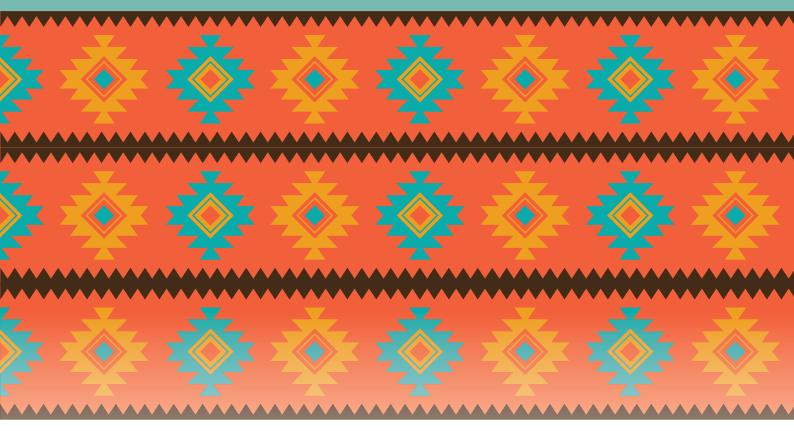


### A CALL TO ACTION: INSIGHTS INTO THE STATUS OF FUNDING FOR INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S GROUPS

A JOINT AWID-FIMI-IFIP REPORT

2016









This study was possible thanks to the support and work of many.

We want to thank to our donors, the support they have shown us; sharing our vision and commitment for the advancement of rights of indigenous people, particularly indigenous women:

Channel Foundation, The Christensen Fund, Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres -FCAM, Ford Foundation, Foundation for a Just Society, Global Fund for Women, Hivos International, Levi Strauss Foundation, Mama Cash, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, OAK Foundation, Organization Internationale de la Francophonie, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency -SIDA, The Government of the Netherlands, TIDES, Wallace Global Fund and Tamalpais Trust.

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### PREFACE

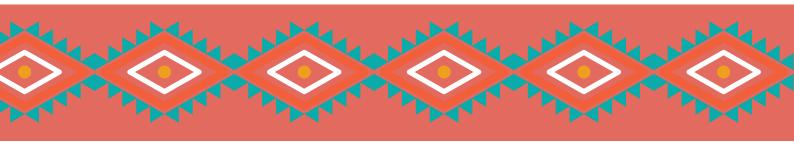
IFIP, FIMI, and AWID came together in 2014 realizing there is a gap in conversation, backed up by research around funding for women's organizing within indigenous communities. Bringing together three institutions' unique entry point into this issue: IFIP with its vast network of funders dedicated to supporting indigenous people; FIMI with its explicit mandate to provide flexible and general funding to indigenous women's led organizing; and AWID with its decade of experience in analysing and research funding trends affecting women's rights organizing globally. Little did we know at the time that this research will prove to be one of the most challenging projects for all of us to take on. We discovered a total lack of point of reference to conduct such a research and on the pages that follow, you will see samples that have been reached and analyzed, providing a first-of-its kind snapshot of the funding landscape for Indigenous women's organizing. Report unpacks history and available data to provide an essential resource that shares lessons learned, highlights key findings, and outlines recommendations on how to build stronger bridges between funders and Indigenous women's groups.

This report is also timely, written at a moment when donor interest in funding Indigenous communities is on the rise. Initial research from the Foundation Center shows that from 2007 to 2012, funding for Indigenous peoples skyrocketed from \$41.4 million to \$83.2 million. Indigenous knowledge and sustainable practices are pivotal antidotes to solving some of the world's most crucial problems such as climate change, conservation, and sustainable management of natural resources. While indigenous women are vital in transmitting and preserving this invaluable knowledge through their relationships with family, community and the environment, there has been little focus specifically on how available resources can be held in the hands of women themselves to bring in valuable solutions to their communities problems.

Although Indigenous women are proven agents of positive change, they continue to fight against the barriers of discrimination and marginalization, within and outside of their communities. Hence, it is critical that donors are effective in breaking down these barriers while also bolstering Indigenous women's efforts as movement builders.

It is our hope that this report will open a dialogue and space for further unpacking of the provided data and results and will provide actionable guidance in how funding trends and donor recommendations can support Indigenous Women's Organizations in a meaningful and effective way, ensuring a sustainable planet for our future generations.

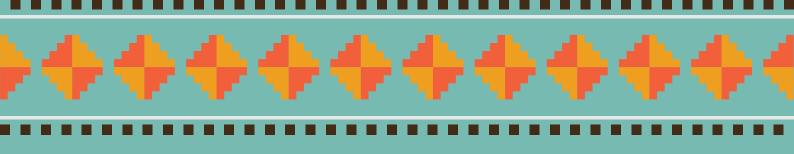
> Respectfully, AWID, IFIP and FIMI



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Twenty years after the <u>Fourth United Nations Conference on Women</u> in Beijing, and almost 10 years after the adoption of the <u>Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</u>, it seems fitting to pause and take stock of the financial support available for Indigenous women's groups. This report shares findings from a collaborative study that tells a new story around resourcing Indigenous women's rights—one where the critical work being carried out by its leaders is brought into the spotlight. This Report also tells a second story about the growing and steadfast community of grant makers who are partnering with Indigenous women's groups, and the considerations that need to be in place to promote the full exercise of the rights of Indigenous women. But, let's start from the beginning.

With the <u>Association for Women's Rights in Development's (AWID</u>) long history of research around resources available for women's rights organizing, a partnership was formed with the <u>International</u> <u>Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI)</u> and the <u>International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP)</u> to embark on a research initiative mapping characteristics of the funding landscape for Indigenous women's rights work. The **purpose** of the research project was to fill an existing knowledge gap since, to date; no global study has been conducted on the status of funding for Indigenous women's rights.

The overarching **goals** driving the project were fourfold, to:

- Influence donor discourses and practices in funding Indigenous women's rights organizing;
- Increase the quality and quantity of funding directed to diverse Indigenous women's rights groups;
- Foster deeper alliances between donors and Indigenous women's groups in order to strengthen advocacy and amplify the call for greater resources for Indigenous women's rights organizing;
- Frame collective resource mobilization as part of the political agenda of Indigenous Women's rights organizing.

It should be noted that this report is by no means an exhaustive account of the 'financial state' of Indigenous women's rights groups globally. As noted later, there are significant gaps and challenges in this avenue of research. Rather, the analysis shared is an initial snapshot into the more visible funding trends impacting Indigenous women's groups, along with offering important considerations for how to build meaningful partnerships with Indigenous women's groups.

For the development of this study, independent researchers were hired to lead the research effort in close collaboration with AWID, FIMI and IFIP. At the onset of the project, the team began to frame **guiding research questions**, defining the parameters of the study.

- What do we know about the quality and quantity of funding currently being channelled to Indigenous women's groups?
- What are the trends that are driving Indigenous philanthropy, and giving to women-led groups in particular?
- What are the issues and priorities that matter most to Indigenous women's rights groups?



• How do funders from diverse sectors understand the social change process as it relates to Indigenous women?

• What can we learn about the programs within donor agencies that most commonly support Indigenous women's rights work?

- · How can meaningful partnerships based on principles of reciprocity be built
- to further the aspirations of Indigenous women's groups?

• What are some examples of the most effective partnerships among funders and Indigenous women's groups?

A shared passion to provide answers to these questions coupled with a fervent desire to expand the pool of resources available for Indigenous women's organizing led to the development of the following **four research objectives** upon which to focus the work:

1. Generate hard data on the funding realities and trends for Indigenous women's groups

2. Gain deeper insight into the challenges and opportunities that exist for Indigenous women's groups seeking resources for their work

3. Highlight examples of powerful partnerships between funders from diverse sectors and Indigenous women's groups.

4. Profile some of the cutting edge work being carried out by Indigenous women's groups. With these objectives in mind, we launch this first-of-its kind report, which presents research findings and analysis gathered from rich and diverse sources of data outlined in the following methodology/steps:

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#### **Qualitative Sources**

• Desk research including reviews of studies, reports, and factsheets focused on women's rights funding, and Indigenous women's rights work.

• 12 In-depth semi-structured interviews conducted between September 2014- January 2015 with leading grant-makers

• Input from Advisory Committee members which includes four Indigenous women activists and five donors committed to Indigenous women's rights (2015)

• 4 mini-case studies of donor-grantee collaborations ("Donor Spotlights" in section X of this report).

#### **Quantitative Sources**

• Analysis of 872 Foundation Center (FC)/ International Human Rights Funders Group (IHRFG) Grants Database (2010-2013)

 Analysis of 1150 Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (IPAF) Proposals 2011-2015

• Analysis of 127 Grants by International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (2011-2012)

 Analysis of 181 proposals received by the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI)'s AYNI Fund (2013)

Analysis 289 Indigenous Grants by Global Fund for Women 1989 – 2015.
495 grants to all grantees in 2015

 Analysis of 74 Young Feminist Organizations serving Indigenous groups with Indigenous leadership (from FRIDA/AWID's 2015 "Mapping Young Feminist Organizing" Research)

• Analysis of 237 Women Human Rights Organizations serving Indigenous groups (but not necessarily Indigenous-led) from AWID's 2011 "Where is the Money for Women's Rights" Research.

A pivotal moment in this timeline was the presentation of preliminary research findings to participants of the half-day "Resource Mobilization Hub" of the September 2014 <u>World Summit</u> on Indigenous Philanthropy put on by IFIP. This strategic event convened leaders, philanthropists, donor agencies and Indigenous visionaries following the <u>United Nations World Conference on</u> <u>Indigenous Peoples</u>. Substantive feedback to the research findings was provided in this space, leading Indigenous women to agree on a set of key recommendations for action when funding any project/initiative that involves Indigenous women in order to promote the full exercise of the rights of Indigenous women.<sup>1</sup>

It should be noted that this study is by no means an exhaustive account of the 'financial state' of Indigenous women's rights groups globally. As noted later, there are significant gaps challenges in this avenue of research. Rather, the analysis shared is an initial snapshot into the more visible funding trends impacting Indigenous women's groups, along with offering important considerations for how to build meaningful partnerships with Indigenous women's groups.

<sup>1</sup> The specific recommendations for action are outlined in the "Looking Forward" section of this report

#### Who are Indigenous Peoples?

The most common description of Indigenous Peoples was set out by the <u>UN Permanent Forum</u> <u>on Indigenous Issues</u>, an advisory board headed by indigenous experts establish as a subsidiary organ of the I United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

It is estimated that there are more than 370 million Indigenous people spread across 70 countries worldwide. Practicing unique traditions, they retain social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live. Spread across the world from the Arctic to the South Pacific, they are the descendants - according to a common definition - of those who inhabited a country or a geographical region at the time when people of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived. The new arrivals later became dominant through conquest, occupation, settlement or other means.<sup>2</sup>

While no UN-system body has adopted any official definition of "Indigenous", a modern understanding of the term is based on the following:<sup>3</sup>

- Self-identification as Indigenous Peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member;
- · Historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies;
- · Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources;
- · Distinct social, economic or political systems;
- · Distinct language, culture and beliefs from dominant groups of society; and
- Resolved to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities.

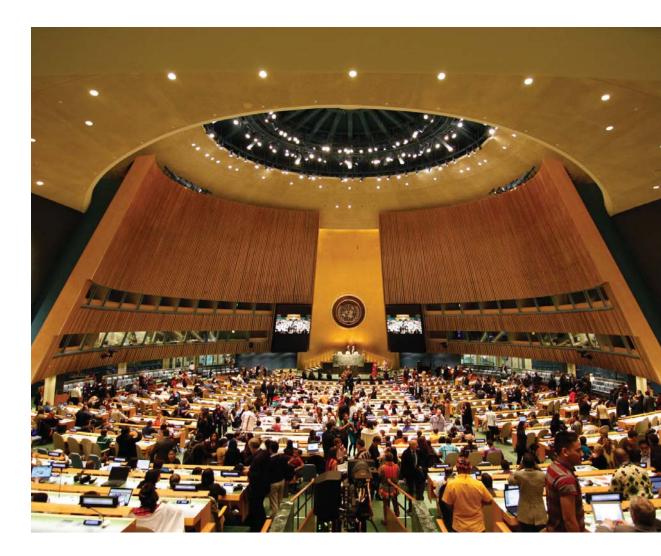
The definitional uncertainty surrounding the word "Indigenous" creates specific challenges for research at the aggregate level. Self-identification is a widely accepted criteria in the human rights arena, but aggregate statistics are generally collected by governments which may base Indigenous status on other characteristics, such as parentage, language or presence on ancestral lands. Definitions vary by country and region. This creates uncertainty about aggregate population estimates and geographic distributions, which in turn affects the certainty of conclusions related to whether Indigenous women's funding is proportional. Nonetheless, with this limitation in mind, we accept the UN estimate of approximately 370 million Indigenous people worldwide as well as

<sup>2</sup> UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Fact Sheet, Who are Indigenous Peoples?

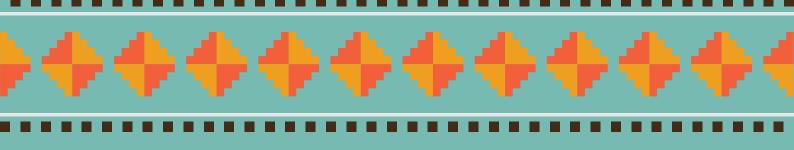
<sup>3</sup> For more information on definitions of Indigenous Peoples, see the ILO Convention no. 169, which provides a widely accepted definition of Indigenous Peoples. This guide may be useful for funders to assess how their grant making affects Indigenous Peoples' lives and communities in specific geographic areas. International Labour Office, Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Rights in Practice: A Guide to ILO Convention, No. 169, 2009

the view that at least one half if not more of these Indigenous peoples are located in South and Southeast  $\mbox{Asia.}^4$ 

This report is intended for a broad audience, including Indigenous women's rights activists and advocates as well as donors from different funding sectors—both newly interested in partnering with Indigenous women's groups, as well as long-term collaborators.



<sup>4</sup> Barsh, Russel. "The World's Indigenous Peoples." Department of Native American Studies at University of Lethbridge, Canada (Paper submitted to Calvert Group by First Nations Development Institute/First Peoples Worldwide) P.2



### 1. FINDINGS AT A Glance

We deserve high quality funding because we are a group of young Indigenous women with a clear vision to advance the rights of women and the environment. We are defenders of Mother Earth, and lead critical debates on extractivism and patriarchy, and know first-hand the impacts of mining. We are activists with principles and values that are revolutionary, which are not cooptable. We have shown great strength and we are training young people to be current leaders, and in essence the future defenders of women's rights in Bolivia.

-Red Nacional de Mujeres en Defensa de la Madre Tierra - RENAMAT Bolivia).

While separate studies have been conducted on funding available for Indigenous peoples, and funding for women's rights organizations, until now no global study has focused at the intersection between the two.<sup>5</sup> *What is the status of funding available for Indigenous women's groups worldwide?* This report shares a first-of-its kind high-level analysis of the current funding landscape, and highlights possibilities for sustainable support and solidarity between funders and Indigenous women's groups.

This report's main findings indicate that despite the fact that Indigenous women's groups are fighting for the survival of their communities, their traditional knowledge, their land natural resources, and to live free from violence, they face significant barriers to accessing the resources they need. At the same time, progressive grant-makers who participated in the research give visibility to the many opportunities that exist for building meaningful collaboration with Indigenous women's groups – crucial allies for protecting the human, environmental, and women's rights.

The report's main findings show that:

#### **Overall State of Funding**

• Indigenous women's groups are receiving less funding than might be expected based on their population. Foundation Center/IHRFG data shows that Indigenous women received 0.7% of all recorded human rights funding between 2010 and 2013, or less than one-third of their proportion in the population. A look at the evolution of funding over the three years, highlights a pattern of growth underway, whereby both number of grants and the percentage of all funding in the Foundation Center / IHRFG dataset roughly doubled.

• When compared to women human rights groups and young feminist groups, Indigenous women's groups are **not markedly different in size and profile** e.g. in terms of size, income, age, or assets, though they do tend to work with **smaller populations** (especially in Latin America).

• Regional analysis of groups being funded, points to **a potential underrepresentation of Indigenous groups** located in Asia, and Africa (the majority of groups receiving funding are located in Latin America).

