

# ADSDPP as Roadmap to Sustainable Future of IP Communities

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## ABSTRACT

The Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP) is the consolidation of the plans of indigenous cultural communities (ICCs) within an ancestral domain for the sustainable management and development of their land and natural resources as well as the development of human and cultural resources based on their indigenous knowledge systems and practices. The ADSDPPs formulated by the communities and facilitated by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) were assessed in terms of the extent to which each plan supports the four-fold rights of indigenous peoples (IPs); the effectiveness of the plan in terms of its responsiveness to the needs of the community; and the efficiency of the plan as manifested by the appropriate match between community assets and programs. The results highlight the centrality of land rights to the restoration of security of indigenous peoples. In anchoring the plans on the four-fold bundles of rights, resource management decisions are made more accountable to critical human values, ecological sustainability, economic equity, and cultural diversity. The parallel targets of effectiveness and efficiency in formulation of plans will continue to be a work-in-progress among ICCs. The imperatives of a continuing capability-building program for local NCIP workers in assisting ICCs develop their ADSDPPs cannot be overlooked. Likewise, an intervention in the preparation and implementation of the ADSDPP will not be strategic and complete without the capacity development of IP leaders. Mainstreaming of the ADSDPP into arenas at different levels such as government and like-minded agencies and groups and targeting appropriate message routes will make the ADSDPP a living document for the IPs.

**Keywords:** Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan, sustainable resource management, indigenous cultural communities, indigenous knowledge systems and practices.

## Introduction

The concepts of sustainability and sustainable development have become powerful and inspiring themes that continue to provide the foundation for a number of local, national, and international initiatives. Proposals for change are often revealed in terms of their contribution to sustainability (Higgins 2000, 147). The Brundtland Report entitled "Our Common Future" states that sustainable development requires the conservation of plant and animal species, and defines sustainable development as "a process of change in which the exploitation of resources and technological development were in harmony with current and future human needs and aspirations." This report recognizes the role that indigenous peoples (IPs) must play in sustainable development, and recommends that indigenous people be given a decisive voice in resource management decisions that may affect them (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). Likewise, the Rio Declaration at the Earth Summit states that IPs have a vital role in environmental management and development, and clearly establishes the relevance of their local knowledge and traditional practices in sustainable development and in the quest to protect their rights.

In the Philippines, the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997 provides the legal framework for recognizing and protecting the rights of IPs and indigenous cultural communities (ICCs) to their ancestral land to ensure their economic, social, and cultural well-being. Under this law, ICCs are able to legally claim their ancestral land through grant of the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT). As of 2011, a total of 156 CADTs have been granted covering 4,259,616 hectares and 912,395 indigenous peoples. CADT claimants could then draft the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP) as the roadmap for the sustainable management of their ancestral domain. NCIP Administrative Order No. 1 (AO 1) series of 2004 provides the guidelines on the formulation of the ADSDPP. Section 6(a), Article 1 of the administrative order defines the ADSDPP as the consolidation of the plans of ICCs/IPs within an ancestral domain for the sustainable management and development of their land and natural resources as well as the development of human and cultural resources based on their indigenous knowledge systems and practices (IKSP). Once the plan is refined and adopted, the community as a whole is made responsible for managing the domain.

IPRA provides that while IPs have rights to their ancestral domains (Sections 7 and 8), they too have responsibilities (Section 9). This essay aims to assess the ADSDPPs in terms of how the plans uphold the rights of ICCs/IPs as stated in Section 2 of AO 1 and how they ensure compliance of ICCs/IPs to their responsibilities as required in Section

3 of AO 1, to maintain ecological balance, restore denuded areas, as well as observe the requirements of IPRA. Specifically, assessment is made in terms of the extent to which such plans comply with the following priority areas and parameters of IPRA: 1) right to ancestral land/domain; 2) self-determination and empowerment; 3) cultural integrity; and 4) social justice and human rights. The ADSDPP is a framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on, and operationally directed to, the recognition, promotion and protection of fundamental human rights. Critical attention to the observance of the four-fold bundles of rights is made using indicators that look at a given plan in terms of its goals and objectives and implementing mechanisms. Likewise, the essay aims to analyze the responsiveness of the plan to community needs and the appropriate match between programs and community assets. Section 3b of AO 1 defines the effectiveness of the ADSDPP as the extent to which the strategies and activities progressively realize the desired results given the amount and quality of material and human resources brought into a program/project.

The essay also aims to revisit the degree of community participation and engagement in the process of formulating and drafting the ADSDPPs. Section 4 of AO 1 provides that the approach to the formulation of the ADSDPP must be community/people-driven and consultative, with guidance coming from NCIP development offices. Through the ADSDPP, IPRA looks at and recognizes the communities as “part of the solution, as partners, rather than the problem, in the protection and management of natural resources” (Brett 2001, 4).

The main body of the essay is divided into four parts. The first section describes the ADSDPPs in terms of their distribution across the country and funding sources, their components and the project proposals forwarded. The section that follows discusses the methodology for assessing the plans, while the analysis is presented in the third section. Some concluding remarks and insights are provided in the fourth and final section.

## **A description of the ADSDPPs**

### ***Distribution of ADSDPPs in the Philippines***

The National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP) through the Ancestral Domain Office (ADO) facilitated the preparation and formulation of the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development Protection Plans by the IP communities with assistance from various organizations. The ADSDPP serves as a bridge toward realizing

the development aspirations of the IPs and aims for the sustainable utilization of the ancestral domain for an empowered community. The active participation of the IP communities in the formulation of the ADSDPPs demonstrates their earnest desire to convey ownership of the plan and celebrates their claim to their ancestral lands.

