

Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples (IKAP) Network

Regional Conference on
**Inter-Generational Transfer
of Indigenous Knowledge and Skills**

Chiang Mai, 16-20 November 2007

DAY 1
Friday, 16 November 2007

Facilitated by Mee, Van Say and Scott.

1. OPENING SESSION
Friday, 16 November 2007

1.1 OPENING RITUAL & INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Janu Kelee, an indigenous elder from Chiang Dao, conducted a traditional ritual of the Lahu people to inaugurate the conference. This was followed by the Tibetan representatives from China showing their thanks (*tachi-taley*) by presenting red, white and yellow *kata* cloth to each participant as a symbol of good wishes and good fortune. Ms. Se Zuoman said that her

people (Anduo group of Tibet) will usually sing a song when they present the kata, and so she sang a song.

Introduction of the participants was then conducted by country and ethnic group, followed by those of the facilitators and resource persons.

1.2 WELCOME ADDRESS

Sakda Saenmi (IMPECT)

Good morning indigenous elders, brothers and sisters and our youth. Welcome to Chiang Mai and to our conference on Inter-generational transfer of indigenous knowledge and skills. There are many activities lined up from today until the 21st, including group sharing, poster information market, community fair, and our general assembly. You may be confused about which is which but I hope you will be able to participate in all of these and get some benefit from doing so that we can practice it in our long life.

I hope you will enjoy a good engagement in these meetings and we hope you will find some fruitful results that you can bring back to your people for their betterment.

I would like to thank our funders for making it possible to bring all of you here and to have these activities. They are Bread for the World, ICCO, and SDC. I now would like to introduce our IKAP staff who have worked hard for this conference.

1.3 Introduction and Background of IKAP

Prassert Trakansuphakon
Coordinator, IKAP

The MMSEA (Mainland Mountain Southeast Asia) is a network of academics and researchers in Southeast Asia, who created a conference for exchanging and sharing the results of research related to Indigenous issues. In August 2002, a third conference organized by MMSEA in Lijiang, China, was the first time in which indigenous peoples' organizations such as IMPECT, Northern Farmers Network and other NGOs from Thailand and other countries, were involved in the conference.

During the conference, it was the academics and researchers who presented the results of their research about indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples did not have a chance to present anything about themselves. Some of the results of the research confused indigenous peoples. An example was the issue of rotational farming. It then became a challenge to indigenous peoples to represent themselves from their own perspective. We were challenged to create our own space for

representing ourselves based on our knowledge and wisdom and in our own way of life, values, spirituality and our cosmology.

At the end of that meeting, the participants divided into issue groups and many indigenous peoples representatives came together on indigenous peoples issues. Some of the main people in that meeting were indigenous peoples representatives such as myself, Timmi, Troung, Hehong, Miju and Ayoe. Ajarn Chupinit was also there and was also one donor representative from ICCO who was willing support to us. That meeting resulted in an agreement to create an indigenous peoples regional network to work together. The meeting asked Timmi and myself to develop a concept paper for the proposal and this later, in 2003, become IKAP.

The first Regional meeting (later called the Regional Assembly) in 2003, was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand. This meeting was for brainstorming the Vision, Mission, Objective and Strategy for IKAP. At the same time we also developed the three-year action plan for the implementation of IKAP activities.

Philosophy, Vision & Objectives of IKAP

The philosophy behind the establishment of IKAP is: Strategically IKAP will work by use of an indigenous knowledge approach or with indigenous knowledge as the entry point for strengthening capacity building for indigenous peoples leaders, communities and the organizations within MMSEA. Indigenous peoples with their strong commitment to IK values, spirituality and perspectives will develop their own plan for their own development or endogenous development. Indigenous leaders and organizations will have autonomy to make their own decisions on their life and their future. Last but not least, indigenous peoples will create their own discourse to present themselves; who they are, what their identity is, and what images and meanings of themselves they will give from their own perspectives.

IKAP Vision: Indigenous Communities have decided to participate in each country's sustainable development, based on their own IK. The vision is recognition of ethnic diversity and equality between peoples, with the aim of peace and social justice in MMSEA.

The Objectives of IKAP are: to promote Indigenous Knowledge for Sustainable Livelihoods in the mountainous areas of MMSEA; to strengthen indigenous peoples' organizations and networks for the transmission of Indigenous Knowledge to the young generation; to establish a space of exchange and a sharing of experiences by facilitating field visits; to build a network on working group topics to support Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples for Biodiversity Conservation and Endogenous Development; to implement and support Capacity Building Activities for Indigenous Peoples and Facilitators; and to create a space of advocacy and lobby activities for IK and IPs in MMSEA.

IKAP Network structure

The structure of IKAP is not based on a bureaucratic model, but is flexible, being based on indigenous peoples' ideology and cultural values. The highest decision-making body will be the Regional Assembly, which will be composed of representatives of the six member countries:

Burma, Cambodia, China, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam. The Regional Assembly has been four times thus far: Chiang Mai (2003), Lugu Lake, China (2004), Sapa, Vietnam (2005), and Mondo-kiri, Cambodia (2006).

Each country has a focal point or a Regional Committee (RC) member to coordinate, communicate and arrange any kind of decision-making at country level, and the RC is the one which directs coordination with the secretariat office of IKAP. The Regional Coordinators Team is the core team which works in the IKAP Secretariat Office, picking up the concepts of policy and turning them into action plans together with the RC members. This becomes the action plan that is implemented at regional level and country level.

The IKAP Secretariat Office has been based in Chiang Mai, and we have two staff, one working as regional secretariat and another working as Office Manager. However the secretariat works closely with the Regional Coordinator Team.

The Regional Work Plan incorporates the following: Training of Trainers, Conference & exchange visit, Indigenous peoples conference and Indigenous knowledge Fair, Topical working groups, Indigenous knowledge Manual and RIKI, and Advocacy through documentation and website.

The six topical working groups are: Rotational Farming, Indigenous Education, Seeds & Plants, Healers & Herbal Medicines, Arts & Crafts, and Youth & Children.

The Regional Conference on Rotational Farming was held at Sisuan Panna, China, in 2006 while that on Indigenous Education was held at Mae Sariang, Thailand, in 2006. Five exposure trips were also conducted in the region. IKAP also co-organized the MMSEA-4 in Sapa, Vietnam and supported 60 indigenous peoples from six countries to attend the conference.

Website and Documentations

The website informs people of many things about IKAP and IKAP activities. The documentation and publication section of IKAP has published an Ethnicity Map for six countries and regions in Southeast Asia, but the Ethnicity Map still needs to be developed further.

The following publications have been produced thus far: *Pgaz K'Nyau Knowledge on Rotational Farming in Northern Thailand*, *The Indigenous Peoples Forum*, *Bridging Epistemology*, and *Poverty Dialogue with Mountain Peoples* (Co-developed with CSDM)

Achievements and Progress

Many things have changed during the five years of IKAP. Here I mention only a few. The IKAP Regional Network now looks clearer and functions through the RC members of each country, even though we still need to enhance the network. In each country the IP Network also appears to be progressing well, but still a lot of support is necessary, based on the various conditions in each country.

The two sequences of Training of Trainers on Indigenous Knowledge, or the 34 persons who have undergone the training, are spreading in the six countries, and can help strengthen indigenous peoples both at the regional and country level. Some of them are very active and have become professional trainers or facilitators.

Of the six topical working groups, three networks are being created viz. the Rotational Farming Network, the Indigenous Education and the Healers and Herbal Medicine Network. Some have been created at country level and others at regional level. The recognition of Governments and civil society is better than before, but this process still needs more active work.

Challenges for IKAP's future

The biggest challenge is how to focus on strengthening indigenous peoples' leaders, communities and the indigenous peoples' organization at the country level. Another issue, linked to TOT, is how to increase the number of indigenous peoples who can attend the TOT at regional level. Also, how can we strengthen the IKAP regional network, the active participation of the six countries in regional activities, and the decision-making process.

1.4 Re-Cap of the 2006 Indigenous Education Workshop

Scott O'Brien

Some of us met in Mae Sariang in 2006 to discuss indigenous education. About 7 of us were there. We started by trying to understand what we meant by indigenous education. After a lot of discussion and headaches we came up with some basic understanding of it. We did not come up with a specific definition but agreed that indigenous education was the 'process of teaching and learning indigenous knowledge'. We also asked ourselves whether it was important. The answer was "Yes."

Then we asked why was it important? What types of IK are in the communities we are involved in? Who has this knowledge, who is teaching and who is learning? What are the difficulties of passing on the knowledge? Where is it being passed on?

We concluded that it was happening in 3 different areas: formal education (e.g. in schools), non-formal education (e.g. adult-education, training workshops, short-term classes), and mostly in informal settings (e.g. in communities where these types of knowledge are passed on in traditional settings and methods).

The Big question is: how is this knowledge being passed on through the generations? How was it done traditionally, how is it being done now, and what are the problems being faced in transmitting indigenous knowledge?

1.5 Inter-Generational Transfer of Indigenous Knowledge and Why indigenous Knowledge is Important

Chonchon (IKAP)

Indigenous knowledge is disappearing everyday with frightening speed. Therefore there is an urgent need to put a more concerted effort to ensure the transfer of indigenous knowledge to the younger generation.

At the outset, in order to make sure that we all have the same understanding of the key terms used in this conference let me elaborate a little on how we in the IKAP secretariat use these terms.

Although inter-generational transfer of indigenous knowledge covers all forms of knowledge transfers between different generations, from the older to the younger, but also the younger to the older, during this conference, we would like us to focus on the transfer of knowledge from the older to the young and future generations.

This can happen in various manners: in informal ways as well as in the form of formal education.

What is indigenous knowledge? Many terms can be found in the literature for indigenous knowledge, such as traditional knowledge, local knowledge, folk knowledge, traditional wisdom, and rural peoples' knowledge. We use the term indigenous knowledge when referring to the knowledge of the indigenous peoples only.

Following Erjen Khamaganova (*Traditional Indigenous Knowledge: Local view*, 2005), indigenous knowledge can be defined as "the entirety of the intellectual and cultural heritage of each indigenous community that shapes our distinct identity that is preserved and developed through transmitting from generation to generation in our own distinct ways and is appropriate and evolving in a distinct physical space."

It is a way of life. It is not just about knowledge in a narrow sense, but also about values, stories, language, and social relations. Sometimes indigenous knowledge is preserved in the form of memories, rituals, ceremonies, dance, artefacts, etc. It is about experience-based relationships between humans and living beings and with their environment.

For the indigenous communities, indigenous knowledge is the basis for decision making in our daily activities – the agricultural cycle, education, or natural resource management that sustains societies and the environment. Therefore protection of IK and to be able to practice it is a question of our right to survival as indigenous peoples and our rights to determine our future.

