

PROJECT ACCESS

GLOBAL CAPACITY BUILDING
FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

2006



PROJECT ACCESS, a cooperative effort of Tribal Link Foundation and Land is Life, supports indigenous peoples' participation in international meetings and conferences where decisions are being made that affect their rights, cultures and livelihoods. This year, the project is placing a special emphasis on funding indigenous peoples to attend the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, May 15-26, 2006.

PROJECT ACCESS is a collaboration between Tribal Link Foundation and Land is Life

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FALL 2006

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SUMMARY

PROJECT ACCESS was able to provide funding for 18 indigenous peoples' representatives to attend two full weeks of the 5th session of the Permanent Forum. Also, in order for the representatives to be able to participate more effectively at the Forum, we organized a capacity building workshop before the Forum – one in English and one in Spanish.

Each of the representatives sponsored by Project Access was also provided individual support by the project coordinators, Steering Committee members and instructors. We organized media interviews, arranged meetings with the NY Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other UN bodies, and also assisted in writing interventions and lobbying.

Trainings were led by some of the world's most experienced indigenous rights experts, and were geared towards giving participants practical knowledge and skills that could be put to use immediately to forward their peoples' struggles. Special emphasis was given to understanding and participating effectively in the Permanent Forum.

Participants and trainers unanimously agreed that the trainings were effective and they were eager to work with Project Access to organize regional trainings and expand upon the Permanent Forum trainings.

BACKGROUND

At the first session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, in May of 2002, Land is Life and Tribal Link brought together a group of indigenous leaders to discuss the urgent need to strengthen the ability of indigenous peoples to participate effectively in international meetings, conferences and policy-making processes that affect their rights, cultures, health, lands and/or sovereignty. A Steering Committee was formed, made up of indigenous representatives from around the world, and Project Access was created. The Steering Committee guides the work of the project and consults with indigenous communities and organizations from different regions of the world to ensure that there is broad based participation in the project's activities, and that the project most effectively addresses the needs of indigenous communities.



PROJECT ACCESS FUNDING RECIPIENTS

AFRICA

Pacifique Mukumba (Mbuti), DRC
 Daniel Salau Rogei (Maasai), Kenya
 Mary Simat (Maasai), Kenya

THE CARIBBEAN

Reginaldo Adolfo Fredericks
 (Lokona Arawak), Venezuela
 Naniki Reyes Ocasio (Taino), Puerto Rico

ASIA - PACIFIC

Jennifer Awingan (Kalinga), The Philippines
 Viktor Kaisiepo, West Papua
 Kado Muir (Ngalia), Australia
 Janes Nanulaitta (Alifuru),
 Maluku, Indonesia
 Mina Susana Setra (Pompankg),
 The Philippines

SOUTH AMERICA

Tomas Alarcón (Aymara), Peru
 Ivan Ignacio (Aymara), Peru
 Miriam Marcia Tanguila Aguinda
 (Kichwa), Ecuador
 Edwin Miro, Bolivia
 Marcos Terena (Terena), Brazil
 Tatiana Ujacow, Brazil
 Laura Yawanawa (Mizteca-Zapoteca), Brazil
 Joaquim Tashka Yawanawa (Yawanawa),
 Brazil



“It is important to frame the Millennium Development Goals as a human rights-based agenda. For indigenous peoples it is difficult to talk about development without talking about basic rights to lands and resources, culture and identity, and self-determination.”

VICTORIA TAULI-CORPUZ,
 Chairperson, Permanent
 Forum on Indigenous Issues

PROJECT ACCESS · CAPACITY BUILDING

TRAINING SESSION, MAY 10-12

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THEIR ROLE IN THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ARENA

Classes were given on the following themes:

- † The UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations
- † The UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- † Indigenous Rights and International Labour Organization Convention 169
- † Protection of Indigenous Knowledge
- † The Conventions on Biological Diversity and Climate Change
- † The UN System and Indigenous Peoples
- † World Bank and Indigenous Peoples
- † The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

FILING HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLAINTS IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Participants learned:

- † History and structure of the UN Human Rights system
- † Filing complaints using Procedure 1503
- † Human Rights Conventions and Committees
- † How to Monitor Compliance with Conventions
- † Working to Ensure Compliance with Conventions

Special emphasis was placed on preparing for effective participation in the upcoming meeting of the Permanent Forum, with practice in elaborating interventions and recommendations before the Forum, lobbying Forum members, and taking advantage of their time at the UN by meeting with government representatives, UN programmes, funds and agencies, foundations and media. Additionally, the UN library gave a special training on how to utilize the UN website. The instructors for this training were Tomas Alarcón and Joshua Cooper. This training was done in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.



PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

OPENS ITS 5TH SESSION WITH SPECIAL THEME: THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT

GOALS AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES; RE-DEFINING THE MDGs

This year's Session, May 15-26, began with the launching of the Programme of Action for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People in the General Assembly Hall at UN Headquarters in New York. The session was attended by some 1,200 indigenous peoples' representatives, as well as some 55 governments, 31 international agencies, members of non-governmental organizations and academia.