A total of 89 ADSDPPs were formulated covering a combined area of 1,656,298 hectares and 565,307 people. The Cordillera Administrative Region registered 28 ADSDPPs, the highest number involving 312,491 hectares and the biggest population of 262,243. Region XI came second with nine ADSDPPs covering the largest area of 424,690 hectares and a population of 112,063. The rest of the plans are unevenly distributed across the country, with Regions VI, VIII and XII having the smallest number of ADSDPPs completed. Table 1 shows the distribution of the ADSDPPs by region with corresponding area and population coverage.

Region	Number	Area (Has.)	Population
CAR	28	312,491	262,243
I	3	30,418	9,017
II	10	271,618	39,856
III	11	38,437	12,942
IV	3	126,210	23,434
V	3	19,208	12,122
VI & VII	2	10,408	5,230
IX	4	68,340	15,020
X	7	128,154	29,640
XI	9	424,690	112,063
XII	2	49,387	20,529
XIII	7	176,937	23,211
TOTAL	89	1,656,298	565,307

**Table 1.** Regional distribution of ADSDPPs with area and population coverage. **Source:** NCIP Ancestral Domain Database Information System.

### *ADSDPPs and sources of funding*

The formulation of the ADSDPP necessitated funding especially for the series of processes requiring active participation and close engagement of the community. Several organizations played an active role in the promotion, protection, and recognition of the rights of IPs and provided financial resources to support their cause, specifically

in the formulation of the ADSDPP. These organizations ranged from local NGOs and higher education institutions to international funding institutions and government institutions (local and national), sharing their resources, either as independent providers or as partners. Table 2 presents the ADSDPPs formulated and their sources of funding support.

Since the passage of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act, the United Nations Development Programme and New Zealand Aid (NZAID) have been at the forefront of providing financial aid for IPs under the Empowerment of Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development of Ancestral Domains Project (IP-EIPSDAD), and have assisted in the formulation of ADSDPPs covering 11 regions, 21 provinces, and 32 municipalities (covering a total area of 647,104.43 hectares and 25 tribes involving 174,280 IPs). Japan Social Development Fund (JSDP) also showed significant contribution in the formulation of ADSDPPs covering five regions, eight provinces and 23 municipalities with a total area of 270,211.7 hectares, involving ten tribes and 87,142 IPs. Comparison among regions reveals that CAR enjoyed the most funding support from UNDP-EIPSDAD, NAPOCOR, CHARMP, and other sources. JSDP funded ADSDPPs across the country with concentration in Regions 2 and 3. The Ateneo de Manila University and College of the Holy Spirit are two of the higher education institutions which have actively supported the formulation of ADSDPPs.

Funding Source	No. of Regions/ Provinces/ Municipalities	Area (hectares)	No. of Tribes	Population
CHARMP, LGU, IFAD	1/ 4/ 4	55,260.65	4	31,573
UNDP- EIPSDADs	11/ 21/ 32	647,104.43	25	174,280
NAPOCOR	1/ 1/ 12	222,047.64	2	197,876
NCIP	4/ 4/ 5	129,566.90	4	32,119
JSDF	5/ 8/ 23	270,211.70	10	87,142
HEIs & NGOs	3/ 4/ 4	149,075.34	3	21,755
DAR & partners	2/ 3/ 9	142,610.66	4	17,900
LGU & partners	1/ 2/ 3	0	3	0
Unidentified	1/ 2/ 3	0	3	0

**Table 2.** Sources of funds for the development of ADSDPPs. **Source:** NCIP Ancestral Domain Database Information System.

## Components of the ADSDPP document

In general, the ADSDPP should include sections on indigenous knowledge systems and practices, a profile of the domain's natural resources, analysis of the area's development needs, and a commitment to maintain ecological balance. A cursory look at the compilation of 26 ADSDPPs of the IP-EIPSDAD produced in three volumes under the coordination of the NCIP reveals that the Plan is divided into four major components:

1. the description of the ancestral domain and the community situation,
2. development plans and programs,
3. implementing mechanisms, and
4. investment plan.

The ancestral domain is described in terms of its physical and agronomic characteristics, including its natural resources. The community situation presents the historical background and political leadership in the community, the demographic and socio-economic profile, and the human development profile in terms of health, education, water systems and social organizations. Infrastructure as well as the indigenous knowledge systems and practices involving natural resources are also part of the description of the community situation. Lastly, an analysis of development needs and challenges is articulated to set the context for the plan's formulation.

The second part of the ADSDPP concerns the plans and programs which highlight the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the community. In some ADSDPPs, these are stated in their native dialects with supplementary English translations. The implementing mechanism elaborates on the leadership in the community, including the customary laws recognized across generations, and the mechanism for settling conflicts/disputes, administration of justice and sharing of benefits. In almost all cases, a council of elders/leaders provides the leadership for the community. The investment plan identifies the programs and projects which the community endeavours to undertake to empower themselves. In many cases, the investment plan is categorized by sector such as the social sector, economic sector, infrastructure and utilities sector, and human resource development and administration. In other ADSDPPs, the investment plan is categorized by resources such as human, forest, mineral, and water resources. The ADSDPP also usually lists proposed projects designed to concretize the investment plan.



## **The project proposals**

The investment plan draws attention to the importance of long-term strategic planning but the IP communities recognize that the pull of current demand for action can derail even the best of intentions. This dynamics of operational inertia encouraged the communities to propose project proposals with the aim of sustaining stakeholder interest and confidence in the plan. Of the 26 ADSDPPs in the IP-EIPSDAD compilation, nineteen (19) appended project proposals as integral components of the investment plan. The project proposals consist of short-term actions designed to address critical priority issues in resource utilization in the IP communities. The list of projects proposed in the ADSDPPs is shown in Table 3.

The table shows that almost 50 percent of the proposals seek to address the rehabilitation of denuded forests and the development of agro-forestry with expected benefits of livelihood, watershed protection, preservation of soil erosion, and potential carbon sequestration after the attainment of sufficient forest cover. Other proposals focus on equity in water use, fishery, promotion of indigenous tourism and documentation, and transmission of indigenous knowledge systems and practices.

