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Philanthropy's Relationship with Indigenous
Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean

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Executive Summary

The relationship between philanthropy and Indigenous Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean began with the colonizing model of charity, then went through “indigenism” and “developmentalism”, to conclude in a recent stage in which donor organizations are beginning to incorporate indigenous values such as reciprocity and balanced interrelationships between cultural, social, and environmental issues in their relationships. Although in many cases the approaches still overlap. Some indigenous-led fund initiatives promote cross-cultural philanthropy, to change the power relations between conventional philanthropy and Indigenous Peoples and thus value their contributions, knowledge, and heritage, applying traditional indigenous reciprocity and promoting self-determination and the Good Living of Indigenous Peoples.

This document aims to provide inputs to philanthropic organizations to broaden their understanding of the indigenous movement in the region and its contributions to global governance, so that philanthropy can better respond to the aspirations and priorities of Indigenous Peoples. To this end, it raises questions about the relationship between philanthropy and Indigenous Peoples: Who are Indigenous Peoples? What are their aspirations, demands, priorities? How are they organized? How do they differ from other organizations, especially NGOs? How do they contribute to global governance? The paper concludes with recommendations to philanthropic organizations.

The UN system has established self-identification as a standard for defining who are Indigenous Peoples; in the region, Art.1 of ILO Convention 169 has been used as a reference, which applies four dimensions for the purpose of censuses and

national statistical systems: recognition of identity, common origin, territoriality and linguistic-cultural aspects; therefore, an indigenous person is one who self-ascribes to an Indigenous People and is recognized and accepted by that people as one of its members. The interconnected individual and collective self-identification reaffirm the right of peoples to decide who belongs to them or not, without external interference.

This collective character as “Peoples” grants them the right to self-determination. It also establishes specific characteristics, such as maintaining their systems of governance and administration of justice, their languages, their art, their health and education systems, their knowledge systems, their technologies, their cultural, spiritual, social, political and economic practices based on their own vision of the world, as well as their relationship with the environment and their special management of their territories. They express their collective identities according to different factors, so that we find rural, intercultural, territorial-community, urban, indigenous-afro-descendant, isolated, in initial contact. In addition to the interconnected characteristics with the above, such as: women, men, youth, people with different abilities or belonging to an LGBT group, for example.

The main request of Indigenous Peoples in the region consists of recovering and exercising their right to “be Peoples”. They express it by claiming their historical rights over their territories, lands, and natural resources, claiming self-determination, and adjusting these rights over time, according to the conjunctures and impacts of new problems. In this regard, one of its main commitments is to articulate itself as a movement at all levels: local, national, regional, and global, to strengthen theoretical content, generate information and evidence, promote intercultural public policies, mobilize, and even measure results achieved together.

At least five areas of emerging claims are identified, all having as cross-cutting axes the revitalization and application of traditional knowledge, as well as capacities and evidence building. These are: a) equality in diversity; b) Mother Earth and environmental justice; c) governance, self-determination, and autonomy; d) promotion of structural changes in the States; e) self-determined development or Good Living (Buen Vivir); f) establishment of mechanisms for direct access to resources.

To promote their requests and agendas to govern themselves, Indigenous Peoples adopt various forms of organization according to national regulatory frameworks, the degree of recognition they enjoy or the level and type of oppression they suffer. At the local level, they organize themselves into associations, unions, movements, communal governments, kingdoms, chiefdoms, or adopt other organizational modalities: women's organizations, religious, territorial, spiritual, youth, disabled, LGBT and other organizations.

They have national organizations, platforms, dialogue tables, political parties, coalitions, indigenous-peasant movements. They are articulated in sub-regional, regional, global, and thematic organizations. Although some Indigenous Peoples have their own NGOs, they differ from these mainly because of the collective nature of their demands, which determines their functions, decision-making processes, and priorities, since decisions are made jointly through various collective processes. Some peoples differ from others by the type of language, their forms of legality and by the type of changes they promote facing short-term projects.

The contribution of Indigenous Peoples to global governance has grown in relevance, especially with the increasing evidence of the value added from their contributions to addressing climate change and protecting the planet's biodiversity. Their commitment has been to promote international norms, spaces, and processes to activate global and local changes. Their main commitment has been for an inclusive and decolonizing multilateralism,

and therefore, they have prioritized their work at the UN, in which they combine participation with political mobilization, communication campaigns with claims and evidence, as well as the building of alliances with diverse stakeholders.

The recommendations to philanthropic entities seek to support Indigenous Peoples on priority issues on their agenda; they are also asked to consider adjusting their grantmaking modalities so that their contributions respond to the indigenous agenda in culturally relevant terms and with a human rights approach, and thus achieve better results.

The priority areas of the agenda are indigenous proposals to address climate change, environmental justice, post-COVID-19 recovery actions, changing power relations through constitutional, legal, and institutional reforms, and continuing to implement and enrich actions aimed at equality, equity and ethnic-racial justice in order to reduce historical inequalities. A central recommendation is to respond to the growing demands for direct funding to Indigenous Peoples. In this regard, it is important to consider support to establish, strengthen and consolidate funds or financial mechanisms to be led by Indigenous Peoples, with substantive support to strengthen and promote interlearning based on ongoing successful experiences.

Additional recommendations are:

- a)** support Indigenous Peoples' own organizations;
- b)** support their own models of philanthropy;
- c)** support long-term organizational strengthening;
- d)** select organizations based on social and cultural criteria;
- e)** support participation in global governance processes;
- f)** know, accompany, listen;
- g)** be flexible;
- h)** understand that communities empower themselves;
- i)** self-questioning.

Section 1. Introduction

This document aims to provide philanthropic organizations with inputs to broaden their understanding of the indigenous movement in the region and its contributions to global governance. This improved understanding will enable them to better respond to the aspirations and priorities of Indigenous Peoples. It has been prepared by reviewing materials produced by indigenous organizations in different spaces, as well as interviewing, conversing, and listening to the proposals of indigenous leaders in the region.

The paper reviews the relationship between philanthropy and Indigenous Peoples in the region. Starting with the colonizing model based on charitable relations, moving on to the “indigenist” approach, then to the “developmentalist” approach, up to the current hopeful initiatives that seek to establish relations based on a human rights approach. Although it is recognized that, in practice, there is still an overlapping of different approaches. It argues that some indigenous-led funds have been established to change power relations and promote self-determination of Indigenous Peoples. However, it is acknowledged that the situation is very precarious, as Indigenous Peoples receive few resources, most of which are channeled through non-indigenous intermediary organizations, increasing the risks in terms of the physical and cultural existence of Indigenous Peoples.

The main questions that affect the relationship between philanthropy and Indigenous Peoples are addressed here. Such as: Who are Indigenous Peoples? What are their stakes, demands and priorities? How do they organize themselves to manage them? How do they differ from other organizations, especially NGOs? How do

they contribute to global governance? And it concludes with recommendations to philanthropic organizations.

Regarding the definition of who are Indigenous Peoples, the document uses the arguments put forward in the negotiation process of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Where self-identification and recognition as “Peoples” was established, with the consequent rights that this entails, especially self-determination. On this basis, it analyzes the main characteristics of these Peoples, and points out some ways of living and expressing their collective identities according to various factors. These factors also determine in many cases the forms of organization that the Peoples maintain or adopt to promote and manage their requests, agendas, and proposals. In this sense, the document identifies some differences between indigenous organizations and NGOs and points out some challenges that this entails for philanthropy.

Thus, the document analyzes the main commitments, proposals, and requests of Indigenous Peoples in the region, framing them within the central challenge of being recognized as Peoples and, as such, being able to enjoy the rights already formally stipulated, but which in practice have not been fully implemented. It analyzes the contributions of the Peoples to global governance and identifies the strategies they promote to achieve the results they propose. It concludes with a series of recommendations for philanthropy, identifying priority issues, and support for “indigenous-led” funding mechanisms to advance the central demand for more resources to reach Indigenous Peoples directly. Additional recommendations are incorporated with suggested adjustments to philanthropic organizations.

Section 2. A brief description of philanthropy and its relationship with Indigenous Peoples

The last four decades have been decisive for the recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America, including the ratification of the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (No. 169), constitutional reforms and other measures. However, the regions still face a major challenge: the construction of pluricultural, inclusive, equitable and non-discriminatory societies in the face of the economic and social gaps faced by them. This situation of inequality has deepened with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some entities forecast an optimistic post-COVID-19 recovery that would allow the region to move from a GDP decline of 6.8% in 2020 to a growth of 5.9% in 2021 and 2.9% in 2022. The problem, however, would be the continuity of the extractivist economic model, based on the reprimarization of economies, land, and resources. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) states that this path will once again lead to inequality, indebtedness, reduced fiscal space, poverty that already affects 209 million people and extreme poverty that affects 82 million people.

The effect of this economic model on Indigenous Peoples has been devastating. ECLAC recognizes that informality, unemployment, and the poverty rate of Indigenous Peoples rose to 46.7% in 2020,

and extreme poverty to 17.3%, i.e., double and triple the respective rates for the non-indigenous population in 9 countries evaluated. Social conflict has been another growing problem. In a study conducted in 2020¹, ECLAC identified 1,223 conflicts in 13 Latin American countries due to the affectation of the territorial rights of Indigenous Peoples, which is associated with extractive industries, such as mining, hydrocarbons, energy, and monocultures; 43.5% of territorial rights were affected by mining conflicts and 18.8% by conflicts linked to energy projects. Between 2015 and 2019, 232 indigenous leaders and community members were murdered in the context of territorial conflicts, mainly associated with the extractive industry.²

The persistence of this development model will put at risk the survival of millenary cultures that contribute to the conservation of the region's cultural and natural heritage, which will increase conflict, inequality, and injustice in Latin America. In this context, philanthropy can play an important role.

It should be remembered that early colonial relations were based on the “doctrine of discovery” that justified the appropriation of lands and resources in exchange for granting Indigenous Peoples “civilization and Christianity”³. This position prevailed for a long time in philanthropic relations, under the argument that the purpose was to “solve” the problem of poverty, basing its cooperation on the basic needs approach, which did not identify the specific needs and diversity of Indigenous Peoples, but included them in groups suffering similar disadvantages within the respective countries, ignoring ancestral

¹ECLAC. Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC.FF). Indigenous Peoples of Latin America-Abya Yala and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Tensions and challenges from a territorial perspective.