This year's session was devoted to considering indigenous peoples' key developmental concerns through the special theme "Millennium Development Goals and Indigenous Peoples." Appreciating that it might not be possible to redefine the Goals — a set of ambitious targets ranging from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS, and providing universal primary education, all by 2015 — the Permanent Forum noted the need for the inclusion of indigenous peoples in all evaluation processes. It also noted the need for stricter monitoring on the progress towards the Goals, and strongly encouraged all States to provide disaggregated data on health and social welfare indicators, to understand where indigenous societies stand in the process.



Descendance Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Dance Theatre, Australia, Cultural Event, PFI

The Permanent Forum reaffirms that self-determination, free, prior and informed consent and accountability form the basis of, and prerequisite for, any relationship that can be called a true partnership for development, and urges all States, indigenous peoples, United Nations bodies, international development agencies, corporations and the private sector, as well as civil society, to uphold these vital principles.

In a closing press conference, PFI members urged Member States to rapidly adopt a long-negotiated draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples as the surest way to promote the human rights of 370 million indigenous people worldwide and to protect the fragile traditional lands and resources on which they depended for survival. With the draft representing the most comprehensive statement of indigenous peoples' collective fundamental rights to date, they hoped it would be endorsed by the newly-created Human Rights Council, to be adopted by the Assembly at the end of this year.

Next year the Permanent Forum will be held May 14-25, 2007, and the special theme will be "Land, Territories, and Resources." Forum member Wilton Littlechild of Canada, pointed out that consideration of that topic must include a discussion on the impact of treaties and their role in matters pertaining to native land rights. Forum member Otila Lux De Coti of Guatemala also stressed the importance of considering all aspects of the theme, particularly since access to land and resources played such a big role in poverty alleviation for indigenous communities.

BACKGROUND ON THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Millennium Development Goals summarize the development goals agreed on at international conferences and world summits during the 1990s. At the end of the last century, world leaders distilled the key goals and targets in the Millennium Declaration (September 2000). The Declaration reaffirms universal values of human rights, equality, mutual respect and shared responsibility for the conditions of all peoples and seeks to redress globalization's hugely unequal benefits. Governments have committed themselves to fulfilling their obligations by 2015.

Emanating from the Millennium Declaration, the eight Millennium Development Goals bind countries to do more and join forces in the fight against poverty, illiteracy, hunger, lack of education, gender inequality, child and maternal mortality, disease and environmental degradation.

THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Millennium Development Goals are an ambitious agenda for reducing poverty and improving lives by the year 2015.

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

THE SECOND UN INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

The Second UN International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, 2006-2015, seeks to further strengthen global cooperation for the attainment of indigenous peoples' goals, by means of action-oriented programmes and specific projects, increased technical assistance and relevant standard-setting activities. The goals of the Decade will coincide with the 2015 benchmark for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

One of the objectives of the Decade is the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in decisions which directly or indirectly affect their lifestyles, traditional lands and territories, their cultural integrity as indigenous peoples with collective rights or any other aspect of their lives, considering the principle of free, prior and informed consent.

BACKGROUND

THE UN PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

The UN, governments, international organizations, civil society groups, private businesses and, above all, indigenous peoples themselves, can form partnerships to promote development, human rights and peace. These partnerships will only work, however, if there is genuine participation of indigenous peoples in the decisions that affect them – and if there is genuine sensitivity towards their cultures.”

– Kofi Annan, UN SECRETARY GENERAL

Indigenous peoples began asking the United Nations to set up a Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in the late 1980's. For indigenous peoples, participation in the United Nations was very limited, and the UN system was not addressing their real life needs and concerns. They proposed the establishment of a new body that would offer all indigenous peoples of the world a space to participate in the UN system and would focus on the global issues that are of concern to their communities.

In April 2000, the Commission on Human Rights adopted a resolution to establish the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and three months later the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) endorsed the resolution, creating the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues as a high level advisory body to ECOSOC. The first meeting of the Forum was held in 2002.

The Forum is composed of sixteen members, eight of whom are nominated by indigenous peoples and eight nominated by governments. Governments may nominate indigenous experts if they choose, and some have done so. Their mandate is to:

- † Provide expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to the Council, as well as to programmes, funds and agencies of the United Nations through the Council
- † Raise awareness and promote the integration and coordination of activities related to indigenous issues within the UN system
- † Prepare and disseminate information on indigenous issues

The Forum holds public sessions for two weeks every year, where the Forum members receive the testimony, requests and recommendations of indigenous peoples. The work of the Permanent Forum is divided into the following themes:

- Economic and Social Development
- Culture
- The Environment
- Education
- Health
- Human Rights

This new UN body creates a unique opportunity for indigenous peoples to monitor and influence the work of the UN, and creates a space, for two weeks every year, where indigenous peoples can voice their concerns about issues that are not being addressed by States or the international community. Members of the Forum, as well as the Secretariat, work throughout the year to ensure that the recommendations of the Forum are enacted and to expand upon important dialogues that were initiated during the Forum.

