

Indigenous, Afro-descendant and
Traditional Peoples', organizations,
partners of the **BUILD Program**

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR
PRACTICES AND KNOWLEDGE,
DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES, INTERESTS,
AND WAYS OF LEARNING



November 5th, 2020
Virtual Meeting

1. Harmonization and gratitude

Facilitated and driven by Isabel Cipriano

The happiness of being together... I am together with the light, that always guides us and illuminates the day, whether the light of the sun, or the moon, or the light of life that the Creator has given us.

We take a minute of silence to honor those who we lost to the pandemic and the impact of Hurricane Eta.



2. What we seek from this meeting



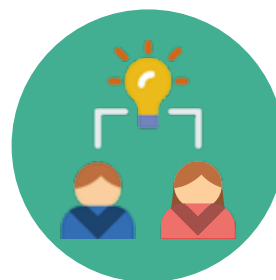
Renew contact and collective communication



Embrace and express solidarity



Plan the next encounter /Agree upon themes



Share ideas for the Second Meeting

3. Experiences during the pandemic

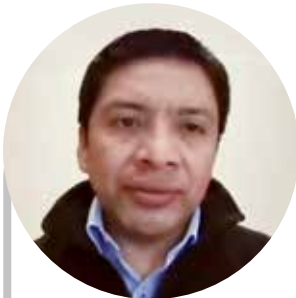
Facilitator: Ileana Gómez, PRISMA Foundation

¿How do we organize?

¿What impact did it have on our organization and how are we dealing with it?

¿What strengths did we gain?

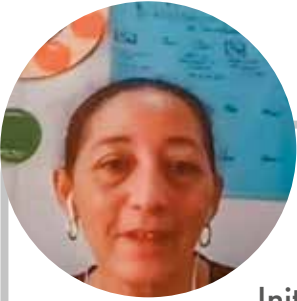
¿How was leadership exercised?



Udiel Miranda
COPAE: Guatemala

We, as COPAE and the Mayan People in general, believe that the pandemic has had both negative and positive effects on the organization. We view the fact that the pandemic forced us to promote a political project in partnership with the CPO as something positive. This project is related to the right of indigenous peoples in Guatemala to exercise their free will, and the promotion of a multinational state that can harmonize and guarantee the exercise of collective rights in Guatemala.

To speak of a multinational state and the exercise of free will implies acknowledging the value of our community practices that are not always visible, but have flourished during the pandemic. They have flourished to such a degree that even some indigenous people who for one reason or another did not believe or felt ashamed to speak about ancestral medicine and ancestral authority, today acknowledge that it has saved lives.



Sandra Regina Monteiro
MIQCB Brasil

Initially, we all thought that we would have to stay at home for 40 days, and then 40 days became 60 days, and then 90 days and 120 days.

We changed our activities and spoke with our donors, and we contacted other donors to provide basic foods, because after 60 days, or 90 days, we found that we had many relatives who needed food.

We obtained resources for providing basic foods and basic hygiene supplies, since not all of the families in rural areas have masks or sanitizing alcohol/gel. We worked with state governments and also the federal government. During the pandemic, cases of violence against women and agrarian conflicts have increased.



Angélica Lesmes
ONIC Colombia

The pandemic has hit the indigenous peoples of Colombia very hard. By the end of October, we have 72 indigenous groups affected by the pandemic. We have had more than thirty-three thousand cases of COVID-19 among indigenous peoples, and 1,177 deaths.

In terms of resources, we had to redirect our resources to attend to issues related to the pandemic, first at the prevention level, and later providing support to the communities. At the national level, the pandemic deepened gaps and worsened the conditions of hunger, malnutrition, insufficient water and other inequities affecting indigenous peoples.



Elodia Castillo, Alcaldesa Indígena Ch'orti'
COMUNDICH Guatemala

This pandemic has taught us to show more solidarity, as indigenous communities and as peoples. It has taught us not to limit our efforts to our own communities in Guatemala, but rather to be aware of the situation of other brothers and sisters in countries that have also been experiencing similar circumstances and problems.

Indigenous authorities have a fundamental role to play, and women as well. For this reason, during the pandemic we have been defending our territories, recovering our land, recovering our ethnic identities, and also our spirituality.



