



# STORIES OF HOPE FROM MT. KALATUNGAN:

The Manobo and Talaandig experience in  
defending and conserving their ancestral lands





The **Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC)** is a regional coalition of national and regional CSOs in Asia actively engaged in promoting food sovereignty, land rights and agrarian reform, sustainable agriculture, participatory governance, and rural development.

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# **STORIES OF HOPE FROM MT. KALATUNGAN:**

**The Manobo and Talaandig experience in  
defending and conserving their ancestral lands**

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# Foreword

The rise in population, improved mobility and waning barriers across geographical and ethnic borders have opened gateways to far-flung areas. The remaining frontiers, mostly governed by indigenous peoples, are now within reach and are undergoing political, economic, and social transformations.

The stories compiled in this publication, ***“Stories of hope from Mt. Kalatungan: the Manobo and Talaandig experience in defending and conserving their ancestral lands”*** tell of the journey of local communities who for a long time have lived a life of their own, celebrating their own culture and traditions. These are the Talaandig and Manobo indigenous peoples living within the Mt. Kalatungan Mountain Range situated in Bukidnon, Philippines. Mt. Kalatungan is the fifth highest peak in the country and a major water source to households and industries in surrounding provinces, with its headwaters providing 35 river systems. It is also a key biodiversity area, home to 342 species of plants and 129 species of animals (MKaRNP General Management Plan 2014 to 2018).

Both the Talaandig and Manobo, who consider the forest a sacred site, a burial ground, and a source of food and medicine, have witnessed how Mt. Kalatungan’s resources have been cleared and depleted by massive logging from the 1960s to the 1970s. Today, whatever is left of these resources is under threat to various commercial pressures such as the establishments of agri-plantations, tourism and settlements.

These intrusions have affected the young generation. Tribal leaders are realizing to their dismay how their rich traditions are slowly being lost. How unfortunate, that in some communities, the young

generation are barely able to speak their own local language. The exciting world of gadgets and modern technologies seemed to have overpowered their culture built over generations.

But there are also narratives of young people who continue to profess their beliefs and traditions. They have remained faithful to their culture and sung their values for everyone to hear. Astonishingly, the millennials and the “Gen Z” appreciated these performances. They can connect with the principles being espoused, most notably on the significance of relating with mother nature. They now realize that the beautiful rivers and water systems they enjoy downstream are outcomes of the revered relationship of the indigenous peoples to their forests in Mt. Kalatungan.

The project *“Improving Tenure Security of Smallholder Farmers in Select Areas in the Philippines”* in these communities comes at an opportune time. It provides them the opportunity to translate these beliefs and principles into concrete actions in managing their resources, as the project aims to improve land tenure security of rural smallholder farmers in the country.

Jointly implemented by the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) and the Xavier Science Foundation, Inc. (XSF), this sharing of experiences is part of the initiative **“Improving Tenure Security of Smallholder Farmers in Select Areas in the Philippines,”** supported by the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) as facilitated by UN-Habitat through its project *“Secure Access to Land and Resources (SALaR)”* and financed by Germany’s Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The experiences of partners and enumerators in implementing the project have been challenging as they have to contend with long journeys, resistance from local authorities, and even threats of snake bites, while conducting surveys and interviews. The results, however, have been fulfilling, knowing that they have facilitated common understanding among community members, strengthened household’s land rights, and prevented potential conflicts within the community.

ANGOC and XSF are grateful to the leaders and members of the partner IP organizations, as the authors of this knowledge product, for taking time to narrate “snapshots” of their encounters so that other communities be inspired in their own day-to-day struggles in protecting their lands. In particular, we thank the Miarayon Lapok Lirongan Tinaytayan Talaandig Tribal Association, Inc. (MILALITTRA, Inc.), Nagkahiusang Manobong Manununod sa Yutang Kabilin (NAMAMAYUK) and Portulin Talaandig Tribal Association, Inc. (PTTA, Inc.).

We acknowledge the work of Gerard Jerome Dumlao for putting the stories together and the leaders of the partner communities namely – Datu Elpidio “Imbay-ao” Suclatan, Datu Herminio Guinto, Datu Johnny Guina, Datu Richard Dawatan, Bae Angelina Guinto, Bae Lauriana Suclatan, and Bae Emilia Guina – for assisting in the preparations and conduct of interviews with the partner IP organizations. We also give special thanks to the following colleagues – Denise Hyacinth Joy Musni, Marianne Jane Naungayan, Timothy Salomon, Joseph Onesa, Lennie Rose Cahusay, Thieza Verdijo, Xyla Mercedita Gualberto, Mari Danella Bocon, Ryan Galamiton, Mark Auditor, Angel Mae Macadingding, Engr. Joshua Paul Atienza, Gary Joy Salvador, and Marlon Elarmo – for their valuable contributions to the preparation of this publication.

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## THE UPHILL BATTLE TO RECLAIM THE ANCESTRAL LAND OF THE MANOBO AND TALAANDIG OF MT. KALATUNGAN

**S**ince time immemorial, the Manobo and Talaandig tribes of Bukidnon in the Philippines' southern island of Mindanao have called the Mt. Kalatungan and Mt. Kitanglad mountain ranges their home.



Even if they are different tribes, they lived in peace alongside each other. The boundaries of their ancestral lands properly and firmly established through kinship and agreements cemented through rituals and the firm belief that every human being has his or her own place under the sun.

This would all change with the coming of a successive wave of colonizers, who established government ownership over the entire country and appropriated large swathes of land for missionary, commercial, agricultural, and residential activities.

### Driven away by logging

Around Mt. Kalatungan in Bukidnon province, large patches of IP lands became logging concessions and the Manobo and Talaandig indigenous peoples were driven away from their communities on the slopes to hamlets in and around the town centers established by the colonizers. There, they were forced to live alongside migrants from the Luzon and Visayas island groups, people who have been assimilated to the culture of the colonizers.

Thus, began the start of not only dispossession of their lands and properties, but also the erosion of their indigenous traditions and practices.

Datu Herminio “Minio” Guinto, 56, from the village of Bacusanon, Pangantucan municipality, narrated that what used to be their ancestral land has been converted to a logging concession almost overnight.

*“As far as I remember, our area was a logging concession. Large logs were hauled daily from the mountain to the sawmill in town. This area, sitio San Guinto (the area including the land where his house presently stands) used to be where the logs were sorted and stacked,”* Datu Minio shares.

The Manobo of Bacusanon were also forcibly relocated from their homes on the slopes of Mt. Kalatungan to the village center, where they lived alongside the settlers, as their land was given as a logging concession to the Timber Industries of the Philippines, Inc. (TIPI).

## The Manobo return to Bacusanon

By the 1970s, logging operations slowed down due to lack of trees. In 1975, the Manobo of Bacusanon returned to their homes in and around sitio San Guinto and proceeded to rebuild their community.

The barangay (village) leadership at that time created sitio San Guinto so that the Manobo will not be accused of being illegal settlers.

According to Datu Minio, the area's traditional name is *Tabunan*, from the practice of a bird called *Mangawang* of burying its eggs, covering these with dried leaves and other debris, over which another bird will lay its eggs on top of it and cover it again with debris, and so on until the hole is level with the ground.

The *sitio* (hamlet) is also significant in terms of the area's ecosystem because it is an aquifer, containing the headwaters of the stream that flows down to the rest of the barangay. But the stream has all but dried up due to logging.

Although the Manobo cut trees for lumber used in building their houses and other structures, they implemented a self-imposed moratorium on the activity upon their return to the sitio to allow the trees to regenerate. Instead, they planted crops on the land. While still poor, the Manobo were content. They were back on their ancestral land.

## Loggers return, conflict ensues

But all that would change with the return of the logging concessionaires in 1987, or after 12 years. While the company established its new headquarters in another sitio (*Migbadiang*), it hired members of the Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU), a paramilitary group created during the time of former President Ferdinand Marcos to combat the Communist New People's Army, as security guards.

In 1987, residents of the area, Manobo and lowlanders alike, were invited by the TIPI to a village consultation. During the meeting,

representatives of the company told the assembled residents that their purpose was to rehabilitate the forest in the area.

However, the company's "rehabilitation" efforts were just a smokescreen for its real intentions. For upon resuming operations, TIPI built roads for log-hauling trucks to be able to pass through.

*"Every week, about 20 truckloads of logs passed through our area. Every day we heard the sound of chainsaws. That did not look or sound like rehabilitation to us,"* Datu Minio shared.

Alarmed, the tribal leaders with the help of the parish priest, decided to bring the issue to the village council. Responsive to their plight, a dialogue between the residents and the company resulted upon the initiative of the village council. This time, the vice governor of Bukidnon, the mayor of Pangantucan, the village captain, and the bishop of the province attended the dialogue. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), which oversees logging operations, was represented by its Regional Director.

During the exchange, it was determined that the area was no longer fit for logging. Thus, a decision was handed down for TIPI to stop its operations within one week from the dialogue, otherwise its equipment will be impounded. After three months of operations, the logging stopped.

But then harassment began. After the order was handed down, company guards started harassing the residents. Some men in the village were beaten, bullets were found scattered near the houses, and combat-boot prints were seen around the houses of identified community leaders.

***"Every week, about 20 truckloads of logs passed through our area. Every day we heard the sound of chainsaws. That did not sound like rehabilitation to us."***

Datu Minio, who was an organizer of the Indigenous Peoples Apostolate of the Diocese of Malaybalay, was particularly targeted. When threats did not work, the logging firm resorted to bribery.

*“My pro-logging relatives visited me bearing gifts – rice, instant noodles, wine. They thought that as an organizer, I could persuade anti-logging residents to stop. But I told them I am just a facilitator of the community’s will,”* Datu Minio said.