The establishment of the Permanent Forum represents an historic gain for indigenous peoples around the world, and they are working hard to ensure that its work is relevant, productive and contributes to making real and positive change.

PROJECT ACCESS · STEERING COMMITTEE



ROBERTO MUCARO BORRERO is a long-time Boriken Taino community activist, artist and historian. He currently serves as the President and Chairman of the United Confederation of Taino People's U.S. Regional Coordinating Office. Roberto has over 15 years' experience within the United Nations system, and is the Chairperson of the NGO Committee on the UN International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples.



VIKTOR KAISIEPO is Biak from West Papua. He lives in exile in The Netherlands. Viktor is a founding member of the Papua Presidium Council, which represents over 1 million indigenous West Papuans in their non-violent struggle for self-determination. Viktor has been representing the indigenous peoples of West Papua at the United Nations for over twenty years.



MIRIAN MASAQUIZA is Kichwa from the community of Salasaca in Ecuador. As a teenager, Mirian became a leader of the indigenous youth movement in Ecuador. Over the course of her career her many responsibilities have included serving as a consultant for the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, DC and for the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. She presently works for the Secretariat of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.



ONEL MASARDULE is Kuna from Panama. He is Coordinator of the Foundation for the Promotion of Indigenous Knowledge, and also is Director of the Institute for the Holistic Development of Kuna Yala, and a representative of the Coalition of Indigenous Peoples of Meso-America.



ANNA PINTO represents the Center for Organization and Research on the Environment. Her work's focus is the rights of indigenous children and women. Anna has brought the issues that concern indigenous children before the United Nations General Assembly, and is working to ensure that the UN Children's Fund understands the situation of indigenous children around the world, and to ensure that their work effectively addresses children's issues.



JOHN GORDON SCOTT is a descendant of the Iningai people – the Aboriginal people who traditionally lived in central Queensland, Australia. Throughout the 1980s and early 90s, he worked as a teacher and an Aboriginal education advisor in Australia. In the 1990's, John worked with the Aboriginal Social Justice Commissioner, Mick Dodson, on indigenous legal education programmes. In 2000, John worked with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (in Geneva) within the Indigenous and Minorities Team. He then held another UN position in New York focusing on establishing the UN Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Presently, John is Policy Officer for Traditional Knowledge at the UN Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity, which he commenced in October 2004.



MARCOS TERENA is of the Terena people from the Pantanal region in Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil. He founded the first indigenous peoples rights movement in Brazil, the Union of Indigenous Nations, in 1977. In 1992 he organized the historic World Conference of Indigenous Peoples on Territories, Environment and Development. Marcos is a founding member of the Inter-Tribal Committee, Land is Life, the International Alliance of Indigenous-Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests and the Brazilian Indigenous Institute on Intellectual Property.

PROJECT ACCESS · INSTRUCTORS



TOMAS ALARCÓN is Aymara from the Andes in Peru. He is a lawyer, and the Director of CAPAJ, an organization that works for the rights of the Aymara people in Peru and Bolivia. Tomas has been participating in United Nations conferences and meetings for over twenty years. He has special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, and is Chair of the meetings of the UN Experts on the Administration of Justice and Indigenous Peoples. Tomas teaches indigenous peoples rights at the International Training Center for Indigenous Peoples in Nuuk, Greenland.



JOSHUA COOPER is a professor of Human Rights Education at the University of Hawaii and the Director of the Hawaii Institute for Human Rights. Joshua teaches Human Rights Workshops around the world and works closely with many indigenous peoples organizations. He is the Chair of Amnesty International's Working Group on Indigenous Peoples.

PROJECT ACCESS · COORDINATORS

Tribal Link Foundation and Land is Life have been working together on developing this project since 2002. Since beginning, we have assisted indigenous peoples' representatives to participate at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (and its preparatory meetings), United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations, United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Conference of the Parties to the RAMSAR Wetlands Convention, meetings of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other important international fora.



BRIAN KEANE, Coordinator

LAND IS LIFE is a coalition of indigenous communities and their representative organizations from around the world that was founded at the historic World Conference of Indigenous Peoples on Territories, Environment and Development (1992). Land is Life works for the recognition of indigenous peoples' human, economic, social, cultural and territorial rights.



PAMELA KRAFT, Director

TRIBAL LINK FOUNDATION, INC. is a communications network linking indigenous peoples to information, media, resources and relevant networks, with a special focus on the United Nations system. Tribal Link provides outreach to the public regarding indigenous peoples and their issues, emphasizing the significance of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

PROJECT ACCESS · PARTICIPANTS

AFRICA



PACIFIQUE MUKUMBA is of the Mbuti people that live in the forests of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Mbuti are commonly referred to as Pygmies, and they have suffered a long history of human rights abuses. Fighting in the DRC over control of resources has had a devastating effect on the Mbuti. Pacifique, as part of a coalition of communities, is involved in the struggle to get the Mbuti a space in the peace process, and to get Mbuti rights recognized and Mbuti lands demarcated as part of the new DRC.



