENTS

● A Message from the Secretary General	i
● Abbreviations	iii
● A Brief Introduction of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact	1
● Use of the Term “Indigenous Peoples”	2
● Executive Summary	4
● Highlights of Key Activities	8
Strategic Goal 1: Increase AIPP’s Impacts	8
Strategic Goal 2: Expand AIPP’s Outreach	10
Strategic Goal 3: Enhance Effective Engagement of Rights Holders and Stakeholders	15
Strategic Goal 4: Strengthen AIPP’s Ability to Adapt	17
● Lessons Learned & Challenges	21
● Financial Statement of 2024 Fiscal Year	23



# A Brief Introduction of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact

Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) is a regional network of Indigenous Peoples' organizations and a movement that was initiated in 1988, and the Secretariat office in Chiang Mai was established in 1992, to promote and defend the rights of Indigenous Peoples in Asia. 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 keys 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 to achieve 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 is an organization of 46 member organizations across fourteen countries from four sub-regions (South Asia, Mekong, Southeast Asia, and East Asia) in Asia, with twelve country-level formations and thirty-four local and sub-country level organizations. Of these members, sixteen are ethnic-based organizations, six Indigenous women organizations, four Indigenous youths' organizations, and one organization of Indigenous Persons with disability. In 2023 and 2024, AIPP Executive Council endorsed the Cambodia Indigenous Peoples Alliance (CIPA), Indigenous Peoples Partnership (IPP), and Tong-Kla Indigenous and Youth Network (TKN) as candidate members from Cambodia, Myanmar, and Thailand. The applications of the candidate members will be reviewed in the next General Assembly of AIPP for approval.

Further, AIPP works beyond member countries and organizations through Indigenous-led regional 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), Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples in Asia (IKPA), and Platform for Asia Indigenous Peoples' Territorial Rights (PAIPT). AIPP serves as the regional Secretariat of these networks. The regional Secretariat of AIPP is based in Chiang Mai, Thailand. At present, AIPP has 30 full-time staff at the Secretariat and is implementing several activities across 14 countries in Asia.



Use of the Term

## “Indigenous Peoples”



Over the decades, the concept of the term Indigenous Peoples has evolved beyond the original meaning found in dictionaries. We use the term 'Indigenous Peoples' (IPs in short) with capitalised initials to denote its evolved meaning, which is well established in international law as well as in some domestic laws.

The 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) recognises the right of Indigenous Peoples to self-determination, as all other people, by virtue of which they can freely determine their political status. The capitalization of the term 'Indigenous Peoples' is increasingly being used by UN bodies, other international and national organizations, as well as governments across the world. For example, in Canada, the term Indigenous Peoples and First Nations are capitalised the same way as, the term Canadian.



In Asia, governments use different terms to refer to us as a collective, like ethnic minorities, tribes and native people, etc. There are also other names given to us by outsiders, some of which are not appreciated by many of us since they often imply notions of cultural inferiority, being primitive or backward. Some examples are **Sakai** (meaning slave) in Thailand or **Aadim Jati** (primitive tribes) in India.

When we call ourselves Indigenous Peoples, we do not intend to claim to be the only native people to our regions and countries. We have also lived side-by-side with other people and communities, native to their own lands where they settled before the colonial period. These were mostly organized as state societies and are today, the dominant people who have economic and political power in our regions or countries.

Our notion of guardianship and spiritual relationship with our lands and territories are distinct features of our worldviews. A strong sense of community, and kinship solidarity, collective ownership of land and resources, and consensus decision-making are some of the distinctive elements of our social and political institutions that set us apart as Indigenous Peoples from our neighbours who belong to the dominant groups or non-Indigenous minorities and natives in our countries.

We use Indigenous Peoples to emphasize our diversity and our rights under international law. The word "Indigenous" is also often used as an adjective with other nouns, like "Indigenous plants" (referring to plant species native to an area) or "Indigenous knowledge" (referring to local or traditional knowledge); all of which may or may not relate to Indigenous Peoples. In the publications of AIPP, whenever "Indigenous" is used in adjective form, it is with explicit reference to Indigenous Peoples, even though the word "Indigenous" may/not be written with a capital initial letter.

### Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)



# Executive Summary

2024 was a pivotal year for the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), a movement of 46 Indigenous organizations across 14 Asian countries. Amid a challenging regional environment, including political turmoil and declining democracy, AIPP advanced its mission to defend Indigenous rights, strengthen its networks, and empower communities. The highlights of the year are presented under AIPP's four Strategic Goals:



## Goal One: Increase AIPP's Impacts

AIPP reinforced governance and accountability to make a stronger impact. Executive Council members led national consultations in Northeast India and Thailand, producing a unified position on Indigenous identity and supporting advocacy for Thailand's Ethnic Way of Life Bill and Northeast India Position Paper on Indigeneity. Regional networks of the Indigenous Peoples Human Rights



Defender (IPHRD) documented 258 human-rights violations against Indigenous Peoples, creating evidence to fuel advocacy. At the Asia Preparatory Meeting on UN engagement, 115 participants from 13 countries (including Indigenous youth and women’s networks) strategized on upcoming UN forums. AIPP also honored two member groups – LAHURNIP (Nepal) and Kapaeeng (Bangladesh) – as “Centers of Defenders” in recognition of their courageous human-rights work. 65 Indigenous Peoples leaders from 10 Asian countries gathered for the 4th Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples of Asia (IKPA) conference, representing 36 global, regional, national, and local organizations including elders, women, youth, persons with disabilities, media practitioners, lawyers, development agencies, and funders. The conference collectively adopted the Tohmle<sup>1</sup> Statement, which Asian Indigenous Peoples used to advance their policy advocacy at COP29 and COP16.

## Goal Two: Expand AIPP’s Outreach

AIPP broadened its network and influence. In 2024 AIPP launched the Platform for Asia Indigenous Peoples’ Territorial Rights (PAIPT) to unify land and territory rights campaigns, and received applications from four new organizations (from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Thailand) for AIPP membership. AIPP engaged in 38 regional and international advocacy events, ensuring Indigenous voices were heard at forums such as the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68), the CEDAW Committee, UNPFII, EMRIP, UNSRIP, UNFCCC and CBD COPs, and the ASEAN Human Rights mechanisms. As co-chair of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB), AIPP contributed to establishing a permanent subsidiary body on Article 8(j) within the Convention on Biological Diversity at COP16, strengthening the recognition of Indigenous Knowledge in global environmental governance.

Indigenous women activists gained visibility on international stages, attending events like the Asia-Pacific Feminist Forum. AIPP’s policy advocacy saw concrete wins: it secured recognition of Indigenous Peoples’ rights, for example, inclusion of the Free, Prior and Informed Consent and land rights in drafts of the ASEAN Environmental Rights Declaration.

---

1. Tohmle” is the Indigenous name for Dhampus,a village situated in the Gandaki province of Nepal. This name holds cultural significance for the Gurung Indigenous Peoples.



### Goal 3: Engage Rights Holders & Stakeholders

AIPP invested heavily in building the capacities of Indigenous communities, especially women and youth. Over 3,200 Indigenous Peoples (women, youth, persons with disabilities, and others) participated in AIPP-supported trainings or received technical support. AIPP's Indigenous Women's Programme (IWP) organized leadership and safety trainings for women environmental defenders and helped revitalize the Network of Indigenous Women in Asia (NIWA) with a new strategic plan and leadership team. AIPP hosted a global Indigenous Youth Leadership fellowship and backed the formation of the Myanmar Indigenous Youth Alliance (MIYA), nurturing a new generation of leaders. It also partnered with expert organizations (e.g. Diplomacy Training Programme, International Work Groups for Indigenous Affairs, United Nations Development Programme etc.,) to conduct national trainings on climate justice, business accountability, and human rights for young activists. These programs strengthened member organizations' ability to advocate at all levels and built solidarity across movements.

### Goal Four: Strengthen AIPP's Ability to Adapt

AIPP enhanced its institutional resilience and knowledge production. The organization published 12 research and knowledge products on topics such as women's leadership in Indigenous governance, gender-based violence, climate change adaptation, and participatory community data for development. Notably, AIPP released **Her Story 7**, a collection of personal narratives from eleven Indigenous women leaders across Asia, highlighting their journeys and successes. AIPP ensured that key materials (toolkits, reports, declarations) were translated and returned to Indigenous Communities. The E Sak Ka Ou<sup>2</sup> Declaration, the first-ever declaration of Asian Indigenous Peoples on climate change, biodiversity and pollution was translated into 11 languages, significantly expanding its reach and enabling AIPP members and partners across the region to champion its messages in their own advocacy work. Internally, AIPP prioritized gender justice and accountability: staff, executive council members, and board members received training on gender equality, AIPP adopted stronger Prevention of Sexual

2. "E-sak Ka Ou" is a term used by the Urak Lawoi Indigenous Peoples to refer to the place where their ancestors first settled on Lanta Island, Krabi Province, Thailand. It means the gill of the Manta ray.





