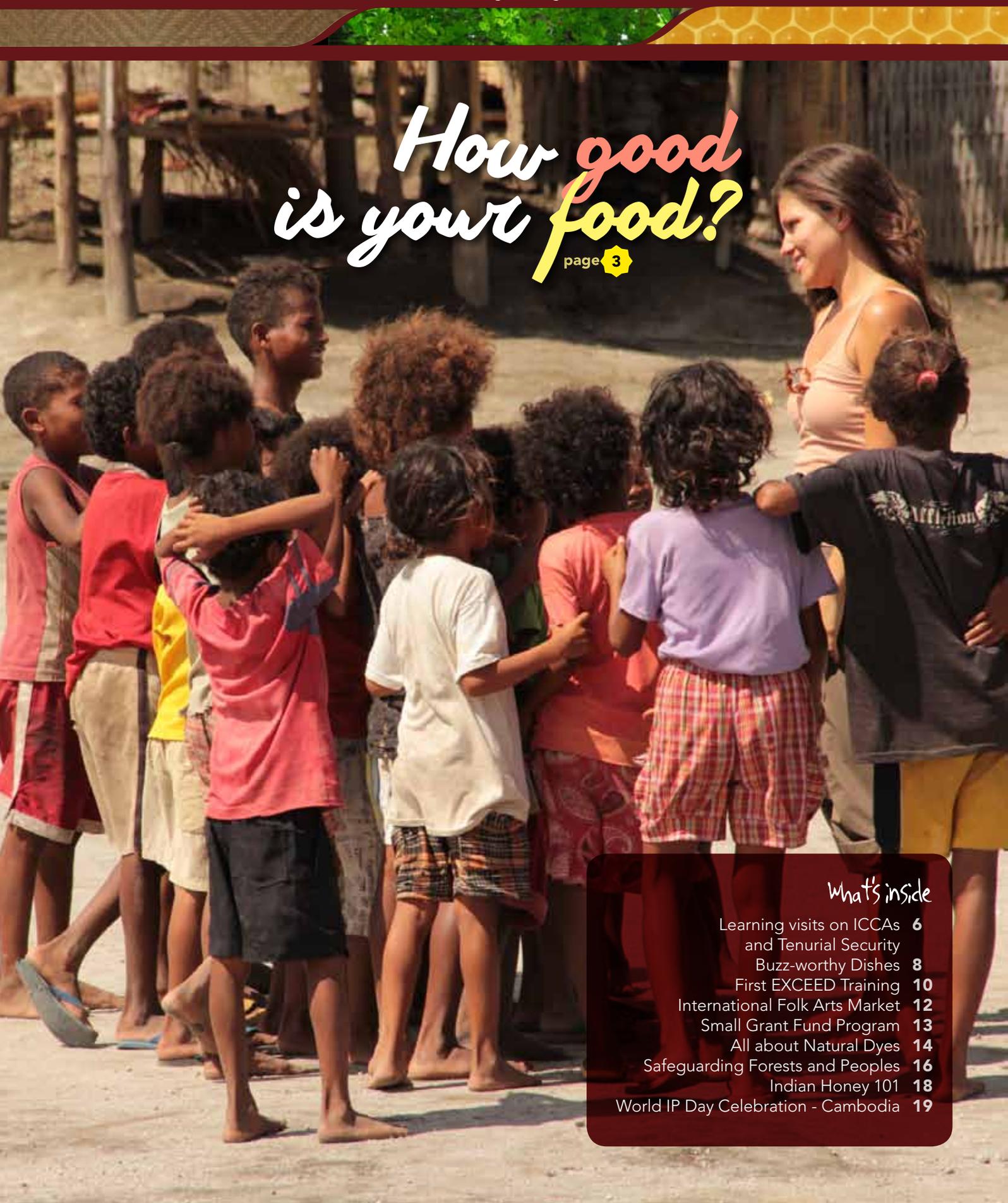


Voices from the Forest

Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme for South and Southeast Asia

How good
is your food?
page 3



What's inside

- Learning visits on ICCAs and Tenurial Security 6
- Buzz-worthy Dishes 8
- First EXCEED Training 10
- International Folk Arts Market 12
- Small Grant Fund Program 13
- All about Natural Dyes 14
- Safeguarding Forests and Peoples 16
- Indian Honey 101 18
- World IP Day Celebration - Cambodia 19

Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme for South and Southeast Asia (NTFP-EP) is a collaborative network of over 60 civil society organizations (CSOs) working with forest-based communities to strengthen their capacity in the sustainable management of natural resources in the Philippines, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Cambodia.

Voices from the Forest is the official newsletter of NTFP-EP. It is released biannually and contains regional and country forests and people updates from the NTFP-EP network.

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This issue we provide due attention to a matter we always take for granted: HEALTH! We have known that “**you are what you eat**” and we realize more and more that bad health is related to bad food choices such as eating food high in “MSG” and sugar-loaded soft drinks. These “fast foods” are no longer facets of an urban life but are creeping into the forest frontiers too and forest people, particularly the Penan, are not aware of the consequences of its consumption (pg 3). While NTFP-EP is promoting natural food among those living nearest the forest like the Penan, in order to sensitize both modern thinking and modern taste buds, NTFP-EP Cambodia joined the Park Hyatt Master’s of Food and Wine initiative to prepare a 6-course menu with all natural wild forest honey ingredients! (pg 8) The importance of knowing what kind of honey is on your table is stressed by Snehlata Nath in her article entitled “A sweet golden steal” (pg 18).

But food products don’t “steal” the show in this issue as crafts products also take center stage featuring the color indigo, again a natural dye making waves across the fashion industry with the environmentally conscious consumer (pg 14). Kudos also go to the Dayak weavers who “wowed” the traditional crafts aficionados with their anjat baskets and ikat fabrics at the International Folk Art Market (IFAM), (pg 12). NTFP-EP launched its recent training program called EXCEED and it is there where we share stories and learnings on crafts enterprises and other inspiring small-scale businesses for newcomers in the field (pg 10).

Of course, enterprises based on natural resources are only possible if the materials used continue to be available and if communities have the incentive to manage forest resources through secure tenure. This forms the basis of the ICCA and tenure learning exchange held in Mindoro and Quezon province earlier this year in the Philippines (pg 6). Safeguarding rights to land and resources was the topic of discussion as well during the ASEAN Regional Knowledge Network –Forests and Climate Change (ARKN-FCC) meeting (pg 16).

But our most special part of this issue is the article on the **Pastor Delbert Rice Small Grant Fund for Community Forest Ecosystem Initiatives** (pg 13). Whether it be about carbon sequestration or jams and jellies or ovaltine vs. coffee, Pastor taught us so much about the life we live in and the importance that the old ways have in the new world. Through this grant fund, we seek to help other innovative community efforts get started and keep going!