## **Methodology**

The choice of framework to assess the ADSDPP considered the nature of these community plans as opposed to the usual livelihood and micro-business plans. The conventional approach of analyzing plans in terms of activities and resources to achieve specific results with maximum efficiency and impact was downplayed. More emphasis was given to the goals and aspirations of the ICCs and the processes acceptable to the IPs without sacrificing the objectives of the ADSDPP formulation. In this regard, the ADSDPPs were assessed using three criteria. The first criterion emphasized the extent to which the plans comply with the following priority areas and parameters of IPRA: 1) right to ancestral land/domain; 2) self-determination and empowerment; 3) cultural integrity; and 4) social justice and human rights. The second criterion measured the responsiveness of the programs to the needs identified, while the third focused on the accuracy of matching between the programs and the existing assets and skills of the community (WWRI 2011). If programs formulated adequately address the community's needs as identified, then the effectiveness of the plan is likely to be high upon implementation.

Region	IPG	Title of Project Proposal
I	Binongan, Tingguian of Lacub Abra	Family-Based Agroforestry Livelihood Project
	Ilaud-Tingguian Tribe of Penarurunia, Abra	Spring Development and Water Supply Project
	Kankaney & Bago IP of Sugpon, Ilocos Sur	No project proposal
	Kankanaeys and Bogos of Alilem, Ilocos Sur	No project proposal
II	Ikalahan Kalanguya of Nueva Vizcaya	No project proposal
CAR	Kalanguya of Tinoc, Ifugao	No project proposal
	Ibaloi & Kankana-ey of Happy Hollows, Baguio City	Establishment of Living Perimeter Fence Land Management and Protection Project Community-Based Sustainable Tourism Cutflower Production IKSP Documentation
III	Ayta Tribe of Porac, Pampanga	Porac Livelihood Development Project: Mainstreaming Ayta Agricultural Products in the Market Chain, Fighting Poverty & Global Warming
	Ayta of Botolan, Zambales	No project proposal
	Dumagats of Karahume of Bulacan & Rizal	No project proposal
IV A	Dumagat Remontado of Tanay, Rizal	Bamboo Production and Utilization Project
IV B	Iraya Mangyan of Puerto Galera, Or Mindoro	Environmental Protection and Community Development Project Community Based Sustainable Tourism
V	Agta IC of Buhi, Camarines Sur	Agta-Buhi Fishery Project Sea-borne Transportation for Health & Disaster Relief Buhi-Agta Multipurpose Community Centers Community-Based Sustainable Tourism
	Agta Tabangnon/Agta Cimarron of Donsol, Sorsogon	Solid Waste Management for Protection of Butanding Construction of Floating Restaurant (Learning) Construction of Irrigation Facilities
VI	Iraynon -Bukidnon of Antique	Abaca Industry and Coffee Intercropping Project
	Bukidnon-Karulano of Kabankalan, Negros Occidental	Agro-forestry Development Project
IX	Subanen Tribe of Dumingag, Zamboanga del Sur	DUSA Agro-forestry Development Project DUSA Multipurpose Tribal Hall
	Subanen of Siayan, Zamboanga del Norte	Community Rubber Plantation
X	Kalasungay of Malaybalay, Bukidnon	Forest Rehabilitation and Livelihood Project Forest Management & Farming Systems
	Matigsalug-Manobo of Bukidnon	Cultural Organic Farming Practices Maintenance and Protection of Forest Cover Documentation of IKSP
XI	Bagobo-Tagawa of Mt Apo, Bansalan	Organic Fertilizer Production Project Agroforestry & Environmental Protection Project
	Boston Mandaya of Davao Oriental	Watershed Expansion and Management CapacityBuilding for Carbon Sequestration Wood Processing Plant for Timber Stand Improvement Non-formal Education for OSY and Adults
	Dibabawon of CompostelaValley	Watershed Management & Forest Restoration Establishment of School for Living Traditions Women Handicraft Project
	Mansaka Tribe of Mabini, CompostelaValley	No project proposal
XII	Aromanen Manobo of Carmen, North Cotabato	CapacityBuilding for Operation and Maintenance of Mini-hydro Power Plant
	Tagabawa Bagobo of Makilala, North Cotabato	Community Based Sustainable Tourism

**Table 3.** List of project proposals in the ADS DPPs. **Source:** Integrated Programme for the Empowerment of Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development of Ancestral Domains (IP-EIPSDAD), Batches 1 to 3: 2007-2010, NCIP.



Likewise, if the matching between assets/skills and programs/projects is accurate, then the efficiency of the plan in realizing the expected outcome is also likely to be high.

Indicators on the extent of compliance with the four-fold bundles of rights were developed based on the articulations contained in the relevant sections of Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 of IPRA. These indicators are shown in the matrix below.

<b>Rights of IP</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
Right to ancestral domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan highlights IP access and control over land and resources</li> <li>• The plan shows concretely the benefits that can be derived from utilization of these resources such as generating employment and/or providing cash and non-cash contribution to income</li> <li>• The plan results in environmental well-being by ensuring that the benefits from protection of the environment are closely tied up with access to and utilization of resources</li> </ul>
Self-determination and empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan has established protocol supporting the principle of free and prior informed consent</li> <li>• The plan provides explicit statements on customary laws, justice system, conflict resolution mechanisms, and benefit-sharing</li> </ul>
Cultural integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan supports cultural preservation by prioritizing the preservation of sacred sites and ceremonial areas</li> <li>• The plan encourages/promotes the use and transmission of knowledge on culture</li> </ul>
Social justice and human rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan provides for access to basic social services and infrastructure</li> <li>• The plan upholds political rights and demonstrates that men and women enjoy equal rights and opportunities</li> </ul>

A 3-point scale was used to measure the indicators for the three criteria indicated below. Likewise, weighted mean score was calculated and interpreted.

