



Research Paper

## Empowering Indigenous Communities: The Pursuit of Quality Education and Peaceful Societies

Beverly Laltoog<sup>1\*</sup> <sup>1</sup> University of Baguio, Philippines

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### Abstract

Educational Institutions in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) fervently advocate for Indigenous Peoples (IP) and Peace Studies Education in higher learning, aligning with the CHED Regional Memorandum No. 56 of 2023. The University of Baguio and other Higher Educational institutions actively integrate IP and Peace Studies into their academic programs. This paper addresses two objectives: explaining cultural misappropriation and introducing the Cordillera Heritage Project to address this issue. This study utilizes a qualitative-descriptive research method by participating in the different programs under Project Cordillera heritage. Project HERITAGE (Higher Education Regional Integration and Teaching of Appropriate, Genuine, and Exhaustive Studies on Indigenous Peoples) is a collaboration between the University of Baguio, CHED CAR, and regional Higher Education Institutions. It introduces Cordillera Heritage as a foundational course, Cordillera Heritage 101: 'History and Socio-cultural Heritage', preserving Cordilleran identity through knowledge, systems, practices, settlements and institutions. The Cordillera Heritage stands as a living legacy, relevant in contemporary society and vital to the region's history. It culminates in the Cordillera Heritage Workbook, which enhances educational materials and includes faculty immersion and training services. The University of Baguio's proactive approach earned commendation from the Commission on Higher Education for being the first to offer Cordillera Heritage 101 across all programs. The institution's commitment reflects in successfully implementing the first regional HERITAGE Faculty Immersion Training Service, showcasing its dedication. The Cordillera Heritage Project responds to regional educational needs by integrating subjects that respect and promote Cordilleran knowledge, values, and culture. Aligned with the aspirations for autonomy and self-determination in Cordillera communities, this course is a significant step toward preserving and promoting the region's heritage within the educational landscape.

**Keywords:** *Inclusive Education; Indigenous Community; Cultural Heritage; Cordillera; Cultural Misappropriation*

### INTRODUCTION

Culture comprises the practices, beliefs, and behaviors of a society. Because culture is learned, it includes how people think and express themselves. While we may like to consider ourselves individuals, we must acknowledge the impact of culture; we inherit thought language that shapes our perceptions and patterned behavior, including about issues of family and friends, and faith and politics (Lamorte, 2016).

To an extent, culture is a social comfort. After all, sharing a similar culture with others is precisely what defines societies. Nations would not exist if people did not coexist culturally. Culture is preserved through transmission from one generation to the next, but it also evolves through processes of innovation, discovery, and cultural diffusion (Soifer et al., 2013). We may be restricted by the confines of our own culture, but as humans we can question values and make conscious decisions.

The contemporary world is faced with the reality of grappling with the inevitability of conflict. Different institutions of different states cannot manage the huge demands unleashed by everyday conflict. The complementary relationship between traditional institutions and the modern state within these circumstances becomes imperative (Balatong et al., 2022). Meanwhile, the Philippines is rich in culture that was passed down by their ancestors. The practices that are embedded in their culture are being applied in their daily lives and reveal how rich and blessed the

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Corresponding author's email: [beverlylaltoog@gmail.com](mailto:beverlylaltoog@gmail.com)**This Article is Licensed Under:**

culture the people have (Abundo, 2015). This culture shows the greatness and complexity of their history, which is influenced by the demographics of the regions or by their ancestors (Corpuz et al., 2012). The Philippines is home to numerous indigenous communities with distinct cultural traditions and practices. However, these indigenous cultures often face marginalization and the loss of their cultural identity due to historical and ongoing social, economic, and political factors.

The Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), rich in ancient culture, is the home of the indigenous tribe called the Igorot. The way of life of the people in this region existed way back to ancient Filipinos before the Spanish colonization. CAR serves as the ancestral domain among the *Igorots*. It comprises the six provinces of Abra, Apayao, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, and Mountain Province plus the lone city of Baguio as a chartered city. The people from those provinces are referred to by a generic term, Igorot, a word coined from the root word, "golot" meaning mountain (Annged, 2019). In addition, "Igorot" is a term commonly used to identify the ethnolinguistic groups in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) (Pitlongay, 2019). Unfortunately, these communities have long faced challenges related to cultural misappropriation and inequality, which have impacted their socio-economic and political status.

In terms of inequality, indigenous communities in the Cordillera region have experienced social, economic, and political marginalization. Historical factors like colonization and land dispossession have greatly influenced their socio-economic status. The exploitation of their cultural heritage without recognition or compensation further exacerbates these inequalities (UN, 2009).

Cultural inequality refers to the disparity in access to and participation in cultural resources and opportunities among different groups within a society. It can manifest in various forms, such as unequal representation, limited cultural expression, and restricted access to cultural education and heritage. According to NEDA (2017), Indigenous communities face discrimination and limited opportunities for social and economic mobility, with their traditional livelihoods being threatened by modernization. Government policies, such as the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997 in the Philippines, recognize and protect the rights of indigenous peoples, including their cultural heritage and self-governance.

