



OPEN DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

A PROJECT BY EAST-WEST MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE, INC

Indigenous Data Sovereignty in the Mekong


Pyrou Chung
Senior Advisor





About EWMI's Open Development Initiative

Photo credit | Sasin Tipchai



Our mission is:
To make **data** and
objective information
accessible and useful
to all people in the
Lower Mekong



Content

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- Indigenous and ethnic minority (IEM) data and sovereignty
- IDS principles
- Preliminary scoping
- Data Representation and the Five D's
- Data Deserts
- IDS in the Mekong
- Lessons learnt
- Next steps

What are **INDIGENOUS DATA**

Data, information and knowledge, in any format, that impacts Indigenous peoples, nations, and communities at the collective and individual levels:

Data about Indigenous Resources and Environments

Land, water, geology, titles,
air, soil, sacred sites,
territories, plants, animals,
etc.

Data about Indigenous Peoples as Individuals

Administrative, legal, health,
social, commercial,
corporate, services, etc.

Data about Indigenous Peoples as Collectives – Nations and Peoples

Traditional and cultural
information, archives, oral
histories, literature, ancestral
and clan knowledge, stories,
belongings, etc.

Informed by British Columbia First Nations Data Governance Institute - BCFNDGI.COM

USINDIGENOUSDATA.ARIZONA.EDU | @USIDSN

INDIGENOUS DATA SOVEREIGNTY

The **right** of Indigenous peoples and nations to govern the collection, ownership, and application of their own data.

1

Derives from inherent rights to govern their peoples, lands, and resources.

2

Genesis in traditions, roles, and responsibilities for the use of community held information.

3

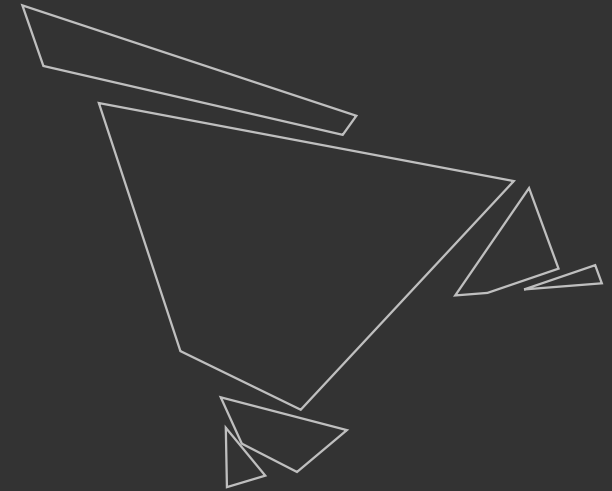
Positioned within a human rights framework and court cases, treaties, and/or recognition.

4

Knowledge belongs to the collective and is fundamental to who indigenous peoples are.

For more information see the US Indigenous Data Sovereignty web site usindigenousdata.arizona.edu.
Definition from Rodriguez-Lonebear, D., and Rainie, S.C. (2016). US Indigenous Data Sovereignty founding documents.
Much of the language regarding rights and framing comes from the charter of Te Mana Rauunga, the Maori Data Sovereignty Network in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Available at www.temanararaunga.maori.nz.
See also, Kukutai T & Taylor J. (Eds). (2016). Indigenous Data Sovereignty. Canberra: Australian National University Press.