<b>Score</b>	<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>Extent of support for fourfold rights of IP</b>	<b>Responsiveness to needs</b>	<b>Accuracy of matching</b>
1	1.0 -1.66	None	Not responsive	No match in all programs
2	1.67-2.33	Lesser extent	Less responsive	Accurate match in some programs
3	2.34-3.0	Greater extent	More responsive	Accurate match in all programs

A total enumeration of ADSDPPs compiled in three volumes of the IP-EIPSDADs was analyzed. There are 26 ADSDPPs in the publication, of which 14 are from Luzon, two from Visayas, and ten from Mindanao. The degree of community participation and engagement in the process of formulating and drafting the ADSDPPs was also revisited through interview with key informants from NCIP and from selected ICCs.

## Analysis

This section discusses the results of assessment of the ADSDPPs in terms of the extent to which the plans promote the four-fold bundles of rights prioritized by IPRA (Table 4). It also presents the analysis of the plans looking at responsiveness of the programs to the community's needs and the matching between programs and community assets.

### Right to ancestral domain

#### *Access to land*

More than 70 percent of the 26 ADSDPPs highlight IP access and control over land and resources to a great extent as shown by a score of 3 for almost all plans and a weighted mean score of 2.65. This is expected considering that the plan is in essence a celebration of the IPs' claims to their ancestral lands, their bounties, and the many opportunities associated with them. The Certificates of Ancestral Domain Titles provide security to the IPs by signaling the end of conflict-ridden and bloody displacements. As a space for any human activity, land is a resource *sui generis*. It is literally the foundation of all economic activity and for all life. The ADSDPP is a ticket for the IPs to engage in these activities and enjoy the benefits from the land.

#### *Concrete benefits from access to land*

Almost 60 percent of the plans show concretely the benefits that can be derived from utilization of land and resources such as generating employment and/or providing cash and non-cash contribution to income. The weighted mean score of 2.51 testifies to this assertion. All plans spell out the expected benefits that will lead to a progressive and economically stable community in the statements of vision, mission, goals, and objectives.

Livelihood opportunities are mostly centered on agro-forestry in idle lands and abandoned swidden farms (*kaingin*). Aside from hardwood, crops targeted for cultivation show a wide range of choices from fruit trees (e.g., mango, coffee, banana) to commercial crops (e.g., rubber, bamboo, abaca, rattan, tiger grass, jathropa, and cassava). Projects in agro-forestry are proposed for generating income from the sustainable use of forest products. Cash income is expected from the sale of produce from these crops while non-cash income is derived from products allocated for home consumption and use. Agro-forestry allows conservation and sustainable use and management of

traditional foods, and strengthens models and systems of production and trade. Development of non-wood products in agro-forestry systems has the advantage of diversifying the economic base and enhancing supply of products for household use as well as for markets (Michon and de Foresta 2007, 8). A project on wood processing for timber stand improvement proposed to cut down nuisance trees and improve stand while processing the cuttings into wood products. Expected to generate additional income for the community, it was also meant to take off the pressure to extract away from the protected areas of the ancestral domain.

An opportunity in improved fishing technology is also identified in another plan. The fishery initiative is projected to provide livelihood for at least 30 families in a particular community. Aside from improving protein intake for the families, the initiative also encourages women to engage in productive employment and contribute at least 20% to the household income from the sale of fish. Other opportunities indicated in this plan are the tapping of potable water from springs and the construction of a mini-hydro power plant, organic fertilizer production and the cultivation of organic crops, the manufacture and sale of furniture made from indigenous materials, and sustainable tourism. The plans proposed comprehensive economic development programs that bring together not only home-based livelihood projects but also community-based processing and marketing of produce.

### *Environmental well-being*

Among the plans, almost 60% highlights environmental well-being to a great extent by ensuring that the benefits from protection of the environment are closely tied with access to and utilization of resources. Mean score for this indicator is 2.46. Programs proposed to ensure a balanced ecological system emphasize forest and watershed protection. Some take the form of protection, rehabilitation, reforestation, and biodiversity conservation. Projects on agro-forestry are envisioned with a strong capability-building component. Projects of this kind are meant to strengthen intercropping of plants like rubber and abaca, and widely encourage the use of organic fertilizer by farmers. The introduction of non-wood forest products like rubber and abaca is an important key to the management of resources in a sustainable way. Under natural conditions, non-wood products can be managed along with wood in an integrated manner, thus increasing over-all productivity and income. There is recognition that non-wood products can be harvested without causing damage to the ecosystem and, therefore, the threat of breaking the strong link between the forest and the life of the IPs can be minimized. Indeed, they are seen, under appropriate management schemes, to be compatible with the

conservation of biological diversity and to have strong linkages and complementarities with component activities of environmentally sound and sustainable practices (Michon and de Foresta 2007, 9).

Other projects proposed focus on watershed expansion and management that increase the volume of trees through planting of bamboo and various naturally grown tree species and the maintenance of a nursery. An IP community in Boston Mandaya explicitly targeted carbon sequestration and listed, as its first activity, capacity-building among the IPs in carbon sequestration. The community could then generate income from carbon credit trading while simultaneously preventing soil erosion, improving watershed, and maintaining wildlife habitats.

There are also plans that envision the community being recognized as tourist destination. These plans, therefore, incorporate in the vision and goal statements the maintenance of a safe and clean environment rich in biodiversity. Tourism is a low-impact means to move away from extraction-based activities. Community-based sustainable tourism is a project proposed under the investment plans of the ICCs to showcase their tourist attractions and products – falls, nature trek, cultural village, and handicrafts. As waterfalls and hot springs are also sacred places, the promotion of IP culture is effectively linked to the project.

