



DIPLOMACY TRAINING PROGRAM

AFFILIATED WITH THE FACULTY OF LAW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
A training program for peoples of the Asia-Pacific region

Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights and Advocacy - A Capacity Building Program for Indigenous Advocates

**Held in partnership with Lumbu Indigenous Community Foundation and
hosted by Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education**

14 - 23 April 2007

Batchelor, Australia

Report

1. Executive Summary

The Diplomacy Training Program's 4th annual regional human rights capacity building program for Indigenous Advocates from the Asia/Pacific and Indigenous Australia took place from 14-23 April, 2007. There were 27 participants from 11 countries in the program. It was held at Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE), Northern Territory.

This training program focused both on international human rights standards relevant to Indigenous Peoples and on building practical advocacy skills. Course participants came from Australia, Pakistan, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Burma (Karen and Shan communities), Canada (Karen Canadian Community) and Thailand (Lisu). Participants work on many issues affecting Indigenous peoples in their countries. Their commitment and enthusiasm throughout the 10 day program added significantly to the success of the training. The following report outlines the background to the program and provides information on the participants and their work, program objectives and content description. It also provides a brief evaluation of the program. Recommendations for future programs are included at the end.

"The power in the coming together of people with heart, compassion and the drive to be part of positive change is immeasurable. It would be impossible to ever really know the small and vital happenings that will be borne in the future from these friendships and networks. It was a huge privilege to not only meet such knowledgeable presenters but to learn with and from such amazing participants from all over the world." Participant Evaluation

2. Background to the program

The Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) has worked with Indigenous advocates since its establishment. Each year since 2004 it has facilitated a regional program in the Northern Territory for Indigenous advocates.

The program has been developed to respond both to the increasing vulnerabilities of Indigenous peoples in the region associated with accelerating processes of globalisation and to the increased international recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights.

The vulnerabilities have come with increased demands for resources from land traditionally owned and cared for by Indigenous Peoples. Population pressures in some countries have led to land clearance and displacement of Indigenous populations. The extractive industries of mining and forestry also have a particular impact – with Indigenous communities instead of benefiting, often being further marginalised, by the economic development of their land and resources. The destruction of the local environment and livelihoods through pollution and unsustainable forestry practices is reported across the region. In extreme cases violence has been used to move people from their land and to end opposition to mining operations. There have also been growing concerns that traditional knowledge of plants and animals re being appropriated without acknowledgment or compensation by pharmaceutical companies and others.

In response to a growing understanding of the special relationship between Indigenous Peoples and their land, and to their increasing vulnerabilities and in response to effective advocacy by Indigenous advocates, the international community has created new mechanisms to protect Indigenous Peoples' Rights – and new forums to enable their voices to be heard.

There is a UN Special Rapporteur on Rights of Indigenous peoples, the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations and the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The UN Draft Declaration on Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in 2006 and is awaiting adoption by the UN General Assembly. In addition the UN Convention on Biological Diversity has a significant focus on issues relating to Indigenous Peoples and the environment and to traditional knowledge and the rights and roles of Indigenous Peoples as custodians of the land.

Indigenous Peoples often have a particular need to look to the international community for support and solidarity. In this region, they are most often minorities, with little electoral or political power or influence. They are often the subject of discriminatory laws and practices that deny or belittle their language and culture – or deny their identity entirely. They are often seen as standing in the way of national progress, and broader economic development. Too often the local political and legal systems have proved inadequate in upholding internationally recognised rights, or in providing effective mechanisms for grievance. In such circumstances Indigenous advocates see the need to appeal to the international community through both UN mechanisms and global solidarity.

3. Program Location

For the last four years this regional program has been held in the Northern Territory of Australia. While the issues facing Indigenous advocates across the region and across Australia are very different, there are also many areas of commonality.

The Northern Territory has the highest proportion of Indigenous people of any State or Territory in Australia. It is also the home of some of the most successful struggles of Indigenous communities to assert custodianship over land and resources, to retain language, culture and customs, to exercise some control over development, and to achieve recognition of human rights, including labour rights.

The courage and determination of Indigenous women and men who participated in the Wave Hill strike and walk-off has recently achieved national recognition. This strike contributed to the broader movement that rolled back over 150 years of systemic racial discrimination in Australia. The strike helped to achieved recognition of both land rights (the Northern Territory Land Rights Act was passed In 1976) – and also the human rights of Indigenous Australians, including their labour rights.

From these changes came a growth in economic power, and a growth in political representation and changing relationships with mining companies. Some, if not all, companies have recognised the need to change the way they engage with Indigenous communities. Greater recognition of, and respect for, Indigenous art and culture, has both contributed to and arguably reinforced these changes. A new generation of young leaders is being nurtured through the growth of Indigenous controlled organisations.

At the same time, Indigenous communities have not adequately benefited from the legal recognition of rights, or from exploitation of resources on their land. Many positive changes have been slow in coming. The failure of successive Territory and National governments to resource basic utilities such as clean water, health services, housing and employment and a failure to ensure the participation of Indigenous communities in decision making processes has been documented by many NGOs, health organisations and the UN.

The program was implemented with the cooperation of Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE). It was held at BIITE's main campus at Batchelor about 120 km south of Darwin in the Northern Territory. BIITE is indigenously controlled and run. It specialises in working with Indigenous students from across Australia, especially from remote communities, to develop an Indigenous approach to mainstream disciplines and careers. The opportunity for DTP's international and Australian participants to interact with BIITE students and staff and to learn of BIITE's work was an additional benefit for the course.