<https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/45664-pueblos-indigenas-america-latina-abya-yala-la-agenda-2030-desarrollo-sostenible>

²CEPAL. FILAC.FF. 2020.

³Preliminary study on the consequences for indigenous peoples of the international legal theory known as the Doctrine of Discovery.

<https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/E.C.19.2010.13%20ES.pdf>

cultural differences. They were seen as “poor”, as “impoverished” or “vulnerable” communities.

Therefore, these early links, were established under a colonialist and/or paternalistic gaze, with a top-down approach that conceptualized Indigenous Peoples as subjects lacking capacities and in need of “assistance” to reach a certain predetermined level of development.

The support we began to receive at the international level had a very hard and complex beginning, one could say, because they arrived without understanding the particularities of Indigenous Peoples, their cultures, their ways of life. There was a lack of trust, because on the one hand we could not comply with some requirements and on the other hand the projects often arrived already planned, the activities were done without including cultural relevance. -Indigenous woman leader from Panama.

In 1940, after the First Inter-American Indigenist Congress⁴, indigenism became the official policy of the States of America. Therefore, the set of ideas and concrete activities that Latin American States have carried out in relation to Indigenous Peoples have carried the generic name of indigenism. This current also prevailed in philanthropic relations. While recognizing the specificity of the indigenous and the right of “the Indians” to receive special favorable treatment to compensate for centuries of discrimination and marginalization, it promoted “integrating” them into the benefits of national and global society, if the dominant society could “save” them by integrating them into it.

In short, the aim was to modify the way of being of the Indigenous Peoples, accompanying these actions with a cultural anthropological current focused on the study and valuation of indigenous cultures, and questioning the mechanisms of discrimination and ethnocentrism to the detriment of these Peoples; assimilation measures were applied, such as hispanization, nationalization and

indigenous peasantization. In the context of this current, support has been given to social demands: the struggle for land, political confrontation with caciques, large landowners and bureaucrats, the strengthening of collective land ownership, community uses and customs, and the integration of Indigenous Peoples and their territories into economic development and the market.

In 1986, the UN adopted the concept of “human development” incorporating the human rights approach. It was later expanded to the sustainable development approach, which included social and economic issues, environmental concerns and sought to reconcile economic growth with environmental sustainability. This approach continues to be the niche of philanthropy in the region, and Indigenous Peoples have taken advantage of donors’ interest in the environment to make their demands known. Since the 1990s, the confluence of various factors and mobilizations has allowed these peoples to begin to be identified as collectives, with specific characteristics, which gives visibility to the ethnic and linguistic diversity that exists in Latin America.

However, it should be clarified that the linkage with indigenous communities and organizations has been done mostly through non-indigenous NGOs that function as intermediaries.

My experience began in the 1990s in Peru; there were many NGOs, especially in Ayacucho, that supported the issue of returnees, and collaborated in giving visibility to the violation of human rights because of the armed conflict. They implemented projects that, they said (were) for the recovery of democracy, including training in electoral education. -Indigenous leader from Peru.

⁴El Primer Congreso Indigenista Interamericano se realizó en Pátzcuaro, Michoacán, México, entre el 14 y 24 de abril de 1940.
<https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigenismo>

According to data available as of 2015⁵, 1.2% of all donations went to Indigenous Peoples, of which 0.04% went to Indigenous organizations in the United States. Of the total donations, 7.7% went to Latin America, of which 30% went to environmental programs and 8% to Indigenous Peoples. It is noteworthy, however, that 66.7% of the aid was channeled through U.S.-based intermediary organizations and 10.2% through non-U.S.-based intermediaries, reflecting that 76.9% was channeled through intermediary organizations. These data coincide with the widespread indigenous perception of lack of access to external resources.

I don't see that much difference between now and the 1990s, what we see is a more organized indigenous sector, which is able to put forward its perspective in conversations with the donor community. -Indigenous technical cooperation specialist

However, there are some hopeful initiatives. The International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP), an international network of Indigenous Peoples donors, was established in 1999 and plays a role in educating donors about the approach to cooperation with Indigenous Peoples, a important step. Important values of Indigenous Peoples, such as reciprocity and balanced interrelationships between cultural, social, and environmental aspects, began to be incorporated into philanthropy. In addition, the processes of change within philanthropy were accompanied by the professionalization of Indigenous Peoples, who influence the direction of cooperation through a direct link between communities and donors.

There are already Indigenous peoples who are professionals and have entered the market. They have the possibility of directly managing resources without intermediation. There is no innovation, there are more prepared people who are entering to dispute the place of the traditional intermediary technicians. -Indigenous leader from Bolivia

Similarly, we are witnessing the development and institutionalization of new philanthropic trends based on the exercise of self-determination by Indigenous Peoples and the need to apply approaches based on individual and collective human rights, such as the establishment of indigenous-led funds. As their name states, these funds are guided by the indigenous worldview and traditional values of reciprocity. They are directed by members of Indigenous Peoples, aim to support community empowerment processes from the local to the global level, and seek to transform existing paradigms and asymmetrical power relations between donors and Indigenous Peoples.

Some examples of indigenous philanthropy initiatives are the AYNÍ Fund of the International Indigenous Women's Forum, the Pawanka Indigenous Fund, the Poodali Fund in Brazil, Sots'zil in Guatemala, the Guardians of the Earth Fund⁶, the Indigenous Community Media Fund of Cultural Survival, Samburu Women Trust in Kenya, the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC), and others. Their origins are varied: some have been created with the support of donors committed to the indigenous vision, others were transformed from an NGO, others have been created by indigenous organizations, by governments or by cooperation agencies.

⁵ Foundation Center. Council on Foundations. The State of Global Giving by US Foundations 2011-2015.

⁶ <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/koef/es>

However, all these initiatives coincide in the commitment to build a new model of intercultural philanthropy based on indigenous values of reciprocity, complementarity, and solidarity. These generate new forms of relationship with private philanthropy and with bilateral and multilateral institutions based on trust and equity. In their establishment processes, they have adopted cultural practices and innovative ways of channeling, monitoring, accompanying, disseminating, and learning throughout the donation process.

The new initiatives, such as FIMI and the AYNI Fund or Pawanka, have a totally different logic of looking at these processes from the inside, and enter as a differentiated initiative. This is one of the ways to change these perceptions, or even to break with the monopolization of funds from a single logic. -Young leader from Peru.

Currently, even with the accumulated experiences and the funds led by active indigenous people, there are challenges in terms of funding received by indigenous organizations, as well as the issues on which funding is focused, which still leave aside priority issues for Indigenous Peoples.

There is a lack of understanding to respond to the situations of disadvantage, to rights violations that we permanently have and are historical. In addition, philanthropy has not always been moving at that pace. There is very little support for political participation. There has been a reductionist view on Peoples capabilities; nowadays, this is changing, but there is not always an entity that can understand in depth or that wants to support political advocacy. Sometimes they only see a person giving a speech, without understanding that behind this person there are collectives that are seeking to empower themselves, there are greater purposes to consolidate a solid and sustainable movement over time. It is not just the public visibility of one person. -Young woman indigenous leader, Peru.

Section 3. Who are the Indigenous Peoples? Where are they? What are the main characteristics that differentiate them from the society in which they live? What is the focus of their efforts and struggles?

There is no definition of “Indigenous Peoples” in the UN system, but a consensus was adopted to recognize self-identification. In 1983, Martínez Cobo⁷ offered a working definition of “indigenous communities, populations and nations”:

‘Are those which, having a historical continuity with the pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed in their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories or parts of them. They now constitute non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories and ethnic identity as the basis for their continued existence as a people, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems⁸.

In our region, ECLAC-CELADE (Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Center) has used the definition included in ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, Article 1 of which states that a people is considered indigenous “on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which

the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries, and who irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions”.

To operationalize this definition, they use four dimensions to quantify Indigenous Peoples in statistical systems, namely: recognition of identity, common origin, territoriality, and linguistic-cultural⁹ aspect. Therefore, it is concluded that an indigenous person is one who self-ascribes to an Indigenous People and is recognized and accepted by that People as one of its members. This interconnected process of individual and collective self-identification reaffirms the right of the Peoples to decide who belongs to them or not, without external interference.

According to ECLAC-CELADE, in the Latin American and Caribbean region there are more than 800 Indigenous Peoples with a population of almost 60 million people¹⁰, characterized by their wide demographic, social, territorial, and political diversity; they include peoples in voluntary isolation, more than 100 transboundary peoples and peoples present in urban settlements¹¹.

In Bolivia and Guatemala, more than 40% of the population is indigenous, followed, in terms of relative weight, by Peru, with 8 million people for 26%, and Mexico, with 27 million representing

⁷José R. Martínez Cobo, Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. Study of the Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Populations. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/publications/martinez-cobo-study.html>

⁸See PFII/2004/ws.1/3 “The Concept of Indigenous Peoples.” Workshop on data collection and disaggregation for indigenous peoples. (New York, 19-21 January 2004) and http://biblio3.url.edu.gt/IDIES/nuevo_enfo/4.pdf

⁹“The Toolkit for the inclusion of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples in population and housing censuses”. Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Center (CELADE), Population Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and of the ECLAC-United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Programme of Work, LC/R.2181/Add.2, December 2011.

¹⁰<http://filac.net/ordpi/ficharegional>

¹¹Fabiana del Popolo (ed.). Los pueblos indígenas en América (Abya Yala): Desafíos para la igualdad en la diversidad. Books of CEPAL, N° 151 (LC/PUB.2017/26), Santiago de Chile, CEPAL, 2017.

21.5% of the population. In the remaining countries, less than 10% of the population is indigenous. The number of Indigenous Peoples per country varies widely, from Brazil, with 305 peoples, Colombia with 102 peoples, to El Salvador with only 3; indigenous populations continue to be younger than non-indigenous populations; they also face processes of displacement, migrations, and progressive urbanization, although rurality still prevails; in the last round of censuses, urban predominance was found in Chile and Peru¹².

