



So what do you think about the meeting last night?



Well it certainly surprised me.



Why would anyone want to change us? What's wrong with the way we are?

I think they want us all to be the same.



It's easier to tell us what to do if we are all the same.



But can't we just stay as we are and just work out how to get along with other people?



It's not as though we are causing any problems or that we have problems we cannot solve ourselves.



But they said they would build a school, provide electricity and medical services.



Only if we let them use the forest to grow that palm oil.



And what's that going to do to our forest?



I really don't know Tunga, it all seems we would be losing so much. What are they really offering to us?



A chance to join  
the modern world.

But what does that mean?

It means we  
get schools,  
electricity...

But it's our right  
to have these things...

...the things that all people in this  
country have been promised...

I want my child to be educated.

But I will always be an  
indigenous woman.

I want medical care for my  
sisters when they are pregnant.





That's who I am.



You know we have a lot of bamboo weavers in our village.



We should grow bamboo instead of palm oil.

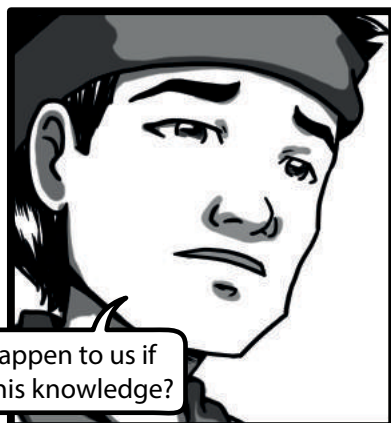


We should work for ourselves and it will keep our forest healthy.



I have also been thinking about the forest...







I too remember going into the forest with my father.

I learned how to hunt and trap.

And work with the forest without killing it.

We are shaped as a people by the land that surrounds us. If we change the land or who we are we will no longer fit in anywhere.

Do you remember that time when your father was a guide...

...and he was working with a member of the government and his son...

...they came to study some of our medicine plants.



The son got ill with a fever far away from where they were staying.

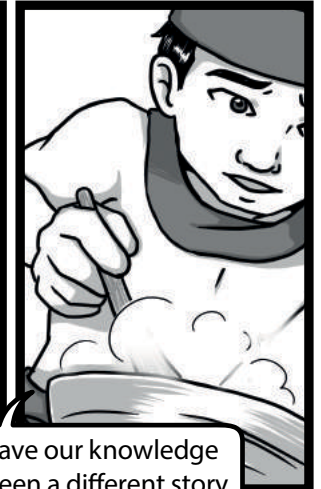
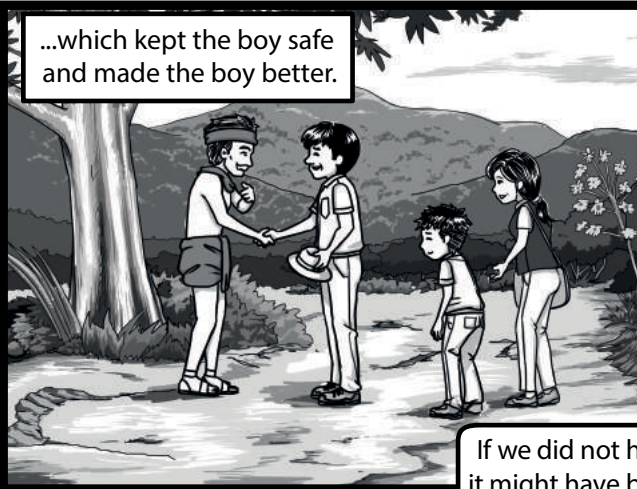
...and then made medicine...



Your father built a shelter from things he found in the forest...