4. Participants and their Work

Over 130 applications were received from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, India, Indonesia, Philippines and Burma as well as Indigenous Australia. Participants were selected by DTP on basis of a detailed written application, relevant work experience, current responsibilities and position and their own and their organization's active commitment to Indigenous human rights. Fluency in English is a requirement. Priority was given to those who identified as Indigenous and a gender and geographical balance was also taken into account in final selection. There were 14 females and 12 males. Ages ranged from 60 to 23.

The participants brought a wealth of experience and knowledge to the program. Organizations represented included Fred Hollows Foundation, Karen Women's organization, Asian Indigenous People's Pact, Lisu Women's Network, Indigenous Disability Advocacy Service NSW, Nyirranggulung Mardrulk Ngadberre Regional Council, Anti Discrimination Board of NSW, United Nations Integrated Mission, East Timor, Socio Pastoral Action Centre Foundation, Philippines, Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation, Rural Litigation and Entitlement Kendra, India, Office of Justice and Peace, Papua, PIKUL, Indonesia, Hopevale Aboriginal Shire Council, Sunrise Health Service, Pine Creek Aboriginal Advancement Association, Melanesian Association, Fiji, Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy, Fiji,

Outback Arts, SILDAP, Philippines, DAMAAN Development Organization, Pakistan and Centre for Environmental Research and Development, PNG.

The issues the participants focus on, reflect a range of the human rights issues in Australia and the region – the right to health; discrimination; protection of cultural heritage, women’s rights, the right to a clean and healthy environment, the activities of mining companies; the right to housing; participation in decision making; political repression; forced labour, and violence against women.

5. Program Outline

The program schedule is attached as an appendix.

- **Days 1-3: The Human Rights Framework**

The program was officially opened with an acknowledgement by Alma Mir of BIITE on behalf of the traditional owners of the land where the program was being conducted. Tom Evison, the Acting Director of BIITE welcomed participants and the DTP. Jacqui Katona from Lumbu Indigenous Community Foundation welcomed participants and DTP’s Founding Board member, Emeritus Professor Garth Nettheim followed with a brief history of the DTP and in particular of its strong engagement with Indigenous peoples’ issues over the years. Each participant then introduced themselves.

Participants identified their hopes and expectations for the program. Jacqui Katona led a discussion during the first afternoon session contextualising the issues by identifying key challenges for Indigenous peoples in Australia and the region.

Dr Sarah Pritchard led participants through the international human rights framework, with a particular focus on Indigenous Peoples’ rights and relevant fora in the UN system. Among the role plays and practical exercises was one focussing on a visit of the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Issues, Rodolfo Stavenhagen.

Garth Nettheim highlighted the need to create domestic legal frameworks for recognition of Indigenous Land Rights – frameworks that reflect and comply to agreed minimum international standards. He told the story of the evolution of land rights legislation in the Northern Territory, under which almost half the land in the territory is now vested in Aboriginal people. Most Australian states have also enacted land rights legislation, but none is as strong as the 1976 Land Rights Act for the Northern Territory. Garth then tracked the evolution of recognition ‘native title’ through major decisions of the High Court of Australia and subsequent legislation. In this process international human rights law proved to be of critical importance especially the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). He noted that, significant though the UN and international standards may be, ultimately the answers have to be found and implemented at the national level.

Jacqui Katona then focussed on the need for effective advocacy to ensure rights are recognised and applied in practice. Using the Jabiluka campaign to stop expanded uranium mining in Kakadu as a case study Jacqui led a discussion on how the Mirarr people used different advocacy approaches in their ultimately successful. This case study was particularly appropriate in light of the resurgence in interest in uranium exploration mining by Australian and Canadian companies.

Jacqui's presentation emphasised the need to ensure community participation and control, to be creative and determined and to be ready to explore and apply a range of strategies and tactics at the domestic and international level. She also discussed with participants how an understanding of other's people's interests could help in processes of effective alliance building, and negotiation.

Days – 4–7: Developing Skills, Exploring Issues

Continuing the focus on building practical skills, Philip Chung, spent a full day with participants focussing on use of the internet in research and advocacy. The first part of the day focussed on developing internet search and research skills, while the second part of the day focussed on creating simple web pages for advocacy.

The focus then moved to exploring some of the principles important to effective campaigning and advocacy. These include the need to **focus** on specific objectives, that can realistically be achieved within particular timeframes, the importance of **credibility** – e.g. accuracy, and reliability; of understanding the factors of timing of actions and reactions that can affect outcomes and the need to keep being **creative**.

The strategic campaigning cycle was explored as practical tool for developing advocacy campaigns. In the process, participants drew from their own experiences and in response to the concerns of participants a particular focus was given to campaigning and advocacy in relation to the situation in Burma.

Sean Kerins an anthropologist working with the Northern Land Council then took participants through a fascinating session exploring the relationships between Indigenous Peoples and the environment, and with the environmental movement. At times the environmental movement and Indigenous communities share common interests and objectives. There can however be tensions and areas of difference, particularly when the environmental organisations do not recognise Indigenous custodianship of the land or see Indigenous cultural practices and land and resource use as being incompatible with protection of the environment. Sean drew on the example of whaling and the Faroese in the Northern Atlantic – Indigenous Peoples whose livelihood is at risk because of the global bans on Whaling. A number of Australian participants also raised the issues of the Wild Rivers Legislation affecting Indigenous communities and their land rights in Northern Queensland.

