

UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The Role of ICTs

Declaration

- The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2007 after many years of hard work and lobbying by Indigenous peoples world wide.
- Canada was one of only four nations to vote against the Declaration.
- The Declaration is a building block and guideline that Indigenous Peoples and their States can use to pursue their collective rights and freedoms.
- Bolivia adopted the Declaration as national law.

Declaration

- Even without Canada's support of the Declaration, many First Nations across Canada have been actively pursuing these rights.
- ICTs are powerful tools that can be used to realize these rights.
- ICTs can be developed and used in new ways we never thought possible.

The Information Society

“the prerequisite for the inclusion of indigenous peoples, nations and tribes in the Information Society is the provision of adequate infrastructure for telecommunications, radio, television, the internet and ICT providers, with the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples, nations and tribes concerned”.

**Declaration and Programme of Action of The Global Forum of Indigenous Peoples and The Information Society,
Geneva December 2003,
UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

ICTs and the Information Society

- Many of our First Nations meet the criteria to participate in the Information Society. For those who don't have the infrastructure, we need to continue educating and changing policies so that everyone is included and minimum ICT levels are met.
- As global leaders, we need to set the stage for the use of ICTs in Indigenous Communities and Nations. We should never stop pushing the limits of ICTs and how they can be used to realize the visions of our communities.

eBario, Malaysia

- The process of recognizing our Indigenous Rights and ICTS is happening all over the world.
- In December 2007, The Kelabit Indigenous people of Bario, Malaysia held a Knowledge fair to showcase its pilot project of a telecentre and use of ICTs.
- In conjunction with the knowledge fair, the UNDP held workshops with participants from Asian Indigenous communities and projects that are using ICTs in relation to the Indigenous Declaration.
- We all shared the ICT based projects we were working on.
- One of the outcomes of the workshop was an eBario Vision. The vision was contributed by all the Indigenous representatives there.
- This Vision complements the Declaration by defining the role of ICTs where the Declaration failed to.



THE E-BARIO VISION FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND ICTS

We welcome the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration serves to further invigorate our own energies towards realizing our rights and we note that the Declaration is a single, albeit vital step towards the ultimate goal of fully realizing them.

We acknowledge the work Indigenous Peoples have done in bridging the digital divide with reference to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process and note Article 15 of the WSIS Declaration states, "In the evolution of the Information Society, particular attention must be given to the special situation of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the preservation of their heritage and cultural legacy." This further supports the work of the Global Indigenous Community in protecting Indigenous Knowledge.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) with quality rich applications and media provide significant opportunities that support aspirations of Indigenous Peoples, as demonstrated by the e-Bario Telecentre and many other Indigenous driven examples around the world.

The e-Bario Vision for Indigenous Peoples and ICTs foresees a world in which all Indigenous Peoples everywhere, irrespective of our location, are able to make full and effective use of new media and ICTs whilst retaining our strength in diversity and simultaneously uniting in purpose towards our common goal of self-determination. In this Vision, we will pursue our development and self-reliance on our own terms whilst retaining the full intent of the Declaration.

The Vision recognizes the need for widespread development and deployment of contemporary and future ICTs and new media for the realization of creative and effective solutions for the problems faced by Indigenous Peoples.

We acknowledge the role of governments and other stakeholders and consequently we are looking for respective partnerships in the following priority areas:

- Sensitize and raise awareness of policy makers and civil society organizations on freedom of expression and rights to information for Indigenous Peoples in Asia.
- Training of Indigenous journalists and other media professionals in reporting in Indigenous Peoples issues and in harnessing ICT/new media.
- Develop the capacity of Indigenous Peoples organizations for setting up ICT interventions for e-inclusion to test applications of common interest (e.g. land, culture, poverty, health, access to information, freedom of expression).
- Develop the capacity in setting up a number of Indigenous community media facilities (radio, website, telecentre etc).
- Establish a 'community of practice' for sharing of good practices on e-inclusion and media for Indigenous Peoples.
- Research on the need and availability of disaggregated data that reflects the situation of Asia's Indigenous Peoples, as they themselves would like to express it.

- The following pages will take a look at various Articles of the Declaration and how ICTs can be used to realize them.
- Some examples are from the UNDP Workshop on e-Inclusion and Media for Indigenous Peoples, as well as know projects that K-Net is involved with.

Self Determination and Governance

Article 3

- Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

Article 5

- Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.

ICTs, Self Determination and Governance

- Putting local governments and communities online – <http://sandylake.firstnation.ca/governance>
- Community websites give them the ability to present their own image
- Most economies have an ICT element to them.
- ICT based jobs and economies can be run from our communities – Telecentres can fill this role.
 - *Indigenous Peoples Experimentation with ICTs in Sabah, Malaysia*. Jennifer Lasimbang, Malaysia
 - *Knowledge-Livelihood-Prosperity: Community Information Centres – Empowering Isolated Tribal Communities through ICTs*. Dillip Pattanaik, India
- ICT gives everyone a voice and promotes grassroots activism - *Hydro Projects: Development Conflicts and Displacement*. Tongam Rina, India
- Using ICTs to mobilize Indigenous peoples - *Surviving Beyond Political Borders: Communication Challenges of the Akha People in the Highlands of Mainland Southeast Asia*. Wang Jianhua, Chinese Akha / Thailand

Culture & Traditions

Article 11

- 1 Indigenous peoples have the right to practise and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.

Article 13

- 1 Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.



ICTs, Culture & Traditions

- Using databases, websites, etc to chronicle our practices
- Many communities share their practices and traditions online
- GIS and Place Name Mapping – Treaty 8 Tribal Association
- Digitizing Languages – First Voices
- Digital Storytelling – <http://legends.knet.ca>

Education & Language

Article 14

- 1 Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
- 2 Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to education of the State without discrimination.
- 3 States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

Article 15

- 1 Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information.

Education and Language

- Providing Education through ICTs - online schools and courses – KiHS , G8 supplementary courses
- Sharing Education Resources online – First Nations Pedagogy
- Sharing Language Resources and Curriculum through ICTs - <http://kwayaciiwin.com>
- Digitizing Languages – First Voices
- Digital Storytelling , Music, Video Games, Animation

Media & Language

Article 16

- 1 Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-indigenous media without discrimination.

Article 18

- Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.

Article 21

- 1 Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.

Media & Language

- Aboriginal Media Organizations are going online. Television, Radio, and Newspapers are converging online
- Community and individual websites present a new contemporary culture
- Social Networking Sites are bringing together First Nation groups

Health & Social Services

Article 23

- Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions.

Article 24

- 1 Indigenous peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals. Indigenous individuals also have the right to access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services.

Health & Social Services

- Telehealth
- Health Education
- Videoconferencing can provide many health services
 - Mental Health Counselling
 - Psychiatric appointments

Land Use

Article 25

- Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

Article 29

- 1 Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.

Article 32

- 1 Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.

Article 31

- 1 Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

Land Use

- ICTs give us the opportunity to work from our communities and keep our ties to the land. Moving to Urban Centres removes our relationship to the land.
- GIS Systems, Land Use Mapping, Place Name Mapping, Treaty 8 Tribal Association
- Videoconferencing and Telework reduces travelling and our carbon footprint