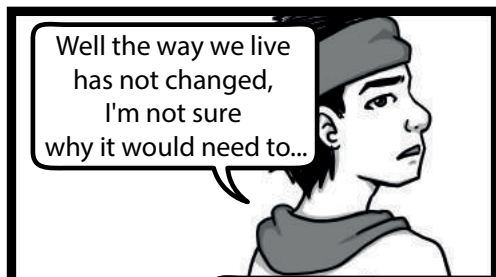


...which kept the boy safe and made the boy better.



If we did not have our knowledge it might have been a different story.





Not the kind of problem you'd find  
in a town. We need to keep our  
right to deal with local problems.

Surely there  
must be a way...



...that we can stay who we are and still be  
part of the country we find ourselves in.

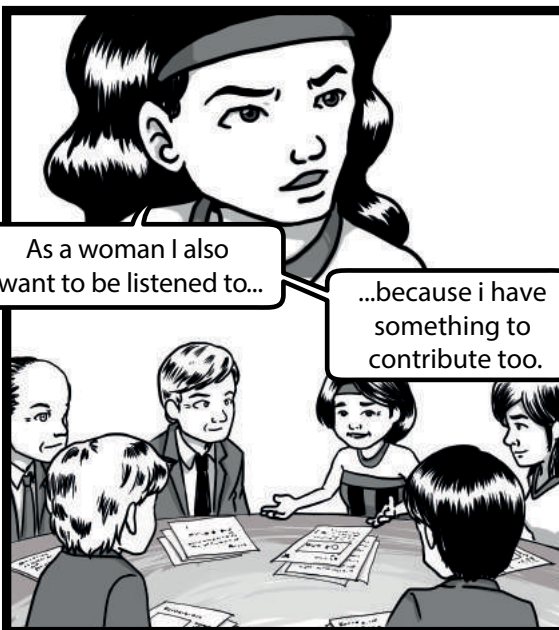


We have lived here  
for generations,  
these are our lands.



As a woman I also  
want to be listened to...

...because i have  
something to  
contribute too.







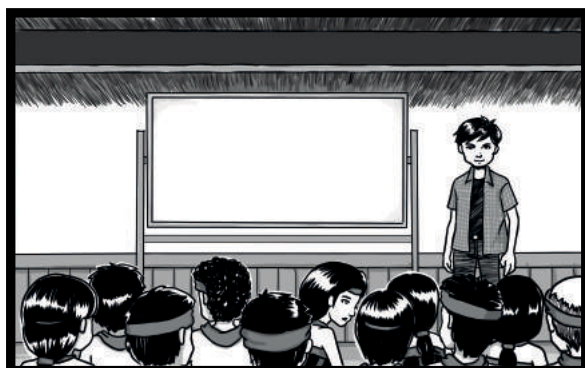
...and to let our way of life continue and to honour our spirits.

Let's wait until tomorrow, the village chief has organised a meeting...



Next day...

...with peoples we can trust to talk about the meeting we had yesterday.



My name is Raniag, I too am an indigenous person like you.

**The rights of indigenous peoples living in a changing world.**



I grew up in the forests not far from here where I learnt the stories of my ancestors...



I was lucky enough to study at a university and can see there are many good things outside of the village...

...I also learnt there are many great things about village life and our culture and that these things are worth protecting and saving for those that...



...will come after us.



There is nothing wrong with many things the modern world can bring to us...



But how can we stop them from just doing what they want?

Yes, we are just small people they are big people...



We cannot just stand by and watch our lands, culture and knowledge destroyed.

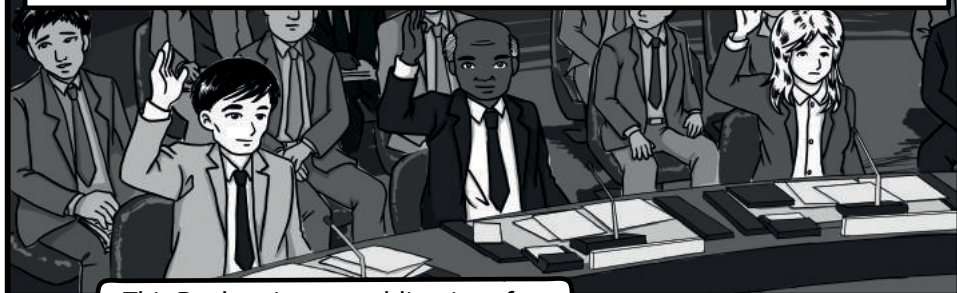


As indigenous peoples we do have rights.





