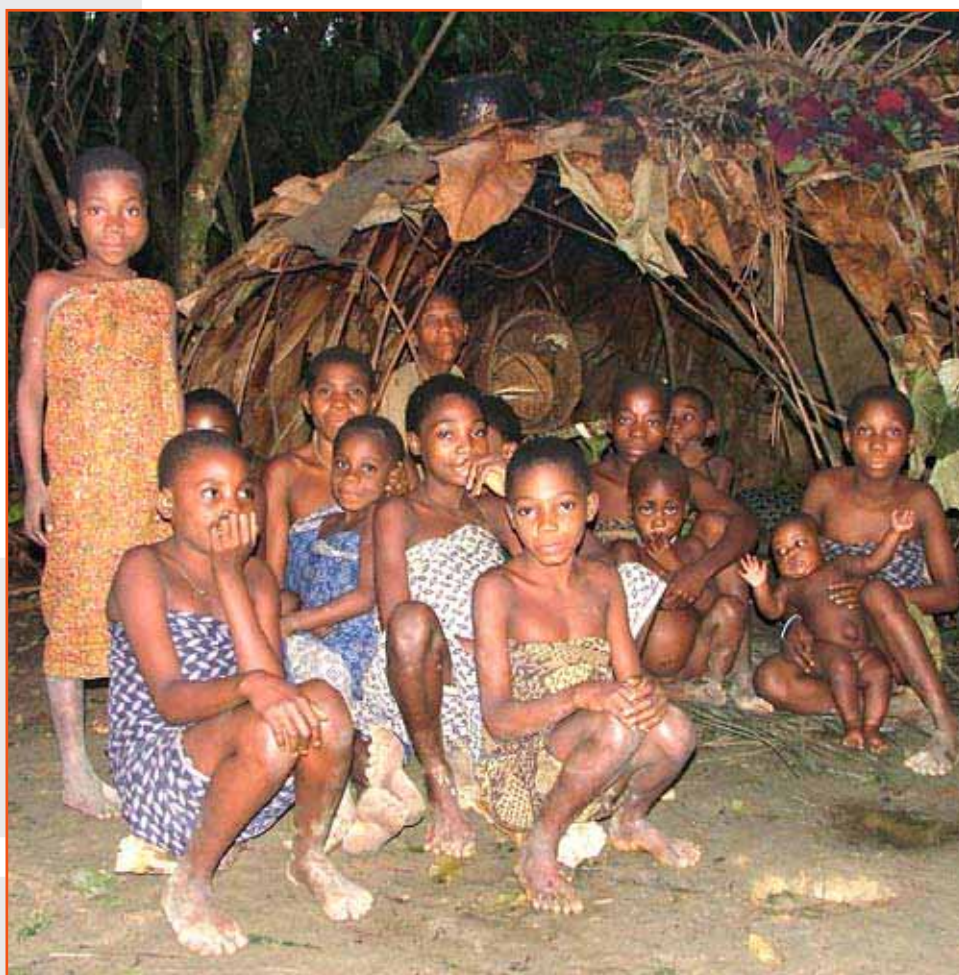


Forest Peoples Project



Annual Report 2005

Forest Peoples Project

The Forest Peoples Project was established on 29 October 1999 as a company limited by guarantee to become the UK-registered charitable arm of the Forest Peoples Programme. The Forest Peoples Project was registered as a UK Charity in August 2000.

Our aims are to support indigenous and tribal forest peoples to:

- ▶ promote their collective and individual rights;
- ▶ secure their lands and manage their natural resources;
- ▶ build their capacity to carry out actions for the long-term relief of poverty;
- ▶ educate policy makers and civil society about their concerns and aspirations.

We work to achieve these aims by means of :

- ▶ technical support, capacity building and policy advice for forest peoples;
- ▶ networking with NGOs, indigenous support organisations and agencies;
- ▶ researching and analysing the situation of forest peoples;
- ▶ providing information on forest peoples.

Cover photo: Mbendjele women and girls, Ibamba, Republic of Congo, by John Nelson

Report edited, designed and produced by Dorothy Jackson

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Overview of the year

The Forest Peoples Project's overall long-term goal is helping forest peoples gain control over their futures through defending their rights, engaging with policy makers and strengthening their capacity to carry out sustainable development for the long-term relief of poverty. Closely linked to this is our work to influence the forest debate with the aim that forests are protected for sustainable use by people with secure rights. Our work therefore adopts a rights-based approach with strong advocacy, capacity building and livelihoods components. Highlights of 2005 include the following:

- ▶ Our rights, livelihoods and education project in Rwanda increased the food security and incomes of 3043 Twa people, supported 80 children at secondary school and enabled over 500 Twa to gain literacy skills. Our project partner CAURWA contributed to civil society discussions on land reform, trained 200 Twa in human rights and provided legal support to Twa communities and individuals.
- ▶ Our "Dancing Pots" project in Rwanda trained 14 potters groups (275 potters) in business development and improved technology, accessed new markets and increased national and international awareness of the Twa's situation and culture.
- ▶ Through community mapping of lands and resources, and supporting dialogue via a Land Forum, we helped fourteen indigenous Bagyeli communities affected by the Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline start registering their land with local authorities.
- ▶ We supported dialogues between indigenous communities and managers of protected areas in Cameroon, Gabon and Republic of Congo to encourage conservation managers to pilot the integration of community rights in protected area management plans.
- ▶ Our Legal and Human Rights Programme supported consultations with indigenous peoples - in Rwanda about the government's refusal to legally recognise the main indigenous organisation, and in DRC about forest and mining laws. In Suriname we obtained two landmark legal decisions by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights upholding indigenous peoples' rights. We obtained a decision by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination urging Suriname to ensure that the draft Mining Act meets Suriname's international obligations to protect indigenous peoples' rights. In Guyana we progressed an aboriginal title suit against the government.
- ▶ We supported the Piaroa and Hiwi peoples of the middle Orinoco, Venezuela, to finalise maps of their ancestral lands in the Sipapo basin.
- ▶ We helped the Evenki people of Siberia to develop proposals to build sustainable livelihoods based on community resource management and traditional practices.

Rights, livelihoods and education for Twa people in Rwanda

FPP maintained capacity building and technical support for the sustainable livelihoods, education and advocacy project implemented by our indigenous Twa partner organisation, CAURWA. The aim of this five-year project, funded by Comic Relief, the European Union and local donors, is to increase the capacity of the highly impoverished and marginalised Twa community to protect and defend their rights and become active agents of their own socio-economic development.

Advocacy and human rights

The human rights situation in Rwanda continued to cause concern during 2005, including the refusal of the authorities to legally register CAURWA and other indigenous organisations whose statutes and names refer to the words 'indigenous' and 'Twa'. In Rwanda's current political climate, those who refer to ethnicity are likely to be labelled by the authorities as "divisionist" and underminers of post-genocide reconciliation initiatives. Critics however assert that the government has used the charge of divisionism to suppress freedom of expression and political opposition.

FPP provided legal and strategic advice to help CAURWA assess options and develop a strategy for dealing with the government (see page 8). The government's denunciations of human rights organisations, and its stance on CAURWA's legal personality, had severe financial consequences for CAURWA. Local partners, which had committed to funding CAURWA's human rights work, suspended their funding to avoid further attacks from the authorities. This meant that some planned activities had to be reduced and others postponed.

As well as the pressing issue of legal registration, CAURWA's human rights work during 2005 focussed on land issues. CAURWA was involved, with other members of the NGO umbrella group Landnet, in planning a nation-wide survey of the Rwandan population's knowledge of the

land reform process and discussing methods of monitoring land reform implementation, which will start in 2006. CAURWA also participated in several meetings with DFID, the lead agency in the land reform process, to advocate for measures to ensure equitable treatment for Twa communities. Despite previous lobbying by civil society organisations, including CAURWA, the land reform process will not address land redistribution and allocation of land to landless households. Instead it seeks to regularise and 'rationalise' land holdings, with the risk that landless Twa may be further marginalised in the process of land titling and commodification of land.

CAURWA maintained its programme of increasing community capacity to claim and defend rights, by training 200 Twa beneficiaries and community volunteers in human rights. CAURWA also provided legal support to six Twa communities whose land had been expropriated by neighbours or the local authorities, and intervened on behalf of Twa victims of crime in six other cases.

Sustainable livelihoods

Livelihoods support work continued in nine provinces, with CAURWA providing training and inputs to 148 Twa cooperative associations (3,043 people) to increase food security and revenues. The project reached an estimated 15,215 indirect beneficiaries, based on 5 dependants per household, which is approximately 46% of the total Twa population in Rwanda.

Increased incomes have enabled association members to pay for their children's school costs, join health insurance schemes, obtain credit, buy additional livestock and improve their housing. The number of associations that have obtained collective use rights to local authority-held land has increased by 52% compared to 2004, and land rental has increased by 43%.

Twa communities' self-confidence has increased as has the recognition by

CAURWA's support has helped hundreds of Twa households increase their food security and incomes. Photo: CAURWA



Supporting Twa and UOBDU in Uganda

local authorities of Twa needs, with the announcement by the Ministry of Local Affairs (MINALOC) towards the end of the year that it had developed a fund to specifically address the socio-economic needs of the Twa.

