

THE SAMDHANA INSTITUTE

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



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Institute

An Asian Center for Social and Environmental Renewal



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Cover story:
Storytelling photo competition
"Lensa Mitra Samdhana"

Lopo of learning at Sekolah Alam Manusak (Manusak Nature School)

Manusak Nature School in Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), Indonesia; a place of learning, family, tourism, and a creative space for a community of young people.

Photo by Atman Laswandi Seubelan
The third winner – *Project in Action* category



Message from the Chairperson of the Board

Dear friends, colleagues and partners,

For all of us, 2020 was a year of unprecedented challenges. The Covid-19 pandemic impacted our health, our unity and even our collective sanity. Regardless, we remained steadfast in our resolve and found a way through troubled times. I personally believe we will emerge stronger, wiser and more dedicated as a result. Now, as we enter 2021, I'd like to share with you some reflections on the past year and outline my hopes for a more resilient future.

At the very least, 2020 was a time for self-reflection, kindness and inspiration. We reflected on what we do well and asked ourselves how we can do better. We considered how to address the growing feeling of isolation during this time of restrictions and started new *Noken* events to connect women, youth and differently abled peoples in Indonesia. We were genuinely amazed by the resilience of the 81 community and civil society (CSO) partners with whom we worked in 2020: the *Mong Pan Youth Association* in Myanmar were the first responders in the Shan state, where they swiftly informed their respective communities and addressed the threat of Covid-19; and *SMK Arjuna Laguboti* in Sumatra used its resources to produce hand sanitizers and distribute them to neighbouring villages.

Urgent support was needed by some community partners in March 2020, as restrictions in mobility brought about by the Covid-19 measures (coupled with the failure of their crops due to droughts related to climate change) meant that some families had to forage in the forests for their food. As one *Datu* described their needs at the height of the lockdown: "All we need is rice and some salt; we have other food sources in the forest." With generous support from friends, colleagues, families and partners, Samdhana responded to this emergency appeal for rice and salt from community partners in Northern Mindanao and Calamianes in the Philippines at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Thank you to all those who shared their kindness and care for our partners' needs. In 2020, we continued to support each other, finding hope within ourselves and the energy to move forward.

Throughout most of Southeast Asia (SEA) and in particular the Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia and more recently Myanmar, social and environmental justice are under siege. As we enter 2021, we begin a new decade determined to support those on the frontline and those seeking a resolution to these crises. We will increase overall strategic support for environmental defenders, for Indigenous People and Local Communities (IPLC) to secure the tenure rights to their territories and support their aspirations for self-determined development. The latter will be based on the recovery of indigenous knowledge and customs, in particular the practice of indigenous governance and justice systems.

In the coming year, together with IPLC and CSO partners, we will continue to explore creative solutions and learn from each other as we face everyday challenges. In addition to legal empowerment, we will ensure partner communities have access to emergency funds for urgent needs; we will provide

technical assistance and advice on conflict resolution or mediation processes with big business, state enterprises or other large development projects; we will support community-based research and exchanges on indigenous and traditional foods for food sovereignty; we will help provide greater access to water resources, indigenous plants and traditional foods as a basis for community resilience; we will support conservation efforts led by women and youth groups who are working to restore our oceans and forests; and through strategic communications, we will facilitate action for climate justice. Throughout this transition, we will focus on improving our capacities to support agrobiodiversity systems, community-based enterprise, sustainable land use, and better communications capacity. In 2021, we will strive to achieve better informed participation of IPLCs and local CSOs, especially in multi-sectoral bodies, online community markets and networks.

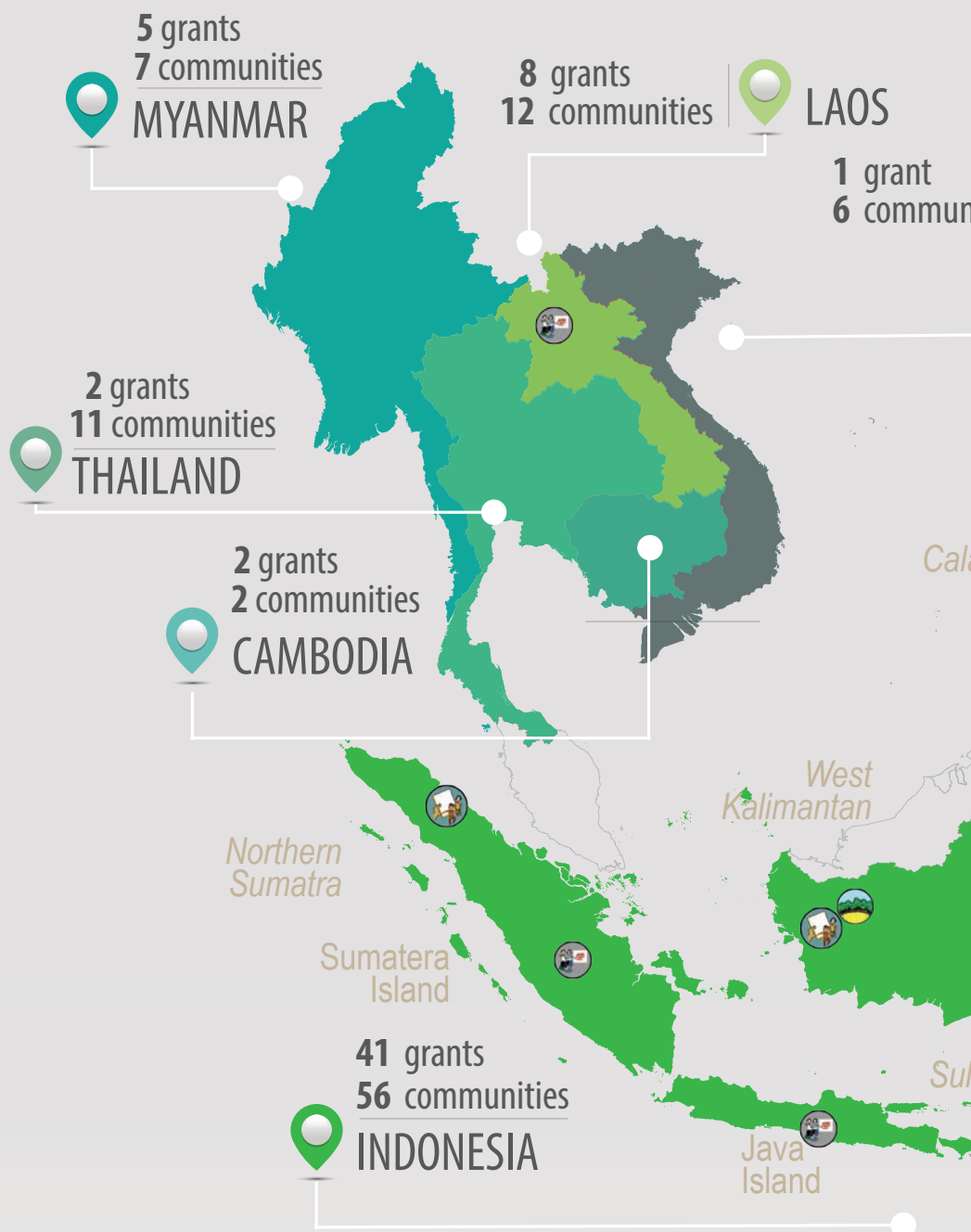
In 2021, as part of our efforts to achieve sustainable development goals, climate justice and benefit sharing for biodiversity, we will grow our partnerships with marginalised IPLC groups in and around forest areas, in small islands and coastal areas, and in agroforests and smallholder farms. We will also seek new strategic partnerships with local and regional CSOs around SEA. We will expand new partnerships to develop online and offline platforms for learning and exchanges throughout the region. In the coming decades, we will ensure more strategic partners have access to the resources, communications capacity, skills, knowledge and networks they need, so they can meet the challenges of an ever-changing world. Across all these efforts, we will ensure gender equality and social inclusion through the meaningful engagement of women, the next generation and differently abled people in their communities.

