# Implementing the
# Indigenous Navigator:
## Experiences Around the Globe

INDIGENOUS
NAVIGATOR

Cameroon - Indigenous Navigator community meeting.
CREDIT: FOREST PEOPLES PROGRAMME/ADRIENNE SURPRENANT

"In Cameroon, the results of the community questionnaire shed light on the wide-ranging impacts of lack of citizenship documents. Birth registration among forest-dwelling indigenous peoples in Cameroon remains low, yet Indigenous peoples' participation in many aspects of public life is restricted without citizenship. One or more key citizenship documents – such as a birth certificates, national identity cards, or electoral cards – are necessary to be able to enroll children in school, move freely around the country, vote, initiate legal procedures, apply for jobs, and perform many other essential life activities. Lack of birth registration leads to disproportionate exclusion from the enjoyment of most legal rights."

COORDINATOR FOR THE INDIGENOUS NAVIGATOR, OKANI.

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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| **AIPP** | Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact |
| **CECOIN** | Centro de Cooperación al Indígena |
| **CEJIS** | Centro de Estudios Jurídicos e Investigación Social |
| **CHT** | Chittagong Hill Tracks |
| **CIPO** | Cambodia Indigenous Peoples Organization |
| **EIDHR** | European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights |
| **EU** | European Union |
| **FPIC** | Free Prior and Informed Consent |
| **FPP** | Forest Peoples Programme |
| **ILEPA** | Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners |
| **ILO** | International Labour Organisation |
| **INI** | Indigenous Navigator Initiative |
| **IPMG** | Indigenous Peoples Major Group |
| **IWGIA** | International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs |
| **LAHURNIP** | Lawyers' Association for Human Rights of Nepalese Indigenous Peoples |
| **MPIDO** | Mainyoito Pastrolist Integrated Development Organization Development |
| **NGO** | Non-governmental Organisation |
| **ONAMIAP** | Organización Nacional de Mujeres Indigenas Andinas y Amazónicas del Peru |
| **ONIC** | Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia |
| **PSA** | Philippine Statistics Authority |
| **PINGO's Forum** | Pastoralist Indigenous Non-Governmental Organization's Forum |
| **SDG** | Sustainable Development Goals |
| **Tebtebba** | Tebtebba Foundation – Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education |
| **UN** | United Nations |
| **UNDRIP** | United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples |
| **VIDS** | Vereniging van Inheemse Dorpshoofden in Suriname (Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Surinam) |
| **WCIP** | World Conference on Indigenous Peoples |

# AUTHORS' STATEMENT

This report is the result of a process of review and feedback conducted between June and August 2020. The feedback was gathered through consultation, surveys and interviews with Indigenous Navigator Consortium members and coordinators at the national partner organisations who have been involved with implementation of the Indigenous Navigator project. Some partners have been implementing the Indigenous Navigator's initial pilot in 2014, while others have joined in 2017. We thank all those who are involved in the Indigenous Navigator Initiative, who have been instrumental in driving this forward. This report seeks to highlight the essence of the Indigenous Navigator, giving a clear and strong voice to the partners' experiences in implementing and working with the Indigenous Navigator framework in close collaboration and partnership with the Indigenous communities. We pursued a country by country format to allow for greater depth in the experiences presented.

With this report we highlight the experiences conveyed directly by partner organisations themselves being those 'working on the front line', and let the commonalities emerge from the experiences shared with them.

As reflected in the report the experience of implementing the Indigenous Navigator is one of profound realisation, empowerment, translation -not only of language but of concepts-, interpretation, discourse and dialogue, community mobilisation, and the enhancement of both self-determination and self-determined development. Throughout the process of developing, testing, sensitising and implementing the Indigenous Navigator's tools and framework, partners have shared powerful and touching experiences similar across countries and regions. Partners raised common difficulties, which ranged from challenges in terms of infrastructure, connectivity and access to technology to interpreting complex and broad human rights concepts which were often foreign to the perspectives of Indigenous communities. Many Indigenous communities reported difficulty in interpreting and concretising those concepts which related to material wealth and private rights, for example the concept of 'poverty'.

Communities shared moving examples of how their awareness of Indigenous Peoples' rights grew through the interactive and highly participatory processes used to gather data and analyse it. Questionnaires were translated and interpreted, and results returned to the communities in the formats of their preference. They were then able to take these concrete results to generate evidence-based documentation for advocacy with duty-bearers at the community, district, national, regional and global level. This advocacy has in several cases resulted in real change, from local government support for their wholly community owned and directed pilot projects, to a strong sense of ownership in terms of the process and outcomes. Outcomes which work to support advocacy and systematically monitor the level of recognition and implementation of Indigenous Peoples' rights.

**ENA ALVARADO MADSEN** AND **DAVID NATHANIEL BERGER**

Peru - Man harvests fields.
CREDIT: IWGIA / PABLO LASANSKY

# INTRODUCTION

The Indigenous Navigator is a framework for supporting Indigenous-led governance, monitoring and human rights assessment, which includes an online portal and a set of monitoring and assessment tools developed for and by Indigenous Peoples. Through the Indigenous Navigator framework, data is collected by and together with Indigenous community members. The information collected can be used by Indigenous Peoples to advocate for their rights and to systematically monitor the level of recognition and implementation of these rights. The Indigenous Navigator monitoring framework encompasses over 150 structure, process, and outcome indicators central to aspects of Indigenous Peoples' civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. These fundamental freedoms are enshrined in, and protected by, the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) (ILOC169). In addition, the framework monitors the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

By using the Indigenous Navigator framework, Indigenous organisations and communities, duty bearers, NGOs, and journalists can access free tools and resources based on community-generated data. Documenting and reporting their situations allow Indigenous Peoples to enhance their access to justice, development and human rights information, and help contribute to the documentation on the situation of Indigenous Peoples globally.

The Indigenous Navigator Initiative (INI), begun in 2014, has been developed and carried forward by a consortium consisting of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), the Forest Peoples Programme (FPP), the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), the Tebtebba Foundation – Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education (Tebtebba), the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). This consortium works in partnership with the European Commission.

Members of different communities of the Wampis Nation mapping the traditional use of territory along the Morona river.
CREDIT: JACOB BALZANI LÖÖV

# BACKGROUND

## INDIGENOUS-LED, BY AND FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The Indigenous Navigator Initiative (INI) is a project led by, and for, Indigenous Peoples. With its rights-based approach, the tools of the Indigenous Navigator allow Indigenous communities to document their situation in a way that is easily communicated to authorities and development actors. The standardised indicators allow for comparison of results across sectors, communities, countries and continents. They also enable longitudinal comparison over time to measure progress and identify major implementation gaps. This data strengthens the position of Indigenous communities as they engage with civic, state and global entities to claim their rights – it serves not only as a baseline for comparison, but as foundation for evidence-based advocacy and documentation of their realities on the ground.

The INI was launched through a pilot action implemented from 2014 to 2016 with support from the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). The pilot phase created the conceptual framework for a community-based monitoring of Indigenous Peoples' rights and development status. During this period (2014-2016), this framework was implemented at the community level by the six consortium members (AIPP, FPP, IWGIA, Tebtebba, DIHR and ILO) and their national partners in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Communities and national partners in the pilot phase closely collaborated to gather and analyse data.

The analysis showed that the Indigenous Navigator's tools and framework were vital to the monitoring of Indigenous Peoples' rights globally. The community-based monitoring framework and tools for the implementation of the UNDRIP and ILOC169 were updated and adjusted for the second phase (2017-2019) to account for the feedback from national partners and communities. Based on the monitoring and data collected, actions and strategies were developed by and with Indigenous Peoples that enhanced their ability to claim their rights.

Data gathered and analysed by communities in the pilot phase assisted the INI to expand the number of communities covered in the second phase (2017-2020). Given the strength and validity of the data and framework, the second phase of the initiative oversaw the inclusion of 11 countries, with regional representation: **Latin America:** Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and Suriname; **Asia:** Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal and the Philippines; and in **Africa:** Cameroon, Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania. National partner organisations and communities were identified, and over the three-year period (2017-2019), 165 (150 Community and 15 National) questionnaires were completed and entered into the global portal. Over 200 communities were involved in the data-gathering and analysis process that resulted in the completion of the community surveys.[1]

Data gathering was carried out through a variety of different methods, based on what best suited the communities and context. For example, communities used: Focus Discussion Groups, Household Surveys, Community Meetings, Individual Surveys and Workshops. Data collectors and communities were trained and sensitised to best practices in data collection including on translation and appropriate methodologies in data gathering.

The scale of population coverage among the 150 community surveys has been particularly striking, covering a population of approximately 270,000 people by the end of 2019. Further, as of 2020, the results of these surveys have been analysed by the communities and national partners and this analysis has been the base of 57 data-driven small grants which are driving forward critical pilot projects.

These projects have been designed, and are being implemented, by the Indigenous communities themselves based on their vision and goals for their own human development.