Indigenous women's groups face three major barriers to accessing long-term funding for their work: Lack of administrative and budgeting capacity, lack of legal status as a registered NGO, and the prominence of "traditional philanthropy" by diverse funding sectors—an approach rooted in the philosophy of providing charity and aid, instead of funding social change.<sup>6</sup>

• While no two Indigenous women's groups are alike, 'donor spotlights' (section 6 of this report) underscore **key characteristics** that go in to building

<sup>5</sup> See Arutyunova, A., and Clark, C. Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots: the Status of Financing for Women's Rights Organizing and Gender Equality. Toronto: AWID, 2013. <u>http://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/WTL\_Starving\_Roots.pdf;</u> "Grantmaker's Guide: Strengthening International Indigenous Philanthropy." San Francisco: International Funders for IndigenousPeoples, 2014. <u>http://internationalfunders.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Grantmakers-Guide-updated-2014.pdf</u>;

<sup>6</sup> See "Traditional Philanthropy" Resource by the Edge Fund at https://edgefund.org.uk/resources/traditional-philanthropy/

strong partnerships including: respecting collective rights, supporting intergenerational transmission of knowledge, offering support to build administrative and financial capacities, and consider re-granting as a key strategy to reach grassroots Indigenous women.

#### **Funding Sources, Types & Quality**

• Indigenous women's groups receive funding from a variety of sources with Public and Private Foundations, Women's Funds, Issue-based Funds and grantmaking NGOs leading the way in terms of the percentage of total grants provided. **37% of grants come from public and private foundations**, these account for 57% of all grant value because they are, on average, larger grants.

• The funding landscape is characterized by **many small funders** and a few **big ones**. For example, 11 donors account for 72% of all grant value in the Foundation Center/IHRFG data from 2010 to 2013, and Ford Foundation alone accounts for 32% of the total value.

• Resources for Indigenous women's rights are largely channelled through the Human/Women's Rights and/or Environmental Program portfolios within donor agencies.

• The **three strategies most used** by funders to implement their goals were: Program development /direct service provision, re-granting through intermediaries, and emergency/rapid response grants

• Grants for Indigenous women's groups tend to offer **annual support**, as opposed to multi-annual support.

#### **Issues, Strategies and Reach**

• The cultural, economic and spiritual significance of land, territories and resources lie at the very heart of what it means to be an Indigenous person. As a result, the **top thematic issues** Indigenous women's groups seek for funding are: **equality/non-discrimination, environment/resource rights, and land-related rights**.<sup>7</sup>

• The top four issues identified as priorities through the interviews were: defense of their land and natural resources, freedom from violence, promoting Indigenous women's leadership and sexual reproductive health rights

• The **strategies** most commonly used by Indigenous women's groups to promote change are focused on enhancing organizational capacity (through leadership development and training) as well as advocacy, campaigning and lobbying.

<sup>7</sup> This finding is significant when we compared with data gathered around priority issues in a "Where is the Money for Women's Rights" global survey in 2011 (targeting more mainstream women's rights organizations) whereby only 5% prioritized land rights, and only 9% prioritized environmental rights and justice overall.

• Indigenous women's groups are working in a very focused way, with smaller groups and populations. Analysis of IFAD proposals reveals that groups are averaging 450 direct beneficiaries and 2,500 indirect beneficiaries. From a regional standpoint, the beneficiary groups are larger in Asia and Africa than in Latin America and the Caribbean.

• Grants that reach Indigenous women's groups tend to support **empowering individuals.** For example, AYNI grant applications focused on education (40%) and economic empowerment (33%), rather than on institutional strengthening (14%) or political participation (13%).

#### **Recommendations for Funders**

• Because the human rights demands of Indigenous women are distinct, funding for Indigenous women's groups needs to be done entirely differently from existing paradigms. By appealing to the principles of **Intercultural Philanthropy** –where the knowledge, experience, and efforts of Indigenous women are valued – donors have an opportunity and responsibility to make advances in social justice.

 Meaningful and culturally sensitive collaboration with Indigenous women's groups requires a foundational understanding by funders of Indigenous peoples' worldviews or cosmovision which can include knowledge of The Pursuit of Common Good, *Buen Vivir*, and the concept of territoriality or Mother Earth.

 Developing organizational capacity and administrative systems are critical pathways to securing sustainable resources for Indigenous women's groups.
 Funders can consider developing more agile mechanisms for identifying organizations that need longer-term support, that will contribute the development of technical and organizational capacities.

• Funders, intermediaries and Indigenous women's groups should collaborate to enhance **monitoring and evaluation (M&E)** practices. Funders can play a leadership role building M&E tools and systems that are responsive to the needs of the Indigenous women's groups they are supporting. Specifically, this could mean developing culturally appropriate evaluation indicators or launching separate Calls for Proposals for Indigenous women's groups. These kinds of efforts not only serve to recognize the diverse characteristics of Indigenous women's groups but also place Indigenous and worldviews at the center of an M&E system.

• Funders can do their part to 'cast the net wider' and help ensure resources are more widely accessible to Indigenous women's groups. One concrete way to do this is through developing broader and more flexible funding application criteria. Some funders interviewed for this research project shared that doing so allowed for the reception high-quality proposals from Indigenous women's groups who framed their work *their* way, respecting cosmology and the experiences of Indigenous peoples.



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### 2. THE INDIGENOUS Experience

Indigenous Women are the transmitters of indigenous cultures, their knowledge, and their traditions. They must be part of the solution, and have the resources, recognition and support to enable them to take charge of their destinies as actors and decision-makers.

Angela Davis, Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.<sup>8</sup>



8 United Nations Permanent Professor Forum Indigenous Issues, "Statement on the International Women's Day", March 8, 2016. https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2016/03/Statement-by-the-Chair-of-the-Permanent-Forum-on-Indigenous-Issues-on-8-March-2016.pdf

#### **Complex Challenges**

Centuries of colonization and discrimination have profoundly impacted the health, rights, and well being of Indigenous communities in all regions of the world. Indigenous peoples suffer from higher rates of poverty, landlessness, malnutrition and displacement than the rest of society. Indigenous territories are estimated to cover 24 percent of the world's land surface and contain 80 percent of the earth's remaining healthy ecosystems. As the stewards of some of the most biologically and culturally diverse regions of the world, Indigenous movements also face an array of climate change impacts that are undermining ways of life that have persisted for thousands of years. From loss of traditional knowledge, to relocation from historic homelands, to increased food insecurity, the impacts are no longer a prediction but a reality for Indigenous communities.<sup>9</sup> <sup>10,11</sup>

Despite continuous economic and social exclusion, Indigenous peoples have demonstrated extraordinary resilience and movement building power. For centuries, and since the time of their occupation and colonization, Indigenous peoples have fought to maintain their land and sovereign identities. International political advocacy by Indigenous movements culminated in having Indigenous Peoples' human rights enshrined and adopted in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous women were pivotal actors in this process, and their work also gave rise to other UN mechanisms that secure critical opportunities and spaces for Indigenous women to engage in debates on gender issues.<sup>12</sup>

Indigenous women take up key roles and responsibilities in their communities and households as drivers of rural economies, and as transmitters of cultural and spiritual knowledge. They have independently formed organizations and networks around the world to fight for the rights of women and girls. Despite such contributions, Indigenous women suffer multiple forms of discrimination. Issues such as race, ethnicity and gender combine to create a range of rights violations such as lack of participation in decision-making processes, lack of control of income, lack of land rights, lack of access to education, harmful traditional practices, domestic violence and gender based violence in situations of armed conflicts and militarization.<sup>13</sup> Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, describes below how Indigenous women are some of the most marginalized groups in the world.

<sup>9</sup> State of the World's Indigenous Peoples, Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for Social Policy and Development Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2009. <u>http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/SOWIP/en/SOWIP web.pdf</u> "Who are Indigenous Peoples?" <u>http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session\_factsheet1.pdf</u>; International Working Groups on Indigenous Peoples;

<sup>10</sup> Lynn, K., J. Daigle, J. Hoffman, F. Lake, N. Michelle, D. Ranco, C. Viles, G. Voggesser, and P. Williams, 2013: The impacts of climate change on tribal traditional foods. Climatic Change, 120, 545-556, doi:10.1007/s10584-013-0736-1.

<sup>11</sup> Funding Indigenous peoples: Strategies of Support. Foundation Centre, in collaboration with the International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP) 2015. http://www.grantcraft.org/assets/content/resources/Indigenous People web %282%29.pdf

<sup>12</sup> Including the establishment of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

<sup>13</sup> http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/SOWIP/en/SOWIP web.pdf



Indigenous women experience a broad, multifaceted and complex spectrum of mutually reinforcing human rights abuses. That spectrum is influenced by multiple and intersecting forms of vulnerability, including patriarchal power structures; multiple forms of discrimination and marginalization, based on gender, class, ethnic origin and socioeconomic circumstances; and historical and current violations of the right to self-determination and control of resources.<sup>14</sup>

In the face of structural vulnerability and violence, Indigenous women organize, and rise up.

#### Indigenous Women Rise Up

Indigenous women's groups have been key movement builders around the issues that matter most to indigenous communities. They have fought and won battles for legal recognition of collective ancestral territories, reclaimed cultural and spiritual identity, and have toppled corporate giants at the helm of destructive resource extraction projects. Author Nancy Moreno of a recently published *Six Indigenous Women at the Heart of Fracking Resistance* in Argentina beautifully describes how a case of local struggle for a group of Indigenous women can have strong resonance for social justice movements worldwide.



Six Mapuche women have taken the risk of putting their bodies on the line to stop the drilling rigs from further endangering their community. Indigenous Women are central to the continent-wide resistance against extractivism, and the story of these women from the Campo Maripe community in the Argentine Patagonia is a solid example of their ongoing contribution, and the importance of Indigenous resistance for social movements worldwide.

Whether in Argentina, Siberia, or Canada, Indigenous women are unified in their belief that rights violations as intrinsically linked to their "disconnection from Mother Earth."<sup>15</sup> Sadly, many Women

15 Paris Climate change Conference & Indigenous Women's Leadership? Women's Earth & Climate Action Network, International 2015. http://

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<sup>14</sup> http://unsr.vtaulicorpuz.org/site/index.php/en/documents/annual-reports/83-report-hrc-2015

Human Rights Defenders are paying the ultimate price to ensure gender and environmental justice. The <u>killing of Berta Caceres</u>, Honduran environmental activist and Indigenous leader of the Lenca people, garnered visibility for the global nature of the crisis regarding the violence targeting environmentalists.<sup>16</sup> Berta's legacy lives on, as Indigenous women globally wage battles in protection of the Indigenous Worldview, unfortunately with few if any resources at all.

#### The Indigenous Worldview<sup>17</sup>

Indigenous communities have a different concept of wealth than non-Indigenous peoples. They do not understand wealth as the accumulation of money, but see wealth as a harmonious relationship with nature and having the resources to survive. – Myrna Cunningham.<sup>18</sup>

Respectful collaboration with Indigenous women's groups requires a foundational understanding of Indigenous peoples' way of seeing life – their Worldview or *Cosmovision*. Core elements are described below to ground and contextualize the research findings.

**Indigenous cosmovision** is defined by the ability of every human being and every nation, society, people and group to have its own singular way of thinking and of seeing life. Indigenous peoples hold a particular perception that the universe contains complementary, interacting spheres that govern the social and cultural order, as well as nature, politics and thoughts. The interrelation and balance between these elements ensures survival as individuals and communities. Indigenous peoples have a rich and diverse cultural heritage that includes knowledge and know-how, language, values, traditions, customs, symbolisms, spiritual beliefs, organization and coexistence norms, worldviews and development concepts. Their worldview is additionally expressed through the set of spiritual, cultural, social and productive practices that involve the spirits, the stars, nature, human beings, and that respond to a logic of elements that complement each other. Each activity presents occasions to transfer ancient knowledge, be it through making and repairing fishing equipment or through farming, hunting and forest harvesting/use techniques. The role and rights of women within this cosmovision is area of continued exploration for Indigenous women, some of whom are giving new meaning to cosmogenic precepts within their own contexts, and within more mainstream women's rights movements:<sup>19</sup>

We cannot work for changes in gender inequality in our communities if we do not incorporate the dual vision of Indigenous cosmovision, where men and women are complementary...As Indigenous women are

wecaninternational.org/pages/wecan-cop21 Nov 24th, Declaration and messages of Action from ECMIA VII. Ind http://www.iwgia.org/news/ search-news?news.id=1289

16 See the recent coverage by the Guardian *Why is Honduras the world's deadliest country for environmentalists?* <u>http://www.theguardian.com/</u> environment/2016/apr/07/honduras-environment-killing-human-rights-berta-caceres-flores-murder; "How Many More?" *Global Witness.* <u>https://</u> www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/environmental-activists/how-many-more/

17 Content and analysis related from this section of the report was drawn from a short reflection paper generously provided by Ford Foundation entitled "Our Journey with Indigenous Peoples," 2015.

18 Interview with Myrna Cunningham by UN Women on International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples in 2011. <u>http://www.unwomen.org/</u>en/news/stories/2011/8/we-need-to-strengthen-women-s-self-esteem-and-make-them-feel-valued-for-their-identity-and-culture

19 The relationship between gender and cosmovision has been particularly developed in Macleod, M., Sieder, R. "Maya women in Guatemala Gender, Law and Mayan Cosmology in Guatemala." Descatos 31: 51-72.

recognized in our communities as the basis for preserving the cultural and social patrimony of our peoples, it is important that our demands to improve our situation take on the cultural aspects which give meaning to our collective identity. –International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI), 2005 AWID Bangkok Forum.

The Indigenous vision of development---Buen Vivir: Indigenous peoples have a vision of development based on a principle of balance between all living beings that is known as Good Living or Buen Vivir. This vision or system prioritizes life over the accumulation of wealth; it seeks harmony among all nature's beings and attempts to build coexistence scenarios. It defies the current development paradigm that includes persistent burdens and deficiencies such as increased inequalities, cultural homogenization and environmental degradation. The vision of development is built on the protection and respect between people and their resources; its application is demonstrated in the practice of complementarity, which advocates that all beings on the planet complement and interrelate with each other. Since the Good Living vision does not contemplate the concept of accumulation, many communities ritualize and redistribute their surplus production thus seeking to maintain equality, equilibrium and harmony.

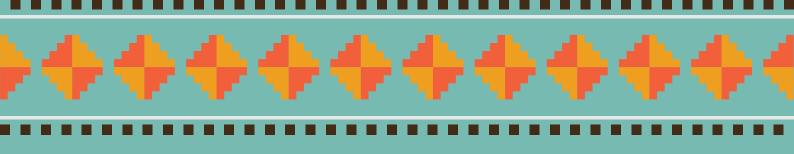
The Pursuit of Common Good: The concept of Common Good acts is a guiding element of the system of community cooperation. It contributes to strengthening associative relationships based on trust, solidarity, reciprocity and ethnic and community belonging. The Common Good works to protect widows, orphans, the elderly and disabled and other unprotected sectors and people within the community. The pursuit of Common Good is linked to the protection and adequate use of their heritage and of the ecosystems that guarantee the community's economic, social and cultural reproduction. In practice, community economic institutions (known by different names such as Inti Raymi, Fiestas comunitarias, Pana Pana, Mano Vuelta, Biribiri) are rooted in the principles of reciprocity and complementarity. When partnering with Indigenous groups, donors should take care to understand characteristic forms of governance and the exercise of power. For Indigenous people, governance is grounded on consensus among all, which entails that anyone with differences of opinion must endeavor to reach agreements through dialogue and avoid conflicts. In practice, this requires respect and knowing how to listen without prejudice, exclusion or any type of subjugation.

**Mother Earth is Sacred:** The concept of territoriality – Mother Earth – provides a collective identity and sense of belonging in an Indigenous community; this territoriality is considered sacred and can in no way be sold or subject to individual ownership. Indigenous territories are collective spaces of coexistence between Mother Nature and human beings where the territory is composed by every element in it: soil, subsoil and air space (rivers, lakes, animals, plants, metals). This territory also represents the agreed upon foundation on which to develop judicial, political, economic and social models or systems. Territories are at the heart of cultural patrimony and cultural life. Many communities in fact believe that without territories their ability to defend their identity and their cultural rights is simply impossible.

The multifaceted nature of the Indigenous experience and the challenging organizing context for Indigenous women, carefully informed the research process and methodology outlined in the section below.



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## 3. QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Key findings from the quantitative analysis component of this research are clustered by theme in section two of this chapter, drawing from the 6 different datasets as relevant. Below is a summary a describing the data sources used and the methodological approach taken.

#### **Data Sources/Methodology**

No comprehensive source of information exists regarding funding for Indigenous women's groups. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, there is no reliable way even to estimate the number of Indigenous women's groups in the world. To understand the profile and circumstances of these groups we must rely on samples drawn from funder databases and from survey data. Each of these sources provides valuable insight, but neither is demonstrably representative of the full picture of Indigenous women's experience. Funder data is generally limited to those who apply for or receive funding. Surveys are limited to those who the researchers are able to reach and those who are subsequently able to respond. Language and technology limitations to surveys are real and are even more likely to affect Indigenous groups. Thus, even those Indigenous women's groups we know about are likely to be among the better organized and most connected. Finally, without reliable knowledge of the overall number and distribution of Indigenous women's groups, we cannot verify the degree to which funder databases and surveys reflect the entire population. We note, for example, that Asia appears to be significantly underrepresented in all our data sources.

