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REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

The programs and projects reaching the indigenous peoples of the Philippines are made possible through the support of international agencies, the government, NGOs, and IPOs. Presented here are samples of these endeavors and suggestions for ADB to consider.

INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES WORKING WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The various international agencies engaged in work with indigenous peoples of the Philippines are guided by their own policy frameworks.⁹⁰ The best measure of the effectiveness and relevance of their strategies is a review of their articulation at various levels: the agency, the host government, the partner NGOs and IPOs, project staff, and the indigenous peoples themselves.

International Labour Organization

The International Labour Organization (ILO) serves as the only international agency that has adopted specific standards covering indigenous peoples. To address the issue, ILO has taken a twofold approach of promoting its Convention 169 at the government level and providing technical assistance on indigenous peoples issues.

ILO's current development program for indigenous peoples is INDISCO, which uses a community-driven participatory approach rather than a top-down approach. The latter was found ineffective since it makes indigenous peoples dependent and is considered a disservice to their communities, which were traditionally self-reliant.

INDISCO's current projects are classified into four components: preservation and promotion of the indigenous culture, promotion of decent employment and income opportunities, promotion of gender equality, and environment and natural resources protection and rehabilitation. There are 4 indigenous communities involved in these projects in Mindanao, 2 in Occidental Mindoro, 2 in the Cordillera, and 1 in Zambales.

United Nations Development Programme

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), established in 1990, is comanaged by the World Bank, UNDP, and the United Nations Environment Programme. It is designed to assist developing countries to deal with four main environmental problems: global warming, pollution of international waters, destruction of biological diversity, and depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer.

The Small Grants Programme (SGP), which is managed by UNDP under the GEF, supports community-based activities that address the above mentioned concerns.

In the Philippines, the objectives of the GEF-SGP sponsored projects are the following.

- Promotion of biodiversity conservation in selected/priority biogeographic regions.
- Protection of international waters from environmental impact of activities from within the territorial boundaries of the Philippines.
- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through the promotion of renewable energy in rural areas.

Since 1994, the GEF-SGP has approved 21 projects that involve NGOs and indigenous peoples. Of these, 16 focus on biodiversity conservation, 4 on climate change and 1 on depletion of the ozone layer. In terms of location, 12 are in Luzon, 3 in the Visayas, and 6 in Mindanao. In biodiversity conservation, they include a variety of studies of traditional systems and conservation of wild flora.

Philippine-Australia Community Assistance Program

The Philippine-Australia Community Assistance Program (PACAP) is one component of Australia's Development Cooperation Program. It supports community-initiated, economically sustainable, ecologically sound, and gender responsive development efforts. To achieve these goals, PACAP provides direct funding assistance and multilevel capacity building in cooperation with NGOs and people's organizations with the goal of raising the living standards of poor and marginalized Filipinos.

PACAP started in the Philippines in 1986 and to date, it has supported 932 projects. Of these, 95 projects involve indigenous peoples and 7 were ongoing in 2001. These are on agricultural development including crop production, postharvest facilities and marketing, and management of the environment and natural resources on a sustainable basis (including soils, water, fisheries, habitats, and forests). Six of the projects are in Mindanao and one in Baguio City.

The World Bank

The World Bank's Operational Directive 4.20 guides Bank projects dealing with indigenous peoples. It ensures borrower government adherence to these standards. Currently, consultation efforts are ongoing to finalize the revision of the policy.

In the Philippines, the Bank has a total of 24 projects. Seven refer directly to indigenous peoples and a further 14 are implemented in areas where indigenous peoples reside. Another project, the Land Administration and Management Project, will benefit NCIP because it deals with the systems and processes necessary for ancestral domains delineation and titling.

Projects implemented in areas with indigenous peoples deal with women's health, education, rural finance, agrarian reform, water, development of local government units, social expenditure, and a transmission grid.

Those with direct reference to indigenous peoples are the following: Early Childhood Development, Community-based Resource Management, SZOPAD Social Fund, Conservation of Priority Protected Areas Project, Mindanao Rural Roads Development Project, National Roads Improvement and Management Project, and Subic Bay Freeport Development II.