## **Right to self-determination and empowerment**

### *Protocol for free and prior informed consent*

Only 23 percent of all plans established protocols for the principle of free and prior informed consent (FPIC) to harness the benefits of empowerment from this vital instrument. Consent of the IP community refers to a collective expression by the community through its leaders or their recognized representatives. The desire for a self-determined and empowered community is visible in the vision, mission, and goal statements. These plans present the management structure of the IPO together with the constitution and by-laws. Among others, the constitution provides for the review and approval of programs and project agreements or contract submitted by proponents for development or management of any component or portion of the ancestral domain. The implementing rules and regulations are also formulated to provide guidelines on the implementation, supervision, and monitoring of all programs and projects, particularly in the areas of natural resources utilization, benefit and responsibility sharing, issuance of regulatory instruments, land allocation, and distribution and entry of migrants. The investment plans include a program in

organizational development with 12 areas for capability building. In communities with several tribes coexisting, a united leadership is envisioned and achieved through the institution of a tribal council.

More than 30 percent of the plans showed a mechanism for dealing with prospective development projects which will need free and prior informed consent, but only to a lesser extent. The bigger 46 percent has no mechanism at all. The weighted mean score for this indicator is at a low 1.77. However, the absence of such explicitly described mechanism in the plan does not limit the opportunities for collaboration with potential partners. A case in point is the recent announcement on the construction of the proposed Tinoc III Mini-Hydro Power Plant Project to begin second quarter of 2011 following the finalization of the feasibility and Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between concerned government agencies and the affected communities. The ADSDPP of Tinoc does not contain a section on implementing mechanisms for plans and programs, but the announcement informs the people that consultations with the communities affected by the project have been conducted since 2009 and all the pertinent papers and requirements have already been completed and filed with the NCIP and the DENR which issued the Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) (Dexter See, "P700-million hydro projects to rise in remote Ifugao town," *Manila Bulletin*, February 27, 2011).

### *Explicit statements on customary laws and practices*

Majority of the ADSDPPs (65 percent) have sections devoted to a description of customary laws, justice system, and conflict resolutions. Again, the communities' desire for self-determination and empowerment is clearly articulated in the statements of vision, mission, goals, and objectives. Traditional laws on conflict resolution and administration of justice are enumerated, including types of offenses and appropriate punishments. In some plans, there is a detailed description of the policy and decision-making process and the execution of laws and decisions. A management structure is presented with various committees to handle internal issues and concerns and impart inputs for resolution of conflicts and the administration of justice. Some ADSDPPs even specify a political component in the investment plan, addressing traditional leadership, capacity building, and the construction of a tribal administration building.

The quest for the right to self-determination and empowerment has certainly led to the unification of some warring tribes. A good example is the case of the Subanen tribal leaders of Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte who, after almost a decade of conflict, have agreed to set aside their differences and strengthen their tribal leadership through a



gradual process of reconciliation and reunification. Putting their past differences aside and aspiring to work together enabled them to draft the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP) as one tribe.

## **Cultural integrity**

### *Preservation of sacred sites and ceremonial areas*

The desire to preserve culture is evident in the vision, mission, and goal statements of ADSDPPs, although such is mostly concerned with promoting the use and transmission of knowledge and culture for succeeding generations. Only 27 percent of the plans support cultural preservation to a great extent by prioritizing the preservation of sacred sites and ceremonial areas. These plans provide an inventory of traditional resources and sacred sites accompanied with a traditional resource map. Among the programs in the investment plan, the preservation of cultural heritage is a priority and covers areas such as the establishment of a museum for cultural heritage and training related to indigenous artifacts, instruments, and ornaments.

### *Transmission and use of knowledge on culture*

Half of the plans encourages and promotes the use and transmission of knowledge on culture to a great extent. An inventory of herbal medicine, trees, and animals as well as traditional practices that guide major decisions in all aspects of life is provided in almost all plans to showcase the existing natural, social, and cultural capital of the community. The investment plans prioritize programs on arts and cultural development covering several areas such as IKSP documentation and transfer to the youth, and traditional craft training and production. In addition to the projects on community-based sustainable tourism proposed in many plans, there is also an overwhelming desire to establish a multi-purpose community center to serve as the venue for cultural gathering, a showcase of the culture of the community, and an evacuation center in times of disaster. One ADSDPP proposed to establish a school of living traditions to preserve the cultural integrity of the community and maintain its spirituality.



## **Social justice and human rights**

### *Access to social services and infrastructure*

Access to social services and infrastructure are supported to a great extent by 65 percent of the plans. The investment plans propose a comprehensive social development program covering basic services and infrastructure projects on health, nutrition, and sanitation; education and skills development; livelihood support programs and infrastructure.

The remaining 27 percent express support but to a lesser extent, while eight percent showed no support at all. The weighted mean for this indicator is 2.58. Most plans are characterized by a long list of programs; however, few proposals are put forth to concretize any of the potential projects. Exceptions include an investment plan which specifies an infrastructure program with two project ideas. The first is on the acquisition of seaborne transportation for health and disaster relief for members who have no other means of transportation in reaching health facilities and places of safety in times of disaster. The second is the establishment of multi-purpose community centers as evacuation areas. Likewise, there are investment plans that integrate an organizational and institutional development program covering capability building activities in both organizational and activity-specific endeavours. A project on non-formal education for out-of-school youth and adult is proposed as an example of putting the investment plan to work.

### *Political and gender rights*

More than half of the plans uphold the political rights of the IPs and demonstrate that men and women enjoy equal rights and opportunities in the social, economic, political, and cultural spheres of life. To a great extent, these plans show respect and recognition for the participation of women in decision-making and the importance of women's organizations. Likewise, livelihood opportunities for women have been identified in the plans, while programs for maternal health have been forwarded. The statements of mission, vision, goals, and objectives of the plan articulate the desire of the ICCs to work with other organizations and communities for peace and development and to coordinate with government, NGOs, and potential partners.