Despite these significant limitations, the information available from funders and surveys does provide a basis upon which to cautiously draw an initial profile in the sector, especially when multiple sources agree. This section of the report draws on the results of two surveys and databases of grants and/or applications kindly made available by a number of organizations.

- 872 Foundation Center (FC)/ International Human Rights Funders Group
- (IHRFG) Grants Database (2010-2013)
- 1,150 proposals to Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (IPAF) 2011-2015
- 127 Grants to Indigenous groups by International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (2011-2012 and 2015 Grants)
- 181 proposals received by the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI)'s AYNI Fund (2013)
- 289 Indigenous Grants by Global Fund for Women 1989 2015. Also, 495 grants to all grantees in 2015
- Survey responses from 74 Young Feminist Organizations serving Indigenous groups with Indigenous leadership (from FRIDA/AWID's 2015 "Mapping Young Feminist Organizing")
- Survey responses from 237 Women Human Rights Organizations serving Indigenous groups (but not necessarily Indigenous-led) from AWID's 2011 "Where is the Money for Women's Rights" Research.

All these primary data sources were examined at the case level using statistical software.

We hope that further primary quantitative research will be undertaken into the situation facing Indigenous women's groups which will be able to address some of the limitations of this study. Nonetheless, we believe that results presented in this section of the report provide valuable, quantifiable insight into the realities Indigenous women's groups experience in mobilizing resources.

#### Findings & Analysis

#### Size and Scope

Analysis of the WITM 2011 survey conducted by AWID and the 2015 Mapping Young Feminist Activism Survey show that Indigenous groups are **not markedly different from other groups** in terms of size, income, age, or assets.

Their main difference lies in terms of regional location and focus. Indigenous women's groups are more likely to have a **local** (rather than national/international) **focus**. Women's rights organizations with Indigenous constituencies report **slightly lower income** and are less likely to have assets. Young Indigenous groups are more likely than other young women's groups to be located in **Latin America and the Caribbean**. (See Appendix 1)





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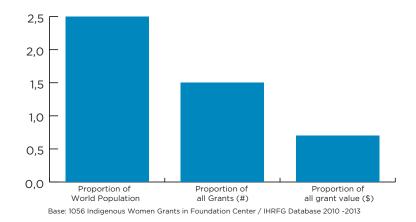
#### What Share of Funding are Indigenous Women's Groups Receiving?

There are approximately 370 million Indigenous people in the world, representing 5% of the total global population. Of course, Indigenous women alone represent one-half of this number, or roughly 2.5% of the global population. At least one-half and perhaps two-thirds of Indigenous people live in Asia, in keeping with the global distribution of all populations, and Indigenous people are estimated to constitute 15% of the world's poor.

There is no basis upon which to argue that funding for Indigenous people or Indigenous women should be proportional to their population. They are often in more challenging situations than other populations, being poorer, more rural and subject to considerable economic and social pressures. It might, however, be reasonable to expect that Indigenous women would receive a share of funding **at least equivalent** to their proportion of the population. Unfortunately, this does not appear to be happening.

The Foundation Center/IHFRG Data provides us with a 'snapshot' of how much of human rights funding internationally is reaching groups devoted to women and Indigenous people and those conducting projects intended to assist women and Indigenous people. An analysis of the percentage of total grant values reveals that funding in terms of grant numbers and amounts are less than might be expected based on population.

As the graphic below demonstrates, FC/IHRFG data suggests that Indigenous women received 0.7% of all funding between 2010 and 2013, or less than one-third of their proportion in the population. Their percentage of individual grants numbers (1.5%) was considerably better, suggesting that Indigenous women's grants tend to be smaller than the average grant in the FC/IHRFG database. This may be a question of grantee capacity or perhaps the fact that beneficiary scope is smaller for Indigenous women's grants (See "Beneficiary Groups" Section below).



#### Proportions of Indigenous Women and Funding Foundation Center / IHRFG Database 2010 - 2013

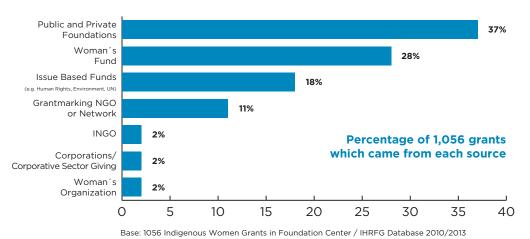
<sup>27 |</sup> A Call to Action: Insights into the Status of Funding for Indigenous Women's Groups

Although the funding amounts and grant numbers as shown in the foregoing figure are lower in comparison to other issues, both appear to be improving. Specifically, the number of grants and the percentage of all funding in the Foundation Center / IHRFG dataset roughly doubled between 2010 and 2013.

Year	Percent of Grants	Percent of Value
Average	1,5%	0,7%
2010	0,9%	0,5%
2011	1,0%	0,5%
2012	1,7%	1,0%
2013	2,3%	0,8%
Base: 1056 Indigenous Women Grants in Foundation Center / IHRFG Database 2010-2013		

#### Funding Sources and Grant Size

Upon close examination of the 1,056 Indigenous Women's Rights FC/IHFRG grants, a pattern emerges around funding sources and amounts. A variety of grantmakers are offering their support to Indigenous women's groups – with Public and Private Foundations, Women's Funds, Issuebased Funds and grantmaking NGOs leading the way in terms of the percentage of total grants provided, as shown in the following figure.



#### Percentage of Grants

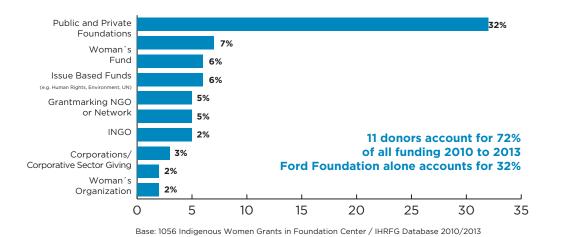
#### Foundation Center / IHRFG Database 2010-2013

While 37% of grants come from public and private foundations, these account for 57% of all grant value because they are, on average, larger grants. The second highest sector ,Women's Funds, account for 10% of all grant value, and issue-based Funds (e.g. human Rights, UN, Environment), account for 12% of total grant value.

The funding landscape is also characterized by **many small funders** and a few **big ones**. For example, 11 donors account for 72% of all grant value in the FC/IHRFG data from 2010 to 2013, and Ford Foundation alone accounts for 32% of the total value.

#### **Largest Donors**

- by Value (\$) -



#### Foundation Center / IHRFG Database 2010-2013

Within an average grant size of \$18K going to Indigenous women's groups, grants from Public and Private foundations average \$30K, a significant contrast from Corporate Sector giving (\$152K) and INGOs (\$79K). In contrast, grantmaking NGOs or networks, Women's Funds, and women's organizations average relatively small grant sizes (all under 15K)

Review of the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (IFAD-IPAF) database helps us to contextualize our understanding of the grant sizes being dispersed to Indigenous women's groups. How do grants received by Indigenous women's groups compare to other Indigenous groups being funded by IFAD? IFAD Indigenous grants average in size at \$26k, but are slightly higher for projects related to Indigenous women (\$29k) than others (\$25k). Moreover, the average grant size increased from \$20k in 2007 to \$40K -\$50k in 2015. The takeaway here is that while Indigenous women's grants tend to receive smaller grants than other grantees in general they **do not get smaller grants** from IFAD than other Indigenous grantees specifically.

#### Funding Length and Quality

Analysis of FC/IFHRG, IPAF and WITM 2011 datasets provides important insight into the quality and flexibility of funding being made available to Indigenous women's groups. For how many years are Indigenous women's groups seeking funding? How does what they need and want measure up against what they are actually receiving?

When it comes to grant duration, the FC/IFHRG data shows that the overwhelming majority of grants (87%) last one year, and this was consistent from 2010 to 2013. The average duration has increased only one month over these years. Analysis of IPAF applications show that the majority of their applicants (57%) requested grants covering two years or more. There is therefore **a contrast** between the one-year grants given and the two-year funding that grantees ask for. The WITM 2011 research showed that 18% of Indigenous organizations had some multiyear support, compared to 22% of other respondents, confirming that most funding is awarded for one year at a time.

#### Where is the Funding Going?

Analysis of where the funding is going across the FC, AYNI, IFAD, IPAF, and GFW datasets point to a strong focus and potential over-representation of LAC, based on where Indigenous groups are located globally. A related finding is the seeming neglect of the Asia region, where most Indigenous people live. Finally, we also see that African groups form a larger proportion of applications than of grants pointing to a possible under-resourcing in this region and disconnect between Indigenous applicants and funders. Below is a breakdown by database of how the regional distribution patterns played out.

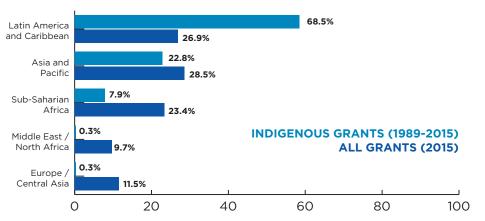
• FC grants went in large part from the Americas (65%) and especially Central and South America. Asia accounted for 20% of grants, far less than might be expected given the large proportion of Indigenous peoples in Asia.

• The majority of IFAD grants also went to Latin America and the Caribbean (55%), while 30% went to Asia.

• AYNI applications also show a large proportion from the Americas (45%) and 20% from Asia.

• IPAF shows 48% of applications came from Africa, with 29% from Americas and 23% from Asia respectively (2011 and 2015 call). When compare to the results for grants, this application data implies that African applications are less likely than others to be successful, while applications from the Americas do comparatively well.

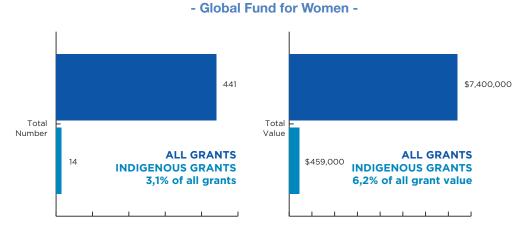
Perhaps the most compelling perspective on where funds are being channelled is illustrated through proportional analysis of Global Fund for Women grants to Indigenous Women's groups compared to all of their grants. As shown below, 68.5% of GFW's Indigenous grants went to LAC compared to the 26.9% of all GFW grants. We also see below how a mere 7.9% of GFW Indigenous women's grants went to Sub Saharan Africa, which contrasts starkly with the 23.4% of all GFW grants.



#### Regional Distributions of Grants to Indigenous People - Global Fund for Women -

Base: 280 Indigenous Women Grants by Global Fund for Women 1989 - 2015 495 grants to all grantees in 2015

Analysis of the Global Fund for Women's (GFW) database of grantmaking in 2013/2014 also provides a contrast to proportional analysis done of Foundation Center data. The graphic below shows a higher proportion of both total grants (3.1% vs. the 1.5 % from FC/IHGRG), and total grant value (6.2% vs. 0.7% FC/IHRG) channeled to Indigenous women's Groups. The percentage figures for GFW actually exceed the proportion of Indigenous women in the global population. This data comparison highlights GFW as an example of a donor who is doing more, when it comes to the support they are channeling to Indigenous women's groups.



Proportion of Grants to Indigenous People 2013 - 2014

Grants by Global Fund for Women 2014-2014

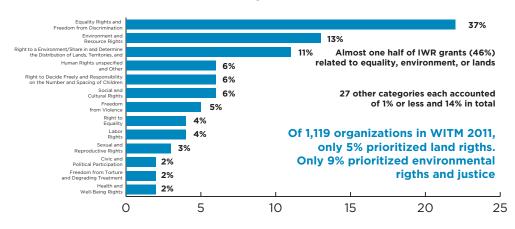
#### Thematic Focus

An analysis of thematic priorities across the FC and AYNI databases reveals one of the chief findings of the study: priority issues for Indigenous women's groups differ somewhat significantly from more mainstream women's rights groups.

The strong focus on land and equality rights among Indigenous women's groups comes out clearly in the FC analysis. FC tracks the human rights involved in each grant, and **three specific rights** account for 46% of grants: equality/non-discrimination, environment/resource rights, and land-related rights. To provide a comparison, of the 2011 WITM Global Survey respondents, only 5% of women's rights organizations prioritized land rights, and only 9% prioritized environmental rights and justice overall.

FC data also shows that issues of violence (5%) sexual and reproductive health and rights (3%) are less evident for Indigenous groups than would be expected for other women's rights groups. For example, of the 2011 WITM survey respondents, 59% identified violence against women as a priority, and 28% identified sexual and reproductive health and rights as a priority focus.

#### **Areas of Human Rights**



#### - As Assessed by Foundation Center -

Base: 1056 Indigenous Women Grants in Foundation Center / IHRFG Database 2010-2013

AYNI grants bring yet more texture to this analysis of thematic focus, as their applications from Indigenous groups tend to focus on education (40%) and economic empowerment (33%), rather than on institutional strengthening (14%) or political participation (13%). In other words, groups are seeking funding that is more focused on directly improving the status of **individual** Indigenous women, and **less focused** on organizational and political change work.

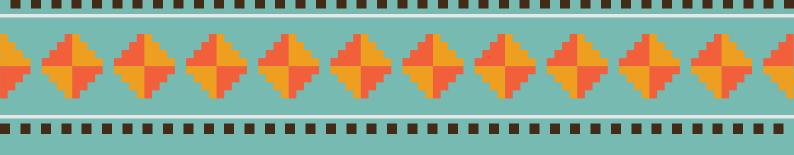
#### **Beneficiary Groups**

Analysis of the key populations and beneficiaries that IFAD proposals target makes evident the fact that Indigenous women's groups focus on smaller populations. Proposals from Indigenous

women tend to have closely defined beneficiary groups, averaging 450 direct beneficiaries and 2,500 indirect beneficiaries. This reinforces the sense that these projects are more concentrated on specific groups of women rather than entire strata of society. To put it simply, Indigenous women's groups are working in a very focused way with small groups. From a regional standpoint, the beneficiary groups are larger in Asia and Africa than in Latin America and the Caribbean.



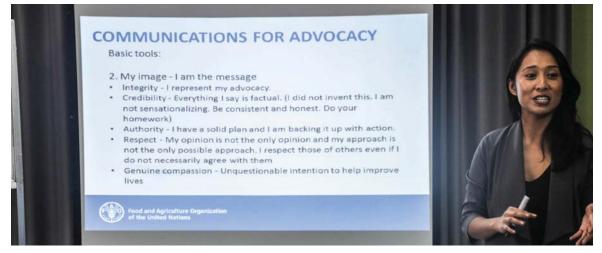




# 4. OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES, AND FUNDING REALITIES: INTERVIEW FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

We formed an organization with members who self-identify as young Indigenous rural women. We started from nothing putting our money away and looking for spaces, and information. We ended up discovering feminism and fell in love with the philosophy and set on path to help empower women. We get resources from the Central American Women's Fund (FCAM) and learned to how to budget our money each month, doing the right thing with honesty, love, conviction and consistency. This has allowed us to have other opportunities and enjoy the confidence of young women and donors. Young Indigenouswomen can make a difference, we must show that our work is valuable, we plan and execute our activities thinking about giving the best for our beneficiaries –all young women.

-Grupo de Mujeres XITLALI, 2015 Mapping Young Feminist Organizing Survey Respondent.











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This section of the Report summarizes main qualitative findings from twelve semi-structured interviews held with a selection of donors known to have a strong track record of funding and supporting Indigenous women, their communities, and organizations. Interviews were held with six Women's Funds plus the International Network of Women's Funds (INWF), four private foundations, and one environmental fund.<sup>20</sup> 60-90 minute interviews were designed to advance the following three of the four major research objectives:

- · Gain deeper insight into the challenges and opportunities that exist for
- Indigenous women's groups seeking resources for their work
- Highlight examples of powerful partnerships between funders from diverse sectors and Indigenous women's groups.
- Profile some of the cutting edge work being carried out by Indigenous women's groups.

Interview themes provide a snapshot of funding trends, challenges and opportunities for influencing support for Indigenous women's rights.

#### Why Fund Indigenous Women's Rights Groups?

Our interviewees represent a constellation of funders who see Indigenous women's groups as invaluable partners to achieve their multiple goals: advancing women's human rights, environmental justice, preserving traditional knowledge, and strengthening social movements. Perhaps Global Greengrants Director of Programs put it best when he described their organizational motivation for supporting Indigenous women "We fund Indigenous women who are at the forefront of movements, at intersections of global environmental sustainability and social justice...Indigenous women are very often leaders in these struggles, and it is urgent to get funds directly to them."