In 2000, the World Bank provided a grant to NEDA to undertake a project entitled Capacity Building for Social and Environmental Assessments. The project aims to strengthen the capacity of government project staff and implementing and oversight agencies of government, universities and colleges, and NGOs and people's organizations to undertake work in Bank-financed projects. These are in the areas of social and environmental assessments, and the preparation of resettlement and indigenous peoples' action plans. The project is ongoing.

The operational guidelines set by the World Bank serve as the reference for the Philippine Government in dealing with indigenous peoples' concerns. However, the articulation of the guidelines at the ground level, according to project-based consultants, depends on the approach of the contracted staff. An example is the concept of participation in the formulation of the Ancestral Domain Management Plans. While one consultant conducted training among the indigenous peoples for the latter to produce the said Plan, another consultant hired an anthropologist to conduct a study and write it. It is critical for organizations to review how policies are carried out at the community level in the reformulation of strategies and, especially, policies.

MAIN GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS⁹¹

The recent draft of the 2001–2004 Medium Term Philippine Development Plan considers poverty reduction as its overarching objective. According to Secretary Deles, for the first time in the history of the

Philippine development plans, there is a chapter on Mindanao where most of the indigenous peoples reside.

The main strategies for economic development and social reconstruction hold the promise of changes in the lives of indigenous peoples if they are pursued with a strong political will by the Government. The strategies are as follows.

- Relief and rehabilitation in conflict-affected areas. This will entail relocation and resettlement of families.
- Provision of basic services, livelihood opportunities, and other needs that would ensure minimum desirable levels of welfare. Even psychosocial needs will be considered.
- Implementation of culturally-sensitive programs. Health care approaches will entail intersectoral collaboration to make them sensitive and conform to cultural norms and practices. Traditional health workers will complement the regular government workforce. For education, indigenous concepts will be integrated into the mainstream educational system. Basic curricula for Muslims and indigenous peoples will be revised to make them more relevant.
- Institutional reforms to address political inequity. The participation of Muslims and indigenous peoples in decision making will be broadened.
- Implementation of the IPRA. The focus will be on the return of ancestral lands to indigenous peoples for their utilization.
- Full implementation of the 1996 Government-MNLF Final Peace Agreement.
- Peace talks with the MILF.
- Peace education and advocacy.

It is evident that an arena for engagement between the Government and the indigenous peoples has been set as specified in the new Philippine medium-term plan. Line agencies have been given their mandate and are

in various stages of articulating this in their projects and programs.

The following government line agencies already have clear programs responding to the needs of indigenous peoples in communities where services are delivered.

Department of Health

Recently, the Department of Health (DOH) issued departmental policy No. 142, mandating provision of resources for indigenous peoples' concerns. Moreover, DOH has created a National Technical Working Group for an Indigenous Peoples Health Development Program. Another noteworthy initiative is the creation of the Indigenous Peoples Health Development Project-Partnerships, which include the provision of grants for capacity building and community projects for local NGOs and peoples' organizations in partnership with indigenous peoples' communities. The projects include water system development, nutrition, community development training, environmental health sanitation, and prevention and control of local endemic diseases. The partnerships program is currently working with the Dumagat in General Nakar, Kongking in Ormoc City, Bihug in Camarines Norte, and Agta in Central Luzon.

DOH focuses on training volunteer health workers from the communities with emphasis on their roles as community mobilizers, health service providers, and health learning facilitators; advocacy and promotion of effective health strategies that directly benefit indigenous peoples; and strategic health planning workshops for indigenous peoples. For 2000 to 2001, the proposed activities included the following.

- a. Needs assessment to identify priority areas for assistance.
- b. Construction of 8 village health structures in the 7 provinces/cities of Region XI.
- c. Capacity building of service providers in eight indigenous peoples' areas in Mindanao.
- d. Development/improvement of 12 water sources to level I and level II in indigenous peoples' communities in Mindanao.

Department of Social Welfare and Development

The Department of Social Welfare and Development is currently implementing the Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (CIDSS), one of the 10 flagship programs of the Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act (RA 8425). Its goal is the empowerment of disadvantaged families, communities, and sectors so that they can access basic services and manage their resources. One of its funding sources is the Australia-funded Vulnerable Group Facility. Currently, CIDSS is being implemented in 1,084 municipalities, 3,793 villages, and 100 poor communities.