Our work would not be possible or impactful without the continued support of our community and CSO partners, donor-partners and the dedication of our staff, board and Fellows. Our sincere thanks go out to each and every one of you. We look forward to navigating a path through the new normal together, exploring new opportunities and facing whatever challenges tomorrow may bring.

Here's to a healthy, hopeful and creative 2021, and the journey ahead.

Regards,

Suraya A. Afiff
Chairperson of the Board, Samdhana Institute



Highlights of **Capacity Development** Programme:

Calamian Tagbanwa women and youth traditional food documentation; Higaonon and Bukidnon women and youth leadership; community conservation and roles in indigenous governance; gender equality and social inclusion (GESI); community skills for communication and documentation; and Laos youth critical thinking skills



Highlights of the **Lifescape** Programme:

Northern Mindanao: Sustainable and Healthy Integration of Indigenous Governance at the Community Level

West Kalimantan: Enabling community livelihoods



programme:

ated Ecosystems through Lobby and aDvocacy (SHIELD) Project,
andscape governance
Forefront of Conservation (ICON) Project.

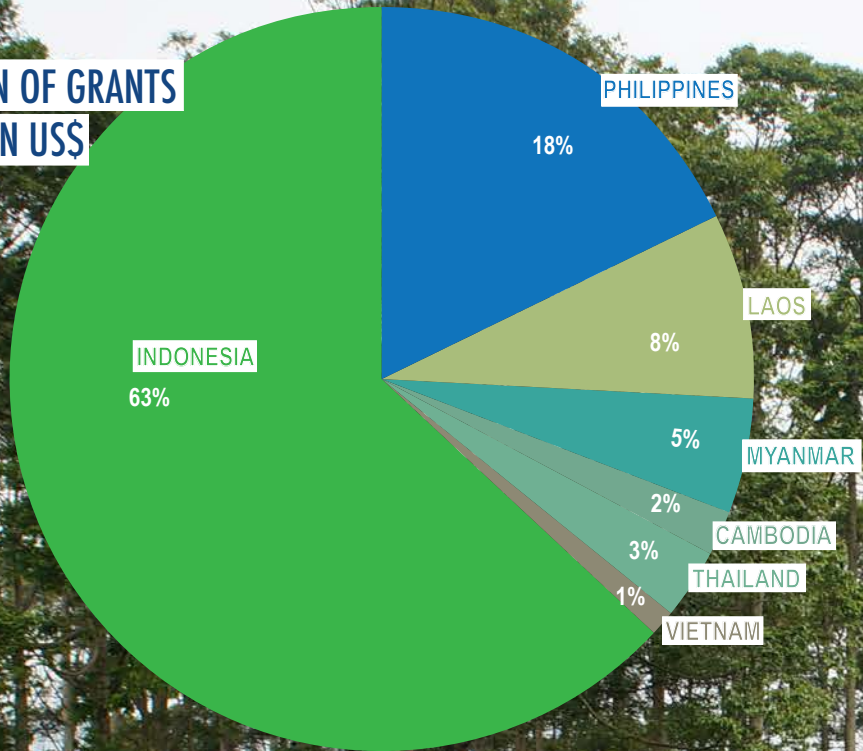
s and social enterprises



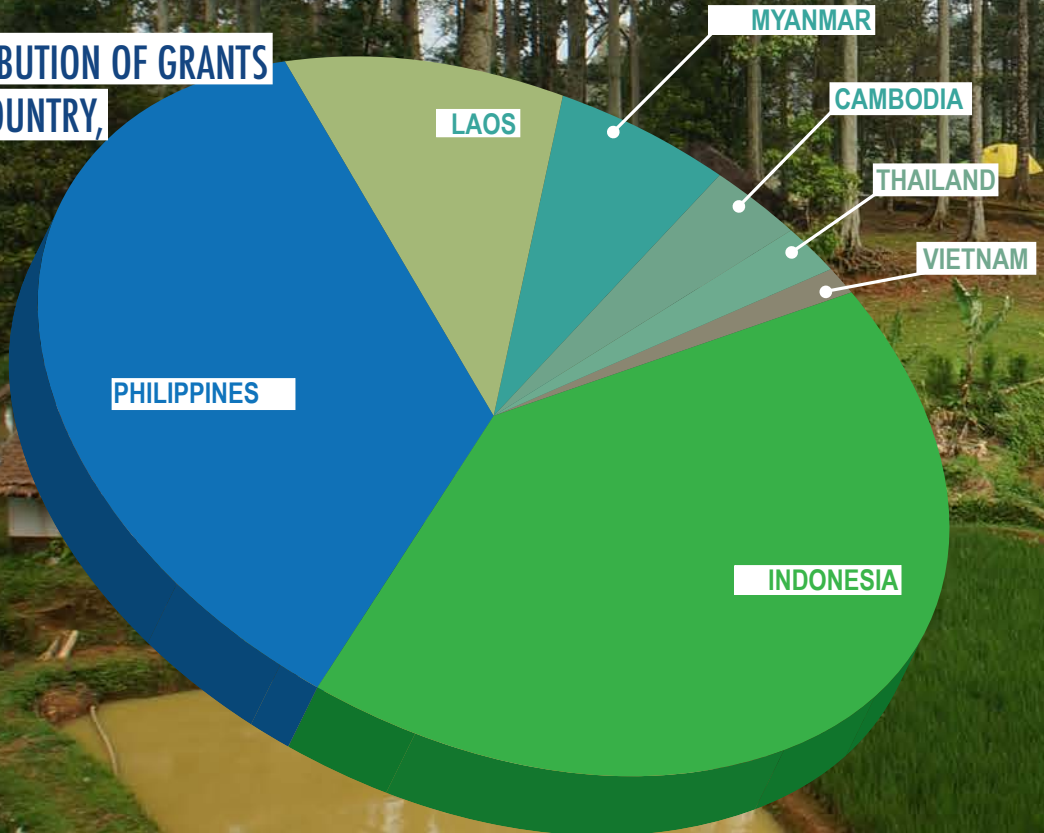
Highlights of **Policy Support** Programme:

Supporting IPLCs and CSOS for the Regency
regulations and regent's decisions for
the boundary rulings of indigenous law
communities (MHA)

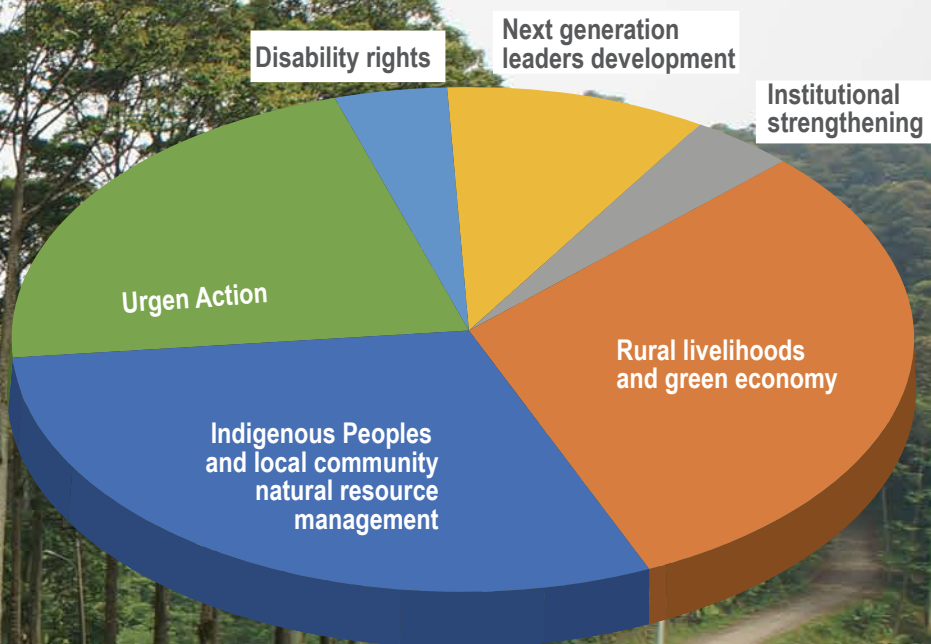
DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS
BY AMOUNT IN US\$



DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS
PER COUNTRY,
2020

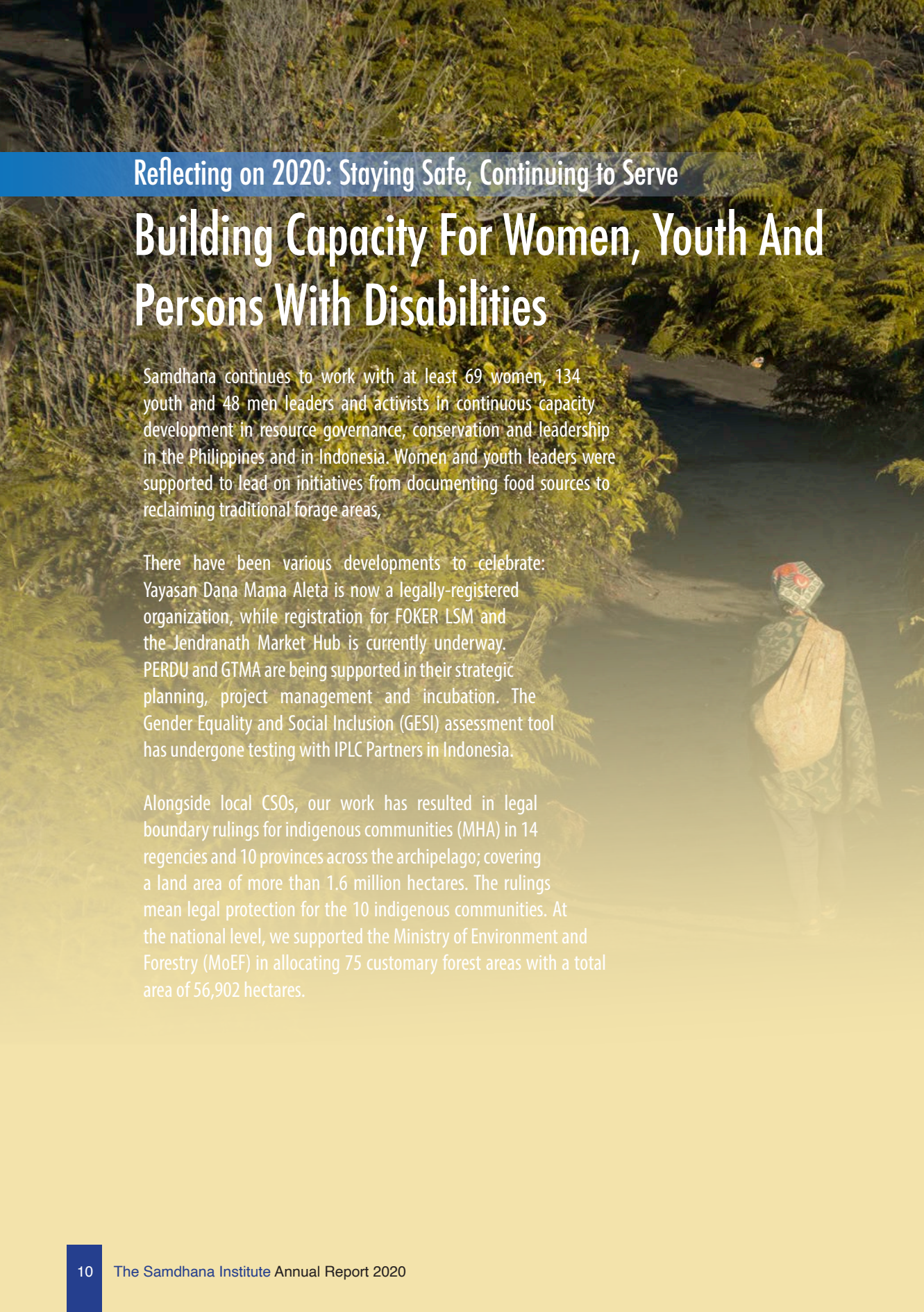


AREAS OF WORK SUPPORTED, 2020



	INDONESIA	PHILIPPINES	LAOS	MYANMAR	CAMBODIA	THAILAND	VIETNAM
# of subgrants	34	29	8	5	2	2	1
Grants amount disbursed in US\$	316,402	91,385	40,736	24,278	9,975	15,830	6,742

Photo by Fendi Siregar

A person wearing a traditional Indonesian headscarf (kerudung) and a patterned sarong is walking away from the camera on a dirt path through a lush, green forest. The path is surrounded by dense foliage and trees, with sunlight filtering through the leaves. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

Reflecting on 2020: Staying Safe, Continuing to Serve

Building Capacity For Women, Youth And Persons With Disabilities

Samdhana continues to work with at least 69 women, 134 youth and 48 men leaders and activists in continuous capacity development in resource governance, conservation and leadership in the Philippines and in Indonesia. Women and youth leaders were supported to lead on initiatives from documenting food sources to reclaiming traditional forage areas,

There have been various developments to celebrate: Yayasan Dana Mama Aleta is now a legally-registered organization, while registration for FOKER LSM and the Jendranath Market Hub is currently underway. PERDU and GTMA are being supported in their strategic planning, project management and incubation. The Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) assessment tool has undergone testing with IPLC Partners in Indonesia.

Alongside local CSOs, our work has resulted in legal boundary rulings for indigenous communities (MHA) in 14 regencies and 10 provinces across the archipelago; covering a land area of more than 1.6 million hectares. The rulings mean legal protection for the 10 indigenous communities. At the national level, we supported the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF) in allocating 75 customary forest areas with a total area of 56,902 hectares.

Projects Completed in 2020



Through the ICON Project, in partnership with Kagduma ho mga Higaonon, Inc. (KAGDUMA), the Dulangan Unified Ancestral Domain Claim, Bukidnon Indigenous Cultural Communities Ancestral Domain (BICCAD), and the Higaonon communities in Cagayan de Oro, we saw the emergence of women and youth as second-line leaders. They led in establishing indigenous tree nurseries, community vegetable and herb gardens. The Dulangan Indigenous Political Structure was validated and the guidelines for the selection of their IP Mandatory Representative (IPMR) finalized. The Higaonon communities in CDO crafted the *Talamdan* (constitution and by-laws) as reference in strengthening and building their indigenous political structure and governance.



The Sustainable Healthy Integrated Ecosystems through Lobby and aDvocacy (SHIELD) project was officially completed. The CSO coalition - Sustainable Ridge-River-Reef Advocacy and Management Society (STREAMS) was established and lobbies for environmentally sustainable governance and responsible private investment across the Cagayan de Oro and Tagoloan Riverbasins in Northern Mindanao. It also promoted greater inclusivity and cultural sensitivity by supporting the crafting of a "*pangimbatasan*" (cultural policies), facilitated by the Kitanglad Integrated NGOs (KIN).



Teaching the 'circles of feeling, thinking and acting' to the youth in Laos. (SAMDHANA)

The Learning and Media Network (LMN) project and small grants in Laos, supported by McKnight Foundation, ended after 5 years of partnership. A total of US \$179,196 in small grants were provided to various village groups and local associations working on natural resource management and improvement of livelihoods. The LMN trainings reached out to 64 youths coming from nine ethnic groups in Laos. There are now a total of nine non-profit associations who are Partners of the Network.

Three projects under the Packard Foundation Agriculture, Livelihoods and Conservation strategy were completed: Indigenous Community Forest and Agricultural Common Assets Management in West Kalimantan and West Papua; Indigenous Community Forest and Agricultural Common Assets Management for Tropical Forest Conservation in West Kalimantan, Papua, and West Papua; and Research on the Underlying Causes and Alternatives to Deforestation in West Papua, Indonesia.

COVID-19 Response: Continuing to journey with Indigenous Peoples and local communities



...k distributed gardening packages
...ds: in Myanmar (60), Laos (60),
...d Vietnam (62); They also
...ork through these communities.

...the information campaign in the
...relief to 410 most vulnerable families
...



EarthAction, LBC Foundation,
The Marion R. Weber Family
Fund, and the Dept. of Science
and Technology-10 contributed
to food emergency relief efforts
in the Philippines.