A core objective of this research project is to make visible some of the most effective collaborations between funders and Indigenous women's groups. Interviewees referenced a multitude of Indigenous women-led groups who are claiming their rights and using innovative strategies such as art and technology for change, international advocacy and campaigns, leadership building through connection to nature, mobilizations, and collective knowledge production. We highlight a few such examples below, in the hope that they might inspire new connections, and perhaps most importantly highlight the work that is being carried out.

<sup>20</sup> SWIFT Foundation, Ford Foundation, Channel Foundation, Mama Cash, Global Fund for Women, Bolivian Women's Fund, Urgent Action Fund of Latin America, Semillas, the International Network of Women's Funds, The Central American Women's Fund (CAWF), Global Greengrants Fund, Tamalpais Trust. Interviews were also held with four indigenous women's rights activists to provide insight into the grantee and indigenous women's perspective, the results of which have used to add depth and texture to the analysis. The interviewed activists were: Rosalee Gonzalez, Joan Carling, and Teresa Zapeta, and Myrna Cunningham.

**National Network of IndigenousWomen Weaving Rights for Mother Earth and Land** (**RENAMITT**) -Partner of Semillas. RENAMITT brings together Indigenous women working on legal land rights from different communities of Oaxaca, Chiapas, Veracruz, Guerrero, Jalisco, Chihuahua, and other states in Mexico. This initiative seeks to diminish inequalities through influencing public policy, so as to promote the rights that Indigenous women have to access and tend land as is promised in national laws and international treaties. With support from Semillas, they created a network that works on national policy and provides gendered analysis to land rights issues. This case demonstrates the strategic role that Semillas was able to play in to help bring individuals together to build movements united in their effort to change an unjust and patriarchal system.

Innabuyog, Inc. A network of Indigenous Women's Organizations in the Philippines – Partner of Global Fund for Women.

Leaders from 20 Indigenous women's organizations in the mountainous Cordillera region of the Philippines formed Innabuyog because they saw a need for a regional alliance to serve as a voice for Indigenous women's struggles and challenges regarding ancestral land, self-determination, resources, and dignity. Today, Innabuyog includes over a 140 women's organizations addressing the devastating environmental, cultural and food-sovereignty effects of mining and cash cropping, as well as violence against Indigenous women resulting from militarization and state repression. With support from Global Fund for Women, Innabuyog led leadership and organizational capacity building campaigns and mobilizations for Indigenous women's to claim their land, food and rights, and engage in local political processes.



## The Skeena Watershed Conservation's "Women on Water (Wow!)" — Partner of Swift Foundation

In British Columbia, Canada, Skeena's "Wow!" program engages native women from the Skeena Watershed in conservation education, job skills training and physical activity through workshops, camping, and river rafting trips. These programs empower women the watershed community to become stewards of their birthright; a clean, culturally significant and ecologically resilient Skeena River. Running for 5 years, the program has allowed women to connect back to the land and rivers, and has served as a model for education, involvement, leadership development etc. for Indigenous women.

## The Indigenous Women's Network of Thailand (IWNT)

## -Partner of Tamalpais Trust

IWNT is an independent organization working to improve the lives of 10 Indigenous groups or "chon paos" of Northern Thailand. IWNT's achievements have been far reaching. First, IWNT has provided capacity building for 240 Indigenous women to participate in local politics, which led to 32 Indigenous women being elected into Local Administrative Organisations and Municipalities (2009). They have also provided training and awareness raising on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and supported CEDAW Shadow Report for 100 Indigenous women leaders (2007-2011), in cooperation with UN Women Thailand and the Asian Indigenous Women's Network. Finally, over the course of their history more than 20 Indigenous women leaders received training, contributed to national and international discussions on climate change, Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) issues, and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), among others.



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## Colectivo RED A.C.; Respeto, Equidad, y Diversidad Social Mexico — Partner of Global Fund for Women

Colectivo RED trains youth leaders to be promoters of sexual and reproductive health, women's human rights, equality, and prevention of violence from a gender perspective. This group has worked with young women and men in Indigenous communities, and participates in feminist women's networks. Colectivo RED aims to dispel harmful ethnic and gender stereotypes by giving girls cameras, education, and a public forum for sharing their perspectives. Young Indigenous women receive training on how to use cameras as tools of social change and create a photography portfolio that creatively expresses the challenges they face in life: violence, ethnic discrimination, and difficulty accessing quality education, health services, and stable jobs. While immersed in this self-reflective creative process, the young women learn about photographic composition, gender-based violence, and advocacy strategies that will empower them to stand up against violence in their communities.

## **Women Resistance and Shadow Powers**

-Partner of Urgent Action Fund Latin America

This collaborative initiative involves research and implementation of joint activities between activists, women's organizations, academics, and public policy actors in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Brazil, Colombia and the US. This initiative analyzes the effects of "shadow powers" or practices of power carried out by people and organizations involved in illegal economic activities, mainly related to drug trafficking, human trafficking, smuggling of weapons and goods. Because many conflict zones are in Indigenous territories, programs around narco-trafficking and armed conflict also have high percentages of Indigenous women. The initiative seeks to make visible the effects of drug trafficking for women and associated problems such as corruption of the justice system and the institutions of government, the trafficking of arms and humans, and large-scale illegal mining. It also highlights examples of resistance being used by women's organizations as a way to advocate for public policies based in Human Rights and public health. This initiative is an example of how an issue of common concern expressed by diverse women's groups connected to UAF LAC, gave rise to a collective knowledge building process that is promoting learning and cohesion across women's movements.



#### Who are the Grantees?

Interviewees represent a diverse range of funding sectors and institutional visions for enacting social, human rights, and environmental change. But what kinds of organizations and groups are they reaching in their grantmaking? What do we know about their leadership structures? An interviewee from Swift Foundation reminded us that setting out to define Indigenous women's work is more complex than it appears:

Swift Foundation doesn't have specific Indigenous women's program areas or organizations, but we fund women in leadership in many arenas. For example, groups in British Columbia (Canada), where there is matrilineal society (historical and cultural traditions) they tend to have more Indigenouswomen-led projects, whereas groups in the Andes Amazon (where "machismo" tends to take hold) do not. Our approach is to start where organizations are at and encourage broad participation from different populations (women, youth, elders etc.). Jen Astone, Swift Foundation, 2014 Interview.

When we asked funders about their responsibility to funding Indigenous women's groups, we were made aware of three distinct types of grantees:

- 1) Indigenous women-specific organizations, groups or communities (ie.
- Both led by and serving Indigenous women)
- 2) Mixed organizations/groups of indigenous or tribal peoples where Indigenous women are the <u>main beneficiaries</u> of their program
- 3) Broader organizations, groups of Indigenous or tribal peoples led by
- Indigenous women (ie: Indigenous women are holding the leadership positions,
- but implementing a broad program of work on a range of Indigenous issues

Overall, Women's Funds we spoke with are committed to supporting Indigenous women-specific groups, whereas private foundations and the environmental funds are resourcing all three. A funder's decision to support a mixed Indigenous-led organization or an Indigenous women's group is often a question of complementarity of work and mission, the governance of the grant making<sup>21</sup>, but it is also a political choice. Sensitive and knowledgeable donors are conscious of some of the barriers Indigenous women face within their own communities. Indigenous women leaders report for example, that they can suffer discrimination within mixed organizations, and have limited opportunities to participate in decision-making. Moreover, Indigenous women are underrepresented both within the membership and in leadership positions.<sup>22</sup> One Indigenous women's rights activist we spoke with provided the following critique highlighting the lack of recognition of Indigenous women's contributions.

<sup>21</sup> For example, IFAD-IPAF's, while funded by IFAD, the governance is with indigenous peoples' representatives forming the majority of IPAF board. The decision on the grants to be approved is not by IFAD, but by the IPAF board.

<sup>22</sup> Deere, Carmen Diana & León de Leal, Magdalena. Empowering Women: Land and Property Rights in Latin America. P 252. University of Pittsburgh Rress: 2001. P 252.

The problem with Indigenous mixed organizations is that their commitment to Indigenous women is very artificial. They experience pressure by their donors to include Indigenous women in their work, and so they include them without having a substantive strategy. Another issue is that women inside those organizations have had hard time being recognized. At the same time we see Indigenous women specific organizations becoming more visible but still not respected. For example, in the recent negotiations for climate change women's organisations found it very hard to be considered...men's organizations came in and took the space. Investing in strengthening Indigenous women's groups is an opportunity for funders who are interested in supporting the most progressive agendas on all issues impacting women, including climate change. -- Indigenous women's rights activist, 2014 interview.

In order to mitigate the leadership issue as well as tensions that can arise around larger NGOs entering into Indigenous communities in un-thoughtful ways, different funds have created practices to maintain Indigenous leadership, self-determination and participation among grant applicants. Naming "Indigenous self-determination" as FIMI's first guiding principle, for example, requires that grantees of the AYNI Fund "must be a community of Indigenous or tribal peoples, or organization / association / group of Indigenous women. In case of a mixed organization of Indigenous or tribal peoples, the proposal must be submitted by a section, a secretariat, or a group of Indigenous women."<sup>23</sup>



23 For more information on the AYNI Fund Application guidelines please refer to the FIMI website at http://www.fimi-iiwf.org/index-fondo.php

## **Programs that Support Indigenous Women's Rights**

With the exception of Channel Foundation's "Advancing Indigenous Women's Rights and Leadership" Program area, none of the funders interviewed have Calls for Proposals or programs dedicated solely to Indigenous women's groups. While Indigenous issues cut across most funder programs, funding for indigenous women's rights is largely channelled through their Human/Women's Rights and/or Environmental Program portfolios.<sup>24</sup> Funders who are focused on environmental programs highlighted the urgency of partnering with indigenous women's groups because of their knowledge of sustainable resource management strategies, and because of the necessary role they have taken up as defenders of their land and natural resources. Swift Foundation alerted us to the fact that "Indigenous women hold specific and gendered knowledge related to agro-ecological issues, climate adaptation, seed and biocultural diversity. There is therefore a strong need for funders to bring a nuanced understanding of the gendered dimensions of issues like climate change." Climate change has gone from being a threat, to a reality for Indigenous women in developing countries where environmental impacts constitute direct attacks on their physical, social and economic health. At the 2014 Summit on Women and Climate, Mariana Lopez former Program Coordinator for FIMI, provided a compelling description of how Indigenous women's lives are being impacted by climate change.<sup>25</sup>

We are seeing a sort of ecological violence that highly affects Indigenous women. The damage that corporations are inflicting on natural resources has an impact on the life of Indigenous women — a very, very direct impact. We see a lot of sexual and reproductive health problems specific to Indigenous women — and not men — that are linked to pesticides, toxins, contamination of water. If environmental rights are not guaranteed, the human rights of Indigenous women are not going to be guaranteed, either. — Mariana Lopez, Former FIMI Program Coordinator.

As Lopez clearly states, environmental and human rights are interconnected. Within donor agencies, programs can intersect as well. **Human Rights programs** offer an umbrella under which the diversity of issues impacting Indigenous communities can be supported. Activists we spoke with caution that Human Rights programs need flexibility in order to meet the programmatic needs of Indigenous women in their specific contexts:

The most important for her is the approach, because the work areas and guides already exist in general terms. Almost every donor has prioritized Human Rights and participation in their work strategies. But it is still necessary to incorporate an approach that responds to the specific needs of ach context and countries where the vision and situation of indigenous women is taken in consideration.

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<sup>24</sup> Note: Interviewees who were part of grantmaking agencies that do not accept unsolicited requests were excluded from this analysis.

<sup>25</sup> This quotation from Mariana Lopez was taken from the article Are Women our Best Hope for Fighting Climate Change? By Eve Andrews, August 14, 2014, on her blog Grist.

Some funders interviewed spoke to how framing and selection criteria of Human Rights Programs as part of the application process can serve to benefit Indigenous women and their communities. Executive Director of Semillas, the first Women's Fund based in the Global South, discussed how this powerfully played out in the context of their new small programs entitled "other human Rights programs." Because this program did not have specifically defined program areas and framing, Semillas received a range of very creative proposals from around Mexico that tended to be indigenous-led. This points to an opportunity for donor agencies to **adapt their criteria to be broader and more flexible,** as this could very well result in high-quality proposals from Indigenous women's groups to frame the work **their way**, respecting cosmology and the experiences of Indigenous people.

FIMI and IFIP are examples of groups who are strongly advocating for **a new paradigm of giving** and relationship building between funder allies and grantees.



## The AYNI Fund Guiding Principles GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## SOLIDARITY + RECIPROCITY + COMPLEMENTARITY

=

Ayni is a Kichua/Quechua word that synthesizes reciprocity, solidarity, equity and collaboration both between humans and other beings of the cosmos (animals, plants, stars, ancestors etc.)

The Ayni Fund was set up with the purpose of investing in material, financial and human resources for the fulfillment of individual and collective human rights of Indigenous women. Their grantmaking programme relies on the human rights framework and focuses on the funded organization and/or community: it is based on Indigenous women's values such as **traditional knowledge, reciprocity, complementarity, respect for diversity and participation,** among others. For example, FIMI endorses the concept of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). All of FIMI's work is based on building networks through informed consent. The principle of FPIC is central to Indigenous women's exercise of self-determination and the right to participate in decision-making in matters that would affect their lives, including their lands, territories, and natural resources. The substantive and procedural norms that underlie FPIC empower Indigenous Peoples to meaningfully exercise their choices, particularly in relation to developing proposals.

AYNI requests a letter establishing Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for the implementation of every project and initiative at the local level. Each letter expresses how the community is involved in the design of the project. In that way, AYNI intends to assure the full participation of the actors affected by the project.

## **The International Funders for Indigenous Peoples**

## "The Four R's of Indigenous Philanthropy" Respect, Reciprocity, Responsibility and Relationships

**Respect**: Honor traditions and respect the ideas of Indigenous Peoples. Respect diverse ways, and use processes and approaches that are transparent, open, adaptable, and flexible. Work directly with communities to gain understanding and knowledge about the community, issues and solutions. Go beyond making grants and think about building long-term relationships and self-reliant communities.

**Reciprocity:** Embrace the idea that giving and receiving connect people, beliefs and actions. It is not all about money, and funders also need to be open to receiving. Giving and receiving from the Earth's endowments is also part of a virtuous circle of healing.

**Responsibility:** Recognize that Indigenous Peoples should speak for themselves and be responsible for their own voice in meetings, negotiations and on issues. Be familiar with the principles articulated in the UN Declaration of Rights for Indigenous People (UNDRIP) and seek to uphold these when working with Indigenous Peoples and to advance these as goals in this work.

**Relationships**: Engage with Indigenous communities by understanding the nature of relationships among ancestral cultures, lands and spirituality. Engaging in this way requires long-term commitments and mutual learning. Relationships based on mutual respect eliminate the tendency to exert power over another.

A number of funders we spoke with have earmarked funds to support **global or international advocacy work** being led by Indigenous women from around the world (Channel Foundation, Tamalpais Trust, and Global Fund for Women). These funds are dedicated to support travel and expenses associated with Indigenous women's participation in global conferences such as the 2015 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), UN Climate Change Conference etc. While some progressive donors recognize international advocacy as a critical area of support, current resources available are not adequately supporting the international advocacy needs of Indigenous women's movement. There is a **continuous cycle of work** that needs to be funded ranging from attending treaty bodies to reviewing country level inputs.



We [Indigenous Women] struggle with limited funds for gathering and exchanges for Indigenous Women across borders. There is a great need to do more that within our sub region in North America, Central America, South America to prepare for continent gatherings. The reason we don't do this is because of funding, not because we don't have an agenda –Rosalee Gonzalez, Activist Interview 2015.

Indigenous women have fought to secure their roles and representation within global and regional networks and organizations, culminating with great visibility at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995.<sup>26</sup> Continued investment in regional networks (such as the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas), as well individual leaders will ensure meaningful participation of Indigenous women and their agendas are adequately represented in key advocacy spaces.



<sup>26</sup> CLADEM (Comité de América Latina y el Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de las Mujeres). "Contribution to the study of the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in relation to their cultural heritage, particularly through their participation in political and public life." Page 8, section 2.2. <u>http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IPeoples/EMRIP/CulturalHeritage/CLADEM\_en.pdf</u>

## Priority issues & Strategies for Indigenous Women's Groups

What we are starting to see in our applications is on corporate encroachment on land and resources and working to not just reclaim or hold on to those resources and also to ensure that food and seed sovereignty, Indigenous rights of knowing and wisdom are retained to fight those larger battles.

Analysis of grant applications provide funders a window into the most pressing issues facing Indigenous women's groups and the strategies they are using to respond. This section of the report is dedicated to providing insight into the priority issue areas, gaps and strategies for Indigenous women's groups.