However, ongoing advocacy, education, and awareness are crucial to addressing the underlying systemic issues of cultural misappropriation and inequality in the Cordillera region (Brondizio et al., 2021), which requires collaborative efforts from different stakeholders such as: governments, communities, educational institutions, and civil society organizations. According to Panopio and Rolda (2007), the more we study another culture, the better we become at understanding our own. Thus, it is of paramount importance to develop a program that will showcase the Cordilleran heritage focusing on the culture, history, experience, character, and traditions, and aim to integrate these elements with academic excellence to promote awareness, education, and best practices in the field of academics and instruction.

The findings may contribute to future programs, policies, and community development efforts related to the Cordillera Heritage Project. The objective of this paper is to come up with a descriptive study that depicts how Educational Institutions in Cordillera empower Indigenous Communities in the Pursuit of Quality Education and Peaceful Societies through Project Cordillera Heritage. Specifically, this seeks to answer the following specific objectives:

1. Discuss cultural misappropriation and the commodification of culture in CAR
2. give an overview of the Cordillera heritage Project
3. identify the accomplished phases of the Project Cordillera heritage
4. An analysis of Project Cordillera Heritage and Sustainable Development Goals specifically (SDG 4) Quality Education, (SDG 10) Reducing Inequalities, and (SDG 18) Peaceful Societies

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This study utilizes a qualitative-descriptive research method to explore the various aspects of the Project Cordillera heritage. The qualitative-descriptive approach is suitable for capturing and interpreting the conditions, experiences, and perspectives related to the project in a rich and detailed manner. The researcher actively participated in the different programs under Project Cordillera heritage, allowing for firsthand observation and engagement. Data were gathered through participant observation, where the researcher documented the activities, events, and conditions experienced during the project. In addition to the researcher's observations and participation, document analysis of the regional memos relevant to the projects was conducted to gather supplementary information and insights. Triangulating these different sources will provide a comprehensive understanding of the Project Cordillera heritage and enhance the credibility of the findings.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents a description of the different programs under Project Cordillera heritage and identifies several phases of Project Cordillera heritage. The information gathered from the observations of the researcher as an author and participants coupled with statements and stories from other participants and authors during the project provided the details necessary to answer the concerns of this study.

**Cultural misappropriation and Commodification of culture in CAR**

The Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) in the Philippines is renowned for its rich cultural heritage and diverse indigenous communities. Regrettably, the region's authenticity has been exploited for financial gain, leading to ethical concerns and impacting its cultural integrity. Some issues related to Cordillera heritage are commodification of culture and misappropriation of culture.

**Cultural misappropriation**

Cultural misappropriation occurs when elements of one culture are adopted or used by another culture without proper understanding or respect. Cultural misappropriation in the context of the Cordillera region refers to the appropriation and use of indigenous cultural elements without proper understanding, respect, or permission. Cultural misappropriation can occur when outsiders, often from the dominant Filipino culture or foreign visitors, appropriate and exploit aspects of Igorot culture for personal gain or entertainment, without considering the historical, social, and spiritual significance behind these practices. This can include the use of traditional clothing, symbols, rituals, music, or artifacts for commercial purposes, such as fashion, tourism, or entertainment, without considering the cultural significance and context of these elements. It can lead to the distortion, commodification, and exploitation of indigenous culture, often perpetuating stereotypes and eroding cultural integrity.

Some examples of cultural misappropriation in the Cordillera may include the commercialization of traditional Igorot clothing, the use of sacred symbols or rituals in inappropriate contexts, or the commodification of indigenous artifacts and crafts. Indigenous textiles and handicrafts, such as those created by the Igorots, have been commercialized and sold without appropriate recognition or compensation for the original creators. This not only undermines the cultural significance of these artifacts but also perpetuates economic inequality among indigenous communities (Tobias, 2022).

One of the main concerns with cultural misappropriation is the erosion of cultural identity and the potential harm it can cause to indigenous communities. When elements of a culture are

taken out of their original context and commodified, they can lose their cultural significance and become distorted or misrepresented. This can lead to a loss of cultural pride, a disruption of traditional practices, and a sense of exploitation among the affected community.

cultural exchange and appreciation are different from cultural misappropriation. Cultural exchange involves a respectful and reciprocal sharing of traditions and knowledge between different cultures, where both parties are willing participants. Cultural appreciation, on the other hand, involves recognizing and celebrating the value of another culture without exploiting or diminishing it.

### **Commodification of Culture in the Cordillera**

Commodification refers to the process of transforming cultural elements into marketable commodities for economic gain. In the Cordillera, one aspect of this commodification is the commercialization of traditional arts and crafts. Items such as woven textiles, woodcarvings, pottery, and jewelry have become popular souvenirs and tourist attractions. While this provides economic benefits to artisans and their communities, it raises concerns about the potential dilution of authentic craftsmanship and the production of mass-produced imitations (Bulilan, 2007).