One day, the tribal elders got a letter from TIPI. Written in English, the letter essentially said that if the group did not withdraw its complaint about logging activities, violence would likely escalate. It was a threat, pure and simple.

After meeting with the tribe’s members, the elders, accompanied by the parish priest, went to Malaybalay, the province’s capital, for an audience with the bishop. The bishop then accompanied the group to Cagayan de Oro City, the regional center, where they handed over the letter to the regional director of the DENR.

The next day, the elders informed TIPI of what they had done.

As a result, the DENR enforced its order for TIPI to cease logging operations in the area. In its order, the DENR said that the company conducted illegal logging operations because it failed to submit an annual logging operations plan, a prerequisite for approval of logging permits.

After this, logging was permanently stopped in the area.

Still, the Manobo of Bacusanon faced threats to their land.

## **Ancestral land parceled by settlers**

During the time they were driven from their ancestral land by logging activities, settlers were able to move in and claim large portions of it.

This was exacerbated by the resettlement efforts of succeeding government administrations, which encouraged people from Luzon and the Visayas to move to Mindanao, starting in the 1950s.

To encourage settlers to move to Mindanao and help in its development, the National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Administration (NARRA) gave each settler family eight hectares of farmland, farm animals and implements, and monthly food rations.

Although the Manobo reclaimed some portions – by purchase, the owners voluntarily giving back the land, or the land was simply abandoned – a large part of their ancestral domain was forever lost to private individuals and agribusiness companies.

At present, huge swaths of the Manobo's land is planted with sugarcane and bananas, leased by their owners to large agribusiness firms.

### **IPRA gives hope, then takes it away**

When the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) was implemented in 1997, the group formally organized and started the process for a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT), with support from the Philippine Association For Intercultural Development (PAFID). A CADT is a title formally recognizing the rights of possession and ownership of IPs over their ancestral domains that have been identified and delineated in accordance with IPRA.

From 1998 to 2001, NAMAMAYUK conducted organizing efforts, preliminary mapping activities, and worked on the tribe's genealogy.

On 10 October 2001, they formally submitted their papers to the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) – Bukidnon provincial office. Their documents were received by NCIP but had not been issued a petition number. That was where the problem began.

Without a petition number, the claim could not be processed since the NCIP could deny that they received NAMAMAYUK's documents.

With the help of church organizations and NGOs, NAMAMAYUK has brought its case to the attention of the NCIP regional and national offices. Up to now, the CADT application is still in limbo.





The same thing happened when NAMAMAYUK attempted to submit their ancestral domain sustainable development and protection plan (ADSDPP), which they were able to complete with the help of the Xavier Science Foundation, Inc. (XSF), in 2017. ADSDPPs are the consolidated community plans developed by indigenous communities within an ancestral domain, which details how resources will be managed based on their indigenous knowledge systems and practices. When they brought the document to the NCIP provincial office, they were told that there was nobody there to receive it since the staff were attending the seminar.

They tried to submit a week later but were told that the seminar was for two weeks. They were told to just leave the document, but they did not for fear that it will suffer the same fate as their CADT application, which the NCIP provincial office claims was not filed because there was no petition number.

In October 2018, Datu Minio and Datu Johnny of PTTA, Inc. personally submitted a follow-up letter to NCIP Commissioner Norberto “Jong” Navarro.

At present, even after a number of follow-up activities by the IP organizations and their CSO partners, notably XSF, PAFID, and the

Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC), there is still no word from the NCIP regarding the status of their claim.

In fact, when representatives of the NCIP provincial office visited the areas as part of the free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) activity for the project *“Improving Tenure Security of Smallholder Farmers in Select Areas in the Philippines.”* the government staff were surprised to even know that these communities exist; and that they have submitted CADT applications.

### **Portulin Talaandig in the same boat**

The ancestral domain claim status of the Portulin Talaandig Tribal Association, Inc. (PTTA, Inc.) is no less different. However, the means by which they reclaimed their land is a different story.

Unlike the Manobo, the Talaandig of Portulin and surrounding barangays had the advantage of having firearms, as they were conscripted during the Marcos administration as CAFGUs charged to combat the Communist New People’s Army guerillas operating in Mt. Kalatungan.

One of their notable commanders was Datu Johnny Guina. Thus, when Johnny was appointed as *datu*, he used this advantage to drive away outsiders from their land.

Johnny was not actually next in line for *datu* as his father and uncles were still alive. But his grandfather saw in the young man leadership qualities and gave him the mantle of leadership.

And the young datu proved him right as he successfully led his people in reclaiming their land.

Datu Johnny is strict but benevolent. He even allowed settlers to retain five hectares of land as long as they gave up their other claims. However, he is not as accommodating to abuses, such as the time when the son of the mayor built a climbers’ lodge using timber gathered from the forest, without asking for the tribe’s permission.



*“I told the mayor’s son that what he did was wrong. Not only did he not ask permission for cutting down trees, he did not ask permission for the land that he built his resthouse on,”* Datu Johnny shared.

Since the resthouse was already there, the PTTA, Inc. appropriated it for the use of the climbers since, technically, it is on their land and is theirs.

The PTTA, Inc. was organized in 1998, also in preparation for their ancestral domain claim under the IPRA.

But even if they do not “officially” own their land, PTTA, Inc. can take consolation in the fact that they have control over it.

*“Even the DENR, which oversees all public lands, cannot come into our area without our permission,”* Datu Johnny proudly declared.

While this may be true to some extent, not having “official” ownership status means that threats are more imminent.

The Mt. Kalatungan range has already been declared a national park. But the IPs inhabiting its slopes are still allowed on their ancestral lands, albeit with oversight from the DENR.

## ENIPAS a new threat

The recently passed Expanded National Integrated Protected Area System (ENIPAS) law has made the IPs apprehensive and more restive since its implementing rules and regulations specify that only indigenous groups belonging to ancestral domains with instrumentalities of ownership, i.e. CADT or CALT (Certificate of Ancestral Land Title), will be recognized in the governance of resources when protected areas that overlap with ancestral domains.

If this law is implemented, then IPs who have yet to secure a CADT will not be able to fully exercise their rights over the use and governance of their ancestral domains.

And only God, or in their case *Magbabaya*, knows what the Manobo and Talaandig of the Kalatungan range will resort to if this injustice comes to pass. ■



## STEWARDS OF THE MOUNTAIN

**W**ell before the arrival of modern societies, indigenous peoples have relied upon traditional knowledge and practices to benefit from the resources provided by their natural habitats.

As traditional managers of the Earth's natural resources, indigenous peoples (IPs) should not be treated as mere beneficiaries, but rather as primary stakeholders and actors in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development initiatives.



The Manobo and Talaandig of the Mt. Kalatungan range have for centuries taken care of their sacred mountain, on which slopes their people have lived in since the Philippines was first populated by humans.

They know every nook and cranny of the mountain and every plant and animal species they share it with. And it is this intense familiarity that breeds respect. A respect that ensures the mountain and its attendant bounty will not fall into harm as long as the tribes are there to manage and protect it.

For the Manobo occupying its slopes, Mt. Kalatungan is sacred, and it is essentially this perception that the tribe nurtured a close and protective relationship with the environment. The mountain's sanctity is explained in the tribe's belief that it is where unseen spirits live, where their ancestors came from, the source of all tribal knowledge, their pharmacy, and their source of livelihood.

To the Manobo, use of the mountain's resources has always been governed by their beliefs and practical knowledge of taking just enough at the right time and place, using the right method and with due permission and respect to the spirits. Otherwise, they might incur the wrath of the spirits and bring upon them sickness, crop and hunting failures, and disasters.

Datu Herminio "Minio" Guinto of the *Nagkahiusang Manobong Manununod sa Yutang Kabilin (NAMAMAYUK)*<sup>1</sup> in Barangay Bacusanon, Pangantucan, Bukidnon, gave a concrete example of this sustainable use of resources.

There was a bird the Manobo called *Mangawang*, which buried its eggs in the ground and covered it with dried leaves and other debris. On top of this covering, another bird lays its eggs, covering them also with dried leaves and debris. This process goes on until the mound is a little higher than the ground.

The Manobo would gather the eggs starting from the bottom-most nest, careful not to disturb the other layers and leaving enough eggs to sustain the bird's existence. When the outsiders came, they

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<sup>1</sup> NAMAMAYUK is one of the seven indigenous peoples organizations (IPOs) of the Mt. Kalatungan range

### Box 1. Mt. Kalatungan mountain range

Mt. Kalatungan is the country's fifth highest peak, with an elevation 2,287 meters above sea level (masl). It is part of the Mt. Kalatungan Range Natural Park (MKaRNP), which has an estimated area of 55,692 hectares (ha.). The natural park consists of 24,732.18 ha. classified as protected area (PA) and approximately 30,889.25 ha. categorized as buffer zone.

The MKaRNP covers parts of Valencia City and the three municipalities of Pangantucan, Talakag, and Maramag, all in Bukidnon province. A total of 21 barangays are located in and around the park.

Mt. Kalatungan is sometimes called the “twin” mountain of nearby Mt. Kitanglad, and the two mountain ranges have strong cultural, historical, and biological ties.

MKaRNP was declared a protected area under the natural park category via the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) through Presidential Proclamation No. 305 issued in May 2000.

The park is home to 429 species that endangered, endemic, economically, and socially important to Philippine biodiversity such as the Philippine eagle, Philippine deer and Philippine wild pig, several species of mountain rodents, as well as 109 species of mosses.