#### Issues

Indigenous women's groups seek resources to address a wide range of thematic (and often interconnected) issues ranging from food security, to environmental protection, to freedom from violence. Many interviewees describe intersectionality between issues as profound. Violence, environment, and human rights are inextricably linked and this is essential to informing their grant-making approaches and decision-making. Despite the wide range of issues Indigenous women's groups are tackling, four in particular rose to the top:

#### 1. Right to Lands, Territories and Resources

The cultural, economic and spiritual significance of land, territories and resources lie at the very heart of what it means to be an Indigenous person. At a collective level it is also what distinguishes Indigenous communities from dominant societies. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (adopted by the UN General Assembly on September 13, 2007) recognizes individual and collective rights to land, however in practice Indigenous communities around the world continue to suffer loss of control over lands, territories and resources.<sup>27</sup>

SRHR (sexual and reproductive health and rights) CULTURAL FOOD SECURITY/SEED SOVEREIGNTY PRESERVATION HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE/WHRDS FIGHTING EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES CONFLICT AND MILITARISM MIGRANT POLITICAL, ECONOMIC JUSTICE RIGHTS YW'S RIGHTS & LEADERSHIP SOVEREIGNTY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & LAND RIGHTS LABOR/MAQUILA/DOMESTIC

<sup>27</sup> The UNDRIP preamble, art. 25; C169 art. 13.1; C107 art. 11 describes the individual and collective aspects of land rights for indigenous peoples in the following way: "Whereas most indigenous peoples have customary ways of recognising land and resource rights of individual members or households, the collective aspects of their rights to lands, territories, and resources are intrinsically linked to their collective rights to self-determination, non discrimination, cultural integrity, and development as distinct peoples."

The insecurity of land rights contributes significantly to Indigenous poverty and impacts Indigenous women in distinct ways. Gender-based discrimination amplifies the situation for Indigenous women in relation to their land, and the violations of their rights. The most recent report of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples highlights the gender-based component currently weighing upon Indigenous women:

Because Indigenous Peoples often inherit land without any formal title, they are highly vulnerable to land grabbing. In many countries, women already face barriers to inheriting and holding land under both Indigenous and state law. When land is seized, compensation and jobs are more likely to benefit men, while women typically lose their traditional livelihoods and face increased vulnerability to abuse, exploitation, and trafficking. In some cases, Indigenous communities whose land rights are threatened have further subjugated the rights of women, as women's rights have been considered "external values," and therefore divisive to the Indigenous struggle.

/ictoria Taulis- Corpus, Report to the Human Rights Council by the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Executive Director of the International Network of Women's Funds provides additional nuance to the above analysis, by underscoring the dangerous roles Indigenous women are taking up in defense of their land.

Where there are extractive industries and in the context of land grabs; often, due to migration of men to cities in search of work, women are the ones on the land, often without property titles as those who are in the position to defend the land, women are prone to targeting, criminalization and danger. Organizations need to exercise caution in "creating heroines" as often this public light renders women more vulnerable to targeting and danger.

Funders interviewed told stories of Indigenous women leaders who are fighting for a healthy environment, defending their ecosystems and nature, protecting ethnic territories and opposing big mines and other extracting industries.<sup>28</sup> We also heard that these experiences are informing grant applications more than ever, which is not surprising given how dangerous it is for a woman

<sup>28</sup> To learn more about a few of the world's fiercest and committed defenders of Mother Earth check out: "Women are India's fiercest forest protectors" By Sam Eaton, Mar 29, 2016. http://wunc.org/post/women-are-india-s-fiercest-forest-protectors#stream/0, "Indigenous Women Unite to Defend the Amazon, Mother Earth and Climate Justice" by Leila Salazar- Lopez, March 24, 2016. http://amazonwatch.org/news/2016/0324-indigenous-women-unite-to-defend-the-amazon-mother-earth-and-climate-justice; *Revolutionary Feminism: Indigenous Women on Front Lines for System Change* by Alexandra Valiente, Libya 360: 2015. https://libya360.wordpress.com/2015/03/08/revolutionary-feminism-indigenous-women-on-front-lines-for-system-change/

to be an environmental activist, especially if she is Indigenous.<sup>29</sup> According to the Global Fund for Women and Urgent Action Fund Latin America, their grantee application numbers from Indigenous communities seeking support to defend the rights of Mother Earth (Pachamama) are on the rise. For UAF LAC, Indigenous women are also strongly represented by grantees who seek funding for their category of resources that support women's rights amidst armed and social conflicts and increased violence, and political instability. UAF goes on to explain that this is because Indigenous women are especially vulnerable to armed-conflict related violence because many conflict zones are in Indigenous territories.

<sup>29</sup> Recent estimates put forth in the 2015 Global Witness report *How Many More* found that at least 116 environmental activists were murdered in 2014. A shocking 40 % of victims were indigenous, with most people dying amid disputes over hydropower, mining and agri-business. Nearly three-quarters of the deaths we found information on were in Central and South America. Globally, it's likely that the true death toll is higher. Many of the murders occurred in remote villages or deep within the jungle, where communities lack access to communications and the media. It's likely many more killings are escaping public records.

https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/environmental-activists/how-many-more/

## 2. Freedom from all Forms of Violence

We do not want to focus the discussion on violence against indigenous women only on domestic violence because we see that violence is related to globalization, to colonization, to racism, to structural changes that need to be improved in different countries. Because of that, there are conditions that increase violence against women – economic measures, militarization, lack of security, ecological problems, contamination – a lot of these affect indigenous women, and these increase violence.

Much has been written, especially in the international arena, about the structural nature of the violence faced by Indigenous women and girls.<sup>31</sup> The Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples describes the violence as "endemic violations of collective, civil and political, and economic, social and cultural rights as a form of structural violence against indigenous women and girls." Data from the same report suggests that Indigenous women are significantly more likely to be victims of domestic violence, sexual violence, militarized violence resulting from conflict, are highly vulnerable to trafficking, and are also vulnerable to gender based killings, and in some communities violence in the name of tradition.<sup>32</sup>

Activist Rosalee Gonzalez described in her interview how the multiple forms of violence being perpetrated against Indigenous women makes their experience distinct, and as a result "a more complex understanding of violence is required." She expands upon this by saying that when violence against Indigenous women manifests as physical violence through targeted corporate takeover or militarized conflict the violence goes beyond the individual. Lack of sovereignty over Indigenous women's bodies becomes an infringement on the spiritual space that allows for protection for their cultural traditions and collective rights. Indigenous women have been expressing this as **all forms of violence**.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Interview by UN News with Mirna Cunningham, outgoing UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Chair, May 2012.

<sup>31</sup> Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, State of the world's Indigenous peoples, 2010; UN-Women and others, Breaking the silence , Amnesty International, Maze of injustice: the failure to protect Indigenous women from sexual violence in the USA, (New York, 2007);

<sup>32</sup> Tauli-Corpuz, Victoria: 2015 Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous peoples

<sup>33</sup> For a comprehensive analysis of the diverse manifestations of violence in the lives of indigenous women and an articulation what makes those experiences distinct from traditional/mainstream understandings of violence see: Mairin Iwanka Raya: Indigenous women stand against violence: a companion report to the United Nations Secretary-General's study on violence against women (International Indigenous Women's Forum, 2006);



Support to Indigenous women to live lives free of all forms of violence is vital, and interviewees discussed the need for the donor community to create new and better opportunities for support in this area. Interviewees were unanimously concerned about the current level of violence Indigenous Women Human Rights Defenders are experiencing in Meso-America in particular, but also around the world. The international community grieved and demanded justice after the March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2016 assassination of Berta Caceres, the Lenca warrior who co-founded and lead the National Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH). COPINH was a long-term grantee of the Global Greengrants Fund, who supported their fight to protect Indigenous homelands in Honduras from the extreme threat of hydroelectric dams for two decades. Terry Odendahl, President and CEO of Global Greengrants Fund described Berta's death as "a horrible example of the violence that is being committed against environmental activists and particularly women and Indigenous peoples, around the world who are fighting to protect human and environmental rights."

Progressive funders like Urgent Action Fund LAC have been playing key roles dispersing rapid response grants to Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs), many of whom are Indigenous women's rights activists.

Women Human Rights Defenders working to protect their ecosystems are highly vulnerable to violence targeted by states and industries. In response, UAF Women supports initiatives to strengthen women who promote respect for the healthy environment, defend the ecosystems and wildlife, safeguard their ethnic territories and oppose large-scale mining and other extractive industries. UAF also supported initiatives to prevent violence against this group of women, as well as actions to make visible the effects of environmental degradation in their bodies, health and welfare.

UAF further shared how Indigenous women's groups are playing a key role developing proposals on their own to guarantee their rights, and give visibility to different forms of violence indigenous women and girls are enduring-- namely physical, psychological and sexual. UAF goes on to describe and advocate for a much-needed shift in International cooperation whereby attention is given to building knowledge around the current reality for Indigenous women. Concretely, this presents an opportunity to shift investments away from government institutions towards Indigenous communities themselves, as a way to build new leadership and protect human rights.



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## 3. Indigenous Women's Leadership

The Interviews all circled to back to the urgent need to invest in Indigenous women's leadership. Semillas described the current moment as one of opportunity. For example, at local and international levels, a critical mass of Indigenous women's leadership is being built up to intervene at level of multilateral agencies and the United Nations (UN). This was particularly notable at the 2015 UN Forum in September, where Indigenous women were negotiating around the <u>Green Climate</u> Fund which has the capacity to give large scale resources to women's funds and NGOs. At present it is set up to grant monies to governments, but due to the strong presence of Indigenous women's leadership, there is a push to get this kind of money into funds that work directly with leadership of Indigenous women and communities.

Funders and activists alike discussed the importance of funding intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge, investing in organizational growth and capacity, and political participation. As a key issue area of support for the Bolivian Women's Fund, grantees use capacity building strategies to support women growth in leadership positions in their communities and to have their voices heard in decision-making processes. Such programs also serve to educate and inform Indigenous women on political issues in their own communities and cities. In contrast, the Central American Women's Fund (FCAM) offers an integrated approach to supporting Indigenous leadership – as one of many identities in struggle across the region. FCAM has been a consistent supporter young women's leadership, reaching many Indigenous women from communities all over Meso-America through their Ola Joven (Young Wave) program. The main strategy used to reach Indigenous and other minority communities has been through implementing training camps designed to strengthen young women's leadership and movement building across the region.

Camps organized by FCAM have been spaces for exchange and intensive training on focus areas and central themes for individual and collective development of young women, and they favor the creation of national and regional connections. Diverse women converge in the camps, which bring together grantee groups and organizations from throughout the region. The combination of experiential and educational methodologies favors changes at a personal level and contributes to the development of new leadership

Nourishing young women's leadership through **capacity building and training** is especially important because of the social, environmental and territorial threats Indigenous peoples are facing—both physically and culturally. Ford Foundation, a key ally and long-term funder of Indigenous peoples reported that by investing in the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, funders are meaningfully contributing to the growth of an ecosystem of young Indigenous leaders engaged in decision-making on issues impacting their communities.

## 4. Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights

The issue of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) came up relatively strongly in the interviews, which provides a new dimension to the findings from the quantitative analysis.

As may be recalled, issues like gender based violence, SRHR, and LGBTQI rights were less likely to be focus of projects than issues around equality, environment, or lands (FC, AYNI, IFAD). It also logically follows that if women are risking their lives to defend their lands, and live free from violence that there would be somewhat of a de-prioritization of SRHR and identity issues. This might contrast with the experience of more urbanized groups of women.

The quantitative data reflects priority issues for Indigenous women, but certainly not *all* of the concerns that matter to Indigenous women and their organizations/groups. The interviews tell us there is more to the story. Funders are taking note of the fact that SRHR continue to matter to Indigenous women's groups, a qualitative trend that emerged most strongly in the interviews with Women's Funds. The Bolivian Women's Fund, GFW, and Semillas are examples of funders who are responding to a need being expressed by Indigenous communities. Semillas reported that half of the top issue areas proposed by Indigenous organizations in their applications for funding encompass SRHR –specifically: reproductive rights, sexuality education and safe motherhood. For the Bolivian Women's Fund, they identified SRHR the major issue cluster to which they are channelling support.

In an activist interview, Teresa Zapeta reflected on SRHR and current funding opportunities available, she notes that "although some funders of Indigenous women have a mandate of resourcing sexual and reproductive health work, it is minimal and certainly not present in all agencies—especially UN agencies." Some progressive funders have taken note, and have begun collaborating to offer new pots of funding to women's groups focused on SRHR issues. One such example is the "Amplify Change, Sexual and Reproductive Health Initiative Civil Society Fund". This fund presents an important opportunity for amplifying the level of influence in tackling SRHR in Indigenous communities by increasing the number of Indigenous women's groups who are reached through the Fund.



## BUBBLE Amplify Change, SRHI Civil Society Fund

The Amplify Change is a Fund launched in 2014, which aims to empower young people, men and women to realise their sexual and reproductive rights. The vision for Amplify Change is to help to secure universal recognition of sexual and reproductive health and rights as human rights, enabling women, men and young people to realise their full potential in safe and supportive environments. The Fund provides support to civil society and communitybased groups working in countries where the needs are greatest, in particular Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Amplify Change offers four types of grants: *Opportunity Grant, Strengthening Grant, Networking Grant, and Strategic Grant.* The fund's vision, mission, and grantmaking structure is built upon an innovative <u>Theory of Change</u> that places building more inclusive movements for SRHR at the very center.

The Fund provides grants to directly fund local civil society organisations (CSOs) that advocate for better policy and action on neglected sexual and reproductive health and rights issues.

Priority themes within sexual and reproductive health and rights are:

- Gender-based violence, including sexual violence and female genital
  mutilation
- Access to comprehensive reproductive health services for socially and
  economically marginalized and vulnerable
- Addressing the causes of unsafe abortion including decriminalisation
- of abortion and supporting women's rights to safe and legal abortion
- Sexual health of young people and girls, including comprehensive sexuality education and addressing child and early marriage
- Challenging stigma, discrimination, attitudes and laws that undermine human rights, including on grounds of gender or sexual orientation of LGBTI individuals

The Fund is a collaborative initiative supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and ViiV Healthcare. The Fund is managed by a consortium that includes MannionDaniels, Global Fund for Women and African Women's Development Fund.

## **Under-Supported Issue Areas**

We asked interviewees to identify any major issue areas for Indigenous women's groups that are traditionally not funded. Which are the neglected issues? Some funders shared how they were surprised at the low numbers of SRHR funding requests they receive, while others saw a need for more funding identity issues (LGBTQI), Indigenous girls organizing, Indigenous media, militarism, as well as formal policy change work. Other issues highlighted include increased funding towards education and capacity building, movement building, technical assistance and support, climate change, and support for international travel for UN work.

Indigenous women's rights activists had their own perspectives on this question. One activist spoke up strongly against the lack of federal and state recognition of Indigenous peoples in the US, but also globally. She describes this issue as not only under-supported, but foundational to securing Indigenous women's rights on the whole. "It is impossible to ask for the rights of Indigenous Women to be upheld when the state doesn't even recognize you as an Indigenous person." The absence of legal recognition of Indigenous peoples accounts for their invisibility in national statistics and challenges in accessing protective and social services.<sup>34</sup> This issue around recognition is a key area of attention, and connected to the issue of registration of Indigenous women's groups, discussed in more depth in section 6 entitled "Barriers."

These under-supported issues areas should be conceived as opportunities for engagement by funders going forward. Global Fund for Women, for example, seeks to address the gap identified around formal policy change work. They hope to act as resource for Indigenous women's groups who need to connect with pro bono lawyers so they can engage with policy makers in ways that would ensure a better environment and security at every level include land, food and water.

<sup>34</sup> International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, The Indigenous World, Copenhagen, 2011 and State of the World's Indigenous Peoples



#### The Disability Rights Advocacy Fund

The Disability Rights Fund and Disability Rights Advocacy Fund's grantmaking cuts across silos and brings different rights movements together to address multiple forms of exclusion and the intersectionality of rights.

They support the emergent Indigenous Persons with Disabilities Global Network (IPWDGN). IPWDGN leads advocacy on the rights of indigenous persons with disabilities in global and regional policies and frameworks. Their advocacy led to the establishment of a Disability Caucus within the UNPFII and a call by the UNPFII Secretariat for a report on global conditions among indigenous persons with disabilities.

## Two Women's fierce advocacy for inclusion

**Olga Montufar Contreras** is one of the leading activists working to ensure that the rights of indigenous persons with disabilities are addressed within the Indigenous Peoples' movement globally. Olga, who is of Mixtec and Nahua origin, can attest to the multiple layers of discrimination faced by indigenous women with disabilities. "Indigenous women with disabilities in my community face a high risk of sexual violence and, as they have extremely limited access to the legal system, it is even more difficult for them to seek justice."

