

Group Work: Country Clinics

Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh

Nepal

Has a national programme under FPCP

- AIPP, Tebtebba and IWGIA etc., are supporting REDD+ awareness programme with IPs in Nepal – UN-REDD Programme needs to support IPs in the same manner – lack of resources to go down to the communities, UN-REDD need to focus on the grassroots level with specific programmes for IPs
- Very recent CSO alliance has been informed about the UN-REED programme through targeted support mission about corruption risk and social safe guard; NEFIN is included in this
- UN-REDD needs to show special attention to the indigenous people other relevant issues too (social, environmental)
- NEFIN has been included in the national REDD working group however, even though these mechanisms exist UN-REDD should also consult separately with NEFIN as a key stakeholder
- REDD cell doesn't have guidelines to integrate IPs into REDD+
- Need to raise awareness of IP issues in other civil society groups as well
- 38% of Nepal IP – very little information on the UN-REDD programme with IPs
- 2,100 Village Coordination Councils and 71 District Coordination Councils and 56 different IP groups included in NEFIN as well as other groups (youth, women etc.) – easy structure to work through

Needs

- Resources, Capacity building – need to be separate for IPs
- Key legal instruments such as ILO 169 and UNDRIP not currently being implemented – this needs to be supported in REDD+ activities

Sri Lanka

Has a National Programme under UN-REDD

- Ministry of environment has carried out one awareness programme
- Discussions have been held with IP representatives (2 meetings)
- Government prepared the document with consultations with the IP communities – planning to include IP representatives in National level bodies (not yet formed)

Capacity to participate

- Before getting involved in a programme like REDD+ there is a lot of capacity building that will be needed in order for IPs to participate effectively

- There is no current organization of indigenous peoples currently, however during the last World IP day the IPs started discussing organization (both coastal and inland IP groups)
- Some IP individuals do have some capacity to engage and could support the others
- Only one leader who can represent the community at the national level- currently no IPs have the capacity to represent at the international level
- Have their own parliament/decision making system
- Need capacity building, good awareness programmes, and resource centres for IP villages

General reflections on the status of IPs in the country:

- 5-6 main villages, plus 100 other villages with IP communities – one is an inland IP group and the other is a coastal IP group
- Only one community living inside the forest
- Past experience with forest/wildlife dept was poor and it has been difficult to connect with coastal IPs due to war – but last World IP day had an event in Varkharai linking the coastal IPs with the forest-dwelling IPs
- Lots of organizations are working on promoting development for IPs, however when decisions are made about their rights etc., they don't participate in these
- The organizations who are working with the IPs, don't really consult the IP communities about their priorities and desires (e.g., gov provided electricity to an IP village, but only 3 houses have availed of it because it's not their priority)
- The IPs are requesting to be left alone and live in the jungle; the government and others expect that IPs will build big homes and roads and destroy the jungle, but they live very simple lives. Most of the plans that government and other organizations are making are to keep them out of the jungle and urbanize them; in the name of helping them, mainstream culture is being forced on them. However, if the IPs were permitted to live their traditional lifestyles as they want to, the environment will be protected
- They have an agreement with the wildlife dept that, though they don't have legal rights over the mountains and jungle, these rights should be respected as their sacred areas in the mountains. This has been respected by the government. Before jobs to do with jungle were given to people outside the community who didn't have a stake in the forest, the IPs are more likely to protect the forest effectively. In historical times non-IPs wouldn't go into the jungle, the IPs would provide other communities with forest products like honey – historically recognized this is the land of the IPs. Ancestors are associated with the trees.
- There is an agreement to allow IPs to collect – these local rights and knowledge should be recognized; IPs should be given preference on jobs regarding forests

Bangladesh

Bangladesh doesn't have a National Programme yet

Activities that have been carried out to date:

- UN-REDD has carried out 5 regional (of which one was just for IPs) and 3 national workshops for many stakeholders in which IP representatives were included – national-level representation may not have been so representative as it was in Dhaka thus participation was not easy even if representatives were invited, which is why regional consultations were carried out
- Also a targeted support initiative being planned

Representative mechanisms:

- Community conservation groups – that are formed in a national alliance. IPs were involved from the south-east in this – not set up for IP representation
- Governance system for Chittagong Hill has some devolution of governance to IPs
- No dedicated mechanisms set up yet
- Have national MPs on IP issues (caucuses) – need to dialogue with them so they can represent these concerns

Capacity

- Some capacity in individuals who have had training from Tebtebba and AIPP; so have people with that capacity but dissemination is a problem
- Don't have the capacity to consult amongst themselves – need money and training; there are NGO networks via which to voice IP concerns
- Sub-district committees that are supported by government funds provide opportunities for voicing their concerns but need to be reviewed and strengthened
- Need to advocate on IP issues with the ministries (e.g., working groups at ministry level)
- Have national level forums that need to be coordinated
- Have very little effective national level representation
- Need mapping of IP organizations in the country (plains-land IPs and Chittagong Hill tribes); participants need to be self-selected

Needs

- Information dissemination and strong collaboration between IP groups in different geographical areas
- Need to add plains-land IPs to roadmap and increase their participation in regional IP organizations as well as national
- Mapping of IP organizations is necessary