*Source: Department of Environment and Natural Resources ([http://faspselib.denr.gov.ph/sites/default/files//IEC/panels-05\\_0.jpg](http://faspselib.denr.gov.ph/sites/default/files//IEC/panels-05_0.jpg))*

gathered the eggs at random, disturbing all the nests and leaving nothing behind. Thus, the bird has gone extinct.

The indigenous peoples of Kalatungan also cut down trees – they do have to build shelter and furniture, and need firewood to cook – but never indiscriminately, excessive, and with the accompanying rituals to appease the spirits.

From their sacred forests, the IPs source the trees for building their *Tulugan* (tribal hall and altar) and the medicinal herbs used by the *baylans* (priests and healers).



Even their governance structure is built around the protection of the environment.

## Sacred forests

Their sacred forests, found deeper into the mountain, hold an even stronger significance. Called *Igmale'ng'en* by the Talaandig and *Idsesenggilaha* by the Manobo, these sacred forests represent everything that is pure and strong, and their conservation ensures the community's continued existence and survival.

For the Talaandig, the sacred forests of Mt. Kalatungan are home to the tallest and hardest trees, it is where the cleanest waters will always flow, where the waters never run dry, where the deer and wild boar will always roam, and most importantly, where the *Kalumbata*<sup>2</sup> will always fly free (De Vera and Guina, 2008).

Datu Johnny Guina, head of the Talaandig from Barangay Portulin and president of the Portulin Talaandig Tribal Association, Inc. (PTTA, Inc.),<sup>3</sup> reveals that members of the tribe hunting for deer and wild boar frequently sighted the Philippine Eagle on the mountain. They even know when the eagle is around because the monkeys will suddenly be restless.

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<sup>2</sup> Local term for Philippine Eagle (*Pithecopaga Jeffryi*)

<sup>3</sup> PTTA, Inc. is also one of the seven IP organizations of the Mt. Kalatungan range

It is forbidden for the Talaandig and Manobo to hunt the eagle because, according to lore, it is the mount of the gods.

“Before I was born, there was a member of the tribe who shot down an eagle. He got sick and the *baylans* tried everything to treat him. He eventually died. The *baylans* said that the man incurred the ire of the gods because he shot down an eagle, which is being ridden by one of them. After that, nobody tried to shoot down an eagle again,” Datu Johnny reveals.

The sacred forests are restricted even to members of the tribe. Only the *baylans* are free to enter. Ordinary members have to ask for permission from the *baylans* and undergo a ritual before being allowed to enter. No person may establish residence within the sacred forest.

Strict rules are followed whenever members of the community enter the sacred forest. These include talking at a very low volume, not using any foul language, not pointing at any unique flora and fauna, and not leaving any foreign objects behind.

## Indigenous forest management and conflict resolution mechanisms

Enforcement of these rules falls on the shoulders of the *datu* and the *baylans*, with help from indigenous forest guards called *bantay lasang* (literally *forest guards*).

The Talaandig and Manobo believe that the rules governing their interaction with their environment are defined by the forest spirits and are then passed on (through dreams according to the elders) to the *baylans*. These rules are strictly enforced through the intercession of the *datu*.

The *datu* resolves conflicts arising from actual or perceived transgressions against the forests through dialogue and a ritual offering ceremonial sacrifices to appease the spirits. Punishment for a proven transgression is left to the spirits who are believed to cast a spell on the offending party or parties, although the *datu* may also

impose a fine and confiscate the contraband and materials used in the transgressions.

While large-scale logging activities on Mt. Kalatungan have entirely ceased due to the lack of hardwoods which were decimated during the logging boom in the area from the 1960s to the 1980s, the forests of Mt. Kalatungan and the ancestral domains of the Talaandig and Manobo are still under threat from small-scale logging and the influx of migrants to the area. These migrants conduct clearing activities to make the land fit for planting and also poach flora and fauna.

Some indigenous people, in desperate times, also conduct illegal activities but these are dealt with by the tribe's governance structures. It is the migrants – with their modern tools and funding from businessmen – which the tribes are wary of. They still remember the destruction brought about by the government's various resettlement programs in the 1930s to the 1950s, and the logging boom from the 1960s to the 1980s. Thus, the Manobo and Talaandig are more on guard this time.

In fact, even children are employed by the community to watch out for poachers and illegal entrants, as children are least likely to be suspected of reporting to the authorities by those who wish to do harm to the forest. This way, the adults also pass on to the children the importance of safeguarding their forest and ancestral lands.

## Helping hands in the forest

It is very easy to get lost within the dense foliage of Mt. Kalatungan. Even the IPs living on its slopes sometimes encounter a situation in which they have to decide which trail to take. Once again, indigenous systems provide an answer.

Indigenous people inhabiting the slopes of Mt. Kalatungan, could easily spot signs left behind by others. Sometimes these signs are obvious for all to see, such as an 'X' formed from grass or leaves warning travellers not to take a particular trail. Sometimes, the sign



is not so obvious as when a small knot (also using a blade of grass or a vine) is made on a trunk of tree, informing passers-by of a “lost and found object” safely secured higher up on the tree.

There is also a sign that the Manobo call *banga-banga*, that points out food and other survival stuff left for those who get lost in the forest. This usually takes the form of an unlighted safety match (*posporo*) left outside a seemingly abandoned hunter’s hut. When a Manobo sees this, it means that there is food inside and anyone can partake of it. The person who partakes of the generosity then leaves a sign, sort of a tribal thank you note. If the beneficiary is feeling more generous, she or he may leave an item of value as a token of gratitude.

***“Even though we are poor, we think of other people’s welfare. We think of the possibility that someone may get lost in the forest so we leave food behind so that others may benefit from it.”***

*“Even though we are poor, we think of other people’s welfare. We think of the possibility that someone may get lost in the forest so we leave food that we were not able to consume behind so that others may benefit from it,”*  
Datu Minio shares.

This system was even used by the enumerators of the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) participatory survey and mapping activity conducted under the

project: *Improving Tenure Security of Smallholder Farmers in Select Areas in the Philippines.*<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Implemented by Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) and Xavier Science Foundation, Inc. (XSF), the project is supported by the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) as facilitated by UN-Habitat and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

During the survey of agricultural lots, the enumerators put signs on lots that they were not able to survey, so that when they return they would know which lots to work on next.

## **Mitigating the effects of tourism on the sacred mountain**

Being the country's fifth highest mountain, Mt. Kalatungan is a draw for hikers and mountaineers. The Mt. Kalatungan and Mt. Lumpagan (also known as Mt. Wiji) traverse have become quite popular that mountaineers from as far as Manila visit the area. The climb is being managed by the Pangantucan Tourism Office, who employs Manobo and Talaandig as guides.

Portulin and Bacusanon are among the entry or exit points for the climb and whose local government units have been authorized by the Tourism Office to collect fees, which the locals appreciate but still deem too small for the potential destruction tourism will bring to their sacred lands.

The Talaandig of Barangay Portulin take cash, but the Manobo of Bacusanon require climbers to buy five seedlings, which the tribe will plant on the mountain. This way, the Manobo believe that they appease the spirits and somehow mitigate the disturbance and potential destruction that climbers will bring.

As is the custom of tribal communities, a ritual is performed before the start of the climb, to ensure that the climbers will find favor with the spirits.

## **Tenurial security key to sustaining the forest**

The Manobo and Talaandig communities who live on Mt. Kalatungan continue to maintain their ancestral lands, including the mountain forests, in spite of tremendous pressures by various factors and interest groups.

In spite of the challenges they face, the Manobo and Talaandig are committed to maintain their sacred lands as these ensure their existence as a distinct indigenous cultural community.

Their indigenous conservation practices ensure that the lowland farming communities continue to benefit from irrigation and drinking water, and that the sound ecological balance of the province of Bukidnon perdures due to the maintenance of the forests.

Thus, they demand official recognition for their role as stewards of the forest and for the invaluable service that they continue to render.

Realizing the importance of tenurial security and to be able to gain official recognition, the Manobo of Bacusanon and the Talaandig of Portulin have each applied for a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT), which have been languishing for over 10 years.

They demand that the government immediately approve their application for CADT, as this will give them the benefit of “legal” recognition, lay the framework for their interaction with other entities such as government and private institutions, and allow them to better conserve and manage the resources within their ancestral domains.

### **Protected area: a boon and a bane**

The declaration of Mt. Kalatungan as a Protected Area under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 has provided an additional layer of protection to the biodiversity of the Manobo and Talaandig ancestral lands. However, the rights and roles of the indigenous communities in the management of their ancestral domain must not be sacrificed in the name of collective participation, efficiency, and legality.

They have been stewards of the mountain since time immemorial, and this must be respected not only now but also for generations to come.

## Collaboration a key to recognition

As challenges to their stewardship become more complex, the Manobo and Talaandig recognize the need for collaboration with other groups. They welcome the support of government and private entities as long as their interventions are culturally sensitive and not environmentally destructive, and respect the IPs' primary rights as stewards of the land.

The Manobo and Talaandig of Mt. Kalatungan see these initiatives as very important to broadening their and others' understanding of communities and conservation efforts. Collaborative opportunities will also make everyone aware of the stakes in conserving Mt. Kalatungan's valuable ecosystems. ■



## PARTICIPATORY ENUMERATION AND STDM IMPLEMENTATION IN THE RURAL SETTING

**T**he Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) is a pro-poor, gender responsive, and participatory land information system developed by Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), as facilitated by UN-Habitat, and other partners.

STDM has been developed to bridge the gap between formally-registered land and land that is not registered. It is a pro-poor, gender-responsive, participatory, and affordable land tool for representing a person-to-land relationship along the land continuum. The land tool has been developed in recognition of the need for legal pluralism and a broader recognition of person-to-land relationships.