Olga's advocacy runs from the grassroots to global levels where she led interventions at the UNPFII and participated in the Eighth Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) of the UN Human Rights Council. Through her work with the IPWDGN, she has seen greater recognition of indigenous persons with disabilities in international fora including commitment by EMRIP to dedicate a session to rights of indigenous persons with disabilities in 2016.

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**Pratima Gurung**, an indigenous woman with disability, comes from a remote and hilly region of Nepal, an area that has not yet recovered from the massive earthquake of April 2015.

In Nepal, indigenous persons with disabilities are hit hard by natural disasters, internal conflicts, and the energy blockade. Pratima says of the situation, "Indigenous persons affected by the earthquake have lost their livelihoods, property, and families. A year after the disaster, many are still living in makeshift shelters and face psychosocial trauma. They've become disabled for the first time and because of their devastating losses, they are unable to admit they have a disability. They often don't access government services, even if these services were available."

Pratima's organizations, the Nepal Indigenous Disabled Association and National Indigenous Disabled Women Association Nepal use the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to advocate to district and national governments, as well as to other social movements.

As IPWDGN Asia Coordinator, Prtima highlights the need to include indigenous persons with disabilities in issues related to disaster risk reduction and climate change. She is working with the Asia Indigenous Peoples' Pact to ensure they do so within their work on climate justice.

## **Strategies**

Strategies that funded organizations tend to use are varied. The top three strategies are **capacity building and training**; **advocacy, campaigning and lobbying**, and **leadership development**. The other strategies mentioned include: base building, education and awareness raising, communications and information, and convenings. Without having interviewed more Indigenous women's rights groups, the researchers were not able to assess how much convergence there is between priority strategies identified by donors vs. women's groups themselves. The absence of movement building and mobilization strategies named by funders (such as convenings and to some extent communications) is a potential indicator that these strategies are less supported or difficult to fundraise for.

## **Donor Approaches & Strategies of Support**

Conversations with donors exposed multiple approaches and strategies being used to support Indigenous women's groups.

## Approaches

In this panorama, we see **women's funds** adopting approaches and playing roles for which they are so well positioned. They are reaching large number of Indigenous women's groups that other funders do not reach including —campesina women, labor rights workers, domestic workers, unregistered groups, or organizations working on issues or with populations that are considered controversial or not a priority for other donors.

In contrast, we see a pattern among private foundations to channel resources to Indigenous women/groups who sit at intersection of human rights and environmental rights. For **private foundations**, we also see the importance of alignment between both the agency and the potential grantees' **vision for change**. In practice, private foundations often make funding decisions based on the vision for change articulated by applicants in proposals, and some foundations shared that grantee selection tends to be based on "finding organizations that support our mission." In some cases, the composition and approach of the selection committee also signalled a potential barrier for Indigenous women's groups if their proposal did not demonstrate satisfactory "organizational alignment" or perceived "shared vision" of the selection committee. Ford Foundation is one private foundation with heightened awareness the challenges of selection processes and this is informing and shifting their internal ways of working:

The quality of the proposal is important but the quality of the organizational vision is more important. When making decisions, key streamlined strategies are weighted with more importance than the quality of a proposal of budget. Ford also tries to help bridge any communication gaps by offering resources to improve to grantees who need help with the quality of proposals and reports—in essence, this funding helps build the capacity of groups to build their grant management systems and internal capacities.

## Strategies of Support

The three **strategies** most used by funders to implement their goals were: **Program development** /direct service provision, re-granting through intermediaries, and emergency/rapid response grants.

With the exclusion of rapid support grant making, funders all expressed a commitment to provide **core and flexible funding** whenever possible. Funders interviewed felt strongly about core funding as being the most helpful kind of support to offer program staff as it enable them to make their own financial decisions. None of the funders interviewed accepted unsolicited proposals, which means connections with grantees were made either through formal calls for proposals or through personal referrals. Below is a selection of "mini-donor spotlights" which highlight key approaches and strategies used to expand reach and partnerships with Indigenous women's groups. A handful of more in-depth "Donor spotlights" can be found in section 7 of this report.

**Global Greengrants Fund**: As the leading environmental fund that supports grassroots action on a global scale, Global Greengrants Fund has directed more than \$8,048,568 to programs on women's rights and leadership impact, and \$11,178,529 to Indigenous rights programs. A volunteer advisory committee carefully oversees the selection process, **letting priorities emerge from the region** rather than top town and awarding small grants. Indigenous women are mostly funded as separate organizations or **leadership** within broader Indigenous organization and represent around \$3 Million in annual grantmaking.

**Semillas:** While Semillas does not have a specific policy to target Indigenous women, they estimate that **50% of their funding reaches Indigenous women** through their programs focused on: Safe Motherhood, Sexuality Education, Labor Rights (domestic workers and maquiladora workers), Economic Autonomy (cooperatives), and "Other human rights." Semillas also funds individual leaders within these program areas, which means that there are **individual Indigenous leaders** that are being funded to work with organizations in the aforementioned program areas.

**Global Fund for Women:** Overall, \$3 million has been committed to Indigenous groups since GFW came into existence, the majority of which has been channelled through their Latin America and Caribbean region and portfolio (followed by Asia Pacific and then Sub Saharan Africa). "We give **flexible core funds** to marginalized groups of populations and get hands directly in the hands of women so that they can offer the for best solutions in their communities and countries." Directly funding Indigenous women's advocacy and ongoing work remains a key priority for the Fund. This constituency is typically reached through their two annual grant rounds, as well as through the additional **discretional funds** available monthly to support Indigenous women's rights in key forums, to organize events, and for humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters.

**Tamalpais Trust**: As a small private foundation, Tamalpais Trust relies upon outreach to make connections with indigenous-led organizations. Resources are channelled through two separate funds—one which funds Indigenous groups directly, the other which provides **re-granting to intermediaries** for both domestic and global to fund Indigenous organizations. Although neither of the two funds restricts funding to women-led groups, the Trust has a very intentional focus to support Indigenous women's leadership, capacity building and empowerment.

**UAF Latin America:** Urgent Action Fund's **rapid response grants**, have supported initiatives to strengthen Indigenous women human rights defenders who promote respect for the healthy environment, defend the ecosystems and wildlife, safeguard their ethnic territories and large-scale mining and other extractive industries. UAF also supports initiatives to prevent violence, and actions to make visible the effects of environmental degradation in the bodies, health and wellness of Indigenous women.

## Working through Intermediaries

Women's Funds have the expertise and history of working Indigenous women's groups, making them ideal collaborators for Foundations and other funders. They know how to reach grassroots groups and also how to get funds to unregistered groups. Many foundations such as Tamalpais Trust, Swift Foundation and Channel Foundation choose re-granting through an intermediary organization as a strategy to expand their reach and work with Indigenous women's groups. Women's Funds, INGOs, NGOs or individual grantmakers can all serve as intermediary organizations and each offers different partnership strengths.

One Women's Fund discussed a situation where NGOs in her country have fallen short as intermediaries. Big NGOs in her country get large-scale grants to support Indigenous communities, yet somehow the money never reaches them. As a Women's fund, sometimes receiving funding from the same sources as these NGOs, they are often expected to play an exceptionally difficult mediation role. Indigenous communities have long-history of interference from outsiders, which has created resistance to building collaborations in this context. For funders who are new to supporting Indigenous women's work, Women's funds suggested taking the time to evaluate and select the right intermediary to work with. Key questions driving the selection process might include: who are the actors most rooted in community organizing? Who has the legal knowledge and expertise? What programmatic or networking knowledge does the potential intermediary have?<sup>35</sup>

In the context of re-granting, International Women's Funds such as Global Fund for Women and Mama Cash rely on funding intermediary networks and women's funds as the practical and political mechanism for channelling funds to Indigenous women's groups. They partner explicitly with FIMI, Semillas and FCAM for example, as a way to strengthen others in the Women's Fund community. The re-granting picture is also defined by how Women's Funds themselves serve as key intermediaries between larger funders and Indigenous women's groups. While there are many benefits associated with Women's Funds working as re-granters (especially the movement building potential!), there are also challenges. Women's Funds interviewed described one such challenge as the trend for big funders to apply pressure to measure organizational performance and rather than assess complex change (which is what women's empowerment work seeks).

"There is a widespread feeling among aid recipients that measurement is used more as a tool of enforcement and accountability to the donor than as a means of understanding and learning what works and changing strategy if necessary "–Srilatha Batliwala and Alexandra Pittman<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> For funders wanting to in learn more about criteria and considerations when selecting an intermediary for working with Indigenous Peoples, see IFIP's *Grantmakers' Guide: Strengthening International Indigenous Philanthropy*, page 19. and for more information on working with intermediary organizations, see Grantcraft's Working with Intermediaries Global Grantmaking through Partner Organizations, 2007.

<sup>36</sup> Batliwala, S., and Pittman, A. Capturing Change in Women's Realities. Toronto: 2010. P.9

This reflects pressure that donor agencies are receiving from governments, or their boards, or "back donors" to show how their funding has made a difference. In practice, this has given rise to the promotion of more linear, results-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks by their grantees.<sup>37</sup> As intermediaries, Women's Funds are sometimes left try to 'resolve' fundamentally different "theory of change" approaches.<sup>38</sup> For Indigenous communities whose work centers on social advocacy, awareness raising and cultural change, measuring change is a messy, complex and long-term process. This all raises important considerations for funders around how issues of power and access can create institutional barriers for grassroots Indigenous organizations to access funding.



37 For an in-depth understanding of the challenges of current M&E frameworks and insights for women's rights organizations see AWID's Capturing Change in Women's Realities, December 2010., by Srilatha Batliwala and Alexandra Pittman and Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation for Women's Rights: Thirteen Insights for Women's Organizations by Srilatha Batliwala.

38 The International Network of Women's Funds has taken up leadership through a core area of work devoted to strengthening learning, planning and Evaluation skills of its members to leverage their visibility as key contributors to systemic change. To access tools and resources for M&E learning see: http://www.inwf.org/our-work/learning-monitoring-evaluation/

## **Barriers to Funding**

The funders we spoke with are using innovative approaches to channel funds to Indigenous women's groups, yet we know many obstacles still exist which prevent women's groups from accessing the resources they need. Barriers impeding funding for Indigenous women's rights groups fall loosely into two categories: The first one, requiring long-term effort, is the dominance of '<u>Traditional Philanthropy</u>' where models of charitable giving remain trapped in old attitudes of discrimination which do no sufficiently respect and value the views and knowledge of Indigenous peoples. The issue came up across in almost all interviews, underscored in the quotations below:

Racism and discrimination is (still) so rampant, when it comes to listening to, acknowledging and taking the lead of Indigenous women.

Structural factors such as racism and discrimination, limiting access to information, limited technical capabilities. These are factors that have been generated by uns system that discriminates .

It is simple to say " are unformed or not know how to manage or develop a project editor , no internet access, etc. They are opportunities that have been denied MI to compete on equal terms for access to opportunities.

Also by interpersonal racism , with feminist organizations in Guatemala , poor things look there na indigenous / rural women, do something for them . maternalist vision, which is product of a power relationship

Sometimes racism comes not from the funders themselves but from the staff "middleman" or intermediary. As the link to the donor agency and holder of the grant funds, this person sits in a position of power, and we have seen cases where a well-meaning non-indigenous staff person demonstrates oppressive thinking and communication.

Interviewees spoke to the long history of paternalism, maternalism, and 'saviour models' that continue to be pervasive in the landscape of funding available for Indigenous communities. This history has left Indigenous women and their organizations sceptical about engaging in new partnerships, concerned that their own expertise and value will be minimized. Urgent Action Fund takes the point around traditional philanthropy even further, and introduces one of the most salient findings from the interviews. "There is a need for international cooperation to respond to human rights demands of Indigenous women in accordance with their own cosmologies - not just "added" into existing paradigms." What is being suggested here is that funding for Indigenous women should be done entirely differently, and that because the Indigenous women's worldview (including the spiritual dimension of collective rights), they need to be treated in a separate paradigm. Several Indigenous women's groups and funders have been referring to this type of alternative funding paradigm as an "Intercultural Approach to Philanthropy." The philosophy of Intercultural

philanthropy upheld by FIMI and others is based upon principles in which the knowledge, experience, and efforts of Indigenous women are valued. FIMI's appeal to Intercultural philanthropy is aptly described below by the UN Women's Report Network (WURN) in 2008, and in discussed in more depth in a "Donor Spotlight" by the Tamalpais Trust in Section 7 of this report.<sup>39</sup>

Equity in the distribution of resources of international cooperation agencies are basic elements of Intercultural Philanthropy. This implies an exchange of resources between the Global North and South and within, which is critical to cultivate new experiences as well as to share traditional values of reciprocity. The approach also seeks to ensure that contributions of recipients of donations are valued, and that resources are utilized in accordance with the needs, capacities, and visions of Indigenous women. An intercultural approach to philanthropy also focuses on investing in Indigenous women, children, and youth so they are enabled to lead the development of their communities...the starting point is always indigenous people's lives, their experiences, and conceptual foundations with regards to social, personal, environmental, professional and spiritual relationships. Intercultural Philanthropy thus builds from the knowledge that indigenous peoples have their own learning processes, systems of knowledge and ways to integrate new information, values, and interpretations and transfer them to new generations.

The **second major barrier** to funding for Indigenous women's groups relates to practical impediments of channeling funds to Indigenous women's groups such as the issue of legal registration of Indigenous organizations, lack of capacity/administrative systems, and lack of accessibility (based on language, geographic remoteness).

All four of the Indigenous women's rights activists interviewed discussed the issue of **legal registration** and how few Indigenous women's organizations are registered. Lack of legal status presents different kinds of issues depending on the group. The coordinator of Alianza de Mujeres Indiginas de Centroamerica y Mexico raised how lack of legal status creates internal issues for their network. Since only 5 of the 23 Indigenous women's groups in their network have non-profit status leadership elections can be tricky. The network members are only permitted to elect a continental coordinator with non-profit legal status since they are the only ones allowed to manage the network's money.-

Another activist described how some Indigenous women's groups *choose* not to acquire legal status for political reasons—though this choice limits their access to funding. "My organization is communal organization created by an autonomous region, and not registered NGO. There are Indigenous women heads of communities who organize at community level and they get their

<sup>39</sup> For more detailed analysis of the approach see the following FIMI resources: Indigenous Women's Fund: Investing in Indigenous Women, Innovative Intercultural Philanthropy <a href="http://internationalfunders.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/IndigenousWomensFund-FIMI.pdf">http://internationalfunders.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/IndigenousWomensFund-FIMI.pdf</a> and Investing in Indigenous Women — Innovative Intercultural Philanthropy, WURN UN Women's Report, Jan 2008. <a href="http://www.wunrn.com/2008/01/indigenouswomens-fund-philanthropy/">http://www.wunrn.com/2008/01/indigenousWomens-fund-philanthropy/</a> (http://www.wunrn.com/2008/01/indigenouswomens-fund-philanthropy/

recognition through autonomy law not by Nicaragua law. She then expands by referencing the experiences of Indigenous sisters in the African context, where groups refuse to organize as NGOs as in doing so they will be rejected by their communities:

That choice limits our access to funders when, for example, some large funders push groups to register in order to access their funding. On which model should Indigenous women use to organize? They will not be able to do their work if they are NGO but they can't get money if they are not an NGO

--Myrna Cunningham Kain, Founding Director of the University of the Autonomous Regions of Nicaragua's Caribbean Coast (URACCAN)

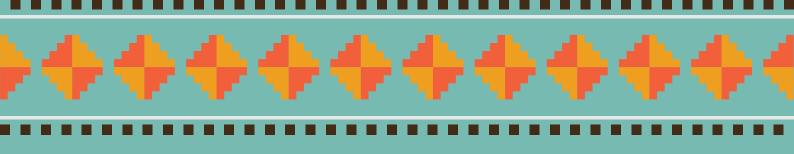
Lack of capacity and administrative systems is one of the biggest obstacles small Indigenous women's groups are dealing with. This makes it difficult for groups to apply for funding in the first place, especially with few skills and experience to write grants, little knowledge of funding opportunities, and usually without paid staff. Without NGO status, federal recognition status, Indigenous women's groups face structural barriers making them ineligible for funding. One activist described Indigenous women's groups as a "movement of volunteers", but cautioned that this should not deter funders from building partnerships. The Central American Women's Fund echoed this point "It is too easy for funders to simply state that Indigenous organizations are not formalized enough or do not have the administrative capacities...this can serve as a pretext for denying funding."

Many interviewees described **technical challenges** and **requirements** associated with getting the funds to the grantees. There are barriers related to access and registration of bank accounts, lack of computer and internet access, and fiscal and tax requirements. Some funders we spoke with also highlighted the challenges with private donor advised funds, and how the US has strict regulations on international giving. This means that Indigenous women's groups fall **subject to rigorous requirements** such as: providing five years of financial data, proof of a certain percentage of publicly funding, and diverse financial records. These conditions are difficult if not impossible for smaller grassroots Indigenous groups to meet.