Indigenous Peoples' territories contain about one third of the continent's forests, which represents 14% of the carbon stored in tropical forests worldwide; They are also home to an enormous diversity of wildlife and play a key role in stabilizing the local and regional¹³ climate, which contributes to the demographic fragility of many Indigenous Peoples. In addition to being affected by socio-environmental and territorial vulnerability factors, such as forced displacement, food shortages, water pollution, soil degradation, environmental disasters, malnutrition, and high mortality.

Indigenous Peoples are distinguished from other sectors of their countries by their self-identification, as well as by their linguistic, ethnic, cultural, spiritual, social, political and economic systems; in many cases they maintain their systems of governance, administration of justice, health, education, architecture, art, based on their knowledge systems, their technologies, their practices and their own vision of the world; and, in general, based on their worldview, they have a special relationship and management with their territories and with nature.

In addition to these common distinctive factors, there are Peoples that present specific risks, demands and approaches derived from their cultural, geographic, social, demographic, and organizational characteristics, which make them express and live their identities in a particular way.

Thus, since the middle of the last century, with the emergence of the land struggles, we find that the agrarian reform processes, by abolishing servile relations in the countryside and with the demand for basic services, led to the emergence of the

indigenous peasantry which, in alliance with the mestizo peasantry, led the agrarian struggles. This indigenous-peasant identity was strongly expressed in 1992 during the 500 Years of Black and Popular Indigenous Resistance Campaign, and is still in force in several countries, as well as in regional and global movements such as La Via Campesina and its regional affiliates. These are indigenous farmers with communal and family properties derived from agrarian reform, who self-identify as members of certain Indigenous Peoples.

Another expression of identity, which emerged in the 1990s, are the indigenous territories, *resguardos* or municipalities. Faced with the growth of industrial agriculture, political and cultural mobilization was strengthened by the right to organize local development in accordance with community needs, combined with the demand for territory. The communities joined forces to rebuild territories, and simultaneously promoted the defense of their cultures and ancestral languages and the recognition of self-government and autonomy. This led to the establishment of indigenous organizations of a new type: in some cases, they became national and regional organizations.

Linked to the demand for autonomy and control of local development, "indigenous territories" and ancestral governance structures, or some structures adjusted to these demands, are also beginning to be strengthened. This period coincides with the emergence of the global nature conservation movement. Therefore, both movements coincide in areas of forest, jungle, or in coastal areas of rich biodiversity; consequently, the mobilization for the defense of territory, in both spaces, whether to "produce", "protect" or "conserve", facilitated the articulation of broader indigenous movements with more universal demands, although with varied impacts. In some cases, the establishment of "protected areas" has been to the detriment of the Peoples. Regardless of the impact, the articulation of both movements has contributed to strengthening the demands for indigenous identity and collective rights.

¹² CEPAL-CELADE.

¹³ FAO. FILAC.

These spaces of self-government have multiple denominations in the region. At times, the denomination derives from agreements negotiated and agreed upon with the States, and in others they are defined by the Peoples themselves. Possession and territorial control are the central axis; however, these territories are characterized by the revitalization of the regulations and forms of governance proper to the People in question.

Currently, as the extractivist development model has taken hold in the region, migration and internal displacement have increased, leading to the creation of what we can call “multi-ethnic territories”. In which members of different Indigenous Peoples coexist, assuming an intercultural or multi-ethnic identity. These are territories of ancestral indigenous possession in which indigenous and/or impoverished peasants have settled due to the extreme small farming of their family plots, or have been farm workers, miners or other impoverished workers who have migrated and are engaged in some rural productive activity: fruit cultivation, coca leaf, cattle raising, etc.

Inter-ethnic coexistence in these multi-ethnic territories occurs in some cases by mutual agreement, or in contexts of continuous inter-ethnic tensions due to “unauthorized” occupation of land or production methods. In Bolivia, this coexistence is enshrined in the Political Constitution, under the denomination of “intercultural” peoples. For the 25 indigenous territories in the Autonomous Regions in Nicaragua, in 9 of them there is a mestizo or indigenous population from another People living together with the original indigenous population. In several cases, the territorial and communal governments are discussing and agreeing on rules of coexistence that do not undermine their right of ancestral possession. These relationships, in any case, generate expressions of particular multiethnic identities.

In other cases, they are Indigenous Peoples and Afro-descendants living together in certain territories. Regarding the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua, these are descendants of Africans who arrived because of the slave trade; these groups fled the Caribbean islands or arrived on the Nicaraguan coast after the slave ships in

which they were held captive were shipwrecked. About the titled territories, 4 of them have Afro-descendant populations and are defined as indigenous-Afro-descendant territories. These are: the territory of twelve indigenous and Afro-descendant communities of the Pearl Lagoon basin, the Creole territory of Bluefields, the Rama-Kriol territory on the South Caribbean Coast and the Afro-descendant Indigenous territory of Karata, located on the North Caribbean Coast.

In Central America, some organizations, and sectors of the Garífuna people have expressed their Afro-indigenous identity, especially in Honduras and Belize. This expression of mixed identity is also found among the “Maroons” [Maroons] in Suriname and French Guyana, who combine their traditional hunting and fishing practices with agriculture. The island of Dominica is inhabited by descendants of the Caribs, the Kalinago People, who have been promoting measures to ensure their physical permanence, trying to avoid and/or reduce inter-ethnic marriages, among other measures. Other indigenous peoples in the Caribbean are the Tainos in Puerto Rico and the Baracoa area in Cuba. In Belize, the K’ekchi’ Maya and the Mopan have won a historic ruling from the Caribbean Court recognizing their ancestral right to territory, a process in which they are involved to ensure its implementation.

Other expressions of identity are seen in other Indigenous Peoples who are in voluntary isolation, forced isolation, uncontacted, initial contact, or transboundary lifestyles. Each has expressions of individual and collective ways of life, cultural identity, language, political organization, ancestral territoriality, rituals, and their own worldview.

Thus, we see that the 200 peoples in voluntary isolation are in a situation of extreme vulnerability because they do not have an immunological memory that protects them from infectious and contagious diseases; they must cope with the pressure on natural resources in their territories derived from oil exploitation, timber extraction, the introduction of extensive commercial plantations, the construction of infrastructure, missionary activity, drug trafficking and international tourism.¹⁴

¹⁴International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA). Pueblos Indígenas en aislamiento voluntario y contacto inicial en la Amazonia y el Gran Chaco. 2006; y Land is Life, COVID 19 urgent recommendations regarding Indigenous Peoples living in voluntary isolation, March, 2020.

These 200 peoples share some risk factors with the Indigenous Peoples in initial contact, who have lost their normative community tissue of governance, culture, and traditional subsistence economy. This has generated changes in their eating habits, as well as accelerated sedentarization and the imposition of welfare models, which threatens their self-determination. In both cases, these populations have suffered serious situations of contagion, epidemics, deaths, and violation of rights. Although some countries have legal or constitutional provisions that assign or reserve territories for them, there is evidence of setbacks in their application. Despite various regional efforts, there is a significant lack of agreements, coordination, and joint programs between border States.

Indigenous Peoples living in urban contexts face new challenges to recreate their collective identities, but they are also the areas where interesting innovations to preserve them are observed. In recent decades, the region has experienced an increase in the urban indigenous population. According to ILO estimation, 52.2% of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean live in cities; according to ECLAC/CELADE data, they exceed 50% of the total indigenous population in Venezuela, Peru, and Mexico¹⁵, although this population is also high in Argentina, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, and Brazil. Uruguay is the extreme case, since more than 90% of the indigenous population is urban. The factors of urbanization are varied, ranging from the absorption of communities by the expansion of cities, voluntary relocation in search of employment and education, to expulsion from their territories due to dispossession, eviction, militarization, armed conflicts, soil degradation, lack of water and environmental disasters resulting from climate change. It should be noted that, in many cases, those who migrate to the cities are mainly women of economically active age.

The Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to housing noted in 2019 that Indigenous Peoples when migrating to urban centers “tend to live

in marginal areas, often in informal settlements in substandard housing or, disproportionately, homeless.” In general, they face conditions of poverty and obstacles in accessing public services, which coincides with the claims of the urban poor in general.

In many cases, urban Indigenous Peoples maintain their own collective socio-cultural systems, as well as their customs and traditions and sustain ties with their communities of origin; however, they tend to develop new forms of cultural expression, although it is observed that their demand to exercise forms of urban indigenous self-government is growing. Indigenous youth have expressed that the assimilation they suffer in urban contexts has contributed, on occasions, to an increase in cases of suicide, abuse of toxic substances, delinquency, loss of respect for the elderly, physical and sexual violence.

Regarding the efforts for equality and non-discrimination within and outside their communities and organizations, there has been progress in the approaches on the complementarity between individual and collective human rights; and, to the extent that empowerment processes have advanced, they have begun to articulate and make visible various forms of oppression and discrimination. Therefore, the intersection between the demands of women, youth, people with disabilities, LGBT groups is increasingly visible.

¹⁵Venezuela, 63%, Peru 56% and Mexico 54%; in Uruguay 96% of the indigenous population is located in urban areas. CEPAL, 2014.

Section 4. Identification of the emerging agenda of indigenous movements

The central demand of Indigenous Peoples in the region has been to recover their character as “Peoples” and for public policies to recognize their distinctive identities. One of the first steps has been for 17 countries in the region to recognize indigenous self-identification in national censuses and in some statistical systems, especially those of health and education. In terms of recognition of collective rights, several countries in the region have incorporated constitutional norms and other laws, the right to self-determination and autonomy, collective lands, intercultural health, intercultural bilingual education, intellectual property in the area of indigenous knowledge, and even the concept of indigenous development, Good Living (Buen Vivir), has been incorporated into the legislation of at least two countries; 16 countries in the region have ratified ILO Convention 169; and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has been recognized and applied in several countries.

An analysis of documents and declarations from the summits and conferences of the 1970s and 1980s shows that demands for collective rights to lands, territories, and natural resources, as well as the right to self-determination and the application of the right to free, prior and informed consent¹⁶, have been formulated and maintained on the global indigenous agenda.

These traditional issues have not gone out of fashion but are becoming more and more relevant because we are in a titanic defense of life and, therefore, territory is a basic issue for Indigenous Peoples. -Peruvian indigenous leader.