Professor Paul Redmond led discussion on issues of Corporate Accountability and Human Rights. For many Indigenous communities it is the actions of corporations that are seen as most directly impacting on their lives. This is particularly the case in relation to mining and forestry. The growing relative power and influence of corporations was illustrated through both statistics and examples. This growth in power and influence has been accompanied by increasing calls for companies to held accountable to human rights standards, although these standards focus primarily on the responsibilities of states. There has consequently been a proliferation of industry codes of conduct, the development of voluntary guidelines focussing on particular sectors such as the Equator Principles for the banking and finance industry. An increasing number of companies are signing up to the set of principles for corporate behaviour included in the UN Global Compact. Governments have also been responding to growing calls for more effective regulation of corporate behaviour through both the UN and the OECD.

The UN Draft Norms on the Human Rights Responsibilities of Business have met with vocal opposition from some sections of the business community, and some governments. In response the UN Secretary General appointed a Special Representative on Human Rights and Business, Professor John Ruggie who has engaged in a round of global consultations to clarify the nature of company responsibilities to human rights, and issues such as corporate complicity and the corporation's sphere of influence. The OECD Guidelines on Multi-National Enterprises are promoted, monitored and applied by governments in OECD Countries and have a formal complaints/mediation process. Paul explored these developments with participants, who worked through both practical exercises and a role play that involved communities engaging in negotiation with mining company executives.

The formal part of the day concluded at 3.00pm after which everyone travelled to Jabiru and Kakadu National Park. Kakadu is one of the World Heritage sites recognized internationally for both natural and cultural significance.

Days 8–10: Sharing Land, Knowledge and Culture

The first morning in Kakadu National Park was spent at Bowali Visitors Centre which is Kakadu Park Headquarters. Jane Christopherson, senior Bunitj traditional owner and member of the Board of Management of Kakadu National Park welcomed the participants on behalf of the Traditional Owners. Jane is also an author of award winning children's books.

Gabrielle O'Loughlin, Executive Officer of Kakadu Board of Management together with Jane, provided participants with an introduction to the recent history of Kakadu National Park. Kakadu was the first national park to be placed under joint management with Indigenous owners. Indigenous peoples had lived there for 50,000 years but the land was threatened by post-colonial incursions of water buffalos and cattle and by mining companies.

The traditional owners had to prove to the Aboriginal Land Commissioner that the land was theirs. It is owned by 12 different clans – the site of the park headquarters was owned by the Mirarr people. For the establishment of the National Park, traditional owners agreed to lease their land for 99 years to the Director of National Parks based in Canberra, under a model of shared management.

The shared management model, in which the Traditional Owners are the majority on the Board of Management, is a complex one, linking to both Federal Government and the Territory Government. The Government pays rent for the lease to the traditional owners. The Board of Management meets with the Director four times a year and its 15 members include 10 traditional owners.

There are many different and often competing interests over the land, including appropriate land use, and tensions over tourism. Yet this model of ownership has seen increased protection given to sacred sites, and to places of special cultural significance. It has also enabled increasing training and employment initiatives for local Indigenous communities. There are a number of Indigenous tourism initiatives. Understanding and respect for traditional knowledge and culture, including traditional land management techniques such as seasonal burning is increasingly recognised. Jane then spoke about traditional activities in Kakadu particularly the use of a wide variety of bush foods in the park.

The shared management model of Kakadu, complete with its continuing problems and tensions, does represent a model that is being increasingly applied around Australia, and one that may offer valuable lessons for the region.

Kakadu Park was an appropriate setting for Robynne Quiggin's subsequent presentation on Indigenous Knowledge, Resources and Intellectual Property Systems. Robynne is an Indigenous Australian lawyer and community advocate who has participated in many international fora. She discussed the strengths and limitations of existing intellectual property systems such as copyright and patents, particularly as they relate to knowledge that is held communally and based on practice and experience over many years. Developing adequate systems, processes and strategies to both protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples to their knowledge and culture, and to prevent its private ownership by others is the focus of increasing attention nationally and internationally. Robynne highlighted her presentation with both case examples and practical case studies from Australia and internationally.

Participants then had the opportunity to travel further into the Park, in the process travelling past the huge scar on the landscape made by the Ranger Uranium Mine. The Ranger mining lease was excised from the heart of the National Park in defiance of the wishes of the traditional owners. The physical beauty and diversity of the landscape could be seen on the drive up past the East Alligator River and to Ubirr, the high escarpment overlooking Arnhem Land. Evidence of Indigenous custodianship of, and relationships to, the land is evidenced in some of the oldest known rock paintings in the world. The day finished with a spectacular sunset over the wetlands.

The following day was a day of leisure. Many rose early to take the Yellow Waters cruise through the Kakadu Wetlands. Kakadu's wetlands are listed under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (The RAMSAR Convention) for their outstanding ecological, botanical, zoological and hydrological features. After returning to Jabiru for a late breakfast the convoy of vehicles headed back to Batchelor along the Arnhem Highway.

Selena Sullivan and Russell Bomford from BIITE's Indigenous Media Unit focussed the final sessions of the program on "Indigenous peoples, Human Rights and the Media". They were later joined by their colleague Vicki Nangla Tippett and a DTP alumnus Todd Condie who is with the media unit of the Northern Land Council.