Cover photo by Earl Diaz

Jessica, KAKAI volunteer playing with the Aeta children

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Madhu and Elly conducting health checks in Ba Puak

How good is your food?

Article by: Elly Oenema

Photos by: Madhu Ramnath, Elly Oenema and Earl Diaz



The Penan sharing traditional botanical knowledge.

In June 2014 Madhu and I went to Miri, in Sarawak, Malaysia, to meet with Dominic in order to visit the Penan. Madhu wanted to discuss the availability and use of wild foods and I looked at the health parameters. We spent 4 days in Ba Puak and 2 days in Long Belok. Ba Puak is a very small village with only 15 families who have been “settled” quite recently in 2 long houses, built for them by private corporations.

Like most indigenous communities, the Penan are quiet and reserved. Their faces are squarish, with eyes spaced distinctly away from each other with thick and straight hair. Originally nomadic, the Penan are known to be very active and consistently mobile within their traditional forestlands. However, many of these Penan have been concentrated in villages with long houses and already moved out of their traditional nomadic hunting and gathering system. Having been nomadic all their lives, suddenly having to be “stationary” is very difficult. The younger children don’t notice it much but their parents and grandparents are having huge problems adjusting which shows in the unhappiness that they express verbally and physically in the form of the rashes and the headaches many of the adults have developed.

Life has become much harder for them since the forest is now farther away and so much less than they have been used to. In exchange for money and a few motorbikes, they now live very far away from any health facilities and schools for their children, while the only transportation means they have are a few motorbikes. As a clear example, giving birth in designated health centers has become more difficult for the pregnant women as they are now situated farther from these clinics. Mothers seem to not practice breastfeeding.

Overall, the physical health is still pretty good but the influence of the traders who come every week with a jeep full of junk food will have a detrimental effect on the health of the children especially who love the salty and spicy snacks which are full of chemicals with MSG being one of them. The empty plastic and foil packets are discarded randomly and so end up in the river since there is little awareness of the effect of this type of garbage on the ecosystem. What was very worrying also was the fact that almost all the adults smoked cigarettes, throughout the day.

In Long Belok, there are about many Penan families have settled there for the past 70 years and it was striking how many people had high blood pressure. Their food habits have changed quite drastically and many people eat food that contains MSG. The good thing is there that a mobile clinic comes to this village on a regular basis and does health checks for many illnesses such as tuberculosis. After returning to Miri, we left the next day and Madhu went back to India while I flew in to Manila with Crissy.



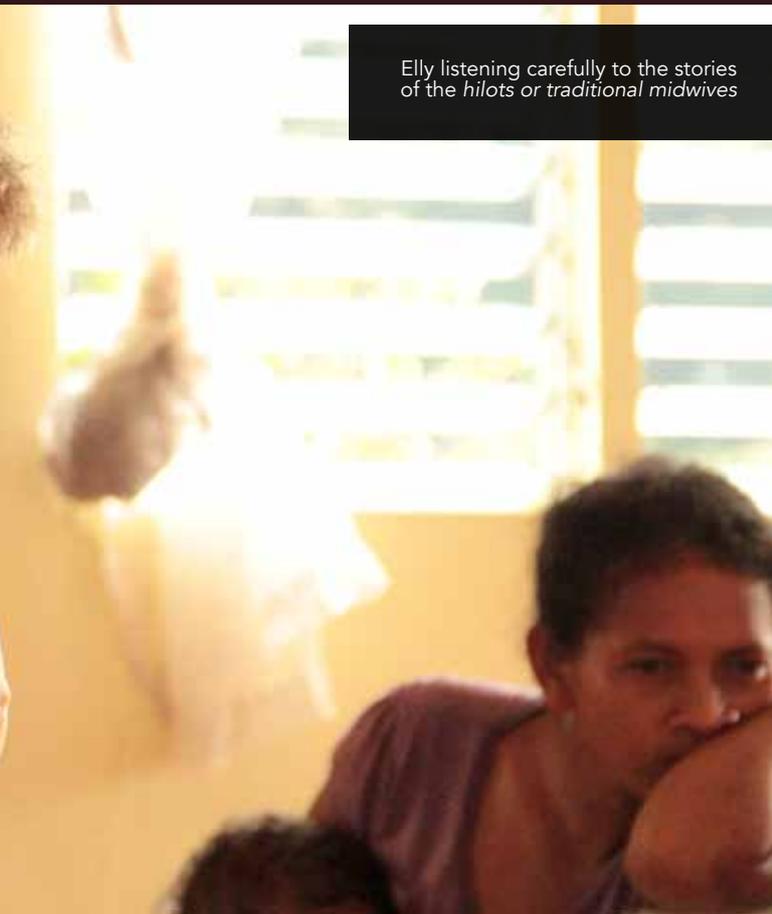
The next morning in Manila, I met up with Earl and Jenne and took a bus to Tarlac, Philippines where we met Jane, Bruce, Cherrie and Jessica of Kabalikat sa Kaunlaran ng mga Aita (KAKAI), a partner of NTFP-EP Philippines in working with the Aeta communities. We all went to Sta Juliana to meet with all the village elders and make a plan for the next 4 days in which we were going to visit various Aeta villages: Dalig, Bunga, Taliktik, Alunan and Malalabatay.

In the time we spent in the villages our team were able to conduct 305 health checks (including the kids) which allowed us to infer that the health condition of the Aeta people is quite good, but there were some people with very high blood pressure, due to too much salt or MSG in their diet. It was also observed that many women were rather thin and underweight and family planning is not done effectively resulting to a significant number of mothers being malnourished, consecutive pregnancies, and also suffering from low blood pressure, and anemia among others.

Quite distinctively, the Aeta who are short, dark and curly-haired are not as reserved as the Penan. They were initially semi-nomadic, often found practicing traditional shifting cultivation around Mt. Pinatubo before it erupted. They are used to living high in the hills but were displaced by the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo



Elly listening carefully to the stories of the *hilots* or traditional midwives



in 1991 and had to move to the lower lands where there are no tall trees and there is little water. This has affected their lifestyle and their diets immensely as their habitat has changed majorly since then. There is no more wild boar, there is no fish and there's not much small game. There is very little wild food and the people grow mainly sweet potato. They live off the sale of wild banana flowers. The diet consists mainly of white rice with salt or MSG and occasionally some vegetables, like pumpkin and string beans.