Despite the government's stance on legal registration, it appears to recognise the value of CAURWA's work, since MINALOC has asked CAURWA to supply recent socio-economic data on the number of Twa households, secondary school children and members of health insurance schemes throughout the country, so that this data can be incorporated in MINALOC planning.

Education and literacy

Sensitisation by CAURWA staff and volunteers has resulted in more Twa families sending their children to primary school. During 2005 CAURWA supported 80 Twa secondary school students throughout the country. Four of them passed their final year diplomas, and 89% passed their year exams to move up to the next class. CAURWA also supported 529 adult learners in 19 literacy circles (189 men, 340 women). By the end of the year 51.8% could read and write (88 men, 186 women).

Organisational development

With support from FPP, CAURWA continued to broaden its partnership base and technical capacity. Following two external evaluations carried out in 2004, FPP helped CAURWA strengthen internal procedures on advocacy, M&E, staff appraisals and salary review systems. FPP provided legal and technical support on the registration issue, and trained six senior CAURWA staff in logistical frameworks and M&E. We also provided ongoing intensive support in organisational and financial management to strengthen CAURWA's capacity, and continued to coordinate regularly with CAURWA's local donors.



FPP has supported Twa from around Mgahinga and Bwindi National Parks and the Echuya Forest in Southwest Uganda since 2000. We helped them to establish their representative organisation, the United Organisation for Batwa Development in Uganda (UOBDU), and supported networking between the Batwa communities. This enabled them to develop a common statement of their priorities concerning recognition of their rights and define the main elements of a community development plan, which UOBDU presented to donors.

During 2005 FPP helped UOBDU develop and submit a proposal to Nature Uganda to ensure Twa participation in the development of collaborative forest management plans for the Echuya Forest. Field activities will begin in 2006.

We also helped UOBDU obtain funds from NCIV for a capacity building programme which will begin in 2006. The programme will increase UOBDU's organisational skills and strengthen links with the communities by establishing offices in the three districts abutting the protected areas.

These activities complement FPP's work to help Uganda's Twa secure rights to land, carried out by our legal and human rights programme (see page 9).

Twa families living near the Echuya Forest in southwest Uganda. Photo: Dorothy Jackson

Twa pottery: income generation through Fair Trade



The Dancing Pots Centre retails Twa pots and acts as a training and information centre for the Twa. Photo: Lucy Mulvagh

FPP's 'Dancing Pots' project supports the Twa people of Rwanda to improve their socio-economic conditions by commercialising their traditional craft of pottery and dance. Implemented in collaboration with our partner CAURWA, the project has completed its fourth year, funded by the Community Fund, Norwegian Church Aid Rwanda, Christian Aid Rwanda, Onaway Trust and several other UK charitable trusts.

Dancing Pots enables Twa potters increase their access to local and international markets by improving product quality and marketing, and increasing their business skills. The Dancing Pots Centre in the capital Kigali provides a central retail outlet and training centre for Twa potters, coordinates events and tourist visits to Twa communities, and holds pottery classes for the public, helping to raise the profile of the Twa and their culture locally and internationally.

The Centre was officially inaugurated in December 2004, attended by representatives of the Rwandan authorities, international donors, embassies. The event was widely reported in the Rwandan media.

Dancing Pots is a member of the Fair Trade Federation (IFAT) and upholds Fair Trade principles including fair wages, participation in decision making; safe working conditions and practices, a positive

or improving situation for women, protection of children and young workers, and protection of the environment.

The project works with 14 potters groups in eight of Rwanda's 12 provinces, benefiting 275 potters (149 men, 126 women) and their family members, reaching an estimated 1,375 people in total.

During the year, training in production planning, quality control, new technology and business skills continued. The project also reviewed potters' training needs and developed a tailored training plan for each group which will be implemented during 2006. Visits between potting communities enabled potters to share techniques and experiences, helping to increase solidarity and networking between the groups.

The potters' average income from products sold to Dancing Pots was £266 per group during 2005, a significant sum for these communities who are struggling to meet basic needs. To our knowledge, Dancing Pots is one of only two buyers in Rwanda who ensure that potters receive a fairly calculated price for their products. The project continues to work to increase potters' confidence to join forces and demand fair prices from all their customers, as has been successfully achieved with bean producers in Rwanda. Nevertheless there are still many unscrupulous and unaware buyers in the country, to whom potters will sell products – even at a loss – to buy food.

