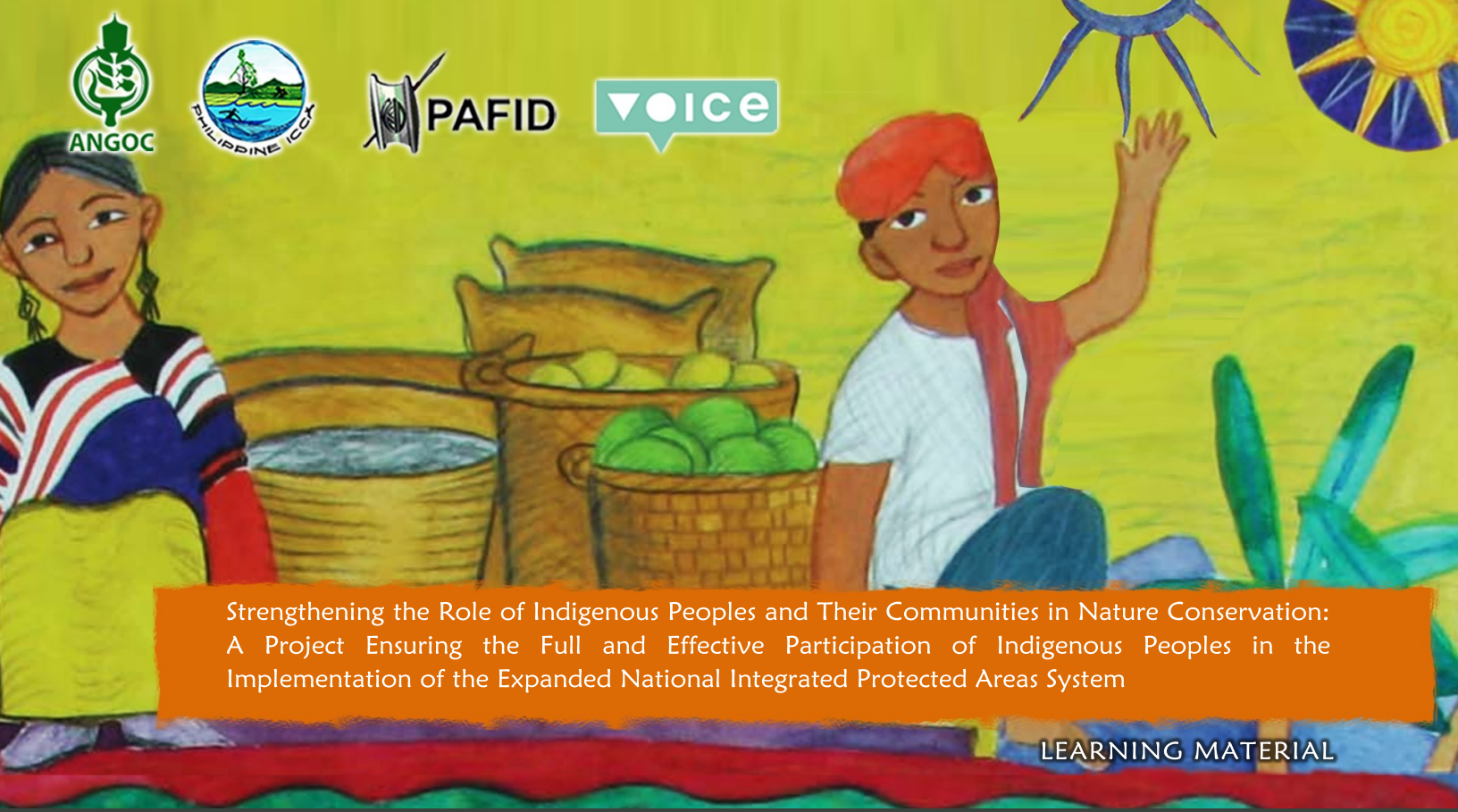




PAFID



Strengthening the Role of Indigenous Peoples and Their Communities in Nature Conservation: A Project Ensuring the Full and Effective Participation of Indigenous Peoples in the Implementation of the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System

LEARNING MATERIAL

# How to Conduct Effective Meetings

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## Introduction

After the necessary preparations for organizing a meeting (i.e. preparing the agenda, sending the invitations, etc.) have been completed, then all that is left is to get the meeting underway. Effective preparations set the stage for a successful meeting.