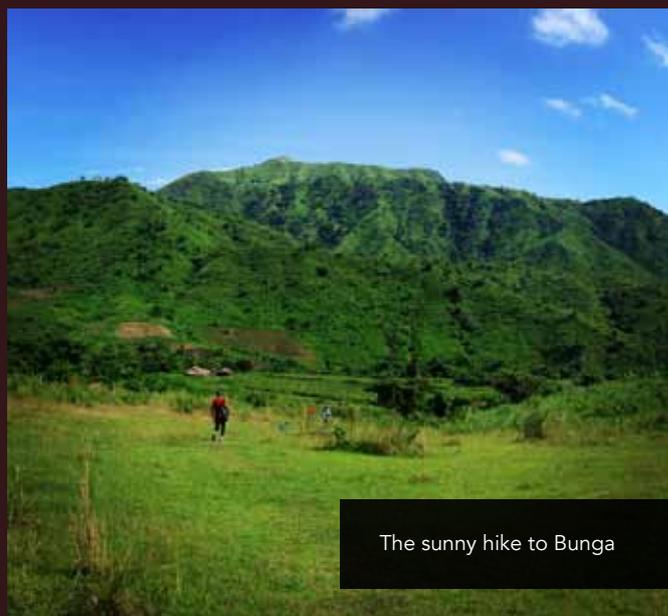
In each of these villages there are traditional midwives who do the deliveries at home and the mortality rate seems to be low. All babies are breastfed. Alunan has a small health center where pregnancy checks are done and in emergencies there is an NGO that takes women to the town for deliveries.

After having done all the health checks we had a full day of training for the midwives and other women from the villages we had visited who were interested. We talked about the basics of treating common illnesses and pregnancy and childbirth. We had a wonderful day full of learning and laughter and goodwill and the midwives were given a basic first aid kit to take back to their villages.

Our stay with the Aeta and the Penan are truly eye-opening experiences. While we may have focused on documenting their health and usual diet in their communities, the stories we've shared with the Aetas and the Penans are definitely worth remembering. Truly, the Penan and the Aeta are lovely groups of people and it is really sad to see how their lives have changed due to instances and entities forcing them out of their usual lifestyles which are finely tuned with the forests.



Aeta kids playing hide and seek



The sunny hike to Bunga

With special thanks to Joanna, Dominic, Edwin, Cristina and the people of Ba Puak and Long Belok; to Jane, Jenne, Cherrie, Earl, Bruce, and the people of Alonan, Talkiktik, Dalig, Malalabatai, Bunga and the members of KAKAI.



Learning from the Bukid and the Agta

Article by: Tanya Conlu

Photos by: Didiek Surjanto, Laila Estrella, and Laarni Ocampo



The Tenure group in the Agta ancestral domain



Chased by bees and sucked by leeches - these were some of the more memorable experiences that partner staff and community representatives from the NTFP-EP network had from their visit to the Philippines last September.

Despite torrential rains and the notorious Metro Manila floods, 29 international participants and 9 Filipinos from different islands arrived in Quezon City to join the Learning Visits on ICCAs and Tenurial Security organized by NTFP-EP. The exchange sought to enrich the knowledge and appreciation of different instruments and strategies to ensure that forest communities have the rights to their land and resources.

As there were two learning paths, the participants were divided for their field visit into the ICCA and the Tenure group depending on the relevance to their work, but converged on the first and last days for context setting and sharing. Their orientation included talks and presentations on the general situation of indigenous peoples in the Philippines, including the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) and how they are able to secure and conserve their land through IPRA and other means such as ICCA registry. Resource persons came from a mix of officials from government agencies and representatives of IP organizations and NGOs, including the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the Forest Management Bureau and the Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Ministry of Forestry in Indonesia, Anthropology Watch, National Coalition of Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines (KASAPI), Philippine Association for Intercultural Development (PAFID), ICCA Consortium, and several indigenous leaders.

The Tenure group compared the legal framework (or lack of) in their respective countries that support IP rights. For Anuja Krishna of Econet in India, “the first and major difference that you find in the approach of IPRA and our own Forest Rights Act (FRA) is that the delineation process of the IP areas in India starts with a ‘limited’ approach, or how little can be given. This is in contrast to IPRA where the communities were facilitated to explore ALL the areas of their access, use, religious importance, etc. Thus the vastness of the area itself is a strengthening factor.”

They visited the Agta-Dumagat-Remontado of General Nakar, Quezon, to learn about their long struggle in getting their Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title. They had an orientation and discussion with the community leaders in the nearest town, Infanta. “One interesting learning,” Anuja adds, “was to see political development among IPs reaching levels where they feel strong enough to push the rule of communities as customary laws and thus to be acknowledged by the government. There was an overall sense of historic reference of rights...” They also studied the community’s 3D map, which they found interesting. According to Anjua, it can be “a continuous reminder to the communities over their resources. It can also be an important physical reference in the village development plan and key to harmonizing various development actions...”

The participants were also impressed by the SPA (Central School of the Agta, not an actual spa) where children went to school in traditional clothing and were taught about their own traditions.



The ICCA group in the Buhid forests

**PROTECT
OUR RIGHTS
PROTECT
OUR FORESTS**

What are ICCAs?

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' Conserved Areas and Territories are places wherein a community has a close association with their territory under their own governance and conservation system. ICCAs are a source of identity, culture, everyday needs and livelihood – the very life force of these peoples.

Some memorable experiences included trailblazing and slipping in the forest, riding on the roof of the jeep, eating wild berries in the forest, and for Sando Purba of HuMA in Indonesia, “We were chased by bees while walking through the forest of the Agta people. It means there is always something from nature that will become a guardian if strangers like us come. Even bees would protect their livelihood. That is why I appreciate how the Agta protect their forest and have even prepared a proposal to the government on the protection of the forest. On the other hand, in Indonesia, we are struggling and all of you have been inspiring us to do the next steps in our fight to protect the forest.” For Anuja, a most important task for all of us is to make local issues international, to let the world know what is happening in our communities.

The ICCA group meanwhile visited the Buhid of Bongabong, Mindoro Oriental, and had dinner in Batangan, at the community center where their 3D map is stored and where Buhid leaders from other areas came to meet them. The next day they had a gripping (literally) 4x4 experience through a winding river to get to the community in Tuwaga, and a short trek up to a viewpoint from where they could see the ICCA, about two to three mountains away. Back at the community, the leaders took turns explaining the delineation and overlaps of their three ICCAs, and the activities they went through to have it ready for registration. The participants were interested to know about the community's structure and relationship with the local government. The barangay captain (village official) who was present reassured them that they respect the rules of the IPs, and that he will see to the incorporation of the

ICCA in the local government plans. Since it was the first time for the community to be visited by such a large group (in fact, it wasn't often that the Buhid get visitors), they were also curious to know about where the participants came from, and were interested in their sharing of traditional laws and sacred sites in their countries.