It must be noted here that ADS DPPs given a rating of 1 in the four major indicators provide information on their situation and needs, but do not propose programs and actions that could respond to their needs. No investment plan is forwarded that can harness potential resources and partners to help the community attain the goals as

articulated. This does not necessarily reflect the lack of capability and willingness of the community to work together, but can be explained by differing perceptions and perspectives each community may have toward natural resources and their management. While natural resource planners often break resources into their constituent parts, indigenous people may often view them more synergistically.

Right of IP	Indicator	% Distribution			WM	I
		1	2	3		
Right to ancestral domain	The plan highlights IP access and control over land and resources	8	19	73	2.65	GE
	The plan shows concretely the benefits that can be derived from utilization of these resources such as generating employment and/or providing cash and non-cash contribution to income	4	42	54	2.51	GE
	The plan results in environmental well-being by ensuring that the benefits from protection of the environment are closely tied up with access to and utilization of resources	11	31	58	2.46	GE
Right to self-determination and empowerment	The plan specifies the mechanism to operationalize the principle of free and prior informed consent	46	31	23	1.77	LE
	The plan provides explicit statements on customary laws, justice system, conflict resolution mechanisms	11	23	65	2.54	GE
Right to cultural integrity	The plan supports cultural preservation by prioritizing the preservation of sacred sites and ceremonial areas	50	23	27	1.77	LE
	The plan encourages/promotes the use and transmission of knowledge on culture	27	23	50	2.23	LE
Social justice and human rights	The plan provides for access to basic social services and infrastructure	8	27	65	2.58	GE
	The plan upholds political rights and demonstrates that men and women enjoy equal rights and opportunities	15	30	55	2.38	GE

WM – weighted mean; GE – greater extent; I – Interpretation; LE- lesser extent

**Table 4.** Assessment scores of ADSDPPs in terms of the extent of support to the fourfold rights of Indigenous Peoples.

### *Responsiveness of programs*

The programs and actions contained in the ADSDPP are also examined to assess how responsive they are to the needs identified by the community. This measure is needed to gauge the effectiveness of a project or activity in fulfilling the goal the community has set for itself.

Half of the ADSDPPs exhibit high responsiveness by analyzing the needs of the community, categorizing and prioritizing them, and identifying programs and projects that adequately address such needs and at the same time exhibit strong potential for implementation. For example, in many communities, priority is given to the need for additional income from livelihood opportunities. Consequently, programs identify agro-forestry as that which can simultaneously supply food staples, the materials for handicrafts, and the processing of non-wood products from the intercrops. The proposal for a fishery project is also seen to augment income. A community concerned with health-related services as its priority proposes a project on seaborne transportation to provide transportation services for families inhabiting the perimeters of a lake, especially in times of emergency and disaster. The community is isolated and is seldom reached by doctors, hence the need for boats that can take the sick to the town, especially when the traditional healers are unable to cure the ailments.

Some 15 percent of the ADSDPPs propose programs that may not respond well to the identified needs. These plans expound on the need for basic services, but do not list any specific program to address this need, even as projects are envisioned for intercropping of plants such as abaca and coffee to increase income. These projects may not directly provide the basic services required but may somehow contribute indirectly to the fulfilment of said need.

The remaining 35 percent of the plans are not responsive to needs at all. For instance, there is a plan that expresses the need to address the health impact of the intensive use of fertilizer and pesticide in the vegetable terraces but lists a project in ecotourism. Other plans merely provide a listing or enumeration of needs, but do not rank the identified needs in terms of critical priority. One can see a long list of personal and community needs grouped in varying categories in such cases, as to be expected of groups of people already so accustomed to being represented as poor and desperately needy (Cahill 2010, 105-106). There are also other plans with no identification of needs; nevertheless, needs are embedded in the statement of objectives. In other plans, needs are expressed as issues or problems. It is possible that communities like these have gone through the process of needs identification, but have not been successful in explicitly reflecting them in plan formulation.

*Accuracy of matching between programs and community assets*

A match between the natural, social and cultural capital or assets of the community and the actions it desires to pursue was also made. This is important in assessing the efficiency by which a proposed activity can be ably supported by existing and available skills and resources in the community.

Analysis started with the identification and enumeration of existing assets in the community. More than half of the communities highlight the richness of their natural, cultural, and social environment by providing inventories of their natural resources (lakes, rivers, falls, springs, minerals), flora and fauna, indigenous practices, crafts, and artisan skills and capabilities of people. The inventories range from a simple list to very detailed description which took three to five pages of the document. Some plans focus on the identification of natural resources and flora/fauna but overlook their rich heritage of crafts and skills.

Analysis of the match between assets and programs reveals that 38 percent of the ADSDPPs manifest an accurate match in all their programs. For example, among the many assets in one community, the lake stands out and the projects formulated by the community revolve around the maximum utilization of this resource. Since the houses are mostly located along the lakeshore, a fishery project is proposed to mobilize all members of the family in the activity including women and children. Likewise, multiple use of the lake is emphasized in the proposed project on waterborne transportation. This community also presents a detailed inventory of its assets. Its proposal for a multipurpose community center intends to make available venues for showcasing the extensive inventory of herbal medicine, trees, animals and even the skills of its loom weavers and artisans. Members of the community apparently deem it crucial to recognize the value of their traditional, artisanal products as indigenous peoples. These traditional skills, passed on from generation to generation, are being revived both to diversify material production and strengthen cultural traditions. In addition, this community has developed 15 professionals who are encouraged to share their knowledge or expertise with the community in the multipurpose hall.

In another community, more than 95 percent of the ancestral domain is composed of forest lands. The projects formulated on watershed expansion, carbon sequestration, and improving timber stand obviously revolve around its most important asset, the forest. The community also boasts of a good inventory of plants, animals, and trees together with their uses and cultural significance. The project on non-formal education of out-of-school youth and adults is meant to build capacity in exploiting the benefits from this rich natural and cultural capital provided by the inventory.