Potters earned £221 in additional income from the dance troupes supported by Dancing Pots, and as teachers of pottery classes at the Dancing Pots Centre. The project helped groups access other opportunities for support and income by applying for funds to the International Women's Association of Rwanda. Other marketing and publicity opportunities included Dancing Pots' participation in a regional trade fair in Kenya, and four national exhibitions, including the annual National Expo that showcases hundreds of Rwandan producers.

The project's capital investment in

Twa supported by Dancing Pots produce a wide range of functional and decorative glazed and traditional pottery. Photo: Lucy Mulvagh



improved production technology continued with the completion of a fourth modern brick kiln for potters groups in Byumba province. Pots fired in brick kilns are much more durable and marketable than those fired traditionally under heaps of grass, and allow potters groups to make a diversified range of products and supply orders on time and to specification. Modern kilns are also more fuel efficient, reducing environmental damage. At the inauguration of a kiln built at Kacyiru on the outskirts of Kigali, televised statements by the Canadian Ambassador and the local authorities helped to publicise Twa pottery and increase the visibility of the Twa.

Such public recognition of Dancing Pots' work in economic development and promotion of Twa culture reinforced the project's advocacy on Twa rights to identity and culture, and to their own representative organisation (see page 4). When the new environmental law came into force, forbidding unauthorised use of timber, the project coordinator lobbied at the provincial and national level for permits to allow the potters to buy and collect wood to fire their kilns.

The project continued to raise its profile and increase awareness about the situation of the Twa through field visits and dance displays for national and international visitors. Several national and international tour operators now offer visits to the pottery centre and to Twa communities. Project staff had two meetings with the Presidential Working Group on Tourism to discuss how the project could help promote tourism in the country, and the Dancing Pots Centre features on the Rwanda Tourism Agency's bus 'City Tours' organised for international visitors to Kigali. The project also produced a DVD/Video of the Kacyiru dance troupe.

Most of the potters groups have women vice-presidents, strengthening Twa women's leadership and decision-making roles. Male and female potters receive equal pay for their work. The Potters Association, which represents the producers' interests in the



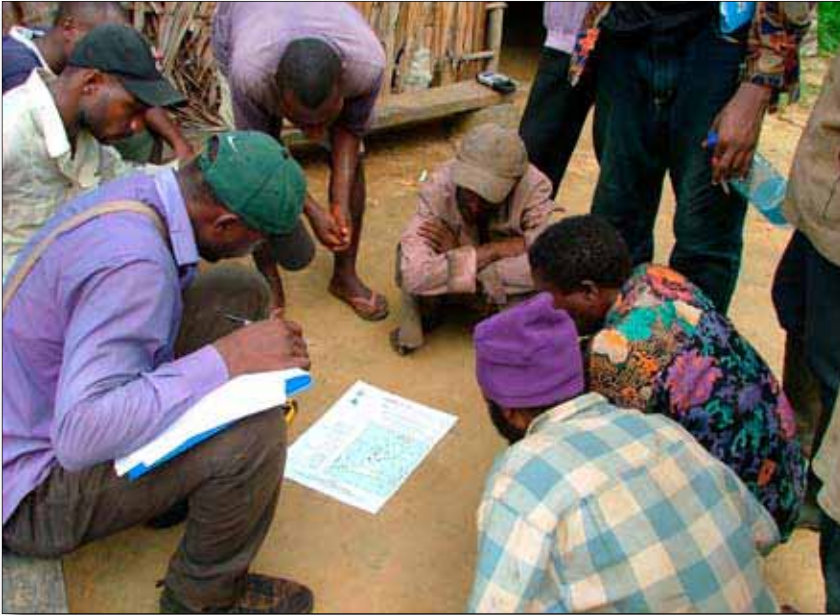
project, met twice during 2005 and elected its first female President. The President sits on the Management Committee, which oversees project planning and implementation, while the day-to-day management is led by the project coordinator. The Management Committee met three times during 2005.

Local project staff received training to improve their business and retail skills, including product ordering and sampling from producer groups, stock control and inventories, product costing and pricing, shop display, marketing and publicity. Business management was strengthened by training project staff in SAGE and Excel software and implementation of computerised accounts and stock control systems. The staff put their English language training into good practice throughout the year, welcoming visitors to the Dancing Pots Centre and accompanying tour groups to Twa dance performances.

The project's substantial progress in 2005 was achieved despite a two-thirds reduction in project funding when one of its main grants came to an end. Staff voluntarily worked part-time and activity budgets were cut, reducing training inputs and field support compared with previous years. A strategic review of the project will be completed during 2006, in conjunction with an independent evaluation of the project. We are currently seeking funding for the next phase of the project.

