

Reminiscing its past while moving forward: AIWN as a transformational force

Introduction

History

The Asian Indigenous Women's Network (AIWN) was formed in 1993 during the First Conference of Asian Indigenous Women in response to the common experiences of discrimination as women, as indigenous peoples and based on socio-economic class. This was attended by 150 participants from 13 Asian countries. As a loose network of 11 indigenous women's organizations and 26 indigenous peoples' organizations with women committees, AIWN has faced several challenges in its aim to organize and consolidate indigenous women's organizations in the region to engage in all levels and fora affecting their rights and identities as women and as indigenous peoples. AIWN continues to build on these experiences to further raise Asian indigenous women's voices from their own organizations, to the national and international levels.

The second conference of the Network happened in March 2004 in Baguio City, Philippines participated by about 100 indigenous women from around Asia. With the theme of the gathering *Heightening Asian Indigenous Women's Empowerment and Solidarity*, the indigenous women took stock of their situation¹ as women and as indigenous peoples providing testimonies of the global issues and problems that surround them, which continue to persist today- globalization, exploitation of indigenous peoples lands, territories and resources; militarization and violence; violation of the right to citizenship; political misrepresentation; lack of social services; outmigration and loss of traditional livelihoods; violence against indigenous women; and weakening of indigenous women's roles. The women have also agreed to take collective actions to advance the rights of indigenous peoples and the empowerment of indigenous women.

In the third conference in November 2010 with the theme *Indigenous Women and Climate Change: Securing rights and enhancing capacities for adaptation and mitigation*, the women assessed the status of AIWN and the situations of indigenous women in Asia. Members of the Network have also shared their various initiatives in response to the pressing condition of indigenous women in their communities. Part of the assessment was a recognition that being part of AIWN has added value to their works in advancing the human rights of indigenous women. Developments at the international level such as the on-going climate change talks, the ending of the MDGs, and other developments with CBD, CEDAW and the UNPFII have also been tackled.

¹ The Baguio Declaration became the intervention document (E/C.19/2004/CR P.1) by the AIWN and Tebtebba during the 3rd Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in May 2004.

The third conference was also an avenue where the representatives of the Network participated in the discussions on indigenous women and climate change and REDD Plus and in the workshop on Communications, Education and Public Awareness on the Convention (CEPA) on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Indigenous Peoples.

Since its inception, AIWN continues to realize its goals through various means in different spaces available. Establishing formations and strengthening of local and national indigenous women's organizations and linking with UN bodies and other indigenous peoples' regional and global networks have been undertaken and continue to be a part of the thrusts of the Network. Formations established include the national network of indigenous women in Thailand (Indigenous Women's Network of Thailand/IWNT), in Nepal (National Network of Indigenous Women/NNIW, National Indigenous Women's Federation/NIWF), in NE India (Indigenous Women's Federation in North East India/IWFNEI) and in Bangladesh (Women Resource Network/WRN). Over the years, there have been members and leading individuals who have not been in close contact with the Secretariat while there have been indigenous women organizations added to and actively involved with the Network. AIWN also continues to be instrumental in highlighting the situation of indigenous women including indigenous women with disabilities in Asia and in seeking redress and resolutions to discrimination at the UN level such as at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), at the CEDAW and at the CSW.

To facilitate its work, AIWN has Country Focal Persons who compose the Coordinating Council. The Coordinating Council is headed by its Convenor, Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, current Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and the former Chairperson of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and Executive Director of Tebtebba. Tebtebba's Gender Unit serves as AIWN's Secretariat.

Small, big steps: moving forward

Through the various initiatives of AIWN and its members, there have been gains on the ground up to the international level to advance the causes of indigenous women and girls including indigenous women with disabilities. The matrix² below shows some of the initiatives of the AIWN secretariat with the Members over the past few years along the objectives of the Network.

Objectives	What have we done, what have we achieved
	✓ Activities which were co-organized by AIWN with the participation of its members and or activities attended by members upon the initiative of

² Those who wish to contribute to this matrix with the initiatives of your organizations, or if you have comments on the content of the matrix, please send to beth@tebtebba.org.