About 38 percent of the plans confirm a match only in some programs. These plans recognize broad programs but do not forward project proposals to concretize them. For instance, some communities have mountains and rivers and the projects proposed focus on agro-forestry to maximize the food, handicraft, and non-wood products that can be derived from them, but no proposal is presented to utilize the vast inventory of medicinal plants, animals, and riverine resources.

The remaining 23 percent of the plans showed no match between assets and programs. An example is a community near a protected area which is endowed with different types of springs, waterfalls, and rich biodiversity. The project proposed is on reduced use of pesticide in vegetable farming, instead of ecotourism which can be supported by its natural endowments.

The preceding discussion illustrates that although some ADSDPPs are able to realize a good match between assets and programs, others are not. The disparity may be attributable to the truism that any indigenous economic system is part of an economic and social totality connecting and governing the lives of its people. The modern economic system has penetrated endogenous societies, affecting their traditional systems to varying degrees and has created increasing pressures and differing expectations that may have encouraged the community to look outward to potential donors and partners rather than inward to their own rich base of natural, social, and cultural assets. The ratings on responsiveness and accuracy of matching are given in Table 5.

INDICATOR	% Distribution			WM	I
	1	2	3		
Effectiveness					
The plan identifies programs that respond to the identified and prioritized needs of the community	35	15	50	2.15	LR
Efficiency					
The plan presents programs that match the existing assets of the community	23	38	38	2.15	AS

WM – weighted mean; LR – less responsive; I -- Interpretation; AS – accurate match in some programs

**Table 5.** Responsiveness of ADSDPPs to need and matching between programs and assets.

Taking the previous two subsections together and what they reveal, it is obvious that in introducing programs, it is essential that there be parallel efforts to respond to the needs, and optimally exploit the natural, social, and cultural capital of the community. In the template for ADSDPP programs, projects and investment plans, NCIP (2007) highlighted the importance of identifying the assets of the community and suggested the listing of priority projects supportable by the socio-economic and cultural profile of the IP community. These priority projects should then be clearly defined with targets, direct and indirect beneficiaries, and attendant costs. The IP capacity to carry out the plan as reflected in the implementation mechanism and investment plan would also have to be clear and convincing.

### **A glimpse of the ADSDPP formulation process**

The study also looked at the process that unfolded in the formulation of the ADSDPP, specifically focusing on the extent of participation of the members and the guidance provided by community development agents from NCIP and various organizations.

Interview of key informants was conducted in selected ICCs and among NCIP community development workers. Photographic documentation taken during community assemblies were also scrutinized for similar confirmations of the extent of community engagement.

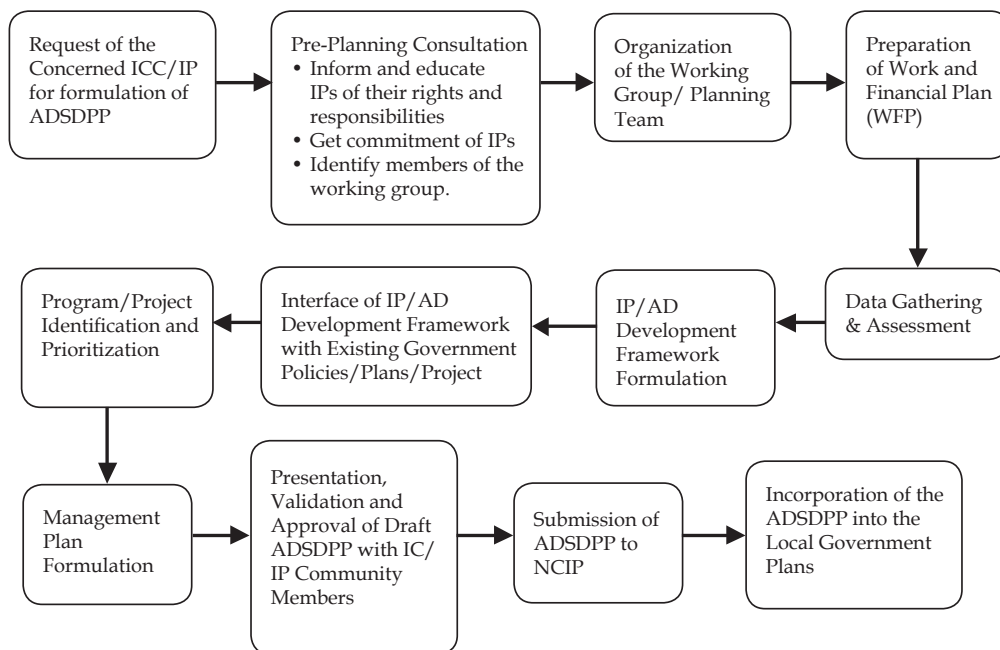
The ADSDPP handbook illustrates four major stages that an ICC undergoes in the formulation of the ADSDPP. Section 8 Article 3 of AO No. 1, series 2004 states: “upon request of ICCs/IPs, the NCIP shall facilitate the formulation of the ADSDPP, and the planning process shall proceed.” This process is outlined below.

1. Preparatory phase
  - a. Information dissemination on IPRA and related laws through meetings and seminars
  - b. Formation and training of technical working groups
2. ADSDPP Preparation
  - a. Baseline data gathering and analysis
  - b. Community ancestral domain sectoral development planning through workshops
  - c. Consolidation of sectoral plans
  - d. Drafting of the community ADSDPP
3. ADSDPP validation
  - a. Presentation and validation of ADSDPP at the barangay level



- b. Presentation and validation of the ADSDPP by the concerned LGU
4. Adoption of the ADSDPP
  - a. Adoption by the community
  - b. Adoption by the LGU and incorporation into the municipal development plan

An illustration of the ADSDPP process flow is also provided below to better understand the process ICCs go through in formulating their ADSDPPs.