A Twa potter teaches school children how to make pots at the Dancing Pots Centre.
Photo: Lucy Mulvagh

Bagyeli land rights and livelihoods in Cameroon



Bagyeli community members discuss boundary demarcation of their lands in the Bipindi area.
Photo: John Nelson

FPP has worked with the Bagyeli people of southwest Cameroon since 1999, to support them to engage with civil society and defend their rights, in order to reduce their poverty and develop sustainable livelihoods in the long term. Our current project with the Bagyeli is in its fourth year, funded by Comic Relief and DFID, and carried out in collaboration with the Centre for Environment and Development (CED) and Planet Survey, two local NGOs.

The Bagyelis' lands lie in the zone of the Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline in the areas around Bipindi and Lolodorf, and in the Campo-Ma'an National Park, which was created to offset the negative environmental impacts of the pipeline. The pipeline project's Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP), a condition of IFC/World Bank funding for the pipeline project, was designed and implemented by the Foundation for Environment and Development in Cameroon (FEDEC). However, FEDEC failed to consult properly with the Bagyeli about the design of the IPP and the compensation plan, and the compensation and development initiatives associated with the pipeline have so far mainly benefited the Bantu farming communities.

Through community mapping of Bagyeli lands and resource use, the project is

establishing the basis for Bagyeli land claims. Twenty Bagyeli cartographers, plus Bantu community members, were trained in GIS data collection, resulting in a series of community land use maps of the Bipindi area. Another five maps were created with Bagyeli communities from the northern side of Campo Ma'an National Park.

The maps underpin formal discussions about Bagyeli land rights through the Bipindi Land Forum, set up in 2004. The Forum is facilitated by our partner Planet Survey and includes Bagyeli community representatives, Bantu traditional village leaders, government representatives, and other local stakeholders such as FEDEC.

As a result of the mapping work, and the Land Forum discussions, 14 Bagyeli communities from the Bipindi area are now beginning the process of securing government administrative recognition of their land rights, based on completion of a *procès verbal*, a statement authenticated by a local official.

Having secured this level of recognition of their land rights the communities may be in a stronger position to obtain *chefferies du troisième degré* (3rd degree chieftaincy) if the government re-establishes this lowest level of administration. The chefferie associates a designated population with a designated geographical space, and gives the community formal representation at district level. In the meantime the communities are using the maps to prevent encroachment on their lands. The Land Platform will continue to provide a forum for resolution of remaining conflicts between Bagyeli and some traditional leaders.

The project is piloting methods of funding small income-generating projects devised by the communities and monitored by Bagyeli field workers chosen by the communities. FPP and our partners have called on FEDEC to consult more closely with communities about development activities funded by FEDEC and to allocate funds directly to communities for their own income generating activities.

Indigenous peoples' rights and conservation areas

Since 2001 FPP has supported indigenous peoples living around protected areas in central Africa to dialogue with conservation managers and policy makers to secure their land and resource rights, in line with international laws and new conservation policies. This work is currently funded by Comic Relief.

So far, we have supported community consultation and documentation, and information provision, facilitation and training with hunter-gatherer communities around Campo Ma'an National Park, Boumba Bek National Park, Nki National Park (Cameroon), Noubale-Ndoki National Park (Republic of Congo), Minkébé National Park (Gabon) and Mgahinga National Park, Bwindi National Park and the Echuya Forest (Uganda). In Cameroon, we also supported meetings of RACOPY (Réseau Recherche Actions Concertées Pygmées), a national network of community organisations and NGOs working with hunter-gatherers.

The project has stimulated increased debate among donors and conservation agencies about the impacts of conservation on local communities in Central Africa. Following complaints submitted by FPP and CED to the World Bank in 2004, the management plan for the Campo Ma'an National Park in Cameroon, was suspended because the original project assessments had failed to address Bagyeli rights over lands and resources.

FPP funded Planet Survey to provide a field worker to support Bagyeli communities around Campo Ma'an to engage with forest managers over hunting and gathering rights. The park managers are now consulting with the Campo Ma'an communities, and taking mapping data collected by the communities into account in park management planning. Four years of advocacy and community support by FPP and our partners have persuaded WWF, the current park managers, and the Ministry of Environment and Forests to start piloting new rules allowing Bagyeli hunting and gathering in the Campo protected area, including within the national

park, in line with community wishes. The threat of commercial bushmeat hunting is a complicating factor that will require further consultation between government and communities.

FPP and CED are supporting similar dialogues between hunter-gatherer communities and conservation managers to pilot the integration of community rights in protected area management plans in the Dja Wildlife Reserve, Boumba-Bek National Park, the Nki Forest in Cameroon and the TRIDOM interzone, which overlaps Cameroon, Republic of Congo and Gabon.