DANIEL ROGEI SALAU, of the Maasai in Kenya, is a representative of the Simba Maasai Outreach Organization (SIMOO). SIMOO is a community-based non-profit organization which works with the Maasai community of Kenya. Its overall goal is to improve the living standards of the community members through integrated development, advocacy and capacity building. SIMOO was formed in 1996 when community members realized that a development gap existed in the community, which had been marginalized for the past century by both the colonial government and successive independent governments.



MARY SIMAT is Maasai from the Narok District in Kenya. Mary is the Chairwoman of Maasai Women for Education and Economic Development (MAWEED), which works for the rights of Maasai women and girls. Mary is also the Chairperson of the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee, a cooperative network of indigenous peoples from the entire continent.

THE CARIBBEAN



REGINALDO ADOLFO FREDERICKS is currently the elected Chief of the Hoboshirima Lokono Arawak community in Estado Bolivar, Venezuela. As head of the governing village council of Hoboshirima, Chief Fredericks is responsible for the overall well being of the community and interacts with community members as well as neighboring indigenous groups, government officials etc. The Lokono people are indigenous to parts of Venezuela, Suriname, and Guyana.



NANIKI REYES OCASIO is a grandmother, a Taíno tradition bearer and community leader from Orocovis, Puerto Rico. Naniki has a background in law and is a well known and respected activist in Puerto Rico and internationally. She has consistently participated in the United Nations and Organization of American States systems with regard to promoting indigenous rights for Caribbean and other aboriginal peoples. In Puerto Rico, she is the founder of the Caney Quinto Mundo (5th World Learning Center), which is situated on 400 acres of land which she caretakes with her husband Maurico. Naniki is one of the few Taíno Indians whose work as a Taíno has been recognized by the Government of Puerto Rico, and she is an elected community representative on the current Governor's Special Communities Board.

PROJECT ACCESS · PARTICIPANTS CONTINUED

ASIA - PACIFIC



JENNIFER AWINGAN is of the Kalinga people of The Philippines. She works with three organizations: the Cordillera People's Alliance, the Cordillera Youth Center, and the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network (APIYN). The APIYN is run through the offices of the Cordillera Youth Center, and includes 21 organizations and 2000 people. Jennifer has been working with the Cordillera Youth Center since 1995, and with the APIYN since its inception in 2002. She is the full-time coordinator for APIYN.



KADO MUIR is a member of the Ngalia tribe of the Northern Goldfields and Desert regions of Western Australia. Kado is an Aboriginal community and business leader. He is active in many regional and community organizations. Kado blends a traditional Aboriginal education with western education; he is an initiated tribal lawman as well as holding a University Masters degree in Anthropology and Archaeology. Kado has worked in government, in Aboriginal community organizations and today operates a cultural communication company educating other Australians about Aboriginal culture and history.



JANES NANULAITTA is of the Alifuru Peoples of Maluku, Indonesia. He represents the Bangsa Adat Alifuru Organization, a non-profit organization which advocates for the educational, cultural and social needs of the Maluku Alifuru people. It aims to empower and strengthen them through trainings, workshops, advocacy, and seminars about human rights, with a special focus on gender equality. The organization was established in 2000 in order to fight for the rights of the Alifuru, particularly those of women and children.



MINA SUSANA SETRA is of the Pompankg people of The Philippines. She is the Secretary-General of the Indigenous Peoples' Alliance (IPA) of West Kalimantan, an organization which includes 94 communities in West Kalimantan alone, with a total of 100,000 people. She has worked with IPA since 1999.

PROJECT ACCESS · PARTICIPANTS CONTINUED

SOUTH AMERICA



IVAN IGNACIO (Aymara) serves as the National Coordinator of the Consejo Andino de Naciones Originarias, CANO (or Aboriginal Andean Nations Council). CANO is a communitarian organization that regroups the aboriginal people from the Andean region (territories now known as Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, North Chile, North Argentina and South Colombia) who are living in Canada, as well as other Native people of Latin America. CANO has workgroups in Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa and Quebec.



MIRIAM MARCIA TANGUILA AGUINDA is a community leader and the only female officer of a new indigenous organization, Makarik Nihua. Makarik Nihua is a grass-roots organization formed in 2003 by representatives of 31 Kichwa and Huaorani communities who came together in the wake of the dismissal of a prominent class action lawsuit against Texaco (now part of Chevron Corp.) in New York, based on the company's oil exploration and production operations in the Amazon Rainforest in Ecuador.