STDM was already used in customary areas in some countries in Africa, but it was first introduced in the Philippines in the urban context. The tool was again used in the rural setting in the project, *“Improving Tenure Security of Smallholder Farmers in Select Areas in the Philippines,”* jointly implemented by the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) and the Xavier Science Foundation, Inc. (XSF). The project is part of the bigger *Secure Access to Land and Resources (SALaR)* project of the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) with support from the German Federal Ministry for Economic and Development Cooperation (BMZ).

The project was implemented in three indigenous people (IP) areas in Bukidnon, in the southern island of Mindanao. STDM was used in the project to complement the legal process of applying for Certificates of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT), an effort to enhance the tenurial security of the IPs.

After series of enhancement trainings on STDM techniques, encoding, and on integration to digital tablets, 20 volunteer enumerators from the partner communities, mostly women and youth, were deployed to the three areas covered by the project. Brimming with enthusiasm, the volunteer enumerators set about their task of gathering data from 2,500 households.

### **NAMAMAYUK enumerators: youths up to the challenge**

Twelve enumerators were tasked to cover Barangay (village) Bacusanon, the NAMAMAYUK area, which includes the sitios of San Guinto, Bugwak, Balmar, and Migbadiang.



## Box 1: Knowledge, skills and attitude required for enumerators

Trainees have been assessed by XSF and will be deemed eligible to be enumerators if they meet the following criteria:

### **On Knowledge**

- ✓ Able to deliver clearly the goals and objectives of the project to her/his respondents
- ✓ Able to answer the questions clearly and confidently when someone asks her/him about the project output
- ✓ Assures the respondents safekeeping of the data collected with utmost confidentiality
- ✓ Understands the different practices of the target communities (culture sensitivity)

### **On Skills**

- ✓ Able to complete the enumeration for three households per day
- ✓ Able to deliver high quality data consistently and accurately in household survey questionnaire and mapping
- ✓ Able to use the camera, global positioning system (GPS), and the tablet accurately and precisely
- ✓ Able to speak *Talaandig* and *Manobo* or *Bisaya* language

### **On Attitude**

- ✓ Can carry out the basic etiquette prescribed for enumeration specially to the respondents
- ✓ Can handle both enumeration and land tenure mapping pressure with the time limitation
- ✓ Is open to objective criticism from the GLTN staff and would-be enumerators
- ✓ Has the initiative and can work independently with minimal supervision
- ✓ Has the immediate right decisions when he/she encounter difficulties in the field
- ✓ Shows leadership and professional approach to his/her would be co-enumerator
- ✓ Can demonstrate stewardship of the kits and gadgets issued to him/her

*“We were excited on our first day because we were curious to discover what the community’s situation is, and what they need,”* Melvin Pongautan, one youth enumerator for NAMAMAYUK, said.

Even with limited equipment, the challenging terrain, slips and slides, and difficulties in getting respondents to understand their questions,<sup>1</sup> as well as being able to receive useful answers, did not dampen the enumerators' morale.

As the area is located on the slopes of Mt. Kalatungan, most of the farms are on high elevations, and the enumerators were required to hike up steep slopes just to reach some of the farm lots. Once they are there, they have to be careful when conducting the survey or else they might fall off cliffs or ravines.

Aside from conducting the survey, the enumerators often became farmworkers themselves, as they had to clear the area of tall grasses just so they could see the boundaries. However, throughout the enumeration activity, the landowners started clearing off their farm lots for ease in mapping out the area. With this gesture, the enumerator's work became quite easy.

On the first day, Melvin and fellow enumerator, Relvin Roy Dumpasan, were only able to complete the survey of four farms, due to the challenging terrain. Their second day was better as they were able to survey 17 hectares.

In sitio Migbadiang, Melvin was able to complete the enumeration of 25 households and survey 43 hectares of farm lots.

He was particularly elated at how the community accepted them. At first, the people were apprehensive because no survey activity has ever been done in the area. But after the enumerators explained the purpose of the activity and the participative process that it involved, the people warmed up to the initiative. They even gladly went with the enumerators to their difficult-to-reach farm lots.

Of all the enumerators for NAMAMAYUK, Roy had the scariest experience. In one of their survey activities, he and Melvin had to separate to cover more ground. However, upon completing the survey of a six-hectare farm lot, the owner told Roy that he would be staying for the night in the farm as he also lives there.

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex A (pages 55 to 61) for the household questionnaire used in the participatory enumeration.

Thus, Roy had to go down to the sitio (hamlet) proper alone. Unfamiliar with the area, he had to pick his way along the trail in the dark, guided only by the distant lights of the sitio proper below.

*“The trail was hard to find because it is a forested area. I heard all sorts of noises and I was already thinking of various scary scenarios in my head. But I just focused on the distant lights of the sitio. I just told myself that this will end and I will be home,”* Roy narrates.

When the trail became broad enough for a carabao cart to pass through, Roy knew he could relax. However, he knew that he still had to cross three streams to get to the main road where, hopefully, he would catch up with Melvin’s group.

Eventually, Roy caught up with Melvin’s group. But the drama did not end there. As he was approaching the group, he did not notice that there was a snake in his path. Luckily, one of the respondents saw the snake and killed it with his bolo.

Another challenge that enumerators shared is the difficulty of the respondents understanding the questions, as many of the community members are not able to attend school or have only reached elementary level.

***“Many of the respondents had difficulty understanding the questions. The more you try to explain, the more they are confused.”***

*“Many of the respondents had difficulty understanding the questions. The more you try to explain, the more they are confused. But since we needed to get the information, we just have to be patient with them until they finally understand what we needed to get from them,”* Shara Bueno, one of the enumerators, explained.

It is also not uncommon for a parent, especially the father, to not know the birthday of a child. In these instances, the enumerator has to wait for the mother to arrive or return when she is available.

The enumerators also expressed that the job could be tedious, even boring, as you have to ask the same questions over and over again to a number of people each day. But they just told themselves to think of the exercise as just talking to people, or just like making gossip.

Romerey “Rey” Suclatan, the son of Datu Elpidio “Imbay-ao” Suclatan, head of the tribe and Chairperson of NAMAMAYUK, shared the same issues and concerns. He was particularly shocked to note that most lot owners did not have Transfer Certificates of Title (TCT). However, he had one story with a positive twist.

*“In one of my interviews, there were many people around listening to the conversation I was having with the respondent. After the session, they asked me how they could join the organization (NAMAMAYUK). We checked the ancestry and found that they were part of the tribe. The enumeration session became a recruitment activity as well,”* Rey shared.

Another problem shared by the group is, due to the sloping terrain, many polygons cannot be closed because it would be too dangerous to go near the cliff or ravine. This issue they hope to remedy during the encoding stage.

The NAMAMAYUK group was able to enumerate and survey 250 households in 13 days. This is quite a feat considering the terrain, the level of education and understanding of the people, and the lack of equipment (one handheld GPS device was shared by two enumerators).

### **Portulin enumerators: compartmentalizing work to cover more ground**

In the area of the Portulin Talaandig Tribal Association, Inc. (PTTA, Inc.), they had four enumerators and one surveyor. PTTA Inc. adopted a different approach of the enumerators just doing the interviews

and one surveyor doing all the surveys since it is a close-knit area and the surveyor, Datu Richard Dawatan, is a trained forest ranger.

The PTTA, Inc. enumerators adapted a team approach to their tasks. The four of them would go to an area together and conduct their enumeration activities. Like their counterparts in NAMAMAYUK, they also encountered difficulties in using the equipment. However, their biggest issue during the start of the work was the weather.

*“When we got to the area on our first day, it was raining hard. Roads were slippery and dangerous, so we were only able to survey a few houses – those that were adjacent to each other,”* Emily Samson, one of the enumerators, said.

Unlike their NAMAMAYUK colleagues, the PTTA, Inc. enumerators did not encounter difficulties with the respondents since they already knew them or were related to them somehow.

*“It also helped a lot that Datu Johnny Guina, head of tribe and Chairperson of the PTTA, Inc., already talked to the people and explained what we were about to do,”* Theresa dela Cruz, another enumerator, explained.

They also had issues taking family photos since most of the time the families were not all in their residence, and expressed apprehension that they will not complete the survey and enumeration of 250 households, since the number of households owning house lots or farm lots may not reach that number.

*“We don’t know if we can complete 250 households because we only prioritized those who own land, either house lot or farm lot,”* Merly Vinuya, another enumerator, shared.

They also expressed concern over security issues in the far-flung sitios of New Eden, Concepcion, and Utah, which are known “critical” areas due to the presence of New Peoples Army<sup>2</sup> regulars.

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<sup>2</sup> The New People’s Army (NPA) is the military arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines, which is dedicated to achieving power by means of revolutionary insurrection.



### **MILALITTRA, Inc. enumerators: women power at work**

On the other side of Mt. Kalatungan, in the municipality of Talakag, lies the villages of Mirayon, Lapok, Lirongan, and *sitio* Tinaytayan in the village of San Miguel. Collectively under the association called Mirayon Lapok Lirongan Tinaytayan Talaandig Tribal Association, Inc. (MILALITTRA, Inc.), it is the biggest of the three project areas, and with only six enumerators supposed to cover 2,000 households, is the most challenging.

Like their PTTA, Inc. counterparts, the group also adopted a team approach. They went to their scheduled area as one. Their first stop was the farthest area, *sitio* Tinaytayan.

Shenine Deconlay, one of the enumerators, recounts how she was inches away from a snake as she surveyed one farm lot. *“The grass was so high that you cannot see anything by your feet. Luckily, the snake was not aggressive and just crawled away,”* she recalled.