Northern Mindanao

Emergency food relief = 1,649 households
and 475 Elders (Individuals)

Sulawesi

East Nusa Tenggara

Given the difficulties and limitations that everyone experienced, Partners were allowed to extend their project timelines, and we also opened the possibility of re-aligning budgets to respond to the local situation that resulted from the COVID-19 lockdowns.

The word “nokening” was coined to describe the Samdhana team’s efforts in reaching out to communities and individuals during the pandemic lockdown. In 2020, a total of four noken activities were conducted in Java and Papua; bringing together a total of 120 people (or ‘nokeners’), including activists, entrepreneurs, people with disabilities and youths, these events were a stimulating way to revive connections, while also supporting and learning from one another.

Samdhana adopted work from home and flexible arrangements at the start of the lockdowns. Maximizing online work and collaboration platforms also gave us the added push to undertake the digital transformation assessment, in anticipation of a more digitally enabled organization to increase our impact. Equally important was giving space for reflection amongst staff, and with Partners, during that period of great uncertainty.

A woman is lying on her back on a sandy beach, looking up at a large, multi-colored flag (resembling the rainbow flag) that is flying high in the sky. The flag has horizontal stripes of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. The beach is sandy and the ocean is visible in the background under a clear blue sky.

Moving Forward

We continue to forge new alliances and explore opportunities for working partnerships, in order to secure tenure and natural resources, support community innovations and local green economies. We have just joined the Fair, Green and Global Alliance (FGG 3) and continue to participate in the Forests for Just Futures in the Philippines, as part of the Green Livelihood Alliance (GLA2). In Indonesia, Samdhana is part of a seven-partner consortium for tenure implementation, while also engaging in the Fork to Farm initiative, to facilitate local dialogues on sustainable and resilient food systems.

Following year-end assessment with long-term donor partners, Samdhana has identified upcoming challenges and opportunities: energy, addressing racism and promoting diversity, understanding decolonisation, disability rights and social justice. Our aim is to be more flexible in our administrative systems for grant making with IPLCs, while also strengthening engagement with global, regional and national civil society movements. We also intend to scale up our work with youth activists and next generation leadership programmes, while also enhancing regional and global cooperation.

Photo by Fendi Siregar



Gathering Gives Voice to Indigenous PWDs

Gathering of Persons With Disabilities (PWDs); specifically members of the Higaonon tribe in the Dulangan Unified Ancestral Domain (SAMDHANA/Mark Jaeno Duyan)

On 11 November 2020, Tingalan Barangay in Opol hosted a gathering of Persons With Disabilities (PWDs); specifically members of the Higaonon tribe in the Dulangan Unified Ancestral Domain. Organised by Higaonon youth volunteers in partnership with the Municipal Social Welfare of Opol and Barangay Local Government Unit, it was the first time for indigenous PWDs to gather, share information and address challenges.

Participants raised several issues at the gathering, including difficulties they have experienced in procuring government PWD identification cards; ID that provides access to medicine, privileges and benefits such as discounts in grocery stores and restaurants. As many Higaonon PWDs earn only a meagre income (and some don't have any income at all), the card is an essential supplement to their needs.

In order to register for the card, PWDs must first travel to the city centre for a blood test – a journey that can be both physically and financially challenging. Through the Disability Rights fund of the

Global Greengrants Fund (GGF), Samdhana was able to provide grant support and facilitate to bring blood testing services directly to the community.

Samdhana has also facilitated community consultations with PWDs, in which participants raised their concerns. “In looking for a job, people discriminate [against] us because they think we’re incapable of working,” explains Ms. Heartcell Paborada, an indigenous PWD who is also one of the event’s main organisers. “It’s more difficult for an indigenous person, because people also discriminate against us for our colour, the way we dress and how we speak,” she added.

Stigma and shame have limited the opportunities available to PWDs in indigenous communities, both in terms of their education and employment, as well as restricting their involvement in community and environmental initiatives. By working alongside tribal councils, local government and social welfare officials, Samdhana is supporting local advocates who are working to raise awareness, giving PWDs a voice and opening pathways for greater participation.