Based on data gathered by FPP and CED with Mbendjele communities in northern Republic of Congo, the logging company CIB agreed to design and implement a programme to incorporate hunter-gatherer forest use and rights into the concession management plan for 1.3 million hectares of rainforest. If CIB's design complies with our recommendations FPP will support Mbendjele communities to engage in the process during 2006.

Using films, reports and community maps we discussed with senior WWF-International staff how WWF procedures, staffing and field projects could be reformed to respect indigenous peoples' rights. This led to a joint field investigation of the problems faced by Pygmy groups in Cameroon who are being denied access to their resources by WWF-funded eco-guards. Negotiations continue about how these problems will be corrected.

FPP's work is helping hunter-gatherer communities secure their traditional rights in protected areas. Photo: John Nelson



Securing indigenous peoples' rights under national and international law



FPP is supporting CAURWA, the Community of Indigenous Peoples of Rwanda, to deal with the government's refusal to legally register the organisation unless it ceases to be an indigenous organisation working for the Twa. Photo: Dorothy Jackson

FPP's Legal and Human Rights Programme contributes cross-cutting legal and human rights inputs to all our projects in Africa to enable our indigenous partners to use national legal systems and international human rights conventions to secure their rights.

During 2005 with funding from the Sigrid Rausing Trust and Law Society Charity, and working in collaboration with our sister organisation Forest Peoples Programme, we also supported indigenous communities and organisations in Suriname and Guyana.

Africa

FPP provided hands-on training for indigenous partners from Rwanda, Burundi and DRC during the 37th Session of the **African Commission on Human Rights**. We helped partners draft statements on recent human rights violations, armed conflict and discriminatory policies affecting indigenous peoples in central Africa and made a statement on the failure of national Poverty Reduction Strategies to address indigenous peoples' rights.

With FPP's support, CAURWA submitted a memo and supporting documents to the President of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rwandan government's refusal to grant

legal personality unless CAURWA ceased to be an indigenous Twa organisation (see page 4) and requested the Commission to investigate the matter. The dossier of information was also given to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of the Human Rights and the Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples who attended the ACHPR meeting.

In **Rwanda**, FPP produced a briefing setting out options for CAURWA, under national and international law, in relation to the legal personality issue. With local donor Trocaire, we helped CAURWA design and implement a country-wide consultation process, involving more than 500 Twa and dozens of local government officials. The consultation confirmed that the Twa want to maintain their cultural identity as Twa and for CAURWA to continue supporting them, as there are no government policies specifically to assist the Twa. As one consultee said: "If you take away our Batwa name what name will you give us?"

The consultation report, unanimously adopted by CAURWA's members in an extraordinary General Assembly in August, called on the government to understand that the terms 'Twa' and 'indigenous' are not 'divisionist', to put in place special measures to improve the socio-economic situation of the Twa and to continue the dialogue with CAURWA to allow it to continue its work.

In 2004 CAURWA's Director was appointed by President Kagame to the NEPAD Peer Review Mechanism's Sub-commission on Democracy and Good Political Governance. In 2005 Rwanda was one of the first countries to be reviewed. The Peer Review report supported CAURWA's position, noting that the authorities appeared to be adopting a policy of assimilation. The report was critical of the refusal to legally register CAURWA, and recommended the government begin intensive dialogue with the organisation and Twa communities.

The government's official response in June 2005 stated that it has never had a policy of assimilation but admitted that

FPP's Legal Advisor training RAPHY members in carrying out field consultations with local communities about the impacts of DRC's forest and mining laws. Photo: RAPHY



the 'Batwa community continues to have a disproportionate number of vulnerable members, and seem not to benefit sufficiently from the national policy that supports socio-economic integration of all Rwandans.' The authorities also noted that 'it is clear that a targeted response to [the Twa's] specific problems is recommended and shall be reflected in the plan of action.' FPP and CAURWA will monitor whether the government upholds these pledges.

In eastern **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** FPP provided training and technical support for the RPY network of indigenous support organisations to consult with indigenous and local communities about the impacts of DRC forest and mining laws on their lands and livelihoods. RPY's field team held 1048 meetings in 334 villages, covering 19 *territoires* in three provinces. The consultation concluded that the mining and forest laws should explicitly recognise indigenous peoples' rights, compensate indigenous peoples evicted from national parks and ensure appropriate procedures and capacity building for indigenous communities so they can participate in consultations, and in negotiations with forestry and mining officials and contractors. The consultation findings will inform advocacy strategies during 2006.

In **Uganda**, FPP had several consultative meetings with a landless Twa community which has been offered 115 acres bordering Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park, by a religious mission. The discussions enabled the communities to express their aspirations for the land, and begin assessing legal options for transferring the land title to the Twa community. The dialogue will continue in 2006.

