



**Indigenous Peoples Development Programme
(IPDP)
Ancestral Domain Development and Protection in the Caraga Region:
Launching IP Community Action and Multi-Sectoral Convergence Plans
14 April 2010, Butuan City**

Message: Ms Linda Wirth, ILO Director, Manila

- My warm greetings to: the Hon. Governor of Agusan del Norte, the Hon. Mayor of Butuan City, the Bishop of the Diocese of Butuan, the Chairman of the NCIP, etc.
- I am pleased to participate in this particularly inclusive occasion that once more puts into focus the development challenges confronting the indigenous peoples in the Caraga Region.
- The presence here of all of you – representatives of IP communities, national and local government and civil society – is a clear and notable testament of a multi-sectoral recognition of these challenges and the need to address them collectively.
- Given the estimated IP population of 500,000 in the Caraga Region, it is not an exaggeration to say that the advancement of the IPs is the advancement of the Region itself.
- In the Philippines, as in many other countries under similar circumstances, the need to discover more effective approaches to indigenous peoples' development cannot be overemphasized. When, notwithstanding the decades of development work for the IPs by a preponderance of service providers, limited evidence of real improvement in the lives of these people could be seen, it is an indication that the effectiveness of the services rendered is at best minimal, and perhaps even wanting in some cases. At the same time, it may also indicate the complexity of the challenges as they evolve over time.
- Whatever it is that seems to limit the result of these services, generally in the form of projects and programmes, must be somehow be discovered so that proper responses could be devised.
- I consider what you are launching today as one meaningful way of determining innovative approaches to IP development. The innovative approach you are beginning to test on the ground is CONVERGENCE in the delivery of development services. Although this concept is not new, it may be the first time it is systematically applied to service delivery involving IP men, women and children, more so in the context of the development and protection of duly-recognized ancestral domains.



- There is no doubt that this approach has great potential in terms of impact and sustainable results that may well make a real difference in the lives of the IP men and women who own these defined territories.
- In relation to the ILO, this approach reflects substantively the core principles of PARTICIPATION and CONSULTATION on which the ILO Convention (No.169) on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples is founded.
- It also provides tremendous opportunity to put into practical use the Decent Work (DW) framework of development which stands on four pillars, namely, recognition of rights, creation of employment opportunities, promotion of social protection and enhancement of social dialogue.
- With regard to the UN, to which the ILO belongs as a tripartite (government, employers, workers) specialized agency for employment and labour, the approach is germane to the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) adopted in 2007.
- There is no doubt about the importance and significance of the mechanism for sustained collaboration among the convergence participants that is expected to emerge from this collective initiative. In the process, there will be valuable experiences, lessons and good practices to be gained. It is hoped that these would enrich all of us, individually and institutionally, in the context of mutual capacity-building.
- Four years from now, when this undertaking will have been completed, it would be source of great inspiration to the IPs and to all service providers to see that it has worked and that there is solid reason to promote its replication in other ancestral domains not only in Caraga but also in the other Regions of the Philippines.
- This is the essence of the IPDP. The IPDP- Caraga refers mainly to providing support to the implementation of ancestral domain sustainable development and protection plans (ADSDPPPs) of IPs in specific areas, focused on institution-building, protection of rights, poverty reduction, environmental rehabilitation and promotion of gender equality. It also indicates that the implementation process would use a Community-Driven Participatory Development (CDPD) approach which gives the IPs the opportunity to take greater responsibility for and leadership in the development and protection of their ancestral domains. However, it does not stop there. It is also a pilot project aimed precisely at testing the essential elements of this convergence mechanism as an innovative approach to IP development.



- We hope that the convergence process can also contribute to narrowing gaps between development aspirations and perspectives of indigenous peoples (as reflected in their community action plans) on the one hand and the development frameworks of stakeholders/service providers on the other.
- As I did in an earlier message to some partner agencies in this same venue, I wish to once more express, on behalf of the ILO, my appreciation to the NCIP for its willingness not only to serve as lead agency in this collaborative endeavor but also to use this process for strengthening its institutional capacity to effectively pursue its mandate under the IPRA.
- I wish also to express the same appreciation to all of you – parties to this convergence – for your equally note-worthy willingness and enthusiasm to work together and interface in a mission of national importance – the effective development and protection of ancestral domains and the advancement of the IPs who own them in terms of their collective self-reliance.
- Finally, I wish furthermore to take this opportunity to thank the Spanish Government through the AECID for its support without which the implementation of the IPDP in Caraga would not have been possible.

Maraming salamat po!!!