In a nearby *sitio* Mabinay, the group encountered a very steep trail where again they saw a snake, a bigger one this time. The group ran away from the snake and was not able to complete the survey.



Shenine shared that aside from the challenging terrain, they did not encounter any difficulty with the respondents because they know each other.

For Leizel Jane Pacana, another of the MILALITTRA, Inc. enumerators, the experience has had more good than bad times. They were happy with the way they were received during their survey of four *sitios* in Lirongan village.

*“We did not have a hard time in Lirongan because the people were very cooperative. They showed the way to their farms, admonished family members not to leave since we still had to take their photo,”* Liezel shared.

Although there were a few who did not want to be surveyed since they already have titles to their lands, there were more who were not on the list who were willing to be enumerated and surveyed.

For team leader Jonamie Lupiahan, the whole exercise was a test of patience. She laments that in some areas, there was not enough groundwork done to orient the people about the project, resulting to hesitation and doubt among the community members.

*“There were instances when we were accused of being fake surveyors, that we would take their land from them,”* she said.

*“People in some areas distrust foreigners. They would say that since the project is funded by foreigners, then it is not for the good of the lumads (natives),”* she added.

As a result, the group did not meet their target of 500 households in the area as they were only able to complete 300.

This is in stark contrast to the case of Lirongan village, where Xavier Science Foundation, Inc. (XSF) was able to conduct an orientation before the enumerators even set foot in the area. Thus, the project was very much welcome and the group could no longer accommodate the number of additional households who wanted to be surveyed.



The group even encountered a case of intra-family conflict over land. In this case, the eldest invited them to survey their farmland. When they got to the property, his siblings wanted the survey to be done in parcels, which could not be done because the land has not been subdivided yet. The siblings raised their voices at each other and the group just left.

*“They thought we could do a subdivision survey, and have their land subdivided without spending money (gusto makalibre),”* Jonamie revealed.

A schoolteacher by training, Jonamie is thankful for the project for teaching her patience, which she can put to good use when she starts teaching.

For Perjoy Abunda, another enumerator, the work was fulfilling even though it was filled with a series of unfortunate events.

There was a time that she had to relieve herself in the cemetery because the subject did not want to be interviewed, and did not let her into the house.

On a different occasion, she was stung by bees, drenched in rain, and forced to eat lunch under the gaze of a line of respondents patiently waiting for their turn to be enumerated.

*“Sometimes we cannot even take a break for lunch because of the number of people we are scheduled to interview,” she shared.*

At times they even have to work on Sundays because that is the day when the family is complete (for the taking of photograph).

All in all, despite the difficulties, the group is one in saying that the experience made them know and understand their co-villagers better. ■



## MORE THAN HOMEMAKERS:

Women of the Talaandig and Manobo of Mt. Kalatungan play the indispensable role of pillars of the tribe

**T**he *Manobo* and *Talaandig* of Mt. Kalatungan mountain range in the province of Bukidnon in Mindanao, Philippines are unabashedly male-dominated.

There is no woman tribal head and no member of the fairer sex among its Council of Elders.

However, it does not mean that women are considered lesser beings in the eyes of the Manobo and Talaandig. Indeed, while they are not accorded official leadership roles, the women of the tribe exercise sufficient power and authority over other matters.

There is a title reserved for women leaders of the tribe: *Bae*. While most of the wives of *datu*s are conferred the title, this is not automatically given. Some women of the community, who are not wives of *datu*s but have done something of great service to the community or possess essential knowledge and skills, have been conferred the title.

The *Bae* is considered a leader among women. While one of the roles of the *datu* is to give the tribe his wise counsel, it is to the *Bae* that the *datu* seeks it. It is to the *Bae* that the *datu* can reveal his fears and apprehensions. Suffice it to say, it is to the *Bae* that the *datu* can show weakness.

But apart from acting as a sounding board and emotional pillar of the tribe's leader, the *Bae* also helps in ensuring that the women of the tribe help in its economic activities.

## Augmenting the family income

Traditionally, Manobo and Talaandig women not only keep the home running while their husbands are farming in the fields or hunting in the forest, they also help their men farm and gather forest products and medicinal herbs.

On top of this, women are also involved in other income-generating activities to help expand or extend the family finances.

*Bae* Emilia Guina, wife of *Datu* Johnny Guina of the Portulin Talaandig, is also the Women's President of the Portulin Talaandig Tribal Association, Inc. (PTTA, Inc.). Under her leadership, numerous projects were implemented that served to supplement the income of PTTA, Inc. Women's Group.

One of their first projects was poultry farming. Unfortunately, the broilers died from disease. Undaunted, the women used the

remaining funds to buy Calla Lily flowers, which they planted in a communal farm.

However, a prolonged drought threatened to wipe out the flowers. To save them, *Bae Emilia* transferred the flowers to her backyard, where they would be assured of constant watering from the runoff from her kitchen.

For one year, income from the sale of Calla Lilies, which the women sell for 30 pesos<sup>1</sup> a dozen in Pangantucan and nearby towns, were distributed to the members. Some of the money is used for organizational activities (such as transportation fund for following-up their Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim or CADT application).

*“Unlike other leaders, Datu Johnny and Bae Emilia do not ask contributions from the members of the tribe. They either use their own money for tribal activities or use the money earned from projects,”* Julieta Dawatan, a member of the PTTA, Inc. Women’s Group shared.

From the group’s earnings, and additional funds from Kasilak Foundation, the Women’s Group bought more Calla Lilies and distributed 50 hills per member.

*“We want to try growing more Calla Lilies because aside from selling them per dozen, we also plan to do landscaping using the flowers,”* *Bae Emilia* explained.

## Rice-ing to the challenge

She also devised of a plan for the sale of the flowers to be used as seed money for the organization.

*“I told the elders, what if for every five pesos sale, we give back one peso to the organization as a seed fund, and they agreed,”* she said.

The scheme generated over 7,000 pesos for the organization, which *Bae Emilia* suggested be used as a seed fund for a rice-retailing business. Again, the elders agreed.

<sup>1</sup> As of October 2019, the exchange rate is a US dollar to 51 pesos.



They named the business *Bugasan sa PTTA, Inc.* So as not to spend on rental, the business was set-up in the house of the *datu* and *bae*. At first, they hired someone to look after the business. In return, that person was paid 20 percent of the profits. However, issues of reliability forced *Bae Emilia* to take over.

Every month, *Bae Emilia* and the organization's treasurer would head to Pangantucan town proper to purchase stocks. When the money they had reached 10,000 pesos, they would deposit it to a bank account they opened at the First Valley Bank.

“We would buy rice from Pangantucan at 30 pesos per kilogram and sell it here at 33 to 34 pesos per kilogram,” she shared.

After three years, *Bae Emilia* told the group that she wanted someone else to look over the *Bugasan* because she was tired and had other concerns that needed attention. By then, the money in the bank already reached 100,000 pesos.

*“I told the general assembly that I can no longer look after the Bugasan, but nobody wanted to take over, so we just closed it down,” Bae Emilia said.*



The bank account served the group in good stead when projects from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) came in, as they were required to open an account with the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP), through which the project funds were disbursed. PTTA, Inc. already had the money, they just had to open an account with the LBP.

They also used part of the money to acquire a two-hectare sugarcane farm.

But mostly, the funds were used for hospitalization and burial assistance of members, and for organizational activities such as following-up their CADT application and community meetings.

The women's group also does animal dispersal projects. They have carabaos, cows, pigs which they disperse by raffle to members during special tribal occasions. In return, the members give back one or two of the dispersed animals' offspring to the organization, to be dispersed again.

## **Caring for the forest, ensuring that traditions live on**

Aside from raising additional funds, the PTTA, Inc. Women's Group also advocates caring for the forest.

Women usually help men during reforestation activities, where they plant endemic tree species. Women also look after the tree nurseries.

They also teach children to inform Wildlife Enforcement Officers (WEO) if they see poachers in their area.

*“Children are very effective since poachers do not usually mind that children are around. That is why it is very important to instill in our children that poaching is bad and should be reported immediately,”* Bae Emilia shared.

The Women's Group is also at the forefront of recruiting and training children and youth for the *Kulahi* Performing Arts Group, which was formed to showcase *Talaandig* culture and traditions through music and dance.

Their current projects include lobbying the local Department of Education to establish an IP school within the Portulin Elementary School, as well as helping the community's youth come up with a dictionary of the *Talaandig* language.

## Healers and weavers

While not as advanced on the economic front, the achievements of the Manobo women of NAMAMAYUK are also commendable.

The NAMAMAYUK women are the healers of the tribe. They gather medicinal herbs and make them into household remedies for common diseases.

However, not all women members of the tribe are taught to be herbal collectors or *mangangatay*, only those whose intentions are pure.

While forbidden by mainstream medical professionals to practice traditional birthing methods, they learn these just the same and are forced to use the knowledge in times when the woman is about to give birth and the village or town midwife is not available.

The Manobo women are also well-versed in the rituals involving child-bearing. When a woman gets pregnant, they conduct a ritual which would ensure that both mother and baby are healthy all throughout the pregnancy, and for a safe birthing.

The ritualist blesses the mother and unborn baby, and the women of the family constructs a mini-crib made from the bark of the banana tree (*luka*), which is placed in the room of the pregnant woman.

*“The ritual is basically like baptizing the baby while it is still in the womb. We do that because we believe that the baby should be baptized the soonest or else it might die,”*

***“When a woman gets pregnant, (other Manobo women) conduct a ritual which would ensure that both mother and baby are healthy...”***

Elsie Salido, one of the members of the women's group, explained. After the baby is born, the placenta is buried near the entrance of the house, with another accompanying ritual called *Pegulemu*.