Based on the analysis of recent documents reflecting indigenous priorities, such as the Outcome Document of the World Conference on

Indigenous Peoples (2014), materials produced by the Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG) in follow-up to the 2030 Agenda, and the interventions of the Global Indigenous Peoples’ Caucuses at the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at the UN, in the preparatory processes of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Climate Change, amongst others, we can affirm that rights over territories, lands and natural resources and self-determination continue to be at the heart of all demands. However, approaches have varied.

Therefore, when we refer to emerging issues, we are talking about the concrete ways in which the historical agenda has been adapted to the changing conjunctures, and how the impacts of the problems on the communities have become more acute. The process of articulation of Indigenous Peoples from the local, national, regional, and global levels makes it possible to consolidate theoretical content, generate information, promote intercultural processes, and even measure the results of the issues on the agenda.

At present, at least five areas of emerging demands are identified, and specific issues are in each of them. The emergent nature of these five areas is expressed in the fact that they promote new concepts, approaches, and partnerships. All of them have as cross-cutting themes which are the application of traditional knowledge, capacity building and the generation of evidence. The areas of emerging demands are the following:

- a) Equality in diversity
- b) Mother Earth and environmental justice
- c) Governance, self-determination, and autonomy
- d) Promotion of structural changes in the States
- e) Self-determined development or Good Living (Buen Vivir)
- f) Direct access to resources

¹⁶The following documents have been analyzed: Manifiesto of the Quechua and Aymara Indians, (1973). Indian Confederation of Venezuela. Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca (Cric, Colombia, 1978). First Indian Parliament of South America (1974). Indian Movement of Guatemala (1977). First Congress of Indian Movements of South America, in Ollantaytambo (1980 Peru). Indian Council of South America (CISA) 1981. First International Indigenous Congress of Central America (Panama, 1977).

The main themes of the agenda continue to be territorial security, health rights, education, political participation. There are times when other priority issues emerge that do not replace the previous ones, but rather complement them: as is happening now with the issue of COVID, the impact of climate change and food security. -Indigenous leader from Panama.

Main areas of emerging demands of the indigenous movement in the region:

a) E quality in diversity

This area includes the demand for equality, mainly from indigenous women, and complementary demands from groups of people with disabilities, youth, and LGBT groups.

In the case of women, the demands are based on the following approaches:

- The complementarity between women's rights regimes and Indigenous Peoples' rights and the need, therefore, to ensure an intersecting approach in defining responses to respond to the different forms of oppression they suffer.

We, the women of Indigenous Peoples, have actively struggled to defend our rights to self-determination and our territories that have been invaded and colonized by powerful nations and interests. We have suffered and continue to suffer multiple oppressions as Indigenous Peoples, as citizens of colonized and neocolonial countries, as women, and as members of the poorest social classes. -Declaration of the Indigenous Women of the World in Beijing.

In this regard, they state that their individual human rights as Indigenous women must be understood in the context of the collective rights of their Peoples and, therefore, the struggle for the rights of Indigenous women cannot be separated from the struggle of Indigenous Peoples as a whole, as they stated in Lima in 2013:

Indigenous women assert our right to self-determination, which includes the direct, full, and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples; including the important role of Indigenous women, in all matters related to our human rights, political status, and well-being.

Specific demands of Indigenous women:

- - The prevention and confrontation of the multiple forms of violence they suffer -ecological, military, economic violence-, and these demands are "interwoven" with demands regarding territory, natural resources, sustainable development. A particular aspect of this line of work is the forms of "healing" that they practice as a particular strategy that links the individual and collective dimensions of the problem and its response.
- Political and economic empowerment, again interrelating their complementarity approach with the responses of political participation and self-determined development. A particular aspect of this line of work is the articulation of economic empowerment with environmental justice¹⁷ responses.

The political empowerment that emerges is very interesting, even considering that before the sisters' position was to distance themselves from politics, especially the link to a party, for fear of being linked to dark trajectories of corruption. Today there is very little support or mechanisms to facilitate this political empowerment. -Young indigenous leader from Peru.

Indigenous women have been able, as they say, to "weave" their role as reproducers of culture with that of "guardians" of seeds, knowledge, and languages; in this way they articulate the struggle for equality and their dignity as women with the struggle for territory, water, their own food systems, and natural resources. They have also associated environmental and territorial demands with the various forms of violence they face, such as environmental pollution, but also with negative community norms that deny them access to land and resources.

¹⁷For indigenous women, environmental justice refers to the respect, safeguarding and recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples as collectivities over their natural resources; for which the coexistence, protection and rational use of land resources should be promoted, always thinking about the preservation of the lives of current and future generations, as well as the right to health, traditional medicine, territory, forests, land, water and minerals. (FIMI. Mama Cash. 2019).

In the daily struggle against violence they confront structural factors, and at the same time, they open spaces to build alliances, challenge negative community norms, strengthen the positive aspects of self-governance and promote inclusive public policies. A new aspect of indigenous women's demand, related to violence, is the generation of data, evidence, and intercultural participatory studies in the hope that they will serve as support for the formulation of strategies and public policies.

The struggle of indigenous women for equality has also served as a platform for three groups: Indigenous Peoples with disabilities, LGBT groups and indigenous youth. By bringing together indigenous women from different sectors -urban-rural, fisherwomen-farmers, youth-elderly, etc.- it has allowed them to value diversity as a principle and to learn to apply the intersectionality approach, since they all experience oppression in a particular way. This has led them to incorporate in their agenda the specific demands of people with disabilities, LGBT, and intergenerational dialogue, putting as a focus the transmission of traditional knowledge and values oriented again to the central issues of the indigenous agenda.

Women's organizations emerged in the 1990s - or 1980s in the case of Peru - because of political violence. When we started with our particular demands, the brothers told us "They are going to weaken, to divide". But when you compare the demands of indigenous women, they are the same as those of Indigenous Peoples, they only complement each other, identifying the issue of machismo. -Indigenous leader from Peru.

At the beginning it was difficult, in the sense that non-indigenous people thought that we indigenous women still could not express ourselves, we could not participate in an effective way, they felt that we had to be led through the corridors of the UN, that we even had to write the documents, our proposals. As time has gone by, we have managed to ally with each other, regardless of our particularities and our ideologies, we have reached consensus. Many non-indigenous women have supported us from the beginning; today, I feel that we are empowered in different international spaces. -Indigenous leader from Panama.

Regarding youth organizations and networks, they have the particularity that although they emphasize the creation of intergenerational spaces for the transmission of traditional knowledge, they have also served to promote new forms of enjoyment, strengthening and dissemination of indigenous identity through indigenous sports events, indigenous art, cultural festivals, and indigenous cinema. Other issues on the youth agenda include sexual and reproductive health (early and/or unwanted pregnancies), employment and living wages, forced recruitment by armed groups, mental health, access to higher education and the Internet. Their innovative initiatives combine new technologies with traditional knowledge to solve current problems faced by communities, such as the use of drones to measure forest loss, see land use; construction of robots to teach classes in rural communities or digital applications for learning indigenous languages.

The incorporation in the emerging demands of the issue of Indigenous Peoples in urban contexts is still incipient in the region, although the problem has been going on for some time. Many of them are young people who seek to recreate their identities and cultures in spaces of the cities, creating collectives and developing applications and virtual programs that recover ancestral oral histories, songs and cultural expressions that would otherwise be extinct. These groups generally live in peri-urban neighborhoods characterized by being unsafe, unhealthy, and polluted, which leads to serious difficulties in entering the labor market. The loss of their culture and language, as well as the weakening of community social protection¹⁸ networks, are serious challenges that weaken the identity and historical continuity of Indigenous Peoples.

Unfortunately, in our countries the concept of development has been very centralist, everything that is being done is in the cities. With an accelerated process of urbanization, we have more and more groups of migrants who come to live in suburban areas where there are excluded people, second level people, who do not have access to services; all of this leads to forgetting the language, the languages that are going to disappear at the rate they are going. -Young leader from Peru.

¹⁸[Urban indigenous peoples: the new frontier \(worldbank.org\).](http://www.worldbank.org)

These spaces and niches are of special importance; however, they still do not attract the attention of philanthropic groups. In conclusion, the situation of Indigenous Peoples living in cities has been identified as a current emerging problem, made visible mostly by young people. There are interesting experiences, such as the relations between Mexican and Guatemalan indigenous communities and community members in the United States. This work has been going on for several years and is carried out through various exchange programs, radio programs in indigenous languages and support for community festivals. There are indigenous women's organizations that have linguistic revitalization programs in border areas in northern Mexico; there are also weaving workshops for migrants and art and culture programs; these are some expressions of the demand.

Other expressions of urban Indigenous Peoples are the establishment of participation mechanisms in city governments in Santiago de Chile and Mexico City, where there is even a demand for an area of indigenous autonomy in an urban context. Panama City has a long experience of cultural revitalization in urban contexts¹⁹ and there is also a demand for recognition of a special regime for indigenous urban lands. In Bilwi, Nicaragua, there are experiences of urban legal pluralism by transferring the community justice administration system to the city. The process of indigenous organization in Uruguay is completely urban.

b) Mother Earth and environmental justice

Although the indigenous movement has historically demanded recognition of the right to territory, its approaches have been enriched with new considerations:

- Although they maintain the demand to increase the titled area, they have gone beyond the purely legal approach and propose to complement that demand with strategies to strengthen territorial governance and the sustainability of the areas titled and controlled by Indigenous Peoples, by supporting their "life plans" or indigenous economic proposals.

- The indigenous movement has been able to build alliances with various actors, which has allowed them to place the issue of titling indigenous lands and territories on the global agenda. The arguments justifying such a demand are based on the fact that although they constitute only 6% of the world's population, they have unique and millenary experiences and visions of the planet that can help combat the climate, nature and health crises at the global level²⁰. They therefore carry out mobilization activities at different levels, accompanied by communication campaigns that emphasize these approaches.
- To promote the development and dissemination of evidence-based studies that prove that Indigenous Peoples have knowledge and practices to prevent deforestation and biodiversity loss. The strategy of combining quantitative and qualitative data and disseminating it widely is also being promoted.
- The demand for legal certainty, combined with evidence of adaptation, resilience, and community-based solutions, is being used to generate arguments that demonstrate Indigenous Peoples' contribution to climate change mitigation.
- These approaches call for greater investments in forest governance, other ecosystem management and communal land rights, and for resources to reach Indigenous Peoples much more directly.
- They continue to raise the need for spaces where Indigenous Peoples can organize and sit at the same table with state authorities, in a climate of political dialogue based on reciprocity and mutual recognition.
- Mobilization, denunciation, coalition building and again the generation of evidence to stop the violence and assassinations of indigenous leaders. It is required to strengthen protection measures in the face of threats to indigenous environments and environmental defenders.