The 57 approved pilot projects cover a wide range of issues, representing critical domains covered by the Indigenous Navigator's framework: self-determination; cultural integrity; education; employment and occupation; fundamental rights and freedoms; general economic and social development; general enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms without discrimination; health; lands, territories and resources; legal protection, access to justice and remedy; and their participation in public life.

In Cameroon, the results of the community questionnaire shed light on the wide-ranging impacts of lack of citizenship documents. Birth registration among forest-dwelling Indigenous peoples in Cameroon remains low, yet Indigenous peoples' participation in many aspects of public life is restricted without citizenship. One or more key citizenship documents – such as a birth certificates, national identity cards, or electoral cards – are necessary to be able to enroll children in school, move freely around the country, vote, initiate legal procedures, apply for jobs, and perform many other essential life activities. Lack of birth registration leads to disproportionate exclusion from the enjoyment of most legal rights. Following the presentation of the community questionnaire results, the national Indigenous organisations and local communities expressed their wish to address the situation of citizenship in a collective project (32 communities working together), aimed at increasing birth registration. The project targets both indigenous Bagyeli communities in South Cameroon, and indigenous Baka communities in East Cameroon.

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1.    Some communities chose to answer the questionnaires in a collective manner. As a result, certain surveys covered more than one community.

# 1. COMMON EXPERIENCES IN IMPLEMENTING THE INDIGENOUS NAVIGATOR

As community members and organisation leaders learned about the questionnaires and the Indigenous Navigator's framework and tools through workshops, trainings and outreach by the INI consortium, they explored the deeper connections between their experiences and the thematic domains of their guaranteed human rights. As they worked together to complete the questionnaires, there were some general overarching experiences that were commonly reported.

Consistently, communities involved in the Indigenous Navigator survey commented that interacting with the questionnaires significantly helped to simplify, clarify, and decode the complex jargon of the various legal frameworks and instruments on human rights. Across the board it fostered an increased awareness of Indigenous Peoples' rights. The process of completing the questionnaire created an opportunity where community members could gather to discuss issues that might not normally be processed in a group or collective setting. During these community gatherings, critical issues were discussed, as well as the unpacking of complex external concepts and their application within the context of the communities. For example, through defining and understanding the concept of 'poverty'. This led to a deeper understanding of community concerns and helped to foster dialogues with duty bearers.

**CECOIN in Colombia specifically reflects on the experience in the community of Karmata Rua, where** *"the application of the questionnaire led to an in-depth discussion of the concept of poverty in their community. Poverty is a deeply subjective measure, and the community gathered together to make a list of situations in which a person could be understood to be poor."*

Many communities struggled with the lack of technology and infrastructure to easily access the Indigenous Navigator platform – especially the required internet connection to connect to the global portal and website. The national partner organisations were able to assist in both gathering data and ensuring that results were shared with community members, securing access by proxy for these communities. At the heart of the process was a commitment to acquire and retain the free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of the communities with regards to the collection, handling, and dissemination of the data, and the INI project. This remains an on-going process as communities gain a stronger understanding of the technology involved and of sharing their data.

Throughout 2017-2020, Indigenous communities collected data on the implementation of their rights, identified critical gaps in compliance with those rights and developed their own project proposals to address the identified gaps according to their visions for their own development. The Indigenous Navigator's tools have directly supported these communities in enhancing their capacity to understand and engage with their rights, identify key issues and challenges their communities face, prioritise their needs and advocate for those needs with local and national governments. The implementation of these pilot projects is supported by targeted, small-scale funding through the Indigenous Navigator's Small Grants Facility.

The various 'pilot' projects seek to strengthen not only the realisation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), but also to address critical shortcomings in realising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They work to strengthen traditional processes, ranging from safeguarding Indigenous agricultural production practices, ensuring access to safe water, preserving and encouraging the use of Indigenous languages, the recovery and exchange of traditional health practices and building local leadership and self-determination through practical, hands-on education. Each pilot project addresses a number of critical SDGs, together the 57 pilot projects cover every SDG.

Most frequent are projects that address GOAL 15: Life on Land (9 countries), GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being (8 countries), GOAL 1: No Poverty, GOAL 2: Zero Hunger and GOAL 4: Quality Education (7 countries each).

**Table 1:** SDGs targeted by the 11 countries implementing Indigenous Navigator projects in selected communities

| SDG Goals | Bangladesh 10 projects | Bolivia 4 projects | Cambodia 3 projects | Cameroon 1 project | Colombia 5 projects | Kenya 6 projects | Nepal 6 projects | Peru 7 projects | Philippines 6 projects | Suriname 5 projects | Tanzania 4 projects |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. No Poverty | ● | ● | | | ● | | ● | ● | ● | | ● |
| 2. Zero Hunger | ● | ● | | | ● | ● | ● | | | | ● |
| 3. Good Health and Wellbeing | ● | | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● |
| 4. Quality Education | ● | ● | ● | ● | | | ● | | ● | ● | |
| 5. Gender Equality | ● | | | | ● | | ● | ● | | | |
| 6. Clean Water and Sanitation | | ● | | ● | | | | ● | | | ● |
| 7. Affordable and Clean Energy | | | ● | | | | | | | | |
| 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth | ● | | | | ● | | | ● | | | |
| 9. Industry, Innovation and Infratsructure | | | | | ● | | | | | | |
| 10. Reduced Inequalities | ● | | | ● | | ● | ● | ● | | | |
| 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities | | | | | ● | | | | ● | ● | |
| 12. Responsible Consumption and Production | | | | | ● | | | | | | |
| 13. Climate Action | | | | | ● | | | ● | | | ● |
| 14. Life below Water | | | | | | | | | ● | | |
| 15. Life on Land | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | |
| 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Industries | ● | | | ● | | | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| 17. Partnerships for the Goals | | | | | ● | | | ● | | ● | ● |

Each partner has also expressed the unique and powerful impact of these pilot projects, which are often the first chance these communities have had to design a project based on the issues that they have prioritised, to completely own and drive forward a development project and cycle. Further, these projects are developed based on the communities' own proposed actions to address them – thus closing the data loop and altering the traditional narrative of extractive research whereby researchers would conduct their research and neglect to return value to the communities based on the insights provided by their analysis. One of the strongest responses, echoed throughout all countries is the solid sense of ownership in terms of the process and the outcomes from implementing the Indigenous Navigator's tools and programmes.

**From Kapaeeng Foundation's perspective,** *"being part of the Indigenous Navigator has been an experience and process that allowed a great deal of ownership…seeing the results of the Indigenous Navigator, and the benefits of these results for the communities, we have [taken on] the framework and tools as an extension of [our] work."*

These are important tools — not only for Indigenous Peoples to use the data but also for Human Rights defenders and state agencies to understand the situation of Indigenous Peoples and communities in Bolivia.

**CREDIT: CEJIS**

# 2. WHAT HAS IT MEANT
# TO BE PART OF THE
# INDIGENOUS NAVIGATOR?

## 2.1. LATIN AMERICA

### Bolivia:

In Bolivia, the Indigenous Navigator has been coordinated by Centro de Estudios Jurídicos e Investigación Social (CEJIS). CEJIS has shared their perspective on participating in the INI and implementing the Indigenous Navigator framework and tools.

The lead project coordinator from CEJIS in Bolivia notes that participating in the INI "has been a positive and innovative experience." The Indigenous Navigator "is a very innovative and complete tool, that allows Indigenous communities and CEJIS to measure compliance with Indigenous Peoples' rights." Further, the Indigenous Navigator enables "a more systematic monitoring of the level of recognition and implementation of the rights of Indigenous Peoples, as guaranteed by the UNDRIP, ILOC169, the SDGs, etc."

As CEJIS engaged with the communities and began the process of introducing the Indigenous Navigator and its tools as well as consultation and consent processes, they also encountered certain challenges. CEJIS shares that, "one of the biggest challenges in the beginning was to understand the questionnaire, which contained many difficult questions."

The questionnaires of the Indigenous Navigator are a translation of the complex human rights frameworks which relate to Indigenous Peoples, including at its core the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Given the complexity of this legal landscape, the development of a framework which accurately captures the

different instruments, which can be tied back to their specific articles, is unavoidably challenging. High-context legal text, and terms such as poverty or property ownership require translation – not literally but conceptually. CEJIS addressed this challenge and reports that, "The team and community members managed to make sense of these difficult questions, and were able to adjust the questionnaires as necessary, adapting some of the high-context legal terminology from the instruments to local, context specific language." This enabled the community members to grasp the meaning and theme behind the questions and to respond adequately to the questions.

As the communities were sensitised and worked through the questionnaires, they reported back to CEJIS, sharing that they began to recognise that the questions being asked, although difficult, were very important in order for communities, duty bearers, and others to get to know the reality of Indigenous Peoples. "These are important tools -— not only for Indigenous Peoples to use the data but also for Human Rights defenders and state agencies to understand the situation of Indigenous Peoples and communities in Bolivia." shares CEJIS.