Didiek Surjanto from WWF Indonesia recounts: “It is my first visit to the Philippines. What most attracted me is the self-confidence of the indigenous people, both in the workshop like Amay, and those I met in their sitio. There is no gap between them and the NGO staff, and they did not even look shy in front of foreigners like us. The NGOs succeeded to make the ICCA into the IP's own agenda. Support from the government, like the Captain in San Vicente, as well as the army, were also interesting for me.... I learn that the legal certainty on the rights of indigenous peoples in the Philippines contributes to the self-esteem and dignity of the indigenous communities.” He adds that the concern of the academe and activists, the long outstanding work of Anthrowatch, and initiatives of NTFP-EP all play a big stake on the struggle for IP rights.

Both groups were blessed by warm sunshine during their forest walks, but were sent off by another typhoon that caused flooding in the Metro. Thankfully, no one missed his/her flight. NTFP-EP is grateful for the support of the Ecosystem Alliance to this learning event which has inspired the participants to bring their learnings and plans back to their respective work areas. For Day Moo Paw from Myanmar, also a first-timer to the Philippines, everything was a new experience. “I learned many things – local experience, knowledge and practices.”

Creating a Buzz for Wild Honey

Article by: Peter Olszewski
Photos by: Leonard Reyes

"Creating a Buzz for Wild Honey". The Phnom Penh Post, 20 June 2014. Web.

NatureWild, a Phnom Penh offshoot of the Philippines-based Non-Timber Forest Products - Exchange Programme for South and Southeast Asia, hopes to start marketing Siem Reap province wild honey as part of its Khmum Prey project or 'wild bees from the forest' range.

At the moment the project markets a range of wild honey from six Cambodian provinces, and this range was introduced on June 6 at a Park Hyatt Hotel's Masters of Food and Wine lunch which featured a six-course honey-laced gourmet feast.

Femy Pinto, a representative of NatureWild, said the range of honey was available at a limited number of outlets in Siem Reap including the Park Hyatt, and added that as well as boosting the number of retail outlets in Siem Reap, the organisation hoped soon to include wild honey from Siem Reap province in its Khmum Prey range.

"It will be great to see Khmum Prey Siem Reap some time soon," she told Insider. "We're quite pleased that Park Hyatt supports Khmum Prey and this can help us get on that platform of quality for a discerning market – quality for a community friendly, nature and environment-friendly market.

"We are still exploring the appropriate entry point in Siem Reap. Our usual entry point is with traditional honey-hunting groups – forest-dependents – and to match up with existing efforts to protect Cambodia's last remaining forest areas." "This is a long-term effort and so it is important that we identify the group that will be in it as a vital part of their livelihood, rather than simply out of

business interest or quick cash."

She added, "There are some potential areas under community forestry and protected areas in Siem Reap which we are exploring, and wild honey collection is one of the main sources of income of the communities living in or around them."

NatureWild has already conducted a preliminary investigation of the wild honey activity in Siem Reap province which, according to Femy Pinto, is, "Largely still informal with limited value addition being done. As far as we know most of honey sold in the market comes from individual suppliers – private efforts rather than out of a collective business.

"Bee keeping via the rafter technique has attracted village entrepreneurs, who are partly supplying the local market of Siem Reap. There are buyers in Siem Reap catering specifically to the tourist market but some get their honey supply from outside Siem Reap. Price and quality are key factors for these buyers.

"But Khmum Prey marketed by NatureWild follows sustainable collection standards with strict monitoring and quality control. If and when we find our best entry point here in Siem Reap, adherence to these protocols will factor into the partnership.

"For sure we can easily tap into the existing, more discerning market in Siem Reap with an assurance of quality, purity and authenticity, and sustainable production and forest protection that Khmum Prey represents."



Six sumptuous honey-based courses

During their research into the Siem Reap honey scene, NatureWild staffers drew on the expertise of high-profile local bee man Danny Jump. Femy Pinto said meeting Jump was instructional. “Yes definitely. He is THE bee man. Very knowledgeable about bees and beekeeping and I understand that he’s also supported a number of villagers here in Siem Reap and even outside, about beekeeping, and the rafter technique. He would be a good person to collaborate with.”

Femy Pinto said she was also surprised to find a chic boutique in the town’s South Korean enclave selling high-end honey to mainly Asian tourists, especially South Koreans.

[A] boutique, Natural Honey, was opened just on a year ago by Korean expat Hong Seung Hee, and sells wild honey from Ratanakiri, as well as hand-made beeswax candles and bee by-products – but at a cost. The cheapest pot of honey on sale at the store, 500ml, costs \$60, and three-litre jars are \$350.

Femy Pinto described the honey store as, “fascinating.” She added, “We just happened to see it across from a hotel where we were having a workshop a few months ago. They get their honey from Ratanakiri, not from Siem Reap, and the price is quite staggering.

“We have had a few Koreans buy from NatureWild and they are very particular about the naturalness-authenticity and the purity of the honey. A Korean friend of mine says it is important that they trust you to give them ‘real’ honey since they are mainly consuming it for health reasons.”

donor roll



ICCO is the interchurch organization for development cooperation. ICCO works towards a world where people can live in dignity and well-being, a world without poverty and injustice. ICCO works in 44 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. ICCO is supporting NTFP-EP for the project entitled:

Regional Support Program for Select NTFP value chains in ASEAN (RESPONSE) - catalyzing community forestry enterprises

The project seeks to support honey and resin value chains in the Philippines, Indonesia and Cambodia. Through this initiative, standards and certification systems will be explored to see how such guarantee propositions can work in favor of small holders. Laboratory tests will also be conducted to strengthen the claims of the efficacy of select NTFPs, especially forest honey. Ongoing NTFP research (especially resin research) will be presented in ASEAN venues with the backdrop of ASEAN integration to take place in 2015. Capacity building and piloting will also be implemented to ensure sustainability of initiatives and empowerment of community partners. The project seeks to work with over 2,300 honey gatherers and over 700 resin producers in these countries. The project will run for two years in 2014 and 2015.

In addition to this project, NTFP-EP Philippines is being supported by ICCO, through the ACT Alliance, for the rehabilitation and restoration efforts for the communities affected by typhoon Haiyan that devastated central Philippines almost a year ago.

NTFP-EP Philippines efforts have been in the towns of Madalag, Libacao, Balete and Banga, Aklan where over 1,000 weavers supported by NTFP-EP projects lost their homes and livelihoods. ICCO supports NTFP-EP’s work on shelter establishment, disaster preparedness, resource management and livelihoods. The project in Aklan supported by ICCO will run initially until 30 November 2014, with a possibility of extending until next year.