# Highlights of Key Activities



## Strategic Goal 1

### Increase AIPP's Impacts

Strategic Goal 1 focuses on strengthening governance, accountability, and Indigenous leadership at all levels. AIPP undertook several initiatives in 2024 to engage its members and networks in advocacy and policy processes:

- ▶ **Country and Sub-Regional Consultations:** AIPP's Executive Council members led national consultations in Northeast India and Thailand. The meeting in Thailand, involving local Indigenous leaders, produced a shared position on Indigenous identity and helped develop an advocacy strategy for Thailand's proposed Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Way of Life of Ethnic Groups Bill. In Northeast India, AIPP's Member Organizations (MO) produced a historic NE Position Paper on indigeneity, which clarifies the position of AIPP's MOs in NE India. Similarly, in November 2024, AIPP convened a virtual East Asia consultation, with participants from Japan and Taiwan, resulting in an agreement to initiate constitutional amendments and an assessment of the regional situation.
- ▶ **Human Rights Documentation:** AIPP's networks maintained a strong focus on documenting rights violations. Through the IPHRD members and country focal organizations in nine countries, 258 cases of human rights violations against Indigenous communities were systematically monitored and recorded. These cases range from land grabbing and forced evictions to attacks on activists and killings. These documented cases are compiled in AIPP database, which informs AIPP's evidence-based advocacy and helps identify abuse patterns and urgent hotspots.



- ▶▶ **Asia Preparatory Meeting:** In March 2024, AIPP hosted the Asia Preparatory Meeting on Indigenous Peoples and UN Mechanisms in Chiang Mai (Thailand). This four-day gathering brought together 115 participants (54 women, 61 men) from 13 countries, including AIPP's regional networks, strategic partners, and the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNSRIP). Participants provided recommendations to present at upcoming UN sessions (UNPFII, EMRIP, etc.), ensuring Asia's Indigenous priorities are heard at the UN. A highlight was honoring two member organizations – LAHURNIP (Nepal) and Kapaeeng Foundation (Bangladesh) – as "Centers of Defenders" for exemplary courage in defending Indigenous rights. Recognizing these groups showcased role models of effective human-rights advocacy and strengthened solidarity within the defender network.
- ▶▶ **4th Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples of Asia (IKPA) Conference:** AIPP organized the 4th IKPA Conference from 1–4 October 2024 in Pokhara, Nepal, bringing together 65 Indigenous Peoples leaders from 10 Asian countries. Participants represented 36 global, regional, national, and local organizations including elders, women, youth, persons with disabilities, media practitioners, lawyers, development agencies, and funders. The conference focused on Indigenous Peoples' rights, biodiversity, and climate change, and collectively adopted the Tohmle Statement which served as a key advocacy tool for Asian Indigenous Peoples at UNFCCC COP29 and CBD COP16.
- ▶▶ **Community Initiatives:** AIPP supported grassroots projects that revive Indigenous knowledge and foster self-reliance. In the northern Philippines, an AIPP partner conducted hands-on training for local farmers in sustainable agriculture using traditional methods, such as organic fertilizers made from fermented plant juices and natural pest repellents. This empowered communities to improve crop yields without the use of chemicals. In the same region (Tulgao, Kalinga), the local farmers' association restarted a rice cooperative: members contribute to an emergency rice reserve and maintain affordable grain supplies. The new co-op adopted lessons from past failures to enhance transparency and

sustainability. These community-driven initiatives, grounded in cultural values of solidarity and reciprocity, have strengthened local resilience, food security, and the revival of traditional practices.

Through these activities, AIPP deepened engagement between its leadership and grassroots members, ensuring that regional strategies reflect local priorities. Strengthened governance and community empowerment under Goal 1 have amplified AIPP's impact on the ground.



