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Independent Evaluation of the Green Climate
Fund's Approach to Indigenous Peoples

GREEN CLIMATE FUND
INDEPENDENT EVALUATION UNIT

Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Approach to Indigenous Peoples

COUNTRY CASE STUDY REPORT: THE PHILIPPINES

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ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Ancestral domain
ADSDPP	Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development Plan and Protection
AE	Accredited entity
APA	Adapting Philippine Agriculture to Climate Change
APR	Annual Performance Report
CADT	Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title
CDRRMO	City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office
CRA	Climate Resilience Agriculture
CCC	Climate Change Commission
CSO	Civil society organization
DA	Department of Agriculture
DILG	Department of Interior and Local Government
DOF	Department of Finance
DOST	Department of Science and Technology
ECP	Environmentally critical projects
EE	Executing entity
FAFIRO	Foreign-Assisted Programs and International Relations Office
FPIC	Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
GAD	Gender and development
GCF	Green Climate Fund
ICC	Indigenous Cultural Communities
ICCA	Indigenous Peoples Community Conserved Territories and Areas
IEU	Independent Evaluation Unit
IIED	International Institute on Environment and Development
IPCB	Indigenous Peoples Consultative Body
IPMR	Indigenous Peoples Municipal Representative
IPRA	Indigenous Peoples Rights Act
IKS	Indigenous Knowledge System
IPs	Indigenous Peoples
IPP	Indigenous Peoples Plan
IRA	Internal Revenue Allotment
KBA	Key biodiversity areas
KDSS	Knowledge and Decision Support System
KIN	Kitanglad Integrated NGOs
LDDRRMO	Local Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office
LGU	Local government unit

MH-IBF-EWS	Multi-Hazard Impact-Based Forecasting and Early Warning System
NAPC	National Anti-Poverty Commission
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NDA	National Designated Authority
NPA	New People's Army
NPMO	National Planning and Management Office
 OCD	Office of Civil Defence
OPPDC	Office of the Provincial Planning and Development Coordinator
OSESSC	Office on Socio-Economic Services and Special Concerns
PAGASA	Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration
PCW	Philippine Commission on Women
SAP	Simplified Approval Process
WFP	World Food Programme

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following summary highlights the positive findings and challenges related to the two projects, organized across four scales:

- Community
- Institutional
- National
- Global

It then summarizes the evaluation's assessment of these projects according to its core questions regarding safeguarding, benefits, participation, traditional knowledge and gender.

Community level

The evaluation's interactions with stakeholders at the community level revealed achievements and challenges. SAP010 demonstrated success in fostering strong stakeholder engagement with vulnerable communities in Legaspi and Tuguegarao through a range of workshops.

However, this positive outcome was tempered by challenges related to the broader governance context. Specifically, the extent of IPs communities' engagement and benefits "depends" on the composition of Local Government Unit (LGU) structures, the presence of clear provincial legal frameworks, and the alignment of budgets with Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development Plan and Protection (ADSDPP) priorities.

This complexity is further illustrated by the challenges highlighted by stakeholders. First, accessing project finance imposes costs on all stakeholders, such as civil society organizations (CSOs), particularly those involved with regular donor visits. Second, interviewees stated that project recognition of Indigenous Peoples' (IPs) rituals and engagement with IPs experts is essential for ensuring project alignment with IPs' worldviews and customs. However, explaining these customs and practices to outside agencies and investors is challenging. Respondents also affirmed that IPs communities require full transparency, cooperation, accountability, and consensus-driven interventions.

Institutional level

At the institutional level, the evaluation revealed further positive and challenging outcomes. SAP010 stakeholders noted the project's constructive engagement with a range of project-critical agencies and entities. Similarly, FP201 stakeholders reported productive cooperation between the project and the Department of Agriculture (DA), including the DA's Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) and the Philippines Commission on Women (PCW). The PCW also supports DOF as the National Designated Authority (NDA) to the GCF, supports the PCW to harmonize Gender and Development (GAD) guidelines and encourage project proponents to take into account and include the GAD in project development., especially projects' gender sensitivity.

Regarding challenges at the institutional level, stakeholders raised concerns about the resource and time costs of coordinating consultation and engagement. More specifically, FP201 faced challenges at the provincial and community levels, where institutional engagement is largely absent, with many stakeholders reporting a lack of project information. Interviewees emphasized the importance of consulting as widely as possible, including with the government's Climate Change Commission, Department of Science and Technology (DOST), National Commission on Indigenous Peoples

(NCIP), National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), PCW and CSOs. However, they noted a trade-off between broad stakeholder consultations and efficient coordination and completion of activities.

National level

At the national level, SAP010 benefits from having a National Planning and Management Office – unlike FP201 – to ensure close coordination with accredited and executing entities. In addition, SAP010 includes IPs not based on their ascribed status but as marginalized groups and for gender considerations, suggesting a more significant role for NAPC. Respondents offered conflicting feedback regarding FP201's genuineness in its consideration of IPs. Interviewees also offered mixed views on the project's genuine commitment to IPs'. Interviewees also offered divergent opinions on the extent to which Indigenous practices and approaches are fully integrated within a blended climate resilience agriculture approach.

Other national-level challenges include the limited involvement of the NCIP and the PCW in project design. Moreover, frequent turnover of focal points, staff attrition, and heavy workloads within government agencies and implementing entities have led to limited institutional memory of consultation processes during project design. National stakeholders also noted that the highly technical nature of proposal development creates tension with those who have practical experience in promoting IPs and their knowledge.

Global level

At the global level, the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) and NCIP provide a strong enabling framework for IPs, aligning with the objectives of international agencies to ensure social inclusion for IPs. However, GCF's alignment with this enabling environment is not yet fully or comprehensively assured across all IPs-related activities.

1. SAFEGUARDING

The evaluation's key questions concerning safeguarding included:

- How effectively has the IPs Policy protected IPs' rights and interests?
- What measures were implemented to ensure IPs' rights were protected?
- What were the outcomes of these measures, and how were they monitored?

a. What has worked

Institutionalized an IPs Policy and established an enabling environment: The Philippines has established an effective institutional framework for IPs through IPRA and the NCIP. This framework fully aligns with the goals of multilateral agencies, such as the GCF, to ensure the social inclusion of IPs. However, the Philippines's IPs framework is considered more robust. For example, the FPIC process requires three levels of approval by IPs communities and NCIP.

Strong stakeholder engagement: SAP010 stakeholders reported strong engagement with a wide range of agencies and entities, including IPs in New Bataan. A strong National Planning and Management Office, as seen in the case of SAP010, is also key to creating strong stakeholder engagement. The tripartite agreement with the LGUs has also been effective. FP201 regional stakeholders reported that the DA and PAGASA participated in the project's inception at the regional level.

Clear gender plan and indicators: The gender plan and indicators for both projects are clear. Moreover, the PCW has been involved with FP201 since its inception, contributing as a member of the project board, technical working group, steering committee, and management unit. It also

supports the Department of Finance in facilitating GAD guidelines, especially regarding gender sensitivity in projects.

b. Challenges

GCF alignment with the Philippines' enabling environment: the GCF still needs to fully and comprehensively ensure the inclusion of IPRA's legal framework and NCIP institutional architecture in all IPs-related activities.

Integration of IPs' knowledge and approaches: There are mixed views regarding how IPs' knowledge and approaches should be integrated into the two projects. Some respondents felt the emphasis on infrastructure and technology limits the use of Indigenous knowledge and nature-based solutions within IPs communities.

Coordination costs: Interviewees raised concerns about the time and resource costs of coordinating consultation and engagement. Nevertheless, they emphasized the importance of consulting widely, including with CSOs and a broad range of relevant government agencies and departments. However, respondents noted a trade-off between broad stakeholder consultation and the efficient coordination and timely completion of activities.

Interviewees emphasized the importance of consulting as widely as possible, including with the government's CCC, DOST, NCIP, NAPC, PCW and CSOs. However, they acknowledged extensive stakeholder consultations could come at the expense of efficient coordination and timely execution of activities.

Provincial and community level engagement: Engagement at the project, provincial and community level remains lacking in FP201, with many stakeholders reporting they have not received project information.

A whole-of-government approach by the government: A whole-of-government approach will allow the government to enhance its access to the GCF while fostering better coordination among agencies. This will help align efforts, preventing fragmentation, overlap between projects, and the risk of project failure. The government can implement cohesive, efficient, and impactful climate and development initiatives by integrating strategies and promoting inter-agency collaboration.

2. BENEFITS

The evaluation's key questions concerning benefits included:

- What benefits have the IPs received from the policy, and how effectively has it delivered these benefits?
- What specific benefits were provided to IPs through the policy?
- How were these benefits assessed and measured for effectiveness?

a. What has worked

Consulting with IPs and NCIP regarding FPIC: EEs consult with IPs and the NCIP through the FPIC process. This ensures the IPs and NCIP are recognized, and the IPs' interests are safeguarded.

IPs ADSDPP: The IPs ADSDPP identifies the concerns and priorities of IPs, which GCF projects are expected to align with. Acknowledging this, FP201 will develop plans in consultation with IPs communities across nine targeted provinces to ensure alignment with the ADSDPP.

b. Challenges

The full utilization of IPs ADSDPP and the Indigenous Peoples Municipal Representative (IPMR) is institutionalized from the national to local level through the NCIP, alongside the IPMR and the IPs' structure. This approach can better ensure IPs are included in projects, from development to implementation and monitoring, while strengthening their rights, aspirations, practices and knowledge and reducing their risk of harm.

3. ENGAGEMENT

The evaluation's key questions concerning engagement included:

- How effective was the policy in promoting IPs' engagement and participation throughout the project lifecycle, from origination to implementation, including access to resources?
- What strategies were used to engage IPs in the project's design and implementation phases?
- How accessible were the GCF resources to IPs, and what mechanisms were in place to facilitate their participation?

a. What has worked

Consulting with IPs and NCIP regarding FPIC: EEs consult with IPs and the NCIP through the FPIC process. IPs in New Bataan are included in SAP010, and the NCIP is considered a member of the technical working group. The NCIP was invited to FP201's national inception, and IPs were consulted.

Strong stakeholder engagement: SAP010 demonstrates robust stakeholder engagement by actively involving vulnerable communities and key stakeholders through workshops held across all project locations, including in New Bataan, where IPs are present. This participatory approach fosters meaningful collaboration, ensuring stakeholders and communities engage in the project's planning and implementation. Such engagement reinforces the project's alignment with local needs while enhancing access to GCF resources, ultimately improving the project's impact and sustainability.

For FP201, including the NCIP in the inception workshop helped ensure its awareness of the project and facilitated its involvement in implementation.

Additionally, while the project's engagement at the provincial level is described as dynamic and inclusive, fragmentation still exists. Allowing diverse stakeholders to contribute their perspectives and collectively benefit fosters stakeholder ownership and enhances the project's overall impact and sustainability.