Selena and Russell explained how Indigenous owned and controlled media – radio, print and now television – was developed in response to both the negative stereotypes of Indigenous People and the invisibility of Indigenous culture and perspectives in the mainstream media. The examples of programs at BIITE, Radio Rum Jungle, Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association and Remote indigenous Broadcasting Services were cited. Indigenous activists in Australia had consciously decided on this strategy and had succeeded in securing a range of government funding sources. One outcome was that Indigenous voices and perspectives could be heard unmediated by the constraints and values of the mainstream media. At the same time the need to interact with, and integrate the mainstream media into advocacy strategies was acknowledged.

The combined expertise provided great insight into the important topic of media in campaigning. The great interest in exploring the Australian experience and its potential application elsewhere in the region, and the range of regional experiences was curtailed by lack of time.

The final sessions of the program were dedicated to evaluation and reflection on the program itself. Lyndon Ormond- Parker who is researching the development of an Indigenous human rights network in Australia which would potentially include DTP alumni made a presentation on his work. Formal written evaluations were completed followed by a wide- ranging discussion.

The closing ceremony was held in BIITE's open air recreation hall with music by didgeridoo player Leigh Fowlestone. The principle address was given by Hon Warren Snowdon, Federal Member of Parliament for the seat of Lingiari and Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Northern Australia and Indigenous Affairs. Certificates to participants were presented by Garth Nettheim and DTP program coordinator Deborah Raphael. Closing remarks were made by DTP's Executive Director, Patrick Earle.

6. Program Objectives and Outcomes - Evaluation

The Diplomacy Training Program develops its curriculum and teaching methodology to achieve specific objectives and outcomes. It evaluates its success in meeting these objectives by asking participants to complete a number of evaluation questionnaires at the end of the program. In recent programs it has introduced a new evaluation form that asks participants to assess whether the program has met these objectives. Each participant also comes to the program with their own learning objectives and the initial introductory program sessions seek to identify these and to enable the program to respond to them. In each program there is great diversity in the participants, in their knowledge and experience and approach to issues and situations. This is a real strength of the program. It also means that participants take different things out of the experience of the program, and this is reflected in the evaluation comments.

The program's specific objectives were as follows.

- to build the capacity of Indigenous advocates in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region to apply human rights instruments and principles to the different challenges they face as Indigenous advocates

Sarah and Jacqui's sessions cut across the technical and practical application of Indigenous People' Rights as expressed in the international Law and the way it must be claimed.

I am considerably affected now from exposure to this knowledge. I now have a practical knowledge base that backs previously only heartfelt convictions as evidence to effect change.

I have received a huge benefit in being able to participate in such a resourceful training course like this. The fact that this information is available and accessible to us with regard to our human rights is important knowledge particularly in our indigenous communities. This course has certainly opened my eyes to what is around me; and I will be bringing this awareness to my community and encouraging more of my community members to attend.

I have gained so much from this training – world view and everything. I will be going back to my community and raising the awareness of our rights to my community and will certainly be taking a major role in opposing the.....from what I have learnt and what I have access to.

“The training will assist very much in terms of advocating and making the communities I work for more aware of their rights in regards to issues they are faced with every day.
Participant Evaluations

- to build capacity of Indigenous advocates to engage effectively with the UN system, other intergovernmental organisations, national/state governments and corporations

“The method and timetable of delivery of heavy ‘legal’ UN information first was invaluable in being able to apply to individual/country situations.”

“The training will assist me understand how to link the issues I am working on with the international law and human rights and how to approach the UN.”

“The best thing about the program was learning the UN procedures/processes, awareness of different committees, treaties and conventions as avenues”.

“The most useful sessions for me were the ones on the UN Human Rights instruments and system and Indigenous Human Rights because now I know the mechanism, how to lobby and the process.”

The lobbying, campaigning and negotiation skills will help in liaising between NGOs and government departments”.

“The training has really assisted me in building my capacity as an advocate; enhanced my skills in advocating using the tools and also my knowledge in understanding all human rights conventions and treaties.”
Participant Evaluations

- to build capacity of Indigenous advocates to share and learn from each others' experiences of advocating for Indigenous Peoples right in different contexts

“All the sessions were useful. Jacqui Katona, Sean, Patrick, Robynne, all! Because it was a real life example of how with strength, commitment and serious determination people can win! Also the “grass roots” approach and the psychology behind how issues are fought and brought to public attention.”

“Meeting and creating networks with the participants, DTP staff and speakers. We learnt so much from each other as well as the program and I feel it has changed me as a person to have had this experience.”

The best thing was to know that the problems of all participants are more or less the same and with a few alterations a successful model can be built to suit our demand.”
Participant Evaluations

- to build capacity of Indigenous advocates to develop networks of solidarity on these issues across Australia and the region

“Seeing that even though we are from different places we all fight the same cause – which is equality for all.”

“The training will help me very much; the advocacy skills, the media skills, the linkages with the environment and most of all the varied experiences from other parts of the world- very useful.”

“The participation from aboriginal people made the training an “advocacy campaign itself” not just a training.”

“All sessions were extremely useful but the internet advocacy was excellent as communication is the only way to tell the world about an issue and the internet is the fastest mode.”

‘I think the course is amazing and I hope you will continue to include Burmese minorities in future DTP programs.’

The practical skills learned the observation and sharing in group work and importantly knowing where to go for information was hugely important. Also the inspiration, empowerment and friendships will help drive me when the going gets tough.”

Participant evaluations

8. Reflections on Participant Evaluations

“This is the best course I have ever taken and I have taken courses for over 20 years. I will be recommending the DTP course everywhere.” Participant evaluation.

The completed participant’s evaluations provided constructive and informative feedback. A number of issues in relation to the course are worth highlighting.