Networking and Organizational Consolidation	AIWN provided avenues of networking with other indigenous women's (regional-global) and indigenous peoples' organizations (i.e. ELATIA)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Implementation of the project <i>Strengthening the AIWN and Mobilizing Change</i>, 2018 >> Activities such as the researches and workshops provided opportunities for strengthening unities and action among indigenous women's organizations particularly at the national and sub-regional level
Lobbying and Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Regular publication of the AIWN magazine³ (2014, 2015, 2016-2017) which contains updates on key developments related to indigenous women's rights and empowerment, inspiring testimonies of indigenous women and other important information ✓ Ensuring the availability/online status⁴ of the AIWN website (www.asianindigenouswomen.org) and the listserve⁵ (aiwn@yahoogroups.com)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Participation in the annual session of the UNPFII in New York where interventions/statements concerning the human rights conditions of indigenous women and girls in Asia and recommendations to respond to these are made; side events/ panel discussions are organized where indigenous women particularly AIWN representatives spoke about their situation and call for actions that would address their condition ✓ Participation in the annual session of the UNCSW in New York; panel discussions/side events are organized to highlight the situation of indigenous women as well as their recommendations to address their situation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> **UNCSW58 side event entitled "Development and Indigenous Women in Asia," focused on the human rights situation in Nepal, Bangladesh and the Philippines ✓ At the UNCSW58, the Commission upon the recommendation of the indigenous women present have urged all concerned governments, agencies and all entities to "<i>Encourage the participation of indigenous women and girls in the World Conference of Indigenous Peoples, noting the contribution of that conference towards the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, bearing in mind that</i>

³ You can download it at www.asianindigenouswomen.org.

⁴ There is no official Facebook, Twitter or Instagram account yet.

⁵ Those who wish to be included in the list, please send a note to aiwn@asianindigenouswomen.org and beth@tebtebba.org.

	<p><i>indigenous women and girls face particular challenges in achieving the Millennium Development Goals".</i></p>		
	<p>✓ Submission of report to the CEDAW Committee</p> <p>>> 2016 re: Draft General Recommendation No. 19 (1992): Accelerating Elimination of Gender-Based Violence Against Women reiterating the experiences of particular forms of discrimination of indigenous women because of their multiple identities and calling for accelerated actions to eliminated violence against indigenous women and girls, for the States to operationalize their commitments during the WCIP and for States to protect, fulfil and respect their rights of indigenous women</p>		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="383 730 954 1726"> <p>✓ Implementation of <i>the Global Leadership School For Indigenous Women in Nepal and the Philippines</i>⁶, 2013-2015; some of the advocacy activities undertaken under the project with the project partners include:</p> <p>>> informal consultation with the UNSRIP, Dec 2014, Baguio City, Philippines</p> <p>>> participation of NIWF in a demonstration calling for SAARC members to include indigenous peoples rights into their agenda, Nov 2014, Kathmandu, Nepal</p> <p>>> Demonstration of NIWF for justice for an indigenous woman victim of violence, Kathmandu, Nepal</p> <p>>> NIWF co-organized interactive dialogue with members of the Constituent Assembly, Nov 2015, Kathmandu, Nepal, with their 16-point agenda</p> </td><td data-bbox="954 730 1500 1726"> <p>✓ Documentation results were communicated in spaces of engagements such as at a side event with FIMI during the UNCSW59 (2015) session, in a side event with Tebtebba during the UNPFII14 (2015) session also reported to the UNSRRIP on the same year</p> <p>✓ Documentation results in the Philippines were contained in a shadow report submitted to the CEDAW Committee on May 2016</p> <p>✓ The <i>National Level Sharing and Dialogue on Indigenous Women's Issues and Concerns</i> in February 2015 in Nepal resulted to a 16-point <i>National Position Paper of Indigenous Women</i> which included their demands to be integrated in the new constitution being deliberated that time and which became their rallying documents with members of</p> </td></tr> </table>	<p>✓ Implementation of <i>the Global Leadership School For Indigenous Women in Nepal and the Philippines</i>⁶, 2013-2015; some of the advocacy activities undertaken under the project with the project partners include:</p> <p>>> informal consultation with the UNSRIP, Dec 2014, Baguio City, Philippines</p> <p>>> participation of NIWF in a demonstration calling for SAARC members to include indigenous peoples rights into their agenda, Nov 2014, Kathmandu, Nepal</p> <p>>> Demonstration of NIWF for justice for an indigenous woman victim of violence, Kathmandu, Nepal</p> <p>>> NIWF co-organized interactive dialogue with members of the Constituent Assembly, Nov 2015, Kathmandu, Nepal, with their 16-point agenda</p>	<p>✓ Documentation results were communicated in spaces of engagements such as at a side event with FIMI during the UNCSW59 (2015) session, in a side event with Tebtebba during the UNPFII14 (2015) session also reported to the UNSRRIP on the same year</p> <p>✓ Documentation results in the Philippines were contained in a shadow report submitted to the CEDAW Committee on May 2016</p> <p>✓ The <i>National Level Sharing and Dialogue on Indigenous Women's Issues and Concerns</i> in February 2015 in Nepal resulted to a 16-point <i>National Position Paper of Indigenous Women</i> which included their demands to be integrated in the new constitution being deliberated that time and which became their rallying documents with members of</p>
<p>✓ Implementation of <i>the Global Leadership School For Indigenous Women in Nepal and the Philippines</i>⁶, 2013-2015; some of the advocacy activities undertaken under the project with the project partners include:</p> <p>>> informal consultation with the UNSRIP, Dec 2014, Baguio City, Philippines</p> <p>>> participation of NIWF in a demonstration calling for SAARC members to include indigenous peoples rights into their agenda, Nov 2014, Kathmandu, Nepal</p> <p>>> Demonstration of NIWF for justice for an indigenous woman victim of violence, Kathmandu, Nepal</p> <p>>> NIWF co-organized interactive dialogue with members of the Constituent Assembly, Nov 2015, Kathmandu, Nepal, with their 16-point agenda</p>	<p>✓ Documentation results were communicated in spaces of engagements such as at a side event with FIMI during the UNCSW59 (2015) session, in a side event with Tebtebba during the UNPFII14 (2015) session also reported to the UNSRRIP on the same year</p> <p>✓ Documentation results in the Philippines were contained in a shadow report submitted to the CEDAW Committee on May 2016</p> <p>✓ The <i>National Level Sharing and Dialogue on Indigenous Women's Issues and Concerns</i> in February 2015 in Nepal resulted to a 16-point <i>National Position Paper of Indigenous Women</i> which included their demands to be integrated in the new constitution being deliberated that time and which became their rallying documents with members of</p>		