Coordination and budget allocations: The degree of IPs engagement with and benefits from development and climate finance depends on coordination with agencies and the composition of LGU structures, as well as provincial legal frameworks with legislatures, budget allocations, and ADSDPP priorities.

b. Challenges

Strategic engagement with the IPMR and NCIP: Stakeholders outlined a need for strategic engagement with NCIP and the IPMR to ensure that IPs' concerns are fully reflected in all stages of project development, implementation, and monitoring across all the GCF projects.

IPs' practices and engagement with IPs experts: IPs' practices, including rituals and engagement with IPs experts, are essential for ensuring project alignment with IPs' worldviews and customs. Yet, these are challenging to communicate to outside agencies and investors.

Transparency, cooperation, and accountability: IPs communities require full transparency, cooperation, and accountability from the project stakeholders. Interventions are consensus-based, reflecting IPs' decision-making processes and prioritizing gender balance to ensure inclusive participation. A memorandum of understanding between stakeholders safeguards the IPs' interests, formalizes commitments, and enhances accountability.

Key agencies' involvement from project design onwards: The NCIP and the PCW have not been fully involved in project design. Stakeholders also noted that frequent turnover of focal points, staff attrition, and heavy workloads within government agencies have led to limited institutional memory of consultation processes within project design.

Greater uptake and use of the GCF's IP policy: Stakeholders stressed the need for greater awareness, uptake and use of the GCF's IPs policy by AEs and EEs to ensure IPs are given due consideration in project development and implementation.

Bridging the gap between technical capacity and practical impact: National stakeholders reported that proposal development is highly technical, creating a disconnect between technical capacity and practical experience in promoting IPs and their knowledge.

4. USE OF TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

The evaluation's key questions concerning the use of traditional included:

- How effectively did the policy incorporate traditional knowledge of IPs, and what were the results for scalability?
- In what ways was traditional knowledge utilized in the policy's design and implementation?
- What were the outcomes of incorporating traditional knowledge, and how did this impact the scalability of the interventions?

a. What has worked

Acknowledgement of existing IPs' knowledge system: Stakeholders recognized that IPs knowledge system and traditional resilience practices are scientifically valid. AEs/EEs know the importance of incorporating these practices in projects by harmonizing them with project outputs and approaches, such as developing the SAP010 impact table and FP201's CRA. Documenting IPs knowledge and practices was part of the projects' implementation plan.

b. Challenges

Integration of technical and Indigenous knowledge: Some respondents view project emphasis on infrastructure and technology as a limitation to using Indigenous knowledge and nature-based solutions within IPs' communities. While integrating technology and IPs' knowledge presents challenges, it is acknowledged that a balanced approach is necessary. For example, IPs have extensive knowledge of flood hazards but may require technical expertise regarding storm surges. Hence, a platform that bridges Indigenous knowledge with science-based and technical expertise is essential to ensuring sustainability.

Inclusion of IPs' practices: Interviewees note that IPs' practices, including rituals and engagement with IPs' experts, are essential for ensuring alignment with IPs' worldviews and customs. Acknowledging and integrating these practices into project design and implementation demonstrates respect for IPs' heritage and enhances community ownership.

5. GENDER

The evaluation's key questions concerning gender included:

- How well did the policy address gender considerations, and what were the results for gender inclusivity and equality?
- What specific actions were taken to ensure gender inclusivity in the policy's implementation?
- What were the outcomes of these actions in terms of achieving gender equality?

a. What has worked

Clear gender plan and indicators: Both projects have well-defined gender plans and indicators that guide project implementation, ensuring gender inclusion.

PCW involvement: The PCW have played a highly active role in FP201, contributing to key governance structures, including the project board, technical working group, steering committee, and management unit. PCW also supports the Department of Finance embedding GAD guidelines, especially regarding gender sensitivity in project activities.

b. Challenges

Institutionalized gender support role: Stakeholders supported institutionalizing a full-time gender position in each government agency to oversee sustainable gender mainstreaming, including in GCF projects.

Utilize gender analysis tools and GAD guidelines: AEs and EEs could enhance project expertise in gender responsiveness using gender analysis tools and GAD guidelines based on the Magna Carta of Women.

B. INTRODUCTION

The Independent Evaluation Unit (the IEU) conducted an Independent Evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Approach to Indigenous Peoples as part of its Board-approved 2024 work plan. The evaluation included case studies from five countries: Botswana, Colombia, Paraguay, the Philippines, and Vanuatu. This case study focuses on the Philippines. The remaining four case studies can be found in the evaluations section of the IEU website.

The evaluation seeks to objectively assess the GCF's performance in implementing its Indigenous Peoples Policy across the Policy's different stages.

The Indigenous Peoples Policy (hereafter referred to as the Policy or IPs Policy) establishes a framework designed to ensure that the GCF activities fully respect the dignity, human rights, and cultural identity of Indigenous Peoples (IPs), ensuring that IPs:

- Benefit from the GCF activities and projects in a culturally appropriate manner
- Do not suffer harm or adverse effects from the design and implementation of the GCF-financed activities.

This introduction provides an overview of the GCF's IPs-related activities in the Philippines, including the number of projects, beneficiaries, total investment, and key entities involved.

The country case study required intensive engagements with national stakeholders from 12 to 27 August 2024. These engagements occurred at various locations across the country, including Tuguegarao City, Quezon City, Legaspi City, Camarines Sur, Kalinga, Bukidnon, and Manila. Cynthia Bejeno from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and

Martin Prowse (GCF-IEU) conducted stakeholder engagements. This draft country case study was edited by Sanchita Bakshi (IIED).

1. GCF'S IPS-RELATED PORTFOLIO IN THE PHILIPPINES

Table 1 outlines three GCF-funded projects, covering adaptation, mitigation, and crosscutting climate-related themes. The country's National Designated Authority (NDA) to the GCF is the Department of Finance (DOF).

Table 1. *GCF-funded projects in the Philippines*

PROJECT NAME AND DESCRIPTION	THEME AND ESS ¹ CATEGORY	ACCREDITED ENTITY (AE)
1. SAP010: Multi-Hazard Impact-Based Forecasting and Early Warning System for the Philippines	Adaptation/Category C	Land Bank of the Philippines
2. FP 201: Adapting Philippine Agriculture to Climate Change	Cross-cutting/Category B	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
3. FP156: ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility: Green Recovery Program	Mitigation/Intermediation 1	Asian Development Bank (ADB)

Source: Country case study brief - Philippines

This report focuses on two single-country projects:

- SAP010: Multi-Hazard Impact-Based Forecasting and Early Warning System (MH-IBF-EWS) for the Philippines, which was approved on 4 December 2019 (Decision B.24/09), with the Land Bank of the Philippines as the responsible AE²
- FP201: Adapting Philippine Agriculture to Climate Change (APA), which was approved on 11 April 2023 (Decision B.35/05), with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as the responsible AE.

For the SAP010 project, the expected number of direct beneficiaries is 467,919, half of whom are women, and an additional 8,040,935 are indirect beneficiaries. The project focuses on four locations that have experienced severe climate-related impacts:

- Tuguegarao City: Experienced extreme flooding during Typhoon Haima in 2016
- Legazpi City: Suffered numerous casualties and extensive property damage during Typhoon Durian in 2006
- Palo: Endured extensive destruction from storm surges during Typhoon Haiyan in 2013
- New Bataan: Faced significant landslides and flooding during Typhoon Pablo in 2012, resulting in substantial loss of life and property.

While IPs are not explicitly targeted in SAP010, Indigenous communities are often the most vulnerable within rural areas and, hence, qualify for inclusion in the project. However, in New Bataan, Compostela Valley, the IPs are also stakeholders, which allows the project to consider and

¹ Environmental and social safeguards (ESS). The GCF defines the environmental and social risks of projects according to three categories: Category A for significant and irreversible risks, Category B for limited, site-specific, and reversible risks manageable with mitigation, and Category C for minimal or no risks or impacts (GCF, 2019).

² Land Bank is a key financial institution owned by the Government of the Philippines that aims to promote rural development, particularly in areas affected by natural disasters.

learn from the IPs' distinct interests and knowledge, including regarding managing the impact of climate change (National Project Management Office (NPMO) interview, 13 August 2024). The project's total investment, including co-financing, is USD 20,191,349, with the GCF contributing USD 9,999,042 in the GCF funding. According to the project's 2022 Annual Performance Report (APR), the five-year project commenced on 5 April 2022 (Green Climate Fund, 2022).

The SAP010 project is implemented by the Department of Science and Technology's Philippines Atmospheric Geophysical Astronomical Services Administration (DOST-PAGASA) as the executing entity in collaboration with several co-executing entities. These are:

- Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Mines and Geosciences Bureau
- Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG)
- Office of Civil Defence (OCD)
- Tuguegarao City Local Government Unit (LGU)
- Legazpi City LGU
- Palo, Leyte LGU
- New Bataan LGU
- Davao de Oro LGU
- The World Food Programme (WFP).

The SAP010 project's main aim is to reduce the exposure of vulnerable communities to climate-induced hazards and increase their absorptive and adaptive capacities. This objective will be achieved through four key approaches:

1. Generating science-based multi-hazard weather and climate risk information

This approach focuses on developing probabilistic weather forecast models, localized forecast models, hazard maps, and tools for impact-based forecasts and warnings, ensuring the availability of scientifically based information.

2. Establishing the early warning system supported by a knowledge and decision support system

This approach strengthens the early warning system by creating a knowledge and support system that improves decision-making. It includes database processing to analyse exposure and vulnerabilities and rapidly quantify potential impacts.

3. Enhancing national and local capacities through people-centred early warning system, forecast-based early actions and financing (FbF)

This approach facilitates capacity building for implementing and using the early warning system and forecast-based early actions, particularly for "last-mile communities",³ and includes developing early action protocols.

4. Mainstreaming climate risk information at national and local levels

This approach aims to scale the early warning system to the national level, ensuring its integration into institutional frameworks.

According to the most recent SAP010 APR 2022, the project encountered challenges and delays during the reporting period, largely due to COVID-19 restrictions, lengthy procurement processes, and changes in local and national officials following recently concluded elections. Additionally, unforeseen administrative delays – such as prolonged legal reviews of tripartite memorandums of agreement and recurrent changes in the project's lead contacts – significantly prolonged the final

³ Last mile communities refer to the most vulnerable, at-risk communities.

submission and approval of key conditionalities. Consequently, funding was delayed, which hindered project activities' timely implementation (Green Climate Fund, 2022).

The report also noted that the first project disbursement of USD 3,216,338 was received on 14 February 2023. As a result, efforts during the first reporting period primarily centred on hiring NPMO staff, planning and coordinating the inception workshop, organizing the first project board meeting, and carrying out other preparatory activities for the project's full implementation.