*"People realised that having information collected by themselves gives them an opportunity to learn about their own situation and how they can monitor whether their rights as Indigenous Peoples are respected"*

As CEJIS continued to implement the Indigenous Navigator's questionnaires with their constituents and communities, they provided detailed sensitisations and trainings in the framework and use of the tool. These trainings build an understanding of the importance of their rights. "People realised that having information collected by themselves gives them an opportunity to learn about their own situation and how they can monitor whether their rights as Indigenous Peoples are respected" CEJIS said. By being sensitised and trained on their rights, a key component of implementing the Indigenous Navigator, the communities came to know and understand their fundamental rights. "By knowing their rights, they are in a better position to demand that the authorities and duty bearers comply with needs for human development." CEJIS reports.

Implementing the questionnaires was an exciting exercise, and community ownership of the data remains a key component. In reflecting on the data collection process, CEJIS shares that "The community members were excited to see the results from the questionnaires. As a first step, once the data had been collected and analysed, CEJIS presented the results to the Indigenous authorities and subsequently all community members during a general community assembly. "Presenting the results was like showing a photograph that reflects how their rights, as described in the UNDRIP, are currently not being complied with." Having clear, concrete and powerful results in hand, "helped the communities define which issues they wanted to address through the pilot projects, but they also realised the need to apply for external funding in order to improve their human development." continues the lead project coordinator at CEJIS.

As an example, once the data had been analysed and returned to the communities in Jach'a Marka Tapacarí-Cóndor, they used the results to bolster their evidence-based advocacy with the local municipality of Pazña. This resulted in the strengthening of their communities' relationship with the municipality, and through this alliance, and supported by the survey process, representatives from the local government have become more active and engaged. Members of the municipality have participated in several workshops and meetings while closely following the process and developments reaped from the Indigenous Navigator, especially in relation to the development of pilot projects. Building relationships is essential, but it also leads to concrete development — as a result of this alliance, the municipality provided financial funding to scale up one of the pilot projects — directly multiplying the benefit to the community.[2] The communities have also showcased their results in briefs and reports that have helped make the data and issues more accessible.[3]

2.   The article on the project and the municipality's support can be read here: http://nav.Indigenousnavigator.com/index.php/en/news/358-bolivia-ayni
3.   Tamburini, Leonardo, Ángela Ágreda, Vania Sandoval, and Carla Illescas. 2019. Indigenous Rights Monitoring Results in Lomerío And Tapacarí-Cóndor Apacheta. PDF. 1st ed. CEJIS. https://nav.Indigenousnavigator.com/index.php/en/news/276-cejis-magazine-Indigenous-rights-monitoring-results-in-lomerio-and-tapacari-condor-apacheta.

## Colombia:

In Colombia, the Indigenous Navigator has been coordinated by two national partner organisations: Centro de Cooperacion al Indigena (CECOIN) and Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia (ONIC).

Reflecting on their experience with the Indigenous Navigator, CECOIN notes that, "the process of analysing the data has been an opportunity to mainstream and aggregate the issues of the community, presenting them in their own context". However, the complexity of the human rights framework remained a challenge, especially as many of the concepts and language used are based on Western concepts, which Indigenous communities are not as familiar with. "Implementing the questionnaires required adaptation depending on the level of familiarity with Western concepts in which the questions were based." Specifically, in communities living in rural settings, people were less familiar with the concepts of the survey. This meant that an increased focus on training and sensitisation was needed to explain the survey and translate the questions so they could be understood in their cultural context.

However, the experience differed from community to community. "In other communities, where people were more familiar with the logic of the information being asked in the questionnaire, or those who were closer to Western concepts, they quickly understood the idea of the survey." This made it possible to discuss and interpret the questions and concepts and conduct the questionnaires.



Demonstrating community mapping.
**CREDIT: ENA ALVARADO MADSEN**

CECOIN specifically reflects on the experience in the community of Karmata Rua, where "the application of the questionnaire led to an in-depth discussion of the concept of poverty in their community. Poverty is a deeply subjective measure, and the community gathered together to make a list of situations in which a person could be understood to be poor." The questionnaire allows for contextual interpretation of concepts, but is fundamentally rooted in the international human rights framework and understanding of poverty as related to material income and access to services. It fails to capture these more community-based interpretations of poverty that also consider quality of life and community cohesion.

*"the application of the questionnaire led to an in-depth discussion of the concept of poverty in their community. Poverty is a deeply subjective measure, and the community gathered together to make a list of situations in which a person could be understood to be poor."*

CECOIN points out that, "for the communities that participated in the analysis of the surveys, the most important part in the process was the realisation of the large set of norms and laws that contain special rights for Indigenous Peoples." This was of special concern to the communities, as they recognised that in practice, their application remains very limited.

The data analysed served the communities, giving them the tools to reflect on issues in a collective process. They were able to use the data to prioritise certain themes in the development of their own plans and could use these plans to develop key pilot projects, community-owned and driven forward.

Despite the fundamentally powerful experience of implementing and working with the Indigenous Navigator's framework and tools, "it continues to be a challenge for the Indigenous communities to access and convert the data and results to a working instrument that can be used in a continuous way," CECOIN shares. Digital literacy and access remain a constraint to using the global portal.

Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia (ONIC) is a national Indigenous Peoples organisation. When contacted to provide feedback on their experience with the Indigenous Navigator, ONIC expressed that "being part of the INI has been a positive experience, as it has been an opportunity to assist the communities in identifying and characterising the main issues at political, economic, social and cultural levels." Like CECOIN, ONIC also emphasises "the challenge in the application of the survey as the questions were based on broad concepts such as poverty, development, and malnutrition. Despite an agreed understanding of these subjective concepts at the international human rights level, Indigenous Peoples and communities often have a different vision of these concepts."

ONIC highlighted the advocacy component of the Indigenous Navigator project as, "one of the most influential experiences. With the data collection and analysis of the results completed, the communities were able to work together with ONIC to identify the main issues within their communities. Further, "the communities could reference and use the Indigenous Navigator when addressing public authorities – strengthening their evidence-based advocacy efforts."

The importance of the Indigenous Navigator lies in the fact that the communities provide truthful information, they share their reality on the ground, and in turn are empowered to become agents of advocacy and change. Data collected through the Indigenous Navigator provides communities and national organisations with references and arguments to support their grounds for complaints to regional, national, and international organisations responsible for guaranteeing Indigenous Peoples rights. In addition, the Indigenous Navigator helps inform Indigenous Peoples of their rights as Indigenous Peoples and nations.

Using the Indigenous Navigator's data, ONIC has established contact with a wide range of both national and international organisations and government representatives to advance the self-determined development of Indigenous Peoples in Colombia.

## Peru:

In Peru, the Indigenous Navigator is coordinated by Organización Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas Andinas y Amazónicas del Perú (ONAMIAP) and Perú Equidad.

For ONAMIAP, being a part of the Indigenous Navigator Initiative, has been an innovative experience. It has allowed the organisation to get to know the reality of the communities with whom they work, in a different and more data-driven way. Particularly the reality of progress and the respective gaps in the implementation of public policies addressing Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous women in Peru.
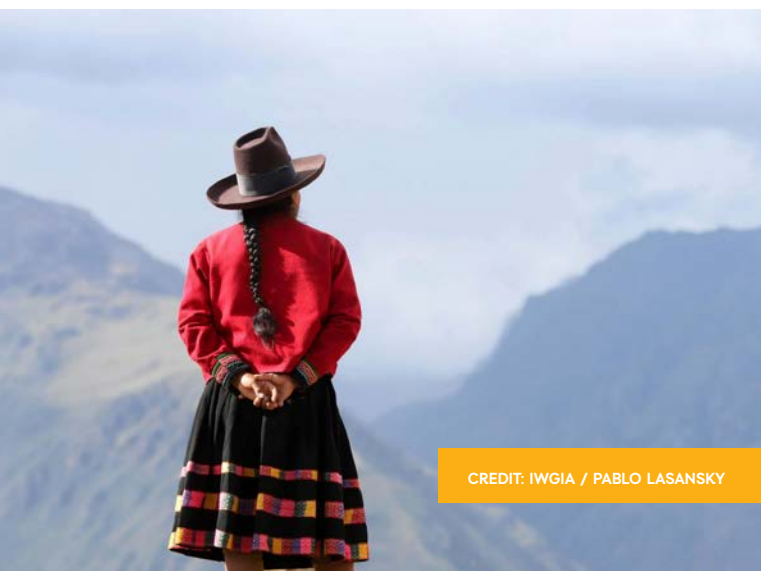


CREDIT: IWGIA / PABLO LASANSKY

In the beginning, the Indigenous Navigator's tools and framework were daunting; specifically, because the digital platform was difficult to access. As ONAMIAP explored the tools and guidance, they share that, "the community questionnaires and the matrices on Indigenous Peoples' rights, the SDGs and international human rights frameworks were extremely important in order for ONAMIAP and these communities to monitor the implementation of them at the community level." Currently, ONAMIAP continues to apply the community questionnaires, which allow for greater advocacy at the local level. Further, ONAMIAP contributes to the continued development of the Indigenous Navigator's global portal, and "the more we work with the digital platform, the more we get to know the tool in greater depth."