⁶ This has two-fold objectives: to capacitate indigenous women in Nepal and the Philippines on their human rights and to enhance the knowledge of stakeholders on the situation of indigenous women's conditions. Capacity building through trainings, documentation and mentoring and institutional collaboration as well as information and advocacy activities formed part of the implementation.

	<p>>> BAI lobbied with members of the House of Representatives, Quezon City, Philippines, with the resolution particularly on the “No Home Birthing” policy</p>	<p>the Constituent Assembly and government officials</p> <p>✓ A resolution from the <i>National Conference of Indigenous Women in the Philippines</i> in March 2015 reiterated that the government policy against home birthing is violating the traditional knowledge of indigenous women and also supported the move to investigate the said policy</p>
Capacity building activities of network	<p>✓ Organized the <i>Asia Indigenous Women’s Strategy Workshop on Forest/Land Tenure and Climate Change</i> in August 2012 in Baguio City, Philippines</p> <p>>> the women shared stories of dispossession from their lands and forests while they have been informed about approaches that that help them address the issues related to their lands and forests</p>	
	<p>✓ Implemented the project Global Leadership School For Indigenous Women in Nepal and the Philippines, 2013-2015</p> <p>>> 813 women and 197 men in Nepal and the Philippines were trained on instruments relevant to the indigenous women: CEDAW, UNDRIP, and the ILO Convention 169</p> <p>>> The participants have been trained to monitor and document cases of violations against indigenous women and girls’ rights</p> <p>>> A total of 276 cases of violence against indigenous women and girls have been documented in Nepal and in the Philippines from 2013 to early 2015</p>	
	<p>✓ Organized the Asian Indigenous Women's Orientation and Training on the Integrated and Holistic Approach, December 2014, Baguio City, Philippines</p> <p>>>Enhanced understanding of participants with the core concepts and approaches in the indigenous peoples’ self-determined development (IPSSDD) as an approach to sustainable development of indigenous peoples and provided updates on the developments in the UN processes that are relevant to indigenous peoples and indigenous women</p> <p>>> Experiences including the challenges of indigenous women towards sustainable development of their communities have been shared</p>	