It has been increasingly acknowledged that indigenous peoples have an in-depth knowledge of the ecosystem we live in and have our own resource use practices which are different from

“modern”, “western scientific knowledge”. Indigenous knowledge is important in numerous ways, such as:

- Indigenous ways of managing resources are often—or used to be—more appropriate and environmentally more sustainable; and indigenous knowledge has the potential value for sustainable development.
- Indigenous knowledge can make a contribution to global biological diversity conservation. It is a fact that most remaining regions of the world that are rich in biological or biodiversity “hot spots” are also homelands for the indigenous communities.
- Although our economies have been often called primitive, our way of life has proven to be highly durable.
- Indigenous knowledge of nature has ensured the survival of many people in difficult and fragile habitats. For example, in the forests of northern Thailand and the rugged mountains of northeast region of India, rotational cultivation has provided livelihood for people and sustained hundreds of distinct cultures.
- Indigenous communities that have maintained traditional modes of production have today become the major custodians of the world’s domesticated plant and animal species.
- The significance of indigenous knowledge in agriculture and health care (herbal medicines) are being recognized by scientists and development agencies.
- Many developed countries realize the potential for indigenous medicine for poor people. It is locally available, culturally acceptable, and cheaper than imported drugs.
- Indigenous knowledge has already been used many times in developing new cures for diseases. Scientists now believe that indigenous knowledge may help them to discover important new cures for diseases such as AIDS and cancer.
- As indigenous peoples retain within their knowledge an inter-generational memory of fluctuations, trends and exceptional events in relation to the local environment, they can contribute importantly to understanding long-term processes of change.
- Indigenous people can sometimes even predict the occurrence of natural disasters and take necessary precautions. For example during the Tsunami in December 2004, the indigenous communities of Andaman Islands escaped as they could predict the disaster and went to the hills.

However, even though there is growing awareness of the value of indigenous knowledge, particularly its potential contribution to sustainable development, it is in danger of disappearing. There are three main reasons for this: One, discrimination against indigenous knowledge systems by the dominant or mainstream culture, and our own internalization of perceived inferiority; two, the right to the continuation of traditional livelihoods, cultures and beliefs being ignored or

dismissed by nation states pursuing a development path that insists on assimilating ethnic and cultural differences and separating people from nature; and three, the growing globalisation of markets and appropriation of our resources and knowledge by outsiders.

In addition to the dangers mentioned above, many of the knowledgeable persons who maintain and practice indigenous knowledge and skills are passing away. What I could have learned from my parents I cannot do so any more because they are already gone as I have also been affected by the modern education system and dominant culture. Therefore before all the older generations are gone and before our cultures and values are fully eroded and damaged beyond repair, we need to make concerted effort as a matter of priority and take steps for effective inter-generational transfer of indigenous knowledge and skills – from the old to the young and future generations.

Challenges

There are many challenges we face in ensuring inter-generational transfer of indigenous knowledge and skills. To a great extent the State has taken control over inter-generational transfer of indigenous knowledge, like how the history of our people is taught, through the education system, through development and modernization programmes and such.

Education is defined by the dominant or mainstream society. It will be important for us to think of strategies, of what other form can be maintained and recreated, in order to have continued flow of indigenous knowledge and to ensure that indigenous knowledge is passed on to our young generation.

We should also make use of the many existing international instruments that recognize the rights of indigenous peoples and the value of indigenous peoples' cultures and indigenous knowledge. They can be used as tools for awareness-raising and above all for the protection of our rights. For example Article 31 of the recently adopted UN Declaration on the Rights Indigenous of Peoples (DRIP) states:

1. Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.
2. In conjunction with indigenous peoples, States shall take effective measures to recognize and protect the exercise of these rights.

This UN DRIP sets the minimum international standards for the respect, protection and fulfilment of indigenous peoples' rights. Cambodia, Burma, China, Lao PDR, Thailand and

Vietnam are among the 143 countries which voted for this Declaration on September 12, 2007 in the UN General Assembly.

Another international instrument which has potential policy tools to ensure appropriate protection of indigenous peoples' rights to their traditional indigenous knowledge and practices is the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). This Convention is an international treaty and it is a legally binding instrument. Some important articles in the CBD that deals with traditional knowledge (indigenous knowledge), are as follows.

Article 8j: Subject to national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge and innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of the knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the knowledge, innovations and practices.

Article 10c: Protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation and sustainable use requirements.

These two articles recognize the close and traditional dependence of indigenous and local communities on biological resources and the need to ensure that these communities share in the benefits arising from the use of their traditional knowledge and practices relating to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

2. COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS

16 & 17 November 2007

The country presentations were delivered over the first day and the first part of the following morning. They were variously facilitated by Ajarn Chupinit, Ayoe, Van Say, He Hong, and Mee.

2.1 Vietnam: Report on Ethnic Medicine Production

Mrs. Hai Yen

Good morning everyone. I would like to talk about our ethnic medicine and our herbalists. We ethnic minorities in Vietnam have our own heritage in herbal medicine. We live in mountainous areas and since ancient times we have been using herbal medicines in our daily lives.

Herbal medicine has a humanitarian meaning and a culture feature. The advantages of herbal medicine are many. One is that it is low cost and available everywhere. Almost all ethnic minorities know at least 4 to 5 or 10 herbs, so they can heal themselves. It is not affected by prices like modern drugs. It convenient and easy to collect or grow and is accessible to everyone. It is simple use and can be used as a drink, for massage and as a bath. Furthermore, there are no or less side-effects, unlike like modern drugs.

For many years, herbal medicine was not favoured by the people who tended to use modern drugs. Now more and more people are coming back to using herbal medicine. This is also encouraged by the government. Nearly in all communes today there is a herbal medicine garden.

Some of the challenges faced by herbal medicine: People in the cities particularly still prefer to use modern drugs. Preservation of herbal medicine knowledge is also difficult because the older people who know the indigenous knowledge often want to keep that knowledge for themselves and for their relatives and do not want to teach strangers. Another challenge is the over-collection of herbal product for sale. Disasters like flood, fire and also monoculture plantations also contribute to destroying herbal medicine. Similarly, the technical development in agriculture and forestry also contributes to the disappearance of herbal medicine because they use a lot of chemical pesticides and fertilizers that destroy the herbal crops.

In mountainous areas, we found that there were still some herbalists who used herbal medicine to cure diseases. But they are only a small number so that they cannot exchange their knowledge or learn from each other, so the knowledge on herbal medicine is dying. Having understood this problem, the herbalists formed a Herbalist Network in Lang Son province.

Herbalists from 5 districts got together and formed a herbalist network. They have a conservation forest where they plant various herbs for reference, not for consumption or use. They also established a herbal clinic, where they cure people and train young people in herbal medicine. They gather every month in these clinics to exchange their experiences.

Members of the network go around the 5 districts and exchange their knowledge in herbal medicine. They also get more knowledge on herbal medicine as they learn from each other. This network also helps the herbalists to get registered with the authorities so that with the licence they can operate as herbalists.

And they are also involved in prevention of HIV by using their herbal medicine. By their activities, more and more people come to the clinics and use their services.

2.2 Vietnam: Herbal Medicine of the Thai People

Uncle Van Hoa

I would like to talk about herbal medicine by the Thai group. Our Thai people have a rich knowledge about herbal medicine. We have had our own book on herbal medicine since the 11th century. Since the 11th century our Thai people moved and spread into 7 provinces in the northwest of Vietnam. Our ancestors brought the book on medicine and other matters. This book from my ancestors, written on bamboo paper and by brush pen, has been in my family for 4 generations.

I am now 79 years old and I want to pass this book to my young children so I have already written this book on this (modern) paper and I also translated it into the Vietnamese language and some in my Thai script. In this volume, it has treatments for 62 diseases. I only finished this first volume but I intend to complete 3 more volumes.

Some illnesses involving the stomach or kidney, the modern treatment involves surgery, but here we do not need surgery. Some diseases which are very difficult to cure with modern medicine e.g. paralysis, we can use the traditional medicine to cure, and we have been successful in this.

Chupinit: We have not heard about the transfer of knowledge about the herbal medicine.

Troung: In Lang Son, there are monthly meetings. Also when they plant the herbal medicines in the conservation forest, they bring some young people along, and teach them.

Chupinit: Is it a tradition to keep the knowledge a secret within the family.

Troung: Yes. But sometimes they share very common cures, but for special/difficult diseases, they keep for themselves. But we encourage them to share the knowledge in the family and in the clan.

Ayoe: The Thai medicine is very famous in China too. It has been integrated into the hospital system; we have a Tay hospital which combines both modern drugs and traditional medicine for its treatments.

Truong: Our herbal medicine clinic is always next to the health care station. People prefer herbal medicine because of the slow process in treating and dealing with the patient. With modern drugs, this is dispensed very fast.

Chupinit: Can the practice of herbal medicine can be taught to our indigenous children in schools?

Luo Shih Hong: Almost every province has a college on traditional medicine. The Chinese government has already realised that the combination of both modern and traditional medicine is important. We have the biggest Tibetan temple, which makes almost every type of Tibetan medicine. Chinese traditional medicine is also being used.

Prassert: How do the young people respond/react to the transfer of traditional medicine?

Hai Yen: There is a rising interest among the school children to go to conservation forest and to plant with the elders. I cannot that they have good knowledge now as they process is slow. In the clinics, they help them as well. The adults try to get their son or nephew to get interested/learn the indigenous knowledge on herbal medicine. Young mothers too use a lot of herbal medicine to cure their children; they are afraid of the side effects of modern drugs.

Li Dejing: I would like to add something to Mr. Luo. Traditional medicine has been recognised by the central government. But in order to become a licensed practitioner you will need a lot of money to do so. So usually those who do this are the big companies, not the ethnic groups themselves. So the challenge is for the ethnic groups to find ways to register the medicine or as practitioners.

Truong: In Vietnam the herbalists also need a licence to do the treatment. We try to ask the authorities to reconsider because to get the licence they need to learn a lot. But we still ask the govt to allow them to practice.

Chupinit: One of our herbalists had to go to Bangkok in order to sit for the exam and pass to get the certificate.

Mrs. See: When I was with the communists in the jungle, I was trained in acupuncture and herbal medicine. I have made use of the knowledge to heal many people all the time. But my practise has not been recognised by the government. Through the army, the barefoot doctors system, the opportunity was there to get recognised/certified. I have to leave this conference early as I have to go to Korat to take a test for my licence. When I pass this test, I will still need to take the actual exam. It takes 3 times, 3 exams. It is a very complicated bureaucratic system. It is not easy to get official recognition.

2.3 Vietnam: Teaching and Learning Thai

Mr. Vi Van Dang

There are 53 ethnic minority groups in Vietnam who speak their own language. Among them there are only 4 groups –Cham, Hoa, Khome, Thai– who have their own scripts.

The Thai script however has a 1000-year history. Thai is language of communication for 1.3 million people in Vietnam. But in 1968 Thai was taken out of curriculum. In 2000 Thai came back to the community but not into the curriculum. The Constitution stipulates that every ethnic community can use their own language, but even so the Thai language has not come back to the curriculum.