TATIANA AZAMBUJA UJACOW is an attorney representing the Inter-Tribal Committee, an indigenous rights organization in Brazil. In 2006 she was awarded the Marçal de Souza Tupay prize by the legislative assembly of the state of Mato Grosso do Sul. In 2005, she published a book on the principle of human dignity and its effect on indigenous rights. Tatiana is also a professor at the Central University of Grande Dourados, a guest lecturer at the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul and a member of the Council for Women's Rights in Dourados.



LAURA SORIANO YAWANAWA is a Mixteca-Zapoteca from Oaxaca, Mexico. She has a degree in International Relations from Principia College in Elmhurst, Illinois, and in journalism and radio studies from the Agencia Internacional de Noticias EFE, in Madrid, Spain. She participated in a radio studies apprenticeship with Pacifica Radio, KPFA in Berkeley CA. She is the former Executive Director of the Center for the Indigenous Rights of Mexico, Central and South America, a non-profit organization based in Oakland, California.



JOAQUIM TASHKA YAWANAWA is the chief of the Yawanawa, a tribe of about 700 Brazilian Indians who live deep in the Amazon rainforest. The Yawanawa are one of the smaller tribes, but they are located in a vital area of Brazil. The Yawanawa are working to gain economic independence by the careful and sustainable use of their forests. They are also striving to rebuild their cultural heritage, which was almost destroyed in the early 1900's by rubber tappers, and later by missionaries, and now by loggers. Recently they were able to start to secure the last of their traditional lands, comprising approximately 500,000 acres.

PROJECT ACCESS PARTICIPANTS' COMMENTS EVALUATION SESSION MAY 23, 2006

- ☑ The Permanent Forum has opened up a wide range of opportunities. I met many new colleagues from all over the world at the Forum and realized the true power of solidarity and exchanging views with other indigenous peoples. In particular the Project Access training was an ideal platform to share experiences, challenges and successes. Such a gathering is very vital in building up linkages and networking which is a prerequisite for solidarity.
- ☑ At the next training I would recommend having a class on public speaking and basic writing skills including proposal writing skills.
- ☑ We all could use laptops. If there are companies who can donate laptops for our projects that would help our work immensely.
- ☑ What I found most useful was the introduction and discussions about UN mechanisms, UN agencies, practical tips on intervention writing and campaign organizing. Now I can actually make a training module on the "UN instruments" relevant to indigenous peoples in our community so that they can better understand the relationship of local campaigns and how they connect to the international level.
- ☑ As a result of attending the forum, our community directly benefited as our issues are brought to the attention of the wider public. We gained international support in various forms such as internationalizing specific campaigns that influence local or national views on pressing issues. The unity and solidarity forged with other communities and organizations contributes to the strength of our local communities. It also raised the capacity of the organization through its leaders, especially those attending these meetings, like me, the capacity to lobby and influence policies and networking is certainly raised.
- ☑ I am grateful for being able to attend the three day training program of Project Access as it helped me foresee the role of the Forum and I feel it was a big contribution to the success of my participation.

PROJECT ACCESS CHALLENGES

- ☑ One basic challenge that many participants stated was the lack of funding to carry out their work effectively. One participant said *"It is important if we can be introduced to funders and foundations in NY, so that after the Forum we can also have something tangible to take back to our communities. I would recommend to have another "Meet the Funders" panel like Tribal Link and Land is Life did in May 2004."*
- ☑ In an institutional setting such as the United Nations, some participants found it hard to share their issues in a concise way. Therefore the training section on how to make effective presentations/interventions was especially helpful to them.
- ☑ All of the Project Access participants had the opportunity to take part in a one day UN library training course on how to navigate the UN system via the world wide web. One challenge was that some of the indigenous participants did not have basic computer skills that would help them fully benefit from a training that walked trainees through this course via the web. Therefore perhaps we may think of adding a special training in basic computer skills to the Project Access training.
- ☑ The Participants wished to have more background information on the other participants so that they could understand any areas of commonality in hopes of collaborating on common issues.
- ☑ Some of the participants wished to have simultaneous translation so they could stay in one large group instead of splitting the group into Spanish and English participants.

PROJECT ACCESS: ACCOMPLISHMENTS / BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT

- ☑ As a result of the training the participants stated that they had more expertise on how to more effectively make an impact during their 2 weeks at the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. This included learning: about the history of the forum, how to make an effective intervention, how to arrange meetings with representatives from UN agencies/missions. Since the training was done in cooperation with the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues the curriculum was particularly timely and relevant. One participant said *“First of all the training is timely because it is done before the actual conference. This creates a sense of confidence towards the Forum and the other side events during the forum.”*
- ☑ As a result of hearing about the struggles and success stories of other indigenous communities around the world, participants expressed an interest in visiting each others communities to share best practices. The participants felt that the 3 day Project Access training made them feel like they were part of an extended family. They really bonded and wished to work more closely together. In fact during the evaluation they asked if there was a way that they could meet every few days in a group as Project Access participants just to check in and support one another.
- ☑ The UN recently terminated it’s Commission on Human Rights and created a new Human Rights Council. A representative from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights spoke to the trainees about the workings of the new Council. The participants found this especially useful as many of their concerns deal directly with human rights abuses.
- ☑ One participant said: *“In most cases, indigenous peoples in their own countries are not being heard, and their issues are being disregarded. The UN mechanisms of addressing these issues are often inaccessible for local communities due to lack of knowledge on the mechanism, lack of information and the inability of communities to overcome bureaucratic processes entailed in the process. The Permanent Forum serves as the venue for indigenous peoples to raise and to discuss their issues directly with concerned governments and agencies. Issues raised at the Permanent Forum put pressure on nations states, UN agencies and other concerned organizations to act on them.”*
- ☑ The recommendations taken by the Permanent Forum on these issues will influence policies in the region and the international community. For example, the final report of the session recommended that a study be done on the impact of palm oil plantations on indigenous communities which one of our Project Access participants highlighted in her intervention to the Forum.

THANK YOU TO AVEDA CORPORATION

On behalf of the 18 indigenous representatives Aveda sponsored to attend the 2005 session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (May 15-26), we wish to express our gratitude for your generosity and ongoing commitment to strengthening the participation of indigenous peoples in the international arena, where they can influence policy and be involved in all decisions that affect them. These indigenous peoples have found a true extended family at the Aveda Corporation.



Special thanks to Kaja Glinski for photography.

INDIGENOUS VOICES

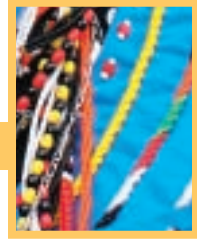
We have highlighted the stories of a few of the indigenous representatives Project Access funded to attend the Permanent Forum. The following stories are true testimonies of the power of participation. By joining together, the voices of the world's indigenous peoples are not only being heard, but are also inspiring the United Nations to work in partnership with them on addressing issues of concern. Their stories encourage us to do all that we can to support their efforts to preserve their communities and cultures.



Maasai Beadwork,
Kenya

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FROM AFRICA

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS

DANIEL SALAU ROGEI

Maasai

Kajiado District, Kenya



The Simba Maasai Outreach Organization (SIMOO) nominated Daniel Salau Rogei to represent the community and SIMOO at the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII). SIMOO is a community-based non-profit organization which works with the Maasai community of Kenya. Its overall goal is to improve the living standards of community members through integrated development, advocacy and capacity building. The organization came into being a decade ago after they realized that a development gap exists in their community, which has been marginalized for the past century both by the colonial government and the successive independent governments.

Daniel states that “the Maasai community, like most other communities in the world, still strongly adheres to its cultural norms and depends on traditional livelihoods. The community is predominantly pastoralist and lives in the drier parts of the Great Rift Valley. They practice a nomadic lifestyle, moving with their livestock-goats, sheep, cows and donkeys from one region to another in search of grass and water. Its strong and sacred relationship with the environment and the concept of ecological jurisprudence has ensured conservation of flora and fauna over ages. Over 70% of the wildlife in Kenya is found in Maasai territory both within and outside protected areas.”

Daniel says that “in the last two decades, the community has experienced major challenges as a result of globalization. Like other indigenous peoples, they have been caught in a precarious situation where they are pulled apart between two worlds. The modern perpetuates ‘civilization’ and development philosophies whereas the ancient subscribe to traditional values and cultural norms. Indigenous peoples including the Maasai are more comfortable with the latter, whose values have sustained them for generations. But the power of globalization is so strong that indigenous peoples find themselves in two worlds, this is therefore a delicate transition that requires perfect balancing because the two worlds need each other and none will survive without the other.”

Daniel seems to be one of those rare individuals that have been able to strike a balance between these two worlds and thus be able to address his communities’ needs. An opportunity to travel to the PFII has allowed him to greatly enhance his networking ability. Daniel feels that the Forum has opened up a wide range of opportunities. He has met many new colleagues

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from all over the world at the PFI and realized the true power of solidarity and exchanging views with other indigenous peoples. In particular he said that the Project Access training was “an ideal platform to share experiences, challenges and successes. Such a gathering is very vital in building linkages and networking which is a prerequisite for solidarity.”

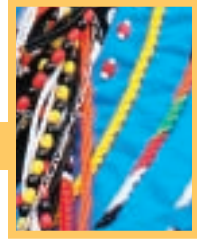
He has dreamed of creating a Maasai Cultural Exchange Project which would encourage community members to visit other indigenous peoples to learn from each other. After meeting fellow Project Access participants Pacifique Mukumba and Sinafasi Makelo (Mbuti Pygmy) of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Daniel proposed that the Maasai visit the Mbuti in the DRC to learn first-hand about their struggles. He is particularly interested in land rights since this is a major issue for the Maasai and would also like to visit South Africa where indigenous peoples have succeeded on many levels with land rights issues.