Another area of concern is the commercialization of indigenous rituals and performances. Traditional ceremonies, dances, and music have been adapted and staged for tourism, sometimes losing their original context and significance. While these performances can generate income for local communities and raise awareness about indigenous culture, there is a risk of them becoming mere spectacles rather than meaningful cultural experiences.

Other examples of the commodification of culture in the Cordillera region are the following: 1) the mass production and commercialization of traditional handicrafts, such as wood carvings and woven products, often result in the loss of their cultural integrity. Handicrafts that were once created with deep cultural significance and skill are now produced in large quantities for the tourist market, compromising their authenticity and turning them into generic souvenirs; 2) Cultural festivals like the Panagbenga Festival in Baguio City and the Kalinga's Tattoo Festival, while important for promoting local culture, can also be subject to commercialization. Sponsorships by corporations, the sale of festival merchandise, and the prioritization of tourist appeal can sometimes overshadow the original purpose of the festivals, which is to celebrate and preserve cultural traditions; 3) the unique culinary traditions, such as *epinikian* (a chicken dish) and *pinene* (blood sausage), have been incorporated into the region's tourism offerings. Restaurants and food stalls feature these traditional dishes to cater to both local and international visitors. While this promotes the local cuisine and generates economic opportunities for local food vendors, it is important to maintain the authenticity of the recipes and recognize the cultural origins of the dishes; 4) Baguio City, often called the "Summer Capital of the Philippines," is a hub for tourism and trade in the region. The city's marketplaces and souvenir shops are filled with various handicrafts, including woodcarvings, woven products, and jewelry made by artisans.

The commercial production and sale of traditional clothing, such as G-strings and handwoven skirts, turn these garments into marketable products rather than symbolic representations of cultural identity. When these items are mass-produced and sold without proper acknowledgment of their cultural significance, they become divorced from their original context and lose their deeper meaning; Incorporating Cordilleran patterns and designs into mainstream fashion can dilute their cultural value and turn them into passing trends. When these designs are stripped of their cultural context and used solely for commercial purposes, they lose their connection to the identity and traditions of the Cordilleran people; 5) when indigenous knowledge, such as traditional farming techniques or ecological practices, is commodified and marketed without proper acknowledgment

or compensation to the indigenous communities, it can lead to exploitation and the loss of cultural integrity. The commercialization of these practices may prioritize profit over the cultural significance and sustainability they hold.

According to [Medrana \(2013\)](#), the tourism industry plays a significant role in the commodification of culture in the Cordillera. The region's stunning landscapes, such as the Ifugao rice terraces, attract much visitors. However, increasing tourism can lead to the exploitation of cultural practices and traditions. Some communities may alter their way of life solely to cater to tourist expectations, potentially resulting in the loss of cultural authenticity and a distorted representation of indigenous culture ([Stein et al., 2020](#)). Additionally, cultural festivals and performances in the region are often exploited for tourism, leading to the misrepresentation and dilution of indigenous rituals and dances. This commodification of indigenous culture erodes traditional values and perpetuates stereotypes about indigenous communities ([Chang, 2018](#)). These examples illustrate how various aspects of Cordilleran culture have been transformed into commodities, often with the aim of catering to commercial interests and tourism. The commodification of culture can lead to the loss of authenticity, dilution of cultural practices, and the exploitation of indigenous knowledge and traditions. It is important to strike a balance between promoting cultural awareness and preservation while respecting the integrity and significance of the Cordillera heritage.

Furthermore, the commodification of culture can create power imbalances between indigenous communities and external factors, such as tour operators, souvenir vendors, and researchers. Local communities may face pressure to conform to market demands, which can lead to the loss of control over their cultural heritage. Addressing these challenges requires promoting responsible tourism that respects the cultural values and rights of indigenous communities. This involves involving local communities in decision-making processes, ensuring fair economic benefits for artisans and performers, and encouraging sustainable practices that preserve cultural heritage while supporting local development. Education and awareness are also crucial in this regard. Efforts should be made to educate both tourists and locals about the importance of cultural preservation, respecting indigenous customs, and understanding the complexities of commodification. By fostering appreciation and respect for the Cordillera's cultural heritage, it is possible to strike a balance between economic opportunities and the preservation of authentic indigenous traditions.

### **The Cordillera Heritage Project**

Project Cordillera Heritage represents a pioneering initiative that acknowledges and integrates the rich heritage of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) into academia. It aims to address the historical misrepresentation and cultural injustices faced by Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs), signifying a transformative shift toward inclusivity and genuine appreciation for indigenous heritage.

The project is a collaborative effort between the University of Baguio, CHED CAR, and several Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the region, including Apayao State College, Abra State Institute of Science and Technology, Mountain Province State Polytechnic College, Cordillera Career Development College, Kings College of the Philippines, Ifugao State University, Benguet State University, Kalinga State University, Saint Louis University, University of the Cordilleras, Easter College, Star Colleges, and many others. They actively embrace this course integration in line with the CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) 2, s. of 2019, which mandates the integration of Indigenous Peoples' studies/education into curricula, rectifying the prolonged absence of authentic representation of IPs and ICCs in formal education.

