



DIPLOMACY TRAINING PROGRAM

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

2024 Capacity Building Program on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Concept Note: The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) Webinar Series and UN Engagement Preparation (Phase 1)

1. Summary

This Concept Note proposes Phase 1 of a program to develop knowledge and understanding of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in Australia and to build the knowledge, skills and networks of First Nations advocates in promoting and protecting their rights, including through effective participation in UN processes.

Phase 1 will consist of:

- **Webinar Series:** The launch of a series of at least 6 x 1 hour webinars to build awareness and knowledge of UNDRIP – the webinar series would be free-of-charge, open to the public and widely advertised.
- **UN Preparation and Engagement Series:** Online and F2F activities to help First Nations representatives prepare effectively for engagement in UN processes – consistent with Australia's commitment to enhanced participation of Indigenous peoples in the UN system. These activities would engage a select group in tailored training and peer support networks.

The activities will be developed and guided by the Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) in partnership with the First Nations Program of Oxfam Australia (OA) and Indigenous Peoples Organisations (IPO).

The webinar series was a recommendation of a roundtable in February 2023 hosted by DTP and Oxfam Australia and bringing together DTP alumni and Indigenous community leaders.

The proposed preparatory programs are a resumption and revamp of programs previously organised by DTP/OA and the IPO. There are over 580 alumni of DTP's Indigenous peoples programs from 1990 to 2016, including UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) preparatory programs¹.

The Concept Note provides some more information on objectives, proposed activities and outcomes. It also provides some background and context for the proposal and a draft budget.

The activities in this proposal are seen as Phase 1 of a longer-term strategy of knowledge and skills building to promote understanding, support and implementation of UNDRIP.

2. Objectives, Activities and Outcomes

2.1 Objectives:

- To build awareness/knowledge of the rights of Indigenous peoples (UNDRIP) including Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and the right to self-determination in international law.
- To build knowledge and understanding of UN mechanisms in particular UNPFII and Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), UNDRIP and FPIC.

¹ It is our understanding that completion of a DTP or equivalent course was previously a pre-requisite to selection for an IPO delegation to UNPFII/EMRIP

- To support the effective participation of selected delegates participating in UNPFII 23rd Session and EMRIP's 17th Session.

2.2 Proposed Target Audience/Participants

Webinar Series:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations and their members and allies
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community advocates
- The alumni of DTP and Oxfam Australia (Straight Talk) and their partner organisations
- NGOs and service delivery organisations working with and for First Nations communities.
- The wider Australian community

UN Preparation and Engagement Series:

- Delegates attending the 23rd UNPFII session (estimated up to 20 participants)
- Delegates attending the 17th EMRIP session (estimated 10 to 20 participants)

2.3 Activities/Methodology

Webinar Series:

- Six webinars on UNDRIP of 1-1.5 hours presented and led by key First Nations advocates/Indigenous rights experts developed and guided by a First Nations Program Steering Committee consisting of DTP and Oxfam alumni, trainers and partners
- Curation and dissemination of resources – guides and further reading, links to IPOs etc
- Webinar series would be advertised widely via DTP/Oxfam alumni network, email newsletter (reaching over 6000 people), social media and university networks.

UN Preparation and Engagement Series:

- Online/hybrid interactive sessions with delegates to UNPFII and EMRIP led by experienced First Nations advocates with experience of participating in UNPFII and EMRIP.

2.4 Outcomes:

- Increased awareness and understanding of Indigenous peoples rights (UNDRIP) in key target audiences
- A safe learning space to build and share knowledge of UNDRIP and UN Mechanisms
- Content for an updated community guide on UNDRIP and UN Mechanisms
- Effective participation of First Nations Australians with the UN mechanisms

2.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

Webinar Series:

- Registration and attendance at webinars.
- Interactive polls during the webinars.
- Post webinar surveys.

UN Preparation and Engagement Series:

- Post UN engagement surveys of delegates.
- 3-5 key informant interviews with delegates and other stakeholders.
- Focus group discussions with delegates following the sessions.
- Feedback from partners

3. Background and Context:

A roundtable in 2023 and subsequent discussions with First Nations advocates have led to this proposal. [See here](#) for report and recommendations.

There has been a long history of committed and skilled international advocacy by First Nations Australians for their rights, and of engaging the UN system. Australian First Nations advocates played a critical role in the drafting and adoption of UNDRIP. These advocates helped to build the UN architecture for Indigenous peoples that Australian First Nations advocates participate in. Effective participation is assisted by good preparation – understanding the processes, and the opportunities to be heard and to engage, and how standards and international processes relate back to community issues and concerns.

Although successive Australian governments have supported UNDRIP since 2009, awareness of UNDRIP still remains limited, especially in the broader community. This was highlighted as a key barrier in a recent parliamentary inquiry into UNDRIP implementation in Australia.

The 2023 Constitutional Referendum on the Indigenous Voice to Parliament (the Voice) highlighted for many the urgent need to build knowledge and understanding of Indigenous peoples' rights, recognised in international law.

Building knowledge and understanding of UNDRIP among First Nations advocates is one contribution towards building support for implementation. Human rights education is a key responsibility of government, and First Nations have a right to education on their rights.

The importance of capacity building programs to help First Nations delegates prepare effectively for their participation in the UN processes has been identified by the IPO and Oxfam.

The UNDRIP Webinar series and UN Engagement Preparation series are proposed as part of a wider capacity building strategy being developed by DTP's First Nations alumni and Oxfam Australia's First Nations Program. This strategy will include F2F training programs on human rights, the rights of Indigenous peoples, engagement and participation with international human rights treaties, mechanisms and forums and advocacy.

4. About the organisers

This capacity building program will be organised by the Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) in partnership with Oxfam Australia, Nura Gili, the Indigenous Peoples Organisation and DTP alumni and trainers.

[The Diplomacy Training Program \(DTP\)](#) is an NGO affiliated with the Faculty of Law and Justice at UNSW. It has 30 years of experience in developing and delivering practical human rights capacity building programs in Australia and the Asia Pacific Region. Working with Indigenous Peoples Advocates and Rights Defenders has been central to DTP's Mission and Vision since 1990. Responding to requests from Indigenous peoples organisations and advocates [DTP has organised over 30 programs](#) with over 580 participants. It has developed resources on UNDRIP and on advocacy.

[Oxfam Australia](#) is part of a global movement of people working together to eliminate poverty by tackling inequality. Oxfam takes a human rights-based approach to development, helping to foster in people the ability to claim rights. As a globally focused organisation with deep roots in Australia, Oxfam has a proud history working in solidarity with First Peoples for over four decades. Through collaboration and collective responsibility, Oxfam will continue to work in partnership with communities to advocate and campaign for the rights and interests of First Peoples within the Australian society, but also for their inalienable rights as the First Peoples of Australia.

Oxfam's First Peoples Program strategy has three focus areas:

- **Political Engagement:** Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to gain power over their lives through increased levels of active engagement in institutions, decision making, political systems and change processes.
- **First Peoples Rights:** Standing side by side with First Peoples to activate the rights and interests of First Peoples to address the systemic causes of disadvantage, inequality, and injustice.
- **Action and Advocacy for Change:** Influencing through coalitions, advocacy, and movements to promote the rights and interests of First Peoples towards justice.