¹⁹ Indigenous peoples, neighborhoods and resident indigenous communities. Organized in Community Committees for monitoring and surveillance.

²⁰ Kaimowitz, D. (2021). Indigenous people are essential for a healthier planet.

<https://landportal.org/es/blog-post/2021/08/los-ind%C3%ADgenas-son-imprescindibles-para-un-planeta-m%C3%A1s-saludable>

- Another line of work to be strengthened is the promotion and application of indigenous solutions for the conservation of biodiversity, which would guarantee the recognition of the rights and leadership of Indigenous Peoples in protected and conserved areas. With this demand they seek to recover, strengthen, and revalue indigenous knowledge, cultural and spiritual practices, and innovations, including appropriate mechanisms to preserve, maintain and transmit them.
- Indigenous Peoples seek to increase and strengthen indigenous leadership in decision-making processes and in access to climate-related resources and nature conservation.
- Another line of work has been to ensure that Indigenous Peoples who wish to declare their territories as indigenous conservation areas have political, technical, legal, and financial support.

c) Governance, self-determination, and autonomy

This demand sustains that each Indigenous People has had - and many still have - its own norms, institutions, uses, customs, and procedures. Likewise, they have methods of control and social regulation that are part of their cultural tradition, which are part of their cultural history, spiritual conception, mythology and worldview, kinship systems, as well as their forms of ownership, use, exploitation and conservation of their collective territories and natural resources.

For Indigenous Peoples, the way they govern themselves and their own justice system is also the way they execute and project their vision of life and self-determination. Self-government represents a form of political and cultural resistance, vindication of rights, encounter, and reconciliation with the mandates of their ancestors, territorial control and dynamizes the life plans and permanence of each people. The exercise of these rights is what is called indigenous autonomy.

Therefore, indigenous autonomy is understood as the control exercised by each Indigenous People

over its territory, its form of development and maintenance of its culture, for which they create, establish, or maintain their own institutions, with their own rules and procedures aimed at maintaining the dignity, rights, and identity of each People.

We are the original and distinctive peoples and nations of our territories and, as such, we abide by natural laws and have our own laws, spirituality, and worldview. We have our own governance structures, knowledge systems and values, love, respect, and our ways of life form the basis of our identity as Indigenous Peoples and our relationship with the natural world. -Interview with indigenous leader.

This line of work has resulted in the establishment of indigenous community, county, territorial and municipal governments in Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Panama, and Peru. Some are constituted by national normative frameworks, others by their own right. In some cases, legal reforms of various kinds have been implemented, including electoral reforms. In some countries, indigenous governments have been articulated through various organizational figures: autonomous commonwealths in Bolivia, indigenous territorial governments in Nicaragua and the Government of the Sumu-Mayangna Nation, also in Nicaragua, the National Coordinator of Indigenous Peoples in Panama (made up of indigenous counties, collective territories and the Naso Kingdom), Indigenous Resguardos in Colombia, indigenous mayors' offices in Mexico and Guatemala.

In addition to these organizational figures, there are other lines of work in the region:

- The conformation and articulation of networks of indigenous community lawyers, who self-identify themselves as specialists in the subject, in Guatemala, Mexico, Argentina.
- The establishment of training processes with a vision of individual and collective leadership training, such as the Intercultural Indigenous University (IIU) of FILAC, community universities and indigenous universities (originating in the autonomies and with indigenous or mixed governance bodies).

²¹Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia (ONIC). 2007.

d) Promotion of structural changes in the States

The main demands concern constitutional reforms, the establishment of institutions responsible for the management of Indigenous Peoples within the States and the promotion of spaces for participation and dialogue between Indigenous Peoples and the States.

This demand has been a constant in the process of recognition of Indigenous Peoples as subjects of collective rights and in the transformation of States in response to this fact. There are interesting experiences that began with the creation of the Indigenous Counties in Panama, the cases of Nicaragua in the 1980s, Colombia in the 1990s and later in Bolivia and Ecuador with constitutional reforms. New processes are underway in Mexico and Chile. What is innovative is the relevant role those indigenous leaders have played in these processes, and currently the proposals that are being put forward to incorporate the broad consultation processes that accompany them. We are at a historic moment to achieve qualitative leaps in the distribution and exercise of political power.

Complementary demands to this positioning:

Search for areas of political participation in the spaces of election to public office through two ways:

- By joining the mechanisms established in the countries, integrating into political parties or movements established based on agreements.
- Creating indigenous or mixed political parties, but with indigenous leadership (MAIS in Colombia, Pachakutik in Ecuador, YATAMA in Nicaragua, WINAK in Guatemala).

Promotion and implementation of mechanisms for systematic dialogue with governments. As a result of these processes, national plans for the implementation of Indigenous Peoples' rights have been agreed upon in two countries: Paraguay and El Salvador. In other cases, national dialogue roundtables have been established, for example, in Colombia and Costa Rica. In several countries, mechanisms for the application of Free Prior and Informed Consent continue to be promoted.

e) Self-determined development or Good Living (Buen Vivir)

The demand for Good Living has been a constant; however, it has now gained relevance as a social, political, and economic model different from the prevailing extractivism in the region. From the vision of Indigenous Peoples, the paradigm of Good Living contains three interrelated dimensions for the conservation, adaptation, and evolution of the life of their Peoples. Applied in the context of the pandemic, it has been analyzed as follows: a) living well with oneself, preserving life and avoiding or treating the contagion of the virus; b) living well with others, building bonds of solidarity, collaboration and mutual support; c) living well with the natural environment, enhancing the opportunities of the natural systems of their territories to grow food and medicinal plants in order to face hunger and prevent and/or recover from the contagion. A complementary strategy to this line of work is the reactivation of the indigenous economy and economic empowerment.

This approach has become especially relevant due to the impact that COVID-19 has had on the communities, with limitations or paralysis of economic activities. This has particularly affected communities whose basic needs are ensured by access to markets for the sale and exchange of products. Communities face great difficulties in offering their products, handicrafts, agricultural production and especially the tourism sector. This demand is closely linked to food security and the need to guarantee food in the communities.

One of the priority issues in the communities is economic reactivation, economic entrepreneurship. Today, indigenous women are proposing new enterprises and requesting technical assistance and capacity building in resource management. Many women are starting family gardens, working in the fields, especially in Kuna Yala. As food from other countries is totally limited, work based on traditional practices and consumption of their own food is being revitalized and strengthened. -Indigenous leader from Panama.

As an Indigenous Forum, we have the challenge of redirecting funds, because the pandemic is not over, and it is necessary to strengthen the indigenous economy, our own agriculture, the milpa, including the knowledge and wisdom of Indigenous Peoples. -Indigenous leader from El Salvador.

Another emerging issue is economic reactivation: many young people who were in urban areas studying or working were left without jobs and education and the schools closed, many returned to the communities, there is no support for the countryside. Young people who were in the urban areas return to the rural areas and to sale textile products, handicrafts, through the internet, because they can no longer go out to sell in the tourist areas. There are innovative initiatives to revive the economy through digital platforms.
-Young indigenous leader from Mexico.

Indigenous Peoples consider that any action for economic activation and empowerment must consider the schemes of traditional indigenous economies, which are based on traditional practices and ancestral techniques for the use and management of the territory. During the pandemic, exchanges were strengthened through networks of reciprocity, complementarity, and the management of ecological floors. In the consumption of indigenous communities, redistribution is sought, and accumulation is avoided. The mechanisms for work, usufruct and redistribution of community goods are established from traditional governance systems.

Indigenous Peoples consider that, in order to have more inclusive economic systems, it is necessary to strengthen indigenous economic structures through the provision of technical assistance and legal advice on sustainable production and commercialization routes that allow communities to position themselves as income generators and genuine agents in production markets.

The other reason why this demand becomes relevant is the increase in concessions of various types (mining, hydrocarbons, industrial agriculture, forestry, energy) on indigenous territories. Added to this situation are investment initiatives linked to climate change, the establishment of new protected areas and the absence of signs of change in the current economic model in the face of the post-COVID-19 reactivation proposals. The central proposition is that, given this scenario, there is an urgent need to streamline the mechanisms for protection, defense, and control of indigenous territories and that any economic process must integrate robust safeguards in terms of obtaining resources from indigenous territories.

The economy is the breaking point in relations with the State; it is the territorial spaces from which resources are extracted. Indigenous Peoples have always tried the alternative towards a more human, more sustainable, more environmental economic development. However, we have not been able to identify successful experiences that can be identified as the economic arm, the economic proposal put forward by the Peoples. Access to credit is very marginal, we are not on equal terms, support for cooperatives and associations with an indigenous approach is very incipient. There are brothers and sisters who have articulated themselves in fair trade networks; we must look at this as a potential to undertake something new.
-Young indigenous woman leader from Peru.

As a complementary strategy, there are actions for the **protection of indigenous knowledge and know-how**, referring mainly to crops, seeds, medicinal plants, textiles, designs, art. At present, Indigenous Peoples not only wish to recover and document their knowledge, but also demand mechanisms to prevent third parties from appropriating or misappropriating this knowledge, or from patenting it or using it without due consent.

On the other hand, there are interesting processes taken place: indigenous companies are being established with biocultural approaches, organized in indigenous business networks and chambers. Meetings have been held between indigenous businessmen and businesswomen in South America and Guatemala; and in Mexico, the Indigenous Business Chamber has been formed, bringing together more than 700 indigenous enterprises.

