



Minutes, meeting of the Reference Group, 24th August 2022

Participants:

Gam Shimray and Shree Kumar Maharjan (AIPP), Rukka Sombolinggi (AMAN), Giovanni Reyes (ICCA Consortium Philippines), Chandra Tripura (BIPF), Agnes Leina (Illaramatak Community Concerns), Maimouna Umarou (SURA-MAMA), Kenneth Turyamubona (Batwa Community Development Organization), Joseph Itongwa (REPALEAC), Benito Calixto Guzmán (CAOI), Dolores de Jesús Cabnal Coc (Indigenous Women Network on Biodiversity), Jesús Amadeo Martínez (Foro Indígena de Abya Yala), Casey Box (The Christensen Fund), Kevin Curry (Ford Foundation), Maria DiGiano (Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation), Leif John Fosse (NICFI, Norway).

Agenda

- Presentation of key messages from global, regional and sub-regional consultations:
 - o Overview of activities July-August
 - o Africa Regional Workshop
 - o Asia Regional Workshop
 - o Latin America Regional Workshop
 - o Overview of survey data
- Plenary: Discussion of draft findings and recommendations
- Next steps and ways forward

Key messages from global, regional and sub-regional consultations

Joseph Itongwa, REPALEAC, highlighted the important role of indigenous peoples in the African region, protecting the second largest forests in the world. Indigenous peoples in Africa have little access to funding and welcome the Pledge, which may assist indigenous peoples in defending their rights. In this context, it is important to support policy reform for the recognition of their rights, traditional occupations and representative institutions. There is also a need for generating data about indigenous peoples in Africa. Likewise, the work on indigenous peoples under the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and other human rights mechanisms needs support. Indigenous peoples of Africa call for more information about contributions and allocations under the Pledge and call for the establishment of direct funding mechanisms to avoid intermediaries.

The regional workshop in Africa was hosted by REPALEAC and convened 30 participants, including 10 women. The report of the workshop will soon be available at the Charapa website: www.charapa.dk

Jesús Amadeo Martínez, Foro Indígena de Abya Yala, underlined that indigenous peoples in Latin America want to be considered partners and not mere 'beneficiaries' of international cooperation, given that indigenous peoples are the owners of territories rich in forests and biodiversity. Indigenous peoples call for a holistic approach to support, considering the interlinkages of ecosystems and issues. As in Africa, they call for direct funding mechanisms to avoid intermediaries who may push their own agendas. Direct funding, managed directly



by indigenous organisations, will support indigenous peoples' autonomy and self-governance. The Pawanka Fund and the Fondo para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de América Latina y El Caribe (FILAC) were mentioned as examples of good practice to build on.

The summary report of the regional workshop in Latin America, hosted by Foro Indígena de Abya Yala can be found here:

https://charapa.dk/wp-content/uploads/Regional-workshop-Latin-America_Final-report-with-annexes.pdf

Rukka Sombolinggi, AMAN, presented the highlights from the Asia regional workshop. Asia is a very diverse region, inhabited by two-thirds of the world's indigenous population, but only a fraction of global climate finance reached them. Principles for support comprise: rights-based approaches (including consultation, participation and FPIC), empowerment, support to recognition of rights in laws and policies and to indigenous peoples' sustainable forest management. Operationally, indigenous peoples call for:

- Support through indigenous people's representative institutions based on self-selection and full and effective participation in decision making processes
- Sustainable processes and mechanisms with required resources
- Development of appropriate skills matching donor's requirement and compliances
- Establishment of an appropriate regional funding mechanism for Asia that is managed, governed, operated and controlled by IPs: the **Indigenous Peoples of Asia Solidarity Fund (IPAS Fund)** that will manage diverse sources of funding to indigenous peoples in all ecosystems in Asia.

Overall, indigenous peoples in the Asia region recommend to:

- Establish a mechanism for continuous dialogue between donors and indigenous peoples
- Establish monitoring mechanisms to follow the commitments under the Pledge
- Support global platform for exchange among indigenous peoples, resources and outreach
- Disclose Information about contributions and allocations under the pledge
- Organize mutual capacity building sessions for donors and Indigenous leaders and prioritize funding

The summary report of the regional workshop in Asia, hosted by Cambodia Indigenous Peoples Organisation, can be found here:

<https://charapa.dk/wp-content/uploads/Report-Asia-Regional-Workshop.pdf>

Birgitte Feiring, Charapa Consult, presented an overview of the data collected through the on-line questionnaire. So far, there are 102 respondents. The data provides a snapshot of the current funding situation. A more in-depth analysis of the data will be presented in the final outputs, to be elaborated by Charapa Consult.

Discussion of draft findings and recommendations

Maimouna Umarou, SURA-MAMA, noticed the high degree of commonalities in the messages from the various regions, and highlighted the need for information sharing and



follow-up on the commitments under the Pledge, including the establishment of monitoring committees and capacity-building at different levels.