The theme of this year’s Forum was “Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Indigenous Peoples: Defining the Goals.” The ultimate goal of the MDGs is to eliminate extreme poverty by 2015. Daniel feels the MDGs are very relevant to the situation of indigenous peoples, in particular the first two goals which are poverty eradication and achieving universal primary education. He believes these two areas are central for indigenous communities. He notes that approximately 75% of Maasai children do not have access to primary education.

By having the opportunity to attend the Permanent Forum he has met many supporters that have helped his community in many ways such as funding Maasai girls’ education; helping to build wells to off-set the effects of severe drought in the region; and supporting their struggle for land rights. “We all need each other”, he says. “The whole world is more vulnerable than ever before both from natural and man made calamities. If it is not drought, it is flooding; if it is not genocide it is terrorism! We all need each other in this small global village.” The Maasai, in a small way, have responded to help those in need. During 9/11, they gave cows to help the victims through the US Embassy in Nairobi. “Women in my village also responded to the Katrina calamity by selling the beaded-jewelry and contributed generously to the Katrina fund,” he added.

Daniel is also interested in joining with other indigenous peoples from East Africa in order to create a regional meeting prior to next year’s Permanent Forum. He said “We need to bring more awareness on the country and regional level to have regional integration. We need more opportunities for people to prioritize what they need, especially now that we are starting a Second International Decade of the World’s Indigenous Peoples.”

After seeing the positive impact of attending the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the numerous beneficial results derived from networking, he is increasingly committed to being a “Global Ambassador” for the Maasai people and to live in two worlds for the benefit of the whole.



FROM ASIA - PACIFIC

TURNING POINTS

JENNIFER AWINGAN

Kalinga

Philippines



Jennifer Awingan grew up in the countryside as a member of the Kalinga tribe in the Philippines. Her mother was one of the few indigenous peoples who went to school, and encouraged her children to do the same. Jennifer had many challenges at school, especially discrimination and poverty, and longed to join the middle class *“to prove I could be better.”* However, upon entering college in the early 1990s she heard about and joined the Progressive Igorots for Social Action, and felt encouraged and empowered to fight for indigenous peoples’ rights. This was a turning point in her life; she knew her main focus was to work with youth with a particular emphasis on education, health and development.

Since then, Jennifer has been working with youth as an organizer and educator. In 1995 she joined the Cordillera Youth Center, a youth-focused program of the Cordillera People’s Alliance (CPA),

the largest federation of indigenous peoples’ organizations in the Cordillera working for the self-determination of indigenous peoples in the region.

In 2000 she was assigned by the CPA to organize an indigenous youth conference. This conference, which included 83 delegates from 16 countries, took place in the Philippines in April 2002, and the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network (APIYN) was born. APIYN helps build the capacity and self-confidence of indigenous youth in the Asia and Pacific region through providing systems of information exchange, networking, alternative education, lobbying and advocacy work at the local, national and international levels. Jennifer was nominated to serve as the coordinator of APIYN and continues to do so. APIYN has grown quickly and currently includes 21 organizations with over 2,000 members. Following on the success of the Filipino conference, another conference was organized in Vancouver, Canada in June 2005, where Jennifer delivered the keynote address. A third conference is now being planned.

During the 2002 conference, Mary Robinson, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, encouraged the youth to be part of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII). Upon hearing this, Jennifer knew she had to somehow attend this Forum to present her community’s issues at the United Nations. Jennifer tried to go that year but was unable to get funding. Jennifer kept trying, and on her third attempt, Jennifer was finally able to attend the 5th session of the PFII because of funding by Project Access.

Jennifer was able to deliver a very powerful intervention on behalf of APIYN by presenting to the Forum the situation of indigenous youth in the era of globalization. In the area of education, Jennifer said that *“many governments, especially in developing countries like the Philippines, are now neglecting basic social services like*

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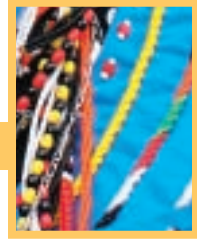
education as the greater part of revenues has to go towards the payment of onerous loans and the military budget.” She said that the resulting deterioration of education facilities and teachers is more pronounced in the remote areas where indigenous youth and children are located, particularly girls. Furthermore, these trends are exacerbated by the increasing privatization of education: “The privatization of education is a tool of globalization and is done through the outright transfer of the responsibility of the state to provide public education to the private sector. This gives the freedom for capitalist educators to commercialize education, to decide on the curricula and other affairs of the school including setting the price of education to make more profit,” noting that school fees were recently increased by 35%.

There is a growing deterioration and lack of education facilities and teachers, more so in the remote areas where the indigenous youth and children can be found. Because of poverty, many indigenous families cannot send their children to school, and there are often unequal opportunities for females to pursue education.