The SAP010 project has actively engaged stakeholders and partners. In 2022, it organized workshops and meetings through the NPMO to update executing entities (EEs) on the project's status, facilitate discussions on mobilizing existing resources and initiate the implementation of activities (Green Climate Fund, 2022).

The second in-country project, FP201APA, aims to support at least 1.25 million poor farming household members, with 50 per cent women, across nine target provinces in five regions. These beneficiaries are expected to receive direct support, while over 5 million people will benefit indirectly. Unlike the SAP010 project, FP201APA explicitly includes IPs among its target beneficiaries. Interviewees surveyed for the evaluation outlined the project's wide range of IPs or Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs).⁴ Overall, 20 per cent of the beneficiaries are expected to be Indigenous communities, while the remaining will be non-IPs communities (FAO interview, 19 August 2024).

The project aims to increase the resilience of rural communities while transforming the country's agricultural system by enhancing farmers' capacity to develop climate-resilient agriculture (CRA) enterprises and adopt financially viable CRA practices. Additionally, it intends to scale up the capacity of the government and private sector to build support systems. Through the CRA enterprise development approach, vulnerable farmers – including women, youth, and Indigenous communities – alongside the private sector will gain access to climate information and technical services. This initiative will address input and market barriers to CRA adoption by leveraging existing systems and new partnerships along value chains. The project also integrates CRA practices, appropriate finance and risk transfer, and emerging digital technologies (Green Climate Fund, 2023).

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is the APA project's accredited entity (AE). The EEs are the FAO and the Government of the Philippines through the Department of Agriculture (DA), DOST-PAGASA and the Philippine Bureau of Treasury.

The project's total funding, including co-financing, is USD 39,254,450, with the GCF contributing USD 26,273,510. The seven-year project will conclude in 2031.

C. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE PHILIPPINES: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. THE PHILIPPINES AND IPs

The Philippines is a culturally diverse country with an estimated 17 million IPs, thought to comprise between 10-20 per cent of the country's total population (International Work Group for Indigenous

⁴ These IPs or ICCs include Isneg (Apayao), Ifugao and Kalanguya (Ifugao), and Kalinga (Kalinga), Agtay, Agta, Aeta and Malaueg (Cagayan), Calinga, Aeta, the Agta and Dumagat of Isabela, Kabihug Minede (Camarines Norte), and Agta, Agta Isarog and Agta Tabangnon (Camarines Sur), Bukidnon, Higaonon, Umayamnon, Manobo, Matigsalug, Talaandig and Tigwahanon (Bukidnon) and the Tboli, Manobo-Tasaday, Manobo, Blit and Manobo (South Cotabato).

Affairs, 2023). According to estimates, IPs – also known as Indigenous Cultural Communities, “cultural minorities”, or “Tribal Filipinos” – are clustered in close to 100 groups.

Indigenous Peoples (IPs) in the Philippines are generally categorized based on geographical distinctions:

Northern Luzon (Cordillera) – Indigenous groups here are collectively known as Igorot (Tagalog for “mountaineer”). There are 10 main tribal groups in upland Luzon.

- Mindanao – Indigenous groups fall into two main categories:
- Lumad (“Indigenous”) – Consisting of 18 distinct tribal groupings.
- Moro – Comprising 10 groupings of Muslim Indigenous Peoples.

Other IPs in Luzon and the Visayas – These groups use various collective names specific to their communities. Ethnographic Distribution\Indigenous communities in the Philippines are spread across seven ethnographic regions⁵:

1. Cordillera Administrative Region and Region I
2. Region II
3. Region III and the rest of Luzon
4. Island Groups and the rest of Visayas
5. Northern and Western Mindanao
6. Central Mindanao
7. Southern and Eastern Mindanao

According to IWGIA (2023), IPs generally live in geographically isolated areas without access to essential social services and few opportunities for mainstream economic activities, education, or political participation. However, IP territories often have abundant commercially valuable natural resources such as minerals, forests, and water.

IPs communities are known for their practices and cultures. They follow customary norms and practice land use and ownership through collectivism and care of their resources (Hirai, H., 2015). They are also known for traditional farming practices. For example, the Ifugaos of Ifugao province, Bontocs of Mountain province and Kalinga-Apayao provinces, and Kankanay and Ibaloi of Benguet province are recognized as wet-rice farmers and have worked in elaborate rice terraces for centuries. Those from Kalinga, Kalinga-Apayao province, and Tinguian, Abra province, employ wet-rice and dry-rice growing techniques. Meanwhile, the Isneg of northern Kalinga-Apayao, the Gaddang of the border between Kalinga-Apayao and Isabela provinces, and the Ilongot of Nueva Vizcaya province all practice shifting cultivation. The Negritos once predominated the highlands, but by the early 1980s, their population had declined to small, widely scattered groups, mainly along the eastern ranges (Minority Rights Group, 2023).

2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Democratic reforms, including those of a socio-economic nature, were introduced in the Philippines in 1987, following the fall of the Marcos regime (see, for example, Rodil, 1993). This had implications for the IPs as the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) – or the Republic Act 8371 – came into force in 1997. IPRA recognizes IPs’ right to ADs to self-determination and free exercise

⁵Hirai, Hanayo (2015). Indigenous Communities in the Philippines: A Situation Analysis. Yuchengco Center, De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines. Available at https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Hanayo-Hirai/publication/308742756_Indigenous_Communities_in_the_Philippines_A_Situation_Analysis/links/57edcbd708ae07d8d8f64d50/Indigenous-Communities-in-the-Philippines-A-Situation-Analysis.pdf

of culture, with an option of applying for a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT). IPRA also led to the establishment of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the government agency that plays a critical role in safeguarding the rights of IPs, particularly their right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). IPRA law mandates that any development, project or activity affecting IPs lands, territories and resources must secure FPIC from the affected Indigenous communities, with the NCIP overseeing the process.

Despite these advancements, the impact of IPRA has fallen short of expectations. Legal hurdles and administrative obstacles have limited its effectiveness. Broader national developments – such as militarization, tribal conflicts and the expansion of large-scale projects – have brought limited benefits to Indigenous communities (Minority Rights Group, 2023; Rodil, 1993). For example, in Mindanao, the Lumads continue efforts to reclaim lands taken from them while advocating for the revocation of all plantation permits and logging concessions. In addition, they are still seeking self-government based on customary laws and the preservation of their Indigenous cultures (Rodil, 1993).

The Minority Rights Group (2023) estimates the ongoing 50-year conflict between the military and the New People's Army (NPA).⁶ The mountains of Mindanao have claimed more than 40,000 lives. Furthermore, according to a joint stakeholders' report to the United Nations Universal Periodic Review on the Philippines in September 2016 by KATRIBU National Alliance of Indigenous Peoples, extrajudicial killings of IPs continued throughout the 2010–2022 period. Some IPs killed during these times were notable opponents of mining, oil palm plantations, and corruption.⁷

Additionally, Lumad communities have suffered attacks on their schools. They continue to face systemic discrimination within mainstream educational institutions, where they are often treated as outsiders or second-class citizens. Long distances to public schools further hinder access to education⁸.

3. LAWS AND POLICIES ON IPs AND CONTESTATIONS

In international law, the Philippines has voted in favour of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1976) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1976). In 2007, the government signed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. However, the Philippines has yet to ratify the International Labor Organization Convention 169, primarily due to concerns about the compatibility of the Convention's provisions with the country's existing legal frameworks, particularly the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997, which already provides comprehensive protections for Indigenous Peoples (IPs). While the Philippines has made significant strides in advancing IP rights, including the establishment of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), there is an intention to ensure that any further

⁶ The NPA is the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CCP). It has been engaged in armed conflict with the Armed Forces of the Philippines since its establishment in 1969, making it one of the world's longest-running insurgencies. The NPA opposes neoliberal principles and policies in the mining sector, which it views as disproportionately benefitting foreign corporations at the expense of local people. However, the NPA has faced severe resistance from the government (Holden, 2014, p.76; Quimpo, 2008). There have also been reported instances of NPA attacks on mining projects and retaliatory killing of environmental activists (ibid).

⁷ Alongside the communist rebellion, an Islamist insurgency has also contributed to widespread insecurity in Mindanao. Despite a peace agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, several ISIS-affiliated extremist groups continue to operate outside the peace framework.

⁸ For example, it has been reported that in 2015, approximately 3,000 Lumads from Diatagon, Lianga and Surigao del Sur were forced to flee when armed men stormed a Lumad school, rounding up teachers and students and hundreds of other civilians. Reports further indicate that two IPs leaders were killed (Minority Rights Groups, 2023).

legal commitments, such as ratifying the Convention, do not unintentionally conflict with or duplicate existing protections.

Domestically, democratic reforms since 1987 have led to the recognition of IPs' rights being enshrined in the 1987 Philippine Constitution. The 1997 enactment of IPRA 1997 is a landmark piece of legislation for the country's IPs communities, widely praised for respecting IPs' cultural integrity, land rights, and self-directed development.

Two articles in the 1987 Constitution explicitly relate to IPs:

- Article XII (5) obliges the state to “protect the rights of Indigenous cultural communities to their ancestral lands to ensure their economic, social and cultural well-being.”
- Article XIV (17) commits the state to “recognize, respect, and protect the rights of Indigenous cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions, and institutions.”

The enactment of the IPRA led to the establishment of the NCIP in 1997. In 2006, following the recommendations by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of IPs, the NCIP called for the National Consultative Assembly to include IPs and IPs' organizations in the planning and implementation of the NCIP's activities and convened a National Forum. This led to the establishment of the Indigenous Peoples Consultative Body (IPCB), which operates at national, regional, and provincial levels. The IPCB is a tripartite body composed of representatives from the NCIP, IPs organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Establishing these bodies was a positive development with the potential to enhance IPs' participation in preparing and implementing IPs' policies.

IPs continue to push for substantive implementation of IPRA and related policies, as there are times when, despite recognizing ADs and having CADTs, their rights are superseded by acquiring an FPIC certificate. Several IPs communities have repeatedly reported being deceived and threatened and even witnessing the killing of some members when companies forcefully pursued FPICs. There have also been reports of Indigenous lands being redistributed to non-Indigenous settlers by the Department of Agrarian Reform through the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (Minority Rights Group, 2023).

Nonetheless, some progress has been noted regarding the issuance of CADTs. The Minority Rights Group (2023) reported that by March 2018, 221 CADTs had been issued for an area of 5.4 million hectares. However, this has so far only involved 1.2 million IPs. The process of obtaining a title remains complex and lengthy.⁹ Once issued, the titles must be registered with the Land Registration Authority, which costs time and money.

4. CONSERVATION, CLIMATE CHANGE & IPs CULTURE & TERRITORIES

There is a clear and significant connection between IPs communities' stewardship of the natural environment within ADs and biodiversity. According to IWGIA (2023), the Philippines is one of 17 highly biodiverse countries, with more than 52,177 species. The country is also one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, with at least 700 threatened species, making it one of the top global conservation areas. Moreover, it is reported that 75 per cent – or 96 out of 128 – key biodiversity areas (KBAs) in the country are within ADs.¹⁰ IPs' territories contain 5.26 million hectares or 75 per cent of the country's remaining forests.