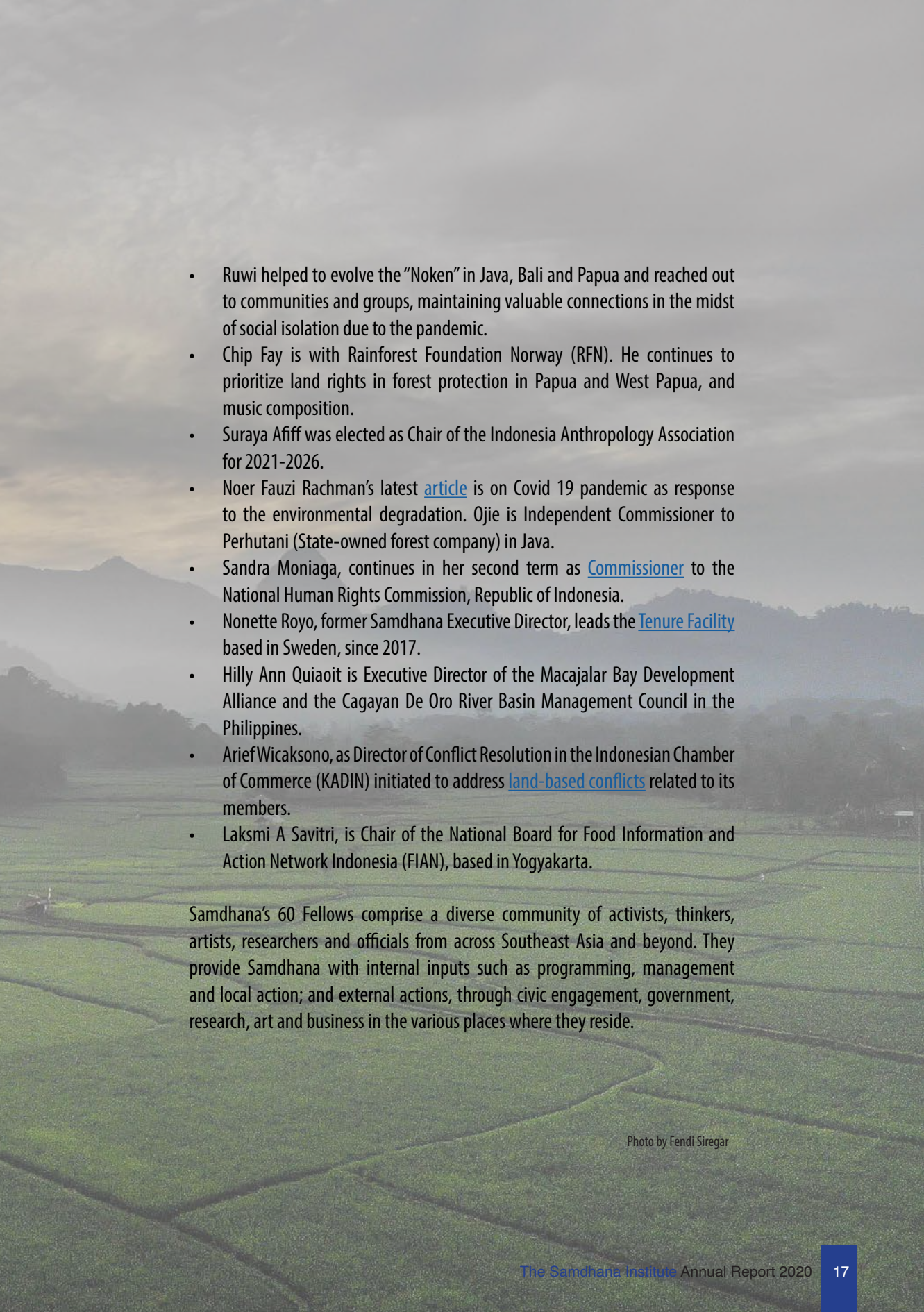
Fellows Feature

A quick glance at Samdhana Fellows' work in 2020

Samdhana Fellows continue to give back in their respective areas of work. Their valuable support and advisory inputs to Samdhana programmes continued: Jo Villanueva, Edtami Mansayagan and Augustus Gatmaytan in the Philippines; Melody Kemp, Sean Foley, Richard Hackman and Ros Bandos in the Mekong Region; Satyawati Sunito in Indonesia, and Nonette Royo, Cristi Nozawa and A. Ruwindrijarto across Southeast Asia. Some also helped launch Samdhana Board and Fellows recruitment, to better reflect the profound social and political changes taking place in the region.

Some individual achievements this year include:

- Melody Kemp's [book about elephants](#) was translated into a bi-lingual video animation and learning manual.
- Robin Broad and John Cavanagh launched their book [The Water Defenders: How Ordinary People Saved A Country from Corporate Greed](#).
- Pete Wood updated an analysis of marine biodiversity conservation priorities in Wallacea, Indonesia.
- Scott Dupree finished his monograph on environmental movements in Mexico, which will be published by the International Center on Non-Violent Conflict (ICNC).
- Suryo Adiwibowo, co-edited a book [trilogy](#) "Trilogi Indonesia Menghadapi Perubahan Iklim".
- Melani Abdulkadir-Soenito, co-authored a guide on [Gender Equity and Social Inclusion \(GESI\)](#), which has since been used broadly in Samdhana Partners' projects.
- Ros Bandos completed his [Master's thesis](#) on land use, land cover changes and socio-economic impacts of resettling a local community from a National Park in Japan.
- Yvan Biot worked with local NGOs to foster "Fork to Farm dialogues" between cities and farmers from across the world and bring their voices to the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26).
- Jo Villanueva re-connected with CSO partners and linked Samdhana and the Legal Rights and Natural Resources Centre (LRC) to promote environmental issues in Northern Mindanao.


- 
- Ruwi helped to evolve the “Noken” in Java, Bali and Papua and reached out to communities and groups, maintaining valuable connections in the midst of social isolation due to the pandemic.
 - Chip Fay is with Rainforest Foundation Norway (RFN). He continues to prioritize land rights in forest protection in Papua and West Papua, and music composition.
 - Suraya Afiff was elected as Chair of the Indonesia Anthropology Association for 2021-2026.