	<p>>> Action plan for the Beijing +20 review/CSW59 was developed</p>
	<p>✓ Participation of selected representatives of AIWN members to FIMI's Global Leadership School, 2014-2018</p> <p>>> Enhanced knowledge of indigenous women leaders on relevant international human rights instruments and mechanisms to advance indigenous women's rights and provided opportunity of actual advocacy experience at the UN during the UNPFII sessions</p> <p>>> Provided opportunities for networking/bonding of indigenous women leaders around the world</p> <p>>> Advocacy plans of selected participants have been implemented</p>
	<p>✓ Co-organized <i>the Global Advocacy and Strategy Workshop: Indigenous Women in Community-Based Monitoring and Information Systems</i>, February 2016, Mandaluyong, Philippines</p> <p>>> Provided knowledge on indigenous peoples' self-determined development (IPSSDD) as an approach to sustainable development of indigenous peoples and community-based monitoring and information systems (CBMIS) as one of its tools</p>
	<p>✓ Participation of Network representatives to the <i>Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on Indigenous Peoples and Gender Responsive Emissions Reduction Programs</i>, February 2017, Hanoi, Vietnam</p> <p>>> Provided an overview on the UNDRIP, the UNFCCC and the REDD+ initiatives and how these intersect with the Agenda 2030 and the empowering of indigenous women; gaps and challenges of indigenous women's engagements in local and national REDD+/climate change finance regimes and development initiatives are defined</p> <p>>> The outcome document, <i>Indigenous Peoples and Gender Responsive Emissions Reduction Program: A Call by Indigenous Women in Asia and Pacific</i>, defined the necessary environment that would ensure climate resilience of indigenous women and their communities; it reiterated the need for capacity building not only of the indigenous women and their agencies but also of those involved in implementing climate change funds to ensure effective engagement of indigenous women in REDD+ initiatives and in other climate change finance regimes; it also underscored the need for REDD+ governance that ensures participation of women, gender-sensitive and culturally-appropriate monitoring and benefit-sharing; outcome document has been used to inform various climate change finance advocacy spaces</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Participation of AIWN representatives to the <i>Global Strategy Workshop for Indigenous Women on Effective Engagement in the Implementation of Agenda 2030 on the Sustainable Development Goals</i>, October 2017, Mandaluyong City, Philippines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >> Oriented the women on the SDGs and its implications on country priority programs viz indigenous women and their communities with particular attention to Goal 5 >> Priorities and entry points for engagements and means to increase capacities of indigenous women to engage at the local-national levels have been defined ✓ Implementation of the project <i>Strengthening the AIWN and Mobilizing Change</i>, 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >> Indigenous women-led researches undertaken to highlight their experiences, initiatives, results and best practices from their initiatives are expected to have enhanced the skills of the indigenous women leaders particularly the younger women with the continuing mentoring done in the process
Engendering indigenous peoples' organizations and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Engendering sensitivity to the issues of indigenous men and women as well as girls among indigenous peoples' organizations and other formations has always been part and parcel of the Network's thrusts. Collective studies and analyses of gender dynamics in indigenous communities continue to help indigenous peoples' formations to integrate indigenous women's concerns in their agenda.⁷ ✓ Publication of <i>Realizing Indigenous Women's Rights: A Handbook on the CEDAW</i>, 2013 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >> Written by Ellen Dictaan-Bang-ao and Helen Tugendhat >> An introduction to the human rights of indigenous women; gives an overview on the situation of indigenous women in Asia; provides some details on the CEDAW and UN human rights mechanisms available for indigenous women in cases of human rights violations; provides a selection of previous jurisprudence from CEDAW >> Can be downloaded at www.asianindigenouswomen.org

⁷ Members of the Network are encouraged to share their experiences and results of their actions in this area. You may send to beth@tebtebbba.org.

Appointment of the AIWN Convenor, Ms Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, as UNSRIP on March 3, 2014, and performing in that capacity up to present	✓ Members of AIWN supported her application with their endorsement	✓ One of the thematic reports she did and submitted to the UN General Assembly in 2015 is related to the situation of indigenous women and girls around the world (A/HRC/30/41)
---	--	---