Embedded within the Cordillera Heritage 101 course are multifaceted mandates, plans, and declarations encompassing UNDRIP articles, Philippine Development Plans, CHED initiatives, and regional agendas. The course aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing the pivotal role of heritage and indigenous knowledge in achieving global objectives.

This educational milestone marks a triumph over the marginalization faced by group with IP and ICCs, reigniting their interest in their heritage and history. The genesis of Cordillera Heritage 101 started with a pivotal online conference in November 2022, which highlighted the absence of clear integration strategies for Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) in tertiary education.

Acknowledging this gap, a collaborative endeavor was initiated to create reference materials, provide training sessions, set up IKS centers, and implement a variety of teaching methodologies. The inception of the course arose from the shared ambition to rectify these shortcomings and cultivate an educational environment that fosters global competitiveness while simultaneously safeguarding local heritage.

The project comprised different programs such as Cordillera 101 as a new course, heritage workbook, Faculty Immersion Training Service, and the Cordillera Heritage Trades: Enhancing the Cordillera Heritage e-Library with Substance. The timeline from conceptualization to approval involved multiple conferences, syllabi harmonization, unanimous endorsements by HEI presidents, support from various organizations (Government and non-government), and local and national officials. In October 2022, the University of Baguio Board, through an academic council meeting, approved the course offering, subsequently submitting the curriculum for approval to the Commission on Higher Education, where it received further approval.

### **Cordillera Heritage 101' as a new regional course**

The Commission on Higher Education - Cordillera Administrative Region (CHED-CAR) has launched a new initiative in partnership with State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the region. Dubbed "Project Cordillera 101," the program aims to promote awareness and appreciation of the Cordillera region's unique culture and heritage by integrating the Cordillera Heritage 101 as a regional course among HEI's and SUC's in CAR. The project's main objective is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Cordillera's history, geography, culture, and traditions to students and the general public. The program will cover various topics related to the Cordillera, such as the region's indigenous peoples, languages, literature, arts, and music.

The adoption of Cordillera Heritage 101 as a new course for higher education institutions in CAR is a significant development. This initiative is part of Project Cordillera HERITAGE AIM (Advancement of Instructional Materials), which seeks to promote intergenerational and lifelong learning in the region. The course will provide students with an opportunity to learn about the rich cultural heritage of the Cordillera region, including its traditions, customs, and practices.

*Higher Education Regional Summit 2022 at Bontoc Mountain Province.* This Regional course was lounge on July 13, 2022, at the Mountain Province State Polytechnic College (MPSPC) through the Higher Education Regional Summit 2022: Adoption of Cordillera Heritage 101 and Eliminating Cultural Appropriation in Intergenerational Learning with the theme "INTERGENERATIONAL AND LIFELONG LEARNING". In this summit, the adoption of Cordillera Heritage 101 was formalized through the signing of an agreement on the adoption of Cordillera Heritage 101 as a new course for higher education institutions in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) by the different Presidents, Vice Presidents, Deans and Faculty members of the participating HEIs and SUC'S in CAR.

### **The Cordillera Heritage Workbook**

With the adoption of Project Cordillera 101' as a new regional course, CHED likewise initiated the second program under the Cordillera Heritage Workbook project to showcase the rich cultural heritage of the provinces and cities in the region, along with their people and territories in an instructional material. The Cordillera Heritage Workbook will serve as an instructional guide to educate students and the general public about the rich cultural heritage of the Cordillera region. UB is proud to have contributed to this important project.

The workbook will be developed through the input from experts in Cordillera studies and indigenous community members who are also faculty members in the different HEI's and SUC's in Cordillera Region. Its development was guided by the goal of accurately reflecting the perspectives and experiences of the Cordillera peoples, and it was written to uphold their reality, on their own terms and through their own values. This workbook is an important step toward sharing the Cordillera heritage with the world and preserving it for future generations. The Cordillera Heritage 101 Workbook is a groundbreaking effort by the Cordilleran community to showcase the historical and cultural significance of the provinces and cities in the region, along with the people and lands that make it unique. Its purpose is to honor and preserve their way of life, as they see it, with their own perspectives, beliefs, and principles. To develop the workbook, the authors were divided into several groups, with each group working on different chapters based on the province where their HEI is located.

### **Faculty Immersion Training Service**

Project Cordillera Heritage FITS is an innovative training series and peer-teaching forum designed to strengthen faculty capabilities in teaching Cordillera Heritage 101. By merging the efforts of Project Cordillera HERITAGE and Project AHEAD, the aim is to achieve Higher Education Regional Integration and Teaching of Appropriate, Genuine, and Exhaustive Studies on Indigenous Peoples. This program provides a platform for faculty immersion and professional development. It fosters a deeper appreciation and understanding of Cordillera Heritage 101 while enhancing pedagogical skills. Through collaborative knowledge-sharing and experiential learning, participants can leverage their unique experiences to improve the quality and effectiveness of their teaching.