 - Noer Fauzi Rachman’s latest [article](#) is on Covid 19 pandemic as response to the environmental degradation. Ojie is Independent Commissioner to Perhutani (State-owned forest company) in Java.
 - Sandra Moniaga, continues in her second term as [Commissioner](#) to the National Human Rights Commission, Republic of Indonesia.
 - Nonette Royo, former Samdhana Executive Director, leads the [Tenure Facility](#) based in Sweden, since 2017.
 - Hilly Ann Quiaoit is Executive Director of the Macajalar Bay Development Alliance and the Cagayan De Oro River Basin Management Council in the Philippines.
 - AriefWicaksono, as Director of Conflict Resolution in the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce (KADIN) initiated to address [land-based conflicts](#) related to its members.
 - Laksmi A Savitri, is Chair of the National Board for Food Information and Action Network Indonesia (FIAN), based in Yogyakarta.

Samdhana’s 60 Fellows comprise a diverse community of activists, thinkers, artists, researchers and officials from across Southeast Asia and beyond. They provide Samdhana with internal inputs such as programming, management and local action; and external actions, through civic engagement, government, research, art and business in the various places where they reside.

Photo by Fendi Siregar



Sikka Youth Empowerment: Building a Cleaner, Greener Community

 Training on recycling of plastic bottles by Association of Child Rights Activists (PAPHA) in Sikka Regency. The youth groups have committed to regular clean-ups of plastic waste. (PAPHA)

In East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), youth groups are eager to learn and contribute to their communities' future. Despite limitations caused by Covid-19, Samdhana Institute was able to support the Association of Child Rights Activists (*Perkumpulan Aktivistis Peduli Hak Anak* - PAPHA) in Sikka Regency, where young people are encouraged to learn about climate change and what they can do to mitigate and lessen its local impact.

At Kolisia B village in the Waioti sub-district, teenagers attended an opening socialisation event to understand better why there are changes in the climate and what it means for them, the environment and their livelihoods. Here they set about sketching their village map; an essential component for analysing and drafting their community's Climate Vulnerability and Climate Analysis (CVCA). Also in attendance were local government staff, who were fully supportive of the project.