## Mat-weaving as cultural and economic activity

One economic activity as well as an art form of the Manobo women is making mats (*banig*). They make it from *Sedsed*, a grass that grows in swampy areas such as rice fields. After being harvested, the *Sedsed* is rubbed with ash to make it stronger and insect repellent.

While some mats are sold, most are given away to guests as a token of the Manobo hospitality. Some mats are even personalized with the guest's name on it.

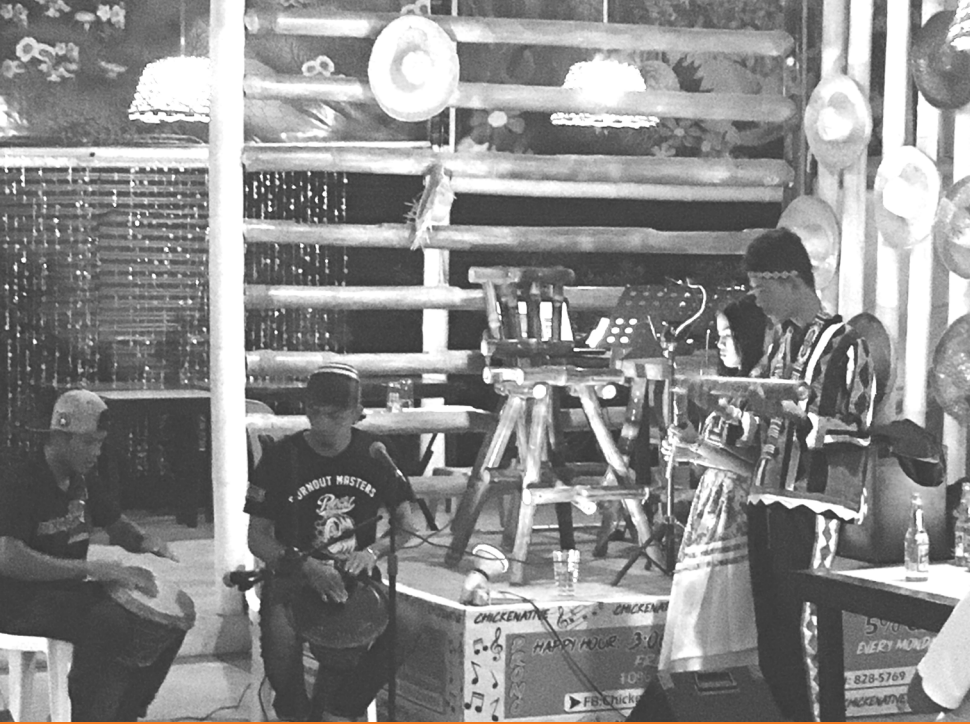
However, the *Sedsed* is sensitive to pesticides and herbicides and is nowadays hard to cultivate. Thus, *banig*-makers use other materials, which is not as good as *Sedsed*.

The women of NAMAMAYUK are also into basket-weaving. They used to make the baskets from rattan, but now use small bamboo (*Badtek, Rawan, or Migo*).

They also craft souvenir items, which they sell during the town fiesta. However, lack of funds for the purchase of raw materials hamper them from making this activity economically viable.

But for the women of NAMAMAYUK, their most important role is teaching their children to love and take care of the forest, and handing down their Manobo traditions, thus ensuring that their culture and way of life live on for succeeding generations.

Indeed, while men dominate the tribe's political sphere, the women of Mt. Kalatungan play a vital role not only to the tribe, but also to the ecosystem that they are nature-bound to protect. ■



## KEEPING THE FLAME ALIVE:

Talaandig and Manobo Youth Groups of Mt. Kalatungan take the lead in keeping their indigenous practices and traditions alive

**S**melly. Dirty. Poor. These are among the many derogatory words that children from indigenous peoples (IP) communities hear at school from their “assimilated” classmates. Hurtful words that sting, leave lasting scars, and shame IP children enough for them, and even their parents, to deny their ancestry and shun their culture and traditions.





## They no longer speak their language

Thus, stories abound of parents not even teaching their children the *Manobo* or *Talaandig* language and rituals. They are taught to speak Visayan instead. As a result, there is already a generation of *Manobo* and *Talaandig* who are no longer in touch with their heritage.

Datu Johnny “Bagusayana” Guina, leader of the Portulin Talaandig Tribal Association, Inc. (PTTA, Inc.) in the municipality of Pangantucan, Bukidnon, recounts that they held a contest to see how many entire families in their association could still speak *Talaandig*. They were shocked to learn that only two families won in the said contest.

In *Barangay* (village) Bacusanon, also in Pangantucan, youth lament that they no longer know their rituals. Now they want to reconnect.

“Some of us have strayed from the path, they no longer follow indigenous knowledge, systems, and practices. We only get together to showcase our culture during fiestas,” Melvin Pongautan, an IP and barangay youth leader, lamented.

“This is not entirely the fault of our parents, we have just been out of touch,” he added.



Julieta Dawatan of Portulin, also a member of the PTTA, Inc., bewails that her daughter was not accepted to the Pamulaan Center for Indigenous Education, a prestigious IP institution of higher learning under the University of Southeastern Philippines located in Davao City, because she could not speak *Talaandig*.

“It was mainly our fault, mine and her father’s. We feared that our children will be ridiculed in school for being *Talaandig*, so we never taught them our language,” she revealed.

## Revival of interest

But things are changing. There has been a revival of interest recently, mostly through the efforts of performing arts groups like the Kulahi Performing Arts Group (KPAG) of Barangay Portulin.

KPAG had its beginnings as the Kulahi Band, a brainchild of Christine Joy Guina (now Agudo), eldest of Datu Johnny’s children. At a young age, Christine Joy already was already organizing cultural entertainment events for her father’s visitors.

In 2009, she became a scholar at Pamulaan Center for Indigenous Peoples Education and immersed herself in thoroughly getting to know *Talaandig* songs, dances, and musical instruments, with the help of other *Talaandig* scholars from *Barangay* Mirayon, municipality of Talakag, province of Bukidnon.

Rodelio Linsahay “Waway” Saway – founder and leader of the *Talaandig* Band – a *Talaandig* datu and world-renowned musician, was a big influence in Christine Joy’s music. She collected his albums and played them whenever she returns to her community.

In 2010, the tourism office of the municipal government of Pangantucan hatched a plan to organize a tribal band. Christine Joy, together with her father Datu Johnny, volunteered the Portulin *Talaandig* youth for the role.

However, the tourism office said that they wanted to see the Portulin *Talaandig* youth group’s performance before they decide.

After the meeting, Christine Joy and Datu Johnny commissioned the Talahari band, a *Manobo* performing arts group from *Barangay Panadtalan* in the nearby municipality of Maramag, to train the Portulin Talaandig youth. After a rigorous two-and-a-half-day training, the group was ready to render their recital with the tourism office.

## Kulahi's coming out party

On 10 April 2010, the Kulahi Band “auditioned” for the Pangantucan tourism office and passed with flying colors. The date marked the “official” birth of the band as they performed for the first time using the Kulahi name.

Three months later, on 1 July 2010, the Kulahi Band held its first public performance during the Pangantucan Day celebrations held at the municipal plaza.

Nine years later, the group has had countless performances under its belt, not only within Bukidnon but in neighboring cities and provinces. It has already established itself as a brand that embodies the Portulin Talaandig youth. It has also inspired other IP youth groups nearby to follow in its footsteps.

The group has also expanded from just performing music to theater, and thus renamed itself the Kulahi Performing Arts Group (KPAG).

The group's founder, Christine Joy, is now a schoolteacher in Pangantucan proper, but she still mentors and creates songs for the group.

From the five youth of Portulin (plus Datu Johnny) who first performed for the Pangantucan tourism office in 2010, the group has now grown to around 15 regular members and is now on its third generation of members. Christine Joy's son, six-year old Rhengade, is Kulahi's youngest member.

Kulahi, which means “shout” or “scream” in the *Talaandig* language, embodies the sentiment of the Portulin youth. They want to shout out to the whole world that they are *Talaandig*. They want the world to know their hopes, fears, ambitions, and apprehensions.

Most of Kulahi's songs revolve around *Talaandig* culture and traditions, their way of life, and their relationship with the environment. Their most popular song is "Kulahi," which literally means shout of the forest.

Kulahi members practice regularly and play up to 10 indigenous instruments, which include the *kubing*, bird flute, *kokak*, rain stick, and traditional drums.

Becoming a KPAG member is indeed a privilege and is not easy. While it is open to any Portulin *Talaandig* youth who wants to join, only those who manifest his or her desire to learn more and promote *Talaandig* culture are recruited. Those selected undergo rigorous training on *Talaandig* culture, traditional instruments, and performing.

After the rigorous training is the screening process, sort of an audition, where the trainees are required to demonstrate their knowledge of *Talaandig* culture (not just the what and how, but more so the why) and showcase the skills they learned from the training.

The KPAG has performed in Bukidnon State University, Central Mindanao University, Barangay Miarayon in the nearby municipality of Talakag, Davao City, and in Cagayan de Oro City's *Kaamulan* Festival. The group is a regular fixture at Bukidnon's provincial festivals and IP events.