Project Cordillera Heritage FITS also serves as a catalyst for personal and professional growth among the higher education faculty. It offers specialized training, resources, and interdisciplinary approaches, empowering educators to excel in their teaching methodologies. By promoting a supportive and collaborative environment, this program nurtures ongoing growth and development. By combining the goals and objectives of Project Cordillera HERITAGE and Project AHEAD, it will provide a comprehensive and impactful approach to higher education. Through regional integration, it will broaden the understanding of Cordillera Heritage and its significance in indigenous peoples' studies. The convergence of these projects allows us to leverage expertise and resources, resulting in a more enriching learning experience for faculty and students.

### **Cordillera Heritage TRADES: Enhancing the Cordillera Heritage e-Library with Substance.**

The Project Cordillera HERITAGE- TRADES (Tracking, Repository, and Acquisition of Documents for [Higher] Education System) aims to improve the Cordillera Heritage e-Library by offering a comprehensive and robust platform for tracking, storing, and acquiring documents within the [Higher] Education System. Its primary goal is to centralize resources, references, teaching materials, and other relevant content to create a one-stop shop for Cordillera Heritage 101 education. The system will also provide researchers with an opportunity to share their studies and

expand the utilization of their work. The management of the e-Library will be entrusted to the CHED-CAR's MIS Unit.

Thus, the CHED will collect and consolidate all materials from various workshops on writing and Cordillera heritage. The materials collected will be digitalized and uploaded to the repository website of CHED, providing educators and researchers with easy access to valuable resources. The initiative enhances knowledge sharing and promote the development of the Cordillera heritage within the education system.

### **Implemented phases of the Project Cordillera heritage**

The development process for the Cordillera Heritage 101 Workbook consisted of several phases. With the completion of these phases, the Cordillera Heritage 101 Workbook moved closer to its final form, ready to be utilized as a valuable resource for educational purposes in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR). several phases of the project were held in the different provinces of Cordillera, which allowed the authors to be immersed in the culture of the different provinces.

1<sup>st</sup> Leg: **FORMATION** (Formulation and Organization of a Resource Material to Advance the Trajectories, Implementation, Outcomes and harmonized Narratives for the course, Cordillera HERITAGE 101- "History and Socio-Cultural Heritage") where the task of creating a workbook was formalized. The regional core group established a working outline thread through all of the identified chapters. This guided the group in the drafting of their respective chapters.

The inaugural phase of the Cordillera Heritage 101 Write Shop held at the Gladiola Center, Benguet State University, marked an auspicious start to the Cordillera HERITAGE-AIMS project. This collaborative gathering, attended by various Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), State Universities, and Government agencies like the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), aimed to forge a comprehensive workbook to preserve and promote the Cordillera region's rich cultural heritage. The event emphasized the significance of understanding and cherishing the region's cultural legacy. Throughout the workshop, participants passionately crafted chapters encapsulating themes such as Historical/Socio-Cultural Features, Philosophy/Morality, Technological, and Political Features, striving to impart this valuable knowledge to future generations. The workshop provided a platform for authors to exchange ideas, refine their chapters, and present their outputs, fostering a cohesive vision for the Cordillera Heritage project. The event's success lay in its collaborative spirit, where authors, representing various chapters, shared insights and received constructive feedback, enriching the collective effort to safeguard and promote Cordillera's unique cultural heritage. This first phase was a testament to the shared commitment and dedication of all involved, paving the way for a promising journey in preserving the Cordillera's cultural legacy.

2<sup>nd</sup> Leg: **LEAGUE EVALUATION**, the chapter authors subjected their drafts to a panel of evaluators. The 'league' used here is to describe the composition of the panel of evaluators, considered experts in their own fields. It also enjoined agencies such as the NEDA, RDC and SP-CAR, the NCIP, DepEd, UP- Baguio, and Tebtebba Foundation.

The Second Phase took place in Lagangilang and Bangued, Abra, focusing on the implementation of "PROJECT Cordillera HERITAGE: Higher Education Regional Integration and teaching of appropriate Genuine and Exhaustive Studies on Indigenous Peoples." The event brought together the authors and participants of Project Heritage, emphasizing information exchange, knowledge sharing, and an immersive experience in Abra's indigenous cultures. Facilitated by the Commission on Higher Education-CAR and representatives from various HEIs, the event aimed to strengthen Cordilleran identity and cultural pride across the region. During the event, the focus was



on enhancing the instructional materials for the Cordillera Heritage 101 course, ensuring their quality and relevance. Day 1 primarily involved presenting and evaluating the proposed workbook chapters, followed by discussions on aligning the themes with specific practices and values across different provinces. This led to the adoption of adaptable themes such as Historical/Socio-Cultural Features, Worldview, Technological Features, and Political Features, reflecting the diverse nature of the Cordillera region. Day 2 involved faculty immersion, showcasing traditional practices such as sugarcane juice extraction and the art of loom weaving, enriching participants' understanding of local customs and culture. The event concluded with fruitful exchanges, reinforcing the development of the Cordillera Heritage workbook and leaving participants grateful for the invaluable experiences gained.