⁹ In 2012, an additional procedure was added to address jurisdictional issues between agencies, but it has slowed the process even further (ibid).

¹⁰ Maintaining biodiversity is essential for ensuring genetic diversity, which helps reduce the risk of disease and genetic disorders.

Furthermore, IPs' conservation practices are critical in limiting climate change and its impacts. A 2021 assessment of 10 Indigenous Peoples Community Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCAs) found that they store 10.5 million tons of carbon – equivalent to the annual gas emissions of at least seven million cars (The Philippine ICCA Consortium, 2021). For IPs, land is life: it is sacred and deeply intertwined with their culture and identity. IPs have practiced and promoted ecosystems and biodiversity conservation for generations. Their contributions to biodiversity conservation are substantial, guided by traditional governance, Indigenous knowledge systems, and sustainable practices. This role remains vital in maintaining planetary health and ecological stability.

The Philippine government's biodiversity conservation strategy currently declares protected areas under the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992 and the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 2018.¹¹ Interviewed stakeholders noted that these laws can conflict with IPs' communities' land use and territories. For example, respondents noted that the government imposition of "Core Zones" and "Strict Protected Zones" prohibits IP communities from accessing, using, controlling, and managing their sacred sites, watersheds, hunting grounds, and forests, which sustain their culture and livelihoods. IPs' groups have limited means to contest these restrictions due to a lack of representation, policy conflict, and insufficient funding (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2023).

Since 2018, 240 protected areas have been established, covering 5.45 million hectares, or 14.2 per cent of the country's territory. Of this, 4.7 million hectares are terrestrial, and 1.38 million are marine areas. On 8 April 2022, five more sites were designated as protected areas. The restrictions within these protected areas could lead to the displacement of IPs' communities from territories and limit their traditional access to and use of resources (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2023; ICCA, 2024).

The IWGIA (2023) reported that resource exploitation can occur within protected areas and ICCAs. Since 2014, 772 large-scale mining permits covering 1.9 million hectares, half of which are in ADs, have been established. Moreover, as of June 2022, 83 of the 410 Environmentally Critical Projects (ECPs) listed by the Environmental Management Bureau in 2022 were situated in IPs' territories, covering 501,205 hectares of Indigenous lands. In 2014, mining and other extractive industries accounted for 51 per cent of all documented ECPs within ADs with CADTs. These ECPs can violate IPs' land and human rights and increase their vulnerability to natural hazards (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2023).

D. KEY FINDINGS

This section evaluates the effectiveness of the GCF's IPs Policy through its funded projects in the Philippines. It examines stakeholder engagement, the relevance and impact of interventions, country ownership, and IPs access to the GCF resources. The section also discusses the effectiveness and efficiency of these projects, their replicability and scalability, and their approach to gender issues. Additionally, it explores innovative approaches, unintended effects, and the integration of REDD+ projects into the country's strategy for IPs, highlighting key lessons and outcomes.

¹¹ The Philippines is also party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992), the Paris Agreement (2015) and the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (1992).

1. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

This first section of results discusses the extent to which the GCF-funded projects have engaged with and included IPs in project design and implementation.

a. Broad stakeholder engagement

For SAP010, stakeholders reported strong engagement with vulnerable communities, including IPs and numerous agencies and entities. For example, key respondents outlined how:

The Simplified Approval Process (SAP) stakeholders' engagement is strong [and has] involved various stakeholders' consultations including LGUs, CDRMO [City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office], Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). Key Functions of DILG: DILG, PAGASA, WFP, NPMO... where [the] project was co-produced, clarified and learned by the stakeholders, especially by the community level stakeholders. The communities are involved from the beginning of the project.¹²

This positive assessment from Legaspi City was supported by interviewees in Tuguegarao, where the Barangay Captains highlighted:¹³

We know the SAP project through our participation in workshops. The project is crucial, especially the early warning device. It is also important to educate the communities, not only the representatives or the barangay captains, so that constituents know the project and its intentions and importance.¹⁴

Further, it was noted that Barangay Captains and council members from vulnerable communities were part of multiple SAP workshops, including the kick-off and stakeholders' engagement workshops and training activities. This information is also in the SAP 2022 annual performance report.

b. Limited inclusion of Indigenous Peoples

However, despite strong and broad engagement with multiple stakeholders, the project does not explicitly emphasize the inclusion of IPs. While it aims to reach all vulnerable communities, it does not differentiate between IPs and other groups, resulting in limited consideration of IPs' needs.

During interviews, the AEs and EEs stated that the need to consider Indigenous communities during project design was unclear. They also indicated they were unaware of the IPs Policy until participating in this evaluation. Instead, IPs were included under broader gender and poverty considerations. They further noted that IPs considerations were not part of the projected outcomes or the output indicators.¹⁵ This suggests that the involvement of IPs is not based on their social status and that they are not prominently featured in the project proposal.

¹² Legaspi City interview, 15 August 2024.

¹³ Barangay Captains are the elected government leaders at the 'Barangay' or community level.

¹⁴ Tuguegarao interview, 12 August 2024.

¹⁵ NPMO interview, 13 August 2024; Debriefing, 27 August 2024.

Further, the discussion on stakeholder engagement raised questions about the definition of Indigenous identity in the Philippines. For instance, the stakeholders from Tuguegarao considered themselves as “climate vulnerable communities” and not necessarily as IPs. It was pointed out that:

Most of the city's constituents come from Ybanag or Ytawis culture; therefore, they speak Ybanag or sometimes speak... Ybanag, Ytawis, or Ilokano. They also have their traditional cultural practices. Hence, in the GCF definition of IPs, they may be considered IPs. Yet, in the NCIP definition, these stakeholders are not considered IPs.¹⁶

The debate over the definition of IPs was also raised by implementing agencies, including the NPMO, during the debriefing.¹⁷ The discussion focused on whether the NCIP or the GCF definition should take precedence in project activities, including monitoring and reporting. It also highlighted a low level of awareness regarding the flexibility of the IPs Policy, which allows the use of other definitions recognized by IPs. That said, interviewees from the AE noted the active engagement of the IPs from the New Bataan area – one of the four project locations and an area with a high Indigenous population. During the project's consultation phases, IPs groups from New Bataan were highly engaged, contributing insights based on their experiences with adverse events. IPs communities that engaged in consultations were keen to continue participating in project activities. Furthermore, the AE is also considering the inclusion of NCIP in the project's Technical Working Group. SAP respondents emphasized the need to ensure more Indigenous representation and are reviewing their budget to support preparatory work for their inclusion. They plan to convene a special session with the project board to discuss these requirements and target outcomes, including the potential inclusion of the NCIP in the Technical Working Group.¹⁸

For the APA project, provinces with a high Indigenous population, such as Bukidnon, Kalinga, and Camarines Sur, are included in the target, and a broad range of Indigenous communities are expected to be included in project activities. However, only 20 per cent of the target beneficiaries will be IPs, while the remaining will be from non-Indigenous groups. As the project is still in its early implementation stage, the specific IPs communities that will benefit are yet to be identified, as the selection of the 100 communities is still to be determined.¹⁹ However, field interviews reveal that none of the Indigenous communities in the targeted provinces of Camarines Sur, Kalinga, and Bukidnon were fully aware of the project. This suggests their engagement with the IPs during the project's design was insufficient.

The project's EE, the DA, and the FAO have committed to pursuing wider consultations with IPs communities during the implementation phase.²⁰ The DA in Kalinga proposed holding meetings during the night, weekends, and holidays to ensure participation and incentivize participants to attend. The EE also highlighted key experiences and promoted IPs involvement through formative deep immersion in communities, participatory methods to elicit community priorities, and incentives for co-implementation through in-kind support. Interviewees believe these steps will enhance long-term ownership and confidence in the project, ultimately leading to social validation and scaling to the national level.²¹

¹⁶ Tuguegarao interview, 12 August 2024.

¹⁷ Debriefing discussion, 27 August 2024.

¹⁸ PAGASA interview, 20 August 2024 and Debriefing, 27 August 2024.

¹⁹ FAO interview, 19 August 2024 and DA interview, 20 August 2024, see also the APA proposal.

²⁰ DA and FAO interviews, 20 and 20 August 2024.

²¹ DA Kalinga interview, 22 August 2024.

c. Mixed feedback on the involvement of stakeholders and IPs

Equally, concerns were raised about the limited involvement of other key stakeholders at the national and regional levels. In APA's case, stakeholders – including NCIP and the PCW – noted that they were only involved in the national inception workshop and not part of the project design. The NCIP reported that it was invited only to the national-level inception process on 21 June 2024 and was unaware of any specific mechanism identified by the project for its continued involvement, adding that it has not been invited to other meetings. Furthermore, NCIP interviewees highlighted that their inclusion was usually because of the FPIC requirement, “which is always the case not only with the APA project”. They reiterated that this should not be the sole basis for their involvement, as the agency is mandated to promote and uphold the IPRA law while ensuring the protection, promotion, and respect of IPs' rights.²²

Similarly, the PCW reported that it was only involved during the national inception process and not in the project design. Interviews further revealed that inception meetings were organized at the regional level but were mainly attended by the DA and PAGASA staff.²³

However, FAO interviewees highlighted that representatives from NCIP and IPs were involved in the project design, which initiated the process of acquiring the FPIC for the project.²⁴ These conflicting accounts may stem from frequent staff turnover in government agencies, making tracking consultations amid staff changes difficult. The FAO also noted that the project design aligned with the Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) submitted to the GCF included requirements of the Section 44 of the Philippines Republic Act No. 8371. Additionally, FAO interviewees noted that selecting the 100 target communities is ongoing, with local interventions set to begin soon. This process will include developing an IP plan in nine provinces, which is integral to acquiring the second and third FPIC requirements.^{25, 26}

d. Broader issues on stakeholder engagement

Frequent turn-over of focal points in government agencies: Interviewees noted that government agencies and entities endure frequent turnover of focal points, high attrition rates, and heavy workloads. These challenges have led to limited institutional memory, disrupting consultation and project design processes as well as the implementation of initiatives. For instance, gender mainstreaming in government agencies and LGUs is often affected by these disruptions. PCW respondents emphasized the importance of establishing permanent gender focal points within agencies.²⁷ It is also worth noting that AEs, including the FAO, reported similar staff turnover, particularly among IP specialists such as NCIP representatives.²⁸

²² NCIP interview, 14 August 2024.

²³ DA and PAGASA interview, 21 August and 22 August 2024.