After a long time of not teaching Thai, the government issued a policy of encouraging the teaching of ethnic languages in schools. So since 2000, we have some activities for the teaching and learning of Thai, especially Mr Hua here who is in a research programme on Thai..

In some provinces, the teaching of Thai is also being done, in classes. Some of the teachers are here today. In these classes, many who attend are young. They learn the Thai script.

However in the teaching the Thai, we face many difficulties. The main difficulty is the Thai script is not in the school curriculum.

This year with support from IKAP and CSCM we established a network on the indigenous knowledge of the Thai of Vietnam, among the Thai teachers, to exchange their experience not just on teaching Thai but on indigenous knowledge in general. The network's plan is to produce a text book in Thai to encourage young people especially to learn Thai. We hope that with support from IKAP and other friends from other countries, we can be successful in our network. Thank you.

2.4 China: Transmission of the Naxi Language

Ms. He Dongmei

I am a primary school teacher in Lijiang. There is an old Naxi saying: To talk with a friend and share delicious food is the most comfortable thing. Everyone therefore can know that the Naxi are friendly and like to communicate with friends. All the Naxi children in the home and community use the Naxi language to communicate – that's how our language can be transferred across generations. Some Naxi words have changed, e.g. the word for sun. The pronunciation has changed or the word has changed to the Chinese word. Words have also come into our language through media – TV and newspapers – as we do not have those words. Until the 80s of the last century everyone spoke Naxi in the community. In the 90s, due to urbanization some parents

changed their mind about the traditional language and did not teach the songs or stories of their language but told them Chinese stories or songs, especially those who do not often use their mother tongue much any more. From the 90s, Lijiang became a very popular tourist area, so the local people involved in tourism chose to speak Mandarin Chinese, and so the young people do not speak Naxi now, Now a new strategy must be used to transmit the language, i.e. it should be taught in the schools.

In 2005, in my primary school there were 585 children and 52% were not Naxi, but only 28% could speak Naxi. Language ability is worsening so the situation is dangerous for children. Children's songs have a very unique role to play in terms of transmission of IK, but now this is in danger. The tunes of the songs are related to Naxi language sounds. In the children's songs they take nature as a human being and it gives the people a passion to communicate with nature, and the songs are meaningful and can educate them. So the children are very fond of the traditional children's songs. Only a few children know any traditional children's songs and in their memories the children's songs are becoming fewer and fewer.

The children's songs are endangered and so we launched our cultural project to protect this heritage. We started to collect the Naxi children's songs in 2003, and in 2004 we went to the community to collect the songs, and in 2005 set up a network to protect the songs. During the collection of these songs we experienced many things, e.g. car accidents on the way to visit villages, and so on. Four years later we have published a book of the results and the book is now used as a textbook in the school to teach the children the songs. The curriculum is in two parts, the formal and the informal education. These are the informal school activities to transmit the songs. This is a slide of the children's song competition.

After several years of testing this method I have more plans for mother tongue promotion in this region. My plan does not only depend on formal schooling but also modern media, CD, MP3, to influence the whole of society. We intend to pass on these songs from generation to generation. This song is the work of her students. Thank you

Prasert: Very interesting for students and teachers. Very clear. How do the leaders and elders transfer indigenous knowledge to the children in the community?

Dongmei: In terms of the children's songs, nothing really is happening. Nobody is doing this kind of thing with children's songs, only in the schools. Some other textbooks for transfer of Naxi knowledge in art and music have been made, but ours is the only one on Naxi songs. Many other schools have launched programmes on Naxi language, but ours is the only one on children's songs and we plan to spread it to other areas.

Q: Is there any problems in the schools about training the students, is there any difficulty in this?

Dongmei: Yes, there are some difficulties because not all the teachers can read, write, speak the Naxi language, so the local educational bureau started a training course for teachers and now six teachers can read write and speak the Naxi language. In the school level they also train teachers in the school each week to help them teach the songs.

Q: Do you have your own curriculum or do you use your own Naxi curriculum in the schools?

Li Dejing: There is not a standard curriculum but it is written by Chinese. Also many Naxi people are editing a Naxi curriculum by themselves, like this teacher is making the song curriculum. Other people are also developing other curricula in the Naxi language.

Scott: So, are all the students Naxi or are the non-Naxi students also getting the Naxi curriculum?

Dongmei: 52% are not Naxi but all the children are having the Naxi curriculum and they quite like it. E.g. a muslim student who is using the Naxi language to make a newspaper and so on. (Examples of work made by students were shown.) There are two kinds of Naxi script, an ancient one and an invented one in the 1950s, a Romanized script. In the children's newspapers the children use both of the scripts at the same time.

2.5 China: Paper-making of the Miao in Guizhou Province.

Mr. Pan Yuhua

I am a Miao from Suchao Village, Guizhou Province. The paper-making village already has 1000 years of history. This paper making was invented by a Han Chinese but this process of handmade paper is preserved in my village. Many of you may be curious about how we preserve this unique process from 1000 years ago, but it is because we have a unique transmission system. We make very small scale production and we sell only through small channels, but we have a unique system where the father teaches the son, all the materials are natural, and we cannot produce a lot. Now the difficulty we face is that there are many paper factories that produce many tons of paper, but we cannot do that. The paper from the factory can be stable cost level, but we cannot do that and the price is low. The sales are carried out from the households.

Young people like me do not want to do this work and some techniques have disappeared. Some young people who are still doing it use some modern techniques, like using some chemicals, but this destroys the whole cycle of papermaking. To recover the skills and techniques, the head man and some other people formed a handmade paper association. This association exchanges skills and sets up standards for the paper and sells all the paper together, not through households. This association also produces paper and uses paper to make some new products. They believe that once they find new ways to promote the paper they can preserve the paper making techniques well. But in the future they must develop new products that use paper

Songwit: Are they using hemp to make paper?

Pan: Yes, that's right. I have some paper-making video CDs. If you are interested you can get them from me and also samples of the paper.

2.6 Burma: Youth and Change in Karen Communities

Ms. Naw Ler Htu

[The session began with Naw Lai Lai Win, a Karen, leading the youth in a traditional Karen dance accompanied by three youths playing traditional instruments.]

In the communities, it is usually in the evening when they do the dancing and music, around the fire and with everyone sitting on the ground. They come with their children, who catch and roast insects in the fire, and the people clap their hands after each dance. This is how the grandparents use to dance.

Now we will look at how they dance and do the music now – more modern, it's quicker and more active.

[The youths demonstrated the modern version of the dance.]

In the past the place where they learn the dances from the elders was the village ground. But today it is in the hall of the church or temple. As a trainer and mother of the family of dancing, the style of dancing in this generation we do not like it very much because it is more modern music. We want to combine it with the traditional ways in order to make the traditional ways more interesting to the younger people.

Now the young people have to study in the schools and do not have much time to learn indigenous knowledge in the evenings and this is one problem we have with the transfer of indigenous knowledge. In the past, when people were learning together, they were doing just farming, but now many people have different kinds of work and so we have little time to do indigenous knowledge things and it's hard for the youth to get indigenous knowledge skills.

To pass the knowledge to the youth, in their communities they organize Training of Trainers (TOT) and then to pass on the indigenous knowledge to many more communities and this is how they are planning to pass the indigenous knowledge to the younger generation. I'm talking about the refugees. There are many kinds of people with more than 20,000 people. For the music and dancing, I will show you again some other time.

Mr Saw Sein Tin: When they do dancing, it's like a story, and the dancing is related to the *hta* and the story. There are many different kinds of *hta*, for men and women and so on.

Asok: Many of the lot of older people are sitting around doing nothing in the refugee camps. Some are depressed and some commit suicide. This is a great opportunity for you to learn indigenous knowledge in the camps because you have time to do it there and the elders would have something to look forward too.

2.7 Burma: Herbal Medicine from Kachin

Ms. Hkaw Lwi

Kachin State is in three parts: one in Burma, one in China and one in India, and they all have their different names. Some people have also moved to Thailand. Today I will present about Northern Burma. We learn about the herbal medicine from the nature and the wildlife. If you have good forests, you have good medicine. The hunter follows the animal and sees what plants the animals use for what purpose.

In the community we have the fire in the house and each night the people sit down to talk and the indigenous knowledge is transferred from person to person here at the fireplace. Indigenous peoples know how to take care of the forest and how to collect herbs and so on from the forest and they know about conservation.

The military government, or SPDC, has opened the Kachin area and businessmen produce a lot of herbal medicine. If you do business you will take all the plants from the forests and not take care of the forests and everything will be gone. In the past the people only take what they need to survive, but the businessmen will take a lot of raw materials and this is a problem in our community. We take the youth to the forest and show them the forest. The youth already know which plants are medicinal because they learn from the families and this kind of thing we encourage. We work with local elders. We found one group who makes herbal medicine and we are helping them not to forget their knowledge. The people have said they want to maintain their knowledge and want to pass the knowledge on to the next generation. They take care of the forest and do not do it as a business.

We also train the people to do accounts and how to pass the knowledge on to the youth. We supported this group to make a herbal medicine forest. They have formed groups and the local authorities have focused on the local level for indigenous peoples knowledge. These are the things that we are doing for the community.

Q: In terms of policies are you focusing on policies on resource management in Kachin State or on national policies?

Hkaw: Burma is not in a good condition and things are not managed well and it is hard to carry out management but we have to try. We have a lot of meetings and try to implement some things.

Troung: Can you take the medicine from the herbal forest? Because in Vietnam if you do not have the correct papers you cannot take herbs from the forest.

Hkaw: In Burma under SPDC, those who have the permission and is registered for the herbal medicine, they can take. But if you do not have the legal documents they have to take secretly. We can take the herbs illegally if necessary. We are trying very hard to pass the knowledge onto our younger generation.

Scott: I want to say a word about the situation in Burma. Many indigenous peoples are at war with or are under attack from the Burmese army. Some people here are refugees, some are IDPs (internally-displaced persons) in the border areas with Thailand, so it is important to understand the circumstances in which these people are protecting and passing on their indigenous knowledge.

2.8 Thailand: Karen Youth Group and the Transfer of Indigenous Knowledge Mr. Sivakorn Odochao

I am from the Karen Youth Network in Chiang Mai. First we want to demonstrate our traditional music.

[Song in Karen with the *tei naj* (small harp).]

This is a part of a *hta*. The meaning is that we are very happy to be in the same group like brothers and sisters. The second part is that we worship the same God, and they come from the same brotherhood and the same family.

We Karen believe that it is important for humans to live with nature, this is our traditional belief. This can be traced back to the correct belief in the human soul. The Karen believe the human has 37 souls but only 5 actually within the body and the other 32 are living with nature. To be a complete human one has to acquire all 37.