## KULAHİ

*Lyrics: Christine Joy G. Agudo*  
*Tune: Adopted from Kadangyan*  
*and revised by Kulahi*

Mig ulahu sa kalasan  
(*The forest cries*)  
Daw tuminulu sa luha  
(*And the tears fall*)  
Agpanayu atiyu ha bulig  
(*Asking for a little help*)  
Te menga atew. Hey!  
(*From people. Hey!*)

### Chorus

Kulahi hu kalasan  
(*Shout of the forest*)  
Kulahi hu kalasan  
(*Shout of the forest*)  
Kulahi hu Talaandig  
(*Shout of the Talaandig*)  
Kulahi hu tribu tew.  
(*Shout of our tribe*)

(*Repeat all*)  
(*Repeat Chorus*)

***“We go where we are invited because it is an opportunity for us not just to showcase our performing skills, but to spread Talaandig culture as well.”***

*“We go where we are invited because it is an opportunity for us not just to showcase our performing skills, but to spread Talaandig culture as well,”* Jeffrie Barton, 19, one of the group’s senior members, said.

They do not charge professional fees for their performances, but only ask for support for transportation and food.

*“We do not charge for our performances because we are just happy to perform and share Talaandig culture through song and dance,”* Christian Guina, one of the group’s lead singers and dancers, explained.

Even though they have performed all over Bukidnon and nearby cities, their most relished performance was their impromptu performance, or “jamming” with a visiting performing arts group from Myanmar.

*“The group from Myanmar went to our place and jamming with them was fun because we learned about the music and culture of IPs from another country, which we realized is very similar to ours,”* Janice Barton, the group’s female lead singer and dancer, shared.

As a total performing arts group, Kulahi does not only spread *Talaandig* culture through songs but also through dances. Among the most popular are the *Binanog*, in which the dancers mimic bird-like movements, in homage to the avian inhabitants of Mt. Kalatungan (which includes the Philippine Eagle), the warrior dance, and the courtship dance.

Aside from performing, KPAG members also undergo training on other aspects of *Talaandig* culture. A regular activity is beads making. Beads are an intrinsic part of *Talaandig* culture as these are embroidered in *Talaandig* traditional garments (clothes and headdresses) and used as accent pieces (wrist bands, necklaces, and the like).

Kulahi's most recent gig was during the *Araw ng Pigtauranan* (Pigtauranan<sup>1</sup> Day) held at the picturesque Lake Napalit.

Out of its 15 regular members, only around five to 10 are usually sent to the performances due to budgetary constraints and lack of instruments.

While the group is happy to perform for food and transportation, they would gladly welcome support for the purchase of more instruments, so that more members can be recruited, and more can join during performances.

### **Kulahi inspires other youth groups**

Kulahi's success has resonated to other youth groups in Pangantucan, who hope to follow in their footsteps.

In Bacusanon, Melvin and his group are planning to put up their own youth performing arts group. They are in the process of asking for sponsors for the purchase of instruments.

*"Kulahi has shown how music and dance can bring together the youth and give them a sense of pride in their heritage. Hopefully, with our own group, we can bring the same to Bacusanon,"* Melvin shares.

Like the *Talaandig* of Portulin, the *Manobo* of Bacusanon also have a rich culture to share. They have the *Olaging*, a traditional singing contest showcasing Manobo songs, the *Panulakan*, an elaborate ritual performed before the start of a major program, and the *Kaligaan*, a ritual that uses dance as a prayer.

Then there is also the *Ibabasuk*, a ritual undertaken before planting.

All these rituals involve elaborate songs and dances that the *Manobo* youth of Bacusanon also wish to showcase via their own performing arts group.

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<sup>1</sup> Pigtauranan is one of the barangays (villages) of the municipality of Pangantucan. It is where Lake Napalit is located.

These rituals are also based on the connection of IPs to their land and the spirits that abound there. Thus, the importance of preserving culture is also linked to tenurial security. Without land, their rituals will vanish.

With Kulahi and other performing arts groups, the flame of hope for future generations of IP youths around Mt. Kalatungan is still alive and burning. But it needs to be nurtured and supported. Otherwise, the flame will die down to a flicker and future generations of Filipinos, not just IPs, will never know what they have lost. ■

# Annex A

## HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN THE PARTICIPATORY ENUMERATION



### IMPROVING TENURE SECURITY OF SMALLHOLDER FARMERS IN SELECT AREAS IN THE PHILIPPINES

HOUSEHOLD SURVEY FORM Number: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE (dd/mm/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: Field mandatory (\*)

A. LOCATION DETAILS			
<b>A1.</b> Municipality:	<b>A2.</b> Barangay:	<b>A3.</b> Street/Sitio/Purok:	<b>A4.</b> Indigenous People's Organization (IPO) <input type="checkbox"/> NAMAMAYUK (1) <input type="checkbox"/> PTTA, INC. (2) <input type="checkbox"/> MILALITTRA, INC. (3)

B. ENUMERATION		
<b>B1.</b> Name of Enumerator *	Last Name:	Other Names:
<b>B2.</b> Sex *	<input type="checkbox"/> Male (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> Female (2)
<b>B3.</b> Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) *		
<b>B4.</b> Barangay		
<b>B5.</b> Contact #		
<b>B6.</b> GPS ID number *		
<b>B7.</b> Camera ID number *		

C. RESPONDENT		
<b>C1.</b> Name of Respondent *	Last Name:	Other Names:
<b>C2.</b> Sex *	<input type="checkbox"/> Male (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> Female (2)
<b>C3.</b> Civil Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Widow	<input type="checkbox"/> Separated <input type="checkbox"/> Live-in/Co-habiting
<b>C4.</b> Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) *		
<b>C5.</b> Level of Education (See code B. page 2)		
<b>C6.</b> Type of Work (See code C. page 2)		
<b>C7.</b> Contact number (if applicable)		
<b>C8.</b> Photo File Name*		





<b>E. HOUSEHOLD</b>	
<b>E1.</b> Household properties <i>(Multiple selection)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sari-sari store (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle/s (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Farm inside of ancestral domain (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Farm outside of ancestral domain (4) <input type="checkbox"/> house/s (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (6) _____
<b>E2.</b> Estimated total <b>monthly</b> farming income for the <b>last (6) months</b> (for farming households)	
<b>E3.</b> Estimated monthly non-farming income for the <b>last (6) months</b>	
<b>E4.</b> Estimated total <b>monthly</b> expenses for the <b>last (6) months</b>	
<b>E5.</b> Average <b>monthly</b> expenses for farm inputs for the <b>last (6) months</b> <i>(farm animals, equipment, fertilizers, pesticides, etc.)</i>	
<b>E6.</b> Which of these communal properties within the ancestral domain do you have access to? <i>(multiple selection) *</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Forestlands (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Burial grounds (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Rivers (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Lakes (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (5) _____
<b>E7.</b> Which of these programs and services are you able to access and utilize? <i>(multiple selection) *</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Health (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Formal credit (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Education (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Security (6) <input type="checkbox"/> Livelihood (3) <input type="checkbox"/> 4Ps (7) <input type="checkbox"/> Market (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (8) _____
<b>E8.</b> Source of programs and services <i>(multiple selection) *</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Government (1) <input type="checkbox"/> NGO (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Private (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Church (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (5) _____
<b>E9.</b> Do you have family savings?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (1) <input type="checkbox"/> No (2) <i>(skip to E12)</i>
<b>E10.</b> If Yes, what type of family savings? <i>(multiple selection)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Rural bank (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative (2) <input type="checkbox"/> At home (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (4) _____
<b>E11.</b> Do you have community savings	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (1) <input type="checkbox"/> No (2) <i>(skip to E14)</i>
<b>E12.</b> If Yes, what type of community savings? <i>(multiple selection)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Rural bank (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (3) _____
<b>E13.</b> Household priorities <i>(Choose top 3 priorities) *</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tenure security (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Farm inputs (7) <input type="checkbox"/> Food security (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet (8) <input type="checkbox"/> Housing improvement (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Peace and order (9) <input type="checkbox"/> Drinking water (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Livelihood/Family business (10) <input type="checkbox"/> Education (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Health (11) <input type="checkbox"/> Electricity (6) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (12) _____
<b>E14.</b> Village priorities <i>(Choose top 3 priorities) *</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tenure security (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile network (10) <input type="checkbox"/> Food security (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Peace and order (11) <input type="checkbox"/> Health centers (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Market (12)

	<input type="checkbox"/> Roads (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Water system (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Drainage improvement (6) <input type="checkbox"/> School and educational facilities (7) <input type="checkbox"/> Sewerage (8) <input type="checkbox"/> Electricity (9)	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety from natural disasters (typhoon, landslide, fire, etc). (13) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (14) _____
<b>E15.</b> Household group photo file name *		

<b>F. HOUSE</b>		
<b>F1.</b> GPS point file name of current residential house ( <i>H + Questionnaire number, e.g. HCDO13</i> ) *		
<b>F2.</b> GPS #		
<b>F3.</b> Majority of materials used for structure ( <i>please select one</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-concrete (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Light materials (3)	
<b>F4.</b> Use of structure ( <i>please select one</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Residential (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed-use (3)	
<b>F5.</b> Number of floor/s ( <i>please select one</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> One (1) floor <input type="checkbox"/> Two (2) floors <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (3) _____	
<b>F6.</b> Power source ( <i>can be multiple selection</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Buseco (1) <input type="checkbox"/> No electricity (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Solar panel (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (4) _____	
<b>F7.</b> Drinking water source ( <i>can be multiple selection</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Local water district (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (4) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Deep well (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendor (3)	
<b>F8.</b> Domestic water source ( <i>can be multiple selection</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Local water district (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Spring (6) <input type="checkbox"/> Community Water Supply (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Rain Water (7) <input type="checkbox"/> Deep well (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (8) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Rivers (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Lakes (5)	
<b>F9.</b> Sanitation/toilet	<input type="checkbox"/> Owned/house (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Communal (2)	
<b>10.</b> Type of Toilet	<input type="checkbox"/> Flush (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Bush (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Pit latrine (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (5) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Pit composting (3)	