For 2002, a CIDSS program to Liberate the Indigenous Peoples from Indignity is being carried out. It seeks to extend culturally appropriate projects to indigenous peoples' communities in 100 CADC villages to ensure their survival; build their capabilities in managing community-based services; preserve their ancestral domain; and cultivate their cultural heritage through the convergence of government, nongovernment, and other sectoral resources, expertise, and technology. It will be jointly implemented by several government agencies.

The objectives of the program are to establish an ethnographic profile; strengthen indigenous values, knowledge systems and practices through rediscovery and reorientation sessions and needs assessment tools; provide basic services to the communities; and modify/develop and institutionalize culturally appropriate projects and programs for families and individuals/sectors in need of special protection.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

The DENR regular activities that involve indigenous peoples are the Management of Ancestral Domain Claims and the Community-based Forestry Management Program.

With funding support from international agencies, DENR is currently implementing projects to address IP concerns, including biodiversity management and conservation, and forest and watershed management with emphasis on community participation and self-

help. A few activities address sustainable upland socioeconomic development through improved agricultural technology, access to basic services and markets, and strengthening existing community organizations.

Department of Education, Culture, and Sports

At the national level, the Department of Education, Culture, and Sports is embarking on two major activities to become more responsive to indigenous peoples' needs, specifically in preserving their cultural heritage: to indigenize elementary and secondary curricula and to develop an equitable nonformal educational system.

A project entitled Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao covers Regions XI, XII, and ARMM. Its objectives are to expand educational opportunities for the poor and disadvantaged population groups, promote curriculum flexibility and localization, and strengthen partnerships in education. These objectives are to be met by establishing 80 community multipurpose and learning centers in remote communities; providing scholarships for selected poor Muslim and indigenous peoples high school graduates to complete teacher education courses; and setting up cultural enhancement facilities in 18 strategically located schools, with significant enrolment of indigenous children.

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES BY NONGOVERNMENT AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' ORGANIZATIONS

The Republic of the Philippines-Asian Development Bank Poverty Partnership Agreement (10 October 2001) specifies the need to "provide adequate protection for the poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged sectors." Further, it indicates the necessity of setting up community and home-based social service interventions using local government units, NGOs, peoples' organizations, and cooperatives as delivery mechanisms.

Although these NGOs and IPOs may not always explicitly refer to the term *poverty reduction* as their goal or objective, the activities and expected outputs

point to the concepts of participation and empowerment, sustainable development, and improved quality of life among the marginalized sectors. These concepts are explicit in the projects dealing with delineation and recovery of ancestral lands, health, education, livelihood, and technology transfer. All these address poverty-related issues and, if effectively implemented, should result in a better quality of life among indigenous peoples.

These NGOs and IPOs may operate at a national level (with federations), but would have a specific constituency (e.g., area-specific IPOs), priority locations (e.g., mostly Mindanao), and field of expertise (e.g., ancestral domain delineation) for project implementation purposes. There is also a wide variety of affiliations (e.g., the church, the “left”, academe) and, thus, sociopolitical orientation guiding the method and direction of projects and programs.

A preliminary listing of relevant NGOs and IPOs was generated from the 7 ethnographic area consultations by OPAIPA in 2001. NCIP is expanding its inventory of such organizations for purposes of networking, depending on their geographic location, priority projects, and skills/specializations.

Priority Thrust: Ancestral Land and Domain

Currently, there are 181 approved CADCs and 9 CADTs proposed by NCIP. The Commission has no funds for land delineation and related activities, necessary equipment, or staff capability; it has a limited quantity of documents turned over by DENR. Thus, NCIP relies on private surveyors and NGOs with expertise in delineation and has made memoranda of agreement that give these groups (e.g., the Philippine Association for Intercultural Development [PAFID] and Anthrowatch) the authority to deal with mapping and delineation.

PAFID has the most expertise and number of communities assisted. Since 1974, the organization has participated in the campaign for tenurial and self-management aspects of ancestral domains in more than 600 indigenous communities and has completed work on up to 85 CADCs and CADTs. It has been conducting training since 1994 within and outside the Philippines. In 1995, DENR and the Bureau of Coasts and Geodetic Survey formally recognized PAFID's outputs.

Based on its track record, PAFID is called upon to assist in solving urgent issues that affect indigenous peoples. These are referred to as “quick response” cases, the latest of which was the killing of some Manobo while delineating their lands and the burning of a village in Mindanao.

