



**INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' HUMAN RIGHTS
DEFENDERS (IPHRD) NETWORK**

*"TOWARDS A UNIFIED NETWORK:
ENVISIONING THE FUTURE OF INDIGENOUS
RIGHTS DEFENDERS"*

Presentation by;

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THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS (IPHRDS) NETWORK

- Established in 2010 by Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP). It is a thematic network created under the Human Rights Campaign and Policy Advocacy (HRCPA) program of AIPP
- With 500 member organizations and individuals in 14 countries, it coordinates actions at the country level through nine IPHRD Focal-Organizations. It is a platform for solidarity, coordination, and support among indigenous human rights defenders in Asia. It aims to promote and advocate for Indigenous Peoples' rights at national, regional, and international levels.
- The human rights situation for Indigenous Peoples in Asia remains dire due to colonial state policies, aggressive development practices, and rapid technological changes, leading to violations of their sovereignty over land and territory and criminalization of human rights defenders. Tactics such as psychological warfare, harassment, and militarization further restrict their rights and advocacy efforts. The lack of recognition and implementation of Indigenous Peoples' rights perpetuates a cycle of violence and limits civic spaces for effective advocacy.





FOCUS ON BUILDING LEADERSHIP, TRAINING, DOCUMENTATION, AND ADVOCACY TO STRENGTHEN THE NETWORK AND SUPPORT INDIGENOUS RIGHTS. IT ALSO BUILDS CAPACITY TO CONFRONT OR ADDRESS ISSUES ARISING FROM:

Colonial State Policies and Lack of Legal Recognition:

Development Aggression and Land Grabbing:

Criminalization of Defenders and Militarization:

Psychological Warfare, Harassment, and Gender-Based Violence:

Environmental Degradation and Imposition of Extractive Projects:

Forced Evictions, Displacements, and Economic Marginalization:

Closing Civic and Democratic Spaces and Lack of Access to Justice:

Cultural Erosion and Assimilation

Rapid Technological Changes

MILESTONES OF HRCPA PROGRAM IN STRENGTHENING IPHRDS:

- In 2021 and 2022, 2023 IPHRD Network members reviewed their first decade, highlighting key achievements, challenges, and areas for improvement, while reaffirming the network's role in fostering leadership, skills, and secured spaces for dialogue and strategy development. Some of the important achievements are as follows:
- Expanded the IPHRD network to include around 500 individuals and organizations, including AIPP members, partners, and allies.
- Supported the operationalization of nine IPHRD Focal-Organizations in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines, Myanmar, Malaysia, India, and Thailand.
- Established four national IPHRD networks in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Thailand, and Nepal, with ongoing efforts in other countries.
- Strengthened co-responsibility with AIPP Secretariat, streamlining and institutionalization of mechanism for collaboration, strengthening IPHRD Focal-Organizations, including aligning strategies and capacity building initiatives at local and national levels enhanced. As a result, capacity building and advocacy efforts have become more coordinated at all levels.
- Improved capacity for documentation and advocacy, recording over 100 cases of human rights violations and producing effective advocacy materials and reports for state agencies, regional, and UN bodies. Additionally, the regional database has been strengthened and is increasingly used for advocacy and trend analysis.
- Enhanced the ability of IPHRDs to build networks, lead movements, and expand emergency grant provisions and mechanism for greater effectiveness.

APPROACH AND STRATEGY



Advocacy and consensus building:

Cross-cutting and integrated methodologies:

Emergency and sanctuary support mechanisms:

Capacity building:

Network strengthening:

Contribution to AIPP's Vision and Goal:

The program will align with AIPP's flagship initiatives, including:

Centre of Excellence in Village Governance (COE-VG):

Indigenous Community Protocols (ICP):

Indigenous Knowledge and Data Sovereignty:

8. Institutionalisation and streamlining and

9. Monitoring and Assessment:

CENTERS OF DEFENDERS: EMPOWERING INDIGENOUS HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Key Points:

- AIPP launched the '**Centers of Defenders**' initiative to support and empower Indigenous human rights defenders across Asia.
- Official recognition of **Kapaeeng Foundation** (Bangladesh) and **LAHURNIP** (Nepal) as the first designated Centers of Defenders during the 2024 Asia Preparatory Meeting for UN engagement.
- The '**Center of Defenders**' (**COD**) designation recognizes organizations that:
 - Demonstrate **Courageous Leadership** in protecting Indigenous rights.
 - Provide consistent frontline defense and effective interventions against the criminalization of defenders.
 - Make impactful contributions to advance Indigenous self-determination, justice, and dignity.



CENTER OF DEFENDERS

- The Centre of Defenders (COD) serves as an inspiration for the IPHRD network, demonstrating courageous leadership in action. It is also a living testament to indigenous resilience, offering tangible hope to communities under threat.
- While AIPP provides foundational support for the Centers of Defenders (CODs), these centers will serve as dynamic engines of change – working in tandem with AIPP to propel our collective vision forward through four key pillars: capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, solidarity, and advocacy.
- This initiative will also create multiplier effects across AIPP's core priorities: cultivating a new generation of indigenous leaders, advancing gender-responsive protection systems, strengthening self-governance and territorial sovereignty, and implementing UNDRIP at community and national levels.
- As they effectively challenge systemic oppression and injustice at all levels, indigenous human rights defenders will receive, through our Center for Defenders, comprehensive support to fearlessly advance indigenous rights and collectively strengthen movements for self-determination.

PLANNING/ACTION- GROUP WORK

1. General thought on strengthening the IPHRD network- list top 3 priority areas and ideas on how to strengthen the network

- At the Country Level
- At the regional level

2. How do we strengthen the regional solidarity? Provide your top 3 priorities

- Eg. Regional archive, how to cross-fertilize campaigns and advocacy

3. Advocacy, lobbying, Campaigns

- Focused priority areas

4. Capacity building priorities

5. Documentation/research/knowledge product priorities

- At the country level
- At the regional level- eg, there was suggestion to document terror laws, documentation of success stories

6. Institutional strengthening

- Identify areas of institutional strengthening

7. Thematic/training priorities for 2026 IPHRD exchange and training