The priorities of the Indigenous Peoples' agenda are accompanied by the establishment of their own strategies and means of communication. Photography, videos, community radio and film have been used to present the reality from the Indigenous Peoples' own vision, and in the last stage the Peoples have joined the social networks despite the enormous technological gaps suffered by the communities.

f) Direct access to resources

A growing demand in the region is direct access to resources. To this end, indigenous-led funds have been established with varied coverage, from local to global levels. These initiatives include the AYNÍ Fund of the International Indigenous Women's Forum, the Pawanka Indigenous Fund, the Poodali Fund of the Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB) and the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC).

In other cases, indigenous organizations have established mechanisms and alliances with multilateral and bilateral agencies, as is the case of the Indigenous Council of Central America (CICA) and Sots'zil, which have coordinated with KfW of Germany, with the Central American Indigenous and Peasant Coordinator of Communal Agroforestry (ACICAFOC) and with FILAC to channel resources to indigenous communities in Central America, and with the World Bank, to channel resources to communities. There has been a growing demand from some indigenous organizations and subregional networks to establish their own financing mechanisms.

Section 5. What are the main characteristics of indigenous organizations? How do they differ from civil society organizations?

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples establishes that indigenous individuals are entitled, without discrimination, to all human rights recognized in international law, and that Indigenous Peoples possess collective rights that are indispensable for their existence, well-being, and integral development as peoples. For each indigenous person to fully enjoy their individual rights, they must enjoy their collective rights. This principle has been applied to various human rights instruments²², and it is interpreted that the violation of collective human rights prevents indigenous persons from fully enjoying their dignity and their individual human rights; this principle has made it possible to support Indigenous Peoples' claims for collective rights.²³

To promote their demands and self-govern themselves in the region, Indigenous Peoples adopt various forms of organization. In many cases, these conform to regulatory frameworks in terms of the degree of recognition they enjoy or the level and type of oppression they suffer, as well as the organizational and regulatory requirements they must meet to receive and share external or national financial resources in their respective countries. For instance, some Indigenous Peoples have NGOs, while others are organized in associations, unions, movements, communal governments, associations of indigenous mayors, interethnic alliances, kingdoms, chiefdoms, and other organizational modalities.

In many communities there are indigenous women's organizations, as well as religious, spiritual, youth, disabled, LGBT organizations among others. Some support and accompany community governments

that reproduce ancestral structures; others conduct their activities in parallel or even in opposition. In some countries, community governments are articulated in territorial governments or other instances; however, this is not very common.

Another trend of some indigenous organizations has been the establishment of national indigenous platforms, as in Bolivia and Peru, or national roundtables for consultation and dialogue, as in Costa Rica and Colombia. In the cases of Panama and Nicaragua, they have articulation mechanisms between regional and territorial governments for coordination and dialogue with the State. The transition or creation of indigenous or multiethnic political parties has been another trend, as in the cases of YATAMA in Nicaragua, WINAK in Guatemala, PACHAKUTIK in Ecuador and MAIS in Colombia.

In other cases they have formed national organizations such as CONAIE (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador), ONIC (National Indigenous Organization of Colombia), CONPAH (Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Honduras); or have promoted coalitions to raise certain issues, as has been done by the Salvadorian National Indigenous Coordinating Council (CCNIS), or the Federación por la Autodeterminación Indígena de los Pueblos (FAPI) in Paraguay, which articulated indigenous organizations to promote national plans for the rights of Indigenous Peoples or protocols to apply Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), including cases such as Guatemala, where indigenous organizations have gained greater visibility in the fight against corruption, impunity and militarization.

There are also cases of indigenous-peasant movements derived from previous efforts for agrarian reform, as in the case of the peasant unions (Unified Syndical Confederation of Rural Workers of Bolivia, CSUTCB) in Bolivia, or the

²² UN Human Rights Committee and Inter-American Human Rights System.

²³ The UN Human Rights Committee made observations to Sweden referring to de facto discrimination against the Saami People in cases of land rights claims, interpreting Article 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Land_HR-StandardsApplications.pdf

National Agrarian Confederation in Peru; and several entities have joined forces, as in the case of the Unidad de la Fuerza Indígena Campesina in Mexico to “transcend the strict vision of the plot of land and production for family and local consumption and promote issues such as housing, services, credit, education, and the market”.

Some organizations have joined subregional processes, such as the Central America Indigenous Council (CICA), the Mesoamerican Indigenous Council (CIMA), the Andean Coordination of Indigenous Organizations (CAOI), the Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon River Basin (COICA), the Alliance of Indigenous Women of Central America and Mexico (AMICAM), the Continental Council of the Guaraní People and the Caribbean Organization of Indigenous Peoples (COIP). They are also part of regional networks such as the Abya Yala Indigenous Forum²⁴ and the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas. Similarly, several organizations are part of global articulation processes, such as the International Indigenous Women Fund (FIMI), the Global Indigenous Peoples’ Partnership on Climate Change, Forests and Sustainable Development (ELATIA), the Indigenous Biodiversity Forum (CITI), the Global Indigenous Forum on Climate Change, the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities and the Indigenous Peoples Major Group for Sustainable Development (IPMG), the Global Indigenous Peoples’ Forum on Food Sovereignty, the Indigenous Women’s Network on Contaminants and Reproductive Health and the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, all of them with the purpose of promoting advocacy actions.

There are experiences of thematic networks, such as the Women’s Network on Biodiversity, the Mesoamerican Alliance of Peoples and Forests, the Latin American Coordinator of Indigenous Cinema and Communication (CLACPI) and the Indigenous Communicators Network. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Abya Yala Indigenous Forum and other organizations formed, together with FILAC, the Regional Indigenous Platform against COVID-19.

It can be concluded, however, that a first difference between Indigenous Peoples and other civil society organizations (NGOs and others) derives from the collective nature of their demands. Their proposals claim their lands, territories, and resources with which they maintain a special relationship, as well as their systems of governance, administration of justice, economy, health, education, architecture, art, languages, spirituality. They are sustained by their knowledge systems, technologies, practices, and their own vision of the world.

This collective character affects the definition of functions, decisions, and priorities, since decisions are made jointly through various collective processes, such as community assemblies.

The Constitutive Acts of the indigenous women’s organizations show that they are joined with their territories, that they are collective. They have a governing body, assemblies, structures. NGOs are individuals who do not respond to a structure. For example, indigenous women’s organizations speak in the first person, NGOs speak in the third person, and work with vulnerable or poor people. -Young indigenous woman from Mexico.

In some countries, indigenous organizations are organized in many ways to promote actions, coordinate between communities and territories, participate in negotiations, and engage in regional and global processes. In all situations, decision-making processes are collective. When they assume the role of NGOs, it is generally to overcome the barrier of intermediaries in the channeling of resources, or in some cases, to be counterparts in government programs.

In indigenous organizations, human capital is active, it will collaborate and be present. For example, if you must defend water, the organization does not have a water defense project. It is up to you to go out to protest, to claim, to manage to prevent this project from being stopped... we are not dependent on projects to exist. This is what keeps us as a social movement alive, active, or as far as possible we would like it to be like that. -Young leader from Peru.

²⁴The Abya Yala Indigenous Forum is made up of three sub-regional territorial organizations, two environmental organizations, one sub-regional women’s organization and one continental indigenous women’s organization. The following have been invited on some occasions as observers International Indian Treaty Institute (IITI), the International Indigenous Women’s Forum (FIMI), the Indigenous Youth Networks and the Continental Council of the Guaraní People.

However, it should be noted that there are not necessarily homogeneous positions among the members of the same indigenous people, community, organization, or government. Often, there are internal conflicts due to various factors. However, they try to respect the collective bases and follow a system of representation that differs from NGOs, since it is based on collective demands.

NGOs, on the other hand, may be created by a small group of people, who make all the decisions and operate depending on the resources they channel. They have a much more elaborate, more academic language. NGOs may be created only to manage resources and then hire technicians who fulfill their function and then leave. Although the indigenous organizations also hire technical personnel to address some issue in a specialized way, these personnel can be indigenous or non-indigenous; however, the decisions are supported by the government agency they have and respond to demands that go beyond a project.

We are indigenous women ourselves; we have a different structure than the NGOs. The organizations promote change, we are the ones who organize ourselves, the ones who experience oppression and discrimination; our work is collective and multiplies at the roots, in the organizations that are part of our network. -Indigenous leader from Peru.

The requirement of “legality” demanded by philanthropy.

One of the differences - which in turn is a difficulty identified by the indigenous organizations in the region - is the requirement of legal status by philanthropic organizations. In some cases, indigenous organizations do not feel comfortable with the legal status offered by the State, or sometimes they are unable to obtain it. That is why there are cases in which they do not have regulatory certificates to prove their existence.

The indigenous organizations are used to having their own management culture that is not necessarily the one that is officially recognized, so that leads us to have a western structure, and in many cases we need to have fiscal sponsors, where there is the president, vice president, treasurer, and that leads us into a fragmentation issue in many cases; as for the Indigenous Peoples' own structures, it is known that the work is collective and the council of elders is seen first, the orientation remains in them,

and from there it is taken to the other councils: the youth council, the women's council, who come to strengthen the work of identity. -Indigenous leader from El Salvador.

Faced with this difficulty, indigenous organizations are forced to invite intermediary entities that do meet the established requirements. This leads to limited control by the indigenous organizations, and often even drastically reduces the financial resources that really benefit the communities, since a large part is retained for consulting or other NGO management.

Many indigenous organizations are “hybrids”, as they combine indigenous priorities and ways of operating with Western structures, statutes, and procedures. In most countries, they are forced to assume the structure established in national regulations to have access to national and external resources. This situation generates additional challenges, since on the one hand it obliges them to comply with the national regulatory framework, and because they are an indigenous organization, they are obliged to respond to the collective norms of indigenous governance. In addition, they must comply with the standards of each donor. Few indigenous organizations have these organizational, administrative, and technical capacities.

Another difference between indigenous organizations and NGOs is that the former project and propose fundamental changes, seek changes in power relations, paradigm shifts; on the other hand, NGOs are guided by the objectives of a project. These differences often come into tension with the monitoring and evaluation systems proposed by the funding organizations.

I feel that the NGOs or the cooperants go according to their interests. For us as indigenous women, projects are not an end, they are a means. They must be adapted to our agendas, to our ways of life, to our times, our lifestyles. Many times, they do not respect the time of the organizations and consider it safer to work with intermediary NGOs. Sometimes the financiers ask us to carry out certain activities, and the results are often not achieved in a year's time; we build social processes that take years. -Indigenous leader from Peru.

