

**PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL**

**INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PLANNING
FRAMEWORK**

**ADAPTABLE PROGRAM LOAN ON
STRENGTHENING CROSS-REGIONAL
COOPERATION FOR WILDLIFE PROTECTION
IN ASIA**

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1. Framework and Objectives

Indigenous Peoples

Since the exact locations of the activities within each participating country cannot be determined at this time, the possibility that the project may impact Indigenous Peoples (IPs) cannot be discounted.

Objectives

The main objectives of the Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) are to ensure that the activities funded under project do not adversely affect IPs if present, and that they receive culturally compatible social and economic benefits. This will require the institutes to carefully screen all proposed activities to determine presence of IPs in the locality and ensure informed direct participation of the IPs in the activities.

Identifying the Indigenous Peoples

In Bangladesh, the largest proportion of the country's indigenous population lives in Bandarban, Rangamati and Khagrachari in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). In varying proportions, indigenous peoples (IPs) also live in almost all districts outside of CHT, most notably in those in the north-west and north-eastern regions. However, the various activities that will be undertaken with the project funds should have the same beneficial impacts on IPs and non-IPs.

The IPs of Nepal are the native or original inhabitants of the Himalayas, and they constitute more than two-third of the total population of Nepal. They speak more than 60 different languages, and they practice diverse cultures, and are largely Buddhists. The IPs look distinct in their physical features, costumes and cultural practice from the non-indigenous or Khas people. The major IPs of Nepal include Magar, Tharu, Tamang, Newar, Gurung, Rai, Limbu, Sherpa and Thakali. The IPs of Nepal had sovereign nations prior to the establishment of current Nepali nation-state around 1770s (AD).

The Khas or Caste peoples (non-indigenous peoples) are the settlers who migrated to Nepal in the late 1600s as refugees from the low land, what is currently known as India. The Khas people are a monolithic group (one language, one religion, one culture, one race) who practice Hinduism and caste system. Khas group are divided into four caste categories- Brahmin, Chetri, Baisya and Suddra. On the top of this caste hierarchy is the Brahmin or the priest group, and at the bottom of the hierarchy is Sudra or untouchables. They all speak one language- the Khas language. They are homogenous group in their physical features and cultural practices; and one cannot identify their caste from their look alone. The only way to identify their caste is by their last names or by asking them directly of their caste.

Although the IPs of Bangladesh and Nepal are well recognized locally, the project implementing agencies will examine the following characteristics to make formal identification:

- Self-identification as members of a distinct indigenous cultural group and recognition of this identity by others;
- Collective attachment to geographically distinct habitats or ancestral territories in the project area and to the natural resources in these habitats and territories;
- Customary cultural, economic, social or political institutions that are separate from those of the dominant society and culture; and
- An indigenous language, often different from the official language of the country or region.

2. Process to Follow

Basic Principles

To avoid or minimize adverse impacts and, at the same time, ensure benefits for IPs, the implementing agencies will apply the following basic principles in selection and design of particular activity:

- Ensure that IP communities in general and their organizations are not excluded by any means in activities selection, design and implementation processes.
- Together with IPs, carefully screen the activities for a preliminary understanding of the nature and magnitude of potential impacts, and explore alternatives to avoid or minimize any adverse impacts.
- Where alternatives are infeasible and adverse impacts on IPs are unavoidable, the projects together with IPs and others knowledgeable of IP culture and concerns, will immediately make an assessment of the key impact issues.
- The project will undertake the necessary tasks in order to adopt appropriate mitigation measures. The most important in this respect is intensive consultation with the IP communities, community elders/leaders, and formal and informal IP organizations, civil society organizations like NGOs, and others who are interested in and have knowledge of IP issues.

Identifying IP Social Concerns

Impacts on IPs will vary in terms activities and their scopes, presence and size of IP population in the locales, as well as the magnitude of potential adverse impacts and social risks. To the extent applicable for a particular activity, information on the cultural and socioeconomic characteristics and potential vulnerability will be used to identify the IP social concerns and adopt alternative mitigation measures.

Impact Mitigation & Development Measures

The project will explore, together with the IP communities, the possibilities of reinforcing any existing and promoting new culturally compatible development activities/measures that will benefit the IPs. Such measures may include providing credits where IPs are found to engage in production of marketable goods; basic water supply and sanitation facilities; and those, such as schools, that could also be used by the communities as a whole.

IP Consultation Strategy

As required for informed consultation, concerned institutes will provide IPs with all activity-related information, including that on potential adverse impacts in a language familiar to and understandable by the IPs. To facilitate consultation the institution will,

- Prepare a time-table for dialogues during activity selection, design and implementation processes, and consult them in manners so that they can express their views and preferences freely.
- In addition to the communities in general, consult IP organizations, community elders/leaders and others with adequate gender and generational representation; and civil society organizations like NGOs and groups knowledgeable of IP issues.

Consultation will include the activity objectives and scope; the likely key adverse impacts on (and benefits for) IPs; IPs' own perception of the impacts and feedback; and a preliminary assessment of economic opportunities which the implementing agency could promote – in addition to mitigation of the adverse impacts.

Consultation will in general concentrate on the adverse impacts perceived by the IPs and the probable (and feasible) mitigation measures, as well as exploring additional development activities that could be promoted under the project. The institutes will keep Minutes of these consultation meetings in the activity files and make them available for inspection by World Bank, respective government officials and other interested groups and persons.

If the presence of IP is identified in the sub-project area, then an Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) will be prepared based on free, prior, informed consultation. This will serve as the basis for sub-project implementation and monitoring.

3. Major Impact Areas and Indicators

The following major impact areas and indicators are suggested for assessment of IP concerns and social risks.

a) Cultural Characteristics

- Relationships with areas where they live -- relating to religious/cultural affinity with the ancestral lands, existence of livelihood opportunities, etc.
- Presence of customary social and political organizations – characteristics indicating internal organization and cohesion of the communities, and their interaction with those of the non-indigenous population.
- Interactions and relationships with other indigenous peoples' groups in the same and other areas.
- Presence of IP organizations, like NGOs and CBOs, working with IP development issues, and their relationships with mainstream organizations engaged in community development activities.
- Identification of any cultural aspects likely to be affected or made vulnerable because of the proposed development works.

b) Settlement Pattern

- The extent to which the indigenous settlements are physically separated from those of the non-indigenous peoples, indicating interactions and mutual tolerance between the groups.
- Characteristics indicating physical organization of homesteads, and the existing community facilities, such as schools, water supply, etc.
- Present distance between the settlements and the participating institute.

c) Economic Characteristics

- Prevailing land tenure -- indicating legal ownership and other arrangements that allow them to reside in and/or cultivate the lands in their areas.
- Access to common property resources -- prevailing conditions under which they may have been using natural resources like forests, water bodies, and others that are considered important sources of livelihood.
- Occupational structure -- indicating relative importance of household's present economic activities, and the extent to which they might be affected or benefited because of the proposed activity.
- Level of market participation -- engagement in activities that produce marketable goods and services, and how and to what extent market participation would be affected or enhanced.