Implementing the Indigenous Navigator in communities across Peru has led to a revelation of just how big the implementation gap is, in terms of Indigenous Peoples'collective and individual rights and the 2030 agenda, so that no one is left behind. "In this process we were surprised to uncover just how large a gap there has been in the government's lack of implementation of public policies at the local, regional and national level." ONAMIAP shares, "After the data collection and presenting the results to the communities, it has been possible to show that the state has neglected them, but also imposed individualism." The collective rights of these communities were being ignored: "the data show the inequalities and the abandonment of Indigenous Peoples and the importance of becoming aware of being a right-holder who can demand the rights to be respected." The Indigenous Navigator is a tool that can strengthen their demands, so that the State truly guarantees the rights of Indigenous Peoples, especially in a context where extractivism continues to deprive them of their ancestral territories.

However, using a digital tool remains a challenge for some communities. Among the challenges encountered along the process, ONAMIAP mentions the lack of capacity at the community level to conduct the questionnaire and the lack of funds and resources to conduct follow-up questionnaires has affected the expansion of the questionnaires into new regions and communities. Continued funding and resource allocation will be key to continuing the INI throughout Peru. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the communities and ONAMIAP consider with great urgency, the need to apply the community questionnaires, after the pandemic. This is in order to have a comparable set of data on the situation of the communities, and to better understand, post-pandemic, the impact of "economic reactivation" measures. ONAMIAP raises concerns that these measures to protect and reactivate the economy, could "work to jeopardize their Indigenous Rights in the name of quick economic recovery – further strengthening the destructive extractivist model."

Given the impressive results from the pilot implementation of the questionnaires, ONAMIAP calls for support in implementing the questionnaires in at least 10% of Peru's Indigenous communities. This remains an aspiration, although the COVID-19 pandemic means that "it is practically impossible to apply questionnaires until the pandemic is resolved. The Indigenous Navigator's tools will be necessary in understanding the post-pandemic landscape, in knowing the real situation of the communities and if they really will not be left behind by 2030."

The other national coordinator, Perú Equidad also recognises the importance of the Indigenous Navigator: "On the one hand, being part of the INI has opened the door to new direct conversations with Indigenous Peoples on the level of compliance and implementation of internationally agreed Indigenous Peoples' rights. It has allowed Perú Equidad to build on their decades of advocacy and work, and offered a new opportunity to hear their [Indigenous Peoples'] perceptions." [...] "On the other hand, it has been an opportunity for a new way of working and collaboration with national and local actors, focusing on evidence-based advocacy."

From the first pilot phase of the Indigenous Navigator in 2014, Perú Equidad has been testing and implementing the framework and tools. The President of Perú Equidad who has coordinated the project from the beginning, explains that the development was a complex process that required a discussion about the suitability of all the tools for application in the field.

"Although the tools had to be adapted to the national context and to the Indigenous communities, conducting the surveys was very profitable, as it allowed us to continue working directly with the Indigenous communities," she says. "For the people that conducted the questionnaires, it was a new experience to realise that the collective rights for which they fight are actually reflected in the 2030 Agenda." They also noted that despite that reflection, "the 2030 Agenda does not adequately reflect Indigenous perceptions or concepts."

Access to a digital platform and tool remains an issue today, as there is insufficient infrastructure in many of the Indigenous communities living in remote areas (e.g. the Peruvian Amazon). These communities, "lack internet access, and as a result the tool is difficult to access and use directly by Indigenous Peoples." Perú Equidad and ONAMIAP continue to play a critical role in ensuring the data can be accessed and returned to these remote communities despite these challenges.

Due to the sensitisation on the Indigenous Navigator and the FPIC process, the Indigenous communities that answered the questionnaires expressed their satisfaction with and recognition of the usefulness of having data included in a global matrix, but also requested the information be reflected on paper and returned to them in a more tangible form. Subsequently, Perú Equidad's president shares, "they found it very interesting to make use of their own data and results to formulate proposals for pilot projects."

In her reflection on the Indigenous Navigator as a whole, Perú Equidad's president notes that, among the important learning experiences, Perú Equidad has experienced that it is extremely complex to develop a global project, especially one which translates essential international human rights frameworks, and where it's not always possible to demonstrate the local realities. "Furthermore, working with the Indigenous Navigator has also shown that the perspective of achieving a more equal society in which we all enjoy the same opportunities and rights is not around the corner. The implementation gap in regards to Indigenous Peoples rights is high, and it will take continued concerted effort to bridge that gap."

Perú Equidad's partners also pointed to the problem of lack of internet access in most Indigenous communities in the country. Expecting these communities to collect and upload data to the platform, and having it widely used by Indigenous communities in Peru, would not be realistic without external support. If only few communities are able to fill in the surveys, it is important to reflect on the extent to which the implementation of the UNDRIP can be monitored in Peru. Although the results of the Indigenous Navigator surveys are undeniably important and have been critical for these communities, when we zoom out, we see that in Peru the questionnaire would need to be implemented in over 7000 localities. Given the infrastructure challenge, this requires the addition of significant resources.

## Suriname:

In Suriname, the Indigenous Navigator is coordinated by Vereniging van Inheemse Dorpshoofden in Suriname (VIDS), an association of Indigenous village leaders representing the Indigenous Peoples of Suriname.[4] VIDS has been implementing the Indigenous Navigator from the initial pilot phase in 2014.

As the project coordinator from VIDS explains, using the framework and tools has required some reading and studying to understand the project. It was a challenge and still is a challenge to translate the information regarding the rights of Indigenous Peoples, the SDGs, and the questionnaires from their international legal frameworks into a language that villagers can understand and fully engage with. It is not simply translating it from English to Dutch, or into an Indigenous language, but also using words and a context that communities can relate to and find familiar. Context specific language and interpretation has been essential.

*"Personally, and within Indigenous communities, it is a path of learning and raising awareness about Indigenous rights. Having a platform where our voices can be heard gives hope that someone is listening and that this will empower our fight for justice and for recognition and respect of our rights as Indigenous Peoples"*

**- VIDS PROJECT COORDINATOR**

In Suriname, the Indigenous Navigator has contributed a great deal in awareness-raising on Indigenous Peoples' rights. Being part of the Indigenous Navigator activities has been a revelation for many Indigenous Peoples, who by answering the community questionnaire have learnt that they do have rights that are recognised under international law. Many communities learned about their rights for the first time in such depth, and the experience of implementing the Indigenous Navigator's tools and framework awakened their interest in knowing more.

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4.    The Association of Indigenous Village Leaders (VIDS)

The project coordinator in Suriname expresses just how important this was, "Answering the questions and discussing the results was often the first time the community members talked about their situation in this way. It was a unique opportunity where they could link their day-to- day life with their rights as humans and as Indigenous Peoples." Becoming more aware of their rights, however, did not automatically lead to an increase in their demands from the state.

From experience, the coordinator shared that, "It is difficult for non-Indigenous people to really understand and respect the rights of the Indigenous Peoples no matter how much information they receive." Using the Indigenous Navigator framework allowed VIDS to convene structural dialogues based on data which are very


Community demarcation in Wit Santi, Suriname.
CREDIT: CARLA MADSIAN/VIDS

important to change ideas and hopefully also behaviour. Evidence-based advocacy is a powerful tool, not only for claiming rights, but also for developing an understanding of those rights for the communities and how they can be used to empower self-determined development.

*"What really worked for the people and communities, for the villages, and made these communities even more enthusiastic to participate in the Indigenous Navigator was the unique approach of the pilot projects."*

What stood apart for the communities implementing the Indigenous Navigator in Suriname was the pilot projects. "What really worked for the people and communities, for the villages, and made these communities even more enthusiastic to participate in the Indigenous Navigator was the unique approach of the pilot projects." The Indigenous Navigator closed the loop, not only collecting and analysing data, but allowing communities to implement community driven projects to address the findings. This is in stark contrast to the previous experiences with researchers and development actors who often visited to carry out or implement an external project or research but did not reciprocate in sharing the findings.

The VIDS project coordinator highlighted that, "In the last years, no not only years, but decades, so many people have come to the villages, you know to these different villages to do their research. Some come to do their studies, some come saying that they would do a project with the community." [...] "But, in those cases, in those past experiences, [the communities], they have never seen a good return." There is a definite feeling of research fatigue, of being used by outsiders for their research without any impact or return, no reciprocity for them and for their families. "So, they are tired of people coming to the village and asking to do research... when you ask them, the first thing they will say to you is 'what good will it be for me?'" This isn't selfish, or self-centred, it is a reaction to having been used by researchers in the past – and here is where the Indigenous Navigator is really something different. First because it is VIDS, the village authorities themselves, that are behind this project, and second, because through the pilot projects, the communities collected the data, and owned it. It was theirs, and as they conducted their analysis they were able to clearly see their challenges and decide for themselves what priority projects they would develop and propose.