If the agenda has been circulated ahead of time, participants will know what is to be discussed and prepare accordingly so that they can make relevant contributions.

## Role of the Chairperson

The Chairperson (Chair) is the one who ensures that the meeting runs smoothly.

The Chair states the purpose of the meeting; basically, reminding the participants why they are there.

Following is the established etiquette in conducting formal meetings:

- The Chair is the point person in the meeting.
- Every participant's remarks are addressed through the Chair.
- A participant cannot interrupt another participant when s/he is speaking.

- Consensus building is the aim of every discussion.
- If a consensus cannot be reached, then the motion is brought to a vote and all members must accept the majority's decision.

The Chair ensures that discussions flow smoothly. S/He should involve all participants and prevent one or two people from dominating the discussions. The Chair can also summarize the salient points to:

- indicate progress, or lack thereof;
- return to the order of the meeting when the discussion become out of the focus;
- highlight the conclusion/s and/or agreement/s reached by the participants;
- highlight important points; and,
- clarify any misunderstanding.



The Chair also dictates the *pace* the meeting to ensure it runs according to schedule.

At the end of a meeting, the Chairperson summarizes the agreements and expresses appreciation to the contributions of the participants to the deliberations. Finally, the date and time of the next meeting should be arranged.

## Role of the Members

Member participation is fundamental to the success of any meeting. An effective meeting is one where all participants:

- prepare prior to the meeting by conducting the necessary research and bringing relevant documents;
- be conscious of time;
- participate and respect other participants' right to speak;
- try not to dominate the proceedings;
- maintain focus on the discussions;
- ask relevant questions to arrive at reasonable agreements; and,
- undertake any agreed action and brief others as appropriate at the conclusion of the meeting.

## Why Meetings May be Ineffective

A meeting may become ineffective when the following occurs:

- The aims and objectives are not clearly defined;
- Unimportant matters are discussed, thus wasting the time of all the participants;
- Ineffectiveness of the Chairperson to facilitate the meeting;
- One or two members to dominate the discussion;
- Too many participants, which limit the flow of discussion and prevent all members to contribute;
- Decisions are rammed through by influential participants and are not truly representative of the entire membership;
- No clear-cut decisions are made or decisions are delayed or not acted upon;
- Chair or Secretary are seen manipulating the minutes of the meeting to serve their purpose; and,
- Participants do not have authority to make decisions; they have to refer back to another person and are therefore unable to comment effectively.



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The Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) a regional association of national and regional networks of civil society organizations (CSOs) in Asia actively engaged in promoting food sovereignty, land rights and agrarian reform, sustainable agriculture, participatory governance, and rural development. ANGOC member networks and partners work in 10 Asian countries together with some 3,000 CSOs and community-based organizations (CBOs). ANGOC actively engages in joint field programs and policy discussions with national governments, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and international financial institutions (IFIs).

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The formation of Bukluran Para sa Pangangalaga ng Kalikasan ng Pilipinas (BUKLURAN, Inc.) or the Philippine Indigenous Peoples Community Conserved Territories and Areas Consortium (Philippine ICCA Consortium) is a nationwide network of community-membership-based indigenous people's organizations (IPOs) of all ethnographic types. It is premised on bringing together indigenous peoples who assert and utilize traditional governance to protect community-conserved areas. Common to its members is the shared view that indigenous peoples' survival depends on the protection of valuable knowledge systems and the ancestral lands on which we thrive and persist. Our community-conserved areas can become the ultimate driving force in the conservation of biodiversity when our rights to our land and resources are respected and recognized.

Our main purpose is to carry out and realize the full recognition and respect for the rights, governance and self-management of our ancestral lands.

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Philippine Association for Intercultural Development, Inc. (PAFID) is a social development organization which has been assisting Philippine indigenous communities to secure or recover traditional lands and waters since 1967. It forms institutional partnerships with indigenous communities to secure legal ownership over ancestral domains and to shape government policy over indigenous peoples' issues. PAFID works exclusively with the indigenous peoples' sector, specifically upon written or signed requests for assistance from indigenous communities or their representatives. PAFID envisions indigenous communities as responsible stewards of their resources.

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