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Preliminary scoping

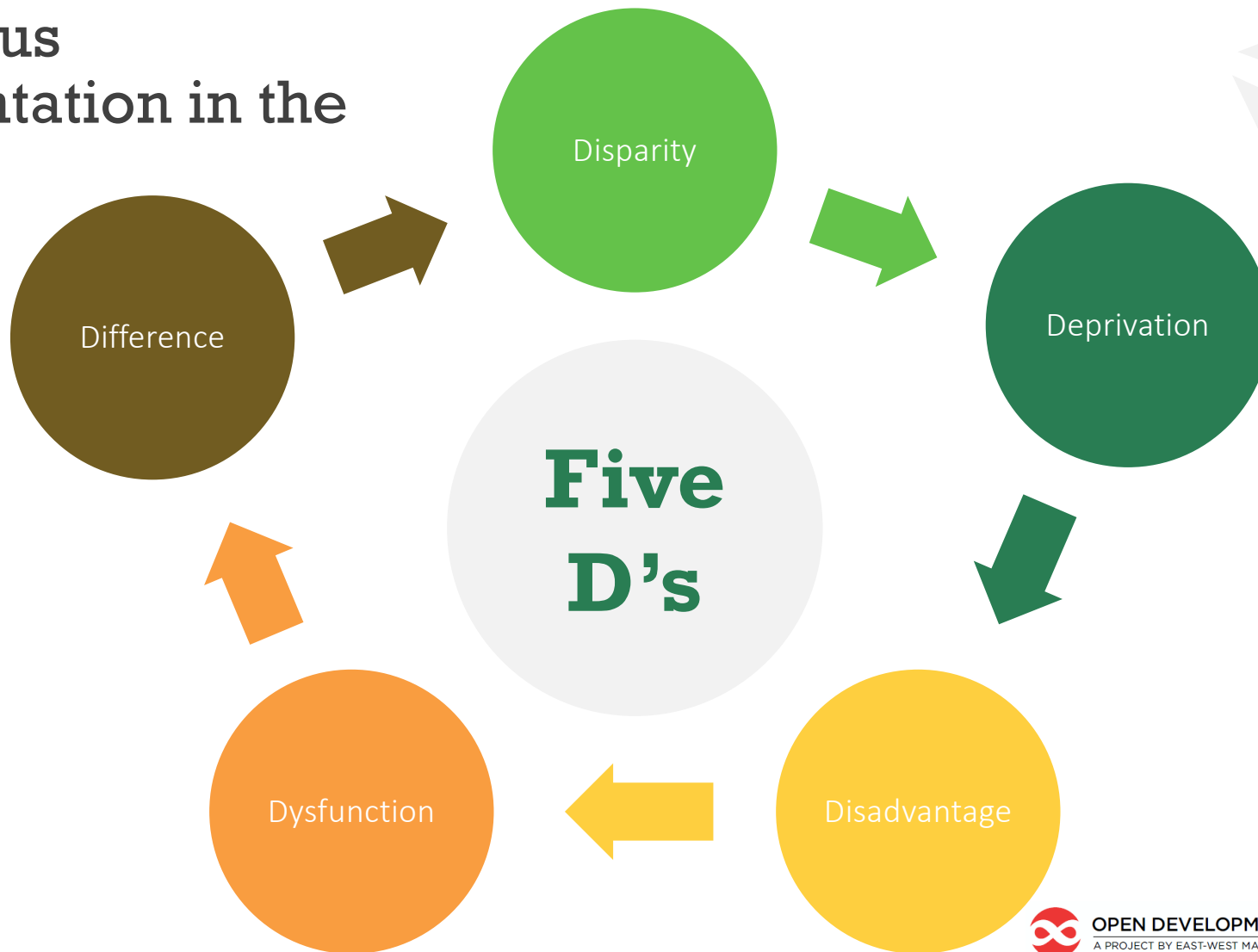
Perceptions of Indigenous people, data deserts
and what needs to happen