It is important to consider that some indigenous organizations adopt the form of NGO because it is the only way they find to access funds. But their commitment is political-cultural, militant. Their political commitment is projected beyond their projects, as the leaders commonly express “with or without funds they will continue working”. The priority demand of indigenous organizations in Latin America is long-term funding and the possibility of supporting organizational strengthening.

For example, an organization comes and tells the community: “we are going to help you”; then, although the project is there, everything is written down, when the community has a problem they go and use that money, because supposedly it was to help them, but in reality that was not the objective; for example, if they need to take out a sick person, they use that money and then they have no way of paying for it; that is why we have to work a lot on communication. -Indigenous leader from Argentina.

In addition to the difficulties in accountability processes, many funders require communities to have experience in managing a certain amount of money to grant them support. This narrow assessment does not consider other capacities, such as the traditional knowledge that indigenous organizations have, the community governance relationships that ensure their continuity and sustainability.

This requirement is often not met, although in reality they manage much more than what appears on paper. Because they manage a territory and an economic system. I know communities that manage more than one hundred and twenty thousand hectares and in their accounting report they may have ten thousand pesos, but in practice and in reality they manage one hundred and twenty thousand hectares rich in native forest, and in economic terms it is a lot, but it is not reflected in the document, so the finance company says: “They do not manage money, they have no experience with other donors”. -Indigenous leader from Argentina.

On the other hand, the organizations are led by leaders who are authorities in the communities. They fulfill multiple roles in multiple spaces and their work arises from their own experience, from having been elected by the community, and from their conviction and political militancy. However, it is frequent that these leaders do not receive remuneration for their work. In the event that the support they receive allows for salaries, these are mostly used to hire technical personnel. In NGOs,

on the other hand, these processes are simpler and follow a business logic. All personnel that are hired have a salary. In the case of volunteers, remuneration is optional.

This aspect often threatens the strengthening of the organizations themselves, as it generates an excessive burden for the leaders, who must explore multiple ways of obtaining income to subsist and support their families.

Section 6. How do Indigenous Peoples contribute to enhance global governance?

The main contribution of the Indigenous Peoples of the region to global governance has been to participate in international spaces to denounce the situation in their respective countries, to achieve the establishment of international norms that incorporate their demands and based on this, to press for changes in their respective countries. Their main commitment has been to an inclusive and decolonizing multilateralism; in that sense, they have prioritized the UN. They have combined this strategy with political mobilizations, communication campaigns and alliances with various sectors.

Although the first indigenous leaders arrived at the United Nations (then called the League of Nations) in 1923²⁵ the region's Indigenous Peoples began to have some impact on international processes in the 1980s, when three memorable milestones occurred: in 1982 the UN presented the "Study on the Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Peoples"²⁶, and established the Working Group on Indigenous Populations (WGIP) as a subsidiary body of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights; and in 1989 the International Labor Organization (ILO) concluded the discussion of Convention 169²⁷ and opened it for ratification.

This period coincided with important processes in the region, such as the 500 Years of Indigenous, Black and Popular Resistance Campaign²⁸, uprisings in Bolivia (March for Territory and Dignity), the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) and in Chiapas the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), which initiated peace negotiations in Central America, and

the establishment of the autonomy regime for Indigenous Peoples in Nicaragua, which gave visibility to ethnic diversity in the region.

The indigenous commitment to global governance has focused on: a) achieving the full and effective "participation" of Indigenous Peoples in all relevant global processes; b) achieving the establishment of specific mechanisms, procedures and instruments for Indigenous Peoples at the UN and in other global and regional spaces; c) influencing global and regional processes to incorporate in their results and procedures the international standards on indigenous rights that have already been achieved.

If we analyze the results achieved after some one hundred years of advocacy in global spaces²⁹, we can conclude that, step by step, Indigenous Peoples have managed to move from being merely informed to being consulted and to now having established mechanisms for providing input, although the incorporation of input remains a challenge. In 2014, in the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples at the UN-which, incidentally, was the only global process to specifically establish a mechanism for Indigenous participation in the formulation of an intergovernmental document-States agreed to seek ways to enable the participation of Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant UN bodies where matters concerning them are addressed. Participation in the UN is achieved through NGOs with consultative status, except for the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at the UN and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which have special accreditation procedures. This situation limits indigenous participation and impedes the presence of indigenous governments.

²⁵In 1923, the head of the Iroquois League, Deskaheh, representing the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy. <https://www.docip.org/en/oral-history-and-memory/historical-process/>

²⁶Prepared by José R. Martínez Cobo, Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/publications/2014/09/martinez-cobo-study/>

²⁷Organización Internacional del Trabajo, Convenio 169. http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312314

²⁸1992, the fifth centenary that articulated the indigenous struggles in Latin America

<https://www.iis.unam.mx/blog/1992-el-quinto-centenario-que-articulo-las-luchas-indigenas-en-america-latina/>

²⁹Schroeder, H. (2010). Agency in International Climate Negotiations: The Case of Indigenous Peoples and Avoided Deforestation.

| The results of the global and regional incidence are summarized in the following table: No. | Indigenous mechanisms and procedures | Instruments | Policies | Others |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 1. | Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at the UN - Subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations. | Convention 169 of the ILO. | FIDA's policy for its work with Indigenous Peoples. | American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples - OAS. |
| 2. | Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) | UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. | FAO Policy on Indigenous Peoples. | IACHR Reports and IACHR Rulings. |
| | Human Rights Council. | | | |
| 3. | Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples - Human Rights Council. | Final document of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP). | UNESCO's policy for its work with Indigenous Peoples. | Resolutions of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). |
| 4. | Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LICPP) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). | AS and Human Rights Council (HRC) Annual Resolutions on Indigenous Peoples' Rights. | Green Climate Fund Indigenous Peoples Policy (FVC). | Cancun and Paris Agreements of CCCMUC. |
| 5. | United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples (UNHCHR). | | | Intercultural Indigenous University Network (UII). |
| 6. | Indigenous Peoples Forum (FIDA). | | | Global caucus for climate change negotiations. |
| 7. | Indigenous Peoples Forum (IPAF) | | | Global Forum of Indigenous Peoples for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). |

| | | | | |
|-----|--|--|--|--|
| 8. | UN Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems Coalition (RBA). | | | |
| 9. | The UN Global Center on Indigenous Food Systems. | | | |
| 10. | Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC). | | | |
| 11. | Indigenous Peoples' Major Group for the Sustainable Development Goals. | | | |
| 12. | Indigenous Coordinating Committee for the International Decade of | | | |
| 13. | Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group to the Green Climate Fund. | | | |
| 14. | International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change (IIFPCC). | | | |
| 15. | Permanent Observer Status to the UN General Assembly of FILAC. | | | |

To achieve these results, Indigenous Peoples have built a cohesive global movement over the past decades that acts in a very articulated manner. They participate in important global negotiations: climate change, biodiversity, the 2030 agenda, food systems, climate finance. Indigenous Peoples began to participate in a coordinated manner in the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) in 2000, following the establishment of the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change (IIFPCC). As a result of the advocacy strategies and negotiations, the Paris Agreement established the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP), which is the first global peer-to-peer experience between Indigenous Peoples and State Parties, to achieve, in a holistic and integrated manner, the exchange of experiences and best practices on climate change mitigation and adaptation³⁰.

Another process where Indigenous Peoples are contributing to global governance linked to climate change is the Green Climate Fund (GCF) which in 2010 was established by 194 governments to limit or reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in developing countries and to help vulnerable societies adapt to the inevitable impacts of climate change³¹. In 2018, the GCF approved the Indigenous Peoples policy, which recognizes the mechanisms of international law most relevant to Indigenous Peoples, and includes principles such as meaningful participation and Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC); respect for self-determination; tenure of lands and natural resources subject to traditional ownership or under customary use or occupation; respect for gender and intergenerational equity; equitable access to GCF resources; commitment not to fund activities that result in the involuntary resettlement (forced eviction) of Indigenous Peoples. In addition, the policy includes grievance resolution mechanisms (GRM), whereby affected individuals or communities can submit their complaints concerning the proponent or implementer of a project³².

The Fund also established an Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Group to improve coordination between the GCF, accredited entities, implementing entities, States, and Indigenous Peoples. The Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group consists of

four indigenous representatives from regions of developing country States where the GCF may fund activities; these representatives are appointed through a self-selection process led by Indigenous Peoples from each region and based on gender equity.

The Indigenous Peoples Caucus and Local Communities, which participates in the negotiations of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Indigenous Peoples Major Group on Sustainable Development (IPMG), which follows up on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, are also worth mentioning. Another ongoing global process is the elaboration of general recommendations of the CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) as they pertain to indigenous women, which responds to processes of indigenous women's participation in the CSW (Commission on Social and Legal Status of Women) and other spaces, which poses the challenge of complementing individual and collective rights to reconcile the human rights regimes that assist indigenous women.

At the global level, Indigenous Peoples have promoted the strategy of advocating for specific policies in various agencies, entities, and organizations; as a result, IFAD and FAO have specific instruments, complemented, in the case of IFAD, by an Indigenous Peoples' Forum that meets every two years with its governing body, in addition to a fund administered by indigenous organizations. After several years of advocacy, the World Bank has approved standards relating to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) in projects executed in areas inhabited by Indigenous Peoples, and at the regional level it is developing a program to strengthen the Abya Yala Indigenous Forum.

The cultural rights of Indigenous Peoples have also been promoted through their participation in global processes at UNESCO and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), as a result there is a UNESCO policy for its work with Indigenous Peoples, including ongoing negotiations to implement language, education, communication, approval of cultural and natural heritage sites. In the case of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the

³⁰Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform <https://lcipp.unfccc.int/>

³¹Green Climate Fund: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/>

³²<https://www.tebtebba.org/index.php/clua-articles/como-hacer-funcionar-la-politica-de-pueblos-indigenas-del-gcf-para-los-pi-el-proceso-para-tramitar-reclamaciones>

World Conservation Congress has taken steps to recognize the role of Indigenous Peoples in nature conservation by creating a special indigenous membership. In the case of WIPO, an international legal instrument on intellectual property, genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge has been under negotiation for many years³³. Since 1993, the regional arm of the World Health Organization, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), has been another space for promoting regional intercultural health policies.