Norma Don Juan
ECMIA México

The pandemic has affected us a lot. We are a network of organizations based in every part of the continent, and we are used to working in person. For us, it is important to share words and now take part in these virtual spaces. It is another format, and these are very reduced spaces. It has been hard for us to work in these types of virtual meetings. Here, we realize how difficult it is, and we see the technological gap that this pandemic has created.

This pandemic has also forced us to adopt new practices, new forms of organizing workshops. It has even led us to modify some spiritual practices. For us, it is important to be in contact with the land, with nature, and with the communities. But we also know that it is very important to strengthen spirituality in such complicated times as these.



Nilcélio Jiahui
COIAB Brasil

COIAB's work in response to the COVID-19 pandemic has consisted of obtaining financing from our partners to support indigenous communities with food, protective materials, and other supplies. In addition, we support changes in lifestyle to respond to the pandemic, and focus on nutritional aspects to strengthen the immunity of indigenous peoples against infection with the virus.

The pandemic has led to many invasions of indigenous lands, the felling of trees and extraction of minerals, on top of the fires that have been ablaze in the Amazon and indigenous lands.

All of these things are happening with the COVID-19 pandemic, but we are resisting and we want to take part in meetings to strengthen our territories and the rights of indigenous peoples.



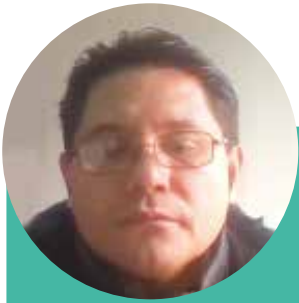
Annas Radin Syarif
AMAN Indonesia

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, AMAN:

instructed its indigenous member communities to lockdown and limit access to outsiders; encouraged people to practice the Tolak Bala ritual to help restore the natural harmony; organized the production of masks and sanitizers, and provided PPE to health officials; promoted production of herbal medicines to boost community members' immune systems made inventories of food stocks; supported the planting of short-term food crops; and promoted Gotong Royong & Sharing - Reciprocity.

AMAN is working for a New Sustainable and Just Life based on:

- a) Indigenous economy based on the spirit of mutual cooperation.
- b) Strengthening food sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples' Increasing community resilience.
- c) Respect for Indigenous territorial rights and tenure security.



Yovani Alvarado
Utz Che' Guatemala

The pandemic helped us to evaluate agricultural diversification, traditional medicine, ancestral knowledge, and the comprehensive management of the territory. For many, their communities were and continue to be the safest place to live.

It also forced us to explore different types of communication and virtual training. It encouraged the adoption of the "at home" work modality, and we now combine both in person and virtual modalities.

It also helped us to develop more fluid communication between different regions, without the physical barriers of distance, and a greater ability to converse, to collectively develop proposals and establish networks between organizations and peoples.



Giselle dos Anjos Santos
CEERT Brasil

In Brazil, we already have had more than 160,000 deaths, but it's important to note that the deaths are greatly underreported. Moreover, some groups have been more affected, such as the black and indigenous populations. CEERT is prioritizing joint actions with other Afro-descendant organizations, to denounce the Federal Government's actions and pressure the Judiciary and Legislature to act, and insure compliance with the law. We are living through a period when public policies are being dismantled, especially in the area of health care, while racism, inequality and food insecurity are getting worse.



Rodimiro Lantan
COMUNDICH Guatemala

COVID-19 has allowed us to identify two systems. The corrupt state system, which is rotten and decadent at every level, where 9 out of every 10 people infected with the virus die. And the ancestral system of the Original Peoples, based on their worldview, spirituality, intrinsic relationship with mother nature, medicines and harmony, where nine out of every ten people infected with COVID-19 survives, and one dies due to doubts about the effectiveness of natural medicine.

4. Presentacion de estudios de caso en curso por el equipo CCARC

Facilitator: Giselle dos Anjos Santos- CEERT



Filippo Del Gatto

Situation of organizations in the midst of the pandemic

The goal is to document how the organizations of indigenous, Afro-descendant, and other traditional peoples are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, and how these actions help build their institutional capacities. The narrative utilizes the lens of the BUILD pyramid, a concept that the BUILD program developed to highlight potential areas where institutional capacities can be strengthened.

Thoughts about indigenous and community organizations in Guatemala, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic

The purpose of this work is to systematize the thoughts of leaders of indigenous and community organizations in Guatemala, in relation to the recovery of ancestral lands, the right to their territories and lands, elements closely linked to affirming ethnic and community identities in the struggle against actual powers and an exclusionary, predatory and racist model of government.