Learn more about ICCO at <http://www.icco-international.com/>

Flower Power on the mountains of Bukidnon

Article by: Crissy Guerrero
Photos by: Beng Camba

Eager participants from the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia and Laos joined together in Malaybalay, Bukidnon for the EXCEED training on “Upscaling Community-based Enterprises: Viability, Sustainability and Resilience.”

Different participants shared their difficulties with community-based enterprises. Elisabeth of the Dayak Iban tribe in Sarawak shared her learning on the value of having clear contracts in a business transaction. Bunthorn of Cambodia mentioned the need for better stocking systems at the field level while Bilog of the Agta tribe mentioned his interest to improve their financial management system.

NTFP-EP had designed the said training to address the growing pressures of small businesses when they had started to have larger transactions and with more sophisticated markets. Efficiency requirements increase and greater financial controls are needed. Furthermore, natural resources are under threat to over extraction if harvest protocols are not followed. Community-based enterprises based on natural resources are also under threat of natural hazards and the negative impacts of climate change.

The topics covered were the Community-based NTFP Framework based on the principles of sustainable production and consumption, global context affecting community based forest enterprises, market development, resource management, organizational systems development, cash flow management and climate proofing. But in true NTFP-EP way, the trainers found interesting ways to facilitate learning. A community enterprise monopoly game was created to simulate the shocks and opportunities of the changing external environment. From this game, Susi from West Kalimantan, Indonesia, felt the difficulties of the current policy scenario which may make community-based forestry enterprises difficult. Marketing exercises helped to structure thinking on segmentation and targeting to better develop products needed and desired by our target market. Joan realized that a better planning process could have helped them sell more cards during the enterprise simulation game. A “candy” game where sweets symbolized the shrinking resources amid an ever



Stripping abaca fiber





Stopping for a photo op on the way to Barangay Manalog

EXCEED

Expanding Community Enterprise and Economic Development is the new training wing of NTFP-EP and seeks to build the capacity of community forestry enterprises.

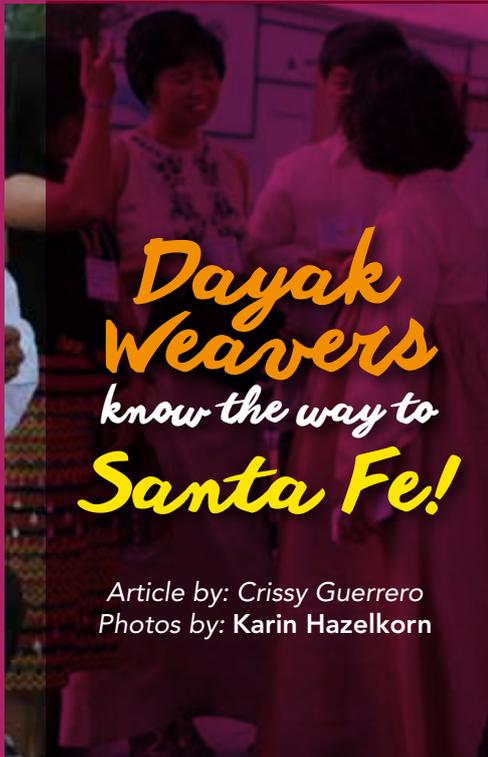
expanding population made participants think twice about how resources should be managed and shared. A case study on cash flow management was the first time for Khamvone of the Forestry Department Laos to learn how to anticipate shortfalls in cash and to propose solutions to ensure smooth enterprise operations.

Everyone's best part of the training, of course, was the field visit. We left Malaybalay center in an "armada" of motorbikes (3 people on one bike!) as we traveled up the mountains of Bukidnon to find the Manalog village nestled below the last remaining forests on the mountain. We went from house to house interviewing the Sunflower weavers and learned about their struggle to complete an export order for 6,000 meters of naturally-dyed fiber from a banana-like plant called "abaca". Khamla from Laos tried his luck at it, and it wasn't as easy as he thought. But the highlight of the trip was the basket ball game between the Filipinos (including the Sunflower weavers!) and a team of Lao, Cambodian and Indonesian participants. It was an embarrassing loss for the Filipinos but let it be known that the sharpest shooters on both teams were the women! We thank the intrepid Jenna Lagunday, the leader of the Sunflower weavers, for hosting us and letting us learn from their experiences in enterprise development.

Finally, the training ended with development of short term and long term action plans. Tammy of Indonesia valued the input on marketing and was interested to develop new market segments for their products and not to be content with existing buyers. Larry from the Philippines, on the other hand, was interested to strengthen organizational and financial management components of their respective community enterprises, because even with strong sales, without systems and controls, gains could very well just easily slip away.

All in all, there were rich discoveries by all and many got the sense that they learned something new and that there was still so much more to learn. The Power of the Sunflower weavers also will be a positive model to remember in building community-based enterprises across the region.





Dayak Weavers know the way to Santa Fe!

Article by: Crissy Guerrero
Photos by: Karin Hazelkorn



Ani proudly holding her country's sign

“Everyone said our products are bee-u-ti-ful!” That was Herlina’s reaction from participating in the 11th International Folk Art Market (IFAM) in Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA. The Fair is the largest gathering of traditional crafts producers in the world and is supported by UNESCO. This is the first time that the Crafts Kalimantan network (composed of over 400 Dayak weavers in Kalimantan supported by 6 NGO partners) participates with Herlina representing Jasa Menenun Mandiri (JMM), a cooperative of weavers in Sintang, West Kalimantan, and Ani, an officer of the Bina Usaha Rotan weaving association in Kutai Barat, East Kalimantan. The fair presented 150 booths from 60 countries displaying a truly global flavor.

Herlina brought naturally-dyed ikat weaving (a traditional technique tying knots in fabric and using dyes to deliver various patterns) and bamboo baskets made by Dayak Desa women whereas Ani brought anjat, the Dayak Benuaq “rainforest backpack”. All had intricate motifs with stories to tell about nature and Dayak life. A favorite was the perahu pecah motif or “damaged long boat” which represented the difficult times the Dayak maneuver across the many rivers of Borneo.

During the fair, some products sold very well but others could have done better. But everyone appreciated the products and no one tried to haggle. This is what the Dayak weavers were happy about. Ani says that one message she wants to carry home to the other weavers of BUR is “we should keep weaving because there are those out there that like our products very much. Weaving keeps our tradition and identity alive. It is also an important part of our economy.”

Herlina said that she wants to take some advice from some of the retailers at IFAM to create some new products with simplified designs and patterns without sacrificing the meaning of the ikat weaving. This will provide an additional offering to ikat patrons at an affordable price with less detailed fabric.