- **Australia and the Region – Getting the Balance Right:**

Several international participants commented that although, an excellent course, there was too much focus on Australian issues. In whichever country DTP holds its courses there is a disproportionate number of participants from that country, and efforts are made to ensure that local issues do not dominate. At the same time the location of the course in a particular country provides the opportunity to learn about particular places and issues in more detail and to draw from local experiences and, where possible, to contribute to local advocacy efforts to promote human rights.

On the basis of the reactions of the international participants in this and earlier courses, that there is little regional awareness of Australia’s human rights record in relation to Indigenous Australians. The common external perception of Australia is one of a wealthy developed nation, where clean water is available to all, and where diseases associated with developing countries have been eradicated. International participants are consistently shocked to hear that Aboriginal children were forcibly removed from their families, of the dispossession and racism that Indigenous Australians have survived over the past 200 years. There is shock also at the extent of health and other disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. International participants develop a sense of both empathy and solidarity with Indigenous Australian participants over the course of the program, and explore commonalities in their experiences of social exclusion and discrimination. Strength is also drawn from seeing what has been and can be achieved in terms of recognition of rights.

While it is difficult to generalise, feedback from the Australian participants in the program suggests that it can be difficult to find the space in the program to explore their own issues, when they feel that these issues are not as desperate and urgent as the situations being encountered by participants from Burma or the Philippines for example. On the other hand they can also draw strength from the knowledge and resilience of advocates who are working in these circumstances.

While the situations facing communities and advocates are different around Australia, and between Australia and the region the feedback is overwhelmingly positive about the opportunity to share and learn experiences. It was particularly evident in this program that people felt the situation facing people in Burma was particularly desperate. As a consequence, and in solidarity with their situation, the participants decided to focus in particular on human rights in Burma in their group work.

- **Presenters and Facilitators**

There was a lot of praise for individual trainers. The sessions on practical advocacy led by Jacqui Katona were particularly powerful and participants were inspired by her story of the Jabiluka campaign. Several commented on the need of presenters and some participants to consider impact of language barriers on the ability to contribute effectively particularly to plenary sessions.

- **Length of the Course**

While most participants commented that the course was about the right length of time, some suggested that the course should be longer. One participant noted the value of the length of this course over previous 2-3 day courses that he had participated in. The length enabled more time to share experiences, to explore the complexities of issues and to build relationships that may be of ongoing benefit.

- **Follow-up**

Participants expressed the desire to reconnect and cooperate where possible. There is some anecdotal feedback about how the training has been applied to work. They are in contact with each other and the training/energy is having an impact beyond the training itself. Participants were very enthusiastic about the potential for an ongoing network. There were a variety of suggestions as to how DTP might facilitate development of the network. When asked about possible follow-up or how DTP might be able to offer assistance in the future participants' responses included the following:

“Establish a monitoring mechanism on how participants use their skills and knowledge”

“Keeping an open line of communication. Assist with advice on funding resources and media networking. Assist with advice on campaigning and on changing organizational structure.”

“Any information on day to day issues that we should be aware of. I was also discussing the possibility of internships across countries.”

“Be accessible for debriefing and clarification of our issues.”
Participant Evaluations

11. Conclusions and Recommendations

- **DTP should consolidate its partnership with BIITE for future programs.**

The cooperation during the program proved to be very successful and created the possibility of a long term relationship between DTP and BIITE.

- **DTP should seek to involve regional Indigenous organisations/networks as partners in the program and to invite an Indigenous advocate from the region to assist with overall facilitation.**
- **DTP should seek to make counselling services available to participants, given the nature of the stories and experiences shared**

Participants share many painful and traumatic stories and experiences, and the effects of this sharing can be very powerful and lasting and some participants have raised the need for experienced help in dealing with this to minimise adverse effects.

- **DTP will initiate dialogue with regional Indigenous organisations/networks as partners in the program and with human rights NGOs to explore possible areas of collaboration.**

DTP should explore with other organisations the longer term capacity building needs for Indigenous advocates and organisations in the region, with a view to developing a longer term strategy for capacity building and training that this program could contribute to. Part of this exploration could be to explore possibilities for internships/fellowships etc and to extend networking opportunities for participants and contribute to the longer term impact of the training.

- **DTP will organise a follow-up survey with participants from this course, and also seek feedback through continuing contact and the new E-Newsletter.**

DTP needs to explore how it might best follow-up programs so it may learn more about the impact of courses on the work of participants, and also so that it may learn how it could be of most ongoing use and assistance to participants/alumni.

11. Thanks and Acknowledgement

This program was made possible by the funding support of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Fred Hollows Foundation and Caritas Australia. The Diplomacy Training Program would like to acknowledge this support with thanks and appreciation.

The generous in-kind support offered by DTP's partner, BIITE, was also essential to the programs success. The warmth and hospitality offered by BIITE staff and students helped create a very positive learning environment for the program. The Diplomacy Training Program would like in particular to acknowledge and thank two of its alumni, Alison Edwards of Fred Hollows Foundation, and Alma Mir, of BIITE for their contribution to ensuring the success of the program. It was their initiative, advocacy and commitment that ensured the program could proceed and succeed.

Finally DTP would like to thank all of the trainers and resource people who generously donated their time and expertise to the program.

