

Press Release
22 May 2013

Breakthrough participation of Indigenous Peoples in Aid and Development Effectiveness

Exactly a month after the International Indigenous Peoples Workshop on Aid and Development Effectiveness in Baguio City, Philippines, around 50 indigenous peoples, advocates and representatives from different organizations participated in a forum on indigenous peoples and development effectiveness. At least total of 35 local, national, regional and international organizations and 15 countries were represented. The side event is part of the ongoing education campaign and capacity building agreed upon in the international workshop.

The *Indigenous Peoples and Aid and Development Effectiveness* was a successful side event during the 12th session on the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues held on May 22, 2013 in the United Nations Headquarters in New York City. This side event was led by the Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-determination and Liberation (IMPSDL), in cooperation with the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network, Land is Life and the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness.

The speakers were Legborsi Saro Pyagbara from the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People in Nigeria, Norma Maldonado of the Asociacion Raxch' och' Oxlaju Aj in Guatemala, Jane Yap-eo of the IPMSDL, and Joan Carling of the AIPP. Windel Bolinget of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance and Kalipunan ng mga KAMP National Alliance of Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines chaired the side event.

The question of “for whom is the development” was thrown by Ms. Maldonado as she makes her point on the development issues faced by Indigenous Peoples, how the funds are being diverted and corrupted by the government and businesses, and how aid is tied with conditionalities imposed on dependent countries. Mr. Pyagbara gave a clear historical background on aid and highlighted the omission of the indigenous peoples’ participation in all the international processes on aid and development effectiveness. With this context, Ms. Yap-eo presented how indigenous peoples should participate as they actively take part in the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE). “To strengthen indigenous peoples’ participation on global aid and development effectiveness, a global coordinating committee must be formed. This will pave the way towards building an indigenous peoples constituency on development aid and effectiveness.” Indigenous peoples movements’ active participation in the CPDE will give a venue to project their views and criticism of development aid, to advocate a position that development aid should support self-determined and sustainable development of indigenous peoples, to directly access development funding for their needs to further build self-reliance, and continuously build unity with other sectors on development funds and effectiveness.

In summary, Ms. Carling presented the link of global aid and implications to the national level, in particular to indigenous communities. The reality is that indigenous peoples remains to be poor and marginalized and these aids doesn’t address the issues of the indigenous peoples, but are mere responses to the interests of the government and businesses. This situation is aggravated with the continued and systemic exclusion of the indigenous peoples’ participation on the processes related to aid and development. It is important to make the indigenous peoples visible to the states, as well as their collective rights as peoples. “Indigenous Peoples must be referred to as nations and peoples who are rights holders, rather than just stakeholders and part of civil society organizations.”

As part of the continuity of the side event, an intervention on the indigenous peoples’ development agenda is to be made during the UNPFII session on Development Agenda Beyond 2015.