Shree Kumar Maharjan, AIPP, mentioned the need to reach an understanding with donors on how they can contribute to support indigenous peoples' rights beyond their financial contributions. Around 70% of the world's indigenous peoples live in the Asia region, but they are also among the most invisible, marginalised and criminalized. There is a need for mechanisms that really ensure that funding reaches the grassroots.

Benito Calixto Guzmán, CAOI, also noticed the convergence of messages across the regions, and highlighted the holistic vision of indigenous peoples, aiming at not excluding any indigenous peoples, whether they are from the Amazon, Andean or coastal region. The regional and global platforms created through the establishment of the Reference Group should be maintained, to continue the discussion about funding modalities. Hence, we need to define the next steps and discuss how we implement the recommendations we have come up with.

Dolores de Jesús Cabnal Coc, Indigenous Women Network on Biodiversity, raised the need for strengthening institutional capacities to follow-up on recommendations. Indigenous peoples have technical and administrative capacities, but donors establish requirements that do not fit our cultures. Indigenous women are at the forefront of protecting lands and territories and need support to strengthen their role. We need the space created through the Reference Group to continue this discussion.

Leif John Fosse NICFI, Norway, thanked the members of the Reference Group for their hard work and the very useful and systematic compilation of recommendations, which donors can learn from. Donors are also different, with different systems that are not easily streamlined. The donor group has its own process, discussing how best to spend funds and to report on commitments. Indigenous peoples are concerned about the targeting of countries eligible for Official Development Assistance (ODA), the requirements for logframes, audits etc. It reflects a clash of mindsets between a compartmentalized worldview of the donors versus indigenous peoples' holistic understanding of the world. Donors also operate with requirements, e.g. for reporting to Parliaments and the general public. Bilateral donors are working with philanthropies and are starting to change, which shape their programmes. Norway, for example, has supported the establishment of the Podaali Fund by COIAB in Brazil.

Kenneth Turyamubona (Batwa Community Development Organization), advised donors to not work with organisations that are not led by indigenous peoples, as the funds are often not reaching indigenous peoples' communities. It is also very important to hear from the Pledge donors whether they are committed to continue working with the Reference Group.

Gam Shimray, AIPP, acknowledged the importance of the points raised by Leif and stressed the need to balance the consideration for accountability with the consideration for flexibility and adjustment of support to the needs of indigenous communities. It is important that a separate consultation will be undertaken in Bangladesh, as a country with severe conflict



and restrictions for funding of indigenous peoples' organisations. Similarly, there are other countries in Asia, including Myanmar, where there is a need for specific consultations on how to support.

Giovani Reyes, ICCA Consortium Philippines, appreciated Leif's comments and said that the clash of cultures between indigenous peoples and donors (which resamples the clash between scientific and traditional knowledge) can be resolved through a rights-based approach. In many countries, the legal recognition of indigenous peoples' organisations is a requirement – and an obstacle – for accessing funds. In this context, there is a need to recognize indigenous peoples' traditional governance systems and institutions.

Casey Box, The Christensen Fund, thanked the Reference Group for their constructive work and welcomed all ideas on how to continue the dialogue initiated by the Reference Group, including in the context of forthcoming global events. A meeting between donors and the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities (GATC) is foreseen during the climate week in New York.

Albert Barume, Charapa Consult, concluded that the discussion about funding to indigenous peoples reflect a paradigm shift. Since the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), there has not been a discussion about how to align funding with the UNDRIP. Now both indigenous peoples and donors are ready for this paradigm shift. That is what makes this exercise unique and a great opportunity.

Next steps and ways forward.

Birgitte Feiring, Charapa Consult shared the tentative timeline for the conclusion of the assessment process:

August: Finalisation of reports from Africa regional workshop and Amazon workshop with COICA

August- September: Charapa team

- Analysis of questionnaire data
- Analysis of findings/recommendations from regional workshops
- Analysis of findings/recommendations from other meetings/interviews
- Drafting

12 September: Broad dissemination of draft outputs for comments:

- Overview of existing implementation mechanisms and modalities
- Review of experiences and lessons learned
- Principles and standards, based on the UNDRIP
- Assessment of how these principles and standards can be operationalised in mechanisms and modalities (existing and emerging) to ensure direct support to indigenous peoples' tenure rights and forest guardianship.

28 September: suggested data for next meeting of the Reference Group

Agenda: 1) discussion and approval of draft outputs, 2)



End-September: Finalisation of all outputs and dissemination to all stakeholders

It was decided that Birgitte will reach out to co-convenors and members of the Reference Group to consolidate a concrete proposal for continuation of the dialogue between indigenous peoples and the donor, which can be discussed at the next Reference Group meeting.