Herlina preparing the products for the fair

Before the actual fair, Herlina and Ani also attended a training sponsored by the International Folk Arts Alliance (IFAA), the organization behind the fair. They learned about understanding different market segments, about attractive booth display, effective selling and product pricing.

All in all, it was an important learning event for Herlina and Ani. The difficult journey to Santa Fe did not dampen their spirits (delays in flights and immigration problems made their whole trip 56 hours long). They will encourage the Crafts Kalimantan network to apply again next year. The friendly and helpful volunteers of IFAM also made the visit memorable and the weavers left new Mexico with a warm feeling all around.



Pastor Delbert Rice Small Grant Fund

for Community-based Forest Ecosystem Initiatives



NTFP-EP is launching the Pastor Delbert Rice Small Grant Fund for Community-based Forest Ecosystem Initiatives (PDR SGF). Reverend Delbert Arthur Rice was the former Board Treasurer of NTFP-EP who passed away last May 8, 2014. Pastor Rice was an American missionary and champion of the indigenous Ikalahan tribe in the mountainous Brgy. Imugan, Sta. Fe, Nueva Vizcaya, Northern Luzon, Philippines. He was an anthropologist and mechanical engineer by profession and a well-known educator and ecologist.

Pastor committed over 50 years of his life in the Philippines, dedicated to the cause of environment protection and social justice.

He was a force in the defense of indigenous peoples' rights and an advocate of forest conservation and sustainable resource utilization. His support for the Ikalahan Forest Reserve and the struggle for recognition of indigenous lands bore fruit in 1974 when the Ikalahan were granted MOA 1 which was the first community forestry agreement of its kind and established the 14,730 hectare reserve.

With the help of Pastor Rice, the Kalahan Educational Foundation (KEF) was established as a people's organization of the Ikalahan Peoples of Northern Luzon. KEF was the pioneer in the establishment of the first Ikalahan school system recognized by the Government. It is best known though for its Mountain Fresh jams and jellies made of indigenous forest fruits.

The Kalahan experience has become a model for Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) and ancestral domain programs alike. Before Pastor's death, the Ateneo de Manila University confirmed on him a prestigious award for community service

Initiatives supported by the Pastor Delbert Rice Small Grant Fund

In the spirit of Pastor Delbert Rice, the PDR-SGF facility aims to support community-based projects with themes that were close to Pastor's heart, especially in the field of forest conservation:

- Community-based forest restoration; including incorporating NTFP species with larger tree species.
- Sustainable NTFP management including resource management and sustainable utilization
- Traditional ecological knowledge in sustainable forest management and food security. Involvement of the youth is especially desirable.
- Customary land rights and ancestral domain recognition to secure long term incentives to conservation.
- Advocacies against development aggression, especially in forest areas with high conservation values.

This overall grant window will be made accessible to more communities in forested areas throughout Asia including the countries of NTFP-EP partners such as Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam and possibly other Mekong countries. A call for proposals will be launched in early 2015.

NTFP-EP thanks Both ENDS, Broederlijk Delen and Samdhana Foundation for initial contributions to the fund. NTFP-EP continues to accept donations to the fund at these bank accounts:

Name:

Non Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme Incorporated (NTFP-EP)

Account Numbers: 1991-0096-94 (Peso) / 1994-0638-19 (Euro)

Bank Name:

Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), Kalayaan Branch

Bank Address:

BPI Kalayaan, 114 Kalayan Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

Contact Number: +63 2 921 17 67

Swift Code: BOPIPHMM

For more information contact Tes Matibag (mpmatibag@gmail.com and sgf@ntfp.org)

Indigo: The Dye life



Article by: Beng Camba
Photos by: Rex dela Pena and Arnel Tapic

When we think of plants, especially in forests, we often think of greeneries from the leaves or bright yellow flowers. A locally known plant in the Philippines called “tagum” (*Indigofera tinctoria*), is a shrubby herbaceous plant known to yield a wide array of blue colors including bright blue color. Just like other natural dyes, indigo is most commonly used in coloring for personal care products and textiles. It grows abundantly in open areas and is usually fed to goats and cows. However, not many are aware of the income opportunities that can be derived from processing this inconspicuous plant.

Indigo and other natural dye applications were once extensively used in the weaving industry. However, due to the limitation of indigo’s bonding capacity (it only works well with natural materials), and the introduction of much cheaper alternatives like synthetic dyes, this led to the collapse of the market and its rapid decline not only in the Philippines but also all over the world. Recently, however, many consumers have developed a

more conscious effort to use healthier and environment friendly products, including natural dyes. Furthermore, a greater appreciation of cultural value in consumer goods has provided a timely opportunity for the comeback of “beyond- organic” products like natural dyes.

Unlike synthetic dyes, which use a lot of chemicals that pollute the environment and pose health hazards to users, natural dyes like indigo are renewable, biodegradable, and pose no health and environmental hazards from propagation, to production. Even their disposal is not harmful to people and nature. The use of natural origins for food coloring, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, paints, inks, plastics, and textile products is an emerging and a very promising market opportunity for natural dyes especially for natural indigo due to its colorfastness properties.

The use of natural dyes in the Philippines is a significant part of traditions and culture of the indigenous communities. The prevalence of synthetic dyes paved the way for the gradual demise of this traditional practice.





Freshly gathered Indigo



It was in 2005 when the CustomMade Crafts Center (CMCC), the traditional crafts marketing arm of NTFP-EP Philippines and its partners, started working with these indigenous communities to revive the use of natural dyes in their hand-woven fabrics. The work focused mainly on natural dye application on traditional hand-woven textiles of the Ifugao, T'boli and Higaonon communities in the Cordillera Region, South Cotabato and Bukidnon respectively. CMCC, in partnership with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), provided technical assistance in optimizing and standardizing the traditional method of natural dyeing. This initiative aimed to help the communities in generating needed income from their crafts by increasing the value of their traditional products.

The application of natural dyes on indigenous fabrics produced by partner communities has tremendously increased the value of community products. From 2011 to 2012, CMCC successfully exported naturally dyed hinabol products from Bukidnon to the United States. CMCC-

assisted producers in South Cotabato have also supplied other exporters with high quality naturally-dyed t'nalak. Currently, CMCC is one of the very few social enterprises marketing naturally dyed products. Although this accounts for a minimal share of the overall market for textiles and dyes, the growing interest among consumers, retailers and governments is indicative of a potential increase in the market share for natural dyes and naturally hand-woven textiles. Inquiries for natural dye powder from paint, resin, cosmetics, and mainstream apparel industries have also started coming in. CMCC has already commissioned a study to determine the current and future prospects of natural dyes as a technology, product and business in the Philippines.