## Strategic Goal 2

### Expand AIPP's Outreach

Strategic Goal 2 emphasizes expanding AIPP's reach and influence through networks, partnerships, and advocacy. Key achievements in 2024 include:

- ▶ **New Networks and Membership:** AIPP established and supported new collaborative platforms to unify Indigenous advocacy in collaboration with the International Land Coalition (ILC) and MOs. The Platform for Asia Indigenous Peoples' Territorial Rights (PAIPT) was launched as a multi-stakeholder network focusing on land, territory, and resource rights across Asia, with membership



**Photo 2:** Regional Conference on Lands, Territories and Resources, 22 – 24 February 2024, Chiang MaiChange, 1-4 October 2024, Pokhara.





women's movement, environmental, and human rights coalitions. Notably, an AIPP co-organized side event at the 11th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) in Bangkok featured Indigenous community-generated data on SDGs, influencing calls to integrate such data into official reports.

- » **Policy and Global Engagement:** AIPP leveraged its growing stature to influence broader policy processes. It continued to play a leading role in the Global Coordinating Body on Enhanced Indigenous Participation at the UN, advocating for the formal accreditation of Indigenous representative institutions. In 2024, AIPP provided ideas to UN workshops on this issue; by year-end, the UN General Assembly had advanced a draft resolution on enhanced Indigenous participation, reflecting AIPP's inputs. AIPP's Secretary General was invited to speak at a high-level UN event marking the 10th anniversary of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, elevating Asia's Indigenous voice. AIPP also engaged in UN treaty processes: through its leadership role in ESCR-Net, AIPP



**Photo 4:** Presentation by Pallab Chakma, IP member to ILC Council, 23 February 2024, Chiang Mai, Amora Hotel



co-drafted Indigenous proposals, “redline document” for the UN binding treaty on business and human rights, insisting on explicit protections for land rights and FPIC and corporate accountability. AIPP facilitated the attendance of Asian Indigenous delegates at treaty negotiations to provide testimony on corporate abuses. Additionally, AIPP assisted Indigenous networks in preparing alternative reports (shadow reports) for UN human rights reviews (e.g., UPRs, CEDAW, SDG Voluntary National Reviews in Nepal and Cambodia, CERD country reviews). These efforts contributed to the UN recommendations urging governments to protect better Indigenous rights, such as land rights, identity recognition, gender violence prevention, etc., which AIPP and its members will continue to engage at the national level.

As co-chair of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB), AIPP contributed to the establishment of the first-ever permanent subsidiary body on Article 8(j) under the Convention on Biological Diversity at COP16 — a milestone that strengthens the long-term participation and influence of Indigenous Peoples in global environmental governance. AIPP also supported its members and partners in engaging with the revision process of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) across the region.

- ▶▶ **Regional Campaigns and Partnerships:** AIPP extended its outreach to support specific campaigns and regional dialogues. In the Mekong sub-region, AIPP worked with MOs to oppose harmful developments. Similarly, in Bangladesh’s Chittagong Hill Tracts, AIPP helped coordinate a campaign that halted a tourism project threatening to displace the Mro Indigenous community. AIPP connected grassroots protests with national advocacy through open letters to the governments and political stakeholders, and raised the issue with UN experts, leading to a temporary project halt. These campaigns demonstrated how Indigenous advocacy, allied with consumer and investor pressure, can influence corporate behavior.



By expanding its networks and participating in key forums, AIPP ensured that Indigenous issues gained prominence beyond the movement. The broadened outreach under Goal 2 has built bridges between Indigenous movements and other sectors and set the stage for integrated campaigns on Indigenous rights at regional and global levels.



**Photo 5:** Regional Dialogue of Indigenous Peoples of Asia with the World Bank, 8-9 November 2024, Siem Reap, Cambodia. Credit: CIPO





### Strategic Goal 3

#### Enhance Effective Engagement of Rights Holders and Stakeholders

Strategic Goal 3 aims to empower Indigenous rights-holders (communities, women, youth, persons with disabilities) and stakeholders (member organizations, partners, states, donors) to engage effectively in advocacy and decision-making. In 2024, AIPP delivered extensive capacity-building and networking activities:

- ▶ **Women's Leadership and NIWA:** AIPP's Indigenous Women's Programme (IWP) continued to strengthen women's leadership. In August 2024, AIPP organized a week-long regional workshop in Chiang Mai for 12 Indigenous women environmental defenders from Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. The training covered international human-rights mechanisms (e.g. UN treaty bodies), climate and biodiversity policy, and practical skills (digital security, self-care). Participants reported greater confidence in using tools like UNDRIP and submitting reports to UN bodies, and in protecting themselves and their communities. AIPP also supported the Network of Indigenous Women in Asia (NIWA) to institutionalize and strategize. It funded a NIWA regional exchange in the Philippines (24 women from South, Southeast, and East Asia), where members



**Photo 6:** Indigenous Women Regional Exchange at Cordillera Day April 2024 Philippines



shared experiences of land dispossession, militarization, and gender-based violence, building solidarity and collective priorities. In July 2024, AIPP facilitated NIWA's strategic planning meeting for 22 women from 11 countries, resulting in a draft five-year plan (2025–2029) focused on advocacy on land and GBV, capacity-building, climate change, and network strengthening. The finalized plan, to be adopted in the upcoming NIWA General Assembly in 2025, outlines concrete steps, such as establishing a secretariat and strengthening women leadership, and has attracted donor interest for NIWA's initiatives.

- ▶ **Youth Leadership Development:** Recognizing youth as future leaders, AIPP invested in youth engagement. In January 2024, AIPP co-hosted the International Land Coalition's Young Leaders Fellowship in Chiang Mai, involving 18 Indigenous youth (from Asia and beyond) in intensive training blocks on leadership, project planning, and field learning in Thailand. Each fellow refined a community action project (e.g. mapping forest rights in Indonesia, launching a youth advocacy group in Nepal). The fellowship not only built the participants' skills but also raised AIPP's profile in the global youth movement; many alumni have since stayed engaged with AIPP networks. AIPP also catalyzed country-level youth initiatives: for example, legal training for youths from Bangladesh, Nepal, and the Philippines, and the election of new youth leaders in Nepal, Cambodia, Malaysia, and Thailand in their respective country-level youth formations. In partnership with the Diplomacy Training Program (DTP), AIPP co-organized a national Indigenous youth advocacy workshop in Malaysia (May 2024, hosted by JOAS), where 19 young leaders studied rights instruments and visited contested mine sites. They returned motivated to form legal-support committees and awareness campaigns. These efforts have inspired youth in different countries to organize, advocate, and learn from each other.
- ▶ **Collaboration with External Partnerships:** AIPP leveraged partnerships to broaden training scope. Through collaboration with external experts, AIPP provided resources to non-Indigenous stakeholders as well. Notably, AIPP worked with DTP in 2023–24 to train European Union diplomats on Indigenous Peoples' rights,



improving how aid officials engage with Indigenous communities. AIPP also collaborated with networks like ESCR-Net to deliver webinars on corporate accountability, allowing Asian Indigenous defenders to learn from global experts about the UN Guiding Principles and business and human rights processes. Internally, AIPP’s Human Rights Campaign and Policy Advocacy Programme (HRCPA) continued online training for IPHRD focal points, teaching secure data management and strategic use of rights documentation. This training has led to more consistent and effective rights-monitoring by defenders across the region.

- ▶ **Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Defenders Network (IPHRD):** AIPP strengthened the multi-country Indigenous Peoples’ Human Rights Defenders Network. In 2024, the network convened virtually to share country updates on security situations and to refresh skills such as safety protocols for defenders. With AIPP’s facilitation, IPHRD focal groups also deepened their engagement with national institutions.

Through these capacity-building and engagement initiatives, AIPP nurtured a stronger, more diverse, and skilled constituency of Indigenous rights-holders and allied partners. By the end of 2024, women’s and youth networks were more organized and influential, and grassroots communities were better equipped to participate in policy processes – all advancing AIPP’s vision of inclusive participation.



### Strategic Goal 4

#### Strengthen AIPP’s Ability to Adapt

Strategic Goal 4 focuses on enhancing AIPP’s internal capacities, fostering a culture of innovation, and ensuring continuous learning. In 2024, AIPP implemented multiple initiatives to strengthen the organization and produce new knowledge:

- ▶ **Research and Publications:** AIPP and its programs delivered 12 research and knowledge products. Highlights include: a study by the Cordillera Women’s Education and Research Center (CWEARC)



on the roles of Indigenous women in traditional governance in the Philippines, which documented women's leadership and recommended gender-responsive policies; a gender analysis of Indigenous women environmental defenders in Northern Thailand, revealing how climate stress exacerbates domestic violence and limiting factors for women; and an evaluation of the "Inclusion Project" (Oxfam Mekong, on Indigenous participation in water governance) that reported on successes (e.g. Indigenous-managed water governance) and challenges (sustaining engagement post-project). AIPP's flagship Her Story series reached its 7th edition in 2024: Her Story 7 profiles eleven Indigenous women leaders (from seven Asian countries) and their achievements. These publications were disseminated widely to partners, members, UN agencies, and donors and used as advocacy tools. The E Sak Ka Ou Declaration, the first-ever declaration of Asian Indigenous Peoples on climate change, biodiversity and pollution was translated into Bahasa Malaysia, Bengali, Burmese, Hindi, Ilocano, Khmer, Nepali, Thai, and Vietnamese languages, expanding its reach and enabling AIPP members and partners across the region to champion its messages in their own advocacy work.



**Photo 7:** E-Sak Ka Ou Declaration from Environment Conference 2023



- ▶▶ **Indigenous Navigator and Community Data:** Under the Indigenous Navigator initiative, AIPP produced four community-generated data reports in 2024. For Malaysia, AIPP completed a full report (“Malaysian Indigenous Peoples’ Challenges and Opportunities”) and a policy brief summarizing key findings and recommendations of the country report. For Bangladesh, AIPP published an advocacy paper in English and Bengali calling for specific actions to implement and protect the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord, combating violence against Indigenous women based on Navigator data. AIPP also documented the process of participatory data collection in Bangladesh, showing how community surveys reveal different education, health, and livelihood indicators than official statistics. These evidence-based tools were shared with government bodies (for example, sections of the Malaysia report were presented to Malaysia’s Human Rights Commission, and the Bangladesh papers were discussed with Members of Parliament), shifting discussions toward measurable Indigenous priorities. Additionally, AIPP and partners finalized detailed community profiles for two Philippine villages (Tulgao and Tanglag), documenting their history, governance, and development needs. These profiles serve as self-advocacy tools for the communities and as evidence for requests to local authorities.
- ▶▶ **Institutional Strengthening – Gender and Governance:** AIPP invested in building its own organizational strength. The internal Gender Action Team (GAT) was strengthened, holding multiple strategic meetings to review policies and plan gender-sensitive improvements. AIPP organized gender-sensitivity training for its Executive Council and staff (e.g. a workshop in Chiang Mai in February 2024), raising awareness of biases and building a shared language on gender issues. In 2024, AIPP also developed detailed operational guidelines to implement its Gender Justice and PSEAH policies, specifying procedures for reporting misconduct and standards for program design. These measures reinforced a safe and inclusive workplace and showed AIPP’s accountability. Moreover, AIPP enhanced staff capacity by conducting workshops on Indigenous rights (land and self-determination) and by emphasizing inclusive practices (for example, adapting meeting



times for members with childcare responsibilities and providing translation during meetings). On governance, AIPP updated its results-based management and monitoring systems across projects, improving how outcomes are tracked and lessons are integrated.

- » **Organizational Adaptation and Learning:** AIPP continued to innovate in how it operates. The success of virtual meetings in 2024 confirmed that online platforms can supplement in-person activities, so AIPP plans to use webinars and hybrid events more widely to maintain engagement. AIPP also maintained an emergency rapid-response mechanism to support Indigenous defenders, women, and communities in crisis. In 2024, this fund provided flood relief in northern Thailand, legal and medical aid to survivors of gender-based violence in Nepal and Cambodia, and support for the Urak Lawoi sea nomad community in Thailand, who were facing displacement. All interventions were documented as case studies. These experiences reinforced the lesson that flexible, quick-response funding is critical; AIPP is now advocating with donors for more flexible and core funds to address urgent needs. Overall, the combination of research, policy inputs, institutional strengthening, and practical innovations in 2024 has made AIPP more gender-balanced, learning-oriented, and accountable. By empowering its people and improving its systems, AIPP is better positioned to navigate future challenges and to serve Indigenous communities effectively.

Through these adaptive measures, AIPP has laid a stronger organizational foundation. The knowledge products and improved internal practices will guide AIPP's work and enhance its credibility – ultimately benefiting the Indigenous rights movement across Asia.