Asama Shinmee; Lisu Women's Network, Northern Thailand

Asama Shinmee is a 41 year old Lisu woman from Chiang Mai. Asama has worked for many years as an administrator and gender equality committee member with Asia Indigenous People's Pact the only grassroots based Asia wide indigenous network. Recently she joined the Lisu network in which her good English language skills will enable her to play an important role in linking the network with the wider human and indigenous rights movements. As a community consultant she is currently working with other Lisu women leaders to set up women's group income generation projects in Lisu villages. She sees this as the foundation for building the women's capacity to negotiate with government agencies on resource use and management and to enable them to participate in the decision making process.

Joanne Scott; Indigenous Disability Advocacy Service, Australia

With many years experience working on health and legal issues mainly in Indigenous organizations Joanne is currently the service manager and senior advocate for the Indigenous Disability Advocacy Service in NSW. This is the only indigenous specific advocacy service in Australia. With a wide geographic spread servicing urban and rural communities the service provides advocacy support to Indigenous people with disability and their families and carers in any area of their life where they may be experiencing discrimination or unfair treatment. There are major challenges for IDAS in ensuring that government and non-government service providers meet their obligations to Indigenous people with disability.

Nikki Havnen; Nyirranggulung Mardrukk Ngadberre Regional Council, Australia

As a young Indigenous Australian, Nikki has strong interest in Indigenous affairs and advancing her skills and knowledge to further assist the Indigenous communities. Nikki oversees the various Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) activities in seven remote communities within NMNRC which is the local government body responsible for delivering services. The CDEP scheme enables local Indigenous organisations to provide employment and training as an alternative to income support. Nikki assists in the development of community programs and activities that incorporate accredited training with a strong focus on employment outcomes for each participant. NMNRC has an important advocacy role to play on behalf of its communities. Nikki is keen to gain a greater understanding of human rights standards and advocacy methods to enable her to take a greater role in relation to CDEP reforms which are having considerable impact on Indigenous communities.

Semiti Qalowasa; Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy, Fiji

Semiti is the Community Coordinator for Economic Justice Program at ECREA leading a team of five community workers. ECREA is an NGO based in Suva, Fiji Islands. Founded in 1990, it aims to address the social, religious, economic and political issues that confront Fiji. Semiti has worked with ECREA and social justice issues for more than 6 years and is engaged in participatory work in poor urban communities to identify empowering strategies particularly in regard to improved living conditions and land security. The growth of informal settlements around Suva is exacerbated by Fiji's land ownership problems. Semiti has had training in a variety of areas – social analysis, economic literacy, counselling, empowerment work, theatre of the oppressed, voter education etc. Due to family commitments to three young children he has postponed completing his University degree. He has a great passion for his work and is deeply committed to a just and equitable society.

Pateresio Nunu (Pate) Polania; Melanesian Association, (Minority Melanesian), Fiji

Pate is a respected leader amongst the Solomon Island community in Fiji. More than 10,000 Melanesian islanders living in Fiji are descendants of people from Solomon Islands, forcefully brought to Fiji in 19th century. Minority Melanesians lack any native title over land in Fiji, and are among the most marginalised communities. He has extensive experience in community work, is a sociology graduate from University of South Pacific and is currently researching and advocating on land issues, land rights and their establishment procedures for his community. Pate has presented papers and submissions to the government on Minority Melanesian issues. His struggle for his people led him to stand for the General Voters (Minority Ethnic Groups) seat

against the current Opposition Leader in the last general Election. Pate is trying to establish an NGO to advocate for Minority Communities in Fiji.

Allan Delideli; Sildap-Southeastern Mindanao, INC (SILDAP), Philippines

Allan is the Executive Director of SILDAP, which works with indigenous peoples from Compostela Valley, Davao del Norte and Davao Oriental in Mindanao, Philippines. SILDAP participates in, and launches, different advocacy and campaign activities protecting the rights of the indigenous peoples and their Ancestral domain against development aggression, as well as campaigning for access to basic services. In 2004, SILDAP was one of the secretariat members on the United Nations Special Rapporteur Regional Dialogue on Indigenous issues for Visayas and Mindanao. Previously advocacy coordinator and then socio-economic program coordinator, Alan has had wide experience in advocating for indigenous education as a basic right as well as working on issues relating to anti-mining, environmental and ancestral domain protection and management, and development aggression at local, and national level.

Narelle Hennessy; Anti-Discrimination Board of New South Wales, Australia

An advocate working within the government sector Narelle is currently employed in an education/ community liaison role with the Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW. She regularly provides information and training to Aboriginal communities regarding NSW Anti-discrimination legislation and conducts forums with other government organizations on a range of areas of discrimination. She is part of a working party looking at indirect discrimination against Indigenous peoples with regards to their superannuation access. She is completing her law degree this year and hopes to specialise in human rights related issues.

Veronica Birrell; Pine Creek Aboriginal Advancement Association, Australia

Veronica has been a powerful advocate for Indigenous people particularly for her own people in the Wugularr community and has a strong understanding of culture and tradition in the Katherine region. She has many established networks which have helped her in her work over many years. She is a member of the Chief Minister's Committee on domestic violence, a member of the Katherine economic committee and has recently been appointed to the Northern Territory's Local Government Advisory Committee where she will have a key role in advocating community issues in the move to establishment of new shore councils. Until recently she was President of the Nyirringgulgung Mardruk Ngadberre Regional Council. Veronica is currently working with the women of Kybrook and Pine Creek Town Camp to develop their soap-making business and other enterprise development or land management activities.