The youth groups have committed to regular clean-ups of plastic waste in Kolisia B and in public areas of Waioti,

covering at least a kilometre of their beach each week. Plastic waste collected will be sold via waste banks or used as raw materials for furniture – such as chairs, tables and even sofas, that will be produced and sold by the Waioti community.

During the event, participants also tried their hands at sustainable agriculture techniques and technologies – ploughing the soil, arranging planting beds and applying organic fertiliser. They also built a simulated drip irrigation farming system, which they installed on 450 m² of land.

Looking ahead, these youth groups have committed to practicing the skills they learned in their homes and backyards, and educate their community about waste management. Other plans include the establishment of rubbish bins along the coastline, so returning tourists can support local efforts to keep the beach clean. With such dedication and innovation shown by its young members, the future of the Sikka community appears to be in good hands.



Aifat Tribes of the Baho Clan: Custodians of the Forest

The head of Marga Baho, together with representatives of 'Adat' leaders, youth leaders and community leaders, Marga Baho, directed the map of the proposed customary area to the local government of Maybrat Regency. (SAMDHANA/Yunus Yumte)

Indigenous tribes are often the first line of defence against developers and the deforestation they bring. Located near the tip of West Papua, Maybrat Regency is home to an estimated 453,545 ha of forest, which supports multiple ethnic groups. Only by establishing legal custodianship of the land can the heritage of the tribes – and the future of the forest – be preserved.

A landmark ruling has ensured the rights of the Aifat Tribe to preserve their traditions on these ancestral lands. The regency decree on the Recognition and Protection of the Aifat Tribe of the Baho Clan in Maybrat Regency, West Papua (No. 72 Year 2020), is a renewal of the previous agreement; crucially, it also states that indigenous land cannot be traded or used for purposes that devalue traditions.

Tribal leaders, youth groups and other members of the clan played a pivotal role in identifying territorial boundaries and ensuring the approval of their people. They participated in the mapping of the boundaries of Aifat territory by studying


their history and that of other indigenous communities in the region, along with culturally important and sacred areas, implementation of indigenous laws, relics and traditional knowledge.

Final approval of the decree was subject to verification by the MHA (*Masyarakat Hukum Adat*, or 'customary law council') committee; a process that was supposed to last for a month. However, when delays threatened to derail the agreement, Samdhana stepped up its support to the local actors and partners, to ensure this was finalised on time. Supporting parties in the ruling of this decree included West Papua Province's Forestry Regional Office via the Maybrat Regency branch office (SDK), with facilitation and support from Samdhana.

With legal custodianship assured, the Aifat Tribe can now enjoy their ancestral home and, in so doing, actively contribute to its conservation.

A photograph of three men in a wooden boat on a river. One man in a blue shirt is in the background, another shirtless man is in the middle, and a third man in a white shirt is in the foreground, looking down. The river is brown and surrounded by green foliage.

The Fight for Land Rights Recognition of Dayak Mayao and Sami Territories

 Spatial mapping of villages in the indigenous Sami community. (AMAN Sekadau)

Struggle and resistance. This was the response of the Dayak Sami indigenous people when a private company tried to evict them from their ancestral lands. In the Sekadau and Sanggau Regencies of West Kalimantan, four traditional *adat* communities - Dayak Mayao, Dayak Sami, Taman Meragun and Taman Sunsong - have been fighting against corporate invasion and for the recognition of their ownership of these territories for years.

These groups do not stand alone in their struggle. They are backed by AMAN Sekadau and Sanggau, who have been raising awareness of indigenous peoples' plight in a bid to gain public support. Together, this consortium has been lobbying on behalf of the four communities with both the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Forestry, while also putting pressure on local government officials in each of the respective regencies. Despite progress, irreparable damage is being done in these

territories, as great swathes of land have already been scarred from non-natural forest use. In Taman Meragun territory alone, palm oil plantations stretch out over 4,552 ha of land, while a further 1,359 ha has Other Utilization Area (APL) status. Collectively, this land use is equivalent to more than a third (35.3%) of the 16,727 ha area designated as protected forest inside the territory.

Most recently, the progress of facilitation and spatial mapping of villages has been derailed by lockdown protocols imposed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, AMAN Sekadau continued their efforts to facilitate community activities and finally won official recognition of Dayak Mayao and Sami territories from their respective district governments in December 2020.

This is more than just a victory against the odds; for indigenous people living on these lands, it is a life-saver. Looking ahead, the struggle must go on.



Forest Protection through Livelihoods Development in Kalimantan and Papua

Dried tengkawang fruit from the Melayang hamlet. (RUAI TV)

Desperate times bring out peoples' innovation. In response to Covid-19, villagers of the Melayang hamlet in West Kalimantan and five other villages in the Kokas district of Fakfak, West Papua, have been turning to farms and plantations in search of food, income and protection from the pandemic.

Local, indigenous knowledge is essential to the sustainable management of forest resources, both in terms of their conservation and the expansion of their economic value. Supported by the David & Lucile Packard Foundation's Agriculture, Livelihoods and Conservation (ALC) strategy, Samdhana Institute has been supporting communities living in the forests so they can better protect the landscape and its biodiversity, while also earning a living to support themselves.

So when the Covid-19 pandemic hit, some of the IPLCs with forest-based enterprises had some fallback during the lockdowns. Two such initiatives were the processing of green butter from illipe nut (*tengkawang*) in the Melayang hamlet and improving nutmeg (*pala*) harvesting in Kokas District. A common problem had previously been low prices, due to low-quality produce. To address this issue, the community trained in harvesting techniques and established an Internal

Control System (ICS) for farmer groups; prices have since improved, along with the quality of commodities produced.

In addition to Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), equipment was upgraded in the Melayang hamlet, where a mini factory was built to enable more efficient green butter production and processing by the Tengkawang Layar farmers group. In addition, the women trained in making noodles and cookies using green butter ingredients; they now take bulk orders during major holidays, such as Christmas.