## Lessons Learned & Challenges

- ▶▶ **Project Management:** The number of projects increased in 2024, but most were activity-based, with little or no budget for human resources. This added workload to existing staff, which could impact staff performance, motivation, and well-being over the long term. Systematic measures to manage workload distribution and prioritize fundraising efforts to ensure adequate resources for human resource support.
- ▶▶ **Strengthening AIPP's Country-Processes:** The postponement of country processes in Malaysia, Bangladesh, and Nepal has affected AIPP's efforts to align country and regional priorities. It has also underscored the importance of contingency planning. As a member-driven organization, AIPP and its members must prioritize country processes to ensure stronger coordination and alignment with regional objectives.
- ▶▶ **Strengthening AIPP's Sub-Regional Process and Coordination:** Stronger collaboration with member organizations and partners through sub-regional processes is needed to align strategies and advocacy efforts. The sub-regional process can contribute to a common understanding among member organizations and regional solidarity, while empowering the Executive Council members to facilitate discussion and decision-making.
- ▶▶ **Use Viable Alternatives:** The East Asia sub-regional process, held virtually, proved that virtual platforms can effectively facilitate discussion, decision-making, and collaboration when in-person meetings are not feasible. AIPP should explore more viable alternatives as it coordinates expanding regional networks.
- ▶▶ **Capacity Strengthening:** Strengthening capacities and leadership at local, country, and regional levels remains crucial for long-term impact. Existing initiatives such as the AIPP School of Participation,



Center of Excellence in Village Governance (COE-VG) could be further improved and developed into more systematic capacity strengthening programmes.

- ▶▶ **Network & Partnership Management:** Managing a network of 47 organizations and five regional networks demands dedicated time, resources and staff. Efficient management of partners and networks is essential for responsiveness and long-term sustainability.
- ▶▶ **Capacity Building for MOs & Partners:** The strength of AIPP lies with Members and Partners. Members are the driver of change. AIPP needs to focus on strengthening the capacity of member organizations, including their internal control systems, monitoring and evaluation, financial management, and fundraising capacities.
- ▶▶ **Unrestricted and Flexible Funding:** Many requests from the member organizations and partners for emergency and urgent action, advocacy and sanctuary went unmet due to limited resources and flexibility. Increasing unrestricted and flexible funding would allow AIPP to respond more effectively to urgent needs.
- ▶▶ **Sub-grant Management:** Managing sub-grants has been challenging for AIPP due to limited experience and bureaucratic procedures. Moreover, the limited capacity of MOs and Partners in project management and government restrictions made it more challenging to strengthen sub-grant management. Therefore, the targeted capacity strengthening of both the AIPP Secretariat and its members is essential to ensure effective and efficient sub-grant management going forward.



# Financial Statement of 2024 Fiscal Year

Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation  
Statement of Activities  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

	Baht
	2024
<b>Revenues</b>	
Grant received for project activities	86,416,446.35
Other Income	1,140,281.05
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>87,556,727.40</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Project activities expense	79,434,447.21
Administration expense	6,196,300.39
Depreciation and assets written-off	551,245.85
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>86,181,993.45</b>
<b>Revenues Over (Under) Expenses</b>	<b>1,374,733.95</b>



**Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**As at December 31, 2024**

<b>Assets</b>	
	<b>Baht</b>
	<b>2024</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>	
Cash and cash equivalents	31,361,051.71
Advance to partners	16,051,949.56
Other receivables	538,051.14
Other current assets	505,510.23
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>48,456,562.64</b>
<b>Non-Current Asset</b>	
Property, plant and equipment	8,495,146.03
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<b>8,495,146.03</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>56,951,708.67</b>
<b>Liabilities and Fund Balance</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
Payable to partners	841,203.94
Accrued program expenses	241,150.00
Other payable and accrued expenses	1,283,195.20
Employee benefit obligations	-
Other current liabilities	1,494,865.05
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>3,860,414.19</b>
<b>Fund Balance</b>	
Initial Fund	200,000.00
Fund balance	
Reserve Fund	4355048.65
Fund-balance ending	48536245.83
<b>Total Fund Balance</b>	<b>53091294.48</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Fund Balance</b>	<b>56951708.67</b>



## **Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)**

112 Moo 1, Tambon Sanpranate, Amphur Sansai Chiang Mai, 50210, Thailand

Tel: + 66 (0)53 343 539 Fax: + 66 (0)53 343 540

[www.aippnet.org](http://www.aippnet.org)