Clearly, indigo and other natural dyes show a lot of promise. It is for this reason that CMCC is scaling up by strategically expanding its producer base and developing a local and international market niche for natural dyes.



Wide variety of natural dyes

Safeguarding ASEAN Forests and Peoples

Article and photos by:
Crissy Guerrero



Naw Ei Ei Min of POINT presents Myanmar group's output



NTFP-EP recognizes the importance of social and environmental safeguards in implementing climate mitigation projects in forest areas, especially in implementing REDD-Plus or Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation –Plus projects in ASEAN. This is one of the reasons why NTFP-EP teamed up with RECOFTC, the Center for People and Forests, the ASEAN Regional Knowledge Network on Forests and Climate Change (ARKN-FCC) and the ASEAN Social Forestry Network (ASFN) to implement the ASEAN Capacity Building Workshop linked to the 10th ASEAN ARKN-FCC Meeting in Jakarta from Sept 9-11, 2014.

It was envisioned that this joint activity would help to strengthen the linkages and synergize the processes and efforts of two of the ASEAN level bodies engaged in discussions related to forests and climate change, especially those related to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) positions.

Specifically the workshop was organized to strengthen

the capacities of ASEAN member states to effectively develop and negotiate positions on pertinent issues related to forests and climate change and to ensure that climate change and forestry discussions sufficiently appreciate and incorporate issues related to various stakeholders. These stakeholders include local communities, indigenous peoples, civil society and grassroots groups and it is important to consider their views within national negotiating positions leading to greater international support and sustainable and socially equitable outcomes.

The activity was scheduled before the deadline submission for SIS or safeguard information system provided by the UNFCCC **SBSTA** in order to input into that process both for ASEAN and for individual ASEAN states submissions. The timing was very good for an in-depth discussion on safeguards information system.

Inputs from negotiation experts, SIS experts and legal experts complemented the inputs from civil society organizations and calls of indigenous peoples. The



What is SBSTA?

Subsidiary body for Science and Technological Advice is a subsidiary body created by the convention. It supports the work of the Conference of Parties (COP) and the CMP through the provision of timely information and advice on scientific and technological matters as they relate to the Convention or its Kyoto Protocol.



Ibu Nur Masripatin, Coordinator of ARKN-FCC, giving her opening remarks



elaborate SIS process from Indonesia was also presented. The morning session ended with discussions on linking mitigation processes to community forestry activities.

In the afternoon, the participants broke into national level groups to discuss the status of SIS development in each country and propose inclusions in their own national level SIS submissions. Though the different levels of SIS work were evident in the varied presentations, it was clear from the reports of the workshop groups that there was a call for guidance on the design and implementation of multi-stakeholder institutional framework mechanisms to implement SIS. This should also be supported by an enabling legal framework. Some countries also proposed grievance and conflict resolution mechanisms.

Many countries underscored that some safeguard mechanisms already do exist and there is a need to integrate the SIS with existing systems for efficiency, time saving and cost saving purposes. Many countries also requested for a flexible mechanism with room for improvement in the future. Difficulties were seen in how

to implement international agreements on the ground and at the local level. Thus some countries also suggested piloting safeguard systems on the ground.

Countries identified their learning needs as the following: knowledge enhancement for better understanding of SIS with different stakeholders and all levels, assistance in developing criteria and indicators for SIS, and guidance on how to strengthen implementation and monitoring of SIS.

All stakeholders went home with increased knowledge on SIS to take back home to their member states. Ibu Nur Masripatin, Coordinator of ARKN-FCC, even commended the organizers for facilitating such a rich exchange of knowledge and experience which helped all better appreciate and tackle SIS development at the country level. On the third day of the series of sessions, it was agreed that ASFN and ARKN –FCC should continue to have combined learning and information sessions in the years to come.

Organizers would like to thank Norad and SDC for supporting the event.

A Sweet Golden Steal

Article by: Snehlata Nath

"A Sweet Golden Steal". Down to Earth,. 1 Sept 2014. Web.

Honey! sounds simple when we say the word, but has a complex background.

Usually associated with health, and taken as medicine to relieve colds and coughs, honey has lately become a favourite breakfast item in most homes. It is eaten with cereal and chappatis, dosas and toast.

In the Indian subcontinent, there are four kinds of honey bees which make honey. The Giant Rock Bee, *Apis dorsata*, makes large single combs on high trees or on steep cliffs. These combs can also be seen in cities on high buildings or water tanks near parks or gardens. Adivasi people in the Nilgiris believe that six stings of this bee can be lethal, yet they collect its honey seasonally and have an understanding of the complex relations between seasons, bees, forest blooms, and rain. A single comb can yield anywhere between 3 to 12 kgs of honey and is the largest contributor of forest honey in the market. Many communities across India seasonally depend on this bee for their income and their traditional food and medicine needs.

There are differing points of view on the `sustainability' of wild honey collection. The traditional knowledge of communities plays an important role in determining this. In the Nilgiris, most honey-gathering communities have sacred honey cliffs and trees which are left untouched. A community group harvests within their ancestral domain after checking whether the honey is mature. In some other areas, as in Sundarbans, honey gathering is done as a large community activity due to the fear of wild animals, mainly tigers. The Chenchu community in Andhra Pradesh is also renowned for their honey gathering knowledge and skill.

The other bees are smaller. *Apis cerana*, often domesticated by farmers in bee boxes, pots, log hives or wall hives, live in tree cavities or earthen walls and build several combs. *Apis florea*, known as the queen of bees, is a small golden bee; they build a single nest on twigs and bushes and store their honey neatly on the top. Their honey is highly medicinal in composition and is found extensively in parts of Gujarat. The Stingless or

Dammer bees, *Trigona spp.* are the fourth; these are the small, mosquito sized honey bees. They forage on herbs and produce very little honey which is medicinal and valued immensely by the Ayurvedic industry, especially in Kerala. The medicinal quality of honey varies and is based on the size of the bee and the flowers it can collect nectar from. Larger bees have longer proboscis, which cannot avail the nectar from small flowers.

In the late 1990s, the Italian Bee, *Apis mellifera*, was brought to India from Europe. This species is not indigenous to the tropics and bred industrially in large Langstroth Hives. This bee is very productive over vast monoculture plantations and agriculture fields of Mustard, Sunflower, Litchi etc. Large companies now sell honey from these sources after due processing. All over the world the problem related to the Varroa Mite and then Colony Collapse Disorder seriously infected these colonies, causing severe losses to farmers and to the pollination of crops.