This isn't to say that they haven't done projects before, a lot of people would come there, and have a project, and they would say "they want to help the villages, and they develop a project, but it's theirs, their project, not the communities. Sure, some villagers can help but what that really means, is it is the villagers working and the outsiders receiving. So, in this case it is different. And the community feels that difference, they know it. These projects are really community owned." - expresses the VIDS coordinator for the Indigenous Navigator Programme in Suriname.

## 2.2. ASIA

### Bangladesh:

In Bangladesh, the Indigenous Navigator is led by Kapaeeng Foundation, with the support of the International Labour Organization.

From Kapaeeng Foundation's perspective, "being part of the Indigenous Navigator has been an experience and process that allowed a great deal of ownership. By working and seeing the results of the Indigenous Navigator, and the benefits of these results for the communities, Kapaeeng Foundation has taken on the framework and tools as an extension of their work."



Bangladesh - Santal Woman with her child.
CREDIT: JOEL CHAKMA

It has been a long process, which has included several steps to fully understand the idea of the Indigenous Navigator for the members of the organisation. During the pilot phase, Kapaeeng Foundation learned about the Indigenous Navigator tools and how it worked through close cooperation with Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact. Kapaeeng Foundation has built on that knowledge and experience during the subsequent steps, ensuring that required capacity-building workshops on community data collection, alliance building workshops, and regional experience sharing workshops, have incorporated the Indigenous Navigator experience. Kapaeeng Foundation also engages in global exchanges of experiences and best practices from their implementation.[5]

It has been a unique opportunity to explain the SDGs to historically marginalised communities as well as a way to ensure the voices of Indigenous women and men are heard. Prior to our training and guidance, most Indigenous communities did not know about their rights, entitlements or about the SDGs. By learning about these subjects, and using the data they have collected, communities can gain a better picture of their situation and voice their needs.

*"...Moreover, now they know where and who to communicate with – primarily making linkages to the government offices - for example, primary education office - where they can petition to have these issues addressed."*

While working with the Indigenous communities in Chittagong Hill Tracks (CHT), it became clear to the communities, that they lack critical social services that the local government should provide. In many of the communities in CHT; education is a key concern. During the survey process, the deprivation of access to quality education for Indigenous children, was a recurring theme. According to the community, this deficit is happening due to lack of monitoring of the schools by local education offices, and a lack of resources being provided. Following the implementation of the Indigenous Navigator in their communities, community leaders recognised they had a duty to address this. "Now they [the communities] discuss the issues related to irregularities at the schools in the school managing committee meetings. During these meetings, the community members engage with the school managing committee and can report issues, as well as successes." Kapaeeng Foundation's coordinator shares, "we had received reports that community members are mobilising and making teachers accountable who do not come to the school regularly. Moreover, now they know where and who to communicate with – primarily making linkages to the government offices - for example, primary education office - where they can petition to have these issues addressed."

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5. You can read more about Kapaeeng and ILO's experience in Bangladesh in this note from the ILO: https://iloblog.org/2019/08/09/navigating-indigenous-rights/

Further, following the repeated demand of the Indigenous leaders and parents of the students now local Primary Training Institutes are providing training to the schoolteachers on how to teach, thus raising the quality of the education provided.

Indigenous people in remote areas throughout Bangladesh know very little about the public policies which can affect and support them such as safety net programmes. Due to the lack of sensitisation and awareness of these initiatives, Indigenous people cannot claim these government benefits. This is especially concerning as much of these resources are targeted to some of the most vulnerable including widows, elders, people with disabilities etc.

While presenting the results from the questionnaires, alongside the sensitisation of these programs and their rights, communities also expressed their surprise while sharing the results from the questionnaires, about the situation of their community. To have the data aggregated and connected through the surveys, they gained a more complete picture of their true situation.

Participants were especially interested in comparing data between the communities, to gauge their situation against their counterparts in Bangladesh. In this learning process, the domain-based categorisation of questions and breaking down the answers and illustration of the data based on these domains (education, health, fundamental freedoms etc.) proved to be very useful. Through the comparison, the community members were able to prioritise their needs and plans to engage with the government agencies accordingly. They were able to use evidence-based advocacy grounded in the data to drive their initiatives forward.

**An influential realisation in implementing the Indigenous Navigator, was that these communities could begin to see and understand their situation through the lens of their fundamental human and Indigenous rights. Particularly how those rights were guaranteed, and in some cases violated, in the local context.**

An influential realisation in implementing the Indigenous Navigator, was that these communities could begin to see and understand their situation through the lens of their fundamental human and Indigenous rights. Particularly how those rights were guaranteed, and in some cases violated, in the local context.

Kapaeeng Foundation shares that, "At the local level, in some places, community leaders were able to mobilise and coordinate discussions with their respective government offices, utilising the data to drive forward the dialogue regarding their needs." In addition, "these groups showcased the data in local level data- sharing events where government representatives also participated." During these meetings, the data from the Indigenous Navigator's surveys gave the communities a new advantage. They now have something concrete in hand to show to the government representatives the reality of their situation. This has been a key component in their dialogue and in supporting their demands on their rights. "Using documentation from the Indigenous Navigator, together with traditional advocacy approaches is a key example of how the Indigenous Navigator supports evidence-based advocacy at the community level."

Aside from direct advocacy by community members at the local level, Kapaeeng Foundation says that, "we have been engaging with Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics", and that "as a result of our engagement, the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics has agreed to include the issue of ethnic identity in the upcoming national census of Bangladesh in 2021."

Implementing such a complex project has had its challenges, and Kapaeeng Foundation notes that the initial knowledge surrounding the UNDRIP and Indigenous Peoples rights was low. As a result, it was "difficult to make the community understand about different issues of the Indigenous Navigator, for example, the UNDRIP." Some of the questions are complex, and these were not clear enough to the community. In addition, it was difficult at times for people to secure 4 to 5 hours for the required community discussions with the questionnaires and their results.

Indigenous Peoples often live closely with nature, and infrastructure can be a major challenge in reaching them, especially during monsoon season. Kapaeeng Foundation reports that, "Communication was another big challenge, especially in the remote areas of the CHT during the monsoon. Our team was stuck for two days

in a remote place in the CHT when excessive rainfall caused a landslide and it disrupted the communication." Nevertheless, the team persevered and ensured that the communities could respond to, and document, their situation and the reality on the ground.

## Cambodia:

In Cambodia, the Indigenous Navigator has been coordinated Cambodia Indigenous Peoples Organisation (CIPO).

The coordinator of the Indigenous Navigator at CIPO, reflected on the Indigenous Navigator experience in Cambodia. "It is a very useful tool, a tool that we are not only using for data collection —to see to what extent the recognition and implementation of our Indigenous Peoples rights — but that we are also using it as our Monitoring and Evaluation tool for the organisation."



Indigenous Navigator Data Collection, Cambodia.
CREDIT: CIPO

Because the Indigenous Navigator's tools and framework were developed by Indigenous Peoples and experts, and then there coupled with strong training for country staff, CIPO and communities were able to learn not only the tool, but also strengthen their capacity for data collection. In using the tool and data analysis skills, CIPO was able to aggregate data at the national level from the community surveys and produce reports which could be used for evidence-based advocacy at grassroot, national and international levels.

"It is not only the tools, but conducting [the Indigenous Navigator's surveys] also provides awareness raising for communities on their rights. These rights are recognized by international instruments as well as national policies frameworks, and we can raise awareness thanks to this framework." Said the coordinator.

CIPO plays an integral role in supporting the individual communities. "We produced the community profiles using the information from the tool, together with other necessary information, especially the needs and development plans of the communities and share these profiles and information back to them." CIPO remarks. It is important to note that the communities also use that information for their advocacy at their village level in response to demands or needs that they have, bringing it forward to all stakeholders, including government agencies and other NGOs who work in their village.

*"The most important thing we have learned from the process of working with the Indigenous Navigator is that the rights of Indigenous Peoples are guaranteed and deserved. They are important, in fact these guaranteed rights are more important than we knew, and we must demand them."* **CIPO INDIGENOUS NAVIGATOR COORDINATOR**

For these communities in Cambodia, the Indigenous Navigator "is not only the data collection tool, but it also provides knowledge and understanding about their rights to the respondents." Said the coordinator about the communities that conducted the survey, "Therefore, it reminds the communities about what they deserve to have, but do not yet have." It empowers them to demand accountability from duty bearers. What we see, is that "self-determined development is always important", to most communities it is vital.

Sensitisation of rights, and empowerment through evidence- based documentation and advocacy are key components of the Indigenous Navigator process, but another fundamental piece is the forging and bolstering of alliances. For CIPO and the communities they work for each day, the documentation and experience provided by implementing the Indigenous Navigator has reinforced their connection with the Ministry of Rural Development. "Specifically," The coordinator reports that they have used the Indigenous Navigator, "to advocate and demand the establishment of the Technical Working Group for Development and Conservation of IPs". Further, CIPO uses the data as a keystone in their advocacy and demands for their rights with the Ministry of Planning to produce the first National Report on Demographic and Socio-Economic status of Indigenous Peoples in Cambodia.