3<sup>rd</sup> Leg: **FRAMING**, the authors were enjoined to **Fortify, Reinforce, and Adapt Methodologies as Impetus to Narratives and Goals of Cordillera HERITAGE 101** and [re] focused on the learning contents of the workbook aligned to the harmonized syllabus.

At Ifugao State University (IFSU), the 3<sup>rd</sup> Leg of the Heritage AIM centered on the Content Review and (Re)aligning of Learning Outcomes and Reinforcing Activities in the Cordillera HERITAGE Workbook within the Project Cordillera Heritage 101. Themed "FRAMING CORDI 101," the event aimed to strengthen methodologies to drive narratives and goals for Cordillera HERITAGE 101, expediting the publication of primary instructional materials for the course. The immersive experience began with a visit to the Hapao museum, offering insights into local heritage, followed by an enriching cultural dance led by IFSU-Hapao Campus students. Courtesy visits to the Municipality of Hungduan and engaging trips to the Bogyah hot spring and Rice terraces further enhanced participants' understanding of the region's cultural and natural heritage. The event culminated in discussions regarding the survey tool for CORDI 101 and the Author's Workbook Timetable. Overall, it was a collaborative success, fostering the creation of engaging instructional materials to deepen students' appreciation of the Cordillera's cultural heritage.

4<sup>th</sup> Leg: **HONING (Harmonizing the Ongoing write- up Narratives Impetus to Nature and Goals of Cordillera HERITAGE 101)** of outputs taking- off from the FRAMING activity during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Leg. It is expected that in these processes, the authors have consulted with elders or have used materials that have been through FPIC . The 4<sup>th</sup> phase of Project Cordillera Heritage, hosted by Kalinga State University, aimed to refine ongoing narratives in alignment with the natural and cultural goals of Cordillera Heritage 101. This event followed the successful FRAMING CORDI 101, reinforcing the methodologies for Cordillera HERITAGE 101. It included faculty presentations of revised chapters to the Editorial Board, which received positive feedback. Representatives from diverse chapters across Cordillera's HEIs and SUCs attended, showcasing collaboration for educational and cultural enhancement.

The event started with a Community Immersion in Tabuk City, visiting the Awichon Cultural Village, a hub of Kalinga's cultural activities. on a cliff edge, the village features traditional Kalinga houses and is significant for preserving its cultural heritage. Participants cherished this immersive experience, engaging with the locals and learning about Kalinga's traditions. Meeting Alonso B. Saclag, a National Living Treasure, further enriched their understanding of Kalinga's cultural legacy.

The subsequent IP Education/Studies Summit strategized CMO 2, s. 2019 implementation. Featuring a keynote by Commissioner Ronald Adamat, it fostered discussions among faculty members and other attendees. The workshop continued at KSU, focusing on finalizing the workbook's components and discussing copyright protection, publication opportunities, and format considerations. Throughout the workshop, the chapter authors expressed their gratitude for their participation, emphasizing the significance of community involvement in heritage preservation. They recognized the need for a holistic approach, preserving both tangible artifacts

and intangible cultural aspects such as language and traditions. This experience highlighted the importance of community engagement in fostering a sense of pride and ownership in preserving cultural heritage.

5th Leg: REFINED outcomes (Resounding and Engaging Framework Impetus to a Nurturing IP Education/Studies and Desirable outcomes), where drafts were finalized before subjecting for publication. The fifth phase of Project Cordillera Heritage, titled "CORDI 101 REFINED," refined and enhance the workbook's content for publication. Hosted at Apayao State College, this event focused on providing a robust framework to nurture Indigenous Peoples (IP) education/study and cultivate desirable outcomes. The authors of the "Cordillera Heritage" workbook engaged in activities to refine their chapters before the workbook underwent a pilot test.

The event started with a presentation by the Editorial Board, offering insights from an extensive review process. This empowered the authors, highlighting their chapters' strengths and areas for improvement. Subsequently, interactive sessions tailored to each chapter facilitated discussions and peer-to-peer feedback exchange. These sessions addressed specific challenges, encouraging collaborative efforts to refine content, strengthen arguments, and ensure project cohesion. Day 2 featured the Faculty Immersion Training Series (FITS) for Social Science and subject teachers preparing to instruct Cordillera Heritage 101. The immersive training enriched educators' understanding and teaching methodologies regarding the Cordillera heritage. Teachers gained valuable insights, resources, and strategies to create engaging lessons that fostered a deeper appreciation of the region's cultural richness among students. The immersive experience on the final day at the Dupag rock formation allowed participants to witness the province's natural wonders and cultural significance. Guided exploration unveiled intricate patterns, while adventurous activities forged connections with Apayao's heritage, creating moments of awe and showcasing the province's cultural and natural legacy.