Angela Sidoti; Outback Arts and Coonamble Common Culture & Environment Heritage Group,

In her roles as Regional Arts Development Officer and Project Officer for Regional Indigenous Cultural Strategy in Far West NSW .Angela works with communities in arts and cultural development. Outback Arts is a not for profit arts and cultural organization funded in partnership between the NSW Ministry for the Arts and local governments. The organisation aims to build arts and cultural capacity in the region through both social and economic development objectives Hers, is a capacity building role looking at the arts as a meaningful form of expression for communities in exploring and celebrating identity. This involves issues around intellectual property and safeguarding of cultural knowledge. Angela also works with the youth of Coonamble on the local radio station and is part of a small cultural heritage group working with Landcare. Angela previously worked with the Centre for Environmental Health Development at University of Western Sydney on issues examining strategies to manage social/economic issues impacting on health in developing countries in the region.

Elvina (Bino) Toby; The Fred Hollows Foundation, Katherine Office, Australia

As the Project Officer for Indigenous Programs, Elvina is responsible for delivering community development services to the women of the Jawoyn Nyirringgulgung and Sunrise Health Service communities. Her main task is to empower and work with individuals and women's groups by supporting them in their responsibilities for the aged and the children. A large part of this work is advocacy. Her day to day work entails attending women centres and helping them in carrying out their women's "business". This business includes providing nutritious meals for school children, the crèche children and the aged and frail. Most women's centres have carriage of

delivering the HACC Program which is a state funded health service for the aged and frail. The program is run by a regional governing body which is centralised in Katherine. The women's centres have had difficulties in accessing resources, advice and support from this body. Elvina's role includes brokering access for other service providers as well as maintaining a connection to the governing body. Elvina recognises the intricacies of working on the interface with multilayered raising awareness of the issues in her community.

Isabel Brank; Cape York Land Council, Australia

Isabel began work with the Cape York Land Council as a legal secretary to the Eastern Kuku Yalanji Team. The position afforded her the opportunity to travel to Eastern Kuku Yalanji and learn more about the traditions and culture of the community. She is currently undertaking a Bachelor of Law and working as a Legal Research Officer for the Cape York Land Council. Her role involves carrying out research on legislation including the Native Title Act and Future Act, case law, legal practice and procedure as well as international environmental and human rights issues. Through the role she has recognised the values of Native Title and human rights. She would like to take on a greater role in advocating for human rights in the Cape York area.

Edward Obara; Charles Darwin University, Australia

Edward is from PNG and is a law student at CDU and is hoping to work with NAALAS, Indigenous Legal Aid in Northern Territory. Edward has had a diverse working history. He has practical skills and experience working as a fisherman, a labourer, and a cook. He has also undertaken an Engineering Traineeship. Coming from mixed heritage (Torres Strait islands and Kairuku District, PNG) Edward is committed to communicating the injustices, needs and aspirations of the Indigenous people of the region. He is particularly concerned with the institutionalized corruption that allows human rights violations in the acquisition of land in the region. He also sees a need for strong positive role models. When he completes his law studies he will represent the Traditional customary landowners of the Kairuku region in regard to customary ownership, usage and royalties.

Erin Lew Fatt; Danila Dilba Health Service, Australia

Erin has worked for Danila Dilba, an aboriginal controlled health service in Darwin for 8 years. She is now gaining an insight into service delivery as the health services office manager. She has in the past been involved in mentoring administration trainees and supporting them into the workforce and the workplace culture. She is committed to working in Aboriginal health and is undertaking a business degree. She is currently involved in planning a series of Indigenous Leadership Workshops for those employed in Aboriginal Health Services actively networking with other Indigenous health organizations and government agencies. In pursuit of her commitment to improvement of Indigenous health in Australia Erin is undertaking a business degree so as to be able to have a career in health services management.

Rumaldus Rumlas; Office for Justice and Peace of the Catholic Diocese of Agats, Papua, Indonesia

As the Director of Secretariat Justice and Peace (SKP), Rumaldus is a promoter of peace and a fighter for justice. SJP is the human rights arm of the Catholic diocese. SKP is involved in a broad range of activities to do with human rights advocacy and prevention of abuses. He is actively involved in advocacy by lobbying, litigation, campaigning, humanitarian aid, publication and documentation of human rights abuses including research and investigation, education and awareness programs, peace building activities, interfaith dialogues and cooperation.

Irene Fisher; Sunrise Health Service, Australia

Irene is currently the CEO of Sunrise Health Aboriginal Corporation, a primary health care service to 10 remote communities in the Katherine east region. These communities have long suffered inequalities in health service delivery, education, employment, affordable and appropriate food and access to services. Her responsibilities include representation, negotiation and liaison with governments at national and state level, with health organizations and lobbying at all levels for the future of Sunrise. Drawing on her extensive experience in health services delivery and knowledge of the social determinants of health Irene would now like to be able to advocate for Indigenous health rights from an international human rights perspective.

Tania McLeod; Fred Hollows Foundation, Australia

Over the past seven years Tania has worked for her community in the areas of substance misuse, housing, health and law and order matters. She is currently working with Indigenous community members to ensure the regular supply and consumption of nutritious food through remote community stores. She is also on the board of a regional indigenous housing service. She has advocated for street Indigenous people on many issues connected with access to health services, harm minimization and child protection. Tania has also worked with the Aboriginal traditional landowners of Darwin, the Larrakia Nation. Tania has found herself in advocacy roles whilst working with Indigenous non-government organisations. While comfortable advocating at the local level where she knows the stakeholders and their business, she would like to gain the necessary knowledge and skills to enable her to perform her role effectively at a territory and national level.

