

Asia Summit on Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples
Bali, 24-27 February 2009

Climate Change: Its Impacts on Indigenous Women and Children

WORKSHOP GROUP A

INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND CHILDREN

1. What are the differential impacts of climate change on women and children in your community?
1. What measures do you recommend to ensure that adverse impacts on indigenous women and children will be addressed?

Food security and biodiversity

- Land has become very dry makes unsuitable to plant rice. Decreasing in agricultural harvest
- Smoke. Burning for Rotational farming has been banned. Burning allowed on a certain period of time which is not suitable to farming cycle.
- Seeds Preservation: Some have disappeared : Changing in climate/temperature and unsuitable land.
- Herbal medicine, not only in the forest but also in the fallow land. Intensification agriculture → cash crops kills the medicinal plants.
- Forest is being cut down: Earlier more food from the forest and we had subsistent life. Now, Less and less, example: Mahua (oil, fruit, flower). Dust and fogs severely damage the Mahua branches and flowers, less flowers.

Health

- Women health, when there is a drought women have to walk far with water-pot to collect water
- In highly dense towns, more and more water-borne diseases.
- Diseases from air pollution
- Women: Many of maternity death specially in the villages far from health centre.
- Can not afford the health service, although there is any health centre nearby.
- The loss of nutritious food and herbal/medicinal plants. Some 30 women-diseases can be cured by medicinal plants.

Economy

- Until 1997 and 2000, women could collect food and household utensils from the forest. Since 2000, many companies came to buy indigenous land and cut down the trees. Most of the Ips depend on paddy fields, now there are many villages without paddy fields. (*Cambodia*)
- Husbands go to town to find jobs but women cannot (language barrier)
- Women end up working at a company (cassava, cashew nut), at very low wages.
- Livelihood: Less income. Husbands have to go out for jobs, leaving women and children at home. If husbands stayed in the village, women have to help find jobs
- Earlier, women and children used to go to the forest to collect fruits and flowers for food and for selling.
- Women look after the family and children. With the lack of food and less income, women have to go out for jobs, leaving family and children behind.
- Discrimination in finding jobs
- They have to move from the mountains to the coast because of harvest failure, collecting only enough for food

Education

- Parents could not afford the education cost for the children, more dropped out student
- Indigenous women are shy, they do not talk with others. And lack of education and language barrier, the woman can not participate in govt' consultation.
- Most of Indigenous children do not have opportunity to go to school. They help their parents to raise buffalos.

Social and politics

- Indigenous Knowledge: gap between generations, children have to adapt to new environment, new lifestyle.
- Coastal; floods. Women and children will be impacted directly.
- Domestic violence increases.
- Wetland drain, and fragile from wetland-fire so they had to be relocated. Changing in culture and lifestyle
- Parents are going out to find jobs, the children are being taking care of their grandparents

Common problems concerning CC issues

- Not all understand about the climate change.
- They can only see the changes in the patterns. Delayed rain, drought, increase in temperature.
- No knowledge about the existing programmes/initiatives/policies on CC mitigation and adaptation

Strategy

- NO to “government’s controlled “ plantations/crops/industries. Stop land grabbing.
- Information on how the CC impacts indigenous women and children should be available(study, etc)
- Awareness raising of IPs on climate change (i.e. provide a simple guide for indigenous peoples to understand CC related issues).
- Awareness raising of Indigenous women about the CC mitigation and adaptation initiatives that will indigenous women and children
- IW to Involve in the negotiation processes and there should be a mechanism to bridge indigenous community to national and national level negotiations.
- Network for sharing information to Ips and Governments should be available
- Exchange visits among indigenous women
- Capacity building of Indigenous Women (Awareness raising, education etc)
- Economic empowerment for indigenous women.