### **HCORDI101: Cordillera Heritage 101 University of Baguio Syllabus**

Through Cordillera Heritage 101, generations of students will explore thematic threads found in the discussion of the provinces and cities within the Cordillera and the region as a whole. These include the following themes:

1. **Settlements and Territories:** Settlements and domains in the Cordillera form the core of the region's heritage. People built cultures based on their environment, identifying themselves as settlers of these domains. The concept of "ili" encompasses the entire settlers' domains, going beyond the idea of a village to represent their territory.
2. **Peopling and Ethno-Linguistic Groups:** The peopling of the Cordilleras lacks definitive records due to historical neglect. Anthropologists theorize two approaches to its population: waves of migration and common backgrounds. These theories explain the formation and diversity of groups in the region.
3. **Education and Social Institutions:** Cordillera's indigenous education is experiential, transferring wisdom through storytelling and mentorship. Formal education complements this traditional system. Social institutions like families, clans, councils of elders, and cooperative systems reinforce community identity and governance.
4. **Games, Oral Literature, Music, and Dances:** Cordillera Heritage 101 explores indigenous games, literature, music, and dances, emphasizing their cultural significance. Some are traditional, while others derive from rites and rituals, requiring respectful interpretation.
5. **Cosmology, Values, Spirituality, Healing, and Rituals:** Villages preserve origin stories and honor cultural heroes through oral traditions. Shared values like CARE sustain community life. Cordillerans believe in reciprocal relationships with the spirit world, practicing

community-based healing and rituals ingrained in social harmony.

6. Land, Biodiversity, and Natural Resource Management: Indigenous knowledge systems ensure the preservation of Cordillera's natural resources. Careful land use planning and stewardship have protected vast forestlands and biodiversity, which are crucial to the region's ecological balance.
7. Indigenous Governance, Laws, and Social Justice: Cordillera's governance operates on customary laws intertwined with rituals. These practices emphasize conflict resolution, harmony, and restoration rather than punitive measures, reflecting a deep-rooted commitment to community cohesion and social justice.

The essence of Cordillera Heritage 101 lies in its commitment to revamp education by authentically preserving and representing the Cordillerans' heritages. By integrating indigenous heritage into formal education, the project addresses historical marginalization, reigniting interest among youth and Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs). This initiative stands as the cornerstone of the region's quest for education aligned with Cordillera's context, nurturing globally competitive graduates while preserving local roots.

This educational endeavor aims to enlighten future generations, nurturing a profound sense of identity, genuine appreciation for heritage, and a commitment to preserving the values within the Cordillera Region and beyond.

The course finds its grounding in the following:

1. CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) 2, s. of 2019, which mandates the integration of Indigenous Peoples studies/education in the curriculum.
2. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), primarily SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), and cross-cutting to all SDGs, noting that heritage and indigenous knowledge are applicable to strands of the goals.
3. Articles 1, 2, 5, 9, 11(1-2), 13(1), 14 (1-3), and 15 (1-2) of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).
4. Chapters II and VI of R.A. 8371 (Indigenous Peoples Rights Act).
5. Republic Act 1080 (An Act Mandating the Integration of Filipino-Muslim and Indigenous Peoples History, Culture, and Identity in the Study of Philippine History in both Basic and Higher Education).
6. Philippine Development Plan (Ambisyon Natin 2040).
7. Chapters II, VIII, XIII, and XV of the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028.
8. Regional Development Plan 2023-2028 (Promoting Philippine Culture and Values under Malasakit, Accelerating Human Capital and Development, and Reducing Vulnerability of Individuals under Pagbabago, and Promoting Technology Adoption and Stimulate Innovation under Patuloy na Pag-unlad).
9. CHED Plan 2023- 2028 (Quality and relevance of Higher Education; lifelong learning, globally competent and responsive education; affirmative action to Indigenous Peoples).
10. C-O-R-D-I-L-L-E-R-A Agenda in CHAMP 2023-2028 (which among others aims to Institutionalize Regional Initiatives especially in the teaching of Local History and the Protection and Dissemination of Socio-Cultural Heritage).

Cordillera Heritage 101 also propels the academic landscape steps ahead toward realizing the aspirations of the Cordillerans as embodied in the quest for regional autonomy. It aligns with the objectives proposed in House Bill 3267, including Section 17 (Community Responsive

Education), Section 115 (Regional Educational Policies), Section 115(b) (Relevant Curricular Programs), Section 115(c) (Existing Indigenous Systems of Learning), Section 120 (Culture-Sensitive Education), and Section 123 (Priority on Indigenous and Appropriate Technology).

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Cultural misappropriation and inequality in the Cordillera region stem from historical factors, economic disparities, and a lack of cultural understanding. Efforts to promote cultural preservation, protect indigenous rights, and address socio-economic disparities are necessary to foster a more inclusive and equitable society. Thus, there is a need to expand and improve the area of intergenerational relationships in the context of lifelong learning by implementing new and creative measures that can enhance our academic systems, particularly considering the current period of emerging technologies and modernization.