The systematization reflects the way in which ancestral medicine and official Western medicine create a masterful, positive relationship. It highlights the way that communities have been able to revitalize their forms of production, recovering traditional products and increasing food security. This has been key to confronting the challenges and shortfalls generated by the pandemic. Organizations have prioritized the protection of memory and the recovery of community wisdom.



**Edwin Matamoros
& Galio Gurdián**



Territories, spaces and times of women

Maricela Kauffmann

This study is related to the roles of women in the territories. Similarly, it looks at the times in which women are exercising leadership.

A central theme of the work is inter-generational dialogue with emerging leaders—with young people—strengthening traditional cultural representations and spirituality.

The goal is to document what women are doing and the way we are living the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also aimed at analyzing what is needed for building institutional and organizational capacities, underlining especially the need to improve our skills and emphasize topics related to ensuring family and community food security, and protecting the environment in order to create the harmony of “buen vivir” (collective wellbeing and sustainable living). It also examines the topic of justice from a female perspective in the current moment, in which women, despite increases in different forms of gender-based violence, have intensified their fight for more equity and equality.

5. Themes proposed for discussion at the meetings

Facilitators: Ana Leiva and Paola Yáñez



Summary of the topics defined at the meeting in November 2019 in Mexico City, and adapted to the context of the pandemic:

- 01 Food security and sovereignty
- 02 Territorial governance and sustainability
- 03 Self-sustainability of organizations: BUILD GUIDELINE
- 04 Increasing community resilience
- 05 Food sovereignty
- 06 Indigenous economies
- 07 Resilience and the Territories
- 08 Inclusion of an inter-generational focus as a crosscutting theme
- 09 Building capacities of young leaders
- 10 Organizational support networks: specific themes or peer support
- 11 Building leadership among women in the communities and in political arenas

6. Second meeting of indigenous, afro-descendant and traditional peoples' organizations in 2021

Facilitator: Ikal Angelei- Friends of Lake Turkana

We will plan our second meeting. To do this, we can begin to collect and review our thoughts via email and chat messages, to be able to define our next steps.

We also need to think about how we can include and attract more people. We know that the Internet poses great challenges, especially to those who live in indigenous territories.

The task, therefore, is figuring out how to ensure that the communities can participate more fully, and in ways that are more feasible.



Margarita Antonio
Equipo CCARC

It is also important to look for ways to build communication skills. We could provide technical assistance and training about any of the websites, in order to continue using Zoom, Meet, etc. Training and assistance could also include ways that virtual activities can be improved using WhatsApp.

The objective is really learning how to do this better, and utilize these technologies in a more complete manner, and also provide the necessary resources to guarantee connectivity. Because if we don't have this ability, it will be difficult to be together when the world of communication has become essentially virtual.



Ikal Angelei
Friends of Lake Turkana

The topic of security is very important, because virtual communication has certain problems related to security. Thus, it is important to ask how secure this technology is, and how we can guarantee that communication of this type, in forums in which indigenous, Afro-descendant and traditional peoples take part, is really secure, to the extent that this specific technology is used. These are key issues, and we can and must explore the best ways to address and analyze them.



Víctor López
Fundación Ford

I would like to thank you and affirm that from our side, as a programmatic team of the Ford Foundation, we are very committed to supporting this process, and actively participating in this energetic exchange that we are seeing today, and which we find very promising.

We would like to thank the CCARC work team: Margarita, Filippo, Maricela, Edwin and Galio, who have been supporting the efforts of all of your organizations.



Giselle dos Anjos Santos

CEERT

More than ever, it is very important to work with young leaders in this complex moment we are living through due to the pandemic.

As mentioned, this implies many challenges, but it also offers many opportunities, and I think the fact that we are meeting here remotely makes it possible for other people from the organizations to take part.

The new participants do not necessarily have to have been those who attended our first meeting in Mexico City. In this way, we can expand participation and attract young people from each organization, so that they gradually become familiar with this forum to contextualize this debate for new participants.

ACUERDOS DEL ENCUENTRO

01

Email the thematic guide for 2020

02

related questions, to consolidate work themes to be addressed.

03

Conduct a virtual consultation about the date and content for the Second Meeting in 2021.



PARTICIPANTS



Mesoamerican Alliance of People and Forests