As experienced in Bangladesh, challenges in implementing the Indigenous Navigator in Cambodia have revolved around the high context of human rights frameworks and the time required in the communities to carry out the surveys. CIPO reports that, "The question's themselves can also be sensitive, especially to local authorities who might be offended or have an agenda to present information in a different light, therefore, it requires data collectors to be more flexible in using the right questions to get the right answers from the communities and stakeholders."

## Nepal:

In Nepal, the Indigenous Navigator has been coordinated by the national partner organisation Lawyers Association for Human Rights of Nepalese Indigenous Peoples (LAHURNIP). The Coordinator for the INI in LAHURNIP shared his experience with the Indigenous Navigator. The coordinator first started working with the Indigenous Navigator in 2016.

As the framework matured, and national partners continued to enhance their capacity and familiarity with the tools, it became clear how important and essential it is to monitor the status of Indigenous Peoples rights at the community and national level.

"In a community, it took us two days to collect community data. On the first day we conduct training on the rights of Indigenous Peoples on the basis of UNDRIP. Then on the next day we collect the data, conducting



Women at community meeting.
CREDIT: ENA ALVARADO MADSEN

the surveys. We use the community leader as a facilitator to simplify the process, this makes it easier to collect data and understand the questionnaire. In addition, we select participants from every area. For example: young, women, aged, disabled person, health worker, teacher, member of local government from Indigenous background, etc." said LAHURNIP's coordinator for the Indigenous Navigator.

Using local knowledge and context, together with the formal guidance from the surveys and the training received by the LAHURNIP staff, allows for context specific answers and interpretation of the tools and framework. Issues and complex themes, such as 'poverty', which have a unique positionality in each community can then be understood and captured in this manner.

LAHURNIP shares that the communities, "were surprised to know their situation." Many of the communities do not speak English, Spanish or French — the three official languages of the Indigenous Navigator. Although the system can provide unique language translations of the surveys and results, due to costs and resources required for the translation, the decision was taken to provide a summary of the findings back to the communities in local language. This is a frustrating challenge, as LAHURNIP shares that, "due to the language barrier, they are unable to access the data of the data portal directly." But, using the summary of the findings provided in collaboration with LAHURNIP, they use these findings as an advocacy tool, and have strengthened their position with the local government. They continue to build stronger connection to local government and use these findings as a key advocacy tool.

When reflecting on the most important and influential outcome of working with the Indigenous Navigator, Manoj notes that, "it helps track community status in line with UNDRIP and SDG goals." This is important, because it means the communities can use that information when engaging with duty bearers.

What has come from this advocacy? "The government has begun supporting Indigenous Peoples in their planning processes, such as including them in planning at the national level as well as at the local level. In addition, the local government has set up a budget for the government school to address a key concern, which is the loss of their local languages. The school will now be supported to ensure mother tongue education."

## Philippines:

In the Philippines, the Indigenous Navigator is implemented by the Tebtebba Foundation – Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education (Tebtebba), the coordinator shares their experience.



Social enterprise training under the Indigenous Navigator.
CREDIT: TEBTEBBA

"Having been part of the pilot phase, the INI brought a fresh approach to showcasing the situation of Indigenous Peoples both locally and globally. This was only possible through a tool that provides evidence and analysis — the Indigenous Navigator." Said the coordinator of the Indigenous Navigator project in the Philippines. The coordinator first heard about the Indigenous Navigator in 2014. "I was the coordinator of the human rights program of AIPP that piloted the Initiative with our partners in Nepal and Thailand, and we had a regional workshop to introduce the instrument, and did this again during the Asia Prep meeting in Siem Reap in 2014." [...] "The final version of the tools under the current phase became more detailed and the Guide to the Community Questionnaire is a very helpful development, which works to ensure better understanding of the rights and framework, as we implement the Indigenous Navigator in the Philippines." The coordinator now works in the Philippines with Tebtebba, implementing the Indigenous Navigator.

"What we realised", the coordinator says, "is that even asking questions, even engaging with their population is underpinned with rights. It is their right to be consulted, and to claim their rights. That is the biggest realisation of those who participated in the workshops, community consultations and focus group discussions using the community questionnaires."

In part, this is a major component of the Indigenous Navigator's tools. This is not just a survey or a matrix, but truly an innovative translation of fundamental human rights enshrined in the UNDRIP. As the questions "were explained afterwards, [the rights they were based on became clear], these questions were underpinned with rights." After the questionnaires were discussed, analysis was conducted, and sharing this information back reinforced the knowledge and understanding of these fundamental rights. "Thus, the manner in which we approached the data-gathering, by training locals on the questionnaire and, by utilising the detailed Guide, was as education-cum-research." Said the coordinator.

The data was organised initially with the local INI team who were trained to do the community consultations, focus group discussions, and other data-gathering activities after which the data was collated and organised by the INI staff because of the difficulty of convening the team again to do the collation and data-organising.

During the report-back to the community, a preparatory meeting was held with the local Indigenous Navigator team to share the initial collated data and the tentative analysis and for comments and tasking. The local team did the report-back with only back-up from the Tebtebba Indigenous Navigator staff. The most influential aspect of the process was analysing the data from a human rights perspective and sharing this with the community.

In the Philippines, the Indigenous Navigator has had impacts on various levels. For instance, Tebtebba shared with the Office of the National Security Adviser the situation of internally displaced persons in one province. Tebtebba was subsequently told that this was passed on to the brigade responsible for the area. This a concrete example of how data can be shared with government agencies to influence their work on Indigenous Peoples.

However, sharing information with government agencies does not guarantee that they will seriously look into the concerns being raised. At the local level, our local partners have deepened their understanding of their rights through the analysis provided by the Guide. The provision of pilot projects is important as this concretises the response to problems that came out from the community questionnaire and consultations and these dealt mostly with economic issues, and capacity-building. Since empowerment is a process, the challenge now is how the national partners will sustain their support for the empowerment process after the Indigenous Navigator project ends.

The local partners have not maximised the data and the process for their local advocacy, although one partner has been using the process and the experiences from the data-gathering, and the data itself, to lobby with the local government units. At the project level, we shared the results of this Initiative with the European Union (EU) Delegation to the Philippines, and the ILO country office. Tebtebba had also been in touch with the Commission on Human Rights to see how they could complement their observatory duties. The Commission on Human Rights made one of the INI partners their collaborator in the Palawan Island Mechanism, but since it was launched in 2018, there have been no developments so far.

Tebtebba had been conducting the annual celebration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples at the national capital where they have invited the different government agencies and introduced the Indigenous Navigator to them. "We have continued to update them with the progress of the work until 2019. We touched base with the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) on how we can have elements of the Indigenous Navigator tools be adopted but so far there had has been no progress in these talks even now as the PSA conducts its 2020 survey. Unfortunately, as we see from the documentation and info charts which have been produced by the PSA

*"In the end, the development of "Indigenous Navigators" among the Indigenous youth themselves, will make the real difference"*
**COORDINATOR OF THE INDIGENOUS NAVIGATOR IN THE PHILIPPINES**

so far, the determination of the ethnicity variable is still problematic." Shared the coordinator, "We also engaged the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples bringing to its attention the key issues emerging from the community survey. However, it is with disappointment that they had not responded effectively to the issues raised."

Translation and adaption to the national context is a challenge. We have translated the community questionnaire into the national language and into regional languages which greatly helped in the data-gathering. The Guide has now been translated into the national language. We face challenges in maintaining and the updating of the data because those involved in the data-gathering need resources to update the data. The local partners do not have the resources to make this happen regularly. A major challenge is for our partners to embrace the tool as something that is helpful in their advocacy and other works. The Indigenous Navigator activities had been largely considered as "projects" which will come and go. Thus, a major part of the Indigenous Navigator work, and this goes beyond the project period, is the strengthening and capacity building of partners to do evidence-based work for their own welfare and development

"As a suggestion, support for local partners is needed to sustain their monitoring, updating and data-gathering. Unfortunately, these partners will not find the global portal, as a repository even of their data, helpful because they do not have access to it for various reasons, foremost of which is access to reliable internet services. Hard copy, visual aids, and participatory activities, are still the empowering approaches we find effective. In the end, the development of "Indigenous Navigators" among the Indigenous youth themselves, will make the real difference" - Coordinator of the Indigenous Navigator in the Philippines.

## 2.3. AFRICA

**Cameroon:**

In Cameroon, the Indigenous Navigator is coordinated by OKANI, an Indigenous-led association.