The launch of Project Cordillera 101 is timely, as it comes at a time when there is a growing need to promote cultural awareness and appreciation in the country that highlights the role of Indigenous Cultural communities and Indigenous Peoples in nation building. By providing education and awareness on the Cordillera's unique culture and heritage, the program hopes to contribute to the promotion of a more inclusive and culturally diverse society.

The development of the Cordillera Heritage 101 Workbook holds significant importance in several aspects. First, the workbook plays a crucial role in preserving and promoting the rich cultural heritage of the Cordillera region. The Cordillera has a diverse and vibrant cultural tapestry, encompassing traditions, rituals, arts, and indigenous knowledge systems. The workbook serves as a comprehensive resource that documents and presents this cultural heritage in a structured and accessible manner. By doing so, it ensures that this valuable heritage is safeguarded for future generations and prevents its erosion or loss over time. Second, the workbook is essential for fostering a sense of cultural identity and pride among the people of the Cordillera. It provides a platform for local communities and indigenous groups to share their stories, traditions, and practices, reinforcing their cultural identity. By learning about their heritage through the workbook, individuals from the Cordillera region can develop a stronger connection to their roots, enhancing their sense of belonging and self-worth. This, in turn, contributes to the preservation and revitalization of indigenous cultures, strengthening the social fabric of the communities.

Furthermore, the Cordillera Heritage 101 Workbook has educational significance. It serves as a comprehensive guide for students and educators, offering a structured curriculum that covers various aspects of the Cordillera heritage. Through the workbook, students can deepen their understanding of the region's cultural diversity, historical significance, and traditional practices. The workbook encourages critical thinking, research, and analysis, fostering a holistic approach to learning. By incorporating the Cordillera heritage into academic courses, the workbook enriches the educational experience and promotes cultural literacy among students.

Importantly, the workbook contributes to sustainable development by promoting responsible tourism and cultural preservation. The Cordillera region attracts a significant number of tourists who are interested in experiencing its unique cultural heritage. The workbook serves as a resource for tourists, offering insights into the traditions, customs, and attractions of the region. By promoting responsible tourism practices, such as respecting cultural norms and supporting local communities, the workbook contributes to the sustainable development of the Cordillera region's tourism industry. It helps preserve the integrity of indigenous cultures, preventing cultural commodification or misrepresentation.

Finally, the development of the Cordillera Heritage 101 Workbook holds immense importance in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of the Cordillera region, fostering a sense of cultural identity, enriching education, promoting responsible tourism, and fostering

intercultural dialog. It serves as a valuable resource that contributes to the sustainable development and preservation of the Cordillera's cultural heritage for present and future generations.

Based on the initiated Cordillera Heritage Project and its alignment with UN SDG 4, 10 and 16, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Foster Collaboration:** Encourage ongoing collaboration among academic institutions, governing boards, officials, and local communities to ensure the successful development and implementation of Cordi101. This collaboration should involve regular consultations and engagement with indigenous communities to ensure accurate representation and respect for their cultural heritage.
2. **Broaden Outreach:** Expand the reach of Cordi101 beyond the CAR region by establishing partnerships with universities, training institutes, and non-governmental organizations focused on cultural preservation, heritage education, and sustainable development. This will help promote a wider understanding and appreciation of the Cordillera heritage.
3. **Promote Interdisciplinary Approaches:** Encourage interdisciplinary approaches within Cordi101 to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the Cordillera heritage. This can involve integrating elements from various disciplines such as anthropology, history, environmental science, and social sciences. By doing so, students can develop a well-rounded perspective on the cultural, historical, social, and environmental aspects of the Cordillera region.
4. **Strengthen Institutional Support:** Advocate for dedicated funding, resources, and faculty development programs to ensure the sustained implementation of Cordi101. This institutional support will ensure the availability and quality of the subject, enabling it to have a lasting impact on students' education and the preservation of the Cordillera heritage.
5. **Monitor and Evaluate Impact:** Establish a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the impact of Cordi101 on students' knowledge, attitudes, and behavior regarding heritage preservation, sustainable development, and cultural diversity. This will provide valuable insights for program improvement and demonstrate the initiative's contribution to SDGs 4, 10, and 16.

Implementing these recommendations will enhance the effectiveness of the initiative in promoting quality education, cultural preservation, and inclusive institutions. This, in turn, will contribute to the achievement of the SDG targets and foster a more sustainable and equitable society.

#### **LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH**

Limitation lies in the scope of outreach beyond the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR). Although the initiative aspires to expand its reach and impact, the effectiveness of this outreach may be hampered by various logistical challenges, including language barriers and differing levels of interest among institutions and communities outside the region. These factors may hinder the workbook's ability to resonate with a wider audience, potentially limiting its overall impact on cultural education and preservation. It is recommended to explore the role of intergenerational learning in cultural preservation represents another important area for further inquiry.

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