

Seminar on the Promotion and Implementation of ILO 169 and UNDRIP conducted in Dhaka

To be able to advance the implementation of Indigenous Peoples rights in South Asia in the country level, a Training Seminar on the Promotion and Implementation of ILO C 169 and UNDRIP – Challenges and Opportunities at the National Level was conducted in Dhaka, Bangladesh last November 11-13. This is a follow up activity based on the recommendations of the participants of the Regional Workshop conducted in Nepal last April 2009 on the Experiences and lessons learned concerning the Implementation of indigenous peoples' (IP) rights.

Bangladesh was chosen as the host country in light of the more favourable climate for the promotion of IP rights since the new government came into power. The said training was jointly co-organized by the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), Programme to Promote ILO Convention 169, Regional Indigenous Peoples Programme of UNDP and the Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum (BIPF) as the local host. Fifty five (55) key indigenous representatives and government representatives from Bangladesh, Nepal and India participated in the said training.

Inputs on the ILO C169, UNDRIP, core collective rights stipulated in both instruments, and the UNDG Guidelines on IPs were among the topics discussed during the training seminar. More focus was given to country group workshops where the participants identified the gaps and challenges in the implementation of IP rights in their respective countries and how they can improve the existing situation in terms of the recognition of their rights.

The three participating countries likewise came up with their advocacy/lobby strategies to promote the ILO C169 and the UNDRIP in their own countries and use the said instruments in addressing their needs and issues. Among the strategies identified is the maximization of the policies on IPs of some UN agencies by forming partnership with them in the implementation of the said policies to make them more responsive to IP concerns. The involvement of the local media which is very crucial in raising the awareness of the people on IP rights and issues was also identified as one of the main strategies.

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