²⁴ The FAO outlined three steps within this process. First, the GCF principles and framework were integrated into the proposal through the IPP, including considerations from ADSDPP. Second, the Philippine government through NCIP was consulted, requesting to apply a different set of procedures for each project proposal and its activities. Third, NCIP implemented the requirements of Section 44 of the Philippines Republic Act 8371, ensuring the FPIC process involved (i) an internal agreement within the organization on the project (ii) codified through a letter of no objection and (iii) a NCIP certificate of preconditions the requirements the project must meet. Interview data suggested that the third step is yet to be completed. While NCIP was fully involved during the project development stage, NAPC was involved to a lesser degree. (FAO interview, 19 August).

²⁵ FAO interview, 19 August 2024.

²⁶ Section 40 of the Philippines' Revised FPIC Guidelines outlines three requirements for the FPIC process: (i) a show of hands/Yes or No (voting), (ii) a certificate of NO objection signed by the Council of Elders, and (iii) a certificate of precondition (grant of FPIC).

²⁷ PCW interview, 19 August 2024.

²⁸ FAO interview, 19 August.

High costs involved in stakeholder engagement: A range of respondents highlighted how coordination or consultation and stakeholder engagement cost resources and time. For example, the FPIC process is iterative and requires substantial funding for food and transportation, which government agencies are expected to provide. Several respondents emphasized the need for projects to deliver tangible benefits to communities rather than focusing on “endless” meetings or consultations.²⁹ The SAP010 AE detailed how the GCF's cascading model tends to incur considerable costs for AEs. Interviewees also highlighted how these costs are a burden and limit the efficiency of operationalization and implementation.³⁰ At the provincial government office in Kalinga, respondents described stakeholder engagement at the provincial level is fragmented and rewarding. While engagement can be challenging, they emphasized its importance for the success of development projects, particularly infrastructure projects, underscoring the need for inclusive consultations (Kalinga interview, 22 August 2024).

Balancing stakeholder inclusion and efficiency in engagement: Interviews revealed another significant challenge in stakeholder engagement. Consulting a broad range of stakeholders, including government agencies and civil society organizations (CSOs), is essential. However, there is a trade-off between the breadth of consultations and the efficient coordination and timely completion of project activities and deliverables.³¹ Respondents emphasized that recognizing the role of key agencies, such as the NCIP, is a more practical approach for the GCF projects. Additionally, several interviewees highlighted the National Anti-Poverty Commission's (NAPC) critical role in facilitating IPs' engagement alongside NGOs.³²

The role of LGU structures and legal frameworks in enhancing Indigenous Peoples engagement and access to climate finance: It was also noted that the extent of IPs' engagement and their ability to leverage development and climate finance relies on the composition of LGU structures, along with provincial legal frameworks with legislatures and budget allocations.³³

Composition of LGU frameworks with the consideration of the Indigenous Peoples Municipal Representative (IPMR) and the development of Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development Plan and Protection (ADSDPP)³⁴ were the most frequent mentions in the interviews.³⁵ Interviewees highlighted how LGU frameworks can institutionalize a culture of consultation and use technology, such as photographic evidence, to ensure the delivery of goods and services. They also stressed how LGU frameworks can promote transparency by publicly posting activities and budgets in communities, enabling local beneficiaries to scrutinize expenditures and hold implementing agencies accountable.³⁶

In Bukidnon, where ADs are located within a national park, collaboration among various actors has played a vital role in ensuring IPs engage with and benefit from projects. These actors include IPs, LGUs, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and citizen groups such as the Kitanglad Integrated NGOs (KIN). Respondents explained that efforts to protect IPs territories,

²⁹ DA Kalinga interview, 22 August 2024.

³⁰ Land Bank interview, 19 August 2024.

³¹ Kalinga interview, 22 August 2024.

³² PCW interview, 19 August 2024; NCIP interview, 14 August; Tebtebba interview, 19 August; and IPMR, Camarines Sur interview, 16 August 2024.

³³ Kalinga interview, 22 August 2024.

³⁴ ADSDPP is a plan that IPs' communities, especially within the ADs, have developed. This has taken place with the help of an NCIP that contains each community's plans and aspirations.

³⁵ DA Kalinga interview, 22 August 2024; IPMR Camarines Sur interview, 16 August 2024; NCIP interview, 14 August 2024.

³⁶ DA Kalinga interview, 22 August 2024.

culture and sustainability began in the 1990s through World Bank funding.³⁷ One respondent highlighted the significance of these collaborations, particularly in managing and preserving sacred areas within the Kitanglad region:

There are identified locations in Kitanglad: buffer zones, forest[s], CADT areas, and sacred areas. Different shamans can access different altars or holy places. IPs have a hierarchy of rituals. Thanks to the buffer zone, they also learned how to measure the quality of water. There are six rivers and two springs in Kitanglad.³⁸

In addition to these collaborative efforts, legal frameworks at the provincial level have been a focus of advocacy for IPs and CSOs. In Bukidnon, stakeholders are pushing for the passage of an IPs Code that would dedicate 3 per cent of the provincial Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) to support IPs welfare and development, similar to the policy in South Cotabato.³⁹ However, the passage of this code has been vetoed. Despite this setback, CSOs continue to advocate for the institutionalization of IPs' concerns.⁴⁰

e. Other barriers to stakeholder engagement

In other contexts, AEs highlighted additional challenges to stakeholder engagement in Indigenous territories. One AE noted that their activities in ADs are often limited. Interviewees indicated that IPs communities can only access banking and financial services outside the AD territory. They identified three key factors that determine their engagement with IPs' communities: (i) whether the IPs' community has a legal personality, (ii) whether IPs' communities have prior experience with financial products, (iii) and whether IPs' communities have a proven a track record of similar engagements. These factors limit the engagement of IPs with government agencies, restricting their access to benefits from projects and other opportunities.⁴¹

2. RELEVANCE

Regarding the relevance of GCF intervention in the Philippines, respondents indicated two key points: (i) the relevance and importance of the GCF interventions to IPs and (ii) the strong alignment between the IPs Policy and the country's existing Indigenous policies, procedures and process.

a. Relevance to GCF intervention

For the SAP010 and FP201 projects, respondents considered the relevance of the GCF interventions to be very high for IPs and vulnerable communities in general. For instance, the SAP010 project is relevant because stakeholders' communities are vulnerable to strong winds, floods, landslides, and typhoons. The project was noted for shifting attention from what the weather will be to what the weather will do, marking a transition from technical or threshold-only projection to impact-based forecasts and actions.⁴² Furthermore, respondents pointed out the following:

³⁷ Bukidnon interview, 23 August 2024.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ The Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) is the share of revenue LGUs receive from the national government. Provinces, independent cities, component cities, municipalities and barangays each get a separate allotment. For instance, in Bukidnon, about 14.8 million of the IRA was allocated in 2023 (see <https://www.dbm.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/BESF/BESF2023/F1.pdf>).

⁴⁰ Bukidnon interview, 23 August.

⁴¹ Stakeholders from Bukidnon highlighted their 'talama' project, which they hope will succeed and be recognized. For instance, they aspire for IPs to have accounts with Land Bank but face strict requirements, including the need for a track record. (Bukidnon interview, 23/24 August 2024). Similarly, IPMR in Camarines Sur noted the challenge of needing to form an organization linked to government agencies to access services and projects. (IPMR interview, 16 August 2024).

⁴² Legaspi interview, 15 August 2024.

The project interventions are relevant ... [and] aim to create significant impact through co-production of knowledge and learning from local voices and practices, to develop impact forecasting and impact tables, which could influence the vulnerable communities and IPs before certain climate events. Thus, incorporating traditional knowledge is part and parcel of the project.⁴³

Additionally, local stakeholders highlighted that SAP010 will enable the developing of early warning systems in project areas. Stakeholders see the project as essential and anticipate the installation of more sirens or early warning devices in strategic locations to alert constituents during times of risk.⁴⁴

Interview data from the APA project revealed that, while the project is highly relevant, there were conflicting views regarding its integration of IPs and IPs policies. Some interviewees disagreed on whether Indigenous practices and approaches are fully integrated within the project's blended CRA approach. According to government agencies, the project is farmer-centric rather than IPs-centric and does not explicitly incorporate Indigenous knowledge. For instance, it was noted that the project emphasizes infrastructure-based solutions rather than nature-based ones.⁴⁵

A few interviewees mentioned that the project would likely use province-level strategic plans for selecting CRA options, primarily focused on rice, coconut, and maize production. This led them to doubt the integration of Indigenous knowledge, suggesting that the project's approach prioritizes technology over traditional Indigenous practices.

Overall, interview responses from the AEs and EEs indicated they were uncertain about the specific project interventions and could not provide precise details on how IPs' knowledge would be incorporated into the project. Interviewees were unable to offer full details on the integration of Indigenous knowledge.

The interviewees noted that broader Indigenous practices, including rituals and experts, are essential for aligning with IPs' worldviews and customs.⁴⁶ However, they also indicated that communicating such practices to outside agencies is challenging. Interviewees stressed the importance of conducting rituals before and after all projects to maintain IPs' relationship with the natural world.

b. Relevance of IPs policy to local process

From the perspectives of IPs and the NCIP, the GCF IPs Policy is implemented within a strong existing institutional framework, including the IPRA and the NCIP. This institutional framework is conducive to social inclusion for IPs communities. GCF interventions can facilitate IPs' involvement through the IPMR or Indigenous Peoples structure at the ground level and through the participation of the NCIP and its procedures at the national level.⁴⁷

Stakeholders repeatedly emphasized the requirement of going through the FPIC process to ensure culturally sensitive and sustainable development.⁴⁸ It was pointed out that international organizations like the GCF should fully ensure the inclusion of the IPRA legal framework and NCIP institutional architecture in all IP-related initiatives, acknowledging local specificities. For example,

⁴³ NPMO interview, 13 August.

⁴⁴ Tuguegarao interview, 12 August 2024; Legaspi interview, 15 August 2024.

⁴⁵ NCIP interview; DA Kalinga interview.

⁴⁶ Bukidnon interview, 23 August and IPMR Camarines Sur interview, 16 August.

⁴⁷ PMR interview, Camarines Sur, 16 August 2024 and NCIP interview, 14 August 2024

⁴⁸ IPMR interview, Camarines Sur, 16 August 2024; NCIP interview, 14 August 2024; FAO interview, 19 August 2024

stakeholders reported that the GCF's added value compared to other climate finance agencies lies in its commitment and intentional approach to include IPs and their knowledge.