Desmond Bowen; Hopevale Aboriginal Shire Council, Australia

Desmond is an elder and traditional landowner from the Guguu Yimidithirr people of Hopevale. He is an elected councillor of Hopevale Aboriginal Shire Council and has a particular responsibility for access to land and resources. This involves him liaising with Australian and overseas bodies to advocate for, and bring awareness to, human rights issues. He has had a long history advocating on behalf of his community through Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody Recommendations, negotiating introduction of the Community Development Employment Program as chair of Hopevale Council, acting as chair of Cape York Land Council and as chair of the Hopevale Justice Group. He believes that by understanding his community's position within the international context, he can help his community to grow and move out of their desperate situation and into the worldwide community. He is currently writing a book about his life experiences and that of his people.

Kelik Ismunandar; Pengembangan Intitusi dan Kapasitas Lokal (PIKUL), Indonesia

Kelik is the Advocacy Manager for PIKUL in Kupang, West Timor. It fosters the growth of a democratic civil society committed to social justice in East Indonesia. A lot of their program work deals with accesses to resources for local people as well as community based disaster management and human rights. Kelik develops advocacy strategies for PIKUL's partners in East Nusa Tenggara, Bintuni Bay Papua and Central Sulawesi. As a student activist of 1993-1998, Kelik actively participated in the people's struggle to establish democracy in Indonesia. He was also one of the founders of the SPEK-HAM (Women's Solidarity for Humanity and Human Right) – an NGO in central Java that assists survivors of gender-based violence through education and public campaigns. Although new to indigenous issues he is drawing on his long experience in advocacy work and commitment to human rights issues in supporting the Indigenous people of Molo in their advocacy process to protect their land, water resources and ancestral graves from marble-mining exploitation.

Wasim Wagma; Centre for Indigenous Peoples of Indus, DAMAAN Development Organization, Pakistan

Wasim is executive officer and research and advocacy program manager with DAMAAN a regional NGO in the southern part of the Punjab working with the most marginalised and neglected communities of the Indus River. DAMAAN has done pioneering work in building the capacity of the indigenous peoples. It has focussed on the right to citizenship and sustainable livelihoods through education of women, conservation and exchange of biological and social diversities, supporting women as food farmers and on primary education in the mother tongue. Wasim has actively participated in numerous rights based campaigns in Pakistan including campaigns on land and water issues and in collaboration with Action Aid Pakistan. on active peace building after the US-led offensive in Afghanistan

Shadab Mansoori; Rural Litigation and Entitlement Kendra (RLEK), India

Shadab is project coordinator for RLEK an NGO in Uttaranchal, India. The organisation works extensively with various indigenous communities in different states across India. His work entails creating awareness and dispersing legal literacy in the predominantly tribal state of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. The work is particularly challenging because Chhattisgarh is affected by the Naxalite insurgency movement and many areas are inaccessible. Major concerns

are displacement from forest lands with no proper government policy to protect their rights. Shadab has a Masters of Laws in Human Rights and is researching Nyaya Panchayats which is the indigenous system of justice dispensed across India.

Fermin Rempillo; Socio Pastoral Action Center Foundation (SPACFI), Philippines

Fermin works as a social development worker and human rights activist for SPACFI a church based NGO in Bicol and has recently started working on issues affecting Indigenous peoples in the province of Camarines Norte. He has had previous involvement as community organizer in rights based projects on coastal resource management. More recently his focus has been on child labour issues in small scale mining sector and the sex trade - working with UN officials in implementing the Philippine Time Bound program to eliminate worst form of child labour from 2006-2007

Julio Agostinho; United Nations Integrated Mission, East Timor

Julio is a legal officer in the UNMIT Legal affairs office working on land and resource issues. He works closely with the land and property unit under the Ministry of Justice and with the UNMIT Human rights unit. He gained legal qualifications in Indonesia and previously worked on a land law program with Associates in Rural Development. Land issues are a potential source of conflict in east Timor and Julio is keen to know more about other countries' experiences.

Victoria Davis-Jenkins; Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation, Australia

Victoria has worked for Balkanu for 6 years and has gained a variety of skills and experience. Balkanu works on a regional and local level in partnership with NGOs and state and government agencies. She currently works for Cape York Digital Network within Balkanu. This provides managed information and communication technology services to communities and commercial users in the Cape York region of Queensland. Her work at Balkanu has enabled her to be actively involved in land and social reform processes in her region. She is currently focusing on community and advocacy work and is the Balkanu representative in the Cape York young leaders group focusing on Indigenous rights and environmental protection.

Mahn Kyaw Swe (Joe) Hantha; Karen Canadian Community/ Cross Culture Learner Centre, Canada

Joe is president of the Karen Canadian community. As well as interpreting for the Cross Culture Learner Centre, a resettlement service he is a strong advocate and active campaigner for the ethnic minorities of Burma. In this role he publishes a regular news bulletin, organizes an annual conference, Canadian campaign for Burma and participates in fora and conferences at national and international level.

O'acken Onge Nufuk; Centre for Environmental Research and Development, Papua New Guinea

O'acken works for the Centre for Environmental Research and Development Inc. (CERD) as a Women's Program Coordinator. CERD is the only NGO in PNG that advocates mine related issues to communities affected by the mining. Her job involves mobilising and empowering women so that they are able to form a strong voice to address issues in relation to mining activities in their communities. She is currently trying to get the Mine Affected Women's Foundation off the ground to mobilize and network women and to encourage them to participate in decision making processes.