The results are stark: *“Indigenous youth find it difficult to find gainful employment. Child labor is also common. Children from 5-12 years old are often exposed to heavy physical strain, toxic pesticides and other chemicals in their jobs; they suffer from retarded growth, disease and malnutrition. They are the lowest paid laborers earning less than a dollar a day.”* At present there are about 5–5.7 million child workers in the Philippines

Indigenous youth are often excluded from participation in important discussions and decisions that affect them. Jennifer is committed to educating youth to become more active members of society by helping them to get involved in the social, political and economic life of their communities. At the Forum, she served as an active member of both the Forum’s Youth Caucus and its Asia Caucus and helped to formulate policy and recommendations for the caucus’ statements. She also gave a presentation on “how to run a campaign” at the Project Access, Global Capacity building training. Additionally, she was also able to successfully network with Filipino dignitaries from the Permanent Mission of the Philippines and the Consulate of the Philippines and share ideas with them.

Jennifer was especially grateful for being able to attend the three day training program of Project Access as it helped her foresee her role in the Forum and feels it was a “big contribution to the success of my participation.” She also plans on incorporating some of the training module into her own training back home. Jennifer realizes how important it is that indigenous youth are heard at the Permanent Forum and feels committed to advocating for their increased participation at next year’s Forum.



FROM ASIA - PACIFIC

PALM OIL PLANTATIONS

DISASTROUS DEVELOPMENT FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN INDONESIA

MINA SUSANA SETRA

Pompankg

West Kalimantan, Indonesia



Mina Susana Setra, from the Pompankg tribe in West Kalimantan, Indonesia is currently the Secretary-General of the Indigenous Peoples' Alliance of West Kalimantan. This organization includes 94 communities with over 100,000 community members. Mina has first hand experience of the wide scale negative effects of the growth of palm oil plantations in her region.

The development of palm oil plantations in Indonesia is having major implications for indigenous peoples such as increased poverty, land alienation, loss of livelihoods, social conflicts, human rights violations and degraded environmental quality. Global demand for palm oil products such as butter and lipstick is expected to increase from 22.5 million tons in 2002 to 43 million tons by 2020. It is estimated that approximately 25 different pesticides are used in palm oil plantations including the chemical "Paraquat," a highly toxic week-killer, banned in many countries, that may be fatal if inhaled,

ingested or absorbed through the skin. Mina's experience led her to co-author the pamphlet, "*Millions of Hectares of Oil Palm Plantations in Indonesia: A Tremendous Disaster for Indigenous Peoples*" with Rukka Sombolinggi of the Aliansi Masyarakat and Norman Jiwan of Perkumpulan Sait Watch.

According to Mina, "Palm oil plantations are a big issue in Indonesia right now because our government plans on building 10 million hectares of plantations in Indonesia. Just in West Kalimantan alone, they plan to build about 5 million hectares. Of that, 1.8 million acres will be in the border area between West Kalimantan and Malaysia. Numerous indigenous peoples are living in this border area, and all our natural resources are there. We have 14 river-banks in this area, so if they are replaced by palm oil plantations, it will become a totally damaged environment."

It is estimated that 100 million of the 216 million Indonesian people depend on forest and sustainability of natural resources for their livelihood and daily needs such as access to clean drinking water, bathing, fishing and agriculture. About 40 million of these 100 million individuals are indigenous peoples. Furthermore, they consider their land sacred, containing medicinal plants and sacred sites, and consider it closely linked to their cultural identity.

There have been many land disputes in this region since the Indonesian government, referring to Article 33 of the Indonesian constitution on natural resources, claimed that all lands and natural resources in Indonesia, including those of indigenous peoples, are state properties. Recently the Indonesian government declared that they will begin to convert the remaining primary tropical rain forests into new palm oil plantations. These include

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indigenous lands in Kalimantan, Sumatera, Sulawesi, West Papua and the Moluccas islands. In addition, without free, prior and informed consent from the indigenous peoples, the government has granted these lands to private companies for the extraction of natural resources such as oil and timber.

While Mina and her colleagues have been carrying out local activities and educational campaigns to raise awareness of palm oil plantations, they feel it's not enough to restrict their activities to Indonesia because the buyers, investors, and consumers are also from Europe, Malaysia, China and other countries. Mina stressed that "we need to talk about these issues on a higher level – and we think the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is the right forum for these issues. At this year's Forum we were able to make an intervention and talk to our government representatives, who said they would send a report back to officials in Indonesia, do an interview on UN radio, and meet with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, who expressed an interest in following up on this issue. We requested that the Permanent Forum do a study on the impact of existing big scale palm oil plantations on indigenous peoples.

Looking toward the future, Mina feels her region urgently needs help with more capacity building to empower and educate community members so that they know their rights and how to act on them to stop the development of palm oil plantations. Mina and her colleagues are committed to educating not only their own community but the international community about this very important issue. The opportunity to attend the Permanent Forum and garner international attention about this issue gave them hope. While their struggle is far from over they now feel that they have many members of the international community on their side.