However, stakeholders also pointed out that AEs and EEs must be more aware of the GCF's IPs Policy. Key informants noted that while the GCF's IPs Policy sets a "gold standard" that does not require revision, its implementation needs improving. They suggested refining the operational guidelines that accompany the policy.⁴⁹ If an AE's project proposal does not fully comply with the GCF's IPs Policy, stakeholders recommended that they be returned to the AE for revision to ensure a complete reflection of IPs' concerns. During the debriefing, agencies reiterated the need for capacity building on the GCF IPs Policy for national stakeholders.⁵⁰

Stakeholders reported that the ADSDPP, which represents the aspirations and needs of IPs, is a foundational planning policy that should be linked to the GCF projects. In Kalinga, for example, the Provincial Development Planning Officer proudly described the Kalinga Action Plan 2023-2028:

This Kalinga Action Plan 2023–2028 covers IPs' concerns and challenges related to the communities' ADSDPP. The province has a high level of consultation process and transparency. All sectors are consulted; even the children are participating. Challenges are overcome because people are empowered. All projects are documented. Tarpaulins are installed in the project sites. People know the project's budget, etc.: all projects, including APA later. It is transparent and institutionalized. There is also a regular assessment; that is why [the] process is institutionalized and even improved.⁵¹

In Camarines Sur province, the IPMR interviewees pointed out the importance of linking project activities to the IPs' ADSDPP:

ADSDPP is institutionalized. Every IP community has an ADSDPP, which the NCIP facilitated. Through this ADSDPP, the IPs' needs and interests are specified. Therefore, any project must be linked to the IPs' ADSDPP. It protects our interests and specifies our needs.⁵²

CSOs also highlighted the robustness of the GCF's IPs Policy, noting that it recognizes IPs as stewards of mountains and forests. However, CSO representatives expressed concern that IPs' community involvement was not fully integrated from the project design stage. They suggested this could be achieved by monitoring projects and involving CSOs directly.⁵³

3. COUNTRY OWNERSHIP

This section covers stakeholder perspectives on country ownership, highlighting stakeholder engagement, a tripartite agreement with LGUs and memorandums of understanding (MoUs).

a. Alignment with national and provincial frameworks

Stakeholders reported considerable national, regional, and local engagement to develop and enhance stakeholder ownership of projects. Regarding SAP010, stakeholders outlined how project ownership

⁴⁹ Tebtebba interview, 21 August.

⁵⁰ Debriefing, 27 August 2024.

⁵¹ Kalinga interview, 21 August 2024.

⁵² IPs interview, Camarines Sur, 16 August 2024.

⁵³ Tebtebba interview, 19 August 2024; KIN interview, 23 August 2024.

has strengthened through stakeholder engagement, impact-based risk assessments, and science-driven decision-making, enabling communities and LGUs to better anticipate and respond to climate hazards.

Project ownership has grown stronger based on impact-based evidence ... and an impact-based system tailored to the country. For example, through the risk matrix, it is identified which communities need evacuation first. Communities are grouped according to the risks identified – low, medium, or high. Hence, the risk matrix identifies which communities or barangays have multiple risks and how communities are engaged.⁵⁴

Through the stakeholders' engagement, the communities have developed a strong ownership of the project, as they were involved from the outset and saw its impact on their everyday lives. They create a strong understanding of the risks and the information, quantified as the number of houses, people, women, men, etc., combined with the threshold impact. For example, 50 mm of rainfall will expose certain areas ... Combining threshold and impact-based evidence and information will generate zero casualties during climate hazards. Through the science-based evidence through PAGASA, the LGUs are helped in their decision-making. Also, through the project, there will be [an] additional automated weather station, which is crucial, as rainfall [is] different [in] each area, including areas near Mayon volcano.⁵⁵

Key stakeholders also emphasized the importance of recognizing IPs as project partners rather than beneficiaries, as this approach aligns more closely with IPs' perspectives:

By being partners, the ownership of projects becomes high, and their accountability to their constituents or communities becomes more strategic. The IPs have their IP structure, which is their mechanism for building development and peace and addressing grievances through their elders of councils or IPs.⁵⁶

b. Tripartite agreement with LGUs and MoUs

Stakeholders reported a tripartite agreement existed between the AE, EE, and LGUs within SAP010. As a result, technologies such as rain gauges will be installed in coordination with LGUs. To fulfil their role, LGUs must secure a deed of donation for the land.⁵⁷ This illustrates the strong collaboration between stakeholders and the sense of local ownership within the SAP project.

Interviewees also highlighted how the country's ownership of projects can be strengthened by establishing a memorandum of understanding among stakeholders, including the national agencies, LGUs, and IPs. This can facilitate the inclusion of IPs' customary practices and knowledge systems and, as such, can be used to safeguard IPs' interests, including their ADs.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ NPMO interview, 13 August 2024.

⁵⁵ Legaspi interview, 15 August 2024.

⁵⁶ NCIP interview, 14 August 2024.

⁵⁷ NPMO interview, 13 August 2024.

⁵⁸ NCIP interview, 14 August 2024; IPs Camarines Sur, 16 August and Bukidnon interview, 23 August 2024.

4. ACCESS

a. Access to the GCF resources supported by FPIC

IPs' access to the GCF resources is supported by the FPIC process, which is institutionalized from the national to community level by the IPRA. The IPs structure further supports this access via the IPMR in every community. These established mechanisms ensure greater transparency, cooperation, and accountability in all projects, including those from the GCF. Further, IPs' mobilization efforts and decision-making practices, based on consensus and gender balance, ensure the protection of IPs' interests and knowledge.⁵⁹

However, AEs reported that the specific requirements for GCF project approval are not fully understood, and proposals are often based on limited information. They emphasized that while the three-step FPIC process mandated by the IPRA is in place, the complexities of the FPIC process in national laws create additional challenges for full compliance.⁶⁰

The FAO interviewees outlined the three steps they followed in the process:

1. Incorporated the principles of the IPs Policy into the proposal through the IPP, considering the local context and the ADSDPP.
2. Consulted the Philippines government through the NCIP, which applies a distinct set of procedures for each project proposal and its associated activities.
3. Worked with the NCIP to ensure compliance with Section 44 of the Republic Act 8371 to facilitate the FPIC process, which involved:
 - + Reaching an agreement within the Indigenous organization regarding the project
 - + Documenting this agreement with a letter of no objection, which is usually accompanied by an NCIP Certificate of Preconditions outlining the project's requirements.

b. Enhanced access through active IPs and NCIP engagement

Through SAP010 and FP20, IPs and vulnerable communities, alongside other project stakeholders, gain access to GCF resources through their participation and engagement, provided IPs involvement and interests are ensured throughout the projects. AEs' interview data confirmed this principle is recognized, with one AE outlining how consultations must take place *in situ* within ADs.

Additionally, interviewees noted that early stakeholder engagement should cascade upward through government agencies.⁶¹ AEs also highlighted how existing projects are enhancing the capacity of IPs communities to understand GCF processes, thus increasing the likelihood of facilitating direct access in the future.

However, from the perspective of government agencies, the technical nature of the GCF's project proposal requirements can create a disconnect between AEs' technical capacity and the practical experience of promoting IPs' knowledge, which national agencies and other stakeholders often hold. Interviewees noted that national agencies face challenges accessing GCF resources due to limited technical experience in project development. The NCIP highlighted difficulties securing project funds, as GCF proposals require specific technical requirements during development.

⁵⁹ NCIP interview, 14 August and Bukidnon interview, 23 August 2024

⁶⁰ FAO interview, 19 August.

⁶¹ FAO interview, 19 August

NCIP representatives further stated that the Foreign Assisted Project and International Relations Office (FAPIRO) – the lead office for funding and international access – is still new and developing its capacity to create proposals and secure GCF project financing.⁶²

Stakeholders emphasized that NCIP, as the agency tasked with protecting and promoting the interests of IPs, would benefit from directly engaging the GCF, particularly through FAPIRO and similar agencies or initiatives. They also stressed the importance of specific projects supporting IPs.⁶³

Moreover, stakeholders highlighted the NCIP's role in coordinating the key mechanisms that ensure IPs' inclusion and participation. They emphasized the importance of involving the NCIP in all IPs-related initiatives, not just during the FPIC process but also from conceptualization of GCF funded projects through to implementation and monitoring.⁶⁴

c. Enhanced access through the government's holistic approach

Interviewees highlighted that a holistic approach would allow the government to enhance its access to the GCF while fostering better coordination among its agencies. This approach will ensure that efforts are aligned, avoiding fragmentation, overlap between projects, or the risk of project failures. By integrating strategies and promoting inter-agency collaboration, the government can implement cohesive, efficient, and impactful climate and development initiatives.

5. EFFICIENCY

Both projects are still in their infancy regarding effectiveness and efficiency in delivering results for IPs. Interviewees reported a wide range of challenges that had limited implementation to date. These included:

- Delays in accessing funds
- Political challenges related to elections
- Government procurement processes
- Fund disbursement issues, leading to project delays, such as during the roll-out of the early warning system in SAP010⁶⁵
- The Philippines' short-term electoral cycle and the frequent transfer of the NDA function among government agencies.

Regarding the latter, the transfer of the NDA function requires a complete change in personnel, including the onboarding of new staff and their familiarization with the relevant GCF policies. Additionally, it potentially leads to a challenge in implementation: the absence of an NPMO to provide projects with strong guidance and coordination, which can further delay implementation.

For instance, interview data highlighted that SAP010 has a strong NPMO, ensuring close coordination between AEs, EEs and stakeholders at the national and local levels. The NPMO is also key to implementing the project's plans and activities, including engagement with vulnerable communities and stakeholders through multiple workshops and consultations. In the case of FP201, the evaluation found that no NPMO has been established yet.

⁶² NCIP interview, 14 August, and PCW interview, 19 August 2024.

⁶³ NCIP interview, 14 August; Camarines Sur interview, 16 August.

⁶⁴ NCIP interview, 14 August; Camarines Sur interview, 16 August; PCW interview, 19 August.

⁶⁵ Legaspi interview, 15 August 2024; NPMO interview, 13 August 2024; and Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) interview, 20 August 2024.

a. Efficiency in accessing funds

The SAP project reported a discrepancy between GCF and national definitions of fund utilization. This inconsistency allegedly affected the project's efficiency, particularly regarding the differences in budget terminology such as 'allocated, committed budgets and accounts payable'. Interviewees noted that this had influenced the release or disbursement of funds by the GCF to the AE, delaying the implementation of the targeted activities.⁶⁶

b. More effective procurement process

Stakeholders highlighted several procurement bottlenecks that have caused delays in acquiring goods and services for SAP010. They suggested that Republic Act 9184 needs adjustment. Citing an example from a previous project, interviewees observed that international procurement practices are often faster than government processes and that GCF can consider using international procurement practices in its projects:

We had an experience with an international funding agency that procured alongside us. They bought computer terminals funded by the project internationally, which, in our experience, was more effective and efficient.⁶⁷

Interviewees also noted that the Department of Finance, currently acting as the NDA, may have helped expedite the procurement process by securing exemptions for faster processes and quicker access to international funds.⁶⁸ The interviewees did not mention whether or how such exceptions may contravene internal government procurement processes.