<b>G. HOUSE GARDEN</b>		
<b>G1.</b> Do you have a garden	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (1) <input type="checkbox"/> No (2) ( <i>skip to H1</i> )	
<b>G2.</b> GPS ID		
<b>G3.</b> GPS file name*		
<b>G4.</b> Use of the Garden ( <i>can be multiple selection</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Food (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetic/Beautification (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Income (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (5) _____	
<b>G5.</b> Plant/s in the garden ( <i>can be multiple selection</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetables (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Ornamental (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit trees (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Medicinal Plants (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Root crops (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (6) _____	

<b>H. HOUSE LOT TENURE</b>		
<b>H1.</b> Tenure type of the land of residential house *	<input type="checkbox"/> Owned/being amortized (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Owned/no amortization (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Owned/inherited (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Shared with payment (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Shared without payment (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Rented (6) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (7) _____
<b>H2.</b> Type of land document of current residential house (multiple selection)	<input type="checkbox"/> Receipt of land tax (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Registered tenancy document (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Contract (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lease (4) <input type="checkbox"/> No document (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (6) _____
<b>H3.</b> Name of the person in the document (if only the name of the person is different from H2)	Last name:	Other Names:
<b>H4.</b> Sex *	<input type="checkbox"/> Male (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> Female (2)
<b>H5.</b> Identification number of land document (if available)		
<b>H6.</b> Photo file name of any documents related to land of residential house *		
<b>H7.</b> If renter/tenant, write the land owner's full name	Last name:	Other Names:
<b>H8.</b> Sex *	<input type="checkbox"/> Male (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> Female (2)

<b>I. HOUSE TENURE</b>		
<b>I1.</b> Tenure type of the residential house	<input type="checkbox"/> Owned/being amortized (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Owned/no amortization (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Owned/inherited (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Shared with payment (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Shared without payment (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Rented (6) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (7) _____
<b>I2.</b> Type of document of residential house	<input type="checkbox"/> Registered tenancy document (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Contract (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Lease/Rent (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> No document (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (5) _____
<b>I3.</b> Name of the person in the document (If only the name of the person is different from I2)	Last name:	Other names:
<b>I4.</b> Sex *	<input type="checkbox"/> Male (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> Female (2)
<b>I5.</b> Identification number of residential house document (if available)		
<b>I6.</b> Photo file name of any documents of residential house *		
<b>I7.</b> If renter/tenant, write the house owner's full name	Last name:	Other Names:
<b>I8.</b> Sex *	<input type="checkbox"/> Male (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> Female (2)

<b>J. FARM</b>		
<b>J1.</b> Type of land *	<input type="checkbox"/> Private land (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Trust land (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Institution land (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Government land (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Public land (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Communal land (6) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (7) _____
<b>J2.</b> GPS ID		
<b>J3.</b> GPS point file name of current farm		

<b>K. FARM TENURE</b>	
<b>K1.</b> How many Farm lots do you own?	
<b>K2.</b> Total Hectares of Farm Lots?	
<b>K3.</b> Tenure type of the farm *	<input type="checkbox"/> Owned/being amortized (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Shared without payment (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Owned/no amortization (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Rented (6) <input type="checkbox"/> Owned/inherited (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (7) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Shared with payment (4)
<b>K4.</b> Type of land document of the farm	<input type="checkbox"/> Receipt of land tax (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Lease (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Registered tenancy document (2) <input type="checkbox"/> No document (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Contract (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (6) _____
<b>K5.</b> Name of the person in the document Name of the person in the document (if only the name of the person is different from k2)	Last name: _____ Other names: _____
<b>K6.</b> Sex *	<input type="checkbox"/> Male (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Female (2)
<b>K7.</b> Identification of land document (if available)	
<b>K8.</b> Photo file name of any documents/evidences related to farm *	
<b>K9.</b> If renter/tenant, write the land owner's full name	Last name: _____ Other Names: _____
<b>K10.</b> Sex *	<input type="checkbox"/> Male (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Female (2)
<b>K11.</b> If tenancy or contract, number of household/s sharing the production	
<b>K12.</b> If tenancy or contract, percent of production given to the landlord/s	
<b>K13.</b> Do you fear that you will be displaced/evicted from your house/farm in the next 5 years	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>K14.</b> If the reason for eviction is conflict on OWNERSHIP, with whom? *	<input type="checkbox"/> Government (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Business/Private sector (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Migrants/settlers (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbor (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify _____ (5)
<b>K15.</b> If the reason for eviction is NATURAL DISASTER, what type?	<input type="checkbox"/> Flooding (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Landslide (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify _____ (3)

<b>L. FARM PRODUCTION</b>	
<b>L1.</b> Crops planted (multiple selection)	<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetables (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Corn (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit trees (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Root crops (6) <input type="checkbox"/> Ornamental (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Agro-forest trees (7) <input type="checkbox"/> Rice (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (8) _____
<b>L2.</b> Type of labor for farming	<input type="checkbox"/> Family (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Contract (as employee) (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Communal (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Contract (as employer) (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (6) _____
<b>L3.</b> Farm animals (assist in farming)	<input type="checkbox"/> Carabao (1) <input type="checkbox"/> No animal/s (4)

	<input type="checkbox"/> Horse (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Cow (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (5) _____
<b>L4.</b> Farm equipment "Heavy & Tools" <i>(multiple selection)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tractor/Implements (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Animal-drawn Equipment(2)	<input type="checkbox"/> No equipment (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (4) _____
<b>L5.</b> Use of farm fertilizers and/or pesticides <i>(multiple selection)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Organic fertilizer (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Synthetic fertilizer (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pesticides (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (4) _____
<b>L6.</b> Priority farm inputs and services <i>(select top 3)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fertilizers (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Seedlings (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Farm tools (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pesticides (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Trainings (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (6) _____
<b>L7.</b> Primary use of farm production <i>(multiple selection)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Household consumption (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Communal consumption (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Income (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (4) _____
<b>L8.</b> If for INCOME, through which option do you sell your produce	<input type="checkbox"/> Direct selling (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Middle-man (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Contract (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Government subsidy (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (5) _____
<b>L9.</b> Farm irrigation <i>(can be multiple selection)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual irrigation (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Communal (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Rain-fed (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> No irrigation (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (5) _____
<b>L10.</b> Who provides the irrigation	<input type="checkbox"/> IP organization (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Government (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Private business (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-government organization (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Church (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify (6) _____



# Partner People's Organizations



## **MILALITTRA, Inc.**

The Mirayon Lapok Lirongan Talaandig Tribal Association, Inc. (MILALITTRA, Inc.) covers four barangays in the municipality of Talakag, in the province of Bukidnon, Philippines. The group was awarded a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title for 11,367 hectares in 2003. The group's Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP) is being updated. MILALITTRA, Inc. is composed of approximately 2,500 households. The community's major source of income is farming. It is estimated that around 1,500 hectares within their ancestral domain are devoted to farming.



Nagkahiusang Manobong Manununod sa Yutang Kabilin (NAMAMAYUK, Inc.)

## **NAMAMAYUK**

The Nagkahiusang Manobong Manununod sa Yutang Kabilin (NAMAMAYUK) covers barangays Bacusanon and Nabaliwa in the municipality of Pangantucan, in the province of Bukidnon, Philippines. NAMAMAYUK has applied for a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title for 3,506 hectares and has already formulated its Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP). The community is composed of 208 households. Their livelihoods revolve around farming and other agricultural activities.



## **PTТА, Inc.**

The Portulin Talaandig Tribal Association, Inc. (PTТА, Inc.) covers barangays Portulin, New Eden, Concepcion, and Dagolos in the municipality of Pangantucan, in the province of Bukidnon, Philippines. It has 165 family members. PTТА, Inc.'s main goal is to deter illegal logging within the sacred forests of their ancestral domain. It has applied for a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title for 6,679.83 hectares and has already completed its Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP). The community's livelihoods involve farming, eco-tourism, and implementing externally funded community development programs.

# Project Implementers and Partners



The **Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC)** is a regional coalition of national and regional CSOs in Asia actively engaged in promoting food sovereignty, land rights and agrarian reform, sustainable agriculture, participatory governance, and rural development. For more information, refer to

[www.angoc.org](http://www.angoc.org)



The **Xavier Science Foundation, Inc. (XSF)** is a legal, non-stock, non-profit, non-government organization advocating programs and projects that will alleviate poverty and promote social empowerment. XSF serves as a conduit of funds to support development projects, innovative

programs, fora, and dialogues. For more information, refer to [www.xsfoundationinc.org](http://www.xsfoundationinc.org)



The **United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)** is working towards a better urban future. Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all. It facilitates the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) and hosts its Secretariat. For more information, refer to [www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org).



The **Global Land Tool Network (GLTN)** is an alliance of global, regional, and national partners contributing to poverty alleviation through land

reform, improved land management, and security of tenure particularly through the development and dissemination of pro-poor and gender sensitive tools. For more information, refer to [www.gltn.net](http://www.gltn.net).



The **German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)** is the primary State development body in Germany. BMZ's

governing principle is the protection of human rights, which includes the right to live in peace and freedom, and to help address the poverty issues in the world. For more information, refer to [www.bmz.de](http://www.bmz.de).

The stories compiled in this publication, *Stories of hope from Mt. Kalatungan: the Manobo and Talaandig experience in defending and conserving their ancestral lands*, tell of the journey of local communities who, for a long time, have lived a life of their own celebrating their culture and traditions. However, with increased global economic pressure, these communities have now witnessed how their ancestral lands and the forests are being depleted and how their rich traditions are gradually being lost. The stories provide insights on how communities translated their beliefs and principles on managing their resources in the quest to strengthen their security of customary tenure.

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