So we leaders of the youth network take it that we as human beings have to live with nature. The network covers only one sub-district in Mae Wang area, altogether 41 hamlets in 19 official villages. According to our belief system all kinds of human activities must be related to rituals and ceremonies. In the past, the transfer of indigenous knowledge was through the grandparent to grandparent, but now the learning of indigenous knowledge is still related to the learning of rituals from the parents and grandparents.

[Shows a picture taken during a funeral ceremony.] Traditionally we keep the body for three days. The singing of the funeral songs is carried out by the youth group. The youth group also gives labour to harvest rice from the rice field.

About 100 years ago the government gave forest concessions to timber companies and all the bog trees were logged. Then, because of the environmental problems in Thailand the mountain people were blamed as destroyers of the forest. Later the government passed a number of forest laws –the National Park Law, National Forest Law, etc.– and determined the forest boundaries.

The indigenous peoples had to demonstrate to the government that they could live sustainably with the forest. We had a big march from Chiang Mai to Bangkok in 1994 to send a request to the government.

The power of the horse is in its hooves, and the power of the people is in their children, and that's how the youth group started. The good thing is that our parents understood that after the campaign they need to come back and understand their traditional culture more. In another Karen proverb, one bamboo rod cannot make a raft and one rice seed cannot make rice wine, so that's why we have to work together to campaign and lobby the government.

Another Karen proverb says the old and young bamboo need to support each other when the wind is strong. What that we are trying to do now is bridge the gap between the two generations. This is what the new education did when it came to our village and now we have to bridge the gap.

Another proverb, a bird flying needs to keep back the wind, but the quicker he can go the more he has to keep back the wind. The problem is that the young people, in order to walk forward further have to look back from time to time. And the young generation has to live with the land and that's why they have to prepare the seeds too. So we have to maintain the activities that our parents and grandparents did before. Basketry and so on (pictures). Another Karen proverb is, 'Living off the land, one must take care of the land; drinking the water, one must take care of the water.'

Prasert Trakansuphakon: Transfer of IK, the youth group learns the indigenous knowledge from the elders and then tries to transfer it to the younger people. This is how this mechanism of transfer is working.

2.9 Thailand: Problems of Indigenous Knowledge Transfer among the Hmong

Mr. Yua Thanomrungruang (Hmong)

Thank you and good afternoon. I am from the Hmong village in Mae Rim, am 56 years old, and considered a knowledgeable person (elder) in my village. Aspects of the indigenous knowledge is the topic today.

We have migrated to Thailand over 200 years ago and there are two subgroups. Education is carried out through masters and people wishing to learn must give something to the masters. Most of the cultural transfer is largely done in schools.

Some of the factors leading to loss of indigenous knowledge include: modern education, the capitalist cash economy, the youth being uninterested in indigenous knowledge, and some elders no longer want to transfer the knowledge. We solve this problem by carrying out activities using indigenous knowledge, and also look for partnerships to do this with other people, or other indigenous peoples.

What we have done to revive the indigenous knowledge is to start by ourselves to do agro-forestry in the village. We have a protected forest in the community. In the school the students learn reading and writing, but we take the children to the forests to look at nature and learn from

reality. We carry out the *dong saen* ceremony, which we do once a year and all the villages come to this ceremony.

The children go to visit other forests on exposure visits. They learn from the actual activity in the ceremony. They have time to try making the rice cakes themselves. Two ladies who are experts in herbal medicine teach herbal medicine to the students. Nobody knows how the next generation will be born again, so in this life we have to make the best effort we can. Thank you.

2.10 Thailand: Mien Textiles and Transfer of Knowledge

Mrs. Foei Srisombat

Thank you to the organisers for inviting all of us to this important meeting. My name is Foei, of the Mien ethnic group from Phayao province.

To understand about the handicraft work about the Mien, you have to trace back to the history of the Mien peoples. In the slide of an old painting of a royal hall scene, the origin and history of the Yao/Mien people is contained in it. It shows the Chinese king to the right end, with the princess and army to the left and centre. According to the legend the King wanted to kill a strong enemy but no one volunteered except for one soldier. He was successful in killing the enemy and according to this legend and in keeping his promise, the King married him to his daughter, the princess. The offspring of this couple was named Yao, and the family was the beginning of the Yao/Mien ethnic group. The whole story is depicted in the embroidery work that is shown in the painting. All the designs we use today have been taken from the painting of the royal hall.

The transfer of knowledge regarding embroidery is a very long process. First you have to know and understand the different symbols and meanings of the different designs. You also need to learn about the different designs that can be used. The student is also required to learn about the different kinds of threads being used. The next step is for one to learn about the dyeing process using different natural materials.

For a very young girl in the past, she had to start by knowing the designs of the embroideries. She also had to learn the different ways of embroideries, of which there are 5 ways of stitching and 2 ways of braiding. The next step is to learn how to measure the physical body of the person by using pen and fingers.

At present, we have adopted many new things e.g. the sewing machine and the measuring tape. What remains the same, however, are the designs of different embroideries, different patterns, and also the tools used that are still largely the same. Also, the system of making stitches is still the same.

The changes happening in Mien textile culture are several. One, the cloth is now coming from the factory. Second, the colour of the cloth and the thread has changed. Third, the designs

themselves have changed, often with no link to the original royal hall picture (of the king, princess, and army).

There are several factors contributing to the change in the traditional style of the handicrafts. First, the belief that modern textiles are better. Also, the younger generation like to wear modern clothes. Then there is the influence from the outside, especially for those who are fashion-conscious. Also, the modern machines and new tools for making handicrafts means that older styles and methods will slowly die out. Finally, the lifestyle of the people has also changed.

This is how we respond to all the challenges and obstacles. First, we organise the handicraft group for Mien people. Second, we revive and document the traditional designs in a book and a CD. Three, we transfer the indigenous method of making embroidery together with the meanings and belief systems that come with it. Four, we put it in practice in the school system, especially in the village school. And five, we create a forum for the revival of indigenous knowledge in different aspects.

What we have been doing so far may not be perfect but it is part of our effort to further our indigenous knowledge, and to pass it on the future generations. I want to close with a Mien proverb which says that: "In order to become a good leader, one needs to be a follower first."

Li Xuewen: In the first picture of the royal hall, there are some Chinese characters. What is the meaning of those characters?

Foei: It tells the legend of the king, the princes and the soldier, and the latter two who started the Yao ethnic group. An imprint of the painting was used as a 'passport' when travelling in the provinces and with it one could even be exempted from tax.

2.12 Laos: Traditional Fabric Dyeing Noimaniphone Lorbliayao

I am a handicraft association member and work with the handicraft network. Before I start I would like to explain about Laos. We have several ethnic groups, like the Hmong and Tai and the Lao.

This is the background to indigenous handicraft in Xiengda village, of the Lao ethnic group. It is about 96 km from Luang Phabang. They have much experience with handicrafts which are passed from generation to generation. During the Indochina war most of the ethnic group people did not have time to teach young people about handicrafts. In recent years, Lao peoples have more time to teach the young people about handicrafts.

Longlan village (Hmong group) is 46 km far from Luangprabang City. They have a lot of experience in teaching handicrafts. The Hmong ethnic group have had their own knowledge on

weaving for a long time. In the year 2003, villagers reformed their indigenous knowledge of weaving to improve their livelihood.

Namkha village, a Kmou ethnic group village, is 100km from Luangprabang City. Before, the Kmou did not have knowledge on weaving, but was influenced by Xiengda Village, and then Kmou started to plant cotton and use it for their weaving. The Kmou have knowledge of using non- timber forest products (NTFP) to produce a kind of bag called *piat* bag.

Establishment of Handicraft groups: Since 2003 there has been a big effort to help the young people learn about the handicrafts of the village. From 2003 to 2004, the ethnic people wanted to establish a group to help teaching and learning of traditional handicrafts.

Network Establishment: From year 2003-2004, CHESH has supported the women groups in these villages to exchange experience on indigenous handicraft both in-country and in Vietnam. Three indigenous handicraft groups were established in 2003 in three villages, each group with 10 members.

To rehabilitate and preserve their indigenous handicraft, the Indigenous Handicraft Network was established in 2006 between three village groups and have also been networking with Mien in Sapa District, Hmong in Simacai District and Thai in Sonla, Hanh Dich Vietnam.

They have established a network in order to improve marketing in order to improve sales and increase income. It is also important to exchange experience between ethnic groups. This is promoted by the handicraft association and the network.

The objective is to rehabilitate, expand and preserve the indigenous knowledge of ethnic groups in Northern Lao PDR. They wish to create a sustainable marketing for the network and to improve the income and livelihood of the ethnic communities living in the area.

Function of the network: A few years after group was established, the activities of the group were not successful, but by exchanges of experience, the group became a network. From the year 2006, the villagers started to use their own plants for traditional dyeing. Each ethnic group also established networks and exchanged experience because of the high demand for the handicraft products.

The groups exchanged knowledge and taught the younger people how to do the handicrafts. The three ethnic groups (Hmong, Lao Lung, Kmou) transferred their own knowledge from elders to younger people between the networks. The exchanges included learning by doing on traditional dyeing and exchanging on sustainable marketing. The ethnic groups learn by doing together. Exchange about marketing experiences takes place in the network.

Traditional belief in the dyeing process: It is prohibited for pregnant women to see and to do the dyeing process. It is also prohibited for women who are in the period of menstruation to go to the traditional handicraft area. The older people tell the younger people that when dyeing they cannot spit. The younger people understand and try to follow the instructions of their elders. Without respect for these beliefs, you will not be successful in the dyeing of natural colours.

They teach each other about their traditional cultures and the beliefs of the local people when they have exchanges. This is for you to understand the dying process and the ethnic network. Some people do not know how to do this and they are helped to learn the processes.

This is a natural product from plants and no chemicals are used in the handicraft association groups. This is because of the exchange of experience in the association, and they try to focus on the quality of products.

Fang is a kind of tree for dyeing in the local area. In the village they know how to use the fang plant to dye fabrics. In conclusion, all this is the result of the network and the association in the past and the work is becoming better and better now.

2.14 Laos: Banana Tree Handicraft Thanongsone Xaisongkham

In Houathom Village, Sangthong District, Vientiane Lao PDR, the Gender Development Group use the banana trees to get the raw materials to make handicrafts. The fibre from the banana tree is used to make several products. The dyeing process also uses natural materials.

The pictures show how we teach the people to use the fibre from the banana plant.\, and also how to dye the fibres.

2.15 Cambodia: Offering Rituals in Rotational Farming Ms. Nam Yak

The presentation began with a demonstration of traditional music of the Por indigenous group using the *phloui*, a traditional wind instrument. This instrument is used for praying to the spirit and asking the spirit to come. It is also for asking the spirit for good health as well as good farming and rain water for the next farming season.

This man is an expert in this instrument and the older men can play it very well. The instrument looks like and sounds like a Thai *khaen*, or Chinese *sheng*, but with a softer tone. This song we sing in the fields and in the village when we sacrifice a buffalo.