Semillas shared how they often provide technical assistance to rurally located Indigenous peoples who lack access to banking, but need to meet documentation requirements by the Mexican state. As an intermediary, Semillas is also subject to rigorous demands, and needs to provide audits and reports to their own donors. Funders we spoke with described how technical challenges are often exacerbated by factors such **geographical remoteness** and **language accessibility**. That said, dedicated funders are **finding new ways** to counter these difficulties. Global Fund for Women, for example, is exploring alternative application and reporting formats that will be more voice-led, visual and in respect of oral traditions of Indigenous groups so their storytelling can be captured. The Bolivian Women's Fund recommended having a joint discussion with key funders around new tools that can help Indigenous women's groups surmount diverse technical challenges that affect their funding access. Global Greengrants Fund has set up an advisory network to help grantees with receiving the funds and overcoming any technical hurtles, such as getting bank accounts set up.







# 6. DONOR SPOTLIGHTS



Section 6 of this report featured examples of how donors and Indigenous women's groups are collaborating, and the strategies they have been using to get them there. The Donor Spotlights in *this* section build on these stories, but go a little deeper to show the different ways in which meaningful partnerships have been forged. Concretely, the research team asked donors on the Advisory Committee to share their own stories for inclusion in this Report. Below you will read three very different examples and histories of experience of how private foundations are building sustainable support and solidarity with Indigenous women's groups. These stories "spotlight" different ways in which funder allies are building participatory and respectful relationships, channeling their resources in ways that help Indigenous women's groups overcome the range of barriers they too often face.

## Ford Foundation: Being there for the Long Haul Towards Change, Equality, and Justice

For decades, the Ford Foundation has been working with indigenous communities around the world in a manner that is culturally sensitive and acknowledges that each indigenous nation, people and community is unique. It is a continuous journey of hope and transformation, where meaningful partnerships are forged on a basis of respect for the multiple expressions of indigenous identity that exist. Over the years, we have championed a model of grant-making grounded in the belief that meaningful change for indigenous communities, their land and their resources is best achieved through funding and fueling vibrant indigenous and women's rights organizations and movements.

Ford's Organizational Strategy identifies indigenous peoples as a priority constituency, and as such, they are a population that receives organizational support across all thematic areas, e.g. Human Rights, Gender and Racial Justice among others. Over 2015, for example, for Ford funding indigenous groups isn't just about the quantity of funds invested, but also about the quality of the resources and the collaboration. One organization at a time, one grant at a time, Ford provides flexible and sustainable support to operations and programs of larger established institutions—an investment in core organizational strength.

Indigenous women's rights organizations make compelling partners. They have experience addressing complex intersecting issues in their communities, all the while developing innovative strategies in pursuit of their agendas and visions for change. When it comes to understanding what sustains indigenous organizations over the long-term, sometimes the most challenging partnerships have taught us the most in this domain. Over the years, we have built a deep understanding for the cultural, ethnic and local characteristics of diverse indigenous peoples; however, we have also encountered challenging moments when our institution's vision has not been a perfect match to the indigenous worldview.

The following recommendations emerge from years of partnering with indigenous [women's rights] organizations and they speak to why these relationships are both strategic a transformative. We hope they serve as a source of insight to members of the philanthropic community committed to funding and engage with indigenous women's rights groups.

- When partnering with indigenous women's rights groups or women leaders, funders have a tremendous opportunity to help strengthen women's roles as
- protectors of their environment and biodiversity.

• Sadly, with an ever-increasing appetite for global economic growth, indigenous lands and territories continue to be placed at risk. Funder support is in high demand--to help indigenous organizations and coalitions conduct much-needed political advocacy and defend their rights to land in the courtrooms.

• We must help build an ecosystem of young indigenous leaders engaged in decision-making on issues impacting their communities by supporting intergenerational transmission of knowledge.

• Partnering with indigenous groups is an opportunity to draw from their understanding of territories and their relations with nature, especially in the areas of resource use and management.\_

Need a closing sentence, to be added to next version once Monica's inputs are included

# A Powerful Partnership: Channel Foundation and CAWF/FCAM Seeding & Nurturing Grassroots Change

The Channel Foundation is a small private foundation based in Seattle, Washington, USA, that promotes leadership in women's human rights around the globe. Our mission is to fund and create opportunities for women's groups working in many regions of the world to ensure that women's human rights are respected, protected, and fulfilled.

Since 2007, Channel Foundation has been able to give support to young indigenous women's groups in Guatemala through our funding of the Central American Women's Fund (CAWF)/ Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres (FCAM). We started funding them through the fiscal sponsorship of the Global Fund for Women and were eventually able to fund them directly with cross border grants via the determination of charitable equivalency (a process by which a US grantmaker evaluates whether an intended foreign grantee is the equivalent of a US public charity). FCAM is the first and only Women's Fund in Central America dedicated to mobilizing resources for grassroots women's organizations working to guarantee women's rights to physical and emotional integrity, economic justice and to participate as leaders in making decisions that affect their lives and communities. Channel has made flexible, consistent, annual grants of US\$25,000 to FCAM for the purposes of supporting the "Strengthening Indigenous Young Women's Leadership" Project. Through this project, funds are directed in the form of small grants of about US\$4,000 to \$5,000 as well as capacity-building training to several women's organizations (about four to five different groups annually) in Guatemala that are led by and involve young indigenous women as leaders in defending and promoting their human rights.

Partnering with a Women's Fund like FCAM has enabled Channel to see meaningful and far-reaching impact in the evolution of under-resourced grassroots groups led by some of the most marginalized young women in their communities. Based in Nicaragua, FCAM has an extensive network and deep ties throughout the Central America region – the kind of on-the-ground connections that Channel cannot possibly have on its own as a small US-based foundation. FCAM's staff members are all part of the Central American women's rights movement and share a political analysis which

values indigenous sovereignty as well as women's human rights. They are aware of the history of exclusion and discrimination that indigenous peoples have faced and that sadly continues even today. They are also aware of the challenges faced by many indigenous women even within their own families, their communities and within society at large.

FCAM developed a unique participatory grantmaking model whereby applicant organizations vote on which groups ultimately receive funding. FCAM also includes technical assistance and capacity building along with their grants (for community organizing, advocacy, and training), so that young indigenous women's groups can grow and choose their own activities at the same time as they build alliances with mainstream women's groups. In this way, they are able to connect to larger transnational movements.

When Channel recently participated in a convening in Guatemala City that FCAM organized with many of the young indigenous women's groups from around the country, we were able to see the clear impact of the long term support we and FCAM provide. Vibrant, young leaders described the growth in their expertise, skills, and confidence as they came together and shared tactics, challenges, and successes. Their stories revealed that, aided by FCAM's connections and steady support, they were experiencing profound personal transformation as well as already bringing about changes for their communities.

## The Tamalpais Trust: Intercultural Philanthropy in Action

Created in 2012, Tamalpais Trust supports the development and strengthening of indigenous-led initiatives, organizations, and global networks that promote and serve indigenous cultures and lifeways, values and knowledge, human rights, ceremonial practices, and the protection of sacred waters and lands.

We believe that as indigenous women gain equal rights - through taking care of Mother Earth and other indigenous ways of living - they reach beyond the indigenous world into a larger sphere of influence. Empowering indigenous alliances by awarding them with **general support** and **long-term funding** have been key priorities for the Trust. This kind of quality funding makes it possible for organizations (of any size) to increase their capacity to lead – locally, nationally, and internationally. In 2015, 42% of the Trust's funds reached indigenous women, being able to support their efforts continues to be a privilege.

In 2014, Tamalpais Trust initiated the launch of a **collaborative fund** dedicated to promoting and harnessing traditional knowledge. <u>Traditional knowledge</u> refers to technical information, innovations, and practices of indigenous peoples developed from centuries of experience. It tends to be collectively-owned, and can be transmitted through stories, songs, folklore, proverbs, rituals, customary laws, languages, agricultural practices, and resource collection. The fund is called the *Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Learning Fund* and is supported also by Novo Foundation, Swift Foundation and the Christensen Fund. So far the Fund issued two calls for proposals and has provided 18 grants to smaller indigenous-led organizations, expanding its reach to new indigenous partners in 14 countries around the world.

The Fund is committed to the concept of **Intercultural Philanthropy**, which is built upon a foundational respect for ancestral practices of solidarity and reciprocity of indigenous peoples. The philosophy of Intercultural philanthropy also builds from the knowledge that indigenous peoples have their own learning processes, systems of knowledge and ways to integrate new information, values, and interpretations and to share them to new generations.

At an **operational level**, the Fund works in an innovative and collaborative way. Solicited grants are submitted by community leaders and endorsed by a member of the Guiding Committee. This capacity-building process promotes mentorship opportunities and strengthens regional and global alliances. The Guiding Committee is made up of members from the global indigenous movement who have actively shaped the scope and priorities of the Fund. **Collective construction of knowledge** is a central tenet driving the work and informs grantee application and evaluation forms, selection criteria, and carrying out Cultural Due Diligence with partners. One striking commitment of the Committee is to support organizational capacity building during project development and the monitoring and evaluation process.

The *Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Learning* Fund is being lauded a creative initiative promoting global partnerships, mentorships, and alliances among indigenous peoples, local organizations and the diverse international donor community.





## 7. LOOKING FORWARD



This report contains a significant amount of analysis --both quantitative and qualitative –mapping the status of funding for Indigenous women's rights groups globally. Key findings summarized in the "Findings at a Glance" section of this Report paints a complex and dynamic picture of the current funding landscape Indigenous women's rights groups are operating within. Looking forward, we discuss three potential areas for further exploration.

#### **1. Recommendations for Funders**

Our research findings are supportive of the following recommendations for action put forth by the group of Indigenous women at the International Funders for Indigenous Peoples 2014 *World Summit on Indigenous Philanthropy*.<sup>40</sup>

• Ensure the full and effective participation of Indigenous Women's across the globe in designing funding priorities, projects, and initiatives beginning with the earliest conceptual states of strategy-building and continuing throughout the entire course of the grant making, technical assistance, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and any other steps in the funding and evaluation process.

• Acknowledge, honour, and respect in a culturally appropriate and relevant manner, the resources and contributions of Indigenous peoples and their own governance structures and other organizations including time, spiritual ancestral knowledge and movement building.

• Build the institutional capacities of Indigenous Women's organizations and other initiatives so that they can participate as full leaders in any projects conducted on their territories or that impact them.



• Support programs carried out directly by Indigenous women across the globe, especially in rural and remote areas and encourage network and alliance building.

40 See Appendix 2 to review the more outcome document and recommendations from the Indigenous women who participated in the "Resource Mobilization Hub" the International Funders for Indigenous Peoples 2014 World Summit on Indigenous Philanthropy.

#### 2. Opportunities for Further Research

The research findings in this report are a starting point from which to build upon. Indigenous women's groups have the capacity to absorb more funding, but more research is needed to give visibility to their organizing work and needs. The possibilities for additional research are vast, a few of which include:

• Develop a research project focused on mapping the financial state of Indigenous women's groups. Through use of a global survey such a project would help monitor resource flows where key data can be collected on budgets, funding sources, and fundraising realities from the grantees' perspective.<sup>41</sup>

• Evaluate the collective impact of the work being carried out by a selection of Indigenous women's rights groups. This type of research effort could highlight innovative ways of measuring change within Indigenous women's communities, and also build a strong case for the collective impact of Indigenous women's organizations and movements.<sup>42 43</sup>

• Conduct mapping to learn more about Indigenous women's groups around the world, including their organizing patterns, structures, and leadership models. *Who are they? Where are the located? What commonalities and distinctions can be identified across regions and movements?* 

• More sectorial analysis to deepen understanding how Indigenous women's groups can diversify their funding sources, and overcome barriers accessing key resources. Funding sectors that were not explored in depth in this research include bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, International Non Governmental Organizations (INGOs), as well as Corporate Sector partnerships.

• Only high-level conclusions around regional trends for funding for Indigenous women's groups were provided in this Report. While we know, for example, that Asia is underrepresented in the funder data, we also know that some funders only provide resources in LAC, Asia and Africa. More regional analysis of the status of funding for Indigenous groups around the world would provide a more holistic global picture, with special attention in need of being provided to the Middle East, parts of Europe, and North America.

<sup>41</sup> See forthcoming "AWID Where is the Money Toolkit" for more detailed information on how to build your own action-research project to track funding trends.

<sup>42</sup> FIMI's AYNI Fund employs an innovative paradigm for its Monitoring & Evaluation strategy with grantees. The M&E plan is characterized, among other things, by a baseline of cultural indicators such as: Good Living/ Well-being ("Buen Vivir"), traditional knowledge, Situation of Indigenous women, Cultural Revitalization, participation and promotion of democracy, food sovereignty and autonomy, and Self Determination.

<sup>43</sup> For an example of this kind of research endeavor, see AWID's Women Moving Mountains: The Collective Impact of the Dutch MD3 Fund, How Resources Advance Women's Rights and Gender Equality by Srilatha Batliwala with Sarah Rosenhek and Julia Miller and in collaboration with 35 of the 45 MDG3 Fund recipients. Toronto: 2013.





#### 3. Putting Ideas into Action

Inspired by some of the conversations held with funders for the research, springs the following list for how to put ideas into action, and build knowledge, learning and collaboration along the way.

• Take advantage of key advocacy moments (regional or international) to convene Resource Mobilizations dialogues between Indigenous women's groups and funders from diverse sectors.

• Convene an intergenerational dialogue focused on Indigenous women's leadership, to capitalize on the critical mass being built up (particularly in Latin America and Asia).

• Develop and implement an advocacy plan targeting key funding sectors encouraging them to tracking resource flows funding going towards Indigenous women's groups.

• Collaborate on a communications campaign targeting untapped funders and explaining why they need to pay attention to Indigenous women and what is happening on the ground.

• More discussion, strategizing, and collaboration is needed between organizations and groups playing intermediary roles/ re-granting funds to Indigenous women's groups.

• Women's Funds should continue play a key role/ develop a plan to lead philanthropic advocacy and donor education around the critical issue of funding for Indigenous women's groups.

• Hold workshops to break down existing tensions and discriminations between Indigenous and women's rights movements—especially when it comes to working with Indigenous women who are working with men in their communities.<sup>44</sup>

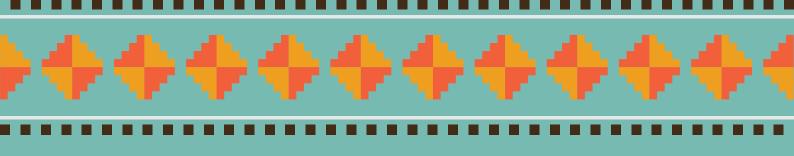
• Key funder allies partner with Indigenous women's groups to host strategic convenings centered on key areas of institutional strengthening including: proposal writing, M&E, securing legal status, budget monitoring and oversight, strategic planning etc..

<sup>44</sup> This is complex terrain, when "traditions" are deployed to justify sexism, and false dichotomies are set up between "community" and individual rights. INWF would be a source for learning here as they have conducted several workshops to address these tensions including "Building a gender transformative agenda" within the climate justice movement and, the second focused specifically on the deployment of "tradition."

#### Conclusion

This report not only hopes to illuminate the funding landscape of Indigenous women's organizations, but a core objective of this research is to make visible some of the most effective collaborations between funders and Indigenous women's groups. Our research and Interviewees referenced a multitude of Indigenous women-led groups who are claiming their rights and using innovative strategies such as international advocacy and campaigns and leadership building through connection to nature, mobilizations, and collective knowledge production. We hope this will inspire new connections and help support the work we have highlighted in this study. After all, Indigenous women are key movement builders. Perhaps Global Greengrants Director of Programs put it best when he described their organizational motivation for supporting Indigenous women "We fund Indigenous women who are at the forefront of movements, at intersections of global environmental sustainability and social justice...Indigenous women are very often leaders in these struggles, and it is urgent to get funds directly to them." Hence, we hope this report will be an important piece in building a concrete roadmap to effective funding for Indigenous women's groups.





