

GLOBAL SEMINAR-WORKSHOP ON INDIGENOUS WOMEN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND REDD PLUS
Legend Villas, Manila, Philippines 18-19 November 2010

A. Introduction and Background

"We are deeply alarmed by the accelerating climate devastation brought about by unsustainable development. We are experiencing profound and disproportionate adverse impacts on our cultures, human and environmental health, human rights, well-being, traditional livelihoods, food systems and food sovereignty, local infrastructure, economic viability, and our very survival as Indigenous Peoples.

Mother Earth is no longer in a period of climate change, but in climate crisis. We therefore insist on an immediate end to the destruction and desecration of the elements of life."

This is the alarm raised concerning climate change and its interrelated impacts on the totality of life and well-being of indigenous peoples worldwide as expressed in the Anchorage Declaration during the Indigenous Peoples' Global Summit on Climate Change in 2009. Aside from the call for global emissions reductions, indigenous peoples call for greater roles and participation in the climate debate and the recognition of their rights and roles as stewards of land and nature including addressing climate justice through the return and restoration of their lands and territories.

The overarching threat of climate change, however, present a serious scenario that may negate indigenous women's gains from their initiatives and potentials in securing their rights and welfare, including that of their communities. Indigenous women possess skills and knowledge to mitigate and adapt to climate change, but they remain vulnerable to its impact given the discrimination they face as women and as indigenous peoples. Moreover, indigenous women have been relatively left behind in the discussions and processes relevant to this despite their day to day experiences of the on the ground realities of climate change. The full and effective implementation of the UNDRIP and indigenous women's increased capacities to use such instrument in national and local levels is one major guarantee that indigenous women are not overrepresented in the vulnerability scale.

There is therefore a need to provide a space for indigenous women to come together, discuss and sharpen their capacities to engage in the different processes and levels of discussions on climate change and its intersectionality to biodiversity , human security and gender violence.

In the light of promoting and ensuring the effective implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Tebtebba, under its 'Ensuring Rights Protection, Enhancing Effective Participation of and Securing Fair Benefits for Indigenous Peoples in REDD Plus Policies and Programmes" project, is organizing the Global Seminar-Workshop on Indigenous Women, Climate Change and REDD Plus on November 18-19 , 2010 in the Philippines.

B. Objectives of the Activity:

With the general end in view of enhancing the awareness, skills, knowledge and effective participation of indigenous women on REDD Plus and to further increase their capacities to design, implement, monitor and evaluate REDD Plus at the local, national and global levels, the global seminar-workshop specifically aims to:

- 1). Enhance understanding of the climate change phenomenon, REDD Plus and their impacts on

indigenous peoples, particularly, women;

2. Highlight indigenous women's traditional knowledge and roles in adapting to and mitigating climate change;
3. Provide updates on the ongoing processes at the international level; and
4. Identify and unite on strategies to ensure effective participation of indigenous women in the upcoming UNFCCC/REDD negotiations and other processes especially at the local and national levels.

C. Methodology and Activities

Lecture and Interactive Discussions- on climate change, REDD and update on the UNFCCC Processes
Panel Presentation - on the significant roles and traditional knowledge of indigenous women in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Please see accompanying guidelines in the Call for Presentations being sent herewith.

Group Discussions- a few group discussions will be undertaken as a venue for deeper discussions and sharing of experiences among participants. This will include regional strategy sessions.

D. Participants

Participants to the seminar-workshop will be representatives of indigenous women's organizations worldwide including representatives of Tebtebba's partner organizations under the NORAD project including those under the International Indigenous Women's Forum. Participants have to be endorsed by their organizations.

Resources have been raised to support participants from the less developed and developing countries in Asia, Africa, Pacific and Latin American Regions. Interested parties from developed countries (North American and Arctic regions including Canada and Russia) are encouraged to generate their own funds in support of their participation.

E. Call for Presentations

Participants are encouraged to contribute as panel discussant during the Global Seminar-Workshop on Indigenous Women and Climate Change and REDD +.

The Panel discussions will highlight indigenous women's roles and use of traditional knowledge and practices as tools/strategies to mitigate climate change or adapt to its impacts. We recommend that you come up with at least one case study related to the suggested themes below based on the obtaining situation in your communities. Other areas which you think are not included in the suggested themes but are relevant to your community and the climate change phenomenon are welcome. These may either be stories/efforts of

- 1) an individual indigenous woman that have made a significant impact on the community or
- 2) a collective effort by community women or indigenous women's organizations that provides solution to the climate crisis, its impacts or effective mitigation and adaptation strategy/technology/practice.