"The Indigenous Navigator was a great opportunity for our organisation to see what is the level of protection of the Indigenous rights in Cameroon, and share it with other countries in the world." Indigenous Navigator Coordinator, OKANI



Cameroon communities answer survey.
**CREDIT: FOREST PEOPLES PROGRAMME**

"We organised capacity building sessions to make sure that the INI is understood by all and implemented the questionnaires." For the staff conducting the surveys, they report that, "it was a great experience for me, because I realised that I had something to do with the promotion of Indigenous rights." At the same time, the coordinators share that "for the communities, all of them were happy to receive the results of the questionnaire, and carried that enthusiasm forward proudly stating that they are, 'ready to support the results everywhere.'" The communities were engaged in free, prior, informed consent processes as part of the Indigenous Navigator, and they gave their consent to share the results. "But this consent from the community comes with the expectation that the INI will help encourage the government to respond and to take their rights into account."

As the communities answered the questionnaires, they began to identify information which was novel to them. The reality of their situation was captured by the framework and tools in a way which uncovered new insights and enabled them to put hard figures on their experiences. One area was the high rates of human rights violations experienced in relation to access and use of lands: 94 per cent of the communities experienced conflicts related to land or natural resources, such as illegal forest exploitation or other illegal activities (66 per cent); national park or protected area development (31 per cent); large-scale industrial agriculture (23 per cent); extractive industries (9 per cent) and infrastructure (6 per cent) - all information revealed by the Indigenous Navigator's framework and tools. The monitoring work also revealed that about 69 per cent of Indigenous children under five do not have their births registered, compared to the national average of 31 per cent, and that about half of all adults (slightly more women than men) do not have valid documents attesting to their citizenship.

A representative from OKANI shares that, *"I couldn't have uncovered the reality for these communities without the framework ... it was very interesting to know that people were putting their hope for a better future on the work that you are doing."* He continues that, *"The Indigenous Navigator is an important tool for the communities, because it helps them and national organisations develop advocacy materials and claim their rights ... This is a real opportunity for the communities and organisations to share with the government the real situation of Indigenous rights, with up-to-date information from the community to counter the old information they have."*

In Cameroon, the Small Grants Facility enabled a direct, local response to this data as well. The Navigator project in Cameroon is accompanying 500 Baka and Bagyeli youth in the processing of their birth certificates (a complicated procedure where birth registrations are missing) across 32 communities. Also included are training for community liaisons and traditional midwives on the importance of birth registration, and dialogues with local

and national governments, and other actors, to foster collaboration in simplifying birth registration procedures for Indigenous Peoples to reduce, in time, the number of Indigenous persons living without such documentation.

As echoed by other national partners, "the main challenge was access to the material in remote areas. It could have been more practical if we had some smartphones, so that we could collect the data directly instead of using papers surveys and then combining the results back in the national offices. Perhaps an innovation could be to pair the questionnaires with stronger support for smartphones to collect data more easily where network allows".

## Kenya:

In Kenya, the Indigenous Navigator is being coordinated by two national partner organisations, Indigenous Livelihood Enhancement Partners (ILEPA) and Mainyoito Pastoralists Integrated Development Organization (MPIDO).

These partners share that the Indigenous Navigator has been a key tool in achieving empowerment through community generated data and self-determined development. The Navigator "is a platform that provides critical linkages across historically disconnected levels of governance and implementation of Indigenous Peoples rights. i.e. community, county, national and international levels." The Indigenous Navigator offers actors at these different levels an "opportunity to demonstrate the value of Indigenous Peoples self-determined sustainable development" and to build on their findings through the small grant facility's pilot projects.



Oltepesi stakeholder dialogue on the Indigenous Navigator pilot project site.
CREDIT: MPIDO

In the Kenyan context, the Indigenous Navigator's questionnaires highlighted critical shortcomings in the realisation of Indigenous Peoples rights in the Indigenous communities, particularly related to health, education, water and food security. Our partners report that, "In the context of a high level of illiteracy and due to the complexity and integrated nature of the tool kit, combined with a low level of awareness of the applicable international instruments and human rights guaranteed by those instruments, made sensitisation and implementation of the surveys challenging." Added to that complexity was the challenge of poor infrastructure e.g. access to power and network signal. These constraints were ultimately overcome by the national partners, "through use of community data collectors, local language and translation of the research material" as well as through the "organising of group discussions around the broad themes of fundamental human rights, the SDGs, international human rights mechanisms etc."

The partners share that "one elder from the Ogiek community decried, 'The rights you are pointing out to us are very important to us! I can't help asking, where have they been all along?! Here we are, while our rights are violated. Does our government really know that we are entitled to these rights?" This sensitisation and recognition of their fundamental rights, guaranteed not only by international but also national instruments, is a critical component of the Indigenous Navigator which we witness again and again throughout the project.

It was astonishing how important and exciting the data validation and needs prioritisation process was, shared one partner: "it was both exciting and heated as different community groups, elders, women, youth, and traditional leaders each shared their perspective on the veracity of the data collected. In some instances, gender-specific sessions were necessary, separating women and men to navigate cultural norms. This brought out deeper nuances that joint sessions could not. Ultimately the community arrived at a collective decision, reflecting their priority needs based on consensus." This led to the further development of the pilot projects targeted to these needs.

Throughout the process, the community was able to uncover issues which had been hidden, and was able to discuss these in order to better understand their needs. The national partners share that, "the common challenge is that their voice is rarely heard, and when heard is not given currency [...] Appreciable knowledge of the relevant instruments and policies is critical in exercising the rights to self-determination." It allows the communities to document and claim their rights, referring to the policies and instruments which guarantee them and holding duty bearers to account. "The framework of the Indigenous Navigator was found to be useful in systematising data collection, revealing the useful interlinkages and interdependence across and within instruments, further building the case for the claims submitted by the communities," Indigenous Navigator's Kenyan national partners said.

One of the strengths of the Indigenous Navigator is that the framework allows for information from complementary data sets to be integrated. However, the partners in Kenya note that, "accessing of secondary data from relevant government officers was not easy" and that there was a very real sense of research fatigue. "Some of the communities felt that they've been through this journey before, of submitting data, of being surveyed and are yet to see something tangible come out of it" reported ILEPA, "managing expectations was difficult especially when people saw the EU logo in the context of the rights and livelihoods-related questions asked." Further, "capturing the national situation of IPs is difficult given the geographical expanse of the country, minimal disaggregated data on IPs and the more than 25 IP groups in the country." Yet, despite these issues, the team notes that the communities were surprised and refreshed by the opportunity to prioritise their needs and formulate pilot project proposals to address them. To have a research team conduct the surveys with them, and then bring that analysed data back to them to prioritise and follow through with the pilot project proposals, was exceptional.

For Indigenous and local communities in Kenya, "we need community approaches, locally adapted and appropriate with the enhancement of mutually respectful partnerships across all levels." [...] "The Indigenous Navigator brings Indigenous Peoples specific and essential data forward and puts it in the hands of the communities themselves." It is designed to adopt community initiated, designed, driven and owned approaches which we see in the pilot projects.

The development and provision for small grant pilot projects was of special note to ILEPA's coordinator. These projects, "were highly impactful and appreciated by the communities" because they helped showcase what self-determined development should be like – that the communities could collect data, have support in analysing it and propose their own solutions. "The continuation of such initiatives is a key recommendation from the Kenyan communities." ILEPA's coordinator for the Indigenous Navigator.

## United Republic of Tanzania:

In Tanzania the Indigenous Navigator is implemented by The Pastoralists Indigenous Non-Governmental Organization's Forum (PINGO's Forum). PINGOs Forum shares with us that, "the Indigenous Navigator was a useful and interesting process that really showcased the status of Indigenous Peoples and the UN declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. At the same time the surveys and tools helped to secure data and statistics on Indigenous Peoples situation in Tanzania."

Throughout the process of sensitisation and implementation of the Indigenous Navigator's tools in Tanzania, the communities were particularly excited by the content and structure of the surveys and the tools and shared that the "information which was produced and captured by the tools truly reflected their situation." Noted PINGOs Forum's coordinator.

The executive director for PINGOs Forum in Tanzania shares that the community looked forward to the Indigenous Navigator process and, "thought we could use the information to address their challenges". Particularly the communities expressed hope that the Indigenous Navigator could help them communicate the struggles that they faced in a more concrete manner. When asked what the most influential or important thing the national

partners and the communities learned from the data and tools of the Indigenous Navigator, the director shared that, "the situation of Indigenous Peoples in terms of service delivery is much lower than the national statistics". When asked why the Indigenous Navigator was important to the communities and national organisations fighting for Indigenous rights in Tanzania, the director said, "Yes… the Indigenous Navigator is very important in that it helps us to understand the challenges and the community priorities […] and that enables the people to engage in identifying their problems, [They can] prioritise their issues, develop their projects and engage in solving their own issues."

Of key concern to PINGOs Forum today, was how COVID-19 has impacted Indigenous Peoples. "The livestock market that they depend on has been affected and schools have been closed." This affects their rights, rights which had already been shown to be critically lacking through the Indigenous Navigator's surveys. Further, this has affected their livelihood, with far reaching ramifications for their families and health.