A major part of India's honey production, approximately 60 thousand tonnes per annum, comes from wild bees. This honey is processed and sold in retail shops. There are different viewpoints about honey processing: some institutions promote indirect heating of honey to kill active bacteria and reduce its water content to increase shelf life; others claim that honey is a complete and ready food made by the bees and only needs to be filtered, as heating honey increases the Hydroxyl Methyl Furfural (HMF), destroying the enzymes. Unheated honey is of better quality and retains the goodness of honey, keeping the sugars, enzymes and micro nutrients intact.

Do you know which honey you have on your table?

For more information contact: sneh@keystone-foundation.org. Snehlata Nath is Director Programmes at Keystone Foundation.

This article was originally published on <http://www.downtoearth.org.in/content/sweet-golden-steal>

"I am Proud and Happy to be an Indigenous Person"

Expressions of the Bunong of Mondulkiri Province at the 10th year celebration of the International Indigenous Peoples' Day

Article and photos by: Femy Pinto



August 8th, 2014 - It drizzled a little bit when I set out early in the morning, on the back of a motorcycle driven by my colleague, Virai, to Pundreng village in Dakdam commune in Oreang district, in the northeastern province of Mondulkiri in Cambodia. It took Virai and I about half an hour to reach the village and we arrived at a bustling village scenery of men, women and youth preparing for guests, family and friends to gather at the village center. Volunteer youth were carrying banners and finding best spots to hang them all around the village alongside the gravel road, the bridge, and on roadside fences. The sound system was set up as well as a guest table and a few chairs; indigenous music was playing over the sound system. I walked around and enjoyed watching the "salapak," a group of young women and men at the hut at the back of the village center – which served as a "dressing room". The young girls enjoyed shooting "selfies" as they were dressing up, putting on a bit of make up and practising their poise whilst wearing the best of their traditional cloths worn on special occasions. After a few minutes, the leader called on the group for a practice of their traditional dance, welcoming the season's harvest.

After a round of practice, I went out of the hut and another group of women were preparing their large pots for food preparation. Two pigs were roasted to share amongst the villagers. Within the next hour, the village center gathered approximately a hundred people in a day of solidarity – of traditional dance, music, speeches, food and rice wine.

That day was a pre-celebration of the members of the Bunong indigenous community of Pundreng – young and old, women and men, for the International day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. It was the second year of a day of solidarity in Dakdam, the 10th year in Cambodia and 20th year celebration in the world.

Bora Ngarang Poeun, a Bunong indigenous woman leader said that this year was a much better organized village celebration. More villagers have come to join the celebration and the food contributions were more than it was in the previous year. She mentioned that this day of solidarity is important because "we can express our pride

and commitment that we will not lose our traditions".

A village elder shared his key messages about supporting the education of their children; calling on the protection of their traditional lands and an encouragement for elders and youth to work together in solidarity as Bunong to promote their cultural identity and promote their empowerment and development as peoples.

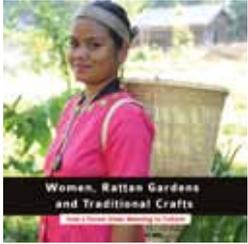
A banner that says "I am proud and happy to be an indigenous person" hung on a bamboo fence at the entrance of the village school grounds. Another banner was fluttering in the wind - as if also with pride "We add a beautiful cultural diversity to Cambodia."

The Bunong indigenous people are the 2nd largest indigenous group out of 24 indigenous groups in 15 provinces in Cambodia. For the indigenous peoples of Cambodia, the IP Day celebration is a joyful occasion for them to show their heritage and identity through their culture, traditions, customs, arts, dresses, and tools or materials in their daily livelihood, economy, society, and culture. At the same time, it is an important occasion to draw the attention of the Royal Government of Cambodia, organizations, national and international media, and the public to recognize the as communities, to recognize their concerns and aspirations and to contribute to the protection of their cultural identities and recognition of their rights.

On the next day, I greeted several of the villagers I met on the previous day in the provincial center for the larger gathering of Bunong indigenous communities. The day was opened with official speeches, followed by a solidarity offering at the foothills of the Phnom (mountain) Dak Kramong, sacred to the Bunong community, and music and dance that carried through until the evening. Several other banners fluttered around the provincial center – two spoke true of their hopes and intentions for the celebration and commemoration of this important day:

"Solidarity leads to the respect of indigenous peoples rights to land, natural resources and identity".

"Cease all land and forest grabbing in our ancestors' territories."



Women, Rattan Gardens and Traditional Crafts

How a Forest Gives Meaning to Culture

This book relates the importance of traditional rattan crafts to the Dayak Benuaq people of Eheng Village in East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. They are struggling to maintain their weaving tradition despite challenges ahead. Saving their crafts means saving their rattan gardens or simpukng we, a critical part of the Dayak Benuaq's culture and landscape. This book is about the traditional basket called *anjat* and other similar baskets. Purchasing these products means supporting the weavers of Eheng to continue their weaving tradition in economic dignity and cultural pride.



Rivers Rising and Parched Fields

Stories on Resilience and Adaptation in a Changing Climate

This film narrates the collaboration between NTFP-EP, Ponlok Khmer and local community and authorities of Putrea village in Chey Sen District in Preah Vihear province in Cambodia to assess the disaster and climate risks that villagers face. A participatory capacity and vulnerability assessment was conducted and flooding and drought have been identified as the key hazards for the village population. Strategies and plans were identified to adapt to and cope with the intensifying and increasing frequency and unpredictability of the occurrence of floods and droughts in the recent years. A participatory process resulted in the development of a community adaptation plan including their proposal to develop and improve forest based livelihoods, and to strengthen their community capacity in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. The community and local authorities are keen to address the impacts of climate change and address their increasing vulnerability to disaster through increased local cooperation and support particularly within the scope of local development planning and investment.



Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction / Climate Change Adaptation in Forest-Based Livelihoods

Climate change is occurring in Danau Sentarum National Park, West Kalimantan, Indonesia and fishermen and honey collectors are starting to be impacted by it. The communities living in and around Danau Sentarum must adapt to these climate changes to maintain their livelihood.

This film is documentation of the participatory capacity and vulnerability assessment against climate change and natural disasters of communities in Danau Sentarum National Park.

new staff



Sony, our new Cambodia Coordinator, started out as a Finance and Administrative Manager and has managed to reinvent himself into a seasoned program manager and environmentalist out of his own interest. He is one of the first graduates of the Masters in Biodiversity Conservation from the Royal University of Phnom Penh and has since dedicated his professional career in the natural resources sector.

Oh My goodness!



Concrete houses were built to for the Cholanaicken hunter gatherers in Kerala, India.

Unfortunately, the houses were not much to the tribe's liking and there were very few takers who actually lived in these houses. Soon the structures started to crumble and that would have been it.

Until - with all the wild elephants around these days - an enterprising family found an alternative use for the ruins. **-JdB**