At first glance, the process seems to follow a simple linear path, a series of straightforward tasks, each of which is tackled in sequence. In structuring the plan, the community working group tended to present their work in this sort of logical manner. At every step of the process, the ICC working group asked to consult with every member of the community, thus consensus was reached prior to any conclusion or decision. This illustrates the active participation and engagement of the community in the process. Inclusion and participation can build commitment to the effort; differing perspectives can help identify improved solutions, and ensure more accountability for results from the planning team. The photographs included in the ADSDPP document – living proofs of well-attended meetings and assemblies – provide vivid images of IPs in action.

However, this intensive community consultation also demanded time and required a continuous interaction, not a self-contained stage

from which the group could move on to the next. The group realized that there were instances when they were doing several things at the same time, some of which impinged upon or overlapped with each other. In some cases, the planning became an iterative process especially when danger points came and the consultation led to the “throwing away” of what had been started. However, such scenarios are typical and the development officer should always consider the processes acceptable to the IPs without sacrificing the objectives of the planning activity. It can be surmised that some plans had a low point as described above and manifested in documents that are either incomplete or inadequate. Some ADSDPP documents started with successful presentation of the community and detailed identification of needs, but ended with either an inadequate discussion of programs and projects or none whatsoever.

A related activity in the ADSDPP formulation process is the drafting/writing and packaging of the document. There are some ADSDPPs that are well-written, and others which are disorganized and redundant. Although writeshops were conducted for the NCIP AD team, the success of the document depended on the writing skills and experiences of the NCIP development officers and the cooperation and willingness of the IPs to be guided and coached.

The development officers have to be in possession of the skills necessary in maintaining a careful balancing act between the desirable and the practical. Too strong a focus early on could lead to ignoring what actually are more important issues, while too weak a focus could result in following up each side issue as it emerges and consequently not getting anywhere. Focus needs to underwrite the planning as it progresses so as to avoid the pitfalls of these extremes. The workshop report of IP-EIPSDAD (2007) concluded that there must be a continuing capability-building program for local NCIP workers for them to effectively assist the ICCs in developing their ADSDPPs. Similarly, an intervention in the preparation and implementation of the ADSDPPs will not be strategic and complete without the capacity development of IP leaders.

### **Concluding remarks**

The essay points to the importance of the ADSDPP as a roadmap in response to the desperate need of IPs to find their pathway to a more sustainable future. It also highlighted the centrality of land rights to the restoration of livelihood security for them. By anchoring the plans on the four-fold bundles of rights of indigenous peoples, resource management decisions are made more accountable to critical

human values, ecological sustainability, economic equity, and cultural diversity.

Analysis has shown that the parallel targets of effectiveness and efficiency in formulation of plans will continue to be a work in progress among the IP communities. In like manner, the formulation and adoption of the ADSDPP is just the beginning of the journey of the IPs toward their desired destination of sustainable development. In this journey, they have to be armed with skills and have to be provided company especially during the usual rough times and moments of confusion. The imperatives of a responsive capability-building program and extensive partnership with like-minded groups cannot be overlooked at this point.

Training and capacity-building, both technical and non-technical, should figure prominently in almost all interventions in support of indigenous peoples. Because the issuance of certificate of ancestral domain title (CADT) is a provision for securing of rights to their ancestral domain, and ultimately to the development and adoption of the ADSDPP, a community that goes through the CADT issuance process will have to interface with different government agencies, specifically the NCIP and most probably any or a combination of the following departments: DENR, DAR, DA, NAPC, LGU and LRA. Having been isolated from the mainstream cash economy until recently, many leaders adept within their own cultural systems have a steep learning curve to negotiate when it comes to cross-cultural communication, developing partnerships, satisfying government codes and regulations, applying for business loans, marketing their products, establishing client bases, and managing finances.

There is value in channelling small funds directly to ICCs and indigenous interest groups if there is built-in assistance in strengthening their managerial capacity. For example, it is notable from the ADSDPPs reviewed that capability-building is incorporated in almost all projects (activity-based) and as a component program of the plan (organizational), but very little attention is given to building capability in managing funds that might come from potential donations and partnership. Finance is the lifeblood of any activity and it will be to the advantage of the community if a member can be encouraged and supported to train as a management or finance professional.

Support for the IP communities must be calibrated to the pace of the changes and transformations taking place within each specific context. As have been stated previously, the learning curve is relatively steep. Moreover, IPs' cultures, behaviors, and ways of life are decidedly different from those of mainstream societies and all interventions must proceed from their acknowledgment. Culture and tradition play an important role in the concept of IP livelihood

systems. The changes a program hopes to bring about must be compatible with this perception of the universe and must reflect the cosmogeny of IPs. As such, there must be a dovetailing of both specific and comprehensive approaches; programs need to take an integrated view of their livelihood systems without discriminating against any activity in advance.

It may also be necessary to go beyond the ICC and beyond the project approach to mainstream IPs' concerns and perspectives at all levels and to carry out sustained policy dialogue with government on all levels. Although the right type of project is necessary to improve the livelihood of IPs and enhance their resilience, addressing indigenous concerns encompasses a broader spectrum of issues that isolated projects cannot tackle in and of themselves. Mainstreaming of the ADSDPPs to arenas at different levels—government and like-minded agencies and groups—and targeting appropriate message routes are certain to make the ADSDPPs a living document for the IPs.

Success requires that all those committed to supporting indigenous peoples' rights work together, reinforcing each other's efforts to translate a common vision into reality. The ADSDPPs can catalyze a unique fora for discussing specific means to support the rights of indigenous peoples, aimed at mobilizing political will, technical expertise, and financial resources, so that the cause of indigenous peoples, the reduction of poverty, and sustainable development become achievable.

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