A folktale telling of the origin of rice offerings

This topic concerns the legendary generation-to-generation transfer of the rice cultivation ceremonies belonging to indigenous people. The story describes the past beliefs related to the ceremony and this is continuing within the indigenous peoples in Cambodia, who continue with the annual offerings with the aim of showing devotion to their ancestors' spirits.

The story narrated is of an indigenous family with two children, one son and daughter who lived in the middle of the jungle. In daily life, they ate yam and manioc tubers that are found with difficulty in the thick forest. These kinds of food are mostly the wild pigs' food and the major problem for this family was that it was hard to compete with the large number of wild pigs in the forest. In their day-to-day life, the parents started to have great difficulties to feed their children.

The forest spirit felt great pity for this isolated family and changed into human form as a very old lady and intended to live with them. She looked very wicked and had a very ugly face. One day, this wicked-looking lady came to stay with the family for a while. Immediately, the family reacted very badly to the old lady. They did not want her to live with her, because she is very dirty and very old, and this family was very poor.

The second and third time she was still neglected by the poor family. The old lady felt that 'It might be because of their livelihood, and I am too old. It might be they that don't really know who I am'. This meant that the old lady is the forest spirit who wanted to live with them to give them some advice to support the family to develop so that there was no need to encroach into the animal area, struggling to take their food. The old lady decided to go back and discuss things with them. Later on, she decided to help them in terms of the rice spirit as a strong helper to overcome the family's rejection.

At every opportunity, she went again and again and tried to negotiate with them until they agreed, but she still kept it a secret where she had come from. She was provided with a very small cottage nearby. In a few days, the parents went in the early morning to find food away from their house and let the two children stay with the old lady. They boiled yam and manioc tubers in the pot by putting it on the fireplace made from three stones. When the two children were still, she went to check what is in the pot. She saw small pieces of yam and manioc and thought that; 'Ah! this kind of food is not suitable for supporting human beings. I will do magic to turn these into rice, and then when the children get up they can taste it'.

When the children got up they walked straight to the pot, because their parents always instructed them to have breakfast before playing around in the back yard. They saw a different thing to eat from what they usually have and suddenly started to cry. Right away, the old lady came to soothe them and tried to persuade them to taste this new kind of food. The children were satisfied with her persuasion and tried to eat the rice. They told her that; "It is very delicious, we never tried it before'.

The sun is nearly setting, and their parents did not come home yet. The old lady told the children to go to bed and she herself went to bed too. A couple of hours later their parents arrived home in the darkness and quietness. They lit a torch and saw their children were sleeping. They tried to wake them, but they would not get up. They went into the kitchen and found the rice that was different from the food they were used to feeding them. They thought that it might be that the old lady had killed them. Suddenly, their father ran to the old lady's cottage and asked many questions but got no answers. The father became angry with her and said rude words to her and expelled the old lady from the house and yard.

The pitiful, lonely and wicked-looking lady was willing to go, but left the father with a smooth and soft message: *Tomorrow you might not be able to meet me again, and you might be really short of food. If you want to have enough food, you should prepare an offering ceremony for me and then you will definitely be able to escape from the shortage. There will be no need to for you to dig up roots*

and tubers to eat as you used to. Before she left, the old lady made an incantation to provide the family with full store of rice, and a lot of cooked rice.

The parents talked about this during the time while children still did not get up. They kneeled down near their children and cried loudly together. They regretted their children losing their lives when they were still small and very lovely. They were unsatisfied with the old lady because she should not kill their children.

In fact, because of the delicious food that they had never tasted before and had become full, the children slept as if they had died. Because the parents cried very loudly, it disturbed their sleep. The children seemed to wake up very slowly. Then they saw their parents were crying with great sorrow without any reason. Right away, the two children got up together and hugged their parents, telling them that they did not die. They told them the whole story about staying with the old lady and that she had taken care of them, providing them with a very good and tasty food.

The lonely parents felt that she was a magic woman, and then they rushed to the kitchen and saw the very good pot of cooked rice that their children told them about. They rushed into the store and saw many kilograms of rice in it. They were so happy and remembered the old lady's words. The rice was kept for rice seed, and they ate some of it too. When they met their people who used to forage for food in the jungle, they told them that they were the lucky family, which were assisted by the magic woman. Also they shared the seed with them for eating and planting. But, what they did not forget was to celebrate the rice annual offering devoted to the old lady who was recognized as the rice spirit who helped them. They also tell this story from generation to generation to teach them about the original cause of the coming of rice.

In the indigenous people's traditional ways the rice offering is carried out seven times: Offering before planting, offering when the rice is growing, offering during tillering and developing, offering before harvest, offering before putting rice into the rice store, offering when taking rice out of the rice store, and offering before starting to eat the new rice.

2.16 Cambodia: Rotational Farming in Mondolkiri

Mr. Voun Sovoeun

I know a little bit about rotational farming and how they can do it by offerings, so I will tell you about it.

I would like to tell you about each of the steps in the cultivation and offerings. We first look for a place in the forest for growing rice and we make an offering there. When the rice is growing we make an offering again. Before the harvest we have to have another offering, and then we collect the rice in the granary. In this indigenous knowledge the children and everyone joins together in the ceremony the young people learn by themselves. Now they are making a book so they can learn about this in the schools. In the book production, they are also joined by elders and young children and villagers and this book is about the knowledge of the indigenous peoples.

Also these efforts are supported by local and national government so that ethnic people and children can also play ethnic music in the school assemblies. The schools are also now beginning to teach the indigenous peoples languages. Apart from the indigenous, indigenous instruments, songs and other performances are used in the schools.

In conclusion we found that the rituals for rotational farming has helped to increase solidarity in our community, and it is good way for the young people to learn the indigenous knowledge.

Paw Say Htoo: Do you have a name for the rice spirit?

Sovoeun: We call it *bokadoei*, or *yakucheu*.

Naw Ler Htu: We call it *biippiyon* in Karen in Burma

Songwit: What do you mean "recognized by government"?

Sovoeun: We mean that it is recognized by the government as indigenous peoples and we are allowed to practice our traditional indigenous ways.

Songwit: It means the government recognizes the rotational farming?

Soveeun: It is recognized by the government in the regulations, in the national assembly and also in our constitution.

Wu Jiawei: When the women do the dyeing, why can't the pregnant woman not do dyeing or go near the place of dyeing?

Noimaniphone: If you follow the belief, maybe the colour of the product will not be good. If you want good quality products then you have to follow the traditional instructions.

Samut Chhoem: What kind of impact was there between Laos and Vietnam people when they had exchange of experiences through the association?

Noimaniphone: We talk about how to exchange experience, how to make the colours or the quality of the colours, it is not really related to the traditional culture, because every group has their ways of making the colours they have, but we can exchange experience about the colours and dyeing the cotton cloth.

2.17 China: Naxi Leba dance and script

Li Xuewen

I am from Lijiang, China. I am of the Naxi people. In my community I am engaged in transmission of indigenous knowledge. In 2007 I established the Lijiang-Dongba Dance Transmission Institute. On behalf of all the staff of the institute I wish to thank the organisers for inviting me, and I wish that this conference will be successful.

I would like to talk about several issues. First I would like to introduce our community in Dongba village. It is a mountainous area with 9440 people in 11 hamlets. They are from the Naxi Lisu, Tibetan, Bai, and Yi ethnic groups.

At the moment there are two 'transmission' projects of the institute. The first is the transmission of the Leba dance, a traditional Naxi dance which has 72 major sections. Any gender or age can participate. It takes 12 hours to finish the whole performance and had set sequences led by a master dancer. The dance imitates the animals and productive activities. The second transmission project is Dongba culture. Includes the transmission of Naxi language, Dongba hieroglyphs and Dongba paper-making.

The method of transmission is via the community school and via the community itself. For the latter, Dongba culture, especially the dances, are performed at funeral ceremonies, wedding and agricultural activities. We also conduct training courses at our institute. We welcome all age-groups, and both sexes. Anyone who wants to learn is welcome to learn. Those who benefit from our activities are the students from the community, the villagers from the community, and other interested outsiders. In fact, now more and more outsiders come to our institute to learn.

The work done so far: at the local school we teach popular Dongba/Naxi script. It is compulsory for 3rd to 6th graders to learn Naxi script in the community school. Two classes are held each week for this purpose.;

There is a Naxi saying that goes like this: I speak the language a lot because that is my identity, and we want to transmit the language we love because we want the children to know who they are.

We also teach the traditional Dongba drawings in the school. Also the Leba dance. In the community we establish and train 7 Leba performing teams involving 470 performers. In the institute we also established a Dongba paper mill, run by a Dongba family.

We have been successful in developing a technique to reproduce the gou tree, which provides the necessary raw material for Dongba paper-making. So we have solved this problem of resource availability.

The other problems that remain include: lack of cultural teachers (in the whole Dongba area we have only one Dongba master who is 72 years already), lack in Dongba/Naxi script teachers,

inability to share information fully (because we don't have access to the internet and no modern media to access the information) and we also lack textbooks and funding.

In the face of these challenges, we really hope to get support from all of you, especially from IKAP.

Prasert: Regarding the Naxi school, is there good cooperation from the government?

Li: In the national curriculum, there is a certain time set aside for local subjects, so the local school asked to have 2 classes of Dongba script and Dongba dance lessons. It is a voluntary subject for the students but about 80 per cent of the students sign up.

Kongthong: How do you share the culture with other people?

Li: Eventhough we are a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural society in our region, the Naxi people are the most dominant. This is because the other groups rely on oral tradition while we have our own script. Also, in the past, everyone in the community spoke at least 3 languages. Because of the cultural revolution and education system, students now have only to speak two languages: mandarin and their mother tongue. So there is a threat to the transmission of languages. I hope that with the institute I can promote the transmission of language and culture.

Songwit: Do the local and federal governments have any programme to train Naxi people as teachers?

Li: We do have training for Naxi teachers at the Dongba. One is 22 years and he had been trained since he was 13 years old at the academy. For the whole process of our transmission project, we have received great support form the Dongba Culture Academy.

Thanh Ha: How many years did it take to get permission to teach the Naxi script in schools. Can you perform some dance here for all of us to know how it is like?

Li: Since it is in the Constitution an it is the policy of the government, there is no problem in getting the schools to teach the language in schools. The students from 3rd to the 6th grade are all encouraged to learn, voluntarily. The Dongba dance actually is a community dance, a sacred dance. It is unique to the community. But I will be happy to demonstrate this dance at the fair tomorrow.

2.18 China: Dong Culture Transmission

Mr. Yang Xiu Kang

The Dong ethnic people are very good at communal singing in tones. We don't need any instruments.

(Mr. Yang then sang a song.) The meaning of this song is to persuade the young generation to be good to their parents. This song is supposed to have many people singing together, including youth and elders, in different tones. The effect of singing alone is not very good. But this is what I can only do.