Other groups undertaking work in this field are the Green Forum, the Mangyan Missions, and Anthrowatch.

Anthrowatch, organized in 1994, is building equipment for mapping and delineation, and works with PAFID in Romblon, Panay, and parts of Mindanao. It also conducts community organization and capacity building, cultural sensitivity training, research on the health situation among indigenous peoples (with DOH), coordination of multistakeholders' meetings/discussions, and publication of materials relevant to indigenous peoples' concerns. To this end, it facilitated a study tour by indigenous peoples for exposure to similar communities with a high level of organization.

PANLIPI and the Legal Resource Center handle the legal aspects of land issues. Both NGOs are active in advocacy and consciousness raising/education with reference to the IPRA. Environmental Science for Social Change Inc. also does surveys and makes maps. It is active in mining and plantation areas. The Upland NGO Assistance Center provides technical and academic support in dealing with indigenous peoples.

Formulation of ancestral domain management plans and ancestral domain sustainable development protection plans involve NGOs such as *Sentro ng Ganap na Pamayanan* and the *Ugnayang Pang Agham Tao* (UGAT or Anthropological Association of the Philippines).

The *Pambansang Lupon ng mga Nakatatanda sa Tribu*, an IPO organized as a result of a PANLIPI program of action for their organization's Council of Elders in 1994, has a total of 40 member organizations in Central Luzon, Northern Luzon, Mindoro, Palawan, and Mindanao. It undertakes paralegal training on issues related to ancestral domains and undertakes strengthening of IPOs.

Another IPO, Tribal Education for Ecological Systems Inc. in Compostela Valley, Mindanao, assists in self-delineation. Other IPOs like *Katutubong Samahan ng Pilipinas*, *Panagtagbo*, and Lumad Development Center conduct most of the organizing and groundwork before mapping activities begin.

Issues in Working with Other Agencies in Land Issues

The difficulties encountered deal with orientation of and competition among NGOs. Those on the “left” do not value the process of land titling within the framework of the IPRA. Criticizing the law as “deceptive and divisive,” organizations identified with the left (e.g., Cordillera Peoples’ Alliance and *Kalipunan ng Mamamayang Katutubo ng Pilipinas*) prioritize community organizing, advocacy, education, and mobilization campaigns on issues and concerns of indigenous peoples. Some NGOs and IPOs have “claimed” certain indigenous communities as “their areas” and usually monitor the entry and activities of “outsiders” and can prevent the movement of individuals conducting mapping activities. Several other NGOs have taken advantage of the “space” provided by the IPRA to advance indigenous peoples’ rights to their ancestral land/domains.

Interaction with the Government is facilitated through professional ties established with individuals within NCIP, DENR, and the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA). There remains the need to work formally with the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board and the Department of Agrarian Reform. Their participation will facilitate delineation at the ground level.

It is said informally that continued mutual openness between civil society and NCIP will help advance IPOs’ goals, and that checks and balances should be set up by NCIP. Sincerity coupled with technical accuracy is critical because it has been observed that “more indigenous lands were lost through mapping than through bullets.”

Lessons Learned

Based on the experience of the NGOs and IPOs in ancestral land and domain issues, the following aspects merit attention.

Professionalize. Once a decision has been reached by an NGO to undertake mapping and delineation, a unit should be set up. The staff should be trained and they should focus their work on the task at hand. Expertise is built up in this manner. A combination of experience and training among NGOs, IPOs, government

organizations, and communities further hones the skills of staff.

Network. There is a wealth of knowledge in the various local and international agencies. Thus, formal linkages should be developed with these groups. PAFID’s first attempt at on-ground mapping of 3,980 hectares in Mindoro took 3 years (1989–1992). A series of linkages accelerated their pace and expanded the extent of their coverage. In 1993, the Ford Foundation introduced the group to the expertise of Dr. Urayvan in Thailand. The World Wildlife Biodiversity Program provided a geographic positioning system and the Foundation on the Philippine Environment facilitated training on its use. Three trainers sent by the Washington-based manufacturer codeveloped a curriculum with PAFID. Clark University in the US involved PAFID (in a joint project among 11 partners globally) in developing its data management software for NGOs. In 1995, during an international training event, the concept of ancestral waters was shared by the Mesquite Indians of Panama and successfully implemented by the Tagbanua of Palawan. Moreover, visits and communication by individuals and organizations serve as catalysts in the continuing learning process. The US Peace Corps conducted extensive documentation of the Mindoro experience. An Australian volunteer brought in her knowledge on geodetics. Another volunteer, a US trainee with expertise in remote sensing, wrote a manual with PAFID.