To facilitate ease of expression and ensure content vis-à-vis the time constraints, the case study may be written in your own national languages. The Secretariat will find a way of translating these into English. However, for those can do it directly in English, please do so!

Guidelines for Developing Cases for the Panel Presentations

The following guidelines hope assist you in the development and writing of the case study. The posed questions are exploratory. You may use, build on them depending on their significance to your case study.

Panel 1: Food Security

This panel will deal with how indigenous women are using their particular traditional agricultural/fishing/forest knowledge and skills to fulfill their roles in family/community care and nurture.

Particularly, the paper and presentations should reflect how indigenous women are addressing issues/problems encountered on food availability, food accessibility, food utilization and the stability of food systems that are impacted by climate. It should further reflect the strength (effectivity, practicality) and what needs to be done to strengthen these.

Panel 2: Sustainable Forest Management and Governance

Among indigenous peoples, the forest is generally a resource base governed by traditional norms and spirituality. Food, housing, medicinal, water, medicinals are just some of the benefits indigenous women and their communities directly derive from the forests. This panel will tackle specific roles of indigenous women (or efforts of indigenous women's organizations) in ensuring that their forests are able to provide the goods and services expected.

Presentation should address:

What are the specific roles of indigenous women in sustainable forest management (i.e what are their contributions in maintaining forest biodiversity and preventing deforestation and degradation) and how do they do this? Describe in details specific tasks/activities taken on by women in the forests. Are there activities strictly done by women or forests resources that are strictly associated to women only?

What are the traditional structures/institutions involved in forest management and governance? Are women involved in the decision making processes in these institutions/structures?
if YES, HOW?

if NO, WHY? What traditional systems, laws and current norms/values or circumstances that prevents them from participation in decision making processes? are there efforts, either by the women, community or individuals to try to change these towards a more gender inclusive and sensitive forest governance?

Panel 3: Women's Security

This panel will address the links between gender inequality and the vulnerability of indigenous women to climate change and its impacts. It will look into experiences of domestic /gender violence, human rights violations and discrimination of indigenous women that are attributed to the drastic impacts of climate change, including disaster risk management, adaptation and mitigation efforts.

Initial observations and reports have it that the destruction of the economic systems advanced by disastrous climatic phenomenon has led to increased environmental refugees as well as economic migration for indigenous peoples. These leaves women-headed households in the communities or

women themselves taking on alternative jobs in the town centers without security of tenure. With limited capacity to negotiate outside their communities (i.e language and cultural gaps, skills, etc.) indigenous women are put in a risky situation in relation to the protection of their human rights and welfare. Initial reports, for example, have it that forced economic migration has made indigenous Congo women vulnerable to trafficking and prostitution and HIV/AIDS.

The presentations should also reflect existing community norms/practices that are contributory to the vulnerability of indigenous women and recommendations to address these towards combating the high representation of indigenous women in the vulnerable/high risk sector. More importantly the presentations should highlight what women, themselves, are doing to prevent further occurrence of such gender violence/discrimination.

Have there been experiences in the community of violence against women ensuing from the impacts of climate change? What happened? How is the survivor doing at present? What are women in the community doing to avoid the same situation? What is the community doing?

How are women included in information and efforts to mitigate, adapt to climate change including disaster risk management and preparedness? If there have been a disaster situation in the community, how were indigenous women treated? Have there been incidences of inequity in terms of access to information and services between indigenous women and men or indigenous women vis. non-indigenous women?

Are mitigation/adaptation efforts sensitive and appropriate to women?

Panel 4: Land Tenure and Security

The paper should reflect how land ownership and secured tenure contributes to the empowerment of women in terms of realizing their traditional roles and exercising their rights and obligations to land, territory and resources.

Do women have equal access to the forest lands and resources?

Panel 5: Energy/Palm Oil Plantations

Alternative energy sources including palm oils are being developed and applied in different forms and scales as mitigation initiatives. These, however have differential impacts on the lives of indigenous women especially with regards their access to and control of the forests and its resources and services. On the other hand, indigenous women may already have developed or are already innovating and using their technologies and systems that are energy and cost efficient as well as sustainable.

What have indigenous women done so far in the area of sustainable energy generation, use and conservation in their homes or communities? Are there innovative systems/technologies that indigenous women are presently using? Describe source of energy, how source is sustained, processing (women and men's tasks in the processing) distribution, if any.

Time Frame:

2nd Week August: Sending out of Call for Presentations

2nd Week September: Confirmation with identified theme, case study area and writer/presenter;

Sept. 30: initial draft submitted to Secretariat

October 30: final/enriched papers

November 15: submission of presentations

November 18-19: Global Seminar-Workshop

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