Last night I drew a poster. Today I am going to introduce how our Dong people transfer our culture and knowledge. I would like to pick the traditional singing as a case to illustrate this. I am going to present our transmission system by steps. First step, how it was done in the past. Second step, the difficulties we face now; and the third step, what we are going to do to overcome these in the future.

In the past, usually it is the mother who teaches the girl how to sing, and the father teaches the sons. There will be a song master who will teach all the people how to sing together. The picture shows a singing pagoda. Everyday the master will teach the people how to sing in the square. There are over 100 villages in Dong province and each will have a pagoda like this, where the people come together to sing and to share their experiences as well.

The singing pagoda is an informal classroom for the Dong people to transfer their knowledge. Every year there will be a singing fair, on 8 August. This is when all the children will get together at the pagoda square, where the parents will guide them and teach them how to sing properly in preparation for the fair.

From the 1980s to 1990s many young people moved out to the cities because of the increase in the economy. They were not keen to learn as before. And our old people began to pass away. The tradition of singing was in danger.

One reason why they do not want to learn to sing is that Dong singing needs a lot of people together, otherwise there is no effect. Also, there are no music books to record all the lyrics. It's only in the people's memory. And there are over a thousand songs.

I am the head of the village, and I began to think about how to solve the problem. First, we decided to teach the traditional songs in the school. Second, to create awareness in the parents of the importance of the traditional songs and traditions. The music fairs stopped in the 1980s and 1990s. In 2000 the music fair was revived. And there is greater interest in Dong signing now.

Kongthong: How often do you train the children in their songs/music?

Yang Xiukang: In the schools, two times a week. The music fair is once a year. It is like a competition. But in every household, the mother will teach the daughter and the father the son. There is a Dong saying that says: Once the child can walk, they can dance; once when they can eat rice, they can sing.

Nareerat: What is the content of the songs? Do they refer to anything about the livelihoods?
To be good with your friends, outsiders, with nature

Yang Xiukang: We have a thousand different types of songs, covering all themes, including those that you mention.

Prasert Trakansuphakon: This sounds very similar to the Karen. We too have a thousand poems or songs. Teaching of right behaviour is also done through singing or poems. Is the songs the same for elders and youths.

Yang Xiukang: The lyrics is different but the rhythm is the same.

Mrs. See: You said that the tradition has been discarded/stopped for 10 years. How was the tradition revived again? What process was taken?

Yang Xiukang: At the end of the 1990s, some Dong elders realised that this kind of tradition is crucial for them. From the 1990s, the government tried to promote tourism, they hoped that indigenous culture can be an attraction, so they helped the Dong people to help recover the tradition. So two forces were involved: internal, from the people, and external from the government.

Mannoon: Sounds like the revival of the singing tradition among the Dong people is part of the result of the encouragement of tourism. What is the effect to the livelihood to the Dong people, to the community itself?

Yang Xiukang: Since the singing tradition has been revived, the villagers are happier than before, they feel that they enjoy their life more than before.

2.19 China: Weaving among the Anduo Group

Ms. Se Zuoman

I am a Tibetan from China, from the Anduo group. I am going to present how the Tibetan people present their knowledge on weaving. Sorry I don't have any computer presentation. I just drew a poster last night and use the traditional way to introduce our tradition.

The Tibetan culture is so rich that if someone was to take time to explain everything it will take months, even years. In the past the Tibetan people were nomads, we follow our herds

everywhere in search of the grasslands. Perhaps our tools for weaving is simple compared with other people because we have to move around from place to place.

The material we use for weaving is only wool. We never dye the wool; just use the natural black or white of the wool. Normally this weaving skill is from mother to daughter, and the other knowledge is from father to son. But many skills or knowledge had been threatened by the mainstream culture which has tremendous influence on our culture. The young generation prefer to wear fashionable costumes, not the old-fashioned way of dress. So our weaving skill and our culture was almost lost from our blood.

I live in a very unique place in Tibet, one of the most beautiful site-seeing places which has benefited from tourism. As a result of the increase in economy, many youths who went to college came back home because they realise that culture is important and they realised the importance to recover the culture.

In terms of the handcraft skills, some realised that the mother is the focal person to transfer the skills. Some women then got together to do something to preserve their skills. In the meantime some NGOs organised them to learn their traditional skills from the older generation. So that once the mothers know this skill they can pass it on to their daughters.

Actually another factor affecting the Tibetan culture is that parents have two choices of schools to send their children to: Tibetan school or Chinese school. Most of the young people wanted to go to the Chinese school as it would be easier to get a job if you graduated from this school. Tibetan school saw little interest from the younger people.

When the government gave them a platform to show and sell their products in the tourist area, all the mothers took the opportunity. I myself jumped into the skill. In the transmission of the traditional skills, the key point is the mother. My community is doing quite well because all the mothers realise the importance of this weaving. Now it is easier for younger generation to learn the skills.

Another encouraging factor is that all the products can be easily sold as our hometown is a popular tourist site.

I didn't present you the difficulties because of the time constrain. But just to let you know that we solve all the problems by ourselves. People from outside can only give temporary help.

Somboon: My question is about the transmission of indigenous knowledge; who are the teachers and who are the learners? From yesterday up to now, in the Burmese case, it seems that the teachers and learners are the youth, in other countries not clear who the teachers and the learners were in this case. It seems to me that we talk to ourselves within our group. In many presentations, it seems that the young generation did not pay attention to indigenous knowledge. Why does it happen and how are we to solve the problem. I am not quite sure if it is the outside culture that influences the learning of the young generation. I propose that for the next gathering,

I want to have representatives who include both the children and youth to come and share how they learn their indigenous knowledge.

(No answer given.)

2.18 Summation and Recap Jannie Lasimbang (AIPP)

There were three presentations yesterday. How the transfers have changed, how they were and how they are now, the challenges of transferring of IK, and some of the ways to overcome the problems are the topics of this presentation.

Many people talked about differing situations, the community, i.e. for Burma, many of the participants are in Thailand as refugees or IDPs so it is hard to transfer IK. In the family, it is hard because there is no space to go to learn, the environment is quite different, there is no place for the community to gather and the forest is also becoming very small. The governments are controlling the people through national parks and so on. There is also international competition and people have to compete in the market.

In education, now children learn in schools but it is not like before when other people and places, like the forest were the teachers, so the teachers have changed, since before people could learn from everything, including nature.

The influence of outside culture, for example from the media and so on, which brings in new information that was not there before.

Now young people feel they have to go and get an outside job so the IK becomes secondary and not so important compared with learning to use a computer and so on.

Some things are positive, because we now, for example, see the threats and so we see the importance of sharing IK widely. Now people can use modern equipment to communicate, CDs, computers and so on.

We have 13 or 14 different case studies and I'd like to talk about each of these.

Practice and informal training:

Lang Son herbal network and Medicinal Reference Book – a modern way of doing traditional work, and there is also a herbal clinic for helping cure illnesses and for training young herbalists, and also for outreach to the community concerning herbal medicine.

Handmade paper (Miao), the people work together to maintain the traditional skill and maintain the value of the paper to sell.

Mien embroidery – they have tried to systematize the handicraft, such as measuring and so on, and also give the meaning of the patterns, not just the techniques, and have made it easier for young people by adapting to modern machinery and so on.

Music and dancing has also adapted to young people. The difficulty of finding places to do it, so they have to look for places where the training can be done.

The Karen youth group, enhancing the learning of traditional ways by involving the youth group in the rituals and use of songs and proverbs so they can transfer the IK.

Hmong agro-forestry, where take the young people to the forest so that they can see which plants are medicines and so on, and they have also produced medical handbooks so that people can acquire the information.

In Laos they are reviving Indigenous Handicraft; knowledge of natural dying and exchanges with other peoples.

Handicraft using banana fibre products also teach local people how to make the products and they also have fairs in Vientiane to promote their products.

There is the Longba Transmission Project.

We also looked at rotational farming in Cambodia, which has been given recognition by the government. The people have offering ceremonies in the fields, from which the children learn by participation.

We heard about Dong traditional songs, which were revived after a 10-year gap.

Tibetan tradition is passed between the mothers and the daughters, and this was revived by re-training the mothers who then transmitted the indigenous knowledge to their daughters. The language was also taught along with the indigenous knowledge.

These were examples of formal teaching and learning:

Thai teaching classes and learning network

Teaching of Naxi children songs, books have been published and it has been included in the national curriculum.

The revival of the Dongba script.

Thailand: Linking Knowledge and activism in the Karen Youth Network

Challenges and focus that lead to a loss of Inter-generational transfer of indigenous knowledge.

There is a great influence from outside in terms of modern medicine and drugs. Over-collection of plants and animals and a lack of involvement of the community in preservation is also a problem. Monoculture and loss of the forest is leading to a loss of the medicinal plants. There is also Government policy of requiring traditional practitioners to get licenses, so this is a barrier for them and some have to practice illegally. Burma, a business was started on herbal medicines and this is leading to commercialization and over-collection of plants and animals. There are also difficulties of competition, where young people want to use more modern products,

In the school system, where the curriculum is inappropriate and the children have no time to learn traditional knowledge, they cannot learn IK there and have to go to different places to do this, so it is hard to attend the ceremonies and so on. The elders also do not have much time to teach.

The influence of capitalism and the market economy is serious in Laos, where the groups did not know how to work in the market economy. They had to study it and later they were able to find out how to market their products.

The younger people are also not interested in what is happening. In some places the teachers themselves do not know how to speak or read the traditional language or the Dongba script masters are dying out. They could use modern technology to enhance this but then there is no funding. New innovative ways are beginning to appear. Making books, curricula, forming networks, and looking at changes in positive ways that can help transfer of indigenous knowledge. There is also formation of associations and so on for networks and exchanges.

Another problem is: Are the youth really interested? The youth must be questioned to see if they are really interested to learn and perhaps we should invite more youth to come next time.

Thi Troung Luong: One of the problems is that people do not know the script for their native language and therefore do not know how to write. This is a problem because they cannot write down what they know in order to pass it on to others. That's why it's important for people to learn their traditional scripts and writing systems.

3. GOOD PRACTICES OF INTER-GENERATIONAL KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

17 & 19 November 2007

Facilitated by Scott, Ler Htu, and Yothin Ek.

Each country group was required to prepare posters and exhibits on the good practices of inter-generational transmission of indigenous knowledge in their country or experience. One or two facilitators were to remain in their country areas (to present the good practices to the visitors) while the others would visit the other country poster exhibitions on a rotation basis. Each visit was to last 20 minutes. The photos in the Image Folder gives an overview of the displays and poster exhibits.

The guide questions for the countries to look into during the exchange were: How inter-generational transfer of indigenous knowledge and skills took place in the past? How is indigenous knowledge transferred between generations today? What has stayed the same and what has changed? What are the factors that lead to the loss of traditional ways of knowledge transfer? How have you responded to the challenges and obstacles? What has your community done/what is it doing to revitalize and strengthen inter-generational transfer of indigenous knowledge?