Key to the long-term sustainability of these operations is official protection of the forests upon which the indigenous communities of Papua and West Kalimantan depend. The Melayang hamlet recently secured Indigenous Forest (*Hutan Adat*) status, while the five villages in Kokas district are working towards obtaining Village Forest (*Hutan Desa*) designation from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF).

Legal tenure status is vital to the future of these communities, and the forests themselves. Consumers who enjoy the green butter and nutmeg produced by these forest communities should also appreciate the importance of supporting their security.



Food for Thought: Sufficiency over Income

Tree-growing activities were held in the Higaonon communities of Pagalungan and Tuburan in Cagayan de Oro, side by side with establishing the women's vegetable gardens. (SAMDHANA)

"We cook and eat our vegetable harvest during our meetings," Bae Mercy proudly announced at the women's group meeting in Bayanga. Here, women take the lead in planting vertical gardens, while their husbands take care of construction. The women are not looking to turn a profit; their aim is to ensure the availability of food for the community.

Many Higaonon families in Bayanga depend on daily wages for survival. When jobs were cut due to Covid-19, the impacts were keenly felt in these communities. "We ate cassava, but it can poison a person if they don't know how to cook it properly," explains Bae, describing hardships familiar to many in recent months. The women had already been planning a community garden, but the pandemic gave them the extra push they needed. With more time on their hands, teams engaged in *pahina*¹ to get the project up and running within a week. Before too long, the garden was brimming with vegetables and herbs.

Other women and youth groups in the Higaonon communities of Cagayan de Oro have established their own communal gardens and successfully harvested their first produce. Operating in tandem with nurseries of native tree species, these projects are supported by the Forest Foundation Philippines (FFP) through the Indigenous Governance at the Forefront of Conservation (ICON) Project.

Some additional vegetable seeds for the project were provided by the Department of Agriculture. "We are grateful we can revive the community garden without encountering difficulties in procuring the seeds," explains Federina, who is a member of the ASAWA-CA, another women's group in Barangay Dansolihon. "We are now active again because of this," she added.

Driven on by their enthusiasm and supported by Samdhana, Higaonon women are growing more than just vegetables; they are reconnecting communities and establishing the roots of a brighter, more resilient future.

¹The local term for volunteer labour in a community during collective activities.



SHIELD Project: Protecting Ecosystems, Empowering Communities

 The Participants and the organisers of the Greening Pinning event in September 2019. (SAMDHANA)

Indigenous Peoples are major stakeholders in the Tagoloan River Basin (TRB) and Cagayan de Oro River Basin (CDORB) of Northern Mindanao in the Philippines; a parallel landscape-seascape continuum referred to as the TAGCDO river basin. Under the Project Sustainable and Healthy Integrated Ecosystems through Lobby and aDvocacy, communities have come up with the Pangimbatasan; a series of policies promoting inclusive governance that recognises the rights and cultures of Indigenous Peoples.

Over 5 years of implementation, the SHIELD Project lived by its tagline: Sustainable and healthy ecosystems, empowered communities. The project aimed to protect and restore key ecosystems within the TAGCDO continuum, through collaborative governance and increased stakeholder participation. Working alongside riverine communities and leaders of the ancestral domains in Mt. Kitanglad and Mt.

Kalatungan, it mapped out high-risk areas (HRAs), so that government funds could be allocated to restoration projects where they were needed most.

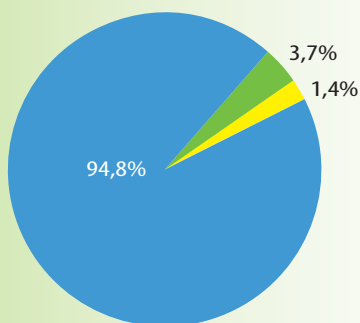
The project resulted in municipal-level ordinances on the Protection for Environmental Services (PES). It also led to the creation of the Sustainable Ridge-River-Reef Advocacy and Management Society (STREAMS) CSO coalition, in which various CSOs have joined together to have a bigger say in decision-making affecting the landscape. STREAMS continues to lobby and influence public and private stakeholders towards more environmentally responsive governance across the river basins.

Through a combination of CSO participation, involvement of Indigenous Peoples and private sector cooperation, the SHIELD Project offers both the building blocks and the blueprint for collaborative and inclusive governance. Ultimately, it provides a model for sustainable, healthy ecosystems where communities lead the way.

Finance 2020

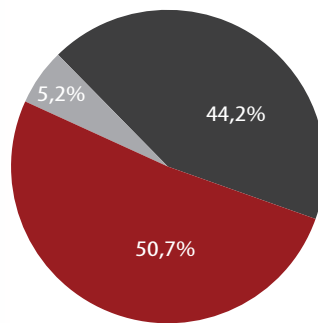
	FY 2020 (Unaudited) in US\$
Grants and Support	3,251,642
Expenses	
Grant Making	1,638,307
Programme Expenses	1,428,450
General and Administrative	167,411
Total Expenses	3,234,167
Total Assets	4,605,663
Liabilities	4,023,907
Unrestricted net Assets	233,681
Restricted net Assets	348,075
Net Assets	581,757
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	US\$ 4,605,664

GRANTS TO SAMDHANA: US\$ 3,251 MILLION



■ RESTRICTED ■ UNRESTRICTED ■ OTHER INCOME

EXPENDITURES: US\$ 3,234 MILLION



■ GRANTS MAKING ■ OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION ■ PROGRAMMES: CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT, POLICY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT, LIVING LAND AND SEASCAPES

Samdhana Support 2020



Norad



Climate and Land Use Alliance
Cultivating solutions for people and the planet



FORD FOUNDATION

the David & Lucile Packard FOUNDATION



SCHWAB CHARITABLE



CLIMATE INVESTMENT FUNDS



THE WORLD BANK



RIGHTS + RESOURCES



CAPS



GLOBAL GREEN GRANTS FUND



Rainforest Alliance

TIDES



Forest Foundation Philippines

TIKVA GRASSROOTS EMPOWERMENT FUND



IUCN National Committee of The Netherlands

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

THE SAMDHANA INSTITUTE



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Institute

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