& APPENDIX 1:
SIZE & SCOPE OF INDIGENOUS
WOMEN'S GROUPS
(COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS)

Comparison of women's groups with and without indigenous constituencies

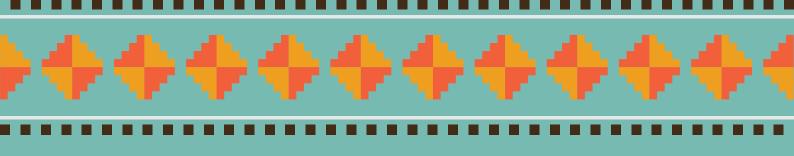
### Comparison of women's groups with and without indigenous constituencies

Comparative Results from 2011 "Where is the Money for Women's Rights?" Survey Association of Women in Development (AWID)	Indigenous Constituency* (N=237)	No Indigenous Constituency (N=882)	<ul> <li>Women's rights organizations with indigenous constituencies report slightly lower income and are less likely to have assets.</li> </ul>
Median Income 2011 (\$USD)**	\$15,000	\$20,000	
Median Income 2012 (\$USD)	\$32,500	\$34,000	
Budget shortfall in 2010	39%	35%	
Median expected survival with no further funding	5 months	6 months	
Percentage receiving multiyear funding (2011)	18%	22%	
Percent core support (2011)	25%	30%	<ul> <li>Overall, however, these groups are not markedly different from other women's right organizations.</li> <li>* Indicated in the survey that indigenous people were a target population of their work. Does not necessarily mean that the organization comprises indigenous people.</li> <li>** Medians are used to avoid potential distorting effects</li> </ul>
Has ever received funding	79%	83%	
Provides grants to others	14%	19%	
Has assets	42%	47%	
Median value of assets	\$10,000	\$10,200	
Median amount of savings and reserves	\$510	\$500	
Have no savings or reserves	29%	31%	
Founded after 2000	57%	59%	
Region			
SS Africa	35.0%	38.1%	
Latin America	19.8%	13.4%	
Caucasus and Central Asia	11.4%	5.4%	
S SE Asia	11.4%	10.3%	
S C E Europe	6.8%	9.2%	
North America	6.3%	4.0%	
MENA	3.4%	7.9%	
Western Europe	2.5%	4.4%	
Eastern Asia	2.1%	4.4%	
Caribbean	.4%	1.5%	
Pacific	.4%	1.0%	

Medians are used to avoid potential distorting effects of a few very large organizations in the sample.

25 Base: 1,119 women's organizations who responded to AWID's 2011 "Where is the Money for Women's Rights?" survey.





# 9. APPENDIX 2: INDIGENOUS WOMEN LIFE EXPERIENCES

Petrona Fernandez Osco/Yanari Suyi Ingavi / Markas Community/ Bolivia/ FIMI's Indigenous Women's Global Leadership School



My name is Petrona Fernandez Osco, I'm 34 years old and I belong to the community of Yanari, Suyi Ingavi of Markas, Ayllus and the community of DZAdz of the 4th Zone section of Desaguadera, La Paz, Bolivia. My mother tongue is Aymara and Spanish is my second language. I am an Educational Sciences graduate from the Universidad Mayor de San Andres. I currently live in my community where I work collaborating with the traditional authorities of the community and at the same time I work in agriculture along with my parents.

I am a teacher and a farmer, I give myself to children; perhaps because I do not have children of my own and I see in them the future of our people. That's why I think that they have to revitalize agriculture, education, and our values. In my culture, the elders are in charge of children's education. The elders stay at home and children from the age of 12 and up go work in the crops and farming while the grandparents are teaching the smallest children how to "learn by doing". The first thing we learn is to weave, this is taught by our grandmothers, and our grandfathers teach us agriculture, for us to understand and have a direct contact with the soil.

In my community textiles are important. We weave, "Aguayos". The textile teaching is very interesting for my community and for me. Young women go to work in the field, while children are left with the grandparents. Grandparents transmit this generational knowledge that has been passed down to children about what they should do; they teach them from the smallest to the most macro things in life. We start by making bracelets, but before you do them, the work is done by women and men. Men help us; they are the ones in charge of guiding the animals. We also make wool and during this process, men spin and women weave.

One of my teaching methods is "weaving" because there's a lot of science in it. One learns how to read, write, count, the colors, etc. Weaving for me is a comprehensive education that encompasses everything. That's what I can highlight about what we learned from our grandmothers. On the other hand, our grandfathers teach us farming, how to manage livestock; thanks to the livestock we obtain the natural fertilizer to grow our food as organically as possible.

Nowadays, climate change is affecting us a lot. We used to have one specific season to sow for the weaving, another one for agriculture and one for livestock but these practices are no longer being done in the same season because of climate change. This has also affects our medicinal plants which are no longer as effective as before because diseases come with more strength and the water has been streamlined. Our community takes water from a spring that isn't flowing with the same strength; for this reasons our community has undergone for some changes in recent years.

Personally, I feel very proud and very happy to belong to FIMI's Global Leadership School because it has given me an opportunity to meet and participate in the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Additionally, I had the opportunity to learn about the indigenous peoples and indigenous women's right which has helps us tremendously in our leadership in our entire community. Fresia Paola Painefil Calfuqueo/Mapuche/ Llaguepulli Community/ Chile / IFAD-FIMI; FIMI's Indigenous Women's Global Leadership School



My name is Fresia Paola Painefil Calfuqueo, I'm 28 years old, born and raised in the Mapuche indigenous community of Llaguepulli, Chile. After completing my primary, secondary and higher education, I returned to my community to contribute in various projects. My Current profession is technician in tourism with mention in travelling.

The Llaguepulli community stands out as a reference at a country level thanks to its organizational structure and the emblematic projects that we have developed over a period of not more than 10 years. We are a strong cultural community; all the projects we undertake are developed according our cultural parameters. The traditional authorities are currently active, recognized and valued by the community, that is why there is an active participation in all the activities and cultural ceremonies performed by the community members. This makes me feel very fortunate and proud to be a Mapuche Woman, and be able to contribute with the community and the territory. In 2011, the community had the opportunity to apply for the IPAF fund from IFAD coordinated by FIMI for the Latin America region, and fortunately we were funded with \$ 50,000. This fund helped us a lot in order to strengthen many of the projects that we have developed; and until today it has been sustainable over time. With this pilot project, and given the good performance we showed, the following year we were granted a national environmental fund; 10 thermal solar were given to 10 families within the community. Our goal is that eventually all families can have this system. Thanks to this fund and as a community, we hope to substantially continue improving our quality of life and find other funding opportunities to submit projects, in which in most of them, we have been successful.

After the execution of this fund, in 2012 I had the opportunity to travel to Nicaragua for a regional meeting organized by FIMI; this meeting was for all the organizations that implemented projects funded by IPAF. I have the privilege of representing my community by publicizing how we distributed the resources and how it helped us improve our results and the positive impact that generated to us.

From that experience, I was linked to FIMI and last year I was given the opportunity to participate in the program Terra Madre Giovani in Italy and later in the program Terra Madre Indígena in India, where issues related to healthy eating were discussed as well as healthier ways of doing farming. It was because of this experience that I started to address these issues upon my return to the community. With the support of The Sacred Fired Foundation and First Peoples Worldwide Foundation and technical support of the MAPLE team of micro-development and the Professor Matt Mariola from The College of Wooster in Ohio we were able to address the importance of Organic farming and the role of women in this aspects such as organic family gardens, the techniques and the ancestral practices, etc.

This year in May, I was able to participate in the Indigenous Women's Global Leadership School in New York City. This experience gave the opportunity to work in an advocacy plan focusing on organic farming emphasizing the important role played by the Mapuche Woman.

The Global Leadership School has been very positive for me because I was able to acquire new knowledge and new experiences. At the same time, I was able to strengthen the leaderships in my community and territory because of the knowledge gained during this process.

Irma Doris Percca Marca/ Aymara / Malloko Community / Peru / FIMI's National Program on Human Rights, Food and Nutrition Security



My name is Irma, I'm 51 years old. I am Aymara, from the Molloko Community, District of Acora, Puno, Peru. I Studied Anthropology and social work to support people who could not read or write. I have worked as an agricultural promoter to support rural producers in cattle breeding and how to improve their processes; I am also and advocate for children on early stimulation programs and since I was 18 years, I've been involved in advocacy processes for indigenous women rights and their participation and empowerment. In 2015 I participated in FIMI's National Program on Human Rights, Food and Nutrition Security.

I work in the organization Union de Mujeres Indigenas del Abya Yala "UMA" (Union of Indigenous Women of Abya Yala). We work with 7 thematic objectives: intercultural education, intercultural health, indigenous women's political participation, and intercultural communication, among others. We have a radio program in Aymara where we share the experiences and culture. We also have a "economic enterprises" program, where we provide support to indigenous women living in communities to develop economic enterprises, etc. Since we do not have any funds, we have to cover our expenses to access fair markets that is why one of our fundraising priorities is to find funds to cover women's expenses for food and transportation in order to participate in this markets. We develop trainings for crafts making and animal husbandry for indigenous women. Despite this type of activities help them to bring money home, they constantly face violence from their partners because supposedly women do not contribute economically to the family. For example, if women participate in an organization the husband would say: "you are wasting time in that place, instead of bring money home"! As a result, we constantly face violence, especially women living in the countryside. It is for this reason, that we try not to increase the problems that indigenous women face and help them to be economically independent and contribute financially to their families.

We also have a cultural identity strategy, we work hard with grassroots organizations and we have a board of directors and a professional in each subject, for example, in economic enterprise, intercultural education, health teacher, etc.

We just have 4 years as an legally registered organization but I think we have made great advances and now with FIMI's supports we could reach it internationally. I feel so good and so empowered with everything that we've learned and I'm sure I will share this experience and knowledge with my sisters who live in other communities. Thank you and thanks to FIMI again. Irene Serina Leshore / Samburu / Kenya / FIMI's Indigenous Women's Global Leadership School



I come from northern Kenya, I belong to the Samburu People, a pastoralist nomadic community. I am 41-year-old married mother of 4 children. I am currently a nominated as a member of the Samburu County assembly representing women and children. Before joining the County Assembly I was the founder member of Nainyoie Community Development Organization, a community based organization working with women and children. The organization educates these groups on their rights, income generating activities for livelihoods support, environmental conservation activities and peace building activities. We also have a center for children that are rescued from the streets.

As a member of the County Assembly, I advocate for the inclusion of women in decision-making processes in the county, employment opportunities, equal opportunities for women entrepreneurs in County tenders and advocacy on women's and children's rights while fighting retrogressive cultural practices e.g. FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), early marriage and GBV.

We live very far from Nairobi, about 400 kilometers, we don't have good roads and technology is a little bit off. I am a woman politician from the Samburu community, as a nominated member of the assembly.

In Africa, women are there to be seen but not to be heard, people do not believe in women leadership, especially in my community, which is very conservative; where many people do not go to school. Women in my community are very strong women, they take care of the family and they do all the work. They do not even have time for themselves, they are all over the place, they have to walk 20 kilometers in search of water, they do not have maternal health facilities, but still they manage. They are the custodians of nature, the custodians of culture and language. They teach the children all they need to be know and they also are official leaders.

The women in my community are known as leaders. In my experience, being in the assembly for the last three years, I think when more women come into leadership their agenda will be more gender inclusive. In my part as a representative of women and children, I have always lobbied for more money for children, more money for health services, more money for women issues. Being in politics also give us a bigger saying in decision making, because right now, all our legislative houses are male dominated, and in the national assembly we only have one woman out of 12 positions. None of my community leaders have been elected.

In Kenya, we are expected general elections in 2017 and we want to prepare ourselves so more women can be elected for a seat. In this sense, we would like to do more civil education to show people that women can be leaders and use ourselves as role model and to even get more women in leadership positions. We also know that Rwanda is a country leader in women political participation, they are around 56% percent of women in all the houses, national and local assembly, and that would be a good opportunity for women in my community to see how the women there have succeeded in getting to those positions, and since Rwanda is a neighboring country to my country it would be less logistically challenging to take the women there and even the elders.

Voting registration again would be a very good opportunity for us, as it is now. In my community women do not carry their identity cards, they are being carried by the husband, because they do not have any saying on who they are going to vote for. The husband gives you the identity card and your vote registration card on the Election Day, and because they are illiterate, they do not know how to write for themselves. They would go to the voting booth and they might vote for "X" and if the husband told them to vote for "Y", then the women in the evening will suffer because of her choice. That is why we want to teach women, that is their right to elect whoever they want and they should not allow anyone to carry their identity card to vote for them. In that way they will make a conscious decision to vote for other women. Also in my community, violence against indigenous women is very common, they face psychological and sexual violence. Gender stereotypes that state that women who participate in politics are either divorce or do not get married are widely spread. We want to train law enforces to tackle violence against women.

Lastly, the 2017 general elections are coming in my community and there is still one more year to go, so there is still time to do all these activities to promote a change, this when all the networking opportunities FIMI has given me contribute since I have the knowledge and tools to fundraise for this, for indigenous women's rights. I am very proud of being part of FIMI's program. The Global Leadership School has opened up our mind and enable us to form new networks, as a result my people highly benefit from all these efforts supported by FIMI.



Mayferee lyngdoh Ryntathiang / Khasi / India / FIMI's National Program on Human Rights, Food and Nutrition Security



My name is Mayfereen lyngdoh Ryntathiang, I am a Khasi woman, an indigenous tribe of India. I was born in 1978 at Wahingdoh block three, Shillong. I completed my Masters in English Literature. Through these years of being a part of active social work and social change, I have also initiated various activities and programs. In 2001 until this date, I have initiated trainings and meetings on Gender, HIV and AIDS, Violence against Women, Life skills, formation of SHGs, and substance abuse at the rural and urban level. In 2002 I was included as part of the team to the South East Asia exposure trip on Violence against Women in Bangladesh and have been a part of the team to initiate a Violence against Women Campaign in Shillong. In 2005, I initiated a Human Rights Campaign in Jaintia Hills, which is currently active. In 2007, I founded a Grassroot organization aim to encourage, empower and enhance people's responsibility for social development.

I am currently working in the state of Meghalaya with communities of different arrays in most districts of the state. My work includes facilitating health rights, livelihood and accessing to legal rights especially for women. In the communities I work with people who still adhere to their local norms and customary laws. The customary laws bind them as a force and a collective to throw away any atrocities. However, with the patriarchal value in a matrilineal system, these customary laws are but diluted to suit the needs of men. Quite befitting to say though is that women uphold the traditions! A paradoxical intertwines. With these traditions, they uphold the food habits like consuming only medicinal edible herbs, dressing sense and many others. The knowledge and wisdom lies in these.

We live on food and wisdom, it can encompass in different ways in terms of livelihoods; the food that we eat, the children, the culture, everything that is created by women. As much as we try to move forward, maintaining our identity in the face of colonization, our language in the face of degradation and our land in the face of development; we still find the strength to pass on from generation to generation.

One of the wisdoms that we have is related to food security, which we still continue to pass this from one generation to another. Food security is one of our main "forte", specially in my area. In the face of colonization we have many of our food systems being taken away for that so called "processed food" that is coming from high chemically grown areas. As indigenous women and as indigenous peoples, we are organic by nature. Unfortunately, these organic ways have been challenged by the government that we work with when they introduce the chemically processed vegetation; but we do not worry because we have hope because we are here right now with FIMI and MADRE and the other counterparts such as FAO, Ford Foundation and IFIP to work together and mitigate this and find the ways to go back to the roots and how much we can value our food chain and lastly, how we can create a better opportunity of food systems.

I think we all have to build an alliance with indigenous peoples not only for the food systems that we have but also spiritually and most special for political strength. We need to advocate at all levels, especially at local level.

Climate change in our region, in our area is a new term, we have not heard of climate change in our region before. In our agriculture way of life, because 70% of our people are in an agriculture mindset, we are the ones who mitigate climate change. We know what kind of soil grows, what kind of vegetation, we know when is 12pm by looking at the sky and not looking at the watch; until today we still have that wisdom. As part of that we still want to promote the food chain that we have within our indigenous communities. Animal and herbs have always been a way of life, we never knew vegetables at the market, just go the forest, grab something to eat. Right now we have berries from America and China and we buy those stuff, so we are trying to bring these back into the markets. Because the markets for organic herbs have completely died since we are so overwhelmed by the so called "globalization" where the women have to create a market niche. We are trying to bring back the uniqueness into this world and get back to nature. Back home, we do not eat processed meat, we eat real vegetables from the garden, so one of the promotions that we are trying to do, is having all these organic products back and not to have certificate for organic products but having certificate for nonorganic products.

Part of being at FIMI is documenting what we have lost. All the knowledge that has been transmitted has been oral and it is lost because some of persons do not share or do not want to share, or the youth fail to ask for them. That is why we want to reach that gap by connecting this through documentation in varies forms; such as a book, which we have done in a virtual form as well, based on our traditional herbs. This is always being a part of our traditional culture, so we want to revive this and make it a universal voice for climate change. When we try to bring back our original herbs in our own region, our own country, and in that way contribute to the climate reduction.

My FAO/FIMI programme started a year ago when I registered with FIMI for the virtual programme. The entire journey began with discussions and a national programme held in Delhi in 2015. The international programme came rather as a surprise for me and especially being involved with FIMI in the UNPFII was a dream come true. Thank you FIMI for the opportunity of a lifetime.