Based on what they saw and heard at the poster exhibitions and at the Regional Indigenous Fair on 18 November 2007 held at the Tribal Museum, the countries reported back on what they learned from the other countries.

LAOS

Reported by Sengphuoxay Inthavinkham

We try to improve or develop what we learn from the other countries, e.g. music, medicine, and also the cultural heritage, especially about how to teach the younger people. Since there are a lot of natural materials in our countries, we plan to revive or increase the use of traditional medicines.

Regarding folktales, proverbs, we realise that this is a way for the local people in Laos to teach the younger people, from parents to children and from friend to friend. Similarly, we have obtained ideas as to what we can do regarding our classical music.

We also learned how to protect our natural resources through environmental education and raising community awareness. We realise that we need to protect the natural resources, especially since the natural resources is also a source of food. Finally, we learn how to mix the native resources and the traditional culture.

We learned most from Burma regarding trees and plants, and medicines. As for classical music, all the countries are very interesting, and we learned from them.

VIETNAM

Reported by Ha Nam Nimh

We learned a lot from you over the last two days. We found many similarities and differences especially in the use of natural resources. From Thailand, we found the forest preservation practices very interesting, while rotational farming in Cambodia impressed me a lot.

Regarding education, we learned the way to produce curriculum and traditional script from China and Thailand. The local curriculum in Thailand is also very impressive. We were interested to learn how the Naxi/Dongba script was being rewritten in national language. And their classes to teach indigenous children, to be involved with reality and be very familiar with nature.

On handicrafts, we were most impressed by the use of banana fibres in Laos and the way they use natural materials to dye the cloth. On art and culture, we learned a lot about the way the Naxi people are transmitting the Leba dance to the community in China. The musical instruments from Thailand were interesting.

Many other things we learned from you and we hope we will another chance to do the same.

CAMBODIA

Reported by Sokunthea Nun

Since we started our conference, Cambodia learned a lot from all of you.

With Thailand, there is much similarity in the inter-generational transfer of knowledge. The difference is that Thailand is a 'good' country in that they can lobby the government for support of indigenous education.

With Laos, we see similarity in the way of using herbal medicine. We also have the bamboo box, which we call *kapau*. But Laos has been able to make use of the banana trees and have an interesting book-making process which also has the support of the government.

From Burma, the similarities are in herbal medicine and education (where the traditional language is used, as well as their indigenous clothes and music). Their rotational farming is the same as ours.

We are also very interested in the educational books for children from other countries, especially Thailand and China.

From China we see similarity in the dyeing and the production of children's songs on CDs and VCDs, and the use of old language as well as in their retention of traditional music and paper-making process. Their clothes however are completely different. Also, our indigenous language has no written script.

With Vietnam, their rotation farming system is similar to ours. What is different is the Thai script which is indigenous but which we don't have. We appreciate that they have herbal medicine books such that we can learn from them. In their dancing and clothes, and also their house-building styles, are all something to learn about.

THAILAND

Reported by Wilailuk

All the previous presentations were similar to what we discussed. It is amazing that we think in the same way, so I will just make an overview of what we learned.

We feel that all the groups are aware of the origins of the indigenous groups. And in each country there is an effort to document the historical background of our indigenous group. The difference is just in the techniques and the media we use. And the major difference is related to the government's policy. So in Thailand we concluded that we are still weak in accessing to the level of the government policy.

So we conclude that we still need to improve our capacity, in order to allow our people to access the information to negotiate at the policy level.

There is some small detail to mention regarding the use of banana stem. Some Thai participants said that they also use the banana fibre but not in the same way.

Intervention by Foei: From the observation of how the banana fibre is used in Laos, we can relate to our tradition to make use of the banana leaf and trunk in a different way. The trunk has to be dried over a fire first before it can be made into string or rope, including the string for the crossbow used to hunt for wild animals.

CHINA

Reported by Wu Jia Wei

The most important thing we learned is the process of indigenous knowledge transfer from the elders to the younger ones. We also learned a lot from the Thai who did the group study in the wild, and started their herbal forest and also how they used the system to transfer the knowledge.

We were also impressed the use of so many local flora and fauna, plants and animals, in their herbal medicine and food. Our Miao rep (Pang Yu Hua) also learned that the dye used by the Lao peoples use natural materials.

BURMA

Reported by Paw Say Htoo

We were glad to see the Tibetan culture. All the traditional dancing is similar to ours. But we want to learn more about the Naxi's children songs and the way they write it in books. From Vietnam, the herbal medicine and herbal forest concept were interesting.

The musical instruments of Cambodia are very similar to ours. Our grandfather said the rice-spirit offering is very similar to our culture. We were interested to see the publications, picture books about musical instruments, etc. We want to do that as well.

With Laos, the basket weaving and dyes used are the same as ours. Before we could do banana fibre weaving, even pineapple fibre, but now we have lost it. But our interest has been revived by your work.

The music groups and dancing in Thailand give us motivation. Work done by IMPECT to publish bi-lingual books and audio-visuals is also inspiring.

We found commonalities in all countries, with rich culture, and suffer the same from modernisation and globalisation.

Yothin: Most of you mentioned the need for transfer of knowledge on topics such as herbal medicine, arts & craft, and natural resources for dyeing. Some wanted manuals or some form of documentation to be done.

Scott: Thailand and Burma indicated the similarities that all countries felt. The political context of the country affects the community's ability to do their work. Some people have different experiences from to her, some have taken longer but in the end there is a huge richness of knowledge are cultures in this room. The strength emerging this room is not what is similar among our countries but how we are similar in our differences. Our strength is our diversity and the common goal to protect and enhance that diversity.

We usually break up into our respective countries. We do this because of the language, but the goal of IKAP is to get over the boundaries, and to be able to support each other. The next session is to organise into group based on topics and areas we have in common.

4. REGIONAL INDIGENOUS FAIR 18 November 2007

The Regional Indigenous Fair with the theme 'Affirmation of Indigenous Knowledge in MMSEA' was held at the (Open) Tribal Museum on Sunday, 18 November 2007. It was officiated by the Vice-Governor of Chiang Mai, Mr. Chuchart Khampaeng who was welcomed by representatives of the indigenous peoples from the six countries, led by Mien musicians.

The opening ceremony began with a traditional bamboo dance of the Akha, followed by speeches by Ms. See Saelee as representative of the Indigenous Knowledgeable & Peoples (IKP) Network in Thailand, and Ms. Thi Truong Long, from Vietnam and as representative of Indigenous Knowledge & Peoples Network. This was followed by cultural performances by Burma (Ramtong, Karen cultural dance), China (Naxi Leba dance) and Thailand (Lahu). The chief of Social Development and Human Security in Chiang Mai Province, Mr. Mongkhon Danwilaipitikul then gave his speech. The fair was then officially declared open by the Vice-Governor, who later visited the country stalls.

The rest of the day saw a series of cultural performances from various ethnic groups in the six MMSEA countries. These included: Seven-hole flute (Cambodia), Hmong flute (Thailand), Le Ba dance of the Naxi people (China), Mien Tray dance (Thailand), Indigenous cultural performance (Laos), Lisu dance (Thailand), Indigenous cultural performance (Vietnam), Karen bamboo dance (Thailand), Indigenous cultural performance (Burma), Lua Sword dance (Thailand), The gong and dancing (Cambodia), 'Dae Khong' dance (Thailand), 'Ha Ta' dance (China), Kachin cultural performance (Thailand), Indigenous cultural performance (Laos), Lahu cultural performance (Thailand).

There were also Learning and Practical bases on Indigenous Knowledge and Skills with indigenous experts and practitioners at hand to show the young visitors their skills and share their knowledge. The six bases were as follows:

- Base 1: Handicrafts (weaving, dyeing, textiles, and embroidering)
- Base 2: Craft and Arts (basketry and silver-smithing)
- Base 3: Indigenous games (archery and others)

- Base 4: Music and songs singing, proverbs, playing musical instruments, and dance
- Base 5: Agriculture (traditional agriculture, indigenous seeds and products)
- Base 6: Indigenous healing (indigenous herbal medicine and massage)

Aside from the above activities, several food stalls serving traditional indigenous fare were set up in the area. Stalls selling indigenous crafts were also set up.

The fair ended at 5.30 pm after fruitful and enlightening exchanges and after much learning and sharing.

5. FORMULATION OF ACTION PLANS FOR IKAP

20 November 2007

Formulation of Plans of Action for IKAP to further the inter-generational transfer of knowledge and skills.

Facilitated by: Mr. Scott O'Brien, Mr. Yothin Ek, Naw Ler Htu

Briefing by Mr. Scott O'Brien:

These are the tentative topic for the next session up to lunch:

- Group for Herbal Medicine: Burma, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos
- Environmental Protection: Natural Resource Management and protection for indigenous people in the highlands who rely on NTFP (non-timber forest products).
- Rotational Farming: Cambodia, Vietnam and Burma
- Local Curriculum: Naxi, making of textbooks and teaching languages in the national and local curricula.
- Natural Dyeing: Laos, Vietnam and China
- Arts and Crafts, Handicrafts:
- Traditional music and dancing:
- Indigenous technologies:
- Seeds and Plants
- Youth and Children
- Indigenous Philosophy

After some discussion, the topics were all grouped into five main areas:

- Indigenous Education
- Handicrafts
- Music and Dance
- Rotational farming (including Seeds and Plants)
- Healers and Herbal Medicine.

The task is to come up with a work plan saying how you will cooperate with each other over the next year. Please try to work out how you will cooperate and support each other.

The participants then moved to five areas within the meeting room to discuss their topics using white boards and colored paper for discussion items, ideas and comments. This process continued up to lunch time. The participants then went to lunch and then continued to discuss the action plans for a further 90 minutes after lunch.

Every group has had very practical discussions for ideas they can implement within their country and community, and now we will have presentations of the Action Plans, 10 minutes for each.

5.1 Rotational Farming

Presented by Sokunthea

We discussed the country situation in Laos Thailand and Cambodia. In Laos there are land use laws and regulations. The rotational farming in Laos is called shifting cultivation, and the government will force it to stop in 2010. In Thailand the policy is not serious, but in Cambodia rotational farming is recognized by the government and so the situation is better in Cambodia than in the other two countries. The meaning of shifting cultivation is that the people cut down the forest and move again and again without coming back, but rotational farming is done in a circle coming back round to the same place again.

As for cooperation among the members, we plan to develop rotational farming networks in the region and leaders to present rotational farming topics at local and regional level then have a network at each level. We can then have a conference at national level to increase the public understanding of rotational farming in each country.

The next stage would be to have a regional conference on rotational farming and rotational farming policies, exposure trips and meetings and then do seed collection and exchange. Mapping skills development is necessary to show forest zones and village borders, to show which lands are used for rotational farming and for other forest uses. Then documentation and research on rotational farming is necessary, and the purpose of this is that we want to develop this in the school curriculum, and to launch campaigns concerning this through the media, have lobbying at policy level, and work towards the transmission of rotational farming knowledge to children in schools.