For over 25 years Indigenous Peoples lobbied the governments to secure our rights.  
Finally in 2007 they adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.



This Declaration sets obligations for states to respect, protect and fulfill our rights and be equal with others.

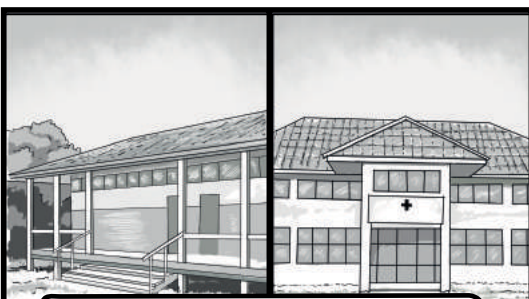
**'United Nations Declaration of  
the Rights of Indigenous peoples'**

**UNDRIP**

Rights to our land, territories and resources, to self  
determination and to our cultural integrity.



It affirms the protection of our culture  
and for us to control our lives.



The Declaration includes the right to  
an appropriate education and other  
support provided to other citizens.



Listen carefully.



That we should not suffer discrimination for who we are. That we have rights over our ancestral lands.



So they cannot take over the lands we have protected and rely upon?



That we can run our communities in the ways we have done so for generations. That our customary laws, suited to us, remain in place and can be developed.



So that means they are not going to tell us how to run our lives.

Within your lands...no.

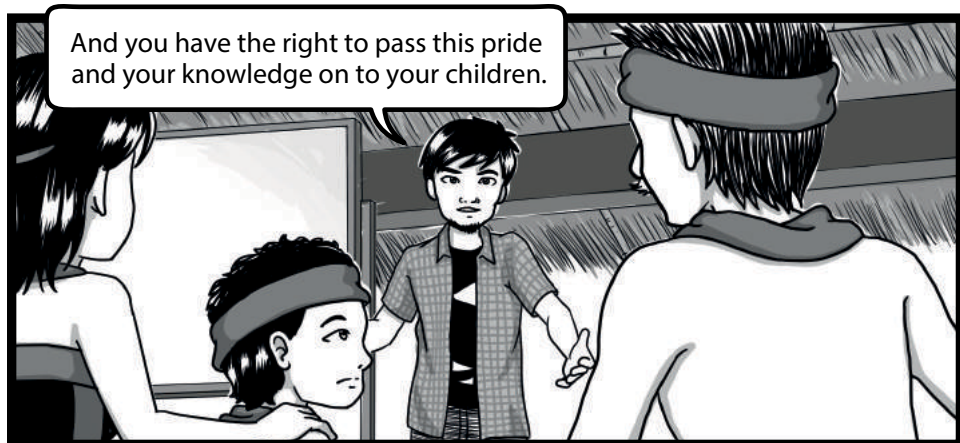
That we have rights to our own distinctive culture.

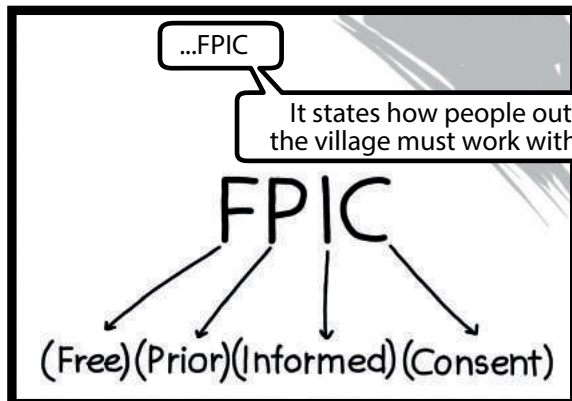
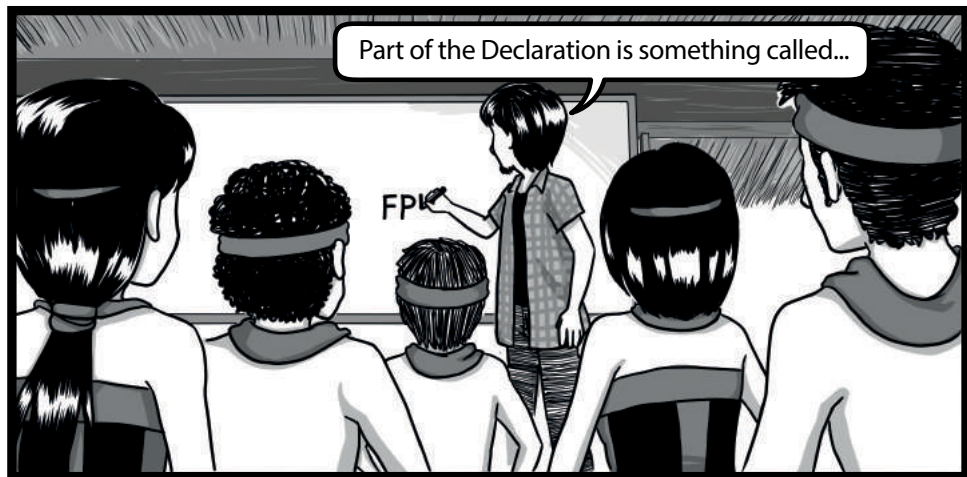


I am proud of who I am and the people I belong to.











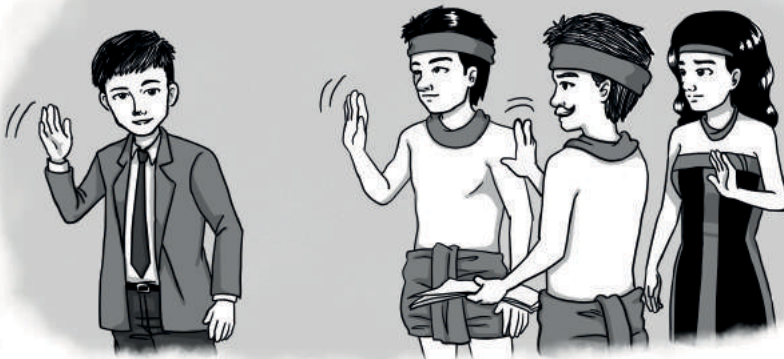
...if they have a project that will affect your way of life or lands.



They must give detailed information about the project free of charge.



They must do this before the project starts and let you make decisions in your own time.



All the information must be given to you in ways that you can understand.



And if you need more information...



...they will give it to you freely.



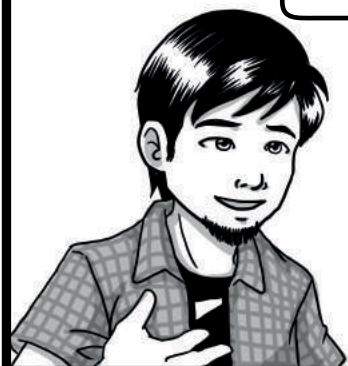


It is then up to you as a community to decide if the project goes ahead or set certain conditions.



The final decision...

...is yours and should be respected.



We know the world is changing.



We know we must adapt and we can do this in partnership with others.



But there must be respect for who we are and the way we want to develop.



The future should be ours to decide. We must strengthen our unity and solidarity as Indigenous Peoples to protect our rights and ensure survival and development of our future generation as distinct peoples.