6. EFFECTIVENESS

a. Strategic engagement with the NCIP and IPs

Regarding project effectiveness, stakeholders, including IPs' communities, emphasized the need for strategic engagement with IPs and the NCIP. They explained that involving IPs in developing, implementing, and monitoring all the GCF projects is crucial for ensuring effectiveness. Interviewees explained that, from their perspective, project efficiency and effectiveness require the full utilization of the NCIP and IPs' ADSDPP, which is institutionalized from a national to local level alongside the IPMR. This approach would also better protect IPs' rights and minimize the risk of harm to Indigenous communities.⁶⁹

b. Enhancing effectiveness through improved monitoring

Key stakeholders expressed concerns that the current system of AEs submitting APRs is neither robust nor adequate for monitoring. They also noted that screening IPs' issues through keyword searches after APR submissions to the GCF is inadequate in fulfilling the GCF's duty of care.⁷⁰ In this regard, stakeholders suggested that better tracking and monitoring of comments from CSO Active Observers at GCF Board meetings could strengthen the GCF's commitment to protecting IPs' communities and ensuring no harm.

⁶⁶ NPMO interview, 13 August 2024 and LBP interview, 20 August.

⁶⁷ Legaspi interview, 15 August 2024.

⁶⁸ Legaspi interview, 15 August 2024, and LBP interview, 19 August 2024.

⁶⁹ NCIP interview and interview with IPs in Camarines Sur, Kalinga, and Bukidnon.

⁷⁰ Tebtebba interview, 21 August.

The SAP010 AE highlighted that, to date, the NCIP had not been included as a member of the project's technical working group or project board. Through its engagements with this evaluation, particularly during the fieldwork's debriefing, the AE reported it was considering raising this matter with the chairs of both committees to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

c. Enhancing effectiveness through a holistic government's approach

Stakeholders highlighted that a more holistic approach by the government would lead to better coordination among agencies and greater project effectiveness. This would help avoid duplication, such as overlapping initiatives like early warning systems. It would also prevent project failures as seen with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' mahogany tree planting programme, described as "destructive to forests and IPs' livelihoods, and culturally inappropriate".⁷¹ A holistic approach would also ensure that accountability to Indigenous Peoples is the responsibility of the state rather than being delegated to autonomous or semi-autonomous government agencies. For example, while the NCIP focuses on IPs and their communities, the overall responsibility for the IPs would lie with the state. As one interviewee explained:

Since communities, including IPs, see any project or intervention as [a] government project, accountability is not solely on [the] NCIP but the entire state. Therefore, a holistic government approach is key, with better coordination between government agencies.⁷²

7. GENDER CONSIDERATIONS

a. Gender plans and indicators

As detailed in their respective funding proposals, the SAP010 and FP201 projects address gender inclusion. SAP010 project interviewees reported that an operational gender plan and indicators are incorporated into the project's design and implementation. Specifically, gender capacity-building activities will be implemented in year 3 by the WFP, one of the project's EEs. Stakeholders emphasized that since the project's inception, it has ensured equal participation of women and men, including IPs' groups and people with disability.⁷³

Stakeholders in Legaspi agreed with this assessment, as illustrated in the following:

Regarding gender consideration, all sectors include women, disabled, senior organizations, fisherfolk, academe, and NGOs/POs – all interested parties, including faith-based and business groups. Thus, gender consideration is embedded in the project's design. For example, there is a classification on the number of elderly, women, children, pregnant, disabled, and able-bodied – usually, men are the last to evacuate. So it is easy to identify who goes to evacuation first. There are also spaces created in the evacuation centres, such as play spaces for children and breastfeeding spaces for women. There are also spaces for couples, which can be given by giving them tickets to hotels by schedule.⁷⁴

⁷¹ NCIP interview, 14 August; Camarines Sur interview, 16 August.

⁷² NCIP interview, 14 August 2024.

⁷³ NPMO interview, 13 August 2024.

⁷⁴ Legaspi interview, 15 August 2024.

b. PCW's involvement in the projects

Since FP201APA's national inception meeting, the PCW has become a member of the project board, technical working group, project steering committee, and project management unit in the APA project. The Department of Finance has also engaged the PCW to assess the projects' gender sensitivity and integrate gender and development (GAD) guidelines, which are required in all GCF projects.

This involvement highlights the PCW's potential to enhance the capacity of government agencies to assess gender responsiveness. However, interviewees noted that it is not the PCW's primary responsibility to review the gender responsiveness of specific projects, including those from the GCF, as the implementing agencies involved in the GCF projects are generally more familiar with its gender guidelines.⁷⁵

c. Enhance gender responsiveness in government agencies and LGUs

According to the PCW, AEs and EEs could enhance gender responsiveness at the project level by using gender analysis tools and GAD guidelines based on the Magna Carta of Women.⁷⁶ For example, they could convene a dialogue between agency heads to clarify the GAD mandate. In addition, PCW interviewees emphasized that enhancing gender capacity within agencies such as the NCIP, the Climate Change Commission, and government agencies such as the DILG could be beneficial and support activities involving LGUs.

Respondents also noted that gender mainstreaming could be strengthened by institutionalizing a full-time position in each government agency to oversee gender mainstreaming, including in GCF projects. This would protect from fast staff turnover in government agencies and LGUs, ensuring continuity in gender mainstreaming across government agencies and entities.⁷⁷

d. Culturally sensitive gender consideration

Stakeholders noted that IPs apply their own gender lens, rooted in family, community, and traditional roles, which may differ from standard conceptions of gender equality.⁷⁸ Stakeholders pointed out that IPs' cultures are dynamic, with some communities accepting polygamy and divorce and generally prioritizing collective rights over individual rights, as reflected to varying degrees in IPs' culture and values. They stressed the importance of embedding culturally sensitive gender considerations in projects.⁷⁹

Within IPs' structures, tribal leaders are often women, as confirmed during the field visit to the Daraghuyan tribe, where most leaders are women. Interviewees highlighted that women in IPs communities play an important role – as shamans, leaders or Council Elders – and are often actively involved in IPs structures.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ PCW interview, 19 August 2024.

⁷⁶ Magna of Women or Republic Act 9710 is a comprehensive women's human rights law that seeks to eliminate women's discrimination through the recognition, protection, fulfilment and promotion of the rights of Filipino women, especially from the marginalized sectors of society. Primarily, the country also has the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development, 1995-2025.

⁷⁷ PCW interview, 19 August 2024.

⁷⁸ NCIP interview, 14 August 2024.

⁷⁹ NCIP interview, 14 August 2024; Bukidnon interview, 23 August.

⁸⁰ IPMR interview, Camarines Sur, 16 August and Bukidnon interview, 23 August.

8. INNOVATION

Stakeholders identified two key innovations: the “impact table” and combining Indigenous adaptation practices with modern technology.

a. Impact table

For SAP010, the impact table is regarded as the project's main innovation. PAGASA and the Land Bank of the Philippines highlighted that the project aims to use the impact table to downscale the early warning system, combining science with local or Indigenous knowledge. Interviewees explained that IPs often use natural markers to delineate hazards – such as rocks to indicate flood levels – and have specific terms for storm surges. They also highlighted how the project will triangulate science-based impact tables with existing IPs’ knowledge structures.

The impact table will determine the number of populations at risk – the target areas, the productive areas, the critical infrastructure, and utilities – and this will be determined through community consultations. Also, through the community-based monitoring system, a dashboard will be created for online access to the whole city. All government offices, including the community level, can access [this] who will benefit from the data/information. There will be a user agreement. The plan for those in the far-flung areas is to provide satellite-based signals to access the information. All barangays or communities will have connections, and the city government is willing to spend the initial cost. It will be maintained by the barangays so that the early warning system will be accessible.⁸¹

b. Combining Indigenous adaptation practices with modern technology

Interviewees described how communities conduct locally determined adaptation practices during floods or typhoons,

...people know what to do in times of crisis, such as floods or typhoons. However, there are still risks, and in many instances, some people choose not to evacuate or leave their properties regardless of the risks. Even with the forced evacuation, authorities face these challenges.⁸²

SAP010's Knowledge and Decision Support System (KDSS) framework aims to integrate local knowledge with technological innovation, requiring the development of a web-based platform accessible via a mobile app.

This will impact the project sites and the whole country, which the IPs will also have access to through NPMOs in cases of those without internet access. The DILG will also develop several new strategies and platforms or communication channels apart from Facebook.⁸³

Interviewees noted that the involvement of IPs and NCIP could incorporate technological innovation with IPs’ knowledge. Interviewees reiterated that IPs “know how to deal with climate risks; they

⁸¹ Legaspi interview, 15 August 2024.

⁸² Tuguegarao interview, 12 August 2024.

⁸³ NPMO interview, 13 August 2024.

have their forecasting practices.” Its integration to and by PAGASA, however, is considered a challenge.⁸⁴

Interviewees recounted numerous examples of communities and IPs integrating traditional knowledge and practices into their disaster preparation plans for generations. For example:

When animals, like snakes or reptiles, come down from the mountain, or if the water source or table becomes low, there will be a volcanic eruption or disruptive volcanic activities. This signals the communities about possible risks; thus, they can prepare in times of disaster. However, with drought, this becomes difficult to determine. This traditional knowledge is also scientific.⁸⁵

In Tuguegarao City, respondents highlighted that while droughts are becoming more frequent, strategies for mitigating this risk have yet to be fully developed.⁸⁶ In the debriefing session, participants noted that IPs are extremely knowledgeable about hazards, such as floods. However, while their understanding is comprehensive, they require technical knowledge about natural hazards, such as storm surges. This highlights the need for a structured interface between IPs and science-based approaches to ensure sustainability.

Overall, interviewees highlighted how IPs communities act as environmental stewards, preserving forests and natural resources for the benefit of the next generation. IPs are skilled farmers who typically lead self-sufficient and sustainable lives.⁸⁷

9. SUSTAINABILITY

a. Sustaining interventions beyond project completion

Interviewees noted that SAP010's impact will continue beyond the project's closure through mainstreaming and institutionalizing the target outcomes in PAGASA and related agencies. This process may also lead to changes in existing policies and the creation of new ones:

In the current set-up, there is a pre-disaster risk assessment; through this project, this will be impact-based through 4 pillars: risk assessment quantified through [a] knowledge support system; monitoring and detection; communication; and response – to develop an early warning system that is impact based. Hence, it was highlighted that stakeholder engagement, collaboration, and feedback are key. Thus, actions are forecast-based and anticipated and will change the usual post-disaster response to pre-disaster response, including, for example, how to consider the insurance of rescuers, etc.⁸⁸

Although land is available for the weather station, the land is publicly owned. It will be obtained via a deed of donation with each LGU to ensure sustainability.⁸⁹ On a broader note, interviewees from one AE suggested projects need to be flexible in operationalizing the IPP. Such adaptive management should increase the likelihood of sustaining the project's net benefits over the long term.

⁸⁴ NCIP interview, 14 August 2024.

⁸⁵ Legaspi interview, 15 August 2024.

⁸⁶ Tuguegarao interview, 12 August 2024.

⁸⁷ NCIP interview, 14 August 2024, Bukidnon interview, 23 August 2024.