Through the Indigenous Navigator, communities became aware of their rights, evoking a surprising reaction. The director shares that, "for the community, they found it strange because most of the projects that the government is doing – they are just imposed." For the communities, "they are not so much used to you, even before establishing a project, coming there and asking them questions, teaching them about their rights, asking them 'what are your problems?'" Many of the communities, they thought that it was just the normal extractive process of collecting data, pulling information out of the community for research without expecting anything to be returned. But this is where the Indigenous Navigator is different, because "when you come in with a follow-up, when you come through with implementation of a project based on what they have said, what they have prioritised, they find it a bit strange." But strange in a good way.

This change is not only at the community level, at the national level "Alliances and relationships with state duty bearers have improved: by working with the National Bureau of Statistics and local government authorities in addressing challenges that were identified by the surveys, this has also improved the relationship with these agents. The communities have improved their connections and relationships, forging alliances and contacts with the relevant authorities to address their needs.

The challenges in conducting the Indigenous Navigator revolved around some of the legal challenges which emerged after the passing of the 2016 law on data, and included government policies that restricted civil-society space in Tanzania. This made it more difficult to engage and collect the data and more, securing Government permissions to collect and publish the Indigenous Navigator data and reports.



Community meeting on the Indigenous Navigator at Mongo Wa Mono, Tanzania.
CREDIT: PINGOS FORUM

# KEY FIGURES AND METRICS

## 3.1. IMPACT FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: THE WAY FORWARD FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL

At the country level, building on the data gathered through the surveys, the consortium has produced several knowledge products and regularly engages in direct dialogues and alliance-building activities. Country-level knowledge products range from guides to engagement with municipal authorities[6] to direct contributions to the Universal Periodic Review process,[7] as well as the data gathered and freely accessible on the global portal.[8] Baseline fact sheets on the situation of Indigenous Peoples in the countries have also been produced.[9, 10, 11, 12] These products help to concretise the experiences of the communities, and also feed into both regional and global knowledge products that serve to inform policy makers and duty bearers. The results captured by the community and national surveys inform policy and advocacy documents and complement efforts and reports produced through the contributions of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG)[13] at the global level, for example at the High-Level Political Forum.[14]

The country level and global level knowledge products, through their findings, continue to contribute to ensuring the effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in the development, implementation, monitoring and review processes of policies and development initiatives at all levels.

## 3.2. BROADER RELEVANCE

While the Indigenous Navigator's tools have been developed for use by Indigenous communities, they are also relevant and useful for NGOs, human rights institutions and specialists, development actors and others who need to anchor their work in the provisions of the UNDRIP, WCIP and SDGs. These tools can be used together with the questionnaires for data collection or on their own. Actors can make, and have made, use of the indicators to monitor their own interventions; explore the links between the UNDRIP and other human rights instruments; and design targeted programmes to reach the SDGs based on the UNDRIP and in- project monitoring frameworks.

The Indigenous Navigator can serve a number of purposes — for example to:
- Raise awareness of within Indigenous communities about their rights and contribute to their empowerment and ability to claim their rights;
- Guide and orient Indigenous Peoples' self-determined governance and development strategies;
- Hold states accountable by evidencing their compliance with — or failure to meet —human rights obligations regarding Indigenous Peoples;
- Assist with the development of legislative reforms and political actions at multiple levels to address issues captured;

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6. The guide is available, in Spanish, here: https://nav.Indigenousnavigator.com/index.php/es/peru-es/369-peru-guia-municipios
7. Centro de Estudios Jurídicos e Investigación Social has contributed to Bolivia's alternative report on the Universal Periodic Review, which is available here: http://nav.Indigenousnavigator.com/images/documents-spanish/reports/2019_-_CEJIS_UPR_ENGLISH.pdf
8. Indigenous Navigator Initiative. 2020. "Learn more about the Indigenous Navigator". The Indigenous Navigator. http://nav.Indigenousnavigator.com/index.php/en/.
9. "Philippines Fact Sheet". 2018. The Indigenous Navigator. Available at: http://nav.Indigenousnavigator.com/index.php/en/philippines.
10. "Nepal Fact Sheet". 2018. The Indigenous Navigator. Available at: http://nav.Indigenousnavigator.com/index.php/en/nepal .
11. The Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA) & Tebtebba Indigenous. 2017. "Kenya's Base-Line Factsheet on Indigenous Peoples in the Context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)". The Indigenous Navigator Initiative. http://nav.Indigenousnavigator.com/images/Documents/Factsheets/Kenyas_baseline_fact_sheet.pdf.
12. Centre for Public Policies and Human Rights (Perú EQUIDAD). 2017. "Hoja Informativa De Perú: Baseline Information for The Indigenous Navigator". The Indigenous Navigator Initiative. https://spark.adobe.com/page/SQPYXHvMUcL5a/.
13. The Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG) is an initiative to ensure full participation and representation of Indigenous Peoples' rights as affirmed by the UNDRIP. The focus of the IPMG is on global engagements relating to sustainable development, however it also endeavours to generate all forms of solidarity support and assistance for Indigenous Peoples at the national level in relation to sustainable development. These include awareness-raising, capacity building, support for lobby, advocacy and community mobilisations, among others. https://www.Indigenouspeoples-sdg.org/index.php/english/
14. Indigenous Peoples Major Group and the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. "Indigenous Voices at the High-Level Political Forum" 2018. The Indigenous Navigator. https://nav.Indigenousnavigator.com/index.php/en/news/221-Indigenous-hlpf

- Deliver data on Indigenous Peoples' human rights and development situation to UN agencies and UN mechanisms addressing Indigenous Peoples' rights (UN Special Rapporteur, Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) and UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues (UNPFII); as well as the ILO supervisory bodies;
- Provide evidence whether states are complying with the commitments they made at the WCIP;
- Guide and orient development policies and development programmes, including those designed to reach the SDGs;
- Generate attention and action in relation to the recognition and protection of Indigenous Peoples' rights;
- Document the national and regional particularities and various historical and cultural backgrounds of Indigenous Peoples worldwide; and
- Provide an accurate state of play of the discrimination and inequalities as well the level of threats that Indigenous Peoples are facing.

Through the continued organisation of orientation workshops, as well as training and alliance building activities in the 11 countries currently participating, an increasing number of target groups have been engaging with the framework and have benefited from enhanced capacities regarding Indigenous Peoples' rights. The tools, training resources, and guidance materials on the initiative are playing an important role in strengthening capacities as well as awareness-raising regarding the Indigenous Navigator framework in the context of data collection, Indigenous Peoples' rights, and the SDGs.


## 3.3. REFLECTION AND REVIEW:

Throughout 2020, the INI is working with these national partners to revise and adjust the tools and framework as well as the global portal itself to ensure that it is more accessible to Indigenous communities around the world.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, knowledge about Indigenous Peoples rights and the SDGs, coupled with the advocacy and communications skills learned during capacity strengthening workshops, have proven very useful in raising awareness about the threat this the virus poses to Indigenous Peoples. Further, capitalising on these experiences, partners have been able to communicate directly on the negative consequences of government's mixed and often insufficient responses to the crisis. An example of this is the effort of ONAMIAP in Peru, who has held webinars as well as developed and disseminated news briefs, and information material which they have used to advocate for leaving no Indigenous Peoples behind in the fight against COVID-19. Likewise, the Indigenous Navigator partners across continents have emphasised the vulnerable situation Indigenous People live in— the poor access to health care and sanitation as well as how the national crisis response in some countries has been used as an excuse to violate Indigenous Peoples and human rights.

# CONTINUED COMMITMENT, A VALUED TOOL

The Indigenous Navigator stands as an example of a project which serves its constituency. It is designed to be owned and led by the community and ensure that access to, and knowledge of, fundamental human rights is available – it has achieved this, while acknowledging challenges in terms of digital access to the data portal and tools. The National partner organisations have served an integral role in bridging this infrastructure gap, ensuring that the communities can access their data and clarify questions in regards to their rights. The observations and recommendations highlighted in this experiences report confirms the high level of ownership among the partners and beneficiaries of the tool and its framework. It demonstrates that the Indigenous Navigator is an important empowerment tool for Indigenous communities.

The experiences noted above stand not only as reviews of the Indigenous Navigator, but the national partner organisations' assessments give powerful testimonies from the direct beneficiaries that clearly express how the interventions, projects and framework are relevant because they are based on the reality and issues experienced by Indigenous Peoples in their everyday life.

For many communities, this has been the first opportunity they have had to interact with and learn about their rights. It has also been unique in that the pilot projects are often the first chance these communities have had to design a project based on the issues they have prioritised and on their proposed actions to address them.

The national partner organisations, as well as the beneficiary communities, have proven, and continue to prove, their engagement and commitment to the Indigenous Navigator as a valued tool to realise their rights. National partner organisations have organised and conducted planned events and activities that have performed beyond expectations given the challenges of local contexts. They are also continuously supporting the communities who have shown their enhanced capacity to develop grant proposals, manage the implementation of pilot projects, and strengthen their demands. Through the Indigenous Navigator process, Indigenous communities become better equipped to describe their internal strategies and engage with local municipal authorities to implement their visions for their own future development.



CREDIT: PABLO TORANZO, IWGIA