At the regional level, the three spaces used to promote change have been the Inter-American Human Rights System -mainly through the establishment of norms on the rights of Indigenous Peoples based on the rulings of the Inter-American Court-; A second space has been the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC), an international public law organization created in 1992 by the II Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Madrid, Spain, to support the processes of self-development and promotion of the rights of Indigenous Peoples, communities and organizations of Latin America and the Caribbean, whose governing and operating bodies are based on parity relations between the States and the Indigenous Peoples. At the international level,

FILAC obtained Permanent Observer status at the United Nations General Assembly, which opens an important opportunity for Indigenous Peoples to influence and make their needs and proposals visible.

At the regional level, it is worth mentioning the participation and influence of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), especially that of the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Center (CELADE) in the development of disaggregated data and the inclusion of ethnic variables in the census rounds of Latin American countries.

³³WIPO: Chair's draft text: https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=438199

³⁴FILAC: History of the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean: <https://www.filac.org/introduccion/>

Section 7. Findings and recommendations for the philanthropic community

In Latin America and the Caribbean, Indigenous Peoples are experiencing very complex situations. After obtaining legal and institutional changes and the improvement achieved in past decades in terms of substantive indicators, it is perceived that there are relapses and stagnation in several fields. The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the precarious conditions of Indigenous Peoples in societies and States. It is therefore urgent to promote significant changes in the behavior of States and other actors with the capacity to have an impact, in order to avoid extremely serious situations, both in terms of the number of deaths and the magnitude of the damage to the way of life and the resilience of indigenous communities.

Although the claims of the peoples are diverse and adjusted to the respective contexts, there are at least two major aspects that are repeated throughout the region: the need to advance in the construction of a new type of State based on a social contract that includes Indigenous Peoples on an equal and intercultural basis; and furthermore, the need to make firm and sustained progress in the construction of a social, economic and cultural model based on Good Living-Living Well, which displaces the current extractivist system based on the exploitation of people and natural resources. In this framework, it is essential that philanthropy accompanies these processes, which are vital for Indigenous Peoples and for the entire society.

Therefore, the recommendations to philanthropy would be to support Indigenous Peoples in the prioritized issues and to make changes that will enable their contributions to achieve better results.

The first priority area concerns the impact of **climate change**, which raises increasingly urgent messages due to its effects on Indigenous Peoples, as is the case of the Amazon, which is expressed through the Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA), and states that “we are reaching the point of no return”.

This situation is exacerbated by the number and strength of hurricanes in the Central American Caribbean and by severe droughts.

This scenario is exacerbated by the COVID-19 **pandemic**, which, when added to existing structural factors, strengthens, deepens, and accelerates the deterioration of living conditions and risks for these peoples: hunger, migration, displacement, high mortality rates and even the risk of **extinction of entire peoples and cultures**. We must be aware that with the disappearance of cultures and peoples, the world loses knowledge, know-how and practices that allow us to protect forests, water, ecosystems and biodiversity, fundamental assets to face the climate and food crisis.

It is widely documented that solutions based on indigenous community knowledge and practices can decrease the effects of **carbon dioxide**, a necessary reduction to achieve the global goals of the Paris Agreement; also, these solutions can stop deforestation, restore forests, marine-coastal ecosystems, waters, oceans, glaciers, mountains. **Security, governance, and sustainability of Indigenous Peoples’ rights over their territories and resources** are fundamental to accessing such knowledge and practices. This is where philanthropy should be prioritized.

Philanthropy can also support the **global indigenous agenda**, which has a comprehensive approach in this regard; the global indigenous agenda can be linked to the SDGs, to responses to climate change and biodiversity conservation; articulate demands on the **security of possession of indigenous territories**, apply indigenous knowledge to manage **self-determined development proposals** and to strengthen their management and governance capacities. It is crucial to **support Indigenous Peoples’ actions to influence global governance**.

The bodies involved are the Global Indigenous Caucus on Climate Change, the Indigenous Peoples’ Forum on Biodiversity, the ELATIA

network (Indigenous Peoples' Global Association on Climate Change, Forests and Sustainable Development) and the Indigenous Peoples' Major Group on Sustainable Development (IPMG); and in the region, the Abya Yala Indigenous Forum, its member organizations, the FILAC and the indigenous-led funds. Networks of indigenous women, youth, lawyers, and indigenous communicators established in several countries (Argentina, Guatemala, Mexico) have a role in global governance on these topics.

Another priority area is **post-COVID-19 recovery** actions since they constitute an opportunity to begin to change the historical marginalization and the current extractivist development model. ECLAC has proposed that **Indigenous Peoples hold the key to a transformative post-COVID-19 recovery** because of their knowledge, collective consciousness, and worldview³⁵. In this regard, they make the following recommendations:

- a) Respect and support the actions of prevention and mitigation of impacts that Indigenous Peoples apply in the face of the pandemic.
- b) Establish formal and efficient mechanisms for dialogue between Indigenous Peoples and state authorities to implement coordinated intercultural actions in the face of the current and future effects of the pandemic.
- c) Support the generation of information not only by disaggregating data on Indigenous Peoples, but also by preparing specific analyses on the main problems faced by Indigenous Peoples in the context of the pandemic, including access to vaccination.
- d) Support specific initiatives of Good Living experiences and projects promoted by indigenous organizations and communities.

In this line of priority is to support the actions developed by the main group of Indigenous Peoples for the SDGs: **sustainable energy projects with human rights**, capacity building for advocacy, generation of information and relevant studies. The Regional Indigenous Platform established between the Indigenous Forum of Abya Yala, other indigenous organizations, FILAC and Indigenous-led Funds are implementing actions in this line.

The third line of priority is to influence the **change in the cultural imaginary of historically highly racist populations**, in order to change power relations with Indigenous Peoples through

constitutional reforms, as has been the case with the constitutional process in Chile, the referendum in Mexico, or the discussions in Peru. At the same time, setbacks can be observed in other countries, such as Brazil, which require active vigilance and continuous formulation of counterproposals to government proposals.

There are other areas of support: actions in favor of equality, equity and ethnic-racial justice, and the processes promoted by the Indigenous Youth Network, the indigenous women's networks, and the networks of indigenous communicators.

There are growing demands for direct funding to Indigenous Peoples since we have gained experience in this regard and have qualified indigenous personnel. There are processes of support to organizations that lack experience, which are carried out through training, accompaniment, mentoring and peer-to-peer learning. This, however, is a priority area for financial support, either through the organizations' own schools, FILAC's Intercultural Indigenous University in coordination with other academic centers, FIMI's global school or directly to the organizations.

In order to establish, strengthen or consolidate funds or financial mechanisms led by Indigenous Peoples, **substantive support is required to promote interlearning** based on the successful experiences underway, such as the AYNÍ Fund of the International Indigenous Women's Forum, the Pawanka Indigenous Fund, the Poodali Fund in Brazil, Sots'zil in Guatemala, the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC). Several indigenous organizations -COICA, Alianza Mesoamericana and others- have expressed interest in creating new initiatives.

This is a growing area of support.

³⁵Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Other recommendations:

1. **Know, accompany, listen. Dialogue** is the foundation for building trusting relationships. A good strategy is to visit the communities, understand how they live, what their cultures are, and the concerns they have. Most communities have a life plan, future projections and face complex problems. As a result, the recipes and plans developed abroad are not effective and the support provided is not sustainable.
2. **Be flexible.** When the contexts are known, trust arises, and this allows to be flexible with the requirements. The best results are achieved when the work is based on cultural and social criteria, which favor organizational strengthening, and then the technical and administrative criteria are adapted, which are generally unrelated to indigenous dynamics. Often funds are provided for a specific problem, but then the reality is more complex and requires adjustments to achieve more effective impacts. Arriving with predetermined recipes is not very useful. Cooperation can find ways to make aid transparent, solid, and executable without requiring Indigenous Peoples to use organizational formats that are not part of their cultures.
3. **Understand that communities empower themselves.** The empowerment of indigenous communities must be understood as an endogenous process, and not as the result of a project. It includes an individual, but above all, a collective dimension, and consists of the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' own power. External actors can provide human, financial, material and information resources, connections, alliances, opportunities for participation in spaces of power and many others, but those who drive their empowerment processes are the peoples themselves as active agents of their own Good Living.
4. **Support Indigenous Peoples' own organizations.** Donors should collaborate with Indigenous Peoples' own organizations, without promoting the creation of new organizations in line with their interests, or imposing their technical staff, but rather accompanying the strengthening of those that already exist. It is necessary to respect internal governance processes, recognize them, and value them. Although they imply more time, decisions are collective, which gives them support and legitimacy. When there are two or three people, decisions are made quickly, but the collective dimension and representativeness are lost.
5. **Betting on our own models of philanthropy.** In recent years, several funds led by Indigenous Peoples have been institutionalized and created to change the way philanthropy operates. In the long term, they aim to change the paradigm of power relations between donors and beneficiaries.
6. **Long-term support for organizational strengthening.** Leaders of indigenous organizations express that funding for institutional strengthening is scarce. Collective decision-making processes imply allocating resources for this, as well as for establishing communication, financial and administrative systems. These processes take time and therefore require long-term support. The uncertainty that occurs year after year in the organizations does not allow for continuity in their projects and life plans.
7. **Select organizations according to social and cultural criteria.** Organizations are usually selected according to financial and technical criteria, without considering social recognition or their cultural contribution. We reiterate that the basis of indigenous organizations is their representativeness and networking. Social recognition among peers is a fundamental criterion for initiating dialogue and understanding each other's realities.
8. **Support participation in global governance processes.** It is well known that the contribution of Indigenous Peoples to global governance processes is very significant. Philanthropy must understand the value of these processes and support them with financial resources, but also manage and promote contacts and alliances to strengthen advocacy and the possibility of promoting change in global agendas.
9. **Self-questioning.** It is necessary to engage in debates on the decolonization of wealth and historical debts to communities, taking sustainability and the future of the planet as the main focus, because the development conceived in the west is not viable.

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