⁸⁸ NPMO interview, 13 August 2024.

⁸⁹ Legaspi interview, 15 August 2024.

b. Strategic building of infrastructure and land use

Barangay Captains and officials in Tuguegarao City and Legaspi City also underscored the importance of long-term, high impact, particularly through constructing infrastructure such as dykes. In Tuguegarao City, some interviewees highlighted the importance of avoiding flash floods, which have increased in intensity and unpredictability, especially in more vulnerable communities.⁹⁰ Officials also highlighted the need for a land-use plan to prevent construction in unsuitable areas, such as former waterways, which can exacerbate flood events.⁹¹

c. Recognition of IPs as sustainability stewards

Interviewees highlighted that recognizing IPs as stewards of environmental sustainability is key to project success. Preserving forests and the natural world for future generations is central to their way of life. As expert farmers and forest guardians, they possess deep knowledge systems and practices. Their involvement is crucial for project success, environmental and biodiversity protection, and climate risk mitigation.⁹² However, interviewees have reported that IPs are often disenfranchised in projects and continue to be marginalized.⁹³

10. UNINTENDED EFFECTS

Overall, interviewees provided limited information regarding unintended effects, as projects were still in their early stages. However, two key points emerged.

a. No negative impact, but positive outcomes

SAP010 stakeholders noted that the project is graded as Category C, indicating it poses no adverse effects and is expected to positively impact people and the environment. They anticipate that strengthening resilience through accessible impact-based information will improve the livelihoods of vulnerable communities.⁹⁴

Stakeholders in Legaspi reported that by providing early warning systems, “rice farmers, for example, could harvest before the disaster hits. Thus, the project will provide a positive outcome”.⁹⁵ From the perspective of government agencies, impact-based information will increase decision-makers’ capacity to deliver services. With assistance and the availability of information tools, they will be better equipped to respond to disasters effectively and to initiate policy changes, reform and implementation.⁹⁶

E. CONCLUSIONS

This case study highlights the presence of a well-established and effective enabling environment and institutional framework for IPs in the Philippines through IPRA and NCIP. It was established in the late 1980s and aligns with the objectives of international agencies, such as the GCF, to promote social inclusion and justice for IPs and their communities. Notably, the domestic FPIC process is considered more rigorous than the version outlined in the GCF’s IPs Policy, as it follows a stringent

⁹⁰ Tuguegarao interview, 12 August 2024.

⁹¹ Tuguegarao City interview, 12 August 2024, and Legaspi City interview, 15 August 2024.

⁹² NCIP interview, 14 August 2024; Bukidnon interview, 23 August 2024.

⁹³ NCIP interview, 14 August 2024; IPs Camarines Sur interview, 16 August 2024.

⁹⁴ LBP interview, 20 August 2024.

⁹⁵ Legaspi interview, 15 August 2024.

⁹⁶ NPMO interview, 13 August 2024; Legaspi interview, 15 August 2024.

three-step requirement. Consequentially, projects such as SAP010 and FP201 cannot, in principle, avoid including IPs.

However, GCF and other international agencies are yet to ensure the complete and comprehensive inclusion of the IPRA legal framework and NCIP institutional architecture in all IPs-related initiatives and modalities. For instance, GCF could strengthen IPs' involvement by formally recognizing the IPMR, IPS, and IPs' organizations at the grassroots level, alongside the NCIP role at the national and international levels. This approach could ensure the participation of IPs at all project stages, from proposal development to implementation and monitoring. By fully using the existing IPs framework, GCF projects can better align with the IPs' ADSDPP framework.

At the operational level, greater awareness and adoption of GCF policies are needed among NDAs, AEs, and EEs. Meaningful engagement with IPs, NCIP, and other agencies such as NAPC, PCW, and related CSOs is required. This engagement should begin at the project conceptualization stage and continue through implementation and monitoring, ensuring consistent and effective collaboration.

Furthermore, while IPs knowledge systems and traditional resilience practices are acknowledged, projects must prioritize integrating technical targets with Indigenous and traditional knowledge systems and practices. This could foster recognition of IPs' knowledge as equally crucial and scientific, mainstreaming it into broader knowledge systems. Such recognition would affirm the scientific validity of traditional knowledge while elevating IPs' cultural heritage, including their rituals and expertise, within mainstream frameworks. Integrating these knowledge systems would enhance climate resilience by leveraging IPs' proven coping mechanisms while respecting their worldview and customs.

IPs' representatives and communities continue to advocate for full transparency, cooperation, and accountability in projects, emphasizing consensus-based decision-making and gender balance. This underscores that IPs are aware of and assertive about their legal rights and interests and actively demand accountability from national and international agencies.

Finally, the distinct histories and political aspirations of IPs also need consideration in all interventions. While the IPRA law and FPIC processes offer robust protections, their implementation is often undermined, particularly in mining and extractive industries. Violations of FPIC processes and disregard for IPs' rights continue to pose serious threats to Indigenous lives and territories. To foster truly inclusive development, the GCF and similar institutions must ensure projects respect these rights, aligning with IPRA and international agreements. At a minimum, IPs seek to secure the protections guaranteed under these frameworks while actively participating in shaping sustainable and just interventions.

APPENDIX 1. DRAFT LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Table A - 1. Draft list of interviewees

NAME	AFFILIATION
Adelita Gawitan	HEPO 111, NCIP
Adrian Duque Tyray	Office of Civil Defence
Alan Earl Labrador	DA-FOS
Angelo S. Salidao	OSESSC – SCO
Annalis Marie Mabazz	Provincial Officer, NCIP Kalinga
Anna Marie Mercaldi	International Finance Group, Department of Finance
Antonietto Cacayan Jr.	Land Bank of the Philippines
Antonio Paglilauan	SWS-NLPRSD, PAGASA Tuguegarao City
Arnilyn D. Pandoro	DA RFO 10, Malaybalay Stock farm
Bae Inatlawan Adelina D. Tarinao	Bae, Daraguyan tribe, Kitanglad, Bukidnon
Balag-Y Claver	Agricultural Program Coordinating Officer, DA Kalinga
Bremer D. Romero	Brgy. Secretary, Brgy 31 Centro Baybay, Legaspi City
Carmen Rosal	Mayor, Legaspi City
Cesar Campomanes	DA-4K
Chris Joshua Tagadas	Enumerator, City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO)
Christy Andolecio	NCIP
Clodelia Danang	OPPDC-Kalinga
Dahlialyn Cawed	Director, FAFIRO- NCIP
Danilo N. Catulin	Brgy Captain – Atulayan Norte, Tuguegarao City
Dominador D. Decano	Project Coordinator, Kitanglad Integrated NGOs, (KIN)
Domingo Bakilala	Agricultural Officer, DA
Edgar Posadas	Director, Office of Civil Defence
Edward Cajucum	OIC Manager, NPMO
Edwin T. Allan	Brgy Captain – Libog Norte, Tuguegarao City
Elizabeth Omas-As	GAD Specialist, PCW
Emerlee B. Gancib	Brgy Kagawad, Brgy 24, Legaspi City
Emmanuel I. Abadilla	PPDO-Kalinga
Engr. Oscar Cruz	PAGASA
Ernesto A. Bansales	IPMR Sangay, Camarines Sur
Eufer Langgad	Brgy Captain – Linao East, Tuguegarao City
Flor G. Moldero	OPPDC-Kalinga
Gabriel Angelo Valeriano	DA
Geraldine Santos	Engr. 111/ADO, NCIP

Gloria Exclamadan	Brgy Captain – Gosi Norte, Tuguegarao City
Grace Bawagan	Tebtebba Foundation
Hans Alejandria	DILG
Helen Magata	Tebtebba Foundation
Irma A. Buemias	Brgy Secretary, Brgy 15, Legaspi City
Jan Neriz Regatillo	P.O, CDRRMO – IBF LGU, Tuguegarao City
Jayson Akam	Brgy Captain – Capata, Tuguegarao City
Jazen Paul Victoriano	FAFIRO-NCIP
Jennifer Ann Santiago	DA-FOS
Jhunace Planea	PAGASA
Jimmy Pengulaya	Brgy Captain – Balzain East, Tuguegarao City
Joel Gabo	Climate InfoSystem focal, DA, Bukidnon
John Caprio Arteta	Brgy Kagawad, Brgy 20, Legaspi City
Jonalyn Isip	Brgy Kagawad, Brgy 30, Legaspi City
Jose T. Abiera	Brgy 21, Binanwahan West, Legaspi City
Joven D. Valladolid	Brgy Kagawad, Brgy 17, Legaspi City
Joven Balbosa	Undersecretary, Department of Finance
Juanito Galang	PAGASA
Julius L. Boyon	SK Chairman, Brgy 33, Legaspi City
Karen De Castro	GAD Specialist, PCW
Karlo Gueano	MEB-DENR
Keith Therese Mamaril	GAD Specialist, PCW
Laurence Luois Arcos	Computer Operator/CDRMMO, Legaspi City
Lilia Malana	Brgy Captain – Namaballan Sur, Tuguegarao City
Lilibeth Gonzales	Finance Officer, NPMO
Lionel Dabaddie	FAO Representative, The Philippines
Lorna Belinda Calda	Chief, DA Field Operation Service (FOS)
Lucia Campomanes	DA-4K
Mabazz, Annalis Marie	Provincial Officer, NCIP Kalinga
Macario Jusayan, PhD	Chief GAD Specialist, PCW Sectoral Coordination Division
Marcelino Villafuerte	PAGASA
Marco Agustin	Brgy Captain – Namabbalan Norte, Tuguegarao City
Margarita B. Cabria	IPMR Iriga City, Camarines Sur
Maria Easterluna S. Canoy	Executive Director, Kitanglad Integrated NGO (KIN)
Maria Soledad Sapp	CDRRMO, LDRRMO
Mariano Baylon Jr.	Brgy Captain – Centro, Legaspi City
Mario Tawsig	Brgy Captain – Padaka, Tuguegarao City
Mark Joel Begui	Punong Barangay, Legaspi city

Melinda S. Saway	IPMR Provincial Office, Bukindnon
Miguelito Bancoma	Brgy Captain, Legaspi City
Mike Somepa	NAO/NPMO
Milo Cammayi	Barangay Captain – Larpon Bajo, Tuguegarao City
Monica Estoque	NPMO
MiLadee Asul	Chief, City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office. Legaspi City
Nathaniel T. Servando	Administrator, PAGASA
Niel Dimagiba	Office of Civil Defence
Niza L. Ayende	CDRRMO, Legaspi City
Noel G. Edillo	WOI-NLPRSD, Kalinga
Oscar Cruz	Engineer, PAGASA
O. S. Merabel	Brgy Kagawad, Brgy 26
Patrizia Naz	LORRM Assistant/CDRRMO
Psyche Mae Asencio	National Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Specialist, FAO
Ralph Alan Ceniza	DA-FPOPD
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