In collaboration with UOBDO, FPP submitted a supplementary NGO report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) highlighting the discrimination, landlessness, marginalisation and exclusion faced by indigenous Twa children in Uganda. The CRC's concluding observations registered its concern at Twa children's



limited access to basic social services and the violation of their rights to survival and development, to enjoy their own culture and to be protected from discrimination. The CRC recommended that the Ugandan government develop a plan of action to protect Twa children's rights and ensure their access to social services.

FPP provided an intensive, week-long training for our **Cameroon** partner Centre for Environment and Development and its partner organisations and collaborators. Through interactive sessions and role play, participants learned about the international human rights framework, international law and the rights of indigenous peoples and how to document human rights violations. Participants also simulated presenting a case before the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. The training was highly appreciated and FPP was requested to provide follow-up training.

FPP and UOBDO's report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child highlighted the violation of Twa children's rights in Uganda. The CRC recommended that the Ugandan government take action to protect Twa children's rights.
Photo: Dorothy Jackson

South America

In June 2005, nearly ten years of sustained effort by our sister organisation Forest Peoples Programme and indigenous peoples and organisations in Suriname came to fruition in a groundbreaking judgement by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. The *Case of Moiwana Village v. Suriname* concerns the massacre of more than 50 Cottika N'djuka maroons (descendants of escaped slaves) by the Surinamese military in 1986. The Court unanimously ruled that, under the American Convention on Human Rights, Suriname had violated the human rights of 130 Moiwana villagers, including the rights to humane treatment, to freedom of movement and residence, to property and to judicial guarantees and protection.

The judgment is a landmark decision on the rights of internally displaced persons, reparations for violations of land rights and the right of indigenous and tribal peoples to give or withhold consent. It establishes a strong legal basis for recognizing and securing the land and resource rights of indigenous and tribal peoples in Suriname and other countries. The Court also

ordered Suriname to make reparations including demarcating and titling of the Moiwana community's traditional territories and providing a US\$1.2 million fund for development programs in Moiwana village.

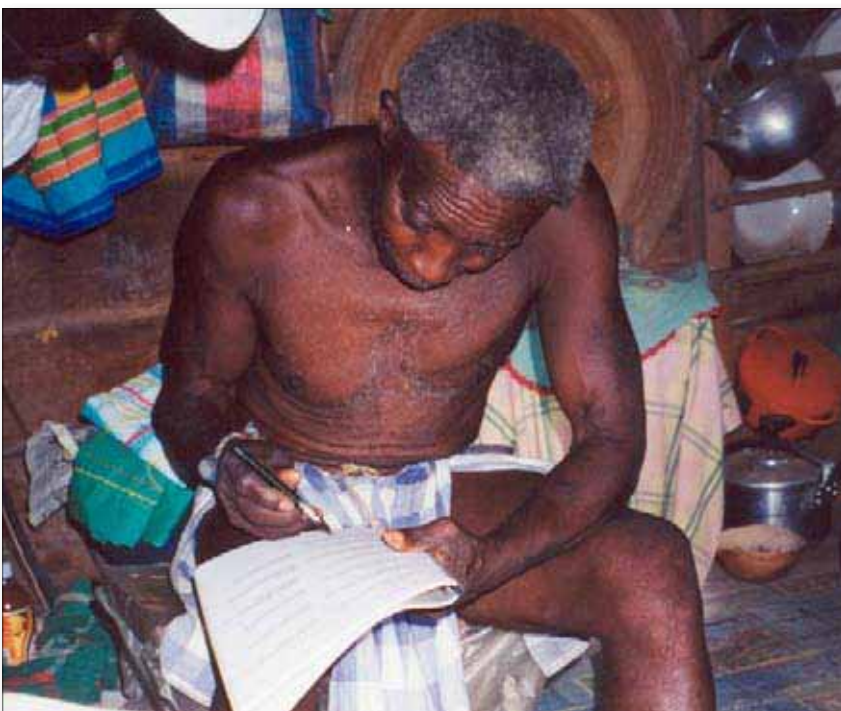
FPP's focus is now on getting the Court decisions implemented and tracking the work of the government Commission set up to implement the Court's order on land demarcation, which also requires the consent of neighbouring Maroon villages and indigenous peoples of the Lower Marowijne River. We are therefore helping these communities map their territories to establish boundaries and draft an accord defining how they will cooperate on the land rights aspects of the Moiwana case.

We celebrated a second legal success in November 2005 when the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights found Suriname in violation of the American Convention on Human Rights by granting logging concessions on the lands of 63 Saramaka maroon villages, thereby failing to legally recognise and guarantee the Saramaka's rights to own and control their lands and territory. The full details of the Commission's decision are currently still confidential.

