

# International Women's Day Celebration



## Introduction

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On International Women's Day, We organized and hosted a powerful celebration at Kotolian Resource Center under the theme **"Accelerate Action."** The event brought together **250 Indigenous participants**—women, youth, elders, and men—from various community groups. The gathering aimed to highlight the critical role of women in community development, traditional knowledge preservation, and gender equality.

The event served as a vital space for Indigenous women to share experiences, uplift one another, and highlight the progress and challenges in their communities. Women from diverse groups gathered to show unity and collective strength. These groups included:

- Paran Women Group
- Olmukonge Women Group
- Namayiana Women Group
- Olokuseroi Women Group
- Elatia Sidai Women Group
- Enyuata Women Group
- Naretoi Women Group
- Dupoto Women Group
- Emirishoi Women Group
- Oloserian Women Group
- Naretoi Ibokishi Women Group
- Nadupoi Women Group

## A word from the Executive Director

*"Today, as we celebrate International Women's Day, we recognize the resilience, strength, and leadership of Indigenous women. Women are the backbone of our communities, preserving our*

cultures, protecting biodiversity, and driving sustainable development. The theme 'Accelerate Action' is a call for all of us to deepen our commitment to gender equality and amplify women's voices in decision-making spaces."

"As we gather here at Kotolian Resource Center, we honor the wisdom of our elders, like Naikumuran Shughur, whose dedication to passing down traditional knowledge ensures that future generations continue to benefit from Indigenous practices. We must protect and promote this invaluable wisdom as part of our collective heritage."



## Celebration Highlights

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The key highlight of the celebration was honoring **Naikumuran Shughur**, an esteemed elder from Paran Women Group. Naikumuran is widely respected for her commitment to the transfer of traditional knowledge to women and girls. She has been instrumental in teaching young women the best practices that were historically relied upon by past generations—practices that are believed to contribute to the strong health and well-being of the community's elders today.





*The community gifting Naikumuran Shughur as a sign of appreciation of her good work in the community in terms of transmission of traditional knowledge and being an herbalist*

As a custodian of Indigenous wisdom, Naikumuran Shughur possesses deep knowledge of traditional medicine, including which herbs and roots are used to treat various ailments. Her teachings emphasize the sustainable extraction of medicinal herbs to avoid the destruction of important medicinal trees and plants. She continues to play a vital role in educating women on how to preserve forest ecosystems while maintaining access to traditional remedies.

Her dedication to cultural preservation and ecological knowledge was celebrated through speeches, songs, and blessings from the community. She was honored as a symbol of resilience and wisdom, inspiring younger generations to carry forward these critical teachings





Photo gallery showing different presenters during the session

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## Learnings to Take with Us

The celebration fostered a sense of unity, pride, and a renewed commitment to accelerating action for gender equality and sustainable development. The women expressed their determination to enhance their roles in decision-making, economic empowerment, and safeguarding Indigenous knowledge systems.

*"Women and girls are the heart of our communities, the keepers of culture, and the drivers of change. These celebrations are not just about recognizing their contributions but also about reaffirming our commitment to their empowerment, leadership, and rights. When we invest in women and girls, we accelerate progress for everyone."*

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