Finally, fundraising, and one person will be responsible for developing this in each country Laos (Mr. Kongthong), Cambodia (Mr. Sokunthea), and Thailand (Mr. Prasert).

Sokul Sao: Please explain clearly about the mapping skills development.

This was discussed with the Lao and Thai people as this is happening in Laos and Thailand, but not in Cambodia. The purpose is to show land use zones for rotational farming and for different uses to show that the people are not destroying the forest or the environment, because in Laos the government says the people are destroying the forest with shifting cultivation, but actually rotational farming is very good for the environment.

Prasert: This is very sensitive because we must show the rotation of swidden and fallow lands and the zoning shows all the fallow lands for the whole cycle of rotational farming. With the mapping it is very clear how much land is being used for the rotational farming, even how much land each family uses. I have an example of a map (Prasert shows a map to the participants) with different colors showing the different zones in the village and this is very sensitive and useful information for showing exactly what is happening in the whole rotation.

Chupinit: I suggest a wider participation than a regional conference as there is rotational farming in Central and South America and also in Africa. This kind of farming is discouraged by all the governments in the area and the main accusation is that too much land is used for farming and it may be of more value if we have people of other areas share their knowledge of rotational farming, because there are different systems using different fallow periods and so on. For example some groups rotate for about 20 years and come back to the same place, but in Cambodia they cultivate a swidden for five consecutive years before they move on, so we need more examples of rotational farming practice to show what kind of rotational farming knowledge has been accumulated in different places and also to look at research that has been carried out in other regions, and this would be very useful for analyzing what is happening in this region.

Yothin: Sometimes the farmers rotate for even 20 or 30 years so the trees can grow back and it is good for the environment.

5.2 Handicrafts

Presented by Ayoe

First we discussed what we can do or what we can provide or what we need. We shared what our resources were and we came up with this formula, First, how can we cooperate. 1. Communication, because we need to have ways we can share information and so on. 2. We can exchange raw materials so we can make new products and also share markets so that we can expand our markets to other countries. We can share resources, e.g. we can make training courses, and we have environmental resources and we need to use these sources sustainably. We

also need to carry out market surveys to find out what each area needs, and then see which places can make the products to fulfill the demand. We need to have meetings once a year. We make handicrafts for the market and we need to lower the prices to compete with other products in the market, which are being made by international companies. So I think we need to establish a regional network of handicraft makers and carry out the market survey to provide the right product for the region, and then we can contact the people in other countries to see what they can make and then send them some parts of the product so they can make the final product in their country. We should bring the planning ideas to the meetings. Lastly, we need to study the regulations for import/export regulations for each country so that we can send the products to different places and then implement our plans for the network

Chupinit: The topic we are supposed to be discussing is the regional transfer of indigenous knowledge to the younger generation, but it looks like we are concentrating on the market rather than talk about how to transfer the indigenous knowledge.

Ayoe: Yes, because we need to make our traditional knowledge viable. The youth do not know about this, but the marketing is the really important factor to bring in the youth to do this, and so then we can pass on the knowledge to them.

Li Dejing: At first we talked about what to do and what we need to make traditional handicrafts, but now we want to know how we can support and cooperate with each other to produce and sell traditional handicraft products in the market, and then with this income we can think of ways to transfer this indigenous knowledge.

We talked about overseas marketing, and we also saw the night market in Chiang Mai. Many things are made by Indigenous Peoples here and so they are not only transmitting indigenous knowledge, but also adapting to the market economy that we are all facing in reality and this helps to develop the Indigenous People.

Handicrafts made by Indigenous Peoples reflect the ethnicities so people who look and buy also want to learn about the cultures of the people who make the products, and so this is a way to express yourself in the market.

Yothin: As Mr. Chupinit said, you are concentrating on the market, but we have heard very persuasive arguments about this from the handicraft group.

5. Indigenous Education

Presented by Tim Moffat

We attempted to identify the needs of the individual and internal areas of expertise among the participants: needs for indigenous training on indigenous educational concepts, how to integrate

this into the formal educational system, needs of networking and lack of resources on indigenous education.

Then we talked about the need to develop organizations' expertise in music, language, resource management, herbal forestry as well as publishing materials in indigenous languages, and then to find ways to match organization and organization together, but sometimes these needs cannot be met by one to one arrangements and so maybe IKAP can help with this.

So we made an action plan that includes more meetings and, of course, we all want to come together to discuss more. We need to have more collections of the work we are doing at least at the country level so that we can facilitate networking at this level. Also we need to develop training for the transmission of indigenous knowledge. Exchanges and exposure trips to other countries to see what other partner organizations are doing, and also there is a need for additional financial support for work at country level in order to make more of the opportunities available here.

More research into indigenous knowledge and transfer of indigenous knowledge by Indigenous Peoples needs to be done to raise awareness of the work we are all doing in this field.

5.4 Healers and Herbal Medicine

Presented by Van Say

We started learning from the four countries because we need to know what we have together, but it was a pity we had no representative from Vietnam or China. I cannot tell you all of the information from Laos, Burma, Cambodia and Thailand, but we have similar projects concerning herbal medicine.

We discussed methods of supporting and preserving our work in the four countries. I think China and Vietnam can add some suggestions for our work plan. We have only two activities. The first is to conduct a regional conference at MMSEA level. We hope to hold a regional summit and to make a proposal to donors in 2008. We think you can help us with the proposal. Myself, Mee and Yotin will work on this.

We want to hold a workshop in July 2008 and a regional conference in November for all herbal issues. We also need to carry out some public relations activities to support the herbal issues and this will begin in 2008. If you have any ideas for activities we can add we would be happy to hear them.

Yothin: Perhaps some people from Vietnam or China would like to make a comment on this.

Li Dejing: Sorry we did not participate, but I suggest that the transmission of indigenous knowledge on traditional medicine is very important because almost all of use depend on flora

and fauna for medical treatment, but young people do not know about this, so we need to revitalize the indigenous knowledge on this and the treatments. I participated in a workshop on this recently and while I was there I found a leaf that I recognized that I could use immediately to help cure someone with a sore throat, which is very practical.

I think for the Indigenous Education we need to include knowledge on traditional medicine. If we can revitalize the traditional knowledge in daily life we do not need to depend on western medicines or hospitals because many western drugs have side effects, so sometimes it is better to use traditional herbal medicines.

Thi Truong Luong: Vietnam is basically the same as China. We did not participate because we do not have a translator. We are very sorry about that. We have five groups in five districts that have made a network in Langson Province and the idea to establish a network is very good. Last year we also developed a proposal for these issues and this is a new thing, but I think we can combine some of the things we have discussed before, so I will try to find the previous documents.

Scott: A lot of what you say is about collecting information and sharing information, and I think you need to look at ways of structuring texts and doing documentation for herbal medicine that you can start immediately, before you even go back to your countries.

5.5 Music and Dabce

Presented by Saw Eh Doe Wah

All six countries participated. First we collected the ideas from different people. Then we identified three stages for going forward:

1. Information collecting – all six countries are collecting music and dances of their own.
2. Cultural exchanges and workshops, especially for youth, once a year and this will happen in the last week of November 2008. This is mostly to do with youth and also in the workshop they will have a regional music festival. Writing a proposal for this will require the formation of a committee, and Somboon will be the chair. He is busy now, so he says he will write the proposal in April 2008.
3. The establishment of a Cultural Center, so if we have one in Thailand, people who want to learn about Laos can come and learn there, and also in Vietnam they will try to implement this, and people can learn about the Karen and other groups if they go to the cultural centre. We will have to consult with the government and the relevant ministry so there will be no problem when setting up the cultural centre. One person each from China, Burma, Vietnam and Thailand will be working on this.

Yothin: Thanks to the five group for the presentations of the discussions, which have had good results and much learning in the meetings.

Facilitation by Naw Ler Htu:

Now we come to look at what we have to do in each country for the future – in terms of inter-generational transmission of indigenous knowledge and skills. So we did not have time so far to choose the top priorities we need for the transfer of indigenous knowledge and skills. When you go back to your country you will be able to look at the details and so now we will give you 15 minutes to discuss what you want to do for the future in country groups.

Luo Shi Hong: In the past few years we made many different plans, but most of them never happen, so maybe before we do this can we reflect on the plans for the country and region and reflect on the mechanism to make sure the plans will actually be implemented in the future?

Ler Htu: Any other questions?

Sakda: Different work plans come out from different conferences and they are integrated in to the IKAP work plans and there are some mechanisms that we have to implement the plans. We have two main concerns. One, the topic-based work plans and the people who will develop the next projects and our work plans, we have discussions at different levels concerning the activities. At country level, the country level will provide the mechanism to do those. Tomorrow we can discuss this at the Assembly, because it is not only IKAP but involves other organizations, but we need to know how they match with IKAP work plans.

Prasert: I have two points. One, these plans are not just for IKAP but for all members, so all members can use these things for themselves as they wish to.

Two, last year and this year we realized that we need to increase the action plans for the country level, not just at the regional level, and we need to work on the participatory process to develop the activities at the national level, and how to link up the country levels.

Scott: When I was 18 I visited Europe and I went into countries just to get the stamp in my passport but never really saw the country. What I am saying is that we should not rush trying to settle all these problems in one go. So tomorrow we can work on the mechanisms and then look at the issues in more depth when we all return to our countries.

Prasert: The process is not really separated between country and regional levels, and even the country plans need to relate to the region in some way. Also tomorrow we need to look not only at the issues, but look at what processes we need to go through to put these issues into practice.

Chupinit: Related to what Shi Hong said, before we look at regional or country plans we need to do some analysis and look at opportunities at the country and regional level, and this way make better action plans and find opportunities at the policy and legal level. Perhaps we should

wait till tomorrow to see how we analyze and present our organizations and think about how we will do this.

Jannie: We need to talk about mechanisms because this is often not done at conference and it is often not done after going back to the country. We can have regional conferences on the various issues, but it will be hard to IKAP to find the money. IKAP secretariat can help with this. We need to look at the activities to see how we can get all the people involved interested in what they are doing and this will have a big influence on the mechanisms and analysis of what we want to do. And perhaps tomorrow will be a good opportunity to discuss what we want to do and how to do it for the next few years.

Ler Htu: Each group has a plan and they are divided into regional groups. We have had two suggestions for tomorrow. So are we going to do this today or tomorrow?

ALL: Tomorrow!

Naw Ler Htu: One thing is that even if we continue now the result will not be so good. All the groups have their work plans so we will stop now. Thanks to all the presenters for your work at country and regional level. Now we ask IKAP secretariat to take over the microphone for announcements.

After announcements regarding the General assembly the next day, the conference was closed at 5.35 pm.

Documenters: Colin Nicholas & Tony Boys
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