An aboriginal title suit filed almost eight years ago against the Guyanese government by the Akawaio and Arecuna peoples of the Upper Mazaruni, with Forest Peoples Programme support, encountered further delays due to the defection of the communities' original legal counsel to the government. During 2005, FPP and our partner, the Amerindian Peoples Association (APA), had to supply the new lawyers with all the evidence needed to prove the case at trial. With an affidavit drafted by FPP, APA requested a trial date and that the court hear some evidence in pre-trial depositions, because some of the key witnesses may not live long enough to see a trial. The government has however sought to delay pre-trial depositions, which would give the APA grounds to take the case to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

In March we obtained the first decision

A Saramaka captain signing the petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to support the Sarakame case submitted in 2000.
Photo: Fergus MacKay



Supporting indigenous peoples in Siberia and Venezuela

of its kind, under the follow-up procedure established by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), in which CERD recommended that Suriname's draft Mining Act, which threatens lands and livelihoods of indigenous peoples, should comply with Suriname's international obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

A second FPP submission under CERD's urgent action procedure, resulted in a CERD decision urging Suriname to legally acknowledge the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples to control and use their lands and participate in the management of the associated natural resources. Suriname should also strive to reach agreements with the peoples concerned before awarding concessions and to ensure that they can appeal to appropriate bodies to uphold their traditional rights and their rights to be consulted and to be fairly compensated for any damage.

With our partner, the Association of Village Leaders in Suriname (VIDS), we circulated these recommendations to government representatives and secured their agreement to formal hearings on the draft Mining Act with indigenous peoples and maroons, to take place in 2006.

During 2005, FPP produced several widely-used guides and briefings on domestic laws and analyses of legal reform measures for indigenous peoples in Guyana, Suriname, Rwanda, DRC and Cameroon. We published a compilation of all UN treaty body jurisprudence on indigenous peoples 1993-2004 in three languages. This was used extensively by indigenous peoples and some governments in the negotiations on the UN's and Organisation of American States' draft Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We also contributed to the development of standards on indigenous peoples' right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent by the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations and the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Siberia

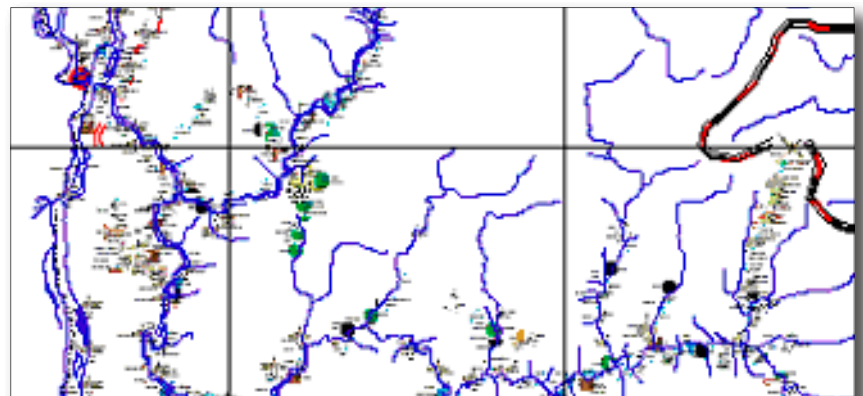
In collaboration with the Moscow-based Russian Indigenous Training Centre (RITS) and the Evenki indigenous organisation Arun ('Rebirth' in Evenki), FPP developed a follow-up project to previous mapping work to assist the Evenki people of central Siberia at a critical time when laws are still being drafted and the region is still largely unexploited by extractive industries.

The project will help the Evenki claim their rights to their lands and resources under Russian law, in order to build sustainable livelihoods based on community resource management and traditional practices. Project components include summer camps to teach traditional livelihood skills to indigenous youth, capacity building for Arun, and documentation and dissemination of issues raised by the indigenous community. Fundraising for the project will continue in 2006.

Venezuela

With funds from the Eden Bequest and the Rainforest Action Network via Global Green Grants, FPP provided support to the Piaroa and Hiwi peoples of the middle Orinoco to map their lands along eight rivers and file a claim for the Sipapo basin, which is the core of their ancestral territory. A draft map was completed and discussed at an assembly of the Piaroa. The Centre for Anthropological Investigation at the National Experimental University of Guyana advised the project which should produce a final map validated by the Piaroa and Hiwi, during 2006.

Part of the draft map produced by the Piaroa and Hiwi of their traditional lands in the middle Orinoco, Venezuela.
Photo: UNEG-CIAG



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