Invest. Equipment should be bought and upgraded as necessary. Its use should be optimized and the system analyzed such that repairs can be performed by staff. There should be continuous links with experts to upgrade skills.

Train. PAFID has trained 127 indigenous people on the whole process of delineation from the initial survey to validation. One Dulangan Manobo from Sultan Kudarat has achieved sufficient expertise to conduct training in other countries.

Trust and respect. Participation and partnership are critical in delineation. The indigenous peoples take care of securing the team and the instruments (handling and safekeeping of hardware). Their knowledge of the terrain and the people promotes ease and speed in the flow of operations. There is sharing of tasks in community preparation and in mapping activities. Thus, it is important that NGOs listen to the community and explain clearly the concepts and tasks for completion

of delineation activities. When translated to cost, the residents as counterparts reduce the cost of the project because, in addition to all the other inputs, they provide labor and food. Mutual trust and respect form the core of the engagement. As PAFID puts it, the activity is “not just mapping but it is also making a statement regarding indigenous peoples’ lives.”

Prospects for the Future with Reference to Ancestral Land/Domain Issues

A workshop could be conducted to consolidate existing efforts and knowledge among various organizations and agencies. NGOs have equipment that their staff are unable to use. Some hardware is lying idle.

There is a need to tap existing resources such as Environmental Science for Social Change Inc., Geoplan (a Department of Science and Technology-funded NGO), the Mangyan Missions, and the geographic information systems laboratory of the University of San Carlos, Cebu City.

An outcome of such a workshop could be the setting up of a resource management institute or center where

- all endeavors could be coordinated, integrated, and housed;
- basic training for NGOs, IPOs, and other interested parties could be conducted; and
- networking and skills and hardware development could continue.

Response to Other Issues Confronting Indigenous Peoples

As noted earlier, there are many NGOs and IPOs dealing with issues affecting indigenous peoples. The main concern of most is ancestral land and delineation, but some embark on other endeavors as required by their constituency. Some examples are cited below.

In the area of education, NGOs such as the Asian Council for Peoples Culture advocate the creation of indigenous schools (culturally responsive primary schools for indigenous children). The Kalahan Foundation in Santa Fe, Imugan, has been conducting

education sessions with the Ikalahan and Mangyan. *Sentro ng Ganap na Pamayanan* is currently conducting a policy review and analysis, and documentation of indigenous knowledge for proposed integration into the government’s education curricula.

General assistance is provided by the Episcopal Commission on Indigenous Peoples in 16 dioceses and to 40 active IPOs in the Philippines. The group also serves as a national secretariat and coordinates policy advocacy in the three branches of the national Government—executive, legislative, and judicial. It has been active in relief and rehabilitation work with the Tabang in Mindanao.

The National Confederation of Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines is composed of federations of IPOs and was organized in 1996 as a result of an ILO-Danish International Development Agency project managed by *Sentro* in response to the need for livelihood opportunities among indigenous peoples. Employing community organization, the staff, composed of indigenous peoples themselves, provided technical and organizing assistance to indigenous peoples’ groups. In 1998, it was formalized as a confederation. Among other objectives, it aims to be effective in the assertion, protection, promotion, and enjoyment of the indigenous peoples’ rights already enshrined in international instruments, national laws, and policies, including those formulated by local organizations.

Linking with the established political base is one area where the Tribal Communities Association of the Philippines is active nationwide except in Muslim areas. It has strengths in advocacy, in identifying problems on the ground, and linking with local authorities and agencies to address problems of indigenous peoples. Moreover, it provides legal assistance to indigenous peoples charged with criminal activities such as illegal logging, and in resolving conflicts arising from claims to ancestral domains. The Association took part in recent elections as a Party List candidate to bring forth the issue of the marginalization of the indigenous peoples in the political process.

The experiences of NGOs and IPOs in the fields of community-based education, health, livelihood, and sociopolitical activities/programs are indeed valuable. The challenge is how to tap their expertise and coordinate their initiatives so that they can contribute to development of ancestral domain sustainable development and protection plans.