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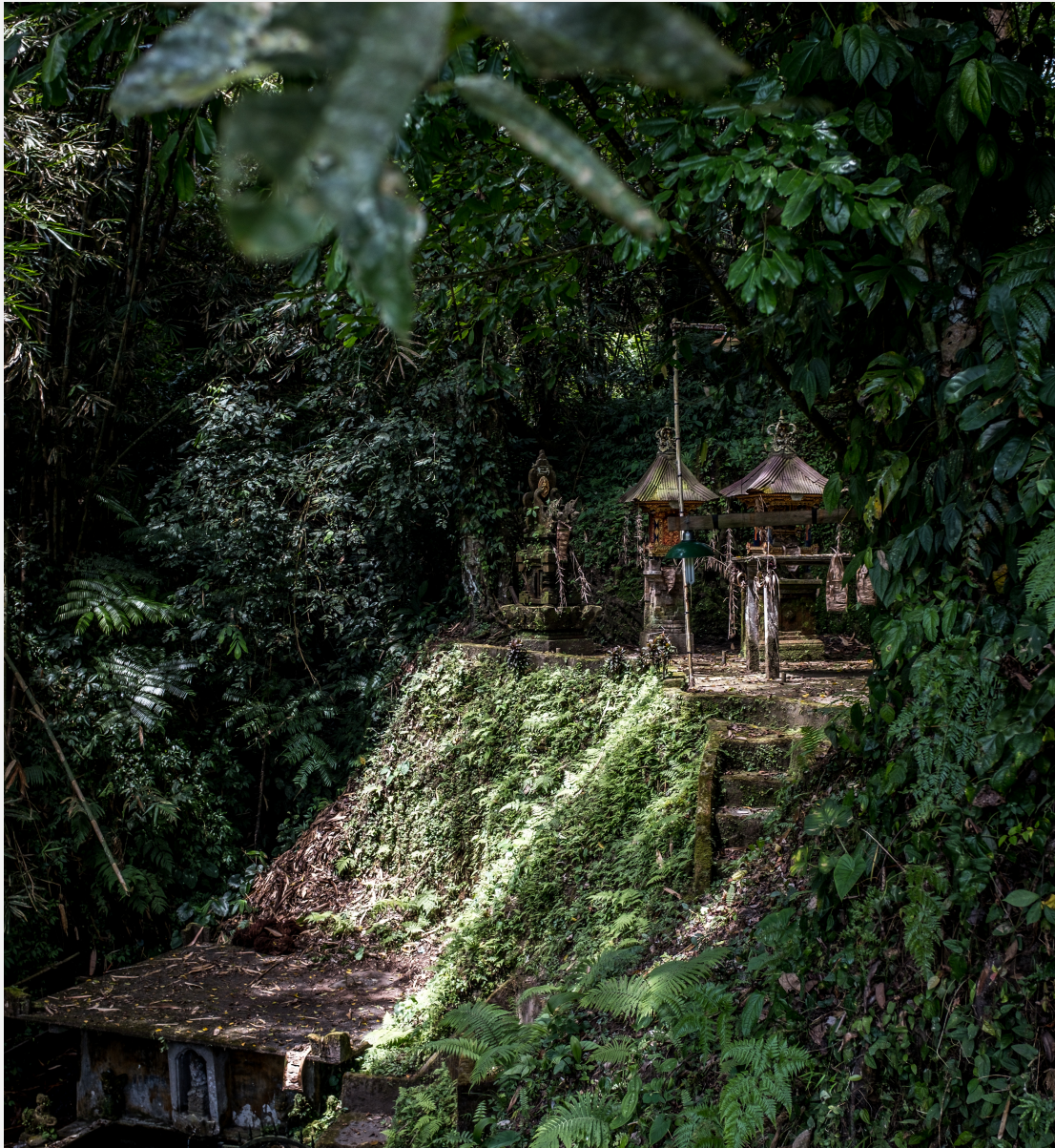


Indigenous Representation in the Mekong



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Indigenous and ethnic data deserts

Colonialist data views

Census and other national datasets are derived with little to no inputs from IEM

Inaccurate and not disaggregated

Challenges to collect data that is reflective of indigenous communities, language, distance cost are all barriers.

Untimely and not targeted to needs

Temporal range of data are large and often lack targeted indicators reflecting IEM needs



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Indigenous People Major Group



Key findings

- Special measures and measurements are required to overcome the persistent marginalisation of indigenous peoples.
- None of the proposed indicators or principles for disaggregation address indigenous peoples' particular situation and some indicators may undermine indigenous peoples' rights.

The Solution

- Indicators must be defined to uphold indigenous peoples' human rights;
- States should include an "indigenous identifier" in official data collection to ensure adequate disaggregation of data;
- Where disaggregation is not yet possible, sample data can be collected through participatory approaches - in collaboration with indigenous peoples' organisations;
- Monitoring should draw on the experiences and capacity of existing human rights monitoring mechanisms.





IDS in the Mekong

Preliminary approach in 2018

The objectives were to

- (i) Share successes;
- (ii) Identify potential partners to join the ODM platform;
- (iii) Determine common indicators for IEM development; and
- (iv) Identify and agree on responsible data stewardship especially with regard to privacy, data aggregation and ownership.



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Progress to date

Scope in each country is contextualized for each national circumstance.



OD Cambodia

Added land tenure records

Data visuals and customary land tenure records updated



OD Laos

Targeted support to youth and women

By providing targeted capacity building to identified partners we hope to build IEM constituent to shift IEM perceptions in country



OD Vietnam

Constrained and shirking environment for civic space

Data openness is limited but we have managed to attain data from government sources and hope to open discussions around this data



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Lessons Learnt

Four key lessons learnt

1. National contexts shape IEM realities

National differences in the legislations and policies surrounding indigenous and ethnic minority groups influence not only the IEM ability to engage in public processes, but divests them of a right and venue to speak out about their concerns.

2. Community fragmentation adds complexity to providing relevant services

Capacity to contribute, ranged broadly. This uneven distribution of establishment and capacities meant that there was dominance in discussions by larger groups and an inability of smaller groups to conceptualize beyond their immediate needs.

3. Varied awareness and capacity

Basic open data skills, such as data literacy and responsibly managing data, was extremely low. Understanding open data and IDS, both higher-level concepts, proved challenging as a result.

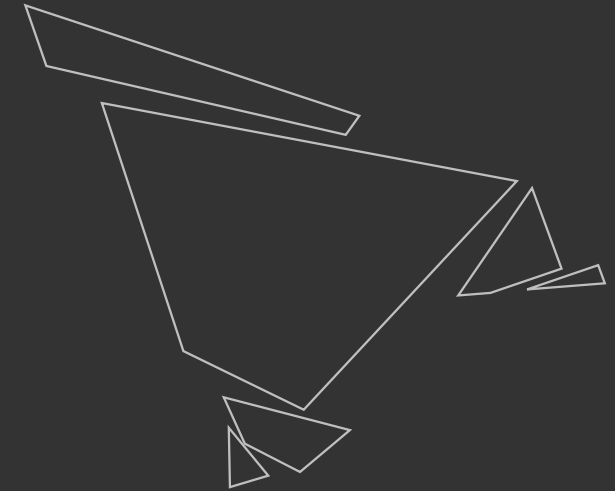
4. Data privacy and protection is as important as data production

IEM issues are sensitive.

As much as it is important to have transparent and accessible data, the subjects of that data also have a right to privacy.

Working in constrained environments is not easy.





Next Steps

Where to go from here



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Next steps

Advisory group function

- Existing and extended networks engaged.
- Formulation of workplan for engagement.
- Approval and guidance on messaging and IEM agendas.
- Help to build IDS constituents within the region.

Responsible data policy and data privacy training

- Currently under development the policy will undertake a process of engagement – with final product being guiding principles.
- Digital rights and data privacy is of utmost importance and IEM have little knowledge on how to protect their data.

Data literacy and capacity building


- Ultimately it is the intent that IEM lead the initiative and take charge of their agendas.
- Training and capacity building will be provided as and when needed.
- Story telling guidance to change the dominant narrative of IEM groups in the region.





Thank You



Pyrou Chung 

+ 95 944 533 8688 

pchung@ewmi